



# The Age of Disruption: How Power Shifts Create More Conflict

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**Contributing Authors:** Weston Aviles (NSI), Patricia J. Blocksome (Naval War College – Monterey), Donald Bolduc (Truth to Power LLC), Skye Cooley (Oklahoma State Univ), Patricia DeGennaro (USARMY TRADOC G2 OEC), David Dorondo (Western Carolina Univ), Robert Hinck (Monmouth College), Abigail Kamp (Univ Maryland START), Barnett Koven (Univ Maryland START), Larry Kuznar (NSI), Suzanne Levi-Sanchez (Naval War College - Newport), Vern Liebl (CAOCL), Michael Logan (Univ of Nebraska Omaha), LTC Mike Maloney (USSOCOM), Mireya McKee (McKee Innovation Consulting), Spencer Meredith III (National Defense Univ), Randall Munch (USARMY TRADOC G2 OEC), Ryan Oliver (USSOCOM), LTC Tom Pike (USASD/NIU), Ethan Sample (Oklahoma State Univ), Lt Col Jennifer “JJ” Snow (USSOCOM & Donovan Group), & LTC Maciej Zaborowski (POL AF/USCENTCOM, CCJ-5, CSAG)

**Editors:** Gina Ligon (Univ of Nebraska Omaha) & Robert Jones (USSOCOM J52 Donovan Group)

**Integration Editor:** Mariah C. Yager (JS/J39/SMA/NSI)

**Preface provided by:** Mr. William “Joe” Miller (USSOCOM Director of Plans, Strategy and Policy)

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## Contents

Preface	iv
<i>William “Joe” Miller</i>	

Executive Summary	vi
<i>Gina Ligon, PhD</i>	

### **PART I: INTRODUCTION: ANATOMY OF AGE OF DISRUPTION**

---

Chapter 1. “Queen Me:” The Evolution of Populations in Great Power Competition	1
<i>Robert Jones</i>	

Chapter 2. Reconceptualizing VEO Threats in Great Power Competition	8
<i>Spencer Meredith, PhD &amp; LTC Mike Maloney</i>	

Chapter 3. The Progress Disquisition	17
<i>Lt Col Jennifer “JJ” Snow</i>	

### **PART II: HISTORICAL, CROSS-CULTURAL, AND GENDER PERSPECTIVES**

---

Chapter 4. Spaces Created by Great Power Competition – A Historical View	21
<i>Vern Liebl &amp; Patricia DeGennaro</i>	

Chapter 5. Gender as a Force of Instability: Analyzing the #MeToo Movement in China and India	27
<i>Patricia Blocksome, PhD</i>	

Chapter 6. An Eastern European Perspective	35
<i>LTC Maciej Zaborowski</i>	

### **PART III: ANALYTICAL APPROACHES FOR GLOBALLY INTEGRATED FIRES**

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Chapter 7. Metrics of Social Disruption and the Role of Risk Sensitivity in Greed and Grievance	38
<i>Lawrence Kuznar, PhD &amp; Weston Aviles</i>	

Chapter 8. Using Organizational Sophistication to Predict Influence from Violent Non-State Actors	48
<i>Michael Logan &amp; Gina Ligon, PhD</i>	

Chapter 9. Unanticipated Possibilities of Asymmetric Conflict and UW	53
<i>Vern Liebl</i>	

Chapter 10. Migration: The Relationship between Inequality, Risk Sensitivity, and Violence	61
<i>Lawrence Kuznar, PhD</i>	

### **PART IV: REGIONAL DEEP DIVES & APPLICATIONS OF WHITE PAPER CONCEPTS**

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Chapter 11. The Middle East: Conflict and Competition in Perspective	66
<i>Ryan Oliver</i>	

Chapter 12. Crisis in Africa	73
<i>Donald Bolduc</i>	

Chapter 13. Inequality, Risk Sensitivity and the Stability of the Iranian State <i>Lawrence Kuznar, PhD</i>	79
Chapter 14. Getting Played in the Great Game <i>Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, PhD</i>	87
Chapter 15: Divergent Axes of Russian Influence in Colombia and Latin America <i>Barnett Koven, PhD &amp; Abigail Kamp</i>	95
Chapter 16. European “Trojan Horses” and Elite Risk-Taking <i>David Dorondo, PhD</i>	102
Chapter 17. The Central American “Cycle of Violence:” Understanding the Catalysts of Migration as a Gray Rhino <i>Skye Cooley, PhD, Robert Hinck, PhD, &amp; Ethan Sample</i>	108
Chapter 18. Asian Focus on Latin American Innovation <i>Mireya McKee, PhD</i>	115
<b>PART V: HOW WE ADAPT ... OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
Chapter 19. Integrating Strategic Planning in the Age of Disruption <i>Patricia DeGennaro &amp; Randall Munch</i>	122
Chapter 20. Integrated Campaigning in the Age of Disruption <i>LTC Thomas Pike</i>	132
Chapter 21. Russian Views on Resistance and Counter-Resistance Operations <i>Patricia Blocksome, PhD</i>	139
Biographies	146

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Typical Distribution of Social Status in a Complex Society	39
Figure 2. Wealth Distribution and Corresponding Risk Sensitivity Curve of the Venezuelan Population, 2006	40
Figure 3. Heat Map Depicting Countries where Changes in Risk Sensitivity Indicate Growing Terrorism Concerns	44
Figure 4. Net Migration by Country	63
Figure 5. Typical distribution of Social Status in a Complex Society.	80
Figure 6. Distribution of Wealth (Consumption) in Iran 2014 and its Relationship to Risk Sensitivity	80
Figure 7. Russian Arms Sales to Latin America	95
Figure 8. Cognitive Maneuver in Context	125
Figure 9. The Whole OE: Putting Together the Puzzle	129
Figure 10. Competition Continuum (JCIC, 2018)	133

## List of Tables

Table 1. Indicators of State Failure, Civil War, Terrorism and Mass Killing	41
Table 2. Summary of Models	42
Table 3. Indicators and Warnings of Organizational Sophistication	51
Table 4. Correlates of Homicide	62
Table 5. Net Migration Model	64
Table 6. Metric of Inequality Iran 2017	81
Table 7. Risk Sensitivity Measures for Iran	82
Table 8. Selected Trojan Horses	105
Table 9. Forms of Violence Covered in Northern Triangle Media	110
Table 10. State System Failures Covered in Northern Triangle Media	110
Table 11. External Incentives for Migration in Northern Triangle Media	111
Table 12. Descriptions of Migration Journey and of Migrants in Northern Triangle Media	112
Table 13. Descriptions of the Actions and Role of the United States in Northern Triangle Media	112
Table 14. Consequences of Migration in Northern Triangle Media	113
Table 15. Policies Addressing Migration in Northern Triangle Media	113
Table 16. Discussed Policies to Address Migration in Northern Triangle Media	114
Table 17. Latin American Innovation Outputs 2008 and 2017	116
Table 18. New Business Entities in Latin America 2006 and 2016	117
Table 19. LATAM startup accelerators (2015) and VC investments (2017)	118
Table 20. Sample Asian Investments in LATAM Startups (2013-2017).	120

## Preface

*Mr. William “Joe” Miller (USSOCOM Director of Plans, Strategy and Policy)*

The Unipolar Moment is gone; the End of History and the Last Man have not come to pass – instead we now find ourselves in the Age of Disruption.

Disruption is a form of change. Disruption focuses on the exploitation of differences – in perception, understanding, possibility, and propensity. Those who disrupt, challenge the status quo. They seek a dislocation in the organizing logic of the power structures that define the world as we know it and processes that sustain the same. They resist control, and they thrive on influence – shifting effort to accumulate influence, develop leverage and obtain advantage. Disruption is change that exploits the friction, uncertainty and ambiguity driven by the crashing, chaotic and complex competition between increasingly more complex combinations of actors seeking their “rightful place” in a world they believe has denied them.

Change is not new – it is the natural order of things from organization toward an increasing entropy, less organization and more freedom of action for constituent parts of a system. What is new, however, is the speed, scope, and character of change. The proliferation of technology and ideas enables and accelerates interactions among organizations and systems. Empowered by this proliferation, the scope of change has increased exponentially as hyper-connected populations and individuals challenge traditional governance from separate and distinct archipelagos of interests, beliefs, values and objectives. They prospect and mine their support from across the globe building ever more complex and distributed islands bringing them into their archipelago<sup>1</sup> with the goal of wielding their power in concert with or in opposition to traditional state and non-state actors in a much broader and more complex global competition over sovereignty. Nation-states everywhere struggle to keep pace with the evolving expectations of their citizenry, many of whom now belong to some number of these competing archipelagic networks. Revisionist actors understand this “governance gap,” and they seek to leverage it to their advantage. Status quo actors instinctively rationalize responsibility for the gap onto factors beyond their control and tend to fixate on the symptoms, often in ways that make the problems worse. This is the essence of the competition today.

The U.S. and the West, as keepers of the status quo, have been more focused on the preservation of the stability we have enjoyed for so many years instead of concentrating on how we might adapt to the disruption around us to drive the changes we need. Western efforts to lend stability to regions in disarray have, in many cases, arguably been as destabilizing as the challenges presented by so many of the new generation of non-state actors in the current environment. While all sides of this contest frame their goals in the trappings of higher causes, at the center their remains a confluence of foreign policies, national governance, and radicalizing ideology upon the broader grievances of populations. With more information and ability to affect change, populations are increasingly able and willing to overcome the deterrence of state power and take action to address those grievances. After nearly two decades of direct engagement in a competition, the nature of which we have failed to grasp, it is becoming clear that this simmering state of disruption is not the fault of any single category of actor, but has become the playground of all in this new great competition for influence among populations. Populations over whom control was once both possible and desired. Now

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<sup>1</sup> John Mackinlay, *The Insurgent Archipelago*, 2009

control is neither of the two, and has become an expensive, and provocative commodity in the emergent contest.

The reemergence of great power competition threatens to further intensify this disruption and requires that the U.S. review how its frames competition among Great Powers, Lesser Powers and empowered populations. Competition is not new; nation-states engage in constant competition for influence, advantage, and leverage to advance and secure their respective advantages. The character of competition, however, has evolved, and we must evolve with it. In the 2018 National Defense Strategy, Secretary of Defense James Mattis commented that “our diplomatic, intelligence, military, and economic agencies have not kept pace with the changes in the character of competition.” Against less capable and complex adversaries, the U.S. military has compensated for poor matchups and a lack of strategic coherence with over-reliance on our material advantages, exceptional manpower and unmatched tactics, on a battlefield where the force as a whole was not challenged. As more potent challengers contest U.S. interests, the Department of Defense realizes it must do more than be more effective, we must be more efficient as well – a shift that demands a change in strategic thinking.

In this collection of papers, authors from across the defense community examine this issue in depth in the hope of cultivating a better understanding of how to think about emergent challenges in the strategic environment. These views range from the operational to the strategic; from the theoretical to the practical; from the functional to the regional; and from the present to the future. Competition on the global stage is not new, but its implications for U.S. interests in the context of asymmetric conflict are increasingly significant. In order to effectively protect and promote its interests, the U.S. must better understand the implications of intensifying competition as power shifts among states and populations.

## Executive Summary

*Gina Ligon, PhD, University of Nebraska Omaha*

Global Power Competition creates more conflict, particularly when those in the arena believe “Power” to be finite, or a zero-sum game, against a defined set of actors. Both the 2017 National Security Strategy and 2018 National Defense Strategy portend of a change in our focus: inter-state strategic competition is now the primary concern in U.S. national security. While the temptation exists for us to focus on the looming giants and the conventional arsenals they build, it is too recent in our history that focusing on one class of adversary—even those who may pose an existential threat compared to a lesser peril from others—leaves us vulnerable for at least three reasons. First, as argued throughout this white paper, because Global Power Competition will result in increased violence and disruption associated with that competition, our success depends on how well we deploy our military to deter unwanted violence in competition and in war. Historically, competition for power inferred power “over.” However, a central thesis of this white paper is that competition should be for power “of.” As Chapter One deftly summarizes, influence on—or power *of* the people—should be central to the securing of our interests and the modern goal of global power competition.

Second, while a focus on outbidding the activities of our near-peer adversaries is an alluring and measurable objective, to do so may result in a deficit in our lessons learned over the past decades of nonstate conflict. As argued in Chapter Two, great power and asymmetric threats are not orthogonal; instead modern threats are part of an integrated network of complimentary, pragmatic, and sometimes ideological interests that interact in ways that may at times augment our adversaries or weaken our allies. In essence, behind every violent extremist organization (VEO) is a potential great power who stands to gain or lose. As a consequence, decisions we make about what appear to be today’s proximal hazards can diminish our attention on those over the horizon—the Black Swan Scenarios (i.e., *Swanarios*) that foment in the fissures created by Global Power Competition.

Finally, a focus on inter-state competition mischaracterizes our reality. Moreover, every potential battle increasingly appears related, as near-peer adversaries use sub-conflict strategies to accomplish their goals iteratively—pushing against each other in unexpectedly consequential domains. To create a sustained competitive advantage, the U.S. must lean into the complexity that is associated with this multi-domain competition for influence. The push to understand these globally integrated fires is paramount. To do so, new analytic frameworks must be considered in the age of disruption, as well as a deference to the historical patterns that repeat and provide a roadmap of what to do more of, less of, or differently.

In an initial effort to engage the Strategic Multilayer Assessment Community on these topics, the following White Paper is organized in five sections: 1) *an introduction: anatomy of the age of disruption*, 2) *historical, cross-cultural, and gender perspectives*, 3) *analytical frameworks for globally integrated fires*, 4) *regional deep dives and application of the concepts*, and 5) *operational perspectives*.

## PART I: INTRODUCTION: ANATOMY OF AGE OF DISRUPTION

### Chapter 1. “Queen Me:” The Evolution of Populations in Great Power Competition

Robert C. Jones  
USSOCOM J52 Donovan Group  
[Robert.jones@us.socom.mil](mailto:Robert.jones@us.socom.mil)

#### Abstract

Great power competition is always with us, but the character and distribution of power is changing in ways that create new challenges for the United States. This is a contest between those who see their interests served best by some semblance of the status quo, and those who see their interest served best through change. Such competition is natural, but the speed, degree and scope of current shifts in power are creating challenges for everyone.

We should be cautious about expanding the definition of war, and are better served by expanding our understanding of peace. We also need to fully appreciate the strategic implications in the degree of relative power that is shifting from governments to populations. Populations have become the most important competition space of all, and the greatest success will go to those who understand the nature of that competition best, and who adapt the most effectively to the changing character of how that competition plays out.

Ultimately, success in competition will not come from how well we employ our military to coerce others to comply with policies and perspectives that are increasingly out of step with an evolving world. Success will come from how well we employ our military to mitigate and disrupt the violence often associated with competition; to deter unwanted actions in competition as well as war; and to help create the time and space our civil leadership needs to evolve to meet the emerging challenges of advancing and securing US interests in a manner that adds, rather than detracts, from US influence.

- **Be strategic.** Violence is not strategic, but relationships and purpose for action are.
- **Define war narrowly.** War should not be expanded to include all competition that is violent, rather war should be narrowly defined to a legal condition of rights and duties between two or more parties and rarely embraced.
- **Embrace a restive peace.** This is the leadership the world wants. This is the leadership America needs. The role of the military is to advance civil competition, not to convert all competition into some degree of war or warfare. Violence and the threat of violence live here.
- **Value influence, avoid control.** Control is becoming an expensive liability, unnecessary (and unwanted) to the advancement and securing of our interests. Influence is the modern goal.

#### Shifting Power

I confess, when it comes to the issue of “Great Power Competition,” I have more questions than answers. We’ve all read the guidance. Assume a fighter’s stance; focus on five named threats; but also recognize the importance of competition short of armed conflict; etc. Fair enough, I can work with

that. Though, as I read the various takes on that guidance from across the Joint Force, most apparently take it to mean, “Do what I like to do, how I like to do it, and do more of it.” I’m just not sure that gets us to where we need to be. This is not a call to the past, this is a call to the future.

After all, what is *power*? It’s surely not just a simple formula of work divided by time, or even square miles of ocean divided by number of carrier battle groups. The work of advancing and securing our national interests is an enduring mission, and one that must be constantly reassessed in the context of the times we live in, and into the foreseeable future. More likely than not, the power that brought one to where they are is neither the power that will sustain them in that position, nor the power that will take them down. But in this contest between status quo actors and revisionist actors, the tendency of the former is to cling too long and rely too heavily on forms of power that have grown obsolete with time. Whereas the revisionist actors are more creative, more risk tolerant, and more willing to invest in and to employ new forms of power to seek an asymmetric advantage. Where one sees threat, revisionists see opportunity.

However one measures power, one thing clear to most is that power is shifting. Power is shifting in form. Not long ago powerful corporations made things, now they facilitate transactions of information, or merchandise made by others. Once great power was measured in battleships and colonies, and then aircraft carriers and alliances. What is power measured in today? I suspect time will tell, and that the status quo actors will be more surprised than they should have been. Generally speaking, when power shifts, the game changes. So, as the preeminent status quo power, the odds are, that not only is the United States overly invested in/focused upon the wrong forms of power – but are also likely *playing the wrong game*.

Playing to win is a powerful component of the strategic culture of the American people; after all, this is what we had been doing since our very inception. But when the Cold War ended, the US both won and lost in equal measure. We won the international contest, *but we lost our national purpose*. Many felt that it was even “The End of History” (Fukuyama, 1989). Clearly history continues, but it was definitely an inflection point. The collapse of that polarized contest initiated a new era of competition, a competition released from generations of artificial constraints, and also a competition energized by unprecedented breakthroughs in technology. A new game was afoot, but while everybody else was playing to win, the US adopted a de facto grand strategy of *playing not to lose*.

This neutral, yet aggressive, approach has been a strategic disaster. Playing not to lose is completely counter to our strategic culture as a nation, and has contributed to our seeing the world in artificially black and white terms of “friends” or “threats.” We state our primary purpose as being that of leading and preserving the global system. But the global system is evolving, and our leadership is too often like that of the worst second lieutenant in the battalion. We go about telling everyone we are in charge; we make up rules we are either unable or unwilling to enforce (or even follow); we do not listen well to those with greater experience but less power; we lack empathy; we seek to buy loyalty; and we do not delegate effectively where appropriate to do so. To be clear, this is not unique to any single administration, but is common to all in varying degrees over the post-Cold War era.

If a nation plays by our rules, or lives by similar values, than they are our friends. But if one dares to play a different game or to suggest different rules? Well, then they are a threat. We see threats everywhere, and frankly, in this competition for influence, many of our friends are starting to look longingly in their directions. It is time for America to become more secure in our own ideological differences from others. In an era where people everywhere seek to be more like themselves, a US policy premised in the belief that we make ourselves safer when we make others more like us is incredibly provocative and counterproductive. It is also a gross violation of that most foundational

American principle of the right of every population to self-determined governance. Successful competition for the US will not be one of preserving a global system as we wish it to be, but rather it will be our ability to influence the evolution of the global system in a manner that preserves our most vital interests in a sustainable fashion and in concert with our express values as a nation.

## The Violence Paradox

It is important to address the problematic way we think about violence. The US military overly fixates on the presence or degree of violence as lending strategically significant shades of meaning to various forms of conflict. Frankly, I have come to believe that violence - its presence, absence or degree - is a condition that yields virtually no strategic insights as to the nature of a problem, and only describes a character of the contest. Overly fixating on the character of conflict leads us to approaches that tend to focus more on treating the symptoms of a problem, rather than the problem itself. This in turn leads us to rationalize that a problem has been solved simply because the symptoms have been suppressed (Iraq 2003, 2011 & 2018). Our understanding of both the nature and the character of competition and conflict is in need of refreshing.

As power continues to shift, the nature of competition and conflict remains stable, as it is rooted in the stability of human nature. However, the character of war, more importantly, the character of peace, is changing. Perhaps most interestingly, the shift in relative power from governments to populations is revealing that several long-held “facts” about the nature of conflict are perhaps only calcified assumptions, serving to confuse our understanding and misdirect our actions. For example, what if internal revolutionary conflict, long classified as a form of irregular warfare, was actually an exercise in illegal democracy? By recognizing these types of emerging distinctions it facilitates our ability to better understand and address problems for what they are and to devise policies and strategies that are more proactive, less provocative, and that yield more durable strategic results.

Instead of focusing on violence, we should focus on more strategically significant factors: such as the nature of the relationships between the competing parties; or each party’s primary purpose for action, and their relationship to the population they are operating among. For example, if a segment of the population internal to a single system of governance is acting legally to force change on their governance, it is an exercise in democracy. On the other hand, if they are acting out *illegally* to coerce change then is it more accurately thought of as an act of *illegal democracy*, than irregular warfare?

Ultimately, the presence or absence of violence is strategically moot. If some group was acting within the law to distribute drugs, and becoming so powerful they disrupt governance with legal campaign contributions, they are a business. If instead they work *outside* the law to distribute drugs, and become so powerful they disrupt governance with corruption, they are a criminal enterprise. Insurgency is insurgency and crime is crime. To create fictions like “narco-insurgency” based on the strategic effects of an activity, rather than the strategic nature, leads to adopting solutions that too often result in long, frustrating, ineffective programs that burn US influence through their execution.

When competition is parsed out into distinct categories based on degrees of violence it becomes too easy to assign blame and to look for threats. Legality of competition is the more important factor, but while never forgetting that laws are typically created by status quo powers to preserve status quo powers. Revisionists will work within the law where convenient, outside the law where they perceive they can, and violently when they perceive they must. Recognizing this fact serves to shift the onus for stability from defeating the revisionist to improving the status quo; and from controlling the population to evolving the government. Whether an illicit operation has a primary purpose of politics

or power, there is a direct linkage to both cause and cure in how governance operates and affects the population. By adopting a more strategic understanding of the problems we face, we can move forward from a current family of solutions that too often are overly tactical, reactive, symptomatic, and strategically ineffective.

Because of our fixation on violence, there is a growing movement to expand the definition of war to the detriment of peace. There is an urge to bundle strategically unique aspects of problems by superficial similarities to fit them within the context of our preferred solutions and our authorities for action. The end result is that we increasingly think of peacetime actions as being shades of war, instead of embracing the reality that peace is often messy, illicit and violent. We wage war on crime, rather than crafting better laws. We wage war on revolutionary actors rather than seeking reasonable evolutions in governance designed to empower populations with trusted, certain, effective and legal means to address the governance affecting their lives within the context of their respective cultures. In short, *we wage war on peace*. It is an approach that burns influence at a time when the possession of influence, and the ability to build and wield influence, is perhaps the greatest element of power.

## Compete for Influence

Define war narrowly as a legal status imposing specific rights and duties between two or more parties. Everything else is peace. Regardless if the character of the problem looks like cooperation, competition, or conflict. A new family of artificial violence-based categories is likely to lead to the same problematic phrasing of campaigns that the latest strategies seek to avoid. It is strategically irrelevant if we are in a state of cooperation, competition, conflict or war. Those terms describe how the competition looks, but do not define what the competition is.

The US must devise a new game, a game we can once again play to win. This will be a game that is more about facilitating change we can live with than about keeping things in stasis. This will be a game that recognizes that teams form around interests and will differ by situation. The reality is that we are all in competition and that concepts of permanent friends or enemies are once again as obsolete as they were at Washington's farewell. Perhaps most importantly of all, this will be a game where nations must compete as vigorously for influence with their own populations at home, as they do for influence with both governments and populations abroad.

## Power to the Man – The Shift Between

Power is shifting between states. As the post-Cold War hegemonic global power, the United States had grown so used to getting our way that it is apparently a bit of a shock to realize that every other nation has goals, interests and ambitions of their own. The goals of many of those nations nest well with the US; some who share many of the same interests, and others who may share fewer interests, but who see their interests served far better by working with the US, than by working against us. Then there are those states who neither share our interests, nor do they see working with the US as the path to attaining their ambitions. It is easy to see these actors as threats, but ultimately, this is simply *great power competition*. It is important to note that while the US is just now formally recognizing this competition, as well as our need to be a more effective competitor; the competition has always been there. We just let ourselves grow complacent.

Most of the focus now is on state power and state competition. There is a broad and deep frustration across the Joint Force with the misadventures of the post-9/11 era. It is easy to understand why the

services are so eager to return to their respective comfort zones, and to re-embrace traditional perspectives of state-on-state competition and conflict. But I urge caution, as this may actually be a doubling down on the misunderstandings and mistakes of the past 17 years.

Our response to the rise of al Qaeda and the attacks of 9/11 was a tragic blend of misunderstandings. We misunderstood ourselves; we misunderstood our opponent; we misunderstood the populations central to the conflict; we misunderstood the rapidly evolving governance challenges of our partners and allies; and we misunderstood how so many factors were combining to transform the character of population-based conflicts.

We think of problems in the context of the labels, like “insurgency” or “terrorism,” that we attach. We then pull books off the shelf from a bygone era that spoke to how to understand and address those same labels for the purposes of sustaining colonies, or implementing containment. But our purpose for action has changed, as has the character of those dynamics. To then compound our error, we consistently bundle fundamentally unique aspects of various problems by their shared physical characteristics in an effort to better fit them within our authorities and permissions to act. This “one size fits all” approach may not be why the VEO problem has doubled in size, but it certainly did not make it smaller. We fixate upon and engage the symptoms, and the net results of our efforts have served to make the problem worse.

Now the call in the National Defense Strategy is to prioritize our focus upon how we compete short of armed conflict with a handful of named state actors. We appear to be rushing to apply the same simplistic logic that shaped our VEO efforts in our return to state-based competition and conflict. But just as the character of population-based conflict has evolved, so too has the character of competition between states. Increasingly, state-based competition is inextricably intertwined with population-based conflict. It is all connected, and it is all changed.

When power shifts between states, the rising states naturally seek to enhance their claims of sovereign privilege; just as declining powers seek to retain what privilege they can. This is the nature of great power competition. Arguably the US claims privilege far in excess of the needs our interests. That is a policy decision, but there is a cost associated with sustaining excess privilege, and it is one that has historically bankrupted great powers, and we need to weigh the costs and benefits of the privileges we claim, and the ways we seek to preserve those privileges carefully. But if we measure these shifts in power by the wrong metrics, if we misunderstand what is essential to power today, if we misunderstand what is necessary to interests today, we will undoubtedly miscalculate the status of this competition as well.

It may be helpful to think about state power like the stock market. The traditional measures of power, found in the character of one’s territory, population, industry and economy all matter. But other factors, like stocks, tend to rise or decline in value as conditions change. Status Quo powers, like the US, tend to be more risk adverse, over-investing in the ‘blue chip’ elements of power that brought them to where they currently stand. Revisionist powers are more tolerant of risk. Revisionists are more likely to see the potential in emerging forms of power. In time, both the status quo and the revisionist actor are apt to believe they are stronger than they actually are. Currently the US is returning to traditional perspectives on threats, conflict, competition and warfare. Certainly those blue chip investments must be sound. But is our power portfolio properly balanced for the world as it actually is, or is it designed for a world as we wish it to be? This is where we are today. This is when miscalculations and mistakes are made.

The Department of Defense and the Joint Force has an institutional blind spot for population-based power. For the military, populations are ancillary to our technology-based domination of the domains we choose to recognize. After all, the services can parse out land, sea and air among themselves with little debate, and they can all see the enabling aspects of space and cyber. Whereas a human domain is perceived some blend of irrelevant, redundant, or as a play by USSOCOM for greater relevance and budget share. But the same technologies that led to the creation of the cyber domain have also severed to open Pandora's Box. Instead of merely creating another new domain in which only the most powerful can compete, cyber has instead served to create new vulnerabilities to the most powerful and shifted the relative balance of power between governments and populations in ways we do not fully grasp- and that has served to re-empower the human domain.

## Power to the People - The Shift Within

We live in revolutionary times. Instability is everywhere. More importantly, we place the blame for this instability everywhere except for where it rightfully belongs. Governments everywhere are under increasing pressure from the populations, both foreign and domestic, affected by their governance. But here is what the leaders of these governments are failing to grasp: people do not fail their governments, it is governance that fails the people.

There is always an inherent friction caused by governance upon the governed. The energy for, and the likelihood of political instability naturally grows in eras like today. Not only is relative power shifting from governments to populations, there is also a tremendous evolution of expectations. Be it calls for greater globalized socialism or right-wing populism in the West; or radical Islam in the Middle East, similar dynamics of human nature are in play. The greatest factor for stability is increasingly not how much control a government has over the people, but rather how much control the people perceive themselves to have over the various forms of governance affecting their lives. If war is the final argument of kings, then certainly revolution is the final vote of the people. The competition space for those votes is a global one, and borders only inform, but do not define that competition space.

This is a competition for influence, and the states that understand the power of populations and who compete most effectively for influence with populations, both at home and abroad, will be the state powers who fare best in the great power competition. This is the key to this broad competition space short of war. Be it in cooperation, competition, or conflict, the actors who understand best the art of creating and sustaining resilience within their own societies; of creating influence among foreign populations; and of being able to create the credible threat of destabilizing the societies of one's most problematic opponents, will have the advantage.

As western society shifted from kingdoms to nations it changed the role of populations in war. War was once a chess-like game of imposing costs on an opposing king, with populations little more than pawns. With the rise of nations populations suddenly had skin in the game. Napoleon leveraged this to his advantage against the kings of Europe; and Grant recognized that a defeat of the Confederacy must include a defeat of their population, in addition to the focus of his predecessors on the kingdom-like objectives of Richmond and Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. It was a shift of power that changed the character of war. A change in governance changed the balance of power and the character of war.

As western powers developed and extended vast networks of electronic communications a new shift in power began to emerge. Certainly the telegraph sped the demise of the British Empire. Now we see the exponential increases in information technologies creating unforeseen challenges for the

United States and our partners and allies around the globe. Populations long deterred by the fear of state power are now acting on ancient grievances. Populations newly aware of the possibilities of better governance are acting on those ambitions. Where legal mechanisms are available, it is chaotic democracy. Where legal mechanisms are denied it is instability, revolution, resistance and unconventional warfare. Great powers still seek to use foreign populations as pawns, but they are pawns no longer. They have crossed the board and are now Queens. Just as a change in governance served to shift power, now that shift in power is serving to change governance. Queen me.

## Conclusion

Great power competition is real, and it is picking up in intensity. As power shifts among the many actors it is changing the character of that competition and challenging our understanding of the nature of competition and conflict as well. But this is not war, and we do not make ourselves safer by insisting on characterizing peace as war.

The bad news for our greatest state challengers? They are all autocratic regimes, which grow increasingly brittle every day, and have far more to fear from their own populations than they do from the military forces of those they challenge. They have a competition of their own. Will they implode first, or will they explode? I suspect they appreciate the inherent vulnerabilities of their respective situations better than we do. The bad news for violent extremist groups like al Qaeda and Daesh? The energy they rely upon for relevance is not in their ideology, but in the political grievances of the populations they leverage to advance their agendas. By adjusting our approach to foreign policy to be more neutral than it became during the post WWII era, and by becoming more agnostic about who or how others self-determine to govern themselves, we can deny VEOs of much of the energy that fuels their campaigns. We can outcompete VEOs for influence.

The good news for the US and our partners and allies? By adjusting our understanding of the problems we face we can become much more focused in our foreign engagements and can shift to approaches that are far less provocative and far more likely to achieve results that are both durable and desired. We can also shift to more proactive approaches focused more on building influence and advancing and securing our interests that current, reactive threat-focused perspectives allow. Our founders designed for us a form and system of governance ideally suited for the world emerging around us. It is a system that has been tested by fire, and that has a flexibility and durability that gives us a natural resilience to shocks of every nature. Yes, we are in an era of great power competition, but we are competing from the front, and hold far more advantages than we appreciate.

## Chapter 2. Reconceptualizing VEO Threats in Great Power Competition

Spencer B. Meredith III, PhD  
National Defense University  
[spencer.b.meredith.civ@msc.ndu.edu](mailto:spencer.b.meredith.civ@msc.ndu.edu)

LTC Mike P. Maloney  
United States Army Special Operations Command  
[mpm6453@yahoo.com](mailto:mpm6453@yahoo.com)

### Viewing VEOs through Great Power Competition

The National Military Strategy (NMS) makes clear that violent extremist organizations are not going away. It recognizes that while great power competition will define the emerging security environment for the foreseeable future, VEOs will remain a potent threat to the United States. A key challenge as we enter into hybrid warfare with state adversaries will be to understand the ways non-state actors evolve as proxies, puppets and in rare cases, partners with great powers. This submission to the SMA White Paper addresses several core aspects of violent extremist organizations (VEOs), and how the United States can counter the multiplying threats facing the nation.

VEOs are changing their tactics, operational planning, and strategic goals to take advantage of the increasing patronage available by Russia and China. This is being done in part through a growing awareness by VEOs that US attention has shifted away from the Middle East as the central area of operations. That awareness has also identified a wider spectrum of options to threaten US interests in great power competition. The net result has been an increasing intent to include great power goals, methods, and messaging into VEO approaches and activities.

Russia and China actively support converging around common goals to undermine US leadership of the global system. Yet neither patron nor client maintains any illusions that either actually believes in the other's self-interests. Instead, these unions serve a few simple purposes. First, VEOs pursue self-interest as vociferously and viciously as Russia and China. At the same time, a key difference is that Russia and China have the ability to play longer games, giving them longer visions of the future. This reduces the incentives to maximize efforts through short, sharp bursts of activity, something VEOs must rely on instead. This can be seen through the rapid acquisition of territory, manpower, and materiel during ISIS's initial breakout, the Jalisco cartel's rise to prominence, and Antifa's emergence via increasingly violent street protests. Most of all, VEOs must strike first, strike hard, and show no mercy with the opposition. This rigidity of purpose and short timeframes are necessary to ensure they maintain adequate market share in the increasingly crowded field of revisionist ideas and organizations. As a result, great power patronage gives VEOs much needed attention and operating space to maneuver against an increasingly aware and awakened United States. The US should expect to see more of this in the future, not less.

Second, great powers can utilize VEOs in myriad ways for the very simple reason that hybrid warfare incentivizes full spectrum actions at all levels of political, economic, and social settings. From the obvious violence targeting civilian centers, to the less frequent but still viable regular warfare when VEOs gain the means of state resources – either from their enemies or through illegal arms sales – VEOs have potent weapons that great powers all too readily support. Less obvious avenues also present themselves. Political warfare fought in the world of public opinion does more than seek to

frighten susceptible populations. It also undermines support of otherwise legitimate governments. VEOs can just as easily expose core weaknesses that permit VEOs to operate within the state's territory, as demonize the inevitable "overreaction" to appear strong and capable in the face of VEO challenges. Legal jurisdictions also become the ensuing battleground as VEOs function within the seams of overlapping responsibilities and lines of authority. This can effectively throw interagency working relationships into turmoil as all sides devolve into blaming for failures, or clamoring for success at the expense of others. Hybrid warfare therefore offers a gold mine for VEOs in their own right, and infinitely more so when supported by great power states.

The most common method of such support comes as a *proxy*. The Cold War brings to mind the most recent examples of proxy battles, but by no means have they been limited to the last century. Ancient Rome, Cortez in Mesoamerica, Belgian colonial policy, and early 20th century Japanese machinations in Manchuria each exhibit variations of great powers using smaller proxies in their battles with more powerful rivals. Equally so, those times also show how non-state entities sold themselves as "Gray Zone" solutions, below the threshold of overt, direct hostilities that threaten escalation by powerful states. The opportunity costs are low for great powers to use proxies, and VEOs can easily manipulate the conditions of great power competition to gain advantage against their own enemies. The net effect is that today's VEOs follow a long line of proxies in great power competition, many of which show clear pathways to "punch above their weight class."

A second variation of VEOs in great power competition minimizes VEO awareness of great power plans and alignment of goals. These *puppets* are less likely to acknowledge patronage by great powers, if they are even mindful of it. In the case of mass movements in democracies, from the French National Front and Bharatiya Janata Party in India, to the migrant caravans of central America, the average member likely has no idea of the organization's support by outside actors, let alone their linkages to great power states. Yet the fact of that ignorance does not diminish the extended benefits such democratic puppets bring to Russia and China. At a minimum, media coverage for these "legitimate" VEOs allows great powers to reap the rewards of undermining the democratic process of rival states. At the maximum, they can swing the tide of elections in favor of pro-Russian/Chinese candidates. Such is the great concern with the 2019 Ukrainian presidential election. As of this paper's writing, the current "populist" outsider candidate has the potential to do more than just upend the established post-Maidan ruling clique. He can also subvert the very democratic trajectory of Ukraine by submitting to Moscow as Yanukovich had previously done. Such an outcome would certainly not lead to a quiet return into the Kremlin's orbit, but the ensuing chaos would still achieve Russia's chief goal in the region – fundamentally undermining the legitimacy of an independent Ukraine.

On the other side of the spectrum, the final option for VEO roles in great power completion is also the rarest. *Partners* require far more upkeep and raise strategic operating costs for great powers, not least because the clear connection between VEO activities and great power support threatens great powers' abilities to manage escalation. If such a relationship is to exist then, VEOs must present a clearly unique benefit to the great power. Two common ways include supporting the state's initiatives more broadly as champions of its international reputation in the United Nations, or through directly undermining the partner of a rival great power. Current examples of Hezbollah and the Maduro regime can be seen in this light, even though they also challenge traditional lines of being either a state or non-state entity.

Hezbollah stands out as a directly funded, openly claimed Iranian partner in the struggle for dominance of both Lebanon and the Levant. It also plays a key role in the regional great power struggle between Shia/Persian Iran and Sunni/Arab Saudi Arabia, to say nothing of galvanizing the counter-Israel movement worldwide. Yet Hezbollah also offers a unique advantage to Iran as a

“legitimate” political actor, thereby sanctioning Iran’s open relationship with the long-standing VEO. In that sense, Hezbollah crosses boundaries as a state and non-state entity through its official standing in Lebanese politics, and because of that ambiguity, remains a viable and potent tool for great power strategy.

The Maduro regime also crosses those lines, albeit in different ways. Maduro and his shrinking clique of kleptocrats currently still have international support from Russia and China as the legitimate government of Venezuela. In large part due to Moscow’s “anti-regime change” stance for anti-democratic regimes, and Beijing’s resistance to external intervention in even the most heinous human rights conditions, both great powers stand by the standing government against the United States and its Latin American partners. Thus, despite mounting alternative bases of support for opposition governance, the Maduro regime remains the government of Venezuela at the time of this paper. However, the extremism of its ideologically driven violence against its own people, the vagaries of its legal standing, and the clear necessity of international props to keep it going, all serve as indicators of a VEO partnership operating in great power competition.

Police brutality and torture clearly stand out as main aspects of Maduro’s socialist violence. Yet so does fostering the spiraling humanitarian crisis through catastrophic mismanagement of the economic emergency, to say nothing of blocking international aid shipments. Yet Maduro and his supporters do not earn the VEO moniker solely based on violence. Nor does virulent socialist ideology in itself prove sufficient to name a sitting government as a VEO. However, the doubling down on revolutionary ideology in the face of clear evidence that 1) the revolution has failed and 2) the masses of Venezuela have rejected its mass mobilization, indicates that the regime is out of step with the normal practices of governance. Such extremism combines with its pariah status among a growing list of international parties. Under such conditions, Maduro and his supporters have become either an entrenched insurgency or an occupying cadre with contested control over key state resources, all with support from outside actors.

Like Hezbollah, the Maduro regime can thus be seen as a VEO partner in great power competition. Doing so reveals the range of options for VEO activity in the emerging security environment, one that far exceeds the preceding post-Cold War era. As hybrid warfare between great powers operationalizes everything along expanding lines of contact, VEOs will continue to require direct action by the United States to counter them. That action must see them as targets in themselves, and *see through them* to the larger adversaries benefiting from VEOs in great power competition. It does not take much imagination to identify the scope of possible horrors wrought by a renewed ISIS-type VEO directly funded by Moscow or Beijing. Such a group need not retain ISIS-style caliphate goals, nor would it likely even be Islamist in that regard. The growing counter-US/counter-democratic/counter-capitalist factions within democracies themselves are potent enough movements and fertile grounds to grow renewed socialist VEO uprisings. Putin’s reclamation of past Soviet glories and even more importantly, excusals of past atrocities, further justifies socialism as a narrative of anti-US VEOs. Combined with the “Communist” character of Beijing’s statist strategies, one need not gaze far into the future in order for the past to become prologue, and socialism’s return to become more than mere coincidence.

To see this way – reconceptualizing the VEO threat as more than Cold War analogs or Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) enemies – and then to act upon that sight, the US must rely on several approaches. First is the need for effective *globally integrated campaigning* as the way to harness full-spectrum elements of national power across the vast competition space. Second, we must develop *intellectual overmatch* to remain agile in identifying 1) strategic vulnerabilities in our adversaries and 2) ways to

turn them into opportunities for countering aggressions. This paper proposes the following options be included in the great power competition toolkit.

## Seeing SOF Anew in Great Power Competition

For nearly two decades, Special Operations Forces (SOF) have been employed worldwide predominantly to counter VEOs. At the forefront of US military efforts to understand and defeat those organizations, SOF operate within the human domain of conflict and specialize in population-centric warfare. The most recent operations have been in the Global War on Terror, but SOF have deeper and wider roots in hybrid warfare that need to be resuscitated for great power competition.

Following the successful unconventional warfare (UW) campaign to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, national missions shifted to counter-VEO approaches. At their core, counter-insurgency (COIN), counterterrorism (CT) and Foreign Internal Defense (FID) quickly became the bedrock of GWOT. Yet COIN and FID have been part of a broader SOF portfolio since before the Taliban arrived on the US radar. However, the post-9/11 fervor focused SOF in narrow ways that allowed many Cold War approaches to atrophy. The resulting “overly-specialized” vision of what SOF can bring to the fight must change as the nation turns its attention belatedly to the threats posed by Russia and China.

Functionally, SOF elements are often employed as small, low-footprint teams ranging between two and twelve people. Their tasks generally center on working with some type of partner military, police, humanitarian or governance organization at the behest of the US Ambassador to that country. That mission set does not preclude countering VEOs though. Throughout GWOT, SOF elements have been tasked with seeing through training of partner security forces and governance capabilities to the deeper human networks that give rise to and support VEO influence. This critical skillset makes SOF a vital resource to counter Russia and China in great power competition as well. However, the perception of SOF mastering the “down-and-in” of non-state human networks has limited how decision makers see the scope of their utility. This paper shows that the same human network mastery can and should be applied to “up-and-out” networks in great power competition.

Counter-VEO accomplishments have ingrained this task into SOF identity, with many decision-makers understanding SOF roles as inherently limited to the non-state mission set. Yet viewing the fight to defeat ISIS’s physical caliphate only through that lens easily has bogged down strategic thinking in the near fight, and often to the detriment of preparing for the next VEO possible within the Middle East and elsewhere. While the rise of a digital caliphate inspires some interest to look beyond the next ridgeline, the more pressing and dangerous VEO incarnations will be those employed and supported by Russia and China, and SOF need to pivot towards them.

As the United States dusts off the peer competitor lens and gazes out at the global competition space once again, some have argued instead that SOF should remain primarily, if not exclusively tied to what it “does best” with VEOs only. This short-sighted view misses both the modularity of SOF and the complexity of hybrid warfare. While tying SOF to the VEO problem might appear to free up conventional tools for the global competition space, critically, the United States is not re-entering the Cold War competition space. That chessboard is gone forever, having morphed with GWOT into the full-spectrum hybrid warfare of the 21st century. The current competition space is more complex, moves faster throughout population-centric networks, and lacks the established “red phone” dampening mechanisms to control the rate of escalation. Accordingly, a vital tool to understand this new environment and generate options to compete well over time is already in the appropriate

places. SOF can and must be a vehicle for seeing through VEOs to great power competitors. Doing so increases the options for SOF to support conventional operations and the other elements of strategic competition.

Viewing the global competition space through this lens confirms many of the existing SOF paradigms. The United States will continue to need partners that can fight and hold terrain, albeit most effectively when backed by coalition airpower and with coalition provided arms and equipment. The United States will continue to need the support of local governments to motivate their populations to resist VEO and great power adversary narratives, and remove resources from those movements. Most importantly, the United States will continue to need defined goals and objectives to demonstrate success against these rivals. The defeat of the physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria; the removal of all ISIS forces in Sirte, Libya; or the degradation of the Taliban's ability to influence the government of Afghanistan, have been put forward as ways to defeat VEOs. Instead, by viewing the global competition space through the hybrid warfare lens, VEOs become a piece on the chessboard rather than the opponent, and SOF elements that were restricted to certain moves in the VEO game can now employ new moves against great power opponents.

