CULTURAL ANALYSIS

The Need for Improved Methodologies and Doctrine

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The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Cultural Analysis: The Need for Improved Methodologies and Doctrine

Abstract:
Joint and Operational staffs and commanders will face both conventional and asymmetrical opponents from various cultures in a variety of military endeavors. These operations and evolving CINC Theater Engagement Plans will also require close cooperation with varying coalitions that will include non-western cultural groups. Current Joint Doctrine does not offer a concise definition or clear methodology for the consistent identification and analysis of cultural factors.

There is a need for an effective analysis approach to improve operational planning in MOOTW involving non-Western cultures. Development of a Joint definition of culture and a standard template will provide a basis for the formulation of Joint Doctrine. Integration of these tools and development of a methodology for analysis will enhance the JIPB process.
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Joint and Operational staffs and commanders will face both conventional and asymmetrical opponents from various cultures in a variety of military endeavors. These operations and evolving CINC Theater Engagement Plans will also require close cooperation with varying coalitions that will include non-western cultural groups. Political and economic considerations will dominate this environment and limit the utility of overt military force. Global media magnifies these factors provoking culturally based reactions in various populations and political centers of gravity. Current methods of cultural assessment may be inadequate to such challenges.

Current Joint Doctrine does not offer a concise definition or clear methodology for the consistent identification and analysis of cultural factors. Current CINCs and major operational units rely on a combination of intelligence section research and the use of various regional experts to identify and assess militarily significant aspects of culture.

There is a need for a consistent and effective analysis approach to improve operational planning in limited objective and MOOTW operations involving non-Western cultures. Development of a Joint definition of culture and a standard template or cultural profile that depicts human cultural systems will provide a basis for the formulation of Joint Doctrine. Integration of these tools and development of a methodology for analysis will enhance the JIPB process. This enhancement combined with integration into Service and Joint education will provide the future CINC or JTF commander with improved cultural analysis capability.
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The Need for Improved Methodologies and Doctrine

Introduction

Cultural considerations have always been important in both international relations and in military endeavors. However, current doctrine does not offer adequate emphasis on culture. There is a need for a consistent and effective analytical approach to improve operational planning in limited objective and MOOTW operations involving non-Western cultures. We will begin our study by examining the definition of the word “culture”. Next, we will examine modern trends that have increased the value and importance of cultural expertise to success in military endeavors. With an assessment of the modern environment complete, we will review American efficiency in military interaction with select non-western cultures through brief case examples. Next, an analysis of current doctrine and practices concerning cultural assessment will identify potential areas for improvement. This will allow the development of recommendations for integration of a consistent theory of cultural analysis into current joint doctrine. The study will examine counter arguments to such proposals in an effort to determine if the benefits of a new emphasis on cultural analysis show compelling promise of improving performance in joint and operational level military practices. The study will then conclude and argue that better methodologies are essential to success in future and current military operations.

Culture: What is it?

Perhaps the most difficult challenge for any discussion of culture is in defining the term. Culture is "the total pattern of human behavior and its products embodied in thought, speech, action, and artifacts and dependent upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations through the use of tools, language and systems of abstract thought."¹ Sociologists see culture as a combination of beliefs, technology, norms,

values and language shared by a given group or nation.\(^2\) Current Joint Doctrine offers no concise definition. In regard to allied and coalition forces, Joint Doctrine states: “Much of the information and guidance provided for joint operations is applicable to multinational operations; however, differences in allied doctrine, organization, weapons and equipment, terminology, culture, religion, and language must be taken into account.”\(^3\) This definition seems to indicate that religion, language, and culture are separate considerations. Language and religion are in fact critical components of human culture. Such broad and undefined use of the term culture clouds the precision of the concept. We do not truly understand what culture is and use the word as a catchall phrase. For purposes of this work we will concentrate on those **cultural attributes of a given human group that offer insight and reveal critical factors with the potential to improve our probability of success while minimizing potential unintended reaction to U.S. activity.** The effectiveness of our ability to recognize, analyze, and account for such characteristics in military planning and execution in a consistent manner is the focus of this study.

**Modern Trends**

The 1990’s began a period of more frequent but limited international conflict with the United States as the sole superpower. Political and economic considerations dominate this environment and limit the utility of overt military force. We are in a period that requires military contact with a variety of cultures very different from our own. "More than ever, a sense of vision is required for senior leaders and policy makers to estimate the intangible forces at work in the environment within which the United States will have to function into the 21st century."\(^4\) The U.S. military will increasingly act as a development agency to guide


the evolution of other nations into democracies. Peacekeeping, nation building, encouraging
democratic economies, and protecting our allies from aggression are providing various
challenges involving members of other cultures. If we are to maximize our effectiveness and
efficiency, we must look beyond the mere material analysis of enemy equipment and
document. This post cold war multi-polar environment, the evolution of non-nation state
military/political organizations, and the pervasive impact of media in the information age
have transformed the dynamics of military operations. The modern Joint Commander in
Chief (CINC) or Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander operates in an environment that is more
political and less physical than ever before. The modern environment has increased the
number of low to medium intensity operations and devalued the utility of overt military
force. Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) such as in Haiti, Bosnia, Somalia and
various United Nations peace keeping and nation building endeavors are more frequent. We
are in the midst of our first global war against a non-nation state. As the War on Terrorism
expands from Afghanistan to the Philippines and other venues, major use of conventional
might against uniformed opponents is becoming both less frequent and more difficult to
execute. High intensity conflict is less likely as our opponents resort to asymmetric warfare
in the face of our conventional superiority.

