

Organizational Images: Towards a Model of Organizations

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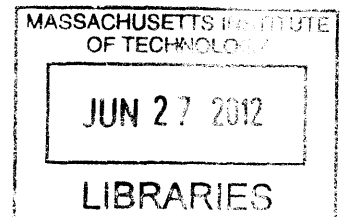
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Submitted to the Department of Political Science on November 18, 2011 in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Political Science

ABSTRACT

This study develops a general theoretical framework for the analysis of organizational behavior by focusing on the notion that organizations develop unique information-processing frameworks, which it labels “organizational images” or “images of operations,” that strongly determine their behavior. The model is then used to draw inferences about the forms of counterinsurgency strategies practiced by the US military in the second war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan. The paper argues that militaries tend to view the tasks they undertake in terms of the coercive application of force, and that this tendency tends to determine the forms of counterinsurgency strategies they chose, leading them to eschew strategies that rely on bargaining with enemy forces. The purported dominance of this coercive “image of operations” is then investigated in military field reports from the war in Afghanistan.

Thesis Supervisor: Roger Petersen

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In *Essence of Decision*, Graham Allison and Phillip Zelikow's classic work on foreign policy decision-making, the authors distinguish between three common paradigms of foreign policy analysis: the rational actor model, the organization theory model, and the governmental politics model. The rational actor model, quite apart from the other two, is based on a concise model of human decision-making known as the rational choice model. Borrowed from economic theory, the rational choice model is a pithy description of human behavior based on a few simple variables. It has had a profound influence on the recent course of political science, becoming for many the basis of their methodological approach to wide-ranging research questions across the many areas of research in the discipline, both in foreign policy and beyond.¹ Its influence in political science generally is attributable to its theoretical elegance and simplicity. Its influence on analyses of foreign policy in particular lies in its methodological simplicity: states are assumed to behave as a rational self-interest maximizing individual would. No similar pithy formulation exists for the organization theory or governmental politics models of foreign policy decision-making. Thus no simple model immediately comes to mind when addressing scenarios where organizational structure and competing interests among several organizational players are thought to play a role. As facile applications of rational choice to policymaking have arguably resulted in major policy failures, e.g. welfare policies aimed at reducing poverty by affecting incentive structures and philosophies of bank deregulation derived from rational choice reasoning, the lack of a concise and easily recognizable alternative should be treated as a non-trivial issue by political analysts and social scientists more generally.

The purpose of this paper is to provide such a pithy model of organizational behavior by focusing on a few key variables and mechanisms. Many important works of organization theory have attempted to lay out a general theory of organizational behavior, especially as applied to large bureaucracies.² Many of these works, especially Herbert Simon's *Administrative Behavior*, James Q. Wilson's *Bureaucracy*, and Morton Halperin's *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, mostly succeed in doing so. Unfortunately, their theoretical explications span hundreds of pages and introduce several significant theoretical constructs. Even in Allison's seminal work *Essence of Decision*, which aimed at summarizing these varying analytical paradigms, the outline of the crucial elements of the rational actor model includes just 4 elements, while the outline of the organizational theory and governmental politics models both span over 30 elements and independent theoretical constructs. The analyst who wishes to apply their insights is thus first challenged with deriving from them an easily communicable model and a set of salient predictions to apply to a specific case. The simple, elegant model of rational choice requires no such work. I argue that having such a simple, "off-the-shelf"

¹ Green, Donald P. and Ian Shapiro. 1994. *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

² e.g. Allison, G. & Zelikow, P. (1999). *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. 2nd edition. Pearson Longman.; Wilson, James Q., *Bureaucracy*, Basic Books, 1991; Simon, Herbert, *Administrative Behavior*, The Free Press, Simon and Schuster Inc, New York, 1997; Morton Halperin and Priscilla Clapp *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, 2006.

conceptualization of organizational behavior would provide significant advantages to the analyst of political behavior and social behavior in general.³

Despite their sprawling nature, however, all of these classic works of organization theory tend to ground their analyses in one basic insight: organizations amount to a shared mental map used to guide their participants' behavior; since this "image" of the organization must exist in each person's brain to some degree for the organization to remain functional, some mechanism must be used to coordinate organization members' images. In bureaucracies made up of a large number of loosely coordinated and semi-autonomous sub-units, this coordination is often difficult and incomplete, a fact which leads to many common bureaucratic pathologies. The semi-autonomous nature of these units itself may generate great heterogeneity in their individual conceptions of the group image, and necessitate organizational activities to keep their images of organizational operations coordinated. The model of decision-making presented in this paper thus starts from this basic premise of "images" and coordination mechanisms. It suggests that many of the characteristic pathologies of organizational behavior arise from these basic facts. Its key insight can be boiled down to this: organization members make choices to maximize their utility, but this utility is thought of in terms of a socially constructed set of metrics and problem-solving shortcuts— the "image"; the process by which this image is established reflects the history of the organization, specifically the incentives its members faced in the past.

To validate the model developed here, I consider a recent major decision in US foreign policy: the innovation and adoption of the new counter-insurgency (COIN) doctrine (embodied in the counterinsurgency field manual FM 3-24) in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This case is particularly suited to an organizational analysis: it is difficult for a number of reasons to determine *post facto* what an optimal, unitary rational decision-maker would have done in response to the deteriorating strategic situation in Iraq. E.g. was the implementation of COIN optimal with respect to the US's broader geostrategic interests? It is nearly impossible to tell without the benefit of considerable hindsight. Or, was COIN optimal in terms of creating the best chance of defeating the insurgency? Reasonable people could fiercely disagree (and have). Was the adoption of COIN optimal from the point of view of the Army and Marines, who would shoulder the task of implementing it? Perhaps, though there's equally reason to believe that the Army and Marines would resist a doctrine that took them so far outside their core competencies. Lastly, was the decision optimal in terms of the political incentives of the president? Again, it is difficult to tell. Applying the rational actor model to the decision to adopt COIN is thus quite difficult. Additionally, the decision amounted a major bureaucratic shift, dragging the military outside its preferred set of roles and tasks; the decision is thus assumed to have significant organizational dimensions.

³ Having such a characteristic model of organizational behavior has been a primary goal of the various strands of the "new institutionalism" in the political science literature. March and Olsen, 1989, for example, argue that collective action should be adopted by political scientists as the dominant model of political behavior. March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. 1989. *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. New York: Free Press.

As an alternative to the rational choice model, I consider what a model of bureaucratic decision-making based on “images” as the basic unit of analysis would say about the adoption of COIN. To do so, I examine a specific theory of military decision-making, Colin Jackson’s theory of organizational learning dysfunction by modern militaries in counterinsurgency engagements, in its application to learning in Iraq and Afghanistan. As my goal is theory building, I first show that his model is basically an extension to a specific case of the general “image” model of decision-making developed here, and then examine how well it fits the evidence: Jackson’s theory posits that the military’s characteristic “image” of operations, which he labels the “military operational code”—a set of deeply held professional beliefs and ways of seeing the world stressing the one-way application of coercive force as the dominant method for achieving its goals—inhibits militaries from converging to counterinsurgency “best practices”⁴. This is because these “best practices” do not fit with their characteristic methods for representing and addressing problems since they cast the problem as one of attaining a political settlement rather than defeating the enemy. When adaptation to counterinsurgency “best practices” does occur, it is because either resource scarcity or civilian intervention (a coordination mechanism) has intervened to spur the military into considering other options.

Jackson applies this theory to a set of familiar historical cases (e.g. the British in Malaya and the French in Algeria), finding in all of them a characteristic learning trap: the military operational code inhibits adaptation by encouraging the military to first ignore mounting signs of failure since they don’t register in the operational code’s usual performance metrics, and then to “exploit” existing alternatives suggested by the operational code rather than “exploring” for new ones. In applying the model to Iraq, I find a similar pattern of delayed recognition of failure, and exploitation of more conventional responses preceding exploration of new counter-insurgency techniques such as “hearts and minds” operations to win over the population, and violent bargaining aimed at co-opting the insurgency.⁵ Thus, the dominant image of operations held by military members, stressing the coercive use of force as the dominant problem-solving paradigm, inhibits adaptation to alternative images that may violate this basic paradigm. Reviewing the set of cases in his study, Jackson argues that the pervasiveness of the “learning trap” pattern across militaries situated in widely differing cultural contexts (e.g. he also considers the counterinsurgency behavior of the Thai military), differing levels of counterinsurgency experience, and differing normative and material constraints suggests that the cognitive biases of the dominant military image play a dispositive role in determining counterinsurgency strategy choice, outperforming alternative theories based on experience, culture, or organizational constraints. In this study I present another case study in support of Jackson’s theory, examining various campaigns across the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and attempt to show that the dominant military image has influenced the course of strategic choice in both of those wars. Part of the evidence in support of the role of the dominant military image is thus indirect: the forms of

⁴ This study leaves aside the question of whether population-centric COIN constitutes a “best practice” or not.

⁵ These practices were “new” to the US military of 2003-2006; they were in no sense new in the history of warfare.

operations chosen are taken as evidence of the types of the thinking the military is engaging in. The prevalence of certain forms of counterinsurgency operations over others in this case study, and in the cases Jacksons presents, is taken as evidence of the influence of the dominant military image. To supplement this indirect argumentation, in the second section, I also attempt to present direct evidence of military cognitive frames by reviewing field reports from Afghanistan drawn from the Wikileaks Afghan war logs, comprised of documents from the US military's SIGACTS or significant activities database. These reports, representing internal and erstwhile secret military discourse, should allow us to directly view the dominant military image at work, both in how it leads to certain conceptions of operations and in how the environment and environmental feedback is processed.

Jackson's theory presents a specific theory of counterinsurgency innovation: when alternative approaches are tried, it is most likely the result of disruptions to the military member's decision-making process emanating from resource constraints, civilian intervention, or "task pressure" (i.e. the pressures of the operational environment). In reviewing the evidence from Iraq and Afghanistan, I find limited support for this pattern of innovation: innovative approaches to the COIN problem, such as Colonel Sean MacFarland's efforts at tribal mobilization in the oft-cited Anbar "Awakening" movement resulted from a combination of resource constraints and a long experience of failure in the region (task pressure). On the other hand, Lt. General David Petraeus's operations in Mosul at the beginning of the war followed an innovative pattern without such pressures. I argue that, though these examples don't fit Jackson's theory exactly, they reflect basic aspects of the organizational theory laid out below: adaptation often occurs because lower-level unit's guiding images gradually shift due to the differential effects of the environment on their thinking versus the effects on the organization as a whole. Additionally, as suggested by some of Jackson's case studies, innovative commanders such as MacFarland and Petraeus in Iraq, or General Leclerc in French Indochina or General Gerard Templer in British Malaya, may bring alternative images into the organization from their wider experiences.

Jackson's theory suggests that, in addition to suggesting sub-optimal solutions to the counterinsurgency problem, dominant military professional and cognitive biases (the "image") also lead the military to subsequently purge the lessons learned during counterinsurgency campaigns after they are over. Eventually, the dominant military image of operations as the coercive application of force to the enemy will reassert itself, even if some units temporarily innovate a new approach. The second half of the empirical section below tests this assertion by examining doctrine documents and field reports from the war in Afghanistan: following the perceived successes of the "surge" in Iraq, the new approaches to counterinsurgency doctrine being promoted by General David Petraeus and others in Iraq became the "new conventional wisdom" in Afghanistan. This institutionalization of COIN approaches followed on-the-ground innovation in Iraq. If Jackson's argument about the influence of the military's professional biases is correct, we should see these new approaches hewing more closely to the dominant coercive paradigm of the military than to more unconventional approaches to fighting insurgencies, thus purging the most effective and unconventional innovations from the military's repertoire. To guide this analysis, I review Jackson's typology of counterinsurgency strategies, arguing that the most rare form of counterinsurgency strategies, which shifts the problem

from one of working with the people to kill the enemy to one of negotiating with the enemy and affiliated non-state groups to generate a political settlement, was rarely tried in either campaign. Rather, the COIN revolution basically augmented the military's basic enemy-focused violent coercive approach with elements aimed at coercing the population into supporting the effort. It was therefore more a result of military thinking applied to a different problem rather than a genuinely innovative approach, pointing to the influence of the military "image" in its processes of adaptation.

