



Without mastery of intercultural dialogue, the war is lost

BRENNUS 4.0

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Whether it is today in the Sahel and the Afghanistan, the army... Either in the morning or yesterday in Afghanistan, the army is engaged in operations which are characterized by the multiplicity of actors. In addition to the populations in whose midst armies are brought to evolve on the same theatre of operations, land forces must more and more facing, not an enemy, but to enemies, most often with allies for the benefit of multiple partners. In this context, the taking into account of the cultural fact in the its diversity and complexity constitutes a decisive factor in the conduct of operations.

« In the conflicts that we lead, the action is conducted on the ground, and at the heart of the human societies. This places the army of Land at the forefront of the global strategy, but it also forces him to take a serious look on the notion of interculturality »¹.

The word intercultural is relatively recent and is often misunderstood. It is therefore important to propose a definition. The word "intercultural" is divided into "inter" and "cultural", which refer to "between" and "culture". Culture can be defined as "a set of systems of meanings specific to a group or subgroup, a set of overriding meanings that appear as values and give rise to rules and norms that the group maintains and strives to transmit and by which it is distinctive and differentiates itself from neighbouring groups".². The prefix "inter" in the notion of interculturality thus indicates a relationship between individuals or groups of individuals from different cultures. It is important to note that it differs from multicultural, which is the coexistence of different cultures in the same space.

In 2016, the Army identified in its outlook document Future Land Action factors of understanding, cooperation and influence among eight factors of superiority operational superiority, i.e. an operational capability-tional or a quality that can confer on the superiority over the opponent.

Interculturality in military action is at the crossroads between the of these three factors in that

it seeks to understand the differences-cultures that interact in a theatre of operations in order to allow military action: it is a question of understanding in order to win.

ATF recalls that one of the invariants of the theatre of operations is the middle: on the ground, over time, and among the men, for the earthly environment being above all that in which man lives. « As recent conflicts have shown, Earthforce... is the only one able to physically and physically mark and the political resolution on the ground, allowing the control of a territory and its population. This resolution does not can be achieved [...] only by integrating many actors capable of to give back to the populations who are deprived of it the basis for a acceptable social and economic life »³.

In the same way as the physical environment, taking into account of the human environment has taken a decisive place in the the success of military action. The diversity of cultures must therefore be taken into account in the planning and conduct of the operations.

Considering that military operations are marked by the encounter of different cultures, it appears that understanding interculturality is a necessary condition for victory, under The Government of Canada has the capacity to address many of the obstacles while at the same time raising the challenge of intercultural training.

The meeting of different cultures is the reality of current commitments

Military operations are characterized by interculturality because of the multiplicity of actors who work side by side in the crisis resolution.

Intercultural societies by nature and an inter-military culture

In today's globalized world, the exchange and confrontations with other cultures are a reality⁴. This dimension of interculturality permeates all sectors of the company. It is not surprising, therefore, that the military and its operations are concerned. Interculturality of operations military is therefore nothing new. The Alliance game has made the great wars of the first half of the twentieth century a world war. XXe century. In the wars of decolonization in Indochina or in Algeria, France intervened on its own, but with the help of of the native troops. For the past 30 years or so, and above all with regard to counter-insurgency operations conducted since 2001, countries with sometimes very different cultures and having Common interests drive operations within ad hoc coalitions. "Faced with new global challenges", the 2017 Strategic Review recalls that "France is committed to strengthened multilateralism and to deepening our strategic partnerships, primarily in Africa and the Near and Middle East" ⁵. It is no longer France's vocation to intervene alone outside its borders to resolve a crisis, not only out of concern for the legitimacy of its action, but also for reasons of capacity that it may lack.

Alongside the local actors in the crisis, and within the populations

Local actors in the crisis may be different from us on the cultural plan; the populations in which we intervene can have very different mentalities, very different ways of living, whether it be in the relationship to work, the relationship to culture, the relationship to nature, the relationship to the family, the education of children, the relationship to religion. It therefore seems important to take conscience to avoid any misunderstanding.

At the side of our partners

Our own partners may have strategic cultures very different from ours. From now on, enlisted soldiers ...in opera...rations receive training missions and sometimes combat support for foreign armies, when others are embedded in multinational headquarters. Some soldiers with sometimes very different cultures are thus living side by side, living on the same bases and sharing the same infrastructures training.

