COMPARATIVE STRATEGIC CULTURES CURRICULUM PROJECT

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Defense Threat Reduction Agency
Advanced Systems and Concepts Office

Comparative Strategic Cultures Curriculum
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Advanced Systems and Concepts Office

FINAL REPORT

Comparative Strategic Cultures Curriculum

Subtitle: *Assessing Strategic Culture as a Methodological Approach to Understanding WMD Decision-Making by States and Non-State Actors*

31 October 2006

Editor: **Jeffrey A. Larsen**

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CASE STUDIES

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Fritz Ermarth, SAIC, McLean, VA

Gregory Giles, Hicks and Associates, McLean, VA

Rodney Jones, Policy Architects International, Reston, VA

Murhaf Jouejati, George Washington University, Washington, DC

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COMPARATIVE STRATEGIC CULTURES SYLLABUS

Jeannie L. Johnson

and

Jeffrey A. Larsen

rev. 20 November 2006

COMPARATIVE STRATEGIC CULTURE SYLLABUS

Jeannie L. Johnson and Jeffrey A. Larsen

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This syllabus is intended to introduce the concept of strategic culture to upper division undergraduates seeking to deepen their understanding of international relations and security studies, and broaden their theoretical and methodological tool sets. Our objective is to provide the instructor with theoretical background on the concept of strategic culture as well as a framework for comparing case studies in this field. We do this through the use of comparative cases that examine a common international security phenomenon: a state's (and one non-state actor) decisions to acquire, proliferate, or use a weapon of mass destruction.

Our purpose is to advance strategic culture analysis as a tool for understanding (and even forecasting) the foreign policy of other actors and of constructing successful foreign policy of our own. Practical applications of strategic culture include:
- better understanding of the foreign lenses through which our policy moves will be viewed
- more effective deterrence, because we understand what the other culture values and can better leverage their cost/benefit ratio
- stronger cooperative relationships with allies
- increased accuracy in the interpretation of intelligence collected abroad
- insight that will allow for the creation of counter-narrative strategies aimed at weakening an adversary's propaganda campaign
- more successful assimilation of immigrants
- a stronger understanding of the repercussions of our foreign policy moves
- illumination of our own cultural values
- enhancement of predictive/forecasting capability

I. DEFINING STRATEGIC CULTURE
Lesson 1

Objectives: Defining the boundaries of Strategic Culture as a distinct concept
- from political culture
- from popular culture
- from political psychology

Definition: *Strategic Culture is that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.*

Required Readings:

Elizabeth Stone, "Comparative Strategic Culture: A Literature Review," unpublished paper (2005)

Jeffrey Lantis, "Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Contructivism," unpublished paper (2006)

Colin S. Gray, "Out of the Wilderness: Prime Time for Strategic Culture," unpublished paper (2006)

Darryl Howlett, "Strategic Culture: Reviewing Recent Literature" *Strategic Insights*, Volume IV, Issue 10 (October 2005), available at www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Oct/howlettOct05.asp

Additional Reading:

 Colin S. Gray, "Comparative Strategic Culture," *Parameters,* (Winter 1984)

 Adda Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960)

 Jack L. Snyder, "The Concept of Strategic Culture: Caveat Emptor" in Carl G. Jacobsen, ed., *Strategic Power: The United States of America and the USSR* (London: Macmillan Press, 1990)

 Ken Booth, "The Concept of Strategic Culture Affirmed" in Carl G. Jacobsen, ed., *Strategic Power: The United States of America and the USSR* (London: Macmillan Press, 1990)

 Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994), chapters 1, 5, 6

 Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996)

 Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security," *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996)

 Michael J. Mazarr, "Culture in International Relations," *The Washington Quarterly,* Spring 1996, available at www.globalpolicy.org/gloabliz/cultural/cultur2.htm.

## II.	STRATEGIC CULTURE AND IR THEORY
Lesson 2

Objective: To examine the relationship between assumptions underpinning the Strategic Culture concept and other major theoretical constructs. Strategic Culture aims to supplement, rather than displace major theoretical constructs such as Realism, Neo-Realism and Constructivism.

Required Readings:

John Glenn, Darryl Howlett, and Stuart Poore, ed. *Neorealism Versus Strategic Culture*, chapters
1, 2, and 3. (London: Ashgate, 2004)
John S. Duffield; Theo Farrell; Richard Price; Michael C. Desch, "Isms and Schisms:
Culturalism versus Realism in Security Studies" *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1
(Summer 1999) pp. 156-180

Additional Reading:
Stephen Peter Rosen, "Military Effectiveness: Why Society Matters," *International
Security*, vol. 19 (Spring 1995)
Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and French Military Doctrine Before World War II", in Peter J.
Katzenstein ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World
Politics* (1996)
Paul Kowert and Jeffrey Legro, "Norms, Identity and Their Limits: A Theoretical
Reprise", in Peter J. Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and
Identity in World Politics* (1996)
John Duffield, "Germany Confounds Neorealism," *International Organization* v. 53
(1999)
Michael Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies",
International Security, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer 1998) 141-70
Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World
Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996)
Theo Farrell, "Strategic Culture and American Empire," *SAIS Review,* Summer-Fall
2005, pp. 3-18.
James Rosenau, "Security in a Turbulent World," *Current History,* Vol. 94 (May 1995),
pp. 193-200.
David Elkins and Richard Simeon, "A Cause in Search of Effect, or What Does Political
Culture Explain?" *Comparative Politics,* January 1979, pp. 127-145.

## III.	FRAMEWORK AND METHODS
Lesson 3

The following essays introduce a conceptual framework useful for researching and organizing ideas using a strategic culture perspective and provides a range of research methods employed by experts in the field. The Additional Readings offer an array of methodological practices from anthropology, social science, and other related fields.

Required Readings:

Jeannie Johnson, "Strategic Culture: Refining the Theoretical Construct" (2006)

Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture" International Security, vol. 19 (Spring 1995)

Theo Farrell, "Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program" *International Studies Review* (2002)

Additional Reading:

Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr, "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda" *International Studies Review,* Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 2000) pp. 65-87

Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002)

Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Philip E. Lilienthal Books, 2004)

Stephanie Kelley, "Rumors in Iraq: A Guide to Winning Hearts and Minds," *Strategic Insights*, Vol IV, Issue 2, (Feb. 2005)

"Islamic Imagery Project: Visual Motifs in Jihadi Internet Propaganda", US Military Academy, Combating Terrorism Center, (March 2006)

Alex Davis and Dan Fu, "Culture Matters: Better Decision Making Through Increased Awareness", Stottler Henke Associates, Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation, and Education Conference (I/ITSEC) (2004)

Christoph O. Meyer and Adrian Zdrada, "Unpacking the Coalition of the Willing: A Comparative Analysis of Norms in British and Polish Press Debates on the Iraq Invasion", *European Security,* Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 2006), pp. 23-45,

Theo Farrell, *The Norms of War: Cultural Beliefs and Modern Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005)

Daniel Miller and Heather Horst, *The Cell-Phone: An Anthropology of Communication,* (Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers, 2006)

George Marcus, "Ethnography In/Of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24 (1995), pp. 95-117, available at http://cio.ceu.hu/extreading/CIO/Marcus_on_multi_locale-fieldwork.html.

Joy Hendry, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology: Other Peoples' Worlds* (New York: Macmillan, 1999)

Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Small Places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology* (Pluto Press, 2001)

Roger M. Keesing and Andrew Strathern, *Cultural Anthropology: A Contemporary Perspective* (Wadsworth, 1997)

IV. APPLYING STRATEGIC CULTURE
Lessons 4-11

The case studies selected revolve around a similar theme -- security decisions concerning weapons of mass destruction (WMD). We have selected case studies which examine decision processes involved in acquiring, using, and/or proliferating WMD, as well as decisions to adhere to, or ignore international norms.

A primer to familiarize students with basic concepts concerning weapons of mass destruction is provided here, followed by an essay examining the utility of strategic culture when examining WMD security issues. We recommend spending one lesson on an introduction to weapons of mass destruction before turning to the case studies.

Required Readings:

Paul Bernstein, "Weapons of Mass Destruction Primer," unpublished paper (2006)

Kerry Kartchner, "Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Crucible of Strategic Culture," unpublished paper(2006)

Keith Payne, "The Nuclear Posture Review: Setting the Record Straight," *The Washington Quarterly,* Summer 2005, pp. 1235-151

Additional Reading:
Peter Lavoy, Scott D. Sagan, and James J. Wirtz, eds., *Planning the Unthinkable: How New Powers Will Use Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000)
John Simpson and Ian Kenyon, *Deterrence and the New Global Security Environment* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006)
Jacques E.C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
Joseph Cirincione, Jon B. Wolfstahl, and Miriam Rajkumar, *Deadly Arsenals: Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002)
George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999)
Scott D.Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate,* 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002)
Jonathan B. Tucker, *Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (2000)
Anthony C. Cain, "Iran's Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Implications of US Policy", *The Maxwell Papers*, Maxwell Paper No. 26, Air War College (April 2002).
Post, Jerrold, et al, *Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism*, in *Avoiding the Abyss: Progress, Shortfalls, and the Way Ahead in Combating the WMD Threat.* Jim A.

Davis and Barry Schneider, eds. (USAF Counterproliferation Center, Air University, July 2005)

Nasir Bin Hamd Al-Fahd, *A Treatise on the Legal Status of Using Weapons of Mass Destruction Against Infidels,* May 2003, at www.carnegieendowment.org/static/npp/fatwa.pdf

Medalia, Jonathan, *Nuclear Terrorism: A Brief Review of Threat and Responses*. Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 10 February 2005, at www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL32595.pdf

Allison, Graham, *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe* (New York:Henry Holt and Company, 2004)

Roberts, Brad, *Nonproliferation Challenges Old and New*. Counterproliferation Papers, Future Warfare Series No. 24, USAF Counterproliferation Center, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL, at www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/roberts.pdf

Giles, Gregory, *The Islamic Republic of Iran and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons,* in Peter Lavoy, Scott Sagan, and James Wirtz, eds., *Planning The Unthinkable: How New Powers Will Use Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000)

Kan, Shirley, *China and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Missiles.* Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 22 February 2005, at www.ndu.edu/library/docs/crs/crs_rl31555_22feb05.pdf

Croddy, Eric A., James J. Wirtz, and Jeffrey A. Larsen, eds., *Weapons of Mass Destruction: An Encyclopedia of Worldwide Policy, Technology, and History* (2 vols.) (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC Clio, 2005)

Davis, Jim A. and Barry R. Schneider, eds., *The Gathering Biological Warfare Storm* (USAF Counterproliferation Center, Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL, April 2002), available at www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/biostorm/index.htm.

Gary T. Gardner, *Nuclear Nonproliferation: A Primer* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994)

Larsen, Jeffrey A., ed., *Arms Control: Cooperative Security in a New Environment* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002)

Wirtz, James J. and Jeffrey A. Larsen, eds., *Nuclear Transformation: The New U.S. Nuclear Doctrine* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

Russell, James A., ed., *The Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006)

Class Discussion: Questions Raised by Strategic Culture

Ten case studies were commissioned for this project, each dealing with a regime that has sought to acquire, has acquired, and/or has proliferated weapons of mass destruction. Authors were asked to compile a strategic culture profile of each of these countries (and al Qaeda), and determine the utility of strategic culture analysis in understanding their decisions. The full title and commissioned author of each of those case studies is:

Joseph S. Bermudez, Jr., "North Korea's Strategic Culture" (2006)

Fritz Ermarth, "Russian Strategic Culture: Past, Present and…in Transition?" (2006)

Gregory F. Giles, "Continuity and Change in Israel's Strategic Culture" (2006)

Rodney W. Jones, "India's Strategic Culture" (2006)

Murhaf Jouejati, "The Strategic Culture of Irredentist Small States: The Case of Syria" (2006)

Peter R. Lavoy, "Pakistan's Strategic Culture" (2006)

Thomas G. Mahnken, "United States Strategic Culture" (2006)

Jerry Mark Long, "Strategic Culture, Al Qaida, and Weapons of Mass Destruction" (2006)

Willis Stanley, "The Strategic Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran" (2006)

Christopher P. Twomey, "Chinese Strategic Cultures: Survey and Critique" (2006)

We propose a study of these cases using the following discussion questions. The questions are designed to facilitate an examination of strategic culture as a field of study through the detailed profiles and interesting analyses presented by the authors. The instructor is offered a discussion topic and one or more corresponding case studies. Note that several of the case studies are listed under multiple questions. Select the case studies per question as best suits the needs of your course. Additional reading material and media references for each country may be found in the following section.

1. *How is state identity formed? Which factors are primary influences? How does this affect security policy?*

> Recommended Case Studies: China – Christopher Twomey
> Syria – Murhaf Jouejati
> Israel – Gregory Giles
> United States – Thomas Mahnken

> *Readings addressing this topic:*
> Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (Holmes & Meier, 1979)
> Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond Identity," *Theory and Society* 29:1 (February 2000), pp. 1-47
> Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott, "Identity as a Variable" (forthcoming in *Perspectives on Politics*, 2006)
> Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Collective Identity in a Democratic Community: The Case of NATO," in Katzenstein *The Culture of National Security* (1996)
> Victoria Tin-bor Hui, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Mark Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005)

Paul Kowert, "Agent versus Structure in the Construction of National Identity", found in Vendulka Kubalkova, et al, *International Relations in a Constructed World* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998)

Jacques E. C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

2. *How do values become policy? Can significant gaps exist between policy that is aspired to, and policy that is actuated?*

Recommended Case Studies: China – Christopher Twomey
United States – Thomas Mahnken
Russia – Fritz Ermarth
Israel – Gregory Giles

Readings addressing this topic:

Andrew Kuchins, "From Values to True Dialogue" *The Moscow Times*, 22 June 2005

Francis Fukuyama, "The Imperative of State Building" *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 15, No. 2, April 2004, pp. 17-31.

Jeffrey Legro, *Cooperation Under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint During World War II,* Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995)

William Kincade, "American National Style and Strategic Culture" found in Carl G. Jacobsen et al, *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (London: Macmillan, 1990)

Paul Cornish, *Cry "Havoc!" and let slip the Managers of War: The Strategic, Military and Moral Hazards of Micro-Managed Warfare*, Strategic and Combat Studies Institute Occasional Paper No. 51 (Shrivenham SCSI 2006)

Patrick Mileham, *Ethos: British Army Officership 1962-1992*, Strategic and Combat Studies Institute Occasional Paper No. 19 (Camberley SCSI 1996)

_____, ed. *War and Morality*, RUSI Whitehall Paper No. 61, (London: RUSI 2004)

3. *To what extent do global norms impact domestic strategic culture?*

Recommended Case Studies: Iran – Willis Stanley
India – Rodney Jones
Pakistan – Peter Lavoy

Readings addressing this topic:

T.V. Paul, "Nuclear Taboo and War Initiation in Regional Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 39, no.4 (December 1995)

Nina Tannewald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo,"
    International Security, 29, no.4 (Spring 2005): 5-49;
Tannenwald, "The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of
    Nuclear Non-Use," *International Organization,* 53, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 83-114;
Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr, "Understanding the Domestic Impact
    of International Norms: A Research Agenda" *International Studies Review,*
    Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 2000) pp. 65-87
Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and
    Political Change," *International Organization*, 52, no. 4 (1998): 887-917.
Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International
    Organizations in Global Politics*, (2004)
Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use
    of Force*, (2003)
Theo Farrell, "Transnational Norms and Military Development", *European
    Journal of International Relations*, (2002)
Theo Farrell, "World Culture and Military Power", *Security Studies* (2005)

4. ***How static/dynamic is strategic culture? What causes change? How quickly can strategic
culture shift in a crisis?***

> Recommended Case Studies: China – Christopher Twomey
>   Russia – Fritz Ermarth
>   United States – Thomas Mahnken
>   Israel – Gregory Giles

> *Readings addressing this topic:*
Christoph O. Meyer, "Convergence Towards a European Strategic   Culture? A
    Constructivist Framework for Explaining Changing Norms," *European
    Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11 (2005)
Angel M. Rabasa et. al, *The Muslim World After 9/11* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND
    Corporation, 2004)
Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (London: Pimlico, 1995)

5. ***To what extent can leaders leverage and/or manipulate strategic culture for their own
ends?***

> Recommended Case Studies: North Korea – Joseph Bermudez
>   Pakistan – Peter Lavoy

> *Readings addressing this topic:*
Jerrold M. Post, *Leaders and Their Followers in a Dangerous World: The
    Psychology of Political Behavior* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004)

Barry R. Schneider and Jerrold M. Post eds., *Know Thy Enemy: Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures*, (Montgomery, AL: USAF Counterproliferation Center, July 2003) 2nd Edition.

Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review,* 51 (April 1986):273-86

Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994)

6. *Can the strategic culture analytical framework be applied to non-state actors?*

Recommended Case Study: Al Qaeda – Mark Long

Readings addressing this topic:

Sebestyén L. v. Gorka, "Al Qaeda and Von Clausewitz: Rediscovering the Art of War", paper delivered to the US Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) Symposium: Countering Global Insurgency (May 2006)

Colonel CE Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Theory and Practice* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996 – reprint of 1905 work.)

Colonel Thomas X Hammes USMC, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St Paul, MN: Zenith Press 2006)

Robert G. Harkavy and Stephanie G. Neuman, *Warfare and the Third World,* (New Your: Palgrave 2001)

Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (London: Vintage, 1998)

T.E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (Paris: 1926)

Marc Sagemen, *Understanding Terror Networks* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004)

Phillip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002)

Samuel Huntingdon, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1997)

Elijah Poole, *Tactics of the Crescent Moon*

Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Virtual State: Wealth and Power in the Coming Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1999)

Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: Free Press, 1991)

Additional Discussion Questions:

Does each culture develop its own way of war?

How does one discern the "keepers" or "stewards" of a particular strategic culture? Are they persons? Or institutions? How is the socialization process perpetuated?

To what extent does geography determine strategic culture?

How do the market forces of globalization affect strategic culture? Are there emerging non-Western perspectives that might counter the power of globalization?

Is the strategic culture in question relatively homogenous, or factionalized? If disparate groups are competing for the ability to direct security policy, how might one determine which viewpoint will be most relevant?

Can significant portions of strategic culture be innovated? Taught from the top levels of government down, and internalized?

How might intelligence and diplomatic processes be improved to unearth accurate data on strategic culture?

If we assume that there are three levels of analysis in studying a country's strategic culture—our own, our adversaries, and our allies—do we tend to overlook our allies?

V. THE FUTURE OF STRATEGIC CULTURE
Lesson 11

After an examination of strategic culture analysis in action, students may be engaged in a discussion concerning the future of strategic culture as a field of study, its strengths, its methodological challenges, and potential utility in both academia and policy. Darryl Howlett starts this discussion with the following essay:

Required Reading:

Darryl Howlett, "The Future of Strategic Culture," unpublished essay (2006)

VI. COURSE WRAP-UP AND CRITIQUE
Lesson 12

ADDITIONAL READING/MEDIA REFERENCES
Organized by Country

THE UNITED STATES

Boot, Max, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

Builder, Carl H., *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989)

Gormley, Dennis M. and Thomas G. Mahnken, "Facing Nuclear and Conventional Reality," *Orbis* 44, no. 1 (Winter 2000).

Gray, Colin S., "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1981).

_____, "Strategy in the Nuclear Age: The United States, 1945-1991" in Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein, eds., *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 579-613.

Linn, Brian M., "The American Way of War Revisited," *Journal of Military History,* 66 no. 2 (April 2002), 501-533.

Mahnken, Thomas G. "The American Way of War in the Twenty-first Century" in Efraim Inbar, ed., *Democracies and Small Wars* (London: Frank Cass, 2003).

Mahnken, Thomas G. and James R. FitzSimonds, *The Limits of Transformation: Officer Attitudes Toward the Revolution in Military Affairs* (Newport: Naval War College Press, 2003).

_____, "Revolutionary Ambivalence: Understanding Officer Attitudes toward Transformation," *International Security,* 28, no. 2 (Fall 2003).

_____, "Tread-Heads or Technophiles? Army Officer Attitudes Toward Transformation," *Parameters,* Summer 2004.

Weigley, Russell F., *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973)

ISRAEL

"An Interview with Brig. Gen. Nehemia Dagan, Chief Education Officer, IDF," *IDF Journal,* vol. 3, no. 4, Fall 1986, 51-52.

Bar-Or, Amir, "The Link Between the Government and IDF During Israel's First 50 Years: The Shifting Role of the Defense Minister," in Maman, Daniel, Eyal Ben Ari, and Zeev Rosenhek, eds., *Military, State, and Society in Israel* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 321-341.

Ben-Eliezer, Uri, "From Military Role Expansion to Difficulties in Peace-Making: The Israel Defense Forces 50 Years On," in Maman, et al, op cit., 137-172.

Ben-Dor, Charles, "War & Peace: Jewish Tradition and the Conduct of War," *Israeli Defense*

Forces Journal, vol. 3, no. 4, Fall 1986, 47-50.

Brom, Shlomo, "Is the Begin Doctrine Still A Viable Option for Israel?," in Henry Sokolski and Patrick Clawson, eds., *Getting Ready for A Nuclear-Ready Iran,* US Army Strategic Studies Institute, October 2005, 133-158. http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub629.pdf

Burk, James, "From Wars of Independence to Democratic Peace, Comparing the Cases of Israel and the United States," in Maman, et al, op cit., 81-104.

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The best site for reading (in English) statements of radical organizations, to include those of al-Qaida is http://www.memri.org/index.html See especially "jihad and terrorism studies project" under "Subjects."

Another excellent resource is the Combating Terrorism Center at the United States Military Academy. Their site is http://www.ctc.usma.edu/ They have recently declassified documents that have been captured by U.S. forces, as well as major studies available on-line.

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Stern, Jessica. "The Protean Enemy," *Foreign Affairs* (July-August 2003), 27-40

COMPARATIVE STRATEGIC CULTURES LITERATURE REVIEW (PART 1)

Elizabeth Stone

Prepared for:

Defense Threat Reduction Agency
Advanced Systems and Concepts Office

Comparative Strategic Cultures Curriculum
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Project Focus:

Despite the publication of many path-breaking books and scholarly articles on the subject of strategic culture, the research in this area has not cumulated into a coherent, productive field of study. However, with renewed policy interest in discerning the motivations and related sources of behavior of countries such as North Korea, Iran, Syria, Pakistan, India, and China, it is time to take a new look at comparative strategic culture.

Where the field has been:

Essentially, literature on comparative strategic culture has come in three waves of study:

1. *Wave 1: Early 1980s*
    a. Focused mainly on explaining why Soviets and Americans apparently thought differently about nuclear strategy.
    b. Scholars (Snyder, Gray, Jones) argued these differences were caused by unique variations in macro-environmental variables such as deeply rooted historical experience, political culture, and geography.
    c. Shortcomings of Wave 1:
        i.   Definitional problem; too unwieldy (Still a problem).
        ii. By subsuming patterns of behavior within a definition of strategic culture, first wave implied that strategic thought led consistently to one type of behavior.
        iii. Alleged homogeneity of society's strategic culture across time proved problematic.
2. *Wave 2: mid-1980s*
    a. Began from premise that there is a vast difference between what leaders think or say they are doing and the deeper motives for what in fact they do.
    b. Strategic culture viewed as tool of political hegemony in realm of strategic decision-making.
    c. Shortcomings of Wave 2:
        i.   Still has problems with symbolic discourse—linking culture and behavior.
            1. Not clear whether we should expect the strategic discourse to influence behavior; elites socialized in strategic culture they produce and thus can be constrained by symbolic myths their predecessors created
                a. In a sense, one should expect cross-national differences in behavior to extent that discourses vary nationally
            2. second generation literature undecided as whether to expect cross-national differences in strategy.
3. *Wave 3: 1990's*
    a. Both more rigorous and eclectic in its conceptualization or ideational independent variables, and more narrowly focused on particular strategic decisions as dependent variables.
    b. All theories take realist edifice as target and focus on cases where structuralist-materialist notions of interest cannot explain a particular strategic choice.
    c. Strengths of Wave 3:
        i.   Avoids determinism of first generation—leaves behavior out of independent variable.
        ii. Explicitly committed to competitive theory testing, pitting alternative explanations against each other.
    d. Shortcomings of Wave 3:
        i.   Focus on realism weaknesses is flawed
        ii. Use of organizational culture as key independent variable in strategic choices is troublesome
        iii. DEFINITION STILL TOO LOOSE.

Presently, the field rests largely in an ill defined, oft debated over netherworld. Comparative Strategic Culture concepts maintain their methodological limitations and the concept remains too amorphous and grossly oversimplified. However, despite this, scholars hold on to strategic culture's utility. As Iain Johnston has written:

> Done well, the careful analysis of strategic culture could help policymakers establish more accurate and empathetic understandings of how different actors perceive the game being played, reducing uncertainty and other information problems

in strategic choice. Done badly, the analysis of strategic culture could reinforce stereotypes about strategic dispositions of other states and close off policy alternatives deemed inappropriate for dealing with local strategic cultures.

Where the field needs to go:

1. Learn from the past:

Need to learn from past mistakes and construct a more rigorous concept of strategic culture that specifies *inter alia* the scope and content of strategic culture, the objects of analysis and the historical periods from which these are drawn, and the methods for deriving a picture of strategic culture from these objects. (Johnston, 1995).

2. Utilize cross-discipline studies:

Need to accept that this concept of strategic culture stretches across multiple disciplines (sociology, psychology, political science, international relations theory) and cannot fully be strengthened unless all crossing disciplines are used. Especially on the basic notion of DEFINING strategic culture itself—it ultimately comes back to cognitive concepts of self, symbols, etc., for which sociological and psychological study is needed.

3. Address relevance of concept as applied to NON-STATE ACTORS:

Upon reviewing the literature, essentially nothing new has been written since the late 1990s, in other words—pre-9/11. If strategic culture as a discipline and lens is to survive, it must move beyond its state centric approach to explaining policy and behavior. Can strategic culture be used to analyze non-state actors? If yes (which I believe it can be), it is even more important to utilize a multi-discipline approach to predicting behavior. The concept of non-state actors further plunges political scientists into realms of needing to understand personal psychology, cognitive choice, symbols, cohesive cultures, etc. Behavior and actions of non-state actors cements strategic culture as a supra-individual concept—above and beyond the individual and within and among the state.

My emphasis of the need to focus on non-state actor psychology as well as the differentiation between democracy and Islamic rule is further testament that strategic culture concepts, even if pursued to better understand state elites' decision making on foreign or WMD policy, has been and will remain a cultural argument at the most basic level. In the post-9/11 environment, "know thy enemy" has never rung more true, and the true implications of the aphorism can and must be further explored using dynamic, cross-discipline, and complex concepts such as comparative strategic culture if the national security of the United States is to be kept secure.

Theoretical Concepts

Historical Background Pieces

- Colin Gray, "National Styles in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1981).

- Colin Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and National Style* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Press, 1986).

- Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options, R-2154-AF* (Santa Monica, CA, RAND, 1977).

- David R. Jones, "Soviet Strategic Culture," in Carl G. Jacobsen, ed., *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

Essays

- **Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture,"** *International Security***, vol. 19 (Spring 1995).**
  - o The "must have" piece in any strategic culture info introduction
  - o Concludes literature (up until 1995) on strategic culture is both under and over-determined, and has so far been unable to offer a convincing research design for isolating effects of strategic culture
    - ▪ Essentially, this is still the case

- o *culture*: different states have different predominant strategic preferences rooted in early formative experiences of state, influenced to some degree by philosophical, political, cultural, and cognitive characteristics of state and its elites
  - o Strategic culture theory doesn't reject rationality; instead, a historically imposed inertia on choice makes strategy less responsive to specific contingencies
  - o Problem for culturalists is to explain similarities in strategic behavior acorss varied strategic cultures.
  - o Too many definitions out there; still too vague on culture's relationship to choice—what does culture do in a behavioral sense?
    - ▪ We need a notion of strategic culture that is falsifiable.

- **Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies," *International Security* 23, no. 1. (Summer, 1998), pp. 141-170.**

  - o Highlights ongoing theoretical debate between culture theories and realism
  - o Explains brief history of 3 waves of cultural theory, beginning with Cold War, then 1970s-1980s, then post-Cold War
  - o 4 strands of cultural theorizing dominate current wave:
    - ▪ organizational
    - ▪ political
    - ▪ strategic
    - ▪ global
  - o all cultural approaches take realist edifice as target, and focus cases where structural material notions of interest cannot explain a particular strategic choice
  - o to make the case that cultural theories should supplant exisiting theories outperform realist theories in "hard cases" for cultural theories

- **Fritz Gaenslen, "Culture and Decision Making in China, Japan, Russia, and the United States," *World Politics* 39, no. 1. (Oct., 1986), pp. 78-103.**

  - o Discusses basic tenets of cultural arguments
  - o Hits on differences/weakness in the culture v. realism debate
  - o cultures consists of assumptions about human nature
    - ▪ assumptions about causality, the possible, the desirable, the appropriate, nature of physical environment
  - o Chinese, Japanese, and Russians tend o have different conceptions of "self" and "others" than do Americans, and former tend to be more collectivist than the latter
    - ▪ These different conceptions have implications for collective decision making under conditions of complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity
    - ▪ A focus on national culture is likely to obscure one's vision of the variety of behavior that can occur within societies
    - ▪ Cultural explanations are not and should not be about similarities, they must explain differences.
  - o Under what circumstances is cultural explanation most persuasive?:
    - ▪ Smaller conceptual distance between cultural variables and what one wishes to explain by them
    - ▪ When individuals whose behavior is to be explained are unclear about structure of rewards/ punishments they face; when situation is characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity.

- **Jeffrey Legro, "Culture and Preferences in International Two Step," *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 1 (March 1996).**

  - o Rational choice analyses of international cooperation have slighted effect of state preference formation and influence of cultural forces in that process
  - o Article addresses gaps by developing an explanation that specifies how organizational cultures of bureaucracies shape state aims and international outcomes

- o Offers domestic-level cultural explanation of preferences that contrasts to common view that state desires are functionally determined or definitively constrained by international system
    - ▪ Organizational cultures of bureaucracies produce information, plans, and capabilities which can constitute state preferences in ways that need not efficiently correspond to international circumstances
    - ▪ Preference dynamics can be central to variations in international conflict and cooperation
    - ▪ Importance of culturally shaped preferences in issue areas—such as use of force in war.
    - ▪ When national security and survival are at stake, analysts tend to posit interests, emphasize strategic interaction, and discount bureaucratic influence.

- **Paul DiMaggio, "Culture and Cognition," An***nual Review of Sociology* **23 (1997), 263-287.**
    - o Cultural theory has become highly sophisticated but not fully operational; need to focus on how people use culture
    - o In past, culture defined as latent variable, influencing in common such manifestations as media images, responses, values; individuals assumed to acquire culture in course of socialization
    - o Recent work depicts culture as fragmented across groups and inconsistent across its manifestations
        - ▪ Culture as a complex rule-like structures that constitute resources that can be put to strategic use
        - ▪ Make studying culture more complicated;
            - • Once we identify culture as inconsistent, must identify units of cultural analysis and to focus attention upon relations among them
            - • Once we acknowledge that people behave as if they use culture strategically, it follows that cultures into which people socialize leave much opportunity for choice and variation.
    - o highlights importance of wedding all fields on culture together: sociology, social psychology, political science, etc.
    - o emphasizes important cognitive concepts such as culture as supra-individual, and "pluralistic ignorance": idea that people act with reference to shared representations of collective opinion that are empirically inaccurate
        - ▪ important implication to comparative strategic cultures

- **Michael Vlabos, "Culture and Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy 82 (Spring 1991).**
    - o too often cultural variations are seen only as national stereotypes and never move beyond myopic impression
    - o Yet stereotypes lead to truths: other cultures are and will remain alien, and culture is source of people's reality, and culture is bigger than countries.
    - o Talks about "culture areas" that bound cultural identities
        - ▪ Talks about introduction of "the West" as concept
    - o patterns of thought and behavior are shaped by culture; they are not products of mere nationalism

- **Stephen Peter Rosen, "Military Effectiveness: Why Society Matters,"** *International Security***, vol. 19 (Spring 1995).**
    - o About impact of social structures on amount of military power that can be generated by nations from different cultures
    - o Argues social structures can affect generation of military power in two ways:
        - ▪ People in a political unit can identify themselves with social structures in ways that can create divisive loyalties within the political unit, creating fissures in the unit that reduce effective military power of the unit as a whole
        - ▪ Social structures than create fissures in unit at large may extend to military organizations of unit, causing military to insulate themselves from divisions created by social structures
    - o IV: (2): 1. dominant social structures of a country, 2. degree to which the military organizations divorces themselves from their society
    - o DV: Amount of offensive and defensive national military power that can be generated from a given quantity of material resources
    - o Does NOT try to explain national military strategy or behavior of individual military commanders

Additional Sources:

- Martin Wight, "An Anatomy of International Thought," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 13 (1987).

- David S. Yost, "Political Philosophy and the Theory of International Relations," *International Affairs*, vol. 70 (April 1994).

- Yitzhak Klein, "A Theory of Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy* 10, no. 1 (1991).

- Samuel P. Huntington, "The West: Unique, Not Universal," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 75 (November/December 1996).

Books

- Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995).

- Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

- Arthur Waldron, *The Great Wall of China: From History to Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; paperback edition, 1992).

- Douglas J. Murray and Paul R. Viotti, eds., *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, third edition (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

Country Studies

China

- **Andrew Scobell, "China and Strategic Culture,"** *Strategic Studies Institute* **(May 2002).**
  - *Strategic culture defined*: fundamental and enduring assumptions about role of war (both interstate and intrastate) in human affairs and the efficacy of applying force held by political and military elites in a country; assumptions will vary from country to country.
  - Highlights importance of elites' perceptions of others' strategic cultures, as well.
    - Preconceived stereotype of strategic disposition of another nation, state, or people that is derived from a selective interpretation of history, traditions, and self-image.
  - Using strategic culture lens on subject of China's use of force, two dimensions highlighted:
    - Nature and impact of China's assessment of its own strategic culture
    - Nature and impact of China's depictions of the strategic cultures of Japan and United States.
  - Existing depictions of China's strategic culture are flawed
    - Country has dualistic strategic culture:
      - First strand: Confucian-Mencian, conflict averse and defensive minded
      - Second strand: realpolitik, favors military solutions and is offensive oriented.
        - Both strands operative and influence/combine in dialectic fashion to form a "Chinese Cult of Defense"
  - China views Japan as having extremely warped, violent, militaristic strategic culture
  - Views U.S. as expansionist, offensive-minded, conflict-prone, obsessed with technology.

Additional Sources

- Jim Nichol, "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," *CRS Issue Brief for Congress* (November 12, 2004).

- Rosemary Foot, "China and the ASEAN Regional Forum: Organizational Processes and Domestic Modes of Thought," *Asian Survey* 38, no. 5 (May 1998), 424-440.

- David B.H. Denoon, Wendy Frieman, "China's Security Strategy: The View from Beijing, ASEAN, and Washington," *Asian Survey* 36, no. 4 (April 1996), 422-439.

- Alastair Iain Johnston, "Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History," in *Cultural Realism* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995).

South Asia

- Jessica Stern, "Pakistan's Jihad Culture," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2000).

- George K. Tanham, "Indian Strategic Culture," *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 15 (Winter 1992).

- George K. Tanham, *Indian Strategic Thought: An Interpretive Essay*, R-4207-USDP (Santa Monica, Ca.: Rand Corporation, 1992).

- **V.K. Shrivastava, "Indian Army 2020: A Vision Statement on Strategy and Capability," Strategic Analysis 25, no. 6 (September 2001).**

  o Scrutiny of events of the post-independence era points to the same set of shortfalls as those in the past. In an attempt to examine the Indian thoughts on strategy, George K. Tanham has observed, "Deeply embedded habits of thoughts related to Indian geography, history, culture.... exert a powerful influence....they will, in the foreseeable future, help to shape its strategic thinking and its strategy."

East Asia

- **Desmond Ball, "Strategic Culture in the Asia-Pacific Region," Security Studies 3, no. 1 (Autumn 1993), 44-74.**

  o Delineates principal purported elements of strategic culture in region, and assesses the extent to which they have real substance, application, impact on emerging security processes in region.
  o Analysis suggests cultural factors will be less important than economic, technological, and strategic developments in determining new architecture of regional security.

- **Scott Snyder, "Patterns of Negotiation in South Korean Cultural Context," Asian Survey 39, no. 3 (May-June 1999).**

  o Highlights understandings of cross-cultural influences on negotiation
  o Examine misunderstandings in various international negotiations that may be traced to differences stemming from deeply held views on identity and action that have been shaped by culturally defined socialization processes (which reinforce cultural norms or conceptions of identity) within particular social structure.
  o Uses case studies of the 1997 South Korean Labor Management Dispute and the South Korean-IMF Bailout Negotiations

Additional Readings:

- Yung Myung Kim, "Asian Style Democracy': A Critique from East Asia," *Asian Survey* 37, no. 12 (December 1997), 1119-1134.

- Frank L. Miller, Jr., "Impact of Strategic Culture on U.S. Policies for East Asia," *Strategic Studies Institute* (November 2003).

Middle East

- **Anthony C. Cain, "Iran's Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction," Air War College Maxwell Paper No. 26 (Maxwell Air Force Base: Maxwell, Alabama), April 2002.**
  o Ascertains that U.S. leaders fail to comprehend Islamic Republic's struggle to reconcile tensions between faith and economic, diplomatic, and military functions of state power.
  o Defines strategic culture simply from a policy/deterrence angle—focus on WMD.

- o   Iran is rational and deterrable.
- o   In order to prevent proliferation, must better understand Iranian decision making processes, which are highlighted by:
    - ▪   Distinguishing between Shi'ism espoused by clerics in government power, the politicized Islam that threatens moderate Muslim regimes in ME, and Islamic tenets to which peaceful Muslims adhere.
- o   challenge to U.S. policy will center on modifying our understanding of Iran to reflect the synergies and conflicts between various segments of Iranian polity that help to shape relations between U.S./Iran.
- o   For contemporary Iranian politics, reconciling demands of international statecraft and domestic consensus building with principles of religious dogma remains difficult.
- o   Increasing global trends of globalization coupled with contemporary international consensus centered on fighting terrorism may provide levers needed to ease tensions between U.S./Iran.
- o   U.S. policymakers can encourage Iranian actions with regard to changing policies about terrorism by acknowledging Islamic republic's legitimate aspirations for regional leadership.

Additional Sources:

-   Mehran Kamrava, *Democracy in the Balance: Culture and Society in the Middle East* (New York: New York, Chatham House/ Seven Bridges Press, 1998), 300 p.

-   Frederick Strain, "Discerning Iran's Nuclear Strategy: An Examination of Motives, Strategic Culture, And Rationality," *Air War College, Air University* (Maxwell Air Force Base: Alabama, April 1996).

Europe

-   **Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars,"** *International Security*, **vol. 19 (Spring 1995).**

    - o   Highlights differences between offensive and defensive military doctrine
    - o   Very heavily references throughout other strategic culture readings
    - o   Challenges portrait of civilians and military in choices between offensive and defensive military doctrines
    - o   Argues choices between offensive and defensive military doctrines are best understood from cultural perspective; two reasons:
        - ▪   Military doctrine rarely carefully calculated response to external environment
            - •   Civilian policymakers have beliefs about military's role in society, and these beliefs guide civilian decisions about organizational form of military
        - ▪   military organizations do not inherently prefer offensive doctrines: preferences cannot be deduced from functional characteristics and generalized across all military organizations
            - •   military organizations differ in how they view their world and the proper conduct of their mission, and these organizational cultures constrain choices between offensive and defensive military doctrines

Additional Sources:

-   Idem, "France and the Gulf War of 1990-1991: Political-Military Lessons Learned," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 16 (September 1993).

-   Dalia Dassa Kaye, "Bound to Cooperate: Transatlantic Policy in the Middle East," *Washington Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2003-2004), 179-195.

Theme-Related

Islam

- Roy P. Mottahedeh, "The Clash of Civilizations: An Islamicist's Critique," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, vol. 2 (Autumn 1995).

- Pierre Hassner, "Huntington's Clash of Civilizations: I — Morally Objectionable, Politically Dangerous," *The National Interest*, no. 46 (Winter 1996-1997).

WMD

- **Greg Giles, "Strategic Personality: Overview of Case Studies," *SAIC* (June 21, 1996).**
    o Argues that explicit assessment of strategic personality can enhance understanding of WMD force building in particular countries.

- **Anthony C. Cain, "Iran's Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Air War College Maxwell Paper No. 26* (Maxwell Air Force Base: Maxwell, Alabama), April 2002.**
    o Ascertains that U.S. leaders fail to comprehend Islamic Republic's struggle to reconcile tensions between faith and economic, diplomatic, and military functions of state power.
    o Defines strategic culture simply from a policy/deterrence angle—focus on WMD.
    o Iran is rational and deterrable.
    o In order to prevent proliferation, must better understand Iranian decision making processes, which are highlighted by:
        ▪ Distinguishing between Shi'ism espoused by clerics in government power, the politicized Islam that threatens moderate Muslim regimes in ME, and Islamic tenets to which peaceful Muslims adhere.
    o challenge to U.S. policy will center on modifying our understanding of Iran to reflect the synergies and conflicts between various segments of Iranian polity that help to shape relations between U.S./Iran.
    o For contemporary Iranian politics, reconciling demands of international statecraft and domestic consensus building with principles of religious dogma remains difficult.
    o Increasing global trends of globalization coupled with contemporary international consensus centered on fighting terrorism may provide levers needed to ease tensions between U.S./Iran.
    o U.S. policymakers can encourage Iranian actions with regard to changing policies about terrorism by acknowledging Islamic republic's legitimate aspirations for regional leadership.

Additional Sources

- Henry Rowen, "The Evolution of Strategic Nuclear Doctrine," in Laurence Martin, ed., *Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

- Frederick Strain, "Discerning Iran's Nuclear Strategy: An Examination of Motives, Strategic Culture, And Rationality," *Air War College, Air University* (Maxwell Air Force Base: Alabama, April 1996).

- Craig Black, "Deterring Libya: The Strategic Culture of Muammar Qaddafi," *The Counterproliferation Papers, Future Warfare Series No. 8* (USAF Counterproliferation Center: Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama), October 2000.

- Greg Giles, "Assessing Strategic Culture: New Analytical Tools for Hard Targets?" *SAIC Symposium on Strategic Culture of Hard Targets (*November 5, 1997).

Non-State Actors' Strategic Culture

- Lee Harris, "Al Qaeda's Fantasy Ideology," Policy Review, www.policyreview.org , August 2002.

- Rex Hudson, "The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why?," *Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (*September 1999), 186 p.

COMPARATIVE STRATEGIC CULTURES: LITERATURE REVIEW (PART 2)

Thomas Skypek

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Comparative Strategic Culture
Literature Review

Tom Skypek

INTRODUCTION

This survey of existing literature on comparative strategic culture unearthed a substantial amount of material, building on the literature review conducted in 2005 by the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Contemporary Conflict. The objectives of the 2006 update were two-fold: 1) to locate additional literature on the subject of strategic culture and 2) to focus on strategic culture as it pertains to the views, acquisition, and use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by both state and non-state actors. This paper provides highlights of some of the new material added to the bibliography.[1]

The field of strategic culture is interdisciplinary with substantial contributions made from the fields of business, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and international relations. This paper, however, looks more closely at five specific fields and sub-fields which can influence an actor's decision to acquire, proliferate and/or employ WMD—proliferation, religion/theology, actor-specific analyses, sociology and psychology. This paper does not review each strategic cultural variable in great detail; what it does do, however, is provide an introduction to some of the key variables that can influence WMD decision-making. Admittedly, discriminating between essential and non-essential information is a challenging task because most of the literature contributes, in some way, to a more complete understanding of strategic culture. But the fundamental question, for the purposes of this project, is determining what forces and factors influence state and non-state behavior with respect to WMD acquisition, proliferation and employment. Is there a universal framework for forecasting an actor's behavior?

METHODOLOGY

Focusing this review on WMD required a creative use of a variety of specific search terms. For example, one search combination included the phrases "nuclear culture" and "first strike." Another combination included "biological weapons" and "perception." A variety of

databases were used to conduct the search. They include: Journal Storage (JSTOR), the Open Source Center (formerly FBIS), LexisNexis, and Intelink, as well as standard Internet search engines.

A tremendous amount of literature related to strategic culture was unearthed. Over 114 sources were found in all. Most of the literature was in the form of scholarly publications published by Western academics, scholars and analysts. There appeared to be a shortage of non-Western perspectives on strategic culture. However, there were a few sources from British and Indian authors.

This review is expansive, including literature on decision-making, business culture, political psychology, and so on. The results of the literature review indicate that strategic culture is not a parsimonious theory. Rather, the literature indicates that many different strategic cultures exist; each state and non-state actor has its own history, paradigm and operational code.

Thirty nine of the 114 strategic culture sources surveyed (34 percent) dealt with WMD. Those 39 sources were overwhelmingly nuclear, focusing less on chemical and biological weapons. The literature focused on Russia and the Former Soviet Union, China, North Korea, India, South Africa, Iran, Iraq, the European Union, NATO and al Qaeda. The survey turned up surprisingly little information on Japan, South Korea, Pakistan, and Israel. There appears to be a dearth of literature focusing on the Latin American, Caribbean, and African states.

The WMD strategic culture literature has been organized into five categories: proliferation (general), religion/theology, actor-specific, sociology and psychology. Each of these categories has a key work that can be used for an overview of the sub-field:

Proliferation (General)
- Barry R. Schneider, "Nuclear Proliferation and Counter-Proliferation: Policy Issues and Debates," *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (October 1994), pp. 209-234

Religion/Theology
- Stephen Kierulff, "Belief in 'Armageddon Theology' and Willingness to Risk Nuclear War," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (March 1991), pp. 81-93

Actor-Specific
- Lewis A. Dunn, "Can al Qaeda Be Deterred from Using Nuclear Weapons?" Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction (Washington: National Defense University Press, July 2005)

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[1] Last updated 19 May 2006 for delivery at the Comparative Strategic Culture Curriculum project Phase II conference in Deer Valley, Utah.

Sociology
- Patricia A. Gwartney-Gibbs and Denise H. Lach, "Sex Differences in Attitudes toward Nuclear War," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (May 1991), pp. 161-174

Psychology
- Glenn Chafetz, "The Political Psychology of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (August 1995), pp. 743-775

CULTURE BY CATEGORY

Low-Intensity Conflict and Insurgency

While not all of the sources surveyed dealt specifically with WMD acquisition, proliferation and use, a number of the sources have been included in this review because they offer particularly useful insights into strategic culture. According to a 1996 article in *Parameters* by Department of Defense analyst Dr. Paul M. Belbuowski, entitled "Strategic Implications of Cultures in Conflict," a thorough understanding of culture is especially important in the context of low-intensity conflict and peace operations.[2] Often neglected cross-cultural discrepancies, such as different conceptions of time, can have a tremendous impact on military operations—from understanding the adversary to developing a sound strategy for victory. For example, the Western conception of time is both quantitative and progressive, whereas Indian philosophy views time in a more cyclical sense. Cultural details are often overlooked; their study, however, can provide increased understanding and situational awareness for decision-makers. Belbutowski laments, "Unfortunately, philosophers of culture, cultural anthropologists, and others are frequently overlooked as indirect contributors to strategy and policy formulation. Their insights into the ways of being of other peoples are invaluable for the long-range forecasting and prediction for foreign policy vision."

Montgomery McFate in "The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture" states that, "Cultural knowledge and warfare are inextricably bound."[3] He argues that the ongoing insurgency in Iraq is a "wake-up call to the military that culture matters." The author explains that cultural understanding has implications, both operationally and strategically. For example, during the Vietnam era, anthropologists excelled at bridging the gap between the military and

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[2] Paul M. Belbutowski, "Strategic Implications of Cultures in Conflict," *Parameters*, 26 (Spring 1996), 32-42.
[3] Montgomery McFate, "The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture," *Joint Force Quarterly*, July 2005, available at www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/1038.pdf.

indigenous tribes. McFate offers a unique perspective in the discussion of strategic culture as a cultural anthropologist and a defense policy fellow in the Office of Naval Research.

WMD Policy

What impact does strategic culture have on an actor's desire to acquire and use WMD? In a 2001 article in the *Journal of Peace Research*, Dr. Rajesh M. Basrur writes that the "restraint, stability and minimalism" of India's nuclear policy is best explained by its strategic culture.[4] Basrur breaks the concept of strategic culture into three parts: 1) the level of assumptions and beliefs, 2) the operational level and, 3) the structural frame. He argues that an analysis of Indian strategic culture as it pertains to nuclear weapons reveals examples of tempered responses to external and domestic pressures for change with a "positive disposition toward arms control." Of course, this is the perspective of an Indian scholar. A Pakistani scholar or a French scholar would likely have an alternative interpretation of India's behavior.

Dr. T.V. Paul of McGill University writes in "Great Powers and Nuclear Non-proliferation Norms: China in South Asia" that great powers are driven more by power and national interests than concerns over supporting or violating established security norms.[5] Paul argues that China has contributed to proliferation in South Asia, despite its public acceptance of the international nonproliferation regime. Paul's argument runs counter to those of strategic culture theorists. These types of cogent arguments help to identify deficiencies in the theory of strategic culture and add significant value to the discussion. In his 1996 book entitled *Morality, Prudence, and Nuclear Weapons*, Steven P. Lee looks at the military and ethical decisions surrounding nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War era with a focus on the future of nuclear deterrence.[6] Lee works to provide a comprehensive normative framework for the understanding of nuclear deterrence policy. He investigates both the ethical and strategic dimensions of deterrence.

Peter Van Ham of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations asks in "*WMD Proliferation and Transatlantic Relations: Is a Joint Western Strategy Possible*?" whether a

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[4] Rajesh M. Basrur, "Nuclear Weapons and Indian Strategic Culture," Centre for Global Studies, Mumbai, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 2, (2001), pp.181-198.
[5] T.V. Paul, "Great Powers and Nuclear Non-proliferation Norms: China in South Asia," paper presented to the International Studies Association, 41st Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA, March 14-18, 2000.
[6] Steven P. Lee, *Morality, Prudence, and Nuclear Weapons* (Cambridge University Press, November 1996).

joint Western strategy to combat proliferation is achievable.[7] He argues that while the United States and Europe approach WMD proliferation differently, a joint Western policy is needed.   In a paper presented in September 2003, entitled "*The European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) – a Strategic Culture in the Making,"* Per M. Martinsen asked whether a European strategic culture is possible.[8] While significant progress has been made over the past three decades in terms of EU integration, the EU's military and civilian shortfalls in capabilities— from the failure to create a deployable joint force to problems in improving C4ISR capabilities— are preventing the development of a single European strategic culture.

Professor Michael Baun argues that the EU's strategic culture has been shaped by the tragedies of the past 100 years and that each state has its own traditions and paradigms.[9] For example, France and Britain are much more likely to use force than Germany or Sweden. In a similar vein, Joanna Spear, writing in *Arms Control Today* in November 2003, argued that the rift between the United States and Europe over the threat posed by Iraq has led a common European "strategic personality" to emerge.[10] Spear believes, however, that one area in which a transatlantic consensus has been reached is on the need to curb the proliferation of WMD. But she is quick to note that the United States and the European Union differ on approach. According to Spear, the Europeans emphasize a multilateral, carrot-based diplomacy while the United States favors a "stick-based diplomacy" in form of military force or economic sanctions. Clearly, recent events with Iran have shown that the EU is not adverse to threatening sanctions to confront noncompliance.

Strategic Culture and Personality

In a 1999 paper published by the Air Command and Staff College, Major Kimberly Crider argues that today's multipolar strategic environment has increased the likelihood of

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[7] Peter Van Ham, "WMD Proliferation and Transatlantic Relations: Is a Joint Western Strategy Possible?" Netherlands Institute of International Relations, April 2004, available at www.clingendael.nl/publications/2004/20040400_cli_ess_vanham.pdf.
[8] Per M. Martinsen, "*The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) – a Strategic Culture in the Making,*" Paper prepared for the ECPR Conference, Section 17 Europe and Global Security Marburg, 18-21 September 2003, available at www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/generalconference/marburg/papers/17/1/Martinsen.pdf.
[9] Michael Baun, "A Common Strategic Culture for Europe?" Young Europeans for Security, undated.
[10] Joanna Spear, "The Emergence of a European 'Strategic Personality," *Arms Control Today,* November 2003, available at www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_11/Spear.asp.

conflict.[11] The culprit, Crider explains, is the variety of ways state and non-state actors view and react to the challenges and opportunities in the international system. These differences in perception result from culture. It is culture, according to the author, that forms our perceptions, assumptions and guides our behaviors. Crider uses cultural changes to analyze potential implications for Sino-US relations. Not surprisingly, the author identifies differences in culture that lead the two states to approaching security challenges from unique perspectives.   In "War and Misperception," an article published in the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Dr. Robert Jervis describes how inaccurate inferences, miscalculations and misjudgments about how others will react to one's policies have routinely led to armed conflict.[12] Similarly, Glen Fisher, a veteran Foreign Service Officer suggests that the human mind is programmed by culture to perceive and respond to the world in certain ways.[13] Professor John Duffield believes that while more recently scholars have embraced cultural approaches to understand state behavior, reliance on political culture has been neglected.[14]

In a piece entitled "The Operational Code of Mao Zedong: Defensive or Offensive Realist?" Huiyan Feng asks whether China's strategic culture is offensive or defensive in orientation as a result of Mao Zedong's own strategic orientation.[15] While scholars like Alastair Johnston have argued that China has a propensity for aggression, Huiyan argues that China's behavior in the Korean War, Sino-India War, and the Sino-Vietnam War illustrates a defensive pattern of behavior. The author analyzes the content of Mao's foreign policy speeches using the automated Verbs in Context System (VICS). The author concludes that Johnston's cultural realist understanding of Mao is not entirely accurate, that while Mao exhibited a tendency toward offensive realism, his operational code was much more complex. Analyst Shivaji Mukherjee believes that China has a "weak martial tradition," evidenced by the writings of Sun Tzu and Confucius. This has led to its preference for strategic defense and minimal use of force and,

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[11] Major Kimberly A. Crider, "Strategic Implications of Culture Historical Analysis of China's Culture and Implications for United States Policy," Air Command and Staff College, *Wright Flyer* No. 8 (September 1999).

[12] Robert Jervis, "War and Misperception," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Spring, 1988), pp. 675-700.

[13] Glen Fisher, *Mindsets: The Role of Culture and Perception in International Relations*, 2nd edition (Intercultural Press, October 1997).

[14] John Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior: Why Germany Confounds Neorealism," *International Organization*, 2003.

[15] Huiyun Feng, "The Operational Code of Mao Zedong: Defensive or Offensive Realist?" *Security Studies,* Volume 14, Number 4 (Summer 2005).

arguably, its stated no-first-use policy.[16]

Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, writing in November 2005, noted that Germany was the first country to issue a "categorical refusal" to support the US-led invasion of Iraq.[17] The author believes that Germany's refusal does not signify Germany's desire to abandon the Transatlantic alliance nor that it is staunchly pacifist. Rather, the German refusal simply meant that the German threshold for military engagement was not crossed. Those thresholds are often determined by strategic culture. Dr. Theo Farrell, in his piece entitled "Strategic Culture and American Empire," writes that there is significant value in studying U.S. strategic culture vis-à-vis U.S. military policy.[18] Farrell also makes a historical comparison between the British Empire and the United States. The author also explained the methodological challenges posed by the study of strategic culture.

Dr. Michael Evans, head of the Australian Army's Land Warfare Studies Centre (LWSC) at the Royal Military College in Canberra concludes that Australia's political and warfighting culture has been pragmatic, but that its strategic culture has a tendency to be overly theoretical and has failed to provide constructive guidance during times of war and crisis.[19] Research conducted by anthropologists studying the causes of war in pre-industrial times have concluded that "war behavior" cannot be easily reduced to simply material factors or culture, explains Columbia Professor Dr. Jack Snyder.[20] Snyder explains that material, institutional, and cultural elements should be evaluated simultaneously to most accurately assess a society's preference for armed conflict. Ben D. Mor explores the concept of international rivalries which he argues develops when a "protracted threat perception" is developed in the early stages of a conflict.[21] Future interaction between the two actors only reinforces the hostile beliefs and behaviors toward the two in an unbreakable cycle. Mor cites Israel's national security paradigm and its evolution throughout the early years of the Egyptian-Israeli rivalry.

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[16] Shivaji Mukherjee, *India, China and No-First-Use: Strategic Culture or Realpolitik?* (Institute for Conflict Management, July 2001).

[17] Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, "The Test of Strategic Culture: Germany, Pacifism and Pre-emptive Strikes," Security Dialogue, Vol. 36, No. 3 (November 2005), pp. 339-359.

[18] Theo Farrell, "Strategic Culture and American Empire," *SAIS Review*, Volume 25, Number 2 (Summer-Fall 2005), pp. 3-18.

[19] Michael Evans, "The Tyranny of Dissonance: Australia's Strategic Culture and Way of War 1901-2005," Land Warfare Studies Centre, Study Paper No. 306, February 2005, available at www.defence.gov.au/army/lwsc/Publications/SP%20306%20Way%20in%20War%20Evans%20_REV_.pdf.

[20] Jack Snyder, "Anarchy and Culture: Insights from the Anthropology of War," *International Organization*, 2003.

In a 2001 study commissioned by DTRA's Advanced Systems and Concepts Office on the "Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence," Caroline F. Ziemke, Phillippe Loustaunau, and Amy Alrich of the Institute of Defense Analyses explore the efficacy of nuclear deterrence by providing country-specific analyses of both Iraq and Iran. They offer unique insights through their meticulous dissection of each state's "strategic personality" and subsequent impact on deterrence.[22]

Religion

Before September 11, 2001, many in the Western world failed to appreciate the role religion played in international politics, according to Drs. John Carlson and Erik Owens of the University of Chicago Divinity School.[23] The two argue in "The Sacred and the Sovereign: Religion and International Politics" that the convergence of politics and religion is not always catastrophic, but that there is a balance to be found. Many religious traditions and ideas coincide with the "political quest" for justice and human dignity.

Adding an empirical element to this discussion, Cultural Anthropologist Dr. Stephen Kierulff concluded from a survey of 281 adults that belief in "Armageddon Theology" is strongly associated with certain political attitudes, such as the belief that the US will attack Russia before the year 2010, believing in one's ability to survive a nuclear war as well as the willingness to use nuclear weapons and risk nuclear war.[24] The adults surveyed were from various religions backgrounds—Christians, Utilitarians, Jews, agnostics, atheists and others. Kierulff's paper was published in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* in 1991.

Gender, Sex and Nuclear Weapons

One study from 1991 conducted by Patricia A. Gwartney-Gibbs and Denise H. Lach

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[21] Ben D. Mor, "Strategic Beliefs and the Formation of Enduring International Rivalries," *International Relations,* Vol. 18, No. 3.

[22] Caroline F. Ziemke, Phillippe Loustaunau, Amy Alrich, "Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence," Institute for Defense Analyses, November 2000, study sponsored by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

[23] John D. Carlson and Erik C. Owens, eds., *The Sacred and the Sovereign: Religion and International Politics* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2003).

[24] Dr. Stephen Kierulff, "Belief in 'Armageddon Theology' and Willingness to Risk Nuclear War," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (March 1991), pp. 81-93

concluded that women are more pessimistic in their views toward nuclear war than men.[25] One explanation for this phenomenon is the inherent biological difference between men and women: childbearing. Another study considered Australian students' attitudes toward nuclear weapons. The results showed that men expressed strong support for nuclear weapons, while both men and women with strict "law-and-order" attitudes supported nuclear weapons.   A 1987 paper by Mark P. Jensen entitled "Gender, sex roles, and attitudes toward war and nuclear weapons" also sought to test the hypothesis that men are more supportive of war than women and that masculinity drives decisions to make war and acquire nuclear weapons.[26] Unlike the other studies, neither masculinity nor femininity were the only factors contributing to attitudes on war, according to Jensen.

WMD Use

What is the likelihood that terrorists would use WMD? D. Gressang IV in his piece entitled "Audience and Message: Assessing Terrorist WMD Potential" argues that examining the terrorists' perceptions and expectations of its audience, and its rhetorical messages provide substantial insights into terrorists' decisions.[27] Dr. Lewis A. Dunn explored the concept of al Qaeda's use of WMD in a July 2005 monograph published by the National Defense University Press. He concludes that it is reasonably likely that al Qaeda would employ WMD to achieve its objectives. However, he adds that a nuclear weapon may also be seem as too valuable to use; al Qaeda may view a nuclear weapon as more valuable as a deterrent or political tool.[28]

WMD Acquisition

What about the desire to acquire nuclear weapons? Pyschologist Michael G. Wessells in "Social-Psychological Determinants of Nuclear Proliferation: A Dual-Process Analysis" assesses the motivations of nuclear proliferators and concludes that proliferation is driven by

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[25] Patricia A. Gwartney-Gibbs and Denise H. Lach, "Sex Differences in Attitudes toward Nuclear War," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (May, 1991), pp. 161-174.
[26] Mark P. Jensen, "Gender, sex roles, and attitudes toward war and nuclear weapons," *Sex Roles*, Volume 17, Numbers 5-6 (September 1987).
[27] D. Gressang IV, "Audience and Message: Assessing Terrorist WMD Potential," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Volume 13, Number 3 (Fall 2001), pp. 83-106.
[28] Lewis A. Dunn, "Can al Qaeda be Deterred from Using Nuclear Weapons?" (Washington: NDU Press, July 2005).

security fears, power, prestige and the collapse of the Soviet Union.[29] Major Richard M. Perry in a 1997 paper entitled "Rogue or Rational State? A Nuclear Armed Iran and US Counter Proliferation Strategy," suggests that Iran's push for nuclear weapons is a calculated strategic campaign aimed at achieving regional hegemony.[30] In "Hegemony and Culture in the Origins of NATO Nuclear First-Use, 1945-1955," Andrew M. Johnston argues that the United States, through the process of cultural socialization blended the previously unique strategic cultures of its European allies into a single Western strategic culture endorsing NATO's nuclear first-use policy.[31]

Dr. Emanuel Adler believes that the theoretical expectations developed by experts to guide negotiations with the Soviet Union became the foundation for the ABM Treaty.[32] He contends that the arms control "epistemic community" was an aggregation of several factions that shared common threads and suggest that an epistemic community requires limited coherence to cooperate and influence behavior. The author believes that this argument poses a challenge to structural realists and similar paradigms.

Weapons Designers

What about the people who build the weapons? Do they have a strategic culture? According to Hugh Gusterson, they do. Gusterson's book, *Nuclear Rites: A Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War*, examines the culture of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and reveals that the scientists have their own brand of humor, habitual secrecy, and temperate emotions.[33] The book reveals that many of the scientists are Christians who believe in the morality of their work and the scientists hail from both sides of the political spectrum.

A 1999 paper by Professor Valerie M. Hudson of Brigham Young University entitled

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[29] Michael G. Wessells, "Social-Psychological Determinants of Nuclear Proliferation: A Dual-Process Analysis," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology,* Vol. 1, No. 1 (1995), pp. 49-65.
[30] "Major Richard M. Perry, "Rogue or Rational State?: A Nuclear Armed Iran and US Counter Proliferation Strategy," Air Command and Staff College, March 1997, available at www.fas.org/nuke/guide/iran/nuke/97-0388.pdf.
[31] Andrew M. Johnston, *Hegemony and Culture in the Origins of NATO Nuclear First-Use, 1945-1955* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, November 2005).
[32] Emanuel Adler, "The Emergence of Cooperation: National Epistemic Communities and the International Evolution of the Idea of Nuclear Arms Control," *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Winter, 1992), pp. 101-145.

"Cultural Expectations of One's Own and Other Nations' Foreign Policy Action Templates" tests the frequently held assumption that states are predisposed to behave in predictable ways in certain situations given their "behavioral dispositions." Citizens from Russia, Japan, and the United States were asked to identify the most likely and least likely responses to a variety of foreign policy situations by their own country and the two other countries. Hudson explains that the results indicate that such "foreign policy action templates" do exist, at least in the minds of the citizens tested, whose behavioral responses for their own country and the other countries tended to match.

The Western Bias

Analysts Joseph Bermudez and Sharon Richardson attempt to combat the cultural biases of Western analysts looking at North Korea.[34] In an imaginary report delivered by an individual close to the regime, the authors attempt to construct the tone and perspective of an individual inside the North Korean power structure, offering an interesting glimpse into how the regime and its decision-makers operate. The authors acknowledge that their monograph cannot be proven by hard data but is meant to stimulate discussion and encourage alternative thinking.

CONCLUSION

There is no shortage of literature on the subject of strategic culture. One challenge is distilling in the information into a useful, policy-relevant framework. This is difficult since strategic culture is not universal. A parsimonious theory of strategic culture does not exist. Each state actor, non-state actor and organization has their own operational code, their own history, their own assumptions, and own strategic culture.

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[33] Hugh Gusterson, *Nuclear Rites: Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, March 1998).

[34] Joseph S. Bermudez, Jr. and Sharon A. Richardson, "The North Korean View of the Development and Production of Strategic Weapons Systems," available at www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/rivals/pfpk-ch3.pdf.

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- Barry Schneider, "Radical Responses to Radical Regimes - Evaluating Preemptive Counter-Proliferation," *McNair Paper*, Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS), May 1995.
- Michael Krepon, "Needed: A Comprehensive Framework for Eliminating WMD," The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, No. 13, available at <www.wmdcommission.org/files/No13.pdf>

Religion/Theology
- Stephen Kierulff, "Belief in 'Armageddon Theology' and Willingness to Risk Nuclear War," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Mar., 1991), pp. 81-93
- James J. Farrell**, "**Thomas Merton and the Religion of the Bomb," *Religion and American Culture*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Winter 1995), pp. 77-98.
- Richard K. Betts, "Paranoids, Pygmies, Pariahs & Nonproliferation," *Foreign Policy*, No. 26 (Spring 1977), pp. 157 – 183.

Actor-Specific
- Lewis A. Dunn, "Can al Qaeda Be Deterred from Using Nuclear Weapons?" Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction (Washington: National Defense University Press, July 2005).
- Stephen F. Burgess and Helen E. Purkitt, *The Rollback of the South African Chemical and Biological Warfare Program,* monograph (Maxwell AFB, AL.: U.S. Air Force Counterproliferation Center, 2001).
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- Helen E. Purkitt, "Correspondence: South Africa's Nuclear Decisions," *International Security*, Volume 27, Number 1 (Summer 2002), pp. 186-194
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- Candida C. Peterson, Jeanette A. Lawrence and Irene Dawes, "The relationship of gender, sex role, and law-and-order attitudes to nuclear opinions," *Sex Roles*, Vol. 22, Nos. 5-6 (March 1990).
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<www.ssrc.org/programs/gsc/gsc_activities/SA_Nuclear_Project/culture.page>

- Lynn Eden, Robert Norris, and Nina Tannenwald, "The Taboos, Secrets, and Hidden History of Nuclear Weapons," The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 2005, available at <www.carnegieendowment.org/static/npp/2005conference/presentations/Taboos_tran script.pdf>
- Bryan C. Taylor, "'Our Bruised Arms Hung Up as Monuments': Nuclear Iconography in Post-Cold War Culture," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (March 2003), pp. 1–34.

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OUT OF THE WILDERNESS:
PRIME TIME FOR STRATEGIC CULTURE

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Prime-time for Strategic Culture

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Table of Contents

Summary

Strategic culture has come of age, at last. After years in the wilderness, the defense community has adopted it officially as an important concept with significant implications. There are some difficulties, however, in finding a methodology to study it and, indeed, in understanding just how it 'works'. In the spirit of Sun-tzu and Jomini, there is a danger that culture is in the process of being identified as the Philosopher's Stone for policy and strategy; the magical element that will transform ignorance into knowledge. Also, there is some likelihood that culture is becoming fashionable. This means that it must also become unfashionable, after a period of prime-time prominence.

Scholars cannot agree on how to define strategic culture. This is rather foolish since there is general agreement on the content of the subject and, roughly, on how it functions. The principal disagreement is between those who include behavior within their definition, and those who exclude it. This is a burning issue for theory builders but otherwise is not really of any great significance. If we have resort to an educated common sense, a most unscholarly proposition, the difficulty evaporates. All people are 'cultural creatures'. Everything we think and do is performed in the context of culture, perhaps cultures. But culture need not dominate. It is an ever present potential influence, sometimes pressing hard, sometimes not. Its principal function is to make sense of the world for us. Some scholars misunderstand the nature and variable character of strategic culture and, as a consequence, they contrast 'culturalist' with realist approaches to security. This is wrong. All realists, including neorealists, are, to repeat, 'cultural creatures', whether they like it or not.

Culture is of the utmost importance. It functions at, indeed as, the engine of thought and behaviour. Clausewitz tells us that war is a contest between two wills, and the will of a belligerent is the product of moral factors which can be summarized as culture. Sun-tzu was right in insisting on the importance of self knowledge and of knowledge of one's enemies. Cultural comprehension meets that insistence.

But there are many perils and pitfalls in both cultural analysis and in an endeavour to apply better cultural understanding pragmatically. In summary form, culture: (1) may explain too much to be useful, since it is ubiquitous in our contexts; (2) has problems of evidence, it is a notoriously opaque, vague, concept; (3) can be misused as a panacea solution; (4) may appeal to those who favor an essentialist view of the world, and who oversimplify thereby; (5) changes, it is not static, it can even change drastically under the impact of traumatic strategic shock; (6) is usually diverse, albeit under a broad national umbrella of assumptions; (7) is not exclusive, there are many cultural features common among national cultures; (8) can borrow and adapt from abroad; (9) does not guarantee victory, while greater understanding is desirable, someone has to operationalize and act upon cultural understanding; (10) will be diluted in its impact on decisions and actions by the fact that official behavior is always a negotiated outcome among competing interests; (11) and the excellent idea of cultural study all too easily loses its sparkle when it enters the methodological swamp in which professional theorists lurk. Perhaps Rumsfeld was right and it is a good idea to drain some swamps.

Strategic culture is vitally important. There are no persuasive arguments to the contrary. But, a little theory goes a long way in a highly practical field like strategic studies. And culture is no panacea. It is not the golden key that can transform military losers into winners. Cultural change happens, but it will not change suddenly by order from above. Finally, if strategic culture is indeed the concept of the moment, its lustre will soon vanish as it is replaced by the next fashionable wonder solution to our strategic problems.

Out of the Wilderness: Prime-time for Strategic Culture

Introduction : Eyes on 'The Plot'

Scholars are rightly suspicious of, or disdainful and actually hostile to, common sense. After all, common sense is not really common, rather is it value-charged by culture, the subject of this paper. Nonetheless, we discard and despise common sense at our peril. Among other points, I will suggest that one can explain strategic culture and its associated concepts (public culture and military or organizational culture), what they are, how they work, and why they are important, both simply and accurately enough. Accurately enough for what? Accurately enough to grasp the essentials of 'the plot' concerning strategic culture. And that, after all, is all that a defense community needs to achieve. I might proceed further, if pressed, and argue that the bare outlines of 'the plot' are the most that can be achieved. By way of a thought provoking analogy, you might care to consider the practical inutility of the nearly 90 years of scholarship that have been devoted to that highly scholar-unfriendly subject, the causes of war. Just about everything that has been written on the subject with a view to developing a general theory of the causes of war, has been a thorough waste of effort. The reason is not hard to find. The job cannot be done. The relevant history is too complex, contexts are too rich and contingent. If you attempt the impossible, settle upon the wrong organizing question, you will accomplish nothing of much value, save by serendipity. I suspect that scholarship on strategic culture, albeit for a different reason, similarly is bound to fail when it ventures far beyond our culture-bound common sense and positivistically seeks a certain general wisdom. Strategy does not yield to the scientific method, and nor does the study of culture.

A powerful, even compelling, idea like strategic culture, easily is reduced to something far less compelling when it is adopted as the concept of the month, or even the period, by scholars and soldiers and officials. Both groups have their professional biases, even their *deformations professionelles*. For another analogy, a new religion will likely burst upon an astonished and delighted populace with a rather simple, yet powerfully persuasive, story. But once that story is interpreted and systematized into doctrine by professional theologians, much of the original message, the essential plot even, is apt to

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be watered down or lost. So, this paper has much to say, not all of it friendly, about the way strategic culture is being studied and prospectively employed. My purpose, though, is entirely constructive. I will endeavour to adhere to what I am calling 'the plot'. If you prefer, and with some apologies to Jeremy Black who for some good reasons detests this notion, I will always try to keep in mind a master narrative.[1] That narrative, or plot, explains what we are talking about and, by plain implication, at least, why we are talking about it.

This study advances first by specifying some general points on our subject. Next, it bows to convention and offers judgments on definitions and methodology, notwithstanding the criticisms that have been offered, and will be offered in more detail below, of scholars who overindulge in the heady delights of theory. The author cannot deny that he too is a theorist. The tale then proceeds to explore the reasons why culture matters greatly. Finally, since cultural analysis has become so popular, it is necessary to outline the principal perils and pitfalls that await the overenthusiastic culturalist. But, first, let us stake out a position, and perhaps fortify it a little, by way of registering some general points.

Some General Points

I will begin by anchoring the paper with, perhaps to, five general judgments. These are discussed and developed in more detail in later sections.

1. Culture comes of age: After decades wandering in the wilderness, the few scholars who wrote about strategic culture have recently been joined by, so it seems, just about everyone else. It seems as if the case for cultural analysis has been made and now is widely accepted. Exactly how such analysis should be performed, and on what, precisely, is another matter. Also, the anticipated benefits of cultural analysis remain somewhat uncertain. But, in the U.S. defense community you cannot keep a big, and possibly good, idea down; not once it has secured official adoption. When Army transformation documents refer to an intention to "transform its culture …",[2] you know that both the noun and the verb are words that are much in favor. Ever since 1973, I have been quoting two wonderful sentences from Bernard Brodie's final book, *War and Politics*. He wrote: "Whether with respect to arms control or otherwise, good strategy

presumes good anthropology and sociology. Some of the greatest military blunders of all time have resulted from juvenile evaluations in this department".[3] Brodie cited the deadly facts that both Napoleon and Hitler despised the Russians. Were he alive today he might well have cited the case of those who invade Iraq without understanding that the country – I speak loosely in that regard – is a multicultural society, which sometimes is controlled by a highly authoritarian central government.[4] Destroy that central government and the country reverts to control by its enduring tribal power structure. When Brodie offered his advice on the value of anthropology and sociology in 1973, he was conveying a message that the strategic studies community had not been hearing. One would like to believe that today his claim is generally accepted, in principle, if not necessarily much in practice, as yet.

2. <u>Methodology and understanding</u>: Strategy is a practical business.[5] Scholars who lack experience in government, let alone in war itself, are apt to forget this. Also, of course, Strategic Studies typically is regarded as a sub-field within the broad tent of International Relations (to mix my metaphors). International Relations, the multidiscipline, was kick-started as an academic pursuit in horrified reaction to World War I. What I am claiming is that Strategic Studies and its scholarly contextual master has always been intended to be useful to the society within which it is practiced and possibly to all humankind. It is not a fine art. Since all professions protect themselves with specialized language known only to initiates, it is not surprising that theorists of International Relations have invented their own code words and, like all bodies of theologians, have fractured into competing schools of belief. Should I lose sleep worrying about whether I am a neo-classical realist or a constructivist? Could I possibly be both? Does it matter? The reason for this seeming digression is that scholars of International Relations, most especially those of a marked social scientific bent, are now hot on the trail of that elusive quarry, strategic culture. So, their assumptions, methods and goals, are of some relevance to this paper. The trouble is, I suspect, that the industrious and methodologically innovative theorist is overreaching both what is possible and what is useful. For a helpful analogy, I draw your attention to an article written by Hedley Bull in 1968, "Strategic Studies and its Critics". Bull addressed, and supported, a charge levelled by some strategists at their own profession. The charge was

that in their pursuit of "technical rigor and precision", many strategists have "lost touch with political variety and change".[6] This strategist, for one, cannot avoid the conviction that strategic cultural analysis sometimes is guilty of the same character of error that Bull identified. The demands of rigor and precision in theory construction are allowed to triumph over the substance of the subject. The writings of Alastair Iain Johnston on the strategic culture(s) of China are a classic example of what I mean.[7] He cannot include behavior in his definition of culture because to do so would torpedo his exercise in theory building. It would be difficult, not to say impossible, to assess the influence of strategic culture if it is both input and already is inherent in the output. I sympathize with him over his dilemma, though not with his solution. While a rigorous method is admirable, it ought not to take precedence over an inconvenient reality.

3. <u>Jomini, Sun-tzu, and the Philosopher's Stone</u>: Culture matters deeply, as is explained in a later section. But, it is not all that matters in strategy and security. Alas the spirit of Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini is alive and well and inhabits Washington, DC. It was the spirit of his theory that gave us a technical and utterly apolitical understanding of strategic stability during the Cold War. Although Jomini said that strategy was an art, I doubt if he really believed it.[8] Rather did he believe that there was a science of war, a science the mysteries of which he was the first to present coherently, if not to unlock. If you read liberal commentaries in opposition to ballistic missile defense or to the *Peacekeeper* (MX) ICBM, you will be in Jominian territory, intellectually. The Swiss colonel tells us in his best known book, *The Art of War* of 1838, "that there is one great principle underlying all the operations of war – a principle which must be followed in all good combinations".[9] The maxims that follow are keyed to the principle of overwhelming an inferior portion of the enemy's army with a superior quantity of yours. In Jomini's words, "[e]very maxim relating to war will be good if it indicates the employment of the greatest portion of the means of action at the decisive moment and place".[10] The confused, if not baffled, soldier of today, can hardly help but be cheered by Jomini's claim, advice is too weak a term, that "[c]orrect theories, founded upon right principles, sustained by actual events of wars, and added to accurate military history, will form a true school of instruction for generals".[11]

But since Jomini's "one great principle" does not sit comfortably with the character of irregular warfare, our leading contemporary concern – for a while, at least – we can look to ancient China for a more suitable great principle. Not only do we find such help in Sun-tzu, we discover that it blesses cultural understanding. Indeed, it all but mandates cultural study. Despite its overfamiliarity, I am obliged to quote the well known formula.

> Thus it is said that one who knows the enemy and knows himself will not be endangered in a hundred engagements. One who does not know the enemy but knows himself will sometimes be victorious, sometimes meet with defeat. One who knows neither the enemy nor himself will invariably be defeated in every engagement.[12]

Good advice, and it is at least half true. Self and other knowledge is important, even vitally so, but it does not guarantee success. There is a danger that Sun-tzu's excellent formula, reinforced by a Jominian spirit, will encourage the fallacious conviction that in understanding culture we have stumbled across the answer to, the correct great principle for, our strategic dilemmas. Thus, a secure grasp of the strategic cultures of friends and foes can serve as the Philosopher's Stone that transmutes the lead of mere information into the gold of a comprehension that is strategically usable.

4. Fashion rules, briefly: The American defense community has a history of intellectual, and even policy, capture by the big idea of the moment, perhaps even the decade. Not so long ago, the magic concept was RMA. RMA gave way to transformation, which, to be generous, one could interpret as the logical and practical consequence of RMA. Today it seems, at long last, culture either is, or is in serious danger of becoming, the big idea of the moment. In some ways this is good news. After all, this theorist, for one, has been advocating cultural analysis for 30 years. But, it is a law of life that fashion changes. It changes because American culture favors novelty and innovation, even if it is the rediscovery of the blindingly obvious, and because it is in the very nature of fashion to change. People, including defense theorists, get bored composing briefings on the same subject, time after time. Also, any subject eventually exhausts the imagination of theorists. Furthermore, as America's security problems shift, so does the focus of debate on suitable responses. Nonetheless, it is to be hoped that

when the current modest level of official enthusiasm for cultural understanding ebbs away, some nuggets of lasting value will be left on our intellectual and institutional beaches. To venture a speculative thought, the most likely reason why strategic culture will lack staying power as a potent idea in the U.S. defense community, will be because of its inherent difficulty.

Strategic cultural understanding is difficult to achieve and even more difficult to operationalize. The fact that it is an important concept, robust in its essentials against challenge, is irrelevant. The practical implications of the promotion of culture to intellectual and doctrinal leading edge status may well, indeed probably will, prove to be unduly demanding. For example, as the global superpower, determined to drain swamps anywhere in the global war on terror (GWOT, a now dated, but still attractive, acronym), America's need for cultural expertise is all but unbounded.[13] It takes years, even decades, to grow a body of Americans who are truly local experts. All things are possible, but this strategic theorist is skeptical that culture, strategic and other, has the horsepower to stay the course in official U.S. policy focus, let alone in troop training and interagency cooperation. More to the point perhaps, it is by no means self evident that the job is doable.

It is useful to change the question when the original question can produce only a negative answer. In reply to the question, can we achieve good cultural understanding of most of our likely friends and probable foes, one is obliged to say, almost certainly not. So, let us change the question. In answer to the reframed question, can we achieve good enough cultural understanding of some of our likely friends and most probable foes, we can say perhaps, albeit only with the application of a great deal of sustained effort. As much to the point is the issue of just how one uses cultural understanding. Who uses it, and how important is such use? That thought bears directly upon the core concern of this paper, the significance of culture relative to other influences upon decisions and behavior. If culture is a variable intervening between stimulus and decision and action, a conception that this author does not endorse, what else intervenes?

5. Culture matters: Given the critical tone and content of some of this section thus far, it is necessary that it be concluded on a strongly positive note. None of the criticisms levelled thus far and in the sections to come are intended to suggest that culture

is of minor, let alone no, importance. This theorist has long been persuaded that culture is a significant, and can even be a determining, influence upon strategic decisions and behavior. The doubts expressed here pertain to the ways in which culture is conceptualized and, of much greater moment, to the practical difficulties that inhibit even culturally well educated performance.

What is Culture and What does it Do?

This paper opened with an unscholarly endorsement of that old unreliable virtue, common sense. Unreliable though it is, it has much to offer to the would-be user of the concept, and perhaps the theory, of strategic culture. Before we delve into some of the dimmer and rococo regions of academic discourse, let us see if we can describe the essence of our subject in language that is simple and clear, yet which is not, as a consequence, misleading. When we refer to Russian strategic culture, for example, what we are claiming is that there is a 'Russian way' both of thinking about the threat or use of force for political purposes, and of acting strategically. In the latter regard, so this statement maintains, there is a Russian 'way of war'. This 'Russian way' is a distinctive product of Russia's history and geography, as interpreted for guidance by Russians. Stated thus, a host of critical questions beg for answer. Let me pre-empt at least a few of them. Whatever one's scholarly credo on research methodology, as I keep saying it is necessary not to lose the plot. The plot, please remember, the master narrative, is the disarmingly elementary, even commonsensical, idea, that a security community is likely to think and behave in ways that are influenced by what it has taught itself about itself and its relevant contexts. And that education, to repeat, rests primarily upon the interpretation of history and history's geography (or should it be geography's history?) My geopolitical friends favor the aphorism that 'geography is destiny'. Perhaps the dedicated culturalist will offer the rival dictum that 'culture is destiny'.

Let us clear some underbrush. However one chooses to define culture in general, and strategic culture in particular, those of us who wear the badge of the 'culturalist' are not claiming that culture is always, or even necessarily often, the prime determinant of decision and action. Strategic decision and behavior typically is influenced by many factors, not least by those dynamics of executive action which ensure that outcomes are

negotiated among competing interests. However, it is well to remember that virtually whatever the mix of factors that we believe have produced a decision and its consequent strategic behavior, all of the people and the organizations within which they function are more or less distinctively encultured. This fact is more than a little inconvenient for some would be theory builders. It would be helpful if one could postulate stimuli entering a decision making process, with culture expediently confined to the role of intervening variable, among other intervening variables, between stimuli and decision. Alas, the world is not like that. Culture is not an intervening variable. We are all encultured. But to state that obvious point is not to claim that culture, understood as preference, necessarily has the last word on our decisions or our actions. Culture doesn't usually program us to think and behave like automata, though one can find cases where an approximation to such a malady appears to have occurred.

After reading a few pages of tortuous scholarly theorizing one longs for a return to basics. Having come perilously close to scholarly pathology, I will now be as basic as I know how in describing our subject. Strategic culture is of interest because the concept suggests, perhaps insists, that different security communities think and behave somewhat differently about strategic matters. Those differences stem from communities' distinctive histories and geographies. We can, and should, add many caveats and qualifications to the basic statement just offered. But, what I have just stated in the spirit of back to basics, is <u>the plot</u>. It is deceptively simple. One would think that it is so elementary, commonsensical even, as to be banal. And yet, time after time, strategic history reveals belligerents who either believed that strategic culture was common and universal, or who simply chose to ignore the distinctive cultural dimensions of their adversaries. Of course, if one is ignorant of that dimension, it is difficult to do anything other than to assume that the enemy's strategic preferences will be broadly familiar.

I would like to suggest that there is rather less of substance, and of value, to some of the scholarly debate than meets the eye. We should not take our definitions or our theories too seriously.[14] A little theory goes a long way; more often than not it goes too far. I commend to you this anarchic comment by the anthropologist Leslie A. White: "Culture is not basically anything. Culture is a word concept. It is man-made and may be used arbitrarily to designate anything, we may define the concept as we please".[15]

That is a little extreme, but his point is valid. Definitions are arbitrary and can be neither right nor wrong. Nonetheless, some definitions of culture are less defensibly arbitrary than are others. Rather than offering my own definition, I will endorse Jack Snyder's 1977 offering from the Rand study which triggered the modern debate about strategic culture. Snyder's definition is good enough to provide focus and to help keep us glued to the plot. Snyder wrote, with one minor amendment, for the changed strategic context:

> Strategic culture can be defined as the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to [nuclear] strategy. In the area of strategy, habitual behaviour is largely cognitive behavior.[16]

Although I have done scholarly battle with Alastair Iain Johnston over the definitional issue of whether or not strategic culture should be understood to include behavioral as well as ideational phenomena, I am less and less persuaded that that debate had, or has, any real significance.[17] The ability of scholars to make a necessarily opaque concept like strategic culture even less penetrable is truly amazing. Of course, it is the professional drive of the social scientist for theory that is largely to blame. I admit that it is more than moderately difficult to design a theory of strategic culture if the elusive beast, culture, is both input and output, presumed cause and presumed consequence. But, so what! The sins of the would-be cultural theorists pale by comparison with the nonsense that we know as neorealism. That theory, family of theories, or approach – take your pick – is relevant to this discussion since it is often contrasted with culturalism. On a personal note, when I first encountered neorealism, back in 1979 in Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*, I thought it was so absurd that noone would, or should, take it seriously.[18] Obviously, I was wrong, with respect to its popularity, but not to its merit. Defense professionals understand that defense policy, strategy, and force planning, are all made at home. Also, we understand that home differs radically from security community to security community. So the neorealist proposition that strategic history, past, present, and future, can be explained strictly by reference to the relations among political entities, with no regard paid to their domestic processes, is, frankly, preposterous. I thought this in 1979 and, being deeply conservative, I still think the same

way today. A pure neorealist view of strategic history is as flawed as would be an unmodified belief in cultural dominance. I shall argue in this paper that culture must always be a potential influence upon decision and action. But that potential is not uniformly, or necessarily, realized.

Useful work has been done by scholars of recent years in sorting out different segments of our subject. Specifically, there is now widespread agreement that although strategic culture has long been, and remains, the umbrella concept, in fact we need to distinguish among: (1) public culture; (2) strategic culture; and (3) military (organizational) culture. Relatively little work has been performed as yet in attempts to connect the three. Among the many virtues of recognition of these minimal, but essential, distinctions, is the discouragement they should give to those who might be inclined to look for a neatly unitary strategic culture. There may be a body of strategic beliefs and attitudes to which, say, most Americans would sign up. But, the many organizational players in policymaking and policy implementation will each have their unique take on how those common beliefs and attitudes should be expressed in actual strategic behavior. In effect, I am going back a decade even from Kenneth Waltz, to Graham Allison and the theory of bureaucratic politics.[19] Remember the old maxim: "where you stand depends on where you sit". I do not wish to reject one rational choice model only to endorse another. Nonetheless, to study strategic culture it is necessary to disaggregate the subject somewhat. In addition to identifying community-wide strategic nostrums and the like, it is necessary also to consider the institutional preferences of self-interested organizations with their career structures. It may make sense to think in terms of multiple cultural identities.

Where does culture come from? As indicated already, it comes from history and geography. However, one must qualify that general claim by noting that culture is not static. It can evolve, it can adapt, and it can even change radically if battered by traumatic shock. Isobel V. Hull, in her study of the military culture of Imperial Germany, observes intriguingly that, "[o]ne might say that militaries are in the trauma business".[20] The First World War itself may not have changed public and eventually the strategic and military cultures of Russia and Germany. But it was the principal enabler of the cultural revolution wrought by the Bolsheviks. Also, with much assistance from the Great

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Depression, 1914-18 eventually bears a major responsibility for another cultural revolution, that effected by Hitler and his Nazis. Historians argue about whether the Third Reich was the culmination of, or the exception to, German history, and a similar argument occasionally flourished with reference to tsarist Russia and Stalin as the new Red Tsar. My point, simply, is that public and strategic culture can change dramatically. Unsurprisingly, the most usual cause of such change is the traumatic effect of war and its consequences.

We must insist that culture in its several identities – public, strategic, military-organizational – should consist of assumptions and ideas that are strongly held. Its roots may not be very deep, and the plant might be a recent development, but it has to be hardy to be worthy of the description, cultural. Culture does not refer to mere opinions, to fashionable attitudes, or to shifting patterns of behavior. However, to claim that it, this somewhat opaque, mysterious 'it' of culture, is more permanent than opinion is not to suggest that it is permanent; it is not. Culture changes, adapts, sometimes adapts poorly, and, as an effect of societal shock, can alter radically.

Like strategy, culture is a difficult concept to explain, let alone portray convincingly.[21] You know you are in trouble when our culture specialists, the cultural anthropologists and sociologists, cannot agree on a definition. Culture is among the most contested of concepts. Fortunately, as sensible people, in desperation we are at liberty to enlist common sense in our column. Since culture, like love and honor, for other examples, cannot be captured and photographed directly, the best we can manage is to identify evidence, at least probable evidence, of its presence. In that respect, following the formula suggested by sociologist Raymond Williams, I look for culture in a community's ideals, in its ideas as revealed by its documents and other artefacts, and in its behavior.[22] In order to outflank methodologically the long running scholars' dispute over whether or not behavior should be included in the preferred definition of culture, it is helpful to ask, 'what does culture do?'.

Today, most, though certainly not all, strategic commentators and senior defense officials agree with the proposition that culture is important. That now popular, even fashionable, opinion, is broadly correct. Such doubts as I have, which are explained later in this paper, pertain not to the issue of culture's importance, but rather to finding useful

answers to the quintessential strategist's question, 'so what?' In fact, culture is much easier to explain than it is to define. What does culture do? It enables us to make sense of our world. Culture provides us with the assumptions, largely unspoken and unwritten, that are the foundation for, though not the sole determinants of, our judgments.[23] Culture yields us the truths, small and large, that we know should guide our decisions and actions. In practice, we will often ignore those truths and behave expediently. Our strategic culture is likely to educate us with quite powerful preferences. But in a world that contains competing interests at home, in short a political process, and external menaces, we must do the best we can.

A culturalist perspective is not at odds with a realist one, at least it is not provided one thinks clearly and files some of the more theoretical literature somewhere appropriate. To quote Isobel V. Hull again, we are all "cultural creatures".[24] This insight has come as something of a revelation to the devotees of universal rational choice. And, as Keith Payne has argued convincingly with respect to deterrence, the principal pillars of modern Western strategic theory, which is to say the dominant theories of deterrence, limited war, and arms control, were all of them constructed on the false assumption of a common rationality.[25] Such an assumption is acultural. There may well be a fairly common rationality among security communities, in fact it is highly probable that all such communities make decisions and act upon them in a rational manner. The trouble lies with the content of that rationality, with its reasonableness in our encultured view, not with the process which purposefully connects means with ends. The suicide bomber is a rational person. But, to us, he or she is not a reasonable one.

Realism and culturalism are not in opposition, except in some fictional universe that should not detain us. Since we are all encultured, whether we like it or not, we are obliged to pursue our interests with our values and preferences as a more or less powerful influence upon our decisions and behavior. As often as not, our world is one of necessity wherein we must simply do our best to realize as many of our desires as the relevant context permits. Culture need not imprison us and command us to behave in ways that are dysfunctional. Of course, it may do, in which case we risk entering a pathological decisionmaking and behavioral condition. I can conceive of behavior motivated by urges that are strongly cultural in origin, but scarcely at all 'realist' as that much abused term

should imply. But, it is literally impossible for there to be behavior of a realist character that is utterly bereft of cultural influence. French statecraft, for example, is justly celebrated for its cynical and realistic expediency. Those useful characteristics are not acultural, rather are they integral to French public and strategic cultures.

The scholarly debate that contrasts realism with culturalism inadvertently encourages us to forget that we are encultured with strategic nostrums and other assumptions that derive from interpretation of our security community's historical experience. Culturalists do not need to be unworldly idealists, to be despised and ignored by allegedly hard-headed realists. To repeat: we are all cultural creatures. Moreover, strategic cultures are by and large functional, not dysfunctional, for their bearers. The dedicated owners of truly dysfunctional strategic cultures have a way of vanishing from the history books.

In common with its close relatives, public and military cultures, strategic culture is not an optional extra. All security communities have belief systems, assumptions, and preferences for behavior that play as one, among many, factor or dimension in their strategic histories. On many strategic issues, distinctive cultural influence may scarcely be a player, while on others it will all but command policy. One size in theory does not fit every historical case.

Why Culture Matters

Strategic culture and geopolitics are no rivals, and neither are strategic culture and *realpolitik*. While citing a caveat with respect to some religious contributions to the ideational, it is plausible to claim that culture is not free floating, offering a range of options to communities in need of a little guidance. Rather is culture grounded, even rooted, in the geopolitical history, the unique experience, of a people. When I say that strategic culture is grounded in the historical experience of a particular geopolitically located, if in some cases, mobile, people, I mean that it is that people's interpretation of their history. But, that claim, as just stated, should not be understood as endorsement of a pure version of the constructivist creed. It is not. Despite the many warnings about the perils and pitfalls that await the unwary culturalist that this paper specifies in the next

section, let no one doubt that a close to maximalist claim for the importance of culture is going to be advanced here.

