# Impediments to Reform in European Post-Communist Defense Institutions

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# Impediments to Reform in European Post-Communist Defense Institutions

## Addressing the Conceptual Divide

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This article argues two key points. First, that that Western democratic and communist defense and military concepts are antithetical and includes an explanation of why this is the case. Second, evidence is provided to demonstrate that legacy concepts are very much both actively and passively evident in European post-communist defense institutions. Consequently, it is argued that absent systematic efforts to expose and challenges the legitimacy of existing legacy concepts (and their accompanying assumptions and institutional logic), these institutions will continue to exist at best in a state of conceptual incoherence, and at worse as zombie organizations; not dead, but certainly lacking any manifestations of life.

This article ambitiously posits that, notwithstanding considerable effort by long-standing Western NATO nations, and NATO itself, to assist post-Communist defense institutions to reform themselves in accordance with Western defense and military norms, the evidence from an examination of all of these organizations suggests that transformation has been uneven at best, a failure at worse. To be sure, no small number of these countries have been active in providing forces to U.S.- and NATO-led operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many have been able to develop enviable "niche" capabilities, such as special operations forces (SOF). However, what one finds when examining the defense institutions of these young democracies is not a lack of an institutional understanding of what constitutes basic Western defense and military concepts, but rather, how they could be adopted into post-communist institutions. This is readily observable in, for example, their inability to raise and maintain viable operational formations that are fit to size and purpose. For instance, the Serbian Army has a total number of 13,250 personnel, but is structured around 35 regular battalions. The Lithuanian Army of 3,200 soldiers is organized into 8 battalions. The Moldovan Army of 3,250 is organized into 5 brigades and 4 battalions. Conversely the Belgian Army has 11,950 personnel organized into the equivalent of approximately 12 battalion-equivalents. Bulgarian Air Force pilots can expect to fly only 30 to 40 hours per annum at best. Before the conflict with Russia, their Ukrainian counterparts were averaging around 40 hours, while NATO considers 180 hour per annum as the minimum in order to maintain basic proficiency.[1] The issue at hand is not to speculate on the optimal size of these armed forces, but rather that they simply do not conform to basic Western military concepts, and as such profoundly undermine their ability to undertake even the most basic operations on a modern battlefield.

In light of this troubling state of affairs, what should be of concern to Western *and* Eastern officials is that it has occurred despite an investment of considerable resources and attention by the old NATO nations. For instance, the Bosnian defense budget in 2012 was approximately US $228 million, but the Bosnian military is assessed by the International Institute for Strategic Studies as possessing little capability to mount combat operations. This bleak situation has developed despite a U.S. government-sponsored $100 million train-and-equip program carried out by a private firm with approximately 200 retired U.S. military personnel, which was launched after the Dayton Peace Accords to enable the new federation to defend itself.[2] On a grander scale, if one examines only *one* form of U.S. security assistance to countries in the region from fiscal year 1991 to 2013

(Title 22, International Military Education and Training, Emergency Draw Downs, and Foreign Military Finance Waived), the combined total is approximately $2.5 *billion*.[3] These representative disparate data paint a picture of not only under-funded and hollow units, but rather the inability of defense institutions to bring themselves to make "defense" *fit* within their existing budgets, in order that they can produce measurable defense "outcomes." They should also be assessed as constituting a very poor return on Western investment. Clearly, there is an incomplete appreciation, or even ignorance, in many of these post-communist defense institutions of the need to achieve *capability coherence* in national defense in accordance with Western defense norms of governance. In its place, emotive and atavistic thinking continues to dominate debates of how these ministries of defense and armed forces should be managed and employed.

The question that begs to be addressed is, why has the reform of these defense institutions been so challenging? A review of the literature on European post-communist defense institutions, augmented by almost 20 years of professional experience providing advice and assistance virtually to all of these ministries of defense and armed forces, has led the current writer to conclude that the primary impediment to these institutions' adopting Western defense and military reforms remains largely conceptual. This article will argue that an essential lacuna in both Western and Eastern capitals has been a systematic under-appreciation of the deeply antithetical nature of Western democratic and communist authoritarian defense and military concepts. Indeed, there has been almost complete ignorance by officials, both in the West and East, of the importance of concepts, let alone their antithetical nature, and thereby their inability to coexist within an institution. For instance, in General Philip Breedlove's March 2016 testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, the outgoing combatant commander for the European theater presented a comprehensive review of the state of security and defense in his area of responsibility. Yet, what was missing from his otherwise comprehensive discussion of how the command is executing an increasing number of assistance programs was *any* mention of how well-suited and prepared the defense institutions in Central and Eastern Europe are to accept this sizeable increase in U.S. security assistance and security cooperation funding, equipment, training, and exercises in response to Russia's growing assertiveness in European affairs.[4] In Central and Eastern Europe, the officer corps of the post-communist armed forces had largely not been purged; indeed, many officers were allowed to remain in their posts and in some cases, rise to senior leadership positions. Only recently have defense education and human resource management systems been subject to growing scrutiny by civilian officials. As such, there should be little surprise that old thinking and ways of doing business have remained the norm, as opposed to the exception. Even in countries that *appear* to have shaken vestiges of communist practices via extensive deployments of formed units (e.g., Poland[5] and Slovenia[6]), continue to exhibit strong cases of conceptual incoherence, as legacy concepts, assumptions, and indeed even their institutional logic, interfere with the full adoption of Western defense and military norms.

This article is organized to address two key issues. First, the writer will argue that Western democratic and communist defense and military concepts are antithetical. The purpose of this section is to leave the reader in no doubt of the impossibility of such concepts to coexist harmoniously within an institution. Second, evidence will be presented that lends support to the article's main thesis that such legacy concepts are very much both actively and passively evident in European post-communist defense institutions. In consequence of their continued utilization, it will be argued in the conclusion that absent systematic efforts to expose and challenge the legitimacy of existing legacy concepts (and their accompanying assumptions and institutional logic), these institutions will continue to exist at best in a state of conceptual incoherence, and at worse as zombie-like organizations; not dead, but certainly lacking any manifestations of life.

Two important caveats require clarification. First, it is recognized that are three typologies of post-communism defense institutions, i.e., post-Soviet, post-Warsaw Pact, and post-Yugoslav, and that they possess many commonalities, as well as some distinct differences. As such, communist defense concepts, while arguably generally the same, there are many variances in their intensity in their successor defense institutions. Space in an article of this length does not allow for teasing out of these differences organized in case studies; and in consequence, there is an admittedly general treatment of these concepts, while unique exceptions will be addressed and explained. More detailed treatment of the unique nature of these three typologies of communist defense organizations, with numerous case studies, are contained in a book manuscript shortly to be published.[7] Second, and related to the first point, there is no generally-accepted understanding of what constitutes "Western" defense concepts. In something as basic as de-centralized tactical decision-making; even among Anglo-Saxon armed forces, countries' practices contain slight differences and nuances.[8] Commonality increasingly can be found in the growing body of NATO doctrinal document, e.g., in operational planning,[9] but such publications are almost exclusively oriented toward facilitating tactical and operational planning and execution. Some generally suggestive commonality in concepts will be addressed in the two tables that follow immediately which have the added benefit of being juxtaposed with their communist conceptual counterparts.