The information age has further affected the modern military environment. The
Internet and global satellite television project incomplete snippets of information to both the
domestic and foreign public. The modern commander is subject to almost constant scrutiny
as isolated incidents or military action take on strategic international implications through the
power of the media. Terrorist organizations, foreign nations, and others use such media to
fan the flames of cultural hatred or to appeal to the cultural sympathies of the masses. CNN
and Al Jazeira become weapons to be exploited by all parties, large or small. Further, the

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6 Al Jazeira is an Arab language satellite Television Station broadcasting from Qatar.
ability to disseminate information almost instantly increases the political and cultural impact of relatively minor incidents. Realization of the impact of media on the modern military environment emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural battlefield. The North Vietnamese exploited information media and American cultural attributes in the Vietnam War. Osama bin Laden and various Middle Eastern terrorist groups use Al Jazeira and even CNN to get their message out. These messages are targeted at influential civilian populations and appeal to cultural factors. The incomplete nature of such information is particularly effective against less than educated populations who may accept speculative or biased reports without consideration of objective fact or context.

Modern military operations will be Joint, Allied, and frequently Multi-national in coalitions with non-allied nations. The attributes of civilian populations and enemy organizations from non-Western cultures will further complicate the battle space. In this complex soup of disparate cultures, the value of improved cultural analysis is clear. The mission of the modern Joint commander is also becoming more political as we attempt to shape the peacetime environment. Theater Engagement Plans (TEP) are rapidly evolving as a major mission for Commanders in Chief (CINC). These missions require careful planning and execution of various activities and military operations in the countries of each Theater. TEPs improve U.S. access, presence, and knowledge of the various theaters in order to maintain peaceful interaction and improve wartime access and performance. The challenges of this increase in interaction between U.S. forces and other cultures require astute and thorough consideration of the cultural attributes of various groups.

**Performance to Date**

Having established the importance of the cultural battlefield and the value of identifying and integrating cultural analysis in military activity, we will now examine several cases in which cultural factors were or will be critical to national and military success.
Vietnam (Sinic Asian Culture)

Military traditions of this region pre-date the rise of the West by thousands of years. Asian cultural traditions offer great experience in the “interplay of warfare and politics.”\(^7\) The Vietnamese were capable of sustaining significant damage as a result of the physical and technical superiority of the United States while waging a successful political war aimed at the “will of the American people”. The influence of the media and the failure of American political and military leaders to assess the effects of a long war of attrition on the American culture contributed to the eventual Vietnamese victory. At the strategic level we were unable to assess and defend our cultural critical vulnerabilities.

Somalia (sub-Saharan African Culture)

African politics, prior to the creation of the artificial divisions imposed by colonial powers, consisted of interactions between tribes, clans, and villages. The imposition of national boundaries and European political institutions has led to a semblance of nation states that are slowly evolving and altering traditional cultures. Somalia represents a clan-based culture with a significantly evolved warrior tradition. Clan loyalties and politics dominate economic and military endeavors. Warfare is endemic in such a culture and does not provoke the moral reactions of Western culture. Violent conflict is a means of obtaining cattle, slaves, women, land and other benefits. War also became the acceptable method of determining who would be chief. In addition to these benefits of military action, the development of young males into tribal warriors formed a cohesive force. Violence, and preparation for war, provided structural principles for the administration of society.\(^8\) United Nations (UN) and U.S. intervention in pursuit of humanitarian objectives triggered various cultural reactions. Initially, various factions attempted to take advantage of our material

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wealth and support. However, our attempts to capture Mohammed Aidid triggered various clan alliances that saw us as an external enemy. Cultural collective defense traditions suppressed Clan and sub-Clan rivalries; at least until Western forces withdrew. Aidid did not long survive after withdrawal of outside forces. After ejection of the foreign enemy, internal debts were settled in accordance with Somali culture and Aidid was killed. In the end, the best intentions of the West failed to find a method of bringing peace and aid to this culture.

**Saudi Arabia (Middle Eastern Islamic Cultural)**

The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia is one of the most significant of the current era. Our economic and military relationships, particularly since Desert Storm, are of vital importance. Saudi Arabia controls significant petroleum reserves and is capable of influencing world oil prices, which directly affect the U.S. and global economy. Since the Gulf War, Saudi military facilities are critical to our force projection in the area. Saudi Arabia also presents our most challenging cultural relationships. With an extensive number of forces deployed to the region and with a sustained and substantial theater engagement plan, significant numbers of United States military personnel are in frequent contact with the Saudi military and civil population. This situation presents interesting cultural challenges. Islamic traditions regarding the role of women, appropriate dress, and individual rights are in direct conflict with American cultural values. Joint doctrine anticipates this in civil affairs doctrine:

One of the functions of civil affairs is to assist in integrating U.S. forces smoothly with the population and forces of the host nation. Deployment of large numbers of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia meant harmonizing our western culture with the culture of our host. The challenge facing U.S. personnel was to adapt to the customs of Saudi Arabia so conduct created an impression of respect for the Saudis and their culture. A rigorous indoctrination program was undertaken to orient U.S. personnel on the region’s uniqueness and its history, customs, religion, law, and mores.9

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Despite these efforts, perceptions of individual rights often create conflict with military efforts to mitigate cultural conflict. Lieutenant Colonel Martha McSally USAF recently sued the government because she was required to wear Saudi clothing and accommodate Saudi law by not driving while off U.S. bases. The media portrays her as a heroine and pioneer for women’s rights.\(^{10}\) Such incidents trumpeted in the media emphasize the presence of U.S. women in roles that are offensive to Saudi culture and undermine efforts to mitigate such effects. A scientific method of analyzing culture, both our own and those of others, would form a logical basis for determination of Rules of Engagement and peacetime rules. It would also provide a foundation for education or our officers that might reduce reactions such as that of LtCol. McSally. She appears to believe the restrictions were an arbitrary command policy and not the result of correct military analysis.