Already in colonial times, the European powers were already-were using local recruiting executives to get more of efficiency with the indigenous troops: " the Europeans would be incapable by themselves of supervising the armies of the colonies, without the help of local managers, who are indispensable because of their familiarity with the men. The native officers are just a handful, but the NCOs and junior officers are very numerous... »⁶

In the face of the enemy

In his book on military strategy, Sun Tzu points out that the importance of knowing your enemy in the chapter entitled "Fighting the Enemy in his Plans": " Who knows the other and in a hundred battles shall not be defeated; who does not know the other, but knows himself, will be victorious every other time; he who does not knows no more about each other than he knows about himself will always be undone. »⁷. If a good knowledge of tactics, techniques and procedures of the enemy is indispensable in order to face them, the knowledge of his way of thinking will allow ground forces to " dominate physically the enemy and take over the moral high ground, until its destruction if necessary »⁸. Finally, we must not lose since the adversary we must fight today may become the partner of tomorrow: it will necessarily have to be associated with the settlement of the conflict. A village that today is secured by the force, it will be necessary to restore normal living conditions there tomorrow, recreate the market and send the children to school.

The actors of an intercultural encounter face many obstacles

Interculturalism has thus become an inescapable reality at the daily. A fine knowledge of cultures is by nature to manage delicate cross-cultural situations. However.., cross-cultural understanding faces obstacles to to be overcome, provided that they possess a certain number of qualities.

Identifying obstacles to intercultural dialogue

Interculturality is a complex concept to handle because the one who evolves in a multinational environment is facing two major obstacles: ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. First of all, ethnocentrism is the attitude of the Greeks towards of those they used to call the barbarians, or more recently the attitude of Western societies that faced the savages. This ethnocentrism, or in other words this centralism... national, can lead to prejudices that are " preconceived opinion, socially learned, shared by members of a group, and likely to be unfavourable to the category concerned »⁹ which can give rise to discriminatory processes. Ethnocentrism can also lead to the creation of stereotypes that are a « rigid and persistent mode of categorization (resistant to change) of this or that human group, which deforms and impoverishes the social reality for which it provides a simplified reading grid and whose function is to rationalize the subject's conduct vis-à-vis categorized group »¹⁰.

Cultural relativism, then, consists in denigrating others cultures and ultimately deny the differences we do not have. don't understand intellectually.

Intercultural dialogue will often be difficult to establish because of these obstacles, which result from a tendency to privilege the group ethnicity to which one belongs and to make it the only model of reference.

It is also important to be aware that the returned image may have a devastating effect. Before establishing a dialogue, it is necessary to become aware of one's own culture, to reflect on oneself, on the image returned and especially on the way the interlocutor perceives this image.

Measuring Cultural Differences and Misunderstandings

It is essential to grasp the cultural background of its inter-speaker, and to question one's own cultural background in order to measure the differences and to adopt the right postures to avoid any cultural misunderstandings. Does my interlocutor work the same way I did? What are his methods? Quid meetings? Are the notions of hierarchies, equality... are they understood differently? With regard to communication, what is the place of the oral over the written? What is his conception of the time (anticipating the behaviour to have during planning work).-with partners who may have a vision for the future. elasticity of time). Do my partners or Aboriginal people have pragmatic or abstract thinking, individual logic or collective, an implicit or explicit expression?

See the challenge of intercultural training -rality

Overcoming the obstacles mentioned above is not a matter of course.: training in intercultural dialogue is essential for the 17000 army troops deployed permanently overseas-sea¹¹. This training is necessary because it is of the nature of to significantly increase the efficiency of actors on the terrain evolving in a multinational context.

Intercultural training for soldiers sent in mission, yesterday and today

The Specialized Staff for Overseas and Abroad¹² (prior to 1er In July 2016, this organization was renamed the École militaire de overseas and foreign specialization) is an organization historically dedicated to intercultural training in the army of the Army and Mother House of the Marine Troops, heir to the colonial troops. Within this framework, EMSOME organizes adaptation training in overseas and foreign countries for the benefit of the military members intended to serve there, either as part of a posting, either in the case of a short-term mission or operation; or outside. By 2016, some 12,000 trainees have been trained. In parallel of these very good training courses and particularly It is recommended to read books in order to get a complete overview of the Continue acculturation in the theatre before the screening.

By way of comparison, in the 19th century, " it is very rare that those who leave, in one way or another, have benefited from an genuine preparation for campaigns and overseas service »¹³. In reality, those who left filled their gaps with their personal culture, especially through reading, or through family tradition: it is indeed highly probable that a number of not insignificant number of cadets of Saint-Cyr are sons of officers serving in the Colonial Army; therefore, it cannot be ruled out that some of them were born overseas or have lived there.

An American example¹⁴

Within the U.S. military, the military follows modules on the theme of interculturality adapted to their level of competence, throughout their careers. As evoked by Nathalie RUFFIE in her book, the U.S. Army has put in specific socio-cultural programmes for the benefit of the of the

soldiers before projection. The United States Marine Corps created in Quantico in 2008 the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL). « This center trains in language skills; it provides them with expertise in the field of and good cultural practices, before and after the during deployment ».

