Strategic Culture: A "Cultural" Understanding of War

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The concept of strategic culture has become increasingly important in the field of strategic studies. This article traces the evolution of strategic culture as an academic topic and suggests that the importance of culture for understanding strategic issues was also recognized in ancient times. However, it was only in the latter part of the twentieth century that the concept of strategic culture was able to attract the attention of strategic studies theorists. The process whereby strategic studies has attained its present status has been one of scholarly debates and this paper seeks to chronicle that process

> Yes, for it was not Zeus who gave them forth,
> Nor Justice, dwelling with the gods below,
> Who traced these laws for all the sons of men;
> Nor did I deem thy edicts strong enough,
> That thou, a mortal man, shouldst overpass
> The unwritten laws of God that know no change.
> They are not of to-day nor yesterday,
> But live for ever, nor can man assign
> When first they sprang into being. Not through fear
> Of any man's resolve was I prepared
> Before the gods to bear the penalty
> Of sinning against these.
>
> — Sophocles (Antigone)[1]

In Sophocles's tragic play bearing her name, Antigone refused to obey Creon's edict forbidding the burial of her brother Polynices' body. In her arguments against the edict, she cited laws that had been in place from time immemorial. While the nature and classification of these laws may still be a matter of debate, a layman's understanding of such laws would be what is called culture. Traditions and longstanding values define the manner in which human beings act and distinguish between right and wrong. Thus it was Antigone's cultural values that made her defy Creon's order, even though this act was to result in her death. It is not only Antigone, the bereaved sister, who was influenced by culture, but also men hardened by war, who have been moved by culture to act in certain ways. Thus it was Sophocles' Odysseus who warned Agamemnon, the commander of the Greek army fighting the Trojans, of the dangers of not obeying the tradition of burying the dead, in this case, the warrior Ajax.[2]

Other societies too are circumscribed by culture. Writing about Kautilya, the ancient Indian strategic thinker, one author observed that Kautilya's political and strategic thinking as compiled in his magnum opus, the *Arthashastra*, was embedded in the society in which Kautilya lived. The political thought of Kautilya was constrained by Hindu society, including class, caste, and customs.[3] In modern times, human beings, in spite of the astonishing

development of science and technology, are yet to transcend culture. It is not surprising, therefore, to find culture playing an important role in modern wars. Commenting on the prodigious amount of reports, data, and statistics produced by the United States government fighting in Vietnam, Stanley Karnow noted that these quantitative measurements missed the qualitative dimensions. These included the motivation of the enemy and even the arcane maneuvres of the South Vietnamese President Ngo Ding Diem and his family.[4] Karnow was, of course, referring to the lack of cultural understanding that dogged the American war effort in Vietnam. This situation seems to have improved little since the end of the war in Vietnam. The U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 led to brilliant displays of technological prowess by the U.S. armed forces. But subsequent developments have led to a reevaluation of the manner in which the war was conducted. Summarizing the experience of U.S. combat troops in Iraq, one analyst noted that it was much more important for the U.S. to understand motivation, intent, method, and culture than to have "a few additional meters of precision, knots of speed, or bits of bandwidth."[5]

The need for a "cultural" understanding of war has also been felt elsewhere. Thus, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)–led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan saw cultural dynamics at work, especially when it came to cooperation and coordination between forces from different member countries, all of which had different experiences and, thus, different ways of doing things.[6] This brief description of historical plays, conflicts, and political events tells us that culture plays an important part in explaining the way human beings act, and of course, fight wars.

Strategic culture is not an autonomous concept, nor is it free of debates regarding its nature, the bearers of the concept, and its future. This paper aims to discuss all the above aspects. It opens with a discussion of the concepts of culture and political culture and the emergence of strategic culture. Section two looks at the concept of strategic culture and the various contributions that have gone into its formulation. The third section brings together the challenges and questions facing the concept. The article concludes by describing the pitfalls that await the unwary in the employment of the concept of strategic culture.

From Culture to Strategic Culture

For any student of strategic studies, the concept of strategic culture is as dangerous as an unmarked minefield on a dark night. One of the difficulties of understanding culture stems from the fact that culture is difficult to define and has been the subject of intense debate. In fact, so difficult has the debate been that some have gone so far as to suggest that scholars must abandon it altogether or "write against it."[7] Valerie M. Hudson, writing in 1997, noted that the complexity of defining culture arose not from what to include in a definition of culture, but rather what to exclude. She noted that the vagueness of culture's boundaries is reflected in the all-encompassing but pithy descriptions of the term found in social science literature.[8] But such vagueness is nothing new. In fact, from its very inception, the concept of culture has been debated vigorously, has had its parameters set and reset, and has seen diverse academic disciplines lay competing claims on it, thus leading to a profusion of definitions of the term.[9]

The apprehension about culture being difficult is not misplaced. But some analysts have disagreed and point out that culture "may be vague, but it is not mysterious," and that it is possible to identify its fundamental characteristics.[10]

A useful definition was provided by the sociologist Raymond Williams, one that also helps explain the concept of strategic culture. Williams identified three general categories in the definition of culture: the "ideal," the "documentary" and the "social". The "ideal"

category sees culture in a state or process of human perfection and essentially entails the discovery and description of those values that can be seen to compose a timeless order. The documentary category views culture as the body of intellectual and imaginative work in which human thought and experience are variously recorded. The third and final category is the social category, in which culture is a description of a particular way of life that finds meanings and values in, among other things, institutions and ordinary behavior.[11] Williams noted the complexity his categorization was apt to cause, but viewed it as inevitable as the categories correspond to real elements in experience.[12] He was also careful to point out that any adequate theory of culture must include the three categories and that individually the categories, without referring to the remaining two, will not result in a comprehensive definition of culture.

Another noteworthy theory was proposed by the "culture and personality" school. This school promoted the idea that culture can be divided into distinct personality patterns. Such patterns, in turn, were thought to shape the personalities of the individuals comprising that specific culture. The school gained prominence during the Second World War and the Cold War, producing a wide range of "national character studies" of Axis powers, notably Germany and Japan.[13]

In addition, prominent sociologists and anthropologists were developing works linking culture and behavior.[14] They were joined in the 1960s by political scientists like Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, who first developed the concept of political culture as "that subset of beliefs and values of a society that relate to the political system."[15] For Almond and Verba, political culture included views about morality and the utility of force, the rights of individuals or groups, a commitment to values like democratic principles and institutions, and attitudes toward the role a country can play in global politics. The study of political culture took off and in the 1980s, a select group of political scientists, primarily comparativists, were looking for more linkages between culture and politics. However, while the concept of political culture managed to remain alive in area studies, it attracted little attention in mainstream international relations scholarship.[16]

Even though the attraction of political culture studies had somewhat faded by the late 1970s, the subject itself left an important legacy in that it led to the birth and development of the concept of strategic culture. Writing about the connection between political culture and strategic culture, one scholar noted that the concept of strategic culture is a direct descendent of the concept of political culture. He observed that the concept of political culture has been debated, developed, variously employed, and variously defined by political scientists since the early 1950s. Drawing on the examples of the works by Ruth Benedict and Nathan Leites, among others, he concluded that the idea of national style is derived logically from the concept of political culture; a particular culture should encourage a particular style in thought and action.[17]

It would be a mistake to conclude, however, that it was only in the late 1970s and early 1980s that scholars realized the importance of the linkage between culture and national security policy. On the contrary, traces of such understanding can be discerned in the classic works of strategy, including the works of Thucydides and Sun Tzu. Let us, therefore, briefly look back in history for the presence of strategic culture.