Do not forget the core of our subject; what we are really talking about. Regardless of the precise definition of culture, and strategic culture in particular, that you most favour, our subject functions on two levels. First, it can be the prime mover of thought, judgment, policy, and all that follows therefrom. Second, it must always be present as an actual, or potential, influence on our decisions and behavior. The reason, if, yet again, I dare restate the obvious, is that we are all 'cultural creatures'. In his recent Adelphi Paper, *The Transformation of Strategic Affairs*, Lawrence Freedman makes much use of, and has interesting things to say about, the concept of "narratives". In Freedman's words, narratives are "compelling story lines which can explain events convincingly and from which inferences can be drawn…".[26] I must register some, but only some, dissent from Freedman, though, when he claims that

> [n]arratives are designed or nurtured with the intention of structuring the responses of others to developing events. They are strategic because they do not arise spontaneously but are deliberately constructed or reinforced out of the ideas and thoughts that are already current.[27]

That can be so, but it understates the role of culture. It is true to claim that culture, including strategic culture, can be molded purposefully into a narrative cunningly contrived for the purpose of popular persuasion. One thinks immediately, almost reflexively, of the powerful ideologies, indeed the political quasi-religions, of Marxism and Nazism. However, excepting such extreme cases which have been historical outriders of our subject, albeit outriders of extraordinary significance, communities do not deliberately construct their cultures, strategic and other. Those cultures emerge and change as a kind of natural phenomena. They are the ever evolving product of the many efforts peoples make to explain their past, understand their present, and anticipate their future.

So opaque is the concept of culture, so hard is it to capture and quantify for analysis, that it lends itself all too easily to exaggeration or near dismissal. I suggest that the problem lies not so much with the concept of culture, but rather with our failure to think with sufficient clarity about what it is and how it works.   There is too much

unhelpful binary analysis. Culturalism or realism, and so forth. Consider Hitler or Stalin, or possibly Osama bin Laden: dedicated ideologues, culturalists in the fullest meaning of the word. Those men simultaneously were (and are) sincere ideologues, yet were able to behave tactically in ways that appeared to contradict their deepest beliefs when it was expedient to do so. Hitler, of course, was far less adaptable than was Stalin. To hold firmly to a master historical narrative that explains the process of change, and who should be history's winners and who its losers, does not disable one from being agile and adaptable as to means and methods. In practice, a distinguishable national strategic culture is likely to act as a holding company over a number of subsidiary military and other related cultures. Strategic culture will have a stronger or weaker influence from issue area to issue area. Also, the overall strategic culture should be considerably forgiving of those expedient and opportunistic decisions and behaviors which circumstances appear to command.

Despite the judgments just offered, it is well not to forget what our subject is about: what is the plot? If we think schematically and hierarchically, for the sake of this illustration, it is commonplace to postulate a significance tree that has political vision at the top, with the succeeding levels downwards comprising policy, grand strategy, military strategy, operations, and tactics. But whence cometh political vision? The answer, of course, is that it comes from what we call culture, strategic culture in this case. It is from our culture that we find the vision of the good or better life for ourselves and for our security community. And it is from that vision that policy draws what it is able, given real-world constraints. Truly, culture must reign, sometimes it rules, while it is ever present, so well integrated as to be unlabelled, in our thoughts and judgments, because we cannot prevent it being so.

There are many reasons one can cite in praise of strategic cultural analysis. I select just five among them to support my claim that such analysis is not only important, it is close to essential. One cannot quite claim that it is essential in the sense of being a *sine qua non* for victory or for the avoidance of defeat. The culturally ignorant can and do win wars. Also, the culturally educated will not necessarily be reliably victorious as a reward for their anthropological expertise. But those caveats are not of great significance. After all, as the Prussian grand master tells us, "[w]ar is the realm of

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chance".[28] Nothing can guarantee victory. However, there are ways of loading the dice in one's favor. Cultural comprehension is one such way. So, why does culture matter to the strategist?

Culture and Moral Factors

Culture matters greatly because it is the most important source of the moral factors that are central to the nature of war as well as to the character of wars. On its first page, *On War* declares, without equivocation, that "[w]ar is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will".[29] And what is this "will"? Clausewitz informs us that "the will is itself a moral quality".[30] He proceeds to explain that

> … most of the matters dealt with in this book [*On War*] are composed in equal parts of physical and moral causes and effects. One might say that the physical seem little more than the wooden hilt, while the moral factors are the precious metal, the real weapon, the finely-honed blade.[31]

The object in war is not usually to destroy the enemy physically, rather is it to subordinate his will to ours. It is not much of an intellectual stretch to argue that war, coercion and deterrence, are all intercultural struggles. They are contests between independent wills, the content and strength of which are very much, though not exclusively, the products of culture. But, deterrence, coercion, and war cannot be reduced conveniently simply to intercultural strife. The physical dimension matters also. The Germans and Japanese did not lack potent strategic cultures and the will to win in 1944-45. Rather were they short of men, material, and sound strategy. However, few wars are waged for the proximate purpose of completely destroying the enemy's strategic strength. Rather are they usually conducted for limited purposes and by military and other means roughly proportional to those goals. The salience of culture is revealed most clearly with respect to deterrence. For deterrence to succeed, the intended deterree has to decide he is deterred. He has a choice. And success or failure in deterrence is never attributable strictly to presumed calculations of the material balance. Much, if not most, of the abstract modelling of stable deterrence in which defense analysts used to indulge, was, of methodological necessity, innocent of the vital ingredient of political velocity.

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Rational choice has difficulty with powerful feelings. Culture, cultural understanding or its lack, is apt to be the key to deterrence success or failure.[32]

Know Yourself

As usual, Sun tzu was right. It is important to know ourselves. Unfortunately, it is extraordinarily difficult to know oneself in terms of strategic culture. In principle, we should perform far better, be more consistently successful, if we were able to look in the strategic mirror and see ourselves without significant distortion. In practice, of course, we tend to see ourselves as we would like to be. So deep is a security community's vested interest in its version of its own master strategic historical narrative, that one should not expect objective self assessment. Perhaps in the aftermath of strategic trauma, a measure of objectivity may creep in. The Germans achieved this under the inspired leadership of Chief of Staff Hans von Seeckt after World War I, with their 57 study committees.[33] After Vietnam, the Americans assuredly did not. The official U.S. response to the protracted disaster of the Vietnam project, was to ignore it for more than a generation.

It is necessary to emphasize that countries do not pick their strategic cultures at random, or because of intellectual or other fashion. Particular strategic cultures are adopted, accepted, and digested as "cultural assumptions" to quote Professor Black,[34] because they fit the characters and contexts of the relevant societies. It is true that they evolve, and that they can alter radically as a result of traumatic shock. But, it is not true that a strategic culture can be discarded by an act of will, at least not rapidly and thoroughly, save in circumstances of direst necessity. Remember that societies, security communities, do not choose their strategic cultures. Rather do their strategic cultures choose them. There is a marriage between a society's strategic need and the culture that seems best to meet that need. Of course, this is an oversimplification. However, the culture of a nation, the American for example, is not acquired by rational choice, certainly not by a single such choice. The country behaved in as strategically effective a way as it was able. That historical experience came to be all but codified in what today we are calling strategic culture.

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Behind strategic culture is a historical record, past, present, and prospectively future, in which material relations among political entities are vitally significant. Strategic culture is likely to be a highly important factor, positive or negative, perhaps some of each, contributing to overall strategic effectiveness. A cultural paradigm is a construction, and as such it can be deconstructed and reconstructed, at least in theory. In practice, even a cultural paradigm that is having a dysfunctional influence upon decisionmaking and actual strategic behavior, may not be changeable. One might not recognize the problem with one's organizing assumptions, and even if one does, the requirements and implications of change may be unduly formidable. Strategic culture certainly can be adaptable, but it is not infinitely so. It is not acquired lightly and casually, and neither can it be discarded and replaced promptly at will from a catalogue of alternative strategic cultures. An interesting question that has yet to attract any noteworthy scholarship address, is the extent to which a security community is able to choose its strategic culture. In most regards we acquire our public, strategic, and military cultures, without any exercise of conscious choice. Given the pervasive influence of strategic culture, generally silent and invisible, it is not obvious that we would know how to go about changing it, even should we wish to do so. After all, culture is a part of us. As I have argued elsewhere, we inhabit a more or less distinctive strategic context, and we are a functioning part of the context.[35]

There is probably some merit in Americans, Britons, Russians, and so forth, being more culturally self aware. But, we have to pose the classic strategist's question, 'so what?' Americans, Britons, and Russians, are what they are. While they are not locked into strategic cultures that are static and eternal in all respects, they are to an important degree captives of the cultures with which local interpretations of their distinctive histories have armed them. Even if you recognize some significant dysfunctionality in your strategic and military cultures, you may not be able to take effective corrective action. This is very much a live issue at present with respect to the official U.S. commitment to transform its armed forces, the Army most especially, of course, into an instrument of excellence in the conduct of irregular warfare of all kinds. Success is possible, but unlikely. If one compares what we used to call the traditional American

'way of war' with the style required for the countering of insurgency and terrorism, one discovers an almost perfect mismatch.[36]

Better self-knowledge is desirable, but it can offer no magical solution to the problems of a maladaptive military instrument. Strategic culture is the product of a centuries-long dialogue between a people and its history. It is not going to yield readily, painlessly, and comprehensively to a would-be revolutionary drive from the policymakers of the moment.

Know Others

Again, Sun-tzu was correct, at least he was substantially so. One cannot make a virtue of cultural ignorance. Before striking a cautionary note, let us endorse the commonplace belief that it is highly desirable to understand as much about the adversary as possible. Cultural intelligence is particularly valuable because it explains the intellectual and moral context within which decisions will be made. Needless to say, perhaps, it is far easier to count tanks and missiles than it is to grasp the cultural assumptions of an alien society, let alone comprehend the cognitive psychology of enemy leaders. How do their brains work? Physiologically like ours, of course. But, does our anatomical commonality conceal radical differences in values, preferences, and goals?

Sun-tzu makes much of the utility in understanding the enemy, and rightly so. However, his wise words need to be read with reservations. His good advice identifies a standard that is rarely met, and probably is rarely attempted. How seriously do belligerents strive to understand each other, let alone themselves? Far more often than not crises and wars erupt and one, perhaps both, sides have no choice other than to function in cultural ignorance as best they are able. The classic 'Principles of War' provide a partial solution to the perils of strategic cultural ignorance. At least they do if the object in the war is the complete overthrow of the enemy. One of those 'principles' asserts the utility of maintaining the 'initiative'.[37] In other words, keep the enemy dancing to your tune. Operate within his decision cycle, his OODA loop if you prefer, so that he is never able to wage the kind of war he might prefer.[38] In practice, this would-be solution to the problem of ignorance is not likely to be very fruitful. The reasons are because most wars are not conducted for unlimited goals, and most wars last long enough

for military initiatives to run out of logistic steam, even if only briefly. Also, we know from experience as well as from Clausewitz, that friction, chance, indeed the whole 'climate of war', can embarrass even the wisest of nostrums and maxims.[39]

Just suppose that the leaders of Imperial Japan understood themselves and, unimaginably, came also to understand the United States by, say, June 1944, the month of the fatal Battle of the Philippine Sea off Saipan. Such cultural comprehension would have been of zero value. Tokyo could not have used such anthropological insight to any strategic purpose. They were doomed. The United States was an implacable foe, totally untroubled in 1944-45 by considerations of collateral damage, and was still considerably ignorant of relevant Japanese culture. But it did not matter for the outcome of the war. Even had Americans grasped fully the importance of the Japanese notion of honor, they could not have used that understanding, save with respect to the vital importance to the enemy of the preservation of the Imperial office. On a much more constructive note, had Americans read their Thucydides carefully in 1940-41, they should have been impressed by the middle item in his famous tryptich of motives for war: fear, honor, and interest. U.S. efforts to coerce Japan posed lethal threats both to Japanese interests and, above all else, to its honor. On the Japanese side, had Tokyo studied American public and strategic cultures, it ought to have realized that the Imperial Navy's Pearl Harbor preference must guarantee the onset of a total war that it could not possibly win. Indeed, the only scenario that might yield success for Tokyo, would be one wherein Germany defeated the Soviet Union. However, even that happy, if increasingly improbable, prospect, would fall short of guaranteeing U.S. acquiescence in Japanese aggression. The mutual cultural misassessments of Japan and the United States in 1940-41, illustrate clearly just how important it can be to achieve cultural understanding of the foe.[40]

The Perils and Pitfalls of Cultural Enquiry

In the judgment of this strategic theorist there is, and can be, no productive debate between those who favor study of the cultural dimension to war, peace, and strategy, and those who do not. The claim that cultural study has not yielded insights superior to those attainable by realist investigation, is misguided on several counts.[41] It is wrong in that it postulates a realist project that is somehow, strangely, culture free. Frankly, that is

absurd. Also, it flies in the face of an overwhelming weight of strategic historical evidence. Indeed, the case, not for a culturalist approach, but rather for the study of culture, including cognitive psychology, is so strong that the caveats cited in this section of the paper are only that, caveats not showstoppers.

Everyone will have their own favorite list of doubts and problems with cultural enquiry. Just 11 are cited here for brief analysis. Each could benefit from essay length treatment.

1. Explaining too much: Since all humans are encultured, most of us multiply so, culture begins to look like a theory of everything. Such a theory, alas, is a theory of nothing. If everything we think and do has to be influenced by culture, and is in a vital sense a cultural manifestation, inter alia, there is no non-cultural space at all. Since this peril has some empirical merit, theorists of culture need to consider it more seriously than they have to date. Scholars have to acknowledge that that which is theoretically inconvenient, is not necessarily, as a consequence, untrue. Commonsense can be of assistance.

2. The problem of evidence: What is the evidence? Well, it rather depends on how one defines culture. If we suppose, for the sake of argument that there are wholly extra-cultural influences on policy and strategy, such factors should not be considered outside of their cultural context. The sensible culturalist does not assert that culture invariably rules. Rather is the claim to the effect that culture is usually, perhaps always, a factor, one dimension among many. Unpicking a decision, deconstructing a strategy and style in warfare, for clear evidence of cultural footprints, is always going to be a contestable endeavor. The somewhat irritating truth is that all of us, our institutions, and our processes of governance, have been shaped, at least influenced, by what we understand as culture. This claim is, I believe, methodologically devastating. Nonetheless, it is true. And it does not in any way detract from the proposition that cultural matters are vitally important.

3. Culture as panacea: Politicians and soldiers are problem-solvers. Truth is what works. Strategy, and strategic studies, is a pragmatic undertaking.[42] As a consequence, defense communities typically are vulnerable to ambush and capture by almost any new sounding big idea which is touted as the solution to the overwhelming

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problem of the moment. Strategic culture is just such a big idea. It is ironic that it always was a good idea. It was good when this author and others wrote about it in the 1970s and 1980s, and when Sun-tzu praised its virtues 2,400 years ago. Better late than never, one should observe. Context is all. Culture has become popular, even fashionable, all of a sudden, because the United States and its allies today are engaged in transcultural warfare.[43] There is nothing whatsoever novel about transcultural warfare, but it does happen to be different from the rough symmetry that characterized the Soviet-American strategic stand-off for 40 plus years, as well as the two world wars. It is understandable that Washington will lend an ear, and provide some money, to almost anyone who is selling a patent medicine to cure its contemporary problems. 'Culture' is one such patent medicine, in the minds of many. This is unfortunate, because, as this paper has argued, there is an excellent case for cultural study. We can only hope that a sensible regard for the cultural dimension to war and strategy will not be tainted unduly by association with the belief that cultural mastery is the path to strategic salvation.

4. <u>Cultural essentialism</u>: One suspects that in most cases, most of the time, it is impractical to seek to distinguish the cultural from the unarguably non-cultural among the influences upon decisions. Indeed, as this paper has suggested tentatively and somewhat dangerously, it is not obvious that a meaningful distinction between the cultural and the extra-cultural can or should be drawn. A brute force way to bulldoze this difficulty is by having resort to the wonderful word, 'essentially'. The determined, not to say dogmatic, culturalist, scores with his or her great essentialist simplification. All the while, a nod is given to other, lesser influences. The hunt for essential truth is never ending, as scholars strive to penetrate to the heart of the matter. Whether or not there is such an animal is a troubling question.

5. <u>Culture can and does change</u>: Culture does not change frequently or, usually, radically. If it did, it would not be culture. Definition has its uses. Culturalist enquiry is subject to the temptation to assume a relatively static character to strategic and military cultures. The same pathology afflicts those among us who write about 'the American (or other) way of war'. *Mea culpa*, I believe.[44] Strategic culture both evolves and can shift seismically if it is assaulted by a traumatic shock of sufficient awesomeness.

6. <u>Culture is diverse</u>: A security community may have more than one strategic culture, at least at the level of a traditional 'way of war'. Britain has been the exemplar of a maritime power, and for a long while it was the proud owner of a global empire acquired for profit and defended by maritime supremacy. But, strange to note, in the twentieth century, as in the high Middle Ages for England, Britain was as much, if not more, of a continental, than a maritime power. In World War I, after 19 August, 1915, Britain made an open ended commitment to continental warfare, a decision that eventually resulted in General Haig commanding a BEF of 60 divisions.[45] In 1939-40, Britain planned to contribute at least 40 divisions to a recreation of the Western Front, a development mercifully ambushed by the Germans' westward strike on 10 May, 1940. While, lastly, from the late 1940s until the end of the 1980s, aside from the campaigns of imperial devolution, and the domestic nuisance of the IRA, the British armed forces prepared assiduously for continental warfare on the North German plain. There was always a significant maritime dimension to British strategic thought and effort, how could there not be for an insular power. But, it is not much of an exaggeration to claim that the twentieth was Britain's continental century. The point of the British illustration is to suggest that reasonably well-led states have strategic cultures that are adaptable to changing, and often deeply unwelcome, political and strategic contexts.

Not only can strategic culture accommodate the diversity needed to meet unexpected threats, also, of course, it has more than one sword arm. Military culture will vary both among the geographically specialized services, and within those services among their separate branches. With some good reason, it may be argued that a country's strategic culture does exist and function as a cohesive whole, notwithstanding the diversity just cited. In fact, I believe this generally, though only generally, to be the case. For reasons of history and geography, to restate the mantra of this paper, communities do have preferred ways in defense preparation, and of war. Their three, or more, services will not be of equivalent combat prowess or national strategic importance. Most, if not all, countries will be more formidable in some, rather than other, forms of warfare. The United States, for example, has been pre-eminent as an air power; indeed it has been the world's first such.[46]

7. <u>Strategic culture is not entirely exclusive</u>: The largely American theorists who created modern strategic thought in the 1950s were unwise to assume that a common logic and rationality would inform Strategic Persons everywhere. Nonetheless, much of the lore of statecraft, strategy, operations, and tactics, is recognized universally as best practice, *ceteris paribus*. People will behave differently not only because they are culturally distinctive, but also because their circumstances will differ. To the best of my knowledge, there is no rule of strategic history or cognitive psychology which requires people to follow their dreams and desires, regardless of context. Culture is an influence, it is not a drug that produces all but mindless strategic behavior. There is a danger that in hunting for evidence of strategic and military cultures, scholars will both privilege the apparently eccentric and neglect the ideas and habits that communities share, especially if they occupy the same cultural space.[47]

8. <u>Strategic cultures borrow and adapt</u>: If one is in hot pursuit of an elusive strategic culture, one is unlikely to be overly friendly to the ideas of cultural borrowing and adaptation. It is frustrating to succeed in corralling a country's strategic culture, only to learn that that culture is willing and able to borrow what its bearers recognize to be contemporary best practice from abroad. In short, strategic and military cultures may be quite adaptable. They will not be infinitely so. As we suggested earlier, truly radical change in culture occurs only as a result of seismic political, social, or military shock. But, it can and does occur. However, recent historical scholarship shows that when security communities benefit from the diffusion of useful strategic ideas and technologies, they are likely to choose to benefit in ways distinctive to themselves.[48] Historical examples abound, but the cases of national diversity in armored and air forces in World War II provide near perfect illustration of the triumph of culture.

9. <u>Cultural empathy does not ensure victory</u>: It is always a good idea to understand both the enemy and one's friends. But, understanding alone, no matter how accurate, has only limited value. Someone, or something, at the military end of the strategy bridge actually has to do strategy, operationally and tactically. The most characteristic feature of warfare is violence. War entails the threat to use force, and the actual breaking of things and killing of people. As our studies of strategic and military culture advance, we must never forget, to repeat, that strategy is a pragmatic enterprise.

It is not hard to identify weaknesses, in principle, in an adversary's strategic culture. But, can we exploit them? Understanding and consequential effective behavior may be two very different things. As often as not, one suspects, the achievement of a much deeper cultural comprehension will simply reinforce the conviction that the enemy inhabits another intellectual and emotional planet.

10. <u>Policy and strategy are negotiated outcomes</u>: Scholars may succeed in teasing out what they believe to be the core elements of a country's strategic culture, only to forget that their subject is, dare we repeat, a practical one. Academics do not inhabit a world of intellectual compromise and expedient decisions. Instead, they are, or should be, committed to the search for truth. Had such scholars functioned in government they would know that the pure flame of strategic culture is certain to be dimmed by the constraints imposed by scarce resources and competing agencies. In short, policy and strategy are always negotiated outcomes. The negotiation is unlikely to negate the influence of a general strategic culture entirely, but it is certain to ensure that that culture will be mediated by financial constraints and by competing organizational interests and cultures.

11. <u>Beware of the methodological bog</u>: This final peril and potent source of pitfalls was mentioned early on in this paper. Some social scientists, theorists of International Relations to be precise (names withheld to protect the guilty), are wont to commit the same fundamental mistake that mars a great deal of official American defense analysis. In the apposite words of John J. Weltman, and I admit to quoting him out of context, the development of nuclear strategy "represent[ed] an attempt at a Jominian solution to a problem that was essentially Clausewitzian".[49] The theorists in question seek a certainty of understanding that is not attainable. For a contemporary illustration of this phenomenon, official military enthusiasm for EBO (Effects Based Operations) is the latest example of an attempt to turn the art of war into the science of war.[50] Of course, it is folly. But, the quest for calculable certainty is never ending.[51] Given the hazards of warfare, such a search is easily understandable. Alas, warfare cannot be reduced to a quantifiable problem. Similarly, many of the worthy efforts by scholars to uncover the secrets of a country's strategic culture, and especially the influence of that culture on behavior, are triumphs of misplaced methodological ingenuity. Methodologically

elaborate and rigorous historical case studies of strategic culture, not that there have been many, have a way of being obliged to do great violence to the nuances and complexity of their subject. I doubt if I am the only person to notice that sophistication, at least ambition, in methodology, is rarely rewarded with plausible sophistication in knowledge gained. I suggest, as I have before, that in common with the causes of war, the scholarly challenge presented by strategic culture resides primarily in the highly resistant nature of the subject, rather than with deficiencies in our research.

Conclusions

Five claims serve to conclude this paper.

First, our analysis supports and affirms the view that culture in its several guises – public, strategic, and military-organizational – is vitally important. The "cultural thoughtways" of friends, foes, and, of course, ourselves, can have a directive or a shaping effect upon decisions and behavior.[52] In 1979, Ken Booth argued that "[s]trategic studies divorced from area studies is largely thinking in a void. The general neglect of area studies is one of the biggest criticisms which can be levelled against strategists".[53] Booth was correct then, while just about everybody interested in security policies and strategy has come, very belatedly, to realize that he is correct for today and tomorrow.

Second, hard experience should tell us that a little theory for the probing of strategic culture goes a long way, usually too far. The needs of theory building and the reality of culture's ubiquitous contextuality, are, alas, severely at odds. This does not matter for our understanding of strategic culture, but it can be deadly for the practicality, let alone the utility, of theory. I suggest that since we are all necessarily encultured, everything that we think strategically, and that subsequently we seek to do for strategic reasons, may be influenced by the cultural dimension.

Third, cultural awareness and understanding can only be helpful, but they are not a panacea for strategic dilemmas. Even a genuine cultural expertise is not <u>the</u> answer, the magic key to strategic success. There are many reasons why policy and strategy can succeed or fail, and cultural empathy or blindness is only one of them. Those among us who are recent converts to culturalism, or even just to a new respect for the cultural anthropology of conflict, should hasten to reread their Clausewitz. Such factors as

chance, friction, fear, the fog of war, and sheer incompetence, may well be more important in the shaping of events than is strategic and military culture.

Fourth, cultural change, even cultural transformation, can and does happen, but do not hold your breath waiting for it. There are serious reasons, rooted in local perceptions of historical experience and in a community's geopolitical context, why a country's strategic culture is what it is. To recognize the need for change, as in the United States today with reference to the challenge posed by irregular enemies, is not necessarily to ensure that the needed change will occur. Such change may meet with too much resistance.

Fifth and finally, the new culturalism is in danger of becoming fashionable; indeed, it may be fashionable already. For those of us who have long touted the virtues of cultural study for strategists, it is most satisfying to note that the subject of our belief is now a prime-time issue-area. But, the trouble with fashion is that it has to change. We should worry lest the current enthusiasm for cultural study and culturally informed strategic behavior should fade into history. They may join the other inherently brief fashions that have marked the passage of recent American strategic history. New, or more often, rediscovered, concepts can be discarded because they are soon intellectually exhausted, at least at a fairly elementary level. Strategic culture may well cease to find widespread favor once officials, soldiers, and sensible scholars, come to appreciate just how difficult a subject it is. More to the point, perhaps, political and military executives will be discouraged by mature recognition of the difficulties that must hinder prudent efforts to operationalize cultural knowledge and understanding. Practical people, a category that should include strategists, will ask that most brutally direct of questions, 'so what?' So what do we do with greater self-, and other-, cultural understanding? Culture matters greatly, but so do the other dimensions of war, peace, and strategy.

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[1] Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (London: Routledge, 2004), p.1. For an opposing point of view, see Lawrence Freedman, *The Transformation of Strategic Affairs*, Adelphi Paper 379 (London: IISS, March 2006), pp. 22-6.

[2] U.S. Army, *Army Campaign Plan* (Washington, DC: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3, Department of the Army, 12 April, 2004), p. 10.

[3] Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p. 332.

[4] See Montgomery McFate, "The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture", *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 38 (3ʳᵈ qtr., 2005), pp. 42-8.

[5] Brodie, *War and Politics*, p.453. "Strategic thinking, or 'theory' if one prefers, is nothing if not pragmatic. Strategy is a 'how to do it' study, a guide to accomplishing something and doing it efficiently".

[6] Hedley Bull, "Strategic Studies and Its Critics", *World Politics*, Vol. 20, No.4 (July 1968), p. 600.

[7] Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[8] Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini, *The Art of War* (1838; London: Greenhill Books, 1992), p. 321.

[9] Ibid., p. 70.

[10] Ibid., p. 323.

[11] Ibid., p. 325.

[12] Sun-tzu, *The Art of War*, Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. (ca.400 BC; Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), p. 179.

[13] See Donald H. Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 6, 2006), esp. pp. 21-2.

[14] For a useful guide to the scholarly debate, see Stuart Poore, "Strategic Culture", in John Glenn, Darryl Howlett, and Poore, eds., *Neorealism Versus Strategic Culture* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 45-71.

[15] Leslie A. White, *The Concept of Cultural Systems: A Key to Understanding Tribes and Nations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), p. 4n.

[16] Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, September 1977), p. 8.

[17] Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), ch. 5.

[18] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

[19] Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1971).

[20] Isobel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 96.

[21] For an unrestrained and politically incorrect portrayal of the importance of culture, see Victor Davis Hanson, *Why the West Has Won: Carnage and Culture from Salamis to Vietnam* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001).

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

[23] I am indebted to Black, *Rethinking Military History*, pp. 13-22.

[24] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, p. 329.

[25] Keith B. Payne, *The Fallacies of Cold War Deterrence and a New Direction* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2001).

[26] Freedman, *Transformation of Strategic Affairs*, p. 22.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, trans. (1832; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 101.

[29] Ibid., p. 75 (emphasis in the original).

[30] Ibid., p. 184.

[31] Ibid., pp. 184-5.

[32] Payne, *Fallacies of Cold War Deterrence*.

[33] See James S. Corum, *The Roots of Blitzkrieg: Hans von Seeckt and German Military Reform* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992). Despite this praiseworthy and probably historically unique exercise, it is interesting to note that the Wehrmacht revealed some lethal weaknesses in World War II that had a long history behind them and therefore may warrant ascription as cultural.

[34] Black, *Rethinking Military History*, p. 13.

[35] Gray, *Modern Strategy*, ch. 5.

[36] I have argued this thesis in *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War college, March 2006).

[37] See John I. Alger, *The Quest for Victory: The History of the Principles of War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982); and Anthony D. Mc Ivor, ed., *Rethinking the Principles of War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005).

[38] OODA: Observation, Orientation, Decision, Action. This formula for (tactical) victory was invented by Col. John Boyd of the USAF. It was inspired by his experience of jet fighter combat over Korea. See Grant T. Hammond, *The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).

[39] Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 104.

[40] See Forrest E. Morgan, *Compellence and the Strategic Culture of Imperial Japan* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003).

[41] As in Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies", *International Security* , Vol. 23, No.1 (Summer 1998), pp. 141-70.

[42] "As in many other branches of politics, the question that matters in strategy is: Will the idea work? More important, will it be likely to work under the special circumstances under which it will next be tested? … strategy is a field where truth is sought in the pursuit of viable solutions". Brodie, *War and Politics*, pp. 452, 453 (emphasis in the original). I must confess to being the person whom Brodie corrected criticised, by name, with his emphasis upon the pragmatic nature of strategy and strategic study.

[43] For an outstanding recent historical analysis of transcultural warfare, see Hew Strachan, "A General Typology of Transcultural Wars – The Modern Ages", in Hans-Henning Kortum, ed., *Transcultural Wars: from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006), pp. 85-103.

[44] Colin S. Gray, "The American Way of War", in Mc Ivor, ed., *Rethinking the Principles of War*, pp. 13-40.

[45] Michael Howard, *The Continental Commitment: The dilemma of British defence policy in the era of the two world wars* (London: Temple Smith, 1972), p.57. Also see David French, *British Strategy and War Aims, 1914-1916* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), ch. 6.

[46] See Eliot A. Cohen, "The Mystique of U.S. Air Power", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 1(January/February 1994), pp. 109-24. In his *Storm over Iraq: Air Power and the Gulf War* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), Richard P. Hallion, the USAF's Official Historian, claims that "[a]s dominant land power characterized a *Pax Romana*, and dominant sea power a *Pax Britannica*, dominant air power is the characteristic of modern America". P. 267.

[47] This danger was flagged many years ago in Gerald Segal, "Strategy and 'ethnic chic'", *International Affairs*, Vol. 60, No.1 (Winter 1983/84), pp. 15-30.

[48] The case studies are excellent in Emily O. Goldman and Leslie C. Eliason, eds., *The Diffusion of Military Technology and Ideas* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

[49] John J. Weltman, *World Politics and the Evolution of War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 152.

[50] Milan N. Vego, "Effects-Based Operations: A Critique", *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 41 (2nd qtr., 2006), pp. 51-7, is a blistering condemnation that takes no prisoners.

[51] The finest work of strategic theory since Clausewitz's *On War*, warns that "planning for certitude is the greatest of all military mistakes, as military history demonstrates all too vividly". J.C. Wylie, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control* (1967; Anapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1989), p. 72.

[52] "Cultural thoughtways" is an inspired concept borrowed gratefully from Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 14.

[53] Ibid., p. 147.

STRATEGIC CULTURE:
FROM CLAUSEWITZ TO CONSTRUCTIVISM

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Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism

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ABSTRACT
This paper charts the evolution of the theory of strategic culture through several generations of scholarship and explores contemporary arguments about the role of culture in shaping national security policy. The paper devotes special attention to policies related to weapons of mass destruction and threat assessment. Key questions include: Do cultural theories provide useful explanations of national security policy? Is strategic culture "semi-permanent," as most of its supporters suggest, or can it evolve over time? And how universal is strategic culture? The essay concludes that while constructivism has generated new attention to ideational foundations of national security policy behavior, there remains substantial room for refinement of the research program.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural approaches to strategic studies have existed in various forms for hundreds of years. The argument that culture influences national security policy is grounded in classic works, including the writings of Thucydides and Sun Tzu. Clausewitz advanced these ideas by recognizing war and war-fighting strategy as "a test of moral and physical forces." The goal of strategy was much more than defeat of the enemy on the battlefield—it was the elimination of the enemy's morale.[1] In the 20th century, national character studies linked Japanese and German strategic choices in World War II to deeply rooted cultural factors. Russell Weigley's 1973 classic, *The American Way of Warfare*, further underlined the importance of cultural roots of strategic dispositions. Jack Snyder's work on Soviet nuclear strategy during the Cold War directed scholarly attention to the key link between political and military culture and strategic choice.

Recent events have renewed scholarly interest in the role of culture in international security. Scholars and practitioners have begun to interpret challenges like democratization in Iraq, U.S.-China trade disputes, nuclear tensions with Iran, and the war on terror through the lens of national identity and culture. Contemporary scholarship claims that a focus on

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1 Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993): 26.

strategic culture offers valuable perspective on military doctrine and critical choices such as nuclear strategy and the use of force.

This essay charts the evolution of the theory of strategic culture through several generations of scholarly work inside, and outside, the discipline. Particular attention is devoted to the relationship between strategic culture and policies on weapons of mass destruction. Key questions include: What are the ideational foundations of national security policy? Do cultural theories, newly inspired by constructivism, provide the most accurate explanations of security policy? Is strategic culture really "semi-permanent," as its supporters suggest, or can strategic culture evolve? Who are the 'keepers' of strategic culture? And how universal is strategic culture? I conclude that while contemporary works on strategic culture offer promise, there remains substantial room for development of more reflexive models. The multi-faceted approach offered by the Comparative Strategic Cultures project may allow us to recognize greater nuances in competing systems and further energize our potential for accurate threat assessment.

EARLY ORIGINS OF THE CULTURAL APPROACH

The "national character studies" of the 1940s and 1950s represented some of the first social scientific efforts to draw connections between culture and state behavior, based largely on anthropological models.[2] This work defined the roots of a nation's character, or culture, in language, religion, customs, socialization, and the interpretation of common memories.[3] Indeed, national character studies became popular tools for threat assessment during World War II. These studies drew intense criticism, however, because of concerns about stereotyping and the reification of the concept of culture.[4]

Prominent sociologists and anthropologists including Mead, Douglas, and Levi-Strauss, nevertheless continued to probe links between culture and behavior. In one of the most influential anthropological works on the subject, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973),

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2 Two of the most prominent scholars of national character were Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), and Geoffrey Gorer, *The American People* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1948).

3 David J. Elkins and Richard E.B. Simeon, "A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?" *Comparative Politics* 11, no.2 (January 1979): 127-128.

4 For popular exceptions to this argument see Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951), and Adda B. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960).

Geertz defined culture as "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life."[5] He provided a useful model of culture and suggested ways that patterns of meanings could lead to distinct behaviors.

Political scientists Almond and Verba launched a high profile study of the concept of political culture in the 1960s, defining it as "that subset of beliefs and values of a society that relate to the political system."[6] Political culture, they argued, includes a commitment to values like democratic principles and institutions, ideas about morality and the use of force, the rights of individuals or collectivities, and predispositions toward the role of a country in global politics. Political culture manifests itself on at least three levels: "the cognitive, which includes empirical and causal beliefs; the evaluative, which consists of values, norms and moral judgments; and the expressive or affective, which encompasses emotional attachments, patterns of identity and loyalty, and feelings of affinity, aversion, or indifference."[7] Parsons described culture as comprised of "interpretive codes" including language, values, and even substantive beliefs like support for democracy or the futility of war.[8]

By the 1980s, interdisciplinary studies linking culture and politics had grown in popularity.[9] Sociologist Ann Swidler proposed a more complex model of connections between culture and state behavior, mediated by cultural "strategies of action." Swidler defined culture quite broadly as consisting of "symbolic vehicles of meaning, including beliefs, ritual practices, art forms, and ceremonies, as well as informal cultural practices such as lan-

5 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); See also Sherry B. Ortner, ed., *The Fate of Culture: Geertz and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
6 Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965): 11-14.
7 John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999): 23; See also Robert D. Putnam, *The Beliefs of Politicians: Ideology, Conflict, and Democracy in Britain and Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973); Putnam, "Studying Elite Political Culture: the Case of 'Ideology," *American Political Science Review* 65, no.3 (September 1971): 651-681; Bert A. Rockman, *Studying Elite Political Culture: Problems in Design and Interpretation* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976).
8 See Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1951).
9 Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technical and Environmental Dangers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

guage, gossip, stories, and rituals of daily life."[10] Building on the arguments of Weber and Parsons, she contended that interest-driven strategies are significant mediating conditions for state behavior.[11]

But while sociological models of culture became increasingly complex, subsequent studies of political culture yielded little theoretical refinement during this period. Critics argued that the approach was epiphenomenal and subjective, and that proponents of political culture made exaggerated claims about its explanatory power.[12] Cultural interpretive arguments remained alive in area studies, but fell out of favor in political science with the behavioral revolution.

STRATEGIC CULTURE AND COLD WAR NUCLEAR POLICY

In 1977, Jack Snyder brought the political cultural argument into the realm of modern security studies by developing a theory of strategic culture to interpret Soviet nuclear strategy. Snyder suggested that elites articulate a unique strategic culture related to security-military affairs that is a wider manifestation of public opinion, socialized into a distinctive mode of strategic thinking. He contended, "as a result of this socialization process, a set of general beliefs, attitudes, and behavior patterns with regard to nuclear strategy has achieved a state of semi-permanence that places them on the level of 'cultural' rather than mere policy."[13] Snyder applied his strategic cultural framework to interpret the development of Soviet and American nuclear doctrines as products of different organizational, historical, and political contexts, along with technological constraints. The result was his prediction that the Soviet military exhibited a preference for the preemptive, offensive use of force and the ori-

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10 Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51, no.2 (April 1986): 273.

11 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1946a[1922-3]): 220; See also Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1958 [1904]); Related works describing the growing interest in connections between culture and political developments include: Ronald Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," *American Political Science Review* 82, no.4 (1988): 1203-1230; Harry C. Triandis, *Culture and Social Behavior* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994); Aaron Wildavsky, "Choosing Preferences by Constructing Institutions: A Cultural Theory of Preference Formation," *American Political Science Review* 81, no.1 (1987): 3-21.

12 See Charles Lockhart, "Cultural Contributions to Explaining Institutional Form, Political Change, and Rational Decisions" *Comparative Political Studies* 32, no.7 (October 1999): 862-893; Lowell Dittmer, "Political Culture and Political Symbolism: Toward a Theoretical Syntheses," *World Politics* 29 (1977): 552-588; Ruth Lane, "Political Culture: Residual Category or General Theory?" *Comparative Political Studies* 25, no.4 (1992): 362-387.

13 Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options*, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1977): 8; See also Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1981).

gins for this could be found rooted in a Russian history of insecurity and authoritarian control.

Snyder's contributions resonated with other security policy analysts, and subsequent work on strategic culture such as Booth's *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (1979) continued to explore the ideational foundations of nuclear strategy and superpower relations. Gray (1981) suggested that distinctive national styles, with "deep roots within a particular stream of historical experience," characterize strategy-making in countries like the United States and the Soviet Union. He defined strategic culture as "modes of thought and action with respect to force, which derives from perception of the national historical experience, from aspirations for responsible behavior in national terms" and even from "the civic culture and way of life." Thus, strategic culture "provides the milieu within which strategy is debated" and serves as an independent determinate of strategic policy patterns.[14]

In simple terms, this "first generation" of work on strategic culture described a synergistic link between strategic culture and WMD policy. Snyder and Gray argued that culture was a semi-permanent influence on policy shaped by elites and socialized into distinctive modes of thought. Nuclear strategy of potential adversaries could be predicted. Snyder's approach described a Soviet preference for the offensive, preemptive use of force and explained modernization initiatives in the nuclear infrastructure to support this orientation. The result of this study was new attention by scholars to the potentially predictive power of strategic culture.

However, critics asserted that the operationalization of strategic culture was problematic and subjective. They suggested that strategic cultural models were tautological, as it would be nearly impossible to separate independent and dependent variables in a reliable way. Skeptics also charged that strategic cultural interpretations were by definition unique, drawing upon narrow and contextual historiography as much as anthropology. Furthermore, both supporters and detractors believed that the concept of strategic culture was fairly static, focusing on enduring historical orientations with strong predictive capability. Writing in 1988, Gray said that "social science has developed no exact methodology for identifying distinctive national cultures and styles." Literature on the "academically unfashionable subject

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14 Colin Gray, "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security* 6, no.2 (Fall 1981): 35-37.

of national character" was anecdotal at best, yet he believed that learning about the "cultural thoughtways" of a nation was crucial to understanding a country's behavior and its role in world politics.[15] Finally, structural realists had no room for so-called 'thick' descriptive studies and were quick to sweep the concept of strategic culture to the side in their drive for more powerful and parsimonious models. Klein argued that only a "comparative, in-depth study of the formation, influence, and process of change in the strategic cultures of the major powers in the modern era" could make a useful contribution to studies of war and peace.[16] With the abrupt end of the Cold War—and, perhaps ironically, the nonuse of nuclear weapons by the superpowers—the concept of strategic culture once fell into disfavor.

STRATEGIC CULTURE REDISCOVERED: THE RISE OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

In the 1990s, a new generation of scholarly work reasserted the utility of cultural interpretations.[17] Theoretical work on strategic culture, domestic structures, and organizational culture advanced significantly in this period, intersecting ever more frequently with the rise of constructivism. In a pathbreaking 1992 work, Wendt argued that state identities and interests can be seen as "socially constructed by knowledgeable practice."[18] According to Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, constructivism recognizes the importance of "intersubjective structures that give the material world meaning," including norms, culture, identity and ideas on state behavior or on international relations more generally.[19] Constructivists argue that "national identities are social-structural phenomena," which provide a "logic

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15 Colin Gray, *The Geopolitics of Superpower* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988): 42-43.

16 Yitzhak Klein, "A Theory of Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy* 10, No.1 (1991): 3; See also Richard W. Wilson, *Compliance Ideologies: Rethinking Political Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Charles A. Kupchan, *The Vulnerability of Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

17 Some of the most influential works in this area for security studies are: Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19, no.4 (Spring 1995): 32-64; Stephen Peter Rosen, "Military Effectiveness: Why Society Matters," *International Security* 19, no.4 (Spring 1995): 5-31; Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine," *International Security* 19, no.4 (Spring 1995): 65-93; Richard J. Ellis and Michael Thompson, eds., *Culture Matters: Essays in Honor of Aaron Wildavsky* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997); Yosef Lapid, "Culture's Shop: Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory," in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996).

18Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no.2 (Spring 1992): 392.

19 Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen Krasner, "International Organization and the Study of World Politics," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 679.

of appropriateness" regarding policy choices.[20] Hopf believes that the paradigm offers "a promising approach for uncovering those features of domestic society, culture, and politics that should matter to state identity and state action in global politics."[21]

The constructivist research program devotes particular attention to identity formation, with connections to organizational process, history, tradition, and culture. According to Hudson, constructivism "views culture as an evolving system of shared meaning that governs perceptions, communications, and actions...Culture shapes practice in both the short and long term. At the moment of action, culture provides the elements of grammar that define the situation, that reveal motives, and that set forth a strategy for success."[22] But constructivists focus primarily on social structures at the systems level, with special attention to the role of norms in international security.[23] Norms are defined as "intersubjective beliefs about the social and natural world that define actors, their situations, and the possibilities of action."[24] Tannenwald's studies of the nuclear taboo and the norm of non-proliferation, along with Legro's work on military restraint during World War II, have generated a great deal of scholarly attention.[25]

Although the central tenets of constructivism were familiar to many—Geertz's work clearly had a significant influence on contemporary thinking, for example—this was successfully framed as a paradigmatic challenge to neorealism. One of the most controversial prongs of this challenge was the assertion by some constructivists that their approach would,

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20 Jacques E.C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.17; See also Stephen Saideman, "Thinking Theoretically about Identity and Foreign Policy," in Shibley Telhami and Michael Barnett, eds., *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), pp.169-170.

21 This, in spite of its proclaimed ontological agnosticism. See Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations," *International Security* 23, no.1 (Summer 1998), p.914; See also Jeffrey W. Legro, "Culture and Preferences in the International Cooperation Two-Step," *American Political Science Review* 90, no.1 (March 1996): 118-137.

22 Valerie M. Hudson, ed. *Culture and Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997): 28-29.

23 For more detailed studies of norms in world politics, see Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State System," *American Political Science Review* 88, no.2 (1994): 384-396; Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no.4 (1998): 887-917; Jeffrey Checkel, "Norms, Institutions and National Identity in Contemporary Europe," Arena Working Paper 98/16 (Oslo: Advanced Research on the Europeanisation of the Nation-State, University of Oslo, 1998).

24 Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20, no.1 (1995): 73-74.

25 Nina Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo," *International Security* 29, no.4 (Spring 2005): 5-49; Tannenwald, "The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use," *International Organization* 53, no.3 (Fall 1999): 83-114.

assuredly, supplant neorealism as the dominant paradigm in the discipline. While this has not been accomplished, the rise of constructivism has clearly energized a new wave of strategic cultural research.

THIRD GENERATION STUDIES

Johnston's *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (1995) is often cited as the quintessential third generation work on strategic culture. The study set out to investigate the existence and character of Chinese strategic culture and causal linkages to the use of military force against external threats. Johnston takes the concept of strategic culture seriously as an "ideational milieu that limits behavioral choices," from which "one could derive specific predictions about strategic choice." But Johnston chose several unconventional approaches for his cultural study. First, he selected the intriguing period of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) as the focus for his contemporary theoretical test. Second, he adopted a methodological approach that offered a clear separation between the independent variable, cultural orientations, and the dependent variable, military strategy. He said, "China has exhibited a tendency for the controlled, politically driven defensive and minimalist use of force that is deeply rooted in the statecraft of ancient strategists and a worldview of relatively complacent superiority."[26] Ultimately, Johnston concluded that there were two Chinese strategic cultures in action: "one a symbolic or idealized set of assumptions and ranked preferences, and one an operational set that had a nontrivial effect on strategic choices in the Ming period."[27] Perhaps ironically, these cultures actually exhibit some classic elements of realpolitik.

Specialized studies of German and Japanese strategic culture also reflect third generation approaches.[28] Berger's *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (1998) focused on "antimilitarist political-military cultures" to explain patterns in

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26Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995): 1.

27 Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, x.

28 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security* 18, no.2 (Fall 1993): 71; See also Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers will Rise," *International Security* 17, no.2 (Spring 1993): 5-51.

those countries' foreign policy behaviors.[29] Berger noted that while Japan's economic and technological power placed it in a position to become an economic and perhaps even military superpower at the end of the Cold War, the persistent postwar culture of antimilitarism truly defined Japanese security policy in the 1990s. According to Berger, cultural beliefs and values act as a distinct national lens to shape perceptions of events and even channel possible societal responses. In this sense, he states, "cultures enjoy a certain degree of autonomy and are not merely subjective reflections of concrete 'objective' reality."[30] In a similar vein, Banchoff developed a consciously constructivist, "path-dependent" model of foreign policy whereby he argues that decisions taken at critical historical junctures have shaped the development of foreign policy over time.[31] Duffield adds that far from setting off in adventurous new directions, "Germany has exercised considerable restraint and circumspection in its external relations since 1990."[32] To Duffield, "[t]he overall effect of national security culture is to predispose societies in general and political elites in particular toward certain actions and policies over others. Some options will simply not be imagined…some are more likely to be rejected as inappropriate or ineffective than others."[33] In a more recent work, Malici employs a congruence procedure to convincingly argue that German elites subscribe to a "culture of reticence" in security affairs.[34]

Contemporary studies of military organizational cultures offer promise as well. Kier described the significance of organizational culture in the development of French military doctrine.[35] Rosen provided a compelling account of the ways that the military and organizational cultures in India have shaped strategy over time. To Rosen, military culture is comprised of the "beliefs and assumptions that frame...choices about international military behavior, particularly those concerning decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, ex-

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29 Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998): 1; See also Berger, "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism," *International Security* 17, no.4 (Spring 1993): 119-150.
30 Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*, 9.
31 Thomas Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed: Institutions, Politics, and Foreign Policy, 1945-1995* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999): 2.
32 John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999): 4; See also Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior: Why Germany Confounds Neorealism," *International Organization* 53, no.4 (Autumn 1999): 765-803.
33 Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior," 771.
34 Akan Malici, "Germans as Venutians: The Culture of German Foreign Policy Behavior," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2 (2006): 37-62.
35 Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars."

pansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable."[36] According to these studies, organizational culture can be interpreted as an independent or intervening variable that directly influences strategic choice.

Another important dimension of third generation work, the study of security norms, lies at the intersection of culturalist and constructivist research. Norms are defined by Katzenstein, Jepperson, and Wendt as standards "of right or wrong, a prescription or proscription for behavior for a given identity."[37] One of the areas of normative study most closely related to weapons of mass destruction and threat assessment is focused on the non-nuclear norm or taboo.[38] To address the puzzle of why nuclear weapons were never employed by the superpowers during the Cold War, strategist Thomas Schelling first raised the concept of a "nuclear taboo" in the 1960s. He described an emerging tradition of nonuse of nuclear weapons: "a jointly recognized expectation that [nuclear weapons] may not be used in spite of declarations of readiness to use them, even in spite of tactical advantages in their use."[39]

In more recent, provocative works, Tannenwald, Price, and Paul characterize a taboo as "a particularly forceful kind of normative prohibition that is concerned with the protection of individuals and societies from behavior that is defined or perceived to be danger-

36 Rosen, *Societies and Military Power*, 12.
37 Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p.54; Farrell and Terriff add that norms are "intersubjective beliefs [that are] rooted in, and reproduced through, social practice." Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, and Technology* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p. 7.
38 T.V. Paul, "Nuclear Taboo and War Initiation in Regional Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39, no.4 (December 1995): 696-717; Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20, no. 1, (1995), pp. 73-74; Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State System," *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 2 (1994): 384-396; Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 887-917; Jeffrey Checkel, "Norms, Institutions and National Identity in Contemporary Europe," Arena Working Paper 98/16 (Oslo: Advanced Research on the Europeanisation of the Nation-State, University of Oslo, 1998); Ronald Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security," in Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security*, pp. 33-75; and, of course, Tannenwald's own work: "Stigmatizing the Bomb," pp. 5-49; Tannenwald, "The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use," *International Organization* 53, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 83-114.
39 Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, Second Edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980): 260.

ous…something that is not done, not said, or not touched."[40] The nuclear taboo literature places special emphasis on the power of morality and related norms in shaping state behavior. As Tannenwald argues, "nuclear weapons have come to be defined as abhorrent and unacceptable weapons of mass destruction" over the past fifty years. This moral opprobrium has become so acute that the use of nuclear weapons today is "practically unthinkable."[41] These optimists claim that taboos represent "bright line" norms that have significant constitutive effects.[42]

A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR STRATEGIC CULTURE AND WMD POLICY

Generations of scholarship have produced greater understanding of ties between culture and state behavior. Strategic cultural studies have provided rich descriptions of particularistic cultures and identities, and researchers have acknowledged important links between external and internal determinants of national security policy. Cultural studies have been informed by cross-disciplinary linkages to anthropology, historical research, sociology, and psychology. Inspired by constructivism, scholars have begun to explore ways in which strategic culture is shaped and may evolve over time. As a result, even skeptics have acknowledged that contemporary works on culture offer much more than an 'explanation of last resort.'

But this survey of the literature also points to substantial room for refinement of the research program. Areas for further attention include the need for a common definition of strategic culture to build theoretically progressive models, delineation of the ways that strategic culture is created, maintained, and passed on to new generations, the question of the universality of strategic culture, and refinement of models of linkages between external and internal determinants of security policy. While some scholars suggest that adoption of cultural models represents a fundamental rejection of structure, contemporary research suggests more comprehensive models of state behavior can be developed short of falsification of the

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40 Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb," 8; See also Franz Steiner, *Taboo* (London: Cohen and West, 1956), p. 21; Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966).
41 Ibid., 5.
42 These ideas relate to recent work on the relationship between "national identity conceptions" and decisions to acquire or develop nuclear weapons; Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation*.

realist program.[43] Contrary to neorealist critiques of ideational frameworks, few cultural scholars believe that this really is an either-or theoretical debate. Furthermore, many cultural scholars recognize the need for a defined ontology as well as falsifiable, middle-range theory. In this spirit, we offer a "to-do" list for the development of new, progressive models of strategic culture in comparative perspective.

1. Develop Common Definitions

Given decades of scholarship on cultural determinants, one might assume that strategic culture has become an accepted *independent* variable in causal modeling. It has not. Snyder's definition of strategic culture as "a set of semi-permanent elite beliefs, attitudes, and behavior patterns socialized into a distinctive mode of thought" set the tone for decades of investigations.[44] Today, scholars seem to agree that distinct political cultures may exist, but definitions still blur the line between preference formation, values, and state behaviors. Pye's definition of culture as "the dynamic vessel that holds and revitalizes the collective memories of a people by giving emotional life to traditions" is a case in point.[45] Here, strategic culture becomes a generator of preferences, a vehicle for the perpetuation of values and preferences, and a force of action in revitalization and renewal of these values. Rosen's characterization of strategic culture as the "beliefs and assumptions that frame...decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable" also blurs the line by including reference to the rules that might govern conduct in war.[46] Delineating culture as an independent variable remains challenging, and some scholarly efforts have bordered on tautology wherein domestic political structures are identified as both reflecting and shaping political culture.[47]

Constructivism has energized work on strategic culture, but it has not advanced the search for a common definition. Elkins and Simeon argued three decades ago that culture is

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43 Colin S. Gray, "Strategic culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Studies* 25 (1999): 49-69; Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, "Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods," *Mershon International Studies Review* 40, no.2 (October 1996): 229-254.

44 Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options*, 8.

45 Lucian W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimension of Authority* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985): 20-22.

46 Rosen, *Societies and Military Power*, 12.

47 Pye, as quoted in Lowell Dittmer, "Political Culture and Political Symbolism, Toward a Theoretical Synthesis," *World Politics* 29, no.4 (July 1977): 555.

a "shorthand expression for a mind set which has the effect of limiting attention to less than the full range of alternative behaviors, problems and solutions which are logically possible."[48] Constructivists often seem to adopt this shorthand approach to descriptions of culture as comprised of both the ideas about strategic choice and the choices themselves. Hudson's contention that culture is "an evolving system of shared meaning that governs perceptions, communications, and actions" seems intuitively correct, but offers little in the way of testable hypotheses.[49] In addition, the professed ontological agnosticism of constructivism may not provide a sufficient base for theory-building in strategic cultural studies. Scholars must recognize the difficulty of drawing linkages between political structure and state behavior but yet seek consensus on explanatory boundaries.[50]

Johnston offered one of the most promising avenues for a progressive research program on strategic culture by characterizing culture as "an ideational milieu which limits behavior choices." But in so doing, his efforts have drawn fire from both first generation culturalists and constructivists. Johnston frames strategic culture as "shared assumptions and decision rules that impose a degree of order on individual and group conceptions of their relationship to their social, organizational or political environment." While he noted that strategic subcultures may exist, "there is a generally dominant culture whose holders are interested in preserving the status quo." This approach to strategic culture as a set of shared assumptions and decision rules allows one to separate the strands of culture from dependent variable outcomes like strategic choice. Furthermore, Johnston's conceptual approach to strategic culture was designed to be falsifiable, "or at least distinguishable from non-strategic culture variables...[that would] provide decision-makers with a uniquely ordered set of strategic choices from which we can derive predictions about behavior."[51] This work is certainly informed by progress in political psychology as well as contemporary sociological studies of the complex connections between culture and state behavior.

Participants in the Comparative Strategic Cultures project workshops (2005-2006) have developed a definition that encompasses some of the contributions, and recognizes

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48 David Elkins and Richard Simeon, 1979 "A Cause in Search of its Effects, or What does Political Culture Explain?" *Comparative Politics* 11 (1979): 132.
49 Hudson, *Culture and Foreign Policy*, 28-29.
50 See Wilson, "The Many Voices of Political Culture: Assessing Different Approaches," 246-273.
51 Ibid., 246.

some of the pitfalls, of past scholarship. According to Kartchner, et al., strategic culture is a set of "shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives."[52] This approach recognizes strategic culture as a product of historical circumstances and national identity, but also allows it a role in shaping decisions about strategy. This and other work in the latest generation of strategic cultural studies tend to be more focused in its conceptualization of variables for study.
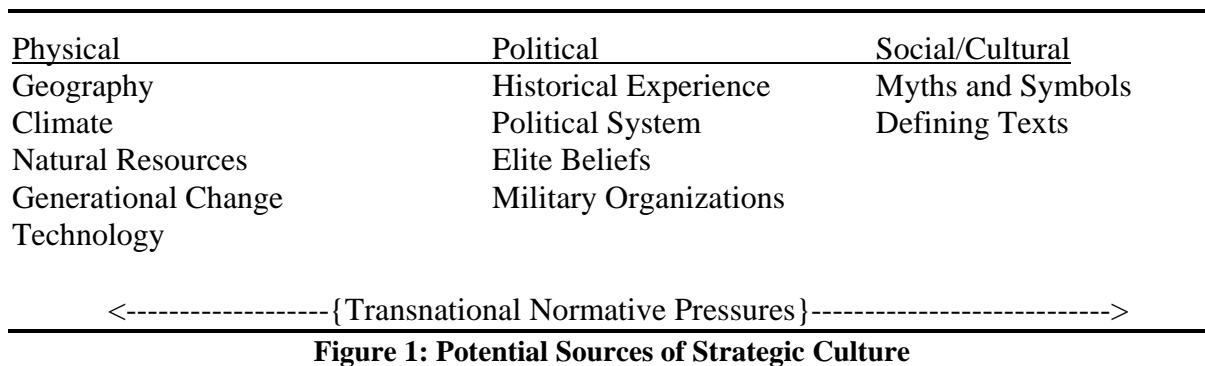
2. Explore the Origins of Strategic Culture [53]

History shows us that there are many sources of strategic culture, encompassing both material and ideational factors. Clearly, geography, climate and resources have been fundamental factors in strategic thinking throughout the millennia and remain important sources of strategic culture today. For many, geographical circumstance is the key to understanding why some countries adopt particular strategic policies rather than others. Proximity to great powers has been viewed as an important factor, for example, and the security policies of Norway, Finland, and even Canada reflected this throughout the Cold War.[54] Additionally, while most territorial borders are settled by negotiation, others have been forged through conflict and remain contested. Some states have multiple borders and may be confronted by different strategic factors at each point of contact with neighboring states: that is, they could have to respond to multiple security dilemmas. This has clearly shaped strategic orientations in countries like Israel, for example, which has developed a sizable nuclear arsenal for defense. Equally, ensuring access to vital resources is critical to strategy. Geographic factors in the context of a changing global territorial and resource landscape consequently continue to exert influence on strategists in the 21st century.

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52 Kerry M. Kartchner, Summary Report of the "Comparative Strategic Culture: Phase II Kickoff Workshop," Defense Threat Reduction Agency Advanced Systems and Concepts Office (Washington, DC: February 13, 2006).
53 These ideas are drawn from Jeffrey S. Lantis and Darryl Howlett, "Culture and National Security Policy," with Darryl Howlett, in John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot Cohen, and Colin S. Gray, eds., *Strategy in the Contemporary World* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2006).
54 Nina Graeger and Halvard Leira, "Norwegian Strategic Culture after World War II. From a Local to a Global Perspective," *Cooperation and Conflict* 40, no. 1 (2005): 45-66; Henrikki Heikka, "Republican Realism. Finnish Strategic Culture in Historical Perspective," *Cooperation and Conflict* 40, no. 1 (2005): 91-119.

History and experience are important considerations in the birth and evolution of states, and the strategic cultural identities that comprise them. International relations theory has identified several kinds of states ranging from weak to strong, colonial to post-colonial, and pre-modern, modern and postmodern. This raises the prospect that different kinds of states may confront different strategic problems and with varying material and ideational resources, apply unique responses.[55] For newly-formed states the difficulties of nation-building can compound insecurities and help shape strategic cultural identities. Conversely, for those states with a deep history the longevity of their existence may prompt consideration of factors that contribute to the rise and fall of great powers or civilizations and shape their policies to suit.

Physical	Political	Social/Cultural
Geography	Historical Experience	Myths and Symbols
Climate	Political System	Defining Texts
Natural Resources	Elite Beliefs	
Generational Change	Military Organizations	
Technology		

<-------------------{Transnational Normative Pressures}--------------------------->

Figure 1: Potential Sources of Strategic Culture

As illustrated in Figure 1, another source of strategic culture is the nature of a country's political institutions and defense organizations. Some countries adopt a broadly Western liberal democratic style of government while others do not. Some are considered mature democracies while others are undergoing democratic transformation and are in various stages of consolidation. Where the latter are concerned there may be cultural variables such as tribal, religious or ethnic allegiances that operate within and across territorial boundaries that determine the pace and depth of consolidation. Similarly, many regard defense organizations as being critical to strategic cultures but differ over the precise impact these have. Military doctrines, civil-military relations and procurement practices also may affect strategic culture.

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55 Colin Gray comments that "different political and strategic cultures confront distinctive geostrategic problems through the prisms of their individual historical circumstances, and with unique sets of assets and liabilities, will make somewhat individual choices." Colin S. Gray, "The American Revolution in Military Affairs: An Interim Assessment," *The Occasional*, Wiltshire, UK: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute, 1997): 28.

Similarly, where civil-military relations are concerned, it is argued the debate is not so much about military doctrines, "but the preconditions for the deployment and the kind of rationality that is at stake in those deployments."[56]

Myths and symbols are considered to be part of all cultural groupings. Both can act as a stabilizing or destabilizing factor in the evolution of strategic cultural identities. The notion of myth can have meaning different from the traditional understanding as something unfounded or false. John Calvert writes that it can also refer to "a body of beliefs that express the fundamental, largely unconscious or assumed political values of a society—in short, as a dramatic expression of ideology.[57] Work on symbols has also suggested that these act as "socially recognized objects of more or less common understanding" and which provide a cultural community with stable points of reference for strategic thought and action.[58]

Many analysts regard key texts as important in informing actors of appropriate strategic thought and action. Traditional analyses of peace and conflict have long pointed to the influence of such texts throughout history and in different cultural settings. These may follow a historical trajectory—from Sun Tzu, who wrote the *Art of War* during the time of the warring states in ancient China, through the writings of Kautilya in ancient India, and into western understanding as a result of Thucydides commentary on the Peloponnesian Wars and Clausewitz's observations of the Napoleonic period. At the same time, there may be competition between texts for influence on society.[59]

Generational change, technology, and transnational norms are also regarded as important sources of strategic culture.[60] Both generational change and technology, particularly information and communications technology, can have important ramifications for issues of empowerment and strategic reach. The arrival of the Internet is a relatively recent phenomenon, yet there are now generations who have grown up with this medium of information and communication. This is also a world of individual and group empowerment that is both global in scope and potentially unique in its implications as a dual-use technology. While in-

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56 Neumann and Heikka, "Grand Strategy," 16.
57 John Calvert, "The Mythic Foundations of Radical Islam," *Orbis* (Winter 2004).
58 Charles Elder and Roger Cobb, quoted in Stuart Poore, "Strategic Culture," in John Glenn, Darryl Howlett and Stuart Poore, *Neorealism versus Strategic Culture,* p. 63.
59 Nikolaos Ladis, "Assessing Greek Strategic Thought and Practice: Insights from the Strategic Culture Approach," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southampton, UK, 2003.
60 Theo Farrell, "Transnational Norms and Military Development: Constructing Ireland's Professional Army," *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no.1 (2001): 63-102.

formation and communications technology has transformed societies, it has also allowed individuals or groups to communicate in novel ways and cause disruption at a distance.

Finally, Farrell argues that norms can define "the purpose and possibilities of military change" and in providing guidance concerning the use of force.[61] He has studied how transnational norms of military professionalism have influenced national policies and the process by which this occurs. Farrell considers that transnational norms can be transplanted into a country's cultural context either through a process involving pressure on a target community to accept the new norms (termed "political mobilization"), or by a process of voluntary adoption (termed "social learning"). Norm transplantation, as Farrell refers to it, can thus occur via a process of incremental adoption over time eventually achieving a cultural match between the transnational and national norms.[62]

Given the range of potential influences on the development of strategic culture, it is imperative for studies to accurately gauge the dynamics at work in any particular society. Material factors form only one important pillar of the milieu that can influence strategic choices. More nuanced (and well informed) cultural studies will identify predispositions and related ideational factors that may also shape security policy.

3. Identify the Keepers of Strategic Culture

Identifying strategic culture as a set of shared assumptions and decision rules prompts the question of how they are maintained, and by whom? Most scholars prefer descriptions of political and strategic cultures as the "property of collectivities rather than simply of the individuals that constitute them."[63] Wilson proposed: "In the most general sense political cultures are socially constructed normative systems that are the product of both social (for example, rules that coordinate role relationships within the organizations) and psychological (for example, the preferences of individuals) influences but are not reducible to either...A political culture is not simply the sum of individual preferences, nor do preferences, especially those of any given individual, necessarily correspond with normative prescriptions."[64] Ac-

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61 Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff , eds., *The Sources of Military Change. Culture, Politics, Technology*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001): 7.
62 Farrell, "Transnational Norms and Military Development," 63-102.
63 Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, 23.
64 Wilson, "The Many Voices of Political Culture," 12.

knowledging strategic culture as an "important ideational source of national predispositions, and thus of national security policy," suggests deep, but vague, cultural foundations for state behavior, however.

If political culture is truly manifested in cognitive, evaluative, and expressive dimensions, it is conceivable that actors who carry those values might be identified. In fact, various political leaders and institutions are engaged in historical interpretation and development of the foreign policy path. This, in turn, prompts coalition- and consensus-building efforts by specific political players. To Duffield, "institutional sources of national predispositions are likely to reside in the central governmental organs charged with the formulation and execution of policy." They may shape policy by "organizational processes, routines, and standard operating procedures may constrain the types of information to which decision makers are exposed."[65] Berger suggests that political culture can only be understood as a combination of norms and political institutions which "exist in an interdependent relationship."[66]

It is quite clear that elites are often the purveyors of the common historical narrative.[67] Most scholars agree that elites are instrumental in defining foreign policy goals and the scope and direction of policy restructuring in the face of new challenges. Furthermore, there is a general consensus in the literature that elites are cognitively predisposed to maintain the status quo. However, contemporary works on policy discourse tend to argue that strategic culture is best characterized as a "negotiated reality" among elites. Leaders clearly pay respect to deeply held convictions such as multilateralism and historical responsibility, but the record of past behavior for many countries also shows that leaders chose when and where to stake claims of strategic cultural traditions; they decided when and where to consciously move beyond previous boundaries of acceptability in foreign policy behavior. Ultimately, contemporary scholarship contends, elite behavior may be more consistent with the assertion that leaders are strategic "users of culture" who "redefine the limits of the possible" in key foreign and security policy discourses.[68] Indeed, the constructivist literature suggests

65 Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, 29.
66 Berger*, Cultures of Antimilitarism*, 11-12.
67 See, for example, Sanjoy Banerjee, "The Cultural Logic of National Identity Formation: Contending Discourses in Late Colonial India," in Hudson, ed., *Culture and Foreign Policy.*
68 Cruz, "Identity and Persuasion," p.278; For more on the strategic "use of culture" see Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51 (April 1986): 273-286.

that leaders can effectively be "norm entrepreneurs" in leading a state to conceptualize a specific strategic path.[69]

Political institutions—including military organizations, parties, and domestic coalitions—may also have a significant impact on foreign policy behavior. The organizational culture literature suggests that state behavior is a function of specific institutional orientations. Studies of Japanese and German foreign policy decisions in the 1990s argue that there are enduring institutional manifestations of strategic culture. But the keepers of the culture need not strictly be *military* bureaucracies. Indeed, in Germany the Foreign Minister has dominant control over foreign and security policy. In Japan, political institutions from the *Diet* to the Liberal Democratic Party to the Self-Defense Forces share commitments to a foreign policy of restraint.[70] Whether or not military bureaucracies are the most common keepers of strategic culture around the world, it remains the case that the influence of organizational culture on state behavior is mediated by other institutions and by the policymaking processes in democratic states.

Finally, studies of public attitudes toward strategic choice suggest some measure of consistency over time. Contemporary works on casualty sensitivity and the war in Iraq, for example, suggest a surprising amount of stability in public views on war. These studies argue against the traditional 'Almond-Lippmann' consensus that the public opinion is unstable and malleable. Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler assert that the public will tolerate even high numbers of U.S. combat casualties in conflicts where they believe in the 'rightness' of the war and in the likelihood of success.[71] These works coincide with more sensitive studies of prudential views in the U.S. public toward the use of force.[72]

69 For more on this see Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); Stephen Peter Rosen, *Winning the Next War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy* (Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, 1993); and Richard Price, 1998, "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines," *International Organization* 53, no.3 (1998): 613-644.
70 Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, p.72.
71 Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler, "Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the War in Iraq," *International Security* 30, no.3 (Winter 2005/2006): 7-46.
72 Bruce Russett, *Controlling the Sword: The Democratic Governance of National Security* (Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

4. Identify Scope Conditions for Strategic Culture

The events of September 11 and the subsequent war on terrorism have prompted re-newed attention to the role of culture in shaping state (and non-state) behaviors. While constructivism offers a fairly ambitious research agenda, I would contend that it is important for cultural theorists to first consider the potential for middle-range theory development. It may indeed be possible to develop scope conditions within which strategic culture could have a stronger impact on security policy. To this end, we can examine both classic perspectives and contemporary debates on strategic culture. For example, one of the most intriguing questions in the subfield actually carries over through several generations of scholarship: what types of actors are most likely to have defined strategic cultures? Snyder made a strong case for the influence of strategic culture in Soviet nuclear policy; and subsequent studies effectively framed U.S. and Soviet cultures within the larger Cold War context. But does the literature imply that authoritarian systems more likely to have defined strategic cultures than are democratic systems? Or, are authoritarian systems simply less likely to have definable strategic subcultures? Can non-state actors have strategic cultures? Can regional organizations or meta-cultural groups have some form of strategic culture?

First, much of the existing literature on strategic culture tends to focus on its role in authoritarian states, implying that there are more measurable strains of strategic culture manifest in rigorous political ideology, doctrine, and discourse. Studies of the North Korea emphasize the core ideology of self-reliance (*Juche*), which prioritizes national security over all other policy concern (even meeting basic human needs). The cult of personality of Kim Jong-Il allows some measure of continuity in expression of military priorities, doctrine, and orientations. Iran also has a fairly definable strategic culture. Iranian strategic culture is rooted in a nearly 3000-year history of Persian civilization that lends itself to a fascinating combination of "cultural superiority," "manifest destiny" and Iran's "deep sense of insecurity."[73] Giles argues, "specific attributes of Shi'ism, which was adopted by Persia in the sixteenth century, both reinforce and expand certain traits in Iranian strategic culture."[74] In

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73 Gregory F. Giles, "The Crucible of Radical Islam: Iran's Leaders and Strategic Culture," in Barry R. Schneider and Jerrold M. Post, eds., "Know Thy Enemy: Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures," U.S. Air Force Counterproliferation Center (July 2003): 146; www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/know_thy_enemy/index.htm.

74 Giles, "The Crucible of Radical Islam," 147.

summary, a combination of political institutions with historical, cultural, religious, and geographic influences constitute Iran's "strategic personality" or culture.

A fascinating debate has emerged over whether the European Union (EU) can establish a strategic culture. The EU formalized a common European Security Strategy (ESS) for the first time in its history in December 2003. Some hailed the achievement as marking a common European strategic culture, but others question whether the EU will ever be capable of forging a bond of common threat perceptions and interests. Optimists such as Cornish and Edwards (2001) contend that "there are signs that a European strategic culture is already developing through a socialisation process." They define EU strategic culture as simply "the institutional confidence and processes to manage and deploy military force as part of the accepted range of legitimate and effective policy instruments."[75] To Meyer (2004), the European Council vote on ESS in December 2003 provided a necessary "strategic concept" around which to focus attention and resources.[76] However, Lindley-French (2002) charges that Europe lacks both the capabilities and will to establish a common foreign and security policy in the foreseeable future. He characterizes the Europe of today as "not so much an architecture as a decaying arcade of stately structures of varying designs reflective of a bygone era."[77] Given serious disagreements over threat perception, Rynning (2003) concludes that the "EU is unlikely to develop a coherent and strong strategic culture" any time soon.[78]

Huntington's 'civilizational thesis' certainly pushes the envelope of theoretical interpretation.[79] He contended that states are part of broader civilizations that share strong bonds

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[75] Paul Cornish and Geoffrey Edwards, "Beyond the EU/NATO Dichotomy: the beginnings of a European strategic culture," *International Affairs* 77, no.3 (2001): 587; See also Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski, eds., *Old Europe, New Europe and the Transatlantic Security Agenda* (London: Routledge, 2005).

[76] Christoph O. Meyer, "Theorising European Strategic Culture: Between Convergence and the Persistence of National Diversity," Centre for European Policy Studies, CEPS Working Document No.204, June 2004, http://www.ceps.be (accessed 12 September 2004).

[77] Julian Lindley-French, "In the Shade of Locarno? Why European defence is failing," *International Affairs* 78, no.4, 2002, p.789; See also Steven Eberts, Lawrence Freedman, Grant Charles, Francois Heisbourg, Daniel Keohane, and Michael O'Hanlon, *A European Way of War* (London: Centre for European Reform, 2004); Stephan Keukeleire, "European Security and Defence Policy without an European Foreign Policy?" in Hans-Georg Erhart, ed., *Die Europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik: Positionen, Perzeptionen, Probleme, Perspektiven* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002): 231-242.

[78] Sten Rynning, "The European Union: Towards a Strategic Culture?" *Security Dialogue* 34, no.4 (December 2003): 479.

[79] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, no.3 (1993): 22-49; "If Not Civilizations, What? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World, *Foreign Affairs* 72, no.5 (1993), pp.186-194; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

of culture, societal values, religion, and ideologies. The most important of these bonds, he argued, is religion, and "the major civilizations in human history have been closely identified with the world's great religions."[80] Meta-cultural ties, taken to the broadest level of categorization, are civilizational identities that shape modern world politics and predispose identity groups toward conflict.[81] However, the civilizational thesis has drawn sharp criticism from the scholarly community.   Area studies experts are critical of Huntington's willingness to propose the sweeping generalizations that were necessary to undergird the civilizational thesis. Recent investigations of Huntington's claims have concluded that there is no statistically significant causal linkage before, during, or after the Cold War.[82] In the end, Huntington's work may have undermined some of the careful, social scientific progress that had been achieved in the cultural research program.

Can the concept of strategic culture apply to non-state actors operating across territorial boundaries where identities may be formed in the realm of cyberspace? The advent of the cyber revolution has generated several issues concerning our understanding of conflict and security.[83] Emily Goldman writes that security threats related to cyberspace "range from the systematic and persistent, to the decentralized and dispersed, to the accidental and non-malevolent."[84] Additionally, while acknowledging that the technologies associated with globalization have enabled terrorist groups to conduct operations that "are deadlier, more distributed, and more difficult to combat than those of their predecessors," James Kiras argues that these same technologies "can be harnessed to defeat terrorism by those governments with the will and resources to combat it."[85] According to Victor Cha's globalization security spectrum, "The most far-reaching security effect of globalization is its complication of the

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80 Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, 47.
81 Ibid., 318.
82 Errol A. Henderson and Richard Tucker, "Clear and Present Strangers: The Clash of Civilizations and International Conflict," *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (2001): 317-338; See also Errol A. Henderson, "The Democratic Peace Through the Lens of Culture, 1820-1989," *International Studies Quarterly* 42 (September 1998): 461-484.
83 Gregory J. Rattray, "The Cyberterrorism Threat," in Russell D. Howard and Reid L. Sawyer, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism. Understanding the New Security Environment,* (Guilford: McGraw-Hill, 2002), pp. 221-245; Stuart J.D. Schwartzstein, ed*., The Information Revolution and National Security. Dimensions and Directions*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1996).
84 Emily O. Goldman, "Introduction: Security in the Information Technology Age," in Emily O. Goldman, ed., "National Security in the Information Age," special issue, *Contemporary Security Policy* 24, no. 1 (April 2003): 1.
85 James D. Kiras, "Terrorism and Globalization," in John Baylis and Steve Smith, eds., *The Globalization of World Politics. An Introduction to International Relations*, 3rd edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 479.

basic concept of 'threat' in international relations."[86] Technology enhances "the salience of substate extremist groups or fundamentalist groups because their ability to organize transnationally, meet virtually, and utilize terrorist tactics has been substantially enhanced by the globalization of technology and information."[87]

Finally, it may also be possible to identify scope conditions under which one is more likely to find constitutive effects of strategic culture. In a classic study, Holsti lays out five "decisional settings" in which belief structures tend to have a great impact on decision-making, including: "situations that contain highly ambiguous components and are thus open to a variety of interpretations"; "non-routine situations that require more than the application of standard operating procedures and decision rules"; "responses to events that are unanticipated or contain an element of surprise"; and even "long-range policy planning…that inherently involves considerable uncertainty."[88] These hypotheses suggest that ideational foundations may be more significant in specific contexts.

More recently, Kartchner has hypothesized that a set of conditions may enable strategic culture to play a more dominant role in state behavior. They include: "when there is a strong sense of threat to a group's existence, identity or resources, or when the group believes that it is at a critical disadvantage to other groups; when there is a pre-existing strong cultural basis for group identity; when the leadership frequently resorts to cultural symbols in support of its national group security aspirations and programs; when there is a high degree of homogeneity within the group's strategic culture; and when historical experiences strongly predispose the group to perceive threats."[89] Clearly, efforts to establish scope conditions within which we are more likely to identify strategic cultures that have constitutive effects represents important progress toward middle-range theory.

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86 Victor D. Cha, "Globalization and the Study of International Security," *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 3 (2000): 391-403; See also John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, eds., *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime and Militancy* vol. I (2001), p. 1. http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1382/.
87 Cha, "Globalization and the Study of International Security," 392. See also, Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Behind the Curve. Globalization and International Terrorism," *International Security* 27, no.3, (Winter 2002/03): 30-58.
88 Ole Holsti, "Foreign Policy Formation Viewed Cognitively," in Robert Axelrod, ed. *Structure of Decision* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp.18-54; See also Alexander L. George, "The Causal Nexus between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behavior: the 'Operational Code' Belief System," in Lawrence S. Falkowski, ed., *Psychological Models in International Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979): 95-124.
89 Kartchner, Summary Report of the "Comparative Strategic Culture: Phase II Kickoff Workshop."

5. Develop Models of Strategic Cultural Change

The focus of most studies of strategic culture is on continuity of state behavior. Eckstein suggested that the socialization of values and beliefs occurs over time. Past learning becomes sedimented in the collective consciousness and is relatively resilient to change. Lessons of the past, therefore, serve as a tight filter for any future learning that might occur.[90] Those scholars who address the potential for change (inspired by Weber, Habermas, and Immanuel Wallerstein), face a great deal of criticism. However, an intriguing characteristic of the latest generation of cultural studies is the recognition of the possibility of change over time. If historical memory, political institutions, and multilateral commitments shape strategic culture, then, recent studies argue, it would seem logical to accept that security policies will evolve over time.[91] This contribution to the strategic culture literature is informed both by studies of foreign policy restructuring and constructivist ideas on foreign policy as discourse. Essentially, this work seeks to challenge "the distinction between behaviour and culture" by considering "culture as practice."[92] It also represents a response to the criticism of prior generations of cultural models as static and unresponsive to systemic pressures.[93]

Under what conditions can strategic culture change? When might foreign policy decisions transcend the traditional bounds of strategic culture? In my own work on the subject, I contend that at least three factors can cause "strategic cultural dilemmas" and produce changes in security policy. First, external shocks may fundamentally challenge existing beliefs and undermine past historical narratives. According to Farrell, a shock is often a "necessary condition for radical change…[shocks] undermine the legitimacy of existing norms, shift power within communities, and enable norm cultural entrepeneurs to construct a new consensus around alternative norms."[94] For German leaders in the 1990s, the scale of the humanitarian tragedies in the Balkans served as a catalyst for consideration of policy options outside the traditional bounds of German strategic culture. The recognition that groups were being systematically targeted for genocide and ethnic cleansing created a moral imperative for German action. Some experts have even suggested that ethnic cleansing in Bosnia eroded

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90 Harry Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 82 (1998): 796.
91 Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed*, 2.
92 Rassmussen, "What's the Use of It?" 71.
93 See, for example, Charles Lockhart, "Cultural Contributions to Explaining Institutional Form, Political Change, and Rational Decisions," *Comparative Political Studies* 32, no.7 (October 1999): 862-893.
94 Farrell, "Transnational Norms and Military Development," 82.

the moral legitimacy of pacifism on the German political left and led to an atmosphere more permissive of the use of force to stop such violence.[95]

However, most scholars rightly assert that any process of change would not be easy. Potential catalysts for change, Berger argued, might be "dramatic events or traumatic experiences [such as revolutions, wars, and economic catastrophes]," that would "discredit thoroughly core beliefs and values."[96] Such change would be accompanied by extreme psychological stress and would require a resocialization process, involving participation by various groups in the crafting of a compromise on a new political cultural orientation.[97]

Second, foreign policy behavior may break the traditional bounds of strategic cultural orientations when primary tenets of strategic thought come into direct conflict with one another. In other words, a country with interpretive codes of support for democracy and an aversion to the use of military force faces a strategic cultural dilemma when confronted by a challenge to democracy that necessitates a military response. The Japanese government confronted this question in relation to the struggle for self-determination in East Timor. The same type of dilemma may arise from a conflict between commitments to multilateralism and unilateral convictions that norms are being violated. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky said that cultures remain vital only if their core principles continue to generate solutions that satisfy human needs and make sense of the world.[98] Products of this strategic cultural *dissonance* include occasional state defections from multilateral arrangements, the development of alternative diplomatic initiatives, or stipulations for policy cooperation.

Thus, strategic cultural dilemmas define new directions for foreign policy and demand the reconstruction of historical narratives. Changes—including abrupt and fairly dramatic reorientations of security policy behavior—appear to be possible, and strategic cultural models must be more reflective of the conditions that draw out such changes. Indeed, Swidler recognized that the relationship between state behavior and strategic culture becomes especially apparent "in unsettled cultural periods…when explicit ideologies govern action [and] structural opportunities for action determine which among competing ideologies

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95 Jeffrey S. Lantis, *Strategic Dilemmas and the Evolution of German Foreign Policy Since Unification* (Westport: Praeger, 2002).
96 Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, 23.
97 Ibid., 14.
98 Michael Thompson, Richard Ellis, and Aaron Wildavsky, *Cultural Theory* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1990): 69-70.

survive in the long run."[99] As NATO leaders implement a new strategic concept, China pursues liberalized trade, and the United States leads a global war on terrorism in the 21st century, strategic cultural models must themselves adapt for long-term relevance.

Third, elites play a special role in strategic cultural continuity and change. Perhaps Berger is correct that strategic culture is best understood as a "negotiated reality" among foreign policy elites. While leaders clearly pay respect to deeply held convictions associated with strategic culture, the story of foreign policy development may be best understood as the pursuit of legitimation for preferred policy courses that may, or may not, conform to traditional cultural boundaries. Indeed, Hymans contends that identity is as much *subjective* as intersubjective, and that leaders often adopt their own specific conceptions of national identity from among a competitive marketplace of ideas.[100] Both the constructivist and culturalist literature agree on the possibility for norm entrepreneurs to approach events, frame the discourse, and begin constructing a new discursive path toward objectives. Indeed, sociologist Cruz contends that elites have much more latitude than scholars generally allow. They may "recast a particular agenda as most appropriate to a given collective reality or...recast reality itself by establishing a (new) credible balance between the known and the unknown." In short, Cruz argued, they "redefine the limits of the possible, both descriptively and prescriptively."[101]

In many ways, the U.S. response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, is illustrative of these agents of strategic cultural change. The Bush administration's declaration of a war on terrorism represented a fundamental conversion in strategic culture prompted by an external shock. President Bush and top advisors embraced a new direction in U.S. security policy based on their reinterpretation of the threat matrix. New strategic cultural orientations include a positive affirmation of American dominance in international security affairs, with priority consideration of homeland security, a new doctrine of preemption that includes a willingness to use military force to achieve security objectives, and a preference for unilat-

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99 Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," 273.
100 Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation*, 19; See also Jane Mansbridge and Aldon Morris, eds., *Oppositional Consciousness: The Subjective Roots of Social Protest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
101 Cruz acknowledges that this raises a critical dichotomy between culture as a system of meaning and culture as practice; Cruz, "Identity and Persuasion," p.278.

eral action to reduce external constraints on U.S. behavior.[102]   However, these changes have been extremely difficult and even traumatic for the American polity, prompting deep divisions over questions like the constitutionality of executive action, the degree of U.S. sacrifice in the war on terror, and a shift in alliance and security relationships in the 21st century.[103]

6. Consider Policy Implications: Strategic Culture and Coercive Diplomacy

The theory of strategic culture offers tremendous opportunity for progressive study of strategic choice in the 21st century, but it clearly contains a few pitfalls as well. I would contend that there is a great deal of potential utility in strategic cultural studies if scholars truly pursue the goal of cumulation outlined here. Progressive models of strategic culture operating from similar sets of assumptions about the sources, influences, and implications of identity have the potential to be highly valuable policy tools. Strategic cultural models speak to concerns in key policy arenas as well, including responses to countries seeking weapons of mass destruction. If one accepts that there are truly different strategic cultural profiles, and that they shape security policy choices around the world, then major powers should tailor their policies to accommodate these cultural differences to the extent possible. Regarding threat assessment, for example, there are significant questions about the applicability of western and traditional models to non-western countries. Studies of Iranian and North Korean decision-making systems, for example, that focus on the dysfunction of the process may ignore significant cultural differences that allow those systems to focus on specific ends and means without traditionally western orientations. A multi-faceted cultural approach allows us to recognize the nuance of competing systems and may further energize our potential for accurate threat assessment.

These arguments are supported in the limited scholarship on identity and strategic choice. For example, George argues "the effectiveness of deterrence and coercive diplomacy is highly context dependent."[104] In a recent article, Jentleson and Whytock recognize that at

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102 Theo Farrell, "Strategic Culture and American Empire," *SAIS Review* 25, no.2 (2005), pp.3-18
103 Jeffrey S. Lantis, "American Strategic Culture and Transatlantic Security Ties," in Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski, eds., *Old Europe, New Europe and the Transatlantic Security Agenda*, 2005
104 Alexander L. George, "The Need for Influence Theory and Actor-Specific Behavioral Models of Adversaries," in in Barry R. Schneider and Jerrold M. Post, eds., "Know Thy Enemy: Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures," U.S. Air Force Counterproliferation Center (July 2003): 271-310; www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/know_thy_enemy/index.htm.

least three different strategies of coercive diplomacy may be selected to achieve strategic objectives in counterproliferation: "proportionality, reciprocity and coercive credibility."[105] These scholars contend that different strategies of coercive diplomacy may be used effectively to achieve specific objectives, but that the selection of these strategies should be "tailored" to match the national identity conceptions of the target state. Finally, drawing on theories from political psychology, Hymans contends that the decision to develop a nuclear arsenal is "extraordinary," and can be found to be rooted in the national identity conceptions that leaders carry with them.[106] Understanding different national identity conceptions, Hymans contends, can help us to predict whether leaders will ultimately decide to take that significant step.

Recent U.S. efforts to deal with nuclear programs in rival states like North Korea and Iran are illustrative of the complexity of the challenges. Efforts to dissuade and deter potential enemies from developing nuclear weapons have largely been unsuccessful to date. This is not to say, of course, that U.S. diplomacy has been unsophisticated in identifying the challenges and recognizing nuances in cross-cultural communication. But one could argue that progressive models of strategic culture can only help to inform selection of policies targeted toward specific strategic cultures. Assuming that concepts like coercion, risk, and deterrence are highly culturally specific, the development of more reflexive models becomes essential for both international cooperation and security policy success.

CONCLUSION

While constructivism may represent a paradigmatic challenge to structural realism in the discipline today, most supporters of strategic culture have adopted the more modest goal of 'bringing culture back in' to the study of national security policy. In fact, these research traditions are more similar than some would believe. Scholars must work to overcome barriers to integration of these two approaches into a more comprehensive model of strategic culture formation, implementation, and change. Some argue that one of these barriers is a certain defensiveness on the part of neorealists, who contend that culturalists (and constructiv-

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105 Bruce W. Jentleson and Christopher Whytock, "Who 'Won' Libya? The Force-Diplomacy Debate and its Implications for Theory and Policy," *International Security* 30, no.3 (Winter 2005/2006), pp.47-86
106 Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation*, 18.

ists) simply seek to supplant neorealism. But ultimately, even Desch allows that cultural theories might supplement neorealism by helping to explain time lags between structural change and alterations in state behavior, by accounting for seemingly 'irrational' state behavior, and in helping to explain state actions in "structurally indeterminate situations."[107] The cases of the evolution of German and Japanese security policies are better understood as a product of domestic political adjustments (rooted in culture, traditions, and common historical narratives) to changing international circumstances. Far from an exclusive interpretation, progressive models that explore external-internal linkages and their impact on discrete, strategic choices represent an important avenue for theoretical advancement.

Culture is clearly a factor in contemporary international security, but research still needs to be done on its depth and scope of influence. The Comparative Strategic Cultures project (2005-2006) assembled a range of experts to address strategic culture in practice around the world. Participants are very cognizant of the warning that in seeking to identify causal relations there is a risk of over-simplifying the social world. Considering strategic culture as "a dynamic interplay between discourse and practice" offers a means for accommodating the issue of the mutable nature of strategic culture. Similarly, it may illuminate both how strategic culture evolves from generation to generation and is transformed by competing groups through negotiation and debate.[108]

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107 Ibid, p.166.
108 Darryl Howlett and John Glenn, "Epilogue: Nordic Strategic Culture," *Cooperation and Conflict* 40, no. 1 (2005), p. 129.

STRATEGIC CULTURE: REFINING THE THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

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Strategic Culture: Methodologies for a Research Program

Jeannie L. Johnson

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written to establish the utility of strategic culture analysis in forecasting problems and improving policy performance in international relations. It is regarded by most of its advocates as a supplement to realism, neo-realism and constructivism theory. Where realism posits that state actors behave rationally, strategic culture analysis points out that rational behavior is culturally dependent. Values weighed by a rational actor in a cost/benefit analysis are often ideational as well as material and cannot be accurately assessed without a substantive knowledge of the actor's preferences. That knowledge, complex and messy as it is to obtain, is a worthy pursuit. This essay is an effort to systematize, in part, a strategic culture research program that can move us closer to that goal.

As pointed out in Jeffrey Lantis' superb article, strategic culture suffers from lack of a defined set of assumptions or codified theoretical construct. The agreed upon foundation for strategic culture consists mainly of a consensus on including culture as a variable in analyzing foreign policy and security decisions. The purpose of this essay is to combine the wisdom of our case study authors and the patterns which surfaced in their work in order to come to some consensus on how, exactly, to pursue the study of strategic culture. We will examine the analytical approach used to construct our case studies, consider lessons learned, and propose efforts toward further refinement.

CASE SELECTION

Given the prominent role that weapons of mass destruction (WMD) play in international security concerns, we selected country cases that would highlight states of particular interest to our U.S. government sponsor with regards to WMD decision-making. Our authors were asked to investigate the influence of strategic culture on state decisions to adhere to WMD related international norms, or to acquire, proliferate, or use biological, chemical or nuclear weapons. The United States was selected as a baseline case, and one that would touch on use, international norms, and an extended period of non-use. Russia and China add to the baseline dimension.

These two states provide highly researchable cases, since area experts, government specialists, and academicians devoted extensive time and resources to understanding their WMD histories, inner workings, and decision-making structures during the Cold War. An obvious choice for inclusion are two nuclear aspirants currently making headlines—Iran and North Korea. Their flouting of international norms, propensities toward proliferation, and heated rhetoric vis a vis the U.S. make them hard to ignore. Both are secretive and coy regimes and posed significant challenges for our authors.

Pakistan and India share the world's most dangerous nuclear border. In addition to evaluating scenarios for use between these two countries, our authors were asked to examine the decisions behind bucking the international system by acquiring weapons in the first place, and, in the case of Pakistan, setting up an extensive proliferation regime.

Israel is a unique case study given its policy of nuclear "strategic ambiguity." Investigating why some countries decide to overtly declare their nuclear programs—in violation of current international norms (India, Pakistan, North Korea)—and why others choose a path of ambiguity, is an intriguing question. Given the dangers in its neighborhood, and its opportunities for nuclear use, Israel's decision to keep these weapons under wraps is remarkable.

Looking forward, we selected two cases that represent potential nuclear aspirants. Although Syria does not have the material capability to pursue a full WMD arsenal at this time, they may someday seek nuclear weapons. Dealings in their neighborhood suggest that a WMD stocked Middle East is one possible future scenario. Evaluating the strategic culture of a country sitting on the sidelines, determining whether to get in the game, may tell us something about how domestic beliefs and processes influence this critical decision.

Our final case study steps completely outside the normal parameters of strategic culture studies and investigates the applicability of this mode of analysis to a non-state actor—al Qaeda. Osama bin Laden has made clear that he is interested in acquiring a nuclear weapon and has gone to great lengths to forge Islamic justification for its use against the United States.[1] Given the proliferation of non-state security concerns, one test for the utility of strategic culture as a foreign policy forecasting tool will be its ability to shed light on the preferences and modes of

strategic behavior of actors outside the traditional nation-state body.

As is suggested by our case selection, nuclear weapons are of paramount concern. That said, our cases offer enlightening material about use, and reactions to use of biological and chemical weapons as well.

CASE STUDY OUTLINE

The primary problem faced by strategic culture analysts is honing down the wide range of variables that may be termed "cultural" and presenting strategic culture analysis as a usable model. Studies under the rubric of "strategic culture" range the spectrum, some focusing primarily on organizational culture within particular security bureaucracies, and others taking in the entire spectrum of ideational and material influences on a country.

Preliminary discussions on the subject of strategic culture had illuminated the troublesome fact that aspects of national and organization culture that may play a strong role in security policy within one regime may not necessarily match those factors which play the primary role in an alternative regime. With this caveat in mind, we asked our authors to work with an agreed upon definition of strategic culture, and to offer suggestions within the text of their case studies regarding the applicability and utility of this definition for their respective regimes. Our definition:

> Strategic culture is that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.

The authors were asked to think about the factors shaping the strategic culture under study, and to profile its resultant characteristics. Areas of specific evaluation included geography, shared narratives, relationships to other groups, threat perception, ideology and religion, economics, and type of government and leadership style. Authors were asked to probe further by asking:

- Are there single or multiple strategic cultures within the state?
- What is the rate of change? What causes change?
- Who maintains the culture?
- What does it say about the enemy?

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1 An extension discussion of this is found in Michael Scheuer's book, *Imperial Hubris*, Potomac Books, (2004)

- What does it say about conflict, the international system, the utility of violence, and the laws of war?
- How important is strategic culture in the formation of security policy relative to other factors?

Finally, our writers were encouraged to include any other factors appropriate to their case.

Requiring the particular focus on weapons of mass destruction served several useful purposes. In addition to testing the utility of strategic culture in helping explain international security behaviors, it narrowed the scope of the research to a more manageable level, and gave structure to the questions investigated by our authors. In addition, the combined data of our finished case studies have helped illuminate which variables within strategic culture tend to play a strong role across regime types, allowing for some refinement in our research design.