## DEFINING THE CONCEPTUAL DIVIDE

A fundamental difference between Western/NATO forces with their communist counterparts is the basic fact that these institutions are explicitly designed, organized, trained, and equipped with the ability; and indeed expectation, to act as "thinking"

organizations at the tactical level and to be able to undertake a range of different missions. In contraposition, communist models and most of their legacy armed forces; despite being highly, if narrowly trained, were intentionally designed to be incapable of allowing freedom of thought; and critically, freedom of action, at the tactical level. Moreover, they were often reduced to the strength of cadre in peacetime, thus never improving or developing. Table 1 is a general, and admittedly hardly scientifically based table developed by the current writer as a representation of some the key differences of how Western and communist legacy cultures continue to condition individuals to operate within their respective institutions' norms. The norms will be further defined and discussed within the body of this work, but at this early stage can serve the important purpose of framing many of the issues which contribute to produce the conceptual divide. It is not an overstatement to observe within this context that these two normative models and values are unquestionably *antithetical*. Whereas Western officers and soldiers are selected, educated, trained, and utilized with the view of making them "thinking" agents in the execution of national policy, their counterparts continue to be plagued by communist social and organizational norms which remain incompatible with basic liberal democratic values. The causation for the continuation of these deeply held, and to the Western eye perverse, values and behaviors are likely found in a number of explanations.

In an applied setting, the antithetical nature of the conceptual divide can be vividly observed as it relates to the differences between Western and legacy defense institutions in the most fundamental element of any military organization, that is, the concept of command of forces while on operations, which is compared between these two systems in Table 2.[10] In Western practice, commanders expect their subordinates to use critical thinking and their own initiative to solve tactical problems, whereas in communist armed forces commanders are expected only to execute orders and generally never take the initiative.[11] Thus, it should be clear that *communist-legacy armed forces, on a conceptual level, could not be more different from their Western counterparts*. One can very easily discern the contemporary

TABLE 1
The Military Conceptual Divide

| Western norms | Legacy norms |
| --- | --- |
| ● Practical | ● Theoretical |
| ● Decentralized execution | ● Centralized execution |
| ● Commanders are empowered | ● Commanders only execute |
| ● Results oriented | ● Process oriented |
| ● Low social context | ● High social context |
| ● Serve the troops | ● Mistreat soldiers |
| ● Low power distance | ● High power distance |
| ● Low uncertainty avoidance | ● High uncertainty avoidance |
| ● Lying is unacceptable | ● Lying is not a sin |
| ● Failure is precious opportunity to learn | ● Failure is never an option, but shame and disgrace |

TABLE 2
Understanding Western and Communist Legacy Command Concepts

| Mission Command | Versus | Detailed Command |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Unpredictable | *Assumes war is* | Predictable |
| Disorder/uncertainty | *Accepts* | Order/Certainty |
| Decentralization | *Tends to lead to* | Centralization |
| Informality | | Formality |
| Loose rein on subordinates | | Tight rein on subordinates |
| Self-discipline | | Imposed discipline |
| Initiative | | Obedience |
| Co-operation | | Compliance |
| Ability at all echelons | | Ability only at the top |
| Higher tempo | | Stasis |
| Implicit | *Types of* | Explicit |
| Vertical/Horizontal | *communications* | Vertical |
| Interactive and Networked | | Reactive and Linear |
| Organic | *Organization* | Hierarchic |
| Ad hoc | *types fostered* | Bureaucratic |
| Delegate | *Leadership styles* | Disempower and Direct |
| Art of war | *Appropriate to* | Science of war[12] |

manifestations of directed command essentially within all successor legacy-defense institutions.

It is for this reason that Table 3 is used to establish in a graphic generalization of the different conceptual approaches of the three legacy defense institutions laid across the areas of analysis, with a generic representation of NATO countries, all circa 1989. What the matrix demonstrates is three critically important points. First, it displays in stark terms the differences among the three typologies of communist defense institutions and should make the point of their differences. That said, while they share many institutional pathologies, due to their difference provenance, their subsequent manifestations vary. Second, the chart should give pause to those Western officials who have the task of working cooperatively with these civil defense institutions and armed forces with the objective of integrating them into allied military structures, particularly as regards to improving their ability to achieve interoperability with NATO nations. To be sure, NATO has become more sophisticated over the years and now differentiates among the various levels of "interoperability."[13] However nuanced these definitions might be, major *conceptual* impediments stand in the way of making progress. Third, in its most primary form, the challenge of effecting closer interoperability is clearly *conceptual;* and therefore, constitutes fundamental obstacles to achieving interoperability with Western armed forces. As these impediments are conceptual in nature, they will not be solved employing a purely technical, equipment, or training approach. This was recognized some years ago by David Glanz:

The term interoperability itself has numerous facets and is still ill defined. Nevertheless, at a minimum it involves the ability of national forces to operate effectively with NATO

TABLE 3
Comparison of Communist and NATO Defense Institutions, circa 1989

| | Defense institutions | Policy framework | National level command | Military decision-making process | Concept of operations | Logistics | Professionalism |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Soviet | General Staff dominated | Weak | Rigid | Non-existent | Mass | Push | Weak |
| Warsaw Pact | Moscow/General Staff dominated | Weak | Non-extant/under-developed and directed by Moscow | Non-existent | Mass | Push | Varying from weak to extant; albeit compromised |
| Yugoslav | Extant, but highly/exclusively militarized | Extant | Mixture of centralized (federation) and de-centralized (republics) | Extant, but basic | Territorial | Push, with traces of pull | Extant, but compromised |
| NATO nations | Robust civil-military organizations | Highly developed | Robust and largely defined | Highly developed and used | Deployment | Pull based on commanders' requirements | Highly developed |

forces, to be able to assume their NATO-assigned staff responsibilities, and most important, but less recognized, *to understand and implement Western military concepts.* [14]

## EVIDENCE OF THE CONCEPTUAL DIVIDE

The universally pernicious nature of communism did tend to produce common characteristics that have impeded an appreciation and adoption of Western defense military norms. To be sure, they vary by country where they are manifested, as well as in their intensity. That said, their representation in this section will serve to support a contextual understanding that provides a basis against which the following section can assess and critique the West's approach to providing reform assistance, and particularly the policy assumptions upon which that have guided their programs. As will be argued, the delta between Western assumptions and Central and Eastern European institutional, conceptual, and cultural realities is quite wide and deep, and they begin from first principles.

### Highly Centralized Decision-making

If there is one communist-legacy concept that continues to be followed throughout these defense institutions, often without any questioning, it is the debilitating centralization of all decision-making. In effect, no decision is too small not to be passed not just to higher command, but literally to the minister of defense and his political team, and even to the President; albeit in the case of, for example, Poland, progress has been made to clarify and expand the ministry of defense's responsibilities for the command of the armed forces. [15] For instance, in the Bulgarian defense institution, *all* invoices, and even travel vouchers, must be approved at

the deputy ministerial level. With an unbroken line tracing back to communist rule, the specific authorities invested in political leadership and military command are generally not defined by law or regulation, but rather are simply equated to constituting unbridled power over all subordinates. Even in more reformed communist-legacy defense institutions, centralization tendencies persist; for example, the Polish chief of defense (CHOD) is named "first soldier" (*Pierwszy Zolnierz RP*). A critically important implication (or rather the cause) of the continued use of this concept is that financial decision-making essentially is universally centralized in ministries of defense. As a result, *capability providers*, for example, chiefs of services, do not possess budgets, nor do they often have authority over determining the number of personnel they require, and enjoy little understanding and support from the ministry of defense even among the retired officer cadre serving as defense officials. For instance, in seemingly reformed Slovenia, the CHOD controls no more than 5 percent of his *own* budget, and the mid-term defense program is so restrictive as to limit the ability of battalion commanders to manage their units' finances to meet their assigned missions and tasks. [16] Debilitating centralization can also be found in the all but universal practice of general staffs continuing to claim authority over tactical-level responsibilities, such as training, which are performed at the expense of providing support to the ministry of defense in executing national-level policies and priorities—where they have been determined, that is.