In an interesting article titled "The Use and Abuse of Thucydides in International Relations," Laurie Johnson points out that Thucydides, in his magnum opus *History of the Peloponnesian War*, shows an understanding of the political and cultural differences among the city-states before and during the Peloponnesian War. Johnson observes that such an understanding was crucial for explaining the behavior of the warring parties.[18] The article goes on to point out that national character (Spartan reticence and inwardness,

and Athenian boldness and lust for glory) and the individual characters of the leaders (the abrasive personality of the Spartan general Pausanias, the statesmanship of Themistocles and Pericles, the personality of Alcibiades and Nicias) play an important role in Thucydides' *History*.[19] Johnson comes to the conclusion that Thucydides did not explain the initiation and conduct of the war as being caused by the distribution of power between Athens and Sparta but more by the differences in national character and in the individual characters of the leaders. The Spartan fear felt at the rise of Athens's power must, therefore, be understood as the result of other underlying causes that involved national differences instead of sameness.[20] In a similar vein, strategic studies theorists like Sun Tzu, with his emphasis on the wisdom of knowing oneself and the enemy, and Kautilya, with his acceptance of the framework of Indian society and its implications for his teachings, do point to the importance of understanding culture in explaining national security behaviour.

In modern times, the concept of national "ways of war" dates from the 1930s, when the former British army officer Basil H. Liddell Hart postulated that there was such a thing as a traditional "British Way in Warfare."[21] Liddell Hart was scarred by his own personal experience of the First World War and also keenly felt the trauma suffered by his generation. As early as 1924, he published an informative article on "The Napoleonic Fallacy," which he transposed into the Clausewitzian fallacy, where he attacked the notion of waging absolute war by seeking decisive battle against the enemy's main force, the classic route to Valhalla.[22] Liddell Hart instead became an advocate of the "indirect approach." He equated it with Britain's traditional approach to armed conflict, which involved eschewing direct military intervention and instead applying economic pressure on the enemy through her navy and financing auxiliaries who would bear the brunt of the fighting on the land.[23] Liddell Hart claimed that the bloody debacle on the Western Front during 1914–18 was an aberration, the result of Britain's deviation from her own way of war. Liddell Hart first floated this broader thesis in 1927, then in book form in 1929, and finally under the title *The British Way in Warfare* in 1932.[24] Though Liddell Hart never addressed national ways of warfare in any of his other books and was himself torn between his advocacy of the "British Way" and the realities of British history,[25] his approach served as a model for others.

Shortly after Liddell Hart's death in 1970, American military historian Russell Weigley produced *The American Way of War*, offering an in-depth analysis of the way the United States fought wars.[26] In a comprehensive assessment of strategy and policy followed by the U.S.—starting from the American War of Independence all the way up to Vietnam—he argued that there was a distinct American way of war. Influenced by the work of the German military historian, Hans Delbruck, Weigley argued that two distinct strategies—attrition and annihilation—could be discerned in the way Americans fought wars. As a weak player, the U.S. had initially practiced a strategy of attrition aimed at wearing out her enemies. However, this changed as she gained both industrial and military power. From the Civil War onward, American military thinkers came to support a strategy that called for the complete destruction of the enemy's armed force and the defeat of the enemy. Therefore the strategy of annihilation became a characteristic of the American way of war.[27]

Other than Weigley's thesis, a few other works on national styles of warfare were written on the Chinese, Soviet, and British ways of warfare. But it was really the U.S. involvement in Vietnam and the U.S.–Russian nuclear confrontation of the Cold War that increasingly made clear that a coherent concept was needed to understand why countries thought about violence and waged wars in different ways. The first step toward the formulation of such a concept was taken in 1971. Writing in the journal *Foreign Policy*, Colin S. Gray questioned the rational-actor assumptions of much of the general theorizing on the influence of nuclear weapons on statecraft. Touching upon the various concepts of U.S. nuclear strategy, namely

deterrence, limited war, arms control and disarmament, first and second strike, and assured destruction, among others, Gray wondered if other nations also identified these concepts in the same way as Americans. Commenting on the notion of escalation, he noted that an escalation ladder, in the mind of a harassed policymaker, might offer an illusion of control or a margin of safety that was likely to be negated by the very nature of the conflict. More importantly, in the mind of the adversary, some of the rungs of the escalation ladder might be missing.[28] But it was not only in the nuclear realm that questions were being asked about the efficacy of mechanistic "action-reaction" policy models that had been hoisted upon countries with different outlooks. Writing at a time when the U.S. was mired in the Vietnam War, Gray, in the same hard-hitting article, noted that Vietnam demonstrated the validity of the charge that the methodology and thought processes of the American theorists were dominated by inappropriate economic models and that American strategic theory was highly ethnocentric.[29] In conclusion he noted, "Attempts to apply American deterrence logic to all national components in the nuclear arms race are bound to result in miscalculation if the distinctiveness of each component is not fully recognized. Similarly, American theories of limited war, escalation, counter-insurgency and nation building are unlikely to achieve the desired ends unless adequate attention is paid to the local contexts."[30]

Gray's discontent with general theories of strategy that overlooked differences in "local contexts" was echoed by other security analysts. This led to more works on the need to include cultural explanations in the study of war. One such piece was written by Adda B. Bozeman. Titled "War and the Clash of Ideas" and published in the spring 1976 issue of *Orbis*, Bozeman attacked that idea that international violence was largely a result of the fact that many of the newly independent states were economically underdeveloped and thus prone to instability leading to conflicts. She derided the fact that "no allowance was made for the possibility that war-related phenomena might be, perhaps even predominantly, aspects of locally prevalent values, images, traditions and mental constructions."[31] Bozeman emphasised the importance of accepting culture or civilization as all that is fundamental and enduring about the ways of a group. Culture or civilization therefore comprised those norms, values, institutions, and modes of thinking in a given society that survive change and remain meaningful to successive generations. Bozeman quoted Paul Verhaegen's discussion on the relation between the "basic psychology" of an African people and the effects of "cultural transition" on them. Verhaegen had come to the conclusion that those characteristics are basic to a culture that is dominant in the bush and that remain obvious in even the most Westernized Africans.[32] For Bozeman, such formulations could be applied to various countries all over the world and she went on to discuss how cultural or civilizational values have affected notions about violence, victory, and defeat in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, and China. Though Bozeman might be accused of failing to note the presence of multiple cultures in the regions she so broadly classified as sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, her assertion was right on target. Her conclusion summed up the prevailing attitude of the time and the need for a proper understanding of culture and war. It is a conclusion worth quoting at length:

> The challenge of understanding the multifaceted nature of modern warfare has not been met by the academic and political elites of the United States. This failure in the perception of reality has been aggravated by a widespread acquiescence in essentially irrational trends—the inclinations, namely, to dissociate values from facts, to treat values as if they were norms, and to assume that privately or locally preferred values are also globally valid norms. These

intellectual developments have contributed not only to many recent foreign-policy errors but also to widespread uncertainties about America's role in the world affairs. They also suggest that the United States has begun to resemble Don Quixote: like the Knight of the Mournful Countenance, it is fighting windmills and losing its bearings in the real world.[33]

It was against this backdrop—the criticism of the view that a timeless rationality could be applied to all states, without any consideration being given to their national histories, politics, and cultures—that the concept of strategic culture made its debut. RAND analyst Jack Snyder launched the strategic culture movement in 1977 with an analysis of the Soviet limited nuclear warfare doctrine. Years later, Snyder explained what had prompted him to promote the idea of strategic culture—it was the realization that the Soviets approached the key questions of strategy in the nuclear era from a viewpoint that was distinctive from the United States' doctrine (as envisioned by the Schlesinger Doctrine) of fighting a limited nuclear war.[34] The concept, first proposed in a RAND report called *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, defined strategic culture as "the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation."[35] Snyder argued in the report that "Soviet strategic thought and behavior" originated from "a distinctively Soviet strategic culture." Finding rational choice theory inadequate to explain the Soviet leadership's decision-making process, he concluded that the Soviet Union's policymakers were not generic strategists, that is, holding similar values as American strategists, but working on the opposing side.[36] Rather, they were politicians and bureaucrats who have been influenced by a strategic culture that is "in many ways unique and who have exhibited distinctive stylistic predispositions in their past crisis behavior."[37]

Soon, however, Snyder would move away from the concept of strategic culture. The reasons behind his disavowal of the concept he had introduced and made popular are discussed later in this article. Suffice to say that Snyder's inaugural effort led to the growth of a considerable amount of work devoted to the concept of strategic culture. The proliferation of works on this subject has led to the classification of the literature into various groups. A discussion of the categorization is useful as it helps shed light on the evolution of the concept. One scholar has divided the literature pertaining to strategic culture into two general categories based on the methodological approach.[38] The first is characterized as "broad descriptive." The body of literature on strategic culture that emerged in the 1970s and the 1980s constitutes this category. Its approach to the subject involves broad historical analyses of patterns in the strategic behaviour of specific states, attributing culturally derived causes to those patterns, and then projecting them into the future. The "analytical school" of strategic culture made its appearance in the 1990s and offers an alternative to the broad descriptive approach. In this approach, analytical scholars use narrower definitions of culture and more rigorous methods for testing its effects on specific classes of strategic behavior. This becomes necessary in cases in which rational-actor models and realist-based definitions of interest fail to explain particular choices adequately.

Yet another scholar, Alastair Iain Johnston, put forward a more detailed description and classification of the literature on strategic culture. For him, the research on strategic culture can be divided into three generations.[39] The first generation, which came into the scene in the early 1980s, was made up mostly of security-policy analysts and Soviet-era specialists. They focused on trying to explain why the Soviets and the Americans apparently thought differently about strategy in the nuclear age. They attributed these differences mainly

to variations in deeply rooted historical experiences, political culture, and geography. The second generation, appearing in the mid 1980s, looked at the superpowers from a Gramscian perspective. This generation recognized the possibility of a disjuncture between a symbolic strategic–cultural discourse and operational doctrines. For this generation, the discourse was used to perpetuate the hegemony of strategic elites. This, in turn, allowed the elites to implement their designs. The third generation emerged in the 1990s. To Johnston, himself a representative of the third generation, this generation is more conceptually and methodologically rigorous. The scholars of this generation narrowed the focus of the dependent variables in order to set up more reliable and valid empirical tests for the effects of strategic culture, and have discussed a wide range of case studies.

Johnston's postulation of the three generations has been accepted by most writers on strategic culture. Some have pointed out the nuances in this classification and have sought to correct some of the dates. Thus, Gray argues that though the generations overlap, the peak of their intellectual activity can be associated primarily with the late 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. For Gray, all the generations add up to a small group of people, with the first-generation scholars studying a more Russian, and Soviet, USSR than the prevailing theories of that time recognized. Second-generation scholars aimed to decipher the cunning coded messages behind the language of strategic studies. The third-generation's objective seems to be mainly researchability.[40]

This article follows Johnston's style of categorising the literature of strategic culture into three generations and discusses them accordingly.

First Generation

Jack Snyder's work on Soviet limited nuclear war doctrine is identified as the first work of this generation. Soon after Snyder's seminal piece appeared, several others reached similar conclusions, though not necessarily after reading Snyder. Fritz W. Ermarth noted that American strategic thinkers were finding it difficult to understand Soviet strategic doctrine, as Soviet views about strategy and nuclear war differed in significant ways from American views.[41] He noted that the assumption that Soviet and American strategic thinking was similar—or that it would converge with time—had prevented a proper comparison of the two views. Ermarth described this assumption as an extension of American "cultural self-centredness." He suggested that this was because of the fact that post–Second World War developments in U.S. strategy—both institutional and intellectual—were derived from the natural sciences that had led to the invention and development of modern weapons. Since scientific truth is transnational and not culturally determined, the logic went that Americans and Soviets would understand the problem of keeping strategic peace on equitable and economical terms.[42] But things did not exactly work out that way. One important reason for this was the fact that both the U.S. and the Soviet Union went about solving the twin challenges of the creation of viable industrial societies and the management of nuclear weapons in different ways, a result of the fundamentally different political cultures of the two societies. The stamp of a legal, commercial, and democratic society influenced the way Americans approached the problem of managing nuclear security issues. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, heir to a political tradition of imperial, bureaucratic, and autocratic characteristics, approached the problem in a different way.[43]

The issues identified by Ermarth were also dealt with by Ken Booth in his classic *Strategy and Ethnocentrism*, published in 1979. Booth lamented the fact that strategic studies have been afflicted with the fog of culture, which has interfered with the theory and

practice of strategy.[44] He asked strategists to pay more attention to identifying particular national idiosyncrasies and styles and to be on guard against the inability to see the world through the eyes of different national or ethnic groups. Acknowledging that "an observer cannot completely eradicate his own cultural conditioning, and the structure of ideas and values which it passes on to him," Booth suggested that "cultural relativism" was the answer to the problem.[45] Defining cultural relativism as the approach whereby social and cultural phenomenon "are perceived and described in terms of scientific detachment as, ideally, from the perspective of participants in or adherents of a given culture," Booth felt that strategic studies would benefit if it embraced cultural relativism. Such an act would mean that a more contextual approach would become a part of strategic studies and thereby reduce the methodological problems associated with ethnocentrism.[46]

