



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**MULTIPLE PERSONALITY ORDER: FAVORABLE
TRAITS FOR SUCCESS IN IRREGULAR WARFARE**

by

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June 2020

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE June 2020		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's thesis
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE MULTIPLE PERSONALITY ORDER: FAVORABLE TRAITS FOR SUCCESS IN IRREGULAR WARFARE				5. FUNDING NUMBERS
6. AUTHOR(S) Tyler C. Oldham				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A				10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.				12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) Warfare of all scales and types involves personalities at its core. In irregular warfare, there are relationships formed between patron and client states with the hope that the surrogate relationship will provide mutual benefit to both principal and agent. The types of relationships, how and why they were formed, and what, if any, kinds of personal traits or characteristics aid in their formation is an area of interest for me. I explore the individual personal characteristics that both principals and agents possess that may provide favorable conditions for successful outcomes. What personality traits or characteristics of individual actors produce favorable conditions for successful campaigns in irregular warfare? By researching individuals who were directly involved in these relationships, common traits that are shared with other cases of success may come to the fore. By using comparative case study methodology to first define what characteristics are present in individuals on both sides of a surrogate relationship and then classifying those identified individual personality traits that seem to be necessary for favorable conditions of guerrilla leaders to succeed, I hope to find out which traits are most prominent and contribute to the body of knowledge of what personality traits favor success in irregular warfare.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS surrogate, irregular, guerrilla, warfare, personality, traits, characteristics, principal, agent, client, patron, trust, cooperation, relationship, Lawrence, Ho Chi Minh, Massoud, CIA, OSS, Vietnam, Afghanistan, World War I, World War II, proxy, LEVERS, language, empathy, values, education, reputation, servant leadership				15. NUMBER OF PAGES 99
				16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified		18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified		19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified
				20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU

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**MULTIPLE PERSONALITY ORDER: FAVORABLE TRAITS FOR SUCCESS IN
IRREGULAR WARFARE**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS
(IRREGULAR WARFARE)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

Warfare of all scales and types involves personalities at its core. In irregular warfare, there are relationships formed between patron and client states with the hope that the surrogate relationship will provide mutual benefit to both principal and agent. The types of relationships, how and why they were formed, and what, if any, kinds of personal traits or characteristics aid in their formation is an area of interest for me. I explore the individual personal characteristics that both principals and agents possess that may provide favorable conditions for successful outcomes.

What personality traits or characteristics of individual actors produce favorable conditions for successful campaigns in irregular warfare? By researching individuals who were directly involved in these relationships, common traits that are shared with other cases of success may come to the fore. By using comparative case study methodology to first define what characteristics are present in individuals on both sides of a surrogate relationship and then classifying those identified individual personality traits that seem to be necessary for favorable conditions of guerrilla leaders to succeed, I hope to find out which traits are most prominent and contribute to the body of knowledge of what personality traits favor success in irregular warfare.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my loving wife, Meagan, who asked the tough questions that made me think critically about my research and conversed with me about this topic and myriad others while steadfastly editing my endless drafts, thank you. To my children, Cameron and Evelyn: to me, the folks that I chose to study are legends in their own right, and someday I hope that you too will find your own legends to admire and emulate. Do your best, I love you. My thanks to Dr. Bradley Strawser, for his support and insights into how to make a thesis both readable and relatable, and to Dr. Kalev Sepp, for providing me with the inspiration to follow my own path and write about what I found interesting and important. Finally, to the men and women of the Naval Postgraduate School, thank you for providing the time and the place to allow for legitimate reflection on the various topics that are covered every quarter that strengthen our nation's warriors in mind, body, and spirit. Sapere Aude.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In war, it is not the men, but the man who counts.

—Napoleon

This thesis focuses on guerrilla leaders, specifically their personality traits and characteristics. Three case studies are examined: the Arab Revolt from 1916–1918, featuring T. E. Lawrence and Prince Feisal; Indochina/Vietnam from the 1940s–1969, featuring Ho Chi Minh, the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS), and Mao Zedong; and finally the Soviet-Afghan War from 1979–1989, featuring Gust Avrakotos and Ahmed Shah Massoud. In each of the three cases, the primary focus is on a very small number of individuals; this is in an effort to maintain a narrow enough scope to better understand specific personalities and weigh those individual's traits and characteristics against the others in the case studies. The purpose of this narrow focus is to evaluate the traits and characteristics via several theoretical mechanisms or models that can be used as yardsticks toward the general body of knowledge involved with war, leadership, and relationships.

The frameworks used include irregular warfare, surrogate warfare, trust, cooperation, assessment and evaluation of war, and influence techniques. This approach attempts to derive lessons from specific personality traits of these individuals and learn what those traits can teach us across these areas of inquiry.

The individuals selected for the case studies were, of course, not random. The cases were chosen because they all fell within the 20th century and each of the campaigns are well understood and documented. Most readers will be somewhat familiar with the general historical contexts in which these campaigns took place. This serves the purpose of allowing me to dive more deeply into each character to dissect what (if any) contributions specific personality traits provided to their cause.

While the campaigns may be generally well known, many of the individuals are less known than others. I will provide short narratives of the campaigns and details about

their contributions in order to give sufficient context and understanding of the individuals on a more intimate level. This focus will allow me to evaluate why certain personality traits and characteristics may prove favorable to successful guerrilla warfare.

There is a challenge here in that some of the individuals are prolifically written about, either autobiographically or by other writers, scholars, and reporters, whereas others are much more obscure, with only secondary or tertiary accounts available. Mao, for instance, does in fact have entire libraries dedicated to his biographical data, but due in part to censorship and propaganda, some accounts were not consistently reliable, so I chose to omit them due to a lack of objectivity of the source.¹

In the beginning of this research, I had no personal heroes or agendas in any of these characters. All of them are dead. I conducted no interviews. While I like their stories, I attempt (and hope) to portray each man with “warts and all.” We are all human, and no matter how great our acts, or how minor our role, I think it is important to view all humanity with a realistic sense of the foibles inherent in the human condition that bind everyman together in this unique way. The purpose of this research is to further our understanding of how people in general can maneuver in their respective geographic, human, and realpolitik environments, and what personality traits and/or characteristics tend to support effectiveness in their efforts.

In order to examine what personality traits tend to support success, we must look to several bodies of theory from which to base our observations and make educated assumptions on how to look at personality traits and characteristics. Irregular warfare, cooperation, trust, and principal-agent theories give us a lens with which we can assess personality traits that may prove favorable to successful outcomes in guerilla warfare.

A. DEFINING THE TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS

As I unpack the key theories and the individual personality traits of the case studies, it is necessary to develop an understanding of what I mean by use of certain words. Without

¹ In other cases on Mao, potential resources were simply inaccessible due to a lack of my understanding the Chinese alphabet.

a grounded, established definition, things can be a bit too fluid or vague to provide any added value. I have provided several definitions of terms that I believe best describe the ideas that the theories, case studies, and my analysis illuminate into a coherent group that allow the reader to better understand what I intend by using these terms throughout the work.

From my research of theoretical literature and the three case studies, I have formed a model of six compelling traits that were prevalent for our conclusions: Language, Empathy, Values, Education, Reputation, and Servant-Leadership—referred to collectively as LEVERS. All these traits were manifested in varying degrees through the individuals examined in the case studies. This list of personality traits is tragically incomplete and is not intended as a model or formula for success. By investigating individual guerrilla leaders, I was able to tie what obvious characteristics each man possessed that the others also tended to share. There are undoubtedly other traits that will be prevalent in similar historical cases, and many other factors that must also be weighed when assessing what generated the successful campaigns featured in my study as well as any other. The following terms are important to understand for foundational purposes, and to coordinate the reader with the context with which the study was conducted.

In the *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, “personality” is defined as “The complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation or a group, especially the totality of an individual’s behavioral and emotional characteristics. A set of distinctive traits or characteristics.”² A trait is defined as “a distinguishing quality (as of personal character),”³ while a characteristic is “A distinguishing trait, quality, or property.”⁴ When I use the term “personality trait,” or the term “characteristic,” I mean the same thing. For the purposes of this research both terms “trait” and “characteristic” are functionally equivalent with regards to their use as a noun, with the adjective of “personality” preceding either.

² Merriam-Webster, “Personality,” in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 924.

³ Merriam-Webster, “Trait,” in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 1326.

⁴ Merriam-Webster, “Characteristic,” in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 207.

This thesis is centered on divining what, if any, traits and/or characteristics individuals possess, develop, or perhaps lack that show commonality across the individuals within the three case studies. While I use guerrilla warfare and its leaders from the 20th century to help scope my research, it is my hope that this framework might convey or scale to any other realm: business, kinship, and international relations, among others. In the next few paragraphs, I will define the traits that my research suggests provides a favorable environment for successful leadership to thrive according to the LEVERS model. The first trait that was common among the case study subjects was the ability to speak and communicate in multiple languages.

Defined as “a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings using conventionalized signs, sounds gestures, or marks having understood meanings”,⁵ language is the ability to communicate verbally, literarily, or non-verbally and has shown to be of great value. Written words, gestures, and oration are all forms of language, and the more languages one has mastered allows for more chances of tactical, operational, and strategic successes as evidenced by the Arab Revolt (Lawrence spoke Arabic), the establishment of an independent Vietnam, (Ho could read, write, and speak Vietnamese, Chinese, Russian, French, and English) and the difficulties encountered by the Mujahideen under Massoud in communicating their requirements to the CIA via interpreters.

The more expressive a person can be with another, no matter the medium, allows for more opportunity to connect at some level with others in meaningful ways. Closely tied to but separate from language is empathy or emotional intelligence.⁶ This forms the second pillar of the LEVERS framework.

Empathy is defined as: “The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing another’s feelings, thoughts, and experience without having those feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an

⁵ Merriam-Webster, “Language,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 699.

⁶ Merriam-Webster, “Emotion, Empathy,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 408; Merriam-Webster, “Intelligence,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 650.

objectively explicit manner; also: the capacity for this.”⁷ Empathy and emotional intelligence allow a person to “feel” beyond their own personal beliefs, viewpoints, or opinions. Cialdini would advocate a disciplined approach to learning this trait with a view toward “liking.”⁸ Kohn’s “thick trust” cannot be established without a high degree of empathy present.⁹ As will be seen, T.E. Lawrence, Prince Feisal, Ho Chi Minh, and Ahmed Shah Massoud possessed a nearly boundless capacity for these traits.

Another valuable trait in the LEVERS model is a shared system of values or ideology. “Something (as a principle or quality) intrinsically valuable or desirable”¹⁰ describes “value” as a basic form, while “A systematic body of concepts esp. about human life or culture” or “a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture”¹¹ describe ideology. While different, ideology and values combine in the individuals of the case studies to produce their unique perspectives of their operating environment. It is the confluence of their way of thinking (ideology) and their moral standards (values) that provide each of them with a lodestar to orient themselves to their cause, and those of others. It is interesting but not altogether unsurprising to find that while each man held his own beliefs, they were not hewn in stone, but granularly dynamic, capable of change, with reason and understanding of updated information about themselves, others, and the world of realpolitik that they worked in. As each man assumed a more worldly view, they became more accepting and understanding of the perspectives and ideas of others.

While some of the men physically travelled across vast expanses of the globe, others found another way to open their worldview through education. Education is the

⁷ Merriam-Webster, “Empathy,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 408.

⁸ Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, Rev. ed. (New York, NY: Collins, 2007), 167.

⁹ Marek Kohn, *Trust: Self-Interest and the Common Good* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 89.

¹⁰ Merriam-Webster, “Value,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 1382.

¹¹ Merriam-Webster, “Ideology,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 616.

fourth piece of the LEVERS model. “The action or process of educating or being educated” and “the knowledge and development resulting from an educational process”¹² explains what I mean in using this term. Not all the learning was (or is) book learning, some is on the job, some experiential, but all forms of learning are valuable traits to pursue.

Every individual, and even the groups like the members of the OSS and the CIA, were trained, schooled, or otherwise sought out information about their interests and the world. Lawrence was an archaeologist and was a published author and expert on architecture of the crusaders in the Arabian desert.¹³ Feisal was royalty and was given much formal education due to this status.¹⁴ Ho Chi Minh was the son of a teacher and himself an educator before he became fully immersed in nearly half a century of irregular warfare and struggle for Vietnamese independence.¹⁵ Avrakotos and Massoud both attended colleges with Gust having earned a degree in mathematics and Massoud leaving his studies in his second year as a student of engineering and architecture before their exploits in Afghanistan had begun.¹⁶

So far, I have defined and given a few examples of the beneficial characteristics of language, empathy or emotional intelligence, values and ideology, and education. All of these attributes support the last two features of LEVERS. They are the foundation, or cornerstones, of reputation and servant leadership. For example, if you were to try to convince a perfect stranger to engage with you in some discussion on any random topic, there must first be some basic traits established at some level to facilitate the conversation. You must speak and understand a common language. Approaching another human being

¹² Merriam-Webster, “Education,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 396.

¹³ Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, A Da Capo Paperback (New York, N.Y: Da Capo Press, 1989), 5–12.

¹⁴ T. E. Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert, The Abridged Edition of Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 2nd ed. (London: Tauris Park Paperbacks, 2011), 37.

¹⁵ Dixee R. Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh: Unexpected Allies in the War against Japan*, Modern War Studies (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 16–17.

¹⁶ George Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War the Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History* (New York, N.Y: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003), 46–48; Marcela Grad, *Massoud: An Intimate Portrait of the Legendary Afghan Leader*, 1st edition (St. Louis, MO: Webster University Press, 2009), xvi.

requires some tact and timing (empathy/emotional intelligence). Once engaged in conversation, each person will begin to express their opinions on whatever the topic is (values/ideology). Depending on the subject matter being discussed, each of you will make your points based not only on how you feel about the topic, but what you know about the topic (education).

First impressions usually stick with us and can be based on opinions from others whom we trust, or our own perceptions that we form from the data we gather and process during a candid interaction with another person. Either way, reputations are based on these assessments of trustworthiness. The “overall quality or character as seen or judged by other people in general” or the “recognition by other people of some characteristic or ability”¹⁷ defines reputation, while trust is an “assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something” or “one in which confidence is placed.”¹⁸

One of the key pieces of theoretical research I consult here is the work by Marek Kohn, simply titled *Trust*.¹⁹ Nearly every source that I picked up regarding guerrilla warfare, surrogate forces, principal-agent theory, assessment, and cooperation—and the research on the case studies themselves—all devote significant word counts toward supporting the idea that reputation and trust are vital to successful relationships. Axelrod makes an important distinction between friendship and cooperation: “Friendship is not necessary for cooperation to evolve.”²⁰ Friendship is independent of reputation. I trust my doctor but am not friends with them. The men of the case studies may not have all been friends, but it is certain that they all had reputations, and degrees of trust were the foundation upon which their successes were built.

Especially important for foreigners working among close-knit kinship groups are the twin concepts of reputation and trust. Prince Feisal had to develop trust of T.E.

¹⁷ Merriam-Webster, “Reputation,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 1058.

¹⁸ Merriam-Webster, “Trust,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 1344.

¹⁹ Kohn, *Trust*.

²⁰ Robert M. Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Rev. ed (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 187.

Lawrence.²¹ Lawrence developed a reputation with the Arab's of the region prior to the beginning of hostilities, which no doubt aided his acceptance by the Arab leaders he assisted.²² Ho Chi Minh was well read and seemed always prepared for his audience with sincere and informed conversations that facilitated building of reputation and trust. Massoud led by example where his patience, openness, and humanity were well known, and his reputation was reinforced by his actions with the Mujahideen and their allies.²³ If reputation is viewed as rungs on a ladder, you must begin on the first rung as an outsider, and work to establish cooperation with little or no bona fides established, then a "thin" trust followed by "thick" trust can be developed over time and shared exposure with a partner.²⁴ This explanation of reputation and trust brings us to our final trait: servant leadership. In order to successfully wield it, one will have to understand and appreciate the former five traits. Servant leadership is a form of functional humility. That is to say that in order to effectively lead by example, one must not only set that standard, but then live by it *with* those who follow.

"To be a servant, to do military or naval service, to be of use, to hold an office, discharge a duty or function"²⁵ defines the term "service." A "servant" is simply "one that serves others."²⁶ Leadership entails a "capacity to lead" or "the act or an instance of leading."²⁷ Being humble is to be "not proud or haughty: not arrogant or assertive.

²¹ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 83, 253.

²² Liddell Hart, 12–15.

²³ Grad, *Massoud*, 6, 16, 73, 104.

²⁴ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 5; Kohn, *Trust*, 89.

²⁵ Merriam-Webster, "Service," in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 1137.

²⁶ Merriam-Webster, "Servant," in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 1137.

²⁷ Merriam-Webster, "Leadership," in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 706–7.

Reflecting, expressing, or offered in a spirit of deference or submission,”²⁸ while humility is “the quality or state of being humble.”²⁹

Servant-leadership and humility act as a catalyst between other traits and assist in creating a more effective mixture of characteristics that supports a guerrilla leader in their endeavors. Cooperation, Principal-Agent (P-A) theory, human terrain, authority, social proof, reciprocity, transformational control, and emotional investment are connected in the ideal of a leader whose followers believe in and share the burden. A servant-leader has authority while at the same time garnering respect from the group that supersedes positional leadership. Servant-leaders possess a reverent type of leadership style.