**Micro-Culture**

As we explore methods of cultural analysis, it is important to remember that specific human groups, although they may be members of a major culture, develop relatively differentiated cultural subsets that require focused analysis. For instance there are distinguishable differences between West Bank Palestinians, Saudis, Afghan Northern Alliance fighters, and Al Qaida members, although all are members of Islamic culture. Military cultural analysis must be capable of focusing on specific groups vice aggregate cultures. Palestinian terrorist groups have expertly leveraged Islamic concepts of Jihad and martyrdom to recruit disaffected people for use as suicide bombers. The use of cultural factors to glorify such action solicits financial and moral support throughout the Islamic World. The tactics and decision-making processes of enemies who send their children on suicide missions appear less than reasonable to the Western mind. Through the focused lens of cultural analysis, however, the interaction of religion, economic underdevelopment, and secular desperation combine in ways that may make such actions predictable.

The War on Terrorism and Future Challenges

Our current efforts against global terrorism and future conflict against non-state, global, and asymmetric enemies will require frequent formation of coalitions and astute analysis of the organization, capability and culture or our opponents. Such operations will put U.S. forces in close proximity to a variety of micro-cultures each with militarily significant attributes that must be quickly identified. Current methodologies and databases cannot possibly anticipate and pre-assess all of these unique groups with any degree of reliability. We must assess the utility and effectiveness of current practices and compare them with other potential methods of cultural analysis in order to determine what doctrinal improvements show promise on the cultural battlefield of the future.

Current Analysis Efforts

Joint doctrine anticipates the importance of preparing the theater.

Actions joint force commanders (JFCs) are able to take before the initiation of hostilities can assist in determining the shape and character of future operations. Most inclusive is preparing the theater, which involves intelligence and counterintelligence operations to understand clearly the capabilities, intentions, and possible actions of potential opponents, as well as the geography, weather, demographics, and culture(s) of the operational area.  

A search of current Joint Doctrinal Publications reveals some recognition of the significance of culture. Concentration on cultural aspects of the battlefield is evident in civil affairs. There is also tremendous importance placed on cultural education and training for Special Operations Forces (SOF). The consideration of culture is also emphasized in course of action (COA) analysis as part of the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (JIPB).

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11 Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine Encyclopedia, 130; Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine Capstone and Keystone Primer. (Washington, DC: 10 September 2001), 35.

12 Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine Encyclopedia, 105.

The JIPB analyst must evaluate how well each COA meets the criteria of suitability, feasibility, acceptability, uniqueness, and consistency with doctrine. The JIPB analyst should avoid cultural bias by considering these criteria in the context of the adversary’s culture.  

However, doctrinal publications offer neither a definition of culture nor recommend any consistent method of analysis of culture. Therefore the modern commander is left to his own devices to integrate cultural understanding in his military endeavors. Commanders have approached this problem with some success despite the inadequacy of current doctrine.

**Marine Air Ground Task Force**

The Marine Expeditionary Units have become important and frequently employed forces in execution of the Theater Engagement Plans of CENTCOM, EUCOM, and PACOM. Marine Corps units from the Marine Expeditionary Force to the Marine Expeditionary Unit use similar methods to assess and integrate cultural considerations in planning and execution. These methods, however, are less than consistent and depend in large part on the talent and diligence of intelligence officers in preparing generalized culture briefs. In addition to generalized briefs, external experts are used to present a series of briefings geared at every level from senior staff to individual Marine. In recent deployments to the Persian Gulf region, both a professor from Marine Corps University and various military personnel from select countries were flown to Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) shipping. These experts prepared the MEU/ARG for interaction with the Kuwaitis, Saudis, and Jordanians during major exercises that were part of the CENTCOM theater engagement plan. The use of generalized intelligence briefs and visiting “duty-experts” does well in general preparation of the force for interaction with target cultures. It does not offer a consistent and methodical technique for analysis and integration of cultural factors.

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15 The author served as Battalion Landing Team Commander as part of the 11th MEU deployment to the CENTCOM area of operations from March-September, 2001.
CENTCOM

The United States Central Command is planning and conducting Afghanistan operations while also responsible for continuing efforts against Iraq. Responsible for most of the Middle East, CENTCOM currently has the most challenging cultural environment to contend with. In response to this challenge, the CENTCOM staff uses various methods to assess and integrate culture in planning and execution. Interviews with a representative of the CENTCOM and J-3 indicate that the use of Foreign Area Officers (FAO), experienced country experts, and robust intelligence databases provide intricate and adequate identification of cultural factors. Factors and analysis identified at the beginning of operations in Afghanistan have proven both useful and consistent to date. This indicates significant improvement since Somalia and also argues that current methodologies in the hands of experienced commanders and staffs yield successful assessment of culturally significant attributes of the battlespace. The success of SOF forces, who are extensively trained in the culture of their target areas; FAOs educated in the cultural details of specific regions and countries; and intelligence professionals using Joint and National databases has enabled CENTCOM to successfully determine and exploit cultural factors. However, both the J-5 and J-3 representatives report that no fixed method of cultural analysis exists in JIPB practices and procedures.

To this point in our study we have argued that the evolution of the current world environment increases the influence and importance of culture in modern military considerations. We have also identified how representative Joint and operational commands are assessing and integrating culture in their operations. This has yielded two techniques, which we will call the FAO/Regional Expert methodology, and the traditional intelligence

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16 David Undeland, LTCOL, USMC, staff officer, J-3 Future Operations, U.S. Central Command, interview by author, 4 May 2002, telephone conference, Naval War College, Newport, RI.

17 John Sarao, CMDR, USN, staff officer, J-5, U.S. Central Command, interview by author, 2 May 2002, telephone conference, Naval War College, Newport, RI.
briefing methodology. For the latter, the J-2 or operational intelligence section utilizes Military and National databases to develop analysis of cultural factors.

**Current Methodologies**

**FAO/Regional Expert Method**

This method of integrating cultural assessment depends on highly educated or experienced individuals that augment key staffs and provide detailed insight into the target culture. The Foreign Area Officer Program trains "selected officers in the languages, military forces, culture, history, sociology, economics, politics, and geography of selected areas of the world." Other experts from government agencies or service and academic institutions are also used to augment the Joint or operational staff in order to bring cultural insight to the planning and execution process.