Booth, in *Strategy and Ethnocentrism*, did not address the points made by Snyder but the latter's concept of strategic culture gained an influential proponent in Colin S. Gray. In an article in *International Security*[47] and subsequently in a book,[48] he adopted Snyder's concept in observing that the U.S., too, had a distinctive strategic culture and this had implications for her nuclear strategy. Gray defined American strategic culture as modes of thought and action with respect to force, derived from the perception of national historical experience, aspirations for self-characterization (e.g., as an American, what am I? how should I feel, think, and behave?), and from all the many distinctively American experiences (of geography, political philosophy, civic culture, and "way of life") that characterize an American citizen.[49] Therefore, American strategic culture is distinctive and influenced by unique geopolitical, historical, and economic influences. These influences have been present in American military experiences going as far back as the Seven Years War of 1756–63 and all the way to 1945, and had, in the process, yielded some dominant national beliefs. These are a belief that "good" causes tend to triumph and Americans only wage war in "good" causes. This, in turn, makes it difficult for Americans to believe that the U.S. occasionally might wage wars for goals "that are controversial in terms of enduring American ideas of justice";[50] a belief that Americans could achieve any target that is set for them and thus had nothing but victory to attain in the wars they fought; a sense of omnipotence derived from a history of successfully fought wars against native Americans, Mexico, Spain, Great Britain, Germany, and Japan; and a sense of unlimited economic resources coupled with technological prowess, which allowed the US to fight wars profligately in material terms and thus save American lives in pursuit of victory.[51]

Thus, Gray summarized that prior to 1945 Americans did not relish the idea of playing a guardian role in international politics. Americans tended to view their country as an example to the rest of mankind, ready to intervene on the side of "good" when evil threatened to engulf the world. The reality of material abundance, coupled with a historic engineering-pragmatic national style, was not conducive to the growth of wise strategic thinking. A United States rich in machines, men, and logistic support of all kinds was not obviously in need of clever stratagems or of a careful balancing of likely political benefit vis-à-vis probable costs in material and human assets.[52] The argument was that some of these characteristics were carried across the threshold of the nuclear revolution to produce a very American approach to nuclear strategy. This approach was characterized by the following beliefs: that nuclear wars could not be won because the massive human casualties accrued in the process would negate any meaningful concept of political or military victory; a belief in the American technological ingenuity to provide an effective nuclear deterrent even if the Soviets achieved a temporary advantage in numbers and yields of nuclear weapons; and an optimism that arms-control talks would ultimately make Soviet policymakers appreciate the merit in American views on deterrence and conflict management and thereby bring about a

stabilizing effect on the whole nuclear issue.[53] In essence, for Gray, all these characteristics both reflected and contributed to the "American way." But he also cautioned about the dangers of carrying the concept of strategic culture too far, without assessing other factors. It was to be kept in mind that as with sound geopolitical analysis, with strategic-cultural analysis one is discerning tendencies and not rigid determinants.[54] Moreover, for Gray, strategic culture was time-specific or had a semipermanent influence on security policy. He claimed that "short of a new historical experience that undeniably warrants a historically discontinuous response," national style would be an enduring explanation of state behavior. Also, strategic culture "provides the milieu within which strategy is debated," and it serves as an independent determinant of strategic policy patterns.[55]

The efforts of Snyder, Booth, Ermarth, and Gray, among others, came to be identified as the contribution of the first generation of strategic culture theorists. They sought to expose the dangers of thinking about strategy only in technical and rational approaches and urged a greater acceptance of the importance of cultural and strategic relativism. Whereas previously culture had been viewed as a residual or secondary explanation for strategic behavior, the first generation of research sought to include it as a primary explanation for differences in national nuclear strategy.[56] However, the first generation soon faced criticism from the heirs of their intellectual legacy. While a full description of the criticism and the response to the critiques shall be provided later in this article, it is imperative to touch upon some aspects of the debate here. For critics, the first generation of research had drawn attention to the role of domestic conditions in shaping national security behavior, but the operationalization of strategic culture was problematic and subjective. They pointed out that strategic models were tautological, as it would be nearly impossible to separate independent and dependent variables in a reliable way. The definition of strategic culture also posed difficulties since the concept drew upon narrow and contextual historiography as much as anthropology. Moreover, both supporters and detractors believed that the concept of strategic culture was fairly static, focusing on enduring historical orientations with strong predictive capability. This, in turn, left little room for development of a crossnational study of the phenomenon.[57]

Even the proponents of strategic culture seem to be wary of the concept. As mentioned earlier in this paper, Jack Snyder, who originally coined the term in 1977, also appeared to be moving away from the concept. In his book *The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914*, he deliberately did not use the term "strategic culture."[58] Later he wrote that he had intended strategic culture to explain the persistence of distinctive approaches in the face of "changes in the circumstances that gave rise to it, through processes of socialization and institutionalization and through the role of strategic concepts in legitimating these social arrangements."[59] Therefore, strategic culture should be brought in to explain phenomena only "when a distinctive approach to strategy becomes ingrained in training, institutions, and force posture," i.e. when "strategic culture had taken on a life of its own, distinct from the social interests that helped give rise to it."[60] The most damaging conclusion by Snyder was that culture was a residual label that is fixed to explain outcomes that cannot be explained otherwise. Culture, including strategic culture, was an explanation to be used only when all else failed.[61] Colin Gray did not assume such a radical position but he too felt there were problems in the field. Writing in 1988 he observed that social science had not been able to develop an exact methodology for identifying distinctive national cultures and styles. Literature on the "academically unfashionable subject of national character" was anecdotal at best, yet he believed that learning about the

"cultural thoughtways" of a nation was crucial to understanding a country's behavior and its role in world politics.[62]

Second Generation

The second-generation literature begins from the premise that there is potentially a vast difference between what leaders think their rhetorical pronouncements say and mean and the deeper motives for doing what they in fact do. Bradley Klein, in an article published in *Review of International Studies*, tried to sift through the rhetoric employed by the elites and policymakers to see whether it corresponded with underlying intentions. He was influenced by the Gramscian concept of hegemony and its effect on strategic culture. For Gramsci, hegemony's central concern was with the political production of relations of dominance by which class rule becomes normalized and is "seen" as legitimate. Gramsci believed that the location of the state over the civil society is not some timeless universal given, but rather a particular historical achievement characteristic of modern class rule by which a culturally and intellectually sophisticated bourgeoisie has sought to integrate subordinate classes, and to do so along lines that are more nearly consensual than coercive.[63] Klein was interested in applying the concept of hegemony in the context of international relations and suggested that production of power relations or relations of dominance in international relations occurs at two levels, one within territorially bounded states, the other among those states in a more or less singular hegemonic world order. He drew heavily from the work of Robert W. Cox to unite these two levels of hegemony and came to the conclusion that the focus of attention ought not to be limited to the study of a state's military capabilities and foreign policy bureaucracy but should be expanded to include social struggles within states. To those adhering to the realist theory of international relations, hegemony means world dominance by the most powerful state. But for Klein "a world hegemony is thus in its beginnings an outward expansion of the internal (national) hegemony established by a dominant social class."[64]