The paper is organized as follows: Chapter 1 develops the image-based model of organizational decision-making (henceforth the "image model") and develops hypotheses on the process of organizational learning from it. Chapter 2 introduces the Jackson theory of organizational learning dysfunction and discusses how it fits into the image model. Chapter 3 applies the model to the case of Iraq. Chapter 4 concludes with a restatement of the model and a general discussion of its utility and relation to other theories. Before proceeding to chapter 1, in the next section I briefly clarify the goals of the paper.

A note on models

The goal of this paper is to develop a pithy model of organizational behavior, and models necessarily ignore certain aspects of the world. Their purpose is to make meaningful simplifications of broad social dynamics based on realistic assumption that allow one to isolate mechanisms of interest. They should therefore be fairly simple and fit to the context of the analysis. One of the oft-criticized tendencies of rational choice theorists, on the other hand, is that they mistakenly pursue the development of a deductive theory with *universal* validity. In doing so, they often overcomplicate their analyses to save the deductive core of the theory. To quote one critic:

Why has the rational choice approach become so influential in political science when it illuminates so little about politics? The answer lies in the professional imperatives political scientists face. Too many of them buy into the misguided idea that the only way to develop a science of politics (as distinct from journalistic commentary) is to have a universal deductive theory, and they then turn to economics in search of it. (The economists turned to physics for the same reason; I leave it to others to debate the wisdom of that move.)

[...]

When rational choice models are specified in ways that make clear, arresting predictions, they often lead to results that are contradicted by what we know about politics. [...] Defenders of rational choice respond with endless adaptations of the meaning of rationality, saving the models at the price of rendering them banal.⁶

⁶ Ian Shapiro, "A model that pretends to explain everything", New York Times, February 26, 2000, Arts section. <http://phoenix.liu.edu/~uroy/eco54/histlist/pol-sci-rational.htm>

On the other hand, the development of deductive theories is considered, by some at least, to be the distinguishing feature of scientific inquiry.⁷ Indeed, the availability of appropriate, simple deductive theories allow the analyst great leverage in explaining wide-ranging phenomena. Elegant theories such as rational choice can thus lull the analyst into a false sense of omniscience if not applied appropriately, just as they can provide great insight when they are. Modern social science has thus rightly focused on developing rigorous theories, but has often erred in applying them too readily when they provide little analytical leverage. The availability of other pithy, off-the-shelf conceptualizations of human behavior besides rational choice should thus be helpful for the discipline. The work of Allison and others aimed at just such a formulation of organizational behavior, but arguably fell short of a pithy and easily communicable set of analytical propositions. This paper aims at developing one such alternative.

Chapter 1: an image-based model of organizational decision-making

For the sake of clarity, I first state the theory *in toto* in the next section. Section 2 unpacks the various concepts that go into it, citing, where appropriate, the origin of these ideas. Section 3 presents the theory in outline and uses it to develop a specific model of instances where organizations must adapt to changing circumstances (i.e. situations parallel to those analyzed by Jackson with respect to military learning during war).

The model in a nutshell

The model of organizational decision-making developed here can be stated in the following way: all human choices in the various contexts we face are guided by an internal mental image. An image tells the person how information from the environment is to be interpreted and what the person can do and should do in response to its stimuli. Thus an image is a sort of “program” the human executes continuously that conditions their perceptions and choices. Organizations are made up of 2 or more people whose images share certain aspects in common that allow them to coordinate their behavior to pursue some common goal.⁸ We can refer to this aspect of their images that overlap as the “organizational image”. A person’s image changes over time in response to conscious and unconscious activities of choice, some of which are influenced by the person’s incentive structure (I’ll refer to this simply as “image drift”). Thus in order to ensure the organizational image remains coordinated, the organization must affect individuals so that their personal images remains coordinated with the organizational image. They do so

⁷ John Kay, “Economics: Rituals of rigour,” *Financial Times*, n.d., <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/faba8834-cf09-11e0-86c5-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1W6Rq1Het>.

⁸ Following Herbert Simon, one can define coordination formally as obtaining whenever the behavior of one individual is dependent on the behavior of another. Op. cit. Simon, p. 9-10.

by supplying payoffs that fit the individuals' incentive structures (i.e. they supply incentives to meet a demand for incentives), a process one may label "authority".

The choices organizations make in general are the result of the organizational images held by their participants, and thus of the organization's ability to use payoffs to keep the organizational image coordinated. The organization's decisions vis-à-vis the outside world are determined by the images of organization members who have authority over the "operators" by which the organization affects the outside world.

Unpacking the elements:

Images

By images I mean the most basic conception of how humans process information about their environments: we all possess a psychological "set", a conditioned way of interpreting information about the world and responding to it. When light beams strike a cell phone and then strike our eyes, our brains assemble the light beams into an image in the mind which is then matched to a store of past encountered images that tells us it is a cell phone, and calls to mind what a cell phone is. The image thus conditions our perception. It also conditions our response to problems: when someone's walking down the street and encounters an obstacle, a number of programs for dealing with the obstacle may be triggered—walk around it, wait for it to pass, complain about it—depending on the specific type of obstacle encountered. Lastly, the image provides value metrics for deciding how close we are to achieving the goals of the image: if our work at our occupation is consistently being rewarded with bonuses, we imagine we're doing a good job.

One way to think about images is as the full information set necessary for a human to perform a certain task in a certain environment. In particular, one can think of an image being composed of goals, methods, and selection rules: goals are predefined states of the environment to be achieved; methods are things the person can do to achieve them; selection rules tell the person which methods to choose in response to different configurations of the environment in order to achieve a goal.

Images and incentives

Our guiding image in a specific context is the result of past learning processes, either in that context or in a similar one, and its development is guided by our incentive structures. E.g. we know to avoid touching a hot stove either because someone strongly encouraged us not to in the past, or we touched one and got burned. In the former case, we may have had an incentive to listen to the person (e.g. a mom who would scold us if we didn't). Thus our incentive to follow their authority led to the alteration of our guiding image with respect to the hot stove. In the latter case, our personal incentive not to feel pain led to the alteration.

The model developed here sees these two routes to image development—authority, or personal learning—as the complete set of processes by which images are developed. I ignore unconscious processes of image development, as well as chemical

changes etc. (e.g. someone gradually succumbing to Alzheimer's, or who suffered a blow to the head, is losing their guiding image due to another process entirely).

The organizational image

When we join an organization, we allow part of our personal image to be made up by an organizational image. We do so, as the model so far suggests, because it serves some incentive we hold, whether it be to get paid, to build a sense of solidarity with coworkers, to create a sense of purpose, or some other payoff. Once we become an organization member, we allow part of our choice processes to be guided by the organizational image so as to serve the organization's purpose. Thus, we can define organizations as mental maps—images—shared by 2 or more people and used to coordinate behavior, where coordination is defined as obtaining whenever one person's behavior is dependent on another's.⁹

Morton Halperin and Priscilla Clapp ground the theory of bureaucratic behavior they present in *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* on images: "When participants share a set of global images, those images will decisively shape the stand they take on particular issues."¹⁰ They go on to list certain images that dominated government thinking during the cold war. E.g. "The preeminent feature of international politics is the conflict between communism and the free world", or "Every nation that falls to communism increases the power of the communist bloc in its struggle with the free world", and "the United States has an obligation to aid any people resisting communism at home or abroad."¹¹ Thus, the organizational image can prescribe a way of seeing the world, as in the first statement, value metrics for analyzing changes in the world, as in the second statement, or things that the organization should do in response to the environment, as in the third. These images may or may not be codified in official doctrine and, in fluid bureaucracies facing quickly changing circumstances, they are less likely to be written down. Reconstructing them is thus an ethnographic task. As the above examples suggest, organizational behavior, especially in large organizations, is mostly guided by informal understandings of this sort.

Consideration of images is especially important in large organizations made up of semi-autonomous sub-units, i.e. bureaucracies. In such organizations, each sub-unit is a sub-organization with its own potentially unique image. Coordinating these units' images so as to achieve the organizational purpose could be difficult.

Coordinating Images: incentive supply and demand

As noted above, images can change either in response to incentives to follow authority, or due to personal incentives such as the avoidance of pain, the pursuit of

⁹ Under this definition, most human relationships involve organizations: friends, families, social networks, businesses, industries, states, nations, political parties, and religions are all organizations under this definition.

¹⁰ Op. cit., Clapp and Halperin, 9.

¹¹ Ibid. 10-11

profit, or the desire to pursue reasonable courses of action (I leave aside what factors motivate personal learning besides general ones such as failure). Over time, if environmental stimulus is allowed to affect an isolated organization member or sub-unit so as to alter their guiding image via their personal learning processes, their image may become discoordinated with the organizational image.¹² Thus, authority structures would have to supply payoffs that matched their incentives to listen to people with authority in order to guide their image back to harmony with the organizational image.¹³ Following James Q. Wilson's incentive theory of the organizations¹⁴, we may thus imagine a supply and demand of incentives: organization members with authority must be able to supply enough incentives to meet other organization members' demand for incentives to keep their organizational images well coordinated.

One can imagine a few scenarios where the differential effects of image changes due to authority versus image changes due to personal motives could lead to various problems for an organization. E.g. if incentives to follow authority are too high, personal learning may be discouraged, which could impede the organization from adapting to circumstances. On the other hand, if personal learning is allowed to dominate, an organizational sub-unit may begin to pursue goals that are counter-productive to the organization's broader purposes. The theory presented here also suggests that, under certain scenarios, organizational images could be coordinated without the exercise of authority: if everyone finds a particular image reasonable and adopts it on their own, the organizational image could be coordinated around a new idea without anyone being "forced" into adopting it by authority mechanisms. On the other hand, it suggests that, when a new image is opposed by the majority of an organization's members, members with authority may need a great supply of incentives (negative or positive) to ensure coordination.

Personal choice:

Images guide choices. How exactly does this happen? Rational choice imagines an agent with fairly robust mental faculties to consider all the relative values of all the different possible states of the world and choose the one that maximizes his utility. As noted by Herbert Simon and others, this is a bad description of human choice. Rather, our rationality is bounded: we use mental shortcuts and incomplete information to make decisions. Few people have the time to engage in the exhaustive mental process described by rational choice. Furthermore, humans' limited attention span means that we essentially

¹² E.g. a sub-unit of a business firm that provides customer service may be motivated to make increasing investments in customer service technology in response to complaints of slow service; these investments could cause the unit to go over budget, leading more senior executives to impose more severe constraints on its spending.

¹³ These acts of incentive distribution by the organization may be overt, such as censure or penalties levied on the organization member, or more subtle, such as the ongoing threat of being fired.

¹⁴ James Q. Wilson and Peter B. Clark, "Incentive Systems: A Theory of Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (September 1961): 129-166.

consider alternatives one at a time. Choice is thus a form of sequential search over a limited range of alternatives.¹⁵ The notion of “images” constraining choice captures these basic insights.