### Absence of Critical Thinking

As a corollary of the concept of centralization of decision-making, the concept that strength and military success can *only* flow from iron and blind discipline has yet to be discredited and retired. Only the most senior leaders are

allowed to engage in critical thinking, as an essential element of their professional responsibilities. David Glanz's observations made in 1998 are as true then as they are now, "In fact, in addition to the other military legacies of communist rule, because of its pervasiveness, persistence, and intangible nature, *the intellectual legacy of Soviet rule may prove to be the most difficult problem in the military to overcome*.[17] Yet, if one becomes a commander of an armed force, but has never been allowed to engage in critical thinking during one's entire professional career, its advent late in one's professional life is unlikely to prove successful. As critical thinking is all but not taught in unreformed and largely "civilianized" professional military education (PME) institutions (where rote and passive "learning" remains the norm),[18] it is little wonder that most staff work in these countries is highly underdeveloped and lacks such basic key characteristics as problem-definition, objectivity, trade-off analysis based on data, and the development of actionable courses of action. With some exceptions, one can find this weakness at all levels in all legacy defense institutions. What is maddening is that many Central and Eastern European officers have been trained and educated in Western PME institutions; and critically, many more have been on demanding international operations (e.g., Iraq, Afghanistan, and UN peacekeeping operations). On operations and international exercises, these individuals will demonstrate remarkable fluency in their ability to engage in critically analyzing the operational environment. However, once returned to his or her national environment, these tools are quietly packed away and legacy concepts once again are followed. For example, notwithstanding the long record of Polish deployments, official sociological studies have found that soldiers do not feel that they are fully part of decision-making, and the Romanian armed forces struggle to enable the delegation of authority and improve information flow.[19]

## Algorithmic Approach to Problem Solving

An additional corollary of the systematic discouragement of being allowed to engage in critical thinking is the primacy of employing the algorithmic approach to solving *all* problems. In essence, this holds that there is *one* "scientifically" based solution (expressed mathematically) to all defense planning and management problems.[20] This fallacious concept has its roots in legacy norms that officials (unless they are senior Party officials) were never to be trusted to make any decisions. As so vividly and bloodily demonstrated by the Soviet Red Army in the Second World War, operational planning analysis consisted of the accurate application of the correct correlation of forces algorithm to produce the *one*, scientifically determined, solution to an operational move.[21] After the Cold War, this legacy approach to operational planning by the armed force has even been elevated to providing a conceptual basis for national-level defense

planning in many countries, including Ukraine.[22] This legacy concept is closely related to; and feeds into, another legacy norm, that being escaping from the responsibility and accountability of one's own professional actions. Soviet ideology was based on the premise that solutions were scientifically derived, and therefore, perfect. *Ergo*, by definition, a scientifically developed algorithm was flawless, and therefore any sub-performance could be blamed on an individual who did not understand, or did not applied fully the algorithm, "science," or communist ideology.

## Undeveloped Defense Planning

In its most generic sense, Western defense planning is based on the concept that *frames* questions, which once accomplished, can only be solved using human factors—argument, civil-military collaboration, and consensus-building—to develop a range of possible solutions. Yet, as a direct result of the continued use of communist-legacy concepts, all these institutions, to varying degrees of intensity, are simply all but incapable of consistently conducting rudimentary defense planning. Notwithstanding early optimistic and highly well-informed assessments that a number of legacy defense institutions were capable of conducting effective defense planning (e.g., Slovakia),[23] subsequent performance has demonstrated that conducting effective *planning* (*vice* producing financially unrealizable plans) remains elusive at best. To be sure, all of these ministries of defense have directorates of "defense planning," and they all draft "defense plans." However, it is difficult to identify where any of these plans actually have systematically changed the allocation of money, personnel distribution, or adjusted structures and what good results were achieved for the money spent throughout all these years of transition?

There are two telling examples of systematic planning failures in these post-Communist defense institutions. First, the Slovak Ministry of Defense publicly acknowledged in 2013 that the armed forces personnel structure was seriously unbalanced, 70 percent of its ground equipment was past its life-cycle, and it could reach only 54 percent of NATO standards to achieve interoperability. The minister went on to acknowledge that this poor state of affairs placed in serious doubt the armed force's ability to defend the country, let alone meeting its international commitments.[24] Second, following the development by the Estonian Ministry of Defense of its National Defence Development Plan, 2013–2022,[25] the National Audit Office analyzed the plan in a critical light. While lengthy, the key negative findings of its report need to be cited in full as they represent a revealing view of the state of underdevelopment of planning and budgeting, which must be balanced by the perception among some Western officials that Estonia is managing its defense institution rather well:

- "Acting for the purpose of attaining the desired defence capacity has not been systematically managed.
- "There were no realistic long-term goals, agreed priorities or approved long-term procurement plans for planning and procuring material resources.
- "The Minister of Defence and the Commander of the Defence Forces did not have an up-to-date overview of the situation of wartime units for a long period of time.
- "The Defence Forces are unaware of the extent of the civil resources they can count on."[26]

From a wider Western perspective, these reports should open some eyes, particularly in NATO nations' capitals, as to the depth of the problem.

Too often, Western officials see what they recognize as comparable organizational structures and documents and simply assume that their activities and outputs are comparable to their Western counterparts.[27] Maddeningly, planning directorates do indeed produce "plans," but they are almost always denuded of priorities, nor are they defined by their financial costs, let alone sufficiently informed by operational planning analysis (e.g., even in advanced Slovenia).[28] As such, they are almost always simply aspirations, and *not* plans. As a reflection of their legacy heritage and positive-law systems, legacy defense officials define plans as *contracts* (with the parliament, the latter being duty-bound to provide the money, as shown in the plan). There is little institutional acceptance of the need for flexibility to enable the basic tenants of plans to stay current in light of expected shifts in policies and financial realities. Equally, plans are seen as inadaptable after their approval, and indeed, they very often become enshrined in law, for example, the Ukrainian Five-Year Development Plans of the Armed Forces.[29] In short, defense plans resemble Soviet-inspired rigid operational plans which are often translated into uncosted, or inaccurately costed, development plans. That such a pernicious legacy persists more than 25 years since the end of the Cold War clearly manifests a widespread debilitating institutional incapability to undertake such a critically essential national-level task. Within a Western normative context, of course, the task of defense planning, from its first principles, must be to make defense "fit" the existing and envisaged defense budget. This line of argument contradicts assertions one almost always hears in legacy defense institutions that reform can only occur with additional funding. The evidence demonstrates that unrealizable national defense plans are still being produced throughout the region must be judged as one of the most serious challenges to these institutions and constitutes a major failure in Western provided advice and assistance. That more Western officials are not aware of, and animated by, this fundamental weakness is nothing short of surprising.