Klein then employs the concept of strategic culture with a twofold, interconnected objective.[65] He first explains the way a modern hegemonic state, in this case the U.S., uses her internationally deployed military forces to project leadership both within the U.S.–led Western Alliance and the rest of the world. He then goes on to decipher the tactics of states as they try to legitimize their use of force within their internal borders. His findings draw clear correlations with the way national (internal) hegemonic social classes act: they draw upon "political ideologies and discourses that help define occasions as worthy of military involvement."[66] Such actions, Klein argues, often lead to a dichotomy between rhetoric and operational policies. With such views in mind, the duty of the concept of strategic culture is to "historicize what has lain implicit in realist theories of hegemony" and "render palpable the political production of hegemony articulated at a theoretical level by the Gramscian conception of hegemony."[67] Thus, strategic culture is perceived as a tool of political hegemony in the field of strategic decision making and involves "widely available orientations to violence and to the ways in which the state can legitimately use violence against putative enemies."[68] Klein attempted to understand these orientations by focusing on the way the U.S. has sought to project her social, cultural and military power on a global level. In this context, the nuclear deterrence doctrine during the Cold War fitted U.S. needs perfectly by conjoining two contradictory modes: one declaratory; and one operational. At the level of the declaratory policy was a strategy based on defense, retaliation, and deterrence. The operational level consisted of counterforce war-fighting strategy. Klein argued that declaratory strategy was used in an instrumental manner by

American elites to establish a cultural justification for operational strategy. This served the dual purpose of suppressing, silencing, or misleading potential challengers and garnering support for aggressive foreign policies.[69]

In a similar vein, Imtiaz Ahmed has shown how modern Indian elites have gone about creating a hegemonic state. Though he does not mention the concept of strategic culture at all and certainly does not identify himself as following any of the generations working on strategic culture, the work is worth mentioning as it parallels Bradley Klein's study on American strategic culture from a Gramscian perspective and applies it to the Indian case. Indeed, Ahmed studies the establishment of the hegemony of the Hindu upper class in modern India and how it achieved this status. This hegemonic objective was then transplanted to the international level. For Ahmed, the task of making India a great and strong nation in the image of the modern "Western" state remains central with respect to both the national and international dimensions of the Indian state. Like Klein, he concluded that in the "politics" located within the fold of the national dimension—i.e., the politics of development and centralization—there are specific and distinctive policies nurtured and organized by the Indian ruling class to reproduce hegemony. This hegemony is then sought to be attained at the international level. The 1971 Bangladesh war and the Indian intervention in the Sri Lankan conflict in 1987 are examples of such exercises.[70]

In the same vein as Klein's and Ahmed's arguments, Robert Luckham identified the existence of an "armament culture" and a "weapons fetishism," which he argued was instrumental in maintaining the importance of a weapons culture that served to perpetuate the hegemony of Western interests. As Poore explains, for Luckham, this influence of the armaments culture "follows directly from the repressive apparatus of the state and from the consolidation around the armament complex of a class alliance"—including strategists, statesmen, soldiers, and arms manufacturers. Because such an alliance is usually close to state power, it is able to influence the ideological state apparatus us, especially the media and the educational system, and use them to promote its own values and thereby strengthen its hold over authority. Poore concludes that this theme of instrumentality, for Luckham, is particularly relevant in the West where "the armaments culture is able to rearrange symbols and meanings in order to harmonise opposites and to justify war through the symbols of peace."[71]

For critics, the second generation had its share of problems. Questions were raised as to whether elites were able to rise above strategic cultural constraints or become socialized within the myths that they were instrumental in creating.[72] The second generation was undecided on this and was not able to solve the conundrum. It was left to the third generation of strategic culture researchers to attempt to solve the riddle.

Third Generation

In the mid-1990s, a third generation of scholarly work drew attention to the utility of cultural interpretations. The theoretical work of strategic culture, domestic structure, and organizational culture experienced a revival during this period, partly influenced by the rise of constructivism.[73] The rise of constructivism clearly paved the way for the emergence of a new wave of strategic cultural research. Theo Farrell for one, writing in 2002, argued that contemporary work in strategic cultural research was a merger of two relevant streams of scholarship—culturalism, as derived from comparative politics (and sociological and anthropological studies) and constructivism from international relations theorists. This merger of culturalism and constructivism makes it possible to "view actors and structures much

differently than the rationalist approaches to international relations . . . locating actors in a social structure that both constitutes those actors and is constituted by their interactions."[74]

So what are the characteristics of the third wave of strategic culture research? Alastair Johnston, who categorized the three generational waves in the first place, provides the answer. For Johnston, this generation overcomes the drawbacks of the first two generations. For one, according to Johnston, the third generation tends to be both rigorous and eclectic in its approach and more narrowly focused on particular strategic decisions. The scholars concentrate on a wide-ranging set of variables, including military culture, political military culture, and organizational cultures, but all are united in attacking realist theories and focus on cases where structural definitions of interest cannot explain a particular strategic choice. The crucial difference between the first and the third generation is that the latter excludes behavior as an element of strategic culture. Other than this, the definitions of the two generations do not vary much, though the third generation does tend to look at recent practice and experience as sources of cultural values whereas the first generation tends to look more deeply in history.[75]

A somewhat similar list of the research agenda of the third generation is described by Michael C. Desch, who also attempts to list the works done by these scholars. He identifies four strands of cultural theorizing dominating the third wave: organizational, political, strategic, and global, and proceeds to list the major works of these various strands.[76] It is worthwhile to peruse the list of some of the major works as this will help identify the pattern followed by the third generation. For example, Elizabeth Kier postulates that different domestic political cultures will embrace divergent methods of controlling their armed forces. Such methods will be based on domestic political consideration and not external strategic concerns.[77] Jeffrey Legro contends that militaries fight differently because they all have different organizational cultures.[78] Theo Farrell holds that culture shapes preference formation by military organizations by informing organizational members who they are and what is possible, and thereby suggesting what they should do. Farrell focused on culture's ability to explain why military organizations choose certain structures and strategies and thereby help states generate military power.[79] Peter Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, and Thomas Berger, maintain that domestic political attitudes toward the use of force vary significantly among states similarly situated in the international system.[80] Iain Johnston argues that domestic strategic culture, and not international systemic needs, best explain a state's grand strategy.[81] Others suggest that global norms affect the way great powers act in international politics, decide which types of weapons to use and not use, and decide why one should join certain alliances.[82] Also included in the third generation is a work by Yitzhak Klein. Published in 1991, well before the third wave emerged, Klein's article, "A Theory of Strategic Culture," proposed that strategic culture be defined as "the set of attitudes and beliefs held by a military establishment concerning the political objective of war and the most effective strategy and operational method of achieving it."[83] However, Klein received little by way of response to his definition and his proposal was not carried forward. The same fate has not befallen the works of the third generation, and this paper will discuss in detail some of the works mentioned above.