Lawrence pulled this off by having no superiority complex about himself, and possessing a “power of detachment” by “a man who realizes the limitations of other men all the better for being conscious of his own, and whose low opinion of himself springs from an acute perception of the lowliness of all humanity.”³⁰ Feisal too was slow to anger and would sit and listen long to the complaints of his fellow fighters. He took the time to get to know and understand what worries they had as human beings, and then provided relief for those that he could remedy instead of insisting on the primacy of the revolt or the direct sacrifices required for the tactical situation at hand.³¹ Ho went out of his way to grovel and be self-deprecating to his “visitor of the moment.”³² By remaining calm, kind, and attentive to all comers he garnered wide support from whomever he was courting at the time. He displayed “Buddha-like composure” and sought to realize the untapped “strategic quality of human dignity.”³³

²⁸ Merriam-Webster, “Humble,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 605.

²⁹ Merriam-Webster, “Humility,” in *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.(Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2014), 605.

³⁰ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 95.

³¹ Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert, The Abridged Edition of Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 46–47, 64.

³² Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 316.

³³ Bartholomew-Feis, 3, 154–55.

Avrakotos and Massoud displayed these qualities in unique ways, but both captured this characteristic in Soviet Afghanistan. Gust loved the underdog more than the sure bet. His affinity to the “untouchables,” the misfits, while wedded to his wit, charm, mastery of tradecraft, intelligence, and work ethic allowed him to exist in two worlds at the same time: he could inspire and lead his outsiders while stepping up to and holding his own in the realm of policy-makers, authorities, and dignitaries. Both kinds loved him for his unvarnished and uncompromising ethos and mission focus.³⁴ Massoud was an empath from his early childhood, being likened to more of a philosopher or poet than a hard-nosed warlord.³⁵ The pureness of his actions and deeds, and his always-forward presence with the fighters afforded him huge followership in the Panjshir Valley and beyond.

B. BACKGROUND RESEARCH OF GUERRILLA WARFARE AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

The personality traits that have surfaced from this study were rendered using six key works that are related to either warfare or human relations. While each book contains far more details about its own nuanced subject, I will cover the aspects of each work that informed the development of my research and led to my findings.

The first group of works I will summarize and analyze will be referred to as the “warfare texts”: *Surrogate Warfare*, *Proxy Warfare*, and *Assessing War*.³⁶ The focus here is how to gauge success in warfare, where the actual success lies (in battle, grand strategy, political, economic, etc.). The second set of works will be called the “relationship texts”: *Cooperation*, *Trust*, and *Influence*.³⁷ These are centered on understanding human relationships, not necessarily bound by warfare or conflict, but relationships that we are either required to or yearn to build with family members, friends, work associates, and

³⁴ Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, 94, 282–83, 330–31.

³⁵ Grad, *Massoud*, 243.

³⁶ Andreas Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare: The Transformation of War in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2019); Andrew Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, War and Conflict in the Modern World (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013); Leo J. Blanken et al., *Assessing War: The Challenge of Measuring Success and Failure* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015).

³⁷ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*; Kohn, *Trust*; Cialdini, *Influence*.

perfect strangers. Using the basic premises and revelations from these six background texts gave me various methods of unlocking personality traits and characteristics of the case studies. The evaluation and analysis that followed yielded the LEVERS concept.

C. THE WARFARE TEXTS

In a compilation of works by multiple subject matter experts in myriad fields relating to both regular and irregular warfare, Leo Blanken, Hy Rothstein, and Justin Lepore set out to answer a different question: how to assess war.³⁸ The collection of essays and monographs they present illuminates the subject from multiple disciplines by using three methods of assessment; observation, indirect evidence and theory, and finally assumption.³⁹ Many interesting ideas come from the overarching concepts of measuring or assessing conflict success that pertain to divining effective personality traits. Principal-Agent (P-A) theory, human terrain, commonalities between patron and client, or at least common enemies, are all discussed as means to assess success in warfare but can also be used to help define effective personality traits and characteristics for guerrilla leaders. The ethical boundaries of patron and client are also important, as this relationship can influence how deep a relationship can grow, or conversely, how transactional a relationship must remain due to different approaches to how war is viewed from a philosophical or moral perspective.

The most recent work consulted was by Krieg and Rickli specifically about surrogate warfare, but from an evolutionary standpoint, attempting to understand “why” surrogates are used more often and how the geopolitical framework of the world has changed post-cold war to bring surrogate forces to a more prominent role.⁴⁰ Their research shows how the world has become more globalized, privatized, securitized, and mediatized, and has evolved to bring technology in the form of artificial intelligence to the surrogacy arena as well.⁴¹ The idea that surrogates are used to distance the principal from the risks

³⁸ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*.

³⁹ Blanken et al., xii.

⁴⁰ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*.

⁴¹ Krieg, 195.

of war are weighted against the emergence of non-state, transnational actors taking up a larger role in modern conflict, harkening back to more medieval, anarchical forms of warfare.⁴² The differences between surrogates and proxies for the purposes of my research are a non-factor, and I have gleaned significant insight into methods of determining key traits through them both.

Andrew Mumford's work, *Proxy Warfare*, gives eight reasons for forming proxy relationships: territory, protection of social groups, economic interests, diplomatic/military interests, ideology, balance of power, perception of probable success, and finally perception of conflict escalation (avoidance).⁴³ Self-interest is at the heart of all of these reasons, and risk management is the primary factor in determining the utility of forming relationships with other forces is worth the time, effort, and risk.⁴⁴

A key perspective from *Assessing War* is the inclusion of the human terrain as a variable to be evaluated in assessment.⁴⁵ This terrain can be evaluated using P-A theory, looking at what forms the triangle of "benchmarks, information, and incentives" for principal and agent in the relationships that they form, and exactly what the alliance is based on.⁴⁶ Each participant in the P-A triangle has either information or incentives for the other half, while both principal and agent have certain benchmarks that can be similar but do not necessarily have to be in order for the relationship to be established. As long as the principal is willing to hand out incentives for the information that the agent has access to, and both are meeting some benchmark of their own interest, the relationship is apt to continue. It is more a question of degree when analyzing what common interests are held by both groups, and how information and incentives are utilized to lubricate the P-A apparatus.

⁴² Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*.

⁴³ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 31–32.

⁴⁴ Mumford, 30,41.

⁴⁵ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, xi.

⁴⁶ Blanken et al., 5.

In a chapter on the use of scouts by both the British and French forces during the 7 years' war, or the French and Indian War, Jason Lepore discusses how important it was for the principal to understand and value the wants and needs of the agents, and the effect that a charismatic leader such as Robert Rogers had in the development of proxy (surrogate) forces.⁴⁷ A closely related chapter describes the relationship that developed between some Union forces and former slaves in the southern states during the American Civil War.⁴⁸ During the Indian Wars of the late 19th century, the knowledge of culture and the nature of the enemy known only to the Indian scouts used by the U.S. Army was invaluable in combating hostile tribes in the western United States.⁴⁹ Krieg and Rickli were also very interested in the P-A interaction between Iran and Hezbollah and what this relationship exemplified and devoted an entire chapter of their work to this prosperous relationship.⁵⁰

P-A theory and the triangle of benchmarks, information, and incentives is easily applied to all three case studies. For Lawrence and Feisal, Lawrence represented the principal, Feisal the agent. Lawrence represented resources, training, and a professional army. Feisal had information. The benchmarks were clear; remove occupiers (Ottoman Turks) from the Arabian peninsula. While both the British and the Arabs had different agendas for the benchmark, it was at its core a common goal that was easily agreed upon. P-A theory combines with human terrain, strategic mindset, trust, cooperation, and influence in providing a kind of loose form or architecture that allows for different ratios and combinations of contextual elements and personality traits to coalesce into a working relationship with mutual beneficiaries.

Many pieces of *Assessing War* can be adopted to better understand what personality traits may be beneficial to forming successful surrogate relationships. The ideas of P-A theory, charisma, knowledge of the enemy, common goals, righteous endeavor, and justice

⁴⁷ Blanken et al., 56–57.

⁴⁸ Blanken et al., 89.

⁴⁹ Blanken et al., 104.

⁵⁰ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 164–90.

are all important concepts that can be viewed from a personality trait-based perspective to allow us to investigate how and when these traits are most important.

Another important factor brought into discussion in *Assessing War* is that of keeping a strategic mindset, and allowing for local/tactical level control to enable the best results for both patron and client.⁵¹ This type of mindset, staying out of the way of subordinates, and trusting the surrogate forces to deliver in their own time and in their own way touches on trust theory and cooperation. Krieg and Rickli use a neotrinitarian concept involving state, soldier, and society more toward the irregular warfare purview.⁵² Mumford also sees the strategic mindset as a valuable component of choosing when to utilize proxy forces, stating that “War has become risk management in all but name.”⁵³ In *Proxy Warfare*, strategic aims are all about minimizing the risk to the principal. Proxy forces are only used *if* they are deemed to, on the balance, be more effective, less costly, and less risky than regular, state-run forces.⁵⁴

This fits well with the strategic mindset mentioned in *Assessing War*, and the evidence provided by the case studies as to how actual principals and agents tend to behave in these relationships. Each piece offered up by the warfare texts support and strengthen each other’s points on P-A theory and the utilities gleaned from irregular warfare relationships.

In *Surrogate Warfare*, the state is the only piece of the trinity to interact with a surrogate force if all goes according to plan, although in many instances, this interaction occurs through the soldier in the form of advisors, special forces troops, and military assistance.⁵⁵ Working with surrogates takes on three main forms; direct, indirect, and coincidental.⁵⁶ The more direct the relationship, the more control the patron (state) has,

⁵¹ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, 112.

⁵² Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 35–39.

⁵³ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 41.

⁵⁴ Mumford, 30–32.

⁵⁵ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 58.

⁵⁶ Krieg, 23.

but the less autonomy is granted to the client (surrogate force).⁵⁷ With a direct approach, the use of the surrogate force is primarily one of obfuscation, to conceal the patron's role in the conflict and give plausible deniability to them. Direct control costs the most treasure, but the least blood for the state. The surrogate force may not be as autonomous as it would prefer, but is well equipped and funded, and is willing to provide its force and information against a common enemy for the time being.⁵⁸

Indirect surrogacy will have a common enemy but will not be ideologically matched in many ways between patron and client, and while some commonalities are found, there is a significant risk of large disputes between the principal and agent. Generally, the client has more autonomy but less financial or military backing in an indirect scenario. Information that the client has is shared for some form of support from the patron state. The amount shared depends on the level of risk that both patron and client perceive about the alliance with the other and the future impacts of such a relationship.⁵⁹

Last is the coincidental method, where the surrogate forces just happen to be fighting an adversary that is also the state's adversary. In this method, neither the patron nor client benefit from any formalized relationship, but rather are indirectly benefiting from the actions of the other against their common enemy. Information and resources are not shared between the two entities.⁶⁰ There are several factors that will contribute to the type of relationship that will form here.

Each of the warfare texts speak to the variations of control and influence that are dynamic for both principal and agent. Depending upon the circumstance, both parties have tools at their disposal with which to negotiate toward their ends. The three case studies under investigation in this thesis display the three tools mentioned in *Surrogate Warfare*. The Arab revolt was a direct method, Ho and the OSS's relationship (at first) was coincidental, while the Viet Minh's relationship with Mao was indirect, and finally the

⁵⁷ Krieg, 23–24.

⁵⁸ Krieg, 23–29.

⁵⁹ Krieg, 23–29.

⁶⁰ Krieg, 23–29.

relationship between the Massoud and the CIA in Afghanistan was an indirect relationship. *Proxy Warfare* provides further support to these varying strategic aims through the definition of proxy warfare as “the indirect engagement in a conflict by third parties wishing to influence its strategic outcome.”⁶¹

In the final chapters of *Assessing War*, Just War Theory is used to help define some ethical bounds to assessment that can also be used to better understand some factors germane to surrogate relations. Dr. Strawser highlights the concept of culture and cult informing the idea of what is just.⁶² A component of Just War Theory and the ethical policies of both principal and agent is interwoven in every relationship in one degree or another. The concept of being able to convey the righteousness of the cause in both directions, to patron and to client populations, is an important characteristic.⁶³

Ethical legitimacy, ideology, and control are all discussed by Krieg and Rickli as being factors that will shape the type and method of relationship between a state and a surrogate force.⁶⁴ Trust, values, and ideology are seen as the most significant ingredients in order to develop transformational trust between patron and surrogate.⁶⁵ Creating legitimacy for both the patron and surrogate force and sensing the time horizon become more important the longer the conflict lasts.⁶⁶ For the patron state, a justification must be made as to why the state chose to go to war via surrogate force. The Just War Theory of proportionality, of wars of necessity versus wars of choice must be addressed and rationalized by both sides to hold moral water.⁶⁷ Three pitfalls await a patron state regarding surrogate selection as well: moral hazard, adverse selection, and “Madison’s

⁶¹ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 1.

⁶² Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, 290.

⁶³ Blanken et al., 286.

⁶⁴ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 3,20, 80, 139,145,166.

⁶⁵ Krieg, 139.

⁶⁶ Krieg, 128.

⁶⁷ Krieg, 147.

dilemma,” where the agent is using the principal’s resources against the principal (in the worst case).⁶⁸

The concluding chapter of *Assessing War* defines that goals are one of the most important factors in assessment, and that clear, refined objectives are key to being able to assess any conflict.⁶⁹ Krieg and Rickli conclude that the goal of modern surrogate relationships is for a “transformational control” to replace the P-A transactional model, where “agents don’t view themselves as pawns- but guardians.”⁷⁰ In *Proxy Warfare*, Mumford states that this type of irregular warfare is “inextricably linked with their wider geostrategic concerns, prompted in the main by interest and ideology.”⁷¹ A parsimonious example was given of the blowback that was witnessed after the end of the cold war coincided with the abandonment of the Mujahideen in the early 1990s.⁷² By better understanding the political, strategic, and transactional base-natures that exist in irregular warfare and the relationships that function within this framework, we can further narrow our focus onto what specific personality traits predominate this arena, and perhaps learn some reasons why these traits favor successful leaders.

In the next section, I will summarize and evaluate the “relationship texts” in an effort to gain a functional knowledge of how human beings organize, socialize, and interact with other’s in the general sense. By seeking out what specific tricks, techniques, and behaviors have already been found to be favorable to successful relationships, these works provide an incomplete but logical and empirically sound menu of characteristics that may be useful in gauging successful traits in the guerrilla leaders of the case studies.

D. THE RELATIONSHIP TEXTS

Where the warfare texts gave us methods of understanding measurements of success and some evidence as to why personality traits matter for guerrilla leaders in

⁶⁸ Krieg, 117.

⁶⁹ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, 319.

⁷⁰ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 185–86.

⁷¹ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 101.

⁷² Mumford, 109–10.

irregular warfare, the following body of texts show exactly how certain aspects of characteristics are formed, how they are manipulated by people, and what makes some characteristics so useful in forming effective relationships with others at a scientific, almost clinical level of understanding. Cooperation and trust are things that every grade school child learns in order to function with siblings, fellow students, and society at large. Influence is something that is developed along with the former two traits but can be used for good or evil. Both heroes and villains use various methods of influence to establish things like trust, or to foster cooperation for both upright and dubious reasons. The case studies will show how the tools of influence can be used in multiple ways.

In Robert Axelrod's book titled *The Evolution of Cooperation*, the four main ingredients that were found to be key in the "prisoner's dilemma" computer simulations were the idea of being nice, forgiveness, retaliation for defection, and being clear about one's motives.⁷³ These concepts are used to explain at first in simulation, but then ecologically, how organisms tend to prosper by following this model as opposed to being the opposite (non-cooperation). Other factors, like time being an unknown variable and reciprocity, were also valuable in the calculus of cooperation. Cooperation as a theory is helpful in guerrilla warfare for obvious reasons, but the idea that Axelrod develops about cooperation being possible outside of friendship is crucial to the understanding of certain surrogate relationships in warfare.⁷⁴

Marek Kohn's essay on trust is succinct and helpful in understanding personal relationships and personalities in communities of varying strata.⁷⁵ His attention to the issue of personal interests and the relationships that are formed based on trust between people and strangers, organizations, and even trust between enemies, highlights trust as a key aspect to any surrogate relationship, and a realm that is essential to forming long-lasting, effective surrogacy's.

⁷³ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*.

⁷⁴ Axelrod, 187.

⁷⁵ Kohn, *Trust*.

Kohn discusses two levels of trust, thick and thin.⁷⁶ These forms of trust dove-tail into Axelrod's concept of cooperation via reciprocity, moral foundation, and a certain vulnerability that allows both sides in a relationship to display a willingness to give what is required to earn mutual trust between the two entities.⁷⁷ The interplay between tools of assessment, cooperation, and trust can be seen as twisting of individual threads together to form a much stronger rope that can be used to form a line of reasoning from the theory to a more concrete definition of which personality traits favor successful surrogate relationships in warfare. We will see these strands combine across the three case studies under examination in this thesis.