REFINING THE THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

Our direction to case study authors was purposefully flexible and culturally comprehensive. One of the challenges this presented when attempting to draw comparisons with other strategic culture work was a mismatch regarding levels of analysis. A multitude of factors, and of actors, influence security policy in any given state (see Figure 1). Determining which of these appropriately fall under the auspices of "strategic culture" continues to pose a challenge for its theoretical development. Without an agreed research process each author in this field is able to focus on a level of preference and call their study "strategic culture".
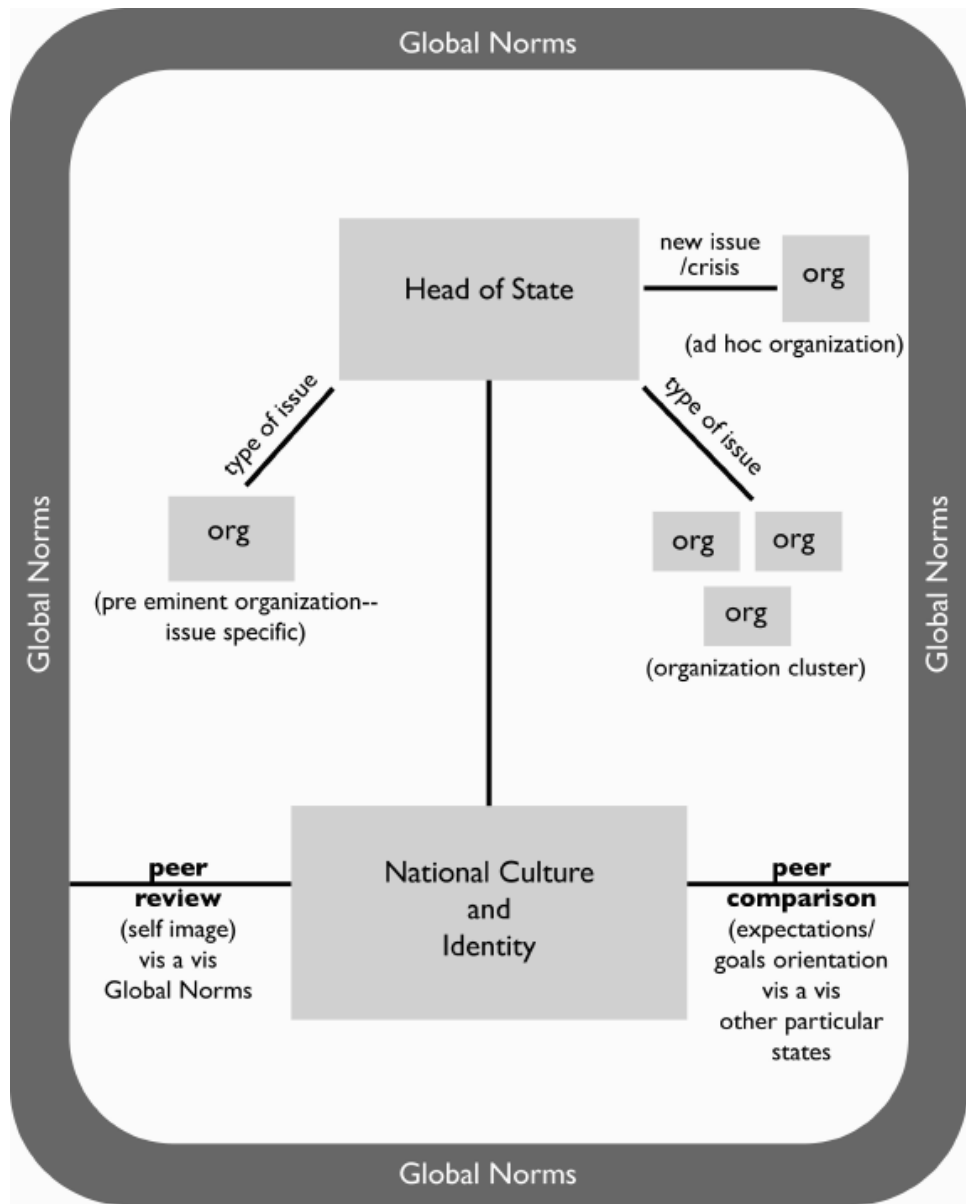
Figure 1: Factors Involved in Developing National Security Policy

If strategic culture is ever to attain credibility as a field of study, it must be confined to some variables and not others. Some important influences on security policy do not appropriately fit into the strategic culture framework. As Colin Gray points out, in order to merit the rubric "culture", the variables we consider must have a somewhat lasting nature:

> We must insist that culture in its several identities – public, strategic, military-organizational – should consist of assumptions and ideas that are strongly held. Its roots might not be very deep, and the plant might be a recent development, but

it has to be hardy to be worthy of the description, cultural. Culture does not refer to mere opinions, to fashionable attitudes, or to shifting patterns of behavior.[2]

Strategic culture certainly can change, but not at the level of the whims of a new administration. The agendas of new administrations are important and must be considered for an accurate forecast of a country's next moves on security policy. Such policy issues are not, however, "strategic culture." Strategic culture is the medium through which those agenda items are processed.

Strategic culture is an existential reality: nation-states do have established notions and habits regarding security policy, but that does not mean that these must play the primary role in guiding said policy. An elite cadre may have an agenda item that would be considered counter-cultural for that nation (as has often been argued regarding pre-emption for the United States) but are able to push it through the resistant mechanisms of strategic culture nonetheless. This may be due to strong material realities, an unexpected crisis, the repeated failure of past strategic culture norms, etc. A full accounting of the factors contributing to any particular security decision might be: "Elite agendas processed through national culture, the national policy process and organizational culture, married to material capabilities, and inhibited or advanced by external actors."

Levels of Analysis

My review of our commissioned case studies as well as numerous others in the strategic culture field has led to the follow suggestions for narrowing the strategic culture parameters. The two most common, and appropriate, levels of analysis which surface in the literature are national culture and organizational culture. National culture provides the context in which organization culture, and its attendant processes, are formed. Therefore coming up with a more clearly defined research program for national culture (as it pertains to security concerns) is a necessary first step in our aim of nailing down the components of strategic culture.

It must be stressed, however, that national culture is only one part of the essential data

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2 Colin Gray, "Out of the Wilderness: Prime-Time for Strategic Culture", unpublished essay prepared for the Nuclear Security Forum, July 2006, p.11

needed to construct a complete picture of a nation's strategic culture. Two more levels of analysis must take place. First, a strategic culture analyst must determine the national policy making process for security issues. Who are the actors involved? What is their rank vis a vis one another? Which is likely to take the driver's seat given the particular policy question under review? What are the rules, stated and unstated, of their engagement with one another? Secondly, an analyst must peer inside the organizational structure of each of the competing, relevant actors. Do they house internal agendas in competition with prevailing national culture? What are their decision mechanisms? What institutional habits have been ingrained into the participants? The combination of national culture, national policy processes, and organizational culture make up the domestic phenomenon termed "strategic culture."

Already, professionals in the academic world study each of these three components. Ethnographers make their trade by delving into the mysteries of local and national cultures, comparativists in the field of political science amass and analyze data on the form and efficacy of various national policy processes, and the study of organizational culture—determining the outlines of institutions and their internal rules, doctrines, and incentive structures—has become a common mode of employ by international as well as domestic political theorists.[3]

A fair question then, is what the study of "strategic culture" hopes to add. The first point would be that strategic culture allows for a security lens to be placed on all of the aforementioned study. It points researchers to a specific task, and corrals data in a way particularly useful to foreign policy.

Second, strategic culture fills a gap in international relations theory. It allows that most actors are likely rational, but insists that rationality must be understood within a cultural context. It explores the ways in which agents within national populations, political administrations, and security related institutions are, to use the more common phrase, "rationally bounded" in their decision-making. Being a culturalist, this author takes exception at the pejorative meaning "bounded" implies. While some strategic cultures may be objectively deficient (where efficiency and accuracy of information are concerned), much of what distinguishes "rational" decisions from one society to another are value preferences, not deficiencies in thinking or

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3 For a particularly good example of this type of research see William C. Mitchell and Randy T. Simmons, *Beyond Politics,* Westview Press, (1994)

organizing.

Our task, then, is determining how particular national beliefs, decision-making processes, and bureaucratic reflexes direct rational decision-making in security policy. Of most interest are those security decisions which other theoretical constructs (particularly realism) have difficulty explaining, such as security moves which preference ideational values over material interests, or which seem to reflect bureaucratic habit more than clear-headed cost/benefit analysis, or are based on misappropriated perceptions of the outside world.

Due to the nature of the case study outline provided to our authors, our cases focus heavily on national culture and less so on organizational culture. Our question, "who maintains the culture?" alluded to the institutions and actors which process security policy, but did not outline a specific set of questions to examine. Therefore, the remainder of this essay will focus on the lessons learned, and refinement enabled in the study of national culture through the efforts of our case study authors.

COMMON THEMES ACROSS THE CASES

National Culture

Nearly all strategic culture analysts spend a good deal of time articulating aspects of national culture which play a role in influencing security policy. As is understood by any student of culture, a rubric as elastic as "national culture" captures a tremendous number of variables. Our first task in refining the theoretical construct and methodological processes for strategic culture is to determine which of these variables are pertinent to the formulation of rationality as regards security policy for a particular regime. The end goal is a research design that will make a security approach to national culture more accessible to the average graduate student or policy analyst.

Christopher Twomey raises early on in his paper on China that many of China's attributes and strategic moves are similar to those any other rational actor may employ. This is likely true for many states. It is, however, the distinctness of another's strategic culture that we are most interested in – those attributes which are alien enough from our own ways of thinking and doing that we misread, mispredict, or misapply foreign policy in the common global arena.

The Model

In an effort to create a more parsimonious research model, we must hone down national culture variables to those that consistently have effect on security policy and that are value-laden for that culture. Four variables which seem to provide such a baseline include identity, values, norms and perceptive lens. Each will be discussed in turn.

<u>Identity</u>

A nation-state's view of itself, comprising the traits of its national character, its intended regional and global roles, and its perceptions of its eventual destiny. Most theorists might agree that nation-states are self-interested, and seek their own net gain. Even economists, however, clarify that rationally self-interested actors are pursuing personal, not universal goals:

> Thus, the economic statement that man is thought to be rational is a fairly modest one. It merely means that he attempts to achieve his goals, and that he devote at least some thought, some of the time, to how to do it.[4]

Rather than accept the blanket assumption of absolute power-seeking offered by neo-realism, (primarily defined in military and economic terms), strategic culture analysis assumes that states may have diverse goals based on a normative understanding of who they are, and what role they should be playing.

For instance, in Murhaf Jouejati's survey of Syria, he notes that Syrian self-identity as "champion of Arab rights" meant that they acted on interests that realism would have difficulty explaining:

> Although Syria could have stayed out of the war in 1948, the then small Syrian army rushed to the frontline in support of its Palestinian brethren in their conflict with the emerging Jewish state. In 1956, although Egypt alone was the target of the tripartite Israeli/British/French alliance, Syria joined the conflict – out of Arab solidarity... During the 1960s, although Israel's attempts to channel water from the Jordan River to the Negev desert did not affect Syria, the Syrian Government set out to divert the Jordan River's head waters – fueling tensions between Arabs and Israelis that culminated in the Six Day War.5

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4 Richard B. McKenzie and Gordon Tullock, "The Economic Approach to Human Behavior", *The New World of Economics*, (1981) p.9
5 Murhaf Jouejati, "The Strategic Culture of Syria" (2006)

<u>Values</u>

In a cost/benefit analysis, the material and/or ideational factors which are given priority, and selected over others. The recent debacle over the Danish printing of unflattering cartoons of Muhammad illustrates the point of divergent social values fairly nicely. For Westerners viewing the situation, the value at stake was clearly freedom of the press and freedom of expression. By Western standards, civilized values require the "maturity" to handle offensive press. An act of violence in reaction to a printed cartoon was clearly childish and barbaric; in short, "irrational."

For Muslims, the value at stake was, instead, defense of the sacred. Muhammad comprises an essential part of Islamic sacred sphere, and it is the duty of Muslims to defend it, even at the cost of bloodshed. Certainly not all Muslims share this view at the same level, but enough did to cause an international uproar.

Rodney Jones' assessment of India stresses the strong value placed by Indians on modern scientific and instrumental knowledge and its affect on two forms of security policy: weapons manufacture and negotiating style:

> This trait drove India's investment in modern science and engineering across the board, its acquisition of modern military technology and large standing military forces, its development of nuclear and missile capabilities – against international opposition, and its secret development of chemical weapons. [In addition,] this trait is conducive to Indian practitioners in strategic decision-making and negotiations being better informed and more analytically focused than most of their external interlocutors. [6]

<u>Norms</u>

Accepted and expected modes of behavior. An evaluation of norms may illuminate why some rational means toward an end goal are rejected as unacceptable, even though they would be perfectly efficient. Tannenwald and Price have explored the non-use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons as a case in point.[7]

Greg Giles explores the power of national norms on security policy in a number of places

6 Rodney Jones, "India's Strategic Culture" (2006)
7 Richard Price and Nina Tannenwald, "Norms and Deterrence: The Nuclear and Chemical Weapons Taboos" found in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed. The Culture of National Security (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 114-152

in his work on Israel. One particularly poignant example focuses on the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) conclusions about engagement in the 1987 Intifada:

> Eventually, the IDF command publicly acknowledged that it could not engage in the types of operations needed to eliminate the Intifada without violating societal norms. In essence, IDF Chief of Staff Dan Shomron declared that there was no acceptable military solution to the uprising and that it had to be resolved politically.[8]

A second example highlights the limits on the power of elites to use societal norms to package controversial decisions. Judaic tradition transfers the sin of war to the party that initiates it. Thus, the distinction between wars forced upon the state (i.e. obligatory) and wars selected (i.e. optional) is of profound ethical importance. "Ethically, the former are considered 'just' wars that require full public support, while the latter lack consensus and, by extension, moral clarity."[9]

The 1982 invasion of Lebanon put Israeli norms to the test. All prior wars had been cast as no-choice wars. The political and military leaders at the time tried various tactics at framing the 1982 confrontation in the same way. Their efforts failed.

> In contrast to all prior wars, the 1982 invasion of Lebanon was deemed [by the public] to be a "war by choice" and consequently at odds with traditional Jewish definitions of a just and legal war. This triggered a national debate that deepened the questioning of fundamental beliefs and assumptions at the core of Israeli strategic culture…As the goals of the operation expanded, and Israeli casualties mounted, initial public support for the war dissipated.[10]

Perceptive Lens

Beliefs (true or misinformed) and experiences or the lack of experience, which color the way the world is viewed. As is widely understood, behavior is based on the *perception* of reality, not reality itself. Perceptions of "fact," of our own histories, of our image abroad, of what motivates others, of the capabilities of our leadership and our national resources, and other security-related ideas, all play a strong role in forming what each regime believes to be rational foreign policy.

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8 Gregory Giles, "Continuity and Change in Israel's Strategic Culture" (2006), p. __.
9 Giles, quoting Charles Ben-Dor, "War and Peace: Jewish Tradition and the Conduct of War*," Israeli Defense Forces Journal*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Fall 1986), pp. 47-50.

A number of distressing examples of the policy implications of a powerful and highly controlled national perceptive lens come from North Korea. Joseph Bermudez points out that the US is portrayed as the primary enemy and one that is perfectly willing to use WMD against the North Koreans:

> During the [Korean] war both [North Korea} and People's Republic of China suffered from repeated, and to them, unexplained outbreaks of infectious diseases such as influenza, Dengue fever, and cholera. These outbreaks caused large numbers of civilian and military casualties. While the leadership knew that it was untrue, they fabricated the story that the US was employing biological, and to a lesser degree chemical, weapons against their units in Korea and against villages within the PRC itself.11

North Korea sees itself as morally stronger than the United States, and President Kim Jong Il has characterized U.S. tactics in the Gulf War as "child's play." The erroneous beliefs Kim holds, and perpetuates, are rarely challenged by subordinates who fear to raise any issues that may be perceived as negative. This results in a misinformed perceptive lens sustained by circular verification.[12]

The Variables Evaluated

The nature of each of these four variables is constructed to avoid eclipsing data pertinent to the study of strategic culture, while maintaining a common framework for comparison. Case studies conducted through a common framework will provide the opportunity for hypotheses to surface concerning the influence of strategic culture on security policy and mark the beginning stages of theory-building in this field.

Selecting identity, values, norms and perceptive lens as our core variables present several advantages. First, each has a specific security dimension. Among other things, identity tells us the global role a nation-state intends to play and its likely aspirations. Values determine which principles, and material goods, are negotiable and which are not. A study of norms will help us understand which means are more likely to be employed than others in attaining state goals. And examining a nation's "perceptive lens" may contribute significantly to understanding the character of bounded rationality operating within a state. Data perceived as fact by a national

10 Giles, p.__.
11 Joseph Bermudez, "An Overview of North Korea's Strategic Culture" (2006)

population need not have any semblance to the truth.

A second advantage of these particular variables is that each remains expansive enough to capture much of what is important about national culture. Inputs such as geography, history, access to technology, experience with regime types, religious traditions, etc., *create* identity, values, norms, and a group's perceptive lens. In some ways these four variables can be viewed as security-related outputs of national culture. (See Figure 2).
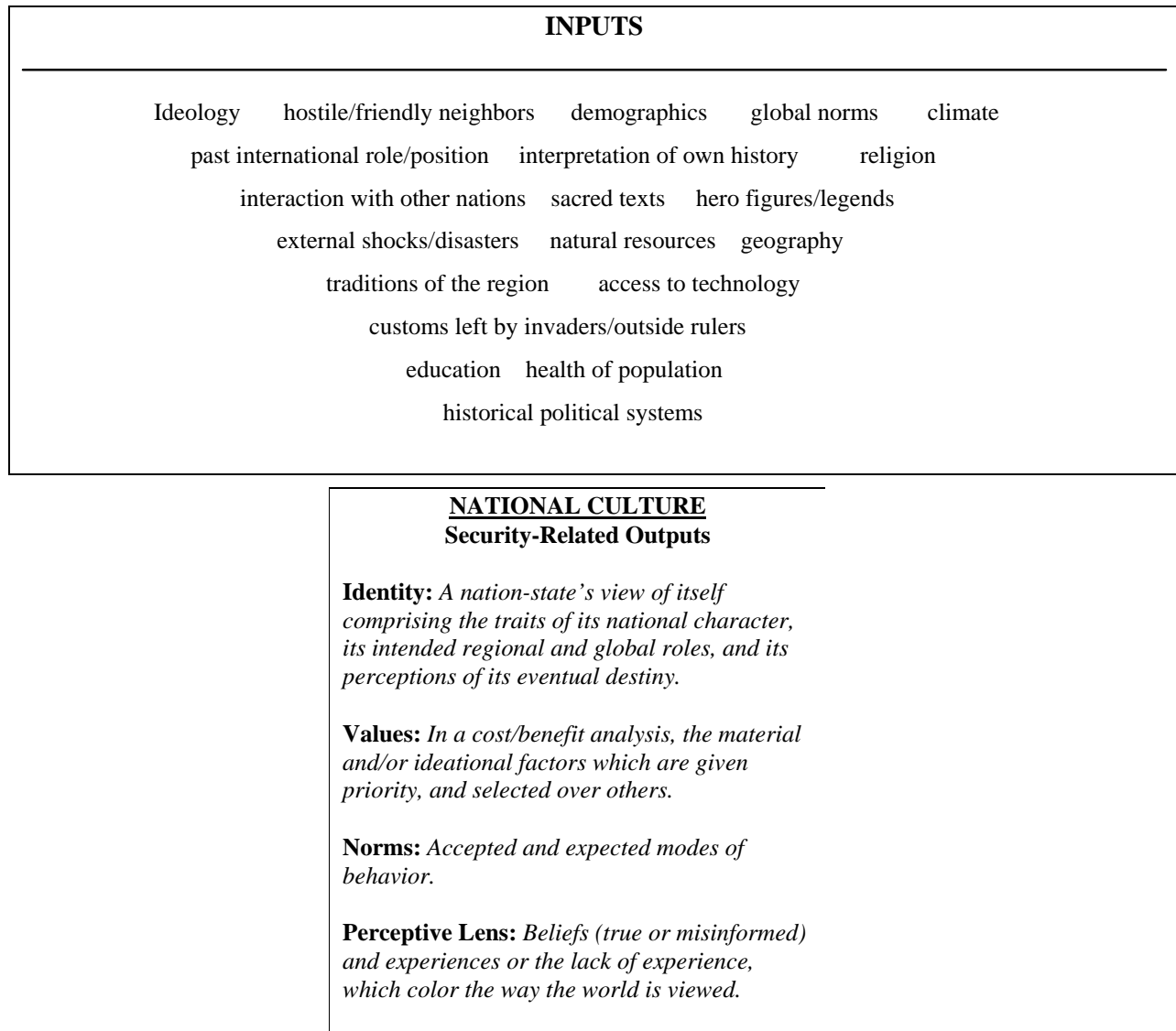

INPUTS

Ideology   hostile/friendly neighbors   demographics   global norms   climate

past international role/position   interpretation of own history   religion

interaction with other nations   sacred texts   hero figures/legends

external shocks/disasters   natural resources   geography

traditions of the region   access to technology

customs left by invaders/outside rulers

education   health of population

historical political systems

NATIONAL CULTURE
Security-Related Outputs

Identity: *A nation-state's view of itself comprising the traits of its national character, its intended regional and global roles, and its perceptions of its eventual destiny.*

Values: *In a cost/benefit analysis, the material and/or ideational factors which are given priority, and selected over others.*

Norms: *Accepted and expected modes of behavior.*

Perceptive Lens: *Beliefs (true or misinformed) and experiences or the lack of experience, which color the way the world is viewed.*

Figure 2: Inputs to Strategic Culture

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12 Ibid

Constructivists have paved the way in suggesting methods for measuring the impact of at least two of these variables on national policy – identity and norms.[13] Interesting methodologies have also surfaced regarding the tracking and prioritizing of accepted narratives which give us a window into "perceptive lens."[14] Work in all three fields shows a great deal of promise and provides a foundation of research for strategic culture analysts to build on in further developing measurement methods. Before we can measure the impact of these variables on security policy, however, we must first examine methods of unearthing cultural data in the first place.

RESEARCH METHODS

The question might fairly be asked, "How does one research such seemingly subjective variables?" Researching culture, as it pertains to security matters, is not a well practiced art form in the discipline of political science. Therefore, our analysts will need to stretch to include methodologies from other disciplines, particularly ethnography and sociology. These methods often include widely employed techniques such as polling and focus groups. Closed regimes are not grounds easily subjected to some of these mechanisms, however, and more creative solutions have to be employed.

Some of the mechanisms suggested here might be employed by an individual researcher, while others require the resources of a broad institution. The aim is to encourage both. Currently U.S. intelligence processes focus on political, economic, security and leadership analysis of a regime. Nowhere are analysts trained with specific skills in unearthing cultural data, or assigned the task of defining the parameters of a foreign society's rationality. Analysts often recognize the need to know some basic information about a foreign culture and seek it out on their own, but the practice is not institutionalized, nor is it given much by way of attention, or resources. As a result, the intelligence community is left open to serious policy mistakes. Understanding culture is essential in forecasting events, building goodwill on the ground,

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13 See, for example, Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda", *International Studies Review*, Vol 2, No 1, (Spring 2000), pp. 65-87; Paul Kowert and Jeffrey Legro, "Norms, Identity, and Their Limits: A Theoretical Reprise", found in Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*, pp. 451-497; andTheo Farrell, "Contructivist Studies: Portrait of a Research Program", *International Studies Review*, Spring 2002, pp. 49-72.
14 Stephanie Kelley, "Rumors in Iraq: A Guide to Winning Hearts and Minds", *Strategic Insights*, Volume IV, Issue 2 (February 2005)

engaging in successful negotiations, and the entire host of other occupations within our foreign policy structure. Wars for hearts and minds are not won by the culturally ignorant.

As academia refines the tools used for strategic culture analysis it will become more attractive to institutions conducting analysis on foreign policy in defense, diplomatic and intelligence circles. The build-up of case-studies provided by individual researchers will provide a launching pad for more comprehensive analyses of this sort. Thus, the methods suggested here have an eye toward both individual and institutional level research.

Transparency of methodology is important to any scientific pursuit. One requirement of future strategic culture studies, therefore, should be a description of the methods employed for ascertaining notions about the identity, values, norms, and perceptive lens held by another society. In that spirit, the following is a sampling of methods based on interviews with our case study authors, as well as a wide range of students and scholars pursuing work in strategic culture or related fields. Given that the syllabus this essay supports is intended for upper level undergraduates, the methodologies will be examined from the most basic and obvious to the more sophisticated.

Select a Specific Security Question

Perhaps one of the most important contributions of our project to the methodology of strategic culture was discovering the utility of starting with a specific question. Willis Stanley, in his study of Iran's strategic culture, emphasizes the notion that the breadth of strategic culture analysis is only manageable, and useful, when it is directed by a specific question. Rather than striving to form national profiles that could be pulled off the shelf and applied to any situation, he argues for a narrower approach that is determined by the question asked. All of the case studies provided in this syllabus focus on the aspects of strategic culture that influence decisions regarding weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Therefore, Stanley notes,

> The focus on WMD decision-making bounds the discussion in an important way. Those parts of the regime that directly take or influence WMD decisions are the only concern. How Iran decides its agricultural policies or its views on censoring films are not particularly relevant to this subset of security decisions.[15]

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15 Willis Stanley, "The Strategic Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran" (2006)

Stanley makes a strong point for the methodology of strategic culture analysis. If it is to become a useful analytic tool for policy-makers, as well as academicians, the task must be feasible.

Reading In

Nearly all authors begin with the assumption that one must conduct a thorough background investigation to become familiar with a regime's history, geography, internal social codes, and general interactions with other states. As pointed out, again by Willis Stanley, if not conducted strategically, this task can be overbearing:

> …there is a continuity of human history is and around the Iranian plateau that extends from the emergence of Neolithic society and agriculture around 8000BCE through to the present day. In order to capture such a broad sweep of history within the confines of "strategic culture," it is important to begin with the question: to what end do we hope to apply our findings?[16]

One way to gauge those aspects of history most important for in-depth study is by listening to historic references made in national political rhetoric, private conversation, lessons in school, and reflected in the artwork and symbols that decorate public and private places. Traumatic historical events are particularly important as they often imprint a nation's social psychology. In addition, tracking interactions with other nations over time often reveals themes and consistent patterns of behavior.[17]

Tapping Into the Population

Useful interaction with the population under survey can range from rudimentary (i.e. daily records of anecdotal interaction[18]) to highly institutionalized methods (i.e. sophisticated polling conducted nation-wide.)[19] One popular method for both institutions and individual researchers is targeted focus groups. Much has been written on this particular survey technique, but the advice of our authors is that effective focus groups must be preceded by an in-depth

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16 Willis Stanley, "The Strategic Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran" (2006) p.
17 Interview with Rodney Jones, (2006)
18 Kathryn Moss, interview (2006)
19 Kate Spears, interview (2006)

study of the issue at hand so that the interviewer can select a sampling of *relevant* focus participants and can frame questions appropriately.[20]

One effective device used by ethnographers is to narrow their interviews to key keepers of local culture. These people have frequent contact with other members of the community, and that contact results in extended conversation. As a result, they tend to harbor the notions, language modes, and perceptive lens of the local community.[21]

An important window into norms, and the color of a group's perceptive lens, is discovering "conventional wisdom" for an area—the things everybody knows.[22] Compiling, and analyzing oral traditions may take a number of different forms.[23]   The author of a recent popular survey of Iran attempted to do this by engaging in dialogue with persons from a sampling of all of the society's castes and factions, and starting each conversation with the same question, "Tell me your story."[24] The patterns and themes developed across conversations helped uncover generally accepted notions about self and others. Additional probing may reveal notions of identity—what is taken for granted as a natural role for the nation, what is expected, and what is controversial.[25]

One fairly inventive young scholar from Monterey's Naval Postgraduate School proposed an alternative to official polling—the systematic study of "rumint" (rumors intelligence).[26]   She surveyed and prioritized the issues on the minds of Iraqis by tracking the frequency of rumors. For instance, she demonstrates that the current Iraqi notion that the United States is behind the Iraqi insurgency stems not so much from a determined belief that the United States is evil, but from the perception that it is impossible that a superpower with the might of America couldn't stop the insurgency if it wanted to. Therefore, it must be behind it. Her work produced a number of surprises for U.S. officials concerning Iraqi attitudes and priorities.

Dr. Deborah Wheeler, a specialist in near-east studies, is conducting research on online discussions in the Middle East—particularly amongst women who otherwise do not speak out.

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20 Willis Stanley, interview (2006)
21 Shaun Kjar, interview (2006)
22 Stanley, interview (2006)
23 Kami Capener, interview (2006)
24 Afshin Molavi, *The Soul of Iran: A Nation's Journey to Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005)
25 Chris Boyd, interview (2006)
26 Stephanie Kelley, "Rumors in Iraq: A Guide to Winning Hearts and Minds," *Strategic Insights*, Volume IV, Issue 2 (February 2005), at www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Feb/Kelleyfeb05.asp.

Chat rooms and editorials posted as pseudonymed blogs may be one way to evaluate the thinking of otherwised reticent populations.[27]

Christine Fair, an analyst writing on Iran, suggests alternative approaches for first-hand interviews with citizens of a repressive regime:

> Utiliz[e] consulates of countries where Iranians seek U.S. visas (India and Turkey) to collect and develop information during the visa interview process. Defense attachés may also engage their in-country counterparts in countries where military cooperation with Iran are ongoing to gain insights into Iran.[28]

Interviews are recommended with the full range of expatriates. Students living abroad, for instance, will not have the same outlook as dissidents, but both have the value of being able to compare their circumstances abroad with belief and values at home.[29] State officials who have defected, as well as state officials who remain employed, are another obvious choice for interview.[30] Second-hand interviews—interviewing those who frequently interact with members of the culture—are also very useful, especially in cases where the populace does not feel comfortable speaking openly about their thoughts and opinions.[31]

Bermudez notes that when information is hard to come by, as it is with North Korea, even interviews with travelers and a careful look at their photographs can prove beneficial. In North Korea's case it helps unveil the genuine state of affairs for the state's population (regarding, for example, roads, electricity, phone service, and health conditions) in contrast to state claims about their situation.[32]

Content Analysis of Texts

Texts taught in school should receive particular emphasis in an analysis of a nation's common threads. Historical texts are forced to explain perceptions of a nation's own history, its view of others, acceptable methods of warfare, common justifications for past behavior (norms), and so on. Societal values are taught to children explicitly, and without subtlety in the early

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27 Deborah Wheeler, interview (2006)
28 C. Christine Fair, "Iran: What Future for the Islamic State?" found in *The Muslim World After 9/11* (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, 2004), p. 244
29 Vance Daniels, interview (2006)
30 Murhaf Jouejati, interview (2006)
31 Stanley, interview (2006)
32 Bermudez, interview (2006)

stages of education. Their texts may include hero legends, songs, rhymes, fables and oversimplified anecdotes from the nation's history.[33] Which figures are celebrated? Which despised?[34] Why?

Education and other socialization processes also result in a body of shared literature considered "classic". What are the messages in this body of work? How widely are they read? How often referenced?[35]

Military texts are essential sources of information on the values, identity, and acceptable methods of achieving security within a regime. Christopher Twomey recommends a deep survey of all sorts of doctrinal texts – telegrams, military orders, descriptions of training regimens, diaries, memoirs, communications between military leaders, etc.[36] This study would reveal national aspirations over time (identity) as well as accepted norms for achieving them, and perhaps more particular values such as views on the use of manpower, and loss of life.[37]

Tracking Political Rhetoric

Fritz Ermarth notes that a first assignment in weighing the value of political rhetoric within a nation is to track its correlation with actual behavior in the past. Tracking over time, and across politicians, may yield generalizations about the reliability of government speeches as concerns sincere goals and security objectives.[38] For instance, Chris Twomey points out that the Chinese culture tends to weigh private comments more heavily than public statements, and that inflammatory public statements need to be qualified accordingly.[39]

Analysis of public rhetoric may assist strategic culture analysts in assessing norm strength. Cortell and Davis, as well as Kowert and Legro, have argued that a norm's strength may be measured, in part, by the frequency with which it is referenced by statesmen proposing a course of action, or legitimizing one taken.[40] The measurements proposed in this work might also be applied to variables such as identity, and perhaps national values.

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33 Jeremy Moyes, interview (2006)
34 Spencer Taylor, interview (2006)
35 Stanley, interview (2006)
36 Twomey, interview (2006)
37 Amanda Haycock, interview (2006)
38 Ermarth, interview (2006)
39 Twomey, interview (2006)
40 Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A

In some cases it is politically incorrect to speak of one's historic strategic culture, so there is an absence of political rhetoric on the topic. Rodney Jones notes the case of Japan. Therefore it may benefit analysts to speak to "outsiders" who have lived in, but are not born to, the strategic culture in question. In the case of Japan, Jesuit priests who lived for extended periods of time in country were more likely to speak freely of Japan's history and predilections than Japanese statesmen.[41]

Extended Observation of Public Behavior

Public reactions to the moves made by state leadership may highlight areas of congruence or cleavage between the understanding of values and norms fostered by the populace and the behavior of state officers. Disaffection my come in the form of protest, local grumbling, or biting humor pointed at political officials, while congruence might manifest itself through strong turnout for state events and parades, voluntary displays of state insignia, or healthy membership in state-related organizations.[42]

More subtle mechanisms for evaluating priorities and values within a culture might include careful attention to salutations and conversations between members of the population meeting for the first time. How does one introduce oneself? By way of profession? Clan ties? Religious affiliation?[43] What aspects are most valued?

Views of other actors, especially neighbors, may be measured in part by the acceptance of neighboring modes of dress, expression, foods eaten, names given to children, and so on.[44]

Evaluating the Output of the Media and the Artistic Community

Depending on the level of independence enjoyed by news, entertainment, and artistic producers within a population, these may yield significant insight into a nation's identity, and its core norms and values. Christopher Twomey notes the onerous level of work involved in a

Research Agenda", *International Studies Review*, Vol 2, No 1, (Spring 2000) pp. 65-87; and Paul Kowert and Jeffrey Legro, "Norms, Identity, and Their Limits: A Theoretical Reprise," in Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*, pp. 451-497.
41 Jones, interview (2006)
42 Gentri Lawrence, interview (2006)
43 Anne Richey, interview (2006)
44 Davis Anderson, interview (2006)

comprehensive review of these sources and points by way of commendation to two authors who have tackled it: Peter Hays Gries on China, and Ted Hopf on Russia.[45]

Where the media is completely controlled, it may still offer up some material for strategic culture analysts. State propaganda illuminates the identity, norms and values that the state hopes to achieve, as well as the perceptive lens that it is trying to inculcate into the population.

In a free society the media helps identify cleavages in the strategic culture – often framed as political debates.[46] In addition, a free media may be a reliable watchdog for norms violations within the state. The flurry of reporting on U.S. excesses in Guantanamo and at Abu Ghraib manifest norms violations that are considered serious and newsworthy in the United States, but may not be treated that way in other countries.

As a mirror of popular thinking, the media may also reveal shared values and norms through the justifications given for feeling favorably toward certain conflicts or state actions.[47] On a lighter note, the very fabric of television sitcoms is their exaggerated presentation of the violation of norms. They may prove a useful, and entertaining, research method.[48]

Assessing Institutional Influence

In determining core values within Israeli society, Greg Giles looked first to shared, institutionalized, socialization processes. He pinpoints the IDF since all Israeli citizens are trained through this institution due to universal conscription. Giles points out further that the respect of this institution, and its ability to continue influence, is manifest by the high numbers of young people polled who said they would be willing to serve in the IDF even if it were an all-volunteer force.[49]

Understanding Symbols

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45 Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); and Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002)
46 Giles, interview (2006)
47 Davis Anderson, interview (2006)
48 Chelsea Curtis, interview (2006)
49 Giles, interview (2006)

Much may be communicated within a population through the strategic use of symbols. Giles notes that the star of David on the Israeli flag makes clear claims about the state's identity. Of particular interest are those symbols that people choose to display in their homes.50

Physical manifestations such as architecture, street names, statues, and memorials demonstrate which aspects of a nation's history it chooses to preserve and celebrate. Understanding who are the heroes, and why, lends itself to understanding national values.[51]

For instance, the Serbian hero, Prince Lazar, has national admiration not because he won wars, but because he stood up to an overwhelming adversary and was defeated with honor. A famous painting of his battle in 1389 (*Kosovo Girl*) is found in a good number of Serbian homes. Stronger awareness of this cultural norm may have helped Balkan analysts more accurately project Serbian President Milosevic's willingness to endure the extended 1999 bombing campaign "Rational" judgments crafted through a U.S. prism led us to believe that Milosevic would fold within three days. NATO prepared for the short campaign, and was forced to make hasty judgments and operational adjustments in order to fight an extended engagement.

Follow the Money

Budget lines, more than political rhetoric, may represent the priorities of a state system. To the extent that budget lines are knowable, several analysts keep close watch on where the state is placing its money.[52]

CONCLUSION

While certainly not a comprehensive list, this brief sampling of methods for studying national strategic culture is meant to whet the appetite of would-be analysts and act as a catalyst for the generation of further research methods.

The primary contribution of this essay is refining the study of national culture for use within the strategic culture construct. The hope is that a pursuit of national culture based on the four-pronged security-based approach will prove inclusive and flexible, and will allow for the beginnings of a systematic study of strategic culture. The goal, from this point, is to develop

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50 Chris Boyd, interview (2006)
51 Jessica Avalos, interview (2006)

some level of analytical parsimony for the other two aspects of strategic culture—national policy processes and organizational culture. And then use this combined tool to unearth patterns in strategic culture that lend themselves to the formation of useful hypotheses.

Several questions that these hypotheses may answer include:

- What causes change in strategic culture? Are some more likely across the board than others? (external shocks, influx of new information/communications, significant demographic shifts, etc.)
- Does the presence of a charismatic leader diminish the influence of strategic culture?
- Is a homogeneous strategic culture more influential than a contested one?
- Are top-down cultures (cultures taught and enforced through government mechanisms) less likely to persist over time?
- Do ideational factors within strategic culture, such as identity, play a stronger role in influencing policy when domestic infighting seems to threaten their existence?

A fairly widespread assumption within strategic culture circles is that national strategic cultures are unlikely to be perfectly homogeneous. More likely they will house a number of competing narratives and practices that relate to security policy. Devising measurement tools which allow us to assess which of those competing ideals is likely to have most sway in the security process is part of our task as strategic culture analysts. The fact that a strategic culture may not be entirely cohesive does not diminish the importance of its study. It will allow analysts to more accurately frame the risks in attempting to forecast policy behavior for that actor, and may illuminate for us cleavages within the support base of our adversaries that may be exploited.

Despite the challenges that exist for the study of strategic culture it is a worthy, and important enterprise. In the words of Colin Gray, "One cannot make a virtue of cultural ignorance."[53] As complicated and resistant to theory as the study of strategic culture may be, it remains in our national interest to pursue it.

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52 Ermarth, Jouejati, and Stanley interviews (2006).
53 Gray, p. 19

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THE CRUCIBLE OF STRATEGIC CULTURE:

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From Science to Solutions

Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Crucible of Strategic Culture

Kerry M. Kartchner

It is more important to understand motivation, intent, method, and culture than to have a few more meters of precision, knots of speed, or bits of bandwidth.[1]

-- Major General Robert H. Scales, Jr., U.S. Army (ret.)

INTRODUCTION

The concept of "strategic culture" is undergoing a revival because it has become essential to better understand the reasons, incentives, and rationales for acquiring, proliferating, and employing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by diverse actors under circumstances that differ significantly from those for which previous analytical constructs now seem inadequate or irrelevant. If the United States and its allies are to assure prospective friends and partners in the common battle against WMD proliferation that their respective guarantees of extended security are credible, if they are to effectively dissuade potential proliferators from engaging in counter-productive acquisition of WMD, and if they are to deter and, if necessary, defeat those actors who rebuff these assurances and dissuasions, they need to understand the strategic cultural context for these objectives.

The purpose of this essay is to lay out a framework for an analytic approach to the intersection of WMD and strategic culture, and to set forth some initial hypotheses. That is, to examine the role of strategic culture in the thinking, decision-making, and behavior of states (and non-state actors) as they contemplate pursuing, possessing, or employing this class of weapons. But first, it is necessary to define "strategic culture" for the purposes of this project, and then to define "weapons of mass destruction" and those decisions regarding weapons of mass destruction we are most concerned with.

For the purposes of this essay, and the overall project, "strategic culture" is defined as "shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security

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[1] Major General Robert H. Scales, Jr., "Culture-Centric Warfare," *Proceedings*, September 2004.

objectives." This definition draws on a rich literature in the application of culture to the study of foreign policy.[2] It further narrows this field, however, to the study of "strategic culture," or those cultural tendencies "which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives" as noted in the definition above.

Strategic culture can manifest itself on many different levels, from the tribal or group level, to the organizational level, the national level, even to the civilizational level. Given the focus of this essay on issues related to weapons of mass destruction, the emphasis will be primarily on the national level. This is not to discount, however, the important insights and explanations that can be found through examining other levels; it is only to set out boundaries for this particular assessment.[3]

The term "WMD" has come to mean many different things, and is used in a number of different ways. However, for the purposes of this project, and as defined in the "Weapons of Mass Destruction Primer" prepared for this project by Paul Bernstein, weapons of mass destruction are defined as "nuclear chemical, biological and radiological weapons, and their associated means of delivery, primarily but not limited to ballistic missiles."[4]

This essay is a preliminary assessment of the subject of how decisions, actions, behavior, and policies related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) may be affected or influenced by a nation's or group's strategic culture. It is necessarily preliminary because a more complete analysis must be based on a more comprehensive database of case studies, and because the full range of factors that determine a nation's or a non-state-actor's decisions regarding WMD is beyond the scope of this project (but may usefully be explored in follow-on studies). In the context of the question of how strategic culture impacts on WMD decisions, then, we are interested in identifying shared beliefs and assumptions regarding the acquisition of WMD, its proliferation, its use, and international WMD norm compliance.

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[2] This literature is most concisely compiled and succinctly examined in Valerie M. Hudson, ed. *Culture and Foreign Policy*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997). See also the compilation of essays in a special edition of the journal *Political Psychology* by Valerie M. Hudson and Martin W. Simpson III, "Special Section on Culture and Foreign Policy," *Political Psychology,* Vol. 20, No. 4 (1999): 667-801.

[3] For a recent exploration of U.S. strategic culture and nuclear weapons with an explicit focus on the organizational level, see Lynn Eden, *Whole World on Fire: Organizations, Knowledge, & Nuclear Weapons Devastation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[4] In his primer on WMD, Paul Bernstein further refers to W. Seth Carus, *Defining "Weapons of Mass Destruction,"* National Defense University Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction Occasional Paper 4, January 2006.

When a nation state or a group considers what its actions and policies are going to be regarding weapons of mass destruction, it faces a range of choices. It can renounce pursuing the acquisition of WMD, and submit to international standards and regimes of non-proliferation. Or, it can choose to pursue acquiring the technology to lay the basis for a future decision to develop nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons without actually proceeding to the manufacture of such weapons, but only to give it the option of doing so if circumstances change in the future. For the purpose of setting forth a framework for assessing the possible impact of strategic culture on these types of decisions, there are four key "decision matrices"[5] that this project is concerned with exploring:

1. *Strategic culture and compliance or noncompliance with international non-proliferation regimes and norms* – does strategic culture strengthen or undermine international or domestic norm-adherence policies and behavior?

2. *Strategic culture and the acquisition of WMD* – does strategic culture inform or determine incentives for acquiring WMD?

3. *Strategic culture and the proliferation of WMD* – does strategic culture promote or inhibit tendencies to proliferate WMD?

4. *Strategic culture and the use of WMD* – does strategic culture influence decisions to use WMD, either in the sense of wielding WMD for deterrence and coercive purposes, or in the sense of actually conducting attacks with WMD?

It is now widely accepted that understanding the regional and cultural context for U.S. foreign and defense policy, especially with respect to combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and preventing their use against the United States or its allies and friends abroad, is required to effectively promote U.S. nonproliferation objectives. This is in part due to the transition from a world dominated by a simple bipolar conflict with clear ideological underpinnings and motivations, to a vastly more complex world of numerous actors (both state and non-state) whose motivations are unclear, and whose objectives may not always be explicit, or are not conveyed in terms we understand.

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[5] I use the term "decision matrices" because, of course, in any given case, it may not be a question of a single decision, but a series of decisions that eventually lead to a significant policy direction. Even the term "decision" may not be accurate in all cases, especially where there is little or no evidence of a specific decision, but where this analysis may be more concerned with general behaviors, certain actions, or stated or implicit policies that are reflected in how a nation or group acts toward or thinks about weapons of mass destruction, or may be expected to act, based on the hypotheses developed in this essay.

Traditional analytical frameworks may not apply in these cases. It seems apparent that deeper forces are at play behind the events that are unfolding in the present era, forces that trace their roots back in some cases hundreds of years in history, stretching far back beyond the relatively short period we knew as the Cold War. These forces have been shaped by religious and cultural factors that we do not readily understand, or that fall outside the conventional analytical frameworks we have previously employed. When traditional ways of understanding no longer seem adequate, it is natural that we should look for new ways to make sense of the world.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING STRATEGIC CULTURE AND WMD

The potential relationships between strategic culture and national security policy and behavior related to weapons of mass destruction are explored below, followed by a discussion of each of these specific groups of decisions, actions, or policies.

Strategic culture offers the promise of providing insight into motivations and intentions that are not readily explained by other frameworks, and that may help make sense of forces we might otherwise overlook, misunderstand, or misinterpret. There are several reasons why it is especially important to apply strategic culture analysis to issues related to weapons of mass destruction.

First, there is increasing recognition that understanding strategic culture is vital to effectively implementing and safeguarding U.S. national security and foreign policy, and combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is among these policies' highest priorities. According to the Defense Science Board's 2004 Study on Strategic Communications, among others, hostility to U.S. national security goals and policies is undermining U.S. power, influence, and strategic alliances, and much of this hostility is driven by a lack of understanding of the cultural and regional context for U.S. policy.[6]

Cultural scripts can determine what is considered "rational." According to Valerie Hudson, "rationality itself may mean different things in different cultures." Hudson cites other studies showing that "differences in moral reasoning based on culture may skew traditional

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[6] This report can be found at http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2004-09-Strategic_Communication.pdf, accessed 7 October 2006.

assumptions of rational-choice theory."[7] This has important implications for deterrence, and for understanding different motivations that various cultures may have for adhering to or rejecting international WMD norms, or for acquiring, proliferating, or employing weapons of mass destruction. For example, if one's deterrence threats are considered "irrational" by the targeted society, they may not be considered credible, or they may be misconstrued. They may not even be considered threats, or they may be considered challenges to be confronted, thus having the exact opposite effect of that desired.

Second, it is important to "know one's enemy" of course, to better assess new and emerging threats. Strategic cultural analysis can provide insights into identifying and evaluating emerging threats. But, it is also important to know one's friends and allies, to know what assures them, what inspires their confidence in American security guarantees, or conversely, what undermines such confidence, and what the basis of their own threat assessments are.[8]

Third, those groups and states at present most interested in acquiring, proliferating, or using WMD often justify their policies and actions in cultural terms. Rather than dismissing such language as mere propaganda, strategic cultural perspectives underscore the importance of such language for understanding the motivations and intentions of these actors.

The following framework is presented as a potential basis for further exploring the relationship between WMD and strategic culture. It assumes that there are three aspects of strategic culture that affect WMD-related decisions and behavior:[9]

(1) Strategic culture can be considered a "shared system of meaning," with language and terms that are understood and agreed within a given culture, and identifying and defining what is considered "rational" within a society. It is a way of interpreting the world, a way of relating to the community, its members, and the relationship of the community to other communities. It is based on "evolving meanings conditioned by historical precedent and contemporary experience."

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[7] Hudson cites two books by Amartya Sen, *Choice, Welfare, and Measurement*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982); and *On Ethics and Economics*, (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

[8] For a discussion of how and why U.S. culture inherently causes friction with other cultures, including with those we consider our friends and allies, see Andrew W. Stewart, "Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy: Cultural Difficulties with the World," Carlisle: U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, June 2006. This report can be found at: http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB706.pdf, accessed 7 October 2006.

[9] Drawn from Hudson, "Culture and Foreign Policy: Developing a Research Agenda," in Valerie M. Hudson, ed. *Culture and Foreign Policy*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997), pp. 1-24.

In this sense, strategic culture helps define the "means" of a group or nation's national security policy.

(2) Strategic culture may be seen as a "collection of value preferences," specifying what a group, state's, or society's appropriate security objectives and desires are. That is, strategic culture contributes to defining the "ends" of a group or nation's national security policy.

(3) Strategic culture is a source of determining what constitutes allowable or optimal behavior, or a "template for human action," relating ends and means in an appropriate, and culturally-sanctioned manner. Cultural influences can be considered a "template for human strategy" and those strategies can in turn be reflected in behavior. In other words, this aspect of culture relates the meaning of the first aspect of culture (a system of shared meaning), with the objectives representing the collective value preferences, and helps determine appropriate means for achieving those ends. Professor Hudson explains:

> What culture provides its members is a repertoire or palette of adaptive responses from which members build off-the-shelf strategies of action. What matters is not the whole of culture, but rather 'chunks' of 'prefabricated' cultural response. We may not be able to predict choice and construction of a particular response by a particular member of the culture, but we can know what is on the shelf ready and available to be used or not.[10]

The above framework lays out certain propositions under the three categories for each of the four "WMD Decision Matrices" consisting of rejection of or adherence to international norms regarding WMD; the acquisition of WMD; the proliferation of WMD; or the employment of WMD in an attack, which are each treated more fully below.

Strategic Culture and International Norm Adherence

Different cultures respond in different ways to the question of accepting and adhering to international law and generally accepted international norms. By international norms is meant both the explicit values recorded in the full range of international non-proliferation regimes, but also the implicit assumptions, values, and rules underlying international attitudes toward weapons of mass destruction, such as the "nuclear taboo," or the assumption that nuclear weapons will only be used as instruments of last resort.

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[10] Ibid., p. 9.

A culture's predisposition to adhere and conform to international norms related to weapons of mass destruction, or that culture's preference for rejecting, ignoring, or flouting such norms, is an important strategic cultural indicator of how it will approach the other three decisional factors related to weapons of mass destruction. Since decisions related to acquiring, proliferating, or employing WMD are captured in one form of international legal constraint or another, whether a nation chooses to act against international norms is an important indicator of whether that nation can be assured, dissuaded, or deterred from acquiring, using, or employing WMD, or whether it must be confronted and ultimately defeated in a military sense in order to prevent its acquisition, proliferation, or use of WMD. This essay addresses norm adherence, then, as the first and foundational factor before proceeding to examine the cultural bases for acquiring, proliferating, or employing WMD.

According to the model, rejection or denial of international WMD regimes and norms is most likely to occur when:

(1) Such rejection or adherence is deemed "rational" within the system of shared meaning defined by the prevailing strategic culture, as sanctioned or endorsed by the keepers or holders of the strategic culture. For example, members of the culture may not view international norms as "valid" or "legitimate" especially if those norms were established by groups considered hostile to the given culture. They may not view them as relevant or enforceable, or they may even view them as tools of the adversary. These perspectives will often be conditioned by past historical experiences, shared narratives, or as precepts based on the culture's scriptural or written records.

(2) Such rejection or adherence is perceived by the holders or keepers of the strategic culture as enabling the group, organization, or state to achieve culturally-endorsed outcomes, or outcomes deemed appropriate by the prevailing strategic culture (whether at the organizational, societal, or systemic levels).

(3) The ends and means for achieving the culturally endorsed outcome (rejecting or adhering to international WMD norm adherence) are consistent with, or enabled by the "repertoire or palette of adaptive responses" deemed appropriate by the keepers or holders of that strategic culture.

In a study that explicitly addressed the cultural basis for compliance with the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, authors Glenn Chafetz, Hillel Abramson, and Suzette Grillot compared Ukrainian and Belarussian attitudes toward acceding to the Nuclear

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Nonproliferation Treaty immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of these states as independent nations.[11] They found that differing Ukrainian and Belarussian role conceptions followed in part from cultural differences between the two states. Ukraine's greater perceived distinctiveness from Russia, as well as its Cossak tradition, versus Belarus' greater willingness to accommodate international desires, determined how these two countries approached the question of whether they should accede to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty as Nuclear Weapon States or Non-Nuclear Weapon States. Both had tactical and strategic nuclear assets on their territories at the time of the breakup of the Soviet Union, and both faced the decision of whether to give up these assets, or to embrace them as new nuclear powers. The international community, including the United States, was keen to have both nations forego their nuclear status, transfer the weapons on their territories to Russia, and accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states, thus preserving the core international value of non-proliferation. Allowing Ukraine, Belarus, (and Kazakhstan) to retain nuclear weapons would have meant expanding the nuclear club.

Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot concluded that "Belarus was consistently and overwhelmingly culturally disposed to accommodative roles and thus destined to meet international expectations. For Ukraine, however, decisions were more problematic because certain physical attributes and cultural features impelled it to see itself as a great power modeled after France and Russia. This national role conception in turn justified nuclear status."[12] Hence, Ukraine was reluctant to relinquish its nuclear weapon assets, while Belarus was more easily convinced to do so. The authors show that cultural factors, as reflected in how culture shaped national role conceptions, was an important determinant of how these two nations approached a specific international norm adherence issue.

Negative experiences with the international community can also affect a state's confidence in the ability of international norms and regimes to protect its interests, or defend it against violators, thus predisposing it to reject adherence to such regimes or norms. This was the case with Iran's experience during its eight year long war with Iraq, when the international community seemed aloof and unresponsive to Iran's complaints about Iraq's use of chemical

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[11] Glenn Chafetz, Hillel Abramson, and Suzette Grillot, "Culture and National Role Conceptions: Belarussian and Ukrainian Compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime," in Valerie M. Hudson, ed., *Culture and Foreign Policy* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), p. 183.
[12] Ibid., p. 181.

weapons. Consequently, Iranian leader's have lost confidence in international collective security mechanisms. Not only can such experiences lead to lack of confidence in international regimes, it can serve as a pretext for pursuing the acquisition of an independent deterrent. According to Anthony Cain, "The conspicuous failure of the international community to act against Iraq's overt use of chemical weapons in the [Iran-Iraq] war served as a catalyst for the Iranian chemical and biological weapons program."[13]

Even in cases where strategic culture exerts powerful sway over a nation's policies and behaviors, that influence can sometimes be overturned or rationalized. Painful national experiences can exert strong pressure on a country to deviate from or even reject strategic cultural preferences, leading to the emergence of a new strategic culture. For example, Iranian strategic culture initially predisposed the regime to forego the acquisition and employment of chemical weapons, based on the Prophet Mohammed's prohibition against using poison. This was a natural reflection of its strategic culture. However, after the Iranians suffered horrific losses from Iraqi chemical attacks during the Iran-Iraq war, accompanied by the failure of the international community to effectively act against or intervene with Iraq, Ayatollah Khomeini reversed this policy. According to Anthony Cain, "the decision emerged only after the international community failed to take action to condemn or curb Iraq's use of such weapons and after intense debates within Iran between Khomeini, the military, and the clerics."[14]

Unfortunately, this decision created the conditions for a revised strategic cultural acquiescence, or even justification, for the future acquisition of nuclear and biological, as well as chemical weapons. Cain observes: "Thus, a fundamentally secular decision based upon military effectiveness calculations had to pass through the filter of Islamic law to acquire the mantle of legitimacy. With the debate settled, however, the republic's leaders relied upon the new religious precedent to justify future nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons proliferation."[15]

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[13] Anthony C. Cain, "Iran's Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Maxwell Paper No. 26,* Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, April 2002, p. 14.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., p. 5. See also Julian Perry Robinson and Jozef Goldblat, *Chemical Warfare in the Iraq-Iran War* (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 1984). This report can be found at: http://www.iranchamber.com/history/articles/chemical_warfare_iran_iraq_war.php, accessed 9 October 2006.

Different schools of thought exist with Islamic cultures which define the relationship between Islamic and non-Islamic international law.[16] In some cases, these traditions reject the legitimacy of international legal structures created outside the Islamic world, or in cases where international law has not served the interests of the Islamic community or its members. The current Iranian regime may feel less constrained by its legal obligations under the NPT because this obligation had been undertaken by the Shah's regime in 1970, prior to the Iranian revolution, and is probably seen, therefore, as not necessarily binding on the new government, as having been undertaken by an illegitimate regime, or as having been superseded by a superior (sharia) law.

Strategic Culture and the Acquisition of WMD

There are many reasons why states may seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction, but from a strategic culture point of view, the question focuses on the domestic sources of such motivations, the strategic cultural filters through which recent experiences are processed, and the unique language used to justify such acquisition. According to the model, the following propositions seek to shed light on the nexus between WMD acquisition and strategic culture. Again, these propositions are offered in the spirit of prospective guidelines for further research, rather than as fully developed theses.

WMD acquisition is more likely to occur when:

(1) Acquiring WMD is deemed "rational" within the system of shared meaning defined by the prevailing strategic culture, as sanctioned or endorsed by the keepers or holders of the strategic culture. That is, adopting a decision to acquire chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, can be deemed a rational course in terms understood, accepted, and endorsed by members of the strategic culture, and the costs and benefits of such a policy are deemed acceptable and bearable.

(2) Acquiring WMD is perceived by the holders or keepers of the strategic culture as enabling the group, organization, or state to achieve culturally-endorsed outcomes, or results deemed appropriate by the prevailing strategic culture (whether at the organizational, societal, or systemic levels, such as granting it the means to defend against its perceived enemies, or

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[16] See the various traditions surveyed in Majid Khadduri, <u>The Islamic Law of Nations</u> (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966).

bestowing the prestige considered necessary to underwrite the strategic culture's established self-appointed regional, global, or systemic role conceptions.

(3) The ends and means for achieving the culturally-endorsed outcome (acquiring WMD) are consistent with, or enabled by the "repertoire or palette of adaptive responses" deemed appropriate by the keepers or holders of that strategic culture. For example, a strategic culture may provide the rationale for leaders to pursue acquiring WMD through imposing enormous deprivations on the given society.

There are some other considerations with respect to strategic culture and the acquisition of WMD. First, except for the so-called P-5 nations whose status as Nuclear Weapon States is codified in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, any other state's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons must be considered contrary to international law and international normative prohibitions against nuclear proliferation. For chemical and biological weapons, there are no equivalents to the P-5, since international agreements completely ban such weapons, while making no exceptions for states already possessing stockpiles of chemical and/or biological weapons. This means that acquiring WMD necessarily requires either violating (in the case of erstwhile adherents to the NPT, Chemical Weapons Convention, or Biological Weapons Convention), or rebuffing (in the case of those states who are technically not signatories or adherents to these treaties and conventions) international norms against WMD proliferation.[17]

Second, nearly every state that has initiated efforts to acquire a nuclear weapons capability (while outside the NPT regime) has made the decision to do so in the immediate aftermath of some national defeat, humiliation, or other crisis. For example, it seems Israel did so in the aftermath of the 1967 war. Pakistan apparently made its decision soon after the 1971 civil war that resulted in splitting the country, partly in response to India's threat to "go nuclear." Note the context of this decision as described by George Perkovich:

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[17] In a survey of those states who are known to have undertaken nuclear weapon development programs, and either abandoned them at some point prior to actually producing a weapon, or later rolled back their nuclear programs, authors Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot label several states as "violators" of international nonproliferation regimes, such as Israel. This is not technically correct except in those cases where the state in question had previously signed and acceded to the NPT. (For example, Israel has never joined the NPT, and thus has never assumed the legal obligations of an NPT member-state, but is labeled a "violater of the NPT" by Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot.) A state that has neither signed nor ratified an agreement cannot be said later to have "violated" that agreement. Nevertheless, even those states that have not acceded to NPT membership while pursuing nuclear weapons acquisition can be said to rebuff the international nonproliferation regime because there is an established international "norm" against proliferation. See Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot, "Culture and National Role Conceptions," especially pp. 170-72.

It is difficult to say precisely when Pakistan's nuclear quest began. We do know that the first Indian nuclear test in 1974 did not start Pakistan on its quest, as Pakistani propagandists used to insist. A seminal episode was the January 1972 meeting in the Chief Minister of Punjab's home in Multan, where Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto reportedly exhorted a gathering of Pakistan's nuclear technology establishment to produce a fission bomb in three years, as the Americans had with the Manhattan Project. Bhutto said he would spare no expense in helping them do it. The timing was telling. Pakistan was still bleeding from the amputation of half its former self: civil war in 1971 had just severed East Pakistan from West Pakistan: the eastern part became the independent country of Bangladesh. Bhutto, convening in the Punjabi heart of West Pakistan, was launching the bomb initiative only a month after the ignominious defeat of the Punjabi-dominated government and Army at the hands of unmartial Bengaliis and their Indian supporters. Nuclear weapons would rebuild Pakistan's strength, heal its wounds, buttress its pride, and ensure better results in a future war."[18]

Of course, these decisions are clearly driven by considerations of realpolitik, and involve the classic realist mechanisms of balancing either externally or internally against a system threat. But from a strategic culture point of view, the threats were perceived in uniquely cultural and historic terms, and interpreted in ways understood throughout the community or society involved, and the terms used to justify the state's subsequent course of action were couched in its own unique strategic cultural language. For example, Iranian public statements have sometimes cited Iranian "culture" as one reason its leaders reject the pursuit of nuclear weapons. IRGC Commander Rezai rejected the pursuit of nuclear weapons in a 1994 interview, saying "Political logic, morality, our own culture and above all the situation in today's world does not allow us to have such deadly weapons."[19]

Third, a nation or society must be predisposed to resort to technological solutions to security dilemmas, even when faced with serious threats. That is, it must value science and technology, and have a cadre of personnel trained and educated in the engineering and physics of WMD. The decision to acquire WMD must be made in the context of having the technological wherewithal to pursue that option. Sometimes this means establishing a long-term plan to achieve access to the WMD materials, technology, or required expertise. Sometimes it means

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[18] George Perkovich, "Could Anything Be Done To Stop Them?: Lessons from Pakistan," A Paper for the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, found at http://www.npec-web.org/Essays/20060726-Perkovich-CouldAnythingBeDone.pdf, accessed 7 October 2006.
[19] Cited in Paula A. DeSutter, *Denial and Jeopardy: Deterring Iranian Use of NBC Weapons*, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1997), p. 45.

exploiting existing national capabilities and resources, other times it means acquiring it through theft or extortion. But from a strategic culture point of view, not all countries are capable of or willing to mount a WMD acquisition program.

Fourth, intervening international political developments may be interpreted as enhancing the symbolic appeal of nuclear weapons acquisition. Anthony Cain notes: "As for nuclear and radiological weapons, the respect India and Pakistan gained after demonstrating their nuclear capabilities is unlikely to have escaped notice in Tehran."[20] "Respect" is a culturally-loaded concept, and is likely to be interpreted through a cultural lens, rather than a realpolitik lens.

Strategic Culture and WMD Transfer/Proliferation

Once a state or group has acquired WMD, they may face powerful incentives to sell the technology or expertise to other states or groups, possibly to recoup the investment in acquiring it, or possibly to accrue allies in a common cause, or for the personal gain of its leaders. How might strategic culture influence a state's or non-state actor's motivations regarding proliferating WMD? According to the model developed above, proliferation of acquired WMD is more likely to occur when:

(1) Proliferating WMD is deemed "rational" within the system of shared meaning defined by the prevailing strategic culture, as sanctioned or endorsed by the keepers or holders of the strategic culture. That is, proliferation is seen as acceptable, or at least not proscribed, by the strategic culture.

(2) Proliferating WMD is perceived by the holders or keepers of the strategic culture as enabling the group, organization, or state to achieve culturally-endorsed outcomes, or outcomes deemed appropriate by the prevailing strategic culture (whether at the organizational, societal, or systemic levels).

(3) The ends and means for achieving the culturally-endorsed outcome (proliferating WMD) are consistent with, or enabled by the "repertoire or palette of adaptive responses" deemed appropriate by the keepers or holders of that strategic culture.

As noted above, there are several reasons why a state or non-state actor may choose to proliferate WMD. If a given strategic culture defies international norms and predisposes a state

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[20] Cain, "Iran's Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction," p. 17.

to seek counter-balancing allies, that state may believe that selling or transferring WMD technology or expertise is in its interests. (e.g. North Korea) Alternatively, if a state has a culture that fosters independent actions or permits rogue players within its ranks, it may be predisposed to allow or overlook private efforts to sell or transfer WMD technology (e.g. the AQ Khan network). Another reason a state may choose to sell its WMD technology or expertise to raise funds as compensation for international isolation. Finally, a group or state may choose to sell or transfer WMD in order to destabilize or distract regional adversaries. Each of these reasons represents a strong realist calculation. However, each may also reflect a cultural perspective in terms of how the decision to transfer or proliferate WMD is justified within its own culture, and how that decision is represented to outside groups.

Strategic Culture and the Use of WMD

The decision to acquire WMD does not necessarily equate with a decision to employ it.[21] There are many reasons to acquire and possess WMD, just as there are many ways to "use" them. Therefore, even if a given strategic culture provides the the rationale for acquiring or proliferating WMD, it may at the same time present strong inhibitions against the use of such WMD. Throughout the Cold War, weapons of mass destruction were developed, produced, and stockpiled mainly to serve as instruments of deterrence, but that may not necessarily be the case for new and emerging strategic cultures. Among traditional powers, there is a strong tradition of assuming that weapons of mass destruction will only be used as weapons of "last resort," reinforced by international law and practice, as well as long-standing international norms. This is the basis of what is sometimes called "the presumption of non-use," or in the case of nuclear weapons, the "nuclear taboo."

Strategic culture may shape or influence the circumstances under which a state or group considers WMD use acceptable, appropriate, justified, or permissible. According to the model, employment of a group or state's WMD is more likely to occur when:

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[21] This issue is addressed with respect to terrorist acquisition of nuclear weapons in Lewis A. Dunn, "Can Al Queda be Deterred from Using Nuclear Weapons?" Occasional Paper 3, Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Washington, D.C., National Defense University Press, July 2005.

(1) Employment of WMD is deemed "rational" within the system of shared meaning defined by the prevailing strategic culture, as sanctioned or endorsed by the keepers or holders of the strategic culture.

(2) Employment of WMD is perceived by the holders or keepers of the strategic culture as enabling the group, organization, or state to achieve culturally-endorsed outcomes, or outcomes deemed appropriate by the prevailing strategic culture (whether at the organizational, societal, or systemic levels).

(3) The ends and means for achieving the culturally-endorsed outcome (employment of WMD) are consistent with, or enabled by the "repertoire or palette of adaptive responses" deemed appropriate by the keepers or holders of that strategic culture.

There are few examples of the actual use of WMD in attacks. Chemical weapons, which have been used on several occasions, may be an exception, as are the small number of instances where biological agents have been employed. Therefore, with respect to evaluating the interaction of strategic culture and WMD use, it may be necessary to distinguish between chemical and biological weapons on the one hand, and nuclear weapons on the other.

To understand the potential relationship between strategic culture and the use of WMD, it is useful to lay out possible reasons or strategies for conducting attacks with WMD. Barry Schneider has identified five possible strategies for using WMD:[22]

(1) To fracture an allied coalition, by threatening one or more members of that coalition in a way that forces them to stand down or withdraw from the coalition. This was Iraq's strategy in the first gulf War, for example, in attacking Israel with ballistic missiles.

(2) To attack or defeat the United States at home.   Threatening the U.S. with high casualties could undermine the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence guarantees, or erode public support of a war effort.

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[22] Barry R. Schneider, "Strategies for Coping with Enemy Weapons of Mass Destruction," Airpower Journal, (Special Edition 1996), pp. 36-47, cited in Craig Black, "Deterring Libya: The Strategic Culture of Muammar Qaddafi," The Counterproliferation Papers, Future Warfare Series No. 8 (USAF Counterproliferation Center: Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama), October 2000, pp. 14-15. This monograph is based on a chapter in the following: Barry R. Schneider and Jerold M. Post, Know Thy Enemy: Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Culture, (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: USAF Counterproliferation Center, November 2002), pp. 247-70.

(3) Defeat or decimate a U.S. expeditionary force that threatened to occupy or overwhelm a local or regional defense.

(4) "Secure the endgame." Use as bargaining leverage to allow a leader to remain in power despite impending military defeat, for example, or to secure some other post-conflict arrangement.

5) To avenge the defeat of a regime, or to inflict punishment on the aggressor.

Anthony Cain describes two scenarios under which the Iranian government would consider resorting to chemical or biological weapons attack as "appropriate," and thus falling within the model's assumptions regarding what the culture deems as "rational" and "justified." One scenario would be as a defensive response to an external threat, or retaliation for an attack. The second scenario would involve an offensive operation, possibly carried out through terrorist proxies, with the objective "to energize a global or, at least, a regional Islamist bid for power."[23] In either case, Iranian strategic culture would provide the rationale or justification for such a decision in ways that had special meaning for internal audiences that shared the cultural vocabulary, even if external audiences did not understand or accept these explanations.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Strategic culture captures the domestic sources of foreign and defense policy behavior in ways that other theories of behavior cannot. Nevertheless, an approach based on strategic culture analysis should not be seen as competing with other well-established analytical models for explaining group or national behavior, such as neorealism, or constructivism. Rather, these respective approaches should each be seen as contributing insights and explanatory value in different ways to different issues, and at different times.

The foregoing essay has presented a conceptual model for organizing further research and analysis into strategic culture, especially with respect to WMD-related decisions, behaviors, and policies. This model consists of three sets of propositions within each of the four WMD decision matrices: (1) rejecting or adhering to international norms regarding the acquisition, proliferation, or use of WMD; (2) acquiring WMD; (3) proliferating WMD; and, (4) actually using WMD in an attack.

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[23] Cain, "Iran's Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction," p. 11.

This conceptual model has further explained strategic culture as consisting of three different aspects: (1) strategic culture as "shared system of meaning;" (2) strategic culture as "collection of value preferences;" and, (3) strategic culture as "template for human action."

The preceding analysis, as preliminary as it may be, suggests three main considerations for further research and analysis.

First, the model presented in this essay should be elaborated and expanded with respect to historical case studies related to WMD. Strategic culture as a "system of shared meaning" should be explored. The idea that strategic culture represents a "collection of value preferences" needs to be developed. The culturally-endorsed options that comprise strategic culture as a "template for human action" could be elucidated. To do this, more in-depth case studies and analytical efforts will need to be devised to focus on WMD specific decisions. This would include, for example, exploring the motivations and intentions behind different countries decisions to acquire WMD (Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea present especially intriguing examples).

A series of case studies could be developed to examine strategic culture as manifested within and among non-state actors.

Second, more study is needed to explore the relationship between strategic culture and the specific national security missions of assure, dissuade, deter, and defeat. The preceding essay has endeavored to set forth some preliminary hypotheses, but these need further empirical and analytical examination.

Further research and analysis into the linkages between strategic culture and other national security issues should be undertaken. For example, using a strategic cultural framework can almost certainly provide useful insights into:

- Threat assessment and threat anticipation. Strategic culture may help sort out which societies pose long-term threats.
- Understanding and confronting terrorism. The sources and motivations for terrorism are a subject of critical debate. Strategic culture may provide some understanding of the basis for terrorism.
- Democracy, negotiating style, predisposition to conform to international norms, laws, and regimes.
- Surprise attack.

Third, there is a case to be made for breaking out "nuclear weapons" into a special strategic cultural category. While this essay has generally treated "weapons of mass destruction" as a single category, drawing insights from instances related to chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, there are some reasonable arguments for distinguishing between chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons with regard to strategic culture. Not all strategic cultures lump these three types of weapons together into the same category. In some cases, strategic cultures make a distinction between chemical and biological weapons on the one hand, and consider nuclear weapons to be an altogether different issue on the other hand. Chemical and biological weapons use may be justified under some circumstances when nuclear weapons use cannot be condoned. Iranian strategic culture, for example, came to justify chemical weapons acquisition and use because these weapons had been used against Iranian citizens and soldiers. The same cannot be said of nuclear weapons.

Moreover, some states have had battlefield experiences with chemical and biological weapons, while only one state has been the subject of a nuclear weapon attack.

Finally, chemical weapons, and to some extent, biological weapons, have been around much longer than nuclear weapons, and states and non-state actors have had more history with these weapons. Chemical and biological weapons are cheaper and easier to acquire, need much less infrastructure, and exploit dual-use materials to a greater extent than nuclear weapons. They represent a lower technological threshold for acquisition.

In conclusion, strategic culture can be a powerful tool for understanding the reasons, incentives, rationales, and motivations for different cultures to acquire, proliferate, or employ weapons of mass destruction. Strategic culture analysis should be considered a supplement, and not a substitute, for traditional analyses based on realism. There are specific types of circumstances where realism is an inadequate explanation, or a poor predictor of behavior, and this is especially true with regard to understanding motivation and intent. However, as the model presented above makes clear, further work is needed to explore the explanatory value of strategic culture analysis, and the areas of intersection and divergence between strategic culture and other models of social and political behavior.

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION: A PRIMER

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Weapons of Mass Destruction Primer

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PURPOSE

This paper provides a brief introduction to the topic of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). It is one element of the Comparative Strategic Cultures Curriculum, a resource developed by the Advanced Systems and Concepts Office of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, with the support of numerous academic and policy experts. The Curriculum is available to academic and professional military education institutions, and is intended to explore connections between strategic culture and the WMD phenomenon, in particular the role of culture in the thinking, decision-making, and behavior of states (and even non-state actors) contemplating, pursuing, or possessing this class of weapons. This primer provides critical background and context for students and faculty who may not be familiar with the core issues that characterize the WMD problem. For purposes of this paper, weapons of mass destruction are defined as nuclear chemical, biological and radiological weapons, and their associated means of delivery. Proliferation refers to the processes by which weapons and the materials, technologies, and knowledge required to produce, acquire, and use them spread globally.[1]

OVERVIEW

Weapons of mass destruction are not a new phenomenon. There are precedents in warfare from ancient times through the medieval era and into the modern age. It was 20th century science and mass industrialization that transformed this phenomenon into the one we appreciate today as posing a uniquely dangerous and destructive threat. While the dangers manifest in the spread of weapons of mass destruction have been studied by theorists and practitioners for many decades now, it is only since the end of the Cold War that WMD have emerged as a dominant security concern. Largely subsumed in the Cold War superpower

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[1] There are numerous official and semi-official definitions of WMD, a term that has a history in international diplomacy dating back nearly sixty years. For a detailed examination of definitional questions, see W. Seth Carus, *Defining "Weapons of Mass Destruction,"* National Defense University Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction Occasional Paper 4, January 2006.

competition, the problem of regional WMD proliferation is now "front and center" and increasingly tied as well to concerns about terrorism and violent extremism.

Regional states possessing or seeking WMD see them variously as a source of strategic leverage, international prestige, regional dominance, local deterrence, and as a means to counter U.S. and Western power in zones of potential conflict. Adversaries seeking to establish an effective framework for competition against established military powers can be expected to accelerate the development of capabilities seen as offering both a measure of deterrence as well as a potential equalizer that will compensate for weaknesses in traditional elements of military or strategic power. Among the asymmetric capabilities adversaries may pursue, WMD will remain of particular concern because of their potential to change the nature of a crisis or conflict, influence the political will of governments and coalitions, impose destruction (or disruption) on a large scale, and achieve other political-military effects. Terrorists see WMD as a means to inflict death and damage on the West on a scale far disproportionate to their resources and status.

The technologies and expertise required to develop and use WMD continue to spread as part of the larger dynamics of globalization. Knowledge that once was esoteric and the province of a small number of nations is now widely available – and not just to other nations. As events have demonstrated, highly destructive technologies can be acquired and mastered by small groups and even individuals. The proliferation of commercial dual-use technology is a driving force in this phenomenon, and can be expected to erode further the technical barriers to WMD proliferation while at the same time increasing the technical competencies of many state and non-state actors. The opportunities for WMD acquisition facilitated by dual-use technology diffusion may be difficult to detect and track. As acquiring WMD becomes more feasible for a wider range of actors, the prospects will grow for "proliferation surprise."

The international regime of nonproliferation treaties and technology controls has played an important role in managing the WMD problem, but it has been less effective in dealing with the most determined proliferators, who use the treaties as a cover for covert weapons development, seek special treaty rules for themselves, and/or choose to stand outside the treaty framework entirely. This is a principal concern today with states such as North Korea and Iran.

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Which States?

States of concern range from rogue states to "near peers" and "status seekers," as well as friendly countries responding to proliferation pressures and "failing" states armed with WMD. While not all state-related proliferation developments will pose direct threats, many may be detrimental to U.S. or Western interests.

Rogue States

Rogue states today encompass a handful of determined nations whose intentions and WMD programs have been a source of concern for many years (in particular Iraq and Libya prior to 2003; and North Korea, Iran, and to a lesser extent Syria). In the future, other regional states with hostile or uncertain intent and a commitment to possessing WMD could emerge.[2]

These states present a number of challenges.

- Intelligence. The intentions and capabilities of rogue states seeking or possessing WMD will remain among the most difficult intelligence targets for the United States and its allies. These societies, decision-making circles, and WMD programs are difficult to penetrate. Lack of human intelligence combined with increasingly capable denial and deception efforts contribute to major knowledge gaps.

- Deterrence. Deterring rogue states seeking or possessing WMD may be problematic for a variety of reasons: lack of mutual understanding that increases the likelihood of miscalculation; a high propensity for risk taking; an asymmetry of stakes in regional conflict that may work against restraint; and the vulnerabilities of U.S. and coalition forces and societies.

- Military planning. In part because of the possibility of deterrence failure, armed forces in key regions must prepare for the operational threat posed by rogue states armed with WMD. The credible threat to use WMD (and their actual use) has the potential to negate some traditional military advantages and raise the costs and risks of prevailing. Coalition

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[2] Iraq under Saddam Hussein was a prototypical rogue state and along with North Korea and Iran part of the "axis of evil." The principal justification for toppling this regime was its continued pursuit of WMD in defiance of the international community, though little WMD capability has been discovered. Libya, too, was for many years considered a rogue state pursuing WMD. In 2004, Libya agreed to abandon its WMD and missile activities.

building may be more complicated under the shadow of WMD threats.   And fielding effective counters to adversary WMD and delivery means is costly and technologically challenging.

- Terror connections. Some rogue states may be prepared to sell or transfer weapons or materials to terror groups for political or economic reasons. States of proliferation concern include those with known or suspected ties to terror organizations. Individuals with access to state programs (e.g., sympathetic scientists) could also provide critical materials and know-how to terror groups with or without government sanction.

- Regional security. The mere possession of these weapons can be destabilizing by upsetting local balances of power, creating the potential for intimidation and coercion, raising the stakes of local crises, and creating additional proliferation pressures. The success of rogue states in acquiring WMD (especially nuclear weapons) could have a catalytic effect leading to an acceleration of proliferation in their respective regions. Success against near-term proliferation challenges (i.e., North Korea and Iran) is thus vitally important to avoiding the nuclearization of entire regions 10-20 years into the future.

"WMD Dominoes"

A major non-proliferation failure in a key region could lead to heightened proliferation pressures and the possibility of a proliferation "chain reaction," including among U.S. allies and friends. Regions today that are of particular concern are East Asia and the Greater Middle East, in response to North Korea's nuclear capability and Iran's nuclear ambitions. Failure to roll back or contain North Korea's nuclear capabilities could lead a number of East Asian states to reconsider their views on the need for an independent nuclear capability.   Similarly, a nuclear Iran could be a catalyst for some states in the region in their thinking about nuclear weapons.

"Status Seekers"

A perception that WMD were becoming more prominent as a source of security or status could lead other regional states to consider acquiring WMD more seriously.[3] An important factor here may be the status accorded to nations such as India, which is pressing its claim to

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[3] Nations such as Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Indonesia and Singapore could fall into this category.

global power status based in part on its nuclear capability and, now, its emerging civilian nuclear cooperation program with the United States. States principally interested in the enhanced status associated with WMD may not become adversaries, but their capabilities could be a complicating factor in regional security that affects United States and Western interests and military planning.

"Near-Peers"

States with diverse WMD capabilities could pose different kinds of challenges. One such challenge would be a limited war against a major power with significant WMD capabilities, especially nuclear.[4] If there was a perceived asymmetry of interest in such a conflict, a near-peer or emerging global power could manipulate WMD threats in an effort to influence the U.S. or coalition assessment of costs, risks, and the chances of a rapid military resolution, and to undermine public support. A near-peer could even attempt to use such weapons in ways intended to avoid or limit nuclear retaliation. Nuclear-capable near-peers that also retain significant clandestine stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons could pursue such a strategy.[5]

"Failing States"

Lesser powers armed with WMD whose political stability is uncertain pose yet a different type of challenge. Here the concern is that the WMD of a state collapsing from within or falling to an insurgency could fall into the hands of extremist elements. At best, WMD in the hands of radical forces could confer legitimacy and bargaining leverage. At worst, they could become instruments of coercion and could be shared with affiliated terror organizations. Even absent the transfer of WMD, failed or weak states may serve as a base for training and operations for hostile non-state actors.

Regional States in Conflict with One Another

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[4] An obvious example is a U.S.-China conflict over Taiwan. See "Asymmetric Conflict 2010," by Brad Roberts, November 2000 for a discussion of this scenario.

[5] Both Russia and China may be retaining the capability to develop and employ chemical and biological agents. See Annual Report to Congress: Worldwide Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons and Missile Threat, Department of Defense, January 2003, pp. 40-43.

As weapons of mass destruction continue to proliferate in volatile regions, it is possible that new WMD flashpoints could emerge, even between nations friendly to the West. While WMD conflicts between regional states may not engage the United States or Western powers militarily, their impact on regional and international security could be profound.

Which Weapons?

Nuclear Weapons

Nuclear weapons use fissile materials such as plutonium or highly enriched uranium to produce explosive blast, thermal radiation (extreme heat), direct nuclear radiation, and radioactive fallout. They can be more than a million times more powerful than an equivalent weight of conventional explosives and have the greatest mass destruction potential. The physics and engineering knowledge required to produce fissile material and manufacture weapons dates back to the World War II era; the first atomic weapon was created by the United States and exploded in July 1945. But even today, producing sufficient fissile material remains the key stumbling block to a state seeking to become a nuclear power. These are man-made materials that require a large industrial infrastructure to produce; creating that infrastructure and operating it efficiently takes significant resources, time, and talent. For this reason, the development timelines for some nuclear weapons states is measured in decades.[6]

Nuclear weapons will retain a special status for both those who seek them and those whose interests may be affected by their spread. There are a number of reasons why: their perceived value as an instrument of deterrence and coercion, greater status and prestige relative to other WMD, and threat perception. States facing chemical and biological threats may choose to "proliferate in kind" but also are likely to have other viable options (such as defensive countermeasures). But states facing a credible nuclear threat can be expected to seek access in some manner to nuclear capability as the preferred countervailing course of action. This could take the form of seeking a nuclear security guarantee from an established nuclear power, but could also involve acquiring an independent nuclear capability. In the future, the special status

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[6] There are five legally recognized nuclear weapon states under the terms of the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty: the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China. In addition, there are four de facto or self-declared nuclear weapon states: India, Pakistan, Israel and, based on its supposed October 2006 nuclear test, North Korea. The United States has not acknowledged North Korea as a nuclear power.

traditionally accorded nuclear weapons could change if nuclear weapons were to be used "in anger." Depending on the impact of such use, nuclear weapons could become more or less attractive as instruments of influence and warfare.[7]

Forty years ago, some serious observers foresaw a world of perhaps two dozen or more nuclear powers. These dire forecasts have not come to pass; overall there has been less nuclear proliferation than once feared, and we are not today facing "runaway proliferation." The technical barriers to developing nuclear weapons and fielding a militarily reliable capability remain significant for many nuclear aspirants, though they are not insurmountable. Historically, proliferation pressures in important regions have been contained through a combination of the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), alliance structures, and various types of security guarantees (some made by the United States, others by the nuclear powers as a group). Today, however, a number of observers believe the world is at a nuclear "tipping point" where traditional constraints and barriers are in danger of eroding significantly.

A number of factors contribute to this assessment and are seen as adding to proliferation pressures.

- Motivations. Some experts believe motivations are deepening, not only because of security considerations (e.g., "lessons learned" from the experiences with Iraq, Iran and North Korea that nuclear weapons provide enhanced leverage or deterrence), but also because many countries associate "nuclear" with modernity and see nuclear science and technology as a powerful means to join the community of advanced nations.

- Capacity. At the same time, nuclear capacity (knowledge, technology, and materials) is significant and growing among an increasing number of actors with increasingly ambitious goals. The expected expansion of nuclear energy in the coming decades will reinforce this. The technologies used to produce nuclear power are essentially the same as those needed to produce nuclear weapons.

- Stress on the nuclear nonproliferation regime. The regime and the norms it embodies are challenged principally by the progress of determined, hostile proliferators acting

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[7] Not all experts believe that the continued spread of nuclear weapons will necessarily be destabilizing. The "more may be better" argument holds that new nuclear states will be responsible, cautious, and opt for stable deterrence relationships. The "more may be worse" argument foresees a major risk of miscalculation and accidental war. For an extensive discussion and debate, see Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company), 2003.

in violation of their treaty commitments. Failure to resolve these challenges could lead to a loss of faith in the ability of the regime to enhance security. Some observers also see the recent U.S.-India nuclear deal as placing added stress on the regime, as it appears to reward a state that is not a party to the NPT and could fuel a nuclear arms race on the subcontinent.

The traditional pathways to produce nuclear weapons are well understood, and encompass a number of methods to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium to yield the material that comprises the core of a weapon. Typically, these are large, industrial scale enterprises centered around nuclear power production activities that operate under safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Monitoring and inspection systems are geared toward detecting illicit diversion of these activities to support weapons production. Determined concealment and deception efforts can undermine the effectiveness of monitoring and detection efforts.   In the future, regional proliferants may have access to new or more advanced technologies that offer a pathway to a nuclear weapons capability that could be even more difficult to detect and track than today's technologies. One such possibility is uranium enrichment using laser technology. Laser enrichment facilities likely would be smaller, less energy-intensive, and more easily concealed – and therefore would be more likely to escape detection by both international inspectors and technical means of surveillance.[8] Also of concern would be a proliferation model in which the amount of fissile material required for entry-level weapons design is significantly reduced and the facilities and activities required to produce such material are correspondingly smaller and less observable.[9] Under these conditions, states may have the option to maintain a *latent* capability to produce some number of nuclear weapons in ways that could be difficult to detect. This model of latent proliferation may appeal to states that desire to retain some type of nuclear option without the burdens associated with maintaining a large production infrastructure or an operational stockpile. This would pose challenges to U.S. intelligence and traditional nonproliferation strategies focused on limiting or monitoring fissile material.

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[8] See Jack Boureston and Charles Ferguson, "Laser Enrichment: Separation Anxiety," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, vol. 61, no. 2 (March/April 2005), pp. 14-18. Iran's laser research program was not detected by the International Atomic Energy Agency.
[9] See "Combating WMD: Challenges for the Next 10 Years," National Defense University, February 2005, p.13 for a more detailed discussion.

At the other end of the spectrum, major powers such as Russia and China could seek to develop new generations of nuclear weapons based on advanced nuclear energy sources such as subcritical and micro-fission devices, pure fusion weapons, nuclear isomers, positron energy conversion (anti-matter annihilation), and even low energy nuclear reactions ("cold fusion"). Weapons based on concepts like these have the potential to produce more powerful effects more "cleanly" and efficiently than the current generation of nuclear weapons. Numerous reports out of Russia indicate developments along some of these lines.

Radiological Dispersal Devices

A radiological dispersal device (RDD) poses a different type of radiation threat, one most closely associated with terrorists. A "dirty bomb" combines radioactive materials with conventional explosives to scatter radioactive particles into the environment. No nuclear fission reaction takes place as would occur with a nuclear weapon. Almost any radioactive material can be used to construct an RDD, including spent fuel from nuclear reactors and radioactive substances used for medical or industrial purposes, though only a handful of materials are considered optimal. Weapons grade materials (i.e., highly enriched uranium or plutonium) are not needed, but could be used. The RDD threat is fourfold: the blast and fragmentation effects from the conventional explosive, the radiation exposure from the radioactive material used, the fear and panic that would spread among he target group or population; and the economic dislocation and mitigation costs that could result. [10]

Virtually any state or non-state actor can build and detonate RDDs, as explosive material is widely available and radiological materials have become more plentiful throughout the world. Some terror groups are known to be interested in acquiring RDDs. However, not all terror groups are likely to be capable of building lethal RDDs. Acquiring a sufficient amount of material, constructing the device without overexposure to radiation in the process, effectively delivering the device on target, and achieving the necessary lethality are tasks that could present significant challenges. While the perception that all RDDs will have major physical effects is flawed, it is true that almost any use of an RDD could have great psychological and political impact. Thus, even crude RDDs might meet some adversary's objective to create panic, disrupt

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[10] Passive, non-explosive sources can also be used to disperse radiation.

military operations or economic activity, or bring public pressure on political leaders to change a course of action.

Chemical and Biological Weapons

States continue to demonstrate an interest in retaining or acquiring chemical and biological weapons capabilities. Some states may view these weapons largely as a deterrent while others may see them as battlefield weapons and fully integrate them into doctrine, plans and training. Still others may see these weapons as most suitable for attacking strategic centers of gravity rather than more traditional military targets. Centers of gravity may be in a theater of operations or on the homeland of Western or coalition countries.

Chemical Weapons. Among WMD, chemical weapons proliferation has been most widespread, as the technical barriers to acquiring and deploying these weapons are significantly lower and they are widely viewed as a "force multiplier" that can be used on the battlefield to achieve military advantage (as during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s). Despite the entry into force in 1997 of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which prohibits the development, possession, and use of chemical agents, it is believed that a number of nations, including near peer and rogue states, possess chemical capabilities that could pose a serious threat.

Most covert stockpiles today are comprised of so-called traditional chemical agents, which are poisons that incapacitate, injure, or kill through toxic effects on the skin, eyes, blood, respiratory system, or nervous system. First generation agents, developed in the World War I era, deliver blister, choking and blood effects (e.g., mustard, cyanide, phosgene). Second generation agents, discovered in the World War II era, act against the nervous system (e.g., sarin, soman, tabun). Third generation agents, developed in the post-war period, are a more advanced and lethal form of nerve agent (e.g., VX). There is growing concern that some states are developing or may already possess even more advanced chemical agents that pose a challenge to existing countermeasures – so-called fourth generation agents (FGAs) and non-traditional agents (NTAs). FGAs were first developed by the Soviet Union to defeat U.S. and NATO countermeasures and are considered more lethal than VX, and may be relatively easy to produce in concealed facilities. NTAs operate against different aspects of human physiology and therefore blur the distinction between chemical and biological agents. They generally are

intended to disorient and incapacitate, but can be lethal.[11] Information on NTAs is becoming more available in open sources. Some of these agents are relatively easy to produce and weaponize and their production signature may be less than that associated with traditional chemical agents. Adversaries may view these agents as conferring important advantages.

Biological Weapons. Biological weapons have spread more slowly than chemical weapons, and while the scientific knowledge required to develop bioweapons has begun to diffuse on a global scale as a result of the biotechnology revolution, there are still technical challenges to weaponizing disease agents and delivering them effectively. It is only since the first Gulf War in the early 1990s that there has been a wider appreciation of biological weapons as a potentially serious and dynamic threat. Yet despite sharply intensified concerns about biological weapons, these programs remain the hardest to detect and track. The Biological Weapons Convention, which entered into force in 1975, has strengthened the norm against bioweapons, but contains no provisions for verification of treaty compliance.

Biological weapons are disease-causing microorganisms such as bacteria (e.g., anthrax, plague), viruses (e.g., smallpox), and rickettsiae (e.g., typhus, Q fever), as well toxins, which are non-living poisons produced in biological processes (e.g., ricin, botulin).   Pound for pound, biological agents can be many times deadlier than chemical agents, and under conditions favorable to the attacker can cause mass casualties and death. The use of biological agents is considered to be plausible and is a factor in the military planning of some Western nations. States like the former Soviet Union and Iraq clearly believed in the utility of biological warfare (BW) and made major investments to achieve operational capability. But with little historical experience to draw on, there is uncertainty about the strategic and operational impact of BW in shaping the course of a major conflict. Wargaming and scenario-based analysis suggest that under some conditions adversary use of BW could have a significant military impact. Yet questions persist concerning the technical barriers to effective large-scale use, the risks of escalation, and other considerations affecting the strategic utility of BW. Regardless of how the probability of biological warfare attacks is viewed – whether to support specific military

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[11] In October 2002, Russian security forces used a derivative of Fentanyl, a fast-acting inhalable opiate characterized as non-lethal and often referred to as a non-traditional agent, in an operation to rescue hostages from a Moscow theater.   The gas killed 120 hostages, demonstrating that agents intended to incapacitate can have lethal effects depending upon conditions.

objectives, attack centers of gravity, or simply instill fear and panic – the consequences of such attacks are so potentially devastating that the protection of forces, essential personnel and, to the extent possible, civilians will remain a high priority.

Today, the vast majority of intelligence, operational planning, and countermeasures development focuses on traditional biological agents that have been validated as threats by the intelligence community. Looking ahead, advances in biotechnology that will be increasingly available worldwide create the possibility of qualitative leaps in the biological warfare threat that could outstrip the pace of countermeasures. The diffusion of advanced techniques in the biological sciences eventually will provide scientists everywhere the capability for genetic engineering. The parallel build up of biotechnology industrial infrastructures could help facilitate the translation of these scientific advances into potential weapons application. These applications could take the form of entirely unfamiliar threat agents that challenge existing countermeasures and which may require lengthy scientific investigation to fully understand. In an unclassified assessment prepared in 2003 for the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Academy of Sciences observed:

> …the biotechnology underlying the development of advanced biological agents is likely to advance very rapidly, causing a diverse and elusive threat spectrum. The resulting diversity of new BW agents could enable such a broad range of attack scenarios that it would be virtually impossible to anticipate and defend against…[A]s a result, there could be considerable lag time in developing effective biodefense measures.[12]

Delivery Means

Ballistic missiles will retain their political and strategic importance for regional states. The technical improvements underway in ballistic missiles will continue, leading incrementally to systems that are longer in range, more reliable, and more accurate. Short- and medium-range ballistic missiles already pose a significant threat to expeditionary forces and friendly regional populations. As the transition from short- to medium- to intermediate-range missiles unfolds, the risks facing U.S. and coalition interests will increase accordingly, especially as states make progress in developing WMD payloads for these missiles. Intercontinental-range ballistic

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[12] "The Darker Bioweapons Future," Office of Transnational Issues, Central Intelligence Agency, 3 November 2003, p.2.

missiles, if they can be developed by hostile regional powers, would pose an even greater strategic threat.

