Chiara Ruffa, *Military Cultures in Peace and Stability Operations: Afghanistan and Lebanon.* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018.

MAJ Aaron Cross, United States Air Force Academy

In the introduction to the classic three-volume series *Military Effectiveness*, Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H. Watman consider what makes military organizations effective in conventional conflict using analysis at the political, strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. Among other considerations at the tactical level, they identify that the organization's approach to morale, unit cohesion, and training

impacts their overall effectiveness.[1] Ultimately, these all stem from and serve as artifacts for a specific military's culture—but what causes a military's culture to develop?

Chiara Ruffa, an Academy Fellow at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University and an associate professor in War Studies at the Swedish Defense University, provides a thoroughly researched and convincing answer. In *Military Cultures in Peace and Stability Operations: Afghanistan and Lebanon*, she explores how military culture develops within democratic countries and how that culture, in turn, shapes effectiveness in peace and stability operations. In her model, developed and tested through field research with both the French and Italian Armies in Lebanon and Afghanistan from 2007-2013, she shows that the state's civil-military relations and society's belief about the use of force jointly shape "military culture," which in turn guides how individual soldiers employ force (11). While her answer derives from a peacekeeping operations lens, it has implications across all military operations. More recent research shows that combat troops not explicitly trained for peacekeeping frequently serve in such a role.[2]

The introduction and first chapter of her book serve as a literature review of material from political science, military sociology, military operations research, military history, security studies, peacekeeping, and peace operations fields, which then informs the development of both her model of Unit Peace Operation Effectiveness (UPOE) to measure effectiveness and the sources of military culture. In the second chapter, Ruffa expands on her theory of the sources of military culture by tracing the domestic conditions leading to the differences between French and Italian military culture. In chapters three and four, she details her findings of both the French and Italian deployments to Lebanon and Afghanistan, respectively. Furthermore, in the conclusion and appendices, Ruffa highlights the implications of her theory, future considerations for research and provides the data on interviewees, a sample survey, and statistical information.

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[1] Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H. Watman, "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations," in *Military Effectiveness,* vol. 1, eds. Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Introduction.

[2] See Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, eds., *The Dilemmas of Statebuliding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations (Security and Governance)* (London: Routledge, 2009).

One of the most significant contributions Ruffa makes is her new model of UPOE. UPOE is a measure based on the work of Risa Brooks and Elizabeth Stanley in *Creating Military Power* (who based their work on Millett and Murray's *Military Effectiveness*) in which integration, responsiveness, skills, and quality dictate tactical effectiveness. Ruffa modifies those to a peace operations context, defining integration as the ability to do humanitarian aid and reconstruction; responsiveness as the ability to interact with the local population; skills as either military or humanitarian focused; and quality as either focused on weapons and munitions or humanitarian and development projects. Additionally, Ruffa adds a fifth category—interoperability—to distinguish between those units who coordinate military operations well and those who excel at civil-military reconstruction projects. While units can and will vary on these measures over time, and not one specific configuration leads to "success" in every peacekeeping or stability operation, she identifies an ideal-type unit as one that is high in responsiveness, integration & quality, has the appropriate mix of military and humanitarian skills, and is excellent at coordinating both military and humanitarian operations.

After defining UPOE, Ruffa then provides her model for how domestic conditions lead to variations in military culture. Her hypothesis revolves around two circumstances: the society's beliefs about the use of force and the model of civil-military relations within a country. She divides these ideas further by first describing that a society's beliefs about the use of force manifest as their likelihood to intervene in out-of-country operations, what types of operations are appropriate (conventional conflict versus peacekeeping), and to what extent a society is casualty-averse (34). Further, she uses two broad models of civil-military relations and military input within a democracy to explain behavior: one of civilian supremacy in which senior military leaders have little input into decisions, and one of professional supremacy in which civilians value senior military input into decisions (35). With the components of military culture thus defined, Ruffa then examines the particular Italian and French military culture cases.

Through historical-institutionalist examination, Italy and France began their current military cultural journey after World War II but arrived at different results. Given Italy's alignment with Axis powers during World War II, the post-war Italian military sought to distance itself from a militarist stance; Italian political leaders

marginalized senior military officers in making defense and security decisions. Thus, in Ruffa's model, Italy exhibited civilian supremacy through most of the Cold War. Then in the late 1980s, senior Italian military officials began to champion their ability to respond to humanitarian crises and drew on a historical idea of Italian soldiers as "good people" in such situations to increase their voice with civilian leaders and rehabilitate their soldiers' image. This was further solidified through the societal views of the use of force in Italy, in which the public views peacekeeping operations as more legitimate and exhibits a high aversion to casualties. In short, Ruffa calls the Italian military culture one of "humanitarianism" (126).

In contrast to Italy's journey, the current French military traces their cultural developments through experience in Indochina, Algeria, and the attempted coup against President Charles de Gaulle in 1961. The French military traditionally found high regard and respect amongst the French public, but strict civilian control came after the 1961 coup attempt. However, there is still an expectation that the military represents France well in multinational coalitions and undertakes unilateral missions when necessary to protect French citizens or honor abroad, meaning the French public has no issues with more combat-oriented operations overseas. Further, the relatively low casualty sensitivity comes from a societal view that military members should sacrifice themselves for the state. Thus, Ruffa calls the French military culture one of "controlled assertiveness" (126).