The study of personality traits comprises both art and science. A very important aspect of leadership is being capable of convincing people to do what you ask of them. Robert Cialdini's book *Influence* offers excellent insights into the mechanics of how relationships are formed and manipulated on a subconscious level. There are six principles that so called "compliance practitioners" will use to gain access to what they desire, be that our money, confidence, or allegiance.⁷⁸ Reciprocity, authority, scarcity, commitment/consistency, liking, and social proof are devices that allow people to function in our complex societies and take myriad actions in everyday life without having to analyze each and every action.⁷⁹ These shortcuts work in a stereotypical fashion to allow us to conduct mundane tasks quickly and efficiently but can also be taken advantage of and are key vulnerabilities to knowing salesmen, statesmen, and con artists. It is worth mentioning here that even at the basic human to human interactive level, the idea of "material self-interest is a given" in addition to the six principles of compliance.⁸⁰

Cooperation is given four distinct characteristics by Robert Axelrod in his work, *The Evolution of Cooperation*. In essence, for cooperation to exist, you must be nice,

⁷⁶ Kohn, 89.

⁷⁷ Kohn, 122.

⁷⁸ Cialdini, *Influence*, xii.

⁷⁹ Cialdini, xiii.

⁸⁰ Cialdini, xiii.

forgive trespasses, retaliate for wrong-doing, and have clear goals.⁸¹ Interestingly, being nice does not necessarily mean that you must develop a friendly relationship with your partner.⁸² Axelrod explains cooperation using the prisoner's dilemma of game theory and evolutionary biology to investigate how cooperation leads to mutual benefits for both prisoner's and organisms in nature. Understanding the biological (and just plain logical) basis of cooperation in humans and other organisms displays another important facet that personality traits or characteristics contribute to leading people.

Beginning with a computer contest, Axelrod makes a simple prisoner's dilemma type game that he invites many scientists, programmers, and other colleagues to play.⁸³ Two versions are played, and in both, a very simple program called "tit for tat" wins.⁸⁴ The program is "nice" in that it will never be the first to defect, that is, in prisoner's dilemma terms, it will not attempt to gain advantage over the other player at the other players expense.⁸⁵ Secondly, while the program will never defect first, it will punish the other player for a defection immediately by also defecting on the next turn.⁸⁶ This is the concept of retaliation. After retaliation, the program adopts forgiveness, meaning that it holds no grudges against the other player, and as long as no more defections are made, the program will continue to cooperate with the other player.⁸⁷ Finally, these three concepts of never defecting first (be nice), punishment for defection (retaliation), and forgiveness of past defections after retaliation are always followed (clarity) so that any other competing program can very quickly assess the modus operandi of the tit-for tat program and "learn" to cooperate to mutual advantage and successful outcomes.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 33–54.

⁸² Axelrod, 187.

⁸³ Axelrod, 31.

⁸⁴ Axelrod, 13.

⁸⁵ Axelrod, 33.

⁸⁶ Axelrod, 44.

⁸⁷ Axelrod, 36.

⁸⁸ Axelrod, 54.

Cooperation and its four main points allow individuals to signal their intentions toward another person or group. The idea of clear signals, reciprocity/vulnerability, retaliation, and forgiveness assist us in understanding the dynamics involved in any social contract. For Gust Avrakotos and Ahmed Shah Massoud, meetings were an exception, cooperation was established by actions and deeds instead of words.⁸⁹ It also helped, and is explained with the concept of retaliation, that the Soviet forces in Afghanistan were on the retaliatory side of two allies, the CIA and the Mujahideen fighters.⁹⁰ Each man made their intentions as clear as possible, provided some service to the other, and kept to their agreements as best they could under the circumstances that they each faced.

Without basic trust in an ally, there can be little real progress made in any type of warfare. Trust is a necessity and establishes a foundation upon which leadership and alliances can flourish or founder. Individuals who possess a characteristic embodiment of trustworthiness are given more opportunities to convert a positive feeling into a tangible result on a battlefield. Trust is defined by Russel Hardin in Kohn's book as "A trust B to do X," and that another's interests will be inclusive or at least not exclusive of our own.⁹¹ Kohn iterates that trust has several layers. Trust in banks, contracts, family members, and even wartime enemies can and does take place but with varying levels and because of different mechanisms that enable trust to occur. Faith in a deity is an example of trust.⁹² Kinship fosters trust due to familiarity and proximate relationships or groupings.⁹³ In these few examples, Kohn establishes that there are "thick" and "thin" trust relationships.⁹⁴ Thick trust is one of personal relationship, familiarity, or kinship. Thin trust is based upon contract, reputation, or assessment of signals and social norms.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 440–41; Grad, *Massoud*, 169.

⁹⁰ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 44; Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 111; Grad, *Massoud*, 224.

⁹¹ Kohn, *Trust*, 8–10.

⁹² Kohn, 58–59.

⁹³ Kohn, 18.

⁹⁴ Kohn, 89.

⁹⁵ Kohn, 89.

My favorite example that Kohn gives regarding thin trust was that of the soldiers involved along the western front of the trenches in the First World War. A policy of “live and let live” was understood and honored by veterans of both sides.⁹⁶ Soldiers would intentionally fire well above the heads of their enemy. Both sides participated in this practice, and when any deviations occurred due to new leadership, or the use of artillery or sniper fire upset the agreement, apologies were made by the offending side. This example is germane to this study for two reasons; it is a wartime demonstration of trust had between enemies, showing that you do not have to be friends to have trust, and second, that self-interest can be different than stated interests of both parties (British and German soldiers had self-interests of preservation of life, while the interests of their respective state’s was winning the war).⁹⁷

Another important aspect about trust is that of moral foundations on which trust is established. Reciprocity is a valuable characteristic for the establishment of trust. Reputation and signals are based upon how an actor is perceived to behave from the potential partner’s point of view.⁹⁸ Kohn’s work, and the multiple author’s that he compiles ideas from illustrate the importance that trust plays in all aspects of society, from daily business to trench warfare, from family chores to interactions with total strangers or organizations. Trust is a feeling and is based on both subjective and objective cues. Faith, kinship, and family groups are more emotionally based, and trust borne in these areas tend to be thicker forms with deeper roots. Thinner versions of trust can be just as effective but are based more on objective cues such as reputation, law, contractual agreements, and societal norms. We will see these aspects of trust play out in different ways across the three case studies examined in this thesis, with important implications for the LEVERS model.

While not devoid of subjectivity, like appearance or mannerisms, these traits have fewer effective indicators in thin trust establishment when compared to written contracts, historical accountability, and past performances. Trust would seem to be an obvious

⁹⁶ Kohn, 32–39.

⁹⁷ Kohn, 32–39.

⁹⁸ Kohn, 122.

necessity for establishing an effective surrogate relationship. While no two cases will be the same, it would seem from the evidence that a relationship toward the thick trust side of the spectrum would be deeper and more easily established and maintained. Despite this, thin trust relationships are not taboo, but may take more time to develop meaningful trust and may be more easily broken than that of familial, kinship, or faith-based trust. The uses of these types of trust are evidenced by Krieg and Rickli as well as Mumford in a few examples each gives of relationships of surrogate and proxy forces in their research, such as the very effective use of Hezbollah by the Iranian state through the present day.⁹⁹

The research shows a strong correlation between individuals who are able to practice at least some of the six principles of influence in establishing trust and cooperation. These tools are very useful in explaining how individuals interact when forming surrogate relationships on a personal level. The ability to be seen as trustworthy (commitment/consistency), friendly (liking and reciprocity) and competent (social proof and authority) and that the relationship is worthwhile (scarcity) all help us to imagine exactly how different types of personality traits and characteristics can work towards building an effective surrogate relationship by starting with individual actors and working toward a wider and wider audience on both sides of the principal-agent dynamic.

Taking the warfare and relationship texts as a whole and using them to assist in delineating aspects of personality traits upon irregular warfare in the case studies allowed for a more focused approach to the individuals within the cases. It will also provide a better understanding of why certain aspects of both warfare and relationships will favor certain individuals based on their possession of specific characteristics.

E. CASE STUDIES CHOSEN

I chose to focus the remainder of my research on three case studies that spanned the 20th century and that were well known instances of irregular or guerrilla warfare. I wanted the subjects to be popular so that the key research focus of personality traits and characteristics could be kept as the primary effort in the research, relying on previously

⁹⁹ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 164–66; Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 55–56.

written autobiographies, biographies, and general historical accountings of the characters, conflicts, and context provided by these sources.

For my first case, I chose T.E Lawrence and Prince Feisal of the Arab Revolt of World War I. Next, I investigated the personality traits and characteristics that emerged in Indochina between World War II and 1969 among Ho Chi Minh, Mao Zedong, and the American OSS forces stationed in the theater. Finally, the CIA's largest endeavor on record, Operation Cyclone, better known as "Charlie Wilson's War," due to the successful book and movie. The primary characters that I focus on here are Gust Avrakotos, the lesser known counterpart to Charlie Wilson, and Ahmed Shah Massoud, one of several guerrilla leaders of the mujahideen.

Throughout my research, two key components surfaced in every text analyzed: ideology and trust.¹⁰⁰ Ideology was used by name in each text, where trust was more abstract, and words like faith, contract, confidence, probability, etc., were used to describe the concept of trust, or at least, a viable substitute for it. Ethical considerations, such as applying just war theory to surrogate relationships came up almost as often.¹⁰¹ Moral values and ethical norms allow for unlike partners to seek common ground at a fundamental level that may then be built upon to develop trust and ideologies that are symbiotic. Finally, for a successful surrogacy to develop, a common enemy, or 'other' must be present and tangible.¹⁰² More so than ideology, trust, or ethics, a common enemy is the crux of developing a surrogate relationship. Without the catalyst of conflict against some opposing force, there would be no impetus for these rather unlikely relationships to be developed in the first place.

So, in order to have favorable conditions for a successful surrogacy, we must have ideologies that are similar, we must trust our prospective partner, we must have some values and norms that are ethically aligning, and we must have a common enemy that we

¹⁰⁰ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*; Kohn, *Trust*; Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*; Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*.

¹⁰¹ Kohn, *Trust*; Blanken et al., *Assessing War*; Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*.

¹⁰² Kohn, *Trust*; Blanken et al., *Assessing War*; Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*; Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*.

are willing to ally against. All these activities occur during a specific period of time. The cases that I will explore occurred at different times, in various geographic areas, and between several governments and groups.

Of course, for each individual case, the relevant time horizon, and the circumstances of that specific period matter. The “shadow of the future” or the “role of time perspective,” as Axelrod describes it, affects the extent to which partnerships are created and destroyed. Time can be both a blessing and a curse upon surrogate relationships. Government policy, reigning powers, charismatic leadership, and public will, or popular support will come and go. All the while, reputation, trust, ideology, ethical norms, and common enemies are all dynamically mixed, influenced, and otherwise affected by the flow of time. Axelrod explains the idea of a “shadow of the future” that must be perceived by both parties as influential to the probability of cooperation.¹⁰³

I established what it is I wish to learn more about in Chapter I: personality traits of influential and successful guerrilla leaders and what, if any, traits or characteristics are prevalent among them. By looking into several different areas of connected study, and using the findings and techniques as described in the warfare and relationship texts, I was able to better frame my own research, and give more focus on methods of uncovering personality traits of the case study individuals. In Chapter II, I will present each case study chronologically, giving a consolidated overview for historical and contextual reasons while focusing the narrative around the area of personality traits that each man utilized.

¹⁰³ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 126; Axelrod, 173.

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II. CASE STUDIES

This chapter will give brief historical contexts to the characters selected to be analyzed. My intent is to tell each individual's story, and to give the reader appropriate context regarding the specifics of each case, while also highlighting the references to each man's personality traits as they manifested. The cases are discussed in chronological order for linearity sake only. There is no order of preference implied or intended. The personality traits and characteristics uncovered will then be evaluated using the warfare and relationship texts for comparison and contrast in Chapter III.

A. THE ARAB REVOLT: 1916–1918

Perhaps no more notable an example of the impact and importance of personality traits in guerrilla warfare exists than the Arab Revolt of 1916–1918 against the Ottoman Empire. T.E. Lawrence's biographer, Liddell Hart commented that "it is clear that personality played as great a part as personalities" about Lawrence and his relationship with Prince Feisal and the Arab tribes, the Egyptians, British, and French forces during his campaign in the desert.¹⁰⁴ Lawrence was already familiar with the Middle East and conversant in Arabic before the war due to his studies in the area as a student at Oxford.¹⁰⁵ Lawrence did not come from a high family station, and thus did not carry with him any air of superiority to his Arab colleagues that many foreigners (especially British) were wont to do.¹⁰⁶

1. T.E. Lawrence

T. E. Lawrence was described by many as "a human chameleon," "essentially dynamic," having empathy with the Arabs and their cause for autonomy and self-rule, and the innate ability to entice others with "the hypnotic influence of a lion tamer."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 262.

¹⁰⁵ Liddell Hart, 7–8.

¹⁰⁶ Liddell Hart, 12.

¹⁰⁷ Liddell Hart, 12,13,237,252.

Lawrence was extremely well read, having studied numerous topics such as warfare, architecture, culture, and history since boyhood. He developed two primary approaches that assisted in conveying his thoughts to Feisal and others throughout the irregular chain of command. His *27 Articles for Handling Arabs*, and a three-part “strategic-tactical staircase” for winning against the Ottoman Empire using algebraic, biological, and psychological methods combined into a formula for irregular warfare.¹⁰⁸

His ability to endure hardships, at times more than the native Arab’s could, made him a leader of example. He was invested and felt a sense of duty toward his Arab allies, and lived and fought alongside them, wore their style of clothes, and spoke their tongue. The size of his purse, in terms of gold that he was able to supply from Britain was also very helpful in winning and maintaining influence with the Arab’s.¹⁰⁹

Lawrence’s ability to integrate so seamlessly into the Arab world allowed him to become a case study unto himself of what a guerrilla leader is. His use of indigenous Arab strengths of light, agile logistics, hit and run raids via camel and horse cavalries, and a certain “home court advantage” in the desert combined well with novel technologies such as Alfred Nobel’s invention, dynamite, the armored car, and the airplane in order to quickly and asymmetrically inflict damage to the Ottoman infrastructure (railroad) without allowing the enemy a target to effectively counter-attack.¹¹⁰ The Arabs could mass and fade away before any meaningful Turkish response could materialize.

Yet another ingenious tactic that Lawrence was able to convey and coordinate with his Arab companions was allowing the Turks to maintain a garrison in Medina. While the city was of significant religious and historical value to the Arab’s, Lawrence understood that the Arab fighters did not have the training, artillery, or cohesion as a group required to maintain a siege upon the fortified city. Even had the Arabs succeeded in taking Medina, they were not a large enough force to hold it against the conventionally equipped and

¹⁰⁸ Liddell Hart, 109–13, 134–39.

¹⁰⁹ Liddell Hart, 178–79.

¹¹⁰ Liddell Hart, 209–12, 280.

trained Turkish army garrisoned there and to the north. The obvious strength of the Turkish garrison was turned into one of the Ottoman Empires weaknesses.¹¹¹

Lawrence focused the energies of the multiple Bedouin tribes upon the railroads, bridges, and depots that supplied the massive, well-armed troops fortifying Medina. His aim was never to starve them out, or cut them off completely from their supply chain, but rather to render them constantly wanting for something, be that troops, ammunition, food, etc. By reducing the number of supply trains significantly, but not completely, the Arab's made Medina, and many other smaller garrisons in the Arabian lands, a drain to Turkish strength. All the garrisons could do was sustain their occupation, and little more due to lack of adequate supplies reaching them via the railroad. Turkish units were not able to leave their garrisons, and thus rendered impotent in the region.¹¹²

Prince Feisal and Lawrence spread their fighters across several camps, attacking vital rail bridges with dynamite to destroy supply lines, pilfer goods left abandoned at the sites, and then fade back into the desert. There were some instances of Arab forces taking strategic cities, such as the port city of Aqaba.¹¹³ Due to his pre-war studies as an archaeologist, Lawrence was familiar with many of the old fortifications that European crusaders had built centuries before throughout the region, Aqaba being one of them. He knew that nearly all the defenses of the fortress were built to repel an enemy from the sea, leaving the eastern walls largely undefended and woefully vulnerable to the Arab's cavalry charges.¹¹⁴

After his success in the revolt, Lawrence went back to England and continued to serve in the armed forces, but as an enlisted man in both the RAF and Royal Army. He was a proponent of leveraging new technology and continued to be a "counsellor unseen."¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert*, The Abridged Edition of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 76–77.

¹¹² Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 55, 130–32.

¹¹³ Liddell Hart, 162–63.

¹¹⁴ Liddell Hart, 143.

¹¹⁵ Liddell Hart, 338.

He felt that “to work through men is more potent than to stand over them.”¹¹⁶ His life was cut short, but his manifold personality traits allowed for his legend and humility to coexist in his own time and still resonate today.