Elizabeth Kier has undertaken an examination of the relationship between culture and military doctrine, focusing on France between the First and Second World Wars. Kier asserts that the French conversion to a defensive military doctrine during the interwar years was not caused by external structures or concern about balances of power. Rather, it was brought about by conflicting civilian and military subcultures that limited terms of conscription while simultaneously inflating military assessments of the length of military training required to build an effective offensive force. Kier believes that organizational

culture affects a state's strategic behavior by conditioning its strategic decision-making processes. Thus culture, according to Kier, did not affect behavior by determining values leading to strategic preferences, but by skewing the governmental processes that produce decision outcomes.[84]

Jeffrey Legro's work is also an attempt to promote the importance of organizational culture. He explored the reasons for combatants in the Second World War applying different levels of restraint when attacking merchant shipping with submarines, going for indiscriminate bombing, and using poison gases. He observed that when specific means of warfare were compatible with the dominant war-fighting culture of a state's armed services, then that state would be propelled toward actions that up the ante and raise the level of escalation. However, when a type of warfare is antithetical to a state's military culture, then that state will exercise restraint even when the enemy's acts are provocative.[85] Legro's notion of organizational culture appears not too different from that of Kier. Both emphasized that organizational culture acts on strategic behavior by conditioning governmental processes. But Legro differed from Kier in concluding that organizational culture plays an important role in determining a state's strategic preferences, and that it also affected decision outcomes.[86]

Johnston's *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* is often cited as the quintessential third generation work on strategic culture. In his study Johnston set out to investigate the presence and character of Chinese strategic culture and causal linkages to the use of military force against external threats.[87] Johnston defined strategic culture as "an integrated system of symbols (e.g., argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors) which acts to establish pervasive and long lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious."[88]

Johnston differed from Kier and Legro by pointing his conception of culture-behavior linkage to grand strategic preferences. Thus, he effectively moved away from the process-oriented relationships preferred by Keir and Legro and returned to value-driven linkages used by earlier theorists. Apprehensive of the fact that such a position might taint him with the same methodological problem of overdetermination affecting some of the first generation scholars, he took preventive measures. One such measure was using the statistical analysis of nearly three hundred case studies. By doing so, as Morgan points out, Johnston "attempted to measure *tendencies* towards certain behaviors rather than be forced to attribute any particular outcome to the effects of culture"[89] (emphasis original). Second, he sought to avoid a tautological flaw he himself had attributed to some first generation scholars. Johnston observed that most of the earlier theorists defined strategic culture, the independent variable in their studies, as some pattern of strategic behavior. This, he pointed out, was essentially the same phenomenon they were measuring as their dependent variable. This made it impossible to explain how such a relatively unchanging influence as culture could account for substantial variance in strategic behavior, the outcome being measured. Johnston attempted to avoid this trap by focusing his definition of strategic culture on attitudes, rather than habits, traditions, or other expressions of behavior.[90]

But critics have pointed out that even though Johnston tried to make his study methodologically foolproof, his efforts have not been totally successful. One critic observes that the outcome of his analysis suggested that China had not one, but two strategic cultures. Johnston had identified the first, a symbolic, idealized system of values that Chinese elites used to rationalize their actions: the second, an operational set of ranked preferences that actually motivated strategic choice. But the operational strategic culture, Johnston's "para-bellum model," mirrored realpolitik and is almost indistinguishable from the dynastic-cycle

model to which he compared it.[91] However, it was Colin Gray who subsequently defended himself as well as his peers in what has been identified as the first generation by taking on Johnston's accusation of being methodologically flawed.

Johnston had taken the first generation, especially Gray, to task for invoking an "everything but the kitchen sink" treatment of strategic culture, thereby making it difficult to establish anything as noncultural.[92] Moreover, the notion that one could identify unique and persistent national strategic cultures to explain all strategic choices was seen to be dangerously deterministic.[93] Gray answered by providing a "belated development of first generation enquiry."[94] He questioned Johnston's emphasis that there should be a difference between strategic culture and behavior. For Gray, strategic culture can be conceived "as a context out there that surrounds, and gives meaning to, strategic behavior, as the total warp and woof of matters strategic that are thoroughly woven together, or as both."[95] In other words, strategic culture should be approached both as a shaping context for behavior and itself as a constituent of that behavior.[96] Therefore, the behaviour of a security community is affected by culturally shaped or 'encultured' people, organizations, weapons, and procedure. For Gray, Johnston's mistake is to conceive of culture as distinct among conflicting explanations for strategic choice. This proposition of Johnston was not credible simply because there is no conceptual space for explanations of behavior beyond strategic culture because all strategic behavior is affected by human beings who cannot help but be cultural agents.[97] Elsewhere Gray emphasized this point. Speaking at a conference at the University of Reading, United Kingdom, he clarified his position by pointing out that when one refers to Russian strategic culture, what one is claiming is that there is a 'Russian way' both of thinking about the threat or use of force for political purposes, and of acting strategically. This "acting strategically" pertains to the conviction that there is a Russian way of war. This Russian way is a distinctive product of Russia's history and geography, as interpreted for guidance by Russians. All this, according to Gray, points to the elementary idea that "a security community is likely to think and behave in ways that are influenced by what it has taught itself about itself and its relevant contexts. And this education rests mainly upon interpretation of history and history's geography."[98]

But Gray has also praised Johnston's criticism of the first generation for raising some important concerns about the field of strategic culture. Johnston, according to Gray, is correct to signal the dangers of determinism in sweeping claims for the explanatory value of the concept of strategic culture. Johnston's work is also to be commended for pointing out that a security community might comprise several strategic cultures, that culture changes over time, and that strategic culture may be more "a litany of canonical, idealized beliefs than a set of attitudes, perspectives, and preferences that are operational as real guides to action."[99] Finally, Gray conceded that Johnston is partially correct in that he raises the danger flag to scholars of the difficulties presented by a concept of strategic culture that "comprises so extensive a portfolio of ingredients, and is so influential upon behavior, that it can explain nothing because it claims to explain everything."[100]

Gray has also drawn attention to the fact that some of the writings about strategic culture make false distinctions about strategic culture and the realist theories of international relations. Michael C. Desch, in particular, emphasised these distinctions. Writing in the journal *International Security*, he wondered whether cultural theories merely supplemented realist theories or actually threatened to supplant them.[101] Others have followed Desch. In a scathing attack on the literature of strategic culture, David M. Jones and Mike L. Smith wrote that "the constructivism of strategic and security culture, stripped of its verbiage, leads to classical realist conclusions."[102] Gray answers such critics by pointing out that there are, and can be, no unencultured realists.[103] Security communities might tend to act

in similar ways at times but that does not mean that they adhere to a universal theory of strategic behavior. The field of strategic studies operated under this false assumption of homogenous rational actors influenced by rational choices. But, as Colin Gray points out, one may be North Vietnamese, Chinese, Russian, Bosnian Serbian, Indian, North Korean, Iraqi, or Iranian, but one performs realist calculations in a way that fits one's values, not the logic of some general theory of deterrence.[104]