In the case of Lebanon, Ruffa found that the difference between the cultures of humanitarianism and controlled assertiveness had real effects on UPOE. The study looked at Italian and French involvement in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon between 2007 and 2013. During this period, both nations had a similar contingent of about 2,100 soldiers deployed, roughly the same types of equipment, and identical mandates and rules of engagement. Through interviews with more than 115 personnel from the United Nations, soldiers from Italian, French, Ghanaian, Korean, and Belgian contingents, nongovernmental organization members, and Lebanese sources, Ruffa found that the Italians and French applied force differently by examining their understanding of the mission, perceptions of big concepts, and organizational behavior.

In terms of the mission, the French and Italian contingents saw the enemy and victory differently. For the French, the enemy was terrorists, and victory meant defeating them. In contrast, the Italians broadly said there was no enemy and victory would be a continuance of the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel. Moreover, the Italians and French differed on their concept of what was necessary for their mission: the French stressed training and equipment, while the Italians highlighted humanitarian actions. Further, these ideas manifested themselves in action. The French contingent focused on patrolling more frequently with greater armament (they employed tanks in their patrols), conducted combined operations with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), minimized interactions with the population, conducted a low number of civil-military operations, and focused more on force protection measures. In contrast, the Italian contingent focused their patrols on interaction with the Lebanese public (and did not use tanks), conducted more humanitarian and civil-military operations, and placed cooperation with the LAF as a lower priority. Ruffa sums this up as "deterrence" versus "show the smile" concerning French and Italian contingents (84).

Moving to Afghanistan, Ruffa found similar results. Examining the Italian and French contingents deployed as part of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan between 2008 and 2012 in Regional Command Central, Ruffa again found similar troop strengths (2,500), equipment, and mandates/rules of engagement. Interviewing over 50 personnel from the Italian and French contingents, NATO, and local Afghans, comparable attitudes to Lebanon emerged. Strikingly, the French soldiers interviewed expressed that they were at war with the Taliban, while the Italian contingents viewed their role as peacekeepers to help development. Moreover, the French saw victory as the defeat of the Taliban, while the Italians saw the reconstruction of Afghanistan as the ultimate victory. In action, the French and Italian contingents similarly conducted themselves as in Lebanon: the French stressed more combat patrols with greater armament, minimized interaction with the public, and prioritized civil-military operations. At the same time, the Italians focused on humanitarian actions and interaction with the Afghan population.

This work has several merits. As Ruffa states in conclusion, this is the first study using qualitative and quantitative methods to study military behavior in peacekeeping situations and crosses many disciplinary boundaries. The UPOE developed by Ruffa

provides a great starting point to evaluate how certain militaries behave in peacekeeping situations based on their country's military culture, adding to a growing body of literature on military culture coming from the security studies realm.[3] The implications of her argument would have important ramifications for peacekeeping operations: the UN could ensure the best fit between a military's culture and assignment to peacekeeping operations (i.e., assigning a contingent with a more humanitarian military culture to a sector that requires more humanitarian-focused operations). Further, the focus of the survey instruments (provided in full in the appendix) on an understanding of the mission, significant concepts, organization behavior, and transparency about individuals interviewed deserve commendation. Last, Ruffa used both interviews and questionnaires distributed to other members of the unit not interviewed to provide validity to perceptions from the interviews.

While the work is intriguing, it does have some unresolved questions. First, Ruffa built her model using small militaries from European countries with democratic governments. Further research would need to validate if this connection between military culture and behavior during peacekeeping missions exists with contingents outside of Europe; one could imagine that the civil-military relations in an authoritarian country may not translate well to this model. Additionally, while Ruffa did her best to be rigorous with the quantitative measures, the observations are still reliant on a relatively small sample size skewed towards officers. While, in theory, the way officers portray behavior on the ground (and the inclusion of civilians to validate their perceptions) should account for what soldiers are doing, more extensive surveys of soldiers would help buttress the behavioral claims. Lastly, the focus on small European militaries may not scale to larger formations. In the book, Ruffa states that there was anecdotal evidence that the Taliban knew when the Italians and French transferred responsibility for a sector and adjusted their behavior accordingly. As a US Army officer, I have witnessed the same anecdote between units in the United States Army in Afghanistan—thus, variations in culture could exist inside larger military establishments rather than just between nations.

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[3] In particular, see Jason Lyall, *Divided Armies: Inequality and Battlefield Performance in Modern War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020) and Peter R. Mansoor and Williamson Murray, eds., *The Culture of Military Organizations* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

In all, *Military Cultures in Peace and Stability Operations: Afghanistan and Lebanon* is a valuable work that any political scientist, strategist, or military officer should read. Chiara Ruffa provides a thoroughly researched and convincing answer to how military culture impacts effectiveness in peacekeeping operations. While focused on peacekeeping, it plants the seed for thinking about how military culture impacts a unit's behavior in any operation. Further, it provides many avenues for further research on the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, how we should approach assigning contingents to sectors of operation during peace and stability operations, and if this translates to combat operations and scales to larger military organizations.

MAJ Aaron Cross is an Instructor in the Department of Military and Strategic Studies at the United States Air Force Academy and an active-duty US Army Armor Officer. He has over fifteen years of military experience, including combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Aaron holds degrees from The United States Military Academy at West Point and Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. The opinions and assertions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the US Government, Department of Defense, US Army, or US Air Force.