2. Prince Feisal

Prince Feisal was another great character of the Arab revolt, and his relationship with Lawrence provided each with a complimentary boost to the other in terms of their abilities and value to the effort of a free Arab nation. Lawrence himself wrote of Feisal in great detail and describes him as “hot tempered, sensitive, courageous,” but also a “careful judge of men.”¹¹⁷ Feisal had the gift of “extreme patience” when interacting with the many tribes that he had to persuade to fight.¹¹⁸ He could exercise tact and had such a great memory that he could recite previous meetings, events, and contracts that would bring context to the current situation.¹¹⁹ He was an excellent peacekeeper between the various tribal groups, and was able to maintain a cohesive movement against the Turks.¹²⁰ Using the idea of Arab nationality as a rallying point, he was said to be “nationalities best servant, its tool, not its owner.”¹²¹

Feisal’s trust and cooperation with Lawrence, and his vetting of and vouching for this British Army officer was crucial to Lawrence’s role and effectiveness in the Arab Revolt. With Feisal’s blessing, Lawrence was accepted into the Bedouin culture. The ceremonial dagger that he wore was a gift from Shariff Hussein.¹²² Its jeweled, golden handle and scabbard was a tangible symbol of Lawrence’s status among the Arabs. His

¹¹⁶ Liddell Hart, 344.

¹¹⁷ Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert*, The Abridged Edition of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 36–37.

¹¹⁸ Lawrence, 46.

¹¹⁹ Lawrence, 47–48.

¹²⁰ Lawrence, 64.

¹²¹ Lawrence, 246.

¹²² Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 253.

adoption of Arab dress was just as important, and his garments too were gifted from royalty, this time from Feisal himself.¹²³

With Feisal's patience, pragmatism, and network of familial ties with the various tribes of the region and Lawrence's knowledge of the fortresses, rail systems, and technologies of the west, the Arabs combined the hardiness and austerity of the Bedouin lifestyle with light, powerful, and effective modern technology to stunning effect upon a well-trained, modern enemy.¹²⁴ A balance was struck between traditional ways and novel ideas. More importantly to the Revolt, the Arabs were always in command. This was their fight. They did not view their sacrifice against the Turks as pawns of yet another empire, but instead believed the correspondence from the "Cairo Promise," that "the Arab's shall keep what they take."¹²⁵ Krieg and Rickli denote this as transformational control, where "agents don't view themselves as pawns, but guardians."¹²⁶

I find some common threads between Lawrence and Feisal, Ho Chi Minh, and Avrakotos and Massoud. Ideology, empathy, endurance, are all common, with patience, language, and monetary abilities also being more common than not. Each man had visions, and a strategy to achieve their goals. Most of them were far-reaching, and at times looked out beyond the more immediate dangers and snares that lay in their path. Each man created inertia of personality into their arena that was able to increase its momentum with every successful contact, victory, and achievement in the face of an overwhelming enemy.

B. INDOCHINA: 1924–1969

This case has one primary guerrilla leader that will be my focus, Ho Chi Minh. While the OSS men and Mao Zedong are remarkable, the man in the middle, who had the most to gain, and generated support from capitalist and communist alike was Ho Chi Minh.

¹²³ Liddell Hart, 97.

¹²⁴ Liddell Hart, 209–12.

¹²⁵ Liddell Hart, 283.

¹²⁶ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 185–86.

1. Ho Chi Minh

The Japanese occupation of what is now called Vietnam, then called Indochina, was the genesis of the relationship between a young, well-educated and traveled school teacher who went by many names and an “influence triangle” that only World War II, the Cold War, and conflicting ideologies could have wrought. Born in Nghe An province in 1890, his family name was Nguyen Tat Thanh.¹²⁷ At the time of his youth, the French ran Indochina as a colonial power. Thanh’s first mentor was a scholar friend of his father, and imbued Thanh with the Confucian core of learning, instilling in him both humanitarianism and also a strong Vietnamese nationalism at a young age.¹²⁸ Thanh became a teacher, like his father and was an avid nationalist who proved to be a persuasive orator to his students.¹²⁹ He longed for more understanding and perspective, so in 1911 Thanh took a job on a French ship for two years, visiting many foreign ports of call, and absorbing other cultures, politics, and world-views along the way. Ho stated that:

The people of Vietnam, including my own father, often wondered who would help them to remove the yoke of French control. Some said Japan, others Great Britain, and some said the United States. I saw that I must go abroad to see for myself. After I had found out how they lived, I would return to help my countrymen.¹³⁰

In the early years of the Great War (World War I), Thanh found himself in Great Britain studying English.¹³¹ In 1917 he was in Paris, and became involved with the French Socialist Party.¹³² With the assistance of other Vietnamese emigres of the intellectual elite, he helped to draft a petition for the world leaders converging at Versailles that “demanded the application of President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points to Vietnam, particularly the provision regarding the self-determination of peoples.”¹³³ Leaving Paris disenchanted

¹²⁷ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 4–5.

¹²⁸ Bartholomew-Feis, 16.

¹²⁹ Bartholomew-Feis, 16–17.

¹³⁰ Bartholomew-Feis, 17.

¹³¹ Bartholomew-Feis, 17.

¹³² Bartholomew-Feis, 17.

¹³³ Bartholomew-Feis, 17.

with the lack of progress, Thanh, now better known as Nguyen Ai Quoc (Nguyen the Patriot) joined the newly forming French Communist Party.¹³⁴ In 1923 Quoc left France for the Soviet Union to study and work for the Comintern.¹³⁵

In 1924 he was sent to China to work as part of the revolution taking place there.¹³⁶ All this activity reinforced and honed both Quoc's beliefs and skills. He was a Marxist revolutionary, could speak Vietnamese, French, English, and Russian, was able to write and speak persuasively, and understood how to influence "the visitor of the moment."¹³⁷ He was imprisoned twice, once in Siam by the British in Hong Kong for being a "subversive," and once in China by the Kuomintang while traveling under a new (and final) alias: Ho Chi Minh.¹³⁸

Ho Chi Minh's story thus far is already quite interesting, but this is only the beginning. His use of language, empathy, values, education, reputation, and servant leadership as a guerilla leader in multiple conflicts interacting with military officers and national leadership figures from multiple countries displays the value of the six key personality traits. In the next two sections I will discuss his relationships with the United States during and directly after World War II, and then his relationship with Mao Zedong during the same time and onward into the Vietnam War.

2. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS)

I was unable to place just one individual as the figurehead of U.S. actions in the Indochina region in the years prior to, during, or after World War II. I will offer the common characteristics that were uncovered by my research that show how many Americans contributed to the Vietnamese resistance against the Imperial Japanese Army and when that rapport was lost shortly after major hostilities ended in 1945.

¹³⁴ Bartholomew-Feis, 4, 18.

¹³⁵ Bartholomew-Feis, 18–19.

¹³⁶ Bartholomew-Feis, 19.

¹³⁷ Bartholomew-Feis, 19, 316.

¹³⁸ Bartholomew-Feis, 23–24.

Ho did not interact with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) until 1942, but the interactions led to his mass appeal to both his own Viet Minh party and the United States and allied nations, even colonial France. Ho was liked by nearly all of his contacts, many of whom would later side with him, dismissing his communist agenda and instead appealing to the nationalism that Ho had inspired and advocated for Vietnam since the 1920s. He was described as gentle, slow to anger, intelligent, well read, a gracious host, undemanding, and patriotic.¹³⁹

Ho's followers attempted to coordinate with the U.S. government officials stationed in China to arrange for his release from Chinese prison.¹⁴⁰ After 12 months, Ho was released back to Vietnam and began to organize his forces to support the allied efforts to defeat Japan and (it was hoped) lead to the freedom and autonomy of Vietnam from all foreign occupation.. Most of the support that the Vietnamese were able to provide was information, intelligence, and observation. The American forces were most concerned about Japanese naval movements and the disposition of Japanese ground forces within the region. Ho's guerrilla forces were used primarily in these roles during the Japanese occupation.¹⁴¹

In November of 1944, Ho and the Viet Minh were responsible for repatriating a downed American pilot, 1st Lieutenant Rudolph Shaw.¹⁴² This event proved a windfall that was masterfully manipulated by Ho. In meetings with members of the U.S. Army, Ho requested a meeting with General Claire Chenault, and asked for an autographed picture of the hero of Flying Tiger's fame. With this photograph and a half dozen M1911 .45 caliber pistols, Ho crafted a plausible, convincing narrative that persuaded his rivals in the Viet Minh that he was a valuable asset to the United States.¹⁴³ Beginning in March of 1945, an

¹³⁹ Bartholomew-Feis, 6.

¹⁴⁰ Bartholomew-Feis, 145.

¹⁴¹ Bartholomew-Feis, 71–72.

¹⁴² Bartholomew-Feis, 149.

¹⁴³ Bartholomew-Feis, 149, 156–66.

Army Captain named Archimedes Patti was assigned to the OSS mission in Indochina.¹⁴⁴ He was a veteran of the European theater and was a fluent French speaker. He studied the situation fully before arriving at his station and had initial success with his mission of increasing support and gaining the information advantage given by the Viet Minh. In April of 1945, he met his counterpart of the resistance, Ho Chi Minh, in person.¹⁴⁵ This meeting was productive and instilled more trust and cooperation between the two men, and plans were made to increase the level and type of support given to the Viet Minh.

In May of 1945, Major Allison Thomas jumped into Vietnam as the first member of the OSS Deer team to embed with Ho's forces, followed by six more team members in July of the same year.¹⁴⁶ The primary mission of the Deer team was to establish regular radio communications between the Viet Minh resistance forces and the U.S. Forces in China in order to gather more timely and accurate intelligence on Japanese forces. The Deer Team provided radio equipment, technological and weapons training, and interpreters to ease communication between the allies.¹⁴⁷

That summer, Ho fell ill and may have been near death, but one of the Deer team, Private First Class Paul Hoagland, a medic, visited Ho in August and treated him for malaria, dengue fever, and dysentery with quinine, sulfa drugs, and other medications, perhaps saving his life.¹⁴⁸ It is impossible to measure the "what if" or "alternate history" of Indochina had Ho not been introduced to these members of the OSS Deer team. While Ho was recovering, his guerrillas mounted a successful coup of the Japanese forces and gained many strategically important cities and villages that would remain in their control through the end of the war. Much of this success can be attributed to the training, supplies, and intelligence shared by the OSS Deer Team with the Viet Minh forces.¹⁴⁹ The

¹⁴⁴ Bartholomew-Feis, 160.

¹⁴⁵ Bartholomew-Feis, 176.

¹⁴⁶ Bartholomew-Feis, 188–93.

¹⁴⁷ Bartholomew-Feis, 188.

¹⁴⁸ Bartholomew-Feis, 208.

¹⁴⁹ Bartholomew-Feis, 312.

significance of this “August Revolution” was outshone by the capitulation of the Japanese Empire after two atomic bombs were dropped in mid-August. The Japanese Instrument of Surrender was signed in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945, bringing an end to the Second World War.¹⁵⁰

With the end of World War II, the Deer team’s mission was complete, and the men were sent back home. Patti was retained and continued to be influenced by Ho, and at times used to counter the French ambitions in the region.¹⁵¹

3. Mao Zedong

Besides managing his relationships with western powers, specifically OSS Army officers, Ho Chi Minh simultaneously courted the “self-willed” and “self-confident” People’s Republic of China (PRC) leader Mao Zedong.¹⁵² The two leaders shared a great deal with respect to ideology, convictions, and political leanings. Both men studied under the Comintern of the Soviet Union in the 1920s, and Ho Chi Minh served the communists’ cause in China where he was arrested in 1938 by the rival nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) party.¹⁵³ During World War II, Ho allowed members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to use North Vietnam as a safe haven away from Chiang Kai-shek’s KMT Party.¹⁵⁴ These actions between the two leaders established a kind of political and ideological kinship, and begat a reciprocity between the leaders of China and North Vietnam that flourished for nearly three decades.

This relationship, though, was at times quite strained. Had international conditions been slightly different, a more noticeable gap might have emerged between the PRC and North Vietnam. Mao was most concerned about the security of his country, while at the same time being emotionally and ideologically pulled to support revolutions in Vietnam,

¹⁵⁰ Bartholomew-Feis, 247–48.

¹⁵¹ Bartholomew-Feis, 239.

¹⁵² Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, The New Cold War History (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 221.

¹⁵³ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 20, 24.

¹⁵⁴ Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 23.

Laos, Cambodia, and other countries he saw breaking away from imperial and colonialist rule.¹⁵⁵ Mao himself was split at times, and these fissures manifested in relationships on the international stage with the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, India, France, and others from the 1950s through the 1970s. The Korean War, Vietnam War, and finally the Sino-Soviet conflict all serve as highlights to the rougher spots of the tyranny of realpolitik and pure communist ideology and reciprocity for a revolutionary cause.¹⁵⁶

This brief history of the Indochinese triangle of influence between Ho Chi Minh, the United States via the OSS, and Mao Zedong provide ample proof of the existence of what personality traits Ho Chi Minh possessed. Less substantial evidence exists about any specific OSS member, and as stated previously, Mao's information is reified by the CCP, and cannot be considered objective.

4. Characteristics and Theory

Ho was nearly always described as being sincere, no matter whom he was conversing with. Bartholomew-Feis states in several instances that Ho was a master manipulator, and cites multiple others who shared this sentiment, while still allowing that there was a friendship and likableness to Ho that was attractive and comfortable.¹⁵⁷ Ho's personality seems to have drawn upon the use of many of the concepts in Cialdini's book *Influence*, such as scarcity, appeal to authority, liking, reciprocity, and commitment and consistency.¹⁵⁸ He often was much more knowledgeable about a foreigners culture, background, and values than was the foreigner to his.¹⁵⁹ This knowledge gave him power, or at least some ability to build rapport with individuals at many levels and sow the seeds of friendship with people from a variety of classes, social systems, and nations.

In Chapter II thus far I have given a case study from both World Wars with the latter case spilling over into the Cold War. In the final case study, I will provide a short

¹⁵⁵ Zhai, 6, 218–19.

¹⁵⁶ Zhai, 157–58.

¹⁵⁷ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 243.

¹⁵⁸ Cialdini, *Influence*.

¹⁵⁹ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 176, 202, 212.

history of the Soviet-Afghan War that would bring our last two candidates to the surface. Pay careful attention to their characteristics. As with the previous two cases, more similarities will emerge.

C. THE SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR: 1979–1989

Congressman Charlie Wilson, CIA Case Officer Gust Avrakotos, and seven Mujahideen commanders, specifically Ahmed Shah Massoud, generated a guerrilla resistance to the occupation of Afghanistan, and expedited the collapse of the Soviet Union via the mountains of Afghanistan in February 1989.¹⁶⁰ The intent of this thesis is to focus on individuals and learn about their personality traits and characteristics in order to provide evidence of what makes guerrilla leaders effective. What the research of this event has illuminated is that while it is popular to ascribe all virtuous attributes and causality to a few people for expediency and easy reading, the truth is that many personalities and characters cross paths and intertwine to develop a movement out of the combined forces of their traits. The above-mentioned actors are but the tip of the proverbial iceberg in the story about the toppling of the Soviet Union accomplished in the Hindu-Kush. In an effort to narrow the scope to an understandable and comprehensible unit, let us focus on the nucleus of this incredible group, specifically Gust and Ahmed Shah Massoud, and from analysis of their traits, we may be able to better understand what kind of gravity they possessed that brings devout followers. But first, a brief history and setting of the scene.

1. Congressman Charlie Wilson

Charlie Wilson was born and raised in East Texas. He graduated from Annapolis, U.S. Naval Academy in 1956, going on to serve as a gunnery officer and staff officer for a short four years before running for public office and changing careers.¹⁶¹ Without congressional support that Charlie Wilson was able to provide due to his access and placement on several important committees, and his charisma and charm, the success of Operation Cyclone would have been untenable. His role was public and exists in the

¹⁶⁰ Crile, Charlie Wilson's War, 504.

¹⁶¹ Crile, 22–30.

congressional record. There are other parts of this story that were classified, and harder to understand.

Charlie Wilson was a larger than life character, and garnered both fame and notoriety in nearly equal measure during his career. Some of his personal failings, along with other notable events that occurred during the mid-1980s (like Iran-Contra) helped to obscure the CIA led actions in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union.¹⁶² Charlie's personality made him both a man to be reckoned with as well as a man to keep at arm's length. In many ways, he was never taken seriously, and this lack of attention bestowed on him by his persona gave generous maneuver room to his projects that he took seriously and supported with his budgetary acumen in congress.¹⁶³ He spoke only one language, drank like a fish, cussed like a sailor, and was exuberant with his spending and his womanizing. While Charlie was the front man of the book and movie, Gust is the primary personality that I would like to consider. Charlie got his day in both book and in Hollywood form (portrayed by Tom Hanks), but the I unsung hero was his CIA counterpart, Gust Lascaris Avrakotos.

2. Gust Avrakotos

Gust Avrakotos was a second generation American, born and raised in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania.¹⁶⁴ He was hard working, tough, street-smart, and possessed an inner drive that gave him immense intellectual abilities in the books as well. He spoke Greek and Finnish in addition to English.¹⁶⁵ His career with the CIA came out of an extreme sense of duty to do what he could for his beloved country. He too loved to drink and chase women. Gust saw himself as a blue-collar, red-blooded street fighter, and despised "cake-eaters," those of high-born wealth and privilege who were handed their success.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Crile, 408, 467.

¹⁶³ Crile, 33, 175, 384.