Problems and Pitfalls

While the methodological debate about of strategic cultural analysis continues to rage, work on strategic culture progresses. More and more research questions regarding the nature of strategic culture have cropped up. One such question concerns the various sources of strategic culture. The most frequently cited sources are: geography, climate and resources; history and experience; political structure; the nature of organizations involved in defense; myths and symbols; key texts that inform actors of appropriate strategic action; and transnational norms, generational change and the role of technology.[105] Elites, political institutions, and public opinion as keepers of strategic culture are some of the elements cited.[106] Theo Farrell has argued that popular culture and civil society also act as indispensable elements in the creation of a country's strategic culture. He noted that missionary movements and business entrepreneurs both harnessed popular ideologies of social progress to justify the expansion of British civilization in nineteenth-century Africa. In a similar vein, both business groups and political (mainly Republican) party leaders drew on the popularized "science of geopolitics" to promote the expansion of the U.S. navy and the projection of U.S. capital into Asia. All this was aimed at reinvigorating the American economy at the beginning of the twentieth century. This expansion of American naval and commercial power was also linked to the creation of a new socially unifying national identity—one that portrayed the post-1865 might of the United States and was able to accommodate the social dislocation brought about by the twin prongs of industrialization and immigration. By expanding outwards and encountering the "other," Americans were able to identify themselves.[107]

Questions have also been raised as to whether strategic culture is unitary in nature. In a thought provoking article, Williamson Murray noted that within military organizations there will be separate and distinct subcultures heavily influenced by traditions as well as by the mission they perform.[108] Discussing the German armed forces, among others, he observed that the German military style reflected a national attitude that took war very seriously—a situation brought about by the numerous invasions that German states had suffered throughout history. The German navy, however, proved in the two world wars that there was nothing innately competent about the German armed services. Therefore one should not overestimate the influence of national culture on the development of a service culture.[109] Murray's concern has also been echoed by Colin Gray. Gray notes that strategic culture needs to take into account the fact that (i) public culture; (ii) strategic culture; and (iii) military (organizational) culture exists and should be taken into consideration. Therefore, the notion of a unitary strategic culture should be questioned. It would wiser to think of strategic culture as an umbrella concept under which multiple cultural identities are at play.[110] In a more colorful example, keeping with the *zeitgeist*, he notes that in practice a distinguishable strategic culture is likely to act as a holding company over a number of subsidiary military and other related cultures.[111]

Another research question concerns the social science of strategic culture. Theo Farrell in his study of the strategic culture of the American empire draws attention to the fact that a focus on the beliefs of policy and military elites, though telling us much about the

subject, is really "thin" constructivism and misses much. For one thing, it is ill-equipped to explore the broad range of agents in civil society involved in producing and enacting norms of war. For him, such an approach sheds little light on the relationship between identity and the purpose of the empire or the role of the force reproducing both. Farrell concludes that such problems call for the need to move toward a "thicker" constructivism, one that is better able to follow scripts and codes for action "all the way down" to the identities that sustain them.[112] A similar point is also made by Stuart Poore when he calls on researchers on strategic culture to consider adopting a 'context all the way down' approach for better research in the field.[113]

Michael Desch has identified another problem for the researchers of strategic culture. This is the *sui generis* problem. This problem is defined as the inherent tendency of the researchers in this area to focus on the particulars of single cases, instead of looking for common cultural traits in a number of cases. This is brought about by the presupposition that each case is unique.[114] Under such circumstances, generalization within the context of strategic studies becomes very difficult to attain because the cultural factors used in the study of single case studies often produce results that challenge the "unit homogeneity assumption, which holds that cases have enough meaningful similarities to be comparable."[115] Such an approach results in few, if any, systematic elements. The lack of systematic elements, in turn, leads to the inability to make predictions, and without predictions, the validation of conceptual claims is not feasible.[116] John Duffield has rejected Desch's accusation by pointing out that many elements of culture "can vary systematically along well-defined dimensions and thus lend themselves to cross-case measurement and comparison."[117] In addition, he wrote, there is no innate reason that prevents *sui generis* cultures from delivering results as long as they have observable behavioral implications. Duffield also rejects Desch's assertion that *sui generis* cases in the study of strategic culture cancel out unit homogeneity. What matters is that other characteristics of the units under consideration be similar across the cases.[118]

In spite of such questions, the concept of strategic culture continues to attract attention. Books, articles, monographs, and research on strategic culture–related issues continue to proliferate. However one also needs to be careful about the pitfalls of being mesmerized by the concept. No study can afford to rely excessively on the concept. Comparing the Swiss strategist Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini's obsession about understanding one great principle and its magic formula with Sun Tzu's emphasis on cultural understandings, Colin Gray warns that "Sun Tzu's excellent formula, reinforced by a Jominian spirit, will encourage the fallacious conviction that in understanding culture we have stumbled across the answer to the correct great principle for our strategic dilemmas."[119] Similarly, Joseph Rothschild, while emphasizing the need for understanding the power of culture in explaining the ways countries and their armed forces act, warned that we should "also guard against tilting excessively in the opposite direction, of becoming intellectually mesmerized by culture and thus failing to appreciate that the patterns and traits of many societies and of their military establishments are probably quite rational for them, given their historical experiences and demographic-geographic situations."[120]

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties surrounding the concept of strategic culture, the need for understanding and making use of the concept is necessary to help us better understand ourselves, our competitors, and the outside world. A recent work on the field of strategic culture reminds us that just as Robert S. McNamara once remarked that he and his

colleagues in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations were profoundly ignorant of the history, culture, and politics of Southeast Asia, the experience of recent years has shown the extraordinary risks inherent in making policy without understanding the history and culture of others.[121] The understanding of strategic culture is a requirement we can ignore only at our own peril.

Notes

1.   Clifton W. Collins, *Sophocles* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood And Sons, 1871), p. 83.

2.   Ibid, p. 121.

3.   Roger Boesche, *The First Great Political Realist: Kautilya and His Arthashastra* (Lanham, Maryland and Oxford: Lexington Books, 2002), p. 103.

4.   Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam—A History: The First Complete Account of Vietnam at War* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 254.

5.   Major General Robert H. Scales Jr., U.S. Army (Retired), "Culture-Centric Warfare," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 130/10/1, 220, October 2004: 32.

6.   Christopher Coker, "Between Iraq and a Hard Place: Multinational Co-operation, Afghanistan and Strategic Culture," *The RUSI Journal*, vol. 151, no. 5, October 2006: 14–19.

7.   Pamela Ballinger, "How to Detect Culture and Its Effects," in Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 342.

8.   Valerie M. Hudson, "Culture and Foreign Policy: Developing a Research Agenda," in Valerie M. Hudson (ed.), *Culture and Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), p. 2.

9.   For an excellent discussion on the development of the concept and the debates surrounding it, see Pamela Ballinger, op. cit., pp. 344–347.