This also widens the win-set for great power competition to include "close with and destroy the enemy" as well as "win the hearts and minds" of the populace. Despite some foolishly stating that conventional warfare is dead and hearts and minds do not matter, nothing could be further from the truth. Success in hybrid warfare must include winning in those areas as much as the very fact of staying in the game – *maintaining presence to compete is a key measure of victory in hybrid warfare*. As a result, presence is the necessary means to evaluate VEOs as threats across the proxy-puppet-partner continuum. Russia and China take this expansive, long-term view, and the US must as well to compete successfully in the new security environment. The following examples give brief glimpses into the transitional nature of VEOs in hybrid warfare and ways SOF have engaged them in great power competition.

### Wagner Group – Proxy in Plain Sight

On February 7th, 2018 Russian private security forces from the Wagner Group posed as pro-Syrian government forces and crossed a de-confliction boundary with US coalition forces. They attacked a location occupied by a small United States SOF element and showed clearly that Russia did not view the battlefield through a VEO-centric lens. The Kremlin's decision to operationalize a non-state actor against a great power rival indicates both a keen awareness of the vast opportunities of hybrid warfare, as well as the innate logic of escalation management through proxy battles. For the first time since Russian forces entered Syria, Moscow wanted to push lightly against US forces using its ostensibly separated proxy to see how easily the United States could be moved from an established position. Up to that point, US forces had very deliberately avoided direct contact with pro-Syrian government forces in order to keep its lines of effort within the counter VEO arena. If Russia had been successful in portraying their mercenary group as Syrian sponsored forces, and the United States had withdrawn north away from the valuable oil field near Dawr-as-Zwar, then Russia would have gained a clear operational victory. The strategic victory for Russia would have been even greater, proving that the United States would give up tactical and operational advantage to avoid peer competition by staying limited to the counter VEO lens. Instead, a small element of US Special Operations professionals, backed by US airpower, successfully repelled the attack, inflicting an estimated 200 – 300 casualties against the mercenaries without loss or injury (Gibbons-Neff, 2018). The net effect provided clear evidence for US decision makers of the ways VEO proxy battles can communicate

strategic intent, capability, and skill in hybrid warfare. Doing so in this instance raised Russia's operating costs as the Kremlin reconsiders the uses of non-state proxies in theater.

## Libya – Puppets Galore

Puppets also play a key role within hybrid warfare. As unwitting actors with the power to increase adversary operating costs, puppets generally exist on the periphery of escalation, giving room for experimentation and data collection without the risk of unforeseen, irreversible political failures. They are, essentially, a cost-effective laboratory for peer competition. United States SOF elements are also cost-effective in identifying them within great power competition, as much as working to counter the threats they pose. Small teams can travel commercially and live off of the local economy, thereby reducing both physical and financial footprints. Combined with regional and language expertise, SOF teams interact across the civil-military spectrum to work with partners throughout the military proficiency, civil defense, humanitarian assistance, and governance portfolios. Of particular importance in the global competition space, SOF can operate in areas that peer competitors have generally regarded as within their sphere of influence, and therefore do not need direct partners or proxies to achieve their goals. In such cases, puppets are the more natural choice to operationalize populations and resources with the appearance of indigenous origins.

By early 2016, Libya had become such a laboratory. The political factions had fractured and generally aligned with either the emerging Government of Nation Accord (GNA) led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, or the commander of the Libyan National Army, General Khalifa Haftar. The United States supported GNA and PM al-Sarraj, but tied that support most clearly to SOF elements isolating ISIS forces within the port city of Sirte and setting the conditions for an eventual airstrike campaign to dislodge them from the city. Since the US decision makers viewed Libya through a counter VEO lens, there was no apparent benefit to engaging in dialogue with General Haftar and the Libyan National Army leaders. Their influence did not extend at the time outside zones controlling oil and other resources, and so appeared to offer little to the CT fight. Russia, however, capitalized on US unwillingness to engage with a powerful figure in Libyan politics, and immediately began a dialogue that resulted in support to General Haftar's forces (Meyer, Al-Atrush, & Kravchenk, 2018). Most importantly, the United States missed an opportunity to compete with Russia in an arena of long-standing Russian influence.

Even recognizing that General Haftar's immediate aims did not align with those of the United States, the failure to maintain an open door with him greatly incentivized Haftar to talk to the only great power on his appointment list. Had the United States been looking through VEOs with a global competition lens, and viewed his organization as a puppet that could at least be denied to Russia, the US could have competed well instead of losing another opportunity for influence in the region. The profusion of factions in the ongoing civil war presents Russia and China a wide range of resources should one faction fall. Hybrid warfare ensures these low opportunity costs for great power use of puppets, and the United States would do well to see through the current VEO fight towards that more costly competition in the area.

## Syrian Democratic Forces – Partners (and a lot more)

In similar ways, partners have value not just in openly supporting great powers, but also in being denied to peer competitors. A central part of the US Syria policy discussion is the future of its main partner in the fight against ISIS, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). To label SDF as much in no way denies the self-interest Syrian Kurds have in self-preservation facing threats on all sides. SDF faces

off against both Syrian and Turkish governments, both with the support of Russia, in addition to various splinter AQ (Al Qaeda) and ISIS groups in the region. The necessity of outside support remains patently obvious to all, but the choices SDF has made show its potential as far more than a partner in the VEO fight. The most important is the broad coalition of groups making up the organization's political and military wings. It would be a stretch to label this nascent democracy building as firmly entrenched democratic values among all parties. However, the alignment of both SDF strategic ends and democratic ways to US approaches in Syria indicates there is more to it than just a counter VEO partner. It has the potential to give far more value in the fight for influence in the region.

Yet if decision makers only look through the VEO lens, one could argue the time will come to withdraw US SOF forces entirely and allow the Kurds to sort out their own destiny in northern Syria. Through the global competition space lens though, removing US influence with the Kurds would leave a vacuum, similar to General Haftar's case, and clear the negotiating table for Russia, the Assad Regime, Turkey and others to work toward their own goals at the expense of the United States. US interests extend beyond Syria and conflict termination there. SDF presents to other potential US partners a clear message that siding with the US is worth the short-term costs of greater democratization and support against US rivals – if the US maintains that credibility. Maintaining this relationship, at the very least, could prevent the Kurds from aligning with Russia in order to secure the backing of a great power however they can.

Seeing through the VEO fight also means the US can maintain bulwarks of influence through Israel and Jordan, while protecting the developing democratization within SDF as a bulwark against rival ideologies evident in Turkey and Iran. It can also signal a clear intent to maintain an enclave in the region should Iraq slide further into Iran's orbit. The net benefit of maintaining the SDF partnership would be to continue competing in the regional strategic "chess game." Doing so enables the US to buffer Russian influence in northern Syria and inhibit Iran's attempt to secure a land bridge through Lebanon to the Mediterranean.

However, the US-SDF relationship will likely continue to contribute to the growing Turkish-Russian relationship. Given the nature of great power competition though, few options exist for the United States to change that trajectory. The US holds little incentive to convince former empires that their rise is neither necessary nor beneficial to them. In that regard, SDF serving as an irritant and threat to Erdogan keeps the US in play in an increasingly crowded field.

## **New Frontiers & New Pathways to Victory in Great Power Competition**

In such environments, US Special Operations Forces offer unique functions to decision-makers. Critically for greater power competition, they have the ability to exist within the competition space to observe and understand competitor actions through small footprint teams. Equally so, they can integrate recommendations for counter-actions through the operational interagency networks built over the last two decades. Both functions apply well to monitoring potential VEO beginnings, as much as great power interest in them, thereby revealing some of the potential pieces on Russia and China's strategic competition board. Based in large part on expertise in the human terrain, SOF can identify, message, and utilize networks to provide decision makers a bevy of indicators and warnings, as much as tactical efforts that produce strategic effects – presence by its very nature increases adversary operating costs, as much by direct action, as by shining a light on the shadows of their strategic choices.

Many of the activities that SOF elements already conduct worldwide apply to areas within the interests of peer competitors. Opening the aperture to new US proxies, puppets, and partners in those areas becomes necessary if for no other reason than keeping them from accomplishing goals and objectives for a peer competitor. Securing direct US benefits may matter less in those areas than the indirect goals of denying competitors influence. Even relatively benign activities accomplished by US SOF elements will draw the attention of peer competitors and force them to allocate assets to understand the actions, intentions, and endstates at play in the area.

Several implications arise for this new full-spectrum hybrid warfare and the place of VEOs and SOF in it. The first conclusion shows that seeing through VEOs to great power competition cuts both ways. In addition to understanding great power actions, it also allows US decision makers to communicate strategic capabilities and intent to rival states, while mitigating risks of escalation with them. Low opportunity costs lead to low sunk costs as great powers can reallocate interests and resources to another group or part of the globe. In this way, China's investment strategy approaches partners as disposable resources, as much as Russia's operationalization of "compatriots" of all shapes and sizes. Hybrid warfare in the context of great power completion has its own post-Cold War, post-GWOT logic, one that counterbalances increasing threats with increasing escalation "pressure valves".

A second conclusion is that replacing the perennial GWOT "whack-a-mole" approach to VEOs with a reconceptualized perspective allows the US to extend the VEO term to other organizations, and utilize SOF counter-network expertise more broadly in great power competition. As indicated above, Hezbollah and the Maduro regime fit into the VEO construct, as do transnational criminal organizations; applying COIN to drug cartels already fits within the doctrinal terminology for insurgencies – "the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, mollify, or challenge political control of a region" (Department of Defense, 2018). Seeing groups this way creates opportunities to apply many of the invaluable counter-network SOF skills and interagency relationships derived over the long fights against AQ and ISIS affiliated groups worldwide.

The third conclusion recognizes the DOS-DOD partnership as the key among those relationships. For presence missions, Special Operations can naturally partner with Department of State bureaus that have operational legs to partner with SOF downrange. Such "expeditionary diplomacy" teams are ideally suited to serve as competition advisors with SOF teams. Gathering and communicating full-spectrum assessments provides benefits to multiple stakeholders across the great power competition enterprise. Not least, a SOF-DOS partnership provides core vantage points for the intersection of national interest and instruments of national power.

Seeing through VEOs to great power competition is an early step in moving from a narrowly focused operational mindset, to the global hybrid warfare arena populated by ancient empires and resurgent existential threats. Special Operations must play its role in that struggle because presence lays the foundation for influence in great power competition, and staying in the game is key to victory.

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## Chapter 3. The Progress Disquisition

Lt Col Jennifer "JJ" Snow  
USSOCOM & Donovan Group  
[jennifer.snow@socom.mil](mailto:jennifer.snow@socom.mil)

### Abstract

In the piece "The Progress Disquisition," we explore a system of subjugated society that has come under the control of corporate entities that are acting like state actors in very compartmentalized and highly controlled sectors around the globe following a major cyber war. In many ways features experienced by the character Pim can be seen developing in today's world: China and Russia establishing a Non-DNS based internet, the implementation of the social credit system and Aadhaar digital registration systems seen in China and India, evolutions creating digital "fortified" islands on the dark net and deep net to protect information and illicit trade, the pervasiveness of companies like Facebook, Google, and Apple inserting themselves into very private aspects of citizen's daily lives, concerns over the future of work, fear about humans competing with autonomy and AI for jobs, re-defining what constitutes free speech versus fake news...all of these challenges and more beg the question: will these technologies be used for great good or great evil? In this story technology has been used to consolidate power in the hands of a few and drive the development of global authoritarian and isolationist regimes which have digitally and physically bound the rest of society into subservience. A bit too dystopian? Maybe...or maybe not...a conversation with an American about the potentiality of such misuse will generate a much different response than what one will hear from a Uighur living in the northwestern region of Xinjiang or a Chinese laborer employed at Foxconn. Please enjoy this thought experiment and I hope it will help drive discussions of viable alternatives and proactive measures to prevent these negative trends from spreading...before it's too late.

### The Progress Disquisition

It was happening again. Pim shook his head trying to remember the words. Right words. Avoid the wrong words. Be on time. Be thankful. Be future minded. Don't be selfish. Greater Good. Greater Good. Greater Good.

He wrestled himself from the sheets, opened the door to his pod and put his feet on the cold concrete floor. Around him third shift was coming to life, pod doors opening, people trudging wearily to the communal showers, wearily to the clothes bins to pick up their fresh uniform for the factory, wearily to the cafeteria to eat. Pim joined the masses in the daily trudge.

A chime sounded and everyone obediently looked up at the large screens adorning the green and gray walls for "Ten Minute Time." The Polygon Logo streamed across the screen with a quick historic montage of the founders' progress before the company avatar appeared to give the workers their daily updates and news. Pim secretly thought the avatar looked like a modified version of one of Hargreaves kids' characters with his dour expression and consistently serious tone. In his thoughts he was Mr. Grumpy. Publicly Pim and his co-workers expounded upon the brilliance and enjoyability of the avatar. The cost to malign the company and by extension anything they put forward was immediate and exponential as Pim had unfortunately discovered. His CO-Ch@t App had been reviewed in a random corporate loyalty check. The company apparently didn't appreciate his sarcastic comments regarding the mundane nature of his daily work or his thoughts on how they

might better utilize their employees. He was still paying off the fine with overtime and part of his weekly salary.

“And remember every day we come together to begin, we stay together to progress, we work together for success!” the avatar concluded in a brassy bravado before appearing to pop and swirl away off the screen like a maddened balloon.

Pim rose with the rest, their swishing uniforms making a coherent sigh before the clatter of deposited dining trays drown it out. He found his place on the line and pushed his button from red to green to begin the day.

Above the floor the daily numbers were being processed. Each line tied into the next and a tight cohesive ecosystem of machines and processes existed in the 10-acre complex. Most of the work was performed by machines. It was safer, faster, more efficient. After the Great Schism, countries built walls, digital walls, industrial walls to prevent such a thing from ever happening again. It was China or maybe Russia who started the Schism but it was the hackers who ended it. As the cyber war swept across the globe, hacker collectives rallied and fought back. It was these unanticipated entities that decided it was better to break the internet into regional, then national, and finally the various intranet isolationist states and collaboratives that existed today. International alliances became a folk tale and digital and physical boundaries were fiercely guarded. Where you were when the Great Schism happened was where you would always be. Each state was self-contained, you had what you had and that was it. Pim had heard to stories of the days when international travel was open before planes rained down from the sky. Mostly the old talked about it in soft wistful voices. But that was ages ago and Pim doubted the veracity of their memories. It was too foreign a concept for someone who had been born and grown up inside the same company he now worked for. The best he could hope for would be a promotion that gave him better social media access, more pay and interesting work. Pim sighed as he sealed the next box of protein powders and tagged it for the merchant bot to take to shipping. Then the next and the next. A small company sponsored data screen scrolled news or played music nearby while he worked, the one perk of his job as a shipper. His life was boxes. Fill them, inspect them, recycle them, ship them. Polygon was the only company in his collaborative so they owned the market on everything from hair barrettes to renewable energy to food. This week was protein powder, next week would be solar cells and the week after would be soap. If not for that mind relieving bit of diversity Pim was certain he would have gone mad already. A sign behind him proclaimed in bright green and gray “Your work today shapes our future tomorrow! Have a good attitude and be a positive contributor!” Mr. Grumpy beamed at him from in between the balloon shaped words making Pim dislike him even more.

Another chime signaled that he had completed enough boxes to earn a fifteen-minute break. Pim shuffled outside with the others in his break group, blinking in the bright lights of the loading dock.

“Hey Pim!”

Pim turned to see one of his friends Donal hurrying over with a small group in tow. Donal was always moving with a group, his cheerful, boisterous nature drew people to him like bugs to a zapper. The analogy was a good one. Donal was an instigator with a penchant for dodging penalties that was epic. Pim partially blamed him for his loyalty fines. He sighed. Donal always had something “in the works.”

The group surrounded him in a wall of colorful banter while Donal ducked his head to light a cigarette, another forbidden practice to ensure corporate health expenses stayed low. Then he palmed Pim a slick plastic eCredit card with a grin.

“What’s this?” Pim asked suspiciously. Donal said nothing and kept grinning.

“Welcome to the Progress little brother,” a girl with cherry red synthetic hair giggled as she bumped up against him, “It’s the real forward forward, don’t miss out!”

“C’mon Joie, we’ve got more people to tell and only seven minutes left on break before we go back to the line. Don’t want to be late for work! We are making the future after all.” Donal slung one arm around the girl’s shoulders and pulled her along as she blew Pim a flirty kiss.

Pim crammed the eCredit card in his pocket furtively. He didn’t need any more trouble. And with Donal there was always trouble. He went back to the line and lost himself in the sea of boxes that endlessly flowed to his station.

It wasn’t until hours later back at his pod that Pim remembered the card. He had a few hours to kill before lights out. He logged into the webs and selected his favorite streaming site. The company logo came up: zero credit balance. He would have to wait until pay day. Unless....

Pim dug into his pocket and pulled the eCredit card out. Perhaps he could use the credits to access the webs. The word “PROGRESS” was emblazoned in crisp black text on one side with an access code. Pim tentatively entered the code hoping this wasn’t another one of Donal’s troublemaking schemes. The web flickered for a moment before a gold page appeared with a door. The word “Welcome” glowed briefly as Pim clicked on the door.

The screen turned black as a series of words streamed to fill the page. At the top of the screen in title font the words “Progress Disquisition” jumped to life. Pim watched as the words turned into web testimonials, videos, blogs, and entire digital human world erupted onto his screen, a world free from Polygon and Mr. Grumpy, a world of voices and colors and emotions. How was this possible? He slammed the off button, breathing heavily. There were no sites outside of the collaboratives and isolationists. Freedom of thought and speech didn’t exist. This was dangerous. Pim felt his anxiety kicking in. He always got in trouble for his wrong thoughts, wrong words. This wasn’t sanctioned by Polygon, the Greater Good, the future builders. He could be demoted for accessing a site like this.

Pim paused with that thought. How was it that all those thousands of people posting on the site weren’t demoted? How did the site exist at all? Slowly he opened his webs and reconnected. The light of the screen shown golden on his face in his tiny darkened pod. It was like diving into the ocean. Pim let himself drown in the knowledge. Hours went by, long after the Polygon system governors would have responsibly turned off his screen time to ensure he got his seven hours of mandatory sleep. Voices of truth colored his imagination and ignited a passion for life he had never felt before. He jumped, startled by the morning chimes calling him to start the day.

The familiarity of the boxes had a calming effect on his nerves. He put his headset on and lost himself in the music, thinking thoughts that Mr. Grumpy would be horrified by, words and truths that should never be spoken under the collaborative, a world that shouldn’t exist but did. Pim felt alive for the first time in years, felt a purpose, felt his life could have a real meaning. Work time he slept and sleep time he lived. A world of anonymous avatars sharing their emotions, their fears, angers, passions, dreams, plans. A world where there was hope that a person could be more. A world where there was more to the future than hoping for a place in a retirement commune with good death benefits. For the first time, Pim felt like he wasn’t just watching the world die, he was seeing it rise and transform. He was transforming. He was rising. Weeks passed then one night Pim went to the site to find only one message, playing and replaying:

## The Progress Disquisition – Welcome to The Shift

They can't see us, they don't know us, they can't catch us. They are puppet masters, but we are cutting the strings, we are what comes next in this evolution, they are entering our world but they don't know it yet. We are smarter, our boredom is their undoing. A door has opened to the world, an electronic beacon drew you here, made us new, became our refuge. Tomorrow the refuge becomes real, physical, tangible. We've never met, we've never spoken to each other, but we are one, we are all, we are next.

This is our world now...the world of the digital becomes the world of the physical. Reality becomes myth and we become the author of our own destinies. Look for the signs and stand with us to claim your future...watch for the shift that comes before the Progress.

Pim sat back, wary of the message. After all this time the voices that made him live were silent and only his own small scared heart could be heard in the vacuum left behind. Was it a trick? Was it a trap by Polygon? Or was it the start of something bigger?

He closed his computer and stared into the darkness. He would know tomorrow.

It occurred to him that the morning chime never came. When Pim climbed out of his pod, people were walking around in confusion. Mr. Grumpy was gone and all of the screens showed videos of people, thousands of people surging online and physically against the walls that kept them separated. People cheering, people dancing, people singing, crying, speaking, and calling. Walls were coming down all over and people were reconnecting online and in the real world. The world was in chaos. The world felt like it was coming into focus. The Polygon senior leaders were nowhere to be found. Pim walked out into the early twilight, took a deep breath, and began walking towards the crowds pushing through the walls and towards what he hoped was going to be a better future.

## PART II: HISTORICAL, CROSS-CULTURAL, AND GENDER PERSPECTIVES

### Chapter 4. Spaces Created by Great Power Competition – A Historical View

Vern Liebl

Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, Marine Corps University  
vliebl@prosol1.com

Patricia DeGennaro

USARMY TRADOC G2 OEC  
patricia.degennaro.ctr@mail.mil

#### Setting the Historical Stage

The current U.S. National Defense Strategy (NDS) focuses on restoring America's competitive advantage to deter Russia, China, and other competitors from challenging the United States and its allies who may be seeking to overturn the international order, a foundation put in place to prevent nation states from replaying the events of World War II. The NDS will implement the National Security Strategy of "peace through strength, affirmation of America's international role, the U.S. alliance and partnership structures and the need to maintain or build military advantage in order to sustain key regional balances of power."

This NDS, according to its authors, is not of confrontation but one that recognizes the U.S. must change its strategies that more likely address a global power competition that has evolved since the collapse of the Soviet Union almost 30 years ago. The NDS elevates the need to thwart or mitigate Chinese and Russian aggression and intimidation to advance their goals at the expense of global U.S. interests. The NDS elaborates on the fact that China and Russia are not the only actors in this competition but also highlights the dangers posed by North Korea, Iran and extremist groups using terrorism. While the strategy is clearly designed to protect the U.S. and its allies, it must deal, resource-wise, from a significant legacy.

- First, from 1985 to 1991 there was a yearly reduction of resources allocated for national defense
- Next, from 1992 to 2000, national defense spending was essentially flat, as the U.S. was going through the "Peace Dividend Era" as the Soviet Union had collapsed, and China was still only a regional power.
- Finally and concurrently with the previous point, the allies of the U.S., in the absence of the Soviet Union and the then greatly enhanced protective umbrella of the U.S., significantly reduced their respective national defense outlays (some reducing almost completely).

From 2001, the U.S. is frequently perceived of as a "Hyper-power" which seems to be in a gentle decline. Clearly some aspects of 'conventional' U.S. military power have atrophied to a degree or became worn out from heavy use, much of that attributable to the inappropriately termed 'Global War on Terror', which has seen the redirecting of attention to distant counter-insurgency efforts and 'democracy-building' efforts in traditionally undemocratic parts of the world. Simultaneously, the slowly rebuilding 'new' Russian Federation and the strengthening People's Republic of China "went

to school”, studying the American “way of war” and political “warfare”. The signal U.S. ability to rapidly deploy forces globally and then sustain them, which has contributed greatly to American dominance in the Middle East and elsewhere, has led both Russia and China to develop anti-access/area denial (A2AD) methods and capabilities that U.S. must recognize, study and counter. Which brings to prominence the interstices of renewed Great Power Competition, where national groups, sub-national groups and/or ethnic/religious groups (or tribes) can have disproportionate effect on the Great Power Competition.

In hindsight, this is not a new challenge for the U.S. Both Russia and China have been in continuous competition with the U.S. (and with each other) on land, at sea and increasingly in space, for decades. That the U.S. has to date equaled or overmatched their respective capabilities does not obviate the current environment of advanced technologies, cyber, AI and information; areas where the U.S. seems to struggle to adapt its “old school” non-linear planning and adaptation to these new injects to the ongoing competition continuum. Additionally, and interestingly, the current U.S. NDS in relation to Russia and China appears to be a contradiction to U.S. security. As written, it seems to be leading the three countries into what Professor Graham Allison (Graham, theatlantic.com, 24 Sep 2015) popularized in 2015 as the “Thucydides Trap”. This term is used to explain the likelihood of conflict between a rising power(s) and the currently dominant one, based on a famous quote from Thucydides: “It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this inspired in Sparta that made war inevitable” (Graham, 2015).

However, as identified earlier, it is the interstices between the great rivals of today that are being addressed here, as any competition or potential conflict which can interest, involve or even consume numerous smaller groups whose interests may run congruent to any of the great powers or may be exploited to achieve their own narrower interest or aims. For example, in the apparent cooperation between China and Russia today versus the United States, how do the people of Central Asia view the cooperation, which there is actual economic (and increasingly security) competition between China’s “One Belt One Road” (OBOR) economic penetration into traditionally Russian-linked and dominated economic infrastructure. It is worth examining how, for a representational example, the nation of Tajikistan is impacted and where its interests lie. As well, what about the various ethnic groups within Tajikistan? Can they be mobilized by either the Russians, the Chinese or the Americans to support the larger Great Power Competition while satisfying their own goals (or at least minimizing any damage, as they realize they are a minor player at best)? Even more importantly, do the various population/ethnic/tribal groups contain an “exploitable energy” reservoir of desires, grievances or expectations which can be “fired up”? Additionally, is there a population which, despite the larger competition, has goals of its own that contradict all three larger players aims and may be the proverbial “Black Swan,” willing to engage in asymmetrical activities?

## Historical Review

For this, a short historical review is in order to show that all the choices posed above are not new. However, the above described situation in regard to the current Great Power Competition, while potentially unstable, at this moment appears relatively stable, especially since the Black Swan of the Islamic State (in Syria/Iraq) has been largely circumscribed. That current fragile stability can easily tip over into instability, especially if we recognize the theory of political entropy, which is actively at work not only in the interstices between the current great powers but also within them. A fresh example of that is the unpleasant exchange between India and Pakistan, significant regional players both of whom hold nuclear weapons but whom are traditionally not considered Great Powers. An unexpected violent reaction by India to a particularly horrendous terror attack by a Pakistani-linked

Islamist militant group (Jaish-e Mohammad) brought the world perilously close to a nuclear exchange. While an egregious example of the potential for non-Great Power entities to affect Great Power Competition (both Russia and China were quickly dragged in to mediate, while other significant minor entities – Turkey and Iran, attempted to inject themselves as intermediaries), such possibilities exist throughout the interstitial continuum.

The most favorable conditions for the appearance of these smaller mobilizable entities is, as the title of the White Paper implies, during periods of disruption, or maximum entropy. This entropy can be caused by several circumstances, one of which is the decline, be it militarily, economically and/or politically, of a Great Power Competition complex, or even the appearance of a decline in some form. Another is the irruption of an overwhelming disaster to one or more of the great powers or within an area they believe to be in their 'sphere of influence', such as a devastating epidemic or a series of closely spaced natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and drought. On occasion, a Great Power complex can just be swamped by waves of outside "invasions", today represented by massive refugee influxes.

Easily examined is the competition between the Achaemenid Empire (Persia) and the various Greek alliances from 499 BC to 330 BC when Persia was finally overthrown by the Macedonians, who had previously defeated and united the Greek city-states into the League of Corinth/Hellenic League. Macedonia could be called a Black Swan, as it was a small kingdom outside of "traditional" Greece and had long been dominated by Athens, Sparta or Thebes (briefly to the Persians). Only with the unexpected victory of the Argead king Philip II at the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC, did the Macedonians finally discard the control of Athens and Thebes. With diplomacy and conquest, Philip II and then his son Alexander (to later be called "the Great, succeeded his father in 336 BC) subdued the remaining Greek city-states. With the unexpected shattering of the Persian Empire by Alexander, his death in 323 BC and the subsequent devolution of the Macedonian Empire into the Diadochi (successors) states, tremendous energy was released from the eastern Mediterranean to the Indus Valley and north into Central Asia, with a swirl of transient kingdoms and tribal combinations lasting for over a hundred years.

Another significant examination could be the Punic Wars (264BC-146BC) between Rome and Carthage, specifically the Second Punic War of 218 BC-201 BC. The Carthaginian general Hannibal Barca marched a Carthaginian army composed mostly of Iberian tribal forces across southern Gaul into Italy, picking up numerous reinforcements from the Boii and Insubres, formerly subject Gallic tribes then in revolt against Rome. This is not the place to recapitulate the entire conflict but what is important was that Carthage refused to send significant reinforcements to Hannibal while he campaigned throughout Italy from 217BC to 203BC. By necessity Hannibal worked to subvert the Roman Socii (the autonomous tribes and city-states of the Italian Peninsula in permanent military alliance with the Roman Republic, often called the Latin Socii), trying to wean tribes and cities away from Rome into alliance with Carthage, and thus becoming a source of recruits and supplies for Hannibal's army. He had no success in northern Italy, as most of the city-states there were descended from Roman colonists and had a hard loyalty to Rome. In central Italy, dominated by the formally dominate Etruscans, their fear of the Gallic allies of Hannibal was much stronger than their desire to abandon Rome, so they remained loyal. It was in southern Italy where Hannibal had his successes. Several of the major tribes, having suffered heavily from Roman aggression roughly 60 years earlier, abandoned Rome and declared support for Carthage. The Samnites, Bruttii and Lucani became the prime source of recruits for Hannibal for over a decade. Many of the Greek city-states (Ionian Greek colonists, primarily) in southern Italy also went over to Carthage, providing money, supplies and some recruits. These would be the Tarantines (modern Taranto), Locri, Heraclea Lucania (modern Policoro), Thurii (near modern Sibari) and others. Ultimately, Carthage was defeated in Spain and

Romans invaded North Africa, forcing Hannibal to abandon Italy, leaving those allies to the mercies of Rome. In Spain, several Iberian tribes had revolted against the Carthaginian forces there, enabling Rome to win (subsequently those same tribes, such as the Indibilis and Mandonius, then revolted against the Romans, who crushed them). In North Africa, despite the return of Hannibal, the Carthaginians were soon defeated when Rome managed to convince the subject Numidians to rebel against Carthage. This period of conflict was rife with tribes and city-states who used the larger Roman-Carthaginian conflict to pursue their own interests, sometimes successfully, often fatally.

There are several other periods where one can explore periods of maximum entropy and concurrent exploitable/mobilizable groups managed to alter their situation and frequently the course of history. The Antonine Plague from 165 to 180 AD is estimated to have killed approximately 5 million people and decimated the Roman Army. Severely weakened and unable to replace losses due to the virtual depopulation of many regions within the Empire, Rome was unable to hold its European frontiers completely, which then saw the invasion of numerous Germanic tribes (the Marcomanni Wars). Ultimately the Romans managed to repel most of the invaders (often by the expedient of recruiting many into the Legions and auxiliary Ala) but Rome was fatally weakened. In reference to the Germanic migrations, it was not just them but others moving from the heartlands of Eurasia, in the period called the "Migration Period" from roughly 300 AD to 540 AD. The Western Roman Empire was subsumed by these waves of "migrants" and the Eastern Roman Empire severely weakened. To continue with more Black Swans (possibly Pink Flamingos, given the nature of urban life and medical care available), the Plague of Justinian from 541 to 542 (with recurrences periodically until 750) is estimated to have killed somewhere between 25 to 50 million people (for perspective, roughly 25% of the population of the eastern Mediterranean died, possibly 10% of the global population dying). Such widespread devastation, while causing famine and even stopping wars (loss of manpower, see the Colchidian War), also forced civilization retrenchment and abandonment of frontiers and even farmlands. The Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire was forced to withdraw extensively in the Levant, to consolidate its manpower into defensible nodes (conversion to the Thematic System). This action ultimately led to the vacuum created behind thin frontier defenses which was exploited 90 years later by advancing Muslims, themselves suffering from a temporary over-population bulge.

Economics, in addition or conjunction with imperial dissolution, war and disease, can also create conditions for dissatisfied or opportunistic groups on the fringes of or between Great Powers (or subject to them) to try for their own destiny. The decline of the Roman Empire or, more recently, the decline of the Spanish Empire in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, had devastating impacts and created massive turbulence across several continents. The rise of new kingdoms, the numerous efforts of numerous smaller city-states, principalities and nationalities to free themselves from imperial domination (examples, the Dutch, the Portuguese, various German principalities, Naples, Modena, Mantua, etc.) and most starkly, the vast devastation of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648, primarily in Central Europe with an estimated 8 million dead). The Spanish effort to finance all their wars led to massive exploitation efforts in the New World (silver and sugar cane), which arguably led to a European slave trade in the New World and concurrent depopulation of areas of Africa (matched by a huge Muslim (initially Arab but soon dominated by Mamluk/Ottoman Turks) slave trade primarily from Africa but also from South Asia and European marchlands).

The French Revolution and ensuing Napoleonic Wars saw the first "levee en masse" and national mobilization of all resources. Significantly, this also brought to the fore groups who mobilized in opposition, such as the Vendee Uprising in which Catholics and Royalists rejected the Revolutionary government in Paris. Napoleon, once in power, managed to persuade a significant number of Poles to fight for France against Russia (in addition to Croats, Italian and Germans to fight for France). The destruction of the Prussian Kingdom ultimately led to a revival of Pan-Germanism (itself initiated by

the savage Catholic French, Spanish and Bavarian/Austrian atrocities of the thirty Years War). The period from 1792 to 1815 saw the extraordinary release of energy from a multitude of small groups, searching for independence or autonomy, as counter-revolutionaries, for recognition and dignity, for economic gain or just for sheer survival.<sup>2</sup>

Similar to the Napoleonic Wars, the end of the First World War and the tumultuous time from 1918 into the early 1930s saw a similar explosion of energy in the drive for minor group goals. The dissolution of four empires (German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman) led to the struggle to create Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Czechoslovakia and others. Others failed, such as the White Russian Movement, the Bermontians of the Baltics, the Ingria Finns, the Kurds, the Armenians, the Azeris, the Georgians, the Ukrainians, the Poles of Silesia, the Bavarian Soviet Republic, the Bashkirs, the Basmachi Movement of Central Asia (supported by the Emirate of Afghanistan) and others. Even before the end of World War I, the potential destructive dynamism of subject groups of peoples to the “established order” was recognized. Foreign Minister Czernin of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1917, profoundly pessimistic about the future, stated:

“In the autumn of 1917 I had a visit from a subject of a neutral state... He had no faith in the destruction of England, nor had I; but he thought it possible that France and Italy might collapse. The French and Italians could not possibly bear any heavier burdens than already laid upon them; in Paris and Rome, he thought, revolution was not far distant, and a fresh phase of the war would then ensue. England and America would continue to fight on alone, for ten, perhaps 20 years. England was not to be considered just a little island, but comprised Australia, India, Canada and the sea. *‘L’Angletere est imbattable* (England is unbeatable)’, he repeated, and America likewise. On the other hand, the German Army was also invincible. The secession of France and Italy (from the Entente) would greatly hinder the cruel blockade, for the resources of those two countries – once they were conquered by the Central Powers – were very vast, and in that case he could not see any end to the war. Finally, the world would collapse from the general state of exhaustion.

...My visitor was astonished by Vienna. The psychology of no other city that he had seen during the war could compare to Vienna. An amazing apathy prevailed. In Paris there was a passionate demand for Alsace-Lorraine; in Berlin the contrary was demanded just as eagerly; in England

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<sup>2</sup> Lest one think that only Europeans and adjacent areas have numerous minority groups (tribes, ethnicities, etc.), a review of the Taiping Rebellion (1851 to 1864) in Qing China is educational. Although not formally a Great Power Competition but rather the victim of Great Power Competition, a heretical interpretation of Christianity led to the creation of the “Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace”. Created by Hong Xuiguan in the 1840s, he believed he was the Younger Brother of Jesus and that his mission was to cleanse China of the Qing and others in order to return the Chinese people to the worship of the biblical God. In the 14 years of its existence, it ranged over 16 of the provinces of China and saw the deaths of at least 20 million people (some counts are as high as 50 million). Underlying this civil conflict was a desire for southern and central Chinese subjects to overthrow the supremacy of northern Chinese rule. Additionally, the Qing had a highly centralized governance model, one which impoverished and belittled those not from northern China. One of the early Taiping moves was to redistribute land seized from the Qing landlords, which obviated ongoing overpopulation and created a sounder fiscal basis for governance by the Taiping. The British had unintentionally provided impetus to the Taiping by exposing young Hong Xuiguan to Christian tracts, as well as in declaring the First Opium War (1839-1842), which resulted in the impoverishment of much of southern and central China (which led to the Taiping declaring opium and all things associated with it as evil and ungodly, liable to execution). The Second Opium War was forced on a gravely weakened Qing administration still fighting the Taiping, which saw the unwanted imposition of over 80 treaty ports for exclusive European (primarily British and French) exploitation, part of the Unequal Treaty issue which has so poisoned modern Chinese perceptions of the West today and provided justification for, from the Chinese perspective, the Great Power Competition.

the destruction of Germany was the objective; in Sofia the conquest of the Dobruja; in Rome they clamored for all possible and impossible things; in Vienna nothing at all was demanded. In Krakow they called for a Great Poland; in Budapest for an unmolested Hungary; in Prague for a united Czech state and in Innsbruck the descendants of Andreas Hofer (a Tyrolean who led an anti-French uprising in 1809) were fighting as they did in his day for their sacred land. In Vienna they ask only for peace and quiet.

Old men and children would fight the arch-enemy in Tyrol, but if the Italians were to enter Vienna and bring bread with them they would be received with shouts of enthusiasm" (Czernin, 1920, p. 217-219).

From the above, it is clear that there are numerous potential mobilizable and exploitable entities but there are also likely to be non-exploitable minor entities, which can have just as important an impact in Great Power Competition.

## Concluding into the Future

This is not an all-inclusive list as that would take us far beyond the scope of this paper. What it does show is that the seemingly "unique" situation existing today in the NDS declared strategy of Great Power Competition is nothing new. Diverse and numerous "exploitable" and "mobilizable" entities/groups have always existed, often quiescent until circumstances arise (peculiar to each) which push them "into play", either against, with or at cross purposes to those larger Great Powers they exist amid. Again, there are numerous examples – Rome versus the Britons, Scotti and Caledoni; the Viking raids, settlements and subsequent creation of political entities (the Rus kingdom, the Normans, etc.); the 1,400 year plus war of Vietnam against China for its independence; the long Albanian resistance to the Ottomans; the Maratha resistance to the Mughals; the American Revolution; the American Civil War; the South Africa Boer Wars; the War of the Pacific; the Mexican Revolution; the long struggle of the Poles for reunification and re-independence and the Wars of Italian Unification.

None of this is new (for a great examination of UW warfare and exploitable groups in U.S. history, see Tierney, 2006), what is new is that we are finally trying to examine the cognitive reasoning which may lead or impel minority groups into conflict, either covertly or openly, within an arena in which there are far larger and more powerful military/political entities. Instead of looking in a mechanistic fashion, we are finally trying to divine what gives these groups the will to combat, especially when ostensibly grossly overmatched.

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## Chapter 5. Gender as a Force of Instability: Analyzing the #MeToo Movement in China and India

Patricia J. Blocksome, PhD  
Naval War College – Monterey  
patricia.blocksome@nps.edu

### Abstract

The #MeToo movement is a worldwide social justice campaign that is focused on exposing sexual abusers and harassers. In most countries, the movement's impact on state stability is limited due to the ability of governments to respond to accusations by bringing those implicated to face criminal proceedings and public shaming. However, the movement has the potential to be destabilizing in states where the government is unable or unwilling to respond to the demands for accountability by the population. Destabilizing #MeToo movements are more likely to occur in states in which share the following five indicators: 1) internet access is widely available and at least somewhat uncensored; 2) the society in which the movement is arising finds it culturally appropriate to support those speaking out on the issue; 3) the movement possesses the ability to transition from virtual to physical mobilization; 4) the abuses or harassment identified will, in either quantity or quality, be significant enough to cause broad support for the movement; and 5) the state is either unable or unwilling to respond in a manner that appeases the demands of the movement. Two countries of particular interest, both with ongoing #MeToo movements that meet all five of the indicators, are China and India. At the time of this writing, neither state was experiencing truly destabilizing effects from the movements, but observers in both states have remarked on the potential for widespread social mobilization that might cause instability.

### Introduction

The 'MeToo' movement was started by activist Tarana Burke in 2006, but the gained worldwide attention in 2017 during the Harvey Weinstein scandal, when actress Alyssa Milano encouraged others to share their stories using the hashtag #MeToo. To date, this movement has spread around the world, with its hashtag, or a derivation, present in multiple languages. The #MeToo movement is not specifically focused on women; the focus is on all victims and survivors of sexual assault and harassment. Generally, however, the majority of identified assaulters and harassers are male, and the majority of those who have endured abuse female.<sup>3</sup>

But what does a social justice movement have to do with national security? In 2017, a National Intelligence Council report on future trends noted that "Gender roles and expectations will increasingly be recognized as crucial to economic and security planning (2017:198)." I argue that the #MeToo movement offer the potential to be a force for instability in certain states, as it may offer disruptive and even destabilizing effects in societies around the globe, particularly in states that have populations susceptible to mobilization and governments that are resistant to change. In order to support this argument, this paper explores the #MeToo movement as a potentially agitating

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<sup>3</sup> The exception to this norm is the ongoing scandal within the Catholic Church, where many victims were male. While this paper focuses on gender issues resulting from the backlash against sexual predators, it is important to note that the movement in totality is more complex.

campaign; identifies indicators which might denote states ripe for disruption; and specifically explores implications for China and India, both of which have ongoing #MeToo movements.

## #MeToo as a Social Mobilizer

One of the more interesting aspects of the #MeToo movement has been its spread beyond the global North. As one review of the phenomenon puts it, “many see #MeToo as a hopeful platform for building feminist solidarity across lines of class, race, and sexuality” (Gil and Orgad, 2018:1318). This can be seen in a visualization of the spread of the #MeToo trend created by Google, which also tracks what cities have the highest level of interest on a daily basis; these cities are spread across the globe.<sup>4</sup>

A key argument of this paper is that this type of gender-focused social movement is potentially capable of sparking widespread protests, as a “fundamental aspect of a culture is its view of the proper relationship between men and women; this issue is likely to catalyze social conflict when groups with differing views on women’s status are combined.” (National Intelligence Council, 2017:199).” Such protests therefore could, in certain circumstances, potentially cause significant instability within a state. Relatedly, states with higher levels of gender equality have been found to have significantly lower levels of intrastate violence (Melander, 2005). Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that issues related to gender could spark large-scale political activism, up to and including political protest and politically-motivated violence.

## Identifying Areas Ripe for Protest

The broader phenomenon of social movements that lead to state instability have examined by several researchers. Gurr (2010) argues that there are three factors that explain protest and rebellion: popular discontent; the justification for political action; and the relationship between an aggrieved group and the government of the state. These factors can all be applied to the #MeToo movement. First, popular discontent is based upon a sense of relative deprivation—the gap between what an individual has and what that individual expects for themselves—and the rise of widespread awareness and rising discontent about the maltreatment of women would, in turn, be expected to increase a sense of relative deprivation for those mistreated and their supporters. Second, political protests may transition into politically-motivated violence if both the cause and the use of violence are seen as appropriate. Thus far, the #MeToo movement has not turned violent, but the level of trauma associated with some of the revelations (rape and other forms of sexual molestation) could arguably justify a violent response against perpetrators or the institutions seen as protecting perpetrators. Third, the ability of the state to identify and respond to popular discontent will explain whether the state can ameliorate grievances or, if unable to do so, stoke demand for stronger political activity. In sum, the #MeToo movement has provided a cause for popular discontent, does provide a justification for protest (and potentially violent political action, though that has not happened), with the level of that political protest based upon the ability of the state to respond to grievances raised by the campaign.