## Restrictive Interpretation of Positive Law

Post-communist positive law (i.e., Civil Code) has had a highly negative affect on the ability, or perhaps willingness, of officials to engage in critical thinking. Actions are allowed *only* insofar as they are explicitly sanctioned in law. As such, all activities and authorities are narrowly defined and the delegation of authority is highly restricted. This approach only encourages the further centralization of decision-making and produces an environment that forbids activity unless it is explicitly *allowed* in law. Not surprisingly, this becomes a very convenient excuse for many not to lead, let alone take calculated risks to press for change. In consequence, the inability of ministries of defense to take an active and dynamic role in interpreting the basic foundations for policy—i.e., the Constitution and Defense Acts—tends to result in policy needing to be *expressed* as legislation, as opposed to being interpreted and articulated in policy memoranda, or regulations. Thus, policy is conflated *as* law which has the detrimental effect of impeding, as opposed to facilitating, needed change. Worse yet, if it is assumed that policy must be expressed in detailed legislation. Even something as basic as "defense planning," can result in a stand-alone piece of legislation (of 20+ pages in length) written by a non-defense planning expert in a very restrictive manner (e.g., Georgia and Romania).[30] In short, the conflation of law and policy has been a major impediment to enabling governments and ministers of defense throughout the region from making even the most basic of *conceptual* reforms.

## Ergo: The Absence of Policy Framework

As a result of all of these factors, policy frameworks, even where they exist, are weak. As Edmunds, Cottey, and Forster postulated in 2006, one of the most significant challenges facing reforming defense institutions in Central and Eastern Europe is the "distinct problem of establishing effective control over defence policy."[31] In effect, institutional and individual thinking remains mired in defining "policy" either as out of bounds as within the realm of partisan political life (i.e., *politika*), or simply to be provided by "military" officials (via "*doktrina*"; see below).[32] Consequently, existing policy direction and priorities remain a function of personal relationships and a decision-making process often built on personal power, as opposed to specified and defined authorities, balanced by individual accountability. Thus, it is common to find published "policy" documents which are completely and utterly ignored by the bureaucracy, since they are rarely connected to financial decision-making. In fact, it is equally not uncommon that such documents are so general as to be useless to planners,[33] or hopelessly out-of-date, thereby providing a visible appreciation of the state of underdeveloped policy frameworks, disconnected from resource decision-making. The inability of a

ministry of defense either to promulgate policy that directs every action of the organization, let alone ensuring that its policies and priorities are executed, simply is not fully functioning as defined by Western concepts of defense governance. For without such a capability, legacy practices and even basic military activities and practices continue unhindered. For instance, absent ministerial-sanctioned contingency planning guidance, it should come to be no surprise that these armed forces continue to be oriented to, and trained in accordance with, legacy concepts, assumptions, and standards. For instance, the Slovenian Ministry of Defense has yet to adopt the practice of placing threats in priority order in its planning documents.[34]

In lieu of policy, one can find either full-blown versions, or not so subtle hints, of the communist practice of establishing the entire conceptual raison d'être of the armed forces by "scientifically" developing *voennaia doktrina*, or "military doctrine." This nomenclature has led to no end of confusion for Western officials and analysts, as this legacy conceptual foundation document has nothing to do with the Western concept of its purpose and is completely different from the Western concept of doctrine per se. The former documents are developed employing the most exacting "scientific" standards to produce the *one* document that addresses *all* aspects of military affairs. From strategy to tactics, military doctrine encapsulates all that was needed to be known, while forever reinforcing the concept of total centralization of control. There was never a question of anyone having the authority to interpret *doktrina*, or that it might contain shortcomings. Its characteristics then can best be thought of as being not philosophical, but rather theological in nature, reinforced by its status as having the force of law: it is transgressed at one's personal peril (as in Moldova).[35] Notwithstanding efforts to reform the defense institution to adopt Western defense and military norms the better to be able to respond militarily to Russian aggression, the Ukrainian government endorsed a new version of its military doctrine in September 2015.[36]

### Unclear Institutional Roles/Missions

Directly related to the issue of a lack of a policy framework is the absence of clarity in institutional responsibilities, which is often due to contradictory legislation. To be sure, this issue varies in intensity from country-to-country; yet, as "roles and missions" remain regularly contested, and essential subsidiary concepts, such as command authorities, are still unknown, let alone defined. For instance, David Darchiashvili documents the contradictory nature of Georgian defense and security-related policy documents and legislation in such critical areas as who can declare a state of emergency (with or without parliamentary approval) and the basic roles and missions of the armed forces, let alone possessing legislation sufficiently flexible to coordinate between the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff.[37] As remarkable as it may seem, notwithstanding

their respective positive-law traditions, there remains great confusion and opacity of the roles and missions of all ministries, let alone *within* defense institutions themselves. The practice— or perhaps one should say "culture" —of coordination and consensus-building ranges from underdeveloped to nonexistent, which only compounds the need to establish clarity in institutional responsibilities. Such an endeavor, without doubt, takes on added meaning when one considers that most countries in the region possess paramilitary forces with law-enforcement as well as national-defense responsibilities in wartime. It is not always clear in most of these countries how these organizations would function in an international crisis. The confusion surrounding Georgian government actions in the Georgia–Russia War of 2008,[38] Russian officials' response to the Beslan hostage crisis in September 2004, [39] and the lack of a coherent Ukrainian response to the Russian invasion of Crimea and support of armed separatists in eastern Ukraine in 2014 provide chillingly representative examples. From a traditional Western perspective, the concept of each discrete role can only be led by *one* organization and others are in support, as well as a basic understanding of the concept of escalation, are only slowly being accepted. Finally, the concept of "transfer of authority," whereby formal, structured, tested, and validated procedures that allow the lead for specific responsibilities to transition through escalation, is equally unknown as an essential concept, both for national defense, but also for effective response to national disasters.

### Inadequate Force Management and Development

The basic Western conceptual building blocks of force management and force development remain alien in the Central and Eastern European region and either simply are not formally conducted or are in their most basic embryonic state. In simple terms, force management is defined as that activity conducted by the defense institution that endeavors actively to maintain required capabilities to determined standards of performance. With the possible exceptions of Poland, Slovenia, and Romania, ministries of defense and general staffs in the region appear blindly unaware of the essential need for the daily and systematic management of the force in its *entirety*. Since the requirement for force *management* has gone largely ignored, it is little wonder that force *development*, which logically should build on the continuous examination of the capabilities of the current force in relation to government guidance, is equally underdeveloped. Hence, the lack of viable procurement programs should not be attributed solely to the lingering effects of the 2008 financial crisis, but rather it also exposes flaws in how these defense institutions continue to waste precious and limited finances on outdated weapon systems and excess infrastructure (e.g., educational institutions). A senior Slovak defense official claimed the 10-year defense plan (i.e., Force 2010) would secure policy objectives by directly linking them to capabilities in a system that had yet fully to

internalize the full conceptual meaning of capabilities, let alone fully to embrace key Western defense concepts.[40]

## "Capabilities"

Directly related to the lack of force-management and force development concepts is that conceptual defense thinking in the region remains largely tied tightly to legacy concepts of "systems" and "platforms," instead of "capabilities." Platforms and systems are seen as discrete items, conceptually detached from integrative training and logistics, all to create synergies with other systems and produce measurable effects; that is, capabilities. As a planning building-block, capabilities remain all but unknown in most legacy defense institutions, not the least of which since many Slavic languages do not possess a distinct word for "capability."[41] Moreover, as there has been very little defense procurement of sizable Western kit, due to the lack of policy-driven planning and force-development processes, the mere experience of procuring and then maintaining a major Western-source capability has yet to have been experienced first-hand by many of these defense institutions. Those that have procured/obtained a critical mass of Western equipment (e.g., Poland with F-16sC/D Block 52s, FFG-7 frigates, Type 209 submarines, and Leopard main battle tanks) have experienced a profound shock to their entire defense institutions, whose implications are still being absorbed. That said, a strong argument can be made that in the case of the acquisition of Polish F-16, although introduced in 2006, these aircraft only became operational in 2012.[42] Moreover, Polish defense officials still struggle to employ this capability using Western concepts as witnessed by the fact that of the five deployments made by the Polish Air Force in support of the NATO Baltic Air Policing operation, not one of these has yet to be comprised of F-16s, but rather have been undertaken by its MiG-29s,[43] despite the fact that the latter are ostensibly more expensive to operate.[44]