What content for a training in interculturality?

First of all, it is important that the soldiers take awareness of their own cultural background. This is what Maddalena de Carlo: in the framework of intercultural education of an individual, the starting point must therefore be the identity of the learner: « through the discovery of his mother's culture, he will be brought to understand the mechanisms of belonging to any culture. The more he is aware of the implicit criteria for classifying his own culture, the more he will be able to objectify the implicit principles of division of the world of foreign culture".¹⁵.

Second, soldiers must be able to understand the image they reflect, and therefore the way they are perceived by their interlocutors. Indeed, we must not lose sight of the fact that in many countries, especially in Africa, France can be negatively perceived by part of the population as the former colonial power.

Finally, once these prerequisites have been assimilated, it is necessary to understand the context and culture of the country of projection in the aim then to better measure the differences between cultures who are going to be around each other. For example: reading basic literature, watch movies and listen to local music. Once you arrive the territory, meet and listen to people, especially those in the different ideas, all with the aim of reducing stress and misunderstandings, deciphering decision-making and negotiation processes of the natives.

A focus on language learning¹⁶

Being understood is an indispensable element. In the age of colonies, while British officers serving overseas were required to speak the language of their indigenous unit, it was not the same in the French army, with the exception of the African army, some of whose officers, who do most of the work there their careers, ended up mastering the Arabic or Berber language. Thus, several lexicons came into being, at the initiative of officers, missionaries or civilian officials. For its part, the state-major of the colonial troops then encouraged the diffusion of teaching methods such as " French as it is spoken the Senegalese», the goal being to find a common core... of French expressions facilitating the understanding of orders of European executives for indigenous recruits.

In colonial times, it was not uncommon for French military personnel are totally immersed in the populations they are were watching. Sharing the indigenous way of life was proving to be a very effective way beneficial for cross-cultural understanding. This was the case officers like Auguste-Louis-Marie Bonifacy (1856-1931): French officer, ethnologist and philanthropist. Posted in Indochina as early as 1894, and then allowed to stay in Tonkin full-time, he took part in the peace campaigns while leading a campaign for parallel work as an ethnologist (EFEO correspondent), especially among ethnic minorities. He encouraged¹⁷ the NCOs to learn the local language, so as not to dumb it down. their useless French speech tirailleurs de discours inutiles. Today, the conversations in the language of the host country are often limited to a few hastily learned words from a lexicon distributed during the pre-projection conditioning . A more in-depth learning of the local languages would be a plus to establish a real relationship of trust with the interlocutor.

The qualities to be possessed in order to obtain an inter-successful culture

Intercultural understanding is essential because it is to promote mutualisation and trust, which are at the root of the of fruitful relationships. Intercultural dialogue must enable our partners to feel on an equal footing with us.

Generally speaking, to achieve this, it is a matter of professional empathy, being ready to transcend cleavages and adopt a polycentric approach (the opposite of the of ethnocentrism). Interculturality cannot be possible that if the interlocutors show enthusiasm in their acculturation process. A true preliminary to everything dialogue, theenthusiasm is measured by the degree of empathy that the will have towards each other, he is the real driving force behind the of the intercultural exchange that is about to take place. Enthusiasm is a feeling communicatedcatif, which is likely to make breaking down barriers and prejudices.

In the context of training actions in a third country, beyond being a source of radiation, first of all for the regiment to which he belongs, but also for his army and in fine for its country, theexemplarity is the foundation of the trainer's credibility, whether in thefield, on the firing range, or within working groups when it comes toreforming the army of a country emerging from crisis (NTM: Nato Training Mission; EUTM: European UnionTraining Mission ...).

The versatility is defined as the ability to modify his behaviour to respond to unforeseen situations. For interlocutors from different cultures, the faculty adaptability is essential for interlocutors from different cultures. It allows them to overcome environmental stress induced by the non-conforming environment in which one the soldier finds himself in.

The availability is an imperative synonymous with investment and naturally develops mutual trust.

Conclusion

In an increasingly demanding multinational context, the success of the of military action requires a mastery of interculturality. As a real decisive factor in military operations, understanding it is a-h intercultural understanding faces many obstacles that the soldier can only cope with by having been trained in upstream of the projection. Training in interculturality is therefore a challenge that needs to be addressed. The organization on 28 November 2018 at the Military School by EMSOME of a symposium dedicated to interculturality in military operations testifies of the importance of the subject. A doctrine on interculturality, such as that it is practised by the French armies in operations, is in the process of being written.

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