¹⁶⁴ Crile, 40.

¹⁶⁵ Crile, 46, 59.

¹⁶⁶ Crile, 91.

Gust was brought up as a hard worker and possessed both street-smarts from running with his friends and selling cigarettes to bars all across Aliquippa and speaking to the blue-collar workers in those bars. He also hungered for more sophisticated knowledge that he satisfied with library trips and voracious reading.¹⁶⁷ In many respects he was self-taught, or at least expanded upon the foundations of the education that his family, friends, and public education could offer him. Gust graduated valedictorian from Aliquippa High and spent two years at Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh before coming back to work off his father's debts after his soda business went bust.¹⁶⁸ His work ethic and devotion to family allowed him to set things straight and return to school at the University of Pittsburgh in 1959.¹⁶⁹ He graduated there with a mathematics degree and was offered a job by IBM.¹⁷⁰ It was during this time that Gust was recruited by the CIA.¹⁷¹ Gust was no angel, and no slouch either. He, like Charlie Wilson, was fiercely patriotic, and despised the Soviet Union. The combination of rough street smarts, college education, patriotism, and work ethic made Gust a great recruit, and he was enamored with the idea of becoming a spy for America.¹⁷²

Gust was cut from somewhat of a different cloth than most of his classmates when he joined in 1962 for training. Of the 50 recruits, 38 were from Ivy League schools like Yale and Harvard, while only 12 came from polytechnics or state universities. Gust stated, "when you grow up realizing the only way to get out of the shithole is by using your brain, you respect brains."¹⁷³ While he respected his upper crust classmates, he also harbored some resentment, as he felt he was not one of them, not up to their standard. This feeling of being an outsider would remain with Gust his entire career and color his perception of many of his superiors and peers. He always felt more comfortable with the minority,

¹⁶⁷ Crile, 48.

¹⁶⁸ Crile, 46–47.

¹⁶⁹ Crile, 46–47.

¹⁷⁰ Crile, 48.

¹⁷¹ Crile, 48–49.

¹⁷² Crile, 48–49.

¹⁷³ Crile, 49.

whether that be classified by race, background, or status. He saw himself as their champion and worked hard to right the wrongs within his organization and utilize the talents of those that the CIA thought of as “untouchables.”¹⁷⁴

Early in his career, he was stationed in Greece during a time of political turmoil in the country. Communist influence and intrigue were prevalent, and Gust’s patriotism, work ethic, courage, and irreverence allowed him to shine. He became a go-to case officer and provided the CIA with mountains of intelligence from his multiple sources, while establishing long-lasting and trustworthy relationships with many notable Greek officials who helped stem the tide of communist control of the country.¹⁷⁵ This was Gust’s first real test within the agency, and he performed admirably in the “trenches” as it were, however, some of his decisions were made outside of CIA convention, and Gust developed a reputation for being a risk-taker and dissenter of upper-echelon policies that impacted his work.¹⁷⁶

While tactically and operationally successful, Gust’s disdain for his superiors severely hampered his career, and after his assignment in Greece ended in 1977, he returned to the U.S. to a cool reception from his agency. He was originally supposed to be reassigned to Finland, but due to a staff change in headquarters, he was removed from the job prior to assuming the role and reassigned to Langley.¹⁷⁷ This frustrated Gust and made him feel like he was being singled out and picked on by his own thankless organization, specifically the “mafia-like” bosses. He lashed out verbally, earning himself a reputation as untouchable, and was forced to use a bit of tradecraft within the bureaucracy to “hide” until a benefactor could wrangle an assignment for him.¹⁷⁸ While cooling his heels and not making any waves, he became involved in some staff work pertaining to the CIA’s near

¹⁷⁴ Crile, 94.

¹⁷⁵ Crile, 51–63.

¹⁷⁶ Crile, 61–63, 94.

¹⁷⁷ Crile, 60.

¹⁷⁸ Crile, 60–63, 93–95.

east division, specifically Afghanistan, and the civil unrest against their Soviet occupiers.¹⁷⁹

By this time, Gust was a 14-year veteran of the CIA. He knew key people and was invested in people that others thought as insignificant, but who were able to assist Gust as he shielded them from an agency that was still mired in cronyism and racism.¹⁸⁰ His assignment to the near east division came in time for Gust to once again have a project worthy of his talents, but small enough that his involvement in it did not raise any suspicions from CIA headquarters.

Gust quickly made friends and sought out other misfits that he could employ to help topple the Soviet Union in Afghanistan by “giving the Soviets their own Vietnam.”¹⁸¹ His abilities to fit into many classes and molds gave him access to people whose talents had been misunderstood, undervalued, or taken for granted within the CIA. His team was uncanny and extremely effective at generating results.

3. Operation Cyclone

Enter Charlie Wilson, who due to some falling out with the Israelis, finds a cause to back in Afghanistan with the Mujahideen. Charlie was on the Appropriations Committee, one of fifty congressmen that decided how to spend the U.S. budget.¹⁸² Charlie wanted to turn up the funding to the Mujahideen, and did, but in a disconcerted and uncoordinated manner. His funds were welcome but had little strategic effect. Gust, at first perturbed by the loud, tall Texan who was like a fox in his hen house, met with and then recruited Charlie, channeling the appropriations in ways that were useful to the CIA’s strategic objectives. Where huge amounts were being spent on weapons for mujahideen fighters, not enough money was going toward ammunition. Too many Afghans were being

¹⁷⁹ Crile, 95.

¹⁸⁰ Crile, 94.

¹⁸¹ Crile, 411.

¹⁸² Crile, 77.

armed, but not trained, and those who were both armed and trained had no ammunition to fight with!¹⁸³

Gust and his team of experts developed a logistical pipeline that funneled the correct ratio of arms, ammunition, food, clothing, and medical supplies to the fighters who were the most effective, cutting off several warlords who were simply stockpiling supplies to be used against their own kind later. Everything from Soviet arms salvaged from the battles in Jordan, Egypt, and Israel were bought up. Chinese manufactured ammunition and weapons were purchased as new. Mules from Tennessee were flown into Pakistan to be used to form mule trains for supplying insurgents in distant provinces over rough mountainous terrain.¹⁸⁴

Next, Charlie and Gust teamed up to procure an effective anti-aircraft weapon that the Mujahideen could use to protect their villages and encampments from the punishing MI-24 Hind helicopter attack gunship. Many options were entertained, and many small purchases made, but the breakthrough weapons were finally delivered in 1986, the U.S. built Stinger Missile.¹⁸⁵ The compact, one-man portable and employable heat-seeking anti-aircraft missile was devastating to Soviet helicopters and allowed the Mujahideen fighters to repel air support and destroy hundreds of armored convoys under the protective umbrella of the stinger. Between 1979 and 1989, 270 aircraft were brought down, the stinger being credited with the majority of those kills by the Russians, leading to a change in tactics to avoid the range of the stinger, the only weapon that caused a change in air strategy.¹⁸⁶

Gust possessed an interesting mix of personality traits that allowed him to exist in two worlds at once: the bureaucracy of Washington and Langley as well as the underworld of espionage and subterfuge. His opposite in this case, Ahmad Shah Massoud, was cut from

¹⁸³ Crile, 272–84.

¹⁸⁴ Crile, 272–84.

¹⁸⁵ Crile, 419.

¹⁸⁶ Christopher Woody, “‘A Fighting War with the Main Enemy’: How the CIA Helped Land a Mortal Blow to the Soviets in Afghanistan 32 Years Ago,” *Business Insider*, accessed February 26, 2020, <https://www.businessinsider.com/32-year-anniversary-of-first-stinger-missile-use-in-afghanistan-2018-9>.

a different, and probably cleaner, cloth. Their traits, especially those of empathy, values, education, and reputation united them together in a struggle against the Soviet Union.

4. Ahmed Shah Massoud

Ahmad Shah Massoud was one of, if not the most successful and influential leaders of the Mujahideen fighters during the Soviet-Afghan war of the 1980s and a counterbalance to the Taliban in post-cold war Afghanistan until he was assassinated on 9 September 2001. Massoud was not in any kind of patron-client relationship with Pakistan, the U.S., or any other outside actor. While he was supported by many different states at different times, his Tajik heritage, the remoteness of his territory in the Panjshir Valley, and the existence of more ethnically aligned Pashtun warlords with Pakistan set Massoud in a more isolated category.

His personality traits can be traced through many of his previous Mujahideen fighters, reporters, and family members who provided Marcela Grad with their memories of Ahmad Shah Massoud in her biography of him released in 2009.¹⁸⁷ Grad's research and compilation of these reflections give vast amounts of information via both written diary entries to anecdotes of the life and times of these dozens of witnesses of what made Massoud an effective guerrilla leader across 26 years of conflict with both foreign and domestic enemies.

Born in 1953, Massoud was one of seven children. At an early age, Massoud developed a keen sense of responsibility, not just for himself and his family, but for all people.¹⁸⁸ He was raised by a father who was an Afghan Army officer and a mother who was strong and smart, and had a deep influence in his views on the world. Massoud was very interested in his father's collection of poetry books.¹⁸⁹ He enjoyed reading on topics from Rumi, Hafez, and Kalili to technical writings about architecture, science, biology, and

¹⁸⁷ Grad, *Massoud*.

¹⁸⁸ Grad, 6.

¹⁸⁹ Grad, 2.

guerilla warfare.¹⁹⁰ He slept little, and was regarded as having a mystical sense of religion, often being compared to Sufiism by his friends and colleagues.¹⁹¹ His devoutness was not fanatical. He led by example, not assertion or coercion.¹⁹² He was humble, respectful, and lived simply, never accepting nor expecting others to kowtow or demur to him for any reason.¹⁹³ Early on, while still a child, he was well regarded by the adults in his village as being mature and responsible.¹⁹⁴

Massoud had a unique ability to keep calm in highly stressful situations. He also was able to make decisions relevant to current circumstances but at the same time think about a vision of a future outcome or goal, 20–30 years distant.¹⁹⁵ He was charismatic, being described as giving off an “energy” to other people just by being in his presence. He would listen more than speak, being attentive to the concerns of his followers.¹⁹⁶

His faith in God, and the apparent ease that his way of life gave him was a key example that many of his friends and family, and even reporters, tried to emulate.¹⁹⁷ He was likened to being more like a philosopher than a warlord.¹⁹⁸

Comparing what personality traits Massoud possessed with those of other leaders in the theater at the same time show how different personalities can accomplish similar objectives. The success of the Mujahideen was multifaceted. It could be said that without the other, neither Gust Avrakotos nor Ahmad Shah Massoud would have tipped the scales in the opposing direction, allowing for a longer, more ruinous Soviet control of Afghanistan. There are certain traits that are shared, however. Empathy, values, education, and reputation were shared by these men. Massoud did not hold anyone else to a false

¹⁹⁰ Grad, 29.

¹⁹¹ Grad, 142–44.

¹⁹² Grad, 169.

¹⁹³ Grad, 197, 199.

¹⁹⁴ Grad, 5–6.

¹⁹⁵ Grad, 56, 66.

¹⁹⁶ Grad, 18, 37, 208.

¹⁹⁷ Grad, 208–16.

¹⁹⁸ Grad, 243.

standard.¹⁹⁹ Both men had a common enemy, the Soviet Union. But beyond a common enemy, these leader's ability to seek and find various ways to success is what eventually brought the withdrawal of Soviet forces in February of 1989.

Massoud was a man who possessed equal parts optimism and patience. Even when tactical situations seemed devastating to his group's objectives, he was able to maintain his composure and focus on the goal of a free Afghanistan. During 1996, Tony Davis, an Australian reporter asked Massoud: "Would you ever flee Kabul?" Massoud said, "For me, the ground is not important. I know my territory and I know how to take it back. If I flee, it will be to avoid harm to the people and, second, not to lose my fighters or my guns."²⁰⁰ He oozed confidence in the Mujahideen cause, and demonstrated that through perseverance and patience, their victory was only a matter of time. Haron Amin, who would later become a United Nations diplomat and Afghanistan's ambassador to Japan, stated that "It seemed like the whole struggle hung on Massoud's morale. The commanders would start to crumble, yet he would stand like a rock."²⁰¹

D. THEORY AND TRAITS

With Massoud, there is less recorded history of specific battles and more oral histories of how he made his followers and others feel. With the CIA, Pakistani, and Russian accounts of the war, we can easily fill in these gaps and simply focus on Massoud's characteristics and traits and see where they intersect with the theoretical forms of guerrilla warfare impacts.

Trust was implicit for Massoud. Within the valley and among his fighters, he established a familial thick trust, but also was able to garner a more transactional thin trust with several principals throughout the war.²⁰² At various times he received supplies, financial support, and weaponry from the CIA, MI-6, Pakistani ISI, and other warlords. He

¹⁹⁹ Grad, 112, 155.

²⁰⁰ Grad, 27–28.

²⁰¹ Grad, 48.

²⁰² Kohn, Trust, 89.

won favor via his ability to instill confidence in every village he visited. His wisdom, patience, and performance gave him strong social proof as well.²⁰³ This trust and social proof paid dividends in establishing cooperation with many village elders and other Mujahideen leaders. Massoud's reputation was matched in person, and he was very nearly a living legend in the Panjshir valley and beyond.²⁰⁴ Massoud mastered what Blanken termed the "human terrain," sharing the values of the people and being the embodiment of empathetic leadership to the Mujahideen fighters within his sphere.²⁰⁵

Massoud was also able to show his ethical and moral legitimacy as described as requisite by Krieg and Rickli.²⁰⁶ His treatment towards prisoners was respectful and humane, and kept Massoud and his fighters in possession of the moral high ground as well as embedded in the mountains of their territory.²⁰⁷ Because Massoud was Tajik, and lived and shared values and homesteads with the local fighters, he also brought with him a degree of indigenous authority to the area of operations that larger principals like the CIA could then use to funnel in needed arms, ammunition, and supplies to keep the Mujahideen well heeled.²⁰⁸

Robert Cialdini could have written his entire book using Gust as the example. Cialdini's influence mechanisms are all used by Gust in garnering support and resources for the Mujahideen. An easy acronym to remember for these mechanisms is *RASCLS*; Reciprocity, Authority, Scarcity, Commitment/Consistency, Liking, and finally Social Proof.²⁰⁹ Gust was able to *recruit* Charlie just as if he were trying to recruit a foreign intelligence asset.²¹⁰ He uses the same methods on Charlie to amazing results! This is not

²⁰³ Cialdini, *Influence*, 114–16.

²⁰⁴ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 194.

²⁰⁵ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, xi.

²⁰⁶ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 3, 80, 145.

²⁰⁷ Grad, *Massoud*, 120.

²⁰⁸ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 197–202.

²⁰⁹ Cialdini, *Influence*, xiii.

²¹⁰ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 258–60.

immoral or illegal, but rather a method of influence that Cialdini, the CIA, car salesmen, and many other trades use to win over clients, congressmen, or customers of all types.

Gust is multilingual and understands the importance of conversation with both principals and agents alike. He uses his dynamic personality to get close to and comfortable with members of his team, Charlie, and many others to affect the outcomes of the meetings.²¹¹ While Gust is not fluent in Tajik, Dari, or Pashtu, he certainly was able to learn bits and pieces of simple terminology and sayings so that he appeared as respectful of the culture of the Mujahideen fighters and then used interpreters to discuss any heavy business.

Gust never felt as if he were truly accepted as part of the whole in the CIA.²¹² He bore this cross with pride and used it as a wellspring of strength and determination to always prove himself and not let his upbringing determine his station in life. This same attitude pervaded in his feelings for other outsiders, like black members of the CIA, or immigrant workers in Pennsylvania, and especially with the Mujahideen fighting the great Soviet bear in their homeland.²¹³

Values were shared between the clients and Gust. He believed in their cause and felt obligated to elevate their capabilities in order to overthrow their occupier, a sworn enemy of the United States and lifelong menace to Gust personally.²¹⁴ Kohn may term this value as thin due to a more transactional nature of the support between Avrakotos and the Mujahideen, but in taking a look at the level of coordination, meetings, agreements, and subterfuge that were undertaken by Gust to supply the fighters with myriad arms and equipment over nearly 6 years, (and beyond if you look at his legacy after his reassignment) this herculean effort may not have been undertaken as seriously or as devoutly by any other CIA officer.²¹⁵ Gusts' hatred of the Soviets and his empathy for the Mujahideen combined

²¹¹ Crile, 258–60, 413–414,.

²¹² Crile, 448–49.

²¹³ Crile, 94, 201–2, 411.

²¹⁴ Crile, 255.

²¹⁵ Kohn, Trust, 89.

into a unique brew of values that helped to sustain the relationship and keep a certain strategic stamina toward the objective of giving the Soviet forces their own Vietnam in Afghanistan.²¹⁶

Avrakotos never stopped learning. From his early youth in the Aliquippa public library through his 27-year career with the CIA, he was studying constantly about various topics.²¹⁷ This love of knowledge was deep and constant and was one of Gust's traits that he prided himself on. His use of his intellect placed him higher up than what many of his contemporaries ever came near. He was punching above his weight socially due to his investment in education.