In response to ballistic missile defenses, adversaries can be expected to consider a number of operational and technical countermeasures. At the same time, the value of ballistic missiles as instruments of coercion or aggression is likely to recede if ballistic missile defenses mature quickly into reliable operational capabilities. One consequence could be decisions by states to shift investment into other systems capable of delivering WMD. Of particular concern are long-range land attack cruise missiles (LACMs), which are an effective means to deliver chemical and biological payloads over a wide area. While few states possess LACMs today, the technologies supporting these cruise missiles are increasingly available and their diffusion can be expected to continue. Unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) are also considered well suited for precision delivery of WMD payloads. Both LACMS and UCAVs in the future could possess stealthy characteristics.

At the other end of the spectrum, there is growing concern about the proliferation of increasingly sophisticated missiles and heavy rockets in the 40-200 kilometer range. Relatively inexpensive and easy to conceal and launch, these systems are capable of being fired in rapid-salvo operations to deliver significant firepower. Armed with chemical payloads, for instance, they can pose a strategic threat.

Other types of delivery means are widely available, to include tactical aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), aerial sprayers, and artillery. Unconventional means of attack may have significant appeal to a state depending on its objectives in employing WMD (for example, if it is hoping to conceal the origins of the attack). Unconventional means include commercial or private aircraft, boats, trucks, automobiles, and other improvised devices.

What Objectives in Crisis or Conflict?

State adversaries may seek to leverage latent or operational WMD capabilities in a number of ways in an effort to shape the political, military, and psychological battlefield in a confrontation with the United States or a Western coalition. These objectives will vary with the phase of a crisis or war, the political and military situation, and the adversary's capabilities and risk calculus. Objectives may be strategic in nature, to include deterring U.S or Western involvement in a regional conflict, preventing coalition formation, fracturing an established

coalition, threatening escalation, and exacting revenge. Objectives also may be operational in nature, to include denying access to coalition forces, defeating operations, and advancing tactical objectives on the battlefield.   In seeking to advance their objectives, adversaries may perceive a wide range of potentially lucrative targets, from the homeland of coalition members at one end of the spectrum to tactical forces at the other.

HOW PROLIFERATION IS OCCURRING

Dedicated national programs to develop WMD and delivery means will continue. As in the past, such programs are likely to be covert at least initially, and will take advantage of the growing diffusion of dual-use technologies and the opportunities for concealment inherent in legitimate civilian activities. Recent developments also suggest that proliferation networks are expanding and becoming more complex and sophisticated as states seek to further reduce the visibility of their programs and the risks associated with discovery. Important features of the proliferation process include the following.

Growing Self Sufficiency

Among some states there is increased emphasis on self-sufficiency through the development of indigenous research and production capabilities enabled by the global diffusion of science and technology. Greater self-reliance is seen as limiting opportunities for interdiction and disruption, even if it also limits access to the most advanced technologies. This is a tradeoff some proliferants will be prepared to make.

Secondary Proliferation

States with maturing WMD infrastructures are emerging as suppliers in their own right, and as a consequence there is a growing degree of mutual self-help among proliferants that exists outside international controls and is difficult to detect. This will serve to undermine the efficacy of international technology controls. Over time these relationships are likely to extend beyond supply to include other forms of sharing as well (e.g., WMD operations, logistics, and command and control).

Global Procurement Networks

The A.Q. Khan case demonstrates powerfully that proliferation networks are no longer limited to state-to-state cooperation. The success of the Khan enterprise over a period of many years makes it only prudent to assume that similar networks will arise in the future led by skilled "private" entrepreneurs with access to the materials, equipment, and expertise required to develop WMD, and adept at the systematic evasion of international controls. The emergence of sophisticated networks that are geographically dispersed and functionally diverse – spanning research and development, manufacturing, finances, and transport – presents a fundamental challenge to the system of international technology controls and will require an equally sophisticated response that targets networks as adaptive systems.

"Mobilization" Capability

Some states are likely to rely on a model of WMD surge production and deployment as a means to maintain ambiguity, deniability, and a degree of survivability in their WMD programs. For instance, the ability to rapidly produce and weaponize biological agents would afford a state the opportunity to field an operational capability in the run-up to a conflict while limiting the peacetime exposure of the program. There is evidence that Iraq adopted such a strategy in the aftermath of United Nations inspections in the 1990s (if so, the manifest failure of this strategy could give others pause in following it). Another variant of this approach is the so-called "basement bomb" in which a state chooses to avoid the presumed costs and risks of overtly deploying nuclear weapons in favor of maintaining components that can be assembled quickly to deliver operational capability.

Denial and Deception

Other forms of denial and deception can be expected as states seek to thwart intelligence efforts directed at their WMD programs and protect such programs from possible attack. By the year 2020, most militaries will be sophisticated in the adaptive use of camouflage, cover, concealment, denial, and deception. Of particular concern is the continued proliferation of deep underground facilities to provide sanctuary to WMD programs (as well as leadership and command and control). To cite a contemporary example, the main facility at Natanz, the principal site where Iran would enrich uranium on an industrial scale, is 75 feet below the

surface and protected by concrete walls 8 feet thick.[13] This is a facility constructed to be survivable against air bombardment.

WMD TERRORISM AND THE "CONVERGENCE CHALLENGE"

> *…powerful and readily obtainable capabilities provide contemporary extremist organizations with increasingly dangerous strategic tools. These tools include chemical and biological agents and radioactive materials.[14]*

While terrorists may prefer the innovative application of "low end" technology and proven conventional tactics in many circumstances, the WMD terror threat is believed to be real and growing, and terrorists are judged most likely to use WMD. Foreign terrorist, insurgent or extremist groups that have threatened or have the ability to attack the United States and other nations have expressed interest in nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons. While there remain important gaps in what is known, there is an increasing search among terror groups for capabilities that could create significant casualties, destruction or social-economic disruption, and psychological effects – especially since the September 11, 2001 attacks and the subsequent anthrax incidents.

Materials, technology and information are being sought through commercial sources, the Internet, sympathizers associated with state programs, black markets and criminal organizations, and potential sources in the former Soviet Union. Emphasis is on materials that are relatively easy to acquire and handle and that can be employed surreptitiously. One focus is chemicals, ranging from "low end" applications such as cyanide (e.g., to contaminate food or water) and toxic industrial chemicals to traditional chemical warfare agents (e.g., blister and nerve agent).

Biological agents present a greater technical challenge to terrorists, but have strong appeal because of their potential lethality and the possibility of covert delivery. Al Qaeda made a significant investment in the acquisition of both chemical and biological capabilities for the purpose of mounting large-scale attacks. Al Qaeda's BW program in particular was considerably more robust than originally suspected. Senior intelligence officials publicly have described a sophisticated research program that acquired expertise and equipment needed to produce agents,

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[13] Iranian officials have also acknowledged the construction of tunneled facilities to protect nuclear activities.
[14] The Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism, Draft, 15 October 2004. p.5.

received assistance from sympathetic scientists, came close to developing a feasible production capability for anthrax, and may have investigated smallpox.

Al Qaeda's nuclear agenda has also been described as ambitious, focused on efforts beginning in the early 1990s to acquire materials, components and weapons, and to recruit foreign scientists for design and fabrication expertise. Al Qaeda may not have been successful to date in gaining possession of fissile material or a nuclear device, but is more likely to possess materials that could be used in a radioactive dispersal device (RDD). Fabricating and employing such a device is considered well within al Qaeda's capabilities if the materials can be acquired. For this reason, the RDD threat is considered to be highly credible.

Al Qaeda may remain the most serious and immediate threat with respect to WMD terrorism, and has certainly gone farthest to provide a religious, strategic, and practical justification for the use of WMD in the service of jihad.[15] But this threat is not monolithic. There are more than thirty designated foreign terrorist organizations and other non-state actors. It is unlikely that all these entities have comparably broad ambitions for acquiring and using WMD, or even see such weapons as a high payoff means to advance their specific objectives. This argues for a case-by-case approach built on a careful assessment of each group's intentions and capabilities. In thinking about the future character of the WMD terror threat, a fundamental question is whether this will become a routine and growing feature of the security landscape or remain a more or less isolated phenomenon.

In gauging the WMD terror threat, interest will remain focused most acutely on existing and emerging terror organizations that view WMD as weapons of choice to be used against the United States and its security partners for maximum impact. Such groups pose a particularly severe challenge. They are likely to be highly motivated, resourceful, insensitive to retribution, and not easily deterred. They are likely to operate as part of sophisticated, dispersed and adaptive networks. They may focus not simply on individual attacks, but on terror campaigns that involve multiple strikes over a period of time, possibly using different types of weapons. Their preferred means of delivery likely will be unconventional.

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[15] See Robert Wesley, *Al-Qaeda's WMD Strategy Prior to the U.S. Intervention in Afghanistan*, Terrorism Monitor, Vol.13, Issue 19 (7 October 2005), www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article and *Al-Qaeda's WMD Strategy After the U.S. Intervention in Afghanistan*, Terrorism Monitor, Vol.13, Issue 20 (21 October 2005), www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article

Because they are highly motivated and difficult to deter, terrorist groups intent on acquiring and using WMD are best countered by strategies that emphasize denying their access to WMD materials and technology from state programs, "loose WMD," and the global trade in WMD-related items. Strategic approaches to combat WMD must address the convergence of motivated terror groups, states with WMD, and the WMD proliferation process. This convergence has been characterized by senior government officials as one of the most critical security challenge facing the nation.

IMPLICATIONS

Plan for uncertainty. Gaps in knowledge and understanding will persist with respect to the motivations, capabilities, and intentions of those seeking or possessing WMD, reducing the prospect for specific warning of WMD developments or operational threats and creating the risk of substantial surprise. These knowledge gaps may close over time.

Expect adversaries to adapt. Adversaries are not standing still. They are refining concealment and deception efforts and pursuing technology-based or operational work-arounds intended to challenge or outpace countermeasures. Combating WMD will be characterized by a number of discrete "offense-defense" arms races.

Deterrence will remain an effective strategy against some states possessing WMD, but other states may not easily be deterred. Terrorists in possession of WMD will be most difficult to deter and most likely to use WMD. They will seek to target the United States and its allies.

Prepare for the long-haul. For some aspects of the WMD challenge, quick progress is needed (e.g., reducing the WMD terror threat). But systematically reducing the strategic and operational dangers posed by WMD is a mission for the long-haul that will require strategic patience and determination. Overall, success in countering WMD will be measured in years and decades. Planning, investment and measures of success should reflect this.

"Next use" of WMD will be an important event. The use of WMD may alter fundamentally the proliferation landscape, strategic planning assumptions, and military planning requirements. How dramatically will depend on the "who, what, when, where, why – and how successful" of the event. A number of outcomes is possible, and decision makers will wish to shape the post-use world in a way that advances and protects Western interests.

RESPONSES TO THE WMD PROLIFERATION CHALLENGE

The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (December 2002) establishes three pillars of strategy: nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and consequence management.

Nonproliferation

Historically, the response to the proliferation challenge has focused on prevention or what is commonly referred to as nonproliferation. Nonproliferation enterprise has been a political, legal, and diplomatic framework aimed at establishing a norm against WMD acquisition, reducing incentives to proliferate, and restricting access to critical technologies. The main elements of the nonproliferation regime include

- international treaties and supporting institutions (e.g., NPT and IAEA);
- technology control agreements (e.g., Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime);
- national export control laws;
- weapons free-zones (e.g., nuclear weapons free zones in Latin America and Africa);
- security guarantees (e.g., Negative Security Assurances, provided by the legally recognized nuclear powers);
- alliance structures (e.g., NATO and the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent);
- threat reduction assistance (e.g., Cooperative Threat Reduction program to with Russia);
- a range of bi- and multilateral cooperative initiatives (e.g., Proliferation Security Initiative); and
- traditional arms control by the nuclear powers to meet their obligations under Article VI of the NPT (e.g., strategic arms treaties).

Counterproliferation

Counterproliferation emerged as a new type of response to the WMD threat in the United States in the aftermath of the first Gulf War. The premise of counterproliferation was that U.S. and allied forces could confront WMD on the modern battlefield, and needed to be capable of deterring and defeating such weapons – weapons, which the experience with Iraq had shown, could be developed despite the best efforts of nonproliferation strategies. In the United States,

counterproliferation became the rubric under which a range of military capabilities has been pursued, including improved passive defenses, missile defenses, and offensive capabilities to neutralize WMD before they can be used.[16] Counterproliferation also includes cooperation with security partners to improve indigenous capabilities and prepare for possible contingencies involving WMD-armed adversaries.

Consequence Management

Consequence management emphasizes the need to respond effectively to a WMD event at home or abroad, both to limit damage and to demonstrate resilience to adversaries. Consequence management measures seek to mitigate WMD effects, protect public health and safety, provide emergency relief, restore essential government and civilian services, and reconstitute military capabilities as needed. In the United States, the vision for emergency preparedness and response emphasizes an "all-hazards" national incident management plan to deal with any type of event, integrating all federal, state and local response organizations and capabilities. The U.S. Department of State coordinates all foreign consequence management activities.

CONCLUSION

Within this strategic framework, policies to address specific proliferation problems can vary widely and may follow no particular template. Consider recent efforts to deal with the rogue WMD threat. Following the first Gulf War, Iraq was subject to a regime of coercive disarmament through the United Nations. When this process could no longer be sustained, the United States pursued a policy of preventive war to confront what was described as a "gathering threat." By contrast, in Libya, the United States, working closely with the United Kingdom, persuaded the Qhadafi regime, through an extended and secret set of discussions, to disarm under cooperative terms. Here, a policy of "rollback" was achievable because the regime saw its strategic interests lying in a decision to disarm that would bring it tangible economic and political benefits. The six-party negotiations with North Korea represent a broader and more

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[16] Other countries may use "counterproliferation" differently. In the United Kingdom, this terms refers to all efforts to address the WMD problem, including those traditionally referred to as nonproliferation.   In the United States, the term "Combating WMD" has emerged as the overarching strategic and defense planning construct for all activities directed at managing the proliferation problem.

open diplomatic effort to roll back North Korea's nuclear program – though with a far more hostile and antagonistic regime whose true intentions remain uncertain.   And with respect to Iran, the goal is to ensure the Islamic Republic does not achieve a nuclear weapons capability in the first place – prevention, as opposed to rollback. In looking at both North Korea and Iran, while diplomatic solutions are possible, they are not likely to follow the Libya model of highly cooperative rollback; at the same time, the preventive war model exemplified by the invasion of Iraq seems implausible as well. New proliferation challenges that emerge will also required tailored approaches.

THE FUTURE OF STRATEGIC CULTURE

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The Future of Strategic Culture

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INTRODUCTION

The case studies and essays commissioned for this project demonstrate that strategic culture can have a fruitful future although it may not occupy what Colin Gray refers to as its current `prime time slot' indefinitely. New ideas or events likely will shade its appeal, but there are reasons why strategic cultural analysis should nonetheless endure. Foremost among these is that it provides the basis for an academic enterprise aimed at developing cumulative knowledge about strategic cultures of all types and as a policy means for discerning trends relevant to the varied cultural contexts that the United States and its allies are likely to encounter. Such an endeavor is important because strategic culture can inform those involved in policy about differing approaches to the use of force and the "ways of war," strategic doctrine, and how an actor could behave in crisis situations. It also raises questions about how strategic cultural identities are formed, the role of elites or "leaders" in shaping strategic culture, and the circumstances that lead to change.

A number of theoretical and methodological issues associated with research on strategic culture have thus been considered. An issue that has pervaded this kind of study since its inception is debate over definition: specifically, the lack of agreement on one. The issue was the subject of a 2006 conference where those attending sought to overcome this key problem by considering the various potential elements that might be encompassed in such a definition. The consensus reached was that a definition was available and that strategic culture can be understood as a set of "shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives." The definition consequently acknowledges that strategic culture is a product of a range of circumstances such as geography, history and narratives that shape collective identity, but one which also allows it a role in both enabling and constraining decisions about security. This definition has served as the basis for the respective case studies and also can serve as a framework for further research.

Three distinct areas where strategic culture can contribute to policymaking are: in the

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analysis of threats; in considering the cultural context where conflict is underway; and in negotiations aimed at inducing peaceful relations. Each of these areas will have a range of complex factors associated with it but there is likely to be an underlying strategic cultural dimension that also should be incorporated. In the analysis of threats, for example, strategic culture can supplement traditional approaches by allowing the potential for anticipating, although not necessarily predicting, changes in the security environment. Such threats may be global in context but act locally in culturally derived ways. A strategic cultural analysis can therefore assist in considering how to respond to developments like these by exploring different pathways by which this type of threat emerges and devise a range of intervention strategies to suit the particular circumstance. Analyses of this kind may require considerable knowledge of any given actor and it will not be an exact science, but it can contribute to a long-term understanding of the factors that shape strategic cultural identities in a globalizing world.

By way of qualification, too much weight should not be placed on strategic culture. There remain methodological and other theoretical problems associated with this area of study. Yet there are aspects of past and current work that can make a valuable contribution to academic analysis and policymaking. To reiterate two of the major thinkers in this area:

As long as one recognizes that in strategic culture one is "discerning tendencies, not rigid determinants, then the end result should be richer theory and more effective practice."[1]

The final introductory comment concerns the future weapons of mass destruction (WMD) environment. The context in which the study of strategic culture originated was a significant one. The nuclear era was three decades old but already it had seen recurrent crises between the United States and the Soviet Union set against the background of the Cold War. The Cold War ended without conflict, but this was still a critical period for policymaking associated with WMD and the strategic cultural learning that accompanied it. There is concern that the emerging era is more complex because it is coupled with a greater danger of actual WMD use. What can strategic culture provide by way of insights in this area? Bearing in mind the caveat identified above, research can provide knowledge relevant to all aspects of WMD policy: from proliferation trajectories through to deployment and, potentially, use of these weapons.

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[1] Ken Booth, "Strategic Culture: Validity and Validation," *Oxford Journal on Good Governance* 2 (2005): 27, quoting Colin S. Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and National Styles*, (Lanham: Hamilton Press, 1986): 35.

Past research on strategic culture has directed attention to the significance of factors such as whether there is a legacy of conflict between groups or states, or whether a state is relatively isolated and surrounded by oceans or is adjacent to a great power. Consequently, the situations where there are two competing states contiguous to each other like India and Pakistan, where the state has witnessed conflict and cooperation over the millennia like China, and where a state has since inception had to strive for its existence in a hostile locality like Israel, will remain central to future analysis. This is because these situations highlight the role that history and geography play in the development of strategic cultural identities.

Where research must continue to innovate is on the question of the dynamics of strategic cultural change. Traditionally, the focus of study has been on continuity or at least semi-permanence in strategic culture. But strategic cultures can and do change, sometimes radically. Those writing on this subject have highlighted a range of factors that may induce change such as what are called "external shocks," which act as a catalyst for a re-assessment of traditional assumptions about that strategic cultures' security environment. Such "shocks" can thus effect security policy in unprecedented ways and generate what Jeffrey Lantis refers to as "strategic cultural dilemmas" about how best to respond to the situation. This occurred in Japan following the launch of a ballistic missile in 1998 by North Korea, and was exacerbated by the announcement of the latter state's first nuclear test in October 2006. Moreover, events of this kind can reverberate on other strategic cultures, both regionally and globally.

There may also be competing groupings or elites within a state that affect strategic cultural identities. If the competition between them intensifies, such as in periods of crisis or political tension, then the groundswell for change may be generated. Coupled to this, narratives often provide the vehicle for such changes to occur.

Work on narratives, both written and oral, has provided key insights into how these allow a particular strategic culture to identify itself in relation to others. They can also precipitate strategic action. Narratives are what Lawrence Freedman refers to as:

> ...compelling story lines which can explain events convincingly and from which inferences can be drawn...Narratives are designed or nurtured with the intention of structuring the responses of others to developing events. They are strategic because they do not arise spontaneously but are deliberately constructed or reinforced out of the ideas and thoughts that are already current...Narratives are about the ways that issues are framed and the responses suggested. They are not

necessarily analytical and, when not grounded in evidence or experience, may rely on appeals to emotion, or on suspect metaphors and dubious historical analogies. A successful narrative will link certain events while disentangling others distinguishing good news from bad tidings, and explain who is winning and who is losing. This usage reflects the idea that stories play an extremely important role in communication, including the ways that organisations talk about themselves.[2]

Understanding the role of narratives is therefore an important element of analysis, but more research is needed on how other trends will impact on these in the future. None of the previous generations of research on strategic culture, for example, have paid sufficient attention to the processes of globalization and the effects this has on the construction of strategic cultural identity. This is changing, however. Recent studies have begun to focus on the role that technology is playing in assisting transnational terrorist networks as a force multiplier in conducting their operations and in allowing access to WMD-related knowledge. Globalization is also generating different understandings and narratives to those of Western ones concerning the future security realm. There is also the possibility that strategic cultures may be more fluid in circumstances where transnational cultural forces are operating across borders where conflict is underway, thus complicating negotiation of a peaceful settlement. Finally, demographic factors are already impacting on strategic cultural identities and likely will become more significant as a trend in the future. Studies of India, Israel and Russia point to this, while for North Korea the concern is that any collapse of the state would present neighbors with a massive refugee problem.

STRATEGIC CULTURE AND WMD PROLIFERATION TRAJECTORIES

The case studies illuminate several aspects relevant to strategic culture and WMD. Strategic culture research emerged in the 1970s to explain what were considered to be differences in the nuclear strategies adopted by the United States and the former Soviet Union. Jack Snyder, Colin Gray, and others argued that analytical attention should be directed towards national cultural environments in order to understand how nuclear strategy was formulated. Previously, nuclear strategy, as with military strategy in general, was often seen to be governed by technological and other material imperatives. Hence, little credence was given to the

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[2] Lawrence Freedman, "The Transformation of Strategic Affairs," *Adelphi Paper 379*, (London: Routledge for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2006): 22-23.

importance of cultures or ideas in shaping outcomes. Similarly, attempts to understand the dynamics behind nuclear proliferation have traditionally been dominated by theories that focus predominantly on material factors and make assumptions about rationality in the decision-making context.

Since the 1990s more attention has been directed towards other theoretical assessments of strategic nuclear decision-making, including those embracing accounts of the domestic cultural context in which decision are made. Such accounts indicate that the study of proliferation, as well as analyses of strategic developments among those states already in possession of nuclear weapons, have begun to embrace both cultural and ideational factors. More recently a study by Lewis Dunn, Peter Lavoy, Scott Sagan and James Wirtz investigated the likelihood that any new nuclear states will use WMD according to three models: realism, organizational theory and strategic culture.[3] They concluded that organizational theory provided the strongest account of the 3 models, but noted the potential explanatory significance of strategic culture in this context. Around the same period, Max Manwaring called for the old "nuclear theology" relating to deterrence to be replaced "with broad, integrated, and long-term culturally oriented approaches." Paul Bracken similarly pointed to the need for greater attention to be paid to the role of strategic culture and the potential for WMD use, as the new nuclear states are Asian based.[4]

To facilitate this re-orientation in analysis it is imperative to avoid ethnocentrism and resorting to stereotypes when addressing different strategic cultures. Stereotyping can lead to misperceptions of how a given actor will behave or respond in certain situations. In the WMD environment this could generate uncertainty over intentions and impact on considerations of actual use.

As a basic proposition, ethnocentrism should be minimized but it is not easy to accomplish. Writing in the late 1970s on the relationship between strategy and ethnocentrism Ken Booth considered that ethnocentrism was a source of mistakes, to differing degrees, in both the theory and practice of strategy. For Booth, ethnocentrism had three closely inter-linked meanings:

(1) *As a term to describe feelings of group centrality and superiority*. The

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[3] Lewis Dunn, Peter R. Lavoy and Scott Sagan, "Conclusion: Planning the Unthinkable," in Lavoy, Sagan and James.J Wirtz (eds.) *Planning the Unthinkable: How New Powers Will Use Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000).
[4] Max G. Mainwaring, ed., *Deterrence in the 21ˢᵗ Century*, (London: Frank Cass, 2001); and Paul Bracken, "The

characteristic features of ethnocentrism in this sense include: strong identification with one's own group as the centre of the universe, the tendency to perceive events in terms of one's own interests, the tendency to prefer one's own way of life (culture) over all others, and a general suspicion of foreigners, their modes of thought, action and motives.

(2) *As a technical term to describe a faulty methodology in the social sciences*. In this technical sense ethnocentrism involves the projection of one's own frame of reference onto others.

(3) *As a synonym for being "culture-bound."* Being culture-bound refers to the inability of an individual or group to see the world through the eyes of a different national or ethnic group: it is the inability to put aside one's own cultural attitudes and imaginatively recreate the world from the perspective of those belonging to a different group.[5]

Policy based around this approach would seek to avoid the extrapolation of Western assumptions to describe non-Western behavior in order to avoid misperceptions, such as where there may be new or evolving WMD situations. But ethnocentrism can also operate both ways with non-Western actors misperceiving the intentions and commitments of Western states, such as over security guarantees and in relation to WMD. The case studies note the differences in the way their particular strategic cultures approach conflict and that there are distinct "ways of war." Ethnocentrism is therefore significant for all situations, especially crisis ones, as the potential for misperception could be high. The study of U.S. strategic culture observes that in the context of discussion surrounding a perceived American aversion to sustaining casualties, "Chinese defense analysts see American casualty sensitivity as a weakness that can be exploited." As Thomas Mahnken emphasizes, however, "this may prove to be a dangerous misperception."

What insights can research on strategic culture provide about different WMD proliferation trajectories? Are there key features in strategic cultures that give indications of when and under what circumstances WMD will be pursued, deployed or used? Much of the literature focusing on strategic culture and WMD has predominantly addressed the nuclear weapons environment. This may be linked to a view that nuclear weapons are the most significant WMD, a perspective that has influenced the direction of study. But what implications

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Structure of the Second Nuclear Age," *Orbis*. 47, no. 3, (Summer 2003): 399-413.
[5] Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism*, (London: Croom Helm, 1979): 15

does this have for strategic culture and chemical (CW) and biological (BW) weapons? This is an area where more research is required. Are there particular situations where strategic culture factors, such as experience derived from conflict, will lead an actor to seek this category of WMD rather than, or in conjunction with, nuclear weapons? The study of Syria is one of the first to explore this type of relationship, suggesting that a defeat in aerial combat prompted that country to embark on a ballistic missile and CW program as a means of deterrent. Another study has examined cultural and ethical views on WMD, and this can aid understanding of the strategic assumptions that underpin this category of weaponry.[6]

WMD roll back and decisions not to acquire WMD are also important from a strategic cultural perspective. This is because there may be competing pressures within a country that have strategic cultural roots, such as disaffection among elites, or tribal, ideological or religious disagreements that generate the conditions for changes to occur in WMD decision-making. In a study of why Libya abandoned its WMD program, Bruce Jentleson and Christopher Whytock consider that U.S. coercive diplomacy coupled with multilateral support played a major part in the outcome.[7]

The theory of coercive diplomacy suggests that a successful strategy of this sort requires a balance to be struck between proportionality, reciprocity and coercive credibility. As Jentlesen and Whytock outline: proportionality "refers to the relationship within the coercer's strategy between the scope and nature of the objectives being pursued and the instruments being used in their pursuit;" reciprocity "involves an explicit, or at least mutually tacit, understanding of linkage between the coercer's carrots and the target's concessions;" and coercive credibility "requires that, in addition to calculations about costs and benefits of cooperation, the coercer state convincingly conveys to the target state that noncooperation has consequences."[8]

Additionally, they stress that "all three elements of a balanced coercive diplomacy strategy are more likely to be achieved if other major international actors are supportive and if opposition within the coercing state's domestic politics is limited."[9] Jentlesen and Whytock emphasize that both the domestic and international environments are significant in a coercive

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[6] Hashmi, Sohail and Lee, Steven, eds., *Ethics and Weapons of Mass Destruction*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, Ethikon Series in Comparative Ethics, 2004).

[7] Bruce W Jentleson and Christopher A. Whytock, "Who 'Won' Libya? The Force-Diplomacy Debate and its Implications for Theory and Practice," *International Security* 30, no. 3, (2005/06): 47-86.

[8] *Ibid*.: 51-52.

[9] *Ibid*.: 53.

diplomacy strategy. In the domestic context, whether a target state is susceptible to such a strategy will depend on a range of factors, such as: regime type, particularly if there is an issue of regime self-perpetuation; the economic costs and benefits on that state of sanctions and military force versus inducements like trade and other economic benefits; and the role played by key domestic actors. Where the latter are concerned, they highlight the importance of elites:

> Even dictatorships usually cannot fully insulate themselves from elites within their own governments and societies. To the extent that elite interests are threatened by compliance with the coercing state's demands, they will act as "circuit breakers" by blocking the external pressures on the regime. To the extent that their interests are better served by the policy concessions being demanded, they will become "transmission belts" carrying forward the coercive pressure on the regime to comply.[10]

Their analysis of the impact of this kind of strategy on Libya's decision to abandon its WMD programs emphasizes the changes that occurred over time in the domestic as well as the international contexts, which they argue was central to the eventual outcome. They note the balance struck between carrots and sticks, including the role played by force, intelligence, multilateral sanctions and economic incentives, and consider how these affected domestic strategic cultural actors like elites as well as tribal affiliations. Finally, in addition to the role that coercive diplomacy played, Wyn Bowen notes the importance of low key diplomatic engagements that took place between the United Kingdom and Libya, especially in the period 1999-2003.[11]

The issue of who the "keepers" of the strategic culture is thus important for the WMD environment. Studies of particular types of "leadership" may therefore be revealing in terms of decisions to acquire, deploy and use WMD capabilities. Equally, research can provide additional knowledge of the circumstances that lead to a rejection of the WMD route

The work of Jacques Hymans has focused on the role that leaders play in decisions to "endow their states with nuclear weapons."[12] Hymans argues that while the leaders which have obtained nuclear capabilities for their countries have ranged across the political spectrum and in all parts of the globe, there are particular types of leader that matter: Simply put, some political

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[10] *Ibid*.,: 54.

[11] Bowen, Wyn Q, "Libya and Nuclear Proliferation," *Adelphi Paper 380* (London: Routledge for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2006).

[12] Jacques Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation. Identity, Emotions, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 1.

leaders hold a conception of their nation's identity that leads them to desire the bomb; and such leaders can be expected to turn that desire into state policy.[13]

The leadership type he identifies as the significant factor in making nuclear decisions is one he calls "oppositional nationalist". These leaders, he suggests:

> …see their nation as both naturally at odds with an external enemy, and as naturally its equal if not its superior. Such a conception tends generate the emotions of fear and pride – an explosive cocktail. Driven by fear and pride, oppositional nationalists develop a desire for nuclear weapons that goes beyond calculation, to self-expression. Thus, in spite of the tremendous complexity of the nuclear choices, leaders who decide for the bomb tend not to back into it. For them, unlike the bulk of their peers, the choice for nuclear weapons is neither a close call nor a possible last resort but an absolute necessity.[14]

Hymans has studied nuclear policymaking in France under the Fourth Republic, Australia, Argentina, and India, and draws on insights from areas like political psychology and foreign policy analysis. In so doing, he also aims to construct "a more general model of identity-driven foreign policy decisionmaking," which seeks to trace "the linkages from leaders' national identity conceptions, through emotions, to their ultimate foreign policy choices."[15] Significantly, Hymans considers that decisions to go down the nuclear path stem not from the international structure but from the individual leaders' heart and desires.[16]

One question for future strategic culture research is therefore to consider what importance should be attached to leadership and regime transition factors and what happens in situations where regime change either does not proceed smoothly or does not proceed at all. In other words, it would be fruitful to consider further when and under what circumstances strategic cultures change in non-Western contexts, and what impact will this have for WMD. For example, the implications of regime survival are significant in the case of North Korea and, in a different way, for Syria. Additionally, it is important to study the role that strategic cultural factors like symbolism and status play in the acquisition, and possibly deployment and use of nuclear capabilities, as these have been identified in the studies of Russia, India, Iran and North Korea. The study of Pakistan also emphasized the role of nuclear myths, as did the study of India.

Finally, broader issues can impact on strategic culture and WMD. Resource and energy

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[13] *Idem.*
[14] *Ibid.*: 2
[15] *Idem.*
[16] *Idem.*

factors have been a feature of WMD proliferation debates in the past. These appear to be gaining in significance as discussion once more focuses on the role of nuclear power in the future energy debate and is the reason for the attention on Iran's nuclear program. Similarly, for Russia, the case study highlighted that economic power and energy resources are gradually replacing that country's traditional reliance on military power for its security and international status

STRATEGIC CULTURE AND DETERRENCE

What can strategic culture tell us about deterrence and WMD risk-taking in crisis situations? This question continues to be of significance since it was first raised in the 1970s by the first generation of writers on the subject. Today, there are key differences when considering this question: there are more actors, differing capabilities and the cultural contexts in which certain deterrent relationships are emerging are varied. Additionally, where are the ideas concerning deterrence emanating from? Are these essentially emulative (based on past knowledge derived from studying the East-West relationship) or indigenous constructs?

In the conclusion to their edited study of deterrence in the new global security environment, Ian Kenyon and John Simpson outline a number of features that have implications for the kind of analysis considered above. Kenyon and Simpson suggest there are several aspects that have relevance for the evolving nuclear environment:

> The first is the distinction between the existence of a deterrent *capability* (itself open to a wide range of interpretations) and of a deterrent *relationship*. Clearly the first is a necessary condition for the second, but it can also exist independently of the second, and increasingly may do so among the established nuclear-weapon states. The second is whether, as Quinlan asserts, deterrence is confined to situations involving *terror* and *unacceptable consequences* or, as others use the term, it also encompasses *defence* and *denial* of the ability to undertake unacceptable actions. Third is the continuing debate between *universal rationality* and *particular strategic cultures* in relation to the mechanisms and effectiveness of deterrence, and the implications for this of threats of mass destructive actions by non-state actors and perceived 'rogue states'. Fourth, there is the question of what, if anything, is understood by the term *strategic stability* in a world of only one nuclear superpower, and an increasing number of small nuclear forces. Finally, there is the role played by *deterrence* and *defence* in combating proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in comparison to that played by *legal constraints*. [17]

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[17] Ian Kenyon and John Simpson, eds., *Deterrence in the New Global Security Environment* (London: Routledge, 2006): 202.

Aspects of strategic culture underpin all of these considerations. Assumptions about rationality, credibility of threats, appropriate capabilities and the effective communication of threat, as well as strategic stability, are all likely to be affected by the differing contexts now evolving and the strategic cultural predispositions associated with each one. Consider rationality, for example. In theoretical terms, rationality can have at least three understandings: substantive; procedural; and instrumental. Substantive rationality involves judgments about value preferences, such as life over death. Procedural rationality deems a rational choice to be the product of an ends-means calculation, whereby an actor considers every option and judges each one on its merits (including having knowledge of how other actors will respond), before making a choice. Instrumental rationality refers to situations where an actor may have two alternatives and chooses the option that yields the most preferred outcome. The latter variant utilizes assumptions concerning cost-benefit calculations related to threats, punishments, and pay-offs often derived from game-theoretic models involving two players.[18]

Given these theoretical models related to rationality, how does strategic culture alter preferences in each? For example, it could be that transnational terrorist actors are not necessarily "irrational;" they may just be operating under differing cultural assumptions about what constitutes a rational act. Actions that may be viewed as irrational in the Western context are consequently rational from the standpoint of their own value-systems and strategic objectives.

In the same edited volume by Kenyon and Simpson, Aaron Karp suggests there are three types of deterrent relationship today: first, there is one that exists between the five nuclear-weapon states, where nuclear weapons serve to prevent use against each other; second, is the variant that is emerging among the new nuclear-weapons capable states; finally, there is the type of deterrence involving terrorist actors.[19] The role of deterrence in each of these contexts is thus variable, with each type displaying features that have a strategic cultural dimension.

Another factor that could influence the development of strategic cultures, especially when connected to WMD, is the influence of global norms. Such norms can exert pressure on some

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[18] Frank C. Zagare and D. Mark Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations no. 72, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000):38-39; and James G. Blight and David A. Welch, "Risking 'The Destruction of Nations:' Lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis for New and Aspiring Nuclear States," *Security Studies* 4 (Summer 1995): 815, footnote 12.

[19] Aaron Karp, "The New Indeterminacy of Deterrence and Missile Defence," in Kenyon and Simpson, *op.cit*.,: 63-82.

actors but not others in area of WMD. Some analysts have observed that a "nuclear taboo" has evolved since 1945, proscribing the use of nuclear weapons except in cases of last resort. There are differences, however, between those who emphasize interest and material factors to explain non-use and those who attribute this outcome to ideational factors and the development of global norms like the "nuclear taboo." Mahnken notes the importance, when referring to nuclear weapons, of "the development and growth of a strong American taboo against their use," and that "American leaders regarded nuclear weapons as different militarily, politically, and psychologically from other weapons almost from the beginning." Thus, while the US may be constrained by such a "taboo" other strategic cultural actors may not be. Research can therefore continue to delve into this area by studying how the nuclear taboo will operate in the future in differing strategic cultural contexts while also considering those features that may strengthen it as a global norm.

Other factors are influencing strategic cultures and deterrence. For the Russian leadership, nuclear weapons are viewed as essential to security although there is reduced threat perception since the ending of the Cold War. The country is also undergoing a process of de-militarization but there remains a possibility that the old strategic cultural legacy could return if a new charismatic leader or major threat environment were to emerge. The United States still views deterrence and wars for limited aims as a central pillar of its strategic culture but there have been different levels of support between the services for nuclear forces. Key aspects for the United States in the future concern the implications for strategic culture in the context of a process of nuclear re-orientation among the armed forces and the implications in the longer term if nuclear knowledge is lost.

There are contrasting views concerning whether China has a strategic cultural predisposition for the offensive or defensive use of force. This has implications for deterrence, as some analysts also consider that China exhibits a risk-taking style of coercive diplomacy in crisis situations. The nuclear posture currently deployed by China constitutes a relatively small nuclear arsenal compared to the United States and Russia and is not much larger than the ones deployed by the United Kingdom and France. Modernization is underway so that China can attain a secure second strike capability and the Chinese leadership is also concerned about the potential for WMD proliferation to have negative effects on regional security, especially now that North Korea has announced that it has conducted a nuclear test.

North Korea considers that nuclear weapons are necessary to respond to what it perceives are U.S. nuclear threats. There is also strategic cultural dissonance between what it believes the United States will do in terms of WMD use and also the power associated with this class of weapon. Iran similarly is considered to be seeking a nuclear capability to deter the United States, to achieve status and power internationally, and as a symbol of national pride.

CONCLUSION

This type of research can show how strategic cultures of all types influence policy choices and outcomes. Several issues have emerged from this analysis. One is how strategic culture will affect the complexities associated with evolving deterrent relationships. The strategic cultural context in which these are emerging is very different from the 1945-1990 period and the implications of this are profound for future strategic stability. One area for future strategic culture analysis is therefore to study the potentially differing understandings of strategic stability and to assess how the various combinations of missile defense, deterrence, and diplomacy are likely to operate.

One overriding conclusion to stem from recent and past research addressing these issues, which has significance for the security realm, is the need to avoid superficial stereotypes when addressing strategic cultural entities such as states and transnational terrorist actors.[20] In the WMD environment this could generate uncertainty over intentions about actual use. Overcoming the trap of ethnocentrism is therefore important for future policy. Concomitantly, ethnocentrism can work both ways: there is a related danger that non-Western actors will misinterpret actions taken by Western states and alliances, and draw the wrong conclusions about what is at stake in any given situation. Future work can ensure that such misinterpretations are minimized.

One question arising from the consideration of how strategic culture can contribute to neorealism is in analyzing whether actors are more likely to acquire WMD in structurally indeterminate situations. Michael Desch accepts that cultural theories might supplement realism by helping explain time lags between structural change and alterations in state behavior, by accounting `for why some states behave irrationally and suffer the consequences of failing to adapt to the constraints of the international system", and in helping to explain state action in

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[20] Elizabeth L. Stone, Christopher P. Twomey and Peter R. Lavoy, Conference Report, "Comparative Strategic Cultures Phase 1 Workshop Proceedings," Prepared by the Center for Contemporary Conflict, U.S. Naval

"structurally indeterminate situations."[21] Concerning the latter, Desch writes that:

> Structure tends to establish parameters; actual outcomes are sometimes determined by other factors. This makes the competition between cultural and rationalist theories less sweeping but also more intense. In structurally indeterminate environments, culturalist and rationalist theories often make similar predictions about state behavior and international outcomes; thus the crucial cases for deciding between them will be in structurally determinate environments.[22]

This represents a fruitful avenue for further research, although a preliminary question would have to be addressed: there would need to be a consensus about what constitutes a structurally indeterminate as opposed to a determinate environment. Additionally, following the work of Hymans, how much emphasis should be placed on individual "leadership" types, as he suggests that it is at this level of analysis that judgments concerning nuclear acquisition should be made.

Research on proliferation has focused on the role of global security norms in constraining both proliferation and use of WMD. It is important to continue analyzing the significance of these norms and whether these constrain all actors. The conclusion thus far is that these norms influence some strategic cultural actors more than others. Moreover, research on individual examples like Libya can yield important observations about the impact of norms, multilateral sanctions, and other policy instruments related to WMD roll-back decisions.

Caution must also prevail in deriving too much from one case of WMD roll back, as there may be specific contextual reasons for the outcome. On this point, Jentlesen and Whytock invoke Alexander George's two caveats that while cross case comparisons should be made, the focus must be "actor specific," and that the analyst, "can draw conditional generalizations about what lessons from case X apply to a similar case Y, so long as they also take into account the ways in which the two cases are different."[23] Nonetheless, Libya has now abandoned its WMD capability and it is useful to consider what factors, cultural or otherwise, played a part in this strategic transformation.

Finally, what also is emerging on the back of current research is the realization of a new strategic cultural analysis that draws on other theoretical traditions but is avowedly oriented

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Postgraduate School Monterey, California, 2005.

[21] Michael Desch, `Culture Versus Structure in Post-9/11 Security Studies', *Strategic Insights* IV, issue 10 (October 2005): 30

[22] *Ibid*.:31.

[23] *Ibid*.,: 81.

towards addressing policy issues relevant for the twenty first century where a range of actors, including a diversity of types of strategic cultural entities, and globalization are changing the security environment. Whereas it has been common to consider strategic culture in terms of three generations of research, each offering insights into the context in which they evolved, a fourth generation is now focused on identifying how these developments are affecting culturally relevant trends in areas such as WMD and in identifying competing narratives within countries in order to analyze how these shape an actors behavior (rather than ascribing any one permanent cultural condition to that actor). This is because there may be multiple strategic cultures present at any given time. Although strategic culture could be static for years, even decades, it can change dramatically with events or other transformative pressures. The impact of such factors as North Korea's missile and nuclear tests, Iran's nuclear program, the concern that transnational terrorist actors will acquire and use WMD, and the search for global energy solutions in the context of climate change are thus key to understanding individual strategic cultures, regional security dynamics, and global attempts to reduce WMD dangers via treaty- and non-treaty based solutions.

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United States Strategic Culture

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The notion that there is a connection between a society and its strategic culture has a long and distinguished pedigree. In his history of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides records that the Spartan king Archidamus and the Athenian *strategos* Pericles each linked the capabilities of their military to the constitution of their state.[1] Writing more than 2,400 years later, Julian Corbett drew a distinction between the German or "continental" and British or "maritime" schools of strategic thought, with the former focusing on war between land powers and the latter on a conflict between a sea power and a land power.[2] Basil H. Liddell-Hart refined Corbett's argument, noting that Britain had historically followed a distinctive approach to war by avoiding large commitments on land and using sea power to bring economic pressure to bear against its adversaries.[3]

A nation's strategic culture flows from its geography and resources, history and experience, and society and political structure.[4] It represents an approach that a given state has found successful in the past. Although not immutable, it tends to evolve slowly. It is no coincidence, for example, that Britain has historically favored sea power and indirect strategies, or that it has traditionally eschewed the maintenance of a large army. Israel's lack of geographic depth, its small but educated population, and technological skill have produced a strategic culture that emphasizes strategic preemption, offensive operations, initiative, and – increasingly – advanced technology.[5] Australia's minimal geopolitical status, its continental rather than maritime identity, and its formative military experiences have shaped its way of war.[6]

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[1] Robert B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 45-46, 81-82.

[2] Julian S. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1911), 38.

[3] Basil H. Liddell Hart, *The British Way in Warfare* (New York: MacMillan, 1933).

[4] Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), Ch. 5.

[5] Michael I. Handel, "The Evolution of Israeli Strategy: The Psychology of Insecurity and the Quest for Absolute Security" in Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein, eds., *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[6] Michael Evans, *The Tyranny of Dissonance: Australia's Strategic Culture and Way of War, 1901-2005* (Canberra: Land Warfare Studies Center, 2005).

This case study examines the strategic culture of the United States. For obvious reasons, the strategic culture of the United States has received considerable attention. The United States is the world's most powerful nation, and will be for the foreseeable future. How the United States behaves affects not only its citizens, but also those across the globe. Understanding the strategic culture of the United States is important for friends, enemies, and neutrals.

What follows is an examination of American strategic culture on the level of the nation, the military, and the armed services. As a nation, American strategic culture was shaped by free security and imbued with exceptionalism. American strategic culture emphasizes liberal idealism and views war as a discontinuation of policy. American military culture, the so-called "American way of war", emphasizes direct strategies, an industrial approach to war, and firepower- and technology intensive approaches to combat. The U.S. armed services, in turn, vary in their structure, dominant groups, and attitudes toward technology.

STRATEGIC CULTURE DEFINED

This case study adopts the definition of strategic culture that was adopted for the project as a whole. Specifically, throughout this chapter, "Strategic culture is that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives."

More specifically, this is a chapter about American strategic culture. It is, in the words of Colin S. Gray, "That culture referring to modes of thought and action with respect to force, derived from perception of the national historical experience, aspiration for self-characterization…and from all of the many distinctively American experiences (of geography, political philosophy, of civic culture, and "way of life") that characterize an American citizen."[7]

One of the central challenges facing the scholar of any state's strategic culture lies in determining which institutions serve as the keeper and transmitter of strategic culture. Is it the state? The military as a whole? Or some subset of the military? Another lies in identifying the content of strategic culture: the most salient beliefs and attitudes that comprise culture. Last

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[7] Colin S. Gray, "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1981), 22.

but not least is the problem of determining the extent to which strategic culture, rather than power considerations, actually determines attitudes and behavior.[8]

This case study considers strategic culture on three levels: those of the nation, the military, and the military service. At the national level, strategic culture reflects a society's values regarding the use of force. At the military level, strategic culture (or a nation's "way of war") is an expression of how the nation's military *wants* to fight wars. Although practice does not have to conform to this desire, success in waging wars that run counter to national ways of war may come only after a period of painful adaptation. Finally, strategic culture at the service level represents the organizational culture of the particular service – those values, missions, and technologies that the institution holds dear.[9]

There are two reasons why it is worthwhile to examine culture on different levels explicitly. First, although military institutions generally reflect the societies that they defend, it cannot be assumed that they will mirror one another at all times. During the 1990s, for example, a number of scholars argued that the U.S. military was becoming less representative of American society in terms of its attitudes.[10] Second, as Clausewitz noted, there is often a tension (and generally a healthy one) between the military, the government, and the society as a whole. As he noted, the military generally operates in the realm of probability and chance, whereas rationality and the people generally characterize the political leadership by passion.[11]

STRATEGIC CULTURE PROFILE

National Strategic Culture

Both geography and history have shaped American national strategic culture. Throughout most of America's history, North America's insular position and weak neighbors

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[8] Alan Macmillan, Ken Booth, and Russell Trood, "Strategic Culture" in Ken Booth and Russell Trood, eds., *Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 8-12.

[9] As Edgar Schein puts it, organizational culture is "The pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problemsEdgar H. Schein, "Coming to a New Awareness of Organizational Culture," *Sloan Management Review* 25, no. 2 (Winter 1984), 3.

[10] See, for example, Ole Holsti, "A Widening Gap Between the Military and Society? Some Evidence, 1976-1996," *International Security* 23, no. 2 (Winter 1998-99): 5-42; and Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).

[11] Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.

to the north and south combined to provide the United States free security. Shielded by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and the Royal Navy, the United States grew to maturity in a benign environment. The fact that the United States did not have to exhaust itself by preparing for and waging wars against its neighbors separated it from other countries, particularly the European great powers. American insularity and the existence of free security bred the view that war is a deviation from the norm of peace. American strategic culture was shaped by long periods of peace punctuated by generational conflicts – the War of 1812, the Civil War, World War I, and World War II – defined as a crusade of good versus evil.

Free security, in turn, affected the American outlook on the world. As C. Vann Woodward wrote more than four decades ago, "Anxieties about security have kept the growth of optimism within bounds among other peoples…the relative absence of such anxieties in the past has helped, along with other factors, to make optimism a national philosophy in America."[12]

American strategic culture explicitly rejects the European tradition of power politics. Rather, from the founding Americans have seen themselves as exceptional. This exceptionalism has influenced the way the United States deals with others. As Walter Lippmann observed, American strategic culture "does not recognize that America is one nation among many other nations with whom it must deal as rivals, as allies, as partners." Rather, "an aggression is an armed rebellion against the universal and eternal principles of the world society. No war can end rightly, therefore, except by the unconditional surrender of the aggressor nation and by the overthrow and transformation of its political regime."[13]

The impulse to transform the international system in the service of liberal democratic ideals forms a strand that runs throughout American history. The Clinton administration's national security strategy of engagement and enlargement and the George W. Bush administration's commitment to spreading democracy, expressed most eloquently in his second

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[12] C. Vann Woodward, "The Age of Reinterpretation," *American Historical Review* 66 (October 1960), 6.

[13] Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy in the United States* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1952), 25-26.

inaugural address, have more in common with one another than either administration's supporters would care to admit.[14]

Much of America's Cold War foreign policy elite, steeped in the history of European power politics and schooled in the realist tradition, saw America's traditional exceptionalism and idealism as dangerous. George Kennan, in his lectures on American diplomacy delivered in 1950, argued that the American approach to international relations was characterized by excessive "moralism and legalism" that led to the tendency to launch crusades against evil. As Kennan put it, "A war fought in the name of high moral principle finds no early end short of some form of total domination."[15]

Americans have often conceived of interstate war not as a continuation of policy, in Clausewitz's famous formulation, but as a symptom of its breakdown. J.C. Wylie was reflecting a widely held American view when he wrote:

> Is war in fact a continuation of policy? For us, I think not. War for a nonaggressor nation is actually a nearly complete collapse of policy. Once war comes, then nearly all prewar policy is utterly invalid because the setting in which it was designed to function no longer corresponds with the facts of reality. When war comes, we at once move into a radically different world.[16]

Similarly, the U.S. Army's 1936 textbook on strategy held that "Politics and strategy are radically and fundamentally things apart. Strategy begins where politics end. All that soldiers ask is that once the policy is settled, strategy and command shall be regarded as being in a sphere apart from politics."[17] Americans have, in other words, tended to think astrategically.[18]

The combination of the rejection of power politics and discontinuity between policy and strategy has yielded a dichotomy in American strategic culture: although Americans are basically peace loving, when aroused they mobilize the nation's human and material resources

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[14] William J. Cinton, National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (Washington, D.C.: White House, 1995) at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/research_pubs/nss.pdf. "President Bush Sworn-In to Second Term" at http://www.whitehouse.gov/inaugural/ (accessed July 16, 2006).

[15] George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy: Expanded Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 100.

[16] J.C. Wylie, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1967), 80.

[17] *The Principles of Strategy for An Independent Corps or Army in a Theater of Operations* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff School Press, 1936).

[18] Colin S. Gray, "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1981), 33.

behind in the service of high-intensity operations. Samuel Huntington saw America's ferocity in war as the flip side of liberal pacifism outside of war. As he put it:

> The American tends to be an extremist on the subject of war: he either embraces war wholeheartedly or rejects it completely. This extremism is required by the nature of the liberal ideology. Since liberalism deprecates the moral validity of the interests of the state in security, war must be either condemned as incompatible with liberal goals or justified as an ideological movement in support of those goals. American thought has not viewed war in the conservative-military sense as an instrument of national policy.[19]

The United States has thus displayed a strong and long-standing predilection for waging war for unlimited political aims.[20] During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln and General Ulysses S. Grant fought to defeat utterly the Confederacy. During World War I, General John J. Pershing, the commander of the American Expeditionary Force, favored a policy of unconditional surrender toward Imperial Germany even as President Woodrow Wilson sought a negotiated end to the conflict.[21] In World War II Franklin D. Roosevelt and his commanders were of one mind that the war must lead to the overthrow of the German, Japanese, and Italian governments that had started the war. In the current war against jihadist extremists there is no sentiment for anything approaching a negotiated settlement.

Just as Americans have preferred a fight to the finish, so too have they been uncomfortable with wars for limited political aims. In both the Korean and Vietnam wars, American military leaders were cool to the idea of fighting merely to restore or maintain the *status quo*. Indeed, Douglas MacArthur likened anything short of total victory over communist forces on the Korean peninsula to "appeasement."[22] Similarly, the standard explanation of

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[19] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1957), 151

[20] As Clausewitz wrote, "War can be of two kinds, in the sense that either the objective is to *overthrow the enemy* – to render him politically helpless or militarily impotent, thus forcing him to sign whatever peace we please; or *merely to occupy some of his frontier districts* so that we can annex them or use them for bargaining at the peace negotiations. Transitions from one type to the other will of course recur in my treatment; but the fact that the aims of the two types are quite different must be clear at all times, and their points of irreconcilability brought out [emphasis in original]." Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 69

[21] David R. Woodward, *Trial by Friendship: Anglo-American Relations, 1917-1918* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 213-214.

[22] See the testimony of General Douglas MacArthur in Allen Guttmann, ed., *Korea: Cold War and Limited War*, 2nd ed. (New York: D.C. Heath, 1972).

American failure in Vietnam—and the one most popular among U.S. military officers—is that the U.S. military would have won the war were it not for civilian interference.[23]

Americans have tended to cast their wars as crusades against evil. As Samuel Huntington put it, "For the American a war is not a war unless it is a crusade."[24] Of course, such an attitude has strong historical roots: during the twentieth century the United States fought a series of despotic regimes, from Hitler's Germany and Kim Il-Sung's North Korea to Saddam Hussein's Iraq and Slobodan Milosevic's Serbia. However, there has always been a clear tension between the need to rally the public in support of the use of force and the need to pursue limited aims. Political leaders who demonized America's adversaries often faced a backlash when the United States did not continue the war to the finish. Advisors to President George H.W. Bush, for example, bristled at his comparisons of Saddam Hussein to Adolf Hitler, fearing that it would complicate the conduct of the 1991 Gulf War.[25]

The United States has similarly encountered difficulty when it has fought adversaries who at least appear less than demonic. Although Ho Chi Minh presided over a brutal communist government, North Vietnamese propaganda and American opponents of the war in Vietnam were able to portray him as a kindly "Uncle Ho", or even a latter-day George Washington. The United States is thus fortunate to have in its war on terror an adversary such as Osama bin Laden, an individual who viscerally hates the United States and all it stands for.

Military Strategic Culture

Just as Americans as a whole exhibit certain preferences when the United States goes to war, so too does the U.S. military. And like the features of American strategic culture, those of American military culture have been marked more by continuity than change.

The notion of a distinct American military culture, a definitive "American way of war," is inextricably linked to Russell Weigley's book of the same name.[26] In it, Weigley argued that

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[23] For alternative views, see Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 175-184; Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

[24] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1957), 152.

[25] George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Knopf, 1998), 389.

[26] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973). For a more critical appraisal of the "American way of war", see

since the American Civil War the U.S. armed forces have pursued a unique approach to combat, one favoring wars of annihilation through the lavish use of firepower. In his formulation, the main characteristics of the "American way of war" include aggressiveness at all levels of warfare, a quest for decisive battles, and a desire to employ maximum effort. The U.S. military has viewed "the complete overthrow of the enemy, the destruction of his military power, [as] the object of war."[27] By contrast, the American military has been uncomfortable waging war with constrained means for limited or ambiguous objectives. Weigley argued that "Americans, especially American soldiers" held a narrow definition of strategy that tended to "give little regard to the non-military consequences of what they were doing."[28]

Weigley's formulation, though influential, represents a narrow interpretation of American military history. As Brian M. Linn has noted, the U.S. armed forces have in fact favored strategies of attrition over annihilation. In addition, the United States has throughout its history pursued a much wider range of strategies than Weigley's formulation indicates, including deterrence and wars for limited aims. [29] Linn and others have noted that the U.S. military has a rich tradition of fighting small wars and insurgencies. Indeed, Max Boot went so far as to propose this tradition as an alternative American way of war.[30]

Linn and Boot both offer valid critiques of Weigley's interpretation of American military history. Weigley's formulation nonetheless stands up remarkably well as a portrayal of American military strategic culture and thus the *aspirations* of the U.S. military.

Another historical tendency has been a preference for the direct approach to strategy over the indirect. The U.S. military has throughout its history sought to close with and destroy the enemy at the earliest opportunity. As Colin S. Gray has put it, "Americans have favored the quest for swift victory through the hazards of decisive battle rather than the slower approach of maritime encirclement."[31] There is perhaps no better illustration of this tendency than the debate over strategy between the American and British governments during World War II. The

Colin S. Gray, "Strategy in the Nuclear Age: The United States, 1945-1991" in Murray, Knox, and Bernstein, *The Making of Strategy*, 579-613.

[27] Weigley, *American Way of War*, xxi

[28] Weigley, *American Way of War*, xviii-xix

[29] Brian M. Linn, "*The American Way of War* Revisited," *Journal of Military History* 66 no. 2 (April 2002), 501-533.

[30] Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

[31] Gray, "Strategy in the Nuclear Age," pp.594-595.

U.S. military, led by Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, sought to concentrate forces for a cross-channel invasion at the earliest possible time. The British, by contrast, sought to encircle Axis-controlled Europe, allowing the Soviets to attrit German forces while the allies carried out a strategic bombing campaign and unconventional warfare in occupied Europe, postponing the invasion until it would be little more than a *coup de grace*.[32]

Coupled with a preference for direct strategies has been an industrial approach to war. During World War II, for example, the United States provided almost two-thirds of all Allied military equipment, building some 297,000 aircraft, 193,000 artillery pieces, 86,000 tanks, 2 million trucks, 8,800 naval vessels, and 87,000 landing craft. In its first year in the war, the United States out-produced the entire Axis in aircraft, tanks, and heavy guns.[33] During the Gulf War, U.S. strategic airlift assets alone moved 500,000 people and 540,000 tons of cargo – and only 5 percent of the materiel the United States employed in the war moved by air.[34] Over the past decade and a half, the United States has demonstrated the ability to organize and deploy large forces worldwide on short notice. Even peacekeeping operations such as Bosnia and Kosovo have involved considerable logistical support.

One characteristic that flows from the industrial approach is the lavish use of firepower. Contemporary accounts of the Battle of Mogadishu focused upon the fact that eighteen American servicemen lost their lives and 83 were wounded. Less remarked upon was the fact that at least 500 Somalis were killed and a thousand wounded in the same engagement.[35] During the major combat phase of the campaign against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan U.S. air forces delivered some 22,000 bombs—including some 12,500 precision-guided munitions (PGMs)—in support of U.S. Special Forces and the Northern Alliance.[36]

A firepower-intensive approach to war makes sense, at least from a certain point of view. The United States can certainly afford the expenditure of resources to conduct such an approach. Moreover, firepower often saves American lives. However, the Vietnam War showed how a reliance on firepower could prove dysfunctional in a counterinsurgency

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[32] Kent Roberts Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II: A Reconsideration* (Malabar, FL: Krieger, 1982), Ch. 2.

[33] Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), p.192.

[34] *Gulf War Air Power Survey*, volume III, *Logistics and Support* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993), p. 9.

[35] Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), p. 333.

[36] O'Hanlon, "A Flawed Masterpiece," *Foreign Affairs,* May/June 2002, p.52.

campaign. The lavish use of artillery and air power was irrelevant to the main problem of the war: how to cut the communist insurgency off from its base of popular support. If anything, the destruction caused by the strategy increased support for the communists.[37] Similarly, the profligate use of American firepower in Afghanistan threatens to weaken support for the United States—support that is vital to ensure the viability of the government of Afghanistan and reduce support for the Taliban.

Another characteristic of the American way of war is its emphasis on technology. No nation in recent history has placed greater emphasis upon the role of technology in planning and waging war than the United States. World War II witnessed the wholesale mobilization of American science and technology, culminating in the detonation of the atomic bomb. Technology played an important role in America's conduct of the Cold War as well, as the United States sought to use its qualitative advantage to counterbalance the numerical superiority of the Soviet Union and its allies. America's post-Cold War conflicts in Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, and Afghanistan highlighted its technological edge over friend and foe alike.

Empirical research into the attitudes of U.S. officers shows them by and large to be technological optimists. A survey of some 1,900 officers attending U.S. professional military education institutions conducted in 2000 by this author and James R. FitzSimonds found that most officers believed new technology, doctrine, and organizations would make it easier for the United States to use force and achieve decisive battlefield victories. They also felt that advanced technology would allow the United States to engage in high-intensity operations with substantially reduced risk of casualties and that it would substantially reduce the duration of future conflicts.[38]

As Colin Gray has observed, strategic culture is neither good nor bad. Rather, it represents the context for strategic action. As he has written:

> The machine-mindedness that is so prominent in the dominant American "way of war" is inherently neither functional nor dysfunctional. When it inclines Americans to seek what amounts to a technological, rather than a political, peace, and when it is permitted to dictate tactics regardless of the political context, then on balance it is dysfunctional. Having said that, however, prudent and innovative

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[37] Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp.196-205.

[38] Thomas G. Mahnken and James R. FitzSimonds, *The Limits of Transformation: Officer Attitudes toward the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Newport Paper 17 (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2003), ch. 6.

exploitation of the technological dimension to strategy and war can be a vital asset.[39]

America's traditional reliance upon technology in war is certainly no recipe for success. Technology is a poor substitute for strategic thinking. The United States lost in Vietnam despite enjoying a considerable technological edge—at least in most areas—over its adversaries because it failed to develop an adequate strategy to achieve its political objectives. During the 1990s, the U.S. government increasingly looked to technology, in the form of standoff air- and sea-launched precision-guided munitions, to solve problems—such as terrorism and ethnic violence—that were at their root political. Washington's penchant for advanced technology also fostered the illusion among some that the United States could use force without killing American soldiers and innocent civilians, and among America's enemies the impression that the United States was averse to sustaining casualties. Saddam Hussein, for one, saw high-technology warfare as a sign of American weakness rather than strength.[40]

A more recent, and more ambiguous, tendency has been a seeming American reluctance to incur casualties. The conventional wisdom is that the American public is very sensitive to losses. Many further argue that the willingness of the American public to sustain casualties has declined significantly since the end of the Cold War.[41]

In fact, the phenomenon of casualty aversion defies such a neat formulation. In many ways, a reluctance to put American troops in harm's way was a logical response to the circumstances of the 1990s. Throughout that decade the United States fought wars for interests that were secondary, even tertiary. The low stakes involved in Somalia made it perfectly rational to withdraw after the death of eighteen American servicemen during the Battle of Mogadishu. Moreover, the U.S. advantage in air power has allowed it to use force effectively without putting a large number of American lives at risk. NATO's air campaign over Kosovo was, after all, able to achieve the alliance's political objectives short of the introduction of

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[39] Gray, *Modern Strategy*, 147.

[40] Kevin M. Woods, Michael R. Pease, Mark E. Stout, Williamson Murray, and James G. Lacey, *Iraqi Perspectives Project: A View of Operation Iraqi Freedom from Saddam's Senior Leadership* (Norfok, VA: U.S. Joint Forces Command, 2006), 15.

[41] See, for example, Edward N. Luttwak, "Where are the Great Powers?" *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 73, No. 4 (July/August 1994); Edward N. Luttwak, "From Vietnam to Desert Fox: Civil-Military Relations in Modern Democracies," *Survival* Vol. 41, No. 1 (Spring 1999); Charles Moskos, "Grave Decision: When Americans Accept Casualties," *Chicago Tribune*, December 12, 1998, p. 25; and Harvey M. Sapolsky and Jeremy Shapiro, "Casualties, Technology, and America's Future Wars," *Parameters* (September 1996), pp. 119-127.

ground forces. In such circumstances it made little sense to put American lives at risk unnecessarily.

But there is clearly more to it than that. Recent research appears to show that the military leadership and civilian decision makers are more casualty averse than the American public.[42] Indeed, the U.S. military has consistently sought to reduce casualties. The so-called Powell Doctrine emphasizes the use of overwhelming force against U.S. adversaries not due to political or strategic imperatives, but because of the belief that it will bring victory sooner while producing fewer U.S. casualties. Similarly, the military leadership has been one of the primary advocates of "force protection" measures to reduce the risk to U.S. forces. It is notable, for example, that two of the three metrics General Wesley Clark established to measure the effectiveness of Operation *Allied Force*, NATO's air war over Serbia, involved protecting allied forces rather than compelling Milosevic to quit Kosovo.[43]

Ironically, the military's concern over casualties appears to be stronger and more persistent than that of its civilian masters. For example, there is no evidence that the U.S. political leadership established the level of U.S. casualties as a criterion for the success of the campaign against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. However, it appears that the military's concern over casualties played a major role in shaping the campaign's conduct. Indeed, at least one observer has attributed the seeming unwillingness of U.S. Central Command to commit large numbers of U.S. ground forces to the Battle of Tora Bora to the military leadership's concern over casualties.[44]

Real or not, the notion that the United States is casualty averse has become fixed in the mind of both allies and adversaries. U.S. allies have expressed concern that U.S. sensitivity to fatalities will constrain future military operations. As a senior British officer wrote, "in future conflicts, the United Kingdom will have to work within, or possibly around, the constraints

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[42] Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, "How Many Deaths are Acceptable? A Surprising Answer," *The Washington Post*, November 7, 1999, p.B3.

[43] The three "measures of merit" were (1) not to lose allied aircraft, (2) to affect Yugoslav military and police activities on the ground in Kosovo as quickly and effectively as possible, and (2) to protect allied ground forces from retaliation. See General Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), pp. 183-184.

[44] See, for example, Michael E. O'Hanlon, "A Flawed Masterpiece," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 81, No. 3 (May/June 2002), p. 57.

imposed by this American aversion to casualties."[45] Chinese defense analysts see American casualty sensitivity as a weakness that can be exploited.[46] However, this may prove to be a dangerous misperception. Indeed, the idea that the United States has a glass jaw is hardly new. Allies and adversaries should remind themselves of the United States' demonstrated ability to endure hardship and suffer punishment. They should recall not only the U.S. government's response to the Beirut barracks bombing and the Battle of Mogadishu, but also its reaction to the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the World Trade Center and Pentagon in 2001.

Service Strategic Culture

Although American military strategic culture has well defined features, each service also has its own unique culture, one shaped by its past and which, in turn, shapes its current and future behavior.[47] Service cultures are hard to change because they are the product of the acculturation of millions of service members over decades and are supported by a network of social and professional incentives. People join the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, not "the military" in the abstract. Service training and education strengthen that identity. They join because they identify—or want to identify—with a service's values and its culture. It is therefore not surprising that two decades after the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which sought to promote jointness, an officer's service affiliation remains the most important determinant of his views, more than rank, age, or combat experience.[48]

In many cases, service identity is more important to officers than an officer's branch identity. All aviators, for example, are not alike: Air Force pilots have cultural attitudes that

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[45] Wing Commander K.S. Balshaw, RAF, "Spending Treasure Today but Spilling Blood Tomorrow: What are the Implications for Britain of America's Apparent Aversion to Casualties?" *Defence Studies* Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 2001), p. 101.

[46] See, for example, the essays in Michael Pillsbury (ed.) *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1997).

[47] Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 7.

[48] Thomas G. Mahnken and James R. FitzSimonds, *The Limits of Transformation: Officer Attitudes toward the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Newport Paper 17 (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2003), 108.

differ significantly from those of their Navy counterparts.[49] Army infantrymen similarly have

views that differ significantly from their Marine Corps counterparts.[50]

One example of the way in which service culture manifests itself is in attitudes toward

technology. Not all elements of the U.S. military are equally reliant on technology. Because

war at sea and in the air is by definition technologically intensive, the Navy and Air Force have

tended to emphasize the role of technology in war. The Army and Marine Corps, by contrast,

have tended to emphasize the human element. As the old saw goes, the Air Force and Navy

talk about manning equipment, whereas the Army and Marine Corps talk about equipping the

man. Not surprisingly, therefore, Army and Marine Corps officers tend to be somewhat more

skeptical than their Air Force and Navy counterparts regarding the impact of technology on the

character and conduct of war.[51]

The services also vary in terms of their structure and dominant groups. The Marine

Corps and Air Force are "monarchical," with powerful service chiefs drawn from a single

dominant subgroup, whereas the Army and Navy are "feudal," with less powerful chiefs drawn

from a variety of subgroups.[52] Each also has its own "altars of worship"—those things that the

institution values.[53] These characteristics, in turn, affect how the services approach technology

and how technology affects the service.

The U.S. Marine Corps is a unitary, monarchical organization. The smallest of the

services, it is also the most cohesive.[54] Its ethos is based on the notion that all Marines are the

same and that every Marine is a rifleman. Despite the fact that the Marine Corps contains all

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[49] For example, when surveyed in 2002, 41% of Air Force pilots but only 21% of Navy aviators agreed with the statement "The ability to strike an adversary with precision weapons from a distance will diminish the need for the U.S. to field ground forces."

[50] For example, when surveyed in 2002, 57% of Army infantry officers but only 30% of Marine infantry officers agreed with the statement "The U.S. armed forces must radically change their approach to warfare to compete effectively with future adversaries." Sixty-five percent of Army infantry officers but only 14% of Marine infantry officers agreed with the statement "Modern conditions require significant changes to traditional Service roles and missions."

[51] Thomas G. Mahnken and James R. FitzSimonds, *The Limits of Transformation: Officer Attitudes toward the Revolution in Military Affairs*, Newport Paper 17 (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2003), 60.

[52] Thomas P. Ehrhard, "Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in the United States Armed Services: A Comparative Study of Weapon System Innovation," (Ph.D. dissertation: Johns Hopkins University, 2000), 75.

[53] Builder, Masks of War, 18.

[54] See, for example, Terry Terriff, "'Innovate or Die'?: Organizational Culture and the Origins of Maneuver Warfare in the United States Marine Corps," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 3 (June 2006): 475-503.

combat arms – infantry, artillery, and armor – as well as an aviation component, only one of the last ten Commandants of the Marine Corps has been a non-infantryman.[55]

Of the U.S. armed forces, the Marine Corps has the strongest commitment to tradition and the *status quo*, one reinforced by the deliberate, self-conscious study of history. It is, for example, the only service that teaches officers history as part of Officer Candidate School.

The Marine Corps' emphasis on tradition and conformity is manifest in the Marine uniform. Not surprisingly, it has changed the least since World War II of any service's uniform. It also reflects the service's ethic of conformity; with the exception of aviators, who wear gold flight wings on their chest, it is impossible to determine a Marine's specialty from his uniform.

Marines value technology the least of any service. In part, this is the result of a culture that puts the individual warrior at the center of warfare. It is also the result of the fact that as the smallest service, the Marine Corps has had the least money to devote to technology. Until very recently, the Marines let the Army and Navy develop the majority of their equipment, adopting and adapting it as necessary.

In contrast to the Marine Corps' monarchical structure, power in the Army is shared among the traditional combat arms: infantry, cavalry/armor, and artillery. Not surprisingly, the position of Army Chief of Staff tends to rotate among these combat arms. The current Army Chief of Staff, General Peter Schoomaker, is the first Special Forces branch officer to head the Army, his most recent ten predecessors included four from the infantry, three from armor, and three from the artillery.[56]

Whereas service identity is paramount to the Marine, his Army counterpart attaches great importance to branch identity. The Army is, in Carl Builder's words:

> A mutually supportive brotherhood of guilds. Both words, *brotherhood* and *guilds*, are significant here. The combat arms or branches of the Army are guilds – associations of craftsmen who take the greatest pride in their skills, as opposed to their possessions or positions. The guilds are joined in a brotherhood because, like brothers, they have a common family bond (the Army) and a recognition of their dependency upon each other in combat.[57]

Unlike the Marine uniform, an officer's branch identity is visible on the Army uniform.

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[55] General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr, who served as Commandant between 1968 and 1971, was an artilleryman.

[56] Generals Fred C. Weyand, Bernard W. Rogers, Edward C. Meyer, and John A. Wickham, Jr were infantrymen; Creighton W. Abrams, Gordon R. Sullivan, and Eric K. Shinseki were tankers; and William C. Westmoreland, Carl E. Vuono, and Dennis J. Reimer were artillerymen.

[57] Builder, *Masks of War*, 33.

The Army has tended to assimilate technology into its existing branch structure. The widespread adoption of the helicopter, for example, did not spawn a new branch, but rather led to a redefinition of cavalry to include rotary-wing aircraft.

Army officers, like their Marine counterparts, frequently profess that technology plays a subordinate role in warfare. In fact, however, the U.S. Army has traditionally valued advanced technology. Indeed, Army leaders have consistently seen advanced technology as a comparative advantage over potential foes. Whereas the Marine Corps sought to adapt itself to the advent of nuclear weapons, for example, the Army wholeheartedly embraced the weapons.

Technology is inherently more important to naval forces than to ground forces. Navies operate in an environment that is intrinsically hostile, and sailors from time immemorial have depended on naval technology to protect them from the elements. This has produced an attitude that recognizes the importance of technology but also prizes the tried-and-true over the novel.

The 20th century witnessed the Navy's evolution from a monarchical to a feudal organization. At the dawn of the 20th century, navies were synonymous with surface fleets. During the 20th century, however, the development of naval aviation and submarine forces changed the structure of the Navy fundamentally. Whereas the Army has tended to assimilate new ways of war into existing branches, the Navy responded to the advent of aircraft and submarines by adding new branches and career paths. As a result, the dominant communities in the Navy are surface, submarine, and aviation. These three branches collectively control the Navy: Of the last ten Chiefs of Naval Operations, four have been aviators, three surface warfare officers, and three submariners.[58]

The Air Force had its origins in, and continues to be defined by, the technology of manned flight. The Air Force is divided into pilots and non-pilots and between different communities of pilots. Even though combat pilots make up less than one-fifth of the Air Force, they are the ones who have dominated the service since its inception.[59] From 1947 to 1982, the Air Force Chief of Staff was always a bomber pilot; since 1982, the Air Force Chief of Staff has always been a fighter pilot.

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[58] Admirals Thomas H. Moorer, James L. Holloway III, Thomas B. Hayward, and Jay L. Johnson were aviators, Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., Jeremy R. Boorda, and Vern Clark were surface warriors, and James D. Watkins, Carlisle A. H. Trost, and Frank B. Kelso II were submariners.
[59] Ehrhard, 89.

National, military, and service strategic culture has affected the way the United States has approached nuclear weapons.

National Strategic Culture

Nuclear weapons have reinforced the long-standing view in the United States that there is a sharp dichotomy between peace and war. Since early in the Cold War, the dominant view expressed by both civilian strategists and military officers has been that nuclear weapons are first and foremost weapons of deterrence. As George Kennan put it in 1961:

> The atom has simply served to make unavoidably clear what has been true all along since the day of the introduction of the machine gun and the internal combustion engine into the techniques of warfare…that modern warfare in the grand manner, pursued by all available means and aimed at the total destruction of the enemy's capability to resist, is… of such general destructiveness that it ceases to be useful as an instrument for the achievement of any coherent political purpose.[60]

In other words, the use of nuclear weapons cannot serve as a continuation of policy.

Beyond the basic view of nuclear weapons as deterrents has been the development and growth of a strong American taboo against their use. As Nina Tannenwald has observed, "Nuclear weapons have come to be defined as abhorrent and unacceptable weapons of mass destruction, with a taboo on their use."[61]

Thomas Schelling attributes the nuclear taboo to "a belief, or a feeling—a feeling somewhat beyond reach by analysis—that nuclear weapons were simply different." Reinforcing this was the belief that "nuclear weapons, once introduced into combat, could not, or probably would not, be contained, confined, or limited."[62] In his view, the nuclear taboo has affected not only nuclear weapons, but also other "peaceful nuclear explosives" and nuclear power.

American leaders regarded nuclear weapons as different militarily, politically, and psychologically from other weapons almost from the beginning. Even before the Soviets

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[60] Quoted in Chris Hables Gray, *Postmodern War: The New Politics of Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1997), 138.

[61] Nina Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (Spring 2005), 5.

[62] Thomas C. Schelling, "An Astonishing 60 Years: The Legacy of Hiroshima," *Perspectives of the National Academy of Science*, 103, no. 16 (April 18, 2006), 6090.

acquired nuclear weapons, let alone achieved parity, American leaders believed that U.S. use of nuclear weapons would have severe long-term political consequences for the United States.[63]

The nuclear taboo was first identified during the early Eisenhower administration. At the time, it was seen as something that the U.S. government needed to counter.[64] Over time, however, the plausible range of uses for nuclear weapons has narrowed considerably. The actual practice of nonuse of nuclear weapons in crisis and war throughout the Cold War both reflected and bolstered the taboo,[65] as did nuclear nonuse during the Vietnam War.[66] As a result, uses of nuclear weapons that were once plausible, such as the use of tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield or direct threats to employ nuclear weapons in order to deter conventional conflict, no longer appear legitimate.

During the 1990s, opposition to nuclear weapons grew into a movement to abolish them altogether. At the forefront of the movement were senior American officers and civil servants. For example, in a speech to the National Press Club in December 1996 General Lee Butler, the former Commander in Chief of U.S. Strategic Command, argued that

> nuclear weapons are inherently dangerous, hugely expensive, and militarily inefficient; that implacable hostility and alienation will almost certainly over time lead to a nuclear crisis; that the failure of nuclear deterrence would imperil not just the survival of the antagonists, but of every society; and that nuclear war is a raging, insatiable beast whose instincts and appetite we pretend to understand but cannot possibly control.[67]

For him, nuclear deterrence represented not a force for stability, but rather a catalyst for conflict. In his view, deterrence was "a formula for unmitigated catastrophe...premised on a litany of unwarranted assumptions, unprovable assertions and logical contradictions." In his eyes, "the threat to use nuclear weapons is indefensible."[68] He was dubious of the ability of

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[63] Timothy J. Botti, *Ace in the Hole: Why the United States Did Not Use Nuclear Weapons in the Cold War, 1945 to 1965* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), Ch. 22.

[64] McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988), 241, 249.

[65] Nina Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (Spring 2005), 33.

[66] Nina Tannenwald, "Nuclear Weapons and the Vietnam War," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 4 (August 2006).

[67] General Lee Butler, Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Speech, National Press Club, Washington, D.C., December 4, 1996, at http://www.wagingpeace.org/butlerspeech.html.

[68] General Lee Butler, "The Risks of Nuclear Deterrence: From Superpowers to Rogue Leaders," National Press Club, February 2, 1998.

nuclear weapons to deter the use of chemical or biological weapons by rogue states. He claimed, in short, that a world free from the threat of nuclear war had to be devoid of nuclear weapons.[69]

Although the 1990s witnessed repeated elite calls for nuclear abolition, public surveys show a more complex picture. The results of several surveys of the American public show considerable skepticism regarding the feasibility of completely eliminating nuclear weapons. Rather, they show that the public sees continuing value in a smaller nuclear arsenal, little optimism about the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence in a more proliferated world, and a willingness to see nuclear weapons used to deter not only nuclear, but also chemical and biological, use.[70]

American attitudes toward nuclear weapons also bear the mark of the U.S. tradition of liberal idealism. As announced by President Ronald Reagan on 23 March 1983, the Strategic Defense Initiative marked a fundamental shift in thinking from deterrence to defense:

> Let me share with you a vision of the future which offers hope. It is that we embark on a program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat with measures that are defensive. Let us turn to the very strengths in technology that spawned our great industrial base and that have given us the quality of life we enjoy today.
>   What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant U.S. retaliation to deter a Soviet attack, that we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies?
>   I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete.[71]

For Reagan, at least, strategic defense offered the prospect of absolute security in the liberal idealist tradition.

Military Strategic Culture

The way the U.S. military has dealt with nuclear weapons reflects its strategic culture as well. For example, nuclear weapons comport with the emphasis the American military has

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[69] Butler, Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Speech.

[70] Dennis M. Gormley and Thomas G. Mahnken, "Facing Nuclear and Conventional Reality," *Orbis* 44, no. 1 (Winter 2000).

[71] Ronald Reagan, "Announcement of Strategic Defense Initiative," March 23, 1983, at http://www.missilethreat.com/resources/speeches/reagansdi.html (accessed August 16, 2005).

traditionally placed on advanced technology. Throughout the Cold War, the U.S. military viewed its technological edge, including its lead in nuclear technology, as a competitive advantage over the Soviet Union. Nuclear weapons were seen as a counterweight to Soviet quantitative conventional superiority. During the Carter and Reagan administrations, technology came to be seen as a key arena of superpower rivalry. The Strategic Defense Initiative, for example, represented an effort to use advanced U.S. technology to render obsolete the Soviet heavy missile force.

American planning for nuclear war also reflected the tendency of the U.S. military to think in terms of war for unlimited aims with total means. As both James Schlesinger and Albert Wohlstetter argued at different times, U.S. military planning was biased toward the massive use of nuclear weapons, rather than exploring the possibility of the discriminate use of such weapons.[72]

Service Strategic Culture

Although U.S. defense policy emphasized nuclear weapons throughout the Cold War, the attitudes of individual armed services toward the weapons was mixed. The Army, Navy, and Air Force all embraced nuclear weapons during the early Cold War, but their interest in them waned thereafter.

During the early Cold War, the U.S. Army in particular embraced nuclear weapons. Indeed, in many ways the Army was predisposed to them. There was a good fit between nuclear weapons and the Army's tradition of substituting technology for manpower and its reliance on firepower. It fielded a family of nuclear weapons that ranged from the *Davy Crockett* nuclear bazooka to the massive 280mm nuclear cannon and the *Redstone* and *Jupiter* intermediate-range ballistic missiles. The Army viewed tactical nuclear weapons not so much as small strategic bombs, but as very powerful artillery.[73]

The Navy not only adopted nuclear weapons—first bombs for carrier-based aircraft, then cruise and ballistic missiles—but also adopted nuclear propulsion for both submarines and

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[72] Desmond Ball, "The Development of the SIOP, 1960-1983" in Desmond Ball and Jeffrey Richelson, eds., *Strategic Nuclear Targeting* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 63; "Policy for Planning the Employment of Nuclear Weapons," National Security Council, NSDM-242, January 17, 1974, Washington, D.C.; and Fred Ikle and Albert Wohlstetter, *Discriminate Deterrence: Report of The Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, January 1988), 8.

[73] Bacevich, *The Pentomic Era,* 65.

surface ships. The Navy readily accepted nuclear propulsion for submarines because it fit comfortably within the identity of the submarine community. Indeed, Owen Coté has termed the nuclear submarine a "true submarine," "one that needed no umbilical cord to the surface and could remain completely submerged."[74]

Not surprisingly, the Air Force whole-heartedly embraced strategic nuclear bombing as its core mission. Bomber pilots dominated the Air Force as they had the Army Air Corps, and Strategic Air Command became the most powerful organization in the service. To many air power advocates, the advent of nuclear weapons seemed to validate the concept of strategic bombing that had animated aviators since the 1920s. The Air Force's embrace of strategic nuclear bombing yielded substantial dividends. During the 1950s, the U.S. Air Force garnered the lion's share of the defense budget. Nuclear-armed bombers, then nuclear-tipped missiles, became the coin of the realm.

During the late Cold War, however, the enthusiasm of each of the services for nuclear weapons diminshed. The shift was most dramatic in the case of the Army. The service that had reorganized in the mid-1950s around the possibility of nuclear warfare had by the early 1960s gone back to an organizational structure that bore more than a passing resemblance to its World War II structure.[75] Although a portion of the Army's artillery branch drew its identity from nuclear weapons, atomic arms were peripheral to the identity of the other combat arms – armor and infantry. Moreover, nuclear weapons played no role in Vietnam War and became a less prominent feature of the Army's major planning contingency, a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict in Central Europe.

Although nuclear weapons (and nuclear power) remained central to the identity of the Navy's submarine service, both became increasingly marginal to the identity of the surface navy and naval aviation. The last nuclear missile system to be deployed on surface ships, the BGM-109A *Tomahawk* Land Attack Missile-Nuclear (TLAM-N), was a program developed and advocated by Pentagon civilians. The missile the Navy really wanted was the BGM-109B

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[74] *Ibid.,* 21.

[75] Major Robert A. Doughty, *The Evolution of U.S. Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946-76* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, ~1981), 23.

Tomahawk Anti-Ship Missile (TASM).[76] Even the Air Force's interest in nuclear weapons began to wane as fighter pilots displaced bomber pilots at the head of the service's hierarchy.

CONCLUSION

The enduring features of American strategic culture, military culture, and the organizational culture of the U.S. armed services has thus influenced how the United States has approached nuclear weapons. As a result, American strategic culture has been dominated by continuity rather than change. Six decades after the advent of the nuclear age, what is notable is the limited enduring impact of nuclear weapons on the way the U.S. military conceives of war.

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[76] Robert J. Art and Stephen E. Ockenden, "The Domestic Politics of Cruise Missile Development, 1970-1980" in Richard K. Betts, ed., *Cruise Missiles: Technology, Strategy, Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1981).

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RUSSIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE: PAST, PRESENT, AND… IN TRANSITION?

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Russian Strategic Culture: Past, Present, and… in Transition?

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PROSPECTUS

Traditional Russian strategic culture – that of Imperial Russia from its emergence as a state in the middle of the last millennium through most of the existence of the Soviet Union into the late 1980s – has been one of the most martial and militarized such cultureS in history, rivaling, if not exceeding, those of Prussia, Imperial and Nazi Germany, and Imperial Japan in this respect. Starting sometime in the 1970s, accelerating in the 1980s, dramatically so in the years after the collapse of the USSR, conditions have arisen which open the possibility of changing this nature—significantly "demilitarizing Russian strategic culture—while also leaving open the possibility of a revival or reassertion of traditional, highly militarized, Russian strategic culture.

The purpose of this tutorial essay is to summarize the origins, contents, and implications of traditional Russian strategic culture, and then, in conclusion, to explore the possibilities for change or reassertion arising from post-Soviet conditions.

STRATEGIC CULTURE DEFINED FOR THE RUSSIAN CASE

It is that body of broadly shared, powerfully influential, and especially enduring attitudes, perceptions, dispositions, and reflexes about national security in its broadest sense, both internal and external, that shape behavior and policy. For all its high degree of militarization, Russian strategic culture is not simply coterminous with its military culture, i.e., deep attitudes about how military power should be shaped, maintained, and used. Strategic culture in the Russian case is very much influenced by political culture, how political power is defined, acquired, legitimized, and used; by foreign policy culture, how the outside world is regarded and addressed; and by economic culture—although the latter is, in the Russian case, more a product of the other influences than itself a source of influence. But that may be changing. In other words, strategic culture arises from the intersection of political, foreign policy, military, and economic culture— and influences can flow in both directions.

Continuity and Change

In the Imperial and Soviet eras, Russia experienced changing structure of statehood, imperial expansion, the appearance of firearm weapons, the industrial revolution, a massive political revolution, several hugely destructive wars with foreign enemies, very destructive civil war, and the appearance of nuclear weapons in the tens of thousands. The continuity of Russian strategic culture through all these changes, strategic in their character, is truly striking. Fully explaining this continuity is beyond the scope of this essay. But it certainly arises in the main from a political culture and psychology shaped by geography, by a long history of "tribal" conflicts under the Mongols, in the expansion and rule of a multiethnic empire, and by deep authoritarianism. Any argument for change in strategic culture must keep this remarkable continuity in mind.

Core Elements of Russian Strategic Culture in the Imperial and Soviet Periods

The Russian state and empire emerged and expanded in conditions of almost constant warfare, initially defensive, then increasingly offensive as the empire expanded. Moscow (Muscovy) became the unifying center of the Russian state because it was most effective in "managing" the Mongol Yoke (overlordship), especially in raising taxes for tribute, and then in assembling military resources for defeating the Mongols and bringing other Russian principalities under Muscovite rule.

Physical and ethnographic geography gave Muscovy and the Russian state no readily established and defensible borders. This condition invited attack. More important, it inspired a combination of fear about vulnerability and an appetite for achieving security and status by expansion. This contributed greatly to the militarization of Russian strategic culture.

As a consequence, by early modern times (1600-1700) military power became the chief institutional foundation of Russian statehood. The monarchy was a kind of royal head on a muscular military body. Historian Richard Pipes cites a telling symbolic illustration of this: When Tsar Nicholas II abdicated the throne in 1917, he sent his letter of abdication, not to the Duma (parliament) which had demanded it, but to the chief of the Russian general staff.

A seemingly contradictory point, however, is very important to understanding the intersection of Russian political and military cultures: Despite the enormous importance of the military as an institutional base and legitimizing symbol of Russian statehood and power, there is

little tradition of direct or active military intervention in Russian politics. That thousands of Soviet military officers went to the camps or to execution at the hands of Stalin's secret police without the serious threat of a military coup is a striking manifestation of this. There have been some exceptions and deviations, but they almost prove the rule. The revolt of the Decembrist officers of 1825 was a significant military intervention in politics; it was not the Russian corporate military in action, however, but a clan of liberal officers. In the 1950s, Marshal Zhukov gave Khrushchev critical but very limited military support against his enemies, first Beria (1953), then the "anti-party group " (1957).

In the late Soviet and post-Soviet periods, this tradition of "non-intervention" by the military has been tested in various ways. In the late 1980s, the Soviet military was involved in suppression of local unrest in Georgia and the Baltics; but they resented this and blamed Gorbachev for sullying their corporate reputation. In August 1991, some senior military leaders supported the "putsch" intended to preserve the USSR. But those commanders most in the chain of command required for military support to the coup, refused it outright or by evasion, thereby guaranteeing its failure. And some units around the parliament went over to the crowd supporting Yeltsin. The most dramatic military intervention occurred in 1993 when the Russian military went into action against the rebellious Duma on behalf of Yeltsin. But, again, this was on behalf of the superior authority of the state, such as it was then. During the 1990s, individual military leaders, such as Rutskoi, Gromov, and Lebed turned politician, and numerous officers were elected to the Duma. It remains to be seen whether these phenomena will lead to change in this aspect of Russian political and military culture: non-intervention by the military in politics.

Russian strategic and military cultures have from earliest times prized and exploited a resource in which Russia was rich: masses of military manpower. Russian strategy, generalship, and operational art relied heavily on this resource through World War II and the Cold War. Industrial age weapons were regarded as "mass multipliers," not as means of fighting better with fewer numbers. Ability to rely on seemingly limitless manpower encouraged a relative indifference to casualties, vividly displayed in both World Wars. It also encouraged relative indifference to the living conditions of most troops. Exploiting this ability required not only very large standing forces, but maintenance of a huge, conscripted, but only rudimentarily trained mobilization base, and a huge military industrial base to arm it. This prizing of mass has bedeviled Russian efforts to accomplish military reform to this day.

Influence of Political Culture

Russian political culture has been a major contributor to strategic culture, especially to its militarization. Political culture is itself very "martial" or harmonious with military values in that it is grounded on the principle of *kto-kovo* (literally "who-whom), i.e., who dominates over whom by virtue of coercive power or status imparted by higher authority, e.g., by God to the Tsar, the Tsar to the boyars; or by history to the communist leadership and in turn to bureaucrats and political satraps. Political conflicts are resolved by struggle and intrigue, occasionally by force, but not by negotiations, bargaining, voting, or legal adjudication.

Marxism, especially as interpreted and applied by Lenin and his colleagues, fit rather naturally with Russian political culture, despite its materialism in contrast to Russians' notions about the "spirituality" of their culture. This is because Marxism is as much a martial doctrine, i.e., a summons to combat, as a political and social philosophy.

After the turbulence of the first post-Soviet decade, it is clear that elements of traditional Russian political culture are strongly reasserting themselves under Vladimir Putin. The essence of this reassertion is not just in moves toward more authoritarian rule, which have been relatively mild by Russian and Soviet standards. Rather it is the clear tendency of those who wield or strive for political power in Russia to regard the features of normal democratic life – parties, parliament, a meaningful press, election campaigns – not as the enabling conditions of a legitimate polity, but as instruments to be manipulated, controlled or combated for the benefit of the central authority.

Foreign Policy Culture

Russian foreign policy culture is a reflection of political culture to a significant degree. Russian leaders have generally been capable of artful and accommodating diplomacy when the situation demanded it, as displayed by the statecraft of Goncharov in the 19th century, and Soviet pursuit of various flavors of détente in the 20th. But there has always been an underlying attitude that views foreign states or actors as either enemies, or subjects, or transient allies, or useful fools to be manipulated, i.e., the attitude of "kto-kovo."

Russian political and foreign policy cultures have always had some element of messianism, that is, a sense of national and international mission beyond security and prosperity

for the country. In the Imperial period, this messianism—the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome, the heir of a legendary religious and imperial tradition—helped to legitimize national expansion, but also a sense of national and cultural superiority. In the Soviet period, this mission was to spread "world revolution", an ideological label for Soviet national power, but also a pretense to supra-national, pseudo-religious, values of justice and progress. Military power has long been seen as a means for pursuing messianic goals or as a protective base from which to pursue them by other means, such as diplomacy, political action (overt or covert), and foreign assistance.

In rhetoric and action, Russian foreign policy culture has often expressed a puzzling combination of contradictory attitudes: defensiveness bordering on paranoia, on one hand, combined with assertiveness bordering on pugnacity, on the other. In the Russian mentality, both an inferiority complex and a superiority complex can be simultaneously on display. The traumatic effects of the break up of the USSR and decline of Russia's role as a great power have intensified these complexes, especially among Russia's national security elites. And the partial recovery of Russia's international standing under Putin's more disciplined and, as the result of energy revenues, better-funded regime, have produced another amplification of these complexes in the pronouncements of leaders and pundits.

Perhaps despite, or perhaps because of the balance among these conflicting complexes, Russian strategic leadership has on the whole been notably risk averse at the level of action and operations. It has not been given to daring high-risk, high-payoff initiatives such as characterized the strategic leadership of Napoleon and Hitler. This was certainly the case throughout the Soviet period. Khrushchev's deployment of nuclear missiles to Cuba in 1962 may be seen as a dramatic exception. At the same time, the record shows that a) because the United States was accelerating its strategic build up and had recently discovered how the Soviets actually lagged, Khrushchev had good reason to believe bold action was less risky than doing nothing, and b) he saw U.S. actions leading up to his move as indications he would get away with it. It was as much a miscalculation as a daring initiative that failed, despite accusations of "adventurism" Khrushchev subsequently faced. The invasion of Afghanistan was clearly such a miscalculation by a very risk-averse Brezhnev leadership.

THE CHALLENGE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR SOVIET AND RUSSIAN STRATEGIC CULTURE

The appearance of nuclear weapons and their deployment by the USSR and its NATO, and then Chinese, adversaries in large numbers presented a paradoxical challenge for strategic and military culture at a very fundamental level of thinking and policy action. On one hand, they vastly amplified the destructive power available to the Soviet military. But, as probable enemies had them in large numbers as well, they called into serious question the very feasibility of mass warfare, a challenge to a core value of the strategic culture, and to the survivability of the Soviet state, a challenge to the core of the ruling ideology.