This method has several strengths. The FAO is a military officer who may, depending on his military experience, be fluent in Joint doctrine and U.S. military doctrine and procedures. He can relate both to the targeted culture and our own military culture. Other experts also bring in-depth knowledge but may be limited in their understanding of military doctrine, art, and science. Experts are invaluable in interpreting cultural influences on enemy behavior. They can also offer insight into potential enemy reactions to our operations that may differ from what we might expect due to cultural differences.

The limitations of the regional expert approach are threefold. First, regional experts are “expert” in only the specific area they were trained for. For example, a FAO trained for China or Southeast Asia will be of much less value in Bosnia. Therefore current experts are regional experts who understand regional cultures. They are not necessarily experts in the mechanics of human culture. Second, there are a limited number of available experts and it would be difficult to train in advance sufficient experts for every country, region, culture, and sub-cultural group we can now identify or anticipate in the future. Major commands are

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18 Marine Corps Order 1520.11C, Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program.
adequately staffed but many operational and significant tactical units, such as MEUs, will never see such expertise integrated on their staffs. Third, many experts will not also be well versed in military doctrine, operational science and operational art. This creates difficulty in integrating the knowledge of the expert into planning and decision-making.

**Traditional Intelligence Briefings**

Today’s intelligence expert can rely on unprecedented global connectivity allowing access to Internet resources in both the unclassified and classified realm. The J-2 can tap Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) biographic studies on enemy leaders, psychological studies, country profiles, and various other information and reports. The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) also generates available culture studies and profiles. Intelligence professionals are more capable than ever before in collecting and delivering detailed, targeted briefings and analysis that include cultural information. The advantage of this continued traditional method is that it capitalizes on the capability of modern information technology to locate and integrate information from global and national resources. This intelligence is then integrated into the current operational picture and disseminated throughout the command.

The limitations of this method are as follows. First, the briefing is only as targeted and complete as the databases available. If the target is a group that has not been the subject of DIA, CIA, or other analysis, the intelligence professional must rely on generalized cultural information for analysis. Second, a specific enemy group may not conform to expected patterns due to cultural differentiation within aggregate cultural groups. In such a situation, there exists no doctrinal procedure for assessing the cultural aspects of a group for which no duty experts or national analysis exists.

**Potential Improvements**

**Psychological Profiling**

Lieutenant Commander Bruce Lankford offers compelling arguments for an increase
in the use of psychological profiling of enemy leadership.\textsuperscript{19} Appendix A is an example of such a profile. He further recommends assignment of cognitive or social psychologists to CINC staffs. Current doctrine anticipates such profiling.

Psychological Profiles. A key to successful arms control negotiations is in understanding how each party to the negotiations thinks and operates. Important factors influencing arms control decision makers include their personalities, culture, instructions, doctrine and strategy, patterns of behavior, and historical approach to similar negotiations. In addition to open-source intelligence research, the profiles can be fleshed out through intelligence derived from SIGINT and HUMINT. \textsuperscript{20}

Lankford’s proposals seem just an expansion of the current Regional Expert methodology but there is a significant enhancement. The added use of a psychologist and a standardized profile bring science to what was previously art. Psychology applies scientific principles in analysis of human behavior. A psychological approach to determining enemy actions and reactions that can account for cultural factors offers some promise.

Cultural Profiling/Templating

If we can develop a standard profile of “culture” for a given targeted group, we can then integrate that profile/template into the JIPB process. This will provide procedure and form to cultural analysis. In 1996, the author developed a template of culture in a separate work.\textsuperscript{21} That template was based on the science of cultural anthropology and is included as Appendix C. LTCMDR Lankford also came to a similar conclusion and his recommended cultural profile is included as Appendix B. Finally, Appendix D offers a more complex template based on a linguistic theory of culture by Dr. Edward T. Hall, former Professor of


\textsuperscript{20} Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace, Joint Pub 2-01.3 (Washington, DC: May 2001), V-11.

Anthropology at Northwestern University and Director of a State Department training program in inter-cultural communication.\textsuperscript{22} Dr. Hall proposes that if each cell in the matrix is understood, complex insight into the culture of a given group will yield valuable and complete understanding of group behavior. Mastery of language as a key to cultural understanding is not a new concept.

A knowledge of the character of the people and a command of their language are great assets. Political methods and motives, which govern the actions of foreign people and their political parties, incomprehensible at best to the average North American, are practically beyond the understanding of persons who do not speak their language. If not already familiar with the language, all officers upon assignment to expeditionary duty should study and acquire a working knowledge of it.\textsuperscript{23}

Dr. Hall’s template is a sophisticated extension of a linguistic theory of cultural analysis.

Methodologies using templates view culture as a system that determines the actions and interactions of human groups. The templates discussed above represent a range of options from which we might develop a standard Joint Doctrinal template. Such a tool would provide a standard method on which to base cultural analysis in JIPB. It would allow systematic production of requests for information (RFI), database research, and development of critical information requirements (CIR) to focus intelligence collection efforts. Such a template would organize and focus current methodologies.

**Analysis**

Current doctrine fails to adequately define culture, although the recognition of the importance of cultural factors is evident. Actual methodologies in the operating forces are closing that gap with increasing efficiency. The errors of Somalia are not recurring in the complex multi-cultural environment of Afghanistan. Therefore, although poorly armed by doctrine, modern joint commanders and staffs are developing adequate methodologies to


succeed on the battlefield of today. However, modern trends indicate a probable need for improvements in doctrine. New tools and procedures will facilitate consistent, efficient, and focused analysis of culture. Differentiation between the attributes of major cultural groups and various new and differentiated sub-cultural groups will increase as failed states fracture. The forces of globalization, asymmetric warfare, and the information age will also affect existing groups. We must develop tools that are adequate to this challenge. We must also improve the JIPB process to better incorporate cultural analysis. JIPB is:

...an analytical methodology employed to reduce uncertainties concerning the enemy, environment, and terrain for all types of operations. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace builds an extensive database for each potential area in which a unit may be required to operate. The database is then analyzed in detail to determine the impact of the enemy, environment, and terrain on operations and presents it in graphic form. Intelligence preparation of the battle space is a continuing process.\(^\text{24}\)

While we have extensive tools for analysis of terrain and the environment, enemy analysis is generally limited to physical order of battle and ad-hoc analysis of cultural factors. In mid to high intensity conflict this has proven adequate. In the operational environment of the present and future, we will need more sophisticated analysis techniques for assessing significantly different cultures.