In influential work, John Steinbrunner finds that individuals use a set of standard techniques to deal with uncertainty in the outside world, the most prominent of which is “use of past images and argument by analogy”: as summarized by Halperin,

Individuals frequently attempt to determine which previous event, either in international politics or in their own personal experience, most closely relates to the event at hand, and then they seek to reason by analogy. Thus the impulse to avoid another Munich played a major role in shaping the reaction of many government officials to the Vietnam situation.¹⁶

Thus, instead of a rational process of choice over all alternatives, a particular decision is framed in terms of some previous decision. Instead of considering the universe of possibilities, this mental shortcut allows you to consider just one or a few.

While there are other types of shortcuts that Steinbrunner mentions, focusing on this particular one is the most informative for qualifying organizational behavior: as in Simon’s model of bounded rationality and “satisficing”, we chose solutions that we believe are good enough in a situation *based on our understanding of similar events from the past*.¹⁷ Our images determine the metrics of value we use. They also condition the alternatives we consider in the first place. As a result, we often engage in “exploitation” of known alternative approaches to a problem, rather than engaging in “exploration” for new ones.¹⁸

Organizational Choice

With all the elements of the model in place, it is possible to meaningfully qualify how organizational choices happen: organizational choices that affect the world outside the organization through some organizational operator¹⁹ reflect the image of the subgroup of the organization that has authority over that operator.

¹⁵ Emotions and motivations citation

¹⁶ *op. cit.* 21

¹⁷ Early critiques of Simon’s model ignored this aspect of his theory; Andrew Lo argued recently that this led a valuable and powerful approach to theorizing decision-making to be overlooked by social scientists, and to the growing hegemony of rational choice theories. Lo, A. (2004). “The Adaptive Markets Hypothesis: Market Efficiency from an Evolutionary Perspective.” *Journal of Portfolio Management* 30 , 15–29.

¹⁸ James G. March, “Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning,” *Organization Science*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (February 1991).

¹⁹ An operator is just any thing that the organization can do to the outside world. I.e. a government bureaucracy can hold a press conference (an operator to communicate with journalists); the Pentagon can make decisions affecting force distributions (thus the ability to affect where military assets are is an operator).

Thus if a sub-unit of a military has the authority to control which tactics to use, and their guiding image (built up from their experience and learning processes) tells them to pursue different tactics than the ones prescribed by the organizational plan, they may do so. If authority structures catch wind of this and disapprove of the new tactics because they don't fit their image, they may attempt to distribute negative incentives (punishments) to coordinate the unit's errant group image (image competition). If, on the other hand, they like the new tactics (i.e. they appeal to their personal incentives) they may decide to impose the new image on other units via the distribution of incentives. Choice is thus determined by images but is constrained by authority.

The model in outline

The preceding section unpacked the models central concepts. In outline, they are:

1. Images: associated patterns of mental response to the outside world that tell the individual what they are seeing, how to evaluate it, and how to respond to it.
2. Organizational image: that part of a person's image that coordinates their behavior with other organization members to achieve the organizational purpose. Organizations are two or more people sharing an image.²⁰
3. Incentives:
 - a. personal incentives lead to the adoption of new images or alterations of existing ones because the individual derives some utility from the change.
 - b. Authority: organizational incentives lead the individual to adopt an image because the individual has some incentive to follow authority structures
4. Incentive supply and demand: the organization's authority structures can attempt to coordinate members' images with the organizational image via distributions of payoffs the organization members want (e.g. salaries, promotions, adopting methods organization members prefer, etc.)
5. Choice: at both the individual level and the organizational level, choices are determined by the images of those doing the choosing.

²⁰ Following Benedict Anderson, organizations are thus "imagined communities."

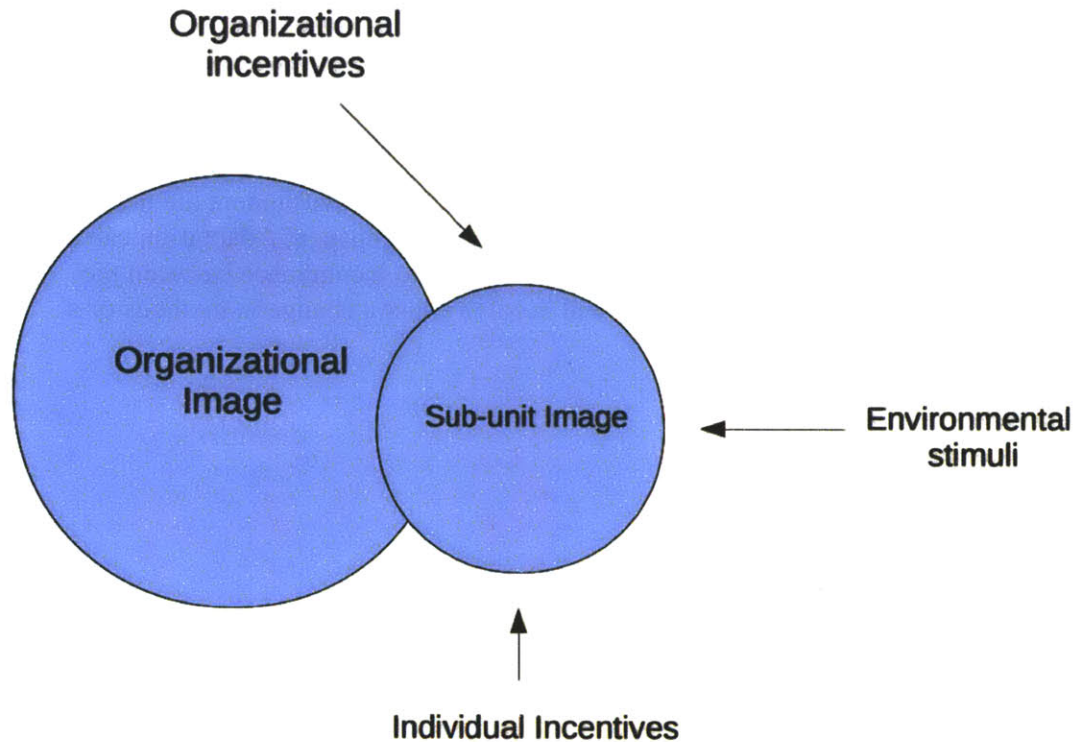


Figure 1

Applying the model to processes of adaptation

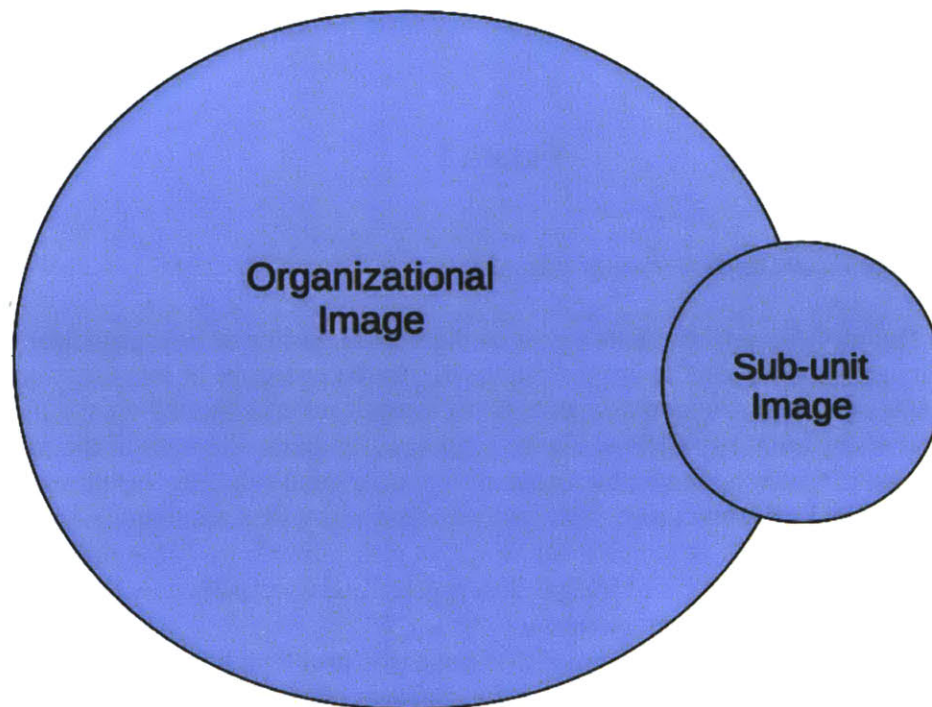
The model above presents a general theoretical outline of how organizations work: images govern choice; images change due to the influence of incentives and the constraints of the environment; organizational images are coordinated via the distribution of incentives by authority figures. Figure 1 portrays the basic elements of the model; the lines represent forces acting on the image of organizational sub-units (a sub-unit may be a single individual, or some group with routinized authority structures (divisions, departments, etc.)). The organizational image, in turn, is made up of the images of its sub-units. The whole system of images is supported and coordinated by the ongoing distribution of incentives (e.g. salaries).

In this section, I apply the model to a specific problem: how organizations deal with adaptation. Specifically, when an organizational image is not fit to the circumstances the organization faces, what processes are likely to follow? Adaptation to unfavorable circumstances seems to describe the process of moving from conventional war approaches to COIN in Iraq, so the purpose of this section is to develop abstractly a model of what one should expect to see in this process using the image model of organizations above.

First, what does it mean that an organization holds an image that is not fit to the circumstances? As defined above, images tell you how to interpret what you're seeing, how to measure it in terms of personal or organizational value or utility, and what behaviors to choose in response to it.²¹ Thus, images tell you what your goal is and how to achieve it in a given environment. When an image is not matched to the circumstances, this means that the methods and perceptions it applies to the environment are not suited to achieving the goal. Either the methods or the goals must change. Adaptation can be understood as a change in dominant images in response to incoherence between the dominant image and the environment. It will involve either a change in methods or a change in goals, or both.

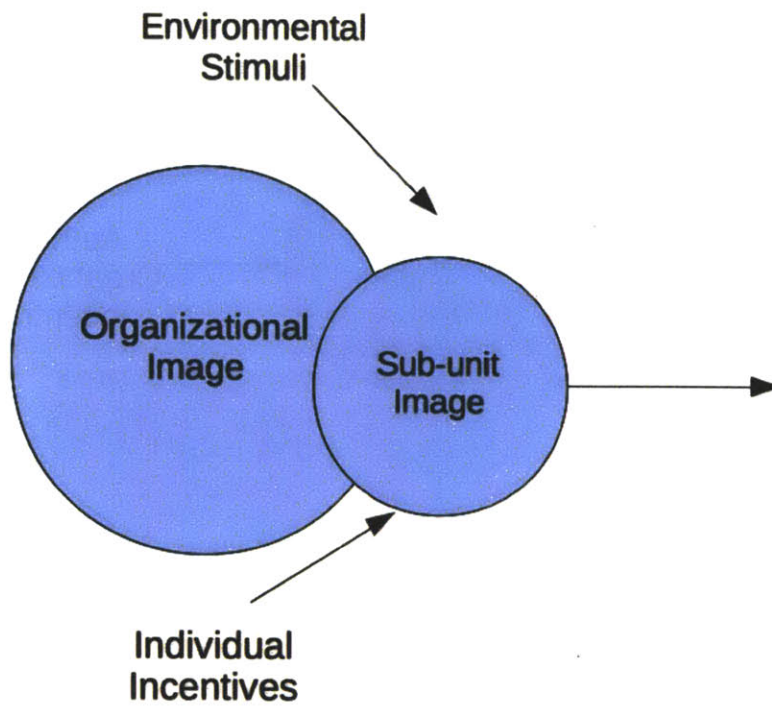
Figure 2:

T0: Image Harmony

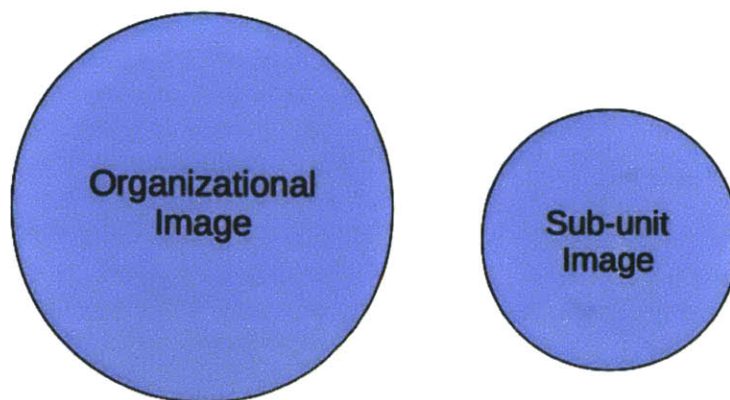


²¹ One way to think about images is suggested by Allan Newell's model of human-computer interaction: images are made up of goals—what state of the environment to pursue; methods—mental indices of the various ways available for affecting the environment (one can call these means “operators”); and selection rules—rules that tell you what method to choose in response to specific environmental stimuli.