## Weak Defense Civilian Cadre

With one notable exception (the Yugoslav republics' territorial defense commands), communist armed forces simply did not have civilian defense experts or officials. The defense institutions were thoroughly militarized as there was no perceived need for a cadre of civilian "defense," as opposed to military, experts to provide that necessary objective policy continuity and act as a conduit between senior political officials and the armed forces. The introduction of democratic governments in these countries quickly changed the civil–military relationship and this gap was quickly filled either by posting active duty officers, retired military officers, or inexperienced civilians to ministries of defense. In many countries, active duty and retired officers were and continue to be widely posted to ministries of defense, notwithstanding their having precious little understanding of the modern democratic concept of civil–military relations, rendering the civilian defense cadre conceptually handicapped by legacy concepts and norms. The result of this dearth in the quality and quantity of civilian expertise has been the continuation of a military orientation of defense institutions that has only begun to diminish, but not in all countries.[45] In fact, one can make a strong argument that the lack of a cadre of experienced civilian defense officials has, among other things, impeded the development of a policy framework.

## False Cognates

A final element of the division that continues to inhibit better mutual understanding between Western and legacy minds is the challenge posed by language. Whereas differentiation in concepts and principles is, at times, obvious, less understood is the impediment of language to achieving greater intellectual interoperability. Given that *lexica* exist to convey conceptual meaning, it is a tricky challenge to be able to convey the true meaning of a basic Western military concept when partners' languages either have no direct equivalent word or, worse yet, there exist *false cognates*, or the concept is simply unknown.[46] As seen in the case of policy and doctrine, false cognates are essentially omnipresent in discussions and communications between Western and legacy defense institutions, and are rarely rectified. Even basic definitions (i.e., battalions, warships, and combat aircraft) present challenges, as in most legacy defense institutions, these terms have different meanings from their Western usage. In the Western context, a generic "infantry battalion" consists of +/– 600 soldiers and officers who have been through a full regime of individual, collective, and leadership training, with sufficient fuel, practice ammunition, a formal annual training cycle, exercise program, and so forth, all of which builds habitual relationships with combat support, and combat service support, formations. Anything less than all of these elements degrades its ability to be operational and suitable for deployment. In the minds of still too many legacy officers, a bona fide infantry battalion can consist of only 20 percent of its authorized manpower and conduct little or *no* collective training, exercises can be episodic and "canned," and with only minor interactions with combat support and service support formations. To the Western mind, an infantry battalion needs these enabling components in order to qualify as a "capability," whereas in a legacy environment, whatever has been determined by senior officials constitutes a universal truth.

## WHY THE CONCEPTUAL DIVIDE PERSISTS

While the evidence is strong that legacy defense institutions struggle to overcome their communist inherences, an explanation as to why these concepts continue to be found throughout the region, despite the ostensible adoption of Western democratic norms and values, arguably is twofold.

The first relates to the *antithetical* nature of Western and communist defense and military concepts. The second is a function of the fact that Western policy of providing advice and assistance continues to underestimate the challenge of transforming these defense institutions due to a lack of appreciation of the strong role played by *culture*.

As regards the first point, the West made a fundamental error of determining that the best means of engaging with its former enemies was via the use of military diplomacy, rather than basing it on professional military honesty, in the development of relationships with these communist armed forces. Thus, the policy choice of deliberately designing condition-specific policies to assist these organizations to undertake the necessary painful reforms to adopt in order to become a defense institution in a democracy was sacrificed for the nebulous objective of "relationship-building," dubiously based on the principles of mutual respect and equality. At the heart of the matter, the West's approach, perhaps not even intentionally, was founded on the erroneous premise, so presciently described by Clemmesen and Ulrich, of the existence of a *commonality* in their respective definitions of military professionalism.[47] As communist governance is loyalty-based, while the governance in Western democracies is merit-based (exceptions aside), it is obvious that professionalism in both is based on completely different sets of values, limiting both worlds to communication with mutually false cognates. As such, the general approach to providing advice and assistance has been founded on the principles that existing security assistance and security cooperation programs, with minor adjustment,[48] were suitable to supporting reform. In effect, Western armed forces were largely delegated the lead in defining requirements and providing advice and assistance. It should not be surprising, therefore, that these institutions defined the problem as militarily technical (and not political and cultural-dependent), to be addressed with training, specifically at the tactical level. That institutional reform implies concurrent institutional *destruction* and recognition of its inherent political nature are realities that have largely been avoided.

Fundamentally, Western officials have grossly underestimated the deep and pernicious roots of communist concepts. Equally long underappreciated has been the fact that as Western and legacy concepts are antithetical in nature, by definition, they cannot coexist in a functional sense (i.e. they cannot co-function) in an organization. Hence, one finds littered throughout legacy defense institutions a plethora of Western concepts, models, and processes that have been ostensibly adopted. In reality, upon examination, what one often finds is that these Western "gifts" have been laid atop their corresponding legacy concepts like stickers, labels or banners. As they are antithetical, the results have been to degrade the ability of these organizations to function effectively either as legacy or as Western-oriented defense institutions. This has resulted in creating "conceptual spaghetti" (see Figure 1). A representative example of this condition
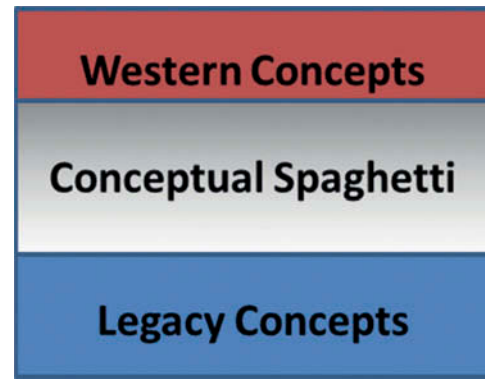


FIGURE 1   Conceptual "Spaghetti".

can be found in the experience of the Serbian Ministry of Defense's introduction of programming budgeting, which was implemented by integrating the method into the legacy financial-management system, and consequently, has yet to function as envisaged.[49]

Apropos the issue of culture, one would be well advised never to underestimate its overwhelming influence manifested in governance, particularly in the context of "nations" that have been long dominated and suppressed by foreign powers and where national institutions have been able to develop a high degree of resiliency to exogenous pressures as an essential mechanism for survival. In the particular case of Central and Eastern Europe, it is clear that most of these societies continue to struggle to overcome their recent historical experience of communism where a culture of distrust was pervasive. It is little wonder that despite some 25 years since the fall of communism, Branko Milanovic calculates that only 10 percent of the population of these countries have experienced economic prosperity greater than they enjoyed at independence. These failed transitions have resulted in messy politics and ineffectual governance.[50]

There is little evidence to support the contention that Western officials even today have determined the need to gain a greater understanding of the cultural conditions as they affect defense of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, thereby better informing Western policy and decision-making. This is unfortunate, as such an understanding is so clearly needed. For solely illustrative purposes, Geert Hofstede is one among many experts who have developed methods by which one can study the difference between and among cultures.[51] There are other methods to be sure, but a brief review of some of the data discerned by Hofstede's research can be used simply to illustrate the *variance* of key cultural norms between Western nations and their counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe. To be sure, countries in this region are hardly homogenous, but those variations argue still for a more informed and nuanced understanding of those key cultural norms. As incomplete as the Hofstede data are, a review of these data in Annex A reveals some useful insights

of the degree to which Western and Eastern cultural norms are significantly dissimilar (data for the United States are presented for comparative purposes). If one only reviews two cultural variables— power distance[52] and uncertainty avoidance[53]—insight can be quickly gleaned.