**Recommendations**

1. Develop a concise definition of culture for use in Joint Doctrine and JIPB efforts. This definition must be comprehensive and include all significant aspects of human culture that can influence military interaction.

2. Develop or adopt a standard cultural analysis template for inclusion in JIPB. In the analysis of factors of Space in the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace, a template or profile tool similar to those in the appendices will focus intelligence efforts and provide a systematic method of cultural analysis. The selected method

must be consistent, methodical, and easy to teach to a variety of individuals. When sufficient duty experts and intelligence databases are available, such a methodology will provide structure to the communication of that knowledge. When cultural groups are encountered for which duty experts and data are unavailable, this methodology will provide a method for developing cultural assessments and focusing intelligence collection efforts. Joint Doctrine offers extensive tools for terrain analysis and threat order of battle. We must dedicate at least that much effort toward development of cultural analysis tools for the modern battlespace.

3. **Educate the Force**. Once Joint Doctrine defines culture and provides tools for systematic analysis, integrate training and education on the theory and use of such tools at all levels of Service and Joint Officer Professional Military Education. This will create an academic understanding of cultural science. Such an understanding will prove valuable in a population that currently has little natural understanding of human cultural systems. It will also provide a basis for improved conduct of inter-cultural military operations.

**Counter Arguments and Response**

The most potent argument against the proposals of this study is that our current methods are proving more than adequate in the unprecedented complexity of the War on Terrorism. We have operated successfully in Afghanistan with diverse coalition partners from individual warlords in the Northern Alliance to the military government of Pakistan. Al Qaida represents a sophisticated, well-organized, well-equipped, global, non-nation state organization that concentrates on asymmetric warfare. Current methodologies appear to have prevailed in attaining victory against such a sophisticated foe without the benefit of improvements recommended by this study.

This counter argument can be overcome by the assessing the limited investment required to accomplish our recommendations. Recommendations 1 and 2 require only brief
consultation by doctrine developers with senior FAO and operational staff principles of the various CINCs. This consultation will allow development of a definition and template. Once developed, intelligence professionals could test these tools in parallel to current methodologies to determine if they offered promise. Follow on education of the force is easily accomplished by modification of already existing JIPB and Service IPB instruction throughout the military educational system.

A second counter argument is that systemization of the cultural analysis process will become bureaucratic and unwieldy.

...it would be wishful thinking to imagine that any theory could cover every abstract truth, so that all a critic would have to do would be to classify the case studied under the appropriate heading.\(^{25}\)

We respond to this objection by offering that a systematic process developed in the light of lessons learned in Bosnia by EUCOM combined with CENTCOM’s current expertise will offer a well-honed tool for all CINCs, JTFs, and major operational commanders. Such commanders will undoubtedly face daunting cultural challenges in the future. At the time of these future challenges, the experiences of Somalia, Bosnia, and other recent culturally complex operations may be lost without systematic and doctrinal capture of current successful methods of cultural analysis.

**Conclusion**

Our study indicates that for the current and foreseeable future American Joint and Operational staffs and commanders will face both conventional and asymmetrical opponents from various cultures in a variety of military endeavors. These efforts may include high intensity combat; limited engagements against asymmetrical foes; humanitarian operations and other MOOTW; and peacetime interaction in the execution of Theater Engagement Plans. The tempo of operations will increase as the pressures of Globalization and the

struggles of failing states trigger small wars and crisis throughout the globe. We will approach these challenges in cooperation with Allies. We will also operate in conjunction with temporary coalitions composed of various states throughout the world. Such operations will require us to work with members of various cultures that are significantly different than our own. Such inter-cultural environments will occur on a more frequent basis than ever before in our history. The importance of accurate and effective cultural analysis is evident. Historically, we have not always understood or correctly assessed cultural factors. Our current doctrine reflects this lack of expertise.

Despite these inadequacies, American success in Afghanistan indicates current analysis of culture appears to meet the needs of the present. We must capture our current success, continue to improve our doctrine, and strive to increase our understanding of human culture if we are to ensure success in the future. Combination of a scientifically derived template and analysis methodology with the current database and regional expert practices will yield a thorough, systematic, and consistent approach to future cultural analysis. The efforts required to make such an improvement will more than repay the time and resources dedicated. We must take advantage of the lessons of the present in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and other contingencies; perfect and improve our cultural analysis methodologies; and capture such efforts through formulation of improved Joint Doctrine. To do less is to risk future inefficiency if not failure on the cultural battlefield of tomorrow.

Therefore I say: Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.

-Sun Tzu

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Appendix A: Psychological Profile

(Classification) NAME:
Purpose: Show the reader the types of information that may be found in an individual leadership profile. The fields listed below are not exhaustive—they merely represent nominal data.