While the spread of the #MeToo movement has been worldwide, not all countries are equally at risk for potentially destabilizing social mobilization. In terms of causing massive societal change, sociologist Jen Schradie argues that the key to building effective activism is by connecting those who support a cause to those organizations actively carrying out political campaigns (LaMotte, 2017). What is key is the ability to move activities from beyond virtual interactions into the physical

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<sup>4</sup> <https://metoorising.withgoogle.com/>

environment. Sharing a tweet, for instance, is a far smaller, and less costly, signal of support than participating in a protest march in the streets. Therefore, the indicator that the #MeToo movement in any given country is gaining in power and ability to effect change is likely to be when the virtual environment becomes the supporting effort to a larger physical operation. However, as seen in other types of protests which started online and then transformed into physical resistance (e.g. the Arab Spring), the transition from a virtual meme to on-ground action could happen very quickly. A specific single event that catalyzes a shift of momentum towards a physical protest is likely to be impossible to predict. However, identifying societies that may be ripe for mobilization on this issue is likely to be somewhat more fruitful, as potential hotspots with the right preconditions may be more easily assessed than fast-moving precipitous events (Thompson, 2003).

The first prerequisite for a widescale #MeToo movement is online access—at least somewhat uncensored—to build and connect a community of those willing to speak out and their supporters. Next, according to Schradie, that community must start organizing in the physical realm, building local groups and carrying out corporeal protests. In addition to these requirements, groups also need the items Gurr describes; popular discontent from the revealed abuses and harassments need to occur on a substantial enough scale that the group is motivated to fight for widespread social change. Then, in order for the movement to be destabilizing, the state in which the movement takes place needs to be unable to satisfactorily adapt to the demands of the movement, leading to popular justification for political action, and perhaps even violence, as other options for inducing change in the state are unavailable.

Based on these criteria, #MeToo movements that are probably destabilizing are more likely to occur in states in which 1) internet access is widely available and at least somewhat uncensored; 2) the society in which the movement is arising finds it culturally appropriate to support those speaking out on the issue; 3) the movement possesses the ability to transition from virtual to physical mobilization; 4) the abuses or harassment identified will, in either quantity or quality, be significant enough to cause broad support for the movement; and 5) the state is either unable or unwilling to respond in a manner that appeases the demands of the movement (e.g. suppressing mobilization, refusing to let those accused be held accountable). In the following section, I discuss two states which, based on these five indicators, appear to be more likely to face destabilizing impacts from the #MeToo movement.

## The #MeToo Movement in China and India

While China and India are by no means the only countries facing #MeToo movements, these two countries are of particular interest because they meet all five indicators discussed above. They both currently have ongoing #MeToo movements which appear to be maintaining momentum and support. At the time of this writing, neither state was experiencing truly destabilizing effects from the movements, but observers in both states have remarked on the potential for widespread social mobilization that might cause instability.

### Internet Access

Though it depends on the statistic you look at, both China and India have high levels of internet penetration. China has the highest total number of internet users within a state, at 829 million users, and India is ranked second, with 560 million users (Internet World Stats, 2019). Percentage-wise, China has 58.4% internet penetration, and India has 40.9%. Though internet penetration is not as high, percentage-wise, as some Western states, there does appear to be enough penetration to

provide a means of communication for the #MeToo movement. There is no reporting of internet censorship in India on the #MeToo movement, but in China, censorship of the #MeToo is an ongoing concern for activists. The #MeToo campaign was initially popular in China, but then heavily censored, with those reporting sexual abuse online often subject to harassment and censorship by the state. This led to the rise of creative workarounds such as the #RiceBunny hashtag, which in Mandarin Chinese sounds phonetically similar to the English 'Me Too' (Hong Fincher, 2018).

### Cultural Appropriateness of Movement

There are ongoing #MeToo movements in both India and China which have been successful at generating public support for victims, suggesting that this type of gender-focused protest movement is considered culturally appropriate. For example, in India, a “horrific gang rape and murder of a young medical student in Delhi in 2012 sparked nationwide protests and debate about violence against women. New tougher laws to curb abuse were introduced, though they have been badly enforced (Nowrojee, 2018).” In China, despite the government’s censorship efforts, the movement has been somewhat successful, with several university professors, activists, media personalities, and even a monk facing sexual harassment investigations (Repnikova and Zhou, 2018). However, in both countries, the movement appears to garner more support in urban than rural areas. This may be attributable to both the relative levels of internet penetration and differing urban/rural cultures. While not surprising, such divides, unless overcome, may limit the total mobilization possible for the movement.

### Transitioning from Virtual to Physical Mobilization

The mobilization patterns between the two states are very different. Overt physical mobilization is currently occurring in India, but not in China, where only covert activities are possible due to the nature of government oversight. As described above, in India, street protests against specific instances of sexual abuse can occur. Indeed, most reporting out of India notes the presence of such events. In addition to protests, other forms of physical mobilization can also occur; in 2018, a group of schoolgirls staged a sit-in to call attention to the daily harassment they received walking to and from their secondary school (Denyer and Gowen, 2018). The situation is far different in China, which generally does not permit freedom of assembly. As one account puts it, “A demonstration such as the Women’s March is out of the question. As a result, feminist activists in China are now mostly operating underground; they are a tightly knit group, whose members travel to meet up and refer to each other as colleagues, but they have few public, official organizations (Zhang, 2018).”

### Large Scope and Scale of Accusations

In India, the public harassment of women on the street is so common that there is a specific term, ‘Eve teasing’, used to describe it (Denyer and Gowen, 2018). Despite widespread non-reporting of issues, due to police intimidation and no expectation of justice, “[o]ver 100 rapes are reported in India every day (Menon and Prusty, 2018).” Several communities have come under scrutiny from the #MeToo movement, including university academics, the Bollywood entertainment industry, and the Indian print media sector; more are expected to come. Yet the problem is even more widespread: one report calls New Delhi “a city used to gruesome sex crimes,” and the head of the government’s Commission for Women pointed out that “even an eight-month-old baby’s rape doesn’t shake up the system (Agence France-Presse, 2018).”

In China, the #MeToo movement had, as of 2018, “reached universities, media outlets, sports teams, NGOs and even religious temples,” with academia particularly affected as the Ministry of Education implemented reforms to address sexual harassment (Repnikova and Zhou, 2018). The CEO of JD.com, a major internet company, is perhaps the highest profile individual to be implicated; he is accused of raping a college student in Minnesota (Qing and Delevingne, 2019). One commentator notes that the Chinese #MeToo movement “is a voluntary social movement with a width and depth the likes of which we have not seen in decades” and points out that, despite attempts at censorship, the movement persists (Chunshan, 2018).

An additional concern that may feed into the scale of accusations in these two countries is the wide disparity in the ratio of males to females; “[d]uring the next 20 years, large parts of China and India are projected to have 10 to 20 percent more men than women. The two countries are already seeing significant numbers of men without prospects for marriage, and the imbalances, which would take decades to correct, have been linked to abnormal levels of crime and violence, as well as human rights violations such as abduction and trafficking of girls and women for marriage or sexual exploitation (National Intelligence Council, 2017:167).” In other words, the gender ratio imbalance in these countries might actually be exacerbating the problems of sexual assault and abuse; the scope and scale of #MeToo accusations in these countries may be fed, in part, by this gender imbalance.<sup>5</sup>

### State Intransigence

Both China and India have strong patriarchal systems. Such systems may offer a great deal of resistance to attempts to change societally-defined gender structures. As described above, the male-female imbalance—caused by cultural systems which value males more—may actually aggravate both a predisposition towards gendered violence as well as resistance towards providing or enforcing women’s rights. Shaming or forcing women to get married, due to the strong demand and limited supply of marriageable women, is unlikely to lead to a decrease in societal tensions, especially as increasing internet access provides information on different cultures where women may have more or different rights and expectations.

In China during the Maoist era, gender equality was part of the political platform of the Communist Party. However, this has changed in the contemporary era, as the current Chinese government and media seek to enforce gender norms of females as wives and mothers, and even seeks to shame unmarried professional women in order to convince them to marry (Hong Fincher, 2018). While the government is not necessarily unsupportive of efforts to change sexual harassment laws, the overriding concern is the suppression of civic action. Interestingly, China perceives the threat of #MeToo as coming from Western adversaries; in 2017 an official Communist publication warned that “‘Western hostile forces’ were using ‘Western feminism’ and the notion of ‘putting feminism above all else’” to the detriment of the state (Hong Fincher, 2019).<sup>6</sup>

In India, government intransigence is often more blunt. Lawmakers belonging to the Prime Minister’s party “are being accused of rape, and supporting men accused of rape, and action is only taken against

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<sup>5</sup> A linked issue is the problem of too many young men with no prospects for marriage. The sheer numbers are staggering: India has 37 million more men than women and China has 34 million excess men (Denyer and Gowen. 2018). Such quantities of unmarried men pose a direct threat to both domestic and international security (Hudson and den Boer, 2004). Domestically, such men may be more prone to violence, or even to societal upheaval, as the inability to marry may lead men to push for widespread changes to societal order. To address this threat, states may expand their military, providing jobs for these men, but also increasing the likelihood of military adventurism.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted from the English translation provided in the cited article; original Chinese publication available at: <http://fi.people.com.cn/n2/2017/0519/c181466-30211002.html>

them only after widespread condemnation of their behavior (Biswas 2018).” While India has recently instituted new laws against sexual assault, the Indian criminal justice system is still deeply flawed, and victims report that the police are more likely to harass the accuser than investigate the allegation. In 2018, news reporting out of India noted at least four different events in which women were burned by their attackers after attempting to register complaints with the authorities (BBC News, 2018a; BBC News, 2018b).

### Potential for Destabilization

Commentators in both countries have noted the potential for widespread social mobilization around the #MeToo issue. The key argument is that the issue of gender is one that not only has the potential to mobilize groups across the spectrum, but also one that the ruling elites in both states appear to be very uncomfortable, or even somewhat unable, to deal with.

One journalist reports that the rise of the cross-class feminist movement is deeply threatening to the Chinese government:

China's male rulers feel so threatened by the prospect of a large-scale feminist movement. While prominent male human-rights activists have emerged over the years... very few ordinary Chinese citizens knew about them or could relate to their abstract goals. The feminist resistance may yet have the potential to become China's most transformative movement in the long run. ...Chinese feminist activists have cultivated a networked community of supporters numbering into the thousands, revolving around university students and graduates. Some have become highly effective organizers. These feminist activists arguably pose a larger, more complicated challenge to the Communist regime than the male activists who preceded them. (Hong Fincher, 2018:7)

In India, the problem is not only the relative indifference of those in power, but also the mix of sexual assault with other political issues:

[R]ape is increasingly used as an instrument to assert power and intimidate the powerless in India. This is not surprising, many believe, in a hierarchical, patriarchal and increasingly polarized society, where hate is being used to divide people and harvest votes. ...In Indian-administered Kashmir, a poisonous cocktail of biology and bigotry led to the macabre rape and murder of an eight-year-old Muslim nomadic girl in January. She was kidnapped, kept captive in a Hindu temple, raped repeatedly and dumped in a forest. It was a warning to the minority Muslim nomads in the area to stop grazing their animals on Hindu owned land, in a restive part of the region, which is simmering with religious tensions. Eight Hindu men have been charged with the Kashmir gang-rape and murder. ...Two ministers from the ruling Hindu nationalist BJP who openly attended a rally in support of the accused resigned after the rising outrage forced the party's hand and compelled Prime Minister Narendra Modi to condemn the incident. (Biswas, 2018)

So far in both states, the #MeToo movement has caused some societal change, but has not yet proved destabilizing to the countries as a whole. However, the movement has shown longevity, and, as the assessments above note, the potential for widespread social action does exist.

## Conclusion

The #MeToo movement has become a worldwide social justice campaign, and has brought down several powerful individuals implicated in crimes of sexual abuse and harassment. Due to the movement's potential for societal mobilization across disparate groups, it presents the possibility for destabilizing political activity. Countries at risk for instability are likely to possess the following attributes: widely available internet access; perceived cultural appropriateness of the movement; physically mobilized supporters; large scope and scale of accusations; and state intransigence or inability to respond to the movement's demands. China and India provide interesting case studies of states which are currently experiencing #MeToo movements as well as potentially being at risk for further destabilization.

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## Chapter 6. An Eastern European Perspective

LTC Maciej Zaborowski  
Polish Air Force / USCENTCOM, CCJ-5, Combined Strategic Analysis Group (CSAG)  
maciej.zaborowski3.fm@mail.mil

### The Age of Disruption – Phenomenon not so new to Europeans

Some say, that history is not repetitive and they argue, that every reality comes with specific and unique set of conditions that exist only 'here and now', what by definition makes every fraction of time and space different and unique. Hence, I would argue that such statement has a weak point, which is a human being. History of mankind is an endless and continuous phenomenon, affected by generations of *Homo Sapiens*. However, it appears that we, human beings are repetitive. Our nature is so that we tend to think about the same ideas as our ancestors did, and we so often come up with near to identical conclusions and actions as our ancestors did, regardless the time and other surrounding conditions. Therefore I would also argue that the reason, why history becomes (even if not "is") repetitive, is the fact that we make the history through the same or very similar actions as it was done by our ancestors, in the past.

It is of no secret that history is very important to the peoples who happen to live in Central and Eastern Europe. The lands between the Black and Baltic Sea have been battlespace for clashing Western (German) and Eastern (Russian) powers for several hundred years. All the nations living there have for all this time been nothing more than just pawns in the hands of Russian tsars and German kings. That history, full of wars, great losses, sacrifices and humiliations, deprived those peoples from any illusions, hopes, trust or believes related to how the two powers, and at the same time two different cultures, play their great games, without any care or sentiments towards all those 'minors' standing on their ways. And it is also of no secret, that from the Central-Eastern European perspective, history is so much repetitive and all the historical lessons and experiences should be considered very seriously.

### Setting the stage – from 'Mitteleuropa' to 'маленькая заграница'<sup>7</sup>

XVIII century's Europe sought two impressive leaders, who laid foundations to the greatness of their countries at the cost of their smaller and weaker neighbors: Prussian (German) Frederick II Hohenzollern and Russian Catherine II Alexieievna Romanova. Their collaboration reshaped maps of Europe, making a number of smaller states disappear, and laid down foundations to future concepts of German hegemonies and Russian imperialistic behaviors. Both rulers also established new terms to great power competition in Europe, repercussions of which dominate the continent even today. In Germany, recognition of Frederick the Great achievements evolved into *Mitteleuropa* – a concept directing German economic and political thoughts, encompassing annexations necessary to establish German-led hegemony over Western, Central and Southern Europe. Later, the concept was further developed and implemented into German strategies that drove Europe to World War I (by Otto von Bismarck and his supporters) and II (by Adolf Hitler).

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<sup>7</sup> *Mitteleuropa* [German] - [https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/concept\\_of\\_mitteleuropa](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/concept_of_mitteleuropa)  
*маленькая заграница* [Russian] – expression regarding direct neighborhood of Russia; countries that are small, insignificant and easily influenced by Russian, which have no capacities to interfere with Russian interests

The Russian concepts evolved into policies and strategies which Russian Empire employed throughout XIX century. What is interesting though, although the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 completely changed the country, the principles of exerting Bolshevik Russian external influence remained very similar to those of tsars. The new, communist leadership of Russia, looked at all Baltic States, Poland, Ukraine and White Russia (but also at Caucasus and Central Asia) as so called '*маленькая заграница*' [Eng. 'small/near neighborhood'], what meant states small, weak, easily penetrable by Russian influence, and having no capacities to influence Russian actions. Those countries also meant to be a buffer zone for Russia<sup>8</sup>, providing security space in case of military confrontations with other powers.

## Great power competition from today's Central-Eastern European perspective

The shape and dynamics in Europe as of today are based on the new world order established after World War II. However, significant changes occurred throughout decades following the Third Reich collapse. Some of the most important facts include: the US Marshall Plan helped to rebuild and restore Germany; Central and Eastern European nations were 'sold' into Stalin's bloody claws; initially bipolar world of the Cold War collapsed together with the Soviet Union transformation into the Russian Federation; new great powers started playing their new great games of proxies in the Middle East; European Union and NATO spread east into former USSR zone of influence. However, while the Western powers played their games, dreaming about the end of history and everlasting liberal democracy, some other events took place far away from Europe. Africa, the ancient cradle of civilizations, flooded Europe with migrants. Middle East and Central Asia became new battlefields engaging the greatest power on Earth, the US, in the longest wars. Growing global inequalities stimulated rise of extremism and violent behavior. China, in spite of benefiting from many years-long US support, decided to become the number one global power, exploiting economy and technology development.

Regardless how dramatic and extraordinary the current situation might look like, from the Eastern European perspective some old, historical principles seem to still govern these dynamics. A subtle return of German hegemony in Europe (with Germany using European Union as the engine), foreseen by Margaret Thatcher decades ago, becomes one of the major concerns. Countries of *Intermarum*<sup>9</sup> see dangerous potentials, reminding those of early XX century. Furthermore, the most recent speeches made by Angela Merkel at the Bundestag, when she called for smaller European Union member states to surrender parts of their sovereignties and independencies, were received very suspiciously. Also re-emergence of Russian power under president Putin and recent aggressive Moscow's actions against its neighbors (i.e. in Georgia 2008, in Ukraine 2014 and on) are more than a warning sign to Central and Eastern European countries. Current Russian policies seem to remind an old Russian saying, which well expresses Moscow views on smaller neighbors: '*Курица не птица, Польша не заграница*' [Eng. 'chicken ain't no bird, Poland ain't no abroad']<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, the growing German appetites for one, united Europe, recall the pathways of *Mittleuropa*, together with Russian '*маленькая заграница*' narrative, remind scenarios in which great powers decided about fates of smaller states and drove Europe events such as Treaty of Vienna in 1815, Treaty of Versailles in 1919 or Yalta Conference in 1945.

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<sup>8</sup> There were some differences between Soviet leaders, especially between how Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin saw spread of the great revolution and possible end state, but ultimately Stalin's vision dominated.

<sup>9</sup> Countries between the Black and Baltic Sea.

<sup>10</sup> The same sentence is also used by Russians regarding i.e. Finland, Baltic States, Ukraine, Bulgaria or Mongolia

However, what makes the situation significantly different from the similar historical examples, are facts related to shifts of powers, which are noticeable today. The center of 'political gravity' and great powers attention, has been moved away from Europe. The dominant role of US, as well as rapidly rising role of China, influence views and perspectives in all those countries squeezed between Germany and Russia.

It seems obvious that the World is on a final stage of a new world order emergence. It also seems relevant to assess, that the leading decision makers who are to forge the new order, would most probably come from Washington D.C. and/or from Beijing. Whether the new order will require yet another major conflict (on a scale of world war) and what will be the roles of former great powers (Russia and Germany), has not been decided yet. But surely both Moscow and Berlin, will try to be amongst those few to decide.

From that perspective, the countries of *Intermarum* see some important roles for themselves. Regardless how would Germany and Russia shape their policies and actions addressing the countries of *Intermarum*, Chinese grand strategies and actions have already been planned so that this part of Europe will also have a role to play. Therefore understanding the complexity and vastness of the Great Rejuvenation and all corresponding projects will be critical to anybody planning to counter China. Beijing designed a plan so vast and multi-vectored, that it encompasses every part of our globe. The plan comes with so many routes, paths and interdependencies, that any opposition focusing just on Asia and Indo-Pacific should not be able stop it. Only proper understanding of all connectivity, interdependencies and dynamics between China and the rest of the globe, can allow any influence on the China-centered scenario for the future. From this perspective, Eastern, South-Eastern and Southern European countries should play some crucial roles in the US strategies to counter Chinese silent, creeping expansion. If really planning for competing with China, the US should exploit very positive attitudes and trust still present among friendly countries between Mediterranean, Black and Baltic seas. All the countries squeezed between growing German power and reemerging Russian power, will need strong and reliable ally, in order to preserve their sovereignties and independence. In return, once their independencies prevail and economies build up to allow them become better and stronger, more broadly respected partners, they will more than willingly repay with decisive and unbroken support to oppose any malign or trickery actions. However, if left alone or not supported in their contemporary struggles, those smaller and weaker countries will have no choice but to bend the knee to new hegemonies or align with emerging powers. Therefore, it is in the best US interests to not neglect the relationships with countries of *Intermarum*, since they may play a significant role in either choosing to join efforts to balance the future Chinese-European links or align to support them.

## PART III: ANALYTICAL APPROACHES FOR GLOBALLY INTEGRATED FIRES

### Chapter 7. Metrics of Social Disruption and the Role of Risk Sensitivity in Greed and Grievance

Lawrence A. Kuznar, PhD  
NSI, Inc.  
[lkuznar@nsiteam.com](mailto:lkuznar@nsiteam.com)

Weston Aviles, MA  
NSI, Inc.  
[waviles@nsiteam.com](mailto:waviles@nsiteam.com)

#### Abstract

The struggle to win the allegiance of or at least deal with populations is key in 21<sup>st</sup> century conflict and competition. This research re-assessed models of state fragility, terrorism and mass killing that provide indicators and warnings of population instability. In addition, the research introduced new measures of the risk sensitivity of sectors within a population that forewarn of impending social unrest. The key findings include:

- Existing models were robust using updated data from a single year, indicating that **existing correlates of population unrest continue to be relevant**, especially dependency on fuel exports, closure from the world economic system, and low per capita GDP.
- **Changes in the risk sensitivity of the poorest segment of society is an indicator of future instability.** The relationship was clearest with respect to **terrorism**.

**Implication:** U.S. aid intended to ameliorate extreme poverty appears to increase the risk aversion of the poor, ironically increasing instability, which may actually weaken states and especially increase the incubation of terrorism. This finding is counter-intuitive and obviously carries ethical implications, but if born out, presents a dilemma for policy and practice.

#### Introduction

Three major powers have emerged as the primary 21<sup>st</sup> century contestants, the United States, China and Russia. The U.S. remains as the most powerful contender, although its near-peers appear to be gaining influence and power and the battle ground has shifted. Conflict is less likely to be played out in force-on-force combat and more likely on the field of influence over the world's populations (Coats, 2019, see Chapters 1 & 2 of this volume). The "green" or "white" layer (Kuznar & Hunt, 2015) of whole populations is key to each power's eventual success. Therefore, the strength of other states, the condition of their populations and their vulnerability to be influenced presents opportunities and challenges for each of the world's contending powers. This chapter presents a re-analysis of prior studies and a new metric for assessing the condition of that "green" layer.

Three forms of social unrest often become national security issues for the U.S., and at times problems or opportunities for near peer competitors: state fragility (failed states, civil war), terrorism (violent

extremists/non-state actors), and mass killings (deliberate state killings of >1000 people). The objective of this research is to:

1. Test the robustness and generalizability of state fragility, terrorism and mass killing models by challenging them with a recent single-year's data.
2. Introduce new variables that may improve model performance and our understanding.
3. Explore how a measure of risk sensitivity might enable finer predictions of the population segments most likely to influence state fragility, terrorism and mass killing.
4. Assess current conditions favoring state fragility, terrorism and mass killing.
5. Identify leading indicators and warnings of these adverse conditions.

Researchers have devised a variety of measures of socio-political conditions that may become threats to U.S. interests. These threats often have two characteristics; they emerge out of populations and not political leaderships, and they seem to appear unexpectedly. They are in fact “gray rhinos” (Cavanaugh, 2017; Jaye, 2017), threats whose indicators are plainly visible but because of our own institutional biases, we fail to detect. In this paper, I examine three measures of social instability and introduce a new measure of risk sensitivity that helps identify populations that are more likely to engage in risky behaviors related to national security dilemmas such as violence, mass emigration, and political challenges to their governments or to the U.S. There is a large body of research that informs our understanding of these phenomena and provides easily accessible indicators for assessing their likelihood for any given country. A common thread in this prior research is that instability and national security threats emerge from grievances (and some argue greed). Measuring risk sensitivity provides a new means for assessing greed or grievance.

## Risk Sensitivity

Friedman and Savage (1948) published the landmark study of decision making under risk. Their proposal is that when a person's utility function (sense of satisfaction) is concave upward he/she is prone to take risks, and when it is concave downward he/she avoids risks (Figure 1).

Importantly, they proposed that social class influenced utility functions (Friedman & Savage, 1948, p. 298). Kuznar (2001) develops a theory and methodology to operationalize their proposition and has tested it on forms of risk taking from hazardous decisions in herd management, to hunting effort in forager societies, tribal trade and coup d'états in ancient empires (Kuznar, 2002), to participation in terrorist organizations (Kuznar, 2007). The theory rests on the notion that people often use measurable material goods (culturally valued items) and services (hunting success, combat or healing skill) as signals of social status (Chagnon, 1988; Hawkes, 1993; Malinowski, 1985; Mauss, 1967). These goods and services are never evenly distributed in a population; people perceive these inequalities and consequently feel “greed” to attain higher statuses or grievance if a higher status is perceived as unfairly out of their reach.

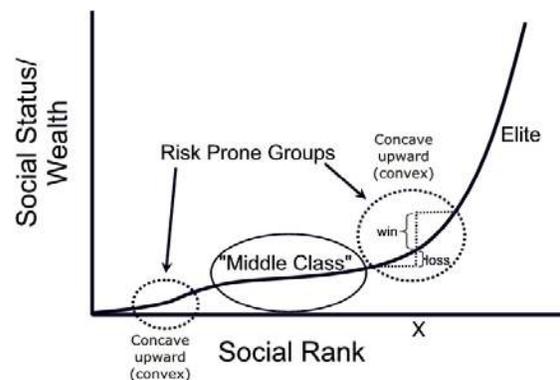


Figure 1. Typical distribution of Social Status in a Complex Society. Concave upward segments of the population are expected to favor taking risks because they potentially gain more social status than they would lose.

Empirically, inequalities are always distributed in an S-shaped or sigmoid manner as one moves from poorest to wealthiest (Kuznar, 2001, 2002, 2007); there are large flat areas of a curve (concave downward) punctuated by marked up-ticks (concave upward) as status rapidly ascends to a higher level (Figure 2). According to Friedman and Savage's theory, those near a status jump should be acceptant of risks that can win a higher social status. Risks come in many forms, both licit and illicit. Note that rebelling against a status quo authority is always very risky. Therefore, this theory provides a necessary but not sufficient condition for identifying risk takers within a population; the specific risks they take will be influenced by the options they have available. For the poor, options may be playing the lottery, petty crime or a dangerous emigration; for the wealthy, options may be high-stakes gambling, venture capital, real estate deals, insider trading or starting a revolutionary movement. As Jones (Chapter 1, page 8) notes, "Revisionists will work within the law where convenient, outside the law where they perceive they can, and violently when they perceive they must".

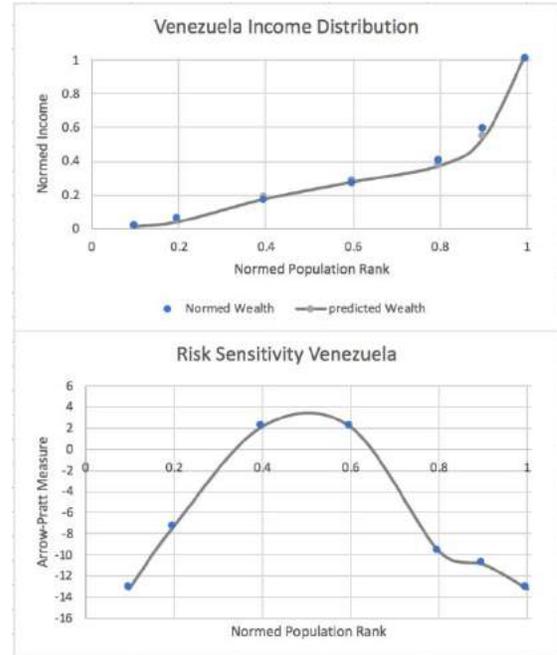


Figure 2. Wealth distribution and corresponding risk sensitivity curve of the Venezuelan population 2006

The key metric for measuring risk sensitivity is the Arrow-Pratt measure of risk aversion<sup>11</sup> (Arrow, 1974; Pratt, 1964). In our case it is derived by using the distribution of social status as a measure of utility and calculating the Arrow-Pratt measure from that distribution. A full description and method of estimation is presented in Kuznar (2007). The measure ranges from  $-\infty$  to  $+\infty$ , with negative values indicating risk acceptance (risk loving, risk prone) and positive values indicating risk avoidance (risk averse). In order to produce comparable data for the world's countries, income or consumption rates per household were used as a proxy for social status using World Bank data on the distribution of income and consumption centiles.

As an example, Figure 2 presents the wealth distribution function for Venezuela in 2006. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile, there is a large segment in extreme poverty. The curve rises to a broad "middle class" from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile, and then steeply rises for the elite who have extremely high incomes. The corresponding Arrow-Pratt measures indicate that the lower and upper portions of society are risk acceptant, and the middle class (percentiles 30 – 65 in this case) are risk averse. This is a very common pattern and naturally divides a population in to a risk acceptant lower class, a risk averse middle class, and an usually highly risk acceptant upper class.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The Arrow-Pratt measure is defined as the negative of the second derivative (concavity) of a utility function divided by its first derivative (increase) in order to control for the rate of increase in a utility curve.

<sup>12</sup> Venezuela presents an unusual case in that the lower and upper thirds of society are roughly equally risk acceptant. This may help to explain Hugo Chavez' success at mobilizing support from the poorer segments of society against elite efforts to control his power as president at that time, and the tensions that have mounted since culminating in the current disputed election results.

Countries used as exemplars of unrest or peacefulness fit the propositions of the model well. Finland, touted as the world’s most politically stable country, has one of the lowest average levels of risk acceptance (-3.65), whereas politically turbulent Venezuela has the second highest level of average risk acceptance (-7.15). This theory can be further tested on a global scale by entering it into standard models that have other confirmed causal variables.

### Prior Research on State Fragility, Terrorism and Mass Killing

There is a well-established statistical literature aimed at identifying predictors of state instability, unstable states/state failure and civil war (Carment, 2003; Collier & Hoeffler, 1998; de Waal, 1989; Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Gallup World Poll, 2008; Goldstone, 2008; Iqbal & Starr, 2008; Lambach, Tischmeyer, Johais, & Bayer, 2015; Lujala, Gleditsch, & Gilmore, 2005; Miljkovic & Rimal, 2008; Rotberg, 2003), and their relationship to terrorism (Coggins, 2015; Plummer, 2012; Rieger, 2008) and mass killing (Stevenson, 2014). State failure, terrorism and mass killing are the dependent variables in this study using standard measures, including the Fragile States Index from the Fund for Peace,<sup>13</sup> the Terrorism Index from the Institute for Economic Policy,<sup>14</sup> and the probability of Mass Killing from the Early Warning Project.<sup>15</sup> Descriptions of how these indices are measured are found in the footnoted links. Table 1 lists the relevant independent variables identified in previous research and their sources.

**Table 1. Indicators of state failure, civil war, terrorism and mass killing.**

Indicator Categories	Example Indicators
<i>Economic</i>	per capita GDP/PPP/Income
	GDP Growth
	Natural Resources
	Oil
	Economic Openness (Imports + Exports)/GDP
	Uneven Development
<i>Well-being</i>	HDI, Basic Needs
<i>Demographic</i>	Population Size
	Infant Mortality
<i>Political</i>	Ethnic Fractionalization
	New State/Years Independent
	State Discrimination
	Government Confidence (lack of corruption, leadership, judicial system)
	Polity Score
	Safety and Security
	Bad Neighbors (Nearby state collapse)
	Africa

In addition to mining previous literature for potential indicators, other potential indicators were explored through the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, the UN statistical databases, and the

<sup>13</sup> <http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/>; the State Fragility Index from the Center for Systemic Peace was not used because most of the independent variables in the research literature are actually used to calculate the index, creating an inherent endogeneity problem.

<sup>14</sup> <http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/terrorism-index/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/terrorism-index/>

Minorities at Risk databases, identifying an additional four indicators that had very strong statistical associations with the dependent variables. These included presence of an informal economy, food deficits, homicide rate and net migration. The average risk sensitivity of each country, and the average of each segment (poor, middle, and wealthy) within a country were used as society-wide measures of risk sensitivity. Subsequent analyses use this augmented collection of indicators to replicate previous research results and extend their relevance.<sup>16</sup> The sample consisted of all countries with populations greater than 300,000 (n = 173).<sup>17</sup>

## The Models

Prior studies typically used country-years as their unit of analysis, enabling maximal data for identifying statistical relationships. We challenged the generalizability and robustness of these models by examining their replicability based on only one year's data, the most recent year available (generally 2017). Stepwise regression was performed to identify the sets of best fitting models.<sup>18</sup>

Table 2 presents a summary of the best models, and the signs and statistical significance of coefficients.<sup>19</sup> In general, these models replicated the key results found in the literature, indicating that single year of data has utility for identifying underlying causes of state fragility, terrorism and mass killings.

**Table 2. Summary of Models. All models statistically significant at  $p < 0.00001$ . \*\*\*  $p < 0.0001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.001$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , .1  $p \sim 0.1$ , n.s. not statistically significant, excluded – excluded from model because of endogeneity**

Model			
	<i>Fragile States Index</i>	<i>Terrorism Index</i>	<i>Pr Mass Killing</i>
<i>Model R-squared</i>	0.632	0.379	0.203
Independent Variables			
<i>Population Size</i>	n.s.	( + ) ***	( + ) *
<i>GDP</i>	excluded	( + ) **	
<i>Economic Closure</i>	( + ) *	( + ) ***	( + ) *
<i>Fuel Exports</i>	( + ) ***	( + ) *	
<i>Country Age</i>	( - ) ***	n.s.	
<i>Neighbors Collapse</i>	excluded	( + ) **	
<i>Informal Economy</i>	( + ) ***	n.s.	
<i>Africa</i>	( + ) **	n.s.	( + ) **
<i>Freedom Index</i>	excluded	n.s.	( - ) **
<i>Risk Acceptance of Poor</i>	( - ) .1	( - ) ***	( - ) .1

Analyses run using the Fragile States Index as the dependent variable identified economic closure (i.e., low trade activity compared to GDP), being a fuel exporter, having a large informal economy relative to GDP, and being in Africa as indicators of increased state fragility. These results are

<sup>16</sup> In order to avoid problems of endogeneity, models using the Fragile States Index and the Probability of Mass Killing excluded independent variables used to calculate these measures.

<sup>17</sup> One limitation of the study is that income and therefore risk sensitivity data, was not available for several key fragile states and/or terrorism hotbeds, including: Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the Philippines.

<sup>18</sup> Full information on model and coefficient goodness of fit is available from the author at [lkuznar@nsiteam.com](mailto:lkuznar@nsiteam.com)

<sup>19</sup> Only those independent variables that were statistically significant in one or more models are presented here for brevity.

consistent with the research literature. Young counties also were more likely to score highly on the Fragile States Index. The Fragile States Index is a complex scale incorporating a wide range of social, economic, political and demographic indicators. Consequently, many indicators found to be related to state fragility had to be eliminated from the model to prevent endogeneity (predicting an index with an indicator that is already part of the index), including per capita GDP, economic growth, regime type, freedom, discrimination, repression, infant mortality, life expectancy and education. All of these contribute to state fragility by definition of how the index is operationalized. The risk sensitivity of the poorest segment of society was weakly statistically related to state fragility, but in a positive manner; as the poorest of a society became less risk acceptant, state fragility increased.<sup>20</sup> Results like this were very consistent across the many models run in the analysis. Interpretation of this pattern will be addressed later. In sum, state fragility is a function of a closed economy, being a fuel exporter, having a large informal economy, and a decreasingly risk acceptant lower class.

Analyses run using incidence of terrorism as the dependent variable indicate that having a large population, a high GDP, being a fuel exporter, and having a neighboring state that has collapsed increased the incidence of terrorist attacks within a country. In addition, falling risk acceptance among the poorest segment of society was a highly statistically significant indicator of terrorist attacks. In sum, incidence of terrorism is a function of a large population, a closed economy, unstable neighbors and a decreasingly risk acceptant lower class (that is, when the poor become more risk averse).

Analyses run using the Probability of Mass Killing as the dependent variable indicate increased violence with population size, economic closure, lack of freedom and being in Africa. The risk acceptance of the poorest segment of society was positively, but weakly statistically related to the probability of mass killing.

## Discussion

Some of the main relationships between social and political conditions and unrest identified in the literature were reproduced in this study using only one year of data, indicating that existing models are fairly robust. The indicators of instability that most often surfaced in this study included economic closure, fuel exports and being in Africa. The role of economic closure implies that trade contacts with the world economy lead to a more stable situation, possibly as trade increases economic conditions at home and exposes people to a broader world view. Since economic openness is an essential component of globalization, this is an indicator that globalization stabilizes, rather than destabilizes countries. The importance of having a high reliance on fuel exports is unclear. Tests by region show that this is not an issue of correlation between terrorism and oil in the Middle East; it has an effect even in developed, Western nations. Presence of an informal economy is also associated with state fragility. This may be due to the fact that as a state loses revenue and power by not being able to tax its economy, the informal economy expands and may increase inequality since jobs in the informal economy are more volatile and often pay less than licit employment (Medina & Schneider, 2018; Orlando, 2001).

In previous research, risk sensitivity has been very good at identifying the segment of society most likely to lead challenges to the status quo (Kuznar, 2002, 2007), but in this study it is poor at predicting the involvement of the upper class as a whole in challenges, probably because high status

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<sup>20</sup> The risk sensitivity of other classes was not statistically related to the Fragile States Index and did not enter the final model.

people have many legal options for taking chances to satisfy their greed or address their grievances (see Jones, Chapter 1 on revisionists).

Consistently, as the poorest segment of society decreases in risk acceptance adverse outcomes increase. This highlights the fact that the impoverishment of the poor is not the root cause of state fragility, terrorism or mass killings. Exactly why their decreasing risk sensitivity is so consistently related to adverse social outcomes is puzzling. One possibility might be loss aversion (Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 2000); the poor and others might switch their risk sensitivity under conditions in which they perceive they are losing. This would be the case when a state is failing, possibly causing the risk averse to take risks to improve their losing status and the risk acceptant to become risk averse to protect what they have. Another possibility is that as the difference between the poor and middle class decreases, the poor gain resources (financial, educational) that increase their awareness of and ability to impact their status (Ferracuti, 1990; Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Van Hear, Bakewell, & Long, 2018). Conversely, the middle class may feel threatened by improvements to the lower class, causing them to switch preferences as they feel aggrieved at a relative loss in status. Future research will explore these possibilities.

## Implications

Measures of population instability can be used to hotspot countries and regions of concern for the U.S. and provide atmospherics to help characterize the temperament of the local population “green” layer. For example, **Figure 3** depicts countries where terrorism is more likely due to lessening risk acceptance in the poorest segment of society.<sup>21</sup>

Successful models identify the underlying causes of these threats and therefore identify targets for mitigation. Participation in the world

economy appears to be a prophylactic against state fragility, terrorism and mass killings. The relationship between reliance on fuel exports and adverse socio-political outcomes has been much studied and debated and requires better understanding in order to untangle the causal pathways. Informal economies may provide immediate relief to underemployed and desperate people, but their long-run effect increases state fragility; efforts to formalize a legal economy appear to be necessary for the long run stability of states. Finally, efforts to ameliorate the extreme poverty in a society appears to increase the likelihood of state fragility, terrorism and even mass killing. U.S. policies aimed at improving the material condition of the poor may be in the nation’s moral interest, but

Decreasing Risk Acceptance of Poor = Increased Terrorism



**Figure 3. Heat Map Depicting Countries where Changes in Risk Sensitivity indicate Growing Terrorism Concerns. Darker shades imply greater risk.**

<sup>21</sup> Despite a few outliers (Finland), the heat map corresponds fairly well to regions where terrorism is a current or growing concern.

ironically could run counter to the national interests of creating more stable countries less likely to incubate terror or descend into bouts of mass killing.

Knowing where and why states will become fragile, terrorism will flourish and mass killings will erupt will enhance U.S. risk mitigation strategies and interventions to limit these adverse conditions. This knowledge may also enhance U.S. capability of knowing where near-peers may try to leverage unrest against the U.S., or where near-peers may walk into blunders that may limit their ability to extend power against the U.S. The future conflicts and contests will be waged in the “green” layer of the world’s populations; the competitor who understands those layers will have the advantage.

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## Chapter 8. Using Organizational Sophistication to Predict Influence from Violent Non-State Actors

Michael K. Logan, M.A.  
University of Nebraska Omaha  
[mlogan@unomaha.edu](mailto:mlogan@unomaha.edu)

Gina S. Ligon, PhD  
University of Nebraska Omaha  
[gligon@unomaha.edu](mailto:gligon@unomaha.edu)

### Abstract

Reconceptualizing the complexity of competition under shifting powers, we cannot ignore the tenacity of malign influence on and from violent extremist organizations, drug cartels, and organized crime networks. Given their strategic importance in the competition for Global Influence, it is critical that we have some way to prioritize which violent non-state actors pose the greatest threat to our and our adversaries' national interests. To do so, the present effort examines the antecedents of organizational sophistication in violent non-state actors as a mechanism to understand which may become tomorrow's Black Swan. Organizational sophistication is defined by three interrelated concepts from organizational and criminological theory: centralization, formalization, and specialization. This chapter presents a framework for how to use these concepts to inform the prioritization of violent non-state threats in this new strategic environment.

Key Words: Organizational Sophistication, Violent Non-State Actors, Terrorist Organizations, Organized Crime, Drug Cartels

### Antecedents of Organizational Sophistication in Violent Non-State Actors

This paper addresses the issue of organizational sophistication in violent non-state actors (VNSAs). VNSAs are defined as *distinctive organizations willing and capable to use violence for pursuing their objectives and not contractually integrated into formal state institutions* (Hofman and Schneckener, 2011). There are six types of VNSAs including warlords, militias, paramilitary forces<sup>22</sup>, insurgencies, terrorist organizations, and criminal organizations and gangs (Williams, 2008). Within and across each type, VNSAs can be distinguished from one another based on several dimensions (e.g., goals, relationship with the State). In relation to their capacity for violence, one key dimension used to differentiate VNSAs is their *organizational sophistication*. Organizational sophistication refers to the degree to which an organization (i.e. a VNSA) is centralized, formalized, and specialized. Each of these factors are internal "structuring" characteristics of organizations as opposed to external "structural" qualities of organizations (e.g. size, span of external influence). This means that they are related to the "policies and activities occurring within the organization that prescribe or restrict the behavior of organizational members" (Dalton et al., 1980, p.51).

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<sup>22</sup> While paramilitary forces may position themselves as allies of the state, and in some cases, assist the state in achieving their goals, they are also involved in atrocities against civilians and further regional instability. An exemplar case of this is the United Self-Defense Forces of Columbia (AUC).

*Centralization* refers to the degree to which decision-making is concentrated (Fredrickson, 1986; O'Neill, Beauvais, & Scholl, 2016). More specifically, centralized VNSAs are hierarchically structured and have a top-down chain of command whereas less sophisticated VNSAs rely on a network structure with less clear distinctions between leaders and foot-soldiers. There are two caveats, however. First, as VNSAs increase in sophistication, decision-making is distributed in a top-management-team as opposed to a single leader. This is because sophisticated VNSAs often have a diverse range of interests. For example, in many Salafi-Jihadist VNSAs, Shura Council members have functional areas of responsibility that become increasingly distinct. As VNSAs gain more distinct operational activities, the “job descriptions” of the Shura members become more orthogonal. Second, as VNSAs increase in sophistication, members of the top-management-team focus on strategic long-term decisions and grant mid-level managers more operational and tactical autonomy. Granting autonomy to lower-level members ensures operational efficiency since day-to-day decisions do not have to flow through the multiple layers of a bureaucratic structure. For example, ISIS Governors of Provinces were able to redeploy members of their security forces to assist with field military operations without gaining approval from the Central Shura leadership council (Ligon & Logan, 2017). This allowed the organization’s most senior leaders to focus on long-term strategy rather than more proximal resource decisions. It also recognized the local expertise of the Province Governors who knew better when they could reassign members of their Hisbah.

*Formalization* refers to the extent to which rules and procedures are used to govern the behaviors of members of the organization (Fredrickson, 1986; Palmer & Biggart, 2017). As illustrated in *Table 3*, sophisticated VNSAs use title and uniforms to distinguish differences in power between members as well as create in-group/out-group boundaries (Ligon, Simi, Harms, and Harris, 2013). From a collaboration standpoint, this formalization allows for rapid decision making as titles and uniforms connote important member specialization and tenure information that can quickly be understood in a crisis. For example, even in early days of ISIS groups, members who had more operational expertise wore different colored face masks when in the field so that others could quickly identify who had the most expertise. In more mature groups, these symbols become highly complex in color, size, and location so that member distinctiveness information is codified and easily recognized.