10.   Forrest E. Morgan, *Compellence and the Strategic Culture of Imperial Japan: Implications for Coercive Diplomacy in the Twenty-First Century* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2003), pp. 19–20.

11.   Raymond Williams, "The Analysis of Culture," in John Storey (ed.), *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1994), p. 56.

12.   Ibid., p. 57.

13.   Notably Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* and Nathan Leites's *The Operational Code of the Politburo*. See Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies", *International Security*, vol. 23, no. 1, Summer 1998, 144–145. For an interesting insight into the impact of Leites's study, see Bruce Kuklick, *Blind Oracles: Intellectuals and War from Kennan to Kissinger* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 32–33.

14.   Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism," *Strategic Insights*, vol. IV, no. 10, October 2005, 2, available at http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Oct/lantisOct05.asp accessed April 20, 2006.

15.   Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture and National Security Policy," *International Studies Review*, vol. 4, no. 3, Fall 2002: 90.

16.   Ibid.: 92–93.

17.   Colin S. Gray, "Comparative Strategic Culture," *Parameters*, vol. 14, no. 4, Winter 1984: 27.

18.   Laurie M. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse of Thucydides in International Relations," *International Organization*, vol. 48, no. 1, Winter 1994: 133.

19.   Ibid.: 137–140.

20.   Ibid.: 141.

21. Lawrence Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture and Ways of War* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), p. 1.

22. Alex Danchev, "Liddell Hart and the Indirect Approach," *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 63, no. 2, April 1999: 317.

23. Liddell Hart, *The British Way in Warfare* (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 1932), pp. 25–38.

24. Lawrence Sondhaus, op. cit., p. 1.

25. For the controversy and criticism surrounding the indirect approach, see Alex Danchev, op. cit., pp. 313–337.

26. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1973).

27. Brian M. Linn, "*The American Way of War* Revisited," *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 66, no. 2, April 2002: 502.

28. Colin S. Gray, "What Rand Hath Wrought," *Foreign Policy*, no. 4, Autumn 1971: 118.

29. Ibid.: 124.

30. Ibid.: 126; Years later, Gray similarly emphasised the importance of cultural understanding in the context of the U.S. involvement in Iraq. See Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?* (Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006).

31. Adda B. Bozeman, "War and the Clash of Ideas," *Orbis*, vol. 20, no. 1, Spring 1976: 77; Bozeman also emphasised the importance of culture in understanding international politics. See Adda B. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960); Bozeman's contribution is also highlighted in Beatrice Heuser, "The Cultural Revolution in Counter-Insurgency,"*Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 30, no. 1, February 2007: 162.

32. Bozeman (1976), op. cit.: 78.

33. Ibid.: 102.

34. Jack L. Snyder, "The Concept of Strategic Culture: Caveat Emptor," in Carl G. Jacobsen (ed.), *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990), p. 3.

35. Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, RAND R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, California: The Rand Corporation, 1977), p. 8.

36. Ibid., p. 4.

37. Ibid.

38. The classification of the literature of strategic culture in two groups and their description has been taken from Forrest E. Morgan, op. cit., pp. 6–7.

39. The division and description of the three generations of strategic culture theorists is taken from Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 5. This work is subsequently referred to as A. I. Johnston (1995a).

40. Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), footnote 1, p. 129. This work is subsequently referred to as Colin S. Gray (1999b).

41. Fritz W. Ermarth, "Contrasts in American and Soviet Strategic Thought," *International Security*, vol. 3, no. 2, Autumn 1978: 138.

42. Ibid.: 140.

43. Ibid.: 155.

44. Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 9.

45. Ibid., p. 16.

46. Ibid., pp. 16, 140.

47. Colin S. Gray, "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security*, vol. 6, no. 2, Fall 1981: 21–47.

48. Colin S. Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and National Style* (Lanham, Maryland and London: Hamilton Press, 1986).

49. Colin S. Gray (1981), op. cit., p. 22.

50. Ibid., p. 26.

51. Ibid., pp. 27–29.

52. Ibid., pp. 29–30.

53. Ibid., pp. 38–44.

54. Colin S. Gray (1986), op. cit., p. 35.

55. Colin S. Gray (1981), quoted in Jeffrey S. Lantis (2002), op. cit., p. 35.

56. Stuart Poore, "What is the Context? A Reply to the Gray-Johnston Debate on Strategic Culture," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 29, no. 2, April 2003: 280.

57. Jeffrey S. Lantis (2005), op. cit.: 3.

58. Lawrence Sondhaus, op. cit.: 4.

59. Ibid.

60. Jack Snyder, "The Concept of Strategic Culture: Caveat Emptor," in Carl G. Jacobsen (ed.), op. cit., p. 7.

61. Ibid., p. 4.

62. Colin S. Gray*, The Geopolitics of Superpower* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), pp. 42–43.

63. Bradley S. Klein, "Hegemony and Strategic Culture: American Power Projection and Alliance Defence Politics," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 14, no. 2, April 1988: 134.

64. Ibid., pp. 134–135.

65. This section has drawn heavily from Nikolaos Ladis, *Assessing Greek Grand Strategic Thought and Practice: Insights from the Strategic Culture Approach* (Ph.D dissertation, University of Southampton, United Kingdom, April 2003), p. 66.

66. Bradley S. Klein, op. cit., p. 136.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., p. 138.

70. Imtiaz Ahmed, *State and Foreign Policy: India's Role in South Asia* (Dhaka: Academic Publishers, 1993), p. 215; also see chapters 9 and 10 of this book.

71. Stuart Poore, "Strategic Culture", in John Glenn, Darry Howlett, Stuart Poore, & Darryl A. Howlett (eds.), *Neorealism versus Strategic Culture* (Aldershot, Great Britain: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), p. 56.

72. Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, Spring 1995: 40. This work is subsequently referred to as A. I. Johnston (1995b).

73. The rise of constructivism and its description has been taken from Jeffrey S. Lantis (2002), op. cit., pp. 96–97.

74. Theo Farrell, "Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program," *International Studies Review*, vol. 4, no. 1, Spring 2002: 50.

75. Alastair Iain Johnston (1995a), op. cit., pp. 18–19.

76. Michael C. Desch, op. cit., p. 142.

77. Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, Spring 1995: 65–93; Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and French Military Doctrine before World War II", in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 186–215.

78. Jeffrey W. Legro, "Military Culture and Inadvertent Escalation in World War II," *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 4, Spring 1994: 108–142.

79. Theo Farrell, "Review Article—Culture and Military Power," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 24, no. 3, July 1998: 416; also see Theo Farrell, "Review Article—Figuring Out Fighting Organizations: The New Organizational Analysis in Strategic Studies,"*Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, March 1996: 122–135; Theo Farrell, *The Norms of War: Cultural Beliefs and Modern Conflict* (Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005). This is subsequently referred to as Theo Farrell (2005a).

80. Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms and Policies," *International Security*, vol. 17, no. 4, Spring 1993: 84–118; Thomas U. Berger, "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism," *International Security*, vol. 17, No.

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