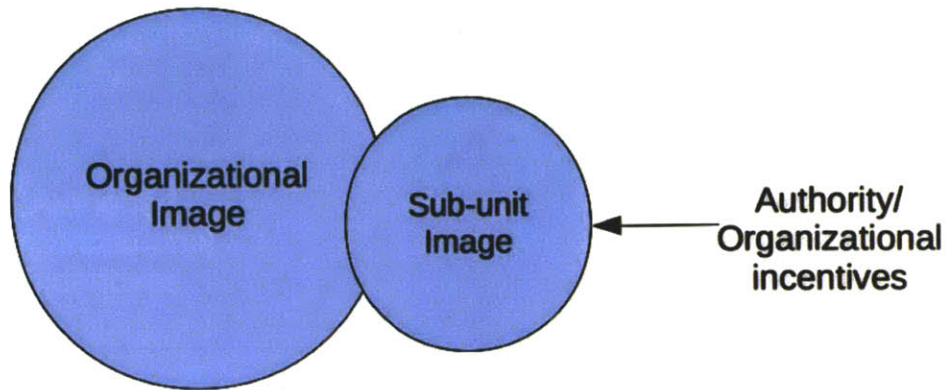
T1: Sub-unit learning



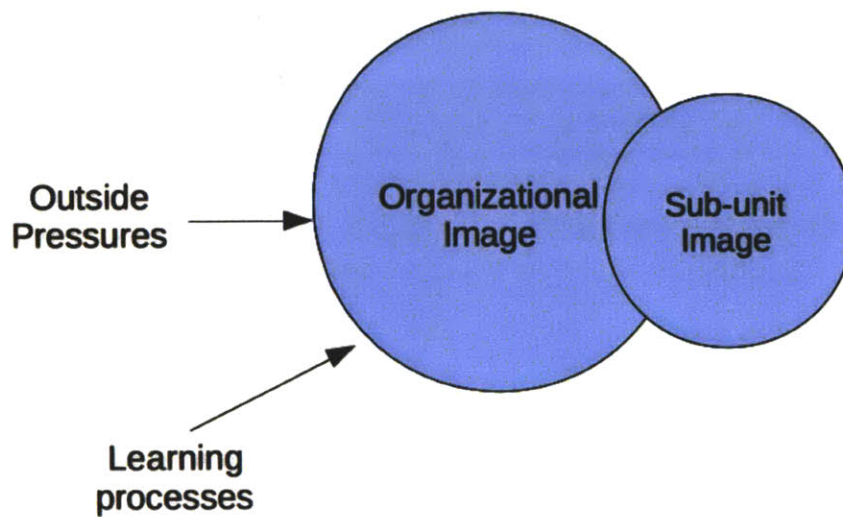
T2: Image incoherence



T3a: organizational resistance



T3b: organizational adaptation



T4: Image harmonization

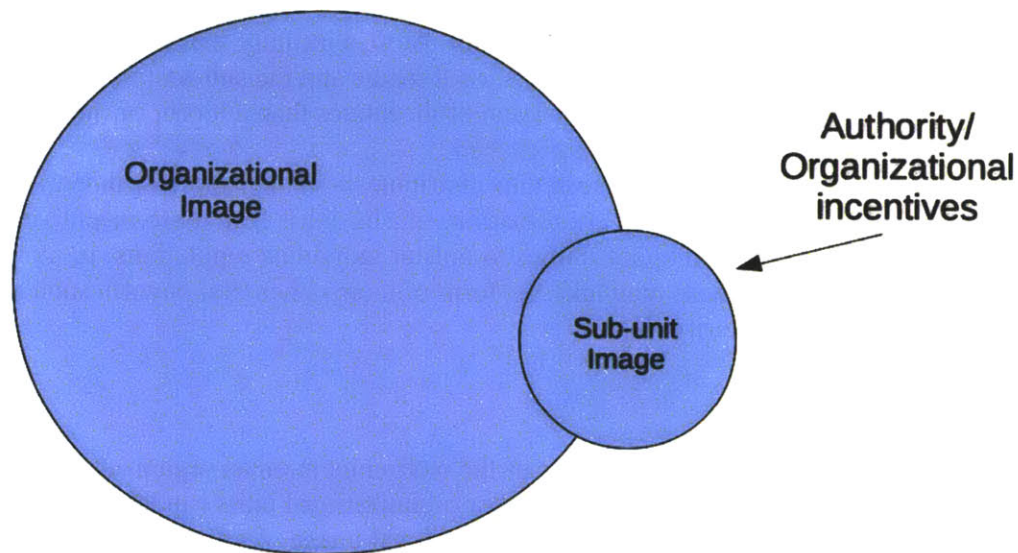


Figure 2 portrays an organizational adaptation process based on images. At t_0 , the organization is in equilibrium: the organization's various sub-units and the individuals they are composed of share images sufficiently to coordinate their behavior towards the end of achieving the organization's goals. At t_1 , the environment interacts with the incentive structure of an organizational sub-unit so as to gradually draw their guiding image away from the organizational image. At t_2 , the sub-unit's image reaches a state of disconnect from the organizational image. In response, at t_{3a} , the organization may either attempt to punish or reward the sub-unit in an attempt to induce them to bring their image (and resulting decisions) back in line with the organizational image; alternatively, t_{3b} , the organization may choose to adopt the sub-unit's image, either because of outside pressure or because it provides the organization with some payoff. Many scenarios likely involve some combination of t_{3a} and t_{3b} . Lastly, at t_4 , the organization falls back into equilibrium as the sub-unit's image and the organizational image become coordinated again.

T0: Equilibrium

Looking at each step more closely, at t_0 , the figure portrays the sub-unit's image and the organization's image as overlapping incompletely. A sub-unit could be a single individual, or a sub-organization within an organization (e.g. a division, a department, etc.). The figure portrays these images as overlapping only imperfectly: for most organizational tasks, there are some decisions that organizational operators must make that are not completely spelled out by the organizational guiding image. E.g. participating in a soup kitchen may require varying levels of coordination of individual behavior:

opening cans and cooking soup could be largely self-directed by the individual based on his prior knowledge of how to do those tasks. On the other hand, the volunteer will have to accept some level of coordination from the organizers in order to allow the cafeteria line to run smoothly, and perhaps in interacting with patrons. A military, on the other hand, may require much more explicit coordination of the individual image of soldiers: extensive training in highly specialized tasks is required to create the patterns of mental response necessary to coordinate a military unit. At t_0 , a military will have generated much greater overlap between the organizational image and the sub-unit image through a greater (and perhaps more diverse) provision of incentives than a looser or more short-term organization like a volunteer soup kitchen.

In equilibrium, the organization thus distributes a stable supply of incentives to ensure the required level of image coordination. In a business firm these incentives may take the form of salaries and opportunities to bolster individual reputations. In more voluntary organizations these may take the form of more ephemeral payoffs such as a sense of purpose or solidarity.²²

T1: Sub-unit learning

In step t_1 , the differential effects of the environment on an organizational sub-unit versus the effects of the environment on other organizational units can lead the sub-unit image to gradually drift away from the organizational image. As theorized above, this is a gradual process of the environment interacting with organizational or personal incentives and learning processes of the sub-unit to change their guiding image. How gradual this process proceeds is a function of several factors, including the structure of individual incentives, the challenges of the environment, the organization's learning routines, and how extensively the organizational image is specified. E.g. if an organization's image specifies several contingencies to expect in an uncertain environment, negative feedback from the environment may first be interpreted in terms of these defined contingencies instead of being realized as a novel problem to be addressed. Exploitation of existing routines may thus precede exploration from new ones. On the other hand, personal incentives such as the desire to avoid failure or personal danger may spur a sub-unit to ignore organizational routines and codes and engage in exploration earlier on. Additionally, organizational procedures may allow certain organizational players to ignore existing rules and norms and engage in exploration themselves if they strongly desire to do so. Or, organizational codes may specifically guide certain individuals to engage in exploration, e.g. a research and development department.

In a seminal paper on organizational adaptation, James March differentiates between exploitation and exploration in organizational learning: exploration involves the search for new solutions outside the organizational repertoire; exploitation involves the application, refinement and development of existing organizational routines. March

²² The "incentive theory of the firm" developed by Peter Clark and James Q. Wilson theorizes three discrete incentive categories that govern organizational behavior: material incentives, solidary incentives (payoffs related to a sense of solidarity), and purposive incentives (payoffs related to achieving some purpose). This theory is discussed in chapter 4.

observes that organizations face explicit and implicit tradeoffs between these two routes to adaptation. Focusing on exploration can result in a plethora of underdeveloped ideas and too little distinctive competence, while organizations focusing on exploitation risk finding themselves trapped in sub-optimal stable equilibria. Choosing the right balance between exploration and exploitation is a complicated task. As he summarizes, “Understanding the choices and improving the balance between exploration and exploitation are complicated by the fact that returns from the two options vary not only with respect to their expected values, but also with respect to their variability, their timing, and their distribution within and beyond the organization.”²³

March goes on to theorize that the “mutual learning” embodied in the organization’s codes and procedures may affect the balance between exploitation and exploration: organizational procedures, norms, routines, etc. both constrain individual behavior, but also accumulate the knowledge generated by individual learning. In the present study, I refer to the entire complex of recorded patterned responses of the organization as the organization’s “image”, which thus comprise norms, routines, procedures, etc.—any guiding information contained in the organizations’ memory. The image both governs the choices of the individuals in the organization, but is also contributed to by the organization’s members. March summarizes the inherent learning tradeoff succinctly: “The gains to individuals from rapidly adapting to the code [the image] (which is consistently closer to reality than the average individual) are offset by second-order losses stemming from the fact that the code can learn only from individuals that deviate from it.”²⁴ Learning organizations must thus both constrain individual learning in order that knowledge be disseminated properly, but also encourage individual learning so that knowledge can be generated. Different organizations will adopt different mixes of exploration and exploitation based on their incentive structures and environmental pressures.