(Classification) POSITION:
- Self-explanatory

(Classification) SIGNIFICANCE:
- Individual’s influence in his particular mission
- Individual’s influence with national leadership (inner/outer circle, etc.)
- Personal alliances/mentors

(Classification) POLITICS:
- Political views (rivalries, alliances, disputes)
- Party membership (standing, regime connections, aspirations)
- Relationship to ruling party (loyal/avenger)

(Classification) PERSONAL DATA:
- Family data (immediate/extended family, etc.)
- Hobbies (solitary or team oriented?)
- Habits (drink, smoke, avarice?)
- Command style (authoritarian/term builder)
- Personality traits (humor, introvert/ extravert, etc.)
- Religious practices
- Languages spoken
- Ethnic background
- Temperament
- Schooling

(Classification) CAREER:
- Experience (command, instructor, billets, years, etc.)
- Combat experience/performance
- Key judgments
- Professional schooling
- Expected future progression

(U) Questions and comments may be addressed to DIA/Office, (202) 732-4567.

Note: This is an example of a profile generated solely from analysis. Psychological reports cannot have much more detailed information.

This product responds to the Office of the Secretary of Defense’s production requirement AD0156-0084.

27 Bruce O. Lankford, 25
Appendix B: Cultural Profile Data

This appendix contains a notional listing of topics that may be found in a cultural profile. The list of topics is by no means exhaustive; it is simply meant to show the reader a representation of the data fields that can be useful in understanding the enemy.

Notional Data Fields

Culture in General
- Languages
- Customs
- Values
- Status of women
- Views of outsiders / U.S.

Ethnic Information
- Groups
- Group backgrounds/history
- Group internal issues
- Dominant groups
- Ethnic dispersion
- Ethnic/profession relationships
- Relations between groups

Religion
- Sects
- Religion/ethnic relationships
- Basic and unusual beliefs
- Religious leadership and influence

Government
- System/ideology
- Pending changes/instability
- Government relationships with the people and military
- Human rights record
- Transnational issues

Economy
- GDP per capita
- Poverty levels
- Status of work force

Education
- Literacy rate
- Emphasis on education

Military Demographics

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\[28\] Bruce O. Lankford, 24.
Appendix C: Template Based on Anthropology

A Template for the Analysis of Culture

SUPERSTRUCTURE

RELIGION
IDEOLOGIES
PHILOSOPHIES

TRADITIONS
MYTHS

RITES
SYMBOLS

TABOOS
AESTHETICS

ART
LITERATURE

SPORTS/GAMES/HOBBIES

STRUCTURE

ASSOCIATION HIERARCHIES
GROUP IDENTIFICATION
INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY
HOMOGENEITY
CONFLICT/COHESION

DOMESTIC FACTORS
COMPONENT STRUCTURE
COMPONENT DIV OF
LABOR
ROLES
SOCIALIZATION
EDUCATION

POLITICAL FACTORS
POLITICAL ORGANIZATION
SOCIETAL DIV. OF LABOR
TAX/tribute SYSTEMS
POLITICAL EDUCATION
CLASS/CASTE SYSTEMS
POLICE/MILITARY

INFRASTRUCTURE

PRODUCTION
AGRICULTURE
INDUSTRY
NATURAL RESOURCES
SERVICES
TRADE
VOLUNTEERISM

REPRODUCTION
NATIVE BORN
IMMIGRATION
RECRUITMENT
CONSCRIPTION

29 James R. Trahan, 18.
This theory sees the development of human culture as a response to basic material factors. The anthropological theory of cultural materialism proposes that environmental factors determine social practices and cultural characteristics. Three terms form a comprehensive mechanism for examining the cultural details of human groups. These terms are *infrastructure*, *structure*, and *superstructure*.  

Materialists refer to the "mode of production" and "mode of reproduction" addressed as *infrastructure*. This *infrastructure* forms the physical underpinning of a society. The economic and political systems and practices that arise to control, regulate, and guide such *infrastructure* are called *structure*. Family structure; domestic division of labor; socialization; education; and age and sex roles are some of the structural components of a culture. Political organization and practices, societal division of labor, methods of financing government, political socialization, education, class, caste, and other practices and traditions arise. Additional structural forms include methods of discipline, police, and most important for our purposes, methods of war.  

*Infrastructure* addresses the basic requirements for a society to survive and perpetuate itself. *Structure* arises from this basis and therefore includes all the practices, institutions and traditions that a society can coerce or persuade its members to adhere to in order to enforce and capitalize on its *infrastructure*. As cultural groups face a challenging and changing environment, there is a limit to what structural systems can accomplish. Therefore there is a need for less tangible mechanisms to guide human creativity, absorb and mitigate stresses within and on the system, and effectively fill the gaps *structure* cannot fill. Materialists refer to these mechanisms as *superstructure*.

*Superstructure* consists of the religion, arts, literature, methods of advertising; rituals, sports, games, hobbies, philosophy, and theoretical science. Components of *superstructure* include symbols, myths, aesthetic standards, ideologies, and taboos. The following example demonstrates how *superstructure* can assist *structure*. Suppose a given tribe has historically suffered considerable disease as a result of ingesting parasites associated with the consumption of pork. The structural authority, perhaps the king decrees, "Do not eat pork". He publishes a law to that effect and allocates some penalty. In this case, the mode of production (raising and eating pigs) is in conflict with the mode of reproduction (preserving the population). Many of the people will cease eating pork, but eventually someone will challenge the *structural* authority. The king's men cannot be everywhere all the time, so how can *superstructure* assist civil authority in enforcing the pork ban? One method is religion. If we have a relatively religious population and religious authorities teach that God says, "don't eat pork", the hungry citizen has a religious as well as legal imperative to prevent the consumption of pork. Thus *superstructure* provides assistance in what *structure* cannot accomplish alone. *Superstructure* can also provide positive incentives to beneficial behavior or the tolerance of personal hardship. Concepts of reward in an afterlife or philosophical arguments concerning the merits of altruistic behavior are examples. *Superstructure* provides support and direction when *infrastructure* and *structure* are inadequate.

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31 Harris, 53-54.

32 Harris, 54-55.
Superstructure can also inspire and support the willingness of individuals to sacrifice for the Group and overcome the individual instinct to survive. The concept of "inclusive fitness" explains individually costly social acts in terms of the effect of such action on genetically related social partners. For instance, if an individual sacrifices him or herself for a fellow group member, the culture, which generally includes other members of the individual's genotype, survives although the individual may perish. Culture defines and supports beneficial altruistic behavior for the members of a given group.