First, if some Western societies (e.g., Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries) can be typified as having "low" power distances, those in the East (particularly after the experience of communism) conversely have generally a "high" degree of power distance (i.e., Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia). To support this line of argument, in the case of Slovakia, where power distance is scored to be at a maximum high of 100, a report by a Slovak think tank advocated the need for *regular* consultations between the president and the CHOD, as well as the minister of defense's collegium to enable more informed decision-making.[54] In other words, power remains centralized at the top of an organization and delegation of authority is rarely allowed, and this is not seen, culturally, as constituting a problem. This has direct applicability for defense institutions in many ways. Western-style mission-command and military decision-making processes (the foundation stones on which liberal democratic military concepts and assumptions are based) are incomprehensible to legacy officers and soldiers within their respective national contexts. Moreover, hardly extant, and in some cases nonexistent, "force-management" practices can be explained by the fact that force management requires an ongoing institutional *dialogue* with those in tactical formations accurately reporting problems, proposing solutions, and arguing requirements, where truth must be spoken to power. Finally as regards this reality, in cultures with high power distance, only the most carefully reviewed and considered advice and assistance programs should be considered that wish to introduce concepts that necessitate devolution of power and authority, for example, introduction of professional non-commissioned officers.

Second, Hofstede's other highly relevant cultural characteristic is uncertainty avoidance. Cultures with a high incidence of this norm are the three Baltic states, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia. In these cultures, individuals are self-limiting when confronted with challenges outside a societal norm, out of fear of losing status and stature within society. Thus, problem-solving on one's own initiative, which would be a self-evident task in Western armed forces, will be difficult to encourage out of fear by individuals of unknown outcomes coming from "above."

The purpose of examining these data is not to make sweeping or broad generalizations that hold for all cases. Rather, the point is that these data show some significant societal and cultural divergences between Western and Central/Eastern European cultures that make adopting Western defense and military concepts a serious challenge. Where the data establish clear differences speaks to the need

for a deeper understanding of the culture of each particular country. It should be clear that the successful transition by legacy armed forces based on Western concepts and assumptions would be greatly enhanced with a full understanding of, among other things, how to overcome, or perhaps even *co-opt*, these ingrained cultural traits.

One should also note that there is an extensive literature on a variety of subjects that relate directly to providing a greater understanding of culture to the diffusion of military innovation, not to mention useful insights that can be gleaned from studies of strategic culture.[55] A recent compendium systematically presents a series of case studies to ascertain the conditions on which military innovation can be transmitted. In brief, the contributors agree that "The process of diffusion appears far less deterministic and much more vulnerable to local conditions than the system view suggests." Organizational research also demonstrates that the adoption and implementation of foreign models is challenging.[56] Historical research reveals no clear explanation of why the diffusion of military innovation and technology was successful in some countries and periods (e.g., Meiji Japan), yet failed in others (e.g., nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire). "These puzzles demonstrate the contingent nature of the diffusion process and suggest the need to search for factors that explain the remarkably wide-range of responses to innovation across societies, organizations, cultures, contexts, and historical epochs."[57] Critically, Goldman and Eliason argue:

> A concerted effort to broaden and deepen "intellectual interoperability" within the context of NATO and other institutions of the growing democratic security community, while beneficial, may require finding common ground culturally as well as politically and militarily.[58]

To conclude this section, a strong case can be made that only by defining the problem *differently* will Western efforts be capable of understanding and addressing the *antithetical* nature of persistent and pernicious communist legacy concepts, defense planning assumptions, and *logic*. It is solely on the basis of such an improved understanding that governments in the region can be enabled to develop solutions that effectively replace their inherited communist concepts with a nuanced understanding of liberal democratic–derived concepts of defense governance. By extension, it is essential for *all* donor NATO nations to change their own policies, concepts, assumptions, programs, and indeed institutional *logic*, when designing and managing reform projects in allied/partners' defense institutions. This is essential, as previous experience over the past 25 years demonstrates that existing Western policies have not worked particularly well. Furthermore, this suggested new approach arguably could be applicable to the whole process of transformation that is at the core of NATO as an organization and of defense change management in each of its member states.

## CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the investment of considerable Western resources and legacy governments' political capital, the transformation of post-communist defense institutions remains very much a work in progress, even after +/–25 years. The results of this uneven evolution of reform has been incapable of preventing a growing dysfunctionality in the region's defense institutions at worst (arguably Slovakia by its own public admission)[59] and underperforming ones at best (e.g., Poland, Slovenia, and Romania). The continued presence of communist-legacy platforms and systems in these armed forces, coupled with their inability to divest themselves of legacy concepts, assumptions, and indeed institutional logic, has produced, to varying degrees, capability incoherence. This essay has argued that causation for this inability to adopt Western defense and military concepts has been the failure by both Western and Eastern officials to recognize the dominating role that continues to be played by the persistence of communist-legacy concepts imbedded in these defense institutions. Albeit hardly exhaustive, the list of concepts that continue to dominate the functioning of these organizations are the centralization of decision-making, an absence of critical thinking, an algorithmic approach to problem solving, underdeveloped defense planning capabilities, a restrictive interpretation of positive law, the absence of policy frameworks, unclear institutional roles and missions, inadequate force management/development, difficulty defining defense outcomes as constituting capabilities, a weak civilian defense cadre, and conceptual false cognates.

Despite the investment of considerable Western resources and political capital by some reforming Eastern officials, communist-legacy military concepts continue to provide much of the "intellectual software" that operates these defense institutions. While Eastern politicians and officials can be faulted for not consistently endeavoring to root out and retire legacy concepts and assumptions with the objective of changing the operating logic of these organizations, Western officials must also come under criticism. There has been very little effort to optimize policy by donor nations— indeed including the NATO International Staff and allied commands—by recognizing the continued widespread existence of communist concepts and the need to develop engagement methods that at least control for, and at best overcome, the existence of these obstacles to these countries' adopting Western defense and military concepts. This must become the preferred means of advising and providing assistance to these defense institutions as opposed simply to encouraging them superficially to lay new concepts on top of their legacy counterparts.

But let there be no mistake that both Western and particularly Eastern politicians and officials need quickly to come to terms with accepting that democratic and communist defense and military concepts are inherently antithetical.

There is an immediate need for the development of country- and culturally aware methods and means to assist these countries systematically to identify communist-legacy concepts, create policies to exculpate them from the institution, and adapt Western concepts optimally suited to their conditions and requirements, so as to avoid producing yet more conceptual spaghetti. Albert Einstein presciently observed that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing repetitively while expecting different results. Unless Western officials recognize the depth of the problem at hand, it is dangerously close to fitting this troubling diagnosis.