Stalin and his successors, at least up to Gorbachev, never seemed to have entertained any serious doubts about the necessity to build and maintain vast nuclear forces, although Khrushchev expressed some ambivalence in his memoirs. The problem was how to think about and manage this power in the strategic context, i.e., in relation to the pursuit of offensive and defensive state goals.

Initially, even as he recognized the great destructive power of nuclear weapons (e.g., in comments to Milovan Djilas) and maximized efforts to get them, Stalin sought to minimize their doctrinal impact, or the strategic discontinuity they represented. This found expression in his doctrine of the "permanently operating factors" that brought victory in World War Two and supposedly still obtained despite nuclear weapons: size of forces, industrial base, ideology and morale, etc.

After Stalin's death, Soviet military and political leaders had to develop a more robust and sophisticated way of thinking, which they did over the course of the 1950s and early 1960s. The implications of this thinking for statecraft and military posture unfolded over the next two decades.

Managing the Nuclear Paradox

The Soviets managed the nuclear paradox by constructing different doctrines and policies for different aspects of it, somewhat in tension, but basically in harmony.

At the level of foreign policy and strategic diplomacy, the Soviets recognized the enormous danger and destructive consequences of nuclear war and embraced doctrines of peaceful coexistence, détente, arms control, and crisis management to contain this danger and avoid its destructive consequences. These doctrines sprang from both moral and practical

appreciations of an apocalyptic predicament. In that sense, they were certainly sincere. At the same time, the Soviets saw the diplomatic, political and other interactions involved as means to continue the "international class struggle", the "struggle against imperialism", the "struggle for peace", in other words, as means to achieve fundamental shifts in the global power balance in their favor. Thus, arms control negotiations and the surrounding politics and propaganda were seen as means to constrain the US and its allies from exploiting their superior technology and economic power to achieve strategic superiority over the USSR. This led them in the mid-1960s to accept the idea of limits on ballistic missile defense, an idea at variance with Russian strategic culture. The combative-competitive elements of strategic culture were by no means laid to rest at this level of doctrine, for all its pacific pretensions.

At the level of military doctrine, especially with respect to building and exercising forces, the combative-competitive element was more vividly displayed. Although embracing deterrence as the first objective of strategy, the Soviets also embraced the notion that there was a plausible theory of victory in nuclear war. Both to make deterrence and the peacetime influence of their military posture as robust as possible and to keep open the possibility of victory, they sought to build comprehensive warfighting forces for all levels of potential conflict. This involved:

- Diverse survivable counterforce capabilities in intercontinental and theater nuclear strike forces.
- Active and passive (civil) defense of the homeland.
- Very massive theater land-combat combined arms forces, especially for the conquest of Europe in nuclear conditions.

Like U.S. strategic planners, Soviet planners considered and made some provisions for limited nuclear conflict which could see the effective use of nuclear weapons while avoiding escalation to all out nuclear exchanges. Also like U.S. planners, the Soviets did not have high confidence that such limits would actually work.

Despite embracing and effecting in their force building a plausible theory of victory in nuclear war, Soviet leaders recognized that large scale use of nuclear weapons could probably sweep away the battlefield for mass warfare and destroy their homeland. This appreciation certainly reinforced their aversion to risk of confrontation.

It is important to note that there was a kind of double think going on here. Despite deep doubts about the workability of their strategic theories of victory and superiority, the Soviets

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believed that as strategists, Russians, and Soviet communists, they should strive as much as possible to make them work, that they should not give up on traditional strategic and military thinking because of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons. This doctrinally animated striving had much to do with the hypermilitarization of the Soviet economy and its ultimate failure. It is also important note that much of the pressure for this came not from the Soviet military, but from the military industrial complex, which had acquired enormous political weight in the years after World War Two. (There was a U.S. counterpart to this strategic double think. Sorting out the similarities and differences, with the benefit of hindsight, would be a really interesting exercise in comparative strategic culture.)

THE APOTHEOSIS OF SOVIET STRATEGIC CULTURE…AND THEN DECLINE

Soviet strategic culture, in its expression in military power and foreign policy behavior, reached a kind of peak or apotheosis in the mid-to-late 1970s. Soviet political and military leaders came to believe that they had achieved or were on the way to achieving a kind of strategic superiority over the West based in robust strategic nuclear forces, theater force superiority both conventional and nuclear, and the beginnings of capabilities to project force beyond the Eurasian continent. Equally important, they came to believe, especially after America's withdrawal from Vietnam, was that "historic trends in the global correlation of forces"—military, political, and ideological—were running in their favor.

This new level of strategic confidence never approached such heights that Soviet political and military leaders believed they could safely initiate or court confrontations with the United States and its allies that might escalate to military conflict. Rather, they viewed their strategic status as a platform from which they could conduct more assertive and ambitious foreign policies in the Third World to win new allies and dependencies, and in Europe to detach traditional allies from the United States. Moreover, they believed that because of its power and "in the interest of peace" Western leaders would have to acquiesce in the expansion of Soviet influence. (An official U.S. intelligence appraisal of the Soviet outlook in this period, since declassified, is listed in the readings.)

Then began what in historical terms was a rather sudden phase of crisis and collapse, running from the late 1970s into the 1990s, important elements of which continue to this day. The institutional, material, and human embodiments of Soviet strategic culture fell apart. The

spiritual, intellectual, and attitudinal contents of that culture came under severe and, potentially, transforming stress.

Soviet military spending began to flatten out in the mid-1970s. It had been growing in absolute terms every year since U.S. intelligence had sought to measure it and had come to represent about 15 percent of GNP, according to U.S. estimates, and perhaps as much as 20 percent according to later Russian assessments. Despite the flush of oil and gas revenues, the military burden was becoming too much for the economy (something it appears Putin-era Russian leaders remember).

The United States and its NATO allies launched new advances in conventional warfighting technology, especially for precision strike, that made Soviet deficiencies in these areas worrisome to senior military officers, such as Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, who voiced their worries to political ears. It then became increasingly apparent to both political and military leaders that the military competition was entering a technology era in which the Soviet Union would be unable to compete. This brought the issue of systemic, especially economic, reform out of the precincts of a few dissident economists into the center of strategic concern.

The United States stepped up its challenge to Soviet power and influence expansion in a number of ways: Supporting Soviet enemies in the unconventional conflicts in Afghanistan, Africa, and Central America; with its NATO allies, countering Soviet deployment of intermediate range nuclear strike systems with similar deployments in NATO; and the Reagan administration displaying an unexpected willingness to confront Moscow rhetorically and ideologically. These developments were not just troubling or threatening, they were "strategically demoralizing" because they negated Moscow's confidence that "historic trends in the correlation of forces" were running it is favor. This parlous state of affairs was the fundamental reason why Gorbachev came to power. The party leadership sought someone to "get the country moving again."

From the mid-1980s to the end of the decade, Gorbachev initiated a series of reform moves and processes which rapidly escalated. Initially with military support, Gorbachev cut the military budget and proclaimed a much less demanding defensive military doctrine. He escalated pursuit of détente and arms control with the United States. He began to reduce Soviet forces in East Europe.

A chance incident during this period, the landing of a small foreign plane on Red Square after passing through hundreds of miles of warning and air defenses, was a severe blow to military prestige in the eyes of the political leadership. This prestige had already suffered greatly from failures in Afghanistan, abysmal living conditions for most soldiers, and the debunking of the military's record in World War Two when *glasnost* permitted more objective history.

Then came the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, i.e., Soviet control of East Europe, and then the collapse of the USSR and communist rule, and more than a decade of decay and deep crisis within the Russian military.

The details and chronology of this history, especially its impact on the Soviet military, are adequately related in Odom's *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*. But it is important to try to draw some implications about the meaning of this history of crisis and collapse for Russian strategic culture in the future before turning to the recent past in which a recovery of sorts is in progress.

Lessons from Recent History

Although crucial developments happened quickly, this era of crisis and collapse has been going on now for nearly thirty years. This is long enough for even deeply ingrained attitudes and beliefs to possibly be changed by protracted discrediting.

Despite its enormous size and power, the Soviet military could not or would not save the Soviet bloc, the USSR, or communist rule. This was in part owing to Gorbachev's distaste for bloodshed. But the military had no taste for quelling domestic disorders either. The bottom line for culture, however, is that in the midst of revolutionary developments concerning the locus, extent, and nature of state power, in a state where military power has long been the foundation of the state, military power was simply irrelevant. In the Russian-Soviet strategic culture tradition, this was quite different from the record of 1916-1922 when the Russian military, while failing to save the Tsar, was transformed into the Red Army which saved the Bolshevik regime in its infancy.

This period of strategic irrelevance has also been a period of institutional rot in that corruption, mismanagement, high rates of crime, accident, suicide, have beset the Russian military. This has hurt its internal morale and external respect.

Over hundreds of years, the Russian-Soviet strategic cultural tradition said that military power was useful, successful, and greatly deserving of respect. The legacy of the past quarter century has been one of enormous and destructive burden on the state, strategic irrelevance, and rot. One needs to ask what the impact of that legacy will be on Russian strategic culture.

STRATEGIC CULTURE IN RECOVERY…OR TRANSFORMATION?

The early Yeltsin years, 1992-96, saw the attitudinal and certainly the behavioral elements of traditional strategic culture go into a deep – but not comatose – hibernation. Most of the Russian public and most of the elites signed up to propositions quite antithetical to traditional strategic culture:

- Russia must become a "normal" country, i.e., a law-governed democracy with a genuine market economy.
- Russia must integrate with the West.
- The West, especially the United States, is not a threat, but a source of help.
- The Russian military is largely not needed to deal with the surrounding world, but may be needed to keep Russia from disintegrating.

Russian defense spending plunged further from already unprecedented low levels of Gorbachev's last years (see accompanying table at end of text). The most pressing problem was to find housing for troops pulled out of East Europe and the former Soviet republics.   The U.S. government pitched in with billions of dollars in aid to safeguard Russian nuclear and other dangerous materials.

The events of these years and their impacts are well described in Odom, Blank, and Golts. Their titles capture the essence of developments.

At the attitudinal level, however, elements of the old strategic culture remained alive, if terribly unwell, among the military and security services and the nationalists in the political elites. They harbored:

- Deep resentment about the break-up of the USSR and loss of international standing for Russia, and toward the leaders held responsible for this.
- Still strong perceptions of threat from the West and also from China and the Islamic world.

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- Strong desire to reestablish Russian international standing, and some semblance of Muscovite influence in the former empire.

- A belief that military power had to be a significant part of this recovery.

At the same time, there emerged a fairly broad consensus, at least in principle, on the need for fundamental military reform and modernization. This meant raising the human, material, and operational quality of the Russian military on the basis of smaller but better forces and a smaller but better military industrial complex. It meant shifting from conscription to a largely volunteer (contracted) force.

As described by Odom, Blank and Golts, however, agreement in principle did not in any way mean progress in practice. Little agreement emerged on how to reform and modernize. More important, reform and modernization take money and the Russian state was broke because of economic collapse and "bandit capitalism's" appropriation of state assets.

Resurgence of Traditional Strategic Culture

Toward the end of Yeltsin's presidency, 1996-99, attitudinal elements of the old strategic culture began a strong recovery among elites and publics, especially hostility to and perceptions of threat from the West, and resentment about loss of Russian status. This occurred in part because of specific U.S. and NATO actions: NATO enlargement, and intervention against Russia's historic friend in the Balkans, Serbia. More broadly, it was stimulated by a fantasy-based disappointment that the United States and the West had not rescued Russia, especially from its economic crisis; and also by a reality-based perception that Western leaders, advisors, and greedy businesses were significantly responsible for the "bandit privatization and capitalism" that impoverished most Russians and created a hated class of wealthy, politically powerful "oligarchs."

Under Putin the political and foreign policy elements of strategic culture—combativeness and competitiveness, perceptions of foreign threat (especially from the United States and the West), and political assertiveness bordering on pugnacity—have been increasingly prominent, so much so that "Russia's return" as a demanding and pushy power in the world was a dominant theme of commentary among pundits and politicians prior to the July 2006 summit of the G8, chaired by Putin in Russia.

The "ideology" on which this reassertion is riding is essentially nationalism, replacing at least to a modest degree the role of communist ideology in Soviet times. This nationalism, centered on Russia's interests, security, and influence as an international actor, is accompanied by assertions of a supra-national Russian mission, to advance a multi-polar world that contains U.S. power, to establish a Eurasian geo-political identity distinct from the West, and to combat perceived threats from Western culture.

This new assertiveness is definitely fueled by the dramatic economic recovery of recent years that oil and gas revenues have stimulated. The Putin regime declares its intent to use Russia's energy resources, and the tight supply situation prevailing in the global energy market, to make Russia a "great energy power," even an energy superpower. A complete strategy for doing this has yet to be publicly articulated. But it clearly involves 1) state domination of extraction; 2) state monopoly of transport (pipelines); and 3) efforts to push Russian business (ever more dominated by the state) downstream into the processing, distribution, and marketing environments of consumer markets. Alarming to many is a clear readiness on the part of the Kremlin to use its energy clout on behalf of political-strategic interests, on display when Russia cut gas supplies to Ukraine, and hence to Europe, in a pricing dispute in early 2006. This was perceived not merely as a commercial dispute, but an effort to punish Ukraine for the pro-Western turn of its internal politics.

The Russian Military

At the same time, energy revenues have fueled a significant increase of resources to the Russian military, whose budgets, purchase of new equipment, and exercise activity are up by significant percentages compared to levels of the past decade. Moreover, Putin personally as well as the regime more generally has been paying more laudatory public attention to the military in the form of visits to facilities and rhetorical promotion of military modernization. Pride of place on this front has clearly gone to the goal of sustaining and modernizing Russia's strategic nuclear deterrent against the United States (and also but much less explicitly against China), mainly through deployments of the Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile and the Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missile. Also highlighted, by Putin personally, is a hypersonic maneuvering reentry vehicle that can defeat any ballistic missile defense. The United

States is clearly the potential "main enemy" in this posturing, partly for reasons of deterrence, partly for political show.

Military reform and modernization objectives debated for over a decade are now asserted, at least rhetorically, more consistently. Russia must have, according to its current leaders, a modernized military that can wage "global war" (by this seems in context to be meant strategic nuclear retaliation for deterrence but not a massive global war on the scale of World War Two or what World War Three might have looked like); several large scale regional conflicts; and local conflicts against insurgents, terrorists, and the like.

Nuclear weapons play, if anything, a more prominent role in current Russian strategy than they did in Soviet times, at least in a qualitative sense. This is avowedly to make up for deficiencies in Russian general purpose land combat forces. This force multiplying role of nuclear weapons was widely discussed in Soviet military writings during the 1990s. Then this discussion went silent, suggesting that something serious was going on. From past public discussion and more recent comment by informed defense experts, the aim is not only to perserve a robust strategic nuclear deterrent, but to develop highly accurate long-range nuclear strike options for selective, strategic operations; and to develop new tactical or battlefield nuclear options suitable (presumably because of low yield) near Russian forces and even on Russian territory. This seems to include options for very limited, non-damaging demonstration firings aimed at stopping and "deescalating" a conflict. Possible conflict with NATO and the US (implicitly also China) is the contemplated setting for these capabilities.

IS TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN STRATEGIC CULTURE COMING BACK?

This question cannot be convincingly answered at present because the story is still unfolding. It leads to further questions pertinent to tracking that process.

Is the Russian military coming back, finally? The rhetoric and budget increases would suggest so. But it remains unclear. Although large in percentage terms, budget increases still leave Russian military spending relatively modest, certainly by historical (Soviet) standards. Russia spends now about 2.7 percent of its GDP on defense, akin to that of advanced European countries, as its leaders point out. Military leaderss protest that this is far too little to accomplish professed goals, while civilian leaders, including the Minister of Defense, proclaim that Russia is not going to "militarize" its federal budget or economy as in Soviet times. The priority goal of

sustaining the strategic nuclear deterrent can be accomplished relatively cheaply, compared to reforming and modernizing the general purpose forces.

For all the rhetoric and increased defense spending, it would appear that, at least for now, Russia's political leaders either care less about military power than their predecessors over decades and centuries, or they have a plan for gradually reforming and modernizing the military according to professed goals with the benefit of energy wealth coming in over many years.

Why might they care less about military power today than in the past? Despite articulated threat perceptions and professed goals, Russian leaders actually perceive an historically mild threat environment. The United States and NATO present no real military threat to Russia for the foreseeable future. Russo-Chinese relations are the best in decades; underlying political and strategic interests bode for them to remain so for the foreseeable future. The prospect of a real military threat from the Islamic south, perhaps from some new Caliphate, is distant at best. In short, military power—except for the strategic nuclear deterrent, the remaining military basis for Russia's claims to be a great power—is not terribly relevant to Russia's current environment. This condition could bode for either: 1) The enduring subsidence of the military element of Russian strategic culture; or 2) its gradual, carefully planned return as resources permit and threat environments encourage or demand.

What about Russia as an energy power? An old aphorism held that Russia had only two reliable allies, its army and navy. Today pundits rephrase this to proclaim that oil and gas are now Russia's reliable allies. Does this mean that Russia's leaders view energy resources as promising to the kind of power to coerce, intimidate, and control for which they once relied on military power? Their rhetoric and actions like that against Ukraine suggest that they do. Might the enduring tightness of the energy supply regime in the global market actually permit fulfillment of such ambitions? This is not at all clear. Energy is, after all, a form of economic power and leverage. But that leverage, ultimately, must be exercised in a marketplace of competing, but also cooperating, political and economic interests, where the actors must respect each others' interests and well-being. Acting only on competitive or combative instincts risks breaking down the market and loss of both the wealth and influence that economic leverage promises. This suggests the possibility that, over time, the quest to make Russia an energy power could exercise an educational, dare one say, "civilizing" influence on Russian strategic culture, especially as new generations come into the elite. Were this the effect, the result could

be a less combative-competitive political element in strategic culture, and its more lasting demilitarization.

But we must remember, as noted earlier: The combative and militaristic qualities of Russian strategic culture have survived revolutionary change before. They may do so again…but not inevitably.

CONCLUSION

Concluding Note 1: The Bearers of Russian Strategic Culture

In Imperial times, the bearers of Russia's strategic culture—perhaps steward would be a better term—were the military leadership, the monarchy, and the nobility. In Soviet times, they were the party leadership, especially in its strong symbiosis with the leaders of the Soviet military industrial complex, and the military leadership.

In post-Soviet times, the picture is more confused. The military leadership is clearly the embattled bearer of the traditional culture of mass forces based on conscription and mobilization. The political combative element is sustained by a host of actors and influences, from the Putin regime and its allies in the security services to a range of experts, journalists, academics, and ideologues of nationalist persuasion. Broad publics and elites clearly believe in a strong Russia, and that military power has to be a part of that strength. But there is also broad consensus that the military excesses of the Soviet period should not be repeated.

Concluding Note 2: The Role of WMD

During Soviet times, nuclear weapons became central to strategy and posture, but certainly did not displace general purpose forces. The Soviets also invested lavishly in biological and chemical weapons, the noxious legacy of which lingers today.

Post-Soviet Russia seeks nuclear weapons, not merely as very important, but as a god-send to protect Russia during a time of internal weakness against foreign intrusion or attack such as Russia suffered during similar times in the past. It sees nuclear proliferation as a danger for Russia, but a more serious challenge to the United States in the near to middle term.

There are some indications that Russia continues a biological weapons program of some scale, probably as a hedge against what others might do in an era of revolutionary developments

in bio-technology. The main concern with respect to chemical weapons is probably to eliminate the huge stocks that remain, while maintaining some research on exotic new possibilities.

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[1] Compiler's Note: This selection aims to give the reader untutored in Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet history, from sources familiar to the compiler, as comprehensive but quickly accessible as possible a body of readings for developing a feel and sense of sweep of the subject. Most readings are rich in treatment of political, foreign policy, and economic, as well as military themes; they also for the most part contain references to an enormous number of additional sources. The period 1914-45 is not represented here because it is richly summarized and sourced in Sokolovskiy

Russian Defense Spending In Real Terms 1991 - 2006

Table 5 Trend of Russian military spending in real terms: 'National Defence' plus military pensions (m.r.)

	GDP	%	GDP Deflator	ND+P (actual)	ND+P %GDP	Real %	92= 100	91= 100
2006B	24,380,000	105.8	107.5	744 508	3.05	106.3	63	41
2005F	21,430,000	106.4	118.4	651 362	3.04	111.2	59	39
2004	17 008 400	107.2	119.8	494 820	2.91	99.3	53	35
2003	13 243 200	107.3	114.0	415 940	3.14	107.7	53	35
2002	10 830 500	104.7	115.7	337 584	3.12	105.2	49	33
2001	8,943,600	105.1	116.5	277 464	3.19	111.2	47	31
2000	7,305,600	110.0	137.7	214,118	2.93	115.7	42	28
1999	4,823,200	106.4	172.4	134,412	2.79	103.4	36	24
1998	2,629,600	94.7	118.5	75,000	2.85	77.8	35	23
1997	2,342,500	101.4	115.1	81,400	3.47	110.7	45	29
1996	2,007,800	96.4	145.8	63,891	3.18	88.3	41	26
1995	1,428,500	95.9	263.0	49,565	3.47	66.1	46	30
1994	610,700	87.3	407.9	28,500	4.67	82.8	70	46
1993	171,500	91.3	988.4	7,213	4.20	85.4	85	56
1992	19,000	85.5	1,590.1	855	4.50	65.6	100	66
1991	1,400	95.0		82	5.86			100

Note: 2005 forecast - ND as Table 4, plus pensions, as original 2005 f.b. The latter may understate actual spending.
Sources: 1992-2006 budget, Rosstat/Goskomstat and Minfin data (can be supplied); 2005 as Table 4; 1991: Institute of Economy in Transition, *Russian Economy, January-September 1998. Trends and Prospects*, Moscow, 1998, p.15   (c) Julian Cooper

Source: Warfare.ru

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Figure 1: Russian Military Spending

Here's how to read that table: Column 1 is the year. 2 is GDP in current, not constant, rubles. 3 is annual change in constant rubles, established by using the deflator in column 4. 5 is annual defense budget plus military pensions in current rubles. 6 is defense in constant rubles as a percent of GDP in constant rubles. 7 is annual change of defense in constant rubles. 8 and 9 show annual defense in constant rubles as a percent of two baseline years. I have not checked the current ruble data against contemporary reporting (though the table cites official sources), nor checked the correctness of the deflators and the arithmetic. The general picture of collapse in the 90s, then slow, modest recovery is consistent with common knowledge. But this detailed picture is dramatic. Flush with cash and draped with the rhetorical mantle of national security and strength, Putin's regime is spending just less than twice what Yeltsin's did at the nadir on military power. I know there are some funny money aspects to this, like subsidies from exports,

funds for defense in other accounts, money to the MVD and FSB, big institutional parts of the strategic culture. But the evidence at hand suggests something significant may be happening.

CHINESE STRATEGIC CULTURES: SURVEY AND CRITIQUE

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Chinese Strategic Cultures: Survey and Critique

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> *In contrast to international-security studies, within the China field there seems to be little controversy about the proposition that "deep" history and culture are critical sources of strategic behavior. Indeed, most students of Chinese strategic thought and practice could be placed safely in a strategic-culture school of analysis, though few use the term explicitly.*
>
> —Alistair Iain Johnston[1]

INTRODUCTION

Chinese culture is extensive and pervades everyday life throughout the country. As a society with millennia of history that is actively woven into the educational system, this substantial effect is not surprising. Beyond the effects on everyday life, however, is there also an effect of this deep, historically rooted culture on China's international affairs?

In this paper I will lay out the traditional arguments made about Chinese strategic culture and pave the way for future evaluation of those arguments in explaining several important events in recent Chinese foreign policy. One mini-case is also attempted here, considering the possible implications of strategic cultural arguments for Chinese nuclear force posture.

Some elements of Chinese strategic culture do clearly appear in the historic record, but this paper will call into question the uniqueness of those forms of culture. (That is, many countries exhibit similar cultural predispositions.) Other aspects of purported Chinese strategic culture have fewer claims on empirical accuracy with regard to Chinese behavior. Given these concerns, the paper finds that strategic culture remains underspecified as an approach for understanding Chinese foreign and security policy. This is despite the substantial amount of high quality work that has been developed on the Chinese case, as the passage from Iain Johnston above suggests.[2]

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[1] Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 22.

[2] Indeed, this case has been studied more than any other, with the possible exception of the Soviet case, from the perspective of this lens.

DEFINITIONS

This project is endeavoring to use a unified definition of strategic culture. To wit, the project's working definition states that strategic culture is defined by:

> shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.[3]

While using this definition, a few additional elements will be added for the purposes of this essay. First, it is important to be explicit about where exactly this culture resides. This is an important point, as it allows for added precision and attention to measuring the culture independently from the behavior it is suggested to shape. One recent alternate definition is explicit in this regard: "Strategic culture … [is] the set of fundamental and enduring assumptions about the role of war in human affairs and the efficacy of applying force held by a country's political and military elites."[4] This study will thus add that aspect—strategic culture is held by a country's political and military elites—to its working definition.[5]

Furthermore, the proposed definition for the project is rather broad with regard to what is meant by the "ends and means for achieving security objectives." An alternate important specification in this regard is laid out by Stephen Rosen:

> [Strategic culture consists of] beliefs and assumptions that frame...choices about international military behavior, particularly those concerning decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable.[6]

Similarly, this study will consider a wide range of possible effects of strategic culture: national security interests, understandings regarding the nature of international politics, preference for particular sorts of diplomatic or military strategies, and predisposition to certain operational tactics. This, then, is what this author will view the "ends and means" phrase is taken as meaning.

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[3] Kerry Kartchner, Presentation to Comparative Strategic Cultures, phase II, Park City, Utah, 3-5 May, 2006.

[4] Andrew Scobell, *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2. Scobell is explicitly building on the definition used by Johnston. See Johnston.

[5] Clearly, it is likely that those cultural beliefs are held more widely, but that need not always b e the case; that is, there could be a divergence between the mass popular and elite levels of cultural beliefs.

[6] Stephen Peter Rosen, *Societies and Military Power : India and Its Armies*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs; (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 12.

These alternative definitions highlight that strategic cultures, in this author's view, might possibly exist at many levels. The rest of the paper will survey and evaluate the main arguments regarding the existence and explanatory power of multiple levels of strategic culture in Chinese security policy.

STRATEGIC CULTURES IN CHINA

This section will survey six different *themes* in Chinese strategic cultural arguments. The specific themes that this author argues are apparent in the Chinese culture are:

- Chinese fears regarding the security implications of weakness at home
- Chinese views regarding the hierarchical nature of international relations
- Chinese preferences for offensive strategies
- Chinese preferences for defensive strategies
- Risk acceptant Chinese strategy toward crisis management
- Chinese propensity to strike first in military operations

Several other themes relating ideational factors to Chinese policy will not be evaluated. Some are often used to explain past Chinese behavior only; these are less useful in understanding future Chinese actions.[7] Others focus on a very narrow form of culture, that of the Chinese military itself; the merits of that approach relative to national level approaches are discussed elsewhere.[8]

Each of these themes is one element in the broad map of Chinese strategic culture. The different themes are not necessarily contradictory, although more than one of them might play a role in shaping China's behavior with regard to a specific issue. In that case, indeed they may work against each other (e.g., with one theme in the culture leading to stronger action and another leading to weaker action). However, in general, the themes are conceived of as independent.

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[7] In particular, there is a substantial literature on the role of communist and Maoist ideology in shaping Chinese security policy. While this author finds much of that quite convincing during the peak of the Mao period, its influence today is negligible. For examples of work on this earlier period in this vein, see Gerald Chan, *Chinese Perspectives on International Relations : A Framework for Analysis* (St. Martin's Press, 1999); Thomas J. Christensen, "Worse Than a Monolith: Disorganization and Rivalry within Asian Communist Alliances and U.S. Containment Challenges, 1949-69," *Asian Security* 1, no. 1 (2005); and Michael H. Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1995).

[8] Christopher P. Twomey, "Chinese Doctrines as Strategic Culture: Assessing Their Effects," *Strategic Insights* IV, no. 10 (2005).

Indeed, it seems likely that this is the case for many countries. Most cultures have a rich set of traditions and narratives to draw upon. These legacies often stem from a wide variety of historic experience: formation of the state, early and recent conflict, religious motifs, ethnic identities, etc.[9] There is every reason to expect that these vastly different sources of strategic culture will lead to a wide range of specific, independently discernible themes within the culture. There is no reason to expect that they would boil down to only one or two different themes, or that any contradictions between those themes would necessarily be resolved.[10]

That said, the way that the "lessons of history" are passed down through the generations is perhaps less pluralistic that the sources of those lessons (i.e., educational texts, approved media coverage, "historical" television dramatizations, etc., all of which *may* be controlled by a central authority). This might suggest that the nature of the reification of the cultural lessons might have a homogenizing effect. That is certainly possible, but ought be a matter for empirical study, not blind assertion. Clearly, a more authoritarian government should have more capable tools to create a single cultural narrative.[11] One of the interesting things about China is that this has not been the case there. On some issues the government has been able to limit any historiographical debate.[12] However, as the discussion will show below, the strategic lessons of its history and culture is not such an issue. A wide range of views remains in play.[13]

The Importance of Unity of China

There are several different sources to arguments made regarding the importance of Chinese culture in shaping its national interests. All would point to a single conclusion: Chinese

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[9] For a discussion of the wide mosaic from which leaders can find historic or cultural themes upon which to base current strategy, see Richard J. Samuels, *Machiavelli's Children: Leaders and Their Legacies in Italy and Japan* (Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press, 2003).

[10] This would not be the case if the historic lessons were so one sided that the contradictory themes were repeatedly show to have "failed the test of time", or proven inappropriate as a guide to policy for historic events. This is certainly possible, but it is likely to describe only such factors that are also equally well captured by broader, more parsimonious approached to international relations, such as realism. For a particularly historically grounded statement of the tenets of realism, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1954).

[11] One thinks of the archetypal George Orwell, *1984*, Reissue Edition ed. (New York, NY: Signet Classics, 1950).

[12] Here, the clearest example would be the Taiwan issue. See Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction : Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford University Press, 2004).

[13] The Chinese Communist Party's view of Confucianism is suggestive. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), all things that smacked of the ancient Chinese cultural traditions where suppressed as backward. Yet, with some degree of rapidity those aspects of Chinese life rapidly returned to the mainstream of Chinese life in the 1980s and 90s as the reform period began. It was even used as a positive aspect of Chinese culture in 1990s government-led campaigns (the "Patriotic Education" campaign and the "Spiritual Civilization" campaign).

history teaches that *domestic weakness and chaos particularly threatening internationally*. That is, there is a view that for China in particular, any weakness at home will be pounced upon by foreign countries. This view is rooted firmly in the "100 years of humiliation" period beginning in the late Qing Dynasty as well as the earlier Warring States period (475 B.C. to 221 B.C.). Both these periods carry with them a clear lesson: a weak and divided China will be subject to substantial violence.

The Warring States period is an important cultural source for modern Chinese. Children will be familiar with its broad outlines, and many of the historic narratives in currency in China today stem from this period. This is the era of Confucius, Mencius, and Lord Shang, as well as the philosophies that they each generated (Confucianism for the first two, legalism for the third). The first emperor built the awe inspiring tombs of Xi'an. The eminent Sinologists John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman refer to the end of this period as "the first unification," emphasizing its importance to the foundation myth of China.[14] The era before final unification was characterized by extreme warfare: "During this time of rivalry and warfare, there was a widespread yearning for peace and order."[15] The scale of warfare is emphasized by other authors: "it does look possible that the major power of the third century BC could each raise armies comparable in size to all the armed forces of the Roman Empire."[16]

The more recent period that further emphasized this core lesson of the dangers of weakness was the 100 years of humiliation. Beginning first with the Opium war in 1841, over the next century, China was beset by a wide range of invaders: Britain, France, Holland, Germany, the United States, the Soviet Union, and—worst of all—Japan.[17] For China today, the sources of this predation come from the weakness of the late Qing Dynasty. In the Chinese view, this weakness was typified by a series of rebellions and revolutions: the Taiping Uprising of 1850-64, the Nian Rebellion of 1951-68, Muslim revolts throughout the late 19th century, the Boxer Rebellion of 1898-1900, and finally the coup led by General Yuan Shikai in 1911 that brought down the last of imperial China's dynasties. Over the course of this century in Chinese

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[14] John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China : A New History*, Enl. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 46.
[15] Ibid., 51.
[16] W.J.F. Jenner, *The Tyranny of History: The Roots of China's Crisis* (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1992), 21.
[17] For an engaging review of this period, see Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

history, it was carved up and its trade was primarily controlled by outsiders. Both formal and informal colonialism were pervasive.

Both of these periods in Chinese history, then, warn of the dangers of weak rule. They emphasize the dangers of civil war and suggest that the international arena is unremittingly violent and predatory. This is said to lead to an excessive Chinese concern with maintaining stability at home, whatever the costs might be (in human rights or economic terms). This is a common theme particularly in the softer, less rigorous discussions of the way Chinese culture shapes its strategic behavior.[18] It also helps to justify Chinese obsession with territorial integrity, as in either Taiwan or Tibet.[19]

While this is clearly an important theme in the ideology of Chinese foreign policy and nationalism, it is important to recognize that in no way are these conclusions unique to China. Most countries emphasize the importance of stability at home when international competition is tight and countries very rarely tolerate secession. China justifies these preference through its own history, but the end point is similar to that of most countries in the world.

Hierarchical Understanding of International Relations

China is also said to have a strong set of beliefs regarding the very nature of international relations that contrast sharply from a view derived from a particular reading of European reading in the post-Westphalian period.[20] In particular, China is said to be culturally predisposed to expect the prevalence of a hierarchical system in international affairs.

The argument here is that for much of its history, China lay at the core of an international system that looked to it for leadership. Not only is such a position "natural" from a Chinese cultural perspective, but regional players are also said to accept it readily. This is the so-called tributary state relationship. One of the clearest proponents of this view is David Kang:

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[18] The importance of lessons from the Warring States period is a persistent theme in Michael Pillsbury's work. See for instance, Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000), Prologue and 315. The lessons of the 100 years of humiliation pervade many works. See for instance, Ross Terrill, *The New Chinese Empire: And What It Means for the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 147. The general lessons suggested by these periods is a theme that pervades Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare, 1795-1989*, Warfare and History; (London: New York, 2001).

[19] For related discussion on the international sources of Chinese nationalism, see Chih-yu Shih, *Navigating Sovereignty: World Politics Lost in China* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), Zhao.

[20] For a conventional view of the 1648 "Treaty of Westphalia system" see Bruce M. Russett and John R. Oneal, *Triangulating Peace : Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: Norton, 2001), 16-20. Indeed as Russett and Oneal note: "The Westphalian system is a European construction," suggesting it ought be viewed in regional—and therefore potentially, cultural—terms.

In this view Asian international relations emphasized formal hierarchy among nations, while allowing considerable informal equality. Consisting of China as the central state, and the peripheral states as lesser states or "vassals," as long as hierarchy was observed there was little need for interstate war. This contrasts sharply with the western tradition of international relations that consisted of formal equality between nation-states, informal hierarchy, and almost constant interstate conflict.[21]

This view is based on the various periods when Chinese power—rather than being at its ebb, as discussed in the section above—was paramount in the East Asian region. In particular, the Ming Dynasty (1368) and the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) presided over periods of relative stability in the region. Beyond that, there were substantial periods characterized by tributary relationships between China and its surrounding powers.[22]

One recent book makes a related point, examining the sources of state power in China and using those to explain the contrast between the European and Asian state systems.[23] Even though this analysis proceeds from structural and material causes, it is explicitly viewed as compatible with cultural approaches. Indeed, it illustrates the potential for synergy between material and structural approaches on the one hand and ideational or cultural approaches on the other. In this case, the influence provided by institutions set up to address early structural constraints can persist for a sustained period.[24]

What this implies for Chinese foreign policy today is that there is an expectation that China will sit at the peak of a hierarchical set of relationships within Asia. Chinese leaders should be predisposed to seeing the world through this lens, and should expect that it is natural for China to regain its place at the peak of such a pyramid.

Predisposition for Defense … or Offense

One of the most enduring views about Chinese strategic culture is that it is primarily defensive. Iain Johnston describes this conventional wisdom in the field as follows:

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[21] David Kang, "Hierarchy and Stability in Asian International Relations," in *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, ed. G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 164. Kang, a professor at Dartmouth, also has a forthcoming book that will develop this and related themes.

[22] For discussion of this in earlier periods, see Fairbank and Goldman, 112-13.

[23] Victoria Tin-bor Hui, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[24] On the power of such institutions and path dependency in general, see Douglass Cecil North, *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*, Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

> Most would argue that Chinese strategic culture uniquely stresses nonviolent political or diplomatic means to deal with adversaries, or—when forces is absolutely necessary—the controlled, defensive use of violence. This has given Chinese strategic behavior a distinctive minimally violent character.[25]

This defensive outlook is sometimes linked to Chinese Confucian philosophies and Daoist moralities.[26] One oft-heard element of this stresses the predisposition for China to build walls to solve security problems.[27] The guidance of Sun Zi is typically interpreted as supporting this view through its emphases on the high costs of fighting, the importance in carefully choosing the time of battle, the value of deceit for winning strategic—if not battlefield—victories, etc.[28]

However, there is also a substantial, and indeed more highly regarded academically, literature on precisely the opposite point. Iain Johnston's highly regarded study of a wide range of classic writings on strategy from the Ming dynasty concludes that there were several strategic cultures competing at that time. The most dominant is a more offensive, violent form, which he refers to as a set of *parabellum* strategic preferences. These he equates to a hard-core realpolitik approach to international security.[29] A similar emphasis can be found in other scholars' work.[30]

Risk Prone Style of Coercive Diplomacy

A final strategic cultural approach to Chinese security policy focuses rather narrowly on the way force is used. This argument suggests that Chinese statecraft is comfortable with manipulating tensions within crises and does not view the "use of force" as a particularly

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[25] Johnston, 22.

[26] See, for instance, Rosita Dellios, ""How May the World Be at Peace?": Idealism as Realism in Chinese Strategic Culture," in *Culture & Foreign Policy*, ed. Valerie M. Hudson (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997).

[27] Discussion of the accuracy of this point is one of the many themes of Arthur Waldron, *The Great Wall of China: From History to Myth*, Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature, and Institutions; (Cambridge University Press, 1990). See also Julia Lovell, *The Great Wall: China against the World, 1000 BC - 2000 AD* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 2006). The leading Chinese foreign policy textbook plays off of this theme in its title: Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997).

[28] Several of these factors are discussed in the first chapter of Chen-Ya Tien, *Chinese Military History: Ancient and Modern* (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press, 1992).

[29] See Johnston, xi.

[30] Terrill, Ross, *The New Chinese Empire: And What it Means for the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

important threshold.[31]   Additionally, Chinese leaders are said to view crises as both dangerous and potential opportunities.[32]

Renowned Sinologist Allen Whiting emphasizes related themes throughout his thoroughly researched corpus.[33]   In one recent survey, he notes: "The political-military pattern of PLA deployment from 1950 to 1996 showed certain consistent characteristics, such as early warning for deterrence, seizure of the initiative, risk acceptance, and risk management."[34] Central to much of his analysis is a preference for the Chinese military to take the initiative. He also notes a Chinese tolerance for risk taking: "The PLA has repeatedly projected its power across China's borders, at times increasing the risk of war. … To be sure, various steps were adopted to lessen the risk of escalation, but thy were minor by comparison with actions that heightened the risk.[35]

Clearly, this is an important bias in Chinese policymaking. If this is an accurate characterization of Chinese policy than the prospects for inadvertent escalation in crises the Chinese are involved in is substantial. This aspect of Chinese strategic culture is particularly worrisome as the potential for nuclear crises increases as the PLA's arsenal increases and the interaction between PLAN strategic naval assets and USN conventional assets intensifies.

Propensity to Strike First

The Chinese are often said to have a propensity for striking first, taking the initiative, and making use of surprise to achieve victory.[36]   Key examples of this practice in modern Chinese foreign policy behavior are the Chinese offensive in the late fall of 1950 in Korea, the sudden

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[31] On the importance of thresholds, "red lines," and focal points, see Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), and Richard Smoke, *War: Controlling Escalation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977).

[32] This common argument is based on a superficial linguistic analysis of the characters in the word "crisis," 危机 (*weiji)* and has no accuracy in the way the term actually has meaning in Chinese.

[33] Allen S. Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950-96, and Taiwan," *International Security* 26, no. 2 (2001); Allen Suess Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1960); and Allen Suess Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina*, Michigan Studies on China (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975).

[34] Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950-96, and Taiwan," 124.

[35] Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence*, 236.

[36] This is a theme taken up in Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950-96, and Taiwan." See also frequent mention in the texts selected by Pillsbury in his compilations: Michael Pillsbury, *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1998); and , Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment*.(Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2000).

attack on Indian forces in 1962, and the pedagogical war against Vietnam in 1979.[37] In each case, the Chinese attacks were sudden and largely unexpected. They were often preceded with a degree of strategic misdirection, enhancing their surprise. This element is also apparent in the Chinese civil war.[38]

While it is true that this is a practice common in China's military, it would be rather narrow to suggest that this is a peculiarly Chinese behavior. The United States routinely aims to gain the initiative,[39] as do most other military forces in the world.[40] Gaining the initiative in military operations is a common theme in military classics of any language.[41] There are no comparative statistical studies that suggest China is more prone to this than other countries.[42]

CHINESE STRATEGIC CULTURE IN PRACTICE

This paper will focus on several aspects of Chinese policy toward weapons of mass destruction, in particular to nuclear weapons, to assess the strategic culture arguments laid out above.[43] It will consider three areas in particular: what drove Chinese decisions to acquire nuclear weapons in the first place; how does China think about the possibility of using nuclear weapons; and what are Chinese beliefs about proliferation of nuclear or other WMD.

Other cases would merit study, but are excluded give space constraints. The 1995-96 Taiwan Straits crisis touches on several of the core themes raised above, so it should be evaluated as well. Chinese policy toward Southeast Asia since approximately 2002 warrants additional study because it appears to represent an important shift in overall Chinese foreign

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[37] With regard to the first two of these, the classic works are Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu*, and Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975).

[38] See for instance Mao's decision to cross the Yangtze River in 1949.

[39] See for instance the ways in which the Afghan and Iraqi campaigns were begun, to say nothing of the Inchon landings, the Normandy landings, the

[40] Prominent examples are the Pakistani campaign in 1999; both the Egyptians and Israelis in 1967; the Egyptians in 1973; the North Vietnamese in 1968, 1973, and 1975; the Argentines in 1982; the Germans in 1938 and 1940; the Japanese in 1941; etc.

[41] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Eliot Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989).

[42] Furthermore, at an anecdotal level, there are plenty of examples of the lack of initiative from the PLA: after the Second Offensive, the PLA rarely held the initiative in the Korean War; the 1969 border clash with the Soviets show only intermittent signs of the Chinese use of this tactic; the Vietnam incursion in 1979 displayed an initial surprise attack, but thereafter it bogged down in less creative frontal assaults.

[43] It is important to note that WMD policy is a relatively hard test for strategic cultural theories. That is, given that these weapons raise issues of the absolutely highest stakes for any country, it is not unreasonable to expect that traditional realpolitik factors might weigh relatively heavily in these cases. That said, given the claims made for strategic cultural work, it is not unreasonable to suggest strong tests for a theory.

policy. The ongoing PLA modernization efforts with an eye toward Taiwan scenarios would also seem important.[44] Finally, current Sino-Japanese relations certainly are related to nationalism in both states, and strategic cultural approaches would seem to be useful in analyzing that case. Fuller studies of all these cases should be considered for follow on research.[45]

Each of the WMD cases will be discussed in turn. Within each, the discussion begins with a thumbnail sketch of Chinese policy and then turns toward assessing that policy from a strategic cultural perspective to see what, if any, conclusions follow from it.

China's Decision to Acquire Nuclear Weapons

Thumbnail Sketch

For the first several years of the PRC's existence, nuclear weapons were not a high priority.[46] Mao had repeatedly expressed disdain for the utility of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the Three-anti and Five-anti campaigns of 1951 and 1952, respectively, as well as the early collectivization campaigns in 1952 and 1953 were very hard on social elites, including those with a technical background. This would undermine China's later ability to actively pursue the development of atomic weapons.

However, China began its nuclear weapons program in earnest in January 1955 following coercive threats in the 1954-55 Taiwan Straits.[47] Initially, the program relied heavily on Beijing's ideological ally in Moscow.[48] During this period, the highpoint of their alliance, Moscow had promised to deliver an atomic weapon design and gave substantial support to Chinese industrial development. However, following the bitter collapse of the relationship and withdrawal of Soviet advisors in 1960, the Chinese atomic weapons development plan was set back substantially. This period coincided with an acute radicalization of politics in China; indeed the Great Leap Forward was a major component leading to the collapse of the Sino-

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[44] Indeed, this is an area perhaps quite promising for strategic culture, as even a cursory view might suggest some emphasis on risk prone crisis diplomacy and an emphasis on military initiative in the elliptical doctrinal writings regarding possible Taiwan scenarios available from PLA affiliated sources.

[45] It is this author's sense that this would exhaust the major cases meriting consideration today. Additional suggestions in this regard would certainly be welcomed.

[46] Christopher P. Twomey, *The Military Lens: Doctrinal Differences, Misperception, and Deterrence Failure* (Monterey, Calif.: Naval Postgraduate School, forthcoming).

[47] Gordon H. Chang, "To the Nuclear Brink: Eisenhower, Dulles, and the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis," *International Security* 12, no. 4 (1988).

[48] John Wilson Lewis and Litai Xue, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1988).

Soviet Alliance.[49] It required the active intervention of the senior Chinese leadership to ensure that this radicalization did not interfere with the ongoing research and development in the Chinese nuclear program.[50] (During the Cultural Revolution, this required the active intervention of Zhou Enlai.) Nevertheless, in 1964 at the Lop Nor test site, the Chinese successfully tested the culmination of their own indigenous development program.

Delivery systems lagged somewhat, with the initial focus on deterring the Soviet Union. With the deployment of the DF-4 in 1974 and the subsequent deployment of the DF-5 in 1981, the Chinese had the semblance of a nuclear deterrent.

Applying Strategic Culture

The Chinese nuclear weapons development program was reactive and delayed at key points by ideological factors, although these were not ideational factors that one would typically refer to as "strategic cultural" in nature. Rather, it was the Communist ideology and Maoism in particular that accounted for the early delays in starting and deploying nuclear weapons. The way the program was initially organized drew on close collaboration with Beijing's close ideological ally. The long delays between the early 1960s success in testing an atomic warhead to the mid-1980s before a reasonably sized arsenal had been fielded capable of threatening Beijing's two greatest threats are accounted for by the ideological excess of the Cultural Revolution. These various factors are clearly quite important to the development of the Chinese nuclear program. Further, the core of these factors exists in ideas: it was not material factors that accounted for these aspects of the program. But none of these factors are linked in any meaningful way with the six elements of Chinese strategic culture that were described at the outset of this essay.

Additionally, it is also clear that much of the impetus behind the nuclear program comes from material factors. Mao's ideologically based pejorative views of nuclear weapons were overcome only through direct and repeated threats to China that could only be addressed through an indigenous nuclear weapons program. The eventual reactions by China can indeed be explained through basic power politics logic, although the delays along the way are quite interesting and revolve around ideational factors.

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[49] See Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 64-84.The classic cite on this period is Michael Yahuda, *The Origins of the Sino-Soviet Rift*.
[50] Lewis and Xue, Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1990).

Chinese Nuclear Force Posture

Thumbnail Sketch

Chinese nuclear force posture has exhibited a number of persistent components over the course of the last 40 years. Most important of these is a relatively small arsenal size, particularly when compared to the superpowers.[51] Even when compared to the other declared powers (Britain and France) China's arsenal looks quite modest given its relatively challenging security situation compared to that of France and Britain.[52] This sized arsenal has not shifted in scale dramatically at any point after its initial buildup in the wake of the 1964 test. There has clearly been a substantial modernization effort, moving to a more secure arsenal that is beginning to incorporate modern, road mobile ICBMs (DF-31s and eventually DF-31As). Beyond that, clearly creating a deployable SSBN has remained a priority for decades, since the early failures of the Xia-class submarine confined it to port. These appear likely to reach fruition soon, although that same assessment was made years ago, so some caution is warranted.[53]

Second, Chinese doctrine has consistently been one of "no first use," emphasizing nuclear weapons utility only as a retaliatory force. Chinese rhetoric has been clear on this point, but beyond that, its strategic forces have—to date—not developed the sorts of technical qualities needed for first strike capabilities (accurate reentry systems, space based intelligence, etc.). More generally, the doctrine—as best can be assessed from the outside—remains one of "limited" or "minimal deterrence."[54] Finally, the Chinese investment in command and control for its nuclear forces remains limited. Of particular relevance to this study: to date, the PLA has

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[51] See William M. Arkin, Robert S. Norris, and Joshua Handler, *Taking Stock: Worldwide Nuclear Deployments, 1998* (Washington, DC: NRDC Nuclear Program, 1998), Table 1, p. 1. This gave operational arsenal sizes at that time as follows: US-8425, Russia-10,240, Britain-380, France-450, and China-400. All but China's arsenals are substantially smaller today.

[52] For a contrary view, see Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's statements in Singapore. However, from a Chinese perspective, Beijing faces potential threats from the United States, Japan, India, all at the great power level.

[53] Indeed, while the Pentagon ascribes IOC status to the DF-31 (initial operational capability), the Type-94 is not mentioned by name anywhere in the report nor described under the report's description of modernization efforts of the PLA. Department of Defense, *The Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2005: Annual Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2005), 29. Other sources note the Type-94 was launched in July 2004. Lyle J. Goldstein, with Andrew S. Erickson, ed., *China's Nuclear Force Modernization* (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2005), 3.

[54] See Alastair Iain Johnston, "China's New 'Old Thinking': The Concept of Limited Deterrence," *International Security* 20, no. 3 (1995/96). While this piece is increasingly dated, there is not sufficient evidence to suggest that it is inaccurate.

not developed the integrated, efficient sorts of systems that would permit a war fighting doctrine.[55]

<u>Applying Strategic Culture</u>

How does this nuclear force posture fit in with the various strategic cultural perspectives discussed above? The short answer is "not well." Indeed, without even engaging in a challenging "three-cornered" test to assess the merits of a strategic culture approach against other accepted theories,[56] the approach does not provide basic correlation with the thumbnail sketch laid out above.

The strategic cultural approaches that would seem most likely to apply would be the preferences for defensive or offensive strategies, the risk accepting behavior in crises, and in particular the Chinese preference for taking the initiative. Each is discussed in turn.

The former strategic culture is quite hard to apply in any case, not just in this one. Since there is a core disagreement about whether the culture is predisposed to offensive or defense strategies, any outcome is both consistent and inconsistent with the theory. That is, the theory itself is indeterminate. Similarly, the development of more modern nuclear weapons is viewed somewhat contradictorily in the field of security studies. While clearly weapons of great tactical offensive capability, in the context of two nations with secure second strikes, nuclear weapons are often viewed as being weapons of use only for the strategic defense.[57]

But beyond these general concerns, in the specific case of current Chinese doctrine, it is incompatible with the more sophisticated assessment of Chinese strategic culture: that of Iain Johnston. Rather than pursue a particularly offensive form of nuclear policy, as the United States and Soviet Union did throughout the Cold, the Chinese have taken a very relaxed posture towards competing at multiple levels of the escalatory ladder.[58] Instead, the Chinese have seemed to accept a version of existential deterrence that has extremely low demands to achieve

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[55] Even Polk, who draws inflammatory conclusions on the basis on non-existent evidence and assertions rather than analysis, would agree with this statement. The most he would allege is that China might be moving towards a C^2 capability that might permit launch on warning. Stephen Polk, "China's Nuclear Command and Control," in *China's Nuclear Force Modernization*, ed. Lyle J. Goldstein, with Andrew S. Erickson (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2005), 20.

[56] On the merits of such Lakatosian tests, see Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[57] Richard K. Betts, "Must War Find a Way? A Review Essay," *International Security* 24, no. 2 (1999).

[58] Herman Kahn, *On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios* (New York,: Praeger, 1965).

deterrence of the other side.[59] None of this would appear consistent with a propensity for offensive strategies.

Other forms of strategic culture that could be applied are more straightforward to evaluate. They would predict a certain Chinese propensity for risk taking in wielding nuclear threats in its crisis diplomacy. Additionally, it would predict that China would develop the capability to take the initiative in a nuclear conflict. Again, there is no evidence of either of these points. China has brandished nuclear threats only in two known instances in the post-Cold War era. One occurrence came from a low level, non-operational general officer (Zhu Chenghu). The other, from Xiong Guangkai, came from a more senior official. However, it is clear that the threat was intended as a promise of retaliation, not a threat to initiate or even escalate.[60] As such, it does not seem to be particularly risk accepting. More fundamentally, two instances of nuclear threat brandishing do not constitute a risk acceptant form of foreign policy. Nor has China engaged in any military signaling that could be characterized as displays of force on the nuclear side.[61]

Indeed, there almost seems to be a culture of "no first use" doctrine that is restraining military innovation in China in ways that directly contradict strategic cultural arguments.[62] Nevertheless, this culture of "no first use" is clearly an ideational form of restraint, and if indeed it is preventing rational innovation, that is a powerful source of hard-core international security behavior.

Chinese Proliferation Policy

Thumbnail Sketch

The legacy of Chinese proliferation behavior is anything but positive from a Western perspective. China has been linked with proliferation of WMD or long-range missiles to

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[59] Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence Now* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 23 and 54.

[60] This is contrary to the initial newspaper reports regarding the utterance. But this is what the American source on the story, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Chas Freeman, states was the statement. See Stephanie Lieggi, *Going Beyond the Stir: The Strategic Realities of China's No-First-Use Policy* [NTI: Issue Brief] (Nuclear Threat Initiative, December 2005, accessed); available from http://www.nti.org/e_research/e3_70.html.

[61] Although it is certainly possible that some of this sort of activity has occurred and was not reported in the open literature. However, given the usual excellent sources of Bill Gertz at the *Washington Times* on this sort of issue, it would be surprising if no inkling of this had trickled out.

[62] Author's interviews in Beijing in June 2006 suggest that despite the existence of some debate over nuclear doctrine in China, and in particular, over the credibility of no first use in the context of American nuclear developments with regard to the Nuclear Posture Review and missile defense, there has been a clear decision to retain the no first use doctrine.

Pakistan, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. As this roster includes the bulk of the key countries of strategic interest to the United States, this is clearly an important issue for the United States to understand.

Since the early 1990s, however, China has—gradually and haltingly, to be sure—moderated its proliferation behavior. It has signed on to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and adheres to the Missile Technology Control Regime rules. It has apparently curtailed its support for Pakistan, long a key strategic ally. It has participated positively in security UN Security Council reprimands against both Iran and North Korea in the very recent past.

In accounting for this shift in behavior, several recent studies point to the role of the creation of an arms control-savvy bureaucracy within the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[63] This development has been supported by the existence of transnational communities of like-minded analysts and scholars of the issue.

While it is unquestionable that Chinese behavior remains far from ideal from the United States' perspective (one need only see the recent levying of sanctions by the U.S. Department of State), it is also clear that the main theme over the past 10 years has been one of positive change.

Applying Strategic Culture

As in the first case summarized above, the key causal role here is played by ideational factors, but not ones that are particularly related to strategic culture. Rather, it is something akin to reversion to the international norm that has accounted for the most interesting changes in Chinese foreign policy in this issue area.[64]

With regards to specific themes in the strategic cultural arguments listed above, a few points might be made. In terms of the Chinese propensity for preferring a "united state," some of the oft-cited (and undoubtedly genuine in at least some cases) excuses from Beijing that proliferation is occurring due to poor policing of localities and private firms is a concern. Such freelancing on a core security issue ought be viewed with the utmost of concern. The view of China at the core of an international relations hierarchy in Asia might play some explanatory role with regard to North Korea- and perhaps Pakistan-bound proliferation, but hardly provides any

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[63] Wendy Frieman, *China, Arms Control, and Nonproliferation* (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004); and Evan S. Medeiros, *Chasing the Dragon: Assessing China's System of Export Controls for Wmd-Related Goods and Technologies* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), MG-353.

[64] For arguments on the importance of global norms, see Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention : Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

insight into other, further afield recipients. The other themes would seem to suggest little about China's proliferation behavior.[65]

IN LIEU OF CONCLUSIONS

It is of course premature to draw any firm conclusions on the basis of a few thumbnail sketches within a single issue area given the extensive literature on strategic culture and the apparent affinity for it that many Sinologists display. The alternate cases suggested above would be obvious next steps for evaluation.

Beyond that, it will be important to put several of these arguments in comparative perspective in two ways. First, to what extent are these strategic cultures unique to China? Second, what do these forms of strategic cultural argument allow us to understand that other theories do not? Without explicitly addressing these points, there is no chance that the arguments made in these cases will capture a wider audience.

That said, two important conclusions arise from this application of a strategic cultural lens to Chinese nuclear policy. First, these case studies have found repeated support for the role of ideational factors in shaping important details in Chinese policy. Second, however, these ideational factors have come from a wide range of sources, and the deep historical cultural roots that are at the heart of strategic cultural analysis are not among them. Often, the role of "strategic culture" has been outweighed by other factors leading to policy refuting the predictions of the strategic cultural approach.

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[65] It is not impossible to spin out ways that a risk-acceptant attitude toward crisis management might play a role, but since proliferation is rarely a crisis management policy, but rather takes place over a period of years, such an argument would be viewed skeptically by this author.

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[66] That is, these authors do not use the social science terminology of cultural analysis, but nevertheless cultural factors pervade their causal arguments.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN ISRAEL'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

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SAIC
From Science to Solutions

Continuity and Change in Israel's Strategic Culture

Gregory Giles

STRATEGIC CULTURE DEFINED

For the purposes of this project, strategic culture is defined as:

Shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.

This definition is well-suited to consideration of the Israeli case. As explained below, Israel has cultivated—some would say imposed—a set of beliefs and assumptions on its citizenry as a means of simultaneously building and defending the fledgling Jewish state in the face of deep Islamic hostility. This belief system is rooted, in part, in such ancient texts as the Bible but is under considerable pressure from contemporary demographic, ideological, and religious changes in Israeli society. As a result, there is both continuity and change in what passes for "appropriate" ends and means of achieving security in Israeli terms. Indeed, the strategic culture framework could provide a useful tool for anticipating how the Jewish state might come to grips with its ongoing internal, as well as external, security challenges.

STRATEGIC CULTURE PROFILE

Summary Description

Israel's is a strategic culture in transition. The dominant or "hegemonic" strategic culture might be summed accordingly:

The Jewish people have been subject to exile and persecution since antiquity, as manifested in various pogroms, particularly in the late-19th century and the Nazi Holocaust, which claimed the lives of some six million Jews. In order to preserve their religious, ideological, political, cultural and physical existence as a people, Jews require a national homeland. That homeland is their ancestral Israel.

With conflicting claims over this land from Palestinians who are backed politically, militarily, and economically by the larger Arab world (and, increasingly Iran), the state of Israel

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is under constant threat of annihilation. Thus, Israel must be actively defended by all the resources the state can bring to bear, particularly its citizenry and technological base, which must be organized into qualitatively superior military forces. Because its resources are limited and it lacks strategic depth, Israel must rely on deterrence, backed by a rapid mobilization capability, and be prepared to act preemptively should deterrence seem to be eroding. In any event, Israel must immediately "carry the fight" to the enemy's territory to achieve a quick victory and spare the Israeli home front.

To hedge against conventional military defeat, international isolation, and attack with weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Israel must have its own WMD options, particularly a nuclear weapons capability. To avoid alienating Israel's international supporters and further enflaming Arab enmity, that capability should remain officially unacknowledged for as long as possible. Finally, Israel must further reinforce a perception of national inviolability by minimizing the impact of terrorism on Israeli society, while simultaneously preserving Jewish norms of ethical conduct in war.

A variety of factors, such as disillusionment with the performance of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), particularly since 1973, and the changing complexion of Israeli society have given rise to competing subcultures, as detailed below. With areas of overlap as well as divergence, these sub-groupings add complexity and dynamism to Israeli strategic culture.

Origins of the "Shared Narrative"

A full recounting of the Jewish saga is beyond the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, it is necessary to highlight the major events and circumstances that haven given rise to Israel's distinctive strategic culture. To begin, it bears recalling the ancient roots of Judaism.

According to Hebrew mythology, around 1200 BC, the Israelite tribes under the leadership of Joshua conquered part of the land of Canaan. This nascent, monotheistic Jewish civilization was built up under the reign of King David. Legend has it that God had promised this land, which later became known as Palestine, to the Jewish people. Under David, bitter battles were fought over the so-called "promised land," resulting in the annihilation of the Philistines residing there. In 587 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judea and deported much of its population to Babylon. Judea was later re-established, only to be destroyed again, this time by the Romans, in AD 70. It was during this era that a group of Jewish zealots took

refuge in Masada. Legend holds that rather than submit to Roman slavery, these Jews committed mass suicide—a heroic, "freedom fighter" myth that is propagated to this day, for example, in the indoctrination of IDF soldiers.[1] Forced exile, the Diaspora, resulted in four-fifths of the Jewish world population residing in Eastern Europe by the beginning of the 19th century, although a "culture of return" to the Holy Land had long since taken root.

Anti-Semitic persecutions, or pogroms, swept through the Russian empire in 1881-1882, triggering Jewish immigration to America and, to a lesser extent, "Zion," the biblical name of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. The so-called Zionist movement, led by these Ashkenazi or Occidental Jews, gathered momentum in the late-1890s, raising funds, purchasing land in Palestine, and then settling it. Socialist and communist ideas combined with nationalist goals, resulting in a Zionist strategy to establish an exclusively Jewish communal society that would later become the basis for a state. To further this goal, underground Zionist militias were set up to protect Jewish settlements from the growing frictions with the local Palestinian community. These activities set the stage for a culture of secrecy and militarism in the eventual Israeli state.[2]

With the end of British colonial rule on May 14, 1948, the Jewish community in Palestine declared its national independence. The following day, troops from several Arab states launched an invasion. Born of war, Israel prevailed and nearly quadrupled its territory from the 5,000 sq. km. proposed under the 1937 British partition plan, to 21,000 sq. km. following an armistice with the Arabs in 1949. Israel's strategic culture has been shaped by subsequent waves of Jewish immigration and violent struggle over land—a country comparable in size to the state of New Jersey—and national existence ever since.

Characteristics of Israel's Strategic Culture

<u>Keepers of Strategic Culture</u>

Israel's strategic culture has been carefully crafted over the past six decades. The primary vehicles for doing so have been state institutions. Among these, the IDF is paramount. The IDF has various means at its disposal to indoctrinate Israeli Jews, particularly recent immigrants, into the dominant security culture. Mainly, this is accomplished through universal

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[1] Recent Israeli scholarship casts doubt on this heroic account. See Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 18, n. 2.
[2] Ibid., 27.

conscription. Israeli men ages 18-21 must serve in IDF three years while women must serve two years, with certain exceptions and caveats. In addition, following conscription, Israelis must remain in the IDF reserves with annual call-up for training, up to age 54 in some cases. This is a powerful means by which the IDF penetrates civil society and inculcates it with a sense of constant threat and need to sacrifice in the name of "security." Because IDF service is a prerequisite for state welfare benefits, and helps open doors to well-paying civilian jobs, the Israeli state uses economic leverage to further solidify this indoctrination. Those prohibited from IDF service, namely Israeli Arabs, are condemned to the margins of Israeli society and are not intended to participate in the state's strategic culture and related benefits. The IDF further propagates its image and reach into civil society by engaging in various non-military activities, such as popular entertainment (e.g., via Army Radio).

The IDF also makes tremendous demands on the Israeli economy and industry, amounting to some 16-20 percent of national government expenditures. This is a decrease from previous levels which reached as high as 40 percent in the mid-1980s but still represents one of the heaviest national defense burdens globally. In short, the Israeli military-industrial complex plays a major role in reinforcing Israel's self-image as a "nation in arms" and one that must permanently maintain military superiority in the region.

The state has further inculcated strategic culture by various forms of military commemoration. This includes national holidays of war remembrance, sanctification of military cemeteries, parades and other military displays. Israeli artists and the media have traditionally supported this effort by using stories, poems, movies, and newspaper supplements to honor the heroism of Israeli soldiers. The state has consciously used other symbols to reinforce its strategic culture, such as the choice of the Star of David for the national flag, as a link between the State of Israel and its ancestry in the Holy Land.   Other state institutions reinforcing the sense that Israel is under current threat and that all national and personal goals should be subordinate to national security are the educational system, which helps serve as a preparatory school for the IDF, and the court system.

These efforts over the years have built considerable public support for, and trust in, Israel's national security ethos. Despite its occasional misfortunes (see below), the IDF remains one of the most highly respected institutions in Israel, as measured in public opinion polls, .second only to the corruption-battling State comptroller, and far ahead of Israeli politicians and

Knesset members.[3] Also telling is the willingness of Israeli youth to serve in the IDF, even if it should become an all-volunteer force.

<u>Strategic Subcultures</u>

Baruch Kimmerling, a scholar representing the "third wave" of Israeli sociologists, has identified three "orientations" within Israeli society, essentially strategic cultures that have some commonality in strategic beliefs, as well as important differences. These are the "security orientation," the "conflict orientation," and the "settlement" or "peace orientation." Each is briefly summarized below (see also Figure 1).[4]

The "security orientation" believes that Israel is locked in a battle for survival with its Arab neighbors, and that a major Israeli military defeat would mean annihilation of Israeli Jews. The primary means to prevent this is absolute and permanent Israeli military superiority in the region. It is the supreme duty of every member of Israeli society to do his or her utmost in military service to the state. The authority of the state to determine the nature of that military service is absolute. However, it is not unconditional, as the state is expected to not abuse this readiness for self-sacrifice and to use the military only for what are believed to be matters of survival.

The security orientation is said to be highly heterogeneous and the political culture of most mainstream social groups. Politically, this orientation channels its votes to the two largest parties, Likud and Labor.

The "conflict orientation" assumes that the Jewish-Arab conflict is just another incarnation of historic anti-Semitism. Given the current geopolitical situation, no peaceful settlement with Israel's neighbors is possible in the foreseeable future. Apparently influenced by realist thought, this group believes that power and military strength are the only factors that matter in relations between different national, ethnic, or religious groups. Periodic wars are inevitable and must be won. All other collective or private goals are subordinate to this.

The "conflict orientation" has a very strong, indeed moral and sacred, connection to the Land of Israel and insists that the state must hold to as much of this territory as possible. This grouping is highly ethnocentric in nature and gives priority to Hebrew or Halachic law over

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[3] Luis Roniger, "Organizational Complexity, Trust, and Deceit in the Israeli Air Force," in Daniel Maman, et al, eds., *Military, State and Society in Israel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 371-372.
[4] Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness*, 208-228.

democratic and legal institutions and practices. Settlers in the occupied territories of the West Bank form the nucleus of this orientation.

The "peace orientation" is diametrically opposed to the "conflict orientation." The former sees the Jewish-Arab conflict as no different from any other negotiable dispute and is unconnected to the persecution of Jews in the past. This grouping frames the conflict mainly in terms of material interests, such as land, markets, boundaries, and water. According to this view, peace is the road to further Israeli development of democracy, economic growth, and cultural progress. It is defined as Israel's acceptance in the region as a legitimate state and society and is equated with security. To achieve peace and security will require compromise.

In this orientation, state and society have a universal civilian basis, without discrimination according to religion, ethnicity, or race. There is mutual reciprocation in state-citizen relations. The state must provide security, well-being and human rights, while citizens are obligated to obey the state's laws, perform military service (if needed), and pay reasonable taxes.

The institutional expression of this orientation is the peace protest movement and the large output from journalists and artists. The peace orientation is reflected mainly in the upper-middle-class Ashkenazi strata of Israeli society, which is politically identified with the Meretz party. The national daily newspaper, Ha'aretz, is identified as a major outlet of the "peace orientation."
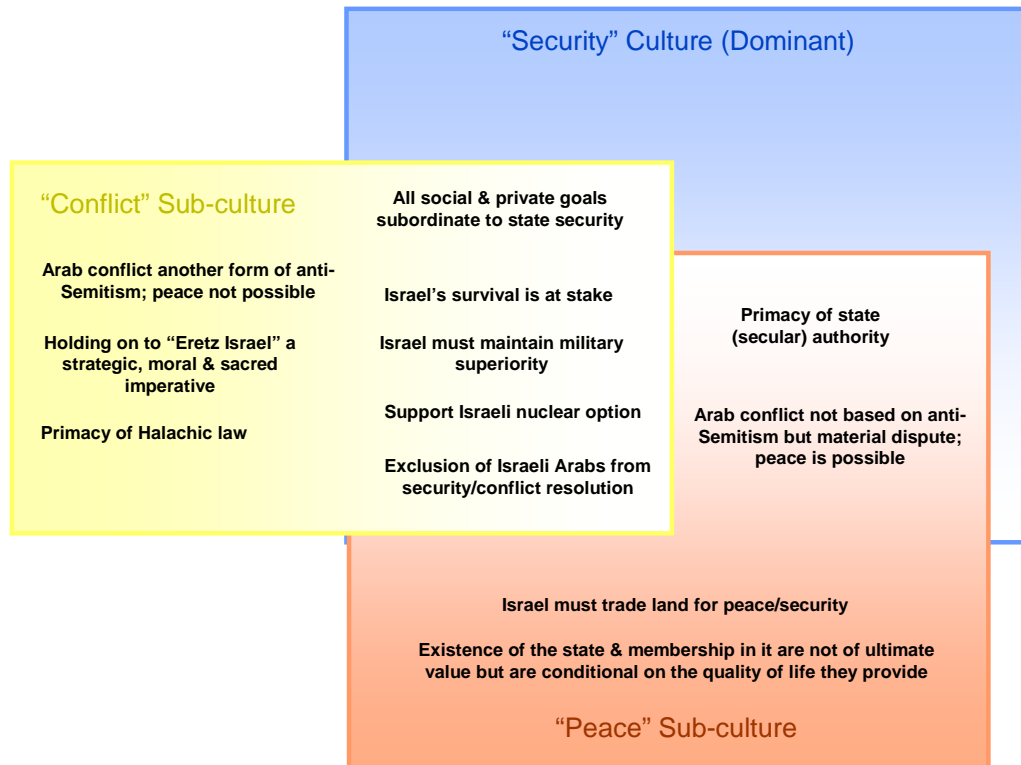
"Security" Culture (Dominant)

"Conflict" Sub-culture

All social & private goals subordinate to state security

Arab conflict another form of anti-Semitism; peace not possible

Israel's survival is at stake

Holding on to "Eretz Israel" a strategic, moral & sacred imperative

Israel must maintain military superiority

Primacy of state (secular) authority

Support Israeli nuclear option

Primacy of Halachic law

Arab conflict not based on anti-Semitism but material dispute; peace is possible

Exclusion of Israeli Arabs from security/conflict resolution

Israel must trade land for peace/security

Existence of the state & membership in it are not of ultimate value but are conditional on the quality of life they provide

"Peace" Sub-culture

Figure 1: Notional Mapping of Strategic Culture in Israel

Despite the differences among these three cultures, there are important similarities. They all perceive a real threat to the survival of Israel as a Jewish settler society. They also acknowledge that Israeli military might is central to that survival. Indeed, peace-oriented advocates of returning the occupied territories are ardent supporters of Israel's nuclear capability as the ultimate protector of a smaller Israeli state. This support for Israel's nuclear capability is not universal, however. A small minority of right-wingers, who believe that territorial depth is the key to Israeli security, are suspicious of the nuclear program precisely because it undermines the rationale for holding on to the occupied territories. Finally, all three orientations believe that Israeli Arabs have virtually no role in the state security apparatus or in conflict resolution.

Kimmerling contends that these three orientations cut across most of the cultures comprising Israeli society writ large, such as the Ashkenazi, traditional Mizrahim (Oriental

Jews), "national religious" (a euphemism for religious fundamentalists), Orthodox religious, and new Russian immigrants.

Strategic Culture in Transition

Of these three groupings, the "security orientation" has effectively provided the basis of Israeli strategic culture since the inception of the Jewish state. The dominance of this culture has been eroded, however, since 1973 as a result of IDF wartime and training mishaps, demographic and generational changes, shifts in the role of the media and academia, the rise of individualism, and the emergence of religious nationalism. Indeed, such changes are responsible for the very emergence of the "conflict" and "peace" strategic sub-cultures.

The early stages of the 1973 Yom Kippur War went very poorly for the IDF, raising the prospect that Israel might be overrun by the combined armies of Egypt and Syria. While the IDF fought brilliantly to avert this catastrophe, irreparable harm was done to the institution as the linchpin of Israeli security and strategic culture. Further doubt was cast upon the professional competency of the IDF in the wake of the ill-fated 1982 war in Lebanon which, as current events underscore, failed to secure Israel's border with Lebanon. The inability of the IDF to suppress militarily the 1987 Intifada by the Palestinians cast further doubt on the institution's ability to "get the job done."

In contrast to all prior wars, the 1982 invasion of Lebanon was deemed to be a "war by choice," and consequently at odds with traditional Jewish definitions of a just and legal war (see below). This triggered a national debate that deepened the questioning of fundamental beliefs and assumptions at the core of Israeli strategic culture. Influential in this regard was the shifting role of Israeli media and academia. Previously, these institutions were full subscribers to the infallibility of the IDF, that is, critical examination had been subsumed in the name of national security. From 1973 onwards, however, Israeli media, academia, and even artists increasingly became vocal critics of the national security ethos. For example, instead of the customary articles run on Rosh Hashanah (New Year's) and Independence Day praising Israeli military heroism, the media began to run exposés on the IDF's operational failures, the harsh fate of

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prisoners of war, and victims of battle fatigue.[5] There remains one important bastion of press deference, however: Israel's nuclear capability (as described below).

For its part, academia spawned a so-called "third wave" of sociologists more inclined to critically assess the relationship between the Israeli military and civil society than its predecessors. Second-wave sociologists defend their work, in part, by acknowledging that over time, they have too have increasingly questioned many of the assumptions behind Israel's national security ethos.[6]

Other changes in Israeli society have challenged the traditional consensus on strategic culture. The influx of 800,000 Russian immigrants following the demise of the Soviet Union posed a major challenge of absorption, assimilation, and preservation of national identity. Here again, the IDF has served as the nation's melting pot, helping to make self-evident to the new immigrants the sense of constant threat and need for military sacrifice on behalf of the Israeli state. Yet, because this pool of manpower has become so large, the IDF cannot absorb it. This has led to modifications in IDF conscription and reserve duty policy and has diluted the concept that all Israelis must make sacrifices in the name of national security.

This influx of Russian immigrants has coincided with changing values, particularly amongst the previously dominant ethnic and cultural community, the Ashkenazi. Whereas military service was highly valued by this group, a broader trend now casts the high technology entrepreneur, lawyer, or media celebrity as the "ideal Israeli."[7] This is reflected in a growing trend of evasion of reserve duty. According to a 1997 estimate, for every eleven IDF reservists, only two actually serve.[8] The deterioration of reservist morale forced the IDF senior command to exclude reservists from service in Lebanon during the controversial 1982 war and from security service in the occupied territories beginning in 1997. While this policy underscored the IDF's adaptability, it also introduced new constraints on the military's operations that would have been inconceivable during the first half of Israel's existence. Indeed, one Israeli analyst contends that it was this decline in reservists' willingness to serve that finally convinced Prime

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[5] Yoram Peri, "Civil-Military Relations in Israel in Crisis," in Maman, et al, op cit., 110. See also, Uri Ben-Eliezer, "From Military Role Expansion to Difficulties in Peace-Making: The Israel Defense Forces 50 Years On," in Maman, et al, op cit., 153-154.
[6] See "Preface," in Maman, et al, op cit, i-v.
[7] Peri, op cit., 109.
[8] Ibid., 126.

Minister Yitzhak Rabin to reach a political settlement with the Palestinian Liberation Organization at Oslo.[9]

While some segments of Israeli society have become alienated from Israel's military ethos in recent years, other communities have stepped forward to fill the breach. In particular, the so-called "national religious" groups have previously been on the margins of Israeli society. Yet, since the late 1980s they have made a focused and sustained effort to utilize the IDF as a vehicle to gain greater influence and access. Particularly noteworthy is the growing representation of national religious youth in the IDF's elite military units. By the end of 1996, for example, this community comprised 15 percent of the IDF's overall manpower but 30 percent of its voluntary elite units, which have been the traditional path to advancement in and beyond the IDF. National religious students have comprised 40 percent of the members in certain officers' courses. What makes this shift worrisome from the perspective of Israeli analysts is that, whereas other groups were motivated to serve in the IDF mainly because they accepted the dominant ethos of sacrifice in the name of national security, religious soldiers appear to be largely motivated by hatred of Arabs and a desire for revenge on them. This could produce a radical change in the value system of the IDF's senior officer ranks in the next few years.[10] Already by 1998, the first national religious officer was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General, with a seat on the IDF General Staff.[11]

Thus, while Israel succeeded in rapidly creating a national identity as an immigrant settler society and promoted the Israeli soldier as the natural inheritor of that heroism, within the span of roughly two generations, various internal and external pressures have significantly diluted the original conception of that ethos. This is evident in the emergence of alternative strategic sub-cultures and other trends reflective of the growing pluralism within Israeli society, such as the rise of the national religious generally, and within the IDF officer corps in particular.

Indeed, the 2005 implementation of the Israeli government's decision to withdraw unilaterally and permanently from the Gaza strip and from four settlements in the West Bank put to the test whether the IDF's religious soldiers would obey rabbinical or secular authority. Following the Knesset vote to implement the withdrawal plan, the Judea and Samaria Council of

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[9] Ibid., 128.

[10] Information in this paragraph is taken from Peri, op cit., 130-131.

[11] Stuart Cohen, "The Scroll or the Sword? Tensions between Judaism and Military Service in Israel," in Cohen, op cit., 271, n. 13.

Rabbis declared that no government had the right to give away "God's land" and that it was "God's will" that soldiers not obey the orders to remove Israeli settlers. In the end, only about 30 officers and soldiers out of the 11,000 involved in the disengagement refused to carry out the eviction orders. Punishment for the soldiers came swiftly in the form of jail time, while officers were mustered out of the IDF. This very small rate of insubordination belied earlier concerns voiced by Israeli analysts and scholars over the potential for a large-scale IDF mutiny or even military coup over the issue of withdrawal.

The flare-up between Israel and Hamas/Hezbollah in the summer of 2006 provided a timely window into the impact these various societal trends are having on the redefinition of Israeli strategic culture. For example, to the extent that the kidnapping and killing of Israeli soldiers by these extremists in July 2006 were commonly viewed by Israeli Jews as clear provocations—and the IDF succeeded in suppressing if not eliminating these threats—there could be restored faith in the armed forces. Such developments would tend to reinforce the dominant, "securitist" culture. Similarly, if the preceding withdrawal of the IDF from Gaza and south Lebanon were seen as having invited these attacks, support for the "peace" sub-culture could be significantly reduced, to the benefit of the "securitist" and "conflict" orientations. Moreover, achievement in battle during this latest conflict could further the careers of religious soldiers, thereby advancing within the IDF officer corps and perhaps the broader national security establishment the "conflict" sub-culture's influence over national policy. By the fall of 2006, many Israelis had indeed concluded that the policy of withdrawal from occupied territory had been a mistake, and the movement to expand Jewish settlements in the West Bank was experiencing a revival.[12] As for the performance of the IDF, it was clear to Israelis that their military strategy and force posture, which relied heavily upon high-tech stand-off attacks by the air force to reduce the exposure of Israeli ground forces, failed the test of battle against an enemy like Hezbollah.[13] Further soul-searching on fundamental Israeli security issues can be expected in the wake of the 2006 conflict with Hezbollah.

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[12] Scott Wilson, "War Turns the Tide For Israeli Settlers," *Washington Post,* September 25, 2006, A1, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/24/AR2006092400757.html
[13] Molly Moore, "Israelis Face 'New Kind of War'; High-Tech Tactics Fail to Halt Rocket Fire," *Washington Post,* August 9, 2006, A11, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/08/AR2006080801229.html

Threat Perception

At the heart of Israeli strategic culture is an immutable threat perception, the huge demographic disparity vis-à-vis the Arab (and increasingly pan-Muslim) world. Israeli political and military thought sub-divides this macro threat into a series of concentric circles that are roughly geographic in nature (see Figure 2).[14] The most proximate threat is the "Palestinian circle," which includes Palestinian citizens of Israel, as well as Palestinians living in the occupied territories and in exile elsewhere. This circle corresponds to "internal security threats" in Israeli parlance, that is, insurgent activities and guerrilla-type attacks against Israeli civilian and military targets emanating from within the state's borders, the Gaza strip, or the West Bank.

In the next ring are the immediate Arab states, comprising Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. Here the threat is perceived largely in terms of cross-border incursions. This threat has fluctuated between raids by marauders operating from neighboring states (e.g., Palestinians and Lebanese Hezbollah) to large-scale attacks by massed Arab armies.

Beyond this ring lies the broader Arab (e.g., Iraq, Saudi Arabia, etc.) and Muslim (e.g., Iran, Pakistan) world. Traditionally, this has been viewed in Israel as a remote threat, but Saddam Hussein's use of long-range missiles against Israel in the 1991 Gulf War and Iran's suspected instigation of the July 2006 attacks by Hamas and Hezbollah underscore the ability of "peripheral" states to inflict damage on the Jewish state, directly or indirectly. For a time, the Soviet Union was considered by some also to lie within this outermost ring, in light of its military support to the Arab confrontation states. Direct Soviet
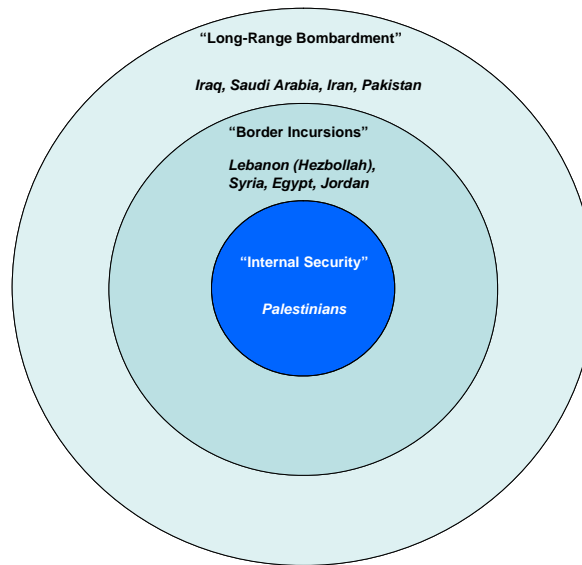
"Long-Range Bombardment"

Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan

"Border Incursions"

Lebanon (Hezbollah), Syria, Egypt, Jordan

"Internal Security"

Palestinians

Figure 2: Israel's Threat Perception Framework

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[14] Baruch Kimmerling, "The Social Construction of Israel's 'National Security,'" in Stuart Cohen, ed., *Democratic Societies and Their Armed Forces: Israel in Comparative Context* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 221-222. See also, Rueven Gal, "The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF): A Conservative or Adaptive Organization?," in Maman, et al, op cit., 364.

intervention would likely have transformed the Arab-Israeli conflict into a superpower showdown, however, as suggested by the 1973 war. In any event, the "threat" from contemporary Russia lies more in its missile and nuclear

trade with Iran.

The Necessity of Violence and Laws of War

As noted above, the state, acting through the IDF system of universal conscription and reserve duty, has socially constructed a sense of imminent threat of attack bordering on fatalism. Indeed, former IDF Chief of Staff Rafeal Eitan recalled in his memoirs how he was once called home from abroad to participate in a military action: "I know that I am back home…there is war. I do not complain: each people with its destiny."[15] Eitan's comments capture the widespread belief in Israel in the inevitability of war, consonant with Judiasm's historic struggle for survival in a hostile environment.[16]

While war may seem inevitable to Israelis, it is by no means desired or, to use the Clausewitzian formulation, simply a continuation of politics by other means. Indeed, Clausewitz is widely renounced in the Israeli military ethos. In a speech to IDF senior officers, Prime Minister Menachem Begin declared:

> Clausewitz['s] famous quote that war is the continuation of policy by other means has no place in today's reality. War does not continue anything. It is a break from everything; it is a world in itself, primarily because it is associated with killings; politically it is also an entirely different issue.[17]

Because war is a strictly negative phenomenon in Judaism, the Israelis have developed a prism that transfers responsibility for war to the party that initiates it. In essence, Israeli Jews have embraced as part of their strategic culture the biblical distinction between wars that are forced upon the state (i.e., "obligatory") and those that are undertaken at the discretion of the ruler (i.e., "optional"). Ethically, the former are considered "just" wars that require full public support, while the latter lack consensus and, by extension, moral clarity.[18] In secular terms, this

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[15] Quoted in Efraim Inbar, "The 'No Choice War' Debate in Israel," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, March 1989, 23.
[16] Ibid., 23-24.
[17] Quoted in Inbar, op cit., 33. Clausewitzian thought was further discredited in Israel due to its association with extreme rightist politicians.
[18] Charles Ben-Dor, "War & Peace: Jewish Tradition and the Conduct of War," *Israeli Defense Forces Journal,* vol. 3, no. 4, Fall 1986, 47-50.

duality is expressed as "no choice war" vs. "war by choice." Generally, Israelis regard all of their wars to date as being "no choice," with the exception of the 1982 and 2006 warsin Lebanon.

Israeli scholars draw a more nuanced distinction, encompassing "defensive" wars, where the enemy "fires the first shot;" "preventive" wars, which are launched to destroy the potential threat of the enemy; and "preemptive" wars, where strikes are initiated in anticipation of immediate enemy aggression. Accordingly, they characterize the wars of 1948, 1969-70, and 1973 as purely defensive; the 1956 war as preventive; and the 1967 war as preemptive.[19]

The 1982 invasion of Lebanon sparked a far-reaching national debate in Israel. Political and military leaders at the time tried unsuccessfully to justify the conflict as a no-choice war. Their subsequent efforts to change the well-understood national political terminology of conflict (by introducing the phrase "war by choice") likewise failed, and as the goals of the operation expanded, and Israeli casualties mounted, initial public support for the war dissipated.[20]

Other biblical teachings are said to set the parameters for Israeli conduct in war. Among these is the stipulation to seek peace before resorting to war. This is typically equated with the ten-day "waiting period" between Israel's mobilization in 1967, in response to the massing of Egyptian troops, and the launching of Israel's devastating pre-emptive attack. Indeed, this waiting period is seen in Israel as reinforcing the 'justness" of that war. Israel's efforts to warn Saddam Hussein off the path to nuclear weapons prior to launching its pre-emptive attack against the Osiraq reactor in 1981—and similar efforts in recent years to dissuade Iran—are consistent with this self-image.

Efforts to imbue Israeli soldiers with high ethical standards are institutionalized through the IDF Chief Education Officer, a Brigadier General, the Military Rabbinate, and various military training programs. As noted on the IDF website:

> IDF soldiers will operate according to the IDF values and orders, while adhering
> to the laws of the state and norms of human dignity, and honoring the values of
> the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. [21]

Among these values is the concept of "purity of arms," which traces back to the origins of the IDF. According to this "value":

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[19] Inbar, op cit., 23. Ben-Dor, op cit., 47-49.
[20] Inbar, op cit.
[21] Official IDF website: http://www1.idf.il/DOVER/site/mainpage.asp?sl=EN&id=32

The IDF servicemen and women will use their weapons and force only for the purpose of their mission, only to the necessary extent and will maintain their humanity even during combat. IDF soldiers will not use their weapons and force to harm human beings who are not combatants or prisoners of war, and will do all in their power to avoid causing harm to their lives, bodies, dignity and property.[22]

The reported refusal of some Israeli Air Force pilots to drop their bombs during the 1982 war in Lebanon because of the risk to civilians is consistent with this value.[23]

Not all IDF Chief Education Officers have embraced the purity of arms concept, however.[24] Rather, there is an acknowledgement, if not expectation, that because IDF soldiers operate in an emotionally charged atmosphere, some will engage in unethical behavior. The aim is to contain such incidents. This expectation is rooted, no doubt, in past atrocities by some of the extremist pre-Independence Jewish militias, as well as the IDF proper. Among these:

- In April 1948, the Jewish right wing National Military Organization (IZL) retaliated against an Arab attack by massacring and then mutilating the bodies of 200 Arab men, women, and children.[25]

- Another retaliatory raid, this time by the IDF commando "Unit 101," under the command of then-Major Ariel Sharon, against the Jordanian village of Kibbiya in 1953 left 69 civilians, including women and children, dead. Under international pressure, the IDF disbanded this unit.

- In 1967, IDF soldiers killed nearly 50 unarmed Egyptian prisoners. With the discovery of the prisoners' remains in 1995, the Israeli government offered compensation to the families of the victims and asserted that Israeli prisoners had also been killed by Egyptian soldiers.[26]

By the late-1980s, Israeli civil society had become less deferential to the military. This greater scrutiny of the armed forces led to a wave of civil court cases in Israel for "deviant acts"

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Anthony H. Cordesman and Abraham R. Wager, *The Lessons of Modern War, Volume I: The Arab-Israeli Conflicts, 1973-1989* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 113-114.

[24] See "An Interview with Brig. Gen. Nehemia Dagan, Chief Education Officer, IDF," *IDF Journal,* vol. 3, no. 4, Fall 1986, 51-52.

[25] James Burk, "From Wars of Independence to Democratic Peace, Comparing the Cases of Israel and the United States," in Maman, et al, op cit., 96.

[26] Youssef Ibrahim, "Egypt Says Israeli's Killed P.O.W.'s in'67 War," *NewYork Times*, September 21, 1995, A1. See also, "Rabin: POW Question Could Open 'Pandora's Box,'" Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBIS-NES-95-165, 22 August 1995, 47-48.

committed by IDF officers and soldiers, particularly those of the elite "Mistarvim" (special hit units), during the Intifada.[27]

More recently, a team of Israeli professors, commanders, and former judges developed a code of conduct to address the specific challenges of low-intensity warfare. Regular and reserve IDF units are taught the following eleven rules of conduct, which supplement the military's "spirit" and "values":

- Military action can only be taken against military targets.
- The use of force must be proportional.
- Soldiers may only use weaponry they were issued by the IDF.
- Anyone who surrenders cannot be attacked.
- Only those who are properly trained can interrogate prisoners.
- Soldiers must accord dignity and respect to the Palestinian population and those arrested.
- Soldiers must give appropriate medical care, when conditions allow, to oneself and one's enemy.
- Pillaging is absolutely and totally illegal.
- Soldiers must show proper respect for religious and cultural sites and artifacts.
- Soldiers must protect international aid workers, including their property and vehicles.
- Soldiers must report all violations of this code.[28]

As another indicator of Israel's desire to adhere to humane standards of war, by 1994, the Jewish state joined the international moratorium on the sale of anti-personnel mines. The following year, it signed two of the three protocols of the international treaty banning the use of inhumane conventional weapons. These protocols limit the use of landmines, as well as anti-personnel weapons that rely on fragments that are too small to be detected by x-ray, thus impeding medical treatment.[29]

STRATEGIC CULTURE IN ACTION

Role of Strategic Culture in Shaping Israel's Security Organization and Decision-making Style

Organization

In many respects, Israel's strategic culture is indistinguishable from its national identity. Case in point is the organizing principle of its armed forces. The 1948 War of Independence was

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[27] Peri, op cit., 112-114.
[28] See "Code of Conduct Against Terrorists," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel_Defense_Forces
[29] "Government Signs Treaty Banning 'Inhumane' Arms," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBIS-NES-95-106, 2 June 1995, 39. Israel did not sign the protocol banning the use of incendiary weapons, such as napalm.

fought by various militias cobbled together into the nascent IDF. That force structure was heavily depleted as a result of casualties, demobilization, and purges designed to remove extremists from its ranks. The IDF then faced a choice of moving to a model based on small elite units or a "people's army." Facing an influx of immigrants, Israel opted for the latter with the intent of using military service as the chief means of molding the immigrants into ideal Israeli citizens committed to self-sacrifice on behalf of the state.[30] As noted, this has been accomplished through the policy of universal conscription and reserve duty.

By design, the IDF thus relies upon a small cadre of professional officers (historically, less than 10 percent of the total force), a conscript base (105,000 troops in 2006), and a larger manpower reserve (exceeding 500,000). The standing conscript force is intended to defend Israel against a major attack for 24-36 hours, by which point, the reserves will be fully mobilized, enabling the IDF to conduct strategic counter-attacks into enemy territory.

In the 1980s, the IDF senior command under Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan made a far-reaching decision to organize Israeli settlers in the occupied territories into special reservist units under the "area defense" system. In so doing, he intentionally institutionalized a close link between the religiously-inspired settlers, who believe in the sanctity of Israeli land, and the IDF in the hopes of thwarting any future efforts to relinquish the occupied territories.[31] This politicization of the IDF has produced a legacy of embarrassment, including the use of an army-issued sub-machine gun by Baruch Goldstein in a 1994 attack that killed 29 Muslims and wounded another 125 in Hebron.[32]

Decisionmaking

Unable to bridge the gap between its secular and religious constituencies, the fledging Jewish state had to forego the adoption of a written constitution. Instead, Israel has relied on so-called Basic Laws passed by the Knesset over the decades to define governmental authority. In the national security field, a Basic Law governing the relationship between civilian authority and the military was not put in place until 1976, and even then only as a result of the 1973 near-disaster. This delay and the inherent ambiguity in the law underscore the degree of informality and fluidity that lies at the heart of Israeli national security decision-making.

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[30] Kimmerling, "The Social Construction of Israel's National Security," 224.
[31] Ben-Elizer, op cit., 156-157.
[32] Ibid., 157.

Ben-Gurion established the principle that the IDF is unconditionally subordinate to the civilian government in 1949.[33] In essence, the elected government—embodied in the Knesset members who comprise the Cabinet and Prime Minister—is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. However, because Ben-Gurion (and a number of his successors) simultaneously held the posts of prime minister and defense minister, the relationship between those positions and the IDF Chief of Staff has been in constant flux. This has, for example, resulted in defense ministers who, like Ariel Sharon in the 1980s, wielded enormous influence over military affairs—effectively operating as a "super Chief of Staff."

Despite the give-and-take nature of this triumvirate, by monopolizing military expertise and related staff resources, as well as exploiting the permeable boundaries between it and civil society, the IDF has enjoyed significant advantages in advancing its corporate interests over the years. For example, the IDF Intelligence Branch alone prepares the national intelligence estimate for Israel's top political leaders. Efforts to create a National Security Council, alternatively in the Defense Minister and the Prime Minister's office, as a counter-weight to the IDF General Staff have amounted to little since the late-1970s. By contrast, the mandated early retirement of IDF officers (usually by age 45) ensures that a significant number of higher ranking officers enter the civilian sector annually. In many cases, these officers "parachute" into Israeli politics with very explicit agendas. For example, when Maj. Gen. (Res.) Ori Orr became Chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, he made it clear that his mission was to protect and advance the interests of the IDF.[34]

By the same token, the IDF has learned the hard way that getting too close to policy formulation can carry a stiff price. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's utilization of IDF generals to help negotiate the implementation of the Oslo compromise with the PLO (to better exercise his control over the process and co-opt military opposition) carried with it an ideologically-driven backlash against the IDF command by the successor Netanyahu governmentt.[35]

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[33] Amir Bar-Or, "The Link Between the Government and IDF During Israel's First 50 Years: The Shifting Role of the Defense Minister," in Maman, et al, op cit., 323.
[34] Ben-Elizer, op cit., 149.
[35] Bar-Or, op cit., 330-333.