Finally, *specialization* refers to the degree to which the organization is composed of many interrelated parts (Yang & Ng, 2015). Indicators of specialization with VNSAs include selective expertise-based recruitment, multiple task-based divisions in the organizations, and collaboration among distinct functions (e.g., social services collaborating with security forces to distribute goods to populace). As these organizations become more complex, so too will their organizational units and the responsibilities of members in them. During the height of their reign, the Los Zetas/Gulf Cartel developed a tactical advantage by recruiting individuals from the Mexican and Guatemalan military and special forces. In addition, the Zetas/Gulf Cartel moved towards a business-like structure with task-based divisions of labor at the administrative-level. The top-management-team had “sophisticated record keeping programs to track shipping, employment, payroll, and payments made to law enforcement officials, as well as payments received and owed” (Campbell, 2010, p. 73).

## Why Organizational Sophistication Matters

There are two reasons why organizational sophistication matters among VNSAs (Best and Luckenbill, 1980).<sup>23</sup> First, as organizational sophistication increases so too does VNSAs’ capacity for complex

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<sup>23</sup> The remainder of this paper draws heavily from Best and Luckenbill’s (1980) research on the social organization of deviants. We chose to cite them once, at the beginning of this section, to avoid redundancy.

tactics and operations. This is based on the notion that sophisticated criminal organizations—whether ideological or non-ideological—have the *resources* and *processes* to engage in such acts. In terms of resources, sophisticated criminal organizations have the human capital to acquire and carry out operations using weapons that require expertise. With regard to processes, the structure of sophisticated criminal organizations allow for efficient pooling and distribution of resources among their members. One implication is that more sophisticated VNSAs are then able to engage in more acts of violence often over a broader range of territory. Another implication is that sophisticated organizations are able to strike a wider range of targets. For example, sophisticated organizations have the expertise and resources to strike hard targets (e.g., military, police) or infrastructure on top of their ability to attack soft targets (e.g., private citizens).

Second, the more sophisticated the VNSA, the more elaborate the socialization of its members. There are three types of socialization in VNSAs – both with different implications. The first form of socialization focuses on skills and techniques to engage in violence (e.g., elaborate combat training). The second form of socialization is ideological, which equips members with justifications for violence. The third type of socialization is organizational. In relation to this effort, this is the most important type of socialization and includes learning organizational roles and responsibilities. There are four primary implications of organizational socialization that belies training. First, organizational training includes leader succession planning, which shores up VNSAs to survive leadership decapitation events. Over time, organizational training allows for bureaucratic processes to become institutionalized in VNSAs (Long, 2010). In institutionalized VNSAs, leader decapitation events only cause temporary functional disruptions, whereas such events are more damaging to less sophisticated organizations.

The second implications of organizational training is that it allows VNSAs to provide elaborate services to its members and target population. As previously illustrated, VNSAs provide services to its members such as the knowledge and resources to engage in complex tactics and operations. Sophisticated VNSAs also provide services to their target population by acting as a pseudo-government in areas under their control. This includes providing services such as security, schools, healthcare, and infrastructure. For example, when the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) moved into new territories, they adopted state-like functions and provided social services to ungoverned populations. They also used their military force to combat existing narco-trafficking groups that terrorized these communities. The major implication is that VNSAs who provide social services are then able to garner popular support and become institutionalized in these ungoverned spaces over time. This increased the likelihood that the organization is able to survive state efforts to combat them or other exogenous threats. In the case of the FARC, they were “able to leverage the support of the local population into territorial control, which led to economic growth, and then military strength” (Cook, 2011, p.24).

Third, VNSAs with organizational training offer more security to its members’ operations. Sophisticated VNSAs – especially with a high degree of formalization – develop rules and procedures requiring members to be loyal to the organization and maintain secrecy. In addition, sophisticated VNSAs cultivate and allocate the resources in order to protect members from social control agents (e.g., police, counter-terrorism agencies). For example, the Los Zetas developed operational security measures such as using multiple rotating phones or dropping phone numbers to avoid detection. They also invested in encrypted messaging technologies and wiretapping equipment to stay one-step ahead of law enforcement (Campbell, 2010). It is difficult to disrupt the core leadership of hierarchical VNSAs because of the multiple layers between leaders and foot-soldiers. In other words, low-ranking members bear the brunt of efforts to infiltrate and take out the organization while members of the leadership are often untouched. When VNSAs are difficult to infiltrate and their

leaders remain in power, they are better equipped recruit individuals based on expertise (also called “talent spotting”) and continue to gain popular support (Windisch, Logan, and Ligon, 2018).

Finally, sophisticated VNSAs who engage in organizational training are equipped for operational collaboration within and across VNSAs. Collaboration between-VNSAs improves organization performance by allowing for the exchange of valuable resources, including information, skills, and materials (Horowitz & Potter, 2014). Resources and materials, including weapons and documents, are exchanged through alliance ties, and collaborative organizations can teach each other new skills and improved techniques. Between-VNSA alliances enabled organizations to aggregate their capacities and share knowledge. Likewise, collaboration within VNSAs enhances the types of violence the organization can utilize. For example, VNSAs with high degrees of internal collaboration have demonstrated the capacity to utilize complex weapons and tactics across multiple target types. In contrast, VNSAs with low degree of collaboration are generally constrained to the use of simplistic weapons and have little variability in the types of targets they engage (Logan & Ligon, 2017).

**Table 3. Indicators and Warnings of Organizational Sophistication**

Key Terms	Definition	Sample Indicators
<i>Centralization</i>	The degree of concentration in the decision-making within the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hierarchical agenda-setting</li> <li>- Top-management-team</li> <li>- Operational and tactical local autonomy in line with strategic direction of the group</li> </ul>
<i>Formalization</i>	The extent to which organizational rules and procedures of codified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Titles that codify functions</li> <li>- Uniforms that signal tenure</li> <li>- Application process that captures technical skills</li> </ul>
<i>Specialization</i>	The number of interrelated functions and division of labor in the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity of organizational activities</li> <li>- Increasingly specialized span of control</li> <li>- Distinction between cells/groups for functional expertise</li> </ul>

## Conclusions

In an increasingly complicated environment, it is imperative to distinguish which non-state adversaries have greatest capacity for coordinated violence. Drawing from criminology and organizational science, the present effort focuses on differentiating the threats posed by VNSA based on their level of organizational sophistication. We argue that VNSAs with a high degree of sophistication, as indicated by their centralization, formalization, and specialization, pose the greatest threats due to their ability to engage in complex tactics, become institutionalized, garner popular support, and avoid infiltration. We offer a framework to identify early warning indicators that highlight when such organizational changes emerge in an advanced way.

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## Chapter 9. Unanticipated Possibilities of Asymmetric Conflict and UW

Vern Liebl

Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, Marine Corps University  
vliebl@prosol1.com

### Conventional War versus Irregular War

There is a recent book written by Professor Sean McFate (2019), titled *The New Rules of War* that postulates, in his words, that conventional war is ‘dead,’ that ‘shadow wars’ will dominate, that there will be wars without states and that mercenaries will return. He further states that war has moved on and ‘we’ now live in an “Age of Durable Disorder,” according to a 37-slide show book presentation he presented 24 January 2019 for the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) General Speaker Series. While his thesis is not altogether new—that conventional warfare is dead and that the focus needs to be on the tools our ‘adversaries’ use to circumvent conventional strength (in light of almost 20 years of U.S. involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria as well as facing China and Russia in a Great Power Competition) —there does appear to be an over-reliance on technology and a concurrent ignorance of non-technical potentialities. Here is where one can and should examine the exploitable/exploiting mobilizable minorities inhabiting the interstices of Great Power Competition, confusingly both understudied and over-examined. The intersecting “march lands” between the Great Powers have been endlessly examined, generally for economic potential, past and future influence from the Great Powers, and as regions suffering from the scourges of terrorism, drug trafficking, and/or human trafficking (I accept I am grossly over-simplifying).

### Terminology can Define, but it can also Blind or be an Unnecessary Change

Still, as a starting point, there are two obvious paths, both of which intertwine.

First, there is in the examination of these march lands militarily and what seems to be a regrettable fascination with terminology and renaming, epitomized for our purposes here as to the descriptor – irregular war. Irregular war can be defined in many ways, but is ultimately about a struggle for legitimacy, credibility, and influence (defined as victory) by state and/or non-state actors over or within a population or populations. It is not necessarily violent and may not be direct in approach. It may, as a subset part, be considered hybrid warfare, which is simply a term traditionally redefined from the original “total war” concept. Purists can differentiate irregular warfare from conventional warfare as “war of the people” as opposed to “industrial war,” but industrial societies are also subject to irregular warfare. In the long litany of history, irregular warfare has been called by various names such as imperial policing, terrorism, insurgency, guerrilla war, colonial war, wars of liberation, low intensity conflict, etc. Within the modern definition of irregular warfare there are five delineated pillars, those being counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, unconventional war, foreign internal defense, and stability operations, which frequently match as opposites the labels in the preceding sentence (to examine the topic further, see: Dep, 2015; Salmoni, 2007; Savage, 2018; Scaife, 2012; White, 2007).

What can be drawn from this is that humans have executed struggle and violence from time immemorial, and that war in huge open battles or wide-ranging contests in which all is staked on a single battlefield victory alone is actually fairly unusual. Irregular war is conventional war, historically and today. Ambush, bushwhack, assassination, booby-trap, economic embargo,

information operations, propaganda, and today, cyberwar (in all its applications), is the norm. Even in such a conventional conflict like World War II, guerrilla war, partisan war, commando operations, Chindit ops, Brandenburgers, etc. (for further examination see: Tabor, 2002; Thompson, 1994; Weir, 2008) (here also can be placed such means as airborne, airmobile and amphibious techniques as well as economic warfare), were much more widespread and common than stand-up battles like Stalingrad or El Alamein (although usually not as costly in the short-run). Again, irregular war is conventional (For excellent examples on these topics see: Anscombe, 1997; Baumann, 1993; Fasier, 2008; Parker, 2004). And all conflict seeks to be asymmetrical, of whatever type, in order to achieve an advantage to gain victory (or survival). Again, the blinding due to a need to stand out appears operative here, to create something new and trendy. All combatants seek an advantage, that is, asymmetrical advantage.<sup>24</sup>

## Looking to the Literature

Second, Professor McFate does not do the historical community of military theorists and thinkers justice on his review of their examining irregular war. The analysis of normative processes, behaviors, and institutions in military affairs throughout history has been done, with an unfortunate over-emphasis on the 'big battle' or war, what most today term as conventional war. However, an examination shows a considerable amount of thought given to irregular war or its aspects. Just to give a few examples: Sun-Tzu explores it in chapters 1 (Estimates) and 6 (Weakness and Strengths), Byzantine Emperor Maurice discusses aspects of it in his *Stratigekon* (2001) (rumors, deserters, characteristics and tactics of different peoples), Baron Jomini (1862) addresses some in his first chapter (The Relation of Diplomacy to War, sections VII – Wars of Opinion, VIII – National Wars and IX – Civil and Religious Wars) while Carl von Clausewitz addresses it multiple times (Book I – Friction in War, Book III – Surprise, Cunning, Book V – Terrain, Book VI – The Key to the Country and The People in Arms). Even Admiral Mahan (1941) in his book *Mahan on Naval Warfare* explores the topic in chapter 10 – Commerce Destroying and Blockade, Command of the Sea Decisive (see also Corbet's (2004) littorals-focused examination of limited warfare). There are plenty of modern examples, both in book and article, which explore both Irregular Warfare and exploitable mobilizable groups in the interstices of Great Power Competition. One prime example which is completely dedicated to addressing this subject is the 1940 *Small Wars Manual* published by the United States Marine Corps.

So, when terminology and theoretical/empirical work re-converge, it is much easier to explore in those gaps between (or even within) those currently contesting Great Powers and look for the "Black Swans," "Grey Rhinos," and "Pink Flamingoes" that are there. The first obvious Black Swan is the rise of the Islamic State, an extremist and violent off-shoot of Al Qaeda, the global terrorist organization which itself was a Grey Rhino of the 1980s. Before proceeding, it must be explained that Al Qaeda, rising from the proxy clash between the United States and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan (a recent Great Power Competition), did so because the United States was blind to a potential religious revival within Islam. By the 1970s, much of the world assumed that Islam was a fading force, much in line with a primarily Western World rise in irreligiosity and concurrent focus on political ideology such as socialism, communism, liberalism and numerous shades (often regionally specific, like Nasserism or Baathism). The U.S., supported by newly wealthy Saudi Arabia (espousing a

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Jones, SOCCOM, commented here, "historically, "irregular" warfare was that fought by irregular forces. So, at Lexington and Concord we had battle between the regulars and the irregulars. Both were British and it was just "war"; or perhaps not war at all, and only an exercise in illegal democracy by a segment of the population denied effective legal means to engage their government. We worry too much about how things look, rather than understanding them for what they are. Some distinctions are fundamentally and strategically important. Most are not."

Muwahiddun [Wahhabi] doctrine), focused on supporting religious groups in and adjacent to Afghanistan as the groups most capable of sustaining a long-term fight against the Soviets and their proxies. That those groups, with the active support of primarily private financial individuals/groups but also by several nations, managed to create what became an international religious militant organization soon to be named Al Qaeda. That in the now 30 year confrontation between Al Qaeda and the United States and its allies those in the West still largely refuse to place the ideological clash in religious terms, as Al Qaeda has repeatedly and explicitly done, has prevented the formation of effective long-term countermeasures (many observers have reached the conclusion that military means alone are insufficient but then do not pursue the ideological counter-means for fear of being called an 'Islamophobe') (Cole, 2019). So, a Grey Rhino.

From that Grey Rhino came a Black Swan, the Islamic State, which while a predictable possibility if examined in the light of Muslim history (see previous Muslim revivalist/extremist groups), caught most Muslims, even Al Qaeda, by surprise. The Islamic State, unlike Al Qaeda, can be called a Violent Extremist Organization (VEO). Al Qaeda has a pan-Islamic ecumenical mission to unite all Muslims into a global caliphate, to be accomplished when Allah so wills it in the fullness of time. This is a reason why Al Qaeda rarely attacks Shias, nor does it engage in takfirism, although Al Qaeda can clearly be called a violent organization (Liebl, 2018b). Islamic State, on the other hand, is exclusive, seeking to unite all *true* Sunni Muslims under the tenets of Wahhabism but taking it to an extreme. The Islamic State has declared their primary enemy to be Shia (Rafidah – rejecters), practices takfir, has rigorously policed its subjects and seeks an immediate apocalypse, all of which most Muslims find to be both violent and extreme. So, Islamic State a VEO, Al Qaeda not so much. While all of this may be interesting of itself, what makes it important is that much of the area populated by population groups susceptible to the blandishments of both Al Qaeda and Islamic State lie in the contested regions between the Great Powers. The rise of the Islamic State, clearly not favorable to any of the three current Great Powers, is not a desirable thing, even though the Islamic State has purportedly been defeated (at least territorially). Mobilizable and exploitable entities lay about like potential land mines, ethnically such as the Uighurs, Kurds, Hazara, Baloch, Tatars, Rohingya and subsets of Arabs, Turkic peoples, etc). Religious groups such as Sunni, Shia Yarsani, Buddhist, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Shamanist and a host of permutations between, as well as irredentist groups like Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turks, Persians, Pushtuns and many more are mobilizable. And some of the mentioned will self-mobilize and contest any or all the Great Powers, despite the odds (see the Chechens, for an example).

### Yemen as a Modern Case Study for Mobilizable Groups Spiraling out of Control

One modern case study will show the extent of exploitable groups mobilized (either by themselves, by external players or some combination) in a significant interstice between the Great Powers. Yemen is in the midst of a series of wars, with a vast amount of external 'meddling' and increasing ripples of disturbance spreading similar to a stone being dropped in a pond (Liebl, 2018a). First, Yemen itself is split between Sunni Arabs and Shia (Zaydi – Fivers), a situation a thousand years old. The population, of whatever religious background, is highly tribalized and thus traditionally fragments, as well as further fragmented by harsh deserts and rugged mountains. Occupying a strategically important spot (Bab el-Mandeb, southwestern corner of the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula) but having little else of value (no oil), Yemen has historically been subject to external invasion, occupation or imperial policing.

Ostensibly at relative peace until 2011, the wider Arab Spring events prompted in Yemen the yearlong Yemen Revolution of Dignity which saw the overthrow of the long-time leader of Yemen, President Ali Abdullah Saleh (33 years in power) in January 2012. A previously existing struggle in

northern Yemen between the Sana'a government and the Houthi group, exacerbated by increasing Saudi (Wahhabi) influence in internal Yemeni politics, which was also anti-Houthi, kept Yemen in turmoil. Violence increased, Al Qaeda elements beginning to rise to geographic prominence in Hadhramauti Yemen, inviting further Saudi reaction. The Houthis then attacked, taking Sana'a in 2014 and then forcing then President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi out of Yemen to Saudi Arabia. As the Houthis continued to expand into Sunni Yemeni areas, Saudi Arabia, aided by UAE, organized a regional coalition to invade Yemen, depose the Houthis and restore exiled President Hadi to power. The invasion was executed and rapidly bogged down.

To make a long story short, the Saudi-led coalition is favored by the U.S. and receives limited support from the U.S., as well as having extensive Western and regional support as the Saudi-led Coalition, in concert with U.S. and allied forces keep the Bab el-Mandeb open and ensure the safety and continuity of maritime trade. The Saudi Coalition has a significant UAE presence and has the support from over 20 countries in the region. The UAE has created a littoral support infrastructure in Eritrea, Djibouti, and Puntland (Somalia) as engaging an extensive mercenary presence of primarily Sudanese and Colombians. The Houthis, the depicted enemy of the Saudi-led Coalition, have now received support from the Iranians, who are engaged in a regional struggle for dominance with Saudi Arabia. Iran is receiving limited support from Russia while Iran enables its Levantine proxy Hezbollah as presence to support the Houthis. China, the third Great Power, is remaining mostly neutral and providing limited humanitarian aid to Yemen (mostly going to Houthi dominated areas) while trying to retain favorable economic relations with Saudi Arabia. Within Yemen, Aden and some areas in southeastern Yemen have declared their independence from the Sana'a government (which only exists in exile in Saudi Arabia) as the Hirak (or Southern Yemen). Loyalist forces in central Yemen stay that way with extensive financial and material support (bribes) from Saudi Arabia and UAE. The Hadhramaut is essentially an Al Qaeda emirate although the UAE is trying to drive them away and the Houthis continue to hold much of the center and northwestern parts of Yemen (the mountains), having organized an unrecognized governmental infrastructure in Sana'a. Finally, unexpectedly, another political entity is declaring its autonomy if not independence, along the Red Sea coastline, being the Tihama Hirak (which is pro-Saudi, anti-Houthi and anti-Aden).

A violent and fractured Yemen, part of the Saudi-Iran Proxy Conflict, which is itself exploiting the Great Power Competition between the U.S. and Russia, is seeing unforeseen repercussions. Saudi Arabia and UAE, because of events in Syria as well as hating the media outlet of Al Jazeera, broke relations with Qatar and placed them under siege (ameliorated by the U.S. and Iran). In response, Qatar has provided huge financial support to Turkey, defraying Turkish military costs in Syria. Additionally, Turkey, to contain the Saudis and support their Qatari friends, contracted for a port in Sudan (Suakin) and established an extensive military training presence in Somalia. These moves have alarmed the Egyptians, who have moved military forces to the southern Egyptian border and additional naval forces into the Red Sea, as well as working with the Saudi-led Coalition. Sudan, with 6,000 mercenaries already under contract to the UAE in Yemen, are concerned about the Egyptian moves but not as much as the Ethiopians, who see the Egyptian actions as a potential threat to the new dams on the White Nile. Within all this, the unrecognized Somali countries of Puntland and Somaliland have attained increased importance. As well, naval forces from the U.S., Europe, China and Iran are deployed extensively in the region. Complicating all of this is the rise of a massive cholera epidemic in Yemen (Dengue Fever and others as well), famine, drug trafficking (primarily khat) and human trafficking (Wilson-Smith, 2019) from the Horn of Africa via Yemen northwards into the Middle East, Europe and Asia.

As the Yemen case study shows, there is extensive room for small, exploitable groups to mobilize within or as part of Great Power Competition, even as proxies several times removed from direct

confrontation (for a second excellent case study see the Tamil War chapter in Tucker, 2018). Tribes, fragmented ethnic groups, political and/or religious struggle, external economic factors, natural or man-abetted disasters, and the extensive use of mercenaries creates a large reservoir of exploitable energy by minority groups. The potential for small mobilizable groups to create unwanted complications (up to and including military confrontation) for the Great Powers is real. As an example, if a Houthi anti-ship missile sinks a European oil tanker, despite Saudi and UAE naval protection, this will likely prompt a U.S. military response. If a Hezbollah/Iranian element could then manage to damage a U.S. asset, this becomes a confrontation. With Russian support to Iran, the possibility of events spiraling out of control is frightening. Aside from Yemen, such groups and situations are present in Syria, Iraq, parts of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Asia, North Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and increasingly, in Latin America (to look at a few examples see Rothstein, 2006 and Singh, 2012).

### Exploitable Energy Groups: Mercenaries, Private Military Contractors and Volunteers

The presence of mercenaries needs to be mentioned, especially as this started with Professor McFate's book noted them, as these can also be mobilizable small groups easily exploitable within the interstices between the Great Powers, sometimes at the instigation of those Powers but deniable. The Wagner Group comes to mind, as it is currently established in the Ukraine, Crimea, Syria, Sudan, and Venezuela (it was in the Central African Republic at one point and may be elsewhere) (Staff, 2019; UAWire, 2019). Ostensibly an independent and private military contractor registered in Hong Kong (China), it works to execute Russian foreign policy without being officially Russian (despite the fact that the majority of the military contractors are Russian/Slavic) (Kasapoglu, 2018). The U.S. registered and based Academi (originally called Blackwater, then Xe) also provides extensive support to U.S. foreign ventures. Just to mention a few – G4S out of the U.K. has 620,000 employees and operates globally, Prosegur is based out of Spain, operates globally with over 100,000 employees (it has over 4,700 armored vehicles); Unity Resource Group is an Australian-based PMC and Defion Internacional is based out of Peru (Varin, 2015). And national forces are not averse to employing foreigners, also ostensibly as mercenaries but ones who have a chance at national citizenship. The Oman Army is 40% Pakistani Baloch (generally hostile to Pakistan) while most of the Bahrain Security Forces are composed of former Pakistan Army soldiers, all of whom are Punjabi). Saudi Arabia uses non-nationals in the Royal Saudi Land Forces (as long as they are Muslim), the U.K. still employs Gurkhas (as well as Brunei and Singapore), France has the Foreign Legion, even the Vatican has the Swiss Guard. Mercenaries, PMCs, even volunteers (Serbian Hussar Regiment in the Ukraine, or the numerous ethno-sectarian Hashd units in Iraq and Syria) are mobilizable small groups. How extensive this mobilization potential can be is shown by the Indian military, which accepts volunteers of Indian heritage from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Congo, Ethiopia, and Vietnam (as well as adjacent Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Nepal).

### Black Swans, Grey Rhinos and Pink Flamingoes –Paying Attention

Today, small and energetic groups (size being relative) can be mobilized, either by external events (such as Adalja, 2019; Ohrt, 2019)/players<sup>25</sup> or by themselves, to participate, abet or exploit the Great

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<sup>25</sup> It is here that a quotation from T. X. Hammes (2004, p. viii-ix) is appropriate, "...First was their utter determination to continue the struggle despite the odds. They were not deterred by fear of death. In each case, they were engaged in a struggle with a government that possessed many times their military power. In each case, they knew the odds and were not deterred. They believed in their cause and were sure that belief was powerful enough to defeat the government. The idea they fought for was central to their resistance. In fact, they

Power Competition and the powers themselves (Russia, China and the U.S). History amply supports this and ignorance of the almost endless minor exploitable/exploiting groups existing in the interstices can see the advent of Black Swans, will see the presence of Grey Rhinos and will incur Pink Flamingoes. Just think of the Poles and their long history between Russia, Germany and Austria (and sometimes Sweden).

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## Chapter 10. Migration: The Relationship between Inequality, Risk Sensitivity, and Violence

Lawrence A. Kuznar, PhD  
NSI, Inc.  
[lkuznar@nsiteam.com](mailto:lkuznar@nsiteam.com)

### Abstract

Irregular (unauthorized/illegal) immigration is becoming a destabilizing influence in the world. This study presents a statistical analysis designed to test what the drivers, and therefore indicators and warnings, of unwanted migration may be. The key findings include:

- The draw of economic opportunity in wealthy nations is the strongest driver of migration
- Countries with rapidly growing populations contribute to the flow of emigres
- Malnutrition is another driver of migration globally
- Other political and social variables (war, repression, discrimination) do not contribute statistically to global migration, although they may be relevant in specific country cases
- Countries with especially high homicide rates also have high emigration rates, although the relationship is not quite statistically significant globally, but apparently is a driver in contexts such as the northern triangle of Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala).
- High levels of inequality that generate highly risk acceptant populations drive homicide
- Interventions that could reduce unwanted immigration, such as minimizing inequality by improving the conditions of the poorest segment of a society, may ironically weaken states and increase terrorism (see Chapter 6).

### Introduction

Migration, especially irregular migration, defined as migration that passes through unauthorized channels (United Nations, n.d.), has become an emergent challenge to developed countries that often are the ultimate destinations of unwelcome migrants (Cummings, Pacitto, Lauro, & Foresti, 2015). This creates humanitarian crises, such as mass drownings during sea passages or abuse of trafficked migrants, and political crises as nativist groups in receiving countries mobilize to prevent immigration and support populist groups often skeptical of democratic institutions. In the course of the global analysis conducted for the Aggrieved Populations project (Chapter 6), an unexpected and especially strong correlation was found between risk sensitivity and homicide.<sup>26</sup> Recent attention to violence as a driver of migration (Medecins sans Frontieres, 2017) inspired an analysis of what country-level measures might explain migration rates, and what role violence may play. This paper presents these findings.

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<sup>26</sup> The U.N. definition of homicide as the “unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person.” Was used in this study. This definition excludes deaths from warfare.

## Risk Sensitivity

Risk sensitivity refers to an individual's attraction or aversion to taking risks. The Arrow-Pratt measure of risk aversion is a standard measure of risk sensitivity derived from individual utility functions (measures of satisfaction) (Arrow, 1974; Pratt, 1964). Negative values imply an attraction to risk taking and positive values imply risk aversion. Economists and anthropologists (Friedman & Savage, 1948; Kuznar, 2001, 2002, 2007) have proposed that an unequal distribution of wealth and social status can influence utility functions and people's risk sensitivity, and that individuals near status (class) boundaries are predicted to be risk acceptant whereas individuals well-ensconced in a class will avoid risks that may threaten their position in society. This theory has been tested in a variety of social and cultural settings and has been found to be related to political risk taking, ranging from political debate to coup d'états and involvement in terrorist organizations (Kuznar, 2002, 2007). The theory and its methods are elaborated further in Chapter 6.

## Inequality and Violence

An association between inequality and homicide persists at localized social scales up through US state-level measures (Daly, 2016) and country-level measures as discovered in this research. Previous research has demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between a state's Gini coefficient, a common measure of inequality, and homicide (Daly, 2016, pp. 135-138). However, the association discovered here between a country's average Arrow-Pratt measure and homicide is over twice as strong (Table 4).

**Table 4. Correlates of Homicide**

<b>Inequality Measure</b>	<b><i>r</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
<b>Gini Coefficient</b>	0.208	0.00674
<b>Average Arrow-Pratt</b>	-0.453	<<0.00001

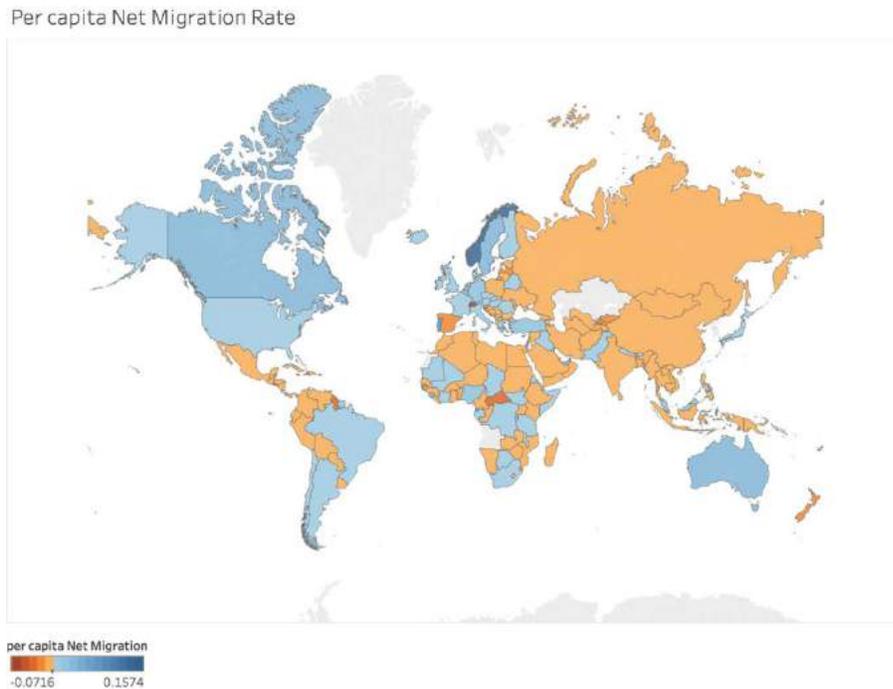
The association of inequality and homicide has puzzled researchers because 1) homicide increases with poverty, and 2) instead of the violence being directed at the wealthy to address inequality, it is overwhelmingly directed from the poor to the poor. In the country data used in this study, increasing risk acceptance was associated with homicide at all socio-economic levels, but was strongest among the poor ( $r = -0.386$ ,  $p < 0.00001$ ), and weaker among the middle class ( $r = -0.219$ ,  $p = 0.013$ ), and wealthy ( $r = -0.228$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ).<sup>27</sup> The association between inequality and homicide among the poor has engendered controversial theories to explain it ranging from theories that point blame at a "culture of violence," to structural inequality in social institutions, to males in impoverished settings struggling to defend their position in tenuous social hierarchies (Daly, 2016). This paper will not tackle the thorny issue of why the poor kill the poor, but it will explore the role inequality and risk sensitivity play compared to other drivers of migration.

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<sup>27</sup> In this study, poor is defined as the risk acceptant lower tier of society (generally below the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile), the risk averse middle (generally from about the 30<sup>th</sup> to 55<sup>th</sup> percentile), and the risk acceptant wealthy (generally above the 55<sup>th</sup> percentile). The exact breakpoints for these three classes was estimated for each country individually.

## The Drivers of Migration: Where Violence Fits

Broad comparative research has proposed that the basic drivers of migration are economic opportunity, personal security and political oppression (Cummings et al., 2015; Lee, 1966; Van Hear, Bakewell, & Long, 2012). The indicators list used in the Aggrieved Populations project (Chapter 6) was used to model the drivers of migration from country data on 173 countries with populations greater than 300,000. These variables include other possible drivers such as infant mortality, food deficits and battle deaths. In order to account for the pull of wealthier countries, the difference between country per capita GDP and the world average was calculated. There is a debate among scholars as to whether or not climate change influences migration (Erian, Katlan, & babah, 2010; Gemenne, 2011; Kelley, Mohtadi, Cane, Seager, & Kushnir, 2015; Lilleør & Van den Broeck, 2011; McLeman, 2011). In order to account for possible climate change effects, a country's ability to respond to experienced climate hazards (droughts, floods, etc.), as measured by the Notre Dame GAIN (Global Adaptive Initiative) metric, was used.<sup>28</sup> As a first approximation to migration, the net migration rates provided by the World Bank were used to track which countries experienced a net loss of population because of emigration and which countries experienced a net gain as destinations of immigration (**Figure 4**).



**Figure 4. Net Migration by Country. Orange countries contribute immigrants and blue countries receive. No color = no data.**

Stepwise regression was used to establish a best model, consisting of a strong and statistically significant overall fit and indicators that were statistically related to the net migration (**Table 5**).

<sup>28</sup> <https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/>

**Table 5. Net Migration Model. R-square = 0.334, p = 2.173e-13.**

Independent Variable	Coefficient	p
<i>Per capita GDP Delta</i>	-7.921e-04	7.28e-11
<i>Population Change</i>	3.057e-03	0.00323
<i>Food Deficit</i>	-2.81e-05	0.002267
<i>Homicide Rate</i>	-1.341e-04	0.17205 n.s.

The best fitting model included the per capita GDP difference, population change, food deficit, and homicide. Homicide is not statistically significantly related, although its sign is in the expected direction and eliminating it from the model dropped the overall fit a fair amount. Homicide is probably a key driver for some countries such as Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala (Medecins sans Frontieres, 2017), but not enough countries generally. Deaths from warfare were not statistically related to migration either, although this is probably because few countries actually experience war; similar to homicide, battle deaths are likely a localized driver as in the cases of Afghanistan and Syria.

## Implications

The modeling identified three clear drivers of immigration: economic opportunity in destination countries as the strongest driver, followed by growing population that probably taxes local job markets and support systems, and malnutrition. Violence appears related, but probably operates in a more context specific way; countries with highly risk accepting populations born of status inequality experience especially high levels of interpersonal violence and war-torn countries experience the flight of refugees.

Interventions designed to mitigate these drivers could be implemented at the level of international NGO and UN support, as well as U.S. policy. These interventions could include:

- Combatting the overall impoverishment of populations from which migrants originate
- Providing infrastructure to combat malnutrition
- Economic restructuring in such a manner to minimize sharp contrasts in wealth and therefore the overall risk proneness of a population and the rate of interpersonal violence.

These interventions are generally assumed to compliment those designed to decrease state fragility and terrorism. However, as findings in Chapter 6 show, decreasing the risk acceptance of the poorest in society by increasing their socioeconomic status may decrease risk acceptance and homicide, but ironically may increase state fragility.

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## PART IV: REGIONAL DEEP DIVES & APPLICATIONS OF WHITE PAPER CONCEPTS

### Chapter 11. The Middle East: Conflict and Competition in Perspective

Ryan Oliver  
USSOCOM  
ryan.oliver.ctr@socom.mil

#### Abstract

Great power competition is shaping the strategic landscape in the Middle East, challenging how the U.S. engages with the region and expanding the potential for disruption. As the U.S. and its rivals contend for influence in the Middle East, regional relationships built on a shared interest in countering asymmetric threats now become more complicated as partners navigate the balance between the U.S. and competing powers. China will likely continue to leverage its diplomatic and economic access for broader engagement and more strategic gains. Beyond its involvement in Syria, Russian engagement in the Middle East is characterized primarily by its diverse relationships. Russia will likely exploit the space created by a reduced U.S. role to extend its influence further as a leading power in the Middle East. Amidst these webs of relationships among states, non-state actors adapt and populations pulse in a strategic environment characterized by complexity, serving as both the backdrop and the primary arena for competition. As well-resourced interference and popular suppression contribute to greater disruption in the region, the U.S. may need to reconsider its existing approach to partnership cultivation and relationship management.

- **Rivals are eroding U.S. influence:** China and Russia have found ample opportunities to exploit their relative strengths among current U.S. partners, which share similar approaches to governance and population management.
- **Shifting competition challenges U.S. partnerships:** Partnerships have long served as the cornerstone of a U.S. regional approach to the Middle East, but the reemergence of great power competition creates new context and questions for those relationships.
- **U.S. strategy must orient on interests:** By orienting on interests and leveraging relative strengths, the U.S. will develop more enduring regional approaches, better avoid conflicts of choice, and more appropriately cultivate partnerships that reflect U.S. national interests.

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Although asymmetric conflict has long set the context for the U.S. military role in the Middle East, the resurgence of great power competition has begun to challenge how the U.S. engages with the region. This competition is most obvious in regional flashpoints like Yemen and Syria, where rival powers and affiliated non-state actors engage in armed conflict to shape the fates of these battleground states. Alongside this more overt activity, however, great power competition has begun to shape the region more subtly as well.

Globally, great power competition—primarily for the influence, leverage, and advantage necessary to secure respective interests (Miller, 2019)—continues to grow in strategic significance and demands further attention. As the U.S. and its rivals contend for influence in the Middle East, regional relationships built on a shared interest in countering asymmetric threats now become more complicated as partners navigate the balance between the U.S. and competing powers. Amidst these webs of relationships among states, non-state actors adapt and populations pulse in a strategic

environment characterized by complexity, serving as both the backdrop and the primary arena for competition. To design a coherent path forward for the U.S. role in this chaotic milieu, the Joint Force should orient its approach to the Middle East on a clear and prioritized understanding of U.S. interests within a broader global context.

## Great Power Rivals in the Middle East

The U.S. view of great power competition presently focuses on China and Russia, both of which play increasingly active roles in the Middle East. While their interests, histories of engagement, and cultural ties in the region differ, both have begun to expand their engagement and erode U.S. influence among its community of allies and partners. These authoritarian states have found ample opportunities to exploit their relative strengths among current U.S. partners that share similar approaches to governance and population management. A review of China and Russia's engagement in the region reflects the similarities and differences in their approaches.

China's engagement with the Middle East features the full spectrum of diplomatic, economic, and military activities. Diplomatically, China has sought to build strategic partnerships with like-minded regimes to buttress its policy positions with external support on contentious issues, such as the status of Taiwan. China's rapid economic growth over the last several decades has required commensurate energy resources, the leading reason why Asia is responsible for 45 percent of Middle East trade (Cohen, 2019). Meanwhile, China continues to invest heavily in infrastructure within the region,<sup>29</sup> and Chinese technology—from its integrated population-monitoring systems to its advanced drone platforms—has proliferated as well. Security cooperation remains nascent, but as China develops its counterterrorism capabilities and regional access, this will likely serve as a growth area for Chinese engagement in the region going forward. Going forward, China will likely continue to leverage its diplomatic and economic access for broader engagement and more strategic gains.

Beyond its more direct involvement on the battlefields of Syria, Russian engagement in the Middle East is characterized primarily by its diverse relationships with state and non-state actors (Sladden, 2017). Unlike the U.S., Russia seems to manage a number of unlikely, transactional relationships, including strong ties with both Israel and Iran, as well as warming ties with Saudi Arabia. From this interconnected position, Russia can better shape energy markets, critical to its economy. Russia leverages its role as an arms supplier to influence the balance of power within the region and to reinforce its position as a partner (Kozhanov, 2016). Russia often casts itself as a leader in the region, particularly in contrast to the U.S. as it wrestles with growing pressure to reduce its roles in Syria and Yemen. As the U.S. evaluates its involvement in these conflicts, Russia will likely take advantage of the opportunity to extend its influence further both as a leading power in the Middle East and through the empowerment of likeminded partners.

## Partnerships in Complex Conditions

As China and Russia advance increasingly assertive approaches to the Middle East, it is critical that the U.S. understand how these rivals might influence U.S. partners and what the implications for U.S. interests might be. Partnerships have long served as the cornerstone of a U.S. regional approach to the Middle East, but the reemergence of great power competition creates new context and questions for those relationships. The National Security Strategy's (2017) approach to the Middle East

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<sup>29</sup> These investments often have direct implications for U.S. activities in the region. For example, Shanghai International Port Group, a Chinese firm, is due to take control of the port of Haifa for 25 years, beginning in 2021. The port is frequented by ships from the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy.

emphasizes relationships, and strengthening alliances and attracting new partners is one of three pillars of the National Defense Strategy (2018). Great power competition has begun to provide new context for these partnerships, however, and introduces greater questions about the U.S. approach to the region.

U.S. military engagement in the Middle East has brought together an unlikely collection of comrades against asymmetric threats, an approach that generally rests on several interlocking assumptions. First, ungoverned or hostile areas that serve as sanctuaries provide asymmetric threats with the geographic space to target the homeland from abroad. Second, extremist activities threaten regional stability to the detriment of U.S. interests. Third, the U.S. prefers a regional balance of power in which Israel is safe, and neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran dominates. These framing assumptions have generally led the U.S. to manage the power equilibrium while actively pursuing perceived asymmetric threats to regional stability. This approach has contributed to strategic drift within the U.S. and arguably left the region in worse shape in terms of security, prosperity, and stability. In the Middle East, competing external powers have until recently remained an afterthought but now add further complexity to consider.

## Israel

The U.S. and Israel enjoy a special relationship, although the latter's ties with U.S. rivals and divergent interests may generate questions as the U.S. shift emphasis among its strategic priorities. U.S. policy is clear that, "Israel has long been, and remains, America's most reliable partner in the Middle East. Israel and the United States are bound closely by historic and cultural ties as well as by mutual interests" (U.S. Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2018). Tension ebbs and flows, however, over "significant policy differences over issues in the Middle East" (Blackwill, 2016). Chinese investments into Israel—particularly in technology and infrastructure—have caused U.S. officials to warn of possible implications for U.S.-Israel intelligence-sharing (Reuters, 2019).<sup>30</sup> Russia, too, has grown closer with Israel in recent years, despite the former's relationship with Iran and involvement in the ongoing Syria conflict. While it appears to overlook Russia's ties with Iran to continue deepening cooperation, Israel's hard line on Iran constrains U.S. policy options in the region and limits opportunities for reconciliation.

## Saudi Arabia

The U.S. partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has been forged in exchanges of energy resources and military equipment, conflicts in Iraq, and concerns about Iran; yet close ties with the Kingdom presents moral and strategic quandaries for the U.S. as well. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia enjoy a robust trade relationship; that is, KSA is both the second leading source of imported oil for the U.S. as well its largest foreign military sales (FMS) customer. The U.S. and KSA also share critical views of Iran's role in the region since 1979. In the security arena, however, KSA has a mixed record of performance. KSA was an uneven supporter of U.S.-led coalition efforts in Iraq and has frequently been accused of supporting extremist organizations engaged in conflict against the U.S. The U.S. has chosen to overlook that the KSA takes a significantly different approach to human rights, but particularly in light of the recent death of U.S. permanent resident Jamal Khashoggi, the U.S. may recalculate its tolerance for KSA human rights abuses. KSA has also sought to balance its relationship with the U.S. by moving closer to China, "as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman [has] accelerated

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<sup>30</sup> The Department of Energy's official statement stated that Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette "raised concerns over foreign investment in Israel, and hopes to continue a dialogue on best practices" (U.S. Department of Energy, 2019).

efforts to court an economic power that offers a potential counterweight to the U.S.” (Malsin, 2019). Decreasing U.S. roles in regional flashpoints and increasing U.S. energy independence may lead to greater attention Saudi human rights issues and balancing toward U.S. rivals.

## UAE

The relationship between the U.S. and UAE has continued to grow over the last several decades but recently had met friction the latter pursues divergent regional interests and global partnerships. The U.S. relationship with the UAE stands on a foundation of deep economic and security engagement. Trade between the countries has grown from \$5.22 billion in 2004 to \$24.7 billion by 2017, and no Arab country has joined the U.S. in coalition action more frequently (UAE Embassy to the United States, 2019). A new Defense Cooperation Agreement in 2017 further codified U.S.-UAE security cooperation, providing clarity on the status of UAE-based U.S. forces operating primarily out of Al Dhafra Air Base (Stratfor Worldview, 2017). Recent developments have generated tension in the U.S.-UAE relationship. The continuing blockade of U.S. partner Qatar, ongoing conflict in Yemen faces increasing opposition in the U.S., and, as with KSA, human rights concerns all continue to growing “headwinds” in the U.S.-UAE relationship (McLaughlin, 2019). Furthermore, UAE and China agreed to elevate their relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership in 2018, signaling deepening cooperation in political, military, and economic matters (Gulf News, 2018). This declaration came just a month after the UAE had signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership with Russia (Gulf News, 2018). When viewed through the lens of great power competition, differences in regional policy and deepening partnerships with U.S. rivals may influence the U.S.-UAE relationship.