As Barry Posen and others have theorized, the intense operating environment of militaries in wartime means that they will likely favor exploitation over exploration. As Posen writes, militaries develop extensive standard operating procedures to deal with the high uncertainty of the battlefield. We should thus expect the process of “image drift” in t_1 to be slow in militaries. Business firms, on the other hand, will likely have to come to a more specific balance between exploitation and exploration, depending on the type of business they do: a high-technology firm derives its profits from constant exploration, while a large retailer may gain the most from creating efficiencies in its existing supply chain.

T2: image incoherence

At t_2 , the challenges of the organizational operator’s environment combined with an ill-suited image lead the sub-units image to drift away from the organization’s image. E.g. a store in a convenience store chain faces a persistent burglary problem, in response to which the store manager decides to close early, violating company policy. His personal incentive to remain safe overwhelmed his organizational incentive to comply with the

²³ Op. cit. March

²⁴ *ibid.* 76

franchise policy on store hours. Or, US bomber pilots in Japan in WWII are ordered to fly low, subjecting them to anti-aircraft fire, leading them to avoid engaging their targets.²⁵ Their fears for their personal safety led them to not follow the organization's prescribed behaviors.

T3: organizational resistance or adaptation

Image incoherence may potentially last a while, depending on how vigilantly sub-units are monitored by other organizational decision-makers. Once the incoherence is recognized, however, if this incoherence threatens the incentive supply of other organization members, they will attempt to correct it in order to defend their own image, t3a. To do so, they can supply positive or negative incentives to the sub-unit in order to induce them to bring their image back into harmony with the organizational image. In the examples above, the convenience store franchise may threaten to fire the store manager if he does not restore its night hours. If the store manager fears being fired more than being robbed, he may comply. In the WWII example, according to Robert McNamara, General Curtis LeMay told his airmen that he would be in first plane and that any pilot who didn't go over the target would be court-martialed; the desertion rate dropped immediately.

On the other hand, as suggested by March, the deviations of the sub-unit from the organizational image may potentially constitute a useful adaptation in terms of achieving the organization's goals, t3b. If this is recognized by other members of the organization with decision-making authority, they may choose to adopt the deviant image as part of the organizational image instead of rejecting. As theorized above, this change in images will happen if the new adaptation provides some payoff to the organization. In highly routinized organizations such as militaries, t3b may be more unlikely than t3a, and may require some outside prodding for organization members to realize that a sub-unit's new image constitutes a useful adaptation. This is portrayed in t3b as "outside pressures". In business firms, these could be profit motives or pressures from customers that lead decision-makers to realize that a sub-unit's new image could contribute to profitability. For militaries, this outside pressure may come from civilian authorities or political pressure from the population.

In most scenarios, organizational learning will reflect some combination of t3a and t3b, representing the basic push and pull between organizational conformity and individual learning suggested by March.

T4: image harmony

At the last step of the adaptation process, the sub-unit's deviant image is either adopted, rejected, or some combination of the two occurs. The organization returns to equilibrium as a new pattern of stable incentive supply is established to coordinate the organization around the new, altered image. It should be noted that this return to

²⁵ This anecdote is related by Robert McNamara in Errol Morris's film "The Fog of War" Errol Morris, *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara*, Documentary, 2003.

equilibrium may take a long time, or may not occur at all (another option is that the sub-unit or organization as a whole simply terminate).

This section developed a specific process model of organizational adaptation from the image model of organizations laid out above. In the next two chapters I examine how well the model describes the process of adaptation to counter-insurgency in Iraq. I do so by first showing in the next chapter how Colin Jackson's model of organizational learning dysfunction is basically an expression of the image-based model developed here. Reference to his model will help fill in the blanks that must be supplied to deploy the theory on Iraq and Afghanistan, namely, "what was the dominant image?", and "what was the alternative image?"

Chapter 2: Colin Jackson's model of organizational learning dysfunction

Militaries share certain features in common with other bureaucracies: they are populated by semi-autonomous sub-units habituated to executing certain fixed routines. Their activities are coordinated through a combination of formal and informal rules, procedures, and conventions—from written doctrine all the way to informal cultural practices. Thus while Colin Jackson's theory aims at explaining a specific phenomenon of military behavior—learning failure in counterinsurgency—it should reflect more general theoretical features of organizations. This section presents Jackson's theory and discusses its relationship to the image model. It also discusses the nature of the dominant image in Jackson's theory, the "military operational code", and its effect on which counterinsurgency strategies are chosen; it also presents Jackson's typology of counterinsurgency strategies, i.e. possible alternative images.

Colin Jackson's theory of military organizational learning dysfunction in counterinsurgency

Jackson posits that a specific image—the "military operational code" (MOC)—inhibits adaptation to effective counterinsurgency practices. The MOC is a set of professional beliefs held by military professionals that ensure effective prosecution of conventional war.²⁶ It is thus a dominant guiding image that has developed as a result of the incentives present in the military's most common forms of engagements throughout history.

As Jackson notes, the MOC image both conditions responses to environmental stimuli, and prescribes value metrics in evaluating the results of the responses chosen.

Since the MOC includes not only a standard prescription but also a set of performance indicators, it focuses the leadership's attention on the results of the military operations. Since the counterinsurgency forces are generally far stronger

²⁶ Jacksons, Colin, *Defeat in Victory: Organizational Learning Dysfunction in Counterinsurgency*, unpublished manuscript, April 16, 2008.

and better equipped than the rebels, almost all military engagements will end in counterinsurgency victories. The string of ‘small victories’ masks the underlying lack of progress towards the desired political objective.²⁷

As theorized in the process model of adaptation above, the dominant MOC image is predicted to inhibit identification of failure (“image incoherence”).

The MOC image also prescribes responses to failure, leading to “exploitation” of existing solutions before “exploration” for new ones:

Even when the gap between local successes and campaign results becomes clear, the first response will be to exploit existing solutions - to refine existing routines and escalate the scale and intensity of the military effort. In this sense, the MOC sets up a "learning trap" in which positive military performance delays the search for more effective and more political strategies.²⁸

Beyond the MOC, bureaucratic preferences also encourage the military to abandon the lessons learned during counterinsurgency campaigns once they are over. Bureaucratic preferences, like the oft-theorized tendencies to maximize autonomy, resources, and prestige, can be seen as a result of the image-formation process: a organizational sub-unit develops its characteristic pattern of behavior—the guiding image--through an iterative process of individual learning amongst its members as to how to perform the task, and through a process of responding to the demands of organizational authority structures for the outputs they are assigned to produce. Sub-units are thus naturally invested in their image. They seek autonomy and resources to protect and sustain it, and they seek prestige because they view their image as integral to achieving the goals of the organizational image.^{29,30}

²⁷ Ibid. 14

²⁸ Ibid. 14

²⁹ this aspect of images is discussed at length by Halperin and Clapp, 2006. Processes of organizational change may thus amount to battles over which sub-unit’s image most determines the dominant image. For example, in discussing processes of organizational change, they comment “It also happens on occasion that a few audacious participants tire of framing every argument in terms of some well-worn orthodoxy. Certain officials conclude that they can get the decisions they want from the government by changing the set of images by which the government operates. If they feel that they have built up sufficient credibility as reputable and reasonable participants in the policy process, they may launch a deliberate effort to change others’ perception of reality.” P. 161

³⁰ This is an important theoretical point on its own: the classic bureaucratic preferences for autonomy, resources, and prestige is theorized to arise from processes that equally affect smaller organizations. An important question in organization science is what conditions lead organizations to seek expansion? More often than not, bureaucratic entities seek expansion to ensure a stable supply of incentives: e.g. Halperin theorizes that bureaucratic sub-units seek financial resources in order to have a ready supply of incentives to supply to subordinates (e.g. promotions and raises) to coordinate behavior. These preferences can thus be understood through the simple concept of incentive supply

Bureaucratic preferences discourage adaptation to effective counterinsurgency practices because they threaten the military's autonomy, resources and prestige: it threatens their autonomy and prestige by elevating the achievement of political objectives like achieving a political settlement with insurgents over military objectives like killing the enemy. These goals assumedly bring civilian leaders and civilian approaches to problems to the fore. Involvement in politics also generally threatens military prestige. The desire for resources affects adaptation to counterinsurgency because conventional operations usually entail higher expenditures on hardware. Thus a conventional strategy will demand more resources than an unconventional one, which could potentially raise their level of priority in the budgeting process. Additionally, although adoption of counterinsurgency practices may entail more resources (e.g. more troops in the "surge"), the military will typically not be able to channel these resources into its preferred areas— i.e. capital expenditures in capabilities related to conventional war. Lastly, the sheer availability of resources may lead militaries to stick to conventional approaches just because they can.

The other element in Jackson's theory is task pressure, which acts as a "switching mechanism" between the two sets of biases: when task pressure is high, during war, and especially during high-intensity situations like domestic insurgency, the cognitive biases of the MOC dominate in affecting the pattern of learning. When task pressure is low, e.g. during peacetime or during expeditionary counterinsurgencies, bureaucratic preferences will tend to dominate.

Jackson's theory thus theorizes variation in the dependent variable, strategy choice, as arising from variation in three independent variables: the professional beliefs of the MOC, bureaucratic preferences, and task pressure. When the dominant pattern of learning dysfunction is overcome, it is because of two factors affecting two of these independent variables: civilian intervention into strategy-making can spur the military to overcome the biases of the MOC, stimulating search for more novel solutions. Likewise, resource scarcity can affect bureaucratic preferences: when resources are abundant, the search for new methods will be dominated by conventional responses since these types of operations are generally capital intensive. On the other hand, resource scarcity can encourage the military to search for novel solutions to the counterinsurgency problem earlier on.

Relation of the Jackson model to the image model

Jackson's model provides a succinct, mechanical explanation of the process of adaptation to counterinsurgency, but one that fits various cases across many time periods quite well:³¹ when faced with counterinsurgency, militaries first exhaust their repertoire of conventional solutions as dictated by the MOC before moving on to try other solutions such as political war. In certain cases, however, some factors may intervene to spur exploration of new solutions before conventional solutions have been exhausted, allowing the military to break out of the MOC-induced "learning trap". Both of these

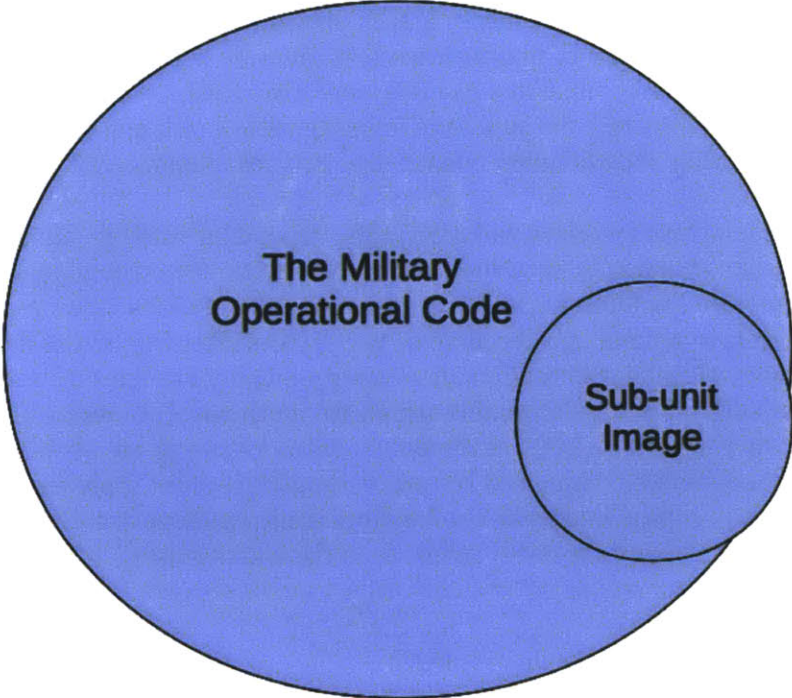
and demand: bureaucracies seek to expand to increase their supply of incentives, and seek autonomy to ensure their stable use.