The template has three purposes. First, it is a framework for the classification of data. Second, it is a guide to direct intelligence gathering efforts. Finally, it is a framework for systematic analysis. Systematic analysis may reveal enemy Centers of Gravity or other Critical Factors.

Analysis of Infrastructure

Our analysis will begin from the bottom of the template since all other aspects of a society are dependent on these factors. Infrastructure represents the essential basis on which any society, nation, tribe, or component part exists.

Production. In this section we analyze the ways in which a society extracts food, shelter and wealth from its environment. Does the society rely on agriculture, industry, trade, the exploitation of natural resources, or some combination of these factors to feed, clothe, compensate, and provide incentives to its members? The concept of services as a form of production has utility when considering non-traditional actors such as HAMAS and other terrorist organizations. HAMAS provides a service to supporters by attacking Israel. This allows Iran, Syria and various other contributors to wage indirect warfare. HAMAS obstructs the peace process in accordance with the desires of these enemies of Israel. In return for these services, HAMAS receives arms, money and sanctuary. Thus HAMAS satisfies its production needs. For the purposes of this template, we will define center of gravity as a significant source of strength or power that affects the ability or desire of the analysis target to continue a given course of action. That course of action may be in opposition to our desires, in the case of enemies; in concert with our objectives, in the case of allies; or some combination of the two, in the case of neutral or non-military targets or analysis.

Reproduction. How does the target group obtain members and action agents? A nation generally relies on a combination of native-born citizens and immigrants. A military or paramilitary entity might rely on volunteerism, recruitment, conscription or some combination of these methods. Are there ways to interfere with this process directly causing the enemy to wither on the vine? Can we take culturally unique action that will disaffect members of the group and cause defection or desertion? In this manner, we complete our analysis of infrastructure. If Critical Vulnerabilities (CVs) that we can affect directly are apparent, we can identify potential courses of action at this point. Examples of actions against reproductive capability include

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operations against training compounds and recruiting activities. As the analysis continues, we will maintain this list of COGs and related potential courses of action. We will continue to search for CVs against which we can act that relate to discovered COGs as we analyze structure and superstructure. Keep in mind that we may discover COGs in any phase of our analysis. Similarly, we may discover actionable CVs that affect those COGs at any point in our analysis. The CVs might occur in a completely different level of the analysis than the COGs. We might attack or act against a superstructure COG through an infrastructure CV and vice versa. The challenge is to systematically discover COGs and CVs and creatively determine the linkages. Not all CVs will be simple targets for military action. Some may require diplomatic, political, psychological, economic, or other action. With this in mind, we will continue our analysis.

Analysis of Structure

Structure in our template is a category that encompasses all aspects of a society between the tangible realities of infrastructure and the more esoteric and elusive components of superstructure. Structure in the proposed framework includes domestic and political factors in keeping with Materialist theory. Association Hierarchies, discussed later, is an innovation that does not fit perfectly in any one category. We include this category in the structure section because such hierarchies determine how an individual or sub-group interacts with the conglomerate culture.

Domestic Factors. In this portion of the analysis the analyst considers cultural aspects of the smallest of human groups. This is the family unit in most cultures but we can also apply the logic to other components such as guerrilla and terrorist cells. Since all cultures arose as conglomerations that satisfied the collective and individual needs of multiple nuclear family groups or components, there are potential critical elements in the organization of such component groups. What is the organization of these families or component groups (patrilineal, matrilineal, monogamous, polygamous, etc.)? Does the culture distribute power by role, by merit, by seniority? Is the basic unit the nuclear family or a more extended form? What are the roles of females? Are they a commodity for political or economic advantage as in tribal and clan based societies (Somalia)? Is there sexual equality? How does the basic unit divide labor? What are the responsibilities, roles, privileges and authority of various members? How do youths (or trainees) become full members of the group? Since almost every human first experiences life and learns its culture as a member of some type of family group, it stands to reason that this background will provide great insight.

In this section we will also consider how a group socializes and educates its members. In our culture, children receive their initial education and socialization in the home. Their parents, siblings and close relatives are their first instructors. As they grow, this process continues with day care or school and interaction with friends, neighbors, and mass media. In a non-national group such as HAMAS, enculturation may occur in Islamic universities or through various local mosques. Communist entities use extensive political propaganda and education to enculturate their members. As we analyze other cultures or sub-cultural groups, we can discover strengths and weaknesses through analysis of the basic enculturation process.

Political Factors. Having completed an analysis of the basic units of a society or group, we proceed to consider the organization of the aggregate group. Here we consider political systems and organization. How does a culture distribute power? Can we intervene in this process to
attain our ends? Are there opposition movements? How will the culture react to outside influence? We next consider the societal division of labor. Is the culture decentralized, with many members performing multiple functions (as in agrarian third world nations)? Or is it more centralized (as in collectivization in socialist economies)? Are there potential vulnerabilities in this division? For example, many terrorist organizations may rely on centralized weapons procurement or fund raising. Attack of these components could effectively defeat their operational forces.

We continue the analysis by examining how the governing power of the target group extracts economic wealth from its members (tax or tribute), and how it indoctrinates members into the political system. We consider any class or caste systems and the implications of these systems to individuals and sub-groups. In analysis of these areas, we may discover vulnerabilities through which we can provoke internal strife, manipulate critical processes, or interfere with the ability of the enemy to function (or prevent such actions in the case of allies).

Finally, we analyze the methods of policing and defending the society. This is an analysis of police and military practices and organizations. Current IPB and intelligence practices already largely accomplish the physical analysis of these factors. Cultural analysis must go beyond this and consider cultural linkages and differences that are not obvious in current IPB templates.