Role of Strategic Culture in Shaping Israeli Doctrine and Operations

The development of Israeli military doctrine and its execution in war, including limitations thereon, provide numerous examples of how strategic culture helps to determine the appropriate means and ends of achieving security. For example, Israel's lack of strategic depth and limited resources has historically precluded the adoption of defensive war-fighting strategies. Indeed, the very high social and economic cost of full mobilization, which puts virtually the entire male population under arms, signifies that war is all but inevitable. Such was Israel's dilemma in 1967. It had perceived Egypt's troop mobilization and closure of the Straits of Tiran as clear signs that deterrence was eroding and that another Arab-Israeli war would be needed to re-establish it.[36] The government decided that it could not sustain the IDF's mobilization beyond 10 days, and so the decision was made to launch a pre-emptive attack. Israel's inability to remain mobilized for extended periods without suffering major economic damage likewise compelled the Jewish state to escalate its strikes against Egypt in 1970 in order to break Cairo's year-long attempt to ensnare Israel in a war of attrition.

The stunning military success of the 1967 war was seen by many Israelis as divine intervention that reinforced their self-identity as "God's chosen people."[37] However, it was not matched by political foresight that could secure the peace, since the newly acquired territory carried with it an enormous and hostile Arab population. Given the collective's own experience with genocide, Jewish leaders could not bring themselves to conduct an ethnic cleansing of that magnitude.[38] Nor, could they accept a bi-national state, which would deprive the Jewish state of its raison d'etre. Hence, core ethical beliefs and identities that transcend partisan politics have prevented Israel from de jure annexation of the occupied territories.

The Jewish military ethos is also evident in Israel's response to the 1972 massacre in Munich, Germany of its Olympic athletes at the hands of the "Black September" Palestinian terrorist group. In essence, Prime Minister Golda Meir formed a secret committee that authorized the Israeli intelligence service, Mossad, to hunt down and kill Black September members involved directly or indirectly in the massacre. General Aharon Yariv, who oversaw

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[36] Kimmerling, "The Social Construction of Israel's National Security," 229.
[37] Ibid., 231.
[38] Kimmerling contends that Israel, in effect, conducted an ethnic cleansing of the territory it conquered during the 1948 war, turning some 700,000-900,000 Palestinians into refugees. *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness,* 40.

what became known as "Operation Wrath of God," echoed the "no-choice" theme and other biblical sources of Israeli strategic culture when he explained the rationale behind the decision:

> We had no choice. We had to make them stop, and there was no other way ... we are not very proud about it. But it was a question of sheer necessity. We went back to the old biblical rule of an eye for an eye...[39]

Other interpretations of what constitutes appropriate means of achieving security can be found in the IDF's handling of the 1987 Intifada. As noted above, the IDF decided that rather than risk a broader break-down in its mobilization capability—the key to Israel's overall military power and national integrity, it would accept constraints on its operations and exempt reservists from operations to suppress the Intifada. Eventually, the IDF command publicly acknowledged that it could not engage in the types of operations needed to eliminate the Intifada without violating societal norms. In essence, IDF Chief of Staff Dan Shomron declared that there was no acceptable military solution to the uprising and that it had to be resolved politically. While principled, this stand proved to be highly unpopular with Israeli political leaders and some sections of Israeli society.[40]

Impact of Strategic Culture on Israel's WMD posture

The Legacy of the Holocaust

As a small state in a hostile environment, Israel very much fits into the realist model—needing to amass power to ward off attack. As the realist framework lays out, Israel had two basic options, to develop its internal sources of power or to seek strong allies. During the critical early period of statehood, Israel actually pursued both paths. Under the highly charismatic leadership of Ben-Gurion, Israel sought an alliance with one or more Western powers that would guarantee Israel's security. It also embarked on a program to develop WMD.[41] Arguably, the latter path has proven more fruitful. Still, realism alone is insufficient in explaining Israeli behavior with respect to WMD, for Israel has staked out a unique posture—one in which it is widely perceived as possessing nuclear weapons without any official acknowledgement of that

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[39] See "Munich Massacre," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Munich_Massacre . See also, Dan Raviv and Yossi Melman, *Every Spy a Prince* (Boston: Houghton Miffilin Company, 1990), 184-192.

[40] Peri, op cit., 111.

[41] Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 66.

being the case. Strategic culture has helped shaped this and other aspects of Israel's attitudes and policies governing WMD.

The historical legacy of the Holocaust and Arab refusal to accept the Jewish state despite its victory in 1948 weighed heavily on Ben-Gurion's mind. Utmost was his fear that a future unified Arab attack—the *inevitable* "next round"—would lead to the destruction of Israel. Ben-Gurion and a very small circle of advisors immediately grasped that the only way to avert another Holocaust would be to attain the capability to inflict one. This "never again" and "no choice" mentality is evident in a private letter of Ernst Bergmann who, as the first director of Israel's Atomic Energy Commission, played a key role in helping Israel achieve its nuclear goals:

> There is no person in this country who does not fear nuclear war and there is no man in this country who does not hope that, despite it all, logic will rule in the world of tomorrow. But we are not permitted to exchange precise knowledge and realistic evaluations for hopes and illusions. I cannot forget that the Holocaust came on the Jewish people by surprise. The Jewish people cannot allow themselves such an illusion for the second time.[42]

It is the perceived lessons of the Holocaust that give full meaning to Ben-Gurion's pursuit of not just nuclear weapons but also chemical weapons. With not just the Israeli state hanging in the balance but also the fate of the Jewish people, the moral ironies of pursuing WMD, including "poison gas," [43] were subsumed by the "no-choice" rationale.

Other facets of Israel's strategic culture influenced the path by which the Jewish state pursued nuclear weapons. As Israel's pre-eminent "founding father," Ben-Gurion established decision-making patterns that endure to this day. Chief among them is the informality and secrecy that govern military decision-making in general, and nuclear decision-making in particular. Because of the highly sensitive nature of the nuclear project, Ben-Gurion kept the number of personnel "in the loop" to an absolute minimum. To underscore, he did not:

- Bring the decision to construct the Dimona reactor before the Cabinet,
- Formally consult with IDF leaders besides Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan,
- Specifically mention or leave a written record of the nuclear project by name,
- Identify the project in the national budget, or rely solely on state funds to pay for it.

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[42] Ibid., 16.
[43] Ibid., 48-49.

The nature of that sensitivity stemmed from a variety of factors including: debate amongst Israel's scientific cadre that it could build such a reactor on its own; France's own reluctance to make known its unprecedented negotiations and subsequent agreement with Israel to help build the reactor and a plutonium reprocessing facility; and, concern that if Dimona was discovered prematurely, the Arabs would launch a preventive war. This issue became even more sensitive when U.S. intelligence uncovered the project between 1958-1960, and particularly the Kennedy Administration made known to Ben-Gurion and his successors that the United States—a potentially major benefactor—was opposed to Israeli nuclear proliferation.

Israeli politicians and the public at large helped solidify this culture of informality and secrecy governing nuclear affairs.[44] Both communities accepted the notion that Israeli national security would be compromised by a public discourse on the subject. Alternative but limited consultative arrangements were devised for select lawmakers, and the combination of self- and military-censorship helped ensure that only a sterile and inconsequential public debate took place. Indeed, while Israeli media, academics, and the public at large have become more critical of the national security establishment over the years, the nuclear issue remains perhaps the last area of tacit agreement on the need to maintain pubic silence.[45]

Behind the scenes in 1962, the real debate was taking place between two schools of military thought as to the posture Israel should adopt now that Dimona was nearing completion, namely, should Israel shift its defense posture from conventional to nuclear forces.[46] A small group of protagonists from each school met with Ben-Gurion to make their respective cases. According to accounts from the participants, their debate reflected many of the functional issues faced by Western powers at the time. Among these was the argument that nuclear weapons could not substitute for conventional forces, and if the former were funded at the expense of the latter, a weakened conventional defense might actually invite (Arab) attack. Notably, this "conventionalist" school asserted that Israeli deployment of nuclear weapons would only precipitate Arab nuclearization, to Israel's overall detriment. By the same token, conventional force proponents did not rule out the need for a nuclear "bomb in the basement" that could be quickly brought to bear if needed. In the end, Ben-Gurion appears to have concluded it would be

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[44] Avner Cohen, op cit., 143-146, 147.
[45] Kimmerling, "The Social Construction of Israel's 'National Security,'" 242.
[46] Avner Cohen, op cit., 148-151.

unwise to put all of the IDF's "eggs in the nuclear basket." In the realist paradigm, Israel's pioneering and far-reaching decision not to acknowledge openly its possession of nuclear weapons represented a rare case of a state constraining its military capability in explicit recognition of the so-called "security dilemma"—wherein increasing one's own security can bring about greater instability as the opponent builds up its own arms in response.

"Nuclear Opacity" and Deterrence

Still, for Israel to derive any hoped-for deterrent effect from the possession of a "bomb in the basement," it had to strike a balance between alluding to this capability without provoking a counter-productive Arab response. Here, Israel has managed to achieve what has been described as "nuclear opacity"—the ability to influence other nation's perceptions in the absence of official acknowledgement of nuclear weapons possession and with only circumstantial evidence that such weapons exist.[47] It has done so using a skillfully devising declaratory policy that "Israel will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East"—a construct Shimon Peres apparently improvised during an impromptu private talk with the President Kennedy in early 1963, but which has become Israel's nuclear mantra ever since.[48] The cause of nuclear opacity was likewise served, intentionally or not, by the 1986 revelations of Mordecai Vanunu, a technician at Dimona who had been laid off for his pro-Palestinian views. Vanunu asserted that Israel had some 200 nuclear weapons in its "basement." The information and photographs Vanunu provided to the London *Sunday Times*—before he was kidnapped by Mossad and jailed for revealing state secrets—suggested that Israel's nuclear arsenal included sophisticated boosted-fission and thermonuclear designs.[49]

The growing concern that Saddam Hussein might use chemical and biological weapons against Israel in an effort to widen the 1991 Gulf War brought the following exchange between reporter Chris Wallace and General Avihu Ben-Nun, then-Commander of the Israeli Air Force, during a broadcast of ABC's *World News Tonight*:[50]

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[47] The phrase "opaque proliferation" was coined by Benjamin Frankel in 1987 and jointly elaborated with Avner Cohen in 1991.
[48] Avner Cohen, op cit., 118-119, 380, n. 21.
[49] Seymour M. Hersh, *The Samson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 196-207.
[50] John Pike, "Nuclear Threats During the Gulf War," Federation of American Scientists website, 19 February 1998, http://www.fas.org/irp/eprint/ds-threats.htm

Ben-Nun: "Would they really decide to send a non-conventional missile on the population of Israel? My own opinion is that that's very unlikely."

Wallace: "Because?"

Ben-Nun: "Even if Saddam Hussein is crazy, he's still not going to commit suicide."

Wallace: "And would it be suicide if he were to use chemical weapons against Israel?"

Ben-Nun: "He should think that he's going to commit suicide, I believe."

Wallace: "There has been talk that if he uses chemical weapons he might face nuclear counter-response."

Ben-Nun: "Maybe."

Wallace: "Maybe?"

Ben-Nun: "Maybe that's what he should think about."

While Ben-Nun's comments are a rare exception to the IDF's customary silence about Israeli nuclear capabilities, they underscore how deterrence is waged under conditions of nuclear opacity. While Saddam did fire some 40missiles into Israel during conflict, none of them were armed with WMD.

Under the constraints of nuclear opacity, it cannot be known with any degree of certainty what doctrine would guide the actual use of Israel's nuclear weapons. Consistent with Israel's strategic culture, however, we might expect the Jewish state to employ nuclear weapons:

- *Only after it had made major diplomatic and political efforts to warn off an aggressor.* In a severe crisis, this might entail the erosion or complete abandonment of the official Israeli policy of nuclear opacity.

- *When the political leadership perceives that it has "no alternative."* Such a perception might arise from a strategic defeat of Israeli conventional forces that left the home front open to attack—along with a sense of abandonment by Israel's erstwhile allies in the West. It could also arise from indicators that the enemy was about to use WMD against Israel. This suggests the possibility of last-resort escalation to shock the enemy into a cease-fire and nuclear preemption, respectively.

- *In retaliation for WMD use against Israel.* Given Israel's small size and the concentration of its population, it has been characterized by some analysts, and ominously by Iran,[51] as a "one-bomb state"—able to be destroyed with a single nuclear explosion. In such an event, Israeli behavior might once again be driven by biblical notions of vengeance. Metaphorically, this has been expressed as the "Samson Option,"[52] and translates into a determination by Israelis to "take down" with them as many Muslims as possible. Such a desire would likely entail measures to ensure that Israeli nuclear forces could survive a nuclear attack in such numbers, and with adequate command and control arrangements, as to strike the major population centers of the Arab states and the "outer-rim" of Iran and Pakistan, if necessary.

Non-Proliferation and Counter-Proliferation

Concerns about the acquisition of WMD, particularly nuclear weapons, by its enemies have compelled the Jewish state to devise strategies to forestall that event. Essentially, the choices lay in two areas: efforts to build norms against acquisition of WMD (i.e., non-proliferation) and active measures to disrupt physically such acquisition (i.e., counter-proliferation). Of these, Israel has clearly favored the latter.

With the advent of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, Israel, under heavy pressure from the United States, initially indicated its willingness to sign the NPT—even voting for a non-binding resolution in the UN General Assembly endorsing the treaty. However, this posturing only temporarily concealed Israel's steadfast unwillingness to surrender its "bomb in the basement," particularly in the absence of a meaningful security guarantee from the United States. Concern that Israel's failure to sign the NPT could stimulate further nuclear proliferation in the Middle East appears not to have weighed heavily, if at all, in the leadership's calculations at the time. To the contrary, Israel asserted privately to US officials that continuing ambiguity about its nuclear status served to deter Egyptian aggression. In short, Israel saw a greater threat

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[51] In December 2001, Hashemi Rafsanjani, head of Iran's influential Expediency Council, said: "If one day…the world of Islam comes to possess the weapons currently in Israel's possession [i.e., nuclear weapons] - on that day this method of global arrogance would come to a dead end. This…is because the use of a nuclear bomb in Israel will leave nothing on the ground, whereas it will only damage the world of Islam." "Former Iranian President Rafsanjani on Using a Nuclear Bomb Against Israel," Middle East Media Research Institute, *Special Dispatch,* no. 325, January 3, 2002, http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Area=iran&ID=SP32502

[52] This phrase was coined by Norman Podhoretz in 1976 and popularized by Seymour Hersh in 1991. See Hersh, op cit., 137 n.

from the Arab conventional military threat and contended that until general disarmament could be achieved, nuclear disarmament was meaningless to the Jewish state.[53]

With little trust in multilateral nonproliferation, Israel preferred direct action to disrupt enemy efforts to acquire WMD and long-range delivery systems. For example, in the early 1960's, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser recruited German rocket scientists to help him build missiles capable of striking deep into Israel. The involvement of Germans in a project designed to kill Jews triggered obvious connections to the Holocaust. Israel's response was "Operation Damocles," a covert action plan using letter-bombs and other tactics to intimidate the German scientists from providing further technical assistance to Nasser.[54] In time, the Germans ceased their cooperation the rocket program collapsed.

Two decades later, Israel launched a daring air strike against the Iraqi nuclear reactor nearing completion at Osiraq, just outside Baghdad. Publicly defending the operation, Prime Minister Begin touched on a central tenet of Israeli strategic culture:

> If the nuclear reactor had not been destroyed, another Holocaust would have happened in the history of the Jewish people. There will never be another Holocaust…Never again! Never again![55]

This strike, which is widely acknowledged as pushing back Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons timetable by a decade—before the Iraqi program was eventually ended by US and UN actions—laid the basis for the so-called Begin Doctrine, which asserted that, "under no circumstances would we allow the enemy to develop weapons of mass destruction against our nation; we will defend Israel's citizens, in time, with all the means at our disposal."[56] In reality, Israeli considerations of preemptive counter-proliferation are more nuanced and include such criteria as the magnitude and severity of the threat, the feasibility of a military strike, and the domestic and international costs of the action.[57]

Nonetheless, these issues have taken on greater saliency with the convergence of a number of troubling developments that touch on fundamental tenets of Israel's strategic culture, namely, the sudden emergence of an extremist Iranian president in 2005, Mahmoud

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[53] Avern Cohen, op cit., 293-338.
[54] Raviv and Melman, op cit., 122-125.
[55] Quoted in Hersh, op cit., 10.
[56] Israeli government statement quoted in Shlomo Brom, "Is the Begin Doctrine Still A Viable Option for Israel?," in Henry Sokolski and Patrick Clawson, eds., *Getting Ready for A Nuclear-Ready Iran,* US Army Strategic Studies Institute, October 2005, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub629.pdf
[57] Ibid, 140-145.

Ahmadinejad, who has publicly denied that the Holocaust ever happened and has called for Israel to be "removed from the page of history"; Iran's enrichment of uranium in 2006, in defiance of the United Nations Security Council and International Atomic Energy Agency; and the continuing lack of an international consensus over how to thwart Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions. Israel's response to these provocations encapsulates the preceding analysis of the Jewish state's strategic culture. Speaking in December 2005, Raanan Gissin, a spokesman for then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon noted, "Just to remind Mr. Ahmadinejad, we've been here long before his ancestors were here. Therefore, we have a birthright to be here in the land of our forefathers and to live here. Thank God we have the capability to deter and prevent such a statement from becoming a reality."[58]

While certainly not the only methodology available, further refinement and use of strategic culture may provide a useful framework for helping scholars, analysts, and decision-makers anticipate how the Jewish state might respond to the growing threat of Iranian nuclear proliferation and, if necessary, cope with the loss of its decades-old nuclear weapons monopoly in the Middle East. Indeed, by the fall of 2006, Israeli scholars and strategists were turning to this issue in earnest.[59]

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[58] Paul Hughes, "Iran's Ahmadinejad Casts Doubt on Holocaust," *Reuters,*December 9, 2005. Available at http://in.news.yahoo.com/051208/137/61g2k.html

[59] Dan Williams, "Israel Seen Lifting Nuclear Veil In Iran Stand-Off," *Reuters,* September 2, 2006. Available athttp://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=284838&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news__international_news/#

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INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

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India's Strategic Culture

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INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE DEFINED

India's strategic culture is not monolithic, rather is mosaic-like, but as a composite is more distinct and coherent than that of most contemporary nation-states. This is due to its substantial continuity with the symbolism of pre-modern Indian state systems and threads of Hindu or Vedic civilization dating back several millennia. Embedded in educated social elites, the consciousness of Hindu values has been resident in essentially the same territorial space, namely, the Indian subcontinent. This continuity of values was battered and overlaid but never severed or completely submerged, whether by Muslim invasions and Mughal rule, the seaborne arrival of French and Portuguese adventurers and missionaries, or the encroachment of the British Empire – with its implantation of representative political institutions and modern law. Indian culture is assimilative, and during the rise of nationalism under British rule, India's strategic culture assimilated much of what we think of as 20th Century "modernity". This composite culture informed India's behavior after 1947 as an independent nation.

On the surface, India's strategic culture today operates through, and affirms, a parliamentary-style republic, a secular constitution, popularly elected national and state governments, and modern diplomatic channels that are cognizant of international law and globalizing trade practices. Most of India's top leaders and civil servants are well educated, use English (and other foreign languages) in external relations, and are sophisticated in the ways of the modern world. Internally, Indian society is highly diverse, and generalizations invariably have exceptions. But there are common threads of attachment to India as India, even among the educated layers of India's religious minorities.

Discerning the underlying traits of India's strategic culture, its distinctiveness, and its resonance in India's contemporary actions may take some effort. But it can be done. There are core traits of Indian strategic culture that have persisted since independence despite shifts in India's strategic foreign and security policies during and after the Cold War, and notwithstanding the gathering momentum of the forces of globalization. However, it is foreseeable that some of the core traits may be subject to modification in the coming decades due to generational changes

in Indian leadership who are less steeped in tradition, the rise of new business entrepreneurs in high technology spheres who operate with a less parochial and more globally oriented paradigm, and the impetus of regional political leaders and upward mobility of lower strata of society who are less easily socialized in a standard strategic outlook.[1]

The provisional definition of strategic culture that was adopted in the earlier workshops[2] is serviceable enough in the Indian case, with one caveat. Before one arrives at security ends and means, the *content* of what is strategic and what is to be secured under the rubric of Indian "security objectives" must be recognized as based on metaphors of "Indian-ness" (or *Bharatvarsha* and *Hindutva*),[3] an outlook that transcends the Republic of India—the divided nation and territory—that emerged after partition from British colonial rule in 1947.

India's Strategic Culture Profile: Traits

We begin here with propositions on the traits of Indian strategic culture—listed in Table 1 below—in two sections, the first related to the conceptual origins of the traits, and the second to their instrumental or behavioral implications. These are discussed and illustrated later, in terms of specific actions and events. Encompassing these traits, and as a provision simplification, Indian strategic culture can be labeled as an *omniscient patrician* type[4]: A description of each

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[1] Stephen P. Cohen's book, *India: Emerging Power* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution), 2001, particularly chapter two, thoughtfully examines the shifts in strategic orientation and in the foreign and defense policies of India under Congress Party leaders from Nehru through his daughter, Indira Gandhi, and grandson, Rajiv Gandhi, to the rise of the more explicit promotion of Hindu culture under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Atal Behari Vajpayee. What is remarkable notwithstanding these *policy* shifts is the resilience of core values and premises of strategic culture.

[2] "Strategic culture is that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives." Note: (1) This general definition seems to be a satisfactory working definition for strategic culture in the Indian case. However, it does not seem to cover rationales for acquisitive or imperialist behavior, i.e., for "objectives" beyond security in the status quo sense, that may be present in other strategic cultures. (2) My understanding of Indian strategic culture is that it forms "loose" drivers (organic predispositions) that differentiate Indian approaches to the outside world -- but not tight predictors of behavior, specific policies, or outcomes of Indian diplomatic, military or security-related activity.

[3] *Hindutva* usually applies to Hindu revivalism in specifically religious and cultural forms, but the term is also used politically to connote traditional Indian civilization and cultural consciousness in a broader sense. Many proponents regard their promotion of *hindutva* as inoffensive because Hinduism is multifaceted, rooted in natural forces and mythologies, does not require personal adherence to any narrow doctrine, has no centralized hierarchy of priesthood or catechism, and is by its polytheist nature diverse in rituals and forms of worship, is not oriented to proselytisation and is tolerant of many paths to understanding of the divine.

[4] The Indian flavor of the *omniscient patrician* type is neatly suggested by the Sanskrit phrase, *bharat jagat guru,* or "India: the World's Teacher". A sampling of other strategic culture types, for contrast, might be: theocratic, mercantilist, frontier expansionist, imperial bureaucratic, revolutionary technocratic, and marauding or predatory.

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element of the philosophical and mythological factors that form the foundation of this culture follow.

A. Philosophical and mythological foundation:

- Sacred permeates Indian identity
- Goals are timeless, not time bound
- India's status is a given, not earned
- Knowledge of truth is the key to action and power
- World order is hierarchical, not egalitarian

B. Instrumental implications:

- India's external visage is enigmatic
- Self-interest expressed externally is impersonal and absolute
- Contradictions in the real world are natural and affirmed
- Force has its place, but guile may trump force
- Actions have consequences, good intent does not absolve injury
- Entitlement inhibits ordinary compromise (hard to split differences, truth is not at ease with quid pro quo)
- Compromise easily viewed as internal defeat (ephemeral, bends truth, dents sovereignty)
- Trust is in right knowledge and action, is impersonal, and hard to build or replenish
- Security is sedentary (encompasses a geographic setting and way of life)
- Strategy is assimilative (appearance changes, reality is constant)

Table 1. Traits of India's *Omniscient Patrician* Strategic Culture

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Sacred Permeates Indian Identity

Indian strategic culture has a collective consciousness of the sacred origins of Indian-ness that give mythological and metaphysical significance to the subcontinent as a territorial expression. Great rivers symbolize life-giving and cleansing properties in the material world and connect mortals to the gods and to the underlying cosmic forces they manifest. Enlarged by

tributaries, the Ganges River (after, Ganga, goddess of purification) is dotted with places of pilgrimage and temples from its source in the Himalayas through the plains before flowing into the Bay of Bengal.[5] India's natural (and spiritual) frontier begins in the Himalayas where the great rivers rise and follows to where they join the sea.[6] Modern concepts of security would protect this way of life and the territorial domain in which it exists. Affinity for the sacred in this society should not be confused with religious fundamentalism or literalist acceptance of religious texts. The shared outlook is not personal, not specifically faith-based nor historically-grounded, as in the Judaeo-Christian or Islamic belief systems, and not necessarily doctrinal or doctrinaire. It is rather a cosmic consciousness, timeless and also pervasive. It is the heritage of the Pundits (sages, priests and teachers).

Goals are Timeless, Not Time Bound

The collective reference points of Indian strategic culture are timeless. The thought process is a-historical [7] and generally resists being event-driven or trapped by deadlines, which tend to be regarded as ephemeral. Underlying forces matter (e.g., demographic trends, rates of economic growth) but their effects are seldom sudden or overwhelming. Official goals may be framed as five-year plans, but if they are not accomplished within that time frame, they are reset as future targets without excessive rancor or disappointment. Painstakingly decided official goals are rarely discredited or set aside entirely. Strategic objectives are embedded in a long haul outlook. Patience and persistence are rewarded over time. This public style is quite the opposite of a post-industrial business or entrepreneurial outlook, in which "time is money" and

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[5] "The Ganga, especially, is the river of India, beloved of her people, round which are intertwined her memories, her hopes and fears, her songs of triumph, her victories and her defeats. She has been a symbol of India's age-long culture and civilization, ever changing, ever flowing, and yet ever the same Ganga." Words of Jawaharlal Nehru, first Prime Minister of India, born in Allahabad on the Ganges.

[6] The other great rivers of the subcontinent that rise in the Himalayas are the Indus (rising north of Himachal Pradesh before flowing north and then southwest through the Indus valley of Pakistan to the Arabian Sea) and the Brahmaputra (literally, "God's son"), which rises in Tibet and flows east before turning south into India's easternmost extremity, and then southwest to the Bay of Bengal. The Saraswati, another great river rising from the Himalayan watershed, symbolically the most important during the Vedic period, is believed to have flowed south and west through present day Haryana-Punjab, Rajasthan, and southern Pakistan to exit through what is now the Rann of Kutch marshland. The Saraswati River has long since disappeared, probably due to geological changes. In mythology, Saraswati was a daughter of Brahma, the creator, and as a goddess is associated with speech, learning, wisdom, and the arts.

[7] History as a subject of chronological study was not indigenous (with some exceptions under Muslim rulers) but rather was imported into India and developed as an intellectual discipline only in the nationalist period.

opportunity costs are high. Business traits may operate in the private sector and in individual careers but are not dominant in the public domain.

India's Status is a Given, Not Earned

This widely held premise is rooted in collective consciousness of India's ageless and rich civilization—a natural claim to greatness. It appears to be reinforced by traditional norms of status in India's society based on ascriptive criteria (caste, family, and upbringing), not only performance-driven mechanisms. In India, caste structure still assigns status and tilts opportunity. Those who have a natural affinity for knowledge, Brahmins particularly but some other high castes as well, have been disproportionately successful in rising educationally and competing for the elected and salaried positions of government, public enterprise, and the professions that have given modern content to India's strategic culture. Those who have risen in these channels in the nationalist era have been inducted into an outlook of cultural superiority versus the outside world. This outlook holds India's importance to be singular and self-evident, an entitlement and that does not need to be earned, proved or demonstrated.[8] This trait is reflected in the doggedness of India's negotiations with the outside world. India's external affairs leadership prizes being respected. Merely being liked by officials in other countries, in interpersonal relationships, are not regarded as necessarily additive to India's prestige or critical to India's achievement of key objectives. India's strategic culture sees status as an objective reality, a matter for other state to recognize and act in accordance with, not a favor for other states to confer.

Knowledge of Truth is the Key to Action and Power

In the abstract, this proposition about knowledge of "truth" could be applied to participants in a theocratic as well as in a scientifically endowed or secular strategic culture. In this case, the reference is the truth inherited from Indian civilization. During the colonial era, India's assimilative strategic culture came to prize modern scientific and instrumental knowledge. This trait drove India's investment in modern science and engineering across the

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[8] World class proficiencies demonstrated in other quarters, as in the graduates of India's excellent engineering schools – the publicly-funded and highly competitive Indian Institutes of Technology – tends to reinforce this sense of cultural superiority in the private sector, as well as in the public sector. This is true, notwithstanding the fact that these graduates are, as individuals, exemplary high performers whose future status in most cases could be described as being earned rather than being a result of birth into families of high social status.

board, its acquisition of modern military technology and large standing military forces, its development of nuclear and missile capabilities – against international opposition, and its secret development of chemical weapons. In India's case, however, its top political leaders, the carriers of strategic culture, were versed not only in modern knowledge but in a cultural frame of reference that had metaphysical and spiritual properties. Ageless cultural and cosmic metaphors set their modern knowledge in a context that placed a premium on deep thinking, instilled a penchant for understanding the interplay of underlying forces over the long term, and inculcated values that reward patience, persistence and devotion to the national interest. This outlook aimed for deeper knowledge, a secular approximation of omniscience.

In India this trait is most pronounced among those reared in Brahmin and high caste families, whose heritage often is pedagogical, as transmitters of learning, including the legendary epics, philosophies, and cultural mores. This outlook was propagated internally in a way that structures a unique sense of obligation among peers and that is particularly instrumental to the achievement of India's strategic goals. This trait is conducive to Indian practitioners in strategic decision making and negotiations being better informed and more analytically focused than most of their external interlocutors, and also much less concerned about the passage of time.

World Order is Hierarchical, Not Egalitarian

India's strategic culture is elite-driven and patrician-like rather than democratic in inspiration or style. It sees the outside world hierarchically both in measures of material power and in attributes of intellectual and ideological competence. It recognizes and adapts to but is not intimidated by a foreign power's temporal performance. It adheres to a long term perspective in which today's impressions may prove evanescent or unreliable. This hierarchical view of the world is informed by the basket of distinctive Hindu mythologies and symbols, which emphasize both what is worthy morally and of durable practical importance. It also draws on Chanakya's (Kautilya's) secular treatise, the *Arthashastra*, which closely parallels Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*, as an exposition of monarchical statecraft, realpolitik in inter-state balances of power, and the practices of war and peace.

This is not to say that Indian strategic decision makers and diplomats reject contemporary principles of international law that subscribe to equality among sovereign nations and that give weaker countries leverage against the more powerful. On the contrary, whenever they work in

India's favor, international legal norms are exploited to the hilt. Independent India has been a strong proponent of the United Nations and active participant in the elaboration of international law. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister and a giant on the international scene adhered to some principles and policies that arguably were idealistic in their inspiration. But India's strategic culture – omniscient and patrician – is hard-nosed. It harbors no illusions about the ultimate importance of international norms in comparison with the importance of objective realities, and the role of accumulated prestige and power in fortifying sovereignty and self-determination.

INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE IN ACTION

The profile of India's strategic culture above focuses on distinctive traits rooted in India's ancient cultural and religious heritage, as they were manifested after independence. These traits may be considered the core or skeleton of India's strategic culture. They have not changed essentially since independence. The analysis that follows shifts to how India's strategic culture has been reflected in or reinforced by international interaction. Necessarily brief and selective, the analysis brings out the implementation of India's strategic culture in the face of external challenges and live security threats, including threats to internal security. This fleshes out the skeleton of India's strategic culture. It may also portray India in a way that most strategic observers can more easily relate to – in terms of geopolitics and national interest.

East-West competition during the Cold War and challenges in the immediate region – particularly India's partition and subsequent wars with Pakistan, and the 1962 military skirmish with China -- enlivened and added texture to India's strategic culture but arguably did not fundamentally alter it. India suffered from a variety of security problems after independence, but, apart from partition in 1947, it did not undergo any severe nationwide traumas of violent revolution, civil war, or military defeat and protracted occupation by a major external power. Had any such trauma occurred, it almost certainly would have forced changes in India's strategic culture. The emerging relationship of strategic cooperation with the United States and the effects of globalization within India could, conceivably, have certain transforming effects, but this remains to be seen. India's home-grown strategic culture has been carved in the minds of elites and its dominant parameters have been very resilient since 1947.

The Partition of India and Residue of Communal Conflict

India's prospective geopolitical options and threat environment were profoundly altered by the rise of Muslim nationalism, and by the partition of India and creation of Pakistan as the last acts of British colonial power. The status of Jammu and Kashmir, formerly a princely state, with territory bordering on China, was divided de facto but left unresolved and became a lasting bone of contention. Partition truncated India as a holistic geographical expression, and therefore constrained a full assertion of the underlying strategic culture in terms that the rest of the world could have viewed as self-explanatory.

Geopolitically, this partition had three profound effects. One was to limit India's natural influence on Iran, Afghanistan, and formerly Soviet Central Asia – since the newly independent state of Pakistan now existed squarely between India and these former neighbors. (East Pakistan as an enclave in the Muslim-majority districts of Bengal also complicated India's reach to the east, and thus limited its natural influence on Burma and defense-preparedness against China, illustrated by the Chinese incursion of October 1962.) Second, the fact that this partition of India was based on the Hindu-Muslim communal divide meant that the Muslim minorities dispersed in the rest of India could, potentially, rise in agitation and jeopardize India's internal solidarity. This domestic factor inhibited India's full assertion externally of what its subcontinental strategic culture implied. Third, the struggle over Kashmir hobbled India even as it threatened Pakistan, leading to recurring limited wars between India and Pakistan, and stoked Pakistan's determination to follow India down the nuclear path.

India's possessiveness of Kashmir is a natural expression, however, of the territorial premises of its strategic culture. Eastern Kashmir is part of the Himalayan chain and is thus linked to ancient Hindu holy places of pilgrimage and legendary as well as historical Indian empires in the same region. Tenets of India's strategic culture hold that religious differences can be absorbed and do not contradict Indian-ness as a unifying feature of those reared together in the subcontinent. This tenet which is at odds with Pakistan's emergence as a homeland for Muslims of the subcontinent implicitly calls the basis for Pakistan into question. The timelessness of Indian goals provides a perspective on Kashmir that frustrates negotiations and suggests to bystanders as well as those involved that India cannot help but prevail in the long run.

The consensual understanding in Indian strategic culture of the virtue of the long view, exercising patience as temporal trends shift, has enabled India's top leadership to build Indian strength internally to mitigate Pakistan's initial curtailment of Indian power. India's greatest strategic feat in the first three decades of independence was to head off further potential fragmentation of its territory both from Muslim disquiet after partition and from language-based subnational movements in southern and western India. The Congress Party-led system defused a grass-roots movement of Tamil-speakers whose demands once verged on independence. It also overcame agitations by Gujarati- and Marathi-speakers by giving them separate linguistically-based states in India's federal system.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of this successful internal political integration of India in the early years. India's internal diversity made it uncertain at the outset whether unity could be preserved. But the political victories of integration were cumulative and underwrote India's success with representative and electoral institutions and economic stability. They gradually strengthened India's capacity to cope not only with the challenges from Pakistan but to overcome or manage a series of other secessionist threats, such as the Sikh Khalistani movement in Punjab in the 1980s and the Naga, Mizo and other tribal independence movements on the periphery of Assam in eastern India. Achieving internal unity was also instrumental in recruiting and modernizing India's military services, expanding the scientific, industrial and manufacturing sectors of the economy, and in projecting India's image abroad of a rising regional power, if not prospective great power.

Pakistan's capacity to challenge India politically and militarily was curtailed by India's first strategic military operation in the 1971 War, in which Indian forces invaded and forced the surrender of Pakistan's military forces in East Pakistan, and enabled the Bengali nationalist movement there to set up the newly independent state of Bangladesh. This action reflected the realpolitik strands of India's strategic culture, dismembering Pakistan as a sovereign entity after preparing and using offensive force decisively. India limited its risks in this venture by concluding the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty with Moscow, although this impaired its much touted doctrine of non-alignment.

Pakistan's loss of the eastern province and acceptance of the 1972 Simla Accord set back residual hopes to win its claims to all of Kashmir by military means. Thereafter, Pakistani military leaders tacitly recognized the fact of India's conventional military superiority over

Pakistan. Pakistan's nuclear weapons program was started secretly in 1972, but this was not known until some years later. Pakistan's military challenge over Kashmir went silent for the next eighteen years. Pakistan's relatively compliant posture after the 1971 War tended to confirm India's view of its strategic culture tenets, especially its sense of superiority, hierarchical view of world order, and conception that truth and power go hand in hand over the long haul. India also managed internal communal problems relatively well in the 1970s and 1980s, reinforcing an organic sense of national unity no longer vitally challenged by linguistic or regional differences, with minor exceptions in India's northeastern tribal areas.

Cold War, the Superpowers, and China

Modern India's independence coincided with the Truman Doctrine and the onset of the post-war U.S.-Soviet rivalry in Europe and the Near East, but predated the communist revolution in China and the Korean War. India's foreign policy doctrine of non-alignment reflected its distinct world view and sense of status as well as its political fragility after partition. Just as the newly formed United States feared "entangling alliances," India's leaders consciously avoided explicit alignment with the West or the Soviet bloc, fearing this would lead to dependency and that foreign quarrels might exacerbate divisions within Indian society. Thus, despite affection for British parliamentary institutions, law and literature – in which two generations of India's nationalist leaders had been steeped – India's strategic culture urged political distance from the West, to seal out European or American neo-imperialist influence. In India's nationalist narratives, the British had, after all, employed "divide and rule" strategies to control the subcontinent and had, ultimately, caved in to Muslim agitation to partition India. Non-alignment was a secular rationale for an anti-imperialist or hands-off posture.

Sealing out Western and Soviet political and military influence had to be done in such a way, however, as to leave open the flow of modern scientific knowledge and high technology. Here there were tradeoffs. India's strategic elite believed, correctly, in its own intrinsic capacity to absorb and master modern scientific knowledge and technology, provided it had open access. This elite held a nearly ideological determination, however, for India to be self-sufficient in modern science, technology and means of national power. By endorsing an autarchic approach to defense production and high technology development, and by demanding technology flows as a

matter of entitlement, the Indian establishment initially retarded national progress in those same sectors.

Non-alignment was conducive to the aims of domestic autarky, but externally, in the context of the Cold War, it was a tool for geopolitical leverage. It was a means of playing the Soviet Union off against the West, and vice versa. Although this approach required patience and a long term perspective, it also enabled India to squeeze high technology offers and military equipment supplies from both sides in the Cold War, more often than not at lower than market prices. While this approach failed to open a flood of technology transfers for India, its steady benefits seemed sufficient in the minds of the strategic culture elite at the time to validate their premises.

Only later did it become obvious that with India's heavy reliance on public sector industries for defense, atomic energy, electronics, and space technologies, the practice of squeezing of technology and arms from both sides during the Cold war also had negative effects on India's capacity to achieve self-reliance in the most sophisticated areas of technology. India's indigenous development of high technology was much slower, more painful, and less successful than public rhetoric implied. India's shared strategic culture inhibited open criticism and remedies for these shortcomings, until the Cold War had passed, and, indeed, have operated that way until very recently.

India's non-alignment was replete with contradictions that illustrate the strategic culture's capacity to absorb inconsistencies. Non-alignment was never a scrupulous policy of neutrality. Over time, Indian foreign policy tilted toward the Soviet Union and the Communist Bloc, even when the Soviet Union intervened militarily abroad, as in Afghanistan. Although touted today to cement US-Indian strategic partnership, India's professed "democratic values" failed to align it with the West during the Cold War.

Several pragmatic reasons for India's pro-Soviet leanings can be adduced. First, U.S. containment policy favored Pakistan, along with Turkey, Iran, and the northern tier Arab states as allies against Soviet expansion. Indian leaders viewed Western military assistance to Pakistan as threatening to Indian interests. The Soviet Union, for its part, routinely supported India's position on Kashmir against Pakistan in the United Nations. Second and less widely understood, India and the Soviet Union had a tacit common interest in managing Muslim populations peacefully within their respective borders. India's early proclivity for socialism, more Laskiite

than Leninist in inspiration, had the same secular objective as Moscow's nationalities policies, of denying space for "political Islam". Third, India's pro-Soviet tilt gave India leverage in Moscow to forestall Comintern temptation to stoke subversion of India through external financing of India's communist parties. India's international support for Soviet positions was also instrumental in negotiating Soviet arms supply at bargain basement rates.

India's relationship with China was not so easily managed, despite initially solicitous Indian policies. India attempted to cultivate a friendly relationship with Communist China, assuming that it would, as a less developed Third World nation with anti-colonial reflexes, sympathize with India's leadership of the non-aligned movement. This appeared to work for a time. But in a humiliating blow to India's omniscient patrician stance in October 1962, China sent troops through Himalayan passes into poorly defended eastern India. This was apparently meant to convey to India that its inflexibility on negotiations over disputed Himalayan borders (based on British colonial era claims) must change. Having made its political point, China unilaterally withdrew behind its own border several weeks later. India's sense of entitlement to those northern regions made India inflexible in its territorial dispute with China, setting up a contest of wills between governments that remains, like the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan, unresolved till today.

China's 1962 military incursion into India humiliated India and stimulated the construction of access roads and fortifications in the Himalayas as well as a sustained Indian conventional arms buildup. By the early 1970s, was well prepared to block such an incursion by China. Meanwhile, China became a source of military assistance and arms transfers to Pakistan and, until recently, a supporter of Pakistan's side in the Kashmir dispute. India's strategic culture helps explain India's resistance to settling what it considers entitlement issues by pragmatic compromise and its determination to wait the opponent out. China's patience likewise appears to be a match for India's.

The 1962 Chinese incursion temporarily brought India closer to the United States, although Washington was preoccupied at the time by the Cuban Missile Crisis. President Kennedy offered India military assistance to improve its defenses against China, and some assistance was delivered. India briefly considered longer term offers but finally walked away because of real or supposed strings attached. The same trait of resistance to pragmatic compromise – India's inability to deal with quid pro quos in a two way relationship – operated

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on one side with China as an adversary, and on the other side with the United States when it was eager to help. These outcomes can also be attributed in India's strategic culture to the traits of superiority, presumed deeper knowledge and a profound sense of entitlement. Admittedly, the unilateral Chinese withdrawal removed the immediate pressure on India. A different test would have applied had China extended and fortified its occupation of that Indian real estate in 1962.

U.S. overtures to India in the 1960s bore other less well-known fruit, for instance, technical intelligence cooperation in monitoring China's development and testing of nuclear weapons. China's first nuclear detonation was achieved in October 1964. Obtaining technical data on that first test and subsequent Chinese nuclear tests was facilitated by U.S. instrumentation, placed with Indian permission in the Himalayas. Those programs were kept out of public view and are not well known even today. India's strategic culture may have reinforced a deep suspicion of U.S. intelligence, particularly of the CIA, with allegations frequently surfacing in India's Parliament. India generally held US overtures for military cooperation at bay. The strategic culture favored a self-imposed Indian demand for self-sufficiency long before this was technically realistic. India also disparaged the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, a troubling undercurrent in relations from the Kennedy to the Nixon administration.

Protagonists of India's strategic culture shaped and propagated a strategic myth that further poisoned U.S.-India relations at the time of Pakistan's dismemberment at Indian hands in December 1971. Indian leaders claimed, and the Indian press amplified, reports that a U.S. carrier task force had entered the Bay of Bengal to relieve pressure on, or perhaps rescue, Pakistani military forces in East Pakistan. The media campaign suggested that the task force was nuclear-equipped and posed a direct U.S. nuclear threat to India as a crude act of coercive diplomacy, aiming to compel India's disengagement from the conflict with Pakistan. This rendition of the event instilled a shared memory in the Indian elite that the United States might go to extreme lengths, even threatening India with the use of nuclear weapons, to protect Pakistan.[9] This theme was replayed from time to time later as a justification for India's steps towards nuclear weapons.[10]

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[9] A US carrier task force did transit through the region at that time, from the Pacific Ocean and around the subcontinent to the Arabian Sea. But its mission was not to threaten India, nor to intervene in the India-Pakistan War, nor to rescue the Pakistani military in East Pakistan. Its course did not change to go north into the Bay of Bengal as such. Rather, the US task force had been assigned to follow and monitor a Soviet naval flotilla that had sailed south from Vladivostok in the Pacific Ocean and then headed west into the Indian Ocean, and finally north

Covert Nuclear Proliferation and Declared Nuclear Weapons

The "knowledge-as-power," "goals-are-timeless," and mystical features of India's strategic culture have been epitomized in Indian nuclear programs and policies, both in how India presented these to the world, and in how it evaluated Pakistan's nuclear weapons progress in later years. The U.S. use of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 was a defining moment for elites around the world, and certainly in India. The dualism of creative and destructive potentials in splitting the atom resonated with India's strategic culture's reflection of mythology and the Hindu pantheon – especially with Brahma "the creator" and Siva "the destroyer". Among Indian scientists, the challenge of divining the timeless mysteries of particle physics and quantum mechanics evoked traditional consciousness of cosmic forces, fusing the realm of the sacred with action in the real world. India's scientific community moved actively into this area even as the new nation gained independence and formed new political institutions.

India's top political leadership sensed the importance of mastering the laws of nature for the development of the nation and the opportunity to lift its huge population out of poverty to a respectable standard of living. India's scientific community viewed this as an entitlement that they would take charge of, dedicating themselves to India's transformation and elevation to a status on par with the great powers of the world. Nuclear energy and technology was by no means the only area of modern scientific endeavor that Indian leadership aimed to master, but it was a uniquely potent one that could be expected to have a galvanizing effect on the rest.

India's policy of ambiguity on nuclear weapons is so well known today that there is a tendency to assume that was India's posture was intentionally ambiguous from the start. This overstates the case. India's leaders, political and technocratic, sought to master this technology. A few among them, but certainly all the atomic energy commission scientists, knew that full mastery of nuclear technology would bring nuclear weapons capability as a matter of course. The construction of plutonium production and chemical separation facilities began early, in the mid-1950s, and plutonium separation was demonstrated in 1965, just 17 years after independence.

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towards the Arabian Sea. If the US naval movement had a political-military message, it was to the Soviet Union, cautioning it not to intervene in the South Asian conflict.

[10] Although the Indian political decision secretly to prepare for the 1974 nuclear explosive test probably was made as early as 1969, and not as a reaction to the events of 1971, some commentary after 1974 implied that the test was a delayed reaction to the type of threat India faced in the so-called "intervention" of the US naval task force.

That said, the top political leadership in the early years, particularly under Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure, believed India's moral and political stature would gain from emphasizing the peaceful aspects of nuclear energy and assuring the world India opposed nuclear weapons. This was consistent with the strategic culture tenets of India's deeper, moral knowledge and desire to enhance its world stature by setting an example that might encourage the nuclear weapon states to change course and begin disarmament.

After China went nuclear in 1964, the rationale for India setting an example of weapons abstinence was less compelling, but not given up entirely. India had been one of the primary advocates of a nuclear nonproliferation treaty at the outset, yet declined to join the NPT when the negotiations were completed in 1968. India's third prime minister, Indira Gandhi, authorized the scientists to complete the technical preparations for the so-called "peaceful nuclear explosion" (PNE) around 1969. Her motivations may have been partly to remove doubts about her own political leadership, and partly to show the world—in those years India's international image had been slipping—that India had the requisite will and capability, and its status should not be discounted.

That nearly four and a half years elapsed before the actual nuclear test is surprising. There may have been a precursor test device that failed. The policy of ambiguity, however, was firmly established by the May 1974 nuclear explosive test. The test program broke the news to the leadership in Delhi telephonically with the code words: "the Buddha smiles." India's overt declaration of nuclear weapons came with the nuclear tests of 1998, after another 24 years, illustrating the timeless goals and patience of India's strategic culture.

The strategic culture traits of knowledge as power and long haul endurance were reflected in the determination to avoid international controls over the nuclear program, even at the cost of being denied open nuclear commerce and technology transfer. India's indigenous construction of nuclear power plants for urban electricity supply proceeded, but at a painfully slow rate, and with plants of small size and dubious safety. Forty years after construction began on the first two power reactors at Tarapur, India's nuclear power plants today still make up barely 2.6 percent of its electric power supply.

The elements of intellectual superiority and status as an entitlement in India's strategic culture have been reflected in the Indian leadership's disdain towards Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. Admittedly, starting later and with far smaller resources, Pakistan's nuclear

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research and power program was almost miniscule in comparison with India's. Pakistan's options for obtaining nuclear technology through normal channels were even more constrained than India's after the 1974 test, since that test precipitated a steady tightening of Western nuclear export controls on sensitive and dual use technologies. Focused on developing nuclear weapons after the 1971 War, Pakistan's major breakthrough was in production of highly enriched uranium (HEU), beginning about 1979, using covertly imported materials and indigenously assembled gas-centrifuge equipment. Pakistan developed a plutonium production reactor and chemical separation plant much later, coming on line in the late 1990s.

India's success in winning Bush Administration acceptance of an Indian civil-military nuclear separation plan between July 2005 and March 2006 is an extraordinary example of India's negotiating steadfastness, and vindication of the omniscience and entitlement traits of its strategic culture. This case further illustrates how that strategic culture resists ordinary compromise and quid pro quos on matters of strategic value, enabling its practitioners to hold out indefinitely if necessary.[11]

Economic Factors and Decision Making

India's strategic culture was well reflected in India's economic decision making until 1991, when a shift in policy towards liberalization occurred that might be considered adaptive. India's centralized economic policies after independence were heavily influenced by the socialist teachings of Harold Laski at the London School of Economics and the Soviet Union's central planning and command economy model. India's western trained economists were first rate and optimistic about macro-economic management. Nehru and his socialist-leaning Congress party associates imparted to the Planning Commission a view that India's poverty and presumably weak industrial trade competitiveness could best be overcome by allocating resources in

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[11] In order to secure a breakthrough with India on broader strategic cooperation, the Bush Administration gave up a series of ingoing positions and essentially accepted Indian demands that two fast-breeder reactors and 8 conventional power reactors, as well as all nuclear research and development facilities be available to the Indian "military program" and exempt from IAEA safeguards. India also rejected the ingoing US proposal that it accept a moratorium on further production of fissile material. India agreed only to retain its *voluntary* moratorium on nuclear testing, to *participate* in international negotiations on a fissile material cutoff treaty (if such negotiations resume), and to place 8 unsafeguarded power reactors and future reactors under *limited* IAEA safeguards. India accepted the principle of perpetuity of these safeguards only on condition that foreign fuel supply agreements for these and other already safeguarded reactors are also maintained for perpetuity. This will require major changes in long-standing US nuclear export legislation. Against the background of the history of US positions on nuclear nonproliferation and on India's past proliferation record, India's success in pushing through such an unyielding position is remarkable.

accordance with five-year plans and closely managed import restrictions and controls on international currency. This perspective was deeply suspicious of "capitalism," "profit," foreign investment, and market principles.

This suspicion of profit and openness to international capital flows was not only a Marxist fashion but fit the omniscient patrician strategic culture like a glove. The science management culture from abroad reinforced the domestic strategic culture that accorded deeper knowledge to the nationalist elite on how to make the economy grow, and a paternalistic responsibility for distributing the benefits equitably to the masses for overall welfare. This meant relying on public sector industries for key sectors, especially in infrastructure and defense – railroads, ship-building, electric power generation, coal mining, steel production, heavy machinery manufacturing, telecommunications, and essentially all defense production. India's economic performance in the agricultural sector was incrementally improved by using genetically improved seeds and expanded irrigation – leading to the "green revolution" in Punjab and Gujarat. But India's centrally-planned industrial performance was so tepid through the first three decades that critics dubbed it the "Hindu rate of growth."

India's reliance on public sector management went hand in hand with tight restrictions on foreign capital and high tariffs on imported goods. The approach slowed the growth of indigenous private firms in the domestic economy, and the absence of external competition meant poor quality control in modern Indian manufacturing (e.g., automobiles, capital equipment), typically making products uncompetitive abroad. It was the view at the top that the political leadership knew what was good for India and that it would excel in an autarchic environment that prevailed until the 1980s, and retarded India's economic development. In this respect, the strategic culture was a severe handicap to Indian performance. It was only the dramatic export-led economic expansion of the Asian tigers (South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia) and the extraordinary trade performance of "communist" China throughout the 1980s that finally sank into Indian consciousness and made the government willing to adopt a change in course.

While Indian policy makers began a series of small economic and trade reform steps in the late 1980s, the 1990-91 financial crisis over hemorrhaging foreign exchange and the adverse effects on Indian workers overseas from the first Gulf War against Iraq forced a shift in economic and trade policy that became cumulatively important in the 1990s. This shift began

essentially as a technocratic policy of liberalization of India's business tax and trading license environment. India opened the doors to its own entrepreneurs importing and exporting more freely, even when it required use of foreign exchange. The government also moved in steps towards the convertibility of the rupee and the dollar, and began, in phases, to open up various sectors of the economy to foreign investment – though foreigners were not permitted to take majority control or buy out Indian firms. This liberalization was fortunate to occur when it did, because it enabled the Silicon Valley developments in the computer and information technology industry in the United States to flow to Asia and take root in India quickly – where education had provided a large labor pool of English-speaking engineers and other technically able workers, and enabled India to capture big chunks of the offshoring of software development and database service activities of many Western and multinational corporations.

One of the ironies of India's excellent performance in the computer software and information technology industries is the vindication of the Indian strategic culture tenets that emphasize deep knowledge, knowledge as power and the enhancement of status this gives India in international circles. Yet these market-driven economic developments would seem to be at odds with the basic emphasis in the strategic culture on traditional mythology, symbolism, and timeless values. Nothing could be more driven by time and money than the production schedules of the information technology businesses. Yet there is a link with cosmic and timeless values metaphorically in the infinite potential for invention and elaboration of information technology applications. That said, the very success of Indian entrepreneurs abroad and at home in these booming business areas also has a burnishing effect on India's sense of status and those traits of Indian strategic culture that suggest India is rightfully superior in what it brings to the modern world. Thus these dynamic new developments tend, in the final analysis, to reinforce certain aspects of the strategic culture, even as they challenge others, e.g., the autarchic impulses. But just as ironically, the challenges—which may be reflected as real world contradictions—are easily reconciled by an outlook that is comfortable in its essence with contradictions.

WAR AND PEACE THEMES IN INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

India's strategic culture has drawn selectively from various threads of its past civilization values and larger political culture. The dominant war and peace elements of India's strategic culture lean more to the realpolitik side of the mythological and religious spectrum, and away

from the pacifist themes that had gained prominence, temporarily, as a result of publicity about Mahatma Gandhi's influence on the nationalist movement. But both sources of inspiration, a readiness for war and pacifist inclinations, have validity in the strategic culture. The emphasis may shift in facing different challenges over time. The guardians of strategic culture are comfortable with contradictions. The nature of this dualism and occasional tension is worth discussing further, especially inasmuch as Nehru's leadership on foreign policy and India's role in the NAM drew evoked moral sympathy in the West for the Gandhian image of India.

Popular Indian mythology draws heavily on the great epics, the Ramayana (life story of godlike prince Rama) and the Mahabharata (literally, the story of "greater India" as epic struggles between good kings and demonic adversaries—their ancestries usually connected with the gods). These epics exist in written form (in Sanskrit), but their transmission to ordinary persons has largely been through local theatrical and dance presentations (in regional languages), seasonal festivals, certain temple rituals and, contemporaneously, in Bollywood movies. What the epics teach, implicitly, is that good and evil forces collide, and that the good usually prevails—albeit often after long suffering and many losses. The "good" is demonstrated both in exemplary acts of personal morality (including heroism and romantic fidelity) and also in accounts of good governance withstanding evil forces. The epics are set in the context of kings, courts, and rivalries that lead to wars, epic in scale and duration. Resort to force in these rivalries is treated as natural. Some of the stories involve god-kings employing extraordinary weapons—thunderbolts, for example—that raise connotations of weapons of mass destruction. War is not necessarily celebrated as such, but deadly combat certainly is approved as acceptable when good fights evil. These popular images are shared by the Hindu elite and population as a whole—either as beliefs or as metaphors—and are important unifying features of a diverse society.

Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, an ancient treatise on principles of statecraft, was written by an actual person who served Maurya dynasty monarchs. The writing is down to earth—not connected with the epic legends. But it is embedded in the same composite civilization and reflects a period of the Indian subcontinent when rival Hindu kingdoms were the norm. Its advice to rulers addresses the use of force, poisons (or toxins and chemical weapons), and tools of espionage, in detail. It presupposes that wars will occur and therefore provides guidance on how to construct military alliances with other states in the Indian state system, for the survival or safety of the home state.

Gandhi shunned the use of force and opposed violence in politics. It should be added that his philosophy and technique of non-violent resistance to the British was, nevertheless, politically steely and unyielding. His concept of resistance was *Satyagraha*, or "force of truth." Gandhi's approach was philosophical and reflected "reform" variants of Hinduism (more in touch with devotional books, such the Bhagavad Gita, or "Song of the Lord," and the philosophical Upanishads, as well as Jain religious teachings) more than the popular and mainstream Hindu tradition. His philosophy emphasized reverence for human life (Jainism venerates all life forms, human, animal, and vegetable) and a sense of horror in killing or shedding blood (*ahimsa*). This perspective is based on the belief of the continuity of all life, or the great chain of being, and interprets all life forms as incarnations. While it would be going too far to say today's guardians of India's strategic culture hold these Gandhian precepts dear, his espousal of Satyagraha, or unyielding "truth-based resistance," has an appeal. Gandhi's reverence for life would also be acknowledged as the preferred high ground, but Gandhi's doctrinal opposition to violence and the shedding of blood would not be considered as an absolute value, only a preferred norm when peace prevails and nothing vital is at stake.

Defining the Enemy

How does Indian strategic culture conceptualize "the enemy"? The enemy is an alien (organized) force whose aims or actions would deprive India of its sacred territory or subvert its society by undermining its civilized values. While the strategic culture is ahistorical in its conscious roots, proponents of Indian strategic culture have ample historical reference points for enemies over the last millennium.[12] Chinese empires as such did not figure prominently in this South Asian history. Rather, the subcontinent was invaded over land by successive waves of Muslim armies, typically from the northwest -- through what we know today as Afghanistan. Muslim rulers overthrew numerous pre-existing Hindu monarchies in north and south India, and established their own hegemony by force, conversion and institutions of government.

The Muslim invader is a particularly potent example of an enemy in India's concept. British leaders probably had an advantage in gaining Indian allegiance for the British Empire in India because the British unseated the Moghul emperors and contained other less powerful

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[12] Alexander the Great, the Macedonian-Greek invader from the northwest, left important archaeological traces two millennia ago in the subcontinent, but apparently no deep socio-cultural imprints that manifest themselves in Indian society and culture today.

Muslim kingdoms (e.g., the state of Hyderabad) that had established themselves in the subcontinent. In theory, Indian society had long absorbed alien intruders by their assimilation of its superior teachings, traditions and civilized values. Muslim beliefs and practices were less permeable and could not be absorbed and transformed. Rather, monotheistic Islam challenged Hindu society and belief by its efforts to stigmatize and purge polytheism and idolatry, and by its egalitarian inspiration (status is earned, not given) which set it against the caste system and therefore the underlying Indian social order. The Muslim impulse to convert unbelievers also challenged Hinduism directly. Over time, Muslim governments adapted to Indian society by restraining forcible conversion, and by recruiting Hindus from urban and upper castes to help run government and from middle and lower castes to fill out military ranks, thereby avoiding incessant internal warfare and rebellion. But Muslim hegemony was imposed, and this mutual accommodation was inherently unstable.

The European invaders came by sea, not over land, combined superior means of waging war with commercial and missionary interests, and carried the early forms of modern scientific and industrial knowledge. The British did better than the Portuguese and French in making territorial inroads in the subcontinent. British encroachments initially were efforts to protect their commercial enclaves. Modern and English-language education came with missionaries, and over time Indian graduates from affluent Indian families continued their educations in the United Kingdom and occasionally elsewhere in Western Europe. As the British colonial system expanded, it introduced modern law and courts, civil and police services, and eventually elective representative institutions. British rulers and colonialists were also "enemies" but mainstream Indian coexistence with the British was not quite so unstable because it displaced or eroded former Muslim power and brought advantages of mechanized transport, industry, science and modern education. Culturally predisposed to the concept of knowledge brings power, Indian upper classes took to the new educational system, and eventually used their knowledge and political organization to gain experience in self-rule and then agitated for independence. The Western colonialist enemy was still alien but softer and more tractable, particularly when his own means of superiority were mastered and turned against him. Inasmuch as the nationalist movement ultimately forced the British to grant India independence, this principle of mastering new knowledge was a particularly potent source of inspiration for modern Indian strategic culture.

Chinese Rivalry

China did not figure prominently as a classical enemy, but a sense of Indian rivalry with China has emerged. In antiquity, the Himalayan wall stood in the way of invasions from the northeast. Buddhism which emerged in India as a reform of Hinduism migrated east by osmosis, not conquest, into Tibet, China, Japan, and most of Southeast Asia. Classical Chinese empires were oriented to the great rivers and agricultural resources of central and eastern China, and simply did not have reasons or energy to invade India and never threatened to colonize India. Tibet was a forbidding high altitude province, lightly populated, and of no special resource significance. The British did press frontiers outward and concerned themselves with boundary issues, including with Tibet. Since boundaries were never settled by formal agreements with imperial China, however, this legacy for India was a source of potential disputes. While India has been concerned with the sources of the great sacred rivers, as discussed earlier, it did not challenge Chinese interests in controlling Tibet, but did claim territory along the Himalayan watershed that would encompass the sources of most of these rivers (the Brahmaputra where it rises and flows east in Tibet being an important exception). Given partition and the creation of Pakistan, and the dispute over Kashmir, India's concern about defining and defending these frontiers was easily understandable. But it did provoke a Chinese military incursion into eastern India in 1962, a political act inasmuch as China just as quickly withdrew rather than fight any prolonged war.

Insofar as China figures in Indian strategic culture as an "enemy," it has several components. First, India is sensitive to China's appeal as an alternative ancient civilization, with a large modern population, that is almost bound to collide with India in seeking influence for security and commercial purposes in adjacent regions. Second, China managed to go nuclear relatively quickly, presenting a possible threat of nuclear blackmail. Third, China has been a major source of military and nuclear assistance to Pakistan, giving China an ally or partner on the Arabian Sea. This concern about China as a potential enemy is easily explained both in Kautilyan and modern balance of power terms. China's nuclear and missile assistance to Pakistan have been serious sore points. Nevertheless, concerns about China are not overplayed in Indian strategic culture. Rather, India's sense of civilization and antiquity is seen as at least equal (if not superior) to China's, and India has been prudent in seeking a non-confrontational

relationship with China in which trade channels and other forms of exchange are growing and are being used to limit China's reliance on Pakistan.

Revolutionaries and Terrorists

In the post-independence world, India has faced another "enemy" (actually a series of enemies) that wage guerrilla war against India, including in contemporary parlance by "terrorist" means. In most cases, these threats are from non-Hindu tribal societies seeking independence or autonomy from India. There are also Maoist (Naxalite) revolutionary groups within India dating back to the 1960s that have fomented insurrection in efforts to establish local bastions of power in Bengal, near Nepal, in Andhra Pradesh, and most recently among aboriginal tribes in Chhattisgarh in central India. The newer variant of terrorism is that of Islamic extremist organizations operating from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh, or within Indian-held Kashmir, with occasional operations deep in the Indian interior. India has had to cope with terrorist "enemies" long before the post-9/11 War on Terrorism, and has a great deal of experience with them. The components of India's strategic culture that are particularly relevant to countering terrorism are timeless goals (patience) and knowledge of truth is power (a superior understanding of the correlation of forces). India's increasing public identification of Islamic extremist groups and terrorist attacks with Pakistan since 9/11 is a major inflammatory factor in that relationship, given nuclear arms on both sides.

Note that Indian leaders do not single out "Islam" or "the Muslim world" as categorically the "enemy." To do so would stigmatize and alienate 12-13 percent, or some 130 million, of India's own population. India's relationship with the Arab countries and the larger Muslim world, however, has been complicated and uneasy. India's strategic culture has no soft corner of admiration for Islam. India long withheld diplomatic recognition from Israel because it was expedient to have close relations with the more powerful Arab countries, particularly Egypt and Iraq. Iraq has been important to India as a source of imported energy. Similarly, India has worked hard to foster closer relations with Iran, partly, as with Iraq, for secure maritime energy supply. This Indian policy of preemptive diplomacy with Arab and Muslim countries in the Middle East naturally weakened Pakistan's natural influence over the same countries.

Only in 1992, with Saddam Hussain under international constraints, the Cold War over, and the importance of the NAM diminished, and in need of better relations with key Western

countries, did India establish formal diplomatic relations with Israel. The Indian-Israeli relationship has since become very close. Even so, India has worked hard to maintain positive relations with Arab and Muslim countries. These particular shifts are not foreordained by, but are consistent with, India's omniscient patrician strategic culture, which puts a premium on the long view and on cultivating counter-alliances with Pakistan's neighbors, and with external powers that can arrest extremist infiltration into India, whenever possible.

STRATEGIC CULTURE AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

India's strategic culture is not enthusiastic about the acquisition and prospective use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, but is fatalistic about their proliferation and potential use. This allows for a view of WMD as a regrettable evil, but one among many cosmic evils that cannot be wished away by political fiat and that can be adjusted to, as necessary. It is noteworthy that India secretly developed and stockpiled chemical weapons, denying their existence until the Chemical Weapons Convention was concluded, leading to a sudden turnabout. In all likelihood, India has done intensive research on biological weapons, especially on virulent diseases like smallpox and pathogens like anthrax, as a hedge against unforeseen contingencies. India's strategic culture affirms mastering each of these scientific thresholds, however unpleasant their wartime consequences may be.

The project of developing nuclear weapons despite policy level ambivalence in the early years and against intense international pressure was shepherded by a strategic enclave that reflected India's strategic culture.[13] After India went nuclear openly in 1998, the policy declarations that some observers confuse with nuclear doctrine were often enigmatic, conveying the impression that India was reluctant to embark on nuclear weapons but forced into the arena by circumstances. India's declarations of a posture of "minimum credible deterrence" and a nuclear "no first use" policy in 1998, coupled with a posture of not physically deploying combat-ready nuclear forces were conveyed to the world as India's conscious decision not to repeat the alleged mistakes of the Cold War superpowers: vastly excessive arsenals, destabilizing arms races and warfighting doctrines. The omniscient patrician strategic culture thus reached one of its more distilled and refined high points in justifying both to the Indian public and the rest of the

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[13] For a somewhat romanticized but entertaining account of the movers and shakers in India's bomb and missile programs, with operational glimpses into Indian strategic culture, see Raj Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace: The Secret Story of India's Quest to be a Nuclear Power* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2000).

world why India had to acquire and demonstrate nuclear weapons. India would continue to teach the world, but have its cake too.

Embracing contradictions, a selection of India's strategists serving on an official advisory board produced in August 1999 a so-called "draft nuclear doctrine" (DND) paper which was released to the public. This DND paper provided a rationale for credible nuclear deterrence based on the features of a full-fledged triad, with postulated requirements for massive retaliation against nuclear attack and the survivability of the force and its surveillance and command and control components under attack. It omitted only strategic anti-missile defenses.

While this DND paper was not then adopted as official policy, in January 2003 a press release "on operationalizing India's nuclear doctrine" announced that a civilian National Command Authority (NCA) and triservice Strategic Forces Command (SFC) had been established. The press release said that a review had been conducted of India's nuclear "command and control structures, the state of readiness, the targetting strategy for a retaliatory attack, and operating procedures for various stages of alert and launch." It did not stipulate that nuclear forces had been deployed nor did it describe force characteristics, service assignments, the adversaries targeted, or the nature of alert procedures. The release did, however, undermine the NFU policy with two loopholes. It indicated first that India would not bar the use of nuclear weapons in retaliation against a *chemical or biological* attack on India or on Indian forces. Second, it promised Indian nuclear retaliation not only against a nuclear attack on Indian Territory *but on Indian forces anywhere*.

India's strategic culture proponents of nuclear weapons were comfortable castigating the nuclear arsenals and policies of the Western powers and the Soviet Union and differentiating India's posture as a minimum deterrent leashed by a no first use policy, on one hand, and in emulating a superpower-like, expansive nuclear triad with built in capacity for absorbing strikes without fatal compromise of survivability on the other. The 2003 release emulated recent U.S. and former Soviet postures of prospective nuclear retaliation for any WMD attack on territory or forward deployed forces.

India's enigmatic approach to strategic nuclear forces suits, on the side of minimalist rhetoric, the nation's still limited economic resources and the long lead times it faces for deployment of credible nuclear forces vis-à-vis China. On the side of its long term ambitions, the template is a guiding framework for long-range air-, sea-, and land-based nuclear strike forces. If

India proceeds to accomplish these maximalist options, the cryptic language it employs today will be described in retrospect as visionary and prophetic, the natural expression of an omniscient patrician. If it falls short of those objectives or the world changes so fundamentally that they are no longer believed needed or are overtaken by events, shifting course is just as easily explained by reverting to the minimum deterrence language and the usual rhetorical bows to postulated nuclear disarmament objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

India's omniscient-patrician type of strategic culture is a complex mosaic of sacred myths and legends and memories of ancient states and civilizations, with the subcontinent as a geographical frame of reference, and with a modern overlay of nationalism supporting a vision of Indian greatness and expectations that India be treated with unmitigated respect. With leadership strata that traditionally prized knowledge as a source both of natural understanding and practical power, the elite carriers of strategic culture adapted modern science and technology to their own purposes in building and fortifying an independent nation. The carriers of that outlook retain a sense of intellectual and moral superiority, however, that is sensitive and reactive to external disapproval or other challenges. The *shapers* of India's strategic culture are primarily nationally recognized political party leaders, senior bureaucratic officials, and notables in the leading universities, think tanks and the press. With few exceptions, senior military officers have not been shapers of Indian strategic culture, although they are naturally involved in the implementation of government policies that reflect strategic culture. The *carriers* of India's strategic culture include politically oriented professionals at large, in the legal and educational systems, and in public sector industries.

While Indian strategic culture supports ethical views that accord respect for human life, good governance, just administration of law, and social morality in ways that dovetail naturally with contemporary international norms of human rights, that strategic culture is flexible rather than doctrinally prescriptive on specific issues of war and peace, foreign or defense policy, and possession and use of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The strategic frame of reference provides a matrix in which leaders can more readily chart out more explicit national policies and postures, and that enables a complex society to develop forms of consensus

to support those initiatives, or, alternately, that permits forces of opposition that gain popular support to resist or reshape those initiatives.

India's strategic culture posits the defense of India as a geographical expression and Indian values as a society. It does not stipulate a general basis for Indian imperial ambitions (e.g., beyond specific territories in dispute in the Himalayan and Kashmir regions), although it contains a certain ambivalence about the finality of independence in Pakistan and Bangladesh. It posits no absolute friends or enemies, although real conflicts with Pakistan and China tend to put both in the inimical category as a practical matter. Apart from the defence of India as such, the most predictable effects of Indian strategic culture are in international policy areas that are perceived to enhance or detract from India's international status and aspirations for recognition as a great power, and in India's unforgiving negotiating style in the same status-related arenas.

India's strategic culture did not, for instance, specifically foreordain that India should acquire a large conventional arsenal or nuclear weapons. But that strategic culture certainly provided a matrix of intellectual and emotional bases for India's major conventional and nuclear weapons acquisitions, once these became affordable or available, and once they were connected by decision-makers to India's standing and credibility with the other major powers. By the same token, India's strategic culture does not foreordain specifically whether, or exactly how, India will actually use nuclear weapons, if it suffers a nuclear or other WMD attack, or believes it faces an imminent threat of nuclear or other WMD attack. Nothing in the strategic culture would prohibit nuclear response. Elements of the strategic culture could be invoked for moderation, but could also be subject to debate based on other strands of strategic culture.

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PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

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Pakistan's Strategic Culture

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Pakistan is a vital U.S. partner in the global war on terrorism. This is not the first time that shifting international security priorities have brought the United States into close cooperation with Islamabad. Most notably, Pakistan provided crucial support in the Cold War struggle against communism, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s, and it re-emerged as a "frontline state" in the covert campaign to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan during the 1980s. After each of these periods, however, the U.S.-Pakistan partnership broke down under the weight of transformed international conditions and diverging strategic trajectories. Because of this troubled history, and also due to current uncertainties about Pakistan's domestic stability and commitment to democratic reform, its close military ties to North Korea and China, its fractious relations with India and Afghanistan, and its checkered history of control over nuclear weapons technology, some observers warn that Pakistan is "at best a reluctant supporter of U.S. goals and at worst a potential long-term adversary."[2] Even if one accepts the Bush administration's rationale for a "broad-based, strategic, and long term" U.S.-Pakistan partnership,[3] there are good grounds to scrutinize what kind of strategic partner Pakistan may become, especially after Washington sides more closely with India and pursues a de-hyphenated policy toward South Asia.

It is a very challenging task to explain what motivates a country's foreign and defense policies and to predict how it will behave in the future, especially when the country in question is so distant—culturally as well as physically—from one's own nation. Fortunately, international relations theory has something to offer here. Several well developed arguments can be utilized to inform the analysis of a country's foreign policy. But unfortunately, there is no consensus on which of the many candidate approaches is most useful for explaining and predicting a given

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[2] Leon T. Hadar, "Pakistan in America's War against Terrorism: Strategic Ally or Unreliable Client?" *Policy Analysis* (Cato Institute) no. 436, 8 May 2002, http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa436.pdf. See also Alfred Stepan and Agil Shah, "Pakistan's Real Bulwark," *Washington Post*, 5 May 2004, p. A29.

[3] The White House, "Fact Sheet: United States and Pakistan: Long-Term Strategic Partners," 4 March 2006, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060304-4.html.

country's defense strategies. In particular, structural realism (or neo-realism) and strategic cultural analysis offer potentially important insights into Pakistan's past, present, and future security policies. Rather than attempting to describe Pakistan's strategic preferences and behavior through one approach, selected *a priori*, this essay identifies and tests each of these competing theories of foreign policy, along with one other analytical approach, against Pakistan's actual behavior. The underlying objective is to determine the value of strategic cultural analysis relative to realism and other explanatory approaches.

After describing the general contours of Pakistan's national security policy, I infer predictions from three separate theoretical approaches and then evaluate these predictions against the historical data on two specific Pakistani policies: (1) Pakistan's decision to pursue nuclear weapons, and (2) its post 9/11 decision to reverse its support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and more generally support the United States in the global war on terrorism. These two policy decisions are vitally important to Pakistan's national security today and in the future. Thus this analysis is designed not only to test leading international relations theories, but also to generate important insights about the key features of Pakistan's current and future strategic conduct.

I argue that neither the neo-realist nor the strategic cultural approaches can adequately explain why Pakistan has pursued its main natioanl security policies. Neo-realism has the most explanatory power, but it cannot explain all of the phenomena that are of immediate interest to policymakers. However, a realist approach, supplemented with a variant of strategic cultural analysis, can fill the most important gaps in our understanding of Pakistani security policy. The specific theoretical model that I find to have the most explanatory power is one that combines elements of realism with elements of culture, but also adds a third dimension: the critical role of individual elites who identify and respond to structural (realist) incentives in a manner consinent with culturally accepted modes of behavior, but who also redefine and transform the strategic culture in line with both their own strategic preferences and their understanding of the room they have to maneuver within the constraints of the international security system. In other words, these elites, whom I call *mythmakers*, operate within the contraints of both the international environment and their nation's political culture, but they are not helpless prisoners of these two confining structures; they have some degree of freedom to reorient and expand the internal and

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external boundaries of their behavior.[4] But, it should be noted that the more a mythmaker tries to push out either of these boundaries of traditional behavior, the greater the risk he runs domestically and internationally.

Although this combined explanatory approach sacrifices some elegance and parsimony, and thus may not be particularly attractive to some international relations theorists, it serves the needs of policy analysts better than most candidate approaches. It enables observers to identify— and potentially influence—three sets of variables: (1) the regional and international security context of the country in question, (2) its strategic culture, and (3) the perceptions and political actions of national mythmakers. After developing the argument in general terms, I outline several policy implications for the United States related to Pakistan's future strategic conduct.

COMPETING THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Scant theoretical attention has been devoted to understanding Pakistan's foreign and defense policies, but two approaches in vogue in the international relations theory literature could be specified to illuminate certain of Pakistan's main strategic preferences and behavior. Because these two approaches—neo-realism and strategic cultural analysis—are likely to generate contradictory predictions about Pakistan's security policy, my goal is to test their utility in explaining key features of Pakistani policy.[5] Beyond that, I also show what we should take away for our ongoing project to improve the explanatory power and policy relevance of strategic cultural analysis.

Neo-Realism

Realism is the most time-honored approach for understanding general patterns of state behavior in an anarchic international political system. The main expectations of neo-realism, the version of realism popularized by Kenneth Waltz, are (1) the recurrence of balances of power in

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[4] An early statement of this approach can be found in Peter R. Lavoy, "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation," *Security Studies*, vol. 2, nos. 3/4 (Spring/Summer 1993): 192-212. A more recent application is contained in Peter R. Lavoy, *Learning to Live with the Bomb: India, the United States, and the Myths of Nuclear Security* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming 2007).

[5] Liberalism (or neo-liberalism) is another popular theoretical approach in the IR literature, but I do not draw on it for my analysis of Pakistan's strategic behavior because the liberal arguments that war does not pay and that cooperation can ameliorate the security dilemma are not particularly useful for illuminating Pakistan's national security policy. For background on neo-liberalism, see Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (New York: Harper Collins, 1977); and Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford Kupchan, "Concerts, Collective Security, and the Future of Europe," *International Security* 16, no. 1 (1991): 114-61.

the international political system; (2) the tendency of states to balance, or strengthen themselves in the face of external military threats; and (3) the inclination of states to imitate one another and to become socialized to the world political system.[6] Power balancing is the oldest concept in the literature on international relations; it is central to all brands of realism.[7] According to Stephen Walt and Kenneth Waltz, countries usually balance against serious foreign threats to their security; rarely do they *bandwagon*, that is, accommodate or appease the countries making these threats.[8] Countries can balance "internally"—by relying on their own military capabilities—or "externally"—by relying on the military capabilities of allies.[9] Statesmen generally prefer internal balancing because it leaves less to chance and less to the will of others.[10]

Strategic Culture

There is no consensus on the precise definition or characteristics of strategic culture, but most authors would agree, at least in general terms, with the definition offered nearly 30 years ago by Jack Snyder, who described strategic culture as "the sum total of ideals, conditional emotional responses, and patterns of behavior that members of the national strategic community

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[6] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), 128. The first prediction concerns an outcome of international interaction and thus is less directly relevant to the task of explaining state behavior.

[7] On balancing, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; and Stephen M. Walt's applications of realism to the problem of alignment: *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); "Alliance Formation and the Balance of Power," *International Security* 9, no. 4 (Spring 1985): 3-43; and "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia," *International Organization* 43, no. 2 (Spring 1988): 275-316.

[8] Walt argues that states balance not because of an unfavorable redistribution of international political, economic, or military capabilities (Waltz's argument), but rather in response to threats stemming from the identity, aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive military might, and perceived intentions of adversaries. *The Origins of Alliances*, 21-26, 263-66; "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation," 279-82, 311-13.

[9] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 168. On the tradeoffs states make in choosing between arms and alliances in their security policies, see Benjamin Most and Randolph Siverson, "Substituting Arms and Alliances, 1870-1914: An Exploration in Comparative Foreign Policy," in *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, ed. Charles F. Hermann, et al. (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 131-57; Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73," *International Organization* 45, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 369-95; and James D. Morrow, "On the Theoretical Basis of a Measure of National Risk Attitudes," *International Studies Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (December 1987): 423-38.

[10] Waltz, *Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 2. On this point, see also Keith Krause, *Arms and the State: Patterns of Military Production and Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 15-16. For inventories of the balancing options available to states, see Edward Vose Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955), ch. 3; and Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliances, Balance, and Stability," *International Organization* 45, no. 1 (Winter 1991): 128.

have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other…"[11] Stephen Rosen's approach is very similar, observing that strategic culture is made up of the shared "beliefs and assumptions that frame … choices about international military behavior, particularly those concerning decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable."[12] Ian Johnston provides one of the more recent and widely embraced approaches to the concept. In contrast to the material context of realism, Johnston portrays strategic culture as "an ideational milieu which limits behavior choices." This milieu is shaped by "shared assumptions and decision rules that impose a degree of order on individual and group conceptions of their relationship to their social, organizational or political environment."[13]

While most observers agree that strategic culture has something to do with the "shared beliefs and assumptions" of a nation, or at least of a national security elite, analytical problems and divergences arise when it comes time to operationalize this concept and test its utility. Nearly all adherents to strategic cultural analysis recognize that in order to understand a nation's strategic culture—its shared beliefs and assumptions—the observer needs to immerse himself or herself in that nation's history, attitudes, and conduct. In short, the observer needs to practice good area studies. The methodology employed typically is derived from cultural anthropology and political sociology. One does not have to go as far as Clifford Geertz, who argued that "As interworked systems of construable signs (symbols), culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly—that is, thickly described."[14] Thick description is necessary for strategic cultural analysis, but it is insufficient for the explanatory task we have at hand.

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[11] Snyder completed this definition with the phrase, "with regard to nuclear strategy," but that more limited definition was crafted for the particular problem he was analyzing. Jack Snyder, The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options (Santa Monica: Calif.: RAND Corporation, 1977), R-2154-AF, 8.

[12] Stephen Peter Rosen, *Societies and Military Power: India and its Armies* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), 12. Rosen focuses on the impact of the norms and structures of Indian society (Indian culture) on India's strategic organizations (e.g., the army, the officer corps, the soldiers).

[13] Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 45. See also Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[14] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). For an excellent survey of the intellectual progression of strategic cultural analysis, see Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture and National Security Policy," *International Studies Review* 4, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 87-113.

A reasonable explanation—as opposed to a purely "thick" description—for a country's key strategic policies is possible. However, it requires a more precise analytical approach, one that singles out specific variables and examines their causal impact. In the next section, I provide a brief, "semi-thick" description of the cultural context of Pakistan's security policy, and then identify six key characteristics of Pakistani strategic culture. Some observers may quibble with this list of strategic cultural characteristics, but at least the meaning I give to Pakistani strategic culture is clear. This approach allows me to compare the explanatory value of strategic culture with neo-realism and with the myth-making model that I develop in the following section.

PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

Pakistan is one of the least secure countries on the planet. As a reflection of its obsession with security, Pakistan now spends close to $4 billion per year on defense, which ranks 28th highest in the world. More tellingly, it ranks 19th in the world in terms of military expenditure as a percent of GDP (at just 5 percent).[15] All other indicators of military capability show that Pakistan has one of the the world's largest and best equipped armed forces, which of course possess a steadily growing arsenal of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. But statistics hardly do justice to the country's intense feelings of insecurity, which are rooted deeply in the past. Emerging out of British colonial India as a homeland for a sizeable portion of the region's Muslim population, one could say that Pakistan was born insecure.

The Roots of Insecurity

The antipathy between the Pakistan and India dates back to August 1947 when Britain partitioned the religiously and ethnically diverse Indian empire into two independent states. India was to become a secular democracy and Pakistan was intended to be a democratic homeland for South Asian Muslims. Because Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs lived in virtually every part of the British colony, more than six million Muslims migrated to Pakistan, and more than four million Hindus and Sikhs moved to India.[16] Communal tensions often flared into violence. More than

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[15] U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The World Factbook, 2005*, http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html.

[16] Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1957-1948* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 264.

one million migrants were slaughtered, and the religious minorities remaining behind often were treated poorly.[17]

Bitter memories of partition remain etched in the minds of older Indians and Pakistanis, and even the youth hold strong views because of jingoistic accounts passed down through state-controlled educational texts and the media (especially the vernacular language media). Still worse, Pakistanis fear that India rejects the "two-nation theory" that was the logic behind partition. India's active support for the creation of Bangladesh (which had been East Pakistan) in 1971 reinforced Pakistan's view that New Delhi aspires to re-unify the Indian empire under its control, or at least reduce Pakistan to a position of weakness and subservience like India's other neighbors (with the notable exception of China).[18] Because both countries are vulnerable to religious and ethnic fragmentation,[19] moreover, each side fears that the other will exploit its social and political cleavages to undermine the legitimacy of the state.

For Pakistan, the greatest concern in this regard is in the territory bordering Afghanistan, where Pashtun tribesmen periodically have threatened to withdraw from the Pakistani state to form a greater Pashtunistan nation with their kinfolk across the border in Afghanistan. To this very day, the Afghan government does not recognize the Durand Line, the 1500-mile border the British colonial government created in 1893 to demark the northwest boundary of its Indian empire. Intermittent Pak-Afghan border clashes took place during the 1950s and 1960s, and they have reoccurred recently as Afghan and Pakistani troops deployed along the border for counter-terrorist missions have occasionally fired on each other.[20] Pakistan does not fear outright attack from the much weaker Afghan military, but India's support for Afghanistan's claims on Pakistani territory have long created unrest among Pakistani military planners, who dread the

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[17] Stanley A. Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 348.

[18] By contrast, Indians believe that Pakistan justifies its existence by vilifying India, and cannot live in peace with its large and prosperous neighbor.

[19] Pakistan's population is 97% Muslim. About 77% of the population is Sunni; 20% are Shi'a. Language is often a reliable indicator of ethnicity. The breakdown of languages that Pakistanis speak is: Punjabi 48%, Sindhi 12%, Siraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10%, Pashtu 8%, Urdu (the country's official language) 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, English (official and lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries), Burushaski, and other 8%. CIA, *The World Factbook, 2005*, http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html.

[20] For a comprehensive analysis of Pak-Afghan tensions over the Durand Line, with particular emphasis on the destabilizing effect of ongoing combat operations against Al Qaeda and the Taliban, see Tariq Mahmood, "The Durand Line: South Asia's Next Trouble Spot," master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, June 2005, http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/research/theses/Mahmood05.pdf.

prospect of a major two-front war. This is the larger context in which Pakistan formulates its security policies.

The Kashmir Dispute

The dispute that caused three of the four Indo-Pakistani wars and continues to be a major source of regional tension is a direct product of partition. In 1947, Hari Singh, the Hindu maharajah of the mainly Muslim state of Kashmir, refused to join either India or Pakistan. India wanted Kashmir to solidify its identify as a pluralistic democracy, but Pakistan coveted the territory to complete its identity as a democratic and secure homeland for the region's Muslim population. When tribal militants from Pakistan's North West Frontier Province tried to "liberate" Kashmir, Pakistan's fledgling army supported them. Under pressure from the tribal invaders, on one side, and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's new Indian government, on the other, Hari Singh acceded to India. Fearing that the loss of Kashmir might spur other ethnic groups inside India to press for autonomy, New Delhi sent its own army to crush the tribal rebellion. War then broke out between India and Pakistan. When it ended in stalemate in 1948, Kashmir was divided, leaving India with two-thirds of the territory, including the populous and picturesque Vale of Kashmir. Since then, Pakistan has tried various methods, from diplomacy to the direct use of force, to wrest the remainder of Kashmir from Indian control. For the past fifteen years, it has covertly supported a violent insurgency that—together with India's heavy-handed response—has ravaged Kashmir. Pakistan portrays the insurgency as a freedom movement and India calls it state-sponsored terrorism. Each argument contains an element of truth.

Having claimed the lives of tens of thousands of Kashmiris, and more than once bringing India and Pakistan to the brink of war, the Kashmir dispute has become an unstable, emotionally charged source of nuclear danger.[21] No matter how dangerous the threat of nuclear war has become, India and Pakistan are unable to agree on an effective political process to reduce tensions or resolve the issue. Pakistan welcomes either direct negotiations with India or third-party mediation; but New Delhi opposes what it views as Pakistani ploys to politicize and internationalize the issue. Indian government officials insist on talks only with Kashmiri groups

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[21] For background, see Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003).

that reject violence and even then, only in the context of integrating them into the Indian republic. Concerned outsiders have proposed various schemes to bring India and Pakistan to the negotiating table, but so far neither side will abandon its self-serving, hard-line position. The threat and actual use of force remain the dominant forms of "dialogue" between India and Pakistan on Kashmir.

Dangerous Military Practices

Some observers predicted that nuclear weapons would stabilize India-Pakistan relations and make war less likely because any conflict now could escalate to nuclear use.[22] This logic caused earlier nuclear powers to act cautiously with one another; however, the opposite appears to hold in South Asia. India and Pakistan exhibit care in handling and even speaking about nuclear forces, but each side engages in risky conduct at the conventional and low-intensity levels of conflict, which creates pressure for escalation to full-scale war. According to New Delhi, the problem began with Pakistan's support for armed insurgents supporting Kashmiri independence. The Indian government estimates that these insurgents have committed over 50,000 terrorist incidents claiming 13,000 Indian lives since 1989.[23] Islamabad retorts that more than 60,000 Kashmiri civilians have been killed in "a reign of terror and repression" by over 600,000 Indian troops.[24] Although each side's claim probably is exaggerated, the advent of nuclear weaponry has not diminished the violence in Indian-held Kashmir or along the Kashmir Line of Control (LOC), where Indian and Pakistani forces routinely have traded small arms and artillery fire.

In fact, all of this border skirmishing and guerilla violence creates strong pressures for conventional warfare. The Indian government mobilized its armed forces in December 2001 to compel Pakistan to withdraw its support for the Kashmir insurgency and possibly to launch an attack if Pakistan failed to withdraw. Although Indian officials claimed that Pakistan continued

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[22] The leading proponent of this view is Kenneth N. Waltz, in Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 109-24. See also Devin Hagerty, *The Consequences of Nuclear Proliferation: Lessons from South Asia* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998); Peter R. Lavoy, "South Asia's Nuclear Revolution: Has It Occurred Yet?" in The *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime: Prospects for the 21st Century*, ed. Raju G. C. Thomas (New York: St. Martin's, 1998), 260-71; and more generally, Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).
[23] Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Fact Sheet on Jammu and Kashmir, 20 May 2002, http://meaindia.nic.in/.
[24] Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Jammu and Kashmir Dispute," http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/foreignaffairs-ministry/policies/kash-issue/kash-issue.jsp.

to support "cross-border terrorism," Prime Minister Vajpayee ultimately decided not to initiate a war. However, the Indian and Pakistani armed forces continue to prepare for the possibility of conflict. If war starts, Pakistan's leadership might feel compelled to ready nuclear weapons for use, and Indian officials might follow suit, thus creating a situation where one wrong move could trigger a nuclear war.

Key Elements of Pakistan's Strategic Culture

This essay does not undertake a comprehensive description of Pakistan's strategic culture. But based on this brief survey of Pakistan's strategic history and context, six general characteristics of the country's strategic culture can be outlined (in decreasing order of importance).[25]

Opposition to Indian Hegemony

Pakistani political and military elites are unified in their opposition to Indian hegemony as a basis for a peaceful and durable regional order. The very notion of an independent Pakistan was premised on the right of South Asia's Muslim population to enjoy the benefits of national sovereignty free from the domination of the region's much more populous Hindu population. After gaining independence, the Pakistani elites have treasured their hard-won sovereignty and resisted every Indian effort to curtail their freedom of action. Pakistan's political and military competition with India therefore forms the centerpiece of its regional and international diplomacy, its military planning, and its arms acquisitions.[26]

Primacy of Defense Requirements

Regardless of whether the Pakistan government was run by civilians or the military (which has ruled for most of Pakistan's existence), defense has always been the country's top budgetary priority. Although Pakistan continues to experience intense poverty, poor infrastructure, a weak educational system, and nearly non-existent social services, defense

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[25] This list is similar to the outline of Pakistan's strategic priorities found in Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "Pakistan's Strategic Culture," in *South Asia in 2020: Future Strategic Balances and Alliances*, ed. Michael R. Chalmers (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, November 2002), 305-28.
[26] For background, see Peter R. Lavoy, "Pakistan's Foreign Relations," in *South Asia in World Politics*, ed. Devin T. Hagerty (Boulder, Colo.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

expenditures run very high, ranging from 73 percent in 1949-1950 to around 25 percent in recent years.[27]

Nuclear Deterrence

Pakistan has waged a determined campaign to acquire and modernize an operational nuclear deterrent ever since its military loss to Indian forces in the 1971 East Pakistan war and the creation of Bangladesh. Despite Pakistan's detonation of nuclear explosive devices in May 1998 and numerous test flights of various missile delivery systems, the expansion, diversification, and security of its deterrent remain key priorities, especially as Indian military might continues to grow. Pakistan's deterrence posture is predicated on a strong conventional force capability and demonstration of its willingness to run high risks and pay high costs to deter aggression.

Acceptance, But Not Reliance, on Outside Assistance

To compensate for India's vast advantages in manpower, wealth, and military equipment, Pakistan consistently has sought out foreign supplies of modern weapons and military training. The United States was its main arms provider during the 1950s and 1960s and again in the 1980s,[28] but Islamabad turned to China and other weapons sources in the 1970s and again in the 1990s when Washington imposed conditions on arms transfers that would inhibit Pakistan from pursuring nuclear weapons, which Pakistani defense planners deemed essential for their competition with India.

Stability on Pakistan's Western Borders

From the first days of Pakistan's existence, tense relations with Afghanistan created not only problems for Pakistan's foreign policy but also its internal security. Early on, Afghanistan refused to recognize the newly independent Pakistan and continues to this day to challenge the

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[27] Rizvi, "Pakistan's Strategic Culture," 314.

[28] Pakistan and the United States signed a mutual defense agreement in May 1954. The following year Pakistan joined two of Washington's three most important regional defense alliances—the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Baghdad Pact (which in 1958 evolved into the Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO). Between 1955 and 1965, Washington provided Pakistan with more than $700 million in military grant aid. U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan between 1947 and 2000 reached nearly $11.8 billion. K. Alan Kronstadt, "Pakistan-U.S. Relations," *Congressional Research Service Issue Brief*, 3 September 2003, document no. IB94941, 1.

legitimacy of the "Duran Line" that demarcates the Pak-Afghan border. A larger concern has been ethnic Pusthun politics in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, which borders Afghanistan. Pusthun separatism became the largest threat to Pakistan's internal stability at the time of independence and remains a long-term worry of Pakistani defense planners. As a result, Pakistani leaders always have preferred "friendly" clients to the West—whether they were the compliant warlords of the 1980s or the Taliban of the 1990s.[29]

Identification with Conservative Islamic Causes

The emphasis on Muslim nationalism that brought Pakistan into being continues to play an important role in shaping its national identity and foreign relations. In the years following independence, Muslim nationalism became more than a nationalist ideology, it became a rallying cry for Islamic solidarity and Muslim causes all over the world. At times, Pakistan has tried to be seen as a leader of the Islamic world, but these efforts have upset some countries, which saw themselves as more fitting international leaders or which did not place as much emphasis on Islam as a domestic or international political force. Thus while Islam remains a major part of Pakistan's political identity, it generally is not a dominant theme in Pakistan's foreign and defense policies.