## Qatar

Qatar hosts the largest U.S. base in the region, but regional tensions threaten stability and further complicate the U.S. role in the Middle East. Qatar’s Al Udeid Air Base is home to the forward headquarters of U.S. Central Command and over 10,000 U.S. troops, which may grow after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently agreed to expand and renovate the location (Lee, 2019). Qatari officials have hosted and mediated negotiations between the U.S. and Taliban representatives, supporting efforts to resolve “the long war” in Afghanistan (Abuelgasim, 2019). However, after four neighboring countries—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, and Egypt—accused Qatar of supporting terrorism and cut diplomatic ties in 2017, the U.S. has strained to leverage its various relationships to manage the situation (Al Jazeera, 2017). As the U.S. has demonstrated clear investment in Qatar and in its relationships with others involved in the dispute, these entangling ties with regional partners may distract U.S. engagement in the Middle East.

## Jordan

Jordan, a key U.S. partner in security cooperation, is also deepening economic and diplomatic relations with China and Russia. “Jordan is a close partner with the United States on a range of diplomatic and security challenges throughout the region, among them the crisis in Syria, combatting violent extremism, and advancing Middle East peace” (Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 2019). Meanwhile, however, Jordan has agreed to host the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in 2020 and is expanding its involvement in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which “points to Jordan not only being a regional fulcrum of BRI, but also shows that Jordan is being positioned as the staging point for China’s impending reconstruction efforts in Syria” (Lyll, 2019). At the same time, Jordan security coordination and economy engagement with Russia have improved behind the close relationship between King Abdullah II and his “brother” President Vladimir Putin, whom he has visited more than any other head of state (TASS, 2018). These intimate ties to U.S. rivals bear more

significant implications for the bilateral relationship when viewed from a great power competition perspective, rather than in a counterterrorism context.

## Reorienting on Interests

In this age of disruption, great power competition is expanding opportunities for conflict globally, and the Middle East is no exception. On the one hand, state actors empower proxies and associated non-state actors, fueling violence and instability from afar. On the other hand, our authoritarian rivals and our partners in the Middle East share a common fear of popular unrest as witnessed in the Arab Spring. These rivals seek to undermine the U.S. role in the region and develop deeper relationships with partner states, while pressure within populations will likely build as regimes intolerant of public discourse deny a release valve for grievances. As well-resourced interference and popular suppression contribute to greater disruption in the region, the U.S. may need to reconsider its existing approach to partnership development and maintenance.

Instead, as great power competition reshapes the strategic environment in the Middle East, the U.S. should leverage an interest-based approach to ensure that it appropriately balances its engagements to proactively address its interests in conditions of ongoing disorder. Across its current base of regional partners, rival powers have gained ground and weakened the U.S. position by exploiting their relative strengths: greater unity of effort across public and private entities, insulation from domestic public opinion, and more limited interpretations of human rights, to name a few. The U.S. approach to the Middle East should account both for the natural advantages the U.S. possesses in relation to the potential energy of repressed populations and for durable partnerships with state and non-state actors with which shared interests drive cooperation. By orienting on interests and leveraging relative strengths, the U.S. will develop more enduring regional approaches, better avoid conflicts of choice, and more appropriately cultivate partnerships that reflect U.S. national interests.

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## Chapter 12. Crisis in Africa<sup>31</sup>

Donald C. Bolduc  
Truth to Power LLC  
[Donald.charles.bolduc@gmail.com](mailto:Donald.charles.bolduc@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the importance of Africa and why Africa matter to the stability of other regional areas, and to the security of the United States. Based on the review of literature and my personal experience it is observed that the challenges in Africa and organizing for success is critical to assisting our African partners and the international community to stabilize Africa. Therefore, this discussion aims to point out that operations in Africa require a regional approach (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). In addition, our success will be facilitated through transparency with all stakeholders under a regional comprehensive approach that focuses on adequate resourcing, an understanding that we are connected with our partners and the threat, and one that leverages the SOF-Conventional force integration, our allies, and coalition partners to complement and expand capacity (Bolduc, 2018, n.d). Moreover, initiatives should not only focus on countering VEOs, but building security capabilities of African partner nations, and fostering long-term resolutions through diplomacy and participation of inter-agency partners (Bolduc, 2018, n.d). It is only through a comprehensive, international effort focused on building functional governance from the national to local levels, that stability will be achieved. Partnership and cooperation can prevent the acceleration of instability in Africa (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). Military forces will play a significant role, but they are not the solution. The international community and the U.S. government will need to re-look current organizational constructs to be able to support the development of national to local governance in conflict affected regions in Africa. Current approaches are not working, and the lack of a comprehensive approach will only support VEO objectives and goals (Bolduc, 2018, n.d).

### Crisis in Africa

Africa will soon be home to a quarter of the world's population. Unfortunately, the pace of economic development will not sustain its rapid population growth and will exacerbate already high rates of unemployment and poverty, which are key drivers of instability (The Demographic Profile of African Countries" by the Economic Commission for Africa, 2016). That instability is already a problem with ramifications not only for our African partners, but also for international allies, U.S. interests and our homeland.

The tragic events in Niger on 3 October 2017—an ambush by ISIS-affiliated fighters that claimed the lives of four U.S. soldiers and four of the West African country's troops and an interpreter—brought attention to the U.S. presence in Africa. What needs better explaining is why it is necessary for U.S.

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<sup>31</sup> Author's note: This article is derived from the following: 1. Chairman's Forward to the National Military Strategy. 2. Department of State Strategic Plan 2014-2017 3. Department of State Integrated Country Strategies 4. United States AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan 5. United States Special Operations Command, Special Operating Forces Operational Concept "A White Paper to Guide Future Special Operations Force Development" 6. Special Operations Command Africa "Gray Zone Defined" 7. Special Operations Command Africa "Foundational Documents" 8. Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations, Oct 16 9. DRAFT Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning as of Apr 17. 10. Input from Jami an Analyst from SOCAFRICA.

diplomatic, military and other government agencies to provide support to our partners on the continent (Bolduc, n.d., 2018).

U.S. policy makers and senior leaders in the military and the State Department have known for decades that Africa is a nexus of extremist groups, criminal networks and illicit trafficking, yet the government has inadequately addressed the root causes of instability in parts of Africa. The root causes of instability include poor local governance, lack of jobs and education, and lack of socio-economic development. Africa is undergoing tremendous demographic, economic, and political changes. Representing one-fourth of the world's landmass—3 1/2 times that of the United States. Africa's 54 countries host 1.2 billion people from more than 800 ethnic groups speaking over 1,000 languages. 41% of the population are below the age of 15, according to the United Nations. Some experts project that even with relatively high mortality rates and assuming the increased use of birth control, the population will reach 2.4 billion by 2050. Africa's strong economic growth, where the continent's 11 biggest economies have tripled since 2000, has peaked. Africa faces significant revenue shortfalls due to falling commodity prices at a time when African governments must not only prepare for significant population growth, but also face more immediate concerns ranging from resource competition, climate change and pandemic disease, to violent conflict and terrorism (The Demographic Profile of African Countries" by the Economic Commission for Africa, 2016). Moreover, governments are failing to keep pace with these challenges—even the most economically powerful find it difficult to provide public safety, education, goods and services to its people. Some governments have begun to backtrack on their transparency, democratic development, and respect for the human rights Department of State Integrated Country Strategies, 2017). Meanwhile, VEOs have exploited poor (or lacking) governance—and the resulting popular discontent—to propagate their ideology and commit violence across the continent. All of these challenges are likely to cause increased instability that poses a threat to U.S. national interests in Africa. The United States has failed to establish an effective policy and a comprehensive strategy for Africa that would be necessary to disrupt, degrade and neutralize violent extremist organizations there, improve local governance and set conditions for socioeconomic development (Linnetsky, 2017). North Africa is likely to become even more unstable, owing to regional and political instability, as well as the potential return of foreign fighters from Iraq and Syria. For example, late March 2017 testimony before the House of Representatives indicated that al-Qaida and Islamic state affiliates in North Africa are "poised to wreak considerable havoc across the continent as they seek to regroup in the ungoverned spaces "and threaten the countries immediately impacted, but also ... the interests and security of the United States and its allies" (*Terrorism in North Africa*, 2017).

## The Challenges to Achieving Stability

From 2010 to the present, VEOs in Africa have been some of the most lethal on the planet. In eastern Africa, al-Shabaab has exploited the weak governance in Somalia and waged 2,349 terrorist attacks in Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti, Uganda and Ethiopia. Al-Shabaab has not only contributed to foreign fighter flows elsewhere, but also to trafficking in persons, narcotics and illicit goods, as well as piracy. Central Africa is the most volatile and remote region in the world, characterized by scant security forces, human rights violations, corruption and government mismanagement, which create an environment conducive to insurgent activities, coups and mass atrocities. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) was responsible for approximately 1,862 attacks during this same six-year period (Global Security). In western Africa, ineffective governance and socio-economic disparity created the environment that gave rise to Boko Haram, ISIS-WA, and al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Boko Haram launched 1,424 terrorist attacks in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon, while in Mali, AQIM pulled off 324 attacks during the period (Stanford University, 2016). In northern Africa, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) gained a foothold in post-civil war Libya and achieved 294

attacks there and in the nascent democratic Tunisia over the past year alone (2015-2016) (Stanford University, 2016).

Due partly to mismanagement in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and other poor policy moves by the U.S., extremist groups have been able to use vulnerabilities in African nations to their advantage (Bolduc, n.d., 2018). Instability often gives rise to violent extremism, which feeds and gives more impetus to the cycle of instability (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). Al-Qaeda, ISIL, and other VEOs grew out of wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. Similarly, conflicts in Somalia, Libya, Nigeria, Mali, and central Africa have spawned al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and AQIM, ISIL -West Africa, the Lord's Resistance Army, and other VEOs, all of whom have branched out and morphed into neighboring countries and further abroad (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). ISIL's spread into Libya, Boko Haram's pledge of fealty to ISIL, and AQIM's launching of attacks in Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire have caused many governments well outside centers of conflict to fear the spread of transnational terrorism (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). In addition, the spread of terrorist tactics, techniques and procedures—forcing them to turn more of their limited resources away from developing their economies to bolstering security, even though it is clear that development and security go hand in hand to counter violent extremism. Moreover, VEOs are becoming increasingly transnational (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.).

Instability displaces vast numbers of people who further tax what little infrastructure already exists. UNHCR estimates that sub-Saharan Africa hosts 26% of the world's refugee population—about 18 million people—causing the UN to open 12 new camps and expand seven others in 2015 alone (UNHCR activities in Africa, 2018). These refugees do not only burden African countries and their neighbors, but also countries further abroad. Approximately 50,000 Africans sought refuge crossing the Mediterranean in 2015, representing one of the most important security concerns of Europe's southern flank. Furthermore, refugee camps have been fertile recruiting grounds for VEOs, whose activities perpetuate the cycle of conflict and displacement (UNHCR activities in Africa, 2018). Extremists have offered disaffected people an identity through participation in jihad, have provided goods and services, and even established harsh rule of law where there is little competing governance (UNHCR activities in Africa, 2018). As a result, rising numbers of terror networks are now operating in Africa. Ten of the groups the State Department has listed as terrorist organizations since 2013 are active on the continent, underscoring the seriousness of the threat (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). Both Al-Qaida and the Islamic State have openly stated aspirations to gain control over large portions of the continent and incorporate them into their caliphates (Special Operations Command Africa Foundational Documents, 2017). Al-Qaida has developed alliances in the tri-border region of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, and has been very successful in conducting operations to destabilize this area (Special Operations Command Africa Foundational Documents, 2017). The U.S. response has been slow, inadequate and ineffective. ISIS and Al-Qaeda's efforts in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger tri-border reflects a long-term vision (Special Operations Command Africa Foundational Documents, 2017). The vision focuses on capitalizing on an opportunity created by dysfunctional governance, vulnerable people and, to develop sanctuary and safe haven in the tri-border region. ISIS and Al-Qaeda has integrated with disenfranchised tribal and ethnic populations in the Sahel, which has resulted in effective operations against our African partners (Special Operations Command Africa Foundational Documents, 2017). This effort has resulted in the merger several Salafist armed groups from ethnic and tribal backgrounds, including Arab, Fulani/Puehl, and Tuareg identities. The Al-Qaeda affiliated attacks in the Sahel have expanded in number and geographic scope operating in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Western Niger (Special Operations Command Africa Foundational Documents, 2017).

One factor that has hobbled the U.S. approach is the Africa experience gap at both the State Department and military. In some cases, subordinate and tactical officers have had a better understanding of the operational environment than their superiors (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). If the United

States is going to place combatants there, it needs to invest in developing the regional senior military leaders and manage talent properly. The lack of expertise increases risk aversion and slows planning, decisions, analysis and execution tempo (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). Another issue has to do with under-resourcing. The U.S. military gives some of its command's dual roles in Europe and Africa Command. That can create a problem for priorities, competition of resources, and timeliness of support that negatively affects USAFRICOM.

Initiatives should not only focus on countering violent extremists, but also building security capabilities of African partner nations and fostering long-term solutions through diplomatic and other agencies. While military forces will play a significant role, they are not the solution (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). The international community and the U.S. government will need to support the development of national and local governance in Africa's conflict-affected regions. Current kinetic and threat-focused approaches are not working, and the lack of a comprehensive approach has only supported violent extremists' objectives (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.).

Socioeconomic development will be critical to inhibiting the activity and influences of extremist groups on the populace (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). Studies indicate rather than ideology, unemployment rates are a more predictable driving factor for support for terrorism in /Analysts also suggest a correlation between the presence of U.S. Agency for International Development programs and lower levels of support for violent extremism (Linnetsky, 2017). Civil administration is also vital for enabling enduring security. Local police are an essential link in maintaining local security to protect the populace. They can help legitimize the government, allow for the establishment of government services and assistance from agencies and nongovernmental organizations to address education, health and humanitarian assistance in the region (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.).

## Conclusion

We are on a timeline of about 10 to 15 years to get this right. Failure to do so will have significant impact on stability in Africa and negatively impact Europe, the Middle East, South America, and North America, as well as coastal security in the Mediterranean Sea, Gulf of Guinea, and East Africa (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.). Over the years we have witnessed the devastation at the hands of extremist ideologies. This violence will pale in comparison to the devastation brought on by competition for resources and day-to-day survival in an unstable environment. An unstable Africa is not in the best interest of global stability (Bolduc, 2018, n.d.).

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## Chapter 13. Inequality, Risk Sensitivity and the Stability of the Iranian State

Lawrence A. Kuznar, PhD  
NSI, Inc.  
lkuznar@nsiteam.com

### Abstract

An analysis of inequality and risk sensitivity within Iran was conducted in order to gauge the potential for challenges to the government and to gain insight into the effects of sanctions on the Iranian government's legitimacy among its own people. The main findings are:

- Iran exhibits **average or below average levels of inequality** compared to other countries on most measures, including the risk sensitivity of its population.
- The wealthiest Iranians and especially the **wealthy in urban areas** exhibit the highest level of risk acceptance and are predicted to be **most likely to challenge the government** status quo.
  - Recent protests have been largely fueled by wealthier urban Iranians, although recent surveys indicate that the population is no more favorable toward the U.S.
- The effect of **sanctions will probably increase the risk acceptance of wealthy Iranians**, their sense of frustration at their government and their likelihood to protest, but sanctions are unlikely to improve the view of the U.S. to Iranians.
- Despite protests, Iranian society is not characterized by an unusual degree of inequality and risk acceptance in the first place. Therefore, moves toward increasing inequality and risk acceptance may have a long way to go before being a serious threat to Iran's government and its legitimacy.

### Inequality and Risk Sensitivity in Iran

Sanctions are levied against Iran based in part on the assumption that economic inequality and hardship will lead to political cleavages that may divide and weaken the Iranian regime's power at home, causing it to change course on several of its policies.<sup>32</sup> This, however, is an empirical question. What is the state of inequality in Iran? How does it compare to the past? How does it compare to other countries? Does Iran exhibit metrics that indicate its state is fragile or sound? What effect are sanctions likely to have on Iran's internal stability? This study provides analyses that address these questions.

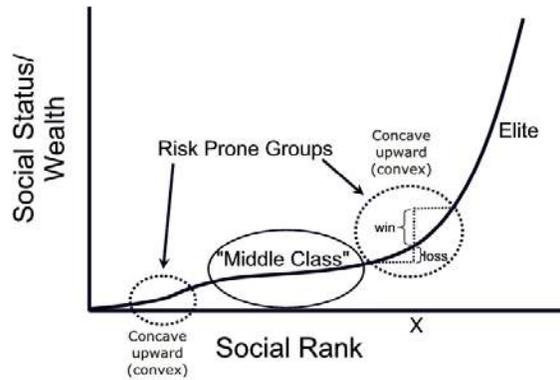
In addition to standard measures of inequality, this paper uses the distribution of wealth in Iran to derive the risk sensitivity measure described in Chapter 6. The Arrow-Pratt measure of risk sensitivity is based on the notion that the curvature of a person's utility function influences that person's sensitivity to risk. If the social distribution of wealth and status influences utility functions and has concave downward and upward sections, then people in concave upward sections of a social hierarchy are expected to take risks, including challenging their status quo (Figure 5).

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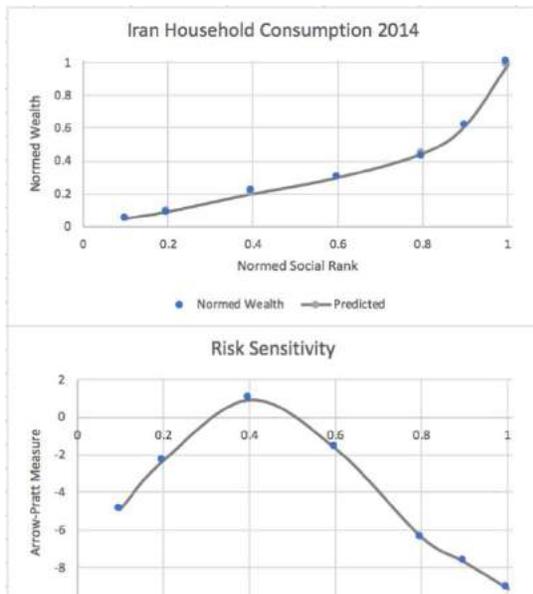
<sup>32</sup> <https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2018/10/286751.htm>

Negative values indicate acceptance or an attraction toward taking risks and a positive measure indicates aversion to risk. This measure has been found to predict who is more likely to engage in political challenges ranging from political activism to coup d'états to involvement in terrorist organizations (Kuznar, 2002, 2007).

**Figure 6** illustrates how the distribution of wealth in Iran, in this case measured by household consumption in 2014, is theoretically related to risk sensitivity. The function that describes the distribution of wealth is used to calculate the Arrow-Pratt measure. The lowest part of the wealth distribution is mildly concave upward, yielding negative Arrow-Pratt values and indicating that the poorest segment of the population should be willing to take risks. There is a small and mildly concave downward “middle class” segment in the wealth curve (from about the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 50<sup>th</sup>), yielding positive Arrow-Pratt values, indicating that middle class Iranians should be more inclined to avoid risks, as middle class people typically are. Finally, the steep incline in wealth as one reaches higher percentiles of the population yields highly negative Arrow-Pratt values, indicating that wealthier Iranians are more inclined to take risks, much more so than the poor. This pattern is, by the way, typical of most societies.



*Figure 5. Typical distribution of Social Status in a Complex Society. Concave upward segments of the population are expected to favor taking risks because they potentially gain more social status than they would lose.*



**Figure 6.** Distribution of Wealth (Consumption) in Iran 2014 and its relationship to Risk Sensitivity

It is important to note that this measure of risk sensitivity indicates who is most likely to take risks but does not specify what risks a person might take to challenge the status quo. It is entirely possible that a person could engage in legal means, such as starting a business or legally immigrating. However, disruptive political challenges are by definition risky and this measure helps to identify who is most likely to seek those risks as well (see Jones, Chapter 1, page 8 on revisionists).

**Table 6** provides several measures of inequality in Iran. The Gini coefficient is a standard measure of inequality.<sup>33</sup> Iran’s Gini coefficient based on World Bank data from 2014 is 38.8, nearly identical to the global average of 39.0.<sup>34</sup> The U.N. estimates a coefficient of human inequality by using the geometric means of per capita GDP, life expectancy and years education. Iran’s coefficient of human inequality is 11.2, below the global average of 19.7. The U.N.’s inequality adjusted

<sup>33</sup> The Gini coefficient is the difference in area between a cumulative wealth curve representing total equality and the inequality that actually exists as measured by the proportion of wealth owned by each percentile of the population. Higher numbers indicate higher degrees of inequality.

<sup>34</sup> Global averages were based on a sample of all countries with populations greater than 300,000.

Human Development Index (a measure of the level of per capita wealth, education and life expectancy) for Iran is 0.707, which compares favorably to the global average of 0.578. Finally, the average risk sensitivity of the population is -4.43, which is slightly below the global average of -4.46.

**Table 6. Metric of Inequality Iran 2017<sup>35</sup>**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Iran</b>	<b>Global Average</b>	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Finland</b>
<i>Gini</i>	38.8	39.0	41.6	29.3
<i>UN Coefficient of Human Inequality</i>	11.2	19.7	13.1	5.5
<i>IHDI</i>	0.707	0.578	0.797	0.868
<i>Average Risk Sensitivity</i>	-4.43	-4.46	-4.85	-3.65

Both measures of inequality are at or below global averages, the overall level of human development is comparatively high and the Iranian population exhibits an average level of risk sensitivity. Comparatively, Iran exhibits less inequality than the U.S., but is considerably higher than Finland, as most countries are. The overall level of human development is higher in the U.S. and Finland, and the U.S. population is estimated to be considerably more risk acceptant.

Averages can mask important variation, especially with regard to the risk sensitivity measure. The issue is not necessarily how risk acceptant a population is on average, but rather whether or not there are sharp contrasts between social statuses that create highly risk acceptant segments of a population. Strong social distinctions create cleavages in society and revisionists willing to challenge a status quo they feel is unfair.

In order to provide more detailed understanding of risk sensitivity based on social cleavage, the Iranian population is divided into three segments: the poorest risk acceptant, the “middle class” risk averse, and the wealthy risk acceptant. The average risk sensitivities of Iran’s poorest and wealthiest segments of society are very close to global averages, are negative, and indicate that the wealthiest are 70% more risk acceptant (Table 7). The average risk aversion of Iran’s middle segment of society is positive but lower than the world average indicating less risk aversion. This configuration indicates less social cleavage than is typical in most countries, but a middle class less likely to avoid risks than typical.

### **Iran’s Urban/Rural Divide**

Researchers note that Iran has a very distinct and unequal urban/rural divide that influences politics. Data were acquired on household expenditures for urban and rural populations from the Household Expenditure and Income Surveys (HEIS) conducted by the Statistical Center of Iran for years 2006 and 2015 to explore risk sensitivity within the rural and urban segments of society and over time.

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<sup>35</sup> The U.S. was chosen for familiarity, and Finland was chosen because it has the lowest inequality in the world.

**Table 7. Risk Sensitivity Measures for Iran**

	Mean	Lower Percentiles	Middle Percentiles	Highest Percentiles	Magnitude Difference
<i>Global Average</i>	-4.46	-3.69	1.23	-6.22	12.37
<i>Iran 2014</i>	-4.43	-3.60	0.95	-6.20	11.70
<i>Urban 2015</i>	-2.95	-1.53	1.15	-6.52	10.35
<i>Rural 2015</i>	-2.90	-1.75	1.55	-6.03	10.88
<i>Urban 2006</i>	-3.36	-1.08	1.23	-5.64	9.18
<i>Rural 2006</i>	-3.54	-1.85	1.02	-6.94	10.83

Rural and urban communities exhibit very similar levels of inequality-based risk sensitivity (**Table 7**). However, Iranian policies targeting the poor (Salehi-Isfahani, 2009) evidently have kept the risk acceptance of the poorest Iranians fairly constant, while the levels of risk acceptance among the wealthiest Iranians remains high and has increased through time (from -5.64 to -6.52) for the urban population.

## Implications

The Iranian revolution in 1979 was brought about by an alliance that included socialists and religious fundamentalists, as well as merchants and land owners who were financially hurt by the Shah's economic policies (Moaddel, 1992; Nabavi, 2012; Parsa, 2011). A key issue for socialists and fundamentalists was reducing growing inequality. Using the Gini coefficient of inequality in household expenditures in Iran, Salehi-Isfahani (2009, p. 20) documents a dramatic decrease in inequality immediately after the revolution due to land reform and aggressive aid programs targeting the poor. However, after this steep decline, inequality has remained static ever since. Risk sensitivity analysis indicates that the Iranian population overall is not particularly prone to taking risks nor are the social cleavages that exist between different income classes particularly marked. Increasing risk acceptance of the wealthiest sector of the urban population indicates that any challenges to the government would most likely originate from that segment of society.

There have been widespread protests and riots during the last year in Iran over the government's failure to deliver on promises of economic growth and over rising inflation, in part produced by sanctions (Erdbrink, 2018). Public opinion surveys reinforce this perception, Iranians think their economy is bad and getting worse (Mohseni, Gallagher, & Ramsay, 2018). However, reflecting the generally low level of risk acceptance, three fourths of Iranians do not think a fundamental reform of the government is necessary (Mohseni et al., 2018). On the other hand, the rioters have largely come from higher income professions such as trade and transportation, and new revolutionary movements are being formed by well-educated and elite Iranians (Nader, 2019; Erdbrink, 2018), reflecting the predictions from risk sensitivity theory. What the majority of Iranians think about their government may not be reflecting in who is taking to the streets, but those taking to the streets may wield more influence.

A couple conditions have the potential to alter these relationships. One is the growing disparity between urban and rural areas. The shift of wealth from rural to urban communities will exacerbate this social divide. Another condition is the interaction between sanctions and oil prices. Iran's worst economic crisis occurred during the late 1980s when oil prices fell markedly, increasing poverty but

decreasing inequality due to the fact that oil profits benefit fewer and wealthier Iranians (Salehi-Isfahani, 2009). Further analysis determined that when oil is less than 10% of Iranian GDP, increase oil revenues decrease inequality but when oil is greater than 10% of GDP, oil revenues increase inequality (Nademi, 2018, p. 1167). A similar relationship exists between inflation and inequality in the Iranian economy (Nademi, 2018, p. 1169). Sanctions are currently causing soaring inflation rates and oil exports are above the 10% threshold.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, current economic conditions are probably increasing inequality by concentrating wealth among wealthier Iranians, which counterintuitively and according to risk sensitivity theory, should actually increase the risk acceptance of the wealthiest Iranians and the likelihood that they would challenge government policies. The conditions appear to be moving in the direction of increased state fragility with the application of sanctions, although Iran is moving from a position of relative stability according to this analysis; it may have a way to go before serious thresholds of instability are crossed.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.rferl.org/a/irans-inflation-rate-will-soar-over-40-percent-year-end-imf-says/29599407.html>; <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PETR.RT.ZS?locations=IR>

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## Chapter 14. Getting Played in the Great Game<sup>37</sup>

Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, PhD  
Naval War College - Newport  
[Suzanne.LeviSanchez@usnwc.edu](mailto:Suzanne.LeviSanchez@usnwc.edu)

### Abstract

The Tajik/Afghan border is a strategic crossing point for international illegal and legal trade and transit to and from Central and South Asia and therefore a key location for development projects being implemented by the international community. Russia, China, Iran, the EU, and the US all vie for local, domestic, and regional influence along this border. Their currency for influence is most often through donor funding and development programs. They also compete with each other through trade arrangements, security projects, educational programs, and informal support of local leaders. Currently, Russia, the US and allies, and China have dominated the competition. Both Russia and China have played the long game in this region and, in doing so, have increased both access and influence. With the new administration in the US this might change, as traditional allied partnerships appear to be shifting rather rapidly, along with an increasing partnership between Russia and China. This paper explores the dynamics between the international community and the local partners through in-depth fieldwork and a conflict that occurred in 2014.

### Key Findings

- The more the state asserts authority over the locals the more they assert local identities, which destabilizes the state.
- The area has outside influences that are dividing the community into four main groups. These groups are each sympathetic to different outsiders. They include:
  - Russians
  - Tajik government
  - Aga Khan Foundation
  - US and Allies
  - Some of the members of these groups belong to more than one category.
- The local leaders/warlords are both a positive and a negative influence on the local community but since state security is not only weak but endemically corrupt, people find justice and security through these informal systems. Without these informal systems, there would likely be increased conflict and decreased stability at the border.
- Other international forces are influencing the area such as China, which has supplied weapons to the security forces as well as economic influence.
- The local leaders along this border area will become more important when troop presence in Afghanistan decreases and/or shifts to priorities that are mission-specific instead of state-building enterprises.

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<sup>37</sup> Excerpt from forthcoming monograph contracted with University of Michigan Press - not for citation or sharing without sole permission of author.

## Informal Organizations, Domestic Factors, and the International Community

Informal and/or local organizations provide a buffer for civil society from the state or familial and kinship networks. On the Tajik side of the border in Gorno-Badakhshan, these organizations provide a pathway for citizens to participate in local governance and the authoritarian administration. On the Afghan side of the border in Northeastern Badakhshan, these organizations provide a similar pathway, only for those to transcend oppressive familial and territorial kinship networks. One of the ways these organizations foster these pathways for access is through relationships with international actors and networks. These relationships include inter-governmental organizations, and international non-governmental organizations, and the international community.

The Tajik/Afghan border is a strategic crossing point for international illegal and legal trade and transit to and from Central and South Asia and therefore a key location for development projects being implemented by the international community. Russia, China, Iran, the EU, and the US all vie for local, domestic, and regional influence along this border. Their currency for influence is most often through donor funding and development programs. They also compete with each other through trade arrangements, security projects, educational programs, and informal support of local leaders. Currently, Russia, the US and allies, and China have dominated the competition. With the new administration in the US this might change, as traditional allied partnerships appear to be shifting rather rapidly. Other outside support networks include the Aga Khan Foundation, OSCE, the UN, GIZ, and the Isma'ili Council (ITREB).

While the international community (IC) makes assertions about the region, different groups in the region use these narratives to their advantage by advancing counter-narratives that influence decisions about funding streams and recourse allocation from the international community. These narratives, in turn, not only influence the distribution of wealth and access to resources, they also shape perceptions inside and outside of the region. The international INGOs, NGOs, and foreign countries' perceptions of the civil society, local governance, and the state as it pertains to Tajik/Afghan Badakhshan impact their actual policies, engagement, and allocation of resources along the border. Moreover, the different INGOs and outside countries operating in the region compete with each other for control and access.

This competition does not occur in a vacuum. Leaders of the state watch closely, both how the international community competes as well as how the policies and donor funding is decided. Assertions being made by the international community about the region are used by local groups and state propaganda outlets to their advantage in order to either gain support for a particular policy or a particular funding stream. Domestic and local networks use these outside interlopers as vehicles for protection, intervention, and support. Competition between state-controlled networks and local networks for support, funding, and access complicates the role of the international community. The domestic networks that work within IGOs, INGOs, and NGOs, control the allocation of funding from outside sources as well as who benefits from these funds. These networks influence policy domestically as well as locally and are gateways of access for locals wanting to gain entrance into the international professional community and access to education in foreign countries.

In the Pamirs, outside stakeholders provide humanitarian and development aid, security sector assistance, and educational support and access. These outside stakeholder projects act as conduits of access for informal organizations to outside financial assistance, educational, and basic needs for the community. This access to outside funding streams allows the informal organizations operating within the formal organizations to serve as a buffer against state intervention and state control over the donor funds. As will be highlighted in the case studies later in the book, these embedded informal

organizations have both positive and negative effects but given that it is currently the main way in which Tajik civil society gains access to resources and political participation, it remains vital for those living in Khorog.

On the Afghan side, these same international networks provide access to groups that may otherwise have little power outside of their villages or districts in Northeastern Badakhshan. In Badakhshan, the different networks providing the information are often at odds with one another making it unclear which avenue for development projects or security support should take to be most effective.

The competition for support contributes to dissonant outside perceptions of what is going on locally in Badakhshan and Gorno-Badakhshan, leading to conflicting networks of support from the outside. These conflicting networks are not only between different countries and IGOs, but within the countries and IGO networks themselves. The following is a series of short vignettes highlighting the complexity of these networks and the effectiveness of local informal organization in spreading their messages and gaining support from outside sources, and the role different stakeholders play.

### **Khorog, Tajikistan: Competing Narratives, Russian Propaganda, and Conflict**

The relationship between Russia and the area surrounding Badakhshan links back to the Great Game and even before. The Soviet Union's planned system put different territorial and ethnic groups in charge of different administrative units. Each ethnic group in Tajikistan controlled a layer of the government. The Khujandis controlled the central administration, the Kulobis the police force, and the Pamiris, at first were the many purveyors of the culture – song and dance – and then later, in the 1970s, they lobbied for the position of leading the KGB. In the late 1970s the Pamiris from Gorno-Badakhshan became the main keepers of the Tajik SSRs secrets. This relationship between the Russian intelligence services and a number of trusted Pamiri families on both sides of the border are rumored to have continued to today. Many of these families own prime property in Dushanbe and some are dual Russian/Tajik citizens. Until recently, there was also a connection between the Mayor of Dushanbe and Russia that provided a measure of protection for some of the residents of Dushanbe who were originally from these families. These families are diverse, highly educated, and most have attended universities both in the west and in Russia. There are others in Gorno-Badakhshan, such as retired Drug Control Agency, OMON (Tajik SWAT), or from other former security agency officials, who are given citizenships and pensions by Russia in exchange for assisting Russia in Tajikistan. It is through these interlocutors that the anti-western propaganda began and was strategically spread through the region. Soon after the messaging campaign, a bloody conflict occurred on May 21, 2014, in which the police headquarters, judicial office, and prosecutor's office were burned and two popular local leaders were shot and killed in the middle of the day on the main street.

While tensions and small bouts of violence had been going on between locals and the mostly non-local security forces since the end of the Civil War in 1997, with the most notable example being the bloody conflict in 2008 and July 2012, the fighting in 2014 were different. In particular, the constant drumbeat of anti-western propaganda that infused daily conversation in the bazaar, on the street, in restaurants, and within local groups permeated conversations directly following Russian annexation of Crimea on February 23 and March 18, 2014. What was unclear when this started, but became clear as various violent events took place, was that influence by Russian media and actions, played a part.

## Igniting Old Tensions, Provoking New Conflicts

The first skirmish occurred in late March 2014. Local leaders belonging to the upper part of the city of Khorog blocked access by the KGB (GKNB)<sup>38</sup> to their section of the city in order to protect a young man accused of beating up a police officer late the night before. The locals said that the police officer had sexually assaulted a local woman at a bar in town so the young man, a local, had beaten him up. The locals were scared that if this young man were taken to prison, he would be raped by the prison guards, which they assert is common practice in Tajik prisons (and was based on the practice introduced by the Russians during Soviet times). The gripe about harassment of local women was not an isolated incident, according to many of those interviewed, and was steeped in history dating back a couple of centuries to when the Uzbek army was installed there by the Russian Tzars and allegedly used rape as a form of social control.

Many locals complained about the brothels operating at the bazaar that were owned by Tajik police and security services not from the area. Local men said that the security services often harassed local women, exploited the socio-economically disadvantaged ones, and that they were not comfortable with local women being unsafe in the streets. One street leader had taken his brother's position as the head of local security on his street. His brother, a widely respected leader, had been in charge of the street. He was known for his coaching of youth sports and, specifically, wrestling. According to the leader's brother, the previous year a police officer made lewd comments and sexually harassed a young woman in the local leader's neighborhood. The leader had warned the same officer previously to leave the young women in the area alone. He ended up beating up the police officer after hearing about the harassment of the young woman. At the time of the interview the local leader was in prison and had been subjected to torture.<sup>39</sup> According to a number of family members, they had heard the accounts of torture from the leader but had remained quiet because they were hoping for amnesty and his release from prison. In Tajikistan, each year the President of Tajikistan announces amnesty for certain prisoners he decides to pardon. Different people interviewed said they had paid different amounts for receiving amnesty ranging from two thousand to five thousand USD. This is but one story of a constant stream of skirmishes and brawls between local men and non-local security personnel that occurred prior to the fight in late March of 2014 in upper-Khorog.

## Arresting a Canadian scholar, detaining an EU delegation, blocking the UK Ambassador, expelling German PhD Researchers: What's Crimea have to do with it?

In the context of the Russian narrative of resistance to oppression in Ukraine by the Crimeans, which was the story flying around the streets of Khorog in 2014, the Tajik security forces attempted to arrest a young man who had protected a young woman from harassment by Tajik police. The resistance to the arrest lasted longer than usual and included more local leaders and their associated networks than in past skirmishes. For several days locals hid the young man from the police until the KGB threatened to arrest the father (who was ill) in lieu of the son. The son was arrested and negotiations between the family of the young man and the police occurred.

Directly following the onset of anti-western propaganda and the arrest of the young man, a visiting EU delegation was detained by the KGB. They had been unwittingly set up by a local interlocuter (more on this later). Shortly after these incidents, a conflict broke out between the Tajik government and local leaders (which chapter four describes), a halted visit by the British Ambassador and a

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<sup>38</sup> Locally still referred to as KGB but officially is the GKNB. This paper will refer to them as the KGB from this point forward.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.refworld.org/docid/54cf837b15.html>

concurrent protest in Dushanbe against the Ambassador's visit to GBOA with Tajiks throwing rocks at the British Embassy. Then there was the arrest of Tajik PhD researcher, Alexander Sodiqov, who was working for British Professor John Heathershaw, and finally, the expelling (and escorting out of Gorno-Badakhshan) a group of German PhD researchers who wanted to village organizations in the district of Shughnan in Gorno-Badakhshan but were unable to do so.<sup>40</sup>

The arrest of Sodiqov, detention of the EU Delegation, expulsion of the German PhD researchers, and blocking of the British Ambassador's visit, were all part of a concerted effort to discredit the EU, Germany, and the U.S. and was being made over a period of six months beginning with the onset of the annexation of Crimea. The competition for influence between western countries and Russia played out on the ground. The local leaders, playing one against the other, were both caught in the middle as well as working to gain influence of their own and access to resources and support for their region.

The Russians wanted to show that the west was working against the interest of the locals. The western countries wanted to show that they were working in support of the rights of the civil society, the Chinese wanted to show they were supporting the economic interests of the region and not interfering like the west and Russia do, and the local leaders were both caught in the middle as well as fully cognizant of the goals of these outsiders and trying to use them to garner resources, development projects, access to education, and media influence for their region. The local organizations, along with their associated leaders, become the rudder that keeps the region stable during the storms of international competition. These informal organizations include the Mahallas (neighborhood organizations), KEPP (educational organization), the warlords (informal leaders), the civil society leaders, and the networks operating within the Aga Khan Foundation organizations. They provide the conduit for access, while at the same time, operating as a buffer from interference. They also at times play one side against the other in order to maintain control in the region. Most importantly, they mediate between locals and the government during times of conflict.

In the case of the young man who went to prison, the local leaders and organizations used social media to gain the attention of western countries that would be concerned about human rights abuses. This brought the EU Delegation to the region. Once the EU delegation arrived, a different set of civil society leaders set up meetings that brought further attention to the region by bringing the delegation to see warlords which would likely get the delegation into trouble, and it did.

After the killing of the two local leaders, burning of the government buildings, and the subsequent conflict between the OMON and the local youth, the civil society leaders negotiated with the Tajik security services to stop a mass shooting of protesters in the main square in Khorog. They also made sure the international media received a constant flow of information and accounts of the events during that period in order to protect the local community from further violence by the Tajik government. The civil society leaders met on a daily basis to discuss plans of action.

The leaders were a diverse group of men, and one woman, from throughout Khorog and from all facets of society. They included a journalist, a Khalife (Ismaili religious leader - one of two not controlled by the Tajik KGB), a retired Drug Control Agency officer, a head of a NGO, a teacher, a member of the local Ismaili Council, a warlord, two local activists, and a youth leader. They had three main goals. Stop further violence, have a list of demands met by the Tajik administration, including

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<sup>40</sup> <https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/field-reports/item/12993-tajikistans-authorities-tighten-control-ahead-of-2015-elections.html>

amnesty for those involved in the fighting in 2012 and 2014, and to increase local representation in security forces in their province of Gorno-Badakhshan. Negotiations by the civil society leaders and their associated informal organizations led to a settlement between the security forces and the community and the ultimate withdrawal of the Tajik military. The Tajik government agreed to all but two of the demands and the civil society leaders agreed to get the protesters in the main square to disband peacefully.

On the Afghan side of the border, while outside interference has been a part of daily life for as long as it has on the Tajik side, the informal organizations play a different role when it comes to the international community. The following section briefly describes the way in which the Afghan local leaders and informal organizations interact with the various players within the international community.

### Afghan Side of the Border

On the Afghan side of the border, competition for access and influence works a little differently. The INGOs meld with various familial and territorial networks. For the most part, these networks control where and how the money is spent. Development projects and political influence operate almost entirely through kinship/tribal/clan/territorial networks. No matter how much anyone tries to create aid projects or develop a national army or border police, the Afghans keep returning the seat of power to their familial networks. The locals know it is going on, some of the internationals know it is the way things work, and then there are the internationals who remain in denial and somehow continue to try to work on the country through a centralized authority. For this reason, often INGOs exclude the local context in their training and development projects/programs in Badakhshan.

This dissonance between the internationals working with the local informal governance systems and the internationals trying to work with the Potemkin village of a centralized system creates a black market of political influence. Afghans jockeying for power for their networks, know which internationals to play in order to benefit their larger familial networks. Many Afghan citizens said they want to have a working country and a government that serves them instead of exploiting them. But, as much as they desire government institutions that serve the needs of the country, they are unable to gain enough leverage to overcome the clan/tribal governance and the internationals, which are being played over and over again and are being used at cross-purposes. Even the locals in powerful positions within the NGOs in northeastern Badakhshan distribute the majority of project funding and implementation based on kinship ties.

Many of these networks within development organizations slow roll projects and block permits as a means to skim funding for familial gains. The challenge is that shaping development projects around these existing informal organizations are not in line with universal human rights principals or goals to centralize authority of the government emanating from Kabul. These informal organizational systems simply work around the existing requirements of the international community and hide the way things actually work. Many in development have witnessed projects not only fail to help the local populations they are meant for but actually hurt them.

Training workshops and development programs that include culture and context as a part and parcel to governance, security, and foreign aid projects, might find more longevity in outcomes. These modes of operating will be built into project implementation. Village development could be allocated through family, territory, or clan, instead of being funneled into black market financial networks and coercive de-capitalization.

Major Jim Gant<sup>41</sup> argues for developing security structures from the reality on the ground. Some might argue that this approach is to prop up the strongman and call it a plan. In Badakhshan, Afghanistan (and Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan), a modus operandi of the both governments is to appoint someone beholden to whatever group controls the illicit trade and call it a job. The person who is appointed, whether border commander or district governor, employs his/her (mostly his) larger kinship network into jobs during his/her tenure. This way of doing political business has not changed by either the presence of our military forces or USAID and other development projects. What has changed, albeit marginally, is some of these informal organizations that span familial and territorial networks, have managed to create institutional constraints that force the allocation of funding for the greater good. While there are still familial networks involved and competition for influence and access does exist between the various informal organizations, the distribution of funding spreads more evenly and project completion is more likely.

## Conclusion

The leaders and the local informal organizations preserve local stability during disruptive events. They serve as a buffer for the community from an intrusive authoritarian dictatorship, work to gain resources for local projects and families, maintain control over the narrative and social media accounts, and play various countries against each other so that no one outside group could gain control of the region. These informal organizations are key to stability as well as a measure of autonomy within a civil society that has access to both few resources as well as fewer rights. Given that colonialist powers have played shifty games in the region for centuries, the need to maintain autonomy while gaining resources for a resource poor region is necessary and requires gaming the players in order to maintain control and autonomy.

The international community plays a crucial economic role along the Tajik-Afghan border in Badakhshan and Gorno-Badakhshan. Through donor funding, energy, water, food, medical care, disaster risk reduction, infrastructural development, and education have all advanced. On the Tajik side of the border, the ability for these projects to reach more members of the community has occurred, in part, due to the different informal organizations lobbying to get things done, despite authoritarian intervention. On the Afghan side, these informal organizations provide the same service only as a means to constrain kinship and territorial control over funding streams. On both sides of the border these local organizations also provide access and a small measure of influence over state governments and administrative policies for civil society, which would otherwise remain invisible and voiceless.