Association Hierarchies. Every human is the subject of complex associations with various cultural, sub-cultural, family, and other groups. For example, a typical American officer is a member of various groups, which may include a nuclear family, an extended family, a fishing club, a political party, a church, etc. He is an American citizen, an officer, a father, and an individual. He is a member of a unique racial group, which may or may not affect his outlook. He is a member of a specific service and a specific command. In each of these groups, he has various roles to fulfill. Even when the group requires no specific action, the culture of the group an individual belongs to may affect his outlook and determine his actions. When the requirements of these various groups compete with each other for his attention and action, a hierarchy becomes apparent. In this section of our analysis, we will seek to understand the association hierarchies of individuals and groups in a targeted culture. What is the priority of those various associations that can command their effort and resources? Are they Arabs, Muslims, Iraqis, farmers, fathers, sons, mothers, daughters, or self-interested individuals first? What is the relationship of the individual to society? Which is more important, the individual or the group, in the culture we are analyzing?

Another consideration in this phase of the analysis is the homogeneity of the target group. Is the culture relatively homogenous, as in Japan, or is it complex and mixed, as in the United States? We might even find ourselves operating against a national entity composed of multiple cultural groups, such as the former Soviet Union, or greatly differentiated sub-groups, such as China. In exploring both the hierarchies of individual association and the homogeneity of the target, we may discover COGs and CVs. We may be able to exploit such factors within the targeted group in pursuit of our desired end state. The example above approached the analysis from the perspective of the association hierarchies of individuals. When we focus our analysis on a specific nation, group, or military unit that is in fact a sub-group of larger cultural entities, we can also gain insight into how that subject fits into its higher organization.
Analysis of Superstructure

As discussed previously, superstructure arises to meet the needs that structure does not meet and to guide and provide an outlet for human creativity. Superstructure arises over time and may at times outlast its original purpose. In short, there may be societies today following superstructural mandates that are no longer necessary, logical, or beneficial. In the case of our earlier example, it may now be okay to eat pork. Then again, if one believes in divine influence and guidance, perhaps pork is still bad. It is not necessary for us to judge the appropriateness or usefulness of such factors and any attempt to do so would undoubtedly suffer from our own cultural bias. What is important is that we realize that such factors are important to members of a given culture and can influence or determine their actions and opinions. Our process must therefore discover and examine such factors. In the case of religion, we must analyze the character, structure, organization, imperatives, moral code, and degree of influence in a society. Philosophy similarly gives us insight into the character and nature of the target culture. Ideology can sometimes approach religion as in the case of communism. We find more subtle clues to the nature of a culture in the traditions, myths, rituals, symbols, and taboos of a given group. Cultural aesthetic standards, art and literature also provide keys to understanding. We may discover exploitable CVs. This category of analysis can also contribute to the formulation of Rules of Engagement (ROE) that will prevent or mitigate the undermining of our allies and coalition partners as well as avoid the unintentional provocation of our enemies.

We can examine the recent campaign against Iraq to illustrate this point. In Saudi Arabia, Muslim traditions concerning the dress and role of women are based on religious doctrine. Superstructure and structure are therefore closely intertwined. Women are subject to a strict code of dress and behavior. There are also religious prohibitions concerning the consumption of alcohol and pork. As we deployed forces to Saudi Arabia, we had the foresight to ban alcohol. With pork as a major component in our combat rations, the sharing of rations provided a potential flashpoint although this does not appear to have caused significant difficulties. Our values of equality and the integration of women in our forces, however, created a dilemma. If we had not deployed women or had significantly restricted the conduct, dress, and employment of women, we would have imposed on our female soldiers by denying them the opportunity to serve to their full capacity. This would have had domestic political implications. The Saudi government faces a growing fundamentalist opposition that could, in time, threaten the current regime. When we deployed women, we risked creating a dilemma for the Saudi government by inadvertently inflaming religious sensitivities (and structural sensitivities concerning sex roles). This possibly assisted the fundamentalist opposition, which could blame the government for allowing infidels into the kingdom.

In retrospect, we decided to deploy with women for one of several reasons: they were irreplaceable; we could not exclude them for political and internal cultural reasons; we intended their affect on the Saudis; or we did not fully consider the implications of the deployment. Analysis of superstructure allows us to discover similar, and sometimes less obvious, dilemmas and make informed decisions.

Focusing the Template

With a little imagination, the proposed template can facilitate analysis of a broad range of potential targets. Culturally derived insight is possible in analysis of anything from a single individual to a multinational coalition. Because of this broad potential, it is necessary to focus the analysis on an intended target. For instance, there are significant cultural differences
between an analysis of global Islam, Iraq, the Hussein regime, the Iraqi Army, the Republican guard, a specific division of the Republican Guard, and an individual commander. In this range there will be many aspects of the analysis that are common or insignificantly different. However, there will be many factors that are different in important ways. Because culture and its affect on its constituents are continually changing, we must clearly define our subject and maintain a consistent focus. Modification of the various factors of the template is necessary and encouraged in order to tailor the template to the selected target. We must avoid stereotyping and generalization whenever possible. Focus is essential.
### Appendix D: A Map of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY MESSAGE SYSTEMS</th>
<th>INTERAC TION</th>
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<th>SEXUAL</th>
<th>TERRITORIAL</th>
<th>TEMPORAL</th>
<th>INSTRUCTIONAL</th>
<th>RECREATION</th>
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<th>EXPLOITATIONAL</th>
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<td>Kinetics</td>
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<td>Sex, community, class, tribe</td>
<td>Marriage groupings</td>
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<td>Community cycles</td>
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<td>Economic cycles</td>
<td>Men's and women's cultural institutions</td>
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<td>EXPLOITATION</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>structures</td>
<td>groups, etc.</td>
<td>Food, resources, and industrial equipment</td>
<td>What are the resources and supports</td>
<td>What are the economic supports</td>
<td>What resources are used and maintained</td>
<td>School building, military, and military support</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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