## NOTES

1. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2015* (London: Routledge, 2015), passim.
2. See Kathleen J. McInnis and Nathan J. Lucas. "What Is 'Building Partner Capacity'? Issues for Congress," R44313, Congressional Research Service, Washington, DC, December 18, 2015, 38–39.
3. United States, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, *Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Construction Sales and Other Security Cooperation Historical Facts*, Washington, DC, September 30, 2013.
4. U.S., Senate, Committee on Armed Forces, Statement of General Philip Breedlove, Commander, U.S. Forces Europe, Washington, DC, March 1, 2016.
5. Poland, *White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland* (Warsaw: The National Security Bureau, 2013), 49. One source calculated that from 1989 until 2009, some 67,000 soldiers and civilians served abroad on UN, NATO, OSCE, and EU operations. Quoted by Marek Pietras, 'Poland's Participation in NATO Operations', in *NATO's European Allies: Military Capability and Political Will*, eds. Janne Haaland Matlary and Magnus Petersson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 210.
6. Osterman cites that from 1997 until 2014, some 4,700 personnel served on deployments, some of which have been demanding, namely, Iraq and Afghanistan. For perspective, the size of the Slovenian Armed Forces in October 2014 was 7,214. See Andrej Osterman, "Republic of Slovenia in NATO: Slovenian Armed Forces Ten Years Later," *Contemporary Military Challenges* 16, no. 3 (October 2014): 49–51
7. Thomas-Durell Young, *Anatomy of Post-Communist European Defense Institutions: Mirage of Military Modernity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, forthcoming).
8. For the U.S. Army's approach to MDMP see, FM-5, *The Operations Process*, March 2010, Annex B (MDMP) and C (Troop Leading Procedures). The Canadian Armed Forces' process is found in Canada, Canadian Forces Joint Publication 5.0, *The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process*, April 2008, see Chapters 4 and 5. A description of the approach of the British Army can be found in, J.E. Passmore, RE, "Decision Making in the Military," *The British Army Review*, no. 126 (Winter 2001–2002): 43–49.
9. Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive," September 10, 2010. NATO UNCLASSIFIED, Releasable to PfP/EU.
10. I am indebted to my friend and colleague Major General Walter Holmes, Canadian Army (Ret.), for allowing me to use this chart that he developed and used in numerous communist legacy defense institutions to explain this important differentiation. Of note, he was the last commanding officer of Commander of Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land).
11. To see how the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) defined command, see Savezni Sekretarijatzu Narodnu Odbranu, *Rukovodenje i*

*Komandovanje*, IVU-24, Belgrade, Vojnoizdavački Zavod, 1983, 29–37.

12. Although the term *voennoe iskusstvo* is regularly in use, its implementation is twisted.

13. As a result of continuous operations with task-organized units, the Alliance's understanding of "interoperability" has become more nuanced. For instance, NATO now includes in the definition of interoperability references to "compatibility," "commonality," "force interoperability," "interchangeability," "military interoperability," and "standardization. See the 2000 and 2013 versions of *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions* (English and French), Allied Administrative Publication (AAP)-6, published by the NATO Standardization Agency, Brussels.

14. David M. Glantz, "Military Training and Education Challenges in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 11, no. 3 (1998), 27. Italics added.

15. Poland, *White Book on National Security*, 47–48, 204, 245.

16. See Branimir Furlan, "Civilian Control and Military Effectiveness: Slovenia," *Armed Forces and Society* 39, no. 3 (2012), 442.

17. Glantz, "Military Training and Education Challenges," 4. Italics in the original.

18. For instance, only 5 percent of the Polish Military Technical University's student body consists of military cadets, and government officials have acknowledged that professional military education (PME) in Poland responds to the civil market than that of the armed forces, which has been a needless drain on the defense budget and has created an impediment to achieving deeper professionalization. See Poland, *White Book on National Security*, 48. Fortunately, recent Polish pronouncements acknowledge how slow PME has been to reform and it is envisaged that rationalization and improvement of this oversized sector of the defense institution is finally at hand. See, Beata Gorka-Winter, "Poland," in *Security Sector Reform in Countries of Visegrad and Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Marian Majer (Bratislava: Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs [CENAA], 2013), 95–96.

19. See Maria Wagrowska, "The Polish Soldier between National Traditions and International Projection," in *Democratic Civil-Military Relations: Soldiering in 21st Century Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 196–97; and Charles M. Perry and Dimitris Keridis, *Defense Reform, Modernization, and Military Cooperation in Southeastern Europe* (Herndon, VA: Brassey's, 2004), 110

20. Albeit written within the context of the Russian armed forces, no one is better at identifying this as a lingering characteristic of Communism as found in Christopher C. Locksley, "Concept, Algorithm, Indecision: Why Military Reform has Failed in Russia since 1992," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 14, no. 1 (2001), 21.

21. Christopher Donnelly, *Red Banner: The Soviet Military System in Peace and War* (Coulsdon, Surrey: Jane's Information Group, 1988), 135–37.

22. See, for example, V. Korendovych, "The Second Defence Review in Ukraine: Preliminary Results and Challenges," *Defense Bulletin* (Defense and Security Policy Centre, Kyiv), 2010, no. 2, 10.

23. See, for example, Thomas S. Szayna, "Slovak Civil-Military Relations: A Balance Sheet after Nine Years of Independence," in *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Cold War Europe*, ed. Graeme P. Herd (Camberley: Conflict Studies Research Centre, 2001), 46.

24. See Slovakia, *The White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic* (Bratislava: Ministry of Defense, 2013), 16–17; 18, 39

25. Estonia, Ministry of Defense, *National Defence Development Plan, 2013–2022*, Tallinn. n.d.

26. Estonia, National Audit Office, *Effectiveness of Formation, Maintenance and Replenishment of Resources Required for Increasing Military Capability and Mobilisation of Defence Forces from 2009–2012* (summary of report), Tallinn, May 30, 2013.

27. The claim that in 1998 the Bulgarian Ministry of Defense established a functioning defense planning directorate is an example of the lack of understanding and appreciation of the challenge faced by a legacy ministry of defense to seize and effectively control the defense budget in accordance with policy. See Piotr Dutkiewicz and Plamen Pantev, "Postcommunist Civil-Military Relations in Bulgaria," in *The Evolution of Civil-Military Relations in East-Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, eds. Natalie Mychajlyszyn and Harald von Riekhoff (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 148–49.

28. Slovenia, *Defence Sector Strategic Review 2009 (DSSR): Summary of Key DSSR 2009 Conclusions*, No. 800-1/2009-189, Ministry of Defence, Ljubljana, October 14, 2009, 42.

29. For instance, the State Program on the Armed Forces Development, which until 2005 was not even co-ordinated with the Ministry of Finance, let alone fully costed. James Sherr, "Civil-Democratic Control of Ukraine's Armed Forces: To what End? By What Means?" in *Army and State in Postcommunist Europe*, eds. David Betz and John Löwenhardt (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 72.

30. See the discussion on the weaknesses of the Georgian Law on Defense Planning, No. 4130, April 28, 2006, in Teona Akubardia, "Overview of the Legislation Facilitating the Civil Democratic Oversight of Armed Forces in Georgia," in *Democratic Control over the Georgian Armed Forces since the August 2008 War*, ed. Tamara Pataraia (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2010), 26–27; and, Romania. Law on Defense Planning, No. 473 of November 4, 2004; repeals Government Ordinance No.52/1998 on national defense planning, *Monitorul Oficial* (Bucharest), no. 525, October 25, 2000.

31. Timothy Edmunds, Andrew Cottey, and Anthony Forster, "Introduction," in *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist Europe: Reviewing the Transition* (London: Routledge, 2006), 5–6.