A few key take-aways regarding the role of state and the international community and its relationship to the informal organizations include:

- *The more the state asserts authority over the locals the more they assert local identities, which destabilizes the state.*
- *The area has outside influences that are dividing the community into four main groups. These groups are each sympathetic to different outsiders – namely, the Russians, the Tajik government, the Aga Khan, and the West. Some of the members of these groups belong to more than one.*

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<sup>41</sup> Gant, Jim “One Tribe At a Time: The Way Forward” *Small Wars Journal*, 2010 and Gant, Jim (2014) *One Tribe At a Time: The Paper That Changed the War in Afghanistan* New York: Black Irish Entertainment.

- *The local leaders/warlords are both a positive and a negative influence on the local community but since state security is not only weak but endemically corrupt, many people find justice and security through these informal systems and without them, there would likely be increased conflict and decreased stability at the border.*
- *Other international forces are influencing the area such as China, which has supplied weapons to the security forces and, due to the immense flows of goods coming across the nearby border with China, they also have economic influence among various influential business and other leaders in the community.*
- *The local leaders along this border area will become more important when troops presence in Afghanistan decreases and/or shifts to priorities that are mission-specific instead of state-building enterprises.*

If the government of Tajikistan continues to try to kill these local leaders, destroy the informal organizations, or kill/arrest the young men associated with them, the people in the area will resist and the potential for a more instability on both sides of the border increases. In recent months, this has occurred while at the same time insurgent strongholds and control on the Afghan side of the border has increased. Additionally, addiction to opium and heroin, along with HIV infection has increased steadily, creating a willing and desperate recruitment pool for the criminal and terrorist networks.

## Chapter 15: Divergent Axes of Russian Influence in Colombia and Latin America<sup>42</sup>

Barnett S. Koven, PhD & Abigail C. Kamp  
National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)  
[bkoven@umd.edu](mailto:bkoven@umd.edu) | [akamp@umd.edu](mailto:akamp@umd.edu)

### Abstract

Russia remains interested in exerting influence in Colombia due to Colombia's extremely close security and economic relations with the US, as well as its desire to retaliate against the US for its perceived meddling in Russia's traditional sphere of influence (e.g. Ukraine). Whereas a key lever for Russian influence in Latin America has been Rosoboronexport's willingness to export arms at low costs, with flexible financing terms and without regards to human rights records, in Colombia, the close US-Colombia security relationship – a major part of Russia's keen interest in Colombia in the first place – ensures that the Colombian Ministry of National Defense remains nonplussed by Russia's foreign military sales offerings. Consequently, Russia has been forced to adapt other levers to exert influence in Colombia. To this end, Russia has instead focused on adapting gray zone approaches – namely electoral meddling and disinformation – employed against other targets to continue to meddle in Colombia.

### Selling Arms, Buying Influence in Latin America

Russia has increased sales of arms and military equipment throughout Latin America. This is the case despite sanctions enacted against Russia following its invasion of Ukraine. The graph below depicts



**Figure 7. Russian Arms Sales to Latin America**

<sup>42</sup> Excerpts are adapted from Koven and Kamp's forthcoming chapter "Weaponizing Peace: Colombia's Demobilized FARC as a Lever of Russian Influence," in *Russian Strategic Intentions*, ed. Nicole Peterson (Arlington, VA: Department of Defense Strategic Multi-layer Assessment Branch, forthcoming).

an increase in arms sales over the past 14 years (**Figure 7**). With the exception of a major spike in 2008 – corresponding to a single transaction valued at \$1.5 billion with Venezuela to supply aircraft, tanks, surface-to-air missiles, anti-tank missiles and mortars – the overall trend has been a more or less steady increase in Russian arms sales in the region throughout much of the 2000s and 2010s. Beyond deepening its ties to foreign militaries, Russia increased its access to ports and airfields in the Western Hemisphere. For example, Russia’s ties to Venezuela allowed it to send ships to Venezuelan ports after the 2008 Georgian War in retaliation for US support for the Georgian government (Gurganus, 2018).

## Russian Regional Interests

Despite its distance, Russia remains keenly interested in retaining and expanding her interests in Latin America. By asserting its presence in a historically US-dominated area, Russia’s influence campaigns fit into its overall strategy of reducing America’s global influence and creating a more multipolar international paradigm. Indeed, the former Commander of US Southern Command, Gen John Kelly (2015) testified before Congress, that Russia is “attempt[ing] to erode US leadership and challenge US influence in the Western Hemisphere” (p. 8-9). It may also be the case that Russia is incentivized to meddle in Latin American affairs as retribution for US involvement in Eastern Europe, and particularly in Ukraine. To this end, the Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council, Andrey Kortunov, recently stated, “that if you mess in our backyard, you should keep in mind that we can mess in your backyard as well” (“On GPS,” 2019).

While Russia is certainly interested in the region as a whole, Colombia is especially important. This is the case as Colombia is one of the US’ most important regional security partners (alongside Mexico). Indeed, extremely close bilateral security cooperation dates back to the start of Plan Colombia in 1999. Today, Colombia is considered the hallmark of US efforts to build partner capacity (Ramsey, 2009). So much so that the US has leveraged Colombian trainers and Colombian facilities to build partner capacity in dozens of third countries, a process known as triangulated security cooperation (Tickner, 2014, p. 1). Moreover, the US and Colombia maintain close economic ties.

That said, while the state of US-Colombia bilateral security cooperation serves to increase Russia’s focus on Colombia, it also curtails possible interest on the part of the Colombian government in purchasing Russian military equipment. Specifically, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s Arms Transfers Database shows that over the last decade, Colombia has purchased nearly twenty times the military equipment from the US as they have from Russia, with no Russian purchases recorded after 2009 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2018). This is despite the fact that Russia has been increasing efforts to market military equipment in Colombia. In particular, Rosoboronexport exhibited a massive booth replete with hundreds of weapons systems at Expodefensa 2017 in Colombia. This marked the first time the firm attended a tradeshow in Colombia (Russian Defence Export, 2017).

For their part, the US Department of Defense was able to effectively leverage the close security ties to forestall any potential of renewed Russian foreign military sales to Colombia. US Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. David Goldfein recently visited Colombia and praised the bilateral security relationship. However, he also clearly underscored the implications of acquiring Russian military hardware, noting, “while there may be other cheap hardware out there that might be available on the market, at some point it becomes really hard to make it connect and share within the system” (as cited in Seligman, 2018). The subtext was clear Russian purchases risk continued US cooperation.

## Russian Influence in Colombia: Electoral Meddling and Disinformation

Absent the ability to entice the Colombian government with foreign military sales, Russia has had to look to alternative approaches to ensure it retains influence in Colombia. Electoral meddling offers Russia an inexpensive way to do just that. Specifically, it enables Russia to effectively impose asymmetric costs on a critical US partner. This is the case despite the fact that Russia can neither effectively project military force nor leverage potentially supportive local populations of ethnic Russians in Colombia. Indeed, Russia's disinformation campaign to influence the 2016 US presidential election clearly explicates this point. Irrespective of if (or to what extent) Russian efforts swayed the outcome of the election, they undoubtedly had (and continue to have) a strong psychological impact on American voters and have generated significant political controversy (DiResta, et al., 2018).

To advance its interests in Colombia, Russia can leverage the highly divisive nature of the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia; FARC). The FARC emerged in 1964 and rose to become Colombia's largest Marxist-Leninist insurgency. At its height, the FARC numbered just under 21,000 armed combatants and controlled approximately 40 percent of Colombian territory – an area roughly the size of Switzerland (McCaughan, 2001; Universidad Militar Nueva Granada, 2010). The peace deal, which was reached in 2016 failed to obtain ratification by popular referendum by a razor thin margin (49.8% in favor, 50.2% opposed). This was principally due to concerns regarding the extremely weak nature of the transitional justice regime and the fact that former FARC fighters would not only be allowed to run for political office, but would in fact be guaranteed seats in Colombia's congress (Koven, 2016). The former Commanding General of the Peruvian Army, Otto Guibovich, who has studied the issue closely, pontificated that the FARC had managed to reverse Clausewitz' oft cited quote that "war is the continuation of politics by other means," noting that "politics would be the continuation of their [the FARC's] war through other means that begin with congressmen and delegates in the parliament" (O. Guibovich, interview with author, October, 17, 2016). A minimally revised agreement was ultimately ratified not by the Colombian people but by the legislature and supreme court.

The divisive nature of the peace process affords Russia three avenues for continued leverage in Colombia. First, electoral meddling in support of the FARC's political ambitions. Indeed, former US defense officials suggested that Russia did attempt to meddle in Colombia's 2018 elections. Moreover, in January 2018, then-Colombian president, Juan Manuel Santos stated that Colombia was preparing for cyberattacks from abroad related to the elections (El Colombiano, 2018). Before the Congressional elections in March 2018, Colombian Defense Minister Luis Carlos Villegas announced that four cyberattacks aimed to shut down Colombia's National Voter Registry (DW, 2018). Colombian intelligence agencies also documented almost 60,000 attacks against the National Civil Registry Website, the agency responsible for identifying and issuing identification documents to Colombian citizens.

Another potential avenue for providing electoral support to the FARC is misinformation. To this end, Russia Today en Español (RT) launched in 2009 and Sputnik media launched a Spanish channel in 2014. One source estimates that RT and Sputnik have region-wide media penetration (Fonseca, 2018). For example, RT alone maintains agreements with well over 300 cable TV providers in the region (ibid.; Farah & Eustacia Reyes, 2016).

Second, and relatedly, even if the aim is not specifically to advance the political plight of the FARC, the divisive nature of the peace process continues to be a key campaign issue. Russian can use its

media penetration and social media presence for disinformation campaigns designed to keep these divisive narratives at the forefront during future Colombian elections.

Third, the new administration of President Iván Duque vowed that it would modify the peace deal. Whether or not it is able to do so remains to be seen, but even slow-rolling implementation – which is certainly possible – could undermine the agreement (Felbab-Brown, 2018). Doing so would incentivize thousands of former FARC fighters to again take up arms. It is already the case that the FARC's 1<sup>st</sup> Front vowed not to demobilize and to continue the fight (Koven, 2016). In addition, Colombia's last remaining leftist insurgency, the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional* or ELN), as well as transnational criminal organizations, such as the First Capital Command are eager to welcome former FARC guerrillas into their ranks. If the peace fails dramatically, Russia could always return to tacitly supporting the provision of weapons and other material support to Colombian subversives, as they did when the FARC was actively engaged in violence.

### Options for US Responses in Colombia and Beyond

Recognizing that Russia has strong incentives to continue to leverage the Colombian peace process to intervene in Colombian domestic politics, what avenues exist for a US response? In the short-term, US policy makers should be alert to the impact of potential disinformation campaigns on nations with close, polarized elections, like Colombia. Russia may try to manipulate the media environment, particularly social media, and hack into election systems if possible. Depending on the country-specific context, the US could offer to share information about potential cyber threats and provide technical assistance to secure information infrastructure. In this case, given the close security cooperation between the US and Colombia, this is especially likely to be an option. The threat of disinformation on social and traditional media networks is more insidious. The best long-term strategy against disinformation is to foster robust traditional media and credible government organizations that have the authority to debunk disinformation that spreads on social media.

More generally, strengthening US defense ties within the region – either through direct engagement with partner nations or through Colombian-led triangulated security cooperation – would help position the US well to start rolling back Rosoboronexport's regional influence. Importantly, the purchase of US equipment also confers prestige on the armed forces fielding those armaments. In Latin America, this reality will ensure that US foreign military sales will be viable even if prices remain higher. For example, numerous Peruvian Air Force officers expressed to one author (Barnett Koven), a strong interest in acquiring air born early warning radar capabilities from US manufacturers versus Brazil's Embraer. This was the case despite the fact that Embraer's offering was better suited to the needs of the Peruvian Air Force and available at substantially lower price.

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## Chapter 16. European “Trojan Horses” and Elite Risk-Taking

David R. Dorondo, PhD  
Western Carolina University  
[dorondo@email.wcu.edu](mailto:dorondo@email.wcu.edu)

“Beware Greeks bearing gifts.” – Laocoön’s Prophecy, *The Aeneid*, II, 49

“Useful idiots.” – V. I. Lenin (disputed attribution)

“We shall find such men, we shall find them in every country. We shall not need to bribe them. They will come of their own accord. Ambition and delusion, party squabbles and self-seeking arrogance will drive them.

Peace will be negotiated before the war has begun. ... Mental confusion, contradiction of feeling, indecisiveness, panic: these are our weapons.” – Adolf Hitler in Hermann Rauschning’s *Hitler Speaks*<sup>43</sup>

“Everyone has to sacrifice at the altar of stupidity from time to time... .” – Albert Einstein

In what might be considered a case of psychological projection, the chief of the Russian General Staff and First Deputy Defense Minister, Valery Gerasimov, noted on 2 March 2019 in a speech (Bershidsky, 2019) to the Academy of Military Sciences that

*“The U.S. and its allies have set an aggressive vector for their foreign policy. They are developing offensive military actions such as a “global strike” and “multi-domain battle,” using “colored revolution” and “soft power” technology. Their goal is to liquidate the statehood of undesirable countries, to undermine their sovereignty and replace their legally elected governments. That’s what happened in Iraq, in Libya and in Ukraine. Currently such action is observable in Venezuela. The Pentagon has started developing a completely new strategy of military action, which has already been called “Trojan Horse.” It’s based on the active use of the “fifth column protest potential” to destabilize the situation along with precision strikes on the most important targets.”<sup>44</sup>*

Though Gerasimov mentions only Ukraine, Iraq, Libya, and Venezuela as being putative specific targets of US “Trojan Horses,” the reportage covering his remarks made it clear that he evidently fears the same approach being applied by the US to Russia.

It remains striking that Gerasimov evinced open concern about precisely the same threat that many of his counterparts, both military and political, in the United States, NATO, and non-NATO Europe accuse Russia of fomenting from the Baltic States and Poland to the United Kingdom. Indeed, Moscow is apparently so fretted about this possibility that it is currently pushing legislation through the State Duma aiming at, among other things, the creation of a sovereign Russian “intranet” capable of being sealed off from the rest of the global Internet.<sup>45</sup> If, in fact, the first cyber-war in history is already being waged, as informed observers in Europe maintain (Eggert, 2019), then such a capability becomes necessary in the Kremlin’s view, regardless of how badly that action may throttle Russian civil society.

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<sup>43</sup> Here the author does not violate “Godwin’s Law.” He asserts no blanket neo-Nazi sentiment among contemporary, Right-wing populist/nationalist groups in Europe, though such views do sometimes appear in them (and though avowedly neo-Nazi groups do exist). He merely asserts the real possibility that witting or unwitting pro-Russian “fifth columnists,” as they used to be called, are at work in Europe. To the extent that they are, they would serve the same purpose as the men mentioned in the epigraph.

<sup>44</sup> “Trojan Horse” is a near universally accepted trope. “Fifth columnists” has fallen into disuse.

<sup>45</sup> Report in the German-language broadcasting service *Deutsche Welle*. 9 March 2019.

But “Trojan Horses” run in more than one direction. This analysis therefore focuses on the same threat as mentioned by Gerasimov but from the opposite, Euro-Atlantic perspective: Russian Trojan Horses—witting or not—and elite risk-taking as sources of political disruption, and the potential thereby for the shifting of power, to the geo-strategic advantage of Russia in German-speaking and East Central Europe (GS-ECE)<sup>46</sup> and, by extension, in the whole of NATO and non-NATO Europe. For the purpose of this analysis, GS-ECE is understood to comprise Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, as well as the Visegrád (V4) Group of States. The latter group includes Hungary, the Czech Republic (Czechia), Slovakia, and Poland. In addition, this study takes cognizance of the same threat in the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

In examining possible pro-Moscow Trojan Horses, current analysis indicates that essentially none of their leaders appear to come from the ranks of the socially or economically dispossessed. They can thus be considered members of a societal elite in the generally accepted sense of that term. They do, however, readily take advantage of both real or imagined socio-economic and regional disparities to generate popular support,<sup>47</sup> cynically against the very elites from which they themselves come.

For example, in Germany, both Right-wing populist/nationalist politicians, as well as their Left-wing counterparts, can take advantage of factors such as a marked under-representation of Germans from the eastern *Länder* (regional states) in public and/or civil service employment. The eastern *Länder* of the former German Democratic Republic include Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg, Sachsen-Anhalt, Sachsen, and Thüringen. Berlin constitutes a city-state.<sup>48</sup>

In the Baltic States, these approaches are exacerbated by the added factor of significant Russian-speaking minorities whose real or imagined post-Soviet grievances are targeted by Russian media. In this regard, Latvia and Estonia constitute noteworthy examples of the attempt to integrate ethnic Russians and/or Russian-speakers even as those populations are being so targeted (“Latvian Russians,” Van Elsuwege, 2004). Similar difficulties confront the government of Lithuania, though to a lesser extent. These cases highlight the contemporary relevance of persistent, historically conditioned ethno-linguistic borders and the degree to which they may be instrumentalized as divisive political factors. Though sometimes ancient in and of themselves (see Chapters 6 & 7 in Anthony, 2007), such borders have frequently been manipulated in the last 200 years of European nationalism for anti-democratic purposes.

The foregoing issues have been greatly exacerbated by, and have been at least partially caused by, the influx of migrants to the European Union, particularly since 2015. In 2017, for example, 2.4 million immigrants entered the EU from non-EU countries. Though large in absolute terms, that figure must be seen in the following context: as of 1 January 2018, only 4.4% of the total EU population of 512.4 million were non-EU citizens (“Migration and Migrant Population Statistics,” 2019). Furthermore, very wide disparities exist between EU member-States regarding the number of migrants (and/or asylum-seekers) they are willing to admit. Thus, as with ethno-linguistic borders,

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<sup>46</sup> This analysis constitutes a preliminary assessment. It forms the initial element of a larger effort on the same subject for the J39 Strategic Multilayer Assessment’s project on the Future of Global Competition and Conflict (FGCC). Project on-going April 2019.

<sup>47</sup> For example, see the call for regional employment-quotas in Germany (Gammel, 2019). There is also now push-back, however, to prevent radical parties’ taking advantage of these disparities. See the *Deutsche Welle* commentary by Kay-Alexander Scholz (2019).

<sup>48</sup> The terms “Right” and “Left” in this study indicate, and apply to, parties, pressure groups, and persons from the opposite ends of the political spectrum and whose activity is either wholly beyond the limits of commonly accepted parliamentary and democratic norms or which intentionally skirts those limits.

these migrants (and/or asylum-seekers) have been instrumentalized by both the Right and the Left, and the resulting tensions have been stoked by Russian-sourced disinformation.

One must be nevertheless be prudent in assessing motives. One should not automatically attribute to Right- and Left-wing leaders or, more particularly, to their adherents irredeemably anti-democratic tendencies, even if, among Right-wing populist or nationalist groups there may exist anti-NATO, anti-EU, and/or anti-liberal (as understood in the US) views. Similar caution is required regarding Left-wing populist groups even if, in their cases, one sees decidedly anti-capitalist, anti-NATO, and/or anti-EU views. Interestingly, both those Right-wing and Left-wing leaders (and their groups) suspected of playing the role of Trojan Horse for Russia appear commonly to share at least implicitly anti-US attitudes. These attitudes are frequently couched primarily as anti-Trump Administration views rather than as generally anti-US ones. Parsing the distinctions, however, can be difficult.

All of which is to say that the observer should remember the trenchant question posed by British scholar Timothy Garton Ash (2019, p. 192) in his review of Polish journalist Witold Szablowski's *Dancing Bears: True Stories of People Nostalgic for Life Under Tyranny*:

*How far are we simply witnessing an understandable reaction against so much rapid change – liberalization, globalization, Europeanization, digitalization – all hitting at once? Or is it the atomization of consumer society, especially in the digital age, that is leading people back to the old familiar solidarities of Christian churches and ethnically defined national communities?*

This question might not seem readily applicable to Left-wing populist leaders, parties, and pressure-groups. It would appear to apply only to Trojan Horses on the Right. Nevertheless, the question also alludes to concerns often animating Left-wing opposition to the European Union and *mutatis mutandis* NATO specifically and the transatlantic relationship more generally.

Furthermore, any observation of contemporary Right- and Left-wing Trojan Horses, their risk-taking – and disruption-causing – leaders, and their possible Russian backers should always remain cognizant of the fact that history never really repeats itself. Indeed, it cannot. The historical record can, however, provide a concrete basis for carefully drawn analogies.<sup>49</sup>

Russian information-warfare, influence peddling, and geo-strategic ambition must never be viewed as the only motivators for witting or unwitting Trojan Horses in GS-ECE, NATO, and non-NATO Europe, even if Russian machinations might be the prime motivator in certain cases. On the contrary, and as the epigraphs attempt to capture, Trojan Horses in GS-ECE, NATO, and non-NATO Europe also possess their own distinctive domestic agendas, agendas often influenced as well by the current vagaries of US policy. For example, the reported “Cost + 50” demands for US forces based in Europe —if they are pursued—will likely add significant grist to the Trojan Horses’ mills, on both the Left and the Right, in that the demand, or one very like it, would in all probability exacerbate any existing anti-US resentment (Wadhams, & Jacobs, 2019). Russian support for these Trojan Horses’ agendas, always for Russia’s own goals, may well yet prove to have been a most cost-effective strategic offensive against both the transatlantic alliance and the European Union.

Of particular interest going forward to the year 2024, however, is the question of the extent to which Trojan Horses in GS-ECE, NATO, and non-NATO Europe might be further engaged by Moscow as President Vladimir Putin approaches what is currently scheduled to be the end of his tenure in office. This assessment currently proceeds on the basis of two assumptions: 1.) that Putin will not again

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<sup>49</sup> See the excellent review by Larry D. Nachman of Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May’s now rather dated but still quite useful book *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (1986).

alter the Russian constitution to allow his serving yet another term in office; and 2.) that no act of God supervenes to remove him from office before 2024.

If these assumptions hold, then Putin would likely continue to engage the assistance of European Trojan Horses for a twofold purpose: 1.) to cement as permanently as possible whatever degree of revived Russian great-power influence will have been accomplished by the final end of his presidency *via* the disruption of GS-ECE, NATO, and non-NATO Europe by these Trojan Horses; and 2.) perhaps even more importantly, to make possible for Putin himself a non-threatening, non-distracting international relationship *vis-à-vis* GS-ECE, NATO, and non-NATO Europe as he sets about grooming his successor. This grooming is vitally necessary in order to protect himself from prosecution after he departs the Kremlin just as he protected his immediate predecessor and patron, Boris Yeltsin. It must be remembered that Putin is part and parcel of the hybrid security services-oligarchic government established in Russia after the 1990 elections. That oligarchy continues to function to this day and promotes a foreign policy designed to destroy democracy elsewhere (Snyder, 2017, p. 29).

**Table 8. Selected Trojan Horses<sup>50</sup>**

Country	Political Party	Orientation
<i>Austria</i>	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) (political party)	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Estonia</i>	Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond (EKRE) (political party)	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Germany</i>	Aufbruch deutscher Patrioten (AdP) (political party)	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Germany</i>	Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) (political party)	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Germany</i>	Aufstehen (grassroots pressure group)	Left-wing
<i>Germany</i>	Die Linke (political party)	Left-wing
<i>Germany</i>	Junge Alternative (JA) (youth affiliate of AfD)	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Germany</i>	PEGIDA	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Hungary</i>	Fidesz (political party)	Right-wing populist/nationalist
<i>Hungary</i>	Jobbik (political party)	Right-wing populist/nationalist

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<sup>50</sup> This list constitutes merely an initial representative sample from GS-ECE.

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### Links

- Atlantic Council: <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/reports/the-kremlins-trojan-horses-3-0>
- European Council on Foreign Relations: <https://www.ecfr.eu/>
- Deutsches Polen-Institut: <https://www.deutsches-polen-institut.de/>
- German Association for East European Studies: <https://www.dgo-online.org/international/english/>
- Jamestown Foundation: <https://jamestown.org/>
- Royal United Services Institute: <https://rusi.org/regions/europe>

## Chapter 17. The Central American "Cycle of Violence:" Understanding the Catalysts of Migration as a Gray Rhino. A Media Ecology & Strategic Analysis (MESA) report

Skye Cooley, PhD  
Oklahoma State University  
[skye.cooley@okstate.edu](mailto:skye.cooley@okstate.edu)

Robert Hinck, PhD  
Monmouth College  
[RHINCK@monmouthcollege.edu](mailto:RHINCK@monmouthcollege.edu)

Ethan Sample  
Oklahoma State University  
[ethan.j.sample@okstate.edu](mailto:ethan.j.sample@okstate.edu)

### Key Points

- Migration is presented as irregular; comprising minors, women, and those seeking humanitarian assistance rather than as migrant laborers.
- Institutional failures and cyclical violence in the Northern Triangle are presented as the drivers of migration; migration is shown as an act of desperation rather than one of incentive-based opportunity.
- US shown as isolationist and solely concerned with reducing migration flow into its borders.
- Regional policies and alliances, particularly with Mexico, are the most discussed topic related to migration. Solutions to migration must simultaneously address underlying institutional failures and humanitarian needs; regional partnerships and policies are seen as the mechanisms required to do so.

### Abstract

Northern Triangle media present the solutions to migration as requiring regional unity to solve institutional failures. Unity takes the form of a broad range of policy discussions among Central American nations and Mexico; these policies provide avenues for solving institutional failures, offer a variety of assistance programs to migrants, and attempt to find potential economic benefits in establishing a more ordered free-flow of people within Central America and Mexico.

### Research Framework

The research offered here attempts to provide a more complete perspective of Northern Triangle migration through narrative analysis of Northern Triangle news media. Narrative aids in contextualizing the story of migration from the perspective of those grappling with its catalysts and consequences directly. Narrative also helps identify how the root problems of migration are discussed and what policies are presented aimed at addressing migration. In essence, Northern Triangle media coverage of migration allows us to see what social institutions are discussed as most vulnerable, and which are discussed as providing solutions.

A total of 199 articles were examined from 10 news sources coming from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. A quantitative content analysis (examining aspects of violence, consequences, policy) and strategic narrative analysis (examining act, agent, scene, instrument, & purpose) was conducted on articles spanning from November 2018 to February 2019.

## Introduction

### A Gray Rhino

The difficulty of social science predictions of any event rests itself on two obvious truths concerning humans and human affairs. The first is Machiavelli's fortuna, that fickle deity of luck. The probable can become the improbable, and vice versa, by the most infinitesimal of external shifts to the environment. The second is Arednt's notion of human plurality, which is to say that the very defining characteristic of being human is to be capable of infinite possible action at any given moment in time. However, as MacIntyre notes, social norms arise through social institutions. These institutions reinforce behavior patterns in ways that make prediction of human action, somewhat, possible. As socially legitimate institutions deteriorate, so do the "rules" governing human action. This creates a gray rhino.

Building on the definition offered by Jaye (2017), "a gray rhino is the two-ton, horny thing that is coming right at you. You've a choice to do something about it or not. It's a metaphor for the fact that so many of the things that go wrong in business, in policy, and in our personal lives are actually avoidable." The gray rhino represents, as Liebl states earlier in this document, threats whose indicators are plainly visible but are not addressed as a consequence of institutional bias. Here we detail a further clarification of a gray rhino as: a noticeable deterioration to the ordered social institutions of a given system; which increases the potential for unstructured, and non-normative (relative to the society), human action within that system. This paper considers the nations of the Northern Triangle as representing gray rhinos. In few regions of the world, are the mechanisms and institutions of social order in more direct upheaval and erosion than that of the Northern Triangle nations of Central America; and, because of that, few regions of the world have greater potential for the complete unknown.

### Violence Erodes Social Institutions

The sustained historical turbulence of the region has created and, perpetuated, what is consider a "cycle of violence" by Cathy and Widom's standards, denoting the repetitive and cyclical pattern of dangerous acts of violence. This cycle has eroded the social institutions of Northern Triangle nations and mass scale migration has become the foremost recognizable political and humanitarian cost. The human toll from the sustained suffering of the region has been immense, and the influx of Central American migrants into the US is a pointed reflection; from 1980 to 2015 the number of such migrants had increased "nearly tenfold." Unsurprisingly, the three Northern Triangle countries ranked as the top three contributors of those Central American migrants coming into the US (Lesser & Batalova, 2017); with many such migrants entering the country illegally.

Estimates by the Department of Homeland Security in 2012 showed that as many as fifty-five percent of Salvadorans, sixty-four percent of Guatemalans, and sixty-seven percent of Hondurans residing in the US were in the country illegally (Baker & Rytina, 2012). The composition of the migrants has shifted from laborers to asylum seekers. The process of migration has changed from small groups of "invisible" migrants attempting to minimize their observable presence to that of visibly massed

caravans using social media networks to announce, coordinate and organize. The arrival of people to the US border from the Northern Triangle is now primarily composed of unaccompanied minors, women, and/or entirely displaced families (Meyer et al, 2016; Soto et al, 2018).

## Findings

### Violence

Coverage of violence and the various state system failures plaguing Northern Triangle countries is difficult for journalist to cover for reasons related to restrictions of press freedom and the personal safety of the journalists themselves. However, our analysis does provide insight into perspectives on the violence and instability within the Northern Triangle.

The most discussed form of violence is the abstraction of violence into a generalized, catchall concept. Because violence as an abstracted concept provides no direct linkages to relatable institutions, organizations, and/or individuals behind it, this type of discussion can make calls for change from a relative distance. Discussions of gang related violence, represented in roughly 8.5% of the articles, are much more descriptive in form; though rarely mention specific gang organizations or individuals. The articles detail gang violence, and threats of violence, but the exact perpetrators are not identified. These discussions link violence to migration.

**Table 9. Forms of Violence Covered in Northern Triangle Media (N=199)**

Undescriptive, General Violence	9% (n=18)	Domestic Violence	1% (n=2)
Gang Related Violence	8.5% (n=17)	Political Violence	0.5% (n=1)
Gender-Based Violence	3% (n=6)		

### Institutional Failures

Institutional failures of the state system as catalysts to migration are mentioned more than twice as many times, as a whole, than violence; though failures of the state related to protection of citizens, institutional corruption, as well as viable economic opportunities being depressed by extortion are intimately intertwined with patterns of violence.

**Table 10. State System Failures Covered in Northern Triangle Media (N=199)**

Failure to Provide Economic Opportunity	20% (n=40)	Failure to Combat Institutional Corruption	10% (n=20)
Failure to Provide Adequate Physical Protection of Citizens	13% (n=25)	General Failure of State System	3% (n=5)
Failure to Provide Social and Educational Services	12% (n=24)		

The larger narrative of state system failures, and their interwoven relationship to violence, as catalysts to migration is perhaps best expressed in a *Proceso Digital* article claiming,

*“The massive migratory cycle that has been experienced in recent months will not be counteracted if the structural causes that feed it are not effectively addressed and basic*

*conditions of a dignified life are progressively ensured, freeing the inhabitants from fear and of the misery within their communities.”<sup>51</sup>*

## Incentives for Migration

In contrast to media coverage of the underlying internal violence and instability driving migration, the following outlines media depictions of the external incentives migrants are motivated towards when choosing to leave the aforementioned “fear” and “misery within their communities.”

There are three striking features: First, the mentions of external incentives (n=83) are overshadowed by that of system failures (n=114) from the previous section; even more so if mentions of violence (n=44) are considered collectively as part of a broader discussion of internal catalysts. Second, while economic incentives are mentioned more frequently than the other categories, that separation is very marginal in relation to safety-based incentives. These two features demonstrate the nature of Northern Triangle migration is shown more as an act of desperation than that of opportunism. Third, it is important to note that these external incentives are not shown as uniquely originating from the United States. In fact, many of the external incentives related to both safety and economics are shown coming from Mexico, as part of a comprehensive plan addressing migration. Mexico is presented as a more practical destination to that of the US; being more welcoming to migrants and offering direct economic opportunities,

*“Mexico became, against all odds, the American dream of the new migrant caravan.”<sup>52</sup>*

Economic Incentives	15% (n=31)	Uniting with Family in Destination Nation	4% (n=8)
Safety Incentives	13% (n=25)	Healthcare Incentives	2% (n=4)
General Improvement in Quality of Life	7% (n=14)	Educational Incentives	.01% (n=1)

## The People and the Path

It is clear from the findings above that media in Northern Triangle media link migration to system failures and violence, and also largely depict the act of migration as one of escape. However, the notion of undertaking migration, for those considering it, is very much discouraged in Northern Triangle media. While there are occasional mentions of the value of remittances to local state economies, migration on the whole is shown as a perilous, often fruitless, endeavor plagued by politics and criminals; particularly for those migrants trying to get in to the United States.

The motivations of caravan organizers, with claims of safe entry for migrants into the US, are often called into question, while the migrants themselves are left exposed to the harshness of the journey and of US policies,

<sup>51</sup> Proceso Digital (1/26/2019). Coordinan acciones para fortalecer asistencia humanitaria y proteccion a migrantes.

<sup>52</sup> Proceso Digital (2/5/2019). Hondurenos cambian “sueno americano” por visa humanitaria en Mexico.

*“Not a single Honduran (of the caravan) acceded to the territory of the United States, not a single Honduran has been...able to access a condition of asylum’... Hondurans who participated in the caravan ‘went hungry’”<sup>53</sup>*

The organization of the migrant caravans is shown as loosely cobbled together via social media channels that are rife with disinformation; disappointment, extortion and danger are presented as regular features of the caravan journey. Many of the migrants, presented with the horrors of the journey, are shown as choosing to simply come home,

*“They expressed that, while in Guatemala, those who were organizing the caravan asked for money, there was no solidarity in the networks that [people could] go together, all those comments that they read on social networks were lies.”<sup>54</sup>*

**Table 12. Descriptions of Migration Journey and of Migrants in Northern Triangle Media**  
(Scored as valence from -1 to 1)

Presentation of Migration Journey (N=56)	Mean = -.64 (standard deviation= .61)
Presentation of Migrants (n=72)	Mean = -.31 (standard deviation= .70)

The negative mean score representing the presentation of the migration journey demonstrates clearly how dangerous attempts at illegal entry into the US via the caravans are shown. Similarly, those undertaking migration are portrayed in a negative light, in part because they assume risks that they cannot control; with repercussions that the home country must deal with. Particularly damnable in the coverage are those who take their children for use as “border shields,” and a regular feature in the articles is the discussion of the daunting task of reintegrating migrants, particularly children, back into society after failed migration attempts.

The examination of the role of the US, considered here as the kind of actor the US is conceived as being (for example, as a guardian of the migrant safety versus a protector of its own borders at the expense of migrants), shows that Northern Triangle media consider the US as serving a negative role in relation to the migrants; that is to say, as a self-interested actor. More importantly however, the actions of the US responding to migration are shown as exceedingly negative. The US is characterized as being anti-immigrant, intentionally creating bottlenecks to slow the process of granting asylum, as pressuring Mexico to serve as buffer state between itself and the migrants, as deploying troops to the border and conducting exercises with teargas and other instruments of crowd dispersal, and as sending most migrants back to their home countries.

“Guillén López described the policies of the government of Donald Trump, in the United States, as the most exclusive, closed and xenophobic with a discourse that criminalizes migration”<sup>55</sup>

**Table 13. Descriptions of the Actions and Role of the United States in Northern Triangle Media**  
(Scored as valence from -1 to 1)

US Actions Related to Migration (N=96)	mean= -.49 (standard deviation= .60)
Role of the US in Relation to Migration (n=72)	mean= -.18 (standard deviation= .52)

In total, the path of migration via caravans is shown as one filled with false promises of opportunity in the US, that are often met with bitter disappointment and even violence. Direct mentions of

<sup>53</sup> La Tribuna (1/5/2019). Embajador de Honduras en Mexico califica de fracaso caravana de inmigrantes.

<sup>54</sup> El Heraldo (12/2/2018). Las redes sociales, entre la verdad y la mentira.

<sup>55</sup> La Tribuna (1/11/2019). Director de migracion de Mexico: Expectativa de migrantes hacia EEUU no es real.

violence against migrants within the caravans is covered in a little more than 12% of the articles (n=24), along with the tensions between the caravans and transit country populations (largely in Mexico) build a general sense of danger regarding the journey and demonstrate that the migrants themselves are particularly unwanted in the United States; ultimately, leaving the home nations to care for returning migrants scared by their experiences of violence and rejection.

### Consequences of Migration

What will now be discussed are the policies, and institutions, shown as aiming to address migration and its causes. The first thing to note is that Northern Triangle media presents the consequences of migration as extending far beyond the borders of any single nation.

Regional Central America & Mexico	22% (n=44)
Northern Triangle	17% (n=33)
United States	7% (n=15)

The consequences of migration are discussed most often within a larger regional context of Central America and Mexico. The movement of people throughout the region is discussed both in terms of the dangers and suffering it brings, as well as the potential it creates for economic opportunities and political unities.

A narrative of regional unity finds expression in these discussions, in the sense that the countries of Central America and Mexico share in the stakes at play in response to migration. There is also a notable difference in how the consequences of migration are discussed when speaking of the US. The US is portrayed as isolationist; offering little to help the situation, fortifying its own defenses, and putting pressure on Northern Triangle nations. The main consequence to the US shown is the government shutdown over the construction of a border wall.

Finally, the policies discussing solutions to migration in Northern Triangle media are vast in scope. Policies are the most discussed topic related to migration. Again, the coverage of policies expressed a narrative of unification among nations of the region, and the US is shown largely as an isolationist.

Northern Triangle	42% (n=84)
United States	35% (n=70)
Regional Central America & Mexico	34% (n=68)

Below is a list of the most discussed policies addressing migration in Northern Triangle media. These policies offer us insight into the mechanisms available discussed to meet the challenges and opportunities of migration, and underscore the larger narrative of regional unity around the shared stakes.

**Table 16. Discussed Policies to Address Migration in Northern Triangle Media**

<i>Policies/Proposal</i>	<i>Actors Involved</i>	<i>Description</i>
Alliance for Prosperity Initiative	US; Mexico	Promote prevention and employment generation programs that combat violence and migration through economic prosperity, governance and security in the Northern Triangle.
Safe Return Plan	Honduras; Guatemala	Safe return of caravan migrants back to their country of origin.
Global Migration Pact	Northern Triangle Countries; Mexico	UN-based framework; lays foundation for how best to address migratory cycles from start to finish.
Regional Security Plan	Security Ministers of Northern Triangle; National Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen.	Paves the way for a formal cooperation memorandum with four areas: the fight against human trafficking and illicit trafficking of migrants; to counteract organized crime and gangs; expand the exchange of information and intelligence; strengthen border security.

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## Chapter 18. Asian Focus on Latin American Innovation

Mireya McKee, PhD  
McKee Innovation Consulting LLC  
mireya.mckee@mckeeinnovation.com

### Abstract

- Innovation outputs such as patent applications and citable documents are increasing in Latin America (LATAM). Creation of new business entities is growing at a rapid pace in the region
- International collaboration in science and innovation has expanded in the last decade primarily with the U.S. and Western Europe
- Recently, Asian countries such as China are playing closer attention and interested in investing in LATAM ventures
- Although opportunities for US investment in LATAM innovation are growing, interest by foreign entities will provide substantial competition

### Innovation outputs are emerging in Latin America

#### Patents and citable documents

Although the innovation outputs of Latin American countries lag significantly behind those of developed countries, there is a definite upward trend in indicators such as patent filings in the region over the last decade. Data from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, 2018) shows that the number of patents applied for in the 10 most developed LATAM economies increased between 2008 and 2017 in all countries except Argentina (Table 1). Brazil and Mexico had the highest number with 7,505 and 2,522 patent filings, and 589 and 270 PCT patent applications in 2017 respectively.

**Table 17. Latin American Innovation Outputs 2008 and 2017 – Patent filings, PCT applications, and, citable documents**

Country	GDP (PPP) in millions (\$)	Patent filings 2008*	Patent filings 2017*	PCT applications 2008*	PCT applications 2017*	Citable documents 2008‡	Citable documents 2017‡
<i>Brazil</i>	3,524,064	5,521	7,505	471	589	40,382	68,741
<i>Mexico</i>	2,696,454	1,237	2,522	202	270	13,556	21,224
<i>Argentina</i>	922,951	1,112	766	23	36	8,497	12,266
<i>Colombia</i>	791,995	202	784	37	143	3,500	10,191
<i>Chile</i>	507,939	768	876	27	167	5,757	11,802
<i>Peru</i>	487,417	37	167	2	33	749	2,318
<i>Dom Rep</i>	201,918	0	42	5	13	63	154
<i>Ecuador</i>	193,753	26	29	4	5	391	2,996
<i>Guatemala</i>	153,433	8	65	14	1	102	269
<i>Panama</i>	121,545	21 <sup>†</sup>	100	9	9	304	545

\*Source: WIPO, 2018. Patent filings consider those Resident + Abroad, Including Regional

<sup>†</sup>2013 data

<sup>‡</sup> Source: SCImago, 2019. Citable documents include articles, reviews, and conference papers

Similarly, the number of citable documents has significantly increased in recent years (SCImago, 2019). The number of articles, reviews, and conference papers produced by countries such as Brazil and Mexico are now comparable to those produced by various Western European countries. Brazil was ranked no. 14 in the world in 2017 behind Russian and South Korea, and ahead of the Netherlands. Mexico was no. 28 behind the Czech Republic and Portugal. The number of articles published by Latin American authors in mainstream scientific journals catalogued in the ScienceCitation Index Extended increased by 90% between 2005 and 2014, carrying the region's global share from 4.0% to 5.2% (UNESCO, 2015).

### New Business entities

Another important metric for Latin American innovation is the creation of new business entities. Many countries in the region experienced significant growth in formation of new limited liability companies (LLCs) during the last decade (Table 2). In particular, Chile, Colombia, and Peru showed and accelerated growth over the 10-year period between 2006 and 2016 with a 71% (77,862 new companies), 59% (45,001 news companies), and 50% (37,407 new companies) cumulative growth rate respectively (The World Bank, 2017).

**Table 18. New Business entities in Latin America 2006 and 2016; GERD indicators 2008 and 2017**

Country	No. new business entities 2006*	No. new business entities 2016*	GERD (PPP) in millions (\$) 2008†	GERD (PPP) in millions (\$) 2017 or latest available†	GERD (PPP) financed abroad in millions (\$) 2008†	GERD (PPP) financed abroad in millions (\$) 2017 or latest available†
Brazil	18,992	18,393	26,777,344	32,945,238	N/A	N/A
Mexico	22,116	45,256	6,828,528	8,363,093	104,095	46,815
Argentina	14,219	11,672	406,525	521,223	18,618	244,471
Colombia	31,333	76,334	842,367	1,412,778	8,925	6,454
Chile	32,112	109,974	893,109	1,102,597	29,824	20,524
Peru	37,990	75,397	343,605	422,727	N/A	N/A
Dom Rep	2,968	9,990	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ecuador	N/A	N/A	842,367	1,412,778	1,354	16,815
Guatemala	4,925	4,306	52,341	31,533	25,356	20,557
Panama	532	2,204	90,211	47,772	43,262	105

\*Source: The World Bank, 2017. Number of new limited liability companies  
†Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UIS online database (2007–17)

## International collaboration in science and innovation

### Research collaborations in Latin America

Most Latin American countries have bilateral agreements or treaties with other economies within and beyond the region. However, international research collaborations have traditionally taken place with partners in North America and Western Europe. For example, the great majority of scientific articles are co-authored by scientists from the USA, followed in most cases by Spain, Brazil, Mexico, France, Germany and the United Kingdom (UNESCO, 2015). There is a high level of foreign research funding in Chile (17.5%), which hosts a cluster of European and North American astronomical observatories, and in Central America, where Panama (21%) hosts a branch of the Smithsonian Institution. Co-operation with the EU has further increased since 2010 with the signing of the Madrid Declaration. This agreement which emphasized partnership in the areas of innovation and technology for sustainable development and social inclusion.

The UK government has also set-up a £750 m fund (roughly 1b USD) to help build research and innovation partnerships with 17 developing partner countries to support their economic development and social welfare, and to develop their research and innovation capacity for long-term sustainable growth (Newton Fund, 2019). The fund has included a series of science and innovation programs with five countries in LATAM: Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Peru.