STRATEGIC MYTHS, MYTHMAKERS, AND MYTH MAKING

Before testing the neo-realist and strategic culture approaches against Pakistna's actual strategic conduct, a third approach must be introduced, one which I believe has potentially more explanatory power over many national security questions. My approach emphasizes the strategic beliefs and political behavior of *strategic mythmakers*. The argument is that a country is likely to adopt a certain national security strategy (such as developing nuclear weapons, or allying with another country) when certain national elites who want their government to adopt this strategy do several things: (1) emphasize their country's insecurity or its poor international standing, (2) portray this strategy as the best corrective for these problems, (3) successfully associate these beliefs with existing cultural norms and political priorities, and (4) convince policy makers to accept and act on these views.

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[29] For background, see Feroz Hassan Khan, "Rough Neighbors: Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Strategic Insights*, 2, no. 1 (January 2003), http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/jan03/southAsia.asp.

This argument provides insight into the sources of key national security debates as well: if enterprising and well-connected strategic elites manage to cultivate a national—or at least a governmental—consensus around the notion that not pursuing the strategy in question (for example, not developing nuclear weapons, or not aligning with a certain foreign power) would make the country *less* secure or *less* influential, then the government is not likely to initiate or continue this course of action. At any given time and in any given country, of course, various strategic myths will co-exist and compete with rival strategic myths.

The success of one myth over another depends on three factors: (1) the substantive content of the strategic myth and its compatibility with existing cultural norms and political priorities; (2) the ability of the mythmaker to legitimize and popularize his or her beliefs among fellow elites and then to persuade national leaders to act on these beliefs; and finally (3) the process whereby institutional actors integrate the popularized strategic myths into their own organizational identities and missions.

Theoretical Assumptions

The emphasis on strategic myth making is not intended to downplay the significance of actual security threats or real status considerations as powerful inducements for countries to seek certain defense policies. On the contrary, it is hard to imagine any responsible government official calling for a significant national security strategy (such as acquiring nuclear weapons) without a prior interest in solving some pressing military or political problem. Realists are correct: the real world does matter. Strategic myths and the existence of genuine security threats are closely correlated.

The chief distinction between the mythmaker approach and the neo-realist or strategic cultural perspectives described above lies at the level of analysis. Whereas security and cultural accounts focus on the prior events or conditions that are believed to trigger a certain strategic behavior, I emphasize the arguments and the political maneuvering that link the triggering conditions to the subsequent decision to adopt this policy and then to the actual process of implementing this policy. Three elements are singled out in my approach: (1) the composition, scope, and logical consistency of the strategic myths themselves, (2) the identity, background and skills of the strategic mythmaker, or carrier of these beliefs; and (3) the process of strategic

myth making—of legitimizing, popularizing and institutionalizing strategic arguments about national security policy.

This argument rests on two assertions that are not necessarily rejected by neo-realists, but which certainly are not emphasized by them either. The first assumption is that the beliefs of individuals matter for foreign policy making and international behavior.[30] Analysis of foreign policy decision making is not required to understand all security problems, but choices and strategies about certain very important policies, such as acquiring nuclear weapons, are not adequately explained without reference to the beliefs of decision makers concerning the political and military implications of these policies. This is true because of the multiple and only partially predictable political, economic and military consequences of developing, deploying, threatening to use, or actually using nuclear weapons. Second, talented and well-placed experts can play a crucial part in helping to create, diffuse and perpetuate strategic myths.

Types of Strategic Myths

The argument developed above posits that the behavior of various states is influenced by the beliefs that officials in these states hold about national security affairs. To illustrate what kinds of beliefs matter the most, consider the case of nuclear weapons development. Two kinds of beliefs play especially important roles in the development of nuclear weapons. The first beliefs are the myths of nuclear security and nuclear influence. These are beliefs about the desirability of acquiring nuclear weapons. The other set of beliefs concerns the technical, economic, and political feasibility of building nuclear bombs as well as the utility of eventually using these weapons for military purposes. Figure 1 lists these sets of beliefs and summarizes their main characteristics.

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[30] The claim about decision making is well known: the goals, judgments and perceptions of policy makers mediate foreign policy decisions. From the vast literature on foreign policy decision making, see especially Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Ecological Perspective on Human Affairs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); Yaacov Y. I. Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1990); and Alexander L. George, "The Causal Nexus between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behavior: The 'Operational Code' Belief System," in *Psychological Models in International Politics*. ed. Lawrence S. Falkowski (Boulder: Westview, 1979), 95-124.

Belief Type	Subject of Belief
Nuclear Myths	
Nuclear security	Relationship between nuclear weapons acquisition and the political and military dimensions of national security
Nuclear influence	Relationship between nuclear weapons acquisition and the status and political influence of the state in international affairs
Auxiliary Assertions	
Technical feasibility	Capacity to overcome technical difficulties associated with developing nuclear weapons; possibility for industrial spin-offs.
Economic feasibility	Capacity to meet financial costs associated with developing nuclear weapons; possibility for lucrative industrial spin-offs.
Political feasibility	Capacity to mange political problems associated with developing nuclear weapons; impact on relations with important states.
Military utility	Capacity to develop operational nuclear weapons and to devise options for their effective use in military operations.

Figure 1 Categories of Beliefs about Nuclear Weapons

The key variables in the strategic myth-making approach, as described above, are summarized in Figure 2.
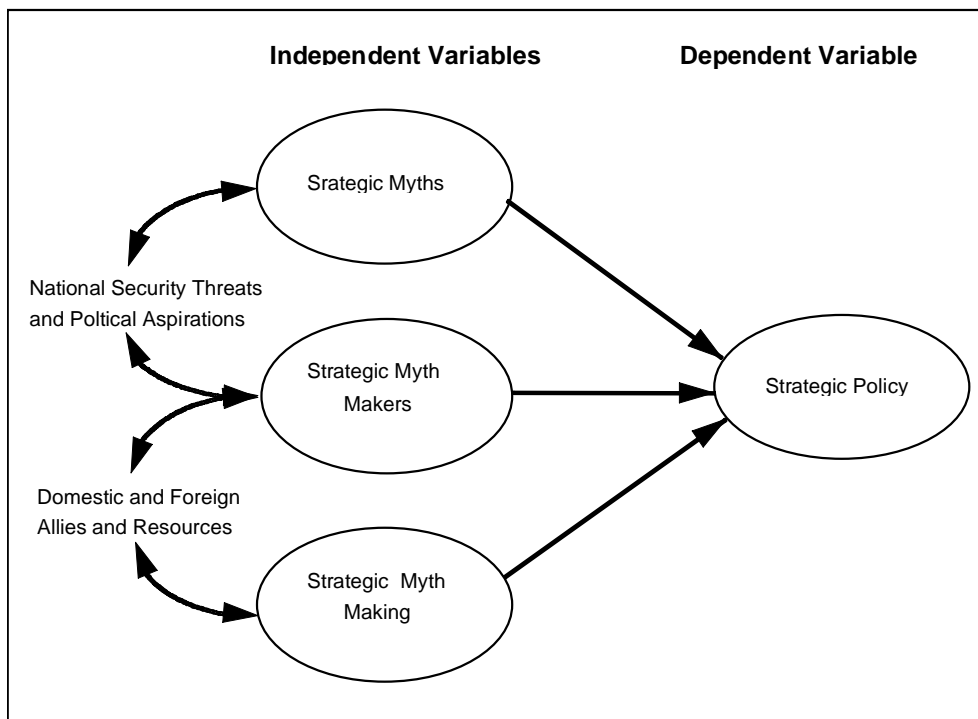

Figure 2: Categories of Strategic Beliefs

PAKISTAN'S SECURITY POLICY ANALYZED

Having described the essential features of three analytical approaches that can be employed to account for Pakistan's security policy, the task now is to specify predictions from these three separate theoretical approaches and then evaluate these predictions against the historical data on specific Pakistani security policies. I choose two especially pertinent Pakistani policies for very brief, illustrative analyses: (1) Pakistan's development of nuclear weapons; and (2) Pakistan's post 9/11 decision to reverse its support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and more generally support the United States in the global war on terrorism.

Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program

Arguably, the most important—and controversial—strategic choice Pakistan made in its five-plus decades of existence was to develop nuclear weapons. It managed to obtain nuclear weapons and maintain a close relatonship with the United States, the stalwart if the nuclear nonproliferation regime. Looking at the issue of whether Pakistan should have developed nuclear weapons, and when, the three theoretical perspectives developed in this essay lead to very different predictions:

Neo-Realism

According to the neo-realist model, which posits that countries generally try to balance against security threats first by developing their own military might and only secondly by forming alliances, Pakistan should have launched a crash program to develop nuclear weapons when it learned that its archrival, India, had initiated its own program to make nuclear bombs shortly after China's nuclear test in October 1964. Although many Pakistani officials suspected India of harboring an interest in nuclear weapons soon after independence, when Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru openly mused about the benefits of nuclear power, Pakistan became convinced about India's nuclear program when the latter launched its Subterranean Nuclear Experiment Project (SNEP) in early 1965.

<u>Strategic Culture</u>

Focusing more on the internal and historical attributes of Pakistan, this approach would hypothesize that because the dominant national security organization in the country was the armed forces, and because this institution was very conservative and pro-Western, Pakistan would continue to rely on conventional weapons and a close strategeic relationship with the United States to meet its security needs.

<u>Myth Making</u>

This approach would expect Pakistan to pursue the nuclear option when key national elites were able to convince the country's leadership that nuclear weapons production is required to enhance the state's security, power, and welfare.

The historical record supports each one of these appraoches to some extent, but on the whole, the myth making model performs better. As realists would expect, a strong pro-bomb lobby formed in Pakistan in 1964 and 1965. Led by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who served as foreign minister under President Ayub Khan's military regime in the mid-1960s, this group urged Ayub to match India's nuclear progress by approving Pakistan's own secret nuclear weapons research and development program, but Ayub resisted their pressure and ruled against going nuclear,[31] just as strategic culture proponents would expect.

After Pakistan's devastating loss to India in the December 1971 Bangladesh war, however, the Pakistan government finally initiatied a nuclear bomb program. This time, realists would predict this decision and strategic culturalists would not. But the key factor was once again the role of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who had emerged as the country's president following the Bangladesh defeat. Now at the helm, Bhutto instructed his top scientists to begin work at once on nuclear weapons.

Pakistan's nuclear policymaking is best understood through the lens of the mythmaker approach, which can explain how the myth of nuclear security initially spread in the 1960s, why it failed to shape official policy at that time, and why Pakistan ultimately decided to go nuclear in

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[31] For background, see Zafar Iqbal Cheema, "Pakistan's Nuclear Policy under Z. A. Bhutto and Zia-ul-Haq: An Assessment," *Strategic Studies* 15 (Summer 1992): 5-20; and Ashok Kapur, *Pakistan's Nuclear Development* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 24-28.

1972. The key factors in this analysis are Bhutto's critical role as Pakistan's primary nuclear mythmaker, the gradual acceptance of the strategic beliefs that nuclear weapons would enhance Pakistan's security and influence, and the eventual institutionaliztion of these beliefs among Pakistan's politicians, the armed forces, and the bureaucracy—to the extent that no leader after Bhutto could (or would want to) reverse Pakistan's nuclear weapons policy.

Pakistan's Post-9/11 Policy Reversal

Al Qaeda's 11 September 2001 attacks against Washington, D.C. and New York city fundamentally altered Pakistan's relations with the United States. The George W. Bush administration's campaign to destroy the Taliban as a haven for terrorist networks with global reach and to eliminate the al Qaeda network had a particularly dramatic impact on Pakistan, which had been the Taliban's strongest ally. Pakistan had helped the Taliban consolidate power in Afghanistan in the mid-to-late 1990s. Viewing the Taliban as a friendly if fanatical regime that could stabilize Pakistan's often unruly Pushtun population and also provide much-needed "strategic depth" in Pakistan's military competition with India, Pakistani leaders were loathe to see the return of instability, and possibly hostility, on their western flank. But faced with intense pressure from the United States, President Pervez Musharraf agreed to break relations with the Taliban, provide basing and over-flight permission for all U.S. and coalition forces, deploy two divisions of troops along the Afghanistan border in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and provide intelligence support to the international anti-terrorism coalition.[32] When he announced this controversial policy reversal on Afghanistan in a September 2001 speech to the nation, President Musharraf indicated that any other decision could have caused "unbearable losses" to the security of the country, the health of the economy, the Kashmir cause, and to Pakistan's strategic nuclear and missile assets.[33]

While most of Pakistan's mainstream political parties supported the government's decision to join the international coalition against terrorism, the country's Islamic groups and parties were outraged. About two dozen religious parties, including the powerful Jamaat-e-

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[32] For background, see C. Christine Fair, *The Counterterror Coalitions: Cooperation with India and Pakistan* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2004), MG-141-AF; and Peter R. Lavoy, "Fighting Terrorism and Avoiding War in South Asia: The Indo-Pakistani Situation," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 32 (Autumn 2002).
[33] See "Highlights of General Pervez Musharraf's Address to the Nation," 19 September 2004, http://www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/FilesSpeeches/Addresses/10312004112025AMHighlights%20of%20General%20Pervez%20Musharraf.pdf.

Islami, which earlier had cooperated with the Musharraf government, came together under the umbrella of the Pak-Afghan Defense Council and launched a nationwide campaign to oust Musharraf. Strikes and street demonstrations occurred throughout the country, American flags were burned, several people were killed, and many buildings were destroyed. Truckloads of Pakistani extremists also traveled to Afghanistan to fight with the Taliban against the U.S.-led anti-terrorism coalition. However, none of these actions managed to incite the Pakistani population against the government or persuade President Musharraf either to backtrack on his policies or to step down. What would our three theoretical perspectives have to say about Pakistan's post-9/11 policy reversal on Afghanistan?

Neo-realism

According to the neo-realist model, Pakistan would do whatever was required to balance against its key adversary, India. President Musharraf warned in his famous 19 September 2001 address to the nation: "Lets look at our neighbors. They have promised U.S. all cooperation. They want to isolate us, get us declared a terrorist state."[34] Because continuing support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan would mean opposing the United States, and driving Washington into a military alliance with India, realpolitik dictated that Pakistan join the U.S. counter-Taliban coalition.

Strategic Culture

Giving more causal weight to the beliefs and desires of powerful domestic constituencies, such as the pro-Taliban Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISID), the strategic cultural argument probably would expect Pakistan to find a way to maintain its strong support for its Taiban allies in Afghanistan.

Myth Making

This approach would argue that Paksitan's policy decision would depend mainly on the strategic beliefs of the country's leader, President Pervez Musharraf. It would recognize that Musharraf faced internal pressures to stand by the Taliban and external pressures to support the United States; but his own beliefs and his ability to cultivate support fro these beliefs among the

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[34] Ibid.

country's influential elites (princiapally among the armed forces) would be the key factor. Because Musharraf's own strategic beliefs, at least in this case, corresponded with the tents of realpolitik, this particular security policy is overdetermined: both the ne-realist and the strategic myth-maker approaches would successfully predict Pakistan's behavior.

CONCLUSION

The sudden shift in Pakistan's Afghanistan policy poses a potentially big problem for strategic cultural analysis. For that matter, all cultural studies, which point to the steady socialization of values and beliefs over time, have difficulty in explaining change. But some proponents of strategic culture recognize that under certain conditions strategic cultures do change. Jeffrey Lantis observes that two conditions, in particular, cause strategic cultures to transform. First, external shocks can fundamentally challenge existing beliefs and undermine long-held historical narratives and practices.[35] The second cause of change is related to the first. At certain times, deeply held foreign policy commitments clash and force policymakers to make critical choices. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Pakistan suffered a serious external shock and President Musharraf was forced to choose between the Taliban and the United States. This choice posed intense value tradeoffs and arguably caused Musharraf—and Pakistan's strategic culture—to adapt to new circumstances, much as realism and the myth-making approaches would have suggested. The myth-making model is particularly useful in accounting for this policy shift, because it sees leaders (and other strategic elites) as instrumental in defining—and redefining—policy goals. They can preserve traditions or they can choose to move beyond previous boundaries of acceptability. Musharraf clearly did the latter.

Implications

This short essay explored the relative utility of three theoretical approaches in accounting for specific Pakistani foreign policy choices. Neo-realism and a general model of strategic cultural analysis each point to significant constraints on the freedom of choice of Pakistani leaders. Neo-realists correctly comprehend that the imperatives of international competition, and especially Pakistan's long-standing political and military rivalry with India, have severely restricted the room for maneuver of successive Pakistani heads of states. Similarly, proponents of

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[35] Lantis, "Strategic Culture and National Security Policy," 111.

strategic cultural analysis can show how the values and beliefs of the Pakistani population, and especially the conservative armed forces and the bureaucracy, also have constrained Pakistani policies over time.

As Pakistan's policymaking on nuclear weapons illustrates, at one time (the mid-1960s) the Pakistani leadership defied the dictates of Realpolitik and instead acted according to the traditional strategic views of the armed forces (as strategic culture would predict), which was not to go nuclear, but to maintain close security ties with the United States and to beef up its conventional military forces. But at another time (1972), Pakistan's leadership reversed course and chose to manufacture nuclear weapons, even if this policy resulted in the estrangement of relations with Washington (which it did, during the 1990s). Why do some Realpolitik or cultural constraints seem so severe at one time and yet so malleable at other times?

The answer lies with the behavior of strategic key strategic elites, who are free to accept some constraints and yet ignore or overcome others. These elites, whom I call *strategic mythmakers*, operate within the confines of both the international environment and their nation's political culture, but they sometimes have some degree of freedom to reorient and expand the internal and external boundaries of their behavior. However, the more a mythmaker tries to extend either of these boundaries of traditional behavior, the greater the risk he runs domestically and internationally.

Leadership entails knowing one's limits, but also knowing how to take advantage of rare opportunities for change, when they present themselves. The myth-making approach points analysts to examine strategic elites as well as their beliefs about national security. It further calls attention to the insitutionalization of these beliefs, or myths, in the rules, values, and beliefs of key national security institutions. As organization theorists would understand, the more national security myths become institutionalized, the greater the hold of culture takes over strategic elites. If U.S. policymakers had recognized this, they would have understood why their efforts to discourage Pakistan from going nuclear were doomed to fail from the mid-1970s onward. Similarly, if current American officials understand Pakistan's strategic culture, and the role of key individuals and elites within the country's key stratetgic institutions, they would have a much better handle on the question of how reliable an ally Pakistan will be now and in the future.

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NORTH KOREA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE

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An Overview of North Korea's Strategic Culture:

Joseph S. Bermudez Jr.

NORTH KOREA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE DESCRIBED

More than any other nation today, the strategic culture of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is the product of the personal dreams and ambitions of a single individual—Kim Il-sung. Kim was the world's longest reigning leader, having assumed power in the northern portion of the Korean Peninsula during 1948 and maintaining that position until his death in 1994. This has resulted in a worldview and strategic culture built upon six central and interrelated and overlapping principles,

- The survival of the Kim clan (i.e., "the center of the revolution") and its power and influence. This is the primal principle to which all others are subordinate.
- Elimination of all internal threats to the power of the Kim clan by the establishment and ruthless maintenance of an extremely small, privileged and powerful military and power-holding elite—all of whom owe absolute allegiance to the Kim clan.
- Reunification of the Fatherland (i.e., the entire Korean Peninsula).
- Establishment and maintenance of overwhelming conventional military strength to facilitate the reunification of the Fatherland.
- Acquisition of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles.
- Deterrence of the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) by the maintenance of overwhelming conventional military strength and the acquisition of WMD and ballistic missiles.

These six principles are themselves processed through the DPRK's political ideology known as Chuche and what is termed as a "lens of self deception" composed of four elements,[1]

- Historical world view
- Political indoctrination
- Hatred for the U.S.
- Authoritarian cultural rules

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[1] See Joseph S. Bermudez Jr., *Information and the DPRK's Military and Power-Holding Elite* in Hassig, Kongdan Oh. *North Korean Policy Elites*, IDA Paper P-3903 (Alexandria: Institute for Defense Analyses, June 2004) , available at http://www.brookings.edu/views/papers/fellows/oh20040601.htm

The result of this "lens of self deception" is that it often distorts and misrepresents the reality of a situation.

Although he is better educated and better informed about world events than his father, Kim Chong-il—who assumed absolute leadership of the DPRK following his father's death—has not significantly deviated from the worldview or strategic culture established by his father.[2] Despite minor efforts to address economic issues Kim Chong-il has vigorously emphasized the strengthening of the military and the continued development of WMD through his "military first" policies. He has proven himself ruthless and dispassionate in dealing with disloyalty of those individuals whom he perceives as a threat—including members of his own extended family.[3]

By all accounts Kim Chong-il is a workaholic, micromanager, "information junkie," technologically savvy, impatient, quick-tempered, intelligent, and ruthless. By his own admission he surfs the internet daily, regularly watches NHK (Japan), CCTV (China) and CNN, and has foreign books and articles (especially anything written about himself) translated and summarized for him. He prefers to manage almost everything directly, down to the most minor of details. Without his personal approval, nothing of significance can be initiated or accomplished. He insists on numerous detailed reports from all organizations and then spends long hours at his office reading them. He doesn't necessarily trust any single source for information but rather compares the information he receives from several different organizations and sources (apparently including the internet). It is not unusual for him to order specialists and technocrats from throughout the government to appear before him so that he might directly question them concerning a particular matter. Finally, he believes that the decisions and choices he makes are better than those of the people around him. It is towards Kim Chong-il that all important information streams, and from him that all power, significant orders and directions issue forth.[4] Ominously, much of the information and analysis he bases his decision making

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[2] Merrily Baird, *Kim Chong-il's Erratic Decision-Making and North Korea's Strategic Culture* in Schneider, Barry R. and Jerrold M. Post , editors. *Know Thy Enemy: Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: USAF Counterproliferation Center, July 2003, 2nd ed.), at www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/know_thy_enemy/cover.htm.

[3] For two excellent analyses of the Kim family and power-holding elites see: Kenneth E. Gause, *The North Korean Leadership: System Dynamics and Fault Lines*; and Alexandre Y. Mansourov, *Inside North Korea's Black Box: Reversing the Optics*, both in Kongdan Oh Hassig, *North Korean Policy Elites*, IDA Paper P-3903 (Alexandria: Institute for Defense Analyses, June 2004).

[4] Peter Maass, "The Last Emperor," *New York Times Magazine*, October 19, 2003; "Interview with defector Hwang Jong Yop [Hwang Jang Yop]: A Rare Portrait Of North Korea," *Time [Asia]*, September 7, 1999, Vol. 152, No. 9,

upon is fundamentally distorted by the strategic culture that his father established and he operates within.

The net effect of these factors is a strategic culture that is rudimentary, familial and possess few, if any, objective internal checks and balances. It views the United States as the primary enemy, a duplicitous and deceitful enemy who, if it perceives any weakness, is likely to initiate a war of annihilation employing WMD against the DPRK. Internally it views any disagreement with policies or criticism of the Kim regime—no matter how insignificant—as a direct threat to Kim Chong-il and is dealt with harshly. Even loyal dissent amongst the highest levels of the military and power-holding elite is discouraged and constructive variations to the implementation of Kim Chong-il's thoughts on strategic issues are reported as being rare. In a very real sense Kim Chong-il's thoughts and desires are the DPRK's strategic domestic and international policies.

Profile of North Korea's Strategic Culture

Development

To understand the basis for the strategic culture developed by Kim Il-sung it is necessary to go back to the pre-Second World War period.[5] Following Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, it became the dominant power in Asia and annexed Korea in 1911. Japan would rule Korea with a cruel and often inhumane hand until the end of the Second World War. The Japanese were then, and still are, viewed by the majority of Koreans as foreigners and oppressors.[6] During the late 1930s, the Japanese military developed a small chemical and biological warfare (CBW) capability that it used against the Chinese. The Japanese also conducted an exhaustive regime of experimentation on Allied prisoners-of-war, Russians, and

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www.time.com/time/asia/, "DPRK's Kim Chong-il's Position on Retaliation," *Choson Ilbo*, October 17, 1996, pp. 8-11, as cited in FBIS-EAS-96-231; "Defector to ROK on Kim Chong-il's Control of DPRK Military," *Win*, June 1996, pp 161-167, as cited in FBIS-EAS-96-197; "Articles by Defector Kang Myong-to Reported," *Chungang Ilbo*, April 21, 1995, p. 5, as cited in FBIS-EAS-95-097; "North Korean Defectors 27 July News Conference," *Choson Ilbo*, July 28, 1994, pp. 3-4, as cited in FBIS-EAS-94-145; and "Newspaper Profiles Kim Chong-il's Supporters," *Sindong-a*, February 1994, pp. 421-439, as cited in FBIS-EAS-94-050.
[5] Adrian Buzo, *The Guerrilla Dynasty* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999); Dae-Sook Suh, *Kim Il-sung: The North Korea Leader* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1988); and Sydney A. Seiler, *Kim Il-song 1941-1948* (New York: University Press of America).
[6] These sentiment have been repeatedly expressed to the author in private conversations, during the past twenty-five years, with ambassadors, ministers, representative and private citizens from both the ROK and DPRK. It does, however, appear to be moderating amongst the younger generations in the ROK.

Chinese civilians.[7] The general nature of these chemical and biological operations and experimentation were known to the Chinese government, the Allies, and, to a lesser degree, the general population. At that time Kim Il-sung and the majority of the DPRK future leadership were young peasant guerrillas who were sporadically fighting the Japanese, first with the Communist Chinese, and then with the Soviet Army. Although only fragmentary evidence is available, it is apparent that they were influenced by what they would learn of these chemical and biological operations.[8] At the time of the U.S. nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, Kim and his fellow guerrillas had been fighting the Japanese for 5-10 years. As the reality and the rumors of the events at Hiroshima and Nagasaki spread throughout the world, the nuclear bomb was viewed as the ultimate "doomsday" weapon. This attitude was reinforced by the experiences of those Koreans returning from Japan who had been in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the time of the bombing.[9] This fear became even more pronounced among Communist guerrilla leaders such as Mao Zedong and Kim Il-sung. By the end of the Second World War, both Kim Il-sung and a number of soon-to-be influential Koreans had an uneducated appreciation of, and indirect exposure to, the effects of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare. This awareness shaped their developing views of the world, warfare, and politics.

Combined with these early appreciations of WMD four additional factors during the subsequent Fatherland Liberation War (i.e., Korean War) would help coalesce both Kim Il-sung's worldview and form the foundations of the strategic culture then developing within the nation,

- The U.S. intervention in the Fatherland Liberation War was interpreted by Kim and his contemporaries as the prime reason the war of reunification failed. From this point forward the United States would be viewed as the primary enemy and as a bully "kicking the door in" and interfering in the purely internal affairs of nations of which it did not approve.
- During the war both the DPRK and People's Republic of China (PRC) suffered from repeated, and to them, unexplained outbreaks of infectious diseases such as influenza, Dengue fever, and cholera. These outbreaks caused large numbers of civilian and military

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[7] Peter Williams and David Wallace, *Unit 731: Japan's Secret Biological Warfare in World War II* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), p. 45; and Harris, Sheldon H. *Factories of Death: Japanese Biological Warfare 1932-45 and the American Cover Up* (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 67-73.
[8] Author interview data.
[9] Peter Hayes. *Pacific Powderkeg* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1991), pp. 241-246.

casualties. While the leadership knew that it was untrue, they fabricated the story that the United States was employing biological, and to a lesser degree chemical, weapons against their units in Korea and against villages within the PRC itself.[10] Furthermore, they claimed that former Japanese soldiers were cooperating with the United States in perpetrating these attacks.[11] For the uninformed masses of the DPRK it became a bedrock of "truth" and these claims are still repeated.

- The United States on numerous occasions (the earliest being President Harry S. Truman's public statements on 30 November 1950) threatened to employ nuclear weapons against Korean People's Army (KPA) and "Chinese People's Volunteers" (CPV) units in Korea, and if necessary against the PRC proper, to end the war.[12] These threats struck a raw nerve since the leadership of both nations remembered the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and neither the PRC nor DPRK could withstand a nuclear attack or had the capability to respond in kind. In combination with other factors the desired effect was achieved and a truce agreement was reached, thus ending the hostilities.

- While appreciative of all the support received from the Soviet Union and PRC, Kim expressed disappointment with the Soviet Union's pressure to sign the Armistice Agreement. This would provide a context for Kim to view future Soviet actions (e.g., the Soviets backing down during the Cuban Missile Crisis, etc.) and fostered the belief that the DPRK must become self-sufficient.

In the years that followed the Fatherland Liberation War, public statements by U.S. officials, the continued U.S. military presence on the Korean Peninsula, and the inclusion of the ROK within the U.S. nuclear umbrella, have contributed to peace. To the DPRK leadership, this U.S. presence has also reinforced the belief that the DPRK has little choice but to comply with the 1953 Armistice Agreement or face devastation from nuclear attack.

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[10] John Cookson and Judith Nottingham, *A Survey of Chemical and Biological Warfare* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), 57-63 and 297-308; and U.S. Army. "Bacteriological Warfare Charges Against the United States: A Strategic Weapon in the Communist Propaganda Warfare," *FEC Intelligence Digest*, No. 32, 2 October 1952, 6-10.

[11] Author interview Data; *A Survey of Chemical and Biological Warfare*, 57-63 & 297-308; and U.S. Army. "Bacteriological Warfare Charges Against the United States: A Strategic Weapon in the Communist Propaganda Warfare," *FEC Intelligence Digest*, No. 32, 2 October 1952, 6-10; and David Tharp, "The Brutal Secret of Japan's WWII Unit 731," *United Press International*, August 8, 1995.

[12] *San Diego Tribune*. "Papers Show Eisenhower Weighed Nuclear Attack," March 26, 1988, A5; and *San Diego Union*. "Nuclear Attack Reportedly Would Have Taken Week," March 29, 1988, A29.

In the immediate post-war years the DPRK possessed neither WMD, nor the capabilities to produce them. Combined with the perceived threat poised by the United States, this contributed to a DPRK belief that possession of such weapons was a requirement to deter U.S./ROK aggression and set the stage for reunification of the Fatherland.[13]

In a December 1955 speech Kim Il-sung set forth a new political ideology known as Chuche that would quickly change the nature of DPRK society.[14] While generally defined as meaning "self-reliance and national identity" it has developed into a unique belief system that permeates every aspect of life in the DPRK. It has been used by both Kim Il-sung and Kim Chong-il to justify almost anything:

> major policy initiatives, including eliminating factional enemies, widening diplomatic activities, neutralizing attempts by China or Russia to exert influence over Korea, questioning the legitimacy of the South Korean government, and relentlessly attacking U.S. imperialism.[15]

Today Chuche is a national ideology with distinctly religious overtones. With Kim Il-sung and Kim Chong-il at the center of the universe, being omnipotent and incapable of doing wrong. Because of its pervasiveness throughout society the DPRK's strategic culture has become a emanation of the Kim's Chuche thoughts.

Kim Chong-il was raised in and, since the 1970s, participated in the subsequent incremental evolution of the strategic culture established by his father. In this both he and his father were accompanied by a small group of military and power-holding elites. This group consisted of trusted friends and relatives (mostly men)—many of whom had fought either as partisans with Kim Il-sung against the Japanese during Second World War or as officers during the Fatherland Liberation War. Since Kim Il-sung's death in 1994, the composition of this small group of older generation elites has changed considerably as members have died, become enfeebled with age or were gradually replaced by Kim Chong-il's trusted contemporaries.[16] To

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[13] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai. *China Builds the Bomb* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1988), chapters 1 and 2. These two chapters present an insightful discussion of the origins and effect of the PRC's fear of U.S. nuclear weapons usage.

[14] Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig. *North Korea: Through the Looking Glass* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2000), Chapter 2 provides an excellent and understandable explanation of Chuche (Juche). See also: Cummings, Bruce. "The Corporate State in North Korea," in Koo, Hagen ed., *State and Society in Contemporary Korea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 197-230.

[15] Defense Intelligence Agency. *North Korea: The Foundations for Military Strength—Update 1995* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 1995), p. 1.

[16] For the most part this was done in a manner consistent with traditional Confucian values of respect and honor for

date, neither Kim nor his appointees have deviated significantly from the basic worldview or strategic culture established by Kim Il-sung. Notably, however, the majority of these new power-holding elites possess even less exposure to international arena than their predecessors, and none have experienced the realities of war. What long-term effect this will have on DPRK strategic culture, especially when Kim Chong-il is eventually succeeded by one of his sons, is unclear.

Even with the possibility of Kim Chong-il soon appointing one of his sons to succeed him, for the foreseeable future, it is unlikely that there will be any significant changes to Kim Chong-il's worldview or the DPRK's strategic culture.

Military and Power-Holding Elite

The "keepers" of the DPRK's strategic culture are a extremely small group of military and power-holding elites. All power within the DPRK originates with Kim Chong-il, who is simultaneously Chairman of the National Defense Commission, General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party (KWP), and Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army (a unified armed force consisting of the ground, navy and air forces). Therefore what really matters within the DPRK is not so much an individual's schooling, personal achievements, employment, position within society, rank within the KPA, KWP, etc. but how close—physically and emotionally—that individual is connected to Kim Chong-il.

To implement their rule the Kim's have cultivated and mercilessly maintained a diminutive class of military and power-holding elites. The primary qualification for membership in this class is absolute allegiance to the Kim's. Such allegiance is rewarded by access to the Kim's and the attendant privilege and power that it conveys. Until the mid-1990s these elites were primarily contemporaries of Kim Il-sung who had repeatedly demonstrated their personal loyalties and shared his worldview. Since Kim's death in 1994 this older generation is being slowly supplanted—primarily through attrition—by contemporaries of Kim Chong-il. All current members of the military and power-holding elite owe their status, privilege and literally their lives and the lives of their families to the Kim clan. Any hint of disloyalty is dealt with harshly, with the offender—and often their extended family—being exiled from the capital P'yongyang to mountain work camps. In more extreme cases offenders are executed.

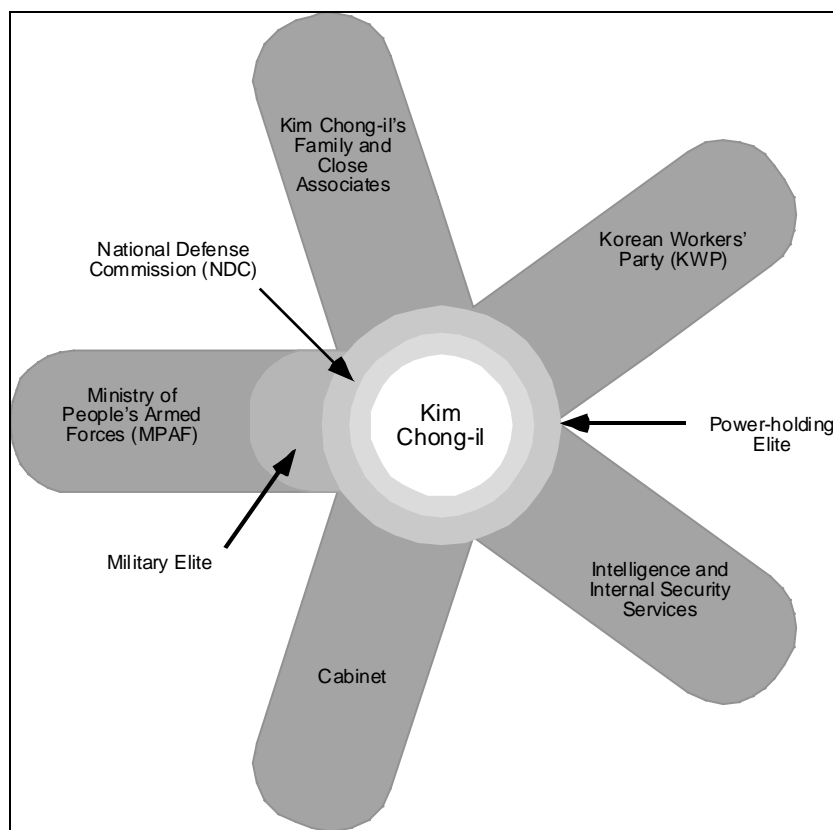elderly and powerful individuals. See Paul S. Crane, *Korean Patterns* (Seoul: Hollym Corp., 1968).

Figure 1: Military and Power-holding Elite

This power structure can best be illustrated by viewing Kim Chong-il as the center—physically, politically, and socially—of the DPRK, as shown in Figure 1. Immediately surrounding him are a group of individuals—primarily men—and their subordinates who come from five broad societal groupings: Kim Chong-il's extended family and close confidents,[17] Ministry of People's Armed Forces (MPAF); KWP; Cabinet; and intelligence and internal security services. The convergence of these groupings represents the power-holding elite within the DPRK. The pinnacle of the power-holding elite is the National Defense Commission, which consists of approximately ten individuals, most of whom hold military rank. Therefore, the military elite within the National Defense Commission should be understood to be among highest power-holders within the DPRK.

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[17] Information on the Kim family may be found in Sarah Buckley,. "North Korea's Secretive 'First Family'," *BBC News*, October 29, 2003, accessed October 30, 2003, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/3203523.stm; and Peter Carlson, "Sins of the Son; Kim Jong Il's North Korea Is in Ruins, But Why Should That Spoil His Fun?," *Washington Post*, May 11, 2003, p. D1. See also, Gause, Kenneth E. *The North Korean Leadership: System Dynamics and Fault Lines*; and Alexandre Y. Mansourov, *Inside North Korea's Black Box: Reversing the Optics*, both in Kongdan Oh Hassig,. *North Korean Policy Elites*, IDA Paper P-3903 (Alexandria: Institute for Defense Analyses, June 2004).

A noteworthy characteristic of the National Defense Commission specifically and the power-holding elite in general is that members occupy multiple leadership positions within the MPAF, KWP, and intelligence and internal security services. In fact, all the military members of the National Defense Commission are also members of the Central Military Committee. This cross-pollination and concentration of power within the hands of a few individuals enables Kim Chong-il, through the National Defense Commission, to easily maintain extremely firm control over all aspects of DPRK society and the flow of information. It also means that the decision-making process and poles of political power apparent in most nations are not present within the DPRK.

An additional aspect of the military and power-holding elite that has become an integral component of the DPRK's strategic culture is what would be termed in the West as corruption. In fact, this corruption should be viewed as being institutionalized and the means by which many of the military and power-holding elite have attained and maintained their positions. It is manifested in the access elites have to information, foreign manufactured goods, opportunity to have their children travel abroad for schooling, their own greater opportunities to travel, nepotism, etc. Thus, favoritism and cronyism are endemic among the elite. Given this vortex of institutionalized corruption, fear of displeasing Kim Chong-il and a convoluted flow of information, it is certainly within the realm of possibility that Kim Chong-il is at times being deceived or misled at some level by subordinates. Exactly how this occurs is unclear but it may manifest itself in a manner similar to the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein.[18] Thus this may be manifested by managers or leaders of program exaggerating the achievements or potential capabilities of their programs or systems. This may account for some of the stories related by defectors concerning Kim Chong-il's surprise at times concerning the true conditions in military units or factories and the excessive remedies that he initiates to address these conditions.

Within such an environment of corruption it would serve an individual's interest (and by extension those who ally themselves with that individual) to have higher quality and greater diversity of information than a political rival. The corollary to this is that limiting a rival's access to information is of significant benefit to a member of the military and power-holding elite.

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[18] James Risen, "Ex-Inspector Says C.I.A. Missed Disarray in Iraqi Arms Program," *New York Times*, January 26, 2004, <www.nytimes.com>, accessed January 26, 2004.

Lens of Self Deception

One of the more notable aspects of the DPRK's strategic culture is that it is processed through a "lens of self deception." In what may be viewed as either "circular verification" or "self-fulfilling prophecy" this lens is both a product of Chuche and the strategic culture that it is filtering. This "lens of self deception" is composed of four layers: historical world view, political indoctrination, hatred for the United States, and authoritarian cultural rules. This lens is so darkly colored that instead of focusing and illuminating, it most often misrepresents and distorts the reality of the information.

As noted above, until the mid-1990s the real power within the DPRK rested within the hands of Kim Il-sung and a small group of military and power-holding elites. As a group these individuals possess a narrow and distorted worldview that is based not upon the free flow of ideas, questioning of facts, and exposure to different cultures and philosophies, but rather upon their limited personal experiences, Communist ideology, KWP propaganda and Chuche. This worldview places world events and the actions of other nations within a distinctly historical context. In this view, Japan is not only a neighbor and important trading partner, it is also the nation that occupied Korea and brutally oppressed the Korean people for many years. Because of this, any actions undertaken by Japan, benign as the might be, are viewed with suspicion.

The DPRK has never attempted to conceal the fact that it believes the United States is its principal enemy and the ROK is its "puppet." In this view it was the United States that interfered in a purely internal dispute—the Fatherland Liberation War—and threatened to employ nuclear weapons. Since that time the United States has continued to both prevent the unification of Korea and threaten the existence of the DPRK with the use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it is the United States that "controls" the United Nations and directs world attention against the DPRK and other countries that it opposes. The DPRK leadership views U.S. actions in countries such as Grenada, Iraq, Panama, Somalia and Vietnam as analogous to their own situation, with the United States acting as a bully "kicking the door in" and interfering in purely internal affairs. Therefore all actions undertaken by the United States are viewed with distrust and as attempts to both prolong the division of the Korean people and directly threaten the existence of the Kim regime.

Korean society within both the ROK and DPRK has a strong underpinning of Confucian

philosophy.[19] One notable aspect of this are stringent authoritarian hierarchal rules. Within government organizations this is expressed by the fact that subordinates will rarely, if ever, disagree with their superiors. In fact, they are encouraged not to. Therefore, if a superior is known to possess a particular view on a subject their subordinates—whether they believe the view correct or not—will tend to work new information into that view. These authoritarian rules are also manifested in deep institutional loyalty that results in a frequent refusal to share information and detrimental inter-agency competition. While such submission to superiors and institutional loyalty are witnessed in some form throughout the business, military and intelligence communities in the world it is quite evident within the DPRK they are taken to extremes under the umbrella of Chuche. The distinct possibility exists that this dynamic may manifest itself in a desire by the subordinates and support staffs to Kim Chong-il and the National Defense Commission to *not* present information that displeases them or is at variance to their stated opinions.

NORTH KOREA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE IN ACTION

Whether consciously or subconsciously the above characteristics suggest that the manner by which information is processed by individuals and institutions results in it passing through a lens of self-deception and exiting in a fundamentally flawed state. It is upon these assessments, however, that decisions within the DPRK are made. When combined with Kim Chong-il's apparent beliefs, that he "knows better" and can arrive at better decisions than those around him, this often leads to ill-advised courses of action and unanticipated outcomes. A prime example of this was evidenced by Kim Chong-il's 2003 public admission that DPRK intelligence agencies had kidnapped Japanese civilians over the past 30 years. Kim's apparent analysis of the situation was that the Japanese would appreciate his magnanimous admission of guilt, view it as a sign of a new level of openness, and open themselves to the DPRK. It apparently never occurred to him that it would ignite deep emotions from a broad spectrum of the Japanese population and harden their feelings towards him and the DPRK. It should be anticipated that such a dynamic will be present during any future dealings with the DPRK—especially during times of crisis.

Within the military this dynamic can be illustrated by how the Military Training Bureau evaluated U.S. operations against Iraq during Operations DESERT STORM and IRAQI FREEDOM.

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[19] Paul S. Crane, *Korean Patterns* (Seoul: Hollym Corp., 1968).

According to defectors international news broadcasts concerning Operation DESERT STORM were taped and, "Videos of the Gulf War were watched everyday in the Operations Office, and assessments of the military power of the United States and the multinational forces, and studies of their strategy and tactics, were re-assessed from new angles." [20]

In one of those paradoxes resulting from a flawed strategic culture that are so common when dealing with the DPRK the same defector indicates that what they witnessed in the videos was shocking and disturbing, yet the final analysis was,

> …the Gulf War was, in short, that it was "child's play." Should [the DPRK] face such circumstances, they concluded, it could easily deal with the United States and the multinational forces. The reasons for this were that: unlike in the past, a U.S.-led military block, even if it is formed, would be unable to act without the consent of its allies; in the event of another Korean war, neighboring powers would not go along with the U.S. position as they did in the Gulf War; [the DPRK's] asymmetry in conventional and high-tech weapons; and [the DPRK's] new confidence in electronic warfare.[21]

Other defectors recount that following Operation DESERT STORM officers above regimental commander were required to watch videotapes of the war to familiarize themselves with U.S. tactics. The videotapes, however, had a negative effect upon the commanders who realized that modern war depends on modern weapons and that the weapons possessed by the KPA were obsolete.

During the 2003 buildup to and early combat phases of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM Kim Chong-il is reported to have gone into seclusion for 50 days beginning in mid-February and extending to the end of March. He even missed the traditional opening ceremonies of the Supreme People's Assembly in P'yongyang. The general assessment of this behavior was that Kim and the intelligence community interpreted media reports concerning U.S. attempts to decapitate the Iraqi leadership and the subsequent deployment of additional U.S. combat aircraft to East Asia, as indications that he might also be the target of a similar decapitation attack. Yet, no such attack was contemplated by the U.S.[22]

A recent example containing many of the elements of the strategic culture established years ago under Kim Il-sung remains valid under Kim Chong-il can be seen in the 10 February

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[20] "Ex-DPRK Major Unveils KPA Military Plan," *Pukhan*, February 1, 2000, pp. 92-99; and "Anti-Kim Front: DPRK Military May Revolt," *Chugan Choson*, December 2, 1993, pp. 32-34, as cited in FBIS-EAS-94-028.
[21] Ibid.
[22] "Kim Jong II Reportedly Feared Being Next Target," *Houston Chronicle*, May 12, 2003, p. 12.

2005 statement issued by the DPRK Foreign Ministry,

> We have already resolutely withdrawn from the NPT and have manufactured nuclear weapons for self-defense to cope with the Bush administration's policy of isolating and crushing the DPRK, which is becoming stronger. Our nuclear weapons will remain a self-defensive nuclear deterrent under any circumstances. Today's reality shows that only strong power can protect justice and defend the truth. As the United States' imprudent rash acts and hostile attempts become more blatant, we only feel great pride in having strengthened, in every way from early on, the single-hearted unity of the entire army and all the people and self-defensive national defense capability while holding high the military-first banner.[23]

SUMMARY

More than any other nation today, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is the product of the personal dreams and ambitions of single individual—Kim Il-sung. Kim was the world's longest reigning leader, having assumed power in the northern portion of the Korean Peninsula during 1948 and maintained that position until his death in 1994. The DPRK is an extension of Kim's thoughts, ideas, strengths, weaknesses and fears. The net effect of this is a worldview and strategic culture built upon six central and interrelated principles,

- Survival of the Kim clan
- Elimination of all domestic threats
- Reunification of the Fatherland
- Establishment and maintenance of overwhelming conventional military strength
- Acquisition of WMD and ballistic missiles
- Deterrence of the U.S. and ROK

These six principles are themselves processed through the DPRK's political ideology known as Chuche and what has been termed as a "lens of self deception." In what may be viewed as either "circular verification" or "self-fulfilling prophecy" this lens is itself a product strategic culture that it is filtering. The four elements of this lens are,

- Historical world view
- Political indoctrination
- Hatred for the U.S.

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[23] "DPRK 'Manufactured Nuclear Weapons,' To 'Suspend' 6-Way Talks for 'Indefinite Period'," *Korean Central Broadcasting System*, 10 February 2005, as cited in FBIS.

- Authoritarian cultural rules

This "lens of self deception" is so darkly colored that instead of focusing and illuminating, it most often misrepresents and distorts real-world reality.

The repeated threats by the U.S. over the past 50-plus years have contributed to the maintenance of peace on the Korean peninsula, but they have also fostered a strategic culture within the DPRK that it must absolutely possess WMD (especially nuclear weapons) as a means of countering the U.S. nuclear threat and thus ensuring their national existence.[24] This belief is not only rooted in strong emotions, but also in years of political, military and intelligence analysis. Raised within the strategic culture developed by Kim Chong-il propagates this view. The 1994 statements by Kang Myong Do, a defector and son-in-law of then DPRK Prime Minister Kang Song-san, provide relevant insight into this conviction,

> North Korea's nuclear development is not intended as a bargaining chip as seen by the Western world, but for the maintenance of its system under the circumstances in which it is faced with economic difficulties and a situation following the collapse of Eastern Europe. ..There is a firm belief that the only way to sustain the Kim Chong-iI system is to have nuclear capabilities.[25]

According to defectors, Kim believes that if the KPA is weak, the state cannot exercise its power in international affairs and its survival will be in jeopardy. He emphasizes that, "...only when our military force is strong, can we take the initiative in a contact or dialogue with the United States or South Korea."[26]

The DPRK's strategic culture not only views nuclear weapons as "decisive weapons" and its primary means of deterring U.S. aggression, but as also providing the DPRK with international prestige, allowing them to take their rightful place among a select few world powers with all the respect and political power commensurate to such a position.

From Kim's perspective U.S. actions, unilaterally and through the UN, are attempts to impinge upon his ability to rule the DPRK, threats to his complete authority and autonomy, and are ultimately designed to overthrow him. These attempts directly affront the strategic culture

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[24] Paul Shin, "Korea-Defection," *The Associated Press*, September 13, 1991.
[25] "North Korean Defectors 27 July New Conference," *Choson Ilbo*, 28 July 1994, 3-4, as cited in FBIS-EAS-94-145, 28 July 1994, 59-63; James Sterngold, "Defector Says North Korea Has 5 A-Bombs and May Make More," *The New York Times*, July 28, 1994, A7; and Don Kirk, "Defector: N. Korea Eyes 10 A-Bombs," *Newsday*, July 28, 1994, A14.
[26] "Defector to ROK on Kim Chong-il's Control of DPRK Military," *Win*, June 1996, 161-167, as cited in FBIS-EAS-96-197.

developed by his father and embraced by himself. The strategic culture that surrounds him fosters the idea that the DPRK is morally stronger than the United States and that by resolutely standing firm and threatening America he can outlast each administration.

The net effect of these factors is a strategic culture that is rudimentary, familial and possesses few—if any—objective internal checks and balances. It views the United States as the primary enemy, one that is deceitful in practice, and willing to use WMD against the DPRK. Internally it views any disagreement with policies or criticism of the Kim regime—no matter how insignificant—as a direct threat to Kim Chong-il and are dealt with harshly. No constructive criticism is allowed, even from loyal members of the military and power-holding elite.

Within such an environment the actions of the DPRK which are routinely evaluated by outsiders as "unpredictable," "irrational," "illogical," or simply "crazy," if viewed from within the context of its strategic culture can be understood as being quite rational and understandable.

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THE STRATEGIC CULTURE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

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The Strategic Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Willis Stanley

STRATEGIC CULTURE DEFINED

Iranian history is, at first glance, fertile ground for a discussion of strategic culture. It is tempting to begin the discussion of strategic culture with the emergence of Iranian culture itself. However, there is a continuity of human history in and around the Iranian plateau that extends from the emergence of Neolithic society and agriculture around 8000 BCE through to the present day. In order to capture such a broad sweep of history within the confines of "strategic culture," it is important to begin with the question: to what end to we hope to apply our findings? If, for example, the purpose is to provide structure to a largely historical narrative, then an accounting need simply pick a beginning and an end and demonstrate why the constructed definition of "strategic culture" explains the conduct within that span. More theoretically-oriented analyses might focus on the concept of strategic culture itself, using specific instances within Iranian history to test a particular definition of "strategic culture" that could be exported to the study of other cultures. Perhaps most ambitiously, social scientists might seek to develop predictive models of strategic behavior using the depth of Iran's history as a laboratory to search for continuities in behavior, patterns that can be better understood by quantitative analysis and so forth.

These uses of strategic culture all have their advocates and they are all interesting and useful endeavors (albeit some significantly more practical than others). This particular use of the concept will be more akin to traditional historical analyses than to pursuits of theoretical rigor or modeling fidelity. This brief review will use the following definition of strategic culture:

> Strategic culture is that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.

This analysis will identify those elements of strategic culture that appear to be influential in shaping the decision-making of the current leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI), particularly with reference to decision-making on issues related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Inherent in that bounded mission is the caution that this essay is not seeking a general

theory of Iranian behavior that is as applicable to Cyrus the Great (around 559 to 530 BCE) as it is to the ruling clerics in modern Tehran. After all, while the modern Iranian may still celebrate the "new year" festival of Nawrooz that dates back to Cyrus and his Acheamenid Empire, it would be more than a bit of deterministic folly to believe that modern Iranians have not learned from and been shaped by the intervening historical experience.

Similarly, it is important that any study of strategic culture be well aware to avoid the trap of mistaking broad cultural observations for a measured assessment of what Iranians believe and why they believe it. For example, one mid-19th century French diplomat's description of the behavior of Iranian merchants and craftsmen includes the following:

> The habits of frenzied usury, of constant debts, of expedients, of lack of good faith, and of prodigies of skill provide much fun to Persians but do not contribute to raising their moral level. The life of all this world is spent in a movement of perpetual intrigue. Everyone has only one idea: not to do what he ought… From top to bottom of the social hierarchy, there is measureless and unlimited knavery—I would add an irremediable knavery.[1]

Are we to draw from this that Iranians have some inherent predisposition toward "knavery?" It may, after all, be interesting to note that the IRI's leadership has engaged in fiscal irregularities that would impress even our 19th century French diplomat. However, this is a slippery slope that does not advance our understanding of *why* the Iranians make certain decisions or how they see the world. At best, it notes a point of continuity in how Western observers have documented Iranian conduct. At worst it is a casual exercise in stereotyping that undermines the credibility of strategic culture as a useful tool.

Those cautions in mind, this essay will continue by taking the modern IRI as a point of departure. The focus on WMD decision-making bounds the discussion in an important way— those parts of the regime that directly take or influence WMD decisions are the only concern. How Iran decides its agricultural policies or its views on censoring films are not particularly relevant to this subset of security decisions. The essay will offer a summary "profile" of Iranian strategic culture in this narrow context, followed by a more detailed discussion of the component elements within the Iranian narrative that appear to be of particular influence. This includes an understanding of how Iranians perceive: Iran's history and shared identity; geography; other groups; the broader world and their place in it; threats; assets in play (e.g., resources, economic

vulnerabilities); and ideology and religion. Based on the above, the essay will continue by offering a discussion of how this strategic culture appears to operate; identifying its characteristics with regard to the broader context of Iranian society (for example, are there competing strategic cultures? Who are the custodians of this particular culture? Are there other factors that might shape how effectively this strategic culture can operate?). The essay will conclude with an assessment of the strategic culture "in action." More specifically, the concluding section will demonstrate how WMD decision-making appears to have been influenced by the strategic culture, what caveats should be in place when applying this profile, and what this profile suggests with respect to future IRI decision-making on WMD.

STRATEGIC CULTURE PROFILE

In many ways, a summary profile of the strategic culture that appears to be operative amongst the IRI's decision-making elite is a difficult way to begin the discussion with an audience that has little or no background knowledge of Iran, its culture or its history. There is no substitute for detailed expertise in area studies; the trick for students of strategic culture is assuring that we are conversant with enough data to make well informed judgments about the issues of concern to our analyses. Thus, there are intelligent things that can be said without learning Persian or delving into the minutia of succession order in the Elamite Empire (approximately 3000-2500 to 644 BCE)—it is simply essential to make a disciplined review of the scholarship of those who have done these things. First we will begin with a *very* brief synopsis of Iranian history, highlighting key points in that may have resonance for a later discussion of the IRI's behavior.

Iranian History

It is productive to begin around 559 BCE with Cyrus's uniting the tribes that had settled on the Iranian plateau (after migration from the Asian steppes) and forging the Achaemenid Empire that would rule from Egypt in the West to Pakistan and the Indus River in the East. Like many of the successful empires to follow, Cyrus and his Achaemenid successors ruled by co-opting the local elites of conquered territory and utilizing the inevitable product of civilization

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[1] Arthur de Gobineau quoted in: Charles Issawai, *The Economic History of Iran: 1800-1914.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 40.

and empire: bureaucracy. Cyrus was also the first in what was to become a tradition of absolute kingship, the ruler exercising godlike and god-granted authority.

Coincident with the birth of Cyrus's empire was the rise of Zoroastrianism in Iran. The prophet Zoroaster developed a theology in which the god of all good, Ahura Mazda, was balanced by the equally powerful god of all evil and death, Ahriman. Under the commandment to do good works, have good thoughts and do good deeds, Zoroaster's followers saw themselves as in service to Ahura Mazda in the eternal struggle against the powers of his evil counterpart. Like the monotheisms that were to follow (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), each immortal soul would be granted its place in Heaven or Hell depending on the person's conduct in the continual struggle between good and evil. This is the "duality" of Zoroastrianism so often mentioned when scholars seek the influence of this ancient religion (Zoroastrians remain a recognized religion, along with Judaism and Christianity, even in the Islamic Republic).

Long after the Achaemenids, conquerors both foreign (Arab, Mongol) and Iranian would avail themselves of administrative networks and individuals with skills sets developed and handed down over generations of imperial service. By 331 BCE Alexander the Great conquered the aging remnants of the Achaemenids. Alexander's passing ushered in a competition leading to more than 150 years of lesser regional powers followed by consolidation of the Parthian Empire in 163 BCE. The Parthian rulers claimed for themselves the divine right of rule, checked the Eastward expansion of Rome, and led a rejection of the Hellenic influence brought by Alexander and his immediate successors. The uniquely Iranian germ of a national identity had survived its first foreign invasion and occupation.

Yet the Parthians lasted only 400 years and in their place rose the first Sassanian "King of Kings," Ardeshir, who himself laid claim to God's mandate to rule. The Sassanians, like their predecessors, held any encroachment from the West at bay. The Sassanian dynasty saw a new flowering of Iranian science, art, architecture and culture that rivaled only their Achaemenid predecessors. More importantly, the Sassanian rulers used the institutionalization of Zoroastrianism to legitimate their rule as ordained by Ahura Mazda and to solidify a caste system that served to minimize discord amongst the elites who might otherwise fracture the empire that stretched once again from Syria to India. By the 6th and 7th Century CE, the toll of fighting off Byzantines and maintaining internal stability was too much even for the evolved

administrative tools of Iranian bureaucracy. As the regime crumbled, the heretofore ignored Arab tribes swept out of the deserts united under the banner of Islam.

In the mid 7th century CE, the weakened Iranian empire fell to the advancing armies of Islam and underwent a transformation more profound than any wrought by Alexander. Islam had just undergone the painful process of Mohammad's successors (the new leader was called Caliph or deputy of the Prophet) consolidating rule over Arab tribes wont to go their own way in the wake of the Prophet's death. The wars of "reconversion" over, the faithful were ready to extend their dominion in all directions. The coming victories and conquests would confirm in the Arab mind the truth of Mohammed's prophecy and their right to impose it in the lands once ruled by Cyrus and Ardeshir.

Islam, a potent fusing of political ideology and theology, posited itself as the last and complete revelation of the word of God as communicated through his Prophet Mohammad. As such, the Muslim Caliph's duty to God was to extend Islam's dominion, giving all a chance to accept the true faith. While Judaism and Christianity, Islam's monotheistic and acknowledged predecessors in revelation, would be acceptable within the lands of Islam, adherents to those faiths would have to endure second class status, pay exorbitant taxes and so forth. Polytheism was less well tolerated by the new rulers although it is a measure of Iran's cultural distinction that Zoroastrianism (passably close to monotheism itself) continued to survive under the Arab conquest. In fact, there remains a small Zoroastrian community in modern Iran acknowledged in the Islamic Republic's constitution.

During these early years of Islamic conquest, a development in the Arab leadership of the expanding empire would emerge that would have profound impact on the direction of Iranian Islam. A split in the leadership over who should be rightfully chosen Caliph developed between Mohammad's closest companions and his cousin (also his son-in-law) Ali. Intrigue, regicide and finally civil war flowered as competitors jockeyed to be acknowledged as rightful Caliph with Ali finally achieving the position after the murder of the third Caliph, Uthman, in 656 CE. Ali himself only survived until his murder in 661 and the beginning of the Umayyad dynasty's rule over the new Arab empire. Even in this period, the partisans of Ali, known as the Shi'ites,

sought to restore their vision of the rightful succession extending from Mohammad through his family.[2]

In 680, Ali's son, Hussein, led an impossibly small group of family and followers into battle at Karbala against the Umayyad army and were slaughtered. This sacrifice in the name of rightful succession is a central event in the development of Shi'ism as a distinct branch of Islam. The Shia reverence for martyrdom comes from reference to Hussein's death and the desire of the faithful to atone for the failure of the faithful (Shia who were not with the party at Karbala) to stand with Hussein and die.

It is important to remember that Shi'ism arose as a political dispute, not an issue of theology (though the two are not really distinct in Islam), and as an intra-Arab matter—Shi'ism is not native to Iran or Iranians. In fact, the consolidation of Iran as the physical heartland of Shi'ism was not to occur until the 16th Century. As a defeated political movement, the Shia gradually retreated from politics; their leader, the Imam, was considered a descendent of Ali.

The development of Shi'ism as a legal tradition distinct from the dominant Sunni version of Islam began with the sixth Imam, Jafar as-Sadiq, and formalized the ways in which the Shia faithful would conduct their affairs given that their leader was often not the recognized political authority. The Imams, deported to Iraq and sometimes imprisoned by the Caliphs, are themselves considered infallible and martyrs by the Shia. In 874 CE, the young 12th Imam, according to Shia tradition, went into hiding to avoid death at the hands of the Caliph. For 67 years, the Imam is said to have communicated with his followers through letters sent via messenger. In 941, the Imam ended his contact with his followers, entering the period called the "great occultation." The Shia community believes that this 12th Imam, called the Mahdi, remains in hiding today and will at some point return as a messianic figure to usher in legitimate Islamic (Shia) government.[3]

The problem the Shia have faced since 941 is how to conduct themselves in the absence of a legitimate, infallible ruler—generally while living in lands controlled by Arab monarchs they view as illegitimate. These rulers governed by reference to the Quran, Islam's holy book, the conduct and recorded sayings of Mohammad, and the conduct of Mohammad's closest

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[2] For a more detailed discussion of the Arab developments, see: Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

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followers, his Companions. To oversimplify a bit, Sunni Islam uses only these references to govern, issue legal rulings and enforce the holy law (for Muslims, the only legitimate law), or Sharia. The Sunnis believe that God would not allow the community of Muslims to go astray so a consensus would provide guidance on questions fundamental to the faith—an approach decidedly unappealing to the minority Shi'ite faction. In contrast, the Shia reference the conduct and the rulings of the infallible Imams. After the great occultation, and hence no guidance from a rightful Imam, the Shia developed the process of allowing qualified scholars to make "legal rulings based on rational considerations,"[4] an interpretive legal technique called ijtihad developed first by the scholar al-Allama al-Hilli who died in 1325. It is not difficult to see why this minority version of Islam, chafing under the control of rulers it did not accept, would find traction amongst Iranians chafing under the domination of Arabs to whom they felt culturally superior.

From the beginning of the conquests, the Arab tribes were well equipped to conquer and plunder, but less so to rule and govern a far-flung empire. The Iranian legacy of administrative and bureaucratic innovation would play a crucial role in giving the Arab empire the tools necessary to govern—for example, the skill of bookkeeping and the organization of administrative departments within governments. As Arab rulers came and fell, much as traditional monarchs rather than as religious leaders, many of Iran's learned court families adapted to serve new masters, in this context becoming quite powerful. The move of the capital of the Caliphate to Baghdad in 762 would increase the influence of Iran in the Islamic world significantly.[5] From Baghdad, the Abbasid dynasty was to dominate the empire for the next 500 years. According to one Abbasid Caliph:

> The Persians ruled for a thousand years and did not need us even for a day; we [Arabs] have been ruling for one or two centuries and cannot do without them for an hour.[6]

The Mongol Conquest

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[3] There are other sects of Shia which, for example, end the line of infallible Imams at the 7th Imam, "Twelver" Shi'ite Islam, as described here, is the dominant version. For a discussion of the evolution of Shi'ism, see: Heinz Halm, *Shia Islam: From Religion to Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997).
[4] Halm, p. 102.
[5] For a book length treatment of the Abbasid period, see: Hugh Kennedy, *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2005).
[6] Patrick Clawson and Michael Rubin, *Eternal Iran: Continuity and Chaos* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 18.

The Abbasid Caliphate ended, crushed under the hooves of Mongol war ponies. In 1218 the ruler of much of Iran at the time, Khwarizm-Shah Muhammad II (who was at odds with the Caliph in Baghdad), decided to execute a party of Mongol ambassadors as spies. This bit of reflexive cruelty (with perhaps a bit of larceny thrown in as some sources suggest robbery was the true motive) earned the wrath of the Mongol leader Genghis Khan, the "World Conqueror." Genghis's retribution, as witnessed by the historian Ibn al-Athir, was catastrophic and comprehensive on a scale that changed the region:

> If anyone were to say that at no time since the creation of man by the great God had the world experienced anything like it he would only be telling the truth. In fact, nothing comparable is reported in past chronicles… [The Mongols] killed women, men and children, ripped open the bodies of the pregnant and slaughtered the unborn… …[T]he evil spread everywhere. It moved across the lands like a cloud before the wind.[7]

While al-Athir's account is likely exaggerated, Genghis Khan brooked no opposition and respected no title or position, effectively decapitating the existing social hierarchies throughout Central Asia and eliminating cities that resisted, or worse, mistook instances of Mongol leniency for weakness.[8] By all indications, the Mongol propaganda effort actually encouraged the most lurid and extreme accounts of their victories, the better to undermine the likelihood of future resistance.[9] In any event, the 400,000 troops of Khwarizm-Shah Muhammad II were bested by Genghis and his 150,000 strong army.

The Mongols returned under Genghis's grandson and established the Ilkhanid dynasty of local Mongol rulers that governed, again, with the aid of native Iranian administration and advice. The Ilkhanids converted to Islam in 1295, but the dynasty fairly quickly fractured into an array of local and regional rulers.[10] That disarray was briefly reversed by Tamerlane, a nomad in the 14th century who repeated some of the Mongols successful tactics (including dependence on

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[7] Bertold Spuler, *History of the Mongols* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968), p. 30.

[8] For example Nishapur where the residents revolted against the Mongols in 1221, in the process killing Genghis Khan's son-in-law. The Khan allowed his widowed daughter to decide the city's punishment. Widely circulated reports state that no living creature (including dogs and cats) was allowed to survive. Jack Weatherford, *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2004), p. 117.

[9] Both Christian and Muslim sources from the period often exaggerate the barbarity and bloodiness with which the Mongols conducted their campaigns, providing lurid accounts of battles killing millions. The Mongols were indeed merciless and brutal in the service of strategic objective or avenging themselves (see note 6), but seldom demonstrated the recreational cruelty with which Christian and Muslim leaders sometimes treated captive Mongol soldiers. Mongol slaughter and rapine pushed at the boundaries of the norms of war and conquest at the time, but was hardly unique in its brutality; it was most distinctive in the efficiency and speed with which it was conducted.

[10] One Mongol Khan was converted to Shi'ism, but his successors returned to Sunni Islam.

Iranian bureaucrats). The next significant period in Iranian history would be marked by extremism and the fateful fusion of Shi'ia Islam with the Iranian national identity.

Iranian National Identity

The political chaos of the late 15th Century laid the groundwork for Iran to assert its national identity for the first time in Shia form. In 1501, a young Shia sheikh, Ismail, using converted Turkomen tribesmen as soldiers, conquered the city of Tabriz and soon claimed for Shia Islam the whole territory once governed by Iran's Sassanids. Ismail, who may have considered himself a living god,[11] was regarded by many of his followers as a direct descendent of Ali. Ismail made Shi'ism the official religion of the new Safavid dynasty, his troops marching forward under blood-red turbans with the slogan: "We are Hussein's men, and this is our epoch. In devotion we are the slaves of the Imam; Our name is 'zealot' and our title 'martyr.'"[12]

Mass conversion to the Shia faith became the rule in Safavid Iran—a rule that was unhealthy to resist. Iran's national identity, always distinct from its Arab conquerors, gained new dimensions of difference as a Shia power reaching from India in the East to the Persian Gulf, northward to the Black Sea (its boundaries East of the Tigris and not including Baghdad) and the Eastern coast of the Caspian Sea. To the West lay the Sunni Ottoman Empire. Further, Ismail's self-appointed role as the Islamically legitimate absolute ruler resonated with an Iranian culture which was historically conditioned to accept the divine right of kingship and remembered the greatness of those like Cyrus who had embodied it. The Iranian national identity was articulated in terms of the Shia's historical passion play of martyrdom and suffering; the deliverance once preached about by Zoroaster now offered up to Iranians in the form of the Shia expectation that the messianic figure of the Mahdi would return to set everything aright. Although Ismail's path of conquest was ultimately checked by the Ottomans and he died in 1524, the Dynasty lived on for another 200 years. However it took through the 18th century before the slowly shrinking Safavid territory became predominantly Shia.[13]

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[11] Muslim rulers after Mohammad on occasion took significant liberties with regard to their theologically defined status, sometimes announcing themselves to be the Prophet's (or God's) successor and equal.
[12] Clive Irving, *Crossroads of Civilization.*(New York: Barnes & Noble, 1979), p. 157.
[13] Shia and Sunni both responded to oppression within the Islamic world by migrating to areas in which they were majority; the selective repression of other religious minorities (e.g., Christians and Jews) being subject to the whims not only of religious dictate but of political expediency.

It was during this period also that the learned scholars of Shi'ism began to coalesce into a definable clerical caste with a loose hierarchy of authority. There were few native Iranian Shia scholars who had completed the lengthy legal coursework to interpret and apply God's will via Islamic jurisprudence, so the Safavids imported many from the Arab world. The clerics, particularly in those areas most remote from officialdom, were the ones who collected the faithful's obligatory taxes (a religious duty, not a remittance to the state), administered mosques and schools, and settled legal disputes.

Despite the official Shi'ite character of the regime, the tension between the emerging religious caste, the ulama, and the king, or Shah, were apparent and never fully resolved. Some of the leading clerics, in keeping with Shia rejection of political authority not vested in the rightful Imam Mahdi, opposed the monarchy. Thus as the ulama consolidated, it also became a potential rival source of legitimacy, the core of any real opposition to a particular Shah—a circumstance first evident in the Safavid period and equally true in the 1979 Islamic Revolution. However, many were willing to accommodate the secular aspects of the monarchy and the ulama often enjoyed close relations with the Shah until the Qajar dynasty united Iran in the late 18th and 19th Centuries.

Ottoman Empire and Modernization

The Qajar Shahs ruled Iran from 1796 to 1925 and were Turkomen. Without any credible claim to the linage of Ali and the Prophet, the division between a secular monarchy (nominally a foreign one at that) and the Shia ulama was more pronounced than ever. This did not, however, mean open conflict. Instead, a tacit accommodation emerged in which the Shahs physically protected the state while the ulama did not challenge their authority. Physical threats to Iran were not an idle consideration. Iran stood facing the Ottomans to the West and the Indian Islamic Mughal Empire to the East and the Russians to the North. On the Arabian Peninsula itself, the puritan Wahhabi sect entered into an accord with the Saud clan and laid the foundation for modern Saudi Arabia and a version of Islam that drew even broader distinctions between the two major divisions of the religion. Perhaps most notably, European presence in terms of warships and trade became unavoidable. Modern concepts of the nation state, with its fixed borders, foreign policy and sovereignty issues came to the Iranian world. The railroad and telegraph were only two of the inventions that challenged an Iranian elite that had evolved over

centuries and was conditioned to accept the Iranian Islamic world as the pinnacle of intellectual and technological development. The shock was profound for the whole Muslim world and continues to reverberate in the 21st century.

Western powers, Russia and Britain chiefly, pressed home their advantages by negotiating painfully lopsided trade concessions from the Iranians and dividing Iran into respective "spheres of influence." The ulama in general retreated from active alliance with the state, becoming quietistic. This apolitical trend reflects the mainstream of Shia clerical attitudes toward secular authority through today. However, the ulama did on occasion "stand up" to the secular authority as in 1891-2 the "tobacco revolt." For a handsome payment, the Shah conceded to the British monopoly on the marketing of Iranian tobacco. Boycotts, riots, and a united and vocal position taken by the ulama, in conjunction with the Iranian merchant class (the Bazaaris), forced the Shah to ultimately rescind the concession.[14]

This uneasy tension, the economic predations of the colonial powers, and the unsettling reformist intent of the Shah led to Constitutionalist Revolution of the early 20th century in which the Shah, just before his death, was forced to accept a parliament, or Majlis, that represented Iran's merchant, landowning and clerical elite. The new Shah was intent on reversing his father's concessions to the constitutionalists and through 1907-8 the sides jockeyed fiercely for advantage. Protests, warfare, assassination attempts and economic ruin were the result.

In 1909, the chaos engulfed Tehran, and the Shah, who was supported by Russian troops, took refuge in the Russian embassy and abdicated in favor of his 12 year old son. It is notable that even in this precarious climate, the Iranian constitutionalists were not in favor of abolishing the monarchy. Moreover, the constitutionalists were not above squabbling amongst themselves, the result being that the Majlis never matured into a truly functioning organ of government. The Majlis was finally ended in 1912 when the young Shah, backed by 12,000 Russian troops, settled the matter by forcibly dissolving the body.

In 1925, Reza Shah Pahlavi toppled the last Qajar Shah and attempted to move Iran toward becoming a "modern" state. Principally, that meant serious structural changes intended to provide the military and technological advantages so evident in the hands of acquisitive Western powers eager to exploit these advantages in dealing with the Muslims. Ataturk's

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[14] Another act of defiance was in 1948 when several leading clerics issued a ruling, or fatwa, declaring that women would henceforth have to wear the chador, a black garment covering head to toe.

Turkish model of development was the objective. As the Shah's state Westernized, the Ulama's space of control grew increasingly restricted. The legal system was secularized, the educational system adopted Western-style universities and local administration slipped from the clerics' grasp. While these moves were discomforting for the ulema, Iran made steady economic progress during the new Shah's first years in power. In addition to the ulema, other remnants of the Qajar elite suffered as well. The Bazaar merchants were dislodged from centuries-old family-based control of Iran's trade by newly empowered institutions and functionaries and state-controlled monopolies. Many of the feudal landowners were displaced as the state, in the person of the Shah, appropriated their land.

In the end, the ulama's worst fear during the constitutional period, that dissolving the monarchy would usher in secularization, was brought near fruition by the Shah himself. Recognizing the ulama as a potential rival power base, the Shah sought to tie his legitimacy to the legacy of Cyrus and the pre-Islamic empires rather than the legal reasoning of Shia scholars. That said, scholars were also eager to keep tax monies, land, prestige, and authority for themselves, making secularization all the more compelling for the Shah.

Continued foreign interference was also a risk and the Shah balanced British and Russian encroachments more successfully than did his predecessor. In 1941, as the wartime British and Russian allies occupied Iran (U.S. troop presence in Iran began in 1942), the Shah abdicated rather than accommodate the Allied powers, and went into exile. His son Muhammad Reza would become the next and last Pahlavi Shah.

Iran During the Cold War

In the post World War II period, the new Iranian Shah confronted all of the tensions the Qajar Shahs and his father had faced as well as the new dynamic of the Cold War—a new American role gently supplanting the British involvement in shoring up the Shah's regime (this time in opposition to their former Soviet allies). The Shah survived by balancing these competing pressures. From 1951 to 1953, the Shah briefly lost that balance when Prime Minister Muhammad Mossadeq ruled as de facto dictator from a position shored up by nationalizing the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Dealing with communist revolutionaries, ardent nationalists, and the British who refused to reach meaningful compromise on the division of profits from AIOC, the Shah was unable to foresee the Prime Minister's agenda and the speed with which he would

act. As Mossadeq stepped into a vacuum of authority, he relied on violent street demonstrations to keep his agenda moving forward through much of 1952 as his support in the Majlis eroded. He purged the military and was unable to revive the economy in the wake of a foreign boycott of Iranian oil subsequent to the nationalization. Ultimately, Mossadeq dissolved the Majlis when it refused to support him. By 1953 the Shah found it advisable to leave the country. However, he was able to return later hat year when an Army coup supported by anti-Mossadeq street demonstrations won the day and returned the Shah to his throne. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and British intelligence role in organizing and helping the pro-Shah forces is often cited in Iran as yet another example in a long history of foreign interference and an affront to Iranian sovereignty.[15]

During the Mossadeq era, the ulama were generally wary both of Mossadeq's secular, leftist agenda and the Shah's cooperation with British and American interests. However, after his return to the throne, the Shah made certain to cement his absolute control of Iran and use the once-again flowing oil monies to press forward with a modernization of Iran. As dictator, the Shah left the clerics and others little room to maneuver as he began his "white revolution" to shake up almost every facet of Iranian life. For the clerics, this "revolution" was catastrophic. The Shah intruded on spheres normally reserved for the judgment of learned Shia scholars, for example, the right of women to divorce, and the banning of women's head scarves.

In the post-World War II period, select Shia scholars developed a new train of thought on the role of the clerical caste in politics; one that saw the clergy's role as active rather than passive. These scholars focused on the twin dangers of secularization and Westernization which they defined as threats that might tempt the faithful away from the truth of Islam by offering them the material bounty flaunted by the imperialists. For these clerics, the Shah's White Revolution was a direct assault on Islam coupled with an abandonment of Iran to foreign occupation and domination. The Americans were no more welcome than were the pagan Mongol hordes. While in 1971 the Shah was hosting lavish celebrations of the 2500th anniversary of the Iranian monarchy, the activist clerics became revolutionaries.

Ruhollah Khomeini, with his title "ayatollah" denoting his status as a widely-respected clerical authority, had been exiled for opposing the Shah in the early 1960s. By the 1970s,

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[15] The history is less clear than many Iranians, or Westerners, believe. See the CIA history of the 1953 coup at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB28//index.html.

Khomeini had developed an ideological tool he called *vilayat-i faqih* or the rule of the jurisprudent. The concept is in many ways an extension of the gradual accumulation of clerical authority begun under the Safavids. Without the Mahdi to provide a true just government, Khomeini's theory held, it fell to the learned scholars of Shia Islam to act as trustees and provide the political leadership that the Prophet and the Imams had provided. Just as Shia were bound to take their guidance in matters of religious authority (and all matters were religious matters) from a learned scholar they chose to emulate in his piety, so too should an Islamic government take guidance from a learned scholar whose direction will be considered near absolute. In many ways, just as the Shah was celebrating his divine right to absolute kingship, Khomeini was asserting his own divine right to absolute authority as he would ultimately become the Islamic Republic's founding Supreme Leader.

The 1979 Revolution

A broad range of factors contributed to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Among them were: large scale population migration from rural land to cities; land reform initiatives that shook up the landed elite; increasingly repressive conduct of the feared SAVAK secret police; and an almost willful desire by the Shah to offend the sensibilities of Shia Muslims by embracing the most decadent and opulent of Western excesses. The Shah had overreached and Iran snapped. In rebelling against the Shah and removing one absolute ruler, the Iranians were quite willing to accept another absolute ruler—as had Iranian revolutionaries in the past.

The small clique of clerics and their many more devoted followers seized the balance of power within the chaos of the Revolution and used the religious legitimacy personified by Ayatollah Khomeini to claim absolute rule. A constitution was drawn up creating a "modern" government with an executive, a parliament and a judiciary. However, at every step in the system there is a vehicle for clerical oversight. For example, candidates can stand for election to Parliament, but they must first be approved by a panel dominated by clerics, only a cleric can head the secret police, and the regular army is mirrored by a powerful new military force called the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps which protects first and foremost the revolution.

What follows is a summary strategic profile of the current leadership of the Islamic Republic, only removed a few years from the personal oversight (and unquestioned authority) of Ayatollah Khomeini.[16]

Summary and Description of Strategic Culture

The current Iranian leadership has a distinct worldview and perspective that is extreme in its embodiment of broader trends in Iranian society. Indeed, the regime itself is in a state of flux, not far removed from the initial fervor of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the horrific costs of the 1980-1988 war with Iraq (known as the Imposed War in Iran), and the consolidation of a new ruling elite drawn from the ranks of the nation's Shi'ite Muslim clerics. Where this process goes as the generation of men who made the revolution fade from view while a new generation of men and women who have borne the brunt of this transition come of age is uncertain. In many respects, the IRI is a novelty both to Iran with its long tradition of Kings and to Shi'ite Islam as religious/political ideology. We will begin with some very basic assertions that are intended as much to demonstrate what the regime is not as to illuminate what the regime is.

The IRI leadership connects ends and means in an intelligible manner. Given the biases often present in our Western perception of how Islam functions as both a religious system and a political ideology, it is important to disabuse analysts of the notion that Iran's leaders are "mad mullahs" driven to irrational or illogical behavior by devotion to existential goals.[17] The logic and experience defined by Shia Islam shapes their decision-making and there is clear historical evidence that they perceive and place observable reality within that context and act accordingly. In short, they appear to connect means and ends and act accordingly.

The IRI's leadership is a small collective group of decision-makers that is, in large part, well informed and constrained in its behavior by the competing interests of various individuals and factions within the elite. While the current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is vested with vast powers over the government, he does not have the personal authority embodied in his predecessor, the Revolution's founder, Ayatollah Khomeini. Khamenei must negotiate

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[16] This profile has been informed by an array of research methods and sources including anthropology, history, political psychology, history, religion, and interviews with Iranians, Arabs, Israelis and others who have had direct personal experience with the Iranian leadership (e.g., diplomats, businesspeople).
[17] For perspective on this see: Karl Vick, "Misreading Tehran," *Washington Post*, June 25, 2006. p. B1.

amongst the regime's economic interests,[18] ideological factions,[19] and institutions. Perhaps the most important institution in the currently emerging configuration is the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The IRGC was formed in the immediate post-Revolutionary period from the militias that helped Ayatollah Khomeini seize and consolidate power. Born in part from distrust of the Shah's military, the IRGC has historically emphasized ideological fervor over military professionalism.[20] President Ahmadinejad and many of those he has brought into the government are former IRGC officials.[21]

The Iranian regime's inner workings are unfortunately opaque. However, Iranian society writ large and the formal organization of the government are rather more transparent (particularly in comparison to other authoritarian regimes in the region), providing significant data on the social, economic and political information that flows into the decision-making process.

Iranian Hostility toward the West

The IRI leadership appears to have a uniformly hostile view of the West in general and the United States in particular; this is unsurprising given Iran's long-term experience with outright invasion and occupation and direct experience with British and Russian colonialism. From the Iranian perspective, interaction with the modern West has not been pleasant. 19th century wars with Russia, and the annexation of much Iranian territory, gave way to 20th century violations of Iran's declared neutrality during World Wars I and II and the widely held belief that Iranian experiments with constitutional forms of government were undermined by the West in the Mossadeq period. After the Revolution, the West's support for Saddam Hussein's Iraq as a

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[18] Many senior clerics established extraordinary personal wealth in the process of the regime's confiscation of the Iranian monarchy's holdings. Others enriched themselves through control over the government and its functions (e.g., export licenses, subsidized farming, etc.).see: Paul Klebnikov, "Millionare Mullahs," *Forbes*, July 21, 2003.

[19] The regime's leadership has methodically marginalized the internal resources of those within the elite seeking to take a less strident tone in Iran's relationship with the outside world, particularly the West. That group has been personified by former President Mohammad Khatami (his allies were called the "2nd of Khordad Movement"). The emerging faction represented by current president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad appears to be much more radical, less experienced (e.g., less education abroad), and less tied to the first generation of Revolutionary political elites. See: Ilan Berman, "The Iranian Nuclear Impasse: Next Steps," Statement before the US Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Committee Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information and International Security, July 20, 2006.

[20] There is some debate on how professional the IRGC has become and how representative is members are of the prevailing attitudes in the population as a whole.

[21] For an introduction to the IRGC see: Kenneth Katzman, *The Warriors of Islam: Iran's Revolutionary Guard* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

bulwark against the alarming radicalism of the new regime (epitomized by the seizure of the American Embassy and its personnel) was viewed in Tehran as conclusive evidence that the Western powers were implacably committed to strangling the Islamic government. Additional factors shaping this perspective include: Khomeini's exposure to the anti-colonial rhetoric of the 1950s and 1960s; Iranian culture's internalization of the notion of duality in ancient Zoroastrianism; and long experience of Iranian subjugation at the hands of successive waves of conquerors including the Arabs and the Mongols. While the regime is adept at receiving and interpreting U.S. messages, its fundamental hostility to the "Great Satan" colors its interpretation of US actions and intentions.

Political-Religious Ideology

The current Iranian leadership appears to have recognizable goals derived from its unique political ideology. That ideology makes use of Shia Islam's gradual consolidation of a clerical caste and Iran's historical concerns about sovereignty and acceptance of an absolute ruler. In this ideology, Iran and Shia Islam are one in the same, indivisible. Iran operates under Khomeini's unique politico-religious doctrine that stresses the survival of the regime as the ultimate service to Islam. In Khomeini's formulation, the regime is the embodiment of Shia Islam's authority on Earth and to abandon it would be to abandon the will of God.[22] Thus the survival of this government and its form is an existential imperative as well as an expression of self-interest and Iranian nationalism. It must be recalled that concept is novel in Shia theology, albeit reflective of existing currents and therefore not simply created out of whole cloth. Remember too that Shi'ism has, of necessity, historically frowned upon religious figures participating in government, given that any government before the Mahdi returns would be considered illegitimate. Clerical rule in the IRI has also formalized the clerical hierarchy more completely, a process begun so long ago by the Safavids.

At sum, the regime's survival interest, honed by centuries living under Sunni Arab domination is reflected in the IRI's identifiable "red lines:" foreign invasion, externally-supported revolution and outside control over IRI oil exports.

The IRI leadership reflects flexible, adaptive elements in Iranian culture and Shia Islam. These include the cultural and religious sanction of deception and façade when necessary to

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[22] Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islamic Government,* (Arlington, VA: Joint Publications Research Service, 1979).

preserve the faith, one's life or, most importantly, the regime. The roots of this flexibility are not difficult to intuit: living as Shia in a sea of Sunnis, and as Iranians in a sea of Arabs, required developing the survival skills of the often weak and powerless. Indeed, the degree to which Iranian elites were able to co-opt their conquerors through application of the administrative skills developed over centuries speaks to the flexibility that has kept Iran's unique cultural identity alive through the present day.

Finally, in the wake of Iran's horrific experience with the "Imposed War," the leadership has appeared reasonably cautious in terms of military adventurism. During the war, Iran demonstrated a clear willingness to accept great costs to sustain and expand the Revolution, at first embracing aims that clearly went beyond preserving Iranian territorial integrity. While this motive did not survive battlefield setbacks and an Iranian perception that the United States was perilously close to entering the war in overt support of Saddam, it remains an instructive example of the directions in which Iranian nationalism and revolutionary zeal can be channeled given the proper circumstances. In this respect, the zeal of Iran to march "first to Baghdad, then to Jerusalem" reflects a worrisome similarity to the zeal with which the Safavids spread the word of Shi'ism with the sword.

Perhaps more hopefully, it is often noted that modern Iran is refreshingly free of territorial ambitions (save for a few small but strategically located islands in the Persian Gulf); there is no appetite for reassembling the Acheamenian Empire or even a "Greater Iran."

Factors Shaping the IRI's Strategic Culture

This profile of the IRI leadership's strategic culture flows from a survey of the range of experience, ideology and practical realities that modern Iranians have inherited from their ancestors.

Geography has provided an important influence on the emergence of a unique Iranian strategic culture. Within the natural boundaries of the Iranian plateau, Iranian nationalism was born and flourished alongside the development of civilization and empire. This was in marked contrast to the nomadic and therefore largely tribal system that gave birth to Islam in the forbidding climate of the Hijaz (or the steppe culture of the Mongol conquerors that would follow the Arabs centuries later). Shi'ism took hold as a reflection of Iranian alienation from their Arab conquerors, a unique trick of identity assertion within the universalist message of

Islam. Iranian nationalism since 1979 has been expressed through the vehicle of Shi'ism. The Iranian Revolution was a perfect expression of that synergy.

Figure 1: Modern Iran[23]

However, there are reminders of Iran's glorious pre-Islamic past. Much of Iran's history remains current for modern Iranians and is communicated through not just through the traditions of Shi'ite Islam but through cultural artifacts that even the current clerical regime does not challenge. For example, the literature of the great Iranian empires is most clearly captured in Ferdowsi's epic poem *Shahnameh* ("Book of Kings") which lays out the evolution of the divine right through which Iranian kings rule (and how they may lose it).[24] Another literary strand is the series of "Mirrors for Princes" in which Iranian scholars and officials provided gentle instruction to their conquerors regarding how to govern. These texts of ancient Iran coupled with the Shia story of oppression comprise the shared narrative of modern Iranians, kept alive through festivals like Nawrooz and Ashura.[25]

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[23] CIA World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ir.html> (accessed 4 July 2006).
[24] Abolqasem Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings* (New York: Viking Press, 2006).
[25] Ashura is the festival to mourn the death of Hussein at Karbala in 680 CE. The climax of the ten-day holiday is self-flagellation by men with chains, and cutting oneself (in extreme cases), followed by chants, and chest beating. For a fuller description of the origins, see: Halm, pp. 41-44.

As implied above, the IRI leadership sees Iran as both oppressed (religiously and physically) and challenged by the seductive power of the West as an alternative to the righteous path of Vilayat-i Faqih. From the Iranian perspective, the West looked on or actually aided Saddam as Iraq waged a long and costly war aimed at (once again) repressing the Shia— including the use of WMD against Iran. This experience defines both Iran's view of the outside world and its place in the world order, and its perception of threat. Published statements by Supreme Leader and senior figures in the government make clear that this immediate history shapes their current strategic perspective and their conviction that the West, and the United States in particular, are an existential threat, a "Great Satan" standing in opposition to God and the House of Islam.

The Centrality of Oil

No discussion of Iranian strategic behavior can avoid the role oil and gas play in enabling this leadership to both remain in power and identify and pursue strategic objectives. In short, oil and gas exports are definitive for the survival of the Iranian economy. As summarized by the US Department of Energy:

> Iran's economy relies heavily on oil export revenues - around 80-90 percent of total export earnings and 40-50 percent of the government budget. Strong oil prices the past few years have boosted Iran's oil export revenues and helped Iran's economic situation. For 2004, Iran's real GDP increased by around 4.8 percent. For 2005 and 2006, real GDP is expected to grow by around 5.6 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively. Inflation is running at around 15 percent per year.[26]

Despite this wealth of resources (and likely access to more as Caspian fields are developed), Iran's oil and gas infrastructure is rapidly aging and production is only now nearing pre-Revolutionary levels. Many of the factors that have heretofore limited the infusion of foreign investment and technology that would improve productivity are also those that have limited broader economic development: the prevalence of corruption and mismanagement; an arcane network of quasi-official "charities" that function as huge conglomerates and may account for as much as 40 percent of Iranian GDP; nationalist suspicion of foreign interests; and alarming levels of capital flight.

<u>The Influence of Shi'ism</u>

Finally, and perhaps most centrally, Shia Islam plays a defining role in shaping the worldview of Iran's decision-making elite. The Iranian constitution enshrines Khomeini's Vilayat-i Faqih and the structure of the government guarantees that the clerical elite retains the authority to enforce its interpretation Islamic law on the populace.[27]

One way that Shi'ism conditions both thought and actions is through the concept of martyrdom. The IRI leadership uses the term to legitimate sacrifices made for the preservation of the Revolution, thus tying the practical survival of the regime to the spiritual context of Shia Islam. The "human wave" attacks during the "Imposed War" are often cited as an example of the extremes to which this notion of sacrifice can be taken. While raw nationalism had its role, the willingness with which Shia soldiers were willing to sacrifice themselves cannot be divorced from the Shia passion play of Hussein's martyrdom at Karbala in 680 and the Shia mandate to atone for not fighting and dying alongside Ali's grandson.

Another concept is *Maslahat,* loosely defined as "in the public interest" without necessarily referring to the strict tenets of Islamic jurisprudence.[28] More familiar to Western audiences is the notion of jihad. "Holy war" can mean a range of things from actual battle against an enemy of Islam, to a person's internal struggle with Islam. However, historically it is difficult to find meaningful usage outside the martial context.[29] In the IRI it may appear that both definitions are used—the IRI is fighting a 'jihad' against the infidels (e.g., Israel, USA), and fighting a jihad to lead the Iranian people to become good Muslims. However, there is sufficient room for skepticism that the leadership's intent is to embrace the more benign (and quite modern) interpretation of jihad.

Without an exhaustive reading of Islamic culture beyond the scope of this essay, it is difficult to adequately convey the degree to which Shia Islam has been fused with the Iranian national identity. Suffice it to say that the last Pahlavi Shah suffered his fate in part because important elements of the Iranian populace were offended by his heavy-handed attempts to

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[26] US Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Iran*, January 2006. http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Iran/Background.html (March 7, 2006)

[27] For one discussion, see: Asghar Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran.* (London: IB Tauris, 1997)

[28] The word actually has Arabic roots, but the concept is quite consistent with Iranian Shi'ism which accepts a more interpretive approach to jurisprudence than is allowed by strict Sunni schools.

[29] David Cook, *Understanding Jihad.* (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

Westernize Iran and foster a "cult of monarchy" drawing its legitimacy from the roots of Cyrus rather than Islam and the Koran.[30]

Given this grounding, the boundaries of Iran's strategic culture are fairly well defined conceptually (e.g., as an evolution of Shia jurisprudence), in terms of material drivers (e.g., control over vast quantities of oil and gas) and experiences within the "immediate" scope of Iranians shared historical narrative ("immediate" to include the formative events of Shi'ism as well as the more directly experienced impact of the "Imposed War"). Based on this understanding of Iranian strategic culture we can begin to ask questions about specific circumstances that may (or already do) face this leadership with respect to WMD.

STRATEGIC CULTURE IN ACTION

Before describing how strategic culture informs an analysis of Iranian WMD decision-making, it is necessary to briefly identify what this regime hopes to gain from WMD acquisition and how it hopes to realize those objectives. Nuclear power status would be an enormous credential for Iran's clerical leaders, helping to solidify its hold on power and stall the fortunes of those would liberalize Iranian society and economy (i.e., increase the Iranian peoples' exposure to the "toxic" corruption of the West). A nuclear weapon capability also would help to fulfill the leadership's ambition to make Iran the Islamic world's preeminent power, a fulfillment of Iran's rightful role as regional hegemon and as a beacon for all to convert to the true Islam. It also secures the continued existence of a legitimate Islamic until the return of the hidden 12th Imam Mahdi, in effect preparing the way for his messianic delivery of the faithful. Finally, Iran's leaders appear to believe a nuclear capability would prevent meaningful U.S. opposition to their domestic and foreign policy agendas. The United States, in their view, would be unwilling to confront a nuclear-armed Iran much as America appears unwilling to confront a nuclear armed North Korea. On the nuclear issue in particular, the regime has skillfully created domestic support for an inordinately expensive civilian nuclear power program as a matter of national pride and symbol of cultural progress.