Reputation cut both ways in Gust's case. His reputation as a worker, stellar practitioner, and go-to man to get dirty jobs done was married to his stubbornness, his arrogance, and his disdain for convention, nepotism, and establishment (something he shared with Lawrence).²¹⁸ Charlie Wilson certainly did not let the latter obscure the former and embraced the Greek with a chip on his shoulder to orchestrate a wonderful resistance. His hard exterior toward superiors may have given him the latitude needed to run Operation Cyclone. If he had been a yes-man, or buoyed up to the establishment more early in his career, he may never have become involved in the near east division, and missed the opportunity to truly leave an indelible mark on world affairs as he did in his support of the guerrillas in Afghanistan.

Unorthodox as he was, Gust displayed servant-leadership throughout his time in the CIA. He bucked authority he saw as illegitimate, but not all authority. He had supporters throughout the CIA, men like Claire George and John McGaffin, who on many occasions protected Gust from their counterparts as best they could, giving him just enough of a window to jump through in order to hide and continue to work in the CIA.²¹⁹ Gust was trustworthy with information and did not care much for credit for his efforts. He also

²¹⁶ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 411.

²¹⁷ Crile, 46.

²¹⁸ Crile, 59–60.

²¹⁹ Crile, 59–60, 154, 252–53.

protected the minority within the organization and understood the value of lower level employees, treating them well and fairly, and speaking on their behalf on many occasions.²²⁰ Gust's relationship with Charlie Wilson provides good evidence of his humility and ability to put the objective of the mission above pride or politics.²²¹ When the book was written, despite Gusts' achievements, the title read: *Charlie Wilson's War*.

In this chapter, I provided brief narratives from three conflicts spanning the twentieth century. I focused in on two or three individuals from each conflict to catalog specific personality traits and characteristics that they possessed. Using the background research from the warfare and relationship texts introduced in the first chapter, I was better able to evaluate each case study for evidence of these traits. In Chapter III, I will combine the methods of investigation from Chapter I with the historical evidence from Chapter II in order to analyze the data and develop my LEVERS model for understanding key personality traits that favor successful guerrilla leaders.

²²⁰ Crile, 94.

²²¹ Crile, 258–60.

III. ANALYSIS AND LEVERS APPLICATION

In Chapter I, I discussed theories from warfare studies of assessment, surrogate, and proxy warfare studies to assist in bounding the question of what personality traits may be favorable to guerrilla leaders. Next, I used research on the much broader topic of human relationships to find means of uncovering if and how personality traits can be utilized to have positive effects on guerrilla leaders' success rates. In Chapter II, three case studies were used to apply what was learned from the theoretical literature to historical events and real people in irregular warfare scenarios across the 20th century.

Now it is time to distill the information from both concepts and historical accounts into a consolidated framework that highlights six predominate traits. In Table 1, I have listed everyone along the Y axis and placed the most dominant personality traits across the X axis. While not all characters share all traits, it is significant that there are only three exceptions (Mao in two areas, and the OSS Deer Team in one).

Table 1. Individuals and LEVERS Matrix

	Language	Empathy	Values	Education	Reputation	Servant-Leadership
T.E. Lawrence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prince Feisal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ho Chi Minh	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
OSS Deer team	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Mao Zedong	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Gust Avrakotos	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ahmed Shah Massoud	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Before I speak on what is prevalent, it is important to give alibis to the three negative squares in Table 1. For the OSS Deer team, as I have mentioned in Chapter II, there were multiple individuals who served in Indochina either directly in contact with or in proximity to Ho Chi Minh. The sheer number of personnel, and their various

personalities are not well enough researched by me to objectively conclude that they *all* represented the traits of servant leadership. So, as not to lend too much credit in favor of my research, it is best to say that the aggregate personalities provided insufficient evidence to support an affirmative result or claim to servant leadership in this case. Had I been able to focus more intently on one individual, the results may have been conclusive (one way or another), but as these men are important to me for this specific research, their individual memoirs or biographies are vague or non-existent on this brief period of their lives.

Mao Zedong is the only true individual to stand out in a negative attributional sense. As the case study chapter shows, he was less earnest and endearing to his allies and used other methods of influence and control within his own country to consolidate his power and position. While there does exist extensive accounts of Mao that shows him in a more positive light, it is written by authors who were under the influence and censorship of Mao's own authoritarian regime, and thus may not be an accurate reflection of his true personality traits, "warts and all." The accounts taken into consideration come from American scholars and authors writing several decades after Mao's death, and from the perspective of a specific time period and set of interactions between Mao and Ho Chi Minh specifically. It is important to capture Mao's traits as they were, and therefore he has negative marks in empathy and servant leadership in Table 1.

Now I will give attention to characteristics that all people have in common that may surprise the reader as having demonstrated little to no effect on favoring successful guerrilla leadership. While common personality traits and characteristics are very illuminating and informative, I find the uncommon, or the omitted, to be just as interesting. The most surprising to me after conducting the research is also one of the more obvious, that of physical stature and attractiveness.

Lawrence was five feet, five inches tall. Ho Chi Minh was diminutive and "slight," Gust Avrakotos was slightly overweight and unattractive. Mao the same. Massoud was also thin, gaunt, and short.²²² It seems that physical stature, being "large and in charge,"

²²² John Arquilla, *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), 161; Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 214; Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 118; Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 247; Grad, *Massoud*, 125–40.

may be neither necessary nor sufficient to carry on a successful campaign. This is not to say that Lawrence, Feisal, or Massoud were “ugly,” but none of these leaders seem to have garnered any support due to their physical appearance or stature. Only one character mentioned at any length in the case studies that was of large, handsome physical stature was Charlie Wilson. In his case, he did use his physical presence along with a booming voice and “loud” personality to make an impression and set the tone for many conversations.²²³ In Charlie’s case, as we will see in others at the end of this chapter, there are traits that each man possessed that lent some amount of credibility that only that character championed. As mentioned before, this is not intended to be an exhaustive or exclusive list, but an insight into the more common traits that are prevalent leaving ample room for other characteristics to play a role alongside or superior to the six (LEVERS) listed here.

Another interesting observation is that while shared values and ideology seem to matter, religious beliefs, piety, or devoutness does not seem to play a significant role in the leaders’ capabilities. Massoud was devout, praying as often as he could, sleep deprived and hungry, but he did not demand his followers or peers to uphold this same practice.²²⁴ There was no apparent rift between Prince Feisal and Lawrence over religious practices either. Ho Chi Minh and Mao were apathetic to religious endeavors themselves outside of their Confucian ties.²²⁵ Gust Avrakotos was raised as Greek Orthodox but other than superstitions, no religious fervor or devoutness was expressed or shown to be of any significance to his work in the CIA.²²⁶

Social status or caste was also less important than what one may initially believe. Lawrence, Avrakotos, Ho, and Massoud came from varying types of lower-middle and middle-class families. While none were impoverished, none held any special placement within their societies via familial hierarchy that granted them any elevated status. They all

²²³ Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, 11–125, 22–23.

²²⁴ Grad, *Massoud*, 142, 144, 155.

²²⁵ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 16; Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 26.

²²⁶ Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, 90.

worked diligently as youths to better themselves through education and learning in both theoretical and practical senses. Prince Feisal is the obvious exception to this rule. What all these men did with their status, whether it was gained from birth or from their work ethic, have been written in many books and dissected here where personality traits are analyzed.

Age was another non-sequitur. Lawrence was 28 when his involvement with the Arab Revolt began. Ho was even younger when he became initiated in the independence movement of Vietnam. Massoud was a student. Avrakotos was recruited into the CIA straight out of graduate school. Most continued to work in their careers and movements for multiple decades, and it seems that the only common tie was that they were all considered “adults” at the time of their influence.

Finally, I will provide some “givens” regarding the character of the individuals of the case studies. These traits might be universal, meaning that whether you agree with the owner of these traits, you cannot argue the fact that these attributes, used for good or evil, depending on your point of view, provided impetus for favorable outcomes. Having a *raison D’être* to cooperate is requisite in any form of social contract. Common objectives are not personality traits or characteristics but are present in each case study to varying degrees of durability and are therefore important to discuss just enough to address the prerequisite of this commonality. One condition of possessing common goals or objectives is the context of the situation at hand, the time and place, or circumstances of the day.

It has been said before that timing is everything and being in the right place at the right time is paramount to our endeavor at understanding why these traits are so important. While there are many variables that can influence when and where an individual ends up in the geopolitical landscape there are intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can have significant impacts to this location. I would like to suggest that for this research access and placement are necessary factors that can be assumed without tainting or shading the lens of the analysis of specific personality traits of the case studies’ characters. While some individuals may have been more fortunate than others in their placement and timing, some may have had to use their charms to obtain the required placement and access to be at a noteworthy and historic inflection point. It seems that assuming this as a given does not

change the research as currently scoped and allows for a deeper, more specific study of each case individually.

Another “given” to address is that of courage. It is doubtful that any follower would be willing to be led by an individual that they thought to be a coward. There are certainly degrees of courage and multiple factors that can play into how to define and measure courage. For the sake of time, and with an eye toward uncovering what other more veiled or nuanced personality traits and characteristics are common, I motion that we forego the exercise of hovering over a facet of personality that in general terms, all would agree to be required in the first place. I find it challenging for anyone to take any of the case study individuals and find their courage lacking in a fatal way.

Lastly, the motivation or willpower of each of the case study individuals must be another constant. Resistance, guerrilla warfare, revolution, and asymmetric conflict makes for a hard life, and is not for the armchair general or standard issue bureaucrat. Most people would refrain from a life of constant movement, food scarcity, disease, combat, and sleep deprivation if they were not otherwise internally compelled by their own will to take up such a cause.

Here are some interesting notes on some of the traits that I discovered that were not at all common, but nonetheless were of import to their individual possessor. Lawrence was an outsider in all his circles of life and society. Massoud was a poet/dreamer with eternal optimism and patience. Ho Chi Minh was resourceful and had a macro understanding of multiple cultures, and the importance of oration and perception. Gust was a passed over bureaucrat with real talent and time on his hands. These traits are not common across the cases, but rather add color and highlights to the specific individual possessor of the “quirk.” This is informative in its own way. Uncommon traits are another thread to pull at for another day, perhaps.

There seems to be no single combination of personality traits and characteristics, no set amount of language, empathy, values, education, reputation, and servant-leadership that will win the day, but instead it is the individual combinations of these traits, and many others that contribute to successful leaders in surrogate relationships and irregular warfare.

While study of these cases has allowed for a slightly more refined understanding of what it takes to be successful in these types of campaigns, there are many other factors that must be considered to construct a relevant theoretical model of the reality of human relationships.

With that, my attempt to keep the focus of the research on personality traits, and more specifically on traits that are not “givens” or requisite, but instead increase the likelihood of successful campaigns in guerrilla warfare is clear in the readers mind. By providing some explanations for exceptions and accounting for more pedestrian traits, it is my ambition to use the warfare, relationship, and case study texts to provide supporting evidence of frequent traits in successful guerrilla leaders.

A. COMMON TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS: LEVERS

There are six characteristics that are predominate in the case studies: Language, Empathy, Values, Education, Reputation, and finally Servant Leadership. Those who possess the ability to communicate in a common language, high levels of empathy or emotional intelligence, shared values with the partner force, a high level of education, a “good” reputation, and finally, humility or more plainly, possessing a servant-leader mentality was elemental in most of the individuals in the case studies.

1. Language

The barrier of language in the effort of communication has many facets, from strictly conveying simple requests, actions, or thoughts, to a more profound cultural and anecdotal understanding between beings. Understandably so, many of the requirements of successful guerrilla operations entail the ability to communicate effectively throughout the force. Being heard is but a part, being understood and having effective feedback is the more prescient matter that must be mastered.

Communication might be the most overlooked necessity of this whole enterprise. Without an effective means of communication, principal-agent theory, cooperation, trust, ideology, values, control, interests, reputations, empathy, and influence is all lost. That being said, not all communication must be verbal. Actions, they say, do speak louder than

words. More importantly to the theory side of this issue, is the idea that “talk is cheap.”²²⁷ To even begin to have influence using any or all of Cialdini’s six tools, one must first establish an effective medium of communication that allows for information to flow both ways.²²⁸

Lawrence could communicate with his Arab counterparts thanks to his years of study in the region. This cultural immersion gave him more than just the ability to speak in a tongue familiar to his Bedouin allies, but also allowed him to better understand their culture: “My poverty let me learn the masses ... they taught me that no man could be their leader except he ate the ranks food, wore their clothes, lived level with them, and yet appeared better in himself.”²²⁹ Because of these acquired traits, he understood his allies all the more, and was thus more capable of empathy as well.

Another master of languages was Ho Chi Minh. Of the three case studies, Ho ranks first in amount of languages both written and spoken. This ability to read, write, and speak in Vietnamese, French, English, Chinese, and Russian gave Ho considerable leverage among many followers, supporters, and (at various times) allies.²³⁰ Ho was also renowned for his use of oration. Archimedes Patti recalled that he was struck by Ho’s “sincerity, pragmatism and eloquence,” and the fact that Ho had learned not to ask for anything specifically or directly, but rather allow his guest to decide how best they could help the Vietminh.²³¹ During a speech to the Vietnamese people in September of 1945, Patti noted how Ho spoke to his followers:

Introduced as the liberator and savior of the nation, Ho began speaking to the citizens, stopping after only one sentence to ask his fellow countrymen if they could hear him clearly. It was a master stroke of oratory. ... From that moment, the crowd hung on every word.²³²

²²⁷ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 12.

²²⁸ Cialdini, *Influence*.

²²⁹ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 8–11.

²³⁰ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 4, 17–19.

²³¹ Bartholomew-Feis, 176.

²³² Bartholomew-Feis, 246.

Ho was able to comfortably engage in either small-talk or intimate conversation with what Bartholomew-Feis related thus: “He knew how to use the rhetoric, even when sincere, that would appeal to the visitor of the moment.”²³³ Ho Chi Minh’s gift of gab is the most notable of the case studies and provides many examples of how language ties many other influence and communication factors together to pave the way for access to people, resources, and trust amongst both indigenous and foreign supporters.

The most challenging barrier between allies of the case studies was that between Gust Avrakotos and Ahmed Shah Massoud. While both men were educated and spoke several languages or dialects, neither had mastered the others native language and thus resorted to interpreters. Also noteworthy is the fact that these two men never once met face to face, but in spite of both geographical and language barriers to communication, their collaborative actions were more effective than their few words towards each other. In the Afghan case, the common enemy of the Soviet Union, the huge CIA network, in collaboration with British MI-6, Pakistan, Egypt, Israel, and most of all Afghan nationals, combined for nearly a decade to conduct a very successful guerrilla campaign. Here, the tenant of principal-agent theory of level of control comes into play.²³⁴ Personal language skills aside, a decision was made to allow for more indirect control of the tactical and operational regimes that over time paid dividends to the CIA. Trust was established between the allied network due to both sides doing what they said they would and showing their work.²³⁵

2. Empathy/Emotional Intelligence

Two of the three case studies showcase the importance of empathy as a personality trait. Mao Zedong is the only individual described as not having used this feature in the context of personality traits favoring successful outcomes. Lawrence and Feisal demonstrated empathy through extreme patience, perseverance, and sacrifice while leading the Arab’s in situ instead of from the relative comforts of Mecca. Lawrence was said to of

²³³ Bartholomew-Feis, 316.

²³⁴ Krieg, Surrogate Warfare, 119.

²³⁵ Axelrod, The Evolution of Cooperation, 12; Kohn, Trust, 8, 89.

had “a sense of duty to the Arabs,” and had the “ability to sense the feelings of any group of men in whose company he found himself; his power to probe behind their minds and to uncover the well-springs of their actions.”²³⁶ Feisal was described as lending “his own spirit to everyone within reach,” and Lawrence described watching Feisal speak with his followers and learning from him, “This extreme patience was a further lesson to me of what native leadership in Arabia meant... I never saw an Arab leave him dissatisfied or hurt- a tribute to his tact and to his memory.”²³⁷ Ahmed Shah Massoud was spoken of in a similar way to Feisal, his followers and observers said that Massoud “always put himself at the level of the simplest soldier...” and “was respectful to everyone,” giving them 100%.²³⁸

Ho Chi Minh was either the most well-endowed with empathy or was more willing to wield the trait’s power over people. Ho courted multiple soldiers and officers of the U.S. armed forces from 1944 well into the 1960s. His relationships with Soviet and Chinese leaders, especially Mao and his cabinet, show true mastery of the trait. Ho was described by members of the OSS as seeming sincere, being a good conversationalist, and using the wide range of his knowledge and his oratory eloquence to appeal to the visitor of the moment.²³⁹ It is my opinion that while Ho was a master of employing empathy as a tool, I do not believe that it was all genuine. This speculation on my part does nothing to diminish his proclivity towards this trait, nor his dedication to his goal of self-rule for his country. In *Assessing War*, one of the most important pieces of information to understand is the makeup of the “human terrain,” having more than just an academic knowledge of the people involved, and why they are choosing to bear arms or otherwise resist an opposing force.²⁴⁰ When looking at the value of empathy from the perspective of the “three inherent problems” that Krieg and Rickli attribute to the use of partner forces becomes apparent.²⁴¹ Moral hazard, adverse selection, and Madison’s dilemma are issues of not fully

²³⁶ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 192, 254.