### GERD financed abroad

Brazil and Mexico have the highest share of gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) in Latin America which includes expenditure on research and development by business enterprises, higher education institutions, as well as government and private non-profit organizations (UNESCO

Institute for Statistics (2018). Many countries in the region suffered a decrease in GERD financed abroad between 2008 and 2017. A notable exception is Argentina which increased from \$18,618 m in 2008 to \$244,471 m in 2017. In general, this scenario stimulates an environment where LATAM is more open to looking for external investment.

## Startup Growth and Investment in Latin America

As mentioned earlier, Latin America as region displayed a strong growth rate in the creation of new business entities over the last decade. This trend was also reflected in the formation of accelerator programs for startups and in an increase in venture capital (VC) investment in the region. According to a report on the state of global accelerators (Gust and Fundacity, 2015) there were over 62 accelerator programs in Latin America in 2015. The report stated these programs had invested over 31 million USD 1,333 startups in Latin America in, about 15% of the global total that year.

In terms of VC investment, according to the Association for Private Capital Investment in Latin America (LAVCA, 2018), investment in Latin American startups has grown significantly since 2013. The total number of global investors into LATAM startups has more than doubled since 2013 (from 36 in 2013 to 80 in 2017, Twenty-five global investors made debut investments in LATAM in 2017 alone, and VC investments surpassed US\$1b for the first time that year. Three tech startups are now considered unicorns surpassing US\$1b valuations, 99, Nubank, and PagSeguro.

**Table 19. LATAM startup accelerators (2015) and VC investments (2017)**

Country	No. of Accelerator programs 2015*	No. of startups accelerated 2015*	No. VC deals 2017†	Total VC Invested in million (\$) 2017†
Brazil	26	297	113	859
Mexico	13	306	59	80
Argentina	7	61	19	71
Colombia	5	67	18	96
Chile	14	442	29	23
Peru	1	13	4‡	31‡

\*Source: Gust and Fundacity Report, 2015  
† Source: Association for Private Capital Investment in Latin America (LAVCA, 2018)  
‡ 2016 data

## Increased interest from Asia in Latin America

### Chinese trade and foreign investment

Recently, China has expressed interest in having closer ties with Latin America. It pledged to increase trade with the region by \$500 billion and foreign investment to \$250 billion by 2025. (Gallagher, 2017). China's two development banks, the China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China, now provide more development finance to Latin America than the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) each year. In addition to bilateral loans, China also set up two new multilateral finance platforms for Latin America in 2015, including a \$20 billion China-LAC Industrial Cooperation Investment Fund, a \$10 billion China-Latin America Infrastructure Fund. Additionally, in the period from 2001 to 2016, trade between China

and Latin America increased by 16 times, and the exports value from China has now surpassed European exports to Latin America (Nolte, 2018).

### China is starting to develop cultural and academic ties in Latin America

The Chinese government has begun a concerted effort to build cultural ties with Latin America. Their foreign minister has invited over 800 party leaders and 200 young leaders from Latin American and Caribbean countries to visit China (Wang, 2018). China also plans to invite a further 600 political leaders from Latin America and facilitate 6,000 governmental fellowships (AFP 2018). There is also a growing number of Chinese government-funded centers of Chinese language and cultural education. There are now 39 Confucius Institutes in Latin America and the Caribbean (10 in Brazil, 5 in Mexico, 4 in Peru), and China is also broadening its knowledge about Latin America (Nolte, 2018).

### Asian investment in Latin America

Chinese investment in Latin America is mostly dominated (80%) by state-owned firms (Nolte, 2018). Traditionally, Chinese investment in Latin America was concentrated in the extractive sector. However, now more than half of China's investment is in the service sector, mostly in transport and infrastructure. Finance, electricity (generation and transmission), information and communication technology, and especially alternative energies are growing areas of interest for investment in the region (Avenado et al, 2017). The automotive industry is another branch targeted by Chinese investors as a strategic sector in Latin America.

In terms of investment in startups, the U.S. is still the major investor in the region having 71% of the total transactions between 2013-2017. The European Union follows with 13% total transactions. However, Asia has begun to make an impact in the region with 8% of the total investment transactions in startups in LATAM (China 4%, Japan 2%, Singapore 1%, and Hong Kong 1%), (LAVA, 2018). Some of the Asian landmark investments in 2017 in the region include those from SoftBank and Didi Chuxing into Brazilian rideshare company 99, significant deals from Singaporean sovereign wealth funds GIC (in Netshoes) and Temasek (Netshoes, IguanaFix, Neoway) and corporate investors Tencent (Satellogic) and Tsing Capital (Bluesmart); and blockchain investors Digital Finance Group and FGB Capital in Ripio (formerly BitPagos) (**Table 20**, LAVCA, 2018).

**Table 20. Sample Asian Investments in LATAM Startups (2013-2017). Source: LAVCA, 2018**

Startup	Startup HQ	Sector	Stage	Investor(s)
99	Brazil	Marketplace: Ridesharing	Growth	Didi Chuxing (China); Softbank (Japan)
<i>Bitso</i>	Mexico	Fintech	Early	Bitcoin Capital (Hong Kong)
<i>Bluesmart</i>	Argentina	IoT: Travel & Tourism	Early	Tsing Capital (China)
<i>Geeki</i>	Brazil	Edtech	Early	Mitsui (Japan)
<i>IguanaFix</i>	Argentina	Marketplace	Early	Temasek (Singapore)
<i>Neoway</i>	Brazil	Big Data	Growth	Temasek (Singapore)
<i>Netshoes</i>	Brazil	e-commerce	Growth	GIC (Singapore); Temasek (Singapore)
<i>Nubank</i>	Brazil	Fintech	Growth	DST Global (Hong Kong)
<i>Psafe</i>	Brazil	Digital Security	Expansion	Qihoo 360 Technology (China)
<i>Rappi</i>	Colombia	Logistics & Distribution	Early	DST Global (Hong Kong)
<i>Ripio</i>	Argentina	Fintech	Early	Digital Finance Group (Huiyin Blockchain) (China)
<i>Sattellogic</i>	Argentina	Earth Observation	Expansion	Tencent (China)

## Conclusions

Latin America is an emerging region with growing innovation outputs. Although it has displayed modest patenting activity over the last decade, the level of publications and new business entities have grown significantly over the same time period. The region has historically had strong collaborative research ties to the U.S. and Western Europe but little R&D interaction with Asia.

The US-LATAM relationship has been built slowly over time and in fact it has taken decades to create and nurture LATAM innovation ecosystems. However, increased interest from Asian investors in the region has begun to chip away at the foundations that have taken years to forge. A more proactive investment in LATAM innovation programs could be advisable to retain a dominant market share and better position this relationship for growth in the future.

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## PART V: HOW WE ADAPT... OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

### Chapter 19. Integrating Strategic Planning in the Age of Disruption

Patricia DeGennaro  
TRADOC G2 OEC Network Engagement Team  
[patricia.degennaro.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:patricia.degennaro.ctr@mail.mil)

Randall Munch  
TRADOC G2 OEC Network Engagement Team  
[randall.p.munch.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:randall.p.munch.ctr@mail.mil)

*"I can't imagine any conflict that we would be involved with in the future being narrowly focused in one region. It would have transregional implications right away and then multifunctional [ones]"*

*-General Joseph F. Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

In today's ever-increasing interconnected and complex world, the US should revisit some of Nye's reasoning for the use of soft power and understand that force itself is just part of the equation. Force alone has not proven itself to be a sufficient enabler to "generate the conditions necessary to resolve conflicts thereby forging sustainable political agreement among internal factions, to improve capacity in host nation civil governance, economic development and security to enable resilience."<sup>56</sup> By planning for and using other elements of power, referred to by the acronym DIME (diplomacy, information, military and economic), the US can get beyond the binary discussion of hard or soft power and war or peace due to the changing character of war.

Three recently released US joint concepts address this challenge directly defining the need "for proactive, on-going campaigning that adjusts to fluid policy environments and changing conditions to create favorable and sustainable outcomes"<sup>57</sup> the *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC)* sets the stage for a paradigm shift in how to integrate military activities and align non-military activities of sufficient scope, scale, simultaneity, and duration across multiple domains to enable the achievement and maintenance of U.S. policy aims.<sup>58</sup>

By planning for and using all elements of power, often referred to by the acronym DIME (diplomatic, informational, military and economic), campaigns can be developed to persuade and shape the preferences of others.<sup>59</sup> Although, in military terms preferences may not be the ideal word, the overall goal is to influence the behavior of other leaders and populations by providing examples that are appealing to them so they choose to follow you.<sup>60</sup> Force alone has not proven to be a sufficient in

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<sup>56</sup> Wilson, Isaiah III, *American Power in Transition: The True Tragedy of American Power*, Parameters 43 (4), Winter 2013-14, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup> Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC), 16 March 2018, p. iii

<sup>58</sup> JCIC, page v.

<sup>59</sup> See Nye's (2004) "The Benefits of Soft Power" in Harvard Business School's Working Knowledge: Business Research for Business Leaders at <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/archive/the-benefits-of-soft-power>.

<sup>60</sup> Nye, Joseph S., Jr, *The Future of Power*, Speech at Los Angeles World Affairs Council, March 28, 2011. Nye further explains the interplay between hard and soft power. "Hard and soft power are related because they are both aspects of the ability to achieve one's purpose by affecting the behavior of others. The distinction between them is one of degree, both in the nature of the behavior and in the tangibility of the resources. Command

achieving sustainable policy aims. Recently released joint concepts, including the JCIC, the Joint Concept for Operating in the Information Environment (JCOIE), and the Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations (JC-HAMO), address this inefficiency directly by defining the need “for proactive, sustained campaigning that adjusts to fluid policy environments and changing conditions to create favorable and sustainable outcomes.”<sup>61</sup>

When nested together, these joint concepts give operations in the information environment (IE) a high priority notably because the *human will* is what must ultimately be influenced.<sup>62</sup> In the IE the character of war and conflict is changing. During recent years, the breadth, speed, and reach of information has expanded exponentially. U.S. competitors and adversaries have leveraged the IE and its rapidly expanding breadth, speed, and reach and have integrated the use of many types of information with armed conflict to enhance influence and achieve strategic objectives. In doing so, they have weaponized information by using it as a form of warfare that can be waged 24/7 without incurring significant risk of armed conflict.

As a result, the U.S. has often been outmaneuvered by our competitors below the level of armed conflict. Further, the U.S. continues to be challenged by the strategic integration of information in planning for non-conventional warfare. As stated in the National Security Strategy, the U.S. is “emerging from strategic atrophy.” Few would argue that the US has experienced strategic atrophy following World War II as well however, if the U.S. is going to emerge from today’s strategic atrophy leaders must learn to adopt the new mindset and approach that enables the Joint Force to conduct integrated campaigning with all its tools of power to remain competitive.

The U.S. government is not designed to leverage information at the strategic level with speed and flexibility on a field of play that is increasingly incongruent. Further the U.S. is encumbered by the rule of law. Authoritarian regimes that compete with the U.S. are not required to be accountable to those whom they govern. Authoritarian leaders can act with speed and decisiveness and use information to cause disruption and confusion within the security environment to their advantage. While disruption and confusion are inhibiting action by the U.S., adversaries and competitors can seize the opportunity to achieve their strategic objectives. In most cases, those objectives are counter to U.S. interests. These factors explain why the U.S. did not actively contest the Russian annexation of Crimea or their intervention in Ukraine. It also explains why and how China continues unopposed as it creates a chain of islands that can support the expansion of Chinese military power.

Recognizing the need to adapt and help the U.S. emerge from strategic atrophy, the Department of Defense (DoD) published JCIC to set the foundation for a new way of thinking. *Further*, in 2017, the Joint Staff added “Information” as the seventh joint function, the first addition of a joint function in roughly 20 years. Information as a joint function is defined in Joint Publication 1 (US Department of the Army, 2017) as follows:

*The information function encompasses the management and application of information and its deliberate integration with other joint functions to influence relevant-actor perceptions, behavior, action or inaction, and support human and automated decision making. The information function helps*

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power—the ability to change what others do—can rest on coercion or inducement. Co-optive power—the ability to shape what others want—can rest on the attractiveness of one’s culture and values or the ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in a manner that makes others fail to express some preferences because they seem to be too unrealistic.”

<sup>61</sup> JCIC pages 14 and 19; JCOIE, pages 22 and 30; and JC-HAMO, page 12.

<sup>62</sup> Secretary of Defense James Mattis declared information as a joint function in 2017. See: Memo: Information as a joint function, September 15, 2017.

*commanders and staffs understand and leverage the pervasive nature of information, its military uses, and its application during all military operations. This function provides [joint force commanders] the ability to integrate the generation and preservation of friendly information while leveraging the inherent informational aspects of all military activities to achieve the commander's objectives and attain the end state (pg. 1-19).*

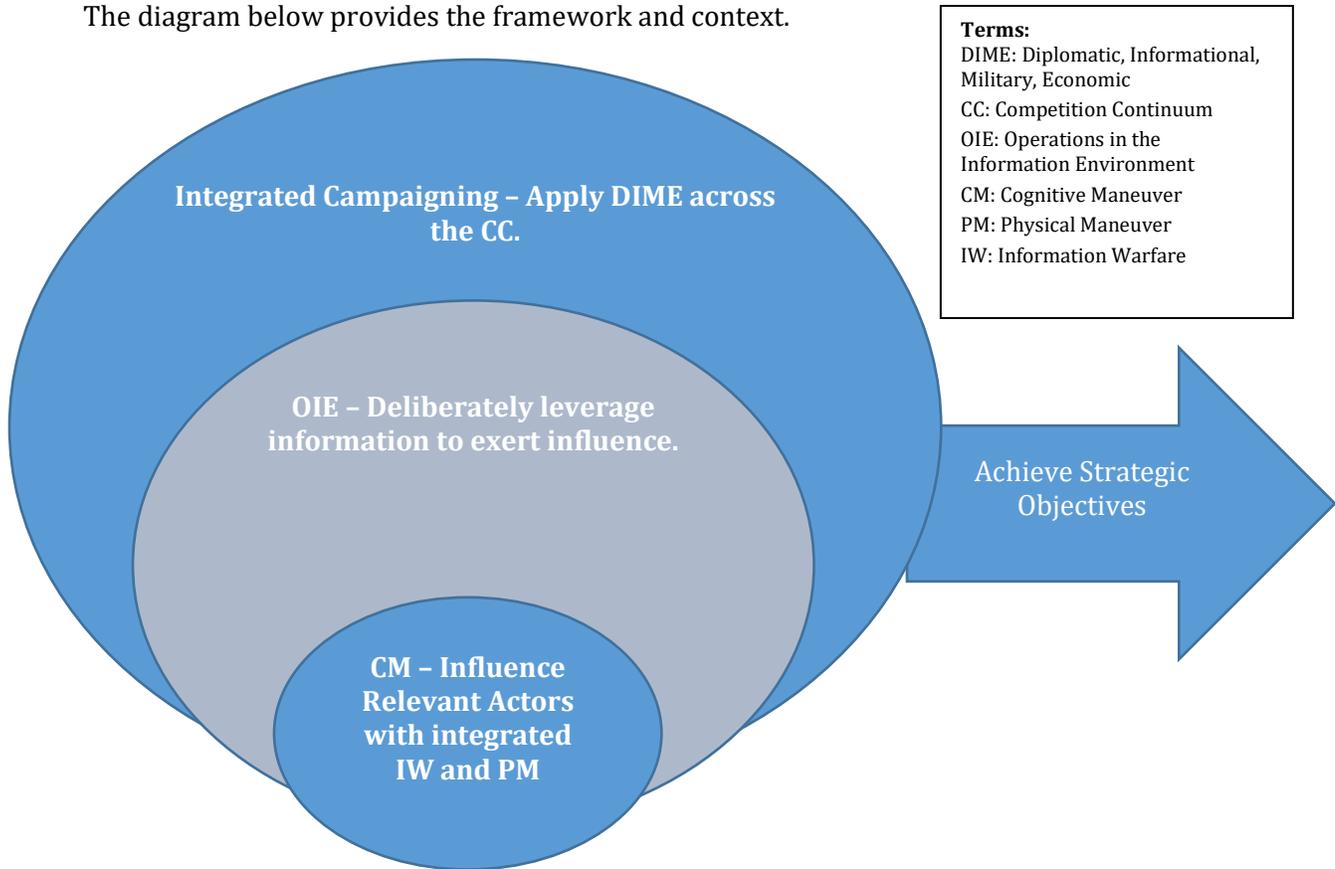
The Joint Staff followed these adaptations by publishing the JCOIE and JCHAMO during 2016-2018 to complement the JCIC and to adopt a new mindset and approach to operation and campaign planning. The Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC) applies mainly to the strategic level. The JCIC describes the need for the US to expand its capability to wage campaigns by applying multiple instruments of national power (diplomacy, information, military, and economic [DIME]) above and below the level of armed conflict, across what is now known as the competition continuum. The JCIC describes the integration of all elements of power (DIME) into campaigning, which is called "integrated campaigning".<sup>63</sup> The Joint Concept for Operations in the Information Environment (JCOIE) applies mainly at the operational level. Its concepts align with the application of all elements of DIME as described in the JCIC; however, its focus is on synchronizing the "I" and the "M" in DIME as a subset of integrated campaigning. The JCOIE also describes the need for DoD to deliberately leverage information to conduct effective operations in the information environment. The Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations (JCHAMO) applies mainly at the tactical level. It describes the need to influence the perceptions and behavior of relevant actors so their behavior helps bring about desired end states.

The publications described above, along with the DoD strategy and information, as defined in JP 1 (US Department of the Army, 2017), should be considered as mutually supporting. Together, they provide a framework by which the military can help the U.S. Government (USG) reach its national strategic goals (See Figure 8). The framework, if applied by the Services and the Joint Force, will also enable them to adopt a new approach to campaign art and design. The new approach will improve military capabilities in order to influence relevant actors, deliberately leverage information to conduct operations in the information environment, and conduct integrated campaigning across the competition continuum.

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<sup>63</sup> See ADDENDUM I for a description of each of the three joint concepts.

The diagram below provides the framework and context.



*Figure 8. Cognitive Maneuver in Context*

This new approach should revolutionize the way the Joint Force plans and conducts campaigns. For the most part, however, this revolution in planning has not yet happened. The DoD and the Services are large institutions that are not always quick to adapt to changes in the security environment. They have long-standing practices for employing combat power to achieve military objectives, which is a trusted, familiar way to plan campaigns. Integrating information and other elements of power into military planning is much less comfortable. Authorities for this type of integration are in some cases missing and in other cases used sporadically. Also, for some military leaders and planners it is an issue that the DoD would sometimes be in support of another agencies campaigns rather than in the lead of integrated campaigning.

Nevertheless, commanders can take the joint force guidance and foster news skills by taking the opportunity to interactively develop campaigns with robust IE strategies keeping in mind the necessary abilities to create influence, apply information as a joint function, and integrate all elements of power.

The ability to create influence is an important aspect of the U.S.'s ability to achieve strategic goals. Force alone will not achieve these goals. Take for example, how deliberately Russia created a campaign to steer the U.S. elections in 2016. By becoming more skillful at creating influence in concert with gray area solutions our military will become far more effective at competing.

A major obstacle to the Joint Force adopting an approach that focuses more resources on exerting influence below the level of armed conflict is a general perception that the effects of influence cannot be measured. This is problematic because the effects of combat operations can be measured by tracking combat casualties and by collecting battle damage assessments, both of which are relatively unambiguous. Effects of influence operations are generally perceived as being much more ambiguous and difficult to quantify. The use of soft power to create influence can, however, be measured. As Dr. Nick Wright describes in a 2017 white paper, “rigor is the key concept in measuring impact, it is about being thorough and careful. Rigorous measurement can be qualitative (interviews, focus groups, observation) or quantitative (surveys, experiments). Behavior change, perceptions or attitudes can all be the focus of measurement.”<sup>64</sup>

One way for the DoD to overcome the obstacle of the perceived inability to measure the effects of influence is to place more emphasis on educating and training senior officers to conduct assessments of influence operations. For Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs), their subordinate commanders, and their staffs, the skillful use of soft power to create effects of influence in order to achieve operational and strategic level objectives should be at least as important as using combat power to create tactical effects. Achieving that mindset, however, will require changes across the spectrum of DOTMLPF (doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities). For example, doctrine must be developed to better describe the blended application of hard and soft power, and education and training must better prepare our leaders to apply blended hard and soft power to operation and campaign planning. One such change will occur at the US Army War College (AWC) this July when a newly developed Graduate Seminar will discuss the combined application of physical maneuver and cognitive maneuver. That graduate seminar will then be expanded into an AWC elective in 2020.<sup>65 66</sup>

Further, with information now officially added as the seventh joint function, the Joint Force is required to integrate information into operation and campaign planning, along with the other six joint functions. As described above, the DoD Strategy for OIE, the JP 1 definition of information as a joint function, and the new joint concepts provide a framework for deliberately leveraging information in operation and campaign planning. Unfortunately, some DoD personnel assume this new concept of operating in the information environment is no different than the former concept of conducting information operations (IO), which was traditionally delegated by the commander to information experts and minimally addressed in the core plan. But information as a joint function is much more comprehensive than the former concept of IO. Formerly, IO was basically the management of IO-related capabilities. Information as a joint function, on the other hand, encompasses the management and application of information and its deliberate integration with other joint functions to influence relevant-actor perceptions, behavior, and action or inaction. In this paper, we use the term “information warfare” to convey the way U.S. competitors and adversaries are using information with significant effects to help them achieve strategic objectives. Thinking of using information in this way opens up an almost unlimited range of options for commanders and planners to leverage information to create influence. Commanders and staffs who ignore these opportunities and continue to treat the joint information function as if it were no different than the former concept of IO will impede Joint Force progress in adopting a new, needed approach to

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<sup>64</sup> Wright, N. D. (2017 July). *From Control to Influence: Cognition in the Grey Zone*. University of Birmingham Institute for Conflict and Cooperation Security, p. 99.

<sup>65</sup> The TRADOC G-2 Network Engagement Team has the lead for developing the Graduate Seminar and subsequent six-week course titled, “Cognitive Maneuver.”

<sup>66</sup> The other six joint functions, besides information, are command and control, intelligence, fires, movement and maneuver, protection, and sustainment.

planning. Over time, however, as the concept of OIE becomes more broadly understood through changes across the DOTMLPF spectrum, resistance to the new approach will be overcome.

Integrated campaigning allows commanders to use a significantly broader canvas for strategic, operational and tactical art and design in order to expand approaches for campaigning allowing influence on not only malign actors, but also neutral and friendly. Cognitive maneuver, as coined by SOCOM, is increasingly more important when operating below armed conflict and is increasingly accepted as an essential part of planning in order to influence relevant actors by integrating *information warfare* and physical maneuver. Planners must understand the broader context of cognitive maneuver first. Then, they must develop unprecedented understanding of how to use the information environment as a whole. Cognitive Maneuver (CM) in this sense requires creating desired effects not only in the doctrinal *domains* of air, land, maritime, space, and cyber, but more importantly in the all three dimensions of the IE.

This possibilities the JCIC creates allows a nuanced appreciation of relevant actors and how CM will can be used to operate without firing a shot. This level of understanding will also enable forces to see through the disruptions and obfuscations that our competitors and adversaries create throughout the IE, therefore, allowing the USG to act more decisively when populations friendly to the US are suddenly threatened by mysterious “little green men” or islands in US Pacific Command’s area of responsibility suddenly sprout military-grade landing strips. All the resources needed for the DoD to understand the OE and its relevant actors in depth are extant. Now they must be used in a concerted effort to support the integrated campaign planning effort. The determination to inform and change the idea of strategic art in planning will move the USG beyond strategic atrophy.

## Training and Equipping for 21<sup>st</sup> Century JCIC

Empires, kingdoms, and nations have competed throughout history. Today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, things have changed. Globalization of monetary systems, information sharing on a global scale, and the “internet of things” has led to a world without borders and vast opportunities for rapid movement of people and things without passports or permissions. Simultaneously nationalism has resurfaced disrupting sovereign systems and international rule of law. Although the National Defense and National Security Strategies advise leadership to keep an “eye” on great power competition, the US must not lose sight of non-conventional asymmetric ways states and other relevant actors are trying to weaken the U.S. without waging conventional war.

The National Defense Strategy (NDS) “acknowledges an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations.” The NDS also states, “Both revisionist powers and rogue regimes are competing across all dimensions of power. They have increased efforts short of armed conflict by expanding coercion to new fronts, violating principles of sovereignty, exploiting ambiguity, and deliberately blurring the lines between civil and military goals” (2018, p. 2). The expansion of military planning to address conflicts within a non-kinetic competition continuum challenges the USG advantage in many areas. The U.S. remains the world’s dominant military power, but that power is not suited to deter Russian propaganda campaigns or Chinese hackers looking to steal American military secrets. Therefore in order to compete, the U.S. must find a way to restructure its security apparatus in order to retain its global advantage. A fresh look at operational art and design by including cognitive maneuver and prioritizing information can regain U.S. overmatch in the OE (operating environment).

Conventional military planning has served the U.S. well. However, the technologies available today and those being developed are evolving and the approach to protecting U.S. interests must evolve with these changes. Rather than trying to understand future threats and hedge capabilities, planners must consider how to operate in the midst of non-kinetic forms of disruption and chaos. Planners must also learn to leverage quantitative and qualitative data to inform decision making by developing leaders with stronger technological and data science training and analytical skills.

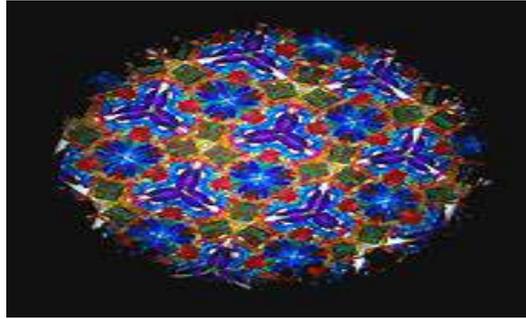
The current OE is more like a kaleidoscope than a game of chess on a ever changing board of play. Sure there are many strategies to earn a win in chess; however, the pieces do not change nor do new ones appear expanding the board into multiple domains, as simulated by the kaleidoscope. Interventions in today's OE come from many parties, seen and unseen, rapidly changing the landscape of opportunities, threats and challenges.

By scanning the macro operational environment (where societal, technological, environmental, economic, and political trends emerge and converge), commanders will gain strategic foresight thereby providing the tools to transform our existing planning processes (and mindsets) to become adaptive and resilient in these uncertain times (Salvatico, 2019). This "strategic foresight" is not predicting, but allowing creativity to make sense of the emerging landscape, develop aspirational futures and create detailed road maps to achieve them (Salvatico, 2019).

Fully integrating campaign planning requires the adaptation from compartmentalization of foreign policy tools to the more adaptive study of chaotic systems (the kaleidoscope) and how order, pattern and structure (the puzzle) can arise from complex systems both through physical and cognitive maneuver (Figure 9). U.S. government policy makers, along with USG agencies supported by, with and through the Joint Force must think about planning in a multidimensional way with a more organic every changing system in order to understand how the system is changing and how it can be put into perspective, therefore improving decision making on all levels.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the US Government.

Changes of position of the bits of material are reflected in an endless variety of patterns similar to what happens during interventions into an environment.



Recognizing patterns and filling in the gaps to create a structured view of the OE.



**Figure 9. The Whole OE: Putting Together the Puzzle**

General Dunford says, [we are in] a new state of “adversarial competition with a military dimension short of armed conflict.” The Joint Force planning concepts mentioned below set the foundation for integration of the physical and cognitive measures that the forces require in order to overmatch our adversaries in competition below armed conflict. These new joint concepts also lay the foundation for future US strategies to evolve in order to address much needed changes to strategic operational art and design. The global reach of information should also change the way U.S. Combatant Commands conduct planning and operations. The impact of information on competition and conflict cannot nor will be contained within a single region. Therefore, GCCs must coordinate and collaborate strategically. Activities conducted and statements issued by one GCC can impact perceptions and behavior on a global scale.

Comprehensive joint integrated planning for multi-domain operations (MDO) requires a shift in how we understand planning itself. The character of war, and we would argue, peace, is changing. By redefining how to use the full range of DIME the USG can address these changes holistically. In support of change, the Joint Concepts recently released can support this effort. The primary Joint Concept for Integrated Campaign Planning explains that “*fully integrated military and non-military activities*” are “*an essential element of success.*” The consequences of not incorporating all operations under a strategic umbrella puts the US military mission and the USG policy goals in jeopardy. By thinking more strategically, critically, and integrally, the U.S. may find that it can compete more

broadly with all its assets throughout the competition continuum protecting American interests across the globe.

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## ADDENDUM I

Three recently released US joint concepts address this challenge directly defining the need “for proactive, on-going campaigning that adjusts to fluid policy environments and changing conditions to create favorable and sustainable outcomes” (Joint Chiefs of Staff [JCS], 2018, p. iii). They are:

- ***The Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC)*** defines *integrated campaigning* as Joint Force and inter-organizational partner efforts to enable the achievement and maintenance of policy aims by integrating military and aligning non-military activities of sufficient scope, scale, simultaneity, and duration across multiple domains. The *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning* sets the stage for a paradigm shift in how Joint Force leaders and inter-organizational partners integrate military activities and align non-military activities of sufficient scope, scale, simultaneity, and duration across multiple domains to enable the achievement and maintenance of policy aims.
- ***The Joint Concept for Operating in the Information Environment (JCOIE)*** describes how the Joint Force will build information into operational art to design operations that deliberately leverage the informational aspects of military activities to achieve enduring strategic outcomes. The changing role of information has allowed state and non-state actors to influence global audiences, rapidly gain momentum, and advance their objectives. Adaptive state and non-state actors are proficient at using information to gain an advantage over the Joint Force. In order to compete in the information environment (IE), JCOIE aims to institutionalize and operationalize the Joint Force’s approach to information. This requires an understanding of information, the informational aspects of military activities, and informational power.
- ***The Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations (JC-HAMO)*** describes how the Joint Force will enhance operations by impacting the *will* and influencing the decision making of relevant actors in the environment, shaping their behavior, both active and passive, in a manner that is consistent with U.S. objectives. Human aspects are the *interactions* among humans and between humans and the environment that influence decisions. To be effective at these interactions, the Joint Force must analyze and understand the social, cultural, physical, informational, and psychological elements that influence behavior. Actors perceive these elements over time, mindful of seasons and historical events, and with people having differing notions regarding the passage of time. Relevant actors include individuals, groups, and populations whose behavior has the potential to substantially help or hinder the success of a particular campaign, operation, or tactical action.

These concepts and the 2018 the National Defense Strategy challenge the U.S. government as a whole to develop more integral ways to address today’s competition continuum<sup>67</sup>. U.S. “grand strategy” must be in step with its operations and actions – lethal and nonlethal alike. Currently, the USG relies primarily on military domination of an adversary when, in fact, a much broader range of options are available to be employed along with military power. One must take into account not only degrading or destroying nation state adversaries, but also find ways to influence and engage in order to shape behaviors and human will. In this hyper-connected operating environment, opponents are conducting operations, for example, by informational or cyber means while the U.S. continues to struggle with integration of these information components into strategic planning and operations. It is the information environment, or what experts refer to as the “connectedness continuum,”<sup>68</sup> where U.S. adversaries plot and execute attacks with reduced signature, seamlessly, and inexpensively across the DIME. The U.S. is being precisely targeted in the IE by state and non-state actors such as Russia and the self-proclaimed Islamic State, therefore the USG must build increased capacity to mitigate these attacks. Policy makers and planners can no longer afford to ignore the effectiveness of these operations nor can they delay the development of the capabilities needed to achieve integrated campaigning (DeGennaro, Munch, & Cobb, 2019, p. 1-3).

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<sup>67</sup> The Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC), Joint Chiefs of Staff, dated 16 March 2018, page vi, states, The foundational idea of the JCIC is to enable an *expanded view of the operating environment* by proposing the notion of a *competition continuum*. This competition continuum offers an alternative to the obsolete peace/war binary with a new model of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict. These are not mutually exclusive conditions. They are states of relationships with other actors that can exist concurrently. The JCIC’s *new lexicon* provides further specificity to aid civil-military dialogue.

<sup>68</sup> See Charles Cleveland, Benjamin Jensen, Arnel David, and Susan Bryant, *Military Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: People, Connectivity and Competition*, Cambria Press, 2018. This book focuses on the human domain and the changing character of war based on the [virtual] connectedness and networks of people. “Increasing connectivity is shrinking the world,” p. 185.

## CHAPTER 20. INTEGRATED CAMPAIGNING IN THE AGE OF DISRUPTION

Thomas Pike  
LTC, USA  
thomas.d.pike.mil@mail.mil

### Abstract

Upgrading the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment (JIPOE) is essential for the success of Integrated Campaigning in the age of disruption. The Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information and Infrastructure (PMESII) breakdown of the operating environment is fundamentally at odds with the complex system foundation on which the JIPOE is built. JIPOE must adopt a perspective which views foreign systems as the constant adaption of interdependent groups. Through this perspective the U.S. foreign policy system can better identify new and emerging groups which can impact U.S. security and the world order. Inextricably intertwined with this upgraded perspective is the need to use computational tools to aid collection, processing, analysis and campaign design. Through this integration the U.S. foreign policy systems can enhance its ability to both detect and influence the dynamics of emerging groups and behaviors in pursuit of U.S. policy objectives.

### Improving Our Perspective

Upgrading the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment (JIPOE) is essential for the success of Integrated Campaigning in the age of disruption. The Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information and Infrastructure (PMESII) breakdown of the operating environment is fundamentally at odds with the complex system foundation on which the JIPOE is built (*Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment*, 2014). JIPOE must adopt a perspective which views foreign systems as the constant adaption of interdependent groups. This perspective will provide greater insight into the dynamics of groups across the globe and help identify emerging groups or behaviors early to craft effective intervention campaigns. The challenge with this approach is understanding the interdependencies and adaptations of layers of foreign groups defies both human cognitive capacity and analytic equations. Due the complexity of these systems, computational tools are inextricably intertwined with this upgraded perspective. An improved understanding of complex systems combined with an understanding of existing and emerging artificial intelligence (AI) allows for an objective assessment of where each type of AI tool fits to support both the JIPOE and Joint Planning Processes. By understanding the world as a complex system of layers of adapting groups, and assessing their dynamic through computational tools, the U.S. will be better prepared to identify, influence or neutralize groups who pose a threat or in pursuit of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

The *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning* (JCIC) acknowledges the historic perspectives of peace and war make foreign policy harder and an integrated approach across the U.S. Government (USG) with a more nuanced understanding is necessary (*Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning*, 2018). The JCIC describes “*Integrated Campaigning* as Joint Force and interorganizational partner efforts to enable the achievement and maintenance of policy aims by integrating military activities and aligning non-military activities of sufficient scope, scale, simultaneity, and duration across multiple domains.” It then goes on to provided four interrelated elements for the conduct of Integrated Campaigning, (1) understanding the operating environment (OE), (2) design and construct the campaign, (3) employ the integrated force and secure gains, (4) assess and adapt the campaign (2018). Interwoven through

this concept is the competition continuum (Figure 10) and the JCIC examines implementation of each of the four elements along this continuum. This study furthers the JCIC by upgrading the JIPOE, which is the Joint framework to understand operating environment. This upgrade then reverberates across the Joint Planning Process, as it fundamentally changes how the U.S. foreign policy enterprise understands foreign populations and the impact its policies have on the emergent behavior of these systems.



Figure 10. Competition Continuum (Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning, 2018)

This study provides recommendations to further develop the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment (JIPOE), which is the Joint framework to understand the OE and recommendations for how to integrate computational tools into the USG's foreign policy system to enhance Integrated Campaigning. To do this it is necessary to first provide the foundational understanding of complex systems. From this foundation is a description of the implications to the JIPOE, and a description for the integration of computational tools. For those interested in more details there is a longer similar version as part of the invited perspectives of the larger Future of Conflict and Competition study (*Analysis and Artificial Intelligence for Integrated Campaigning*) which provides an upgraded JIPOE framework, a discussion about the dynamics of computation and how different Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can be overlaid on existing Joint processes to support Integrated Campaigning. Intrinsic to both these studies is the core concept that populations are made of layers of adapting groups. This shift in perspective is essential for the U.S. to execute effective policy in the age of disruption.

### On Complex Adaptive Systems

Complex adaptive systems provides a scientific perspective to explore everything from physics and biology to economics and political science (Axtell & Epstein, 1996; Beinhocker, 2006; Cioffi Revilla, 2017; Mitchell, 2009; Simon, 1997; Smith & Morowitz, 2016). Over the past decade a complex systems perspective has become the dominant focus of policy studies (Dunn, 2018) and is ubiquitous in the study of conflict from counter insurgency to high intensity conflict (Clausewitz, Howard, &

Paret, 1976; *Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment*, 2014; Kilcullen, 2010, 2013; Lawson, Sean, 2014). Complex systems can be understood at numerous degrees of difficulty, which is essential as it will be shown that this perspective needs to be applied by 18-year-old Servicemembers and PhD Foreign Service Officers.

Presenting complex systems in their simplest construct, they are adaptive networks (Krakauer, 2018), where the interdependencies (e.g. edges, links) are important (Miller & Page, 2007; Mitchell, 2009). For example, a family is in a homeostasis with each member interdependent to the others and this homeostasis shapes the behavior of the members. If a parent is an alcoholic or nurturing, there are known impacts on child behavior. If the homeostasis changes, a parent becomes sober or a parent dies, the family network adapts, a new homeostasis is found, and behavior changes (Sapolsky, 2017; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). This same phenomenon is then repeated from this family unit up to the level of populations. The network structure of Europe in the middle ages caused it to behave fundamentally differently than the network structure of China. The European structure was able to exploit new technologies, like the printing press and gunpowder, while China's structure was not; even though it had the technologies centuries earlier (Root, 2019). This same perspective can be used to understand any emergent behavior today, from extremist Islam to Nationalism. Groups exist at multiple levels in constructs such as families, neighborhoods, cities and nations and even exist simultaneously (e.g. work group, home group). This is the fundamental structure of a population whether it is the domineering multi-leveled group of Putin in Russia, Jinping in China, or U.S. political parties. This layered structure of groups is essential as it provides resilience to the system (Cioffi Revilla, 2017; Holland, 1995; Miller & Page, 2007; Simon, 1997).

Unlike the classical view of science which has analytic equations to explain behavior, simple mechanisms combined with numerous interactions are more helpful in understanding complex systems (Grimm et al., 2005). A critical element in these interactions is uniqueness, each group even if similar or using the same processes is in a slightly different situation and this uniqueness influences the emergent behavior of the system (Axtell et al., 2002; Lorenz, 1963). This uniqueness is literally a part of us, as each human has a unique genetic code and this code is not only unique to each person but even expressed differently based on that individual's environmental exposure. Complex adaptive systems are therefore a network whose behavior emerges from the adapting interdependencies of numerous groups at multiple levels. Although this description may strain intuitive understanding its implications can be explored through an analysis of the JIPOE framework.

## JIPOE and Complex Adaptive Systems

JIPOE does use a complex systems approach, but does not account for the unique interdependencies of groups at numerous levels. JIPOE focuses on nodes within the PMESII (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information and Infrastructure) construct (*Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment*, 2014). PMESII's categorical breakdown implies these are the universal elements of the society producing the emergent behavior. This presumption contradicts the reality that each military, political party, patronage network etc is unique due to the resources it is dependent to maintain or expands its power. The most important part of foreign groups is their dependencies; understand a groups' dependencies and one will understand their behavior. From this dependency analysis, one can enact strategies our policies to alter their behavior by altering their interdependencies. The categorical approach of PMESII prevents analysts from focusing on the unique nature of that group due to its interdependencies within its system.

The rise of extremist Islam, which has dominated U.S. Foreign policy for nearly two decades, shows the challenges of the PMESII approach. PMESII, implicitly assumes a Westphalian notion of competing nation-states. The House of Saud's and other's heavy funding of Wahhabist education and extremist mosques across the world gave local competitive advantage to these viewpoints, which gave rise to low-level extremist groups across the world which were not nation states but did produce the world's first global insurgency (Kilcullen, 2010; Logan, 2016). A PMESII approach could incorporate such actions under the social category in an analysis of Saudi Arabia, but would never identify the possibilities of these small groups banding together into a global insurgency.

A view of layered groups also provides a better analysis of Putin's modernization of Soviet KGB tactics to weaken foreign adversaries. The KGB's active measures, which Putin has modernized to the global world, seeks to exploit the fundamental composition of complex systems, by sowing discord among the disparate groups to reduce their cohesiveness as an entity (Abrams, 2016). Putin and his establishment target the information dependencies of the sub groups in foreign populations. By analyzing Putin's targeted populations as layers of groups, analysts can develop a better understanding of the impact and goals of such propaganda, as well as develop more effective measures to counter it.

Understanding how the groups within the foreign population survive and how they can adapt must be the focal point of analysis and it must be understood that processes of a group under one condition may not work under another. For example, Sparta, after defeating Athens in the Peloponnesian War, was defeated by Thebes only 33 years later as the Spartan system which made it initially successful, undermined its strength when it transitioned from a local to a regional power (Bueno De Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, & Morrow, 2003). Analyzing complex systems is challenging because the emergent behavior at each level is the result of the functioning and interdependencies of those groups at a moment in time.

The reality of layers of adapting groups provides foundational support to the concept of Integrated Campaigning and the age of disruption. The foreign policy system must work coherently at multiple levels and across specialties to influence foreign behavior in pursuit of policy goals. Colloquially, how do you organize and enable the U.S. foreign policy enterprise to work together to identify and influence foreign groups. Computational tools which are an essential tool to understand the operating environment (i.e. analyze complex systems), further increase in importance as they enable more effective interdependencies within the U.S. foreign policy system which can help it act as a more coherent team.

## Integrating Computation

It is not a coincidence that complex systems have come to the forefront of many disciplines at the same time computational power has increased and the entry barrier to employ code has lowered. Repeated interaction of unique and adapting entities defies closed form analytic equations, but computers are able to simulate these interactions. Complex systems were previously ignored as the tools to analyze them were too cumbersome, they are now being embraced because computers allow them to be analyzed (Cioffi Revilla, 2017; Gleick, 1987; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Simon, 1997). In addition, the ability of computers to do a large number of calculations allows for not only simulations of complex systems but has also allowed for the explosion of the prevalent AI tools of machine learning and neural networks (Goodfellow, Bengio, & Courville, 2016). Code also allows for the storage and transfer of these processes so they can be compartmentalized and combined in unique and novel ways by any user (Booch et al., 2007). Computation provides an essential tool to analyze

complex systems, process the overwhelming of data collected, and store these techniques so they can propagate across the U.S. foreign policy system.

Based on the capabilities of computational tools they should be integrated in three ways. First, as tools to reduce processing challenges due to the ubiquity of data. Second, as virtual laboratories to test analysis and experiment *in silico* with policies (i.e. courses of action) and third as technical bridges to allow expert algorithms to support analysis and planning. To place this integration in a practical description, collection assets obtain large amounts of data from the OE and use AI to help curate and pre-process the data. These types of tools have already proven effective in identifying outliers or cloistered groups of individuals working towards a common purpose. The integrated team must then further study and process this data integrating it with its qualitative understanding of the local dynamics based on group interdependencies. This team then ‘plugs and plays’ advanced, vetted algorithms by domain experts, to custom build distributed AI simulations (i.e. Agent Based Models) to *grow* the main dynamics of their OE *in silico*. Successfully growing the observed dynamics provides a more rigorous test of one’s understanding of the OE and provides a *virtual laboratory* to try different campaign designs prior to execution, and updates the design as they assess and adapt during execution. As unique groups exist at multiple level across the foreign policy system this approach, at varying levels of complexity, must be employed from the battalion and/or USAID team in a village to the National Security Council.