From that understanding of the stakes involved, analysts can begin to frame possible, or even likely, Iranian responses to specific questions; for example, IRI responses to U.S. deterrent

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[30] In addition, the resources that supported Iran's pre-revolutionary commercial and religious elite were threatened by the Shah's land reform and economic initiatives—thus there was a purely material reason for many influential clerics to actively oppose the Shah.

or coercive threats related to Iran's nuclear program. Another obvious question is whether economic or technological incentives, the "carrot" in the classic formulation "carrots and sticks," would be sufficiently tempting to undermine IRI strategic objectives. A more nuanced question, relevant to both carrots and sticks, is whether Iranian leaders can be persuaded to believe their Western counterparts given the Iranian leadership's extreme views of the West and its intentions. For example, in the case of a coercive threat, Iranian leaders would have to accept that the threat would not be carried out if they complied with Western demands; in the case of an inducement, they would have to believe that the West would bargain in good faith and deliver as promised.

In the economic sphere, either inducements or sanctions must consider the near total role petroleum products plays in Iran's calculus. A UN oil embargo would be a serious threat to IRI values. Unfortunately, the mechanics for organizing such an effort are vulnerable to exactly the tactics at which the Iranian leadership excels. For example, since 2004, IRI has been aggressively courting foreign investment in the oil sector, particularly from countries like China and Japan, as one step in minimizing the likelihood of a credible embargo threat. Even without skilled opposition, the ability to organize such an effort in a timeframe relevant to the progress of IRI nuclear technology is highly questionable.

Militarily, Iranian caution appears conditioned on maintenance of a comfort zone in which they do not perceive actions to be the opening phase of a regime change effort. Should the UN or some subset of major countries contemplate military action to retard the Iranian nuclear program, the potential for an effective strike has to be weighed against the possibility that Iranian leaders could miscalculate the strike's impact on the regime's chances for survival. In the event of such a strike, understanding Iranian redlines and thresholds will be critical to disciplining Iran's response via its traditional post-1988 means: terrorism.

Diplomatically, Iranian lack of trust in the international "system" makes it difficult to construct a set of positive inducements that would both preclude Iranian deception and provide reassurance to the Iranians that the deal struck will be honored by the "Great Satan" and its minions. For example, Iranian conduct of nuclear negotiations with the EU-3 (Britain, France and Germany) and the IAEA have led a steadily progressing nuclear program in Iran and much frustration in London, Paris and Berlin.[31] From the Iranian perspective, the negotiations appear

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[31] For example in November 2004 the EU-3 and Iran reached an agreement that included a suspension of IRI nuclear activity. Iran accelerated its nuclear work as the deadline neared, clearly indicating that contrary to European hopes,

to be a thinly-veiled U.S. initiative to deprive Iran of perhaps the only capability and technology capable of deterring the United States when Washington considers overt aggression against the Islamic Republic.[32]

CONCLUSION

As should be obvious, this approach to strategic culture does not produce a predictive model of behavior although it has clearly suggested some outcomes are more likely than others—and why. But it does provide historical context and a framework upon which to hang logical and evidentiary support, both of which can be tested and subject to revision. Moreover, the findings from this sort of approach can be challenged in the way that even culturally informed stereotypes cannot. Conclusions from this sort of review should be able to stand up to empirical scrutiny through review and assessment of formative observations about history, resources, religion and so forth. Errors of fact and reason can be more readily identified and corrected than either the unquestioned assumptions within stereotypes or the simplifying hyperrationality common to more formalized approaches to decision modeling.

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a real long-term halt to Iran's nuclear program was not on the table. e.g., see: Ian Traynor and Suzanne Goldenberg, "Fresh suspicion over Iran's nuclear aims," *The Guardian*, November 20, 2004, Pg. 1.
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THE STRATEGIC CULTURE OF IRREDENTIST SMALL POWERS: THE CASE OF SYRIA

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The Strategic Culture of Irredentist Small Powers:
The Case of Syria

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STRATEGIC CULTURE DEFINED

Strategic culture is that set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.

STRATEGIC CULTURE PROFILE

Summary Description of Syria's Strategic Culture

By virtue of its leading role in the Arab national movement, Syria's strategic culture is rooted in its view of itself as the champion of Arab rights against what it perceives to be Western penetration of the Middle East, with Israel as its bridgehead. That perception is derived from Syria's bitter experience with Western colonial powers, especially Britain, which first fragmented the Middle East, then colonized it, and later supported European Jews in the usurpation of Palestine. It is also derived from Syria's frustration with the United States, which provides Israel massive military, political, and economic support – even as Israel occupies Arab territories in violation of United Nations Security Council land-for-peace resolutions.

With the advent of the more pragmatic Hafez Assad regime in 1970, Syria limited its objectives vis-à-vis Israel: from the liberation of Palestine to the recovery of the Arab territories Israel occupied during the 1967 war (and the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza). To this end, Assad sought to enhance Syria's bargaining position by attempting to reach strategic parity with Israel through the bolstering of Syria's offensive and defensive capabilities and by using militant anti-Israel groups as instruments of Syria's power. With the collapse of Syria's former Soviet patron, Syria's efforts to reach strategic parity with Israel came to a halt. Upon Assad's death in June 2000, all his son and successor Bashar could do to defend Syria was to rely on Syria's aging military equipment, the deterrent threat of Syria's chemical weapons, and the ability to mobilize militant anti-Israel groups.

Factors Shaping Syria's Strategic Culture

Geography

Syria's political geography is an important factor in shaping Syria's strategic culture: Whereas Greater Syria once included contemporary Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine, contemporary Syria has been hemmed in by artificial boundaries that Britain and France imposed on it following their Word War I victory over the Ottoman Empire.[1] Moreover, Syria's only natural defensive barrier, the mountainous Golan Heights, was occupied by Israel during the Six-Day War in 1967.

Origins, Sources, "Shared Narrative"

History is another factor that shaped Syria's strategic culture. The origins of Syria's strategic culture are rooted in Syria's bitter experience with Western colonial powers. According to the Syrian narrative, Britain betrayed the Arabs by failing to fulfill its World War I promise to the Syrian-backed *Emir* (Prince) Hussain, *Sharif* (governor) of Mecca, to support an independent Arab state in return for an Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire.[2] Instead, following the defeat and demise of the Ottoman Empire, Britain took over former Ottoman territories and, together with France, Britain's wartime ally, divided them into separate political units which the two European powers then colonized: Britain took over Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq, and France occupied Syria and Lebanon. Adding insult to injury, the British promised the Jewish people a "national home" in Palestine, until then southern Syria.[3]

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[1] British and French diplomats agreed on the division of Greater Syria (contained in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement) as early as 1916. The treaty became publicly known only in 1917 as a result of its leaking by the Bolsheviks. For further reading on this question, see Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israel Conflict*, 5th ed. (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004), pp. 64-67.

[2] Syrian officers backed the Sharif because of the prestige of his position (Guardian of the Holy shrines) and the legitimacy it would confer upon their cause. For the Brtish promise to the Arabs, see the Husayn-MacMahon correspondence in smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict, p. 91. The literature on this subject is massive, but for a concise description, see Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 55-84.

[3] On the British promise to the Jews, see the Balfour Declaration in Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 67-69.

<u>Relationships to Other Groups</u>

Syria's bitter experience with Western colonial powers is a critical component of Syria's worldview. Following the dismemberment of Greater Syria and the loss of Palestine, Syria's relationship with both state and non-state actors became function of their relations with the newly created Jewish state. This goes a long way in explaining both Syria's anti-Western predisposition and its support for militant anti-Israel guerrilla groups.

Unlike the US, Israel, and several Western states which consider anti-Israel groups as "terrorist organizations," Syria (along with other Arab and several Third World states) view them as legitimate national resistance movements struggling to end Israel's illegal occupation of their lands. Syria also uses these groups as leverage against independent minded Palestinian organizations (i.e., Fatah, the mainstream Palestinian organization) to prevent the latter from adopting a separate Palestinian-Israeli deal that might, according to Syrian thinking, weaken the broader Arab front against Israel. Alternatively, Damascus uses these groups to derail diplomatic initiatives that fail to take Syrian interests (i.e., the recovery of the Golan Heights) into account.

However, Syria (under the two Assads) consistently denied militant Palestinian groups the right to use Syrian territory as a base from which to launch operations against Israel. This policy is part and parcel of Syria's broader security policy of scrupulously adhering to the terms of the disengagement of forces agreement with Israel that former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger brokered in 1974 following the 1973 war.

<u>Threat Perception</u>

Threat perception is yet another factor shaping Syria's strategic culture. From a Syrian perspective, Israel (which is located only 40 miles southwest of the Syrian capital of Damascus) represents the greatest threat to both Syrian security and regional security.

Syria (along with other Arab states) and Israel went to war in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. During the "Six-Day War" in June 1967, Israel occupied Syria's Golan Heights, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, and the West Bank of the Jordan River (Palestinian territory that had been administered by Jordan since 1948). In 1982, Syria and Israel confronted each other in Lebanon. Although Syria and Israel engaged in peace talks during the 1990s as part of the Middle East peace process, the peace talks failed, Israel continued to occupy the Syrian Golan, and the two states continue to be locked in a state of war.

Syria's sense of threat springs from Israel's territorial aggrandizement that has been sustained by Israel's U.S.-backed superior conventional military power. That sense of threat is heightened by Israel's nuclear power. Most public estimates of Israel's nuclear capability range between 100-200 weapons,[4] but one analyst, Harold Hough, concludes that the Israeli nuclear arsenal contains as many as 400 deliverable nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.[5] Furthermore, Israel has an active chemical weapons program, including the production of mustard and nerve agents, and a biological warfare capability.

To make matters worse, although Syria, along with 185 other states, signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT) in force since 1970, Israel is the only country in the Middle East not among the signatories to that treaty.

On a broader level, Syria feels vulnerable to its U.S.-dominated regional security environment. In addition to Washington's massive military, political and economic support to Israel, the United States extends its tentacles throughout the region. A quick glance at the map buttresses this argument: To Syria's north is Turkey—a powerful U.S. ally and NATO member—with which Syria has traditionally had a tense relationship. Syria and Turkey share 714 miles of border. Although Syrian-Turkish relations improved significantly after Bashar Assad's landmark visit to Turkey in January 2004, some of the underlying issues that divide the two states have not been entirely resolved.[6] Moreover, Turkey and Israel—Syria's arch-rival— are allies and, by the terms of their strategic alliance, Turkish authorities allow the Israeli air force to train in Turkish airspace, close to northern Syria.[7]

To Syria's east lies Iraq, with which Syria shares some 376 miles of border and where the United States has deployed 140,000 troops since March 2003. Although Syria views the

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[4] See, for example, Amy Dockser Marcus, "Growing Dangers: US Drive to Curb Doomsday Weapons in Mideast Is Faltering," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 6, 1966, p. A1. For a more detailed account of Israel's nuclear capability, see Rodney W. Jones and Mark G. McDonough, *Tracking Nuclear Proliferation*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1998), chapter 7.

[5] Harold Hough, "Could Israel's Nuclear Assets Survive A First Strike?" *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 1997, p. 410.

[6] One of the major issues dividing Syria and Turkey is the question of riparian rights over the Euphrates River. Another issue is the territorial dispute over the province of Alexandretta (known as "Hatai" to Turks; "Iskenderun" to Syrians). That province was ceded by France to Turkey in 1939 in order to entice Turkey to not enter into an alliance with Nazi Germany. Syria was them under the French mandate, and Syrians were not consulted. For further reading, see Murhaf Jouejati, "Water Politics As High Politics: The Case of Turkey and Syria," in *Reluctant Neighbor: Turkey's Role in the Middle East*, Henri J. Barkey, ed., (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace, 1996), pp. 131-146.

[7] For further reading on the Turkey-Israel alliance, see Gregory A. Burris, "Turkey-Israel: speed Bumps," *The Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 4 (Fall 2003).

American military presence in Iraq as a threat to its security, Syria's Iraqi challenge predates the U.S. occupation of that country. In addition to the personal animus between the late Syrian leader Hafez Assad and Iraq's ousted leader, Saddam Hussein, and to the ideological competition that pitted the two rival factions of the Ba'th Party that dominated the two states, Syria and Iraq have for a long time been locked in a classic geo-political rivalry.[8] As a result, the two states tried to destabilize each other during the 1970s and 1980s and came close to armed conflict on several occasions. Moreover, Saddam Hussein's ability and willingness to use chemical weapons against Iraq's Kurdish minority and against Iran heightened Syria's threat perception.

To the south, Syria shares a 300 mile border with Jordan, a state with which Syria maintains an uneasy relationship in large part because the Jordanian elite is among Washington's closest Arab allies and often does its bidding.

Finally, off Syria's western coastline, the US Sixth fleet is firmly anchored in the Mediterranean. In these circumstances, it is easy to understand why Syria feels the need to be strong. It is also easy to understand why Syria maintained a sizeable force inside Lebanon, Syria's western neighbor, until 2005, when the UN Security Council, at the behest of the US and France, ordered Syria to withdraw its troops from that country.[9]

Ideology and Religion

Islam is the religion of the majority of Syrians. In its essence, Islam, like Christianity, recognizes the concept of "just war." *Jihad* (Holy war) by force of arms may be either defensive—to defend oneself from attack—or offensive—to liberate the oppressed. But Islam emphasizes the defensive aspects of jihad rather than the offensive ones. The dictates of Islamic law include such principles as advance notice, discrimination in selecting targets, and proportionality. With regard to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Islam is highly likely to prohibit their use as these weapons do not discriminate between civilian and military targets. It is

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[8] For the best account of the Syrian-Iraqi rivalry, see Eberhard Kienle, *Ba'th Versus Ba'th: The Conflict Between Syria and Iraq*, 1968-1989 (St. Martin's Press, 1991).

[9] Syria's military intervention in Lebanon in 1975-76 to stop the Lebanese civil war was mandated by the Arab League. Syrian forces remained in Lebanon until UNSCR 1559, adopted on 2 September 2004, called for Syria's withdrawal and the disarming of Lebanese and non-Lebanese armed groups.

on this basis that senior Iranian officials have denied that Iran is pursuing the development of nuclear weapons.[10]

However, since there were no WMD when the Koran was written (there are no Koranic verses that deal with this issue specifically) there has been no systematic work by Muslim scholars on the ethical issues surrounding the use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, despite the fact that several Muslim states possess at least some of these weapons.

Still, there is general agreement that since the enemies of Islam possess such weapons, Muslim countries are justified in acquiring them, but only for purposes of deterrence and, if used, as a second strike weapon.[11]

Whatever the case, Islamic doctrine does not appear to have a significant impact on the Syrian elites' strategic calculations. As we shall see, they have been more influenced by Arab nationalism's secular ideology.

Economics

Syria's economic base is too slim to support its foreign and security policies. Although the Syrian economy has enjoyed a good rate of growth, it remains transitional. Mainly agrarian, it has only a modest industrial sector.

Under the radical Ba'th (1966-1970), Syria embarked on a socialist course that sought to curb economic ties to the West, seen as obstacles to integrated national development and constraints on a nationalist foreign policy. A new state-dominated economy emerged, aimed at self-sufficiency but supported by the former Soviet bloc. The regime's simultaneous commitment to an ambitious development program, populist welfare, and a militant foreign policy put severe strains on its resources.[12]

Under Hafez Assad, Syria was forced to rebuild ties to the Western market and Gulf countries in a search for new resources. Unabated growth in military, investment, and consumption expenditures made Syria increasingly dependent on external economic support,

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[10] According to Mohamed Mehdi Zahedi, Iran's Minister of Science, Research and Technology, "Islamic doctrine does not allow us to produce mass destruction weapons or nuclear ones and the Iranian state is based on that principle." *Associated Press*, "Iranian Minister: WMD Outlawed in Islam," 27 June, 2006. This statement followed a similar statement made by Iran's foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi before the Iranian Parliament on 8 June, 2006.

[11] "Islamic Laws On War And Peace," www.federationpress.com.au/pdf/**IslamicLaw**son**War**Peace.pdf, p. 59.

[12] Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "Revisionist Dreams, Realist Strategies: The Foreign Policy of Syria," in *The Foreign Policy of Arab States*, Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds., (Cairo: The American University of Cairo Press, 1984), pp. 285-287.

chiefly from the Arab oil-producing countries and the former Soviet bloc. This support was crucial in sustaining Syria's foreign policy stance, but Syria's dependence was also a constraint on policy, diluted only by its distribution among several ideologically disparate sources. Dependence on Saudi Arabia, in particular, had a powerful moderating effect on Syrian policy.[13]

Although low oil prices in the late 1990s forced Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil producing states to reduce their economic assistance to Syria, the recent shift towards a market economy promises to further moderate Syrian policy. Indeed, the economic reforms that Bashar Assad's administration has put in place since coming to power in July 2000 are designed to integrate Syria into the world market economy. To date, the Syrian government has given the private sector more space, including the establishment of private banks, private insurance companies, and in the near future, a stock market.[14] Despite the financial benefits and projected growth that this shift is likely to produce, there is little likelihood that Syrian economy will be able to sustain its foreign policy and security objectives, especially that Syria's oil deposits are projected to dry up in 2010.[15]

Type of Government/Leadership Structure

In its constitutional provisions, Syria's presidential system makes the president the center of power. The president is supreme commander, declares war, concludes treaties, proposes and vetoes legislation, and may rule through decree under emergency powers. He appoints vice presidents, prime ministers, and the Council of Ministers—the cabinet or "government"—which may issue "decisions" having the force of law. The president enjoys a vast power of patronage that makes legions of officials beholden to him and ensures the loyalty and customary deference of the state apparatus. Presidential appointees include army commanders, the heads of the security apparatus, senior civil servants, heads of autonomous agencies, governors, newspaper editors, university presidents, judges, major religious officials, and public sector managers. Through the Council of Ministers, over which he may directly preside, the president commands the sprawling state bureaucracy and can personally intervene at any level to achieve his objectives if the chain of command proves sluggish.

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[13] Ibid.

[14] "Syria Slams Private, Public Monopolies," *The Daily Star*, 19 October, 2005.

[15] Syria's oil production has recently dropped from 600,000 b/d to 450,000 b/d. Revenues from oil exports account for 70% of GNP.

The president is chief legislator, the dominant source of major policy innovation. He can legislate by decree during "emergencies" (a condition loosely defined) and when parliament is not in session. He can also put proposals to the people in plebiscites that always give such proposals overwhelming approval. The president normally controls a docile majority in parliament, which regularly translates his proposals into law. His control of parliament stems from his ability to dismiss it at will and from his leadership of the ruling Ba'th Party that dominates it.

Finally, the president bears primary responsibility for the defense of the country and is the supreme commander of the armed forces. He presides over the National Security Council, which coordinates defense policy and planning, and assumes operational command in time of war.

That said, although policy making in Syria appears to be a one man show, Syria's presidential system includes a powerful subsystem in the form of the Ba'th Party.[16] The influence of the Ba'th Party is clearly spelled out in the Syrian constitution which states that the Ba'th Arab Socialist Party is the leading party in the state. It leads a National Progressive Front (NPF) whose duty is "to mobilize the potentials of the masses and place them in the service of the Arab nation's objectives."[17] According to the Syrian Constitution, therefore, the Ba'th Party is the core institutional unit in the Syrian political system. And although in theory the Ba'th is supposed to share power with other political parties in the NPF, in reality it remains the primary institutional actor. Indeed, the charter of the NPF unequivocally states that political activity, except by the Ba'th, is prohibited in the two sensitive sectors of society, the armed forces and the educational institutions.[18]

The influence of the Ba'th Party in Syria's decision-making process furthermore relates to Assad's own perception of his role vis-à-vis the party. For example, much of the Assad regime's legitimacy rests on the system of values advocated by the Ba'th. Thus, to undermine the influence and prestige of the party could lead to the weakening of the regime itself. Consequently, the two

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[16] The term "Ba'th" means "renaissance" or "rebirth" in Arabic, hence, the rebirth of the Arab Nation.
[17] Antoine Guine, *The New Syria* (Damascus: SAMA, 1975), p. 103.
[18] Articles 7 and 9 of the Charter, published in Damascus by the National Command of the Ba'th Arab Socialist Party, Bureau of Documentation, Information and Broadcast, 7 March 1972.

institutions of the presidency and the party in Syria tend to be interdependent, relying on each other for ideological credibility and political survival.[19]

It is very unlikely, therefore, for Assad to take an important decision unilaterally without consulting the top leadership of the party, whose members are frequently involved in high-level consultations.

Still, the individuals who make up the Syrian political elite and who participate in decision-making do not have an independent power base of their own. Rather, they derive their power from their access to the president. Moreover, in recent years, the Ba'th Party has been downgraded, de-ideologized and turned into a patronage machine with little capacity for independent action.[20] It has not made key foreign policy decisions in a long time.[21]

In sum, although Assad was somewhat constrained in the formulation of foreign policy, he was nonetheless the central figure in the decision-making process.

Characteristics of Syria's Strategic Culture

From Multiple to Single Strategic Culture

Syria's strategic culture is a reflection of its multiple, transient identities: On the one hand, Syrians regard themselves as Arab. On the other hand, they are fragmented along ethnic, sectarian, and urban/rural lines. Despite 60 years of independence, a purely Syrian identity is only now beginning to emerge. As we shall see, the question of identity has had a significant impact on Syria's strategic culture.

That Syrians should identify themselves as Arab is natural. Syria is part of the Arab hinterland with which it shares language, religion, and culture. In the absence of political boundaries prior to the collapse of the Ottoman empire, these shared values helped construct an imagined community, with Damascus at its center, extending far beyond Syria's actual boundaries – an imagined community that survived the fragmentation of Greater Syria. Thus, when Syria gained its independence from France in 1946, Syrians scoffed at the boundaries of their new state. After all, the new truncated Syria was but an artificial creation of Western Imperialism.

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[19]   Adeed I. Dawisha, "Syria and the Sadat Initiative," *World Today*, Vol. 34, No. 5 (May 1978), p. 194.
[20]   Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "Asad's Syria and the New World Order: The Struggle for Regime Survival," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1993), p. 2.
[21]   Hinnebusch, "Syria: The Politics of Peace and Regime Survival," p. 78.

From then on, however, a gradual decline in Syria's supra-national and sub-national identification has taken place. Simultaneously, Syria's modernization schemes gradually led to the emergence of a purely Syrian identity. Indeed, with the establishment of a network of roads linking cities, towns, and rural areas; a public education system whereby Syrians study from the same textbooks; a central legal system, etc., the inhabitants of Syria have come to share in a new, purely Syrian experience.

Rate of Change /What Causes Change?

This gradual shift—from an Arab to a Syrian identity—has had a significant impact on Syria's strategic culture. Whereas Syria once viewed itself as the champion of Arab rights, Arabism has declined as a determinant of Syria's external action. Rather, Syria under Hafez Assad acted increasingly along statist lines, albeit never entirely: the Ba'th party tended to act as a counter-balance to Assad's more pragmatic approach, and, as a result, policies were frequently a compromise between the party's gravitation towards ideological orthodoxy and political militancy and Assad's tendency towards pragmatic solutions. This is not to imply that the late Syrian leader lacked ideological commitment, but, enacting a different role from the party ideologue, his interpretation of ideological imperatives was balanced by an appreciation of prevalent environmental constraints, and consequently tended to be more pragmatic and flexible.

Who Maintains the Culture?

The Ba'th Party is the gate keeper of Syria's Arab nationalist culture, but it is the security apparatus and the military wing of the Ba'th party that maintain Syria's strategic culture.

The Ba'th Party is the brainchild of two French-educated Syrian intellectuals – Michel Aflaq, a Greek Orthodox, and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, a Sunni Muslim. It was officially established in Damascus on 7 April 1947 when its first congress approved its constitution and established its executive committee.

The Ba'th Party's ideology is pan-Arab, secular nationalism. The "Unity" of Arab states is at the core of Ba'th doctrine and prevails over its second and third objectives: those of "Freedom" and "Socialism," respectively. According to Aflaq, the Arab peoples form a single nation with the aspiration of becoming a state with its own specific role in the world. Although

persuaded of the importance of secularity, Aflaq recognized the impact of Islam. He also advocated socialism and, in 1953, the Ba'th Party merged with Akram Hawrani's Arab Socialist Party—a Hama-based political party that sought to promote peasant rights vis-à-vis large landowners. The merger—the Ba'th Arab Socialist Party—created a broader based movement. On 8 March 1963, the Ba'th Military Committee seized power in Syria in a military coup. One month earlier, the Ba'th Party seized power in Iraq.

Ba'thist ideology spread slowly by educating followers to its intellectual attractions. Significant expansion beyond Syria's borders took place only after the war of 1948, when lack of Arab unity was widely perceived as partly responsible for the loss of Palestine to the new state of Israel. The Iraqi branch of the Ba'th Party was established in 1954.

Ba'th Party presence in the armed forces is separate but parallel to that in the civilian apparatus. The two wings (civilian and military) of the Ba'th Party join only at the Regional Command, to which both military and civilian members belong, and where delegates from party organizations in military units meet at regional congresses. The military wing of the Ba'th Party has established branches down to the battalion level. The leader of such a branch is called a *Tawjihi* (political guide). The *Tawjihi* is a full-time party cadre with specialized training in indoctrination. He is not the Commander, and the Commander may not be a *Tawjihi*. Moreover, not all military officers were party members, but it was almost a prerequisite for advancement to flag rank.

According to the organizational report submitted to the ninth Regional Congress (June 2000), the number of Ba'th Party branches, sections, and divisions within the armed forces were, respectively, 27; 212; and 1656.

What does it Say About the "Enemy?"

Since the Ba'th party, through its avowedly Arab nationalist ideology, has perceived itself as the guardian of all Arab nationalist causes, its position on Israel has always been vociferously militant. Thus, Israel is viewed as the scion of Western imperialism, a Western bridgehead of sorts into the Arab world. In this view, Israel is an aggressive, expansionist, settler-colonial state: Israel colonized Palestine, tossed out a segment of Palestine's local inhabitants from their ancestral homes, maintained a brutal occupation over another segment and,

at various times, invaded each and every one of its neighbors, occupying parts of their territory in flagrant violation of international law.[22]

What does it Say About Conflict and the International System, the Utility of Violence, and the Laws of War?

Although Syria is a leading member of the nonaligned movement—Third World states that refused to be part of either of the two blocs during the Cold War—Syria aligned itself with the former Soviet Union in the early 1980s through a "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation." This was not out of ideological affinity but rather in reaction to the U.S. strategic alliance with Israel. Given the zero-sum nature of Syria's perceptions vis-à-vis Israel, and given the benefits that accrue to Israel from the special U.S.-Israeli relationship, Syria prefers the bi-polar international system to the current U.S.-dominated international system.

That said, even under the bipolar system, the thrust of Syrian policy was that a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict could be achieved only if the United States persuaded Israel to abide by UN land-for-peace resolutions, specifically UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 (which require Israel to withdraw from territories it occupied during the 1967 conflict and Arab states to recognize Israel). To this end, Syria used the "carrot and stick" approach with Washington. On the one hand, Syria tried to befriend the United States, the only power that has sufficient leverage over Israel, so as to demonstrate to Washington that Syria can be a useful and stabilizing force in the Middle East. Syria's intervention in Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war of 1975/76 on the side of right wing Lebanese forces (against the Palestinian/leftist Lebanese coalition) is one case in point; Syria's successful efforts in the release of American hostages in Lebanon during the 1980s is another; Syria's participation alongside the U.S.-led coalition of forces in Iraq in 1991 is yet another.

On the other hand, Syria employed violence-by-proxy to torpedo any U.S. diplomatic initiative that did not take Syrian interests (namely the recovery of the Golan Heights) into account. The U.S.-brokered 17 May 2006 agreement between Lebanon and Israel is one case in point.

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[22] Article II of the United Nations Charter speaks of the "inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force." In the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel, according to the Syrian perspective, acquired Arab territories in June 1967 purely by force.

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Underlying this realist strategy is Syria's conviction that a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, one that fully restores Arab rights, could be had only if Arabs back their diplomacy with teeth. Within this context, while Syria generally abided by international law, it occasionally resorted to violence, albeit indirectly.

STRATEGIC CULTURE IN ACTION

The Role of Strategic Culture in Syria's Security Orientation, Organization, and Decision-Making Process

Syria's strategic culture is critical in shaping its security orientation. The conflict with Israel facilitated the military establishment's hold on political power in general and on the Ba'th party in particular.

Organization

Organizationally, the Ba'th party is of a pyramidal structure, at the top of which lie the Regional (Syrian) and National (Arab) Commands. In addition to Assad, who acts as the Ba'th Party's secretary-general, the twenty-one man Regional Command includes influential members of the policy-making elite. Parallel to the Regional Command is the twenty-one man National Command, whose sphere of responsibility lies in the foreign sector, particularly with the Arab world.[23]

Although the Regional Command is the highest decision-making body, and although its members represent the party's top elite, this body stands on the third level of the Syrian regime's power structure. At the first level is Assad, who concentrates all the critical threads in his hands. Immediately below him are the chiefs of the multiple intelligence and security networks, which function independently of one another, enjoy broad latitude, and keep a close watch on everything in the country that is of concern to the regime. They form in effect Assad's eyes and ears. On the same second level, and also directly answerable to Assad, are the commanders of the politically relevant, regime-shielding, coup-deterring, elite armed formations, such as the

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[23] The number of members of the Regional Command was reduced to 15 following the twentieth Ba'th Party Congress in June 2005. Reports according to which the Ba'th Congress would shut down the National Command were not confirmed.

Republican Guard, the Special Forces, the Third Armored Division. It is these formations, which alone are allowed in the capital, that constitute the essential underpinning of Assad's power.[24]

Further below, on the third level, stands the Regional Command. Except for Assad, who is its secretary general, its members scarcely compare in importance to the intelligence chiefs or commanders of the elite forces. In essence, the Regional Command serves as a consultative body for Assad and at the same time watches, through the party machine, over the proper implementation of his policies by the elements on the fourth level, namely, the ministers, the higher bureaucrats, the provincial governors, the members of the executive boards of the local councils, and the leaders of the party's ancillary mass organizations and their subordinate organs.[25]

Decision-Making

In his capacity as Regional Secretary, Assad chairs all Regional Command meetings. When he is absent, the assistant regional secretary substitutes for him. In consultation with Assad, the assistant secretary sets the agenda for the meetings.

A degree of open deliberation is allowed. The various sides to a complex issue are heard and different or opposite claims are weighed. Criticism of the way certain policies are implemented is also tolerated. This does not conflict with Assad's interests, but helps him formulate more workable or meaningful policies and to exercise his power in a smoother manner. The side to which he lends his weight prevails.

One key difference with regard to the importance of the Regional Command and that of its members has to with the different styles of the two Assads: Whereas Hafez Assad consulted with Regional Command members and took their views into account, Bashar Assad has increasingly used this body as a rubber stamp.

Historical Events That Have Been Determined by Syria's Strategic Culture

That Syria's strategic culture is a major determinant of Syria's external action is illustrated by the following examples: Although Syria could have stayed out of the war in 1948, the then small Syrian army rushed to the frontline in support of its Palestinian brethren in their

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[24] Hanna Batatu, Syria's Peasantry, <u>The Descendents of Its Lesser Rural Notables, and Their Politics</u>, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 206-207.
[25] Ibid.

conflict with the emerging Jewish state. In 1956, although Egypt alone was the target of the tripartite Israeli/British/French alliance, Syria joined the conflict—out of Arab solidarity—by, among other things, blowing up the British-owned Tapline pipeline that ran from Iraq to Syria's Mediterranean port of Lattakia. During the 1960s, although Israel's attempts to channel water from the Jordan River to the Negev desert did not affect Syria, the Syrian government set out to divert the Jordan River's head waters—fueling tensions between Arabs and Israelis that culminated in the Six Day War.

Impact of Strategic Culture on WMD conceptions, calculations, and policies

As noted above, in 1970 the more moderate faction of the Ba'th, led by Hafez Assad, limited Syria's objective to the containment of Israel to within its 1967 boundaries. Despite Syria's limited objectives vis-à-vis Israel, and given Israel's superior military power, Syria engaged in the development of chemical weapons so as to deter Israel from attacking Syria. From a Syrian perspective, should Israel attack Syria, Damascus would then be in a position to strike Israel's centers of mobilization and inflict unacceptable harm.[26]

According to the Monterey Institute of International Studies' Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) and to other specialized organizations, Syria has a large and advanced chemical weapons capability. That capability is said to include chemical warheads for SCUD ballistic missiles and chemical gravity bombs for delivery by aircraft. Syria's chemical weapons stockpile is in the hundreds of tons. Agents are believed to include Sarin (a nerve agent that can be lethal to victims who inhale it or absorb it through the skin or via eye contact), VX (an even more potent nerve agent), and mustard gas, with major production facilities near the cities of Damascus and Homs.[27]

Syria began developing chemical weapons in the early 1980s as part of Hafez Assad's quest to reach strategic parity with Israel. Assad sought parity with Israel to strengthen his hand in future negotiations over the terms of peace between Israel and the Arabs. For Assad, strategic parity did not necessarily mean matching Israel tank-for-tank and plane-for-plane. To do so in terms of conventional military power was, given Syria's slim resources, beyond Syria's

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[26] See Murhaf Jouejati, "Syrian Motives for its WMD Programs and What to do About Them," *Middle East Journal*, V. 59, N.1, Winter 2005; and ibid., "Syrian WMD Programs in Context," in *Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction In The Middle East*, James A. Russell, ed., (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 63-73.
[27] See http://cns.miis.edu/research/wedme/syria.htm; and "Top US Officials Voice Concern About Syria's WMD Capability," *Arms Control Today*, May 2003, at www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_05/syria_may03.

capability. Indeed, Syria had always been militarily inferior to Israel. During the 1948 Palestine War, Syria could deploy no more than 2,000 poorly armed personnel along the old Palestine border. In June 1967, the Syrian army was decimated by Israel's invading force. In three days of combat, Israel's army seized the entire Golan Heights. It was not until the 1973 October War that Syria could claim some successes against Israel. However, when Egypt, Syria's wartime ally, announced a ceasefire just a few days into the war (enabling in the process Israeli forces to concentrate along the Syrian front), the Syrian army nearly collapsed as Israel's army broke through Syrian defenses, reaching the town of Sa'sa' twenty five miles from Damascus. Although Israel later withdrew from that portion of Syrian territory, Israel's withdrawal was only as a result of the US-brokered 1974 disengagement of forces agreement. In the process, however, the disparity of power between Israel and Syria brought the message home to Assad that, in the absence of a deterrent capability, Israeli forces could easily overrun Damascus. Even as Assad later tried to bolster the conventional offensive and defensive capabilities of Syria's armed forces, the balance of power between the two foes continued to be lopsided: In 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon and its armor routed Syrian forces there. Although the retreat of Syrian ground forces was orderly, the Syrian air force did not fare as well: Syria lost 82 aircraft (for the loss of one Israeli combat aircraft) in one day of dogfights. Seeing that the Syrian air force is no match for the Israeli air force, Assad decided to acquire long range surface-to-surface missiles.[28] It is shortly thereafter that he decided to develop a chemical warfare capability.

Hafez Assad's decision to seek strategic parity with Israel was the stepchild of his earlier attempts to alter the balance of power – all of which failed. Assad's thinking was that the balance of power could be attained if Arab states worked together to force Israel to the negotiating table. The first attempt was, as mentioned above, in 1973 when Syria and Egypt launched a surprise attack against Israel. That attempt failed because Egypt later engaged in separate talks with Israel that led to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. The second attempt was in 1979 when Assad sought to build an eastern Arab front in compensation for the loss of Egypt from the Arab power equation. That attempt also failed: The Arab states that made up the front (Iraq, Jordan, and the Palestine Liberation Organization) were far too divided among themselves to pursue "joint-Arab action."

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[28] Anthony H. Cordesman, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1991), p. 165.

Despite Assad's efforts to bring Syria's armed forces to par, however, Syria was unable to alter the balance of power. Syria had to abandon its quest for strategic parity with Israel in April 1997 when, during a visit by Assad to Moscow, Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev indicated that the Soviet Union would no longer accommodate that quest. Gorbachev warned Assad that efforts to achieve parity would not succeed: Israel would strike preemptively long before Syria attained its goal and, with firm US support, would come out ahead in any arms race.[29] Since the demise of Syria's Soviet patron, the asymmetry in conventional power between Syria and Israel steadily widened as Syria has not been able to systematically upgrade its weapons systems. What is more, Russia, the Soviet successor state, now demands payment in cash before it will supply Syria's armed forces with the spare parts needed to keep Syria's ageing equipment running – cash that Syria's shrinking economy is unable to generate.

In these circumstances, the strategic value of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal has, from a Syrian perspective, multiplied and chemical weapons continue to be the choice weapon with which to deter and contain Israel. This raises the following questions: 1) Will Syria ever use its chemical weapons? 2) Will Damascus transfer chemical weapons to terrorist groups?

There is nothing in the historical record to suggest that Syria might actually use chemical weapons against its foes, Israel included. Unlike Saddam's Iraq, which used chemical weapons against Iraq's Kurdish minority in March 1988 and against Iran at various times during the Iran-Iraq War, Syria never resorted to the use of chemical weapons, either against its internal opponents (the Muslim Brotherhood in 1982 in Hama) or its external ones (Israeli forces during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982). Over and above that, there is no indication that Syria might willingly transfer chemical weapons to the militant anti-Israel groups it supports. According to former U.S. Undersecretary of State for Arms Control John Bolton, "there is currently no information indicating that the Syrian government has transferred WMD to terrorist organizations or would permit such groups to acquire them."[30] In this regard, the record shows that Syria has kept a very tight rein over these groups. This caution is a product of Syria's acute

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[29] Alasdair Drysdale and Raymond A. Hinnebusch, *Syria and the Middle East Peace Process* (New YorK: Council on foreign Relations Press, 1991) p. 165.

[30] John R. Bolton's testimony before the House International Relations Committee, September 16, 2003, "Syria's Weapons of Mass Destruction and Missile Development Programs," in http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/24135.htm

awareness that it would ultimately pay the price for any major terrorist incident it was believed to be behind, especially against Israel.[31]

CONCLUSION

Relying on Syria's awareness of its military weakness vis-à-vis Israel is not necessarily cause for comfort, however. Syria is determined to recover its Israeli-occupied Golan Heights—by hook or by crook. As Bashar Assad himself put it to a Kuwaiti newspaper recently, "If there is no peace, naturally you should expect that war may come."[32] In other words, if Syria does not recover its Israeli-occupied Golan Heights through negotiations, it will try to do so through war, a prospect that might have horrific consequences for the entire region.

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[31] Syria has not been directly implicated in any terrorist activity since the 1986 "Hindawi affair" (the attempted bombing of an El Al flight from London).

[32] *Al Anba* interview with Syrian President Bashar Assad, Sunday, 8 October, 2006

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STRATEGIC CULTURE, AL-QAIDA, AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

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Strategic Culture, Al-Qaida, and Weapons of Mass Destruction

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An analyst writing for a prominent counterterrorism think tank recently offered a "primer" on the world's most feared terrorist network and the potential employment of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Saying that an al-Qaida attack using these weapons is "inevitable," the analyst held that such employment "would serve all the traditional purposes of terrorism: symbolism, propaganda, and psychological impact, irrespective of the failure or success of the mission." Then, in a sweeping conclusion, the analyst averred, "What matters is to cause mass casualties…. In this context discussions about motives to deploy WMD are irrelevant. No matter how complex the deep principles or incentives behind WMD terrorism, the *only reliable motive is an unflinching desire to slay blindly.*"[2] (emphasis added)

"Irrespective of success or failure." "Slay blindly." Unfortunately, the analyst's views seem to be as common as they are categorical and reductionistic. Al-Qaida's true aim, despite the spectacular assault on the World Trade Center, has never been simply indiscriminate slaughter. Indeed, its long-term goals have been articulated in a multitude of venues and with remarkable consistency. Although its ideologues have vigorously debated methods of achieving them, blind slaying has not numbered among them, whether as means or end. In studying al-Qaida documents, something else emerges: a view of the world and a strategic code more richly textured, nuanced, calculating, even deadly. Al-Qaida may indeed someday use WMD, but it will do so having calibrated its aims, and—despite our author's assertion—success *will* count.

But the account given above falls short in another way, and it is this: we can no longer speak of a single al-Qaida, a vertical organization with a *shura* council rigorously controlling a top-down structure. It is better viewed as an ideology metastasizing through multiple "al-Qaidas," franchises that import the original message of the proto-al-Qaida and adapt it to local

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[2] Tiina Tarvainen, "Al-Qaeda and WMD: A Primer," *Terrorism Monitor*, 2 June, 2005.

and national exigencies. Increasingly, "al-Qaida" must be taken as a political metonymy, an expression to indicate an array of global Islamic organizations, operating with varying levels of autonomy, but generally subscribed to a salafist religious narrative that stipulates a political order which will be achieved through the use of controlled violence. The original al-Qaida remains, but it is no longer simply the hierarchical structure developed in the 1990s following the mujahideen triumph in Afghanistan. "Al-Qaida" is now an idea spread throughout the blogosphere, and that is where the greater threat lies.

The question of jihadist use of WMD must therefore be put in a double context. First, one must examine al-Qaida as a violent non-state, *non-national* actor (VNSNNA) whose ideology posits a nexus of strategic principles and suggests an operational code. Then, one must examine particular "al-Qaidas," violent non-state *national* actors (VNSNA), which may import that ideology, tailor it to local exigencies, and develop specific national operational codes. In taking this two-tiered approach, we are not discounting that Osama and the original al-Qaida may attempt to acquire and use WMD, but we are asserting that multiple jihadist groups are now deliberating possible use in their respective national settings. Thus, the question Western analysts face is considerably more complex than simply, "What is the likelihood al-Qaida will employ WMD?"

This paper will take only an initial step in the complex task of trying to determine whether and under what circumstances al-Qaida and its affiliates may use WMD. It will confine itself to examining the ideology, approached as narrative, of the *original* al-Qaida, not particular franchises. It will ask what its views are with respect to the acquisition and employment of WMD, and it will do so by using strategic culture as an analytic concept. What emerges is a contested ideology, but also one of substantial nuance, and—as we shall see—something considerably advanced beyond a simple desire to employ WMD to slay blindly.

AL-QAIDA AND STRATEGIC CULTURE AS ANALYTIC TOOL

As an analytic concept, strategic culture studies developed in the 1970s, following the earlier idea of a political culture among elites, a "culture" amenable to critical analysis. Once the culture was understood, analysts could then make predictions about political behavior.   As the idea developed, analysts applied the idea of strategic culture to the Soviet Union. In its usual formulation, the Soviets were seen as developing specific operational codes based on a long-

developing culture that stemmed from centuries of Russian history and the wars that swept across Eastern Europe to the Russian heartland. Thus, analysts ascribed operational doctrines like "defense in depth" and "correlation of forces" to facets of a deeper strategic culture, a set of factors that made for a kind of historically-imposed inertia on present actions.[3]

Analysts of violent non state actors have recently revived the concept, looking for a more insightful way of describing (and, where possible, predicting) strategic behaviors than simply positing them to a given actor's forward-looking calculation of maximum utility. That is especially important when looking at al-Qaida, for game theory is unable to take adequate account of suicide bombing. In such a case, of course, the actor does nothing to maximize his utility, but quite the opposite. And yet the rationality of the bombers seems intact, from a psychological point of view,[4] and when examined within a religious and historical context—the very thing strategic culture analysis compels us to do—the sacrifice the bombers make is both explicable and consistent. To use Hedrick Smith's apt phrase from another context (that of Soviet political behavior), what one confronts in the Middle East today is the weight of the salafist past upon the Islamist present. Strategic culture helps us read al-Qaida's past and offers an interpretation of present actions.

At the outset, one must acknowledge a special consideration in seeking to use strategic culture as a tool to examine al-Qaida. Heretofore, it has been used with respect to *state* actors. Al-Qaida, despite its dreams of a renewed caliphate, is not a state. Moreover, in the parlance of international relations, it isn't even a nation. It is transnational. But the ostensible weakness of strategic culture as a tool may be its very strength, if prudently applied. "Nation" is a protean concept. One way of approaching it is to see a nation as a group of people who strongly identify with an overarching, shared cultural narrative, a key focus in strategic culture analysis. Indeed a state has effective political cohesion to the degree it is coterminal with that nation and its narrative.

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[3] An earlier and useful overview of this analytic approach may be found in Colin Gray, "Comparative Strategic Culture," *Parameters* (Winter 1984): 26-33. A recent attempt to assess the current status of the field of strategic studies is found in "Comparative Strategic Culture: Conference Report" issued by the Center for Contemporary Conflict and available at http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/events/recent/ComparativeStrategicCultureSep05_rpt.asp. An exceptionally vigorous critique of the approach is that of Alastair Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* (Spring 1995): 33-64. While not discounting the concept as an analytic tool, Johnston does look to specify the term and to suggest ways of making its methodology more rigorous and its hypotheses falsifiable. My approach here is indebted to his discussion, as will be readily apparent.

[4] The intact psychology of al-Qaida members is a key conclusion of the work of Marc Sageman. See particularly his *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2004).

Thus, in many ways the nation is the unit more susceptible of strategic culture analysis, an analysis appropriate to the state only to that degree the state comprises those who share a national narrative. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Tamil Tigers, the Basque separatists, the Chechen rebels, and Hamas would be amenable to this analysis, for while they are violent non-state actors, they are yet national actors within a state setting. The same could be said for particular "al-Qaidas" within a local setting, whether in Bali, Morocco, or "Londonistan." This conceptualization would seem especially pertinent to national groups in Iraq. Rather than attempt to analyze violence in the Iraqi state as a whole, a more fruitful approach would see Iraq as an artificial state that comprises three nations.   With respect to its creation after World War I, Sir Anthony Parsons, long a British diplomat in the Middle East, observed, "Woodrow Wilson had disappeared by then, and there wasn't much rubbish about self-determination. We, the British, cobbled Iraq together. It was always an artificial state; it had nothing to do with the people who lived there."[5] Strategic culture takes account of that crucial historical dimension. It would approach the Iraqi Sunni and Shia militants, not merely as combatants in a *state's* civil war, but as two *nations* who battle each other. Each side has its own deep cultural narrative, and each side has its account about The Other and the threat the other poses to its own values and very existence. Strategic culture, in approaching the state of Iraq, must analyze multiple narratives—just as it must for any non-homogenous state.   And to the degree that a state is markedly pluralistic (i.e., differing national groups vying for advantage within a given government structure), strategic culture loses focus as an analytic tool, unless it allows for multiple narratives.

Which brings us to the question of whether al-Qaida, transnational as it is, would be amenable to such analysis. The answer is a qualified "yes." Religion can serve as a powerful ethnic marker, a critical element constitutive of identity.[6] In the case of Islam, the appeal that salafi jihadists make is that the bond of religion trumps state identification. This replicates the pattern of early Islam, wherein the forefathers claimed that loyalty to the *ummah*, the Islamic community, was to supersede *asabiyya*, loyalty to the kinship group. In support, jihadists

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[5] A number of sources may be cited for this background on Iraq's creation. To cite only two, Glenn Frankel gives a concise account in his "Lines in the Sand" in Micah Sifry and Christopher Cerf, eds., *The Gulf War Reader* (New York: Random House, 1991), 16-20. David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace* (New York: Holt, 1989) gives a superb review, focusing especially on Churchill, passim, but particularly 191-92. On the orchestration of Feisal's "popular" selection and reception, see Fromkin, 506-08. The Parsons quote is in Frankel, 18.

[6] On the concept of ethnic markers, see Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People, and the State* (New York: Tauris, 1993).

frequently cite Q 2:143, "Thus we have made of you/an Ummat justly balanced/that ye might be witnesses/over the nations [al-nas, lit., "the people" or "the multitudes"]." For al-Qaida, the organization is simply a tangible expression of this larger *ummah*.[7] And the *ummah* is not so much transnational as it is the nation which is trans-global. In contradistinction, say, to the Tamil Tigers who see themselves as a nation operating within the state context of Sri Lanka, al-Qaida members view their imagined *ummah* as that nation which is larger than any state. From the Western perspective, those from other countries who travel to Iraq as suicide bombers represent *different nationalities* that have converged on a failed state. From the Islamist perspective, these are members of the *one nation* who have traveled to the region to defend their religion *bi amwal wa anfusihim*, with their possessions and their lives. The brilliance of Osama and others is in the crafting of a religious narrative that gives a thick account of this nation, the *ummah*, and thus makes it a cultural reality for which men and women are willing to die. It is that nation and its narrative that we analyze here using the tools of strategic culture.

In this approach, we will take "strategic culture" to indicate an ideational milieu, one that makes important assumptions about the fundamental values of the community, the nature of the enemy that threatens those values, and the role of war in defending the same.[8] These fundamental values coalesce in what we will term a meta-narrative, the overarching story that situates individuals in a distinct community, provides a cognitive roadmap by which they are to live, and that motivates members to protect the community against its enemies, even in the face of death. Within this larger narrative, elites rank order strategic options about how best to defend and promote the community through warfare. Then, in the messy details of contingent circumstances, decision makers act to achieve those valued ends. We may diagram it as shown in Figure 1:

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[7] An important self-description that salafists use is "vanguard," a term made popular by Sayyid Qutb in his major work, *Milestones*. The idea here is that Islam has fallen into moral decay, and a committed group of true believers (the vanguard, *taliᶜa*) will restore it to its early purity.

[8] Again I note my debt, especially in terminology, to Johnston. The idea of narrative as cognitive roadmap I develop more fully in "From Gilgamesh to Fatwas," *War, Literature, and the Arts* (forthcoming, 2007). At the same time, I acknowledge an implicit debt to Harvard researcher Steven Pinker, especially in his *The Blank Slate*, and the idea that cultures are epiphenomena and that what is truly universal is the psychological unity of the race.
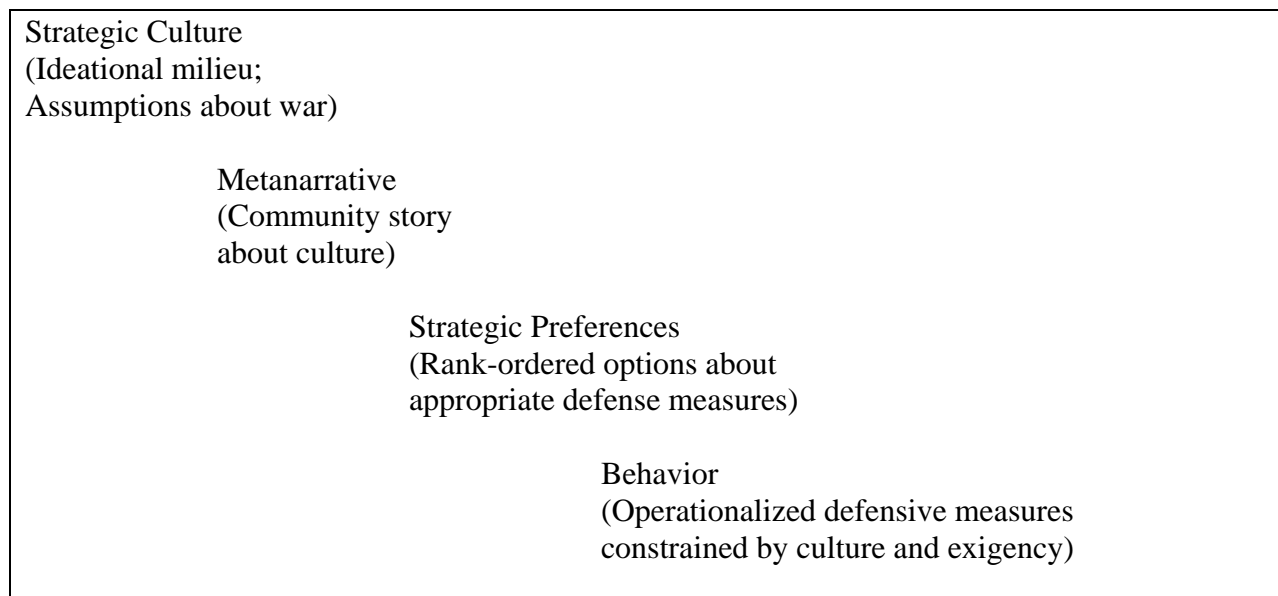
Strategic Culture
(Ideational milieu;
Assumptions about war)

> Metanarrative
> (Community story
> about culture)

>> Strategic Preferences
>> (Rank-ordered options about
>> appropriate defense measures)

>>> Behavior
>>> (Operationalized defensive measures
>>> constrained by culture and exigency)

Figure 1: Real Life Decision Making

The remainder of this paper will focus especially on the second step of this diagram, the meta-narrative of al-Qaida and its concomitant preferences. Following that, it will then suggest what behaviors may arise within that "national" and trans-global entity.

THE CLASSICAL NARRATIVE

The classical view in Islam about the world and the role of jihad arose during the Abbasid caliphate. This doctrine developed following a series of stunning and quite rapid victories over rival tribes in the Arabian peninsula, and the larger but effete empires of the Byzantines and Persians.[9] The story was retrospective, providing a justification for warfare, an explanation for its victories, and a justification for the ethical dimension of Islam's actions. This narration rendered the world thus:

| *dar al-Islam* | *ahl al-kitab* | *dar al-harb* |
| (house of Islam) | (people of the book) | (house of war) |

In this formulation, there was a categorical divide between the believers and the unbelievers, yet it provided an intermediate space for *ahl al-kitab*, people of the book, generally

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[9] An older but still useful exposition of the classical doctrine is Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1955). For a discussion of the origins and nuances of jihad, see Jerry M. Long, "Jihad," in *The Encyclopedia of Religious Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Christians, Jews, and other monotheists. Between the two houses there is perennial war. There may be occasional periods of *sulh*, a cessation of hostilities, or a *hudna*, a truce, but not *salaam*, true peace. Eventually, Islam will triumph, despite whatever setbacks it may suffer in the meantime. And that is a key point, for this inevitable victory requires faith, calculation, and long-term patience.

Despite representations in modern art, as Islam spread geographically, the aim was not forced conversions, but insuring that conquered peoples recognized the supremacy of Islam. Moreover, Islamist jurists formulated rules of warfare that parallel the West's ideas about *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*: what constitutes a threat against Islam, who should be considered combatants, the permissibility of collateral damage, and what intentional damage might be inflicted on an enemy's territory.[10] It is important to note that this was not a monolithic formulation; there was a great deal of debate among Muslim scholars about how these questions ought to be answered.[11] It was also true of the principle of *da^cwa*, the appeal that Muslims were to make to non-Muslims to embrace Islam. Scholars debated ways in which *da^cwa* ought to be promulgated. They also debated who could live in tributary status: no one at all, monotheists only, or polytheists as well.

Refashioning the Narrative

Al-Qaida's formulation draws from this classical doctrine, as well as from a number of medieval and modern thinkers and movements (Ibn-Taymiyya, wahhabism, Maududi, Qutb, Abdullah Azzam, and many others). In this reformulation, Osama functions as a kind of lay mujtahid, one who gives independent interpretation to Islamic texts. But it is critical to understand that Osama is not free to give just any interpretation, or else he would have no legitimacy. Rather he functions within an historical and religious tradition that has set the parameters within which he must move. Moreover, he is clearly influenced by his mentors and by those other ideologues in al-Qaida with whom he interacts. In this regard, it is better to see Osama as a kind of Homer who does not invent his story but must refashion what has come to him in his cultural context. And it is equally important to see that al-Qaida is not monolithic.

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[10] For a good overview of the topic, see John Kelsay, *Islam and War* (Louisville: Westminster, 1993). Also valuable is Ann Elizabeth Mayer, "War and Peace in the Islamic Tradition and International Law" in *Just War and Jihad*, eds. John Kelsay and James T. Johnson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991): 195-226.

[11] For an indication of the scope of that discussion among Islamic scholars, see the primary documents collected in Rudolph Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam* (Princeton: Marcus Wiener, 1993).

Osama is iconic and even something of a *batil*, an Islamic hero, but he is not *imperator* whose ideas alone carry weight. Within al-Qaida, as is true of Islam more generally, there is sharp contestation, and those who read the primary materials will see the degree to which that is true. And a critical corollary merges here. A single *fatwa* does not constitute the definitive al-Qaida position on an issue, nor is al-Qaida's doctrine frozen in ahistorical time. It is dynamic.[12]

Yet one may describe al-Qaida thinking in *broad* terms with relative accuracy. It begins with the dichotomy of the house of war and the house of Islam. Osama and others have appealed to this division on countless occasions. Osama's statement several weeks after 9/11 is typical. "These events have divided the whole world into two camps, the camp of the faithful and the camp of the infidels. May God shield us and you [i.e., other Muslims] from them."[13] But al-Qaida's use significantly attenuates the intermediate space for people of the book, and Jews are almost never offered any consideration for this category. On the other hand, the category *dar al-harb*, pretty much an undifferentiated mass in classical thinking, is particularized in contemporary thinking. It posits a trifecta of enemies: The West; The Jews; and Traitorous Arab leaders.

Each of those may be further differentiated, using either secular or religious terms. For instance, the West may become either the "crusaders" or the "imperialists." Often it is simply "America." A particularly important term in their lexicon for the west is *kafirun*, unbelievers, and President Bush is designated "head of the unbelievers." The Jews generally are "Zionists" or the "Zionist entity." And the traitors among Arab leaders (usually heads of state in the Gulf Cooperation Council and virtually all senior members of the Saudi royal family) are "agents," intermediaries who do the bidding of the West and who fail to implement Islamic law, the *shari{c}a*.[14] More significantly, al-Qaida terms them *murtadun*, apostates. That is significant, for

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[12] This is especially important to note in connection with the *fatwa* issued by Nasir al-Fahd in May 2003 on the permissibility of WMD. The lengthy and carefully constructed *fatwa* follows the traditional pattern of posing and answering objections, drawing on the Quran, the hadith, and the writings of other scholars. But the claims of some Western analysts notwithstanding (to include the writer quoted at the start of this article), Fahd's pronouncement does not settle all. On an issue of this magnitude, several prominent and respected scholars would have to concur if the community were to have consensus. But that hasn't happened, and there is a curious lack of reference among other leading Islamists to Fahd on this point. To see the degree of contestation there may be on critical issues, see Yvonne Haddad, "Operation Desert Storm and the War of the Fatwas" in *Islamic Legal Interpretations: Muftis and their Fatwas*, ed. Muhammad Khalid Masud, et. al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996): 297-309.

[13] The full text is in "The Sword Fell," *New York Times*, 8 Oct 01.

[14] Zawahiri forwarded this theme again in late July 2006. After discussing the "Zionist-Crusader War" against Lebanon and Hezbollah, he concluded, "My Muslim nation, without a doubt it is clear to you now that the governments of the Arabic and Islamic countries are inefficient and conniving…. You are all alone in the field."

classical Islam stipulated harsher treatment for those who had left the faith than for simple unbelievers. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is a "layman" who "bartered away the true religion." And among non-Arab, Muslim leaders lumped in that category is President Musharrif of Pakistan, the "traitor" of Islam. Moreover, these categories sometimes get blended. Israel, for instance, is frequently accused of having formed a "crusader-Zionist alliance" with the West. Great Britain and the United States have formed "armies of unbelief" and "the Crusader West."[15] The interim prime minister of Iraq, Ibrahim al-Ja'fari, is the "servant of the cross" who has declared war on his Muslim co-religionists. And so on, in seemingly endless permutations.

Key Dates

Al-Qaida's contemporary doctrinal reformulation has, of course, taken place within a specific historical context, and several dates are critical to the Islamists. Apart from the obvious deeper history that al-Qaida often cites (the loss of the Iberian peninsula, the crusades, etc), several more recent events of the last century stand out, and al-Qaida ideologues frequently reference them. Here are five of those key dates.

1916—Sykes-Picot

Radicals (and indeed most Arabs) view this as the date of the great betrayal, when Britain secretly pursued its imperialist aims in the region, at the expense of the Arabs.[16] It is a strongly evocative date and seen as contributing to the end of the caliphate (1923) and the implementation of an "imperialist" mandate system. Immediately after 9/11, Osama released an audio tape in

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Cited in "In Zawahiri's Words: 'We Will Unite,'" *New York Times*, 28 July 2006. Several weeks later, on the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, Zawahiri continued the theme, accusing Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan of supporting Israeli hostility against Lebanon. Cairo, he said, had made a "graveyard" of the Arab's joint defense pact. *Al-Jazeera* on-line (Arabic), 12 September 2006.

[15] Notably, on the first anniversary of the London train bombing, al-Qaida released a new tape with commentary and voiceover, which included the martyr statement of Shehzad Tanweer recorded prior to the attack. In his voiceover, Zawahiri pointed out, "The names of the station [sic] that were targeted have significance, both symbolically and in terms of morale, for the Crusader West," apparently referring to the bombing of the King's Cross—Tavistock line. The statement is in MEMRI, 11 July 2006.

[16] An obvious example is the 1996 "Ladenese Epistle," in which the assault of the West on Islam is made the foundation of the argument that follows for defensive war. It is even more explicit in Osama's declaration in October 2001 in which he argued that 9/11 was simply retaliation for "80 years of humiliation" (see "The Sword Fell," cited supra). Zawahiri and others share that analysis. What lacks, however, is the sort of capacity for critical self-reflection that one finds in the writings of, say, Qutb and Mawdudi, who offer Muslim jeremiads. Self-reflection seems to have returned in Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, however, whose "Observations Concerning the Jihadi Experience in Syria" is remarkable on this account. See the summary available in Brachman and McCants, *Stealing al-Qaida's Playbook*, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/Stealing%20Al-Qai%27da%27s%20Playbook%20--%20CTC.pdf.

which he claimed that the attack on the WTC was retaliation for a series of Western assaults on the region, beginning with the critical era in World War I.

1948—Establishment of Israel

May 1948 is seen as part of a Western plot to establish a beachhead on Muslim lands, and most Muslims and Arabs generally call this *al-nakba*, the disaster. Al-Qaida is more specific. This "loss of Palestine" is not merely loss of territory. It represents the loss of Jerusalem, the third holiest site in Islam and the first *qibla* (direction of prayer). Even Saddam, in his Machiavellian way, sought to leverage the religious aspect of Jerusalem as legitimation for his invasion of Kuwait. Many al-Qaida pronouncements, as with the 1998 *fatwa*, list the recovery of Palestine and the first *qibla* as a key war aim.

1967—The June War

Often referred to in the region as another *nakba*, Islamists highlight it as the failure of secular Arab nationalism and, indeed, the judgment of God. From this point, Islamists propounded their own alternative, what they have termed *al-Hal al-islami*, the Islamic solution. That has proved a paradigm, of sorts. Hezbollah, Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, and al-Qaida have seized on any sort of disaster as an opportunity to show—by rhetoric and practice—the superiority of the Islamic solution, mobilizing the aid that feckless Arab governments cannot, then exploiting the public relations moment.[17]

1973—The Ramadan/Yom Kippur War

Arabs view this as the war that restored the nation's honor (after the debacle of 1967) and demonstrated the vulnerability of the Zionist enemy.[18] Indeed, it made possible—at least in Sadat's view—a trip to Jerusalem to address the Knesset and participate in the Camp David

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[17] Zawahiri writes of the impact of the 1967 defeat in his *Knights Under the Banner of the Prophet*. "The jihad movement realized that the woodworm had begun to eat the idol [Nasser, as leader of secular Arab nationalism] until he became weak because of the effects of the setback and he fell to the ground amid the bewilderment of his priests and the horror of his worshippers…. The death of [Nasser] was not the death of one person but also the death of his principles, which proved their failure on the ground of reality, and the death of a popular myth that was broken on the sands of Sinai." *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 4 December 2001. Thereafter, Zawahiri writes, an invigorated militant Islam developed in the void.

[18] It is significant, in this context, that the Egyptian military's successful plan to breach the Bar Lev defensive barrier and cross into the Sinai was code-named Operation Badr, explicitly referencing an early Muslim victory over the Makkans in 624 C.E.

talks. But it is important with respect to the history of al-Qaida. Osama has pointed to this as the beginning of his return to Islam. Because of the massive U.S. airlift to reinforce Israel after its initial setbacks in the Sinai, the war indicated to Osama the unalterable commitment of the West to support the Zionist entity, a formative event in the development of al-Qaida's view of the real nature and structure of the house of war. Not incidentally, this was underscored again in July 2006 when the United States resupplied Israel in its war with Hezbollah.

1990—The Gulf War

It is difficult to overstate the importance of this period. Osama, flush from victory in Afghanistan, offered to employ his *mujahideen* to repel Saddam. The Saudis turned instead to the West. But more important than United States intervention was the continued U.S. *presence* in the peninsula, a "defilement" that radicals compared to that of a woman ritually unclean during her monthly cycle.[19] This was the final validation, to Osama and others, of the West's intent to overrun the house of Islam, and provocation (*jus ad bellum*) to launch a "defensive" war, on their view.[20]

DOCTRINES OF WAR AND WMD

It is this meta-narrative, selectively derived from classical doctrine and reshaped through historical contingency, that forms the basis for al-Qaida's strategic preferences and operational code. Al-Qaida, in fact, has made no secret of its strategic views, even if it practices reasonably good security with respect to operational employment. It is possible to "read al-Qaida's playbook," as a recent publication of the Combating Terrorism Center at the United States Military Academy puts it.[21] And to read it, is to be immediately struck by how thorough

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[19] See, for instance, the striking use of this imagery in the al-Qaida attack on western compounds in Saudi Arabia in May 2004, dubbed the "Khobar Operation." The text describing the assault is available at http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=subjects&Area=jihad&ID=SP73104.

[20] This post war period, I will argue, is the single most important precursor to Osama's attack on 9/11. His reading was that the house of war had overrun the house of peace. His fatwa in 1998 can only be understood against this backdrop. For more background on Osama's appeal to the Saudi royal family, see Yossef Bodansky, *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America* (New York: Random House, 2001): 28-31; and reporting in *The Jordan Times*, 8 November 2001. For a coolly-reasoned and powerfully stated Arab view on the U.S. presence and how provocative it might be, see Mohamed Heikal, *Illusions of Triumph: An Arab View of the Gulf War* (London: HarperCollins, 1992), 333-34.

[21] I am indebted here and in much of the discussion that follows to Brachman and McCants' *Stealing al-Qa'ida's Playbook*, and to the collection of primary materials in the "Harmony" database on the Combating Terrorism Center's website, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/.

al-Qaida ideologues have been in deliberating warfighting doctrine in light of the larger worldview of radical, salafist Islam. The reductionistic approach of reading al-Qaida as simply an undifferentiated group of terrorists seeking spectacular effects by indiscriminately killing massive numbers of Americans is a serious misreading indeed. Here, then, are three key points of doctrine.

A Long War

The war al-Qaida fights will be a long war, requiring patience and careful calculation. The authoritative source here is the writing of Sayyid Qutb, and he merits quoting at length on this critical point.

> [T]he growing bankruptcy of western civilization makes it necessary to revive Islam. The distance between the revival of Islam and the attainment of world leadership *may be vast*…but the first step must be taken…. The Muslim community [i.e., the umma] today is neither capable of nor is required to present before mankind great genius in material inventions, such as would make the world bow its head before its supremacy and thus re-establish once more its world leadership. Europe's creative mind is far ahead in this area, and *for a few centuries* to come we cannot expect to compete with Europe…. How to initiate the revival of Islam? A vanguard must set out with this determination and then keep going, marching through the vast ocean of *jahiliyyah* [ignorance of the true faith] which encompasses the entire world…. The Muslims in this vanguard must know the landmarks and the milestones on the road to this goal so that they would know the starting point as well as the nature, the responsibilities, and the ultimate purpose of *this long journey*.[22]

In his statement the month after the attack on the World Trade Center, Osama used precisely this term—"vanguard"—which Qutb had used, claiming that it was they who had struck a blow against America.   He finished his statement claiming, "The wind of change is blowing to remove evil from the peninsula of Muhammad."[23] In the ideological trajectory of his doctrinal mentor, Osama was stating the vanguard had set out on its long journey with this major blow against the *dar al harb*, and that winds of change had begun to stir, *not* that the task was completed nor even near completion. And al-Qaida understands that the fight is lengthy precisely because its fight is asymmetric, despite the dramatic success on 9/11. In fact, in a moment of candor after his "period of solitude," al-Qaida ideologue Abu Mus ͨab al-Suri

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[22] *Milestones*, 7, 8, 9. Emphasis added.
[23] "The Sword Fell."

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declared, "It is inconceivable to imagine the defeat and destruction of America, with all the military and economic power that it has reached, except through natural disasters."[24] Hence the comment of al-Qaida on its al-Nidaa web site about the necessity of unconventional warfare in 2003: "We expected that the method of defense of regular or semi-regular [Iraqi forces] would collapse…. [Thus] we have focused on the modus operandi of guerilla warfare. This is the most powerful method Muslims have…[for] there is no chance that in the years to come we will be allowed to possess the elements of strength."[25]

This is not to indicate despair on the part of the Islamists but the realization that theirs is a long battle to gain the supremacy of Islam. In fact, the al-Nidaa statement emphasizes that guerilla warfare proved successful against the Americans in Vietnam and the Russians in Afghanistan. While it will occasionally be able to launch major operations, increasingly much of its focus must be on what Abu Bakr Naji calls "vexation and exhaustion operations" in his *Management of Savagery*.[26] Similarly, al-Qaida understands it must constantly evaluate and recalibrate its plans, based on careful study of jihads, past and present, and their relative success. Al-Suri is especially pertinent here as an al-Qaida intellectual who has produced a critical study on earlier experiences of jihads that failed, especially in Syria and the Hama Uprising in 1982.[27]

A Defensive War

The war al-Qaida fights will generally be couched as a defensive war, and therefore morally legitimate. That was clearly the case after 9/11 when al-Qaida pronouncements repeatedly described the attack as a justified retaliation for Western aggression against Muslims. The point is important, for it shows al-Qaida sensitivity to international condemnations. Describing it as defensive has an additional benefit with respect to Islamic jurisprudence. Classical thinking differentiated jihad as *fard kifayah* or *fard ayn*, a collective obligation or an individual obligation. In the former case, the community was responsible for mustering a contingent who could conduct an offensive jihad. But the latter obtained when the Islamic community came under attack, and every individual must come to its defense.

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[24] *Al-sharq al-Awsat*, 23 January 2005.
[25] Cited in MEMRI, 11 April 2003.
[26] Available on the Combating Terrorism Center's website, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/.
[27] His *Observations Concerning the Jihadi Experience in Syria* is excerpted in CTC's *Stealing al-Qaida's Playbook*, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/.

Bin Laden's famous February 1998 *fatwa* used exactly this approach. The Arabian peninsula, with its sanctities, had come under attack. All Muslims, therefore, must come to its defense. Some months later, Osama gave an interview with al-Jazeera in which he commented on the jihadists who had carried out attacks against Riyadh (1995), Khobar (1996), and the U.S. embassies in Africa (1998). "I look at these men with much admiration and respect, for they have removed the shame from the forehead of our umma."[28] Osama's comment reflects both Arab culture, as well as Islamist conviction. In his view, Arab honor had been besmirched by the colonialist West, and a reprisal attack, after the pattern of *ghazw*, was necessary to restore the honor and remove the shame. But Osama also cast this in Islamic terms: shame had come to the Islamic nation, and God had given authorization to defend the community:

> To those against whom
> War is made, permission
> is given to fight,
> because they are wronged—and verily,
> God is most powerful
> For their aid. Q 22:39

This same pairing of culture and religion may be found in *Military Studies in the Jihad against the Tyrants*, captured by British authorities in Manchester, England, in May 2000. Note that the title itself implies that this is defensive; this is preparation to turn back tyranny. The book opens with a "pledge" to "the sister believer whose clothes have been stripped off…whose hair the oppressors have shaved…whose body has been abused by the human dogs."[29] The imagery is striking, for it depicts violation of a woman's *ʿirdh*, honor. The humiliation that takes place (stripping, shaving) is indicative of violating a major cultural taboo, and the reference to dogs, generally seen as unclean in Arab culture, compounds the sense of previous violation. This violation mandates a response. For the Islamists, therefore, jihad is morally warranted, both culturally and religiously.

Abu Bakr Naji gives a much more nuanced analysis. *In The Management of Savagery*, Naji presents jihad as necessary to reverse moral entropy. On his view, jihad is a merciful gift from heaven:

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[28] Cited in *Messages to the World*, ed. Bruce Lawrence (New York: Verso, 2005), 74.
[29] Jerrold Post, ed., *Military Studies in the Jihad against the Tyrants* (Maxwell AFB, AL: USAF Counterproliferation Center, n.d.), 15. The *Encyclopedia of Jihad* is even more direct: "Islam permits the killing and assassination of those who have wronged Allah, his Prophet, or Muslims, from among his worst enemies, without dispute." 514. Unfortunately, the *Encyclopedia* is no longer available on the CTC website.

Before God sent down the law of jihad, He wanted to show humanity what would happen without jihad so that they would see the complete wisdom of the Lawgiver, praised and exalted be He. The result was terrible: stupid, stubborn opposition from most of the people and the followers of Satan…. [T]he generations become corrupt upon the earth and spread unbelief and corruption among humans. They even work to create a fitna [chaos, dissension] for the believing few, either by direct pressure or by the fitna of exalting unbelief and its people in the eyes of the weak few among the believers…. [In the gift of jihad, God shows the] completeness of [his] mercy to humanity, for this restores justice and averts eternal punishment for those who believe.[30]

This idea of jihad as a moral reprisal because of infidel attacks has been publicly articulated on numerous occasions. Abu Gheith, for instance, used it to describe 9/11. "Why were millions of people astounded by what happened to America on September 11?" Gheith asked. "America is the reason for all oppression, injustice, licentiousness, or suppression that is the Muslims' lot." It was therefore appropriate to "punish a Harbi infidel in the same way he treated a Muslim."[31] Similarly, Islamists depicted the London bombings in July 2005 as reprisal for earlier attacks against Muslims. On the first anniversary of the bombings, Al-Qaida released a martyr video of Shehzad Tanweer, one of the London bombers. The British govt had "declared war on Islam," he said, attacking without cause "mothers, children, brothers and sisters…in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Chechnya." Non-Muslim British were guilty, by extension, for they had voted in the government which was responsible for those depredations. Zawahiri added a voiceover, saying these men were motivated by love of God and of his prophet.[32] And later in the month, Zawahiri released another tape after Israel invaded Lebanon. In this, Zawahiri justified Hezbollah, calling for retaliation against the "Zionist-Crusader war [that] is without conscience" and which had torn "Muslim bodies in Gaza and Lebanon," as well as in Chechnya, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Iraq.[33] The pattern is consistent: Al-Qaida's view of war is one in which it is taking morally defensible action against Western assaults against Muslims worldwide.

An Intelligent War

The war al-Qaida fights will be an intelligent war, predicated on their own strategic culture analysis. This has two components. The first is that al-Qaida has and will continue to

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[30] *Management*, 242-43.
[31] MEMRI, 12 June 2002.
[32] MEMRI, 11 July 2006.
[33] "We Will Unite to Fight," *New York Times*, 28 July 2006.

study Western history, institutions, management principles, military doctrine, and so on. Moreover, it has also studied Western open-source counter-terrorism doctrine. Captured al-Qaida documents, as well as al-Qaida pronouncements, have show a remarkable knowledge of everything from the American political process and economic concerns, to the U.S. military's pre-positioning of supplies in the lower Persian Gulf and its disposition of forces. The second component is al-Qaida's ability to show flexibility with respect to its own methods, doing a fairly rigorous analysis of its failures and adapting new approaches. One such is al-Suri's *Observations Concerning the Jihadi Experience in Syria.* Another is *The Story of the Arab Afghans From the Entry to Afghanistan until the Final Departure with the Taliban*, serialized in *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* in December 2004. Among other observations, (putative author) Abu Walid al-Masri recalls Osama's false assumption that the United States could withstand only two or three decisive blows and that 9/11 should prove decisive.[34]

Of particular interest is al-Qaida ideologue Abu Bakr Naji, especially in light of his clear commitment to a strategic culture analysis of the West. He merits quoting at length.

> We urge that most of the leaders of the Islamic movement be military leaders or have the ability to fight in the ranks, at the very least. Likewise, we also urge that those leaders work to master political science just as they would work to master military science.… Political action is very important and dangerous, such that one of them said: "A single political mistake (leads to) a result that is worse than one hundred military mistakes." Despite the hyperbole in this statement, it is true to the extent that it clarifies the seriousness of a political mistake.… *The interest in understanding the rules of the political game and the political reality of the enemies and their fellow travelers* and then mastering disciplined political action through sharia politics and opposing this reality is not less than the importance of military action, especially if we consider that the moment of gathering the fruit— a moment which is considered the recompense for the sacrifices offered by the mujahids during long decades—is a moment resulting from a political strike and a decisive political decision. Thus, the most important of their political principles is the principle of (self) interest. Their principle absolutely does not submit to any moral value; rather, all the other principles are subordinate to it—friendship or enmity, peace or war—and are all determined according to (self) interest. The politicians of the West summarize that in a slogan which says, "There is no eternal enmity in politics and no eternal friendship; rather, there are eternal interests."[35]

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[34] *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 8 December 2006.
[35] Naji, *Management of Barbarism*, 85-88, passim. Emphasis added.

Naji's closing paraphrase of Lord Palmerston's dictum from the middle Nineteenth Century should come as no surprise. Al-Qaida, it seems, is determined to follow Sun Tzu's non-negotiable principle of victory through knowledge, and it has done its homework rather thoroughly, to include reading primers of international relations.

On some level, al-Qaida has sought to formalize strategic analysis, as the *Encyclopedia of Jihad* makes clear. "The mission of [al-Qaida's strategic intelligence unit] is gathering, organizing, and distributing military information on the strategic level of the [target] country. Its goal is to know the country's military, political, economical and social capabilities and to predict its intentions, in order to work confronting all possibilities."[36] In application, the knowledge so gained can have implementation at the strategic or tactical level, and may be used in lethal or non-lethal ways. One example that reflects multiple applications of strategic intelligence is al-Qaida's tracking of the Bush administration's awarding of Iraqi reconstruction contracts, announced in December 2003.[37] Within a day, one publication, *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, editorialized

> When we warned that US aggression against Iraq was aimed at achieving two important goals, to loot Iraq's economy and wealth and to serve Israeli interests and remove any real Arab threats to the racist Jewish state, there were those who accused us of exaggeration…. Yesterday the US president, George Bush, announced that bids for contracts in Iraqi reconstruction will first be given to US companies, then other companies affiliated to allied countries which sent their forces to Iraq, risked the lives of their people, and served in the US project.... The US decision will…increase the world's hatred for the current arrogant US administration.[38]

Osama noted how the issue of the contract awards could be exploited, and he responded to the wedge moment with non-lethal propaganda: "This war makes millions of dollars for big corporations, either weapons manufacturers or those working in the reconstruction [of Iraq], such as Halliburton and its sister companies…. It is crystal clear who benefits from igniting the fire of this war and this bloodshed: They are the merchants of war, the bloodsuckers who run the policy of the world from behind the scenes."[39] And an al-Qaida unit in Saudi Arabia, the al-Quds Brigade, formed quite lethal plans. It spent some months reconnoitering a Western housing compound where Halliburton employees lived, then attacked it in May 2004 with a small team,

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[36] *Jihad*, 120.
[37] The Bush administration's decision to award contracts to key members of the "coalition of the willing" is described in "Bush Defends Barring Nations from Iraq Deals," *New York Times*, 12 December 2003.
[38] Cited in the BBC on-line, 12 December 2003.
[39] MEMRI, 15 April 2004.

killing 22 persons. The next month, the leader of the mission, Fawwaz al-Nashami, described the "Battle of Khobar" in an interview with Sawt al-Jihad [Voice of Jihad]. The battle was, Fawwaz said, part of the larger plan to purge the Arabian peninsula of ritual impurities by attacking Western contractors. It also provided the occasion to appeal to Muslims working in the compound to embrace a salafist vision of Islam.[40]

As part of this intelligent war, al-Qaida understands its words and actions have multiple audiences. Its methods in war will be guided, to some degree, by an appreciation for and an adherence to classical Islamic strictures about *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. As we note above, al-Qaida routinely positions itself as fighting a defensive war. But even if one considers all such elaborations as tendentious, al-Qaida is keenly aware of its public image. In an undated letter to Mullah Omar, Osama averred that gaining the upper hand in the "information war" (al-Harb al-ilamiah) represents 90 percent of the preparation for battle.[41] And Abu Mus^cab al-Suri has underscored the importance of propagandists to articulate the movement's objectives and legitimate use of violence.[42]

Much of al-Qaida literature is, therefore, quite taken with examining the reactions of various Muslim publics. For instance, al-Qaida attacks in Saudi Arabia that caused extensive casualties among Muslims (the Battle of Khobar did not) proved counter-productive, and after a year of harrowing attacks, they suddenly ceased. Al-Qaida clearly noted the negative public reaction, one which the Saudi royal family was quick to exploit, and it curtailed its attacks. Another example is the November 2005 hotel attacks that killed over 50, to include members of a wedding party. Zarqawi offered an extensive apology, saying that the hotels were a den of crusaders and Zionists, and that members of the wedding party were emphatically not the target. He then added,

> The obscenity and corruption spread [by the Jordanian government] have turned
> Jordan into a quagmire of utter profanity and debauchery, and anyone who has
> seen the hotels, the houses of entertainment, the dance parties, the wine bars, and
> the tourist resorts in Aqaba, in the Dead Sea [region], and in other places is
> wrenched with sorrow over what this family [i.e. the Jordanian royal family]—
> both its men and its women—has done to this country, whose people are good.[43]

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[40] The story is reported in MEMRI, 15 June 2004.
[41] The Arabic original is at http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq/AFGP-2002-600321-Orig.pdf. Interestingly, the anonymous author of *The Story of the Arab Afghans* considered Osama to be "maniacally obsessed with the international media," a disaster for the Taliban. *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 10 December 2004.
[42] *Stealing al-Qaida's Playbook*, 17.
[43] MEMRI, 8 December 2005.

In part, the concern about the violence is doctrinally driven. Naji has written, "One should note that violence and coarseness must not transgress the limits of the Sharia and that one must pay heed to the benefit and harm (that results from) it, which the Sharia considers to be, in the rules of jihad, as one of the most important subjects for the guidance of creation, if not the most important subject."[44] But al-Qaida is also intelligent and pragmatic. It wants to avoid what Jarret Brachman and William McCants term the "Shayma effect" after the botched assassination attempt on Egyptian Prime Minister, Atif Sidqi. In the event, a young school girl (Shayma) was killed, and—as Zawahiri later noted—caused a propaganda debacle for Egyptian Islamists. In brief, al-Qaida is not blinded by zeal. It will formulate plans carefully calibrated to exploit perceived weaknesses of the enemy *and* which will play well with Islamic audiences.

AL-QAIDA STRATEGIC CULTURE AND WMD

When we turn to al-Qaida's doctrine of WMD, the most salient factor is that there is none. This is not to say there are not *references* to acquisition and use. There certainly are a number of adversions. Typical are comments like these from Suleiman abu Gheith, al-Qaida spokesman, in June 2002: "It is our right to fight them [the Americans] with chemical and biological weapons, so as to afflict them with the fatal maladies that have afflicted the Muslims because of [their] chemical and biological weapons."[45] Or this from Abu 'Abdullah Al-Kuwaiti: "If the American people are ready to die as we are ready to die, then our combat groups along with our military, nuclear, and biological equipment will kill hundreds of thousands of people we don't wish to fight."[46] But measured against the very large output of al-Qaida pronouncements, references are comparatively infrequent, as Reuven Paz points out, and when they do occur, it is

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[44] *Management*, 76.
[45] MEMRI, 12 June 2002.
[46] http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq/AFGP-2002-001120-Trans.pdf. The Center for Nonproliferation Studies has done a commendable yeoman's task in compiling an extensive list of references to WMD, the preponderance being to CBW. It is available at http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/other/sjm_cht.htm The difficulty, of course, is verifying the reliability of the sources and many prove simply chimerical—as with the allegation in al-Majalla in 2002 that Osama had purchased 48 "suitcase nukes" from the Russian mafia. After the successful U.S. attack on al-Qaida strongholds in Afghanistan, the number of reported attempts to obtain nuclear or radiologic materials for a dirty bomb dropped precipitously. See the chart referenced just above.

most often to chemical munitions.[47] Significantly, manuals like *Military Studies in the Jihad against the Tyrants* fail to mention them at all.

There has also been vigorous deliberation within the al-Qaida shura about the utility of WMD. Perhaps the most important source is Abu Walid al-Masri, putative author of "The Story of the Arab Afghans from the Time of Arrival in Afghanistan until their Departure with the Taliban."[48] By his account, hawks within al-Qaida's shura have pushed for authorization. Most prominent among them was Abu Hafs al-Masri, until he was killed in a U.S. airstrike in November 2001. Abu Hafs had served as the organization's minister of defense and potential successor to Osama. He and others in al-Qaida argued they should try to obtain whatever they could of WMD for defense in a kind of Islamic MAD doctrine.[49] But others were deeply concerned about what they termed the "genii in the bottle," and they urged against acquisition. They feared pulling heaven down upon their heads in a retaliatory strike by the West. And thus what followed was extensive debate about rules of engagement, targets, and jurisprudential questions concerning collateral damage. Also notable is that even the hawks described use in terms of deterrence, not first strike. Moreover, according to Abu Walid, the majority agreed that use of WMD is a sensitive and very dangerous issue. And in any event, he reported, al-Qaida could likely obtain only quite primitive weapons.[50]

Osama's own position seems ambiguous. On the one hand, Abu Walid reported that the al-Qaida leader had wanted to obtain dirty bombs from the Russian arsenal. Yet he also describes Osama as having blocked Abu Hafs from pursuing a WMD program.[51] When asked directly about chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons in an al-Jazeera interview in December 1998, Osama temporized, saying Israel and Christians had nuclear weapons capability. He then added, "America knows today that Muslims [i.e., Pakistan] are in possession of such a

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[47] See Reuven Paz, "Global Jihad and WMD," in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 2 (September 2005), pub. by The Hudson Institute in Washington D.C., eds. Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown.

[48] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* serialized "The Story" beginning 8 December 2004. Authorship is not certain, but I will refer to the author as "Abu Walid," with that caveat. For an important examination of conflict within al-Qaida leadership more generally, see Montasser al-Zayyat, *The Road to al-Qaida*, trans. Ahmed Fekry and ed. Sara Nimis (London: Pluto Press, 2004).

[49] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 8 December 2004. In his 2003 fatwa authorizing use of WMD, al-Fahd makes something of the same point: "If the infidels can be repelled from the Muslims only by using such weapons, their use is permissible, even if you kill them without exception and destroy their tillage and stock." More recently, Abu Mus͑ab al-Suri has averred that WMD would offer "strategic symmetry." Cited in Paz , "Global Jihad and WMD," 83.   The author wishes to express gratitude to Dr. Jarrett Brachman and the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point for supplying a copy of the full *fatwa* of al-Fahd.

[50] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 9 December 2004

[51] *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 8 December 2004

weapon."[52] Osama responded similarly in an interview that *Time* published the following month. Asked about chemical and nuclear weapons, he replied, "Acquiring weapons for the defense of Muslims is a religious duty. If I have indeed acquired these weapons, then I thank God for enabling me to do so. And if I seek to acquire these weapons, I am carrying out a duty. It would be a sin for Muslims not to try to possess the weapons that would prevent the infidels from inflicting harm on Muslims."[53]

Clearly, Osama did make some attempt to acquire such weapons. One especially notable testimony about Osama and al-Qaida's interest in nuclear (or radiologic) weapons in particular is that of Jamal Ahmad al-Fadl, the Sudanese national who defected from the organization in 1996 and now lives under protective custody in the United States. Al-Fadl had served as the money man in al-Qaida's 1993 attempt to purchase uranium in Sudan. In the end, however, this deal, like others, proved unsuccessful.[54] It is also important to note that in February 2002, after swift defeat of Taliban, U.S. officials searched military camps that Osama and al-Qaida had used. They found no WMD.[55]

What should be apparent is that, despite its deliberations and even its attempts to obtain weapons materiel, al-Qaida has not elaborated a consistent doctrine with respect to the use of WMD and nuclear weapons in particular. Instead, where western analysts do find discussions about WMD, they discover contestation on the issues of acquisition and employment, a contestation that is carried on within the parameters of a salafist Islamic narrative. Moreover, al-Qaida discussions also proceed within a framework of certain perceptions about the character and operational code of the West. None of this argues that al-Qaida will not again seek to acquire and employ WMD. Unlike Fahd's 2003 *fatwa* authorizing use, there has been no counter *fatwa* among al-Qaida leaders or clerics proscribing use. Use is clearly permissible. But indiscriminate employment, merely for spectacular effect, is highly unlikely. Al-Qaida's aim is not operational effect. It is to secure victory, and a victory with a legitimacy understood in religious terms. Because it is fighting an intelligent war, al-Qaida does consider the attitude continuum among fellow Muslims. Indiscriminate slaughter would multiply the "Shayma effect" among their co-religionists. That is true even when the victims are non-Muslim, for jurists have

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[52] The interview is available in *Messages to the World*, 65-94. This comment is @ 72.
[53] 11 January 1999. Accessed on-line.
[54] A useful catalog of several attempts is found at http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/reports/binladen.htm.
[55] "U.S. Analysts Find no Sign bin Laden Had Nuclear Arms," *NYT*, 26 February 2002.

long argued against the deliberate targeting of non-combatants. And there is scant evidence that al-Qaida's argument that non-combatants are responsible for state actions, simply on the basis of having voted, has found traction among Islamic publics.

Additionally, al-Qaida has shown a pragmatic side. On the one hand, al-Qaida has authorized suicide attacks, for it can justify them as "martyrdom operations." But it realizes that indiscriminate use of WMD would likely bring devastating retaliation, and Afghanistan is a case in point. On the other hand, U.S. successes in physically attacking the Taliban and al-Qaida bases and in information warfare assaults on al-Qaida communications networks, as well as freezing al-Qaida financial assets—all have limited the panoply of weapons the organization can acquire or develop. Thus, al-Qaida is existentially limited in what it can acquire or develop, and jurisprudentially limited in what it would use and in what manner, if acquired. A jihadist attack, like politics, is the art of the possible.

CONCLUSION

Based, then, on al-Qaida's history and strategic doctrine, and in view of pragmatic limits on what may be acquired and/or weaponized, the following summary of al-Qaida's WMD use seems warranted:

> Limited employment of radiologic or chemical weapons, outside Muslim countries, is clearly possible and, if acquired, may even be probable. Employment within Muslim countries is much less likely. Use of weapons that could be characterized as causing indiscriminate mass slaughter seems implausible, both for pragmatic and jurisprudential reasons.

But the debate about al-Qaida and WMD cannot end there. What "al-Qaida prime" may do and what al-Qaida franchises may do are separate questions. The threat from the former, in many ways, is decreasing; threats from the latter, increasing. In the future, we should expect al-Qaida's function to move more toward providing ideology, encouragement, and a kind of perverse legitimacy to field units which are operating with increasing autonomy. We ought, then, to be speaking of the WMD threat from al-Qaidas. It is they, far away from the destruction of the mountainous hideaways of Afghanistan, who will be importing both a salafist ideology and new weapons to confront their enemies. Yet that was the original vision inspired by Shaykh Abdullah Azzam, in any event. Al-Qaida would be only a base. He never intended that the jihadists remain there. Today, his vision is being fulfilled. Al-Qaida is no longer the chief

threat. Al-Qaidas are. It is they, in their local contexts, that could more easily threaten the West with WMD, and it is their own adapted narratives the West must more rigorously study.

<div align="center">**SUGGESTED READING**</div>

There is very little available that specifically employs a strategic culture to understanding al-Qaida, on any level. This bibliography, therefore, is suggestive of critical readings that will aid in such an approach.

Primary materials

The best site for reading (in English) statements of radical organizations, to include those of al-Qaida is http://www.memri.org/index.html See especially "jihad and terrorism studies project" under "Subjects."

Another excellent resource is the Combating Terrorism Center at the United States Military Academy. Their site is http://www.ctc.usma.edu/ They have recently declassified documents that have been captured by U.S. forces, as well as major studies available on-line.

Lawrence, Bruce, editor, *Messages to the World. The Statements of Osama bin Ladin*. 2005. A very useful, chronological selection that offers informed commentary.

Arab and Muslim Attitudes

Several organizations continue to do major studies of attitudes across the Arab and Islamic worlds, to include Gallup, Pew, and Zogby.

Gallup   http://www.gallupworldpoll.com/
Pew   http://people-press.org/
Zogby   http://www.zogby.com/index.cfm

Secondary materials

Books
al-Zayyat, Montasser, Sara Nimis, and Ahmed Fekry, *The Road to al Qaeda: The Story of bin Laden's Right Hand Man* (Pluto Press, 2004)

Almond, Gabriel, et al. *Strong Religion*. 2003.   This study by academics in political science, religion, and history offers a comparative analysis of violent fundamentalisms among adherents of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Bergen, Peter, *Holy War Inc.: The Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (Free Press, 2002)

_____, *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al Qaeda's Leader* (Free Press, 2006)

Burke, Jason, *Al Qaeda: A True Story of Radical Islam* (I.B. Tauris & Company, 2004)

Coll, Steve, *Ghost Wars: the Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden from the Soviet Invasion to Sept. 10, 2001* (Penguin Reprint Edition, 2004)

Gunaratna, Rohan, *Inside al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (Berkley Trade, 2003)

Hoffman, Bruce, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006)

Kean, Thomas and Lee H. Hamilton, *The 9/11 Report: The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004)

Kepel, Gilles, *The Roots of Radical Islam* (Saqi Books, 2005)

_____, *The War for Muslim Minds* (Belkap Press, New Ed edition, 2006)

Long, Jerry M. *Saddam's War of Words*. 2004. Examines ways Saddam's message found a receptive audience by exploiting elements of Arab culture and Islam, elements which al-Qaida now seeks to exploit.

Roy, Olivier, Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Umma, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006)

Sageman, Marc. *Understanding Terror Networks*. 2004. Sageman is a psychiatrist who also holds a Ph.D. in polisci and who has done the most comprehensive work-up the Islamic radical's psyche.

Stern, Jessica. *Terror in the Name of God*. 2003. An extraordinarily perceptive text on comparative fundamentalisms. Stern allows the participants to speak for themselves.

Zubaida, Sami. *Islam, the People, and the State*. 1993. Useful in its exploration of religion as identity marker.

Articles

Gray, Colin. "Comparative Strategic Culture," *Parameters* (Winter 1984): 26-33.

Johnston, Alastair. "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* (Spring 1995): 33-64.

Long, Jerry M. "An Army Whose Men Love Death." *Joint Force Quarterly* (forthcoming, January 2007).

Stern, Jessica. "The Protean Enemy," *Foreign Affairs* (July-August 2003), 27-40