³¹ E.g. Algeria, Vietnam, British Malaya, etc.

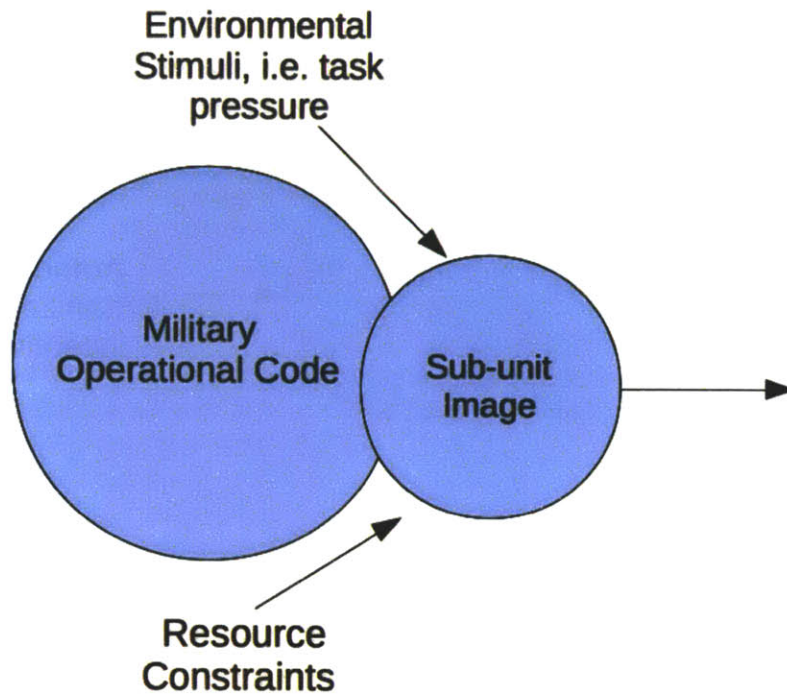
factors amount to effects on military decision-makers incentive structures: resource scarcity means the potential returns to conventional solutions are much lower since the resources to support them are not present; additionally, civilian intervention can serve to incentivize military leaders to pursue unconventional solutions early on.

Figure 3:

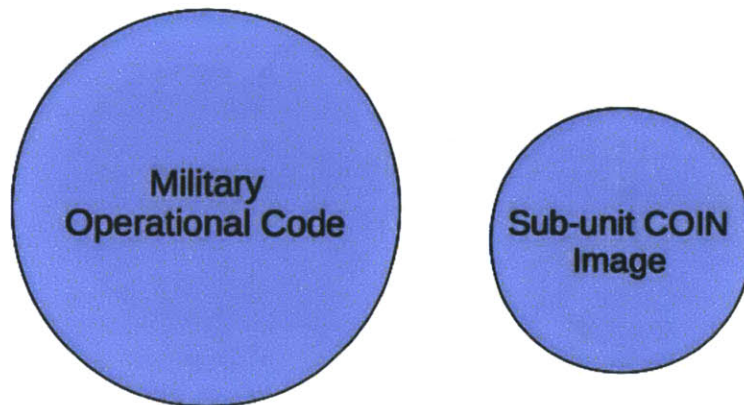
T0: Beginning of Campaign



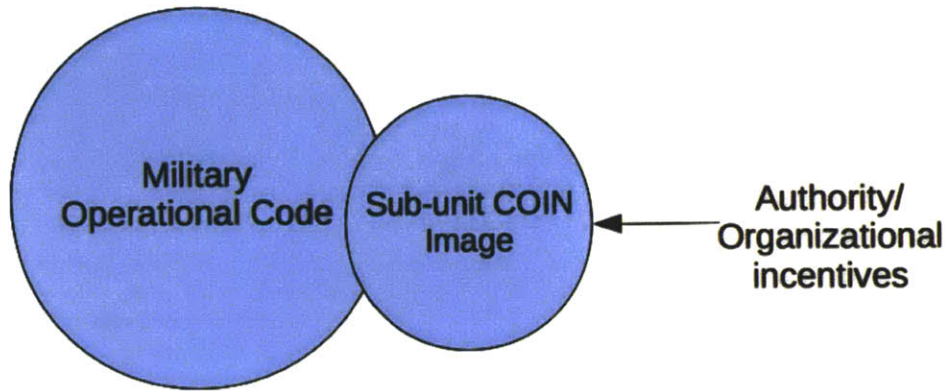
T1: MOC exploitation and failure



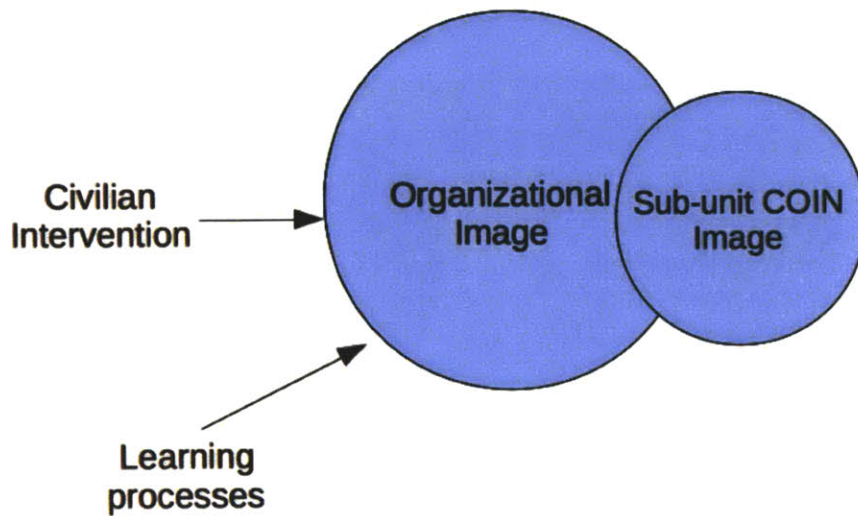
T2: Image incoherence



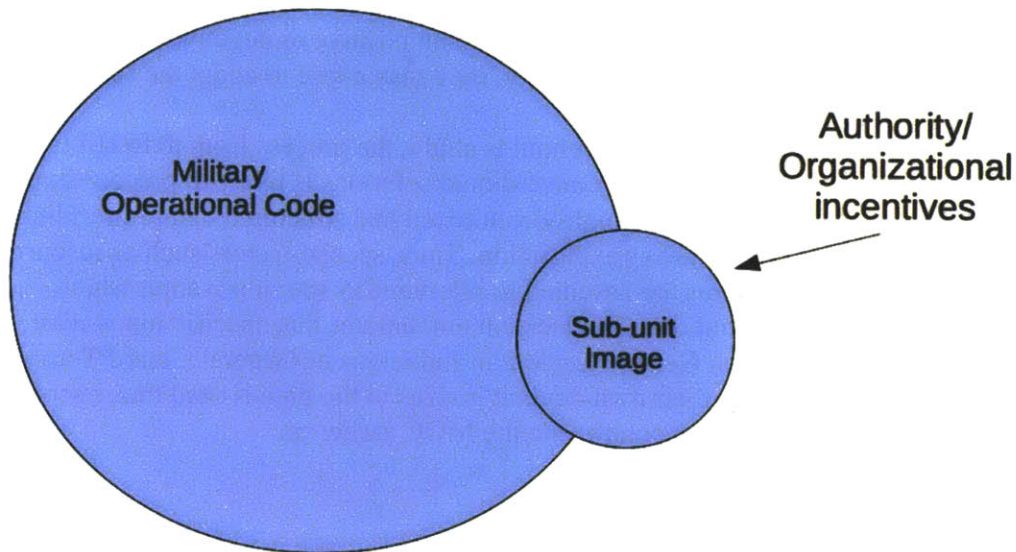
T3a: organizational resistance to COIN



T3b: Civilian Intervention



T4: Institutionalizing COIN/Forgetting COIN after the campaign



Jackson's theory can be placed in the framework of the image model above, as portrayed in figure 3. At t_0 , at the beginning of the campaign, the image of ground units and the organization as a whole are harmonized around the dominant image, the military operational code. At t_1 , as the MOC prescribes ill-suited solutions to the counter-insurgency problem, the sub-unit's image of operations may gradually drift away from the MOC due to the influence of negative environmental feedback, i.e. "task pressure" in Jackson's formulation. Likewise, factors such as resource scarcity can lead the sub-unit to converge to a new image more quickly by eliminating conventional options. These two factors interact with the incentives of the sub-unit to cause their image to drift away from the MOC and towards unconventional COIN solutions, t_2 .

At t_3 , as Jackson theorizes, the military at large rejects the solutions being generated on the ground because of bureaucratic biases and the cognitive biases of the MOC, t_{3a} . Players within the military attempt to resist the new image by distributing organizational incentives to correct the errant images. On the other hand, civilian pressure may intervene to push the military away from the Military Operational Code and towards unconventional COIN solutions, t_{3b} .

Lastly, at t_4 , Jackson theorizes that, after COIN campaigns end, the bureaucratic preferences of the military will tend to return to the fore, leading it to forget the lessons of COIN. Thus, at t_4 , the military supplies incentives and exercises authority so as to reject the COIN image and restore the Military Operational Code. Below, I examine this stage of the adaptation process in reference to war in Afghanistan, arguing that the institutionalization step in t_4 attempted to codify the new approaches to COIN by placing

them squarely within the military's dominant coercive paradigm; thus COIN, innovation occurred, but was constrained by the military's dominant image.

As shown in figure 3, Jackson's model thus follows the general organizational adaptation process laid out above: the environment affects sub-units so as to gradually drag their image away from the organizational image, the MOC. This process may be spurred by environmental pressures or resource constraints. In response, the organization either resists the new sub-unit image by supplying positive or negative (most likely negative) incentives to the unit. Alternately, they may chose to adopt the sub-unit image due to civilian pressure.

As Jackson emphasizes throughout is study, the process from t0 to t1 may be quite gradual as the exploitation of conventional solutions is likely to precede exploration for new ones. This is because the highly-routinized and structured nature of military behavior favors exploitation over exploration. Thus, special factors such as resource scarcity or civilian pressures are assumed to intervene to spur innovation when innovation does occur. Additionally, Jackson emphasizes that specific innovative individuals such as French General Leclerc in Indochina or General Gerard Templer in British Malaya may bring their own deviant images to the process and thus encourage unconventional solutions that contravene the MOC earlier on.

The Military Operational Code

In applying Jackson's model to Iraq, it will be helpful to clarify what we would expect to see as far as the MOC affecting strategic choices. This section briefly addresses what the MOC is, and how it might affect choice of counterinsurgency strategies.