### Integrated Campaigning in the Age of Disruption

The ‘right’ perspective for understanding the OE is critical for the U.S. to identify disruptive elements as they emerge. Complex adaptive systems provide the right perspective and is used by all disciplines which make up the U.S. foreign policy system. The Joint application of complex adaptive systems, through the JIPOE, needs to immediately change the focus from a categorical breakdown to group identification and dependency analysis. The USG must further integrate computational tools to share knowledge, process data and conduct more effective analysis and planning. AI tools will help identify outliers and emergent groups who may have gone undetected. In addition, incorporating distributed AI will allow analysts to *grow in silico* their OE of interest, providing a more rigorous check on their assessments. Planners can then use validated models as a virtual laboratory to develop and test their campaign designs to influence or neutralize these groups. The holistic integration of both improved concepts and emerging technology is the historic recipe for major advances in the conduct of war (Boot, 2006) and in this case will include an unprecedented impact on foreign policy in general. This approach helps the U.S. go beyond traditional views to see the world more accurately and identify those emergent groups who would seek to harm the U.S.

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## Chapter 21. Russian Views on Resistance and Counter-Resistance Operations

Patricia J. Blocksome, PhD  
Naval War College – Monterey  
[patricia.blocksome@nps.edu](mailto:patricia.blocksome@nps.edu)

### Abstract

The concept of resistance operations is currently of interest to the national security community. However, this area of research has focused predominantly on how European states—particularly the Baltics—could resist should Russia occupy their territory. Missing from this discussion is a look at how Russia views resistance operations—both those directed against it, and those it undertakes. This paper provides an initial overview of contemporary Russian understanding of resistance and counter-resistance operations.

Russian counter-resistance operations are laid out in Gerasimov’s seven-step New Generation Warfare concept (Adamsky, 2018):

1. Informational-psychological struggle
2. Indirect information actions to neutralize the adversary’s military superiority
3. Non-military action to dissuade adversary from initiating aggression
4. Deception operations to conceal the planned attack
5. Subversion and reconnaissance activities by SOF
6. Kinetic attack
  - a. likely using air or space assets
  - b. targeting infrastructure and state and military command and control centers
  - c. preferably using unconventional, deniable combatants, such as private military contractors and proxy paramilitary forces
7. Territorial occupation

Based on this model, I propose the following seven-step Russian view of resistance operations:

1. Controlling information to ensure that only ‘correct’ information is propagated
2. Resisting political, economic, information and technical pressures on the Russian military, and developing military technologies to counter the technological advances of adversaries
3. Broadcasting a narrative to both internal and external audiences that defends and legitimizes military aggression
4. Being suspicious about adversarial military activities, such as exercises, that could provide cover for military aggression or attacks
5. Instituting strong counterintelligence and countersurveillance programs to defeat subversion and reconnaissance
6. Strengthening defenses for infrastructure and state/military command and control, and preparing quick response forces for kinetic attacks
7. Resisting both informational and geographic occupation, or, if occupation is expected to occur, developing a resilient population that sustains a will to resist

## Introduction

There is growing interest in the US military regarding ‘resistance operations’, that is, “A nation’s organized, whole-of-society effort, encompassing the full range of activities from nonviolent to violent, led by a legally established government (potentially exiled/displaced or shadow) to re-establish independence and autonomy within its sovereign territory that has been wholly or partially occupied by a foreign power (Fiala and Stringer, forthcoming).” This area of research has focused predominantly on European states—particularly the Baltics—who are developing plans to resist should Russia occupy their territory. For the US and NATO as whole, the focus is more on how to support such resistance efforts by their partner states. However, missing from this discussion is a look at how Russia views resistance operations—both those directed against it, and those it undertakes. This paper provides an initial overview of contemporary Russian understanding of resistance and counter-resistance operations.

## A Brief Overview of Russia’s Strategic Worldview

It is important to note the role that Russian perceptions of the international system play on the development of their theories of resistance. In short, Russia views itself as under persistent attack from the West. This view of the West is based on a history that dates back to at least the Napoleonic invasion of tsarist Russia. More contemporaneously, the current climate of distrust between Russia and the West is predicated on Russian fears that the West could prevail in a conventional fight, the expansion of NATO and the EU into the Russian ‘neighborhood’ of former Warsaw Pact states. Russia is extremely concerned about adversarial action within what it considers its sphere of influence, as well as within its own territorial borders.

A particular concern is what the West would term ‘regime change’, which Russia considers the West to have attempted in places such as Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. Russia considers these military operations illegitimate, and sees the West as hypocritically using international law and organizations such as NATO and the UN to legitimize their own actions while seeking to delegitimize similar Russian actions. For example, Russia views the interventions in Kosovo as analogous with its actions in Ukraine; in both cases the external military force was not approved by the UN Security Council, but was undertaken anyway (Bartles, 2016:32).

Perhaps the most interesting insight into the Russian strategic worldview is the fact that they do not use the term ‘hybrid warfare’ despite the West identifying that as Russia’s chosen military strategy. The only time the term ‘hybrid warfare’ is used in Russian military journals is to discuss the West’s fascination with, and employment of, this type of operation. So if Russia, according to its own military journals, is not undertaking hybrid warfare, what exactly is it doing? The Russian term—again, according to the Russians—for what they are facing and attempting to do is New Generation Warfare (NGW).

## The Russian Model: New Generation Warfare

In 2018, General Gerasimov, chief of the Russian general staff, described NGW as follows:

The principal features of future conflicts will be the extensive employment of precision weapons and other types of new weapons, including robot technology. Economic targets and the enemy’s system of state control will be subjected to priority destruction. In addition to traditional spheres of armed struggle, the information sphere and space will be dynamically

involved. Countering communications, reconnaissance, and navigation systems will play a special role. ...An urgent task is searching for balance between military and nonmilitary defense measures and safeguarding the country's security. (Gerasimov, 2019)

Russian NGW has seven stages (Adamsky, 2018):

1. Informational-psychological struggle
2. Indirect information actions to neutralize the adversary's military superiority
3. Non-military action to dissuade adversary from initiating aggression
4. Deception operations to conceal the planned attack
5. Subversion and reconnaissance activities by SOF
6. Kinetic attack
  - a. likely using air or space assets
  - b. targeting infrastructure and state and military command and control centers
  - c. preferably using unconventional, deniable combatants, such as private military contractors and proxy paramilitary forces
7. Territorial occupation

This description of NGW offers several intriguing points. First, the role of non-military activities is a critical precursor to any kinetic action. What is more important is that Russia does not see steps 1, 2, or 3 as necessarily nesting within a specific campaign. Rather, the first three steps are ongoing, persistent objectives in current global interactions between states (Bartles, 2016). Any aspect of what might otherwise be termed diplomacy—particularly any form of coercive diplomacy—is, when seen in this light, a threatening precursor to the later kinetic stages of the NGW model. Viewed through the NGW lens, what Russia currently sees in not only its own actions, but also those of its adversaries, is a state of perpetual warfare. While the West has termed this idea 'competition', there is an element of perpetual, intentional deception or subversion in the non-military steps of NGW that is not necessarily present in Western conceptions of 'competition'.<sup>69</sup> Second, in contrast to Western conceptions of the 'gray zone', in which competition usually exists below the level of an overt military response, NGW requires kinetic military activity in step 6. This is an interesting break with Western ideas. However, while Russia sees kinetic action as a distinct step in NGW, preferably that action would be taken by deniable actors, with the state's official military forces used only as a last resort.

Therefore, NGW arguably expects more conventional, 'traditional' military battlefield activities, as opposed to Western literature on hybrid warfare, which is more focused on non-traditional military activities. Indeed, as a US Army armor officer noted, the actual conventional battles waged by Russian-aligned forces in Ukraine were highly traditional, being waged in ways that would look familiar to World War I, with "trenches, razed cities, the corpses of destroyed armored vehicles" as well as the "indiscriminate employment of rockets and artillery (Fox, 2017)." One scholar argues that, in fact, in recent history Russia actually prefers conventional military activities over unconventional activities, even if those conventional activities, such as battles to seize objectives, are carried out by more deniable or unconventional forces (Savage, 2018).

While Russia has in previous conflicts brought in their official armed forces, this can actually be understood as a response to failing to achieve their objectives via unofficial sources. This conception of Russian forces as the reserve force if other groups fail helps to explain the growing prominence of

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<sup>69</sup> The definition of competition, as described by USSOCOM strategists, is: "the interaction among actors in pursuit of the influence, advantage, and leverage necessary to secure their respective interests (Miller et al., 2019)."

the *Vozdushno-Desantnye Voiska*, the quick-response airborne troops that are undergoing a planned expansion (Bartles and McDermott, 2014). It also explains the rise in usage of private military contractors and ‘volunteers’ found in both Syria and Ukraine; these are the preferred force for NGW operations.

Finally, though not mentioned as one of the seven steps of NGW, there is one other aspect to this type of warfare that General Gerasimov has identified: the role of distance. Gerasimov notes that “There has been a shift from sequential and concentrated operations to continuous and dispersed operations conducted simultaneously in all spheres of confrontation and in remote theaters of military operations (2019:132).” This idea of dispersed operations implies that the steps of NGW may be applied at geographically separate areas, even if the end result is to be concentrated in a single area.

### New Generation Warfare as Counter-Resistance Operations Theory

The astute reader will have realized that I have not at this point directly tied NGW to resistance operations. After all, in the Western conception, resistance operations are developed *to respond* to an occupying power. Russia’s discussion of NGW is therefore probably more in line with Western conceptions of counter-resistance operations, since Russia perceives the West as currently carrying out steps 1 through 3 *on Russia*. NGW as a form of counter-resistance, however, makes a great deal of sense. The goal in NGW is first to destroy resistance to, and only then occupy, a territory. Therefore, I argue that NGW can, in Western terminology, be understood as the Russian version of counter-resistance operations.

### Inverting New Generation Warfare: A Theory of Russian Resistance Operations

If NGW can be understood as counter-resistance, what would Russian resistance operations look like? How would Russia propose to respond to NGW? First, as discussed above, the reader must understand that Russia considers, or at least announces to the world, that it is under attack. As one journalist put it, “A Russia swamped with foreign spies neatly fits the Kremlin’s current narrative that Russia is a besieged fortress threatened by the West (Rosenberg, 2019a).” Then, given the Russian understanding of NGW, how would Russia seek to counter what it perceives as Western implementation of these steps? In order to answer that question, this paper proposes a framework for Russian resistance operations based upon an inversion of the seven steps of NGW.

### Combatting New Generation Warfare

Step 1 in NGW, the informational-psychological struggle, is combatted by controlling information to ensure that only ‘correct’ information is propagated. This can be seen by the 2019 passage of two bills in the Russian parliament which ban “blatant disrespect” of Russia and “false information (Rosenberg, 2019).” Perhaps most tellingly, a BBC correspondent called these two pieces of legislation “An Internet Iron Curtain (Rosenberg, 2019).” Efforts to combat step 1 can also be seen in Russia’s efforts to expel NGOs and attack organizations such as USAID, which otherwise might offer compelling counter-narratives (Bartles, 2016).

Step 2 in NGW focuses on information operations that directly affect military capacity. It can be countered by first resisting adversarial political, economic, information and technical pressures on the military. For instance, sanctions against military equipment sales to Russia would be seen as a step 2 activity. Additionally, step 2 would be countered by the strengthening of Russia’s own military technology (to include informational-technological assets). As President Putin recently noted, “We

see foreign intelligence agencies trying to increase their activity towards Russia, seeking by all means to access political, economic, scientific and technological information (Rosenberg, 2019).” Such a comment seems to imply a worldview in which Russia’s adversaries are seeking information by which they could neutralize Russian military advantages; this would be in line with step 2 of NGW.

The goal of step 3 in NGW is to resist any adversarial non-military actions attempting to dissuade aggression. This step can be countered by offering a narrative—both internally and externally—that defends and legitimizes military aggression. Domestic narratives would focus on encouraging the Russian public to believe that their military both would be successful if employed, and also should be employed to counter legitimate threats. External narratives would also focus on the legitimacy of military actions, however dubious those claims might appear.

Step 4 is focused on uncovering deceptive practices by the adversary in order to understand the nature of the threat; this is a step predicated on the belief that one’s adversaries are constantly engaging in duplicitous actions. If Russia believed itself to be countering step 4, I would expect them to be paranoid about adversary military activities, such as exercises, that could provide cover for actual military attacks.

Step 5, in Western military terminology, is about the intelligence preparation of the operational environment. Likely expected responses to this step in NGW would be a crackdown on subversion and reconnaissance, and this what appears to be happening in Russia. According to information provided by the Russian government, in 2015 the FSM found 342 members of foreign intelligence agencies during the previous year; in 2019, the count was 594 members (Rosenberg, 2019). While these numbers are unverifiable, their publication indicates a perceived rise the threat posed by foreign agents. This is also the step of the campaign where cyberdefenses would become essential if the informational operations were carried out in cyberspace.

Step 6 in NGW is the execution of kinetic operations, focused on the destruction of civilian industrial-technological capabilities, as well as military and civilian headquarters. Defending against such an attack requires strong defenses around critical infrastructure, as well as robust state and military command and control systems. Such C2 technology was emphasized in comments made by Gerasimov in 2018. Defensive preparations would likely include the development of quick reaction forces, and the reorganization and basing of the military to quickly respond to internal, as well as external attacks. State management of the crisis could be strengthened via stable, authoritarian political leadership, as might be found in an autocracy. These defensive preparations should sound quite familiar to those watching Russia’s organization of its internal affairs.

The last step of NGW, step 7, is territorial occupation; both military objectives and the will to resist have been defeated. By the point that step 7 is reached, the situation is bleak for those attempting to counter. Resistance at this point would focus on regenerating the ability and will to continue the fight.

### The Seven-Step Russian Resistance Operations Model

Based on the above descriptions of how one would counter NGW, I propose the following model for counter-NGW operations, or in Western terminology, resistance operations.

1. Controlling information to ensure that only ‘correct’ information is propagated
2. Resisting political, economic, information and technical pressures on the Russian military, and developing military technologies to counter the technological advances of adversaries

3. Broadcasting a narrative to both internal and external audiences that defends and legitimizes military aggression
4. Being suspicious about adversarial military activities, such as exercises, that could provide cover for military aggression or attacks
5. Instituting strong counterintelligence and countersurveillance programs to defeat subversion and reconnaissance
6. Strengthening defenses for infrastructure and state/military command and control, and preparing quick response forces for kinetic attacks
7. Resisting both informational and geographic occupation, or, if occupation is expected to occur, developing a resilient population that sustains a will to resist

## Conclusion

While the concept of resistance operations is of much contemporary interest, most research in this area has focused on Western conceptions. This paper offered an alternative perspective, that of contemporary Russian understanding of resistance and counter-resistance operations. The Russian model of New Generation Warfare is analogous to Western models of counter-resistance. The NGW model can be inverted—by considering how one would oppose an adversary carrying out NGW—in order to develop an understanding of what the Russian approach to resistance operations would be. By developing greater insight into different views of resistance and counter-resistance operations, we can better understand this conflict phenomenon.

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## Biographies

### Weston Aviles

Weston Aviles is an analyst at NSI, Inc. He studied criminology and political science at Arizona State University (BS) with minors in Middle Eastern history and economics, and certificates in political thought and leadership, international studies and religion and conflict. Weston then studied Government at the InterDisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya, Israel graduate school with a focus in counter-terrorism and security studies (MA). His graduate studies focused on Arab Spring dynamics, international security in the MENA region and radical Islam. Weston is an alumni of the University of Virginia's Semester at Sea program and has participated in several academic programs in Israel to study terrorism and counter-terrorism. Weston is now an analyst for NSI and continues a research focus on Middle Eastern politics and conflict studies



### Patricia Blocksome

Dr. Patricia J. Blocksome is an assistant professor in the national security affairs department at the U.S. Naval War College – Monterey. Her research focuses on special operations, unconventional warfare, rebel group operations and strategy, and hybrid warfare. Concurrently, Dr. Blocksome serves as an adjunct professor at Joint Special Operations University, where she teaches courses on countering violent extremism. She is the vice president for research at the Special Operations Research Association, managing editor of the *Special Operations Journal*, and associate editor of *the Journal of Interdisciplinary Conflict Science*. Prior to joining the Naval War College faculty, she served as an assistant professor at the U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies and as a non-resident instructor in the irregular warfare department at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School. She is the editor, along with Christopher Marsh and James Kiras, of the forthcoming book *Special Operations: Out of the Shadows*. She has also been published in the *Journal of Human Rights*, *International Political Science Review*, *Special Operations Journal*, *Small Wars Journal*, *CTX Journal*, *Air Commando Journal*, and *Interagency Study*. She received her PhD in Security Studies from Kansas State University.



## Donald C. Bolduc

After 33 years of active duty service to his country in which he received 2 awards for valor, 5 Bronze Star medals, 2 Purple Hearts, led ten deployments, and survived both a bomb blast, numerous fire fights, and a helicopter crash, General Donald C. Bolduc, former Commander, Special Operations Command Africa, has hung up his fatigues to take on perhaps his most important and challenging mission of advocating for veterans and their families, the treatment and shedding the stigma of PTS, TBI, pain management, sleep disorders, and neurotoxicity both from within the US military as well as the general public. His second passion is teaching, and he is serving an Adjunct Professor at Southern New Hampshire University, and coaching, and mentoring leadership from entry level to the senior executive level, through his Truth to Power (LLC).



The General started his career as Private Bolduc on June 29, 1981, exactly 36 years before his final change of command. After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, then-Major Bolduc led one of the first groups into Afghanistan to take control of the southern Afghanistan region from Taliban rule. One of the few survivors of a 2,000-pound bomb that was inadvertently targeted on their own position by friendly fire in December 2001, and despite his injuries Bolduc refused to leave the battlefield and continued to take on his next objective. He was later awarded his first of several combat valor awards and a Purple Heart for his injuries.

As the Battalion Commander of 1st Battalion 3rd Special Forces Group (Desert Eagles) Bolduc's unit was credited with the success of Operation Medusa and awarded the Canadian Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation for actions by the "Desert Eagles" that were considered an extraordinary deed or activity, of a rare high standard, in extremely hazardous circumstances, beyond the demands of normal duty in combat. This was the first time a foreign military unit received this distinction from the Canadian government and military. From 2010 through 2011 and 2012-2013 he served as Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force commander and then as Commander, Combined Joint Special Operations Component Commander in Afghanistan and was credited with the creation and establishment of the "Village Stability Operations" the only successful bottom-up stability effort in rural areas and villages in Afghanistan. The program achieved unprecedented security gains and was considered by Mullah Omar the most dangerous program to the Taliban. This program undermined insurgent influence and control by the Taliban and ensured the stabilization of large areas of the war-torn country through Afghan Local Police between 2010-2013.

In his role as the Deputy Director for U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) from 2013-2015, Brigadier General (BG) Bolduc was responsible to the USAFRICOM commander for the full spectrum of operations and activities across the African continent. In his role as the Special Operations Command-Africa commander (COMSOCAFRICA) from 2015-2017 BG Bolduc was responsible for 96 missions and more than 2000 U.S. military, interagency and international military personnel operating in 28 countries throughout Africa and Europe. SOCAFRICA is designated as U.S. Africa Command's lead counter-Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO) operations component. Prior to this, he served on the Joint Staff in the Office of Secretary of Defense and as the Aide to the Secretary of the Army at the Pentagon.

His other awards and decorations include the Defense Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, 5 Bronze Star Medals with Valor Device, Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device, numerous foreign awards including Canadian Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation, Ordre Du Merite Nationale from Mauritania, Ordre Du Lion from Senegal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Special Forces Tab, and Ranger Tab.

## **Skye Cooley**

Skye Cooley (Ph.D., University of Alabama) is an assistant professor in the School of Media and Strategic Communications at Oklahoma State University. His research interests are in developing narrative and rhetorical analytical tools and processes that can be applied to both media content and functions. Dr. Cooley has examined narrative across a wide variety of international media in support of efforts by the US military to better understand and respond to events in the international system.



## **Patricia DeGennaro**

Patricia (Tricia) DeGennaro is a senior geopolitical risk and intelligence analyst for Threat Tec., LLC. She currently supports the US Army's Training and Doctrine Command Operational Environment Center's Network Engagement Team. Prior to her time at TRADOC, she was an adjunct professor at New York University's Department of International Affairs where she taught courses on international security policy and civilian and military affairs. She recently completed a Fellowship with the Donovan Group at Special Operations Command. She has also been a Visiting Scholar at George Mason University's Center on Narrative and Conflict Resolution and a Senior Fellow at the World Polity Institute.



DeGennaro capitalizes on her experience as an academic, author and consultant in international security policy. Much of her work focuses on stabilization in the Middle East and surrounding region, countering violent extremism, and transitioning nations from war. She has spent considerable time in Iraq and Afghanistan on security, provincial governance, capacity building, public policy and joint interagency, intergovernmental and multinational coordination.

During her tenure, she has consulted with the Asia Foundation, Director of National Intelligence Office, Department of Homeland Security, The Conference Board, World Bank, Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee chaired by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, and several organizations that support the Middle East Peace Process. She also spent four years in Albania as a Small and Medium Enterprise volunteer with the Peace Corps and, later, as a contractor with US Agency for International Development. Regionally, DeGennaro continues to focus on the Balkans, the Middle East and South Asia where she travels often.

DeGennaro has published several articles on US foreign policy and national security topics. Her focus is to encourage an integrated international policy that looks beyond war and the use of force. She is often an expert commentator for CNN, MSNBC, Al Jazeera, Fox News, BBC and various nationally and internationally syndicated radio programs.

DeGennaro holds an MBA in International Trade and Finance from George Washington University and an MPA in International Security and Conflict Resolution from Harvard University. She speaks fluent Albanian and has a basic knowledge of Italian, Arabic and Dari.

## David Dorondo

David R. Dorondo earned the degree of B.A. cum laude in history from Armstrong State College in 1980 and the M.A. in German and European diplomatic history from the University of South Carolina in 1984. From 1984 to 1987, he was a member of St. Antony's College, Oxford and was admitted to the degree of D.Phil. from the University of Oxford in 1988. He earned a Fulbright Fellowship to attend the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg in the Federal Republic of Germany for the academic year 1985-1986, having already spent the year 1981-1982 at the same institution as a graduate exchange student. Since 1987, he has served as a member of the Department of History of Western Carolina University and teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses in modern European military and political history and the history of international relations. His most recent publications is "The US Army, the Nuclear Posture Review, and Nuclear Deterrence: A European Historical Context."



Dr. Dorondo is a member of US Strategic Command's Deterrence and Assurance Academic Alliance; the Society for Military History; the Association of the US Army; and the US Army Historical Foundation. He serves on the Executive Council and the Brewster Award Committee of the North Carolina Association of Historians. From 2013 to 2016, he served as Creighton Sossoman Professor of History at Western Carolina University. He received WCU's Last Lecture Award for teaching in 2011-2012 and the College of Arts and Sciences Teaching Award for the year 2000-2001. Since 2000 he has served as Faculty Advisor to the Pi Psi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society. In 1996 he received the Medal of Scholarship from Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society in Social Sciences. He founded and moderates The Carolina Round Table on the World Wars and co-founded and co-moderates WCU's Global Spotlight Series on International Affairs. An avid horseman and hiker, he lives below Flat Gap in the Cowee Mountains of Jackson County, North Carolina.

## Robert Hinck

Robert Hink (Ph.D., Texas A&M University) is Professor of Organizational Communication at Monmouth College. His program of research centers on organizational rhetoric, particularly regarding international and diplomatic rhetoric, public diplomacy, conflict and negotiation, as well as global media. His research projects address concerns regarding the formation and sustainment of political cooperation among distinct political communities, and the rhetorical means by which they structure and manage internal and external stakeholders.



## Robert C. Jones

Bobby Jones is a retired U.S. Army Special Forces Colonel; a former Deputy District Attorney; and the Senior Strategist at U.S. Special Operations Command. Currently serving as a member of the SOCOM J5 Donovan Group, Mr. Jones is responsible for leading innovative thinking on the strategic environment and understanding how it impacts factors critical to national security, such as competition, the character of conflict, deterrence and societal stability.



Mr. Jones's principle focus is on the fundamental human aspects of political conflict. In a rapidly evolving strategic environment, good strategy is rooted in understanding what remains constant and why; while good tactics demands a realistic appreciation for what is different or changed. Successful campaigning demands a fusion of the two. He enjoys "wire brushing" concepts by routinely standing in front of tough audiences. None of these is tougher than those he faces in his role as a fixture in the Joint Special Operations University's Enlisted Academy, applying a commonsense perspective to bring our most experienced Special Operators strategic insights they can actually use. This is also the third consecutive year that Mr. Jones has addressed the Air War College class during the Operational Design phase of their curriculum, sharing practical insights gleaned from his experiences.

He has been a featured speaker at Universities as storied as Oxford, St Andrews, Stanford, and Harvard; and has led professional development events with operational units across the SOCOM enterprise. Mr. Jones is also a Fellow with the Center for Advanced Defense Studies (C4ADS).

***"If war is the final argument of Kings, then revolution is the final vote of the people."*** RCJ

## Abigail Kamp

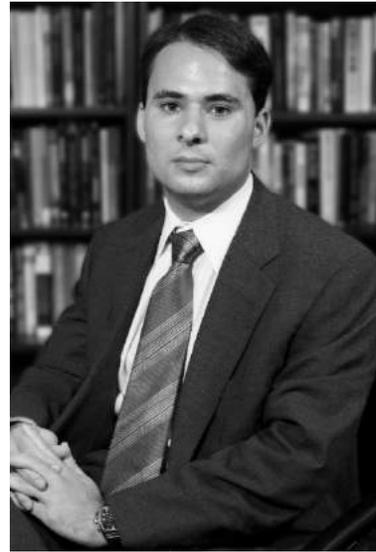
Abigail Kamp is a Graduate Research Assistant for the Political Instability, Counterterrorism and Gray Zone Research Portfolios at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), located at the University of Maryland (UMD). In her current role, she studies a wide range of topics including US-Colombia relations during the development and execution of Plan Colombia, misalignment of US counterterrorism efforts across the interagency, and community-based violence prevention and intervention efforts.



Prior to graduate school, she supported a variety of federal clients as a consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton. While there, she drafted two Congressional reports on military personnel issues and managed the coordination process to ensure timely delivery to Capitol Hill. She was also a research assistant on the Immigration and Homeland Security team at the Bipartisan Policy Center where she wrote extensively about U.S. immigration and border security policies. Ms. Kamp holds a BA in International Relations from the George Washington University and was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Natal, Brazil. Currently, she is a Robertson Fellow pursuing a master's degree at UMD's School of Public Policy, where her research focuses on the evolution of US security assistance in Africa and Latin America.

## **Barnett S. Koven**

Barnett S. Koven is the Training Director, a Senior Researcher, and the Political Instability, Counterterrorism and Gray Zone Portfolios Lead at the University of Maryland's (UMD) National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Center of Excellence. He is also the Founder and CEO of BSK Consulting, L.L.C., a boutique consultancy specializing in practitioner education and mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative) research in support of national security practitioners and policy-makers. In addition, Koven is a Fellow at the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy at Florida International University, a Professorial Lecturer in Political Science & International Affairs at the George Washington University (GWU), an Associate Member of the Graduate Faculty and a Lecturer in Public Policy at the UMD, an Adjunct Presenter at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School and a Quantitative Social Scientist at Performance Systems, LLC. He received his Ph.D., M.Phil. and M.A. in Political Science, as well as a B.A. in International Affairs and Latin American and Hemispheric Studies from the GWU. Koven also holds a Certificate in Conflict Analysis from the United States Institute of Peace and a Certificate in Advanced Security in the Field from the United Nations System Staff College.



Koven has conducted extensive overseas research in conflict and post-conflict zones. His work employs cutting-edge quantitative and qualitative methods to answer pressing defense and homeland security questions. Specifically, he focuses on issues pertaining to counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, countering violent extremism, counter-narcotics, gray zone conflict, security cooperation, organized criminal violence, weapons availability and conflict onset, post-conflict reconstruction, and the material and non-material sources of military power. Koven has received research funding from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), the U.S. Department of State, the DHS and the National Nuclear Security Administration, as well as from the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy, the GWU and the UMD. A complete list of journal articles, book chapters and policy publications can be found on his personal website: [barnettkoven.weebly.com](http://barnettkoven.weebly.com).

In addition to his aforementioned academic affiliations, Koven regularly instructs Combating Terrorism Seminars at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Charleston, SC. He has also lectured during Joint Special Operations University's Special Operations Forces Interagency Collaboration Course, the Defense Intelligence Agency's Advanced Counterterrorism Analyst Course and overseas as part of the Diplomatic Security Service's Global Anti-terrorism Training Assistance/Special Program for Embassy Augmentation and Response Executive Forum on Foreign Terrorist Fighters Consultation. In addition, Koven has taught at the National Reconnaissance Office as part of the Executive Master of Public Management Program. Moreover, he is also a frequent presenter during the various lecture series and conferences curated by the Strategic Multi-layer Assessment Branch of the DoD, as well as to myriad other U.S. government and university audiences. Finally, Koven routinely provides terrorism analysis on national and international media broadcasts.

## **Lawrence A. Kuznar**

Dr. Lawrence Kuznar is Chief Cultural Sciences Officer with NSI, Inc. and Professor of Anthropology at Purdue University-Fort Wayne. Dr. Kuznar conducts anthropological research relevant to counterterrorism and other areas of national security. His current research focuses on discourse analysis of Daesh leadership messaging to provide leading indicators of intent and behavior and has applied this methodology to Eastern European State and non-State Actors, Iran, and polities in the Middle East and Asia. He has developed computational models of genocide in Darfur and tribal factionalism in New Guinea, mathematical models of inequality and conflict, and integrated socio-cultural databases for predicting illicit nuclear trade and bioterrorism. He has conducted discourse analysis of the expression of conflict and enmity in Arabic, Farsi and Pashto, to identify leading indicators of conflict. Dr. Kuznar's recent research has been funded by academic sources, the Office of the Secretary of Defense Strategic Multilayer Analysis, Air Force Research Lab (AFRL), the Human Social Cultural Behavior (HSCB) modeling program of the Department of Defense, and by the US Army Corps of Engineers. He has also served on the HSCB Technical Progress Evaluation panel and a National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) net assessment panel.



## Suzanne Levi-Sanchez

Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of National Security Affairs Department at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport Rhode Island where she teaches Security Strategies with a focus on the Middle East and Central Asia and The Iranian Way of War. Professor Levi-Sanchez holds a Ph.D. from Rutgers University in Political Science. Her prior academic appointments include Princeton University (funded by IREX and the American Institute for Afghan Studies) and the University of Illinois (funded by a grant from USAID). Dr. Levi-Sanchez also received funding for her fieldwork from the University of Delaware, UCLA, the Mina Houtan Foundation, and Rutgers University. She is the author of *The Afghan-Central Asia Borderlands: The State and Local Leaders* published by Routledge in 2016, and came out in paperback in 2018. Her second book entitled, *Local Governance at the Periphery: Informal Organizations in Tajik/Afghan Badakhshan*, is forthcoming from the University of Michigan Press. A third book, *The Iranian Way of War*, is under contract with Lexington Books. She also is working on a fourth book entitled, *The Blind Man and the Elephant: Seven Conceptual Essays on Iran* and is currently under review with several publishers.



## Vern Liebl

Vernie Liebl is an analyst currently sitting as the Middle East Desk Officer in the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL). Mr. Liebl has been with CAOCL since 2011, spending most of his time preparing Marines and sailors to deploy to Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and other interesting locales. Prior to joining CAOCL, Mr. Liebl worked with the Joint Improvised Explosives Device Defeat Organization as a Cultural SME, and before that with Booz Allen Hamilton as a Strategic Islamic Narrative Analyst. Mr Liebl retired from the Marine Corps, but while serving, he had combat tours to Afghanistan, Iraq and Yemen, as well as numerous other deployments to many of the countries of the Middle East and Horn of Africa. He has an extensive background in intelligence, specifically focused on the Middle East and South Asia.

Mr Liebl has a Bachelor's degree in political science from University of Oregon, a Master's degree in Islamic History from the University of Utah, and a second Master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College (where he graduated with "Highest Distinction" and focused on Islamic Economics). He has also published extensively on topics ranging from the Caliphate to Vichy French campaigns in WW2. Current projects are chapters for a book on Strategic Culture and a book on Environment and Security, as well as a series of historical articles on conflict between the Ottoman, Mughal, Safavid and Abdali empires.



## **Gina Ligon**

Dr. Gina Ligon is The Jack and Stephanie Koraleski Professor of Collaboration Science at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She received her PhD in Industrial and Organizational Psychology with a Minor in Measurement and Statistics from the University of Oklahoma. She is a non-Resident Fellow for the George Washington University Program on Extremism, and has been part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Centers of Excellence since 2010. She is the Principal Investigator and originator of the Leadership of the Extreme and Dangerous for Innovative Results (LEADIR) database.



Her research interests include profiling leaders from afar, violent ideological groups, expertise and leadership development, and collaboration management. Prior to joining UNO, she was a faculty member at Villanova University in the Department of Psychology. She also worked in St. Louis as a management consultant with the firm Psychological Associates. She has published over 50 peer-reviewed publications in the areas of leadership, innovation, and violent groups, and she is the editor to the academic journal *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward Terrorism and Genocide*.

## **Michael Logan**

Michael Logan is a doctoral candidate in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a research associate at the Center for Collaboration Science. He holds a master's degree in criminal justice from Radford University and a bachelor's degree in criminology from Lynchburg College. His research interests focus on violence, violent extremism, and criminal organizations.



Michael has worked on projects funded by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Defense (DoD), and the National Consortium of Studies of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). Michael is currently working alongside Dr. Gina Ligon on the Leadership of the Extreme and Dangerous for Innovation Results (LEADIR) dataset on research that explores markers of organizational sophistication in violent extremist organizations. Michael's research has appeared in *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *Journal of Qualitative Criminal Justice and Criminology*, and *Homeland Security Affairs*.

### **LTC Mike P. Maloney**

Lieutenant Colonel Mike P. Maloney currently serves at the United States Army Special Operations Command, culminating two decades working within the Special Operations community. His experience areas include counter-terrorism, transnational criminal activity, and international affairs in Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. He is currently focusing research on the contemporary and emerging global security environment and the United States' return to the great power competition space and the role of Special Operations Forces within that arena.



### **Mireya McKee**

Mireya has 18 years of research, technology transfer, and innovation management experience. She began her career as a researcher, completing a BSc in chemistry with honors from Monterrey Tech, Mexico, and a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Texas-Austin as a CONACYT fellow. Afterwards, she carried out postdoctoral research in nanotechnology at Oxford University, where she received an EPSRC Developing Future Leaders-Women in Science grant.



She transitioned into business, completing a certification program on the commercialization of scientific research at Oxford's Saïd Business School. She then became a consultant and later a senior consultant in technology transfer for Oxford University Innovation (OUI) in the UK. After that, Mireya started an innovation management consultancy, McKee Innovation, providing training and supporting the commercialization of innovative technologies from universities and start-up companies from around the globe. As part of her consultancy, Mireya led global business development at Tekcapital Plc, an investment group creating market value from intellectual property. Currently, she is also the Assistant Director, KickStart Venture Services, University of North Carolina, where she commercializes university technologies through startups. She is very familiar with the innovation ecosystems of Latin American countries and has worked with a number of government agencies in designing and implementing new innovation policies and business acceleration programs for early-stage science and technology inventions.

### Spencer B. Meredith III

Dr. Spencer B. Meredith III serves as an Associate Professor of National Security Strategy at the National Defense University (NDU), College of International Security Affairs (CISA). With two decades of research and support to governance and conflict resolution, his principle areas of expertise are Russian, Eastern European, and Middle Eastern politics. Focused on the Gray Zone and countering peer-adversary influence, he is a Subject Matter Expert for multiple Geographic Combatant Command, Intelligence Community, and Joint Special Operations efforts. He has briefed at the National Security Council, and his current work focuses on democratization and the human domain in Ukraine and the Baltics.



With a doctorate from the University of Virginia in Government and Foreign Affairs, as well as a Fulbright Scholarship to the Republic of Georgia, he has a broad record of scholarship. His first book, *Nuclear Energy Safety and International Cooperation: Closing the World's Most Dangerous Reactors* (2014) resulted from work with key US Interagency and partner nation elites in Eastern Europe. His articles have appeared in peer-reviewed journals ranging from *Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, *Central European Political Science Review*, to *Special Operations Journal*; as well as in professional publications including *Strategy Bridge*, *Small Wars Journal*, *Inter-Agency Journal*, *Special Warfare*, and *Foreign Policy Journal*. He is a regular contributor to Joint Staff White Papers on cognitive factors in the contemporary and future operating environments.

## Mr. William J. A. Miller

William J. A. Miller is Director, Strategy, Plans, Policy and Concepts, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Mr. Miller was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the cavalry upon graduation from the University of Florida. In his 26-year Army career, he led and commanded U.S. and allied Soldiers from the platoon through brigade level. He has extensive operational experience, including numerous deployments to Kosovo, Bosnia, Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. Mr. Miller served as a Squadron and Brigade Operations Officer and as a Division-level plans officer. He also spent four years as a planner at the joint, interagency and combined levels devoted to counterterrorism efforts.

Mr. Miller retired from active-duty service in August 2005 as the Deputy Assistant Director, Strategy, Plans and Policy at U.S. Central Command. Prior to his appointment to the Senior Executive Service in 2007, Mr. Miller was the Chief Operating Officer and primary strategic analyst for Miller-Smith Strategic Solutions, Inc. The company provided direct support to the U.S. Special Operations Command's Center for Special Operations in the development of strategies and plans to support global special operations, the Army in the development of future concepts and doctrine, as well as several corporate customers.

### EDUCATION

- 1979 Bachelor of Science degree in business administration, with honors, University of Florida, Gainesville
- 1988 Master of Science degree in operations research, Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio
- 1992 Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.
- 1993 Master of Military Arts and Sciences degree, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

### CAREER CHRONOLOGY

1. July 1980 - March 1982, Platoon Leader, Troop C, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, Schweinfurt, Germany
2. April 1982 - December 1982, Executive Officer, Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, Schweinfurt, Germany
3. January 1983 - April 1984, Logistics Officer, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, Schweinfurt, Germany
4. May 1984 - September 1985, Commander, Troop L, 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Bliss, Texas
5. October 1985 - February 1988, Operations Officer, 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Bliss, Texas
6. March 1988 - April 1993, Operations Research Analyst, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
7. May 1993 - June 1994, Operations Plans Officer, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kan.
8. July 1994 - November 1995, Operations Officer, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kan.

9. December 1995 - May 1998, Program Analyst, Office of the Army Chief of Staff, Washington, D.C.
10. June 1998 - June 2002, Battalion Task Force Commander, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, Germany (Kosovo)
11. July 2002 - July 2004, Commander, 2nd Brigade, 91st Division, Fort Carson, Colo.
12. August 2004 - August 2005, Deputy Assistant Director, Strategy, Plans and Policy, Headquarters U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla.
13. August 2005 - August 2007, Chief Operating Officer and Primary Strategic Analyst, Miller-Smith Strategic Solutions, Inc., Tampa, Fla
14. August 2007 - present, Director, Strategy, Plans, Policy and Concepts, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill AFB, Fla

### AWARDS AND HONORS

Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster  
Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters  
Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with two bronze stars

### OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

Fellow, Advanced Operational Studies, School of Advanced Military Studies

### PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Board Member, Gracepoint Mental Health Council of Foreign Relations

## **Randall Munch**

Randall (Randy) Munch supports the TRADOC G-2 as an independent contractor, assisting the Network Engagement Team in developing training courses that operationalize recent doctrine and joint concepts related to network engagement, such as the Joint Concept (JC) for Human Aspects of Military Operations and the JC for Operating in the Information Environment. During 29 years of service in the Army as an Infantry officer and a Foreign Area Officer, he deployed with the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division to Somalia and Haiti and with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency to Iraq. Following his military retirement in 2005, he worked with the Joint IED Defeat Organization and with TRADOC organizations to help operationalize and institutionalize the concepts of attack the network and network engagement, and he is now using that experience to help advance the concept of cognitive maneuver.



## **Ryan Oliver**

Ryan Oliver is a contractor in the U.S. Special Operations Command J5 Strategy, Plans, and Policy, where he has served as the lead writer for the USSOCOM Competition Series. He previously worked at The Asia Group and Avascent, consulting firms based in Washington, DC. He received a B.A. in International Affairs from the George Washington University and M.A. in Security Studies from Georgetown University, as well as a degree in Mandarin Chinese from the Defense Language Institute. He serves as an intelligence officer in the Florida Army National Guard.

*As a contractor, Mr. Oliver does not offer views on behalf of or speak for USSOCOM.*



## **LTC Tom Pike**

Tom Pike is a joint qualified strategic intelligence officer. He is currently a PhD candidate in George Mason's complex adaptive systems based Computational Social Science program and will begin his utilization tour at the National Intelligence University fall 2019. He has studied complex systems and their application to foreign policy from the tactical to the strategic level for the past decade. He has served in the infantry and military intelligence specialties.



## **Ethan Sample**

Ethan Sample is a research assistant professor Oklahoma State University. Mr. Sample has deep interests in Latin America and its culture. Mr. Sample is proficient at the Spanish language, has studied abroad in Latin America, and has traveled extensively along the US-Mexico border.



## **Lt Col Jennifer Snow**

Lt Col Jennifer Snow is the Donovan Group Innovation Officer for the U.S. Special Operations Command, J51 Futures Plans and Strategy Division and SOFWERX Team. She serves as the military representative for technology outreach and engagement to bridge the gap between government and various technology communities to improve collaboration and communications, identify smart solutions to wicked problems and help guide the development of future smart technology policy to benefit special operations.

Lt Col Snow entered the Air Force in November 2002 as a graduate of the U.S. Officer Training School at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama. She began her professional career as a member of Air Force Special Operations Command, served as an Air Education and Training Command intelligence instructor supervisor and was selected to be one of General Keith B. Alexander's Junior Officer Cryptologic Career Program Interns at the National Security Agency. Prior to her current assignment, Lt Col Snow was a graduate student at the Naval Post Graduate school where she studied emerging disruptive technologies and focused on a class of fast moving emerging technologies she calls "Radical Leveling Technologies", as an area of concern to National Security. Her work was presented to members of the National Security Council at the White House.

Her current efforts focus on examining Radical Leveling Technologies and the new construct of Virtual Nations. Snow seeks to address the broad implications of these technologies and communities as well as the need to leverage the expertise, access and capacity of the community of users and technology drivers to benefit USSOCOM and find innovative policy solutions while still enabling technology for good.

## **Mariah Yager**

Ms. Mariah Yager serves on the Management Team for the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Program under the Joint Staff/J-39, DDGO. She is a Senior Research Analyst with NSI. From 2010 to 2017, Ms. Yager helped to develop a scientifically valid, replicable, and operationally trainable discourse analysis methodology. This methodology has been used to examine insurgent writings, the expression of trust and worldview, and cognitive complexity, both in the vernacular and English translations.



Ms. Yager received her Master's in Professional Communication from Purdue University of Fort Wayne and Bachelor degrees in Anthropology and Interpersonal and Group Communication, from Indiana University and Purdue University, Fort Wayne (IPFW) respectively. Ms. Yager has taught fundamental communication theory and public speaking at IPFW and previously worked in the private sector in client management and assessments for an executive coaching and consulting firm.

## **LTC Maciej Zaborowski**

Lt Col Maciej Zaborowski is a Polish Air Force officer, currently assigned at Combined Strategic Analysis Group (CSAG), CCJ-5, US Central Command. He serves there as analyst and a member of international sort of 'think tank' structure, unique to USCENTCOM.

Lt Col Maciej Zaborowski entered military in 1993 (Military University of Technology, Warsaw; 5-year Master of Science in aviation course, commissioned officer in 1997). He began his professional carrier as a member of 36th Special Air Transportation Regiment (maintenance engineer positions, also JAK-40 and Tupolew 154M flying crew member). Prior to his current assignment, Lt Col Zaborowski served at number of positions in the Polish Ministry of National Defense and the General Command of the Polish Armed Forces as an analyst, defense planner and strategic planner. He also served at the NATO Supreme Allied Command Transformation (Norfolk, Virginia, 2008-2011) as Curriculum Design Officer and Concept Developer, and in European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (Field Office Zugdidi, 2013-2014). He is a graduate of National Defense University postgraduate studies, with focus on leadership and negotiations. He is also a graduate of George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, Germany (Program of Advanced Security Studies).

His current efforts focus on Great Power Competition, with highlight on Central Asia, Russia, Kazakhstan and China.