32. Reka Szemerkenyi, "Central European Civil-Military Reforms at Risk," *Adelphi Paper 306* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies,1996), 17.

33. For a recent example of a planning document that essentially does not address the defense budget in any meaningful and useful way see, Bulgaria, "Programme for the Development of the Defence Capabilities of the Bulgarian Armed Forces 2020," Council of Ministers, Sofia, September 30, 2015.

34. See Viktor Potocnik, "Slovenian Armed Forces Size and Character," *Contemporary Military Challenges* 17, no. 4 (December 2015), 32.

35. See Trevor Waters, "The Republic of Moldova: Armed Forces and Military Doctrine," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 11, no. 2 (1998), 88–89.

36. Ukraine, Ministry of Defense, "Ukraine's Military Doctrine," Kyiv, approved by the President of Ukraine, No. 555/2015, September 24, 2015.

37. David Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia, 2004–2007* (Tbilisi: Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development, 2008), 61.

38. See Ariel Cohen and Robert Hamilton, "The Russian Military and the Georgian War: Lessons and Implications," Strategic Studies Institute (Carlisle Barracks, PA), June 2011.

39. Timothy Phillips, *Beslan: The Tragedy of School No.1* (London: Granta, 2008).

40. Ratislav Kacer, MoD State Secretary, cited by Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, "Professionalisation of the Slovak Armed Forces," in *The Challenge of Military Reform in Post-Communist Europe: Building Professional Armed Forces*, eds. Anthony Forster et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 54.

41. This term is often incorrectly defined as "capacity" or "potential."

42. Lukas Dycka and Miroslav Mares, "The Development and Future of Fighter Planes Acquisition in Countries of the Visegrad Group," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 25, no. 4 (2012), 544–46, 555.

43.  "15 Years in NATO," Ministry of National Defense Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 2014, 16.

44.  Barre R. Sequin, "Why Did Poland Choose the F-16s?" *Occasional Papers Series* No. 11, George C. Marshall Center, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, June 2007, 11.

45.  This is humorously recounted apropos Hungary by Pál Dunay in "The Half-Hearted Transformation of the Hungarian Military," in *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Edmunds, Cottey, and Forster p. 21.

46.  Soukupova illustrates the challenges of understanding Czech translations of English documents: "Czech-written documents are full of English military phraseology, which when consulted against attached dictionaries of used terms do not correlate with the intended Czech meaning. Moreover, English phrases are adopted from American, British and NATO official military dictionaries at the same time and are very often mixed up throughout one document. As many Czechs from the security sector speak very little English and come from a very different educational background compared to their West counterparts, semantic interoperability becomes a problem when analysing any text. Perhaps the most striking evidence of this is a Czech term *schopnosti NEC*, which literarily translates as 'capabilities of network enabled capabilities.'" Kristina Soukupova, "The Influence of Civil-Military Relations on the Implementation of Network Enabled Capabilities as a Transformation Driver and Security Sector Consolidation Catalyst in the Czech Republic," Ph.D. dissertation, King's College London, March 2010, 7.

47.  Michael H. Clemmesen, "Integration of New Alliance Members: The Intellectual-Cultural Dimension," *Defense Analysis* 15, no. 3 (December 1999): 261–72; and Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, *Democratizing Communist Militaries: The Case of the Czech and Russian Armed Forces* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), see particularly 108–53.

48.  For example, Expanded-International Military Education and Training. See Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster, "Reshaping Defence Diplomacy: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance," *Adelphi Paper* 365 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2004), 9–10.

49.  Robert M. McNab, "Implementing Program Budgeting in the Serbian Ministry of Defense," *Public Budgeting and Finance* 31, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 216–30.

50.  Milanovic is an economist at the City University of New York. His blog (http://glineq.blogspot.com/) is cited by David Brooks, "The Legacy of Fear," *The New York Times*, November 10, 2015.

51.  Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations across Nations*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), passim; and, Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), passim.

52.  The degree to which less powerful members of a culture both accept, and expect, an inequality of power distribution.

53.  The degree to which a member of a culture accepts, or rejects, uncertainty/ambiguity.

54.  Jaroslav Naď, Marian Majer, and Milan Šuplata, *75 Solutions for Slovakia's Defence* (Bratislava: Central European Policy Institute, ca. 2015), 2.

55.  Space does not allow the treatment of this important field of study as it relates to this essay. For a useful treatment of the strategic cultures in Central and Eastern Europe (albeit with some exceptions), see Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich, and Alexandra Jonas, eds., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, in *Schriftenreihe des Zentrums für Militärgeschichte und Sozialwissenschaften der Bundeswehr*, Volume 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013).

56.  Emily Goldman and Leslie Eliasen, eds., *Adaptive Enemies, Reluctant Friends: The Impact of Diffusion on Military Practice* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 8.

57.  See Virginia Aksan, *Ottoman Wars, 1700–1870: An Empire Besieged* (New York: Longman, 2007).

58.  Goldman and Eliasen, eds., *Adaptive Enemies, Reluctant Friends*, 391.

59.  Slovakia, *White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic*, 16–17, 18, 39.

ANNEX A

Cultural Tools and Country Comparisons

| | Estonia | Latvia | Lithuania | Ukraine | Bulgaria | Czech Rep. | Hungary | Poland | Romania | Slovakia | Croatia | Serbia | Slovenia | U.S. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Power distance** | **40** | **44** | **42** | **92** | **63** | **49** | **38** | **61** | **85** | **100** | **73** | **86** | **73** | **40** |
| Individualism | 60 | 70 | 60 | 25 | 28 | 61 | 87 | 64 | 28 | 54 | 33 | 25 | 27 | 91 |
| Masculinity | 30 | 9 | 19 | 27 | 39 | 58 | 92 | 66 | 41 | 100 | 40 | 43 | 19 | 62 |
| **Uncertainty avoidance** | **60** | **63** | **65** | **95** | **74** | **63** | **71** | **82** | **79** | **41** | **80** | **92** | **88** | **46** |
| Pragmatism | 82 | 69 | 82 | 55 | 72 | 73 | 60 | 31 | 53 | 81 | 58 | 52 | 49 | 26 |
| Indulgence | 16 | 13 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 29 | 31 | 29 | 20 | 28 | 33 | 28 | 48 | 68 |

Missing from the database: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro.

*Source*: The Hofstede Centre, http://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html.

**Definitions:**

**Power distance**: This dimension deals with the fact that all individuals in societies are not equal – it expresses the attitude of the culture towards these inequalities amongst us. Power distance is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally

**Individualism**: The fundamental issue addressed by this dimension is the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members. It has to do with whether people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "We". In Individualist societies people are supposed to look after themselves and their direct family only. In Collectivist societies, people belong to 'in groups' that take care of them in exchange for loyalty.

**Masculinity**: A high score (masculine) on this dimension indicates that the society will be driven by competition, achievement and success, with success being defined by the winner/best in field – a value system that starts in school and continues throughout organizational behavior.

**Uncertainty avoidance**: The dimension Uncertainty Avoidance has to do with the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen? This ambiguity brings with it anxiety and different cultures have learnt to deal with this anxiety in different ways. The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these is reflected in the UAI score.

**Pragmatism:** The extent to which people show a pragmatic or future-oriented perspective rather than a normative or short-term point of view.

**Indulgence**: The extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses. Relatively weak control is called "Indulgence" and relatively strong control is called "Restraint".