Jackson notes that the dominant feature of the MOC is a focus on coercion: military problems are generally viewed as one of applying force to compel submission by the enemy. Jackson identifies three dominant assumptions of the MOC image:

First, the model is predicated on a simple and stable information structure in which the enemy army is the focus and all other objects in the battle space are secondary. Second, it assumes that problem solving depends on the one-way application of force to compel submission. It assumes that the physical destruction of the enemy's armed forces will lead enemy leaders to capitulate. Third, the model minimizes the role of the local population. The central issue is the clash of armies and civilians are treated as insignificant and largely passive bystanders.³²

Barry Posen likewise identifies several broad tendencies in military behavior that encourage offensive doctrines: e.g. militaries prefer to address standard scenarios to reduce operational uncertainty, and deny opponents their standard scenario. Offensive doctrines allow this. Offensive doctrines also increase militaries' autonomy and resources by emphasizing their core competencies of violent coercion.³³

Jackson and Posen note that the military mindset, which generally encourages

³² *ibid.* 50

³³ Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984) 47-49.

conventional, offensive approaches to military conflict, arises largely from the desire to reduce operational uncertainty through the use of standard operating procedures. Another way to put this, in terms of the image model, is stability of incentive supply: organizations will prefer to pursue courses of action that allow stable payoffs to their incentives. Thus images, and the standard operating procedures (or choice rules) they prescribe, develop to ensure a stable supply of incentives, i.e. high certainty about the environment and operations' effects on it, and the payoffs it supplies. Images therefore have inertia of their own. The dominant military image favors the solution of problems through the application of organized military force, so even scenarios that require a broader set of tasks and problem solving approaches will tend to be viewed in those terms.

Types of counterinsurgency strategies

In order to theorize the affect of the dominant image, the MOC, on strategy development during counterinsurgency engagements, the DV, Jackson develops a typology of possible counterinsurgency strategies: Model 1, the dominant response, entails a conventional approach to counterinsurgency: counterinsurgency is essentially a “small war”, with the enemy and the process of defeating him analogous to that of a conventional engagement: the enemy is distinct from the population, and can be defeated solely through the application of military force. Model 1 is the MOC in action.

Militaries occasionally evolve to an approach that incorporates political considerations into the conventional model of warfare, Model 2. Under this strategy, the military views the problem of counterinsurgency as the application of carrots and sticks to various parties in society—the insurgents, the government, and the local population. The problem is still viewed as the one-way coercive application of resources to the target, but the resources are expanded to include positive inducements to resisting the insurgency, such as construction of roads and schools, in addition to negative military force, and the target is both the insurgents and unaffiliated parties.³⁴

Even more rarely, militaries evolve to seeing the problem as one of violent negotiation rather than coercion, Model 3. This approach, which constitutes a supposed “best practice” of counterinsurgency in Jackson’s analysis, shifts the emphasis from the application of coercive force to achieve victory to one of negotiating a political settlement with the insurgents and the population. It thus breaks the military’s dominant problem solving paradigm:

Models 1 and 2 assume that the counterinsurgency forces can dictate outcomes through the exercise of coercive force against rebels and the population. By contrast, Model 3 assumes that the counterinsurgency forces have limited agency and that the population is an actor rather than a target. According to this reasoning, counterinsurgency forces can impose coercive control, but cannot

³⁴ One can thus see COIN in terms of the image model: the goal is to supply incentives so as to generate legitimacy for a new organizational image, the state.

construct a lasting political order without the consent of the governed.³⁵

Model 3 approaches fall outside the dominant military image of operations: rather than attempting to coerce certain parties into accepting a new political order dictated by the military and allied entities, the problem is seen as one of crafting a political order in concert with various parties in society.

In the following chapter on Iraq, I argue that the practices adopted as part of the “surge” entailed Model 2 and, in some cases, Model 3 approaches. Thus, in some instances, the military did break out of the characteristic “learning trap”. The question then becomes whether their adaptation resulted from the factors theorized by Jackson: civilian intervention and/or resource scarcity. I find that civilian intervention surely played a role in ensuring that innovations spread quickly once they were discovered, as in t3b in figure 3. Many of the innovations initially happened, on the other hand, due to military learning quite apart from any civilian pressure. Rather, new images resulted from a combination of resource constraints and the existence of specific innovative commanders with previous grounding in COIN theory. While this does not fit Jackson’s explicit model completely, his empirical analysis of various cases often attributes innovation to a combination of resource constraints and innovative commanders such as General Leclerc in French Indochina. The example of Colonel MacFarland’s operations in Ramadi is a largely similar story of an under-resourced but innovative commander crafting a unique campaign for the circumstances. On the other hand, General Petraeus’s innovative Mosul operations seemed to arise not from any civilian intervention or resource constraint, but rather due to ideas he had formed prior to being deployed; as Jackson’s theory would suggest, they therefore largely fall into the Model 2 rather than Model 3 category.

Additionally, I argue that, when adaptations to COIN did take place, they were dominated by Model 2 approaches, as Jackson’s model would suggest. This was especially evident in the drafting of the Counterinsurgency Field Manual FM 3-24 and the resulting institutionalization of certain COIN tactics and approaches. The sequence of adaptation and institutionalization of COIN approaches followed that suggested in t4 above: the most notable early adaptations such as Colonel MacFarland’s in Anbar province fit a classic Model 3 approach; however, as these adaptations were institutionalized, they were placed in a Model 2 mold, essentially applying the MOC to unconventional war and reaffirming the military’s cognitive and bureaucratic biases. Aside from doctrine, I also attempt to show some Model 2 thinking at work as evidenced in field reports obtained from the Wikileaks Afghanistan war logs. The “new conventional wisdom” of COIN in Iraq was subsequently applied to Afghanistan, providing a good testing ground for how the new image was applied (t4). The evidence for Model 2 thinking is found mainly in how the operations are conceptualized and how the results of operations are interpreted: as theorized above, the dominant coercive image of military operations, stressing concrete metrics of operational effectiveness, leads officers to apply simple, non-social metrics to the problem of gauging operational effectiveness, even in explicitly political operations such as tribal outreach or

³⁵ *ibid.* 11

reconstruction efforts. I argue that, in the end, the MOC determined the military's approach to the counterinsurgency problem by placing it squarely within the military's dominant coercive approach to problems.

Chapter 3: Applying the image model to Iraq

If Colin Jackson's model is generally correct and appropriate to apply to the Iraq case, we should expect to see military cognitive biases—the MOC—and bureaucratic preferences obstructing the adoption of Model 2 and Model 3-type COIN practices. These are defined as any “population-centric” tactics that mainly aim at attaining political rather than military effects, e.g. engagement with tribal leaders, reconstruction aid used as a carrot to secure buy-in to the political system, “hearts and minds” psychological operations, basing units among the population, bargaining with the insurgents, etc.. We should furthermore expect to see patterns of exploitation of known conventional solutions in response to the growing insurgency, rather than exploration for new tactics and strategies. Lastly, when adaptation to new strategies does happen, it should be the result either of civilian pressure, resource scarcity, or a combination of the two.

While Jackson's story does a good job of explaining initial strategic choices and the response to strategic failure in Iraq, evidence for the last of these points—the role of civilian intervention and resource scarcity in spurring adaptation—is mixed. Rather, I find that adaptation significantly preceded civilian intervention into strategy-making in Iraq, and that it was not necessarily the result of resource scarcity. Rather, tactical and strategic innovations arose from an iterative process of exploitation *and* exploration for new tactics by ground units; additionally, certain units led by commanders with strong personal views of COIN operations (i.e. their own guiding images apart from the organizational image) contributed significantly to identifying and testing new approaches. Civilian intervention did play a role, however, in securing the blessing of authority structures for this new approach to the war once it was identified.

Although Jackson's model does not fit the evidence completely, I argue that the general view that the military's dominant image—the military operational code—largely determines their processes of organizational learning during war, as suggested by the general image model, is borne out: although COIN cast the military in unfamiliar roles as political negotiators, social workers, and diplomats, these innovations sprung essentially from a desire to adopt offensive doctrines, as suggested by Posen: the initial strategy shift in 2006 revolved around a debate over whether forces should retreat to bases outside major population centers and in an effort to lower the US footprint and pave the way for an Iraqi-led political settlement. This was a defensive posture. As Ricks comments, the innovations in 2006-2007 recast US forces in an offensive role, pushing them out amongst the population and allowing them to take the fight to the enemy. Rather than passively waiting for a political settlement to be negotiated by Iraqis, the military shifted to aggressively trying to create the conditions for one to occur. COIN tactics thus arose from the MOC, not in spite of it. This reflects Posen's general hypotheses about the doctrinal preferences of militaries (and bolsters the notion that organization theory-type factors explain the decision to adopt COIN).

This movement is also evident in one of the most oft-cited example of COIN success in Iraq, Colonel Sean MacFarland's Ramadi operations: Colonel MacFarland

pursued genuine Model 3 solutions, seeking to directly arm tribal militias and negotiate with them on pursuing a political settlement to defeat the insurgents; even here, however, this shift in operations can mainly be seen as an attempt to create the conditions to apply military force to kill the enemy:

Additionally, although the shift to COIN tactics did involve a new conception of the primary problem of the war, casting it from one of defeating the insurgents to one of inducing parties into accepting a stable political settlement, they more often than not fell into Model 2 rather than Model 3 approaches. That is, the tactics adopted as part of the shift towards COIN essentially retained the dominant military approach to problems as that of a one-way applications of (positive or negative) incentives to the target with the hope of restoring state authority, with the target expanding to include the local population and government in addition to the insurgents. They thus often fell short of the Model 3 “ideal” of viewing the problem as one of violent negotiation with the insurgents over attaining a new political settlement. As Jackson notes, moving from Model 2 to Model 3 involves recognizing “the limits of one-way politics in restoring low cost, state authority”³⁶; the shift to Model 3 in Anbar was likely facilitated by the absence of state authority in the area and the prevalence of tribal power, as well as a lack of sufficient manpower to execute population-centric COIN, rather than any innovative shift in military thinking. In order to validate this point, I briefly argue that other cases of COIN engagement following the shift in official strategy of 2007 show that the move to Model 3 is doubtful: the dominant emphasis of strategy is expanding and legitimizing existing state authority, rather than the forging of a new political settlement through violent negotiation with the insurgents.³⁷ This Model 2 emphasis is evident in the structure of these engagements, in relevant doctrine documents such as FM 3-24, and also in field reports drawn from the Wikileaks leak.

Thus the dominant MOC image played the dispositive role in determining strategic choices that the image model and Jackson’s model suggests: COIN was less the result of externally directed disruptions to the military’s incentive structure such as civilian intervention, as in the Jackson model, and more the result of an internal process of evolution in the Army and Marine’s guiding image developed in response to failure.

Summary of predictions for Iraq:

Below, I test three hypotheses about Iraq and Afghanistan. First, as the MOC image determines both the form of operations and the interpretation of feedback, a long period of exploitation of conventional Model 1 solutions is expected to precede adaptation to Model 2 or Model 3 approaches, the “learning trap”. As noted in the theory section above, an image is defined as encapsulating information necessary to recognize

³⁶ op.cit. Jackson 12.

³⁷ though recent evidence suggests halting efforts towards Model 3 adaptation. “In Afghanistan’s Panjshir, disquiet over Taliban reconciliation | Reuters”, n.d., <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/09/08/us-afghanistan-massoud-idUSTRE7872A920110908>.

what one is seeing, judge it in terms of the organization's value metrics, and what behaviors to choose in response to it.

H1: the military will fall into a learning trap as conventional solutions are first exhausted before unconventional solutions are tried.

Jackson traces out the effect of the MOC image by observing the military repeatedly applying known alternative conventional solutions in response to failure instead of developing unconventional solutions. This should be evident in its application to performance metrics as well as in its strategic adaptations.

Second, Jacksons proposes that adaptations to Model 2 and Model 3 approaches may be the result of a combination of resource constraints and/or civilian intervention. To test this point, I focus in on two different tactical engagements, those in Anbar and Mosul. In both cases, unconventional solutions were experimented with fairly early on in the war, and significantly, before the "surge" orders that institutionalized the COIN approach of FM 3-24. The question then becomes what spurred these innovations. If Jackson's model is correct, some combination of resource constraints and/or civilian intervention should be evident in the adaptation.