²³⁷ Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert*, The Abridged Edition of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 46–47.

²³⁸ Grad, *Massoud*, 16–18, 200.

²³⁹ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 176, 202, 212, 243, 316–17.

²⁴⁰ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, xi.

²⁴¹ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 117–18.

appreciating the human terrain of the battlespace.²⁴² If, as seen in Lawrence, Ho, and Massoud most easily, an individual possesses the ability to incorporate emotional intelligence and empathy into the partnership, there will be less chance of misunderstandings and distrust between principal and agent.

In *Proxy Warfare*, Mumford contributes two additions to Pearson's reasons for Proxy War. The most germane to personality traits in leaders being the perception of probable success.²⁴³ Without empathy it would be difficult for leaders of small bands of underfunded, hungry, overmatched rebels to *believe* or *perceive* a successful outcome. Here again I will reference the three case studies and the individuals who led the successful campaigns. Would Lawrence have taken the risks that he took? Would Ho have been able to sustain the struggle for over 20 years? How about Massoud? Without a true understanding of the human terrain, and feeling the needs of the people who he led, would he have left the Panjshir valley to fight the Soviets? All three of the warfare texts hint to the connections of human relationships. Traits like empathy and emotional intelligence are the intangible tools that can be pivotal in forming successful guerrilla leaders.

The relationship texts speak more directly toward the connection of empathy and forming meaningful bonds with others. Trust uses ideas of familial bonds, tribalism, nationalism, etc., to relate how individuals form relationships from tight-knit family groups to large-scale social contracts.²⁴⁴ Communication, and signaling trustworthiness, becomes very important. Empathy is a communication strategy.²⁴⁵ Being in receipt of another's feelings and perspective, and then being able to appreciate and digest the vantage-point of others is a way to earn their trust. Axelrod states that "talk is cheap," meaning that words have no actions or deeds to support them, are empty, and will not foster cooperation at any level.²⁴⁶ Three of the four key factors in determining cooperation are related to empathy

²⁴² Krieg, 117–18.

²⁴³ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 32.

²⁴⁴ Kohn, *Trust*, 10, 12, 80.

²⁴⁵ Kohn, 24–25.

²⁴⁶ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 12.

and emotional intelligence; being nice/reciprocity, the ability to forgive, and communicating clearly.²⁴⁷ I am not claiming that it would be impossible to accomplish the above factors without empathy, but rather, with empathy, these factors are nearly assumed. Finally, in Cialdini's book on compliance, the ideas of reciprocity, liking, and social proof are part of what conveys empathy toward others.²⁴⁸

3. Values and Trust

In Kohn's *Trust*, common interests are crucial to forming trust.²⁴⁹ Both values and reputation (which I will amplify later) are contingent upon the concept of trust. Kinship, religion, community, or common identity are all linked to thicker forms of trust, while in the absence of these mechanisms, there are substitutes.²⁵⁰ Contracts act as intermediaries where familial or other cultural bonds do not exist.²⁵¹ In these thin relationships, communication, intention, and reputation help to establish trust in each agent.²⁵² Reciprocity plays a key role as well in establishing values and reputation. Kohn, Axelrod, and Cialdini note that a certain amount of vulnerability allows for trust to form.²⁵³ All three case studies show significant aspects where trust was of paramount importance.

The presence of a shared set of values or ideology between the guerrilla leaders and their followers is obvious for all three case studies. In *Assessing War*, Robert Reilly argues "acknowledging that wars of ideas are among the primary causes as well as the primary objectives of conflict."²⁵⁴ Furthermore, the conveyance via strategic communication about the "rightness of the cause" is also imperative.²⁵⁵ The values of a group of fighters must

²⁴⁷ Axelrod, 33, 36, 54.

²⁴⁸ Cialdini, *Influence*, 18, 167, 114.

²⁴⁹ Kohn, *Trust*, 10.

²⁵⁰ Kohn, 19, 53, 69, 80, 89.

²⁵¹ Kohn, 12, 63, 89.

²⁵² Kohn, 89.

²⁵³ Kohn, 122; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 100; Cialdini, *Influence*, 36.

²⁵⁴ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, 285.

²⁵⁵ Blanken et al., 286.

pair with those of their leadership for shared goals and objectives to be clear. Lawrence was considered a “naturalized Arab, sharing their deep-rooted desire for un-trammeled freedom.”²⁵⁶

For Ho Chi Minh, the nearly global effort he put into searching for solutions to his countries problems and the dedication of literally his entire adult life to his ideal of freedom from any outside force charmed both countrymen, communist, and capitalist admirers alike. Axelrod’s contribution to the importance of values comes in the form of clarity of motives and the fact that in order for cooperation to take place, friendship is not required.²⁵⁷ Gust and Massoud were underdogs and found common bonds in opposing the Soviet Union. Their success shows that shared values need not be to the bone, or in blood, but only deep enough to overcome the animosity of a common foe.

Krieg and Rickli note that, “in the context of human surrogate war, the transformative nature of patron-surrogate relations based on trust, common values, or ideology might be the most significant ingredient.”²⁵⁸ The claim that shared values indeed have meaning in human relationships are further supported by Mumford’s work on reasons for proxy war, namely ideology as a stand-alone reason!²⁵⁹

4. Education

The educational levels of the individual leaders of the case studies vary greatly, but it is undeniable that each man had significant interests in learning all they could about the subjects that inspired them. It so happens that whether that subject was medieval architecture or Persian poetry, manifestoes or classics, each shared a desire to absorb knowledge from the world around them.

Not all knowledge is contained in texts, so travel was a part of this educational process. Globalization, or the idea that the world is becoming more intertwined at smaller

²⁵⁶ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 12.

²⁵⁷ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 54, 187.

²⁵⁸ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 139.

²⁵⁹ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 31.

and smaller levels, was not yet thought of when Lawrence and Feisal set off on the Arab Revolt.²⁶⁰ Ho Chi Minh toured nearly all the globe while employed aboard ship, then stopped off in Europe, Russia and China before bringing his learned experiences home to Vietnam to lead a revolution.²⁶¹

In the Tajik mountains of Afghanistan, Massoud would not travel far when counted in footsteps or border crossings, but with his insatiable appetite for reading and reciting poetry, and his wide ranging interests in subject matter, he brought the ideas of self-determination and autonomy to his nation.²⁶² Gust Avrakotos used his intuition and wit to punch well above his weight in Afghanistan by studying not only the text books, but his fellow man, understanding their individual strengths and weaknesses, leveraging their talents and boosting their performance when and where he could to attain victory in CIA Headquarters and in the Panjshir Valley and Kabul.²⁶³

5. Reputation

In all cases, at least one of the pair of guerrilla leaders held only a fragile position that could have easily been overcome by the more powerful principal actor had they harbored nefarious intentions. The leader's ability to be a good judge of character, to accurately communicate, and give clear signals of intent was then reflected by their future ally. In Lawrence and Feisal's case, Lawrence's familiarity, and association with the Arab community from his archeological work years before the revolt assisted him in developing necessary reputation with the Arab leaders and gave both insights into the other's values.²⁶⁴

Ho Chi Minh cultivated his reputation and signaled his values to both his U.S. and Chinese supporters before, during, and after the second World War. Ho shared close

²⁶⁰ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 195.

²⁶¹ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 17–24.

²⁶² Grad, *Massoud*, 29, 58, 66.

²⁶³ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 28, 48, 201–2, 282–83, 324, 408, 510–11.

²⁶⁴ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 8–13.

communist, cultural, and revolutionary ties with Mao beginning in the 1920s.²⁶⁵ This established his trustworthiness and reputation and showcased his shared ideology with other party members from multiple regions, including China. Ho's OSS bona-fides were kick-started by an American Airman who crash landed in his lap in November of 1944. U.S. Army Air Force 1st Lieutenant Rudolph Shaw was the seed corn for Ho to contact American forces in the region looking for any assistance they could get in fighting the Japanese in Indochina.²⁶⁶

In the Afghan case study, the reputation of each element was written in blood, money, and mules. Gust Avrakotos never met Ahmed Shah Massoud face to face, but a thin trust was enough against the mistrust and hatred of the Soviet Union that they both harbored.²⁶⁷ The Afghan case highlights the fact that in the absence of a more capable or more closely knit ally, nearly any help is preferred to none at all, as described in both *Proxy Warfare* and *Surrogate Warfare*.²⁶⁸

6. Servant Leadership

The ability of a leader to simultaneously be viewed as a reverential leader and also one of the “men” is not an absolute requirement but may come as close to being requisite as any trait can. This characteristic is important because it encompasses so many of the smaller, more granular aspects that both the case studies and the theories illuminate. Human terrain, ethics, vulnerability, sacrifice, trust, legitimacy, interest, ideology, authority, liking, and commitment are all bound up in this regime of personality. A leader can possess perhaps all of these skills separate from possessing the trait of humility, but it seems in the case studies that the leaders who shared the burden of their followers by riding thousands of miles on camelback and drinking from mud holes, or walking 17 days through rugged jungles and subsisting on meager rice rations, bivouacking in cold mountain caves with no

²⁶⁵ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 18–42; Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 5, 23–26.

²⁶⁶ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 149.

²⁶⁷ Kohn, *Trust*, 89.

²⁶⁸ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 30–31; Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 20–25, 117–24, 169.

shoes or food alongside their compatriots were most able to rally their followers and maintain a cohesive and effective guerrilla force. In so doing, the leaders were able to carry out very successful campaigns that have been memorialized in our history books, their biographies, and our hearts. We look up to these types of leaders because of their servant-leadership.

Lawrence and Feisal were on the front-line in the Arab Revolt. Both men ate, camped, and fought alongside their soldiers. From the beginning of the campaign, Lawrence “became a naturalized Arab instead of merely a European visitor to Arab lands.” Hart continues to describe Lawrence as a “human chameleon..., essentially dynamic or, better still, fluid- in the likeness of mercury, divisible into globules yet inherently coalescent.”²⁶⁹ Lawrence was said to have “represented the heart of the Arab movement for freedom, and the Arabs realized that he vitalized their cause; that he could do everything and endure everything just a little better than the Arabs themselves.”²⁷⁰ Lawrence enjoyed influencing men, being the “counsellor unseen.”²⁷¹ His *27 Articles for Handling Arabs* reveal his thoughts and positions on influence, and his thoughts were always that “to work through men is more potent than to work over them.”²⁷²

Feisal shared many of Lawrence’s affinities toward leadership. He was known for his patience, self-control, and humility.²⁷³ In Lawrence’s own recollection of the Prince, he recalled: “[Feisal] lent his own spirit to everyone within reach... This extreme patience was a further lesson to me of what native leadership in Arabia meant. ... Feisal was hidden in his tent, veiled to remain our leader: while in reality he was nationalities best servant, not its owner.”²⁷⁴

²⁶⁹ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 12–13.

²⁷⁰ Liddell Hart, 253.

²⁷¹ Liddell Hart, 338.

²⁷² Liddell Hart, 109–13, 344.

²⁷³ Liddell Hart, 96, 108.

²⁷⁴ Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert, The Abridged Edition of Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 46, 246.

Ho Chi Minh was very well educated and well-travelled when compared to most of his followers, but he never lost touch with his nation's struggles. He exerted himself to be among his followers as often as possible while also conducting high-level meetings with diplomats, soldiers, and spies from multiple countries nearly simultaneously. Ho's nationalism and his sense of duty augmented his grasp of cultures, languages, and the human terrain enveloping his country's struggle for independence. Edmond Taylor said it well that "in an increasingly mechanized world, human dignity is still not only a moral but a strategic quality."²⁷⁵ Ho Chi Minh set human dignity high on his priorities, and treated all of his contacts with a high level of respect. He demonstrated reciprocity often, and his sincerity and consistency allowed for his reputation to bloom quickly with all suitors. Described as "gentle, slow to anger, persuasive and open to ideas," and "patriotic," having a Confucian core gave him a grounded understanding of humanitarianism and lent him what Charles Fenn remarked as a "Buddha like composure."²⁷⁶

Mao cannot be said to have been filled with the virtue of humility as his Vietnamese contemporary. His is the only exception to this research regarding servant leadership. While there is much propaganda that claims otherwise, the ancient axiom that actions speak louder than words are validated when looking at what characteristics and traits Mao championed to be influential and lead his national revolution with such great success.²⁷⁷ It is not my intent to diminish the incredible feat of Mao Zedong, but instead to illustrate that while it can be said that certain personality traits and characteristics can be useful in establishing successful guerrilla warfare campaigns, there is no formula or prescription for success.

For CIA operative Gust Avrakotos, his humility was buried under a façade of outward bravado and years of learned espionage techniques. That is not to say that Gust did not display servant-leader characteristics, but that his role demanded a nuanced understanding of how and when to activate his own set of skills (LEVERS) if you will.

²⁷⁵ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 3.

²⁷⁶ Bartholomew-Feis, 6, 154–55.

²⁷⁷ Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 20, 23, 24, 139–40, 153, 218–21.

Gust was most comfortable around other so called “untouchables” in the CIA staff.²⁷⁸ He was scarcely recognized for his contributions to the effectiveness of Operation Cyclone (until 2003 when Crile’s book was released), and though he found it hard to not be recognized, he did not stop putting forth immense effort to ensure its success. Crile states that “[Gusts’] father had taught him: there was never too much that he could do for his country, and he had to feel right about himself when he looked in the mirror.”²⁷⁹ Gust utilized his training and innate talents to coach other notable figures within the CIA, Congressman Charlie Wilson, members of his own department, and other foreign intelligence agencies in order to achieve victory in Afghanistan. Displaying deference to certain high-ranking but uninformed or ignorant political figures and bureaucrats took concerted effort in order to gain and maintain popular support.²⁸⁰

Ahmed Shah Massoud is a horse of a different color; more clearly embodying the ethos of servitude and humility. Massoud “ate when and what his followers ate. He always put himself at the level of the simplest soldier.”²⁸¹ He was also regarded as “open minded,” and seen as living like a “very simple person, man of the people,” with “no pomp or decorum,” living “like the prophet...Massoud did not give things to people, he was just honest with them, and he proved to the people that he was serving them...more like a philosopher.”²⁸²

In all cases except Mao’s, the principle individuals adhered to the ideals of selflessness, sacrifice, and service to a cause. They placed their nationalism, idealism, compassion for others, and dreams above their own penchant for acclaim. Trust and cooperation are developed when others have a “hand hold” made by another’s vulnerability and reciprocity.²⁸³ Acts of kindness that are not immediately transactional help to form

²⁷⁸ Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, 94.

²⁷⁹ Crile, 440–41.

²⁸⁰ Crile, 258–60, 315, 324, 330–31.

²⁸¹ Grad, *Massoud*, 16.

²⁸² Grad, 166, 197, 199, 231, 243.

²⁸³ Kohn, *Trust*, 89, 122; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 5, 33, 173.

stronger bonds and turn into what Krieg and Rickli coin as “transformational control” with their specific reference to the effectiveness of Iranian influence of Hezbollah.²⁸⁴ Favoring a “liking” strategy can lead to follower buy-in, and dividends can be reaped in commitment/consistency as well as in authority.²⁸⁵ When lines begin to blur between principals and agents, and coalitions are formed in deeper rooted thick-trust relationships, both sides are more likely to realize objectives and also to have access to relevant, timely feedback about each other’s positions at tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

The longest resistance, and the only lasting “success” studied was that of Ho Chi Minh and his leadership of the Viet Minh in Indochina to establish a self-governing Vietnamese State. While most Americans will view Ho’s success with an understandable degree of contempt and complaint, it is difficult to look upon his situation and objectively deny his contributions to the outcome. From 1921–1969, Ho used his own “LEVERS” to guide not only his countrymen but other world powers toward the realization of an autonomous Vietnam. For 48 years he spoke with diplomats, traveled the world, bivouacked in dense mountain jungles, and inspired his fellow man to continue to resist foreign intervention whether French, Japanese or American.

Lawrence is yet another very strong example of being a servant to a cause. His victory with the Arab’s was complete with the end of World War I. He was a full colonel at wars end. He remained involved in Arab affairs, advocating for the promises made in 1915, and served on Winston Churchill’s staff as an expert on the matter.²⁸⁶ By 1921, being completely disillusioned by the British government’s betrayal of their Arab allies to the Sykes-Picot agreement, he resigned his commission, refused knighthood, changed his name, and enlisted as a private in the Royal Air Force as a mechanic.²⁸⁷ He was never to be wealthy or honored for his contributions. He felt that he failed his fellow guerrillas and was heartbroken by the outcome.

²⁸⁴ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 185–86.

²⁸⁵ Cialdini, *Influence*, 18, 57, 167, 208.

²⁸⁶ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 331.

²⁸⁷ Liddell Hart, 336–37.

Massoud is the most potent example of servant-leadership and humility that my research has uncovered. Likened as more of a philosopher than a warlord, his service to his people, and his empathy towards all, friend and enemy alike, place him in his own category of servant-leadership.²⁸⁸ Massoud was a well-spring of optimism and hope for his cause and was the heart of some of the best and most enduring resistance to the Soviet Army, albeit not the best equipped or well-funded. He remained close to or on the battlefield, never dismissing himself from the daily struggles of combat, and the needs of his followers, while simultaneously formulating tactics and strategies that spanned minutes to years into Afghanistan's future.²⁸⁹

To sum up Chapter III, I have found that there are six personality traits that favor successful guerrilla leaders by analyzing three case studies with theories and premises based in warfare assessment, surrogate and proxy warfare, and human relationship texts. Language, empathy, values, education, reputation, and servant-leadership traits were found to share a common thread throughout the selection of 20th century guerilla leaders selected for study. By looking at each individual in the studies and highlighting what observers, enemies, and followers said of them before, during, and after their campaigns, I investigated what traits each man possessed and used to help win his war. The use of techniques found in the literature about warfare and relationships allowed a more consolidated, focused effort on what to look for and how to spot it as a relevant attribute of the leaders.

By better understanding what personality traits these individuals had and how those traits assisted them in being influential and powerful leaders may inspire other men and women who have a strong desire to lead and succeed. Careful introspection and unvarnished feedback from superiors, peers, and subordinates could assist in developing their personality traits in order to increase the likelihood of success in their endeavors, whatever they may be.

²⁸⁸ Grad, *Massoud*, 243.

²⁸⁹ Grad, 56, 66.

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IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. SYNOPSIS

Do personality traits and characteristics have an impact upon the outcomes of guerrilla wars? Do people who possess particular traits have a better chance of success in irregular warfare? Are there specific personality traits that are necessary tools of leadership in warfare, and if so, can these traits be measured? By presenting a wide range of theoretical approaches to understanding guerrilla warfare via assessment, cooperation, trust, surrogate relationships, proxy warfare, and influence I found several ways to answer these questions and then to analyze what traits surfaced in three case studies of guerrilla warfare in the twentieth century. I then focused my studies to the most influential individuals of each campaign to determine what traits and characteristics they possessed, if any traits were mutual, and what traits were unique to each individual analyzed.

Many interesting ideas come from the overarching concepts of measuring or assessing conflict success that pertain to divining effective personality traits. P-A theory, human terrain, and commonalities between patron and client, or at least common enemies, are all discussed as means to assess success in warfare but can also be used to help define effective personality traits and characteristics for guerrilla leaders.²⁹⁰ The ethical boundaries of patron and client are also important, as this relationship can influence how deep a relationship can grow, or conversely, how transactional a relationship must remain due to different approaches to how war is viewed from a philosophical, moral perspective.²⁹¹

According to Axelrod, for cooperation to exist, you must be nice, forgive trespasses, retaliate for wrong-doing, and have clear goals,²⁹² but being nice does not necessarily mean that you must develop a friendly relationship with your partner.²⁹³ Marek

²⁹⁰ Blanken et al., *Assessing War*, ix, xi, 3, 290, 319.

²⁹¹ Blanken et al., 326; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 89.

²⁹² Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 33–54.

²⁹³ Axelrod, 187.

Kohn iterates that trust has several layers. Kohn establishes that there are thick relationships to include personal relationships or kinship, and thin relationships that include contracts, reputation, or assessment of signals and social norms.²⁹⁴

Krieg and Rickli wrote specifically about surrogate warfare, but from an evolutionary standpoint. Their research shows how the world has become more globalized, privatized, securitized, and mediatized, and has evolved to bring technology in the form of artificial intelligence to the surrogacy arena as well.²⁹⁵ Mumford's eight reasons for forming proxy relationships: Territory, protection of social groups, economic interests, diplomatic/military interests, ideology, balance of power, perception of probable success, and finally perception of conflict escalation (avoidance).²⁹⁶ While self-interest is at the heart, risk management is the primary factor in determining the utility of forming relationships with other forces is worth the time, effort, and, risk.²⁹⁷

Cialdini offers excellent insights into the mechanics of how relationships are formed and manipulated on a subconscious level with six principles that so called "compliance practitioners" will use to gain access to what they desire, be that our money, confidence, or allegiance.²⁹⁸ Reciprocity, authority, scarcity, commitment/consistency, liking, and social proof are devices that allow people to function in our complex societies and take myriad actions in everyday life without having to analyze each and every decision.²⁹⁹

Perhaps no more notable an example of the impact and importance of personality traits in surrogate leadership exists than the Arab Revolt of 1916–1918 against the Ottoman Empire. Lawrence was already familiar with the Middle East and conversant in Arabic

²⁹⁴ Kohn, *Trust*, 89.

²⁹⁵ Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 195.

²⁹⁶ Mumford, *Proxy Warfare*, 31–32.

²⁹⁷ Mumford, 30,41.

²⁹⁸ Cialdini, *Influence*, xii.

²⁹⁹ Cialdini, 2–3.

before the war due to his studies in the area as a student at Oxford.³⁰⁰ Lawrence did not come from high family station, and thus did not carry with him any air of superiority to his Arab colleagues that many foreigners (especially British) were wont to do.³⁰¹ He was described by many as “a human chameleon,” “essentially dynamic,” having empathy with the Arabs and their cause for autonomy and self-rule, a confidence, and the innate ability to persuade others with “the hypnotic influence of a lion tamer.”³⁰² He developed two primary ideas that assisted him in conveying his thoughts to Feisal and others up and down the irregular chain of command such as it was; his *27 Articles for Handling Arabs*, and a three-part “strategic-tactical staircase” for winning against the Ottoman Empire using primarily Arab tribesmen comprising of algebraic, biological, and psychological methods combined into a formula for irregular warfare.³⁰³ His ability to endure hardships, at times more than the native Arab’s could, made him a leader of example.³⁰⁴ Lawrence’s ability to integrate so seamlessly into the Arab world allowed him to become a case study unto himself of what a guerrilla leader is.

Prince Feisal was another great character of the Arab revolt, and his relationship with Lawrence provided each with a complimentary boost to the other in terms of their abilities and value toward the effort of a free Arab nation. Lawrence himself wrote of Feisal in great detail and describes him as “hot tempered, sensitive, courageous,” but also a “careful judge of men.”³⁰⁵ Feisal had the ability of “extreme patience” when interacting with the numerous tribes that he had to persuade to fight.³⁰⁶ He could exercise tact and had such a great memory that he could recite previous meetings, events, and contracts that would give credit to the current situation.³⁰⁷ He was an excellent peacekeeper between the

³⁰⁰ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 7–8.

³⁰¹ Liddell Hart, 12.

³⁰² Liddell Hart, 12,13,237,252.

³⁰³ Liddell Hart, 109–13, 134–39.

³⁰⁴ Liddell Hart, 253.

³⁰⁵ Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert, The Abridged Edition of Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 36–37.

³⁰⁶ Lawrence, 46.

³⁰⁷ Lawrence, 47.

various tribal groups, and was able to maintain a cohesive movement against the Turks.³⁰⁸ Using the idea of Arab nationality as a rallying point, he was said to be “nationalities best servant, its tool, not its owner.”³⁰⁹

With Feisal’s patience, pragmatism, and network of familial ties with the various tribes of the region and Lawrence’s knowledge of the fortresses, rail system, and technologies of the west, the Arabs combined the hardiness and austerity of the Bedouin lifestyle with light, powerful, and effective modern technology to stunning effect upon a well-trained, modern enemy.³¹⁰ The balance between traditional ways and novel ideas was maintained. More importantly to the revolt, the Arabs were always kept in command. They did not at the time view their sacrifices as pawns of yet another empire.³¹¹ Krieg and Rickli denote this as transformational control, where agents do not view themselves as pawns, but guardians.³¹²

While the OSS men and Mao Zedong are remarkable, the man in the middle, who had the most to gain, and generated support from capitalist and communist alike was Ho Chi Minh. Ho’s interactions with the Office of Strategic Services in 1942 led to his mass appeal to both his own Viet Minh party and the allied nations. Ho was liked by nearly all of his U.S. contacts dismissing his communist agenda and instead appealing to the nationalism that Ho had inspired by advocating for Vietnam since the 1920s.³¹³

In May of 1945, the first member of the OSS Deer Team dropped into Vietnam to embed with Ho’s forces. Six more Deer team members followed in July of the same year in order to provide radio equipment, technological and weapons training, and interpreters to Viet Minh guerrillas gathering intelligence on Japanese forces.³¹⁴

³⁰⁸ Lawrence, 64.

³⁰⁹ Lawrence, 246.

³¹⁰ Arquilla, *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits*, 157–71.

³¹¹ Liddell Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia*, 283.

³¹² Krieg, *Surrogate Warfare*, 185–86.

³¹³ Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh*, 154–55, 176, 202, 217–19, 264.

³¹⁴ Bartholomew-Feis, 71–72.

Besides managing his relationships with western powers, specifically OSS Army officers, Ho Chi Minh simultaneously courted the “self-willed” and “self-confident” People’s Republic of China (PRC) leader Mao Zedong.³¹⁵ The two leaders shared a great deal with respect to ideology, convictions, and political leanings. During the Second World War, Ho allowed members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to use North Vietnam as a safe haven away from Chiang Kai-shek’s KMT Party.³¹⁶ These actions between the two leaders established a kind of political and ideological kinship, and begat a reciprocity between the leaders of China and North Vietnam that flourished for nearly three decades.

This relationship though, was at times quite strained. Had international conditions been slightly different, a more noticeable gap might have emerged between the PRC and North Vietnam. Mao was most concerned about the security of his country, while at the same time being emotionally and ideologically pulled to support revolutions in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and other countries he saw as breaking away from imperial and colonialist rule.³¹⁷ The Korean War, Vietnam War, and finally the Sino-Soviet conflict all serve as highlights to the rougher spots of the tyranny of realpolitik, and communist ideology, and reciprocity for a revolutionary cause.³¹⁸

Gust Avrakotos was no angel, and no slouch either. His career with the CIA came out of an extreme sense of duty to do what he could for his beloved country. Gust saw himself as a blue-collar, red-blooded street fighter, and despised “cake-eaters,” those of high-born wealth and privilege who were handed their success.³¹⁹ He, like Charlie Wilson, was fiercely patriotic, and despised the Soviet Union. The combination of rough street smarts, college education, patriotism, and work ethic made Gust a great recruit, and he was enamored with the idea of becoming a spy for America.³²⁰

³¹⁵ Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 221.

³¹⁶ Zhai, 23.

³¹⁷ Zhai, 20–24.

³¹⁸ Zhai, 218–21.

³¹⁹ Crile, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, 91.

³²⁰ Crile, 48–49.

As a 14-year veteran, Gust became involved in the CIA's near east division, specifically Afghanistan, and the civil unrest against their Soviet occupiers.³²¹ He quickly made friends and sought out other misfits that he could employ to help topple the Soviet Union in Afghanistan by "giving the Soviets their own Vietnam."³²² His ability to fit into many classes gave him access to people whose talents had been misunderstood, undervalued, or taken for granted within the CIA.

Ahmad Shah Massoud was one of, if not the most successful and influential leaders of the Mujahideen fighters during the Soviet-Afghan war of the 1980s. Massoud was not in any kind of patron-client relationship with Pakistan, the U.S., or any other outside actor. While he was supported by many different states at different times, his Tajik heritage, the remoteness of his territory in the Panjshir Valley, and the existence of more ethnically aligned Pashtun warlords with Pakistan set Massoud in a more isolated category.

His personality traits can be traced through many of his previous Mujahideen fighters, reporters, and family members who provided Marcela Grad with their memories of Massoud in her biography of him released in 2009.³²³ Grad's research and compilation of these reflections give vast amounts of information via both written diary entries and anecdotes of the life and times of these dozens of witnesses to what made Massoud and effective guerrilla leader across 26 years of conflict with both foreign and domestic enemies.

Massoud led by example, not assertion or coercion.³²⁴ He was humble, respectful, and lived simply, never accepting nor expecting others to kowtow or demur to him for any reason.³²⁵ He possessed a unique ability to keep calm in highly stressful situations. He was able to make decisions relevant to current circumstances, but at the same time think about a vision of a future outcome or goal, 20–30 years distant. He was charismatic, being

³²¹ Crile, 95.

³²² Crile, 411.

³²³ Grad, *Massoud*.

³²⁴ Grad, 169.

³²⁵ Grad, 197, 199.

described as giving off an “energy” to other people just by being in his presence. He would listen more than speak, being attentive to the concerns of his followers. His faith in God, and the apparent ease that his way of life gave him was a key example that many of his friends and family, and even reporters, tried to emulate.³²⁶

The evidence from the case studies showed that between the cases, language, empathy, values, education, reputation, and servant leadership were prevalent in most of the leaders, most of the time. The use of other methods of assessment and understanding of human relationships, whether in a wartime setting or not, gave several lenses with which to either confirm or deny the usefulness of these and other personality traits. This study is by no means comprehensive. It looks at relatively few avenues of analysis, and only a scant three cases were assessed. There are surely other types of people who could be assessed using LEVERS as a model. Conventional military leaders, businessmen, politicians, or perhaps more controversially ourselves, could be measured to see if the model allows for a deeper understanding of our feelings and attitudes to this end.

B. LESSONS LEARNED

Using LEVERS as a tool, think about people one might view as leaders. What characteristics do they possess? How does one’s opinion of them differ from someone who is seen as less capable in terms of leadership? Introspectively, or in small groups, this model may prove useful to helping to identify both strengths and weaknesses that can be uncovered and corrected. By adding this simple technique to the body of knowledge available, this research may perhaps allow for further study to be conducted in many interconnected disciplines such as psychology, leadership studies, political science, etcetera.

Personality traits and characteristics alone cannot begin to explain why some leaders were successful where others were not, or why some “bad guys” ruled nations or subjugated people for decades without significant loss. It is just another dimly lit alley meandering through a web of correlation in search of causation that may assist us in better

³²⁶ Grad, 208–16.

understanding figures of our past, present, and future by better understanding ourselves and our collective humanity and what it is we are drawn to follow. Of the three case studies, the most successful in terms of final outcome is up for debate.

The time horizon you place upon when their “war” ended matters in this debate, but for me, Ho Chi Minh is the winner. He led a resistance against two colonial empires and a superpower, and yet his dream was realized, albeit after his death. But then, T.E. Lawrence and Feisal did defeat the Ottoman Empire and if that is the measure of success that we want to use, then this too was a victory. Although trading one occupation for several others hardly seems victorious, and now, over a century later, there is still turmoil in the Arabian peninsula that resonates with the issues of colonialism and subjugation. The Soviet Union was being bled white by the rebellion in Afghanistan, at a time when they were being outspent by their capitalist competitor in the West. Gust Avrakotos and Ahmed Shah Massoud achieved their collective goal but fell short of realizing stabilization of Afghanistan under self-determination and a free Afghan government. Charlie Wilson said it best; “These things happened. They were glorious and they changed the world. And the people who deserved the credit are the ones that made the sacrifice. And then we fucked up the endgame.”³²⁷

Personality traits and characteristics did not, by themselves, or in the combination of “LEVERS” deliver success for these individuals. Myriad other traits and characteristics, access and placement, timing, context, courage, willpower, the influence of other individuals, perhaps luck, and happenstance tipped the scales in favor of these men. We have much more ground to cover, and still there will be no smoking gun, no formula to establish a cut and copy antidote for successful relationships. Guerrilla warfare and the types of leadership that it requires relies heavily upon context, and by better understanding what context clues about who is more successful may perhaps allow for further understanding of not only our chosen leaders, but more importantly, ourselves.

Personality traits and characteristics are durable. They can often outlive their owner! Even though the individuals in my case studies are all deceased, their personality

³²⁷ Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War*, 523.

traits and characteristics continue to echo within our consciousness. As mentioned before, the conflicts in which they struggled are between 31 and 102-years-old yet are memorialized in our collective memories to some degree through our knowledge of history and the legends of these individuals. Much of what history gives to the future generations is exactly this, a narrative or lesson about our ancestors, and how they reacted to challenges in their lifetimes. T.E. Lawrence studied the crusaders in Arabia, or Ho Chi Minh listened to his Confucian teachings, Massoud read, listened to, and discussed ancient poetry with his peers. They all developed an understanding of the importance that their personality brought to leadership and embraced the teachings of their elders in oration and in print to expand their potential and develop their own core traits, perhaps subconsciously as well as intentionally.

Personality traits and characteristics are fungible. They are transferable across age, race, sex, and creed. They can be learned, apprenticed, or inherited, not in the genetic sense, but in an adoptive sense. Followers, readers, admirers, even adversaries can seek out answers to questions about their hero's and foes and develop a respect for and knowledge of what made those individuals successful. In so doing, some may attempt to emulate, imitate, or change their own characteristics and traits in order to become successful in their own right, against their own struggle, no matter the scope.

What LEVERS envelops are some of the primary means by which personality traits are transferred to followers, peers, and readers. None of these traits connote negative habits. All stand alone as positive attributes. Placed together, they each provide support and lend credibility to other similarly positive traits. This positivity and synergy are what may be responsible for their conveyance beyond their original owner. The individual men became legends, but even beyond the grave, their personalities add context, color, and perspective to kindred spirits and questioning minds.

Finally, as mentioned in Chapter III, there is no recipe or formula of personality traits that will ensure victory. Many outside factors will guide or constrain or otherwise obfuscate the pathway of all participants in irregular warfare. The intention of the research is to add a few fireflies to the lantern of knowledge to help light the way toward further understanding, and hopefully someday, a meaningful peace.

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