H2: unconventional campaigns resulted from the influence of resource constraints and/or civilian intervention on military decision-makers.

The story of the surge has been well-told elsewhere, and clearly involves a significant element of civilian intervention by figures such as retired General Jack Keane and an assortment of intellectuals and policymakers.³⁸ This aspect of Jackson's model is clearly borne out by these accounts, so I leave it aside in the present study, choosing instead to focus on innovations early in the Iraq war. These provide a better test of Jackson's theory of the drivers of tactical and strategic development by military units.

Lastly, I turn to the war in Afghanistan to see what type of COIN strategy was eventually institutionalized within Army and Marines (t4). If Jackson's story is correct, we should expect to see Model 2 rather than Model 3 solutions dominating, as these fit more closely into the military's dominant coercive mindset.

H3: due to the influence of the MOC, the institutionalizing of COIN practices should proceed in a Model 2 rather than Model 3 mode.

Aside from these three hypotheses, I look to validate the process model laid out in figures 2 and 3 above: we should expect to see explicit stages of image incoherence and organizational resistance to new images along the way.

Turning to the evidence:

³⁸ see Woodward, Bob, *The War Within: A Secret White House History, 2006-2008*, Simon and Schuster, 2009.

The US military clearly adopted new tactics in late 2006-2007, most notably in establishing small combat bases close to and within population centers to provide for better population security, and through increased efforts to work with tribal leaders to provide security and identify insurgents.³⁹⁴⁰ These innovations were blessed as the new approach in Iraq through the elevation to command in Iraq of General David Petraeus, a consistent proponent of the new approach. Additionally, in announcing the new strategy in Iraq in January 2007, President Bush remarked that “It is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq,” and that its purpose was “to help Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods, to help them protect the local population, and to help ensure that the Iraqi forces left behind are capable of providing the security that Baghdad needs.”⁴² A shift to a new strategic image thus clearly took place in Iraq. The question then is whether it followed the hypothesized process.

Below I present evidence related to validating the hypotheses laid out above. Iraq is a vast and complex case; commanders had significant leeway in crafting their campaign plans, encouraged in part by the lack of an overall strategic plan at the top levels of decision-making. As a result, Iraq exhibits significant variation in the varieties of COIN tactics employed. As Austin Long notes in a review of COIN doctrine and COIN practice in 2003-2006, “The military used an array of approaches ranging from firepower-intensive raids to population security. This variation seems to have depended partly on understandable differences, such as the region and time period, but mostly appears to be due to different commanders.”⁴³ Jackson likewise acknowledges that militaries will often contain individuals with strong Model 3 orientations who may occasionally break out of the tendencies of the dominant MOC image. The point of his model rather is to theorize broad tendencies in military behavior owing to the influence of the dominant image. Accordingly, the presentation of evidence below on the hypothesized adaptation processes is necessarily selective. My goal is to validate inductively the view that organizational images play a strong determinative role on organizational choices overall and thus deserve theoretical attention in their own right.

The evidence from Iraq strongly fits Jackson’s model: the MOC initially led to a dysfunctional learning cycle whereby conventional Model 1 approaches were

³⁹ Thomas Ricks, *The Gamble* (London: Penguin Books, 2010) 165. Whether these new tactics were the primary cause of the reductions in violence 2006-2009, however, does remain controversial.

⁴⁰ Also see “Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The US Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006”, by Austin Long, Rand Counterinsurgency Study, Paper 6, page 26.

⁴¹ Interview with Major General Richard C. Zilmer, January 1, 2007, by Lieutenant Colonel Kurtis P. Wheeler, reported in “Anbar Awakening, Volume 1, American Perspectives, US Marines and Counterinsurgency in Iraq, 2004-2009”, Edited by Chief Warrant Officer-4 Timothy S. McWilliams and Lieutenant Colonel Kurtis P. Wheeler, Marine Corps University Press, Quantico Virginia, 2009.

⁴² Quoted in Ricks, p. 122

⁴³ Austin Long, “Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence,” The US military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006. RAND Counterinsurgency Study, Paper 6.

successively tried and failed. Additionally, recognition of failure at the organizational level was indeed impeded by the application of inappropriate conventional performance metrics, and by general resistance from organizational players with a strong MOC mindset.

Where Jackson's model falls short, at least in a superficial analysis, is in theorizing why the military began to adopt Model 2 and, in some select cases, Model 3 strategies: innovation to Model 2 and, in some cases, Model 3 approaches significantly preceded the adoption of the COIN philosophy at the organizational level, as evidenced by their adoption prior to the publication of the field manual or the strategy review that preceded the "surge". Their early adoption was therefore not the result of civilian intervention or, explicitly, of resource scarcity. Rather, innovations resulted from an often resource intensive bottom-up learning process. In short, commanders simply innovated on their own in response to the demands of the operating environment. A more subtle point that shows the power of Jackson's theory, however, is that these innovations were mostly of the Model 2 variety; that is, they retained the military's dominant problem solving paradigm of applying coercive force, albeit using both positive and negative incentives. When Model 3 approaches aimed at forging political coalitions were tried, they were the result not of doctrinal or strategic changes, or civilian intervention, but of specific circumstances faced by the commanders, as a regional analysis of strategy variation shows: only in Anbar were genuine Model 3 strategies approached, and this was largely owing to the dynamics of tribal power already operative in the area, though some evidence exists that resource scarcity in the form of insufficient manpower also played a role, as in Jackson's theory. Jackson's broader point about the influence of the dominant MOC image on the search for strategic responses is thus borne out.

In the following case study, I largely ignore the role of General Petraeus and the COINdinitas on the adoption of COIN strategy in the military more widely. This is a well-told story and clearly illustrates the role of civilian, or at any rate outside intervention into the policy-making process in encouraging the adoption of unconventional strategies, in line with Jackson's theory (one of the primary interveners in the policy process was retired General Jack Keane, a civilian of a sort).⁴⁴ I focus instead on the tactical shifts that occurred early on in the war in response to active search for new images by lower-level units: this focus should provide the most leverage in examining the effects of the dominant MOC image on decision-making, and the role of "image drift" in response to changing incentive structures in spurring bottom-up innovation. Specifically, I contrast the Model 3 approach of Colonel Sean MacFarland in Ramadi and the Model 2 approach of General Petraeus in Mosul in the first phase of the war (before he became overall commander).

⁴⁴ James Russell notes that Petraeus's role was mainly in blessing innovations already under way. This had the effect of bolstering the COIN competencies of new units entering the field, but the origin of these tactics traces to unit-level innovations. James Russell, *Innovation, Transformation, and War: Counterinsurgency Operations in Anbar and Ninewa Provinces, 2005-2007* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011)

3. As Ricks also notes, General Odierno drew directly from these early innovations in crafting the COIN strategy that was eventually adopted more broadly. (op.cit. Ricks 72-80).

Initial strategic responses: applying the MOC

Jackson's model suggests militaries will first pursue conventional solutions in response to insurgencies. These Model 1 solutions view the problem of counterinsurgency as essentially that of a small conventional war: the objective is to kill or capture the enemy, and achieving it involves the one-way application of military force. Additionally, as H1 suggests, evidence that this strategy is failing to achieve the objective should at first be ignored or reasoned away due to the application of inappropriate Model 1 performance metrics, and due to bureaucratic frictions arising from resistance from bureaucratic decision-makers.

As Long notes⁴⁵, tactical approaches in the early phase of the war, from 2003-2005, were highly variable, ranging from conventional firepower-intensive cordon-and-search type operations to efforts at population security. This variability was likely exacerbated by a lack of clear strategic guidance from high-level decision-makers.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the military did exhibit a clear tendency towards Model 1 approaches. Perhaps the clearest evidence of this can be found in the fact that COIN doctrine emphasizing unconventional approaches did exist in 2003-2005, and yet the majority of operations stressed a conventional approach. For example, Long notes that FM 3-07, "Stability Operations", explicitly addressed the strategic peculiarities of counterinsurgency: "Stability operations and support operations demand greater attention to civil considerations—the political, social, economic, and cultural factors in an area of operations (AO)—than do the more conventional offensive and defensive operations"; and, that "Success in counterinsurgency goes to the party that achieves the greater popular support. The winner will be the party that better forms the issues, mobilizes groups and forces around them, and develops programs that solve problems of relative deprivation."⁴⁷ Furthermore, FMI 3-07.22, an interim field manual on "Counterinsurgency Operations", was published in October 2004 in response to a lack of clear doctrinal guidance for COIN, and emphasized a similar population-centric view of the COIN problem.

Despite these sources of strategic guidance, the majority of forces in Iraq initially pursued conventional solutions and framed the problem in conventional ways.⁴⁸ Initial tactical approaches were dominated by cordon-and-sweep operations and targeted raids aimed at directly weeding out the insurgents from the population.⁴⁹⁵⁰ Early strategic

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ricks, 195

⁴⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-07, Stability and Support Operations, February 2003, p. 2-15. Quoted in Long, *ibid*.

⁴⁸ *op.cit.* Ricks, 15-30.

⁴⁹ Eric Schmitt, "AFTER THE WAR: STRATEGY; G.I.'s Shift to More Precise, Smaller Raids - New York Times," *New York Times*, September 2, 2003, sec. World, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/02/world/after-the-war-strategy-gi-s-shift-to-more-precise-smaller-raids.html?src=pm>.

⁵⁰ Long notes two notable examples, Operation Kennesaw Dragon, in Ad Dawr on November 14, 2005, and Operation Clean Sweep, in Southern Baghdad on the same day,

guidance from Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the ground commander in late 2003, to the extent that it was forthcoming, amounted to advice to pursue a “presence mission” that stressed intelligence collection:⁵² ongoing patrols and cordon-and-sweep operations would drive intelligence collection aimed at identifying and isolating the insurgents.⁵³ E.g. A Red Cross report on operations in the Sunni triangle in 2003-2004 under Colonel David Hogg summarizes:

Arresting authorities entered houses usually after dark, breaking down doors, waking up residents roughly, yelling orders, forcing family members into one room under military guard while searching the rest of the house and further breaking doors, cabinets and other property. They arrested suspects, tying their hands in the back with flexicuffs, hooding them, and taking them away.⁵⁴

Cordon and sweep operations were likewise the hallmarks of operations by the 4th Infantry Division in the Sunni triangle under General Odierno⁵⁵ and the 82nd Airborne under Maj. General Charles Swannack, which detained thirty-eight hundred people from August 2003 to March 2004.⁵⁶ These tactics thus showed a disregard for the responses of the neutral population and likely fueled some decisions to aid the insurgency. They thus represented classic Model 1 responses: the problem was killing or capturing the enemy, and the population was simply a neutral terrain on which that battle was to be fought.

Thus, despite clear doctrinal guidance to observe the classic tenets of COIN—e.g. protect the population, nurture them as a source of intelligence—the general biases of the MOC image dictated that operations generally fell into Model 1 patterns, as Jackson’s model would suggest. The MOC was thus a strong determinant of COIN practices, even in the face of established operating procedures for COIN. Operations were not framed in terms of political war, as history and doctrine would prescribe, but rather in terms of the military’s dominant coercion paradigm.

It is important to note that there were exceptions to this pattern, notably in the operations of David Petraeus’s 101st Airborne Division in Mosul. In the case of Petraeus and, for example, of Colonel H.R. McMaster’s operations in Tall Afar, this variation likely resulted from alternative images possessed by these commanders: both Petraeus and McMaster spent considerable time studying alternative COIN tactics and strategies while pursuing academic degrees.⁵⁷

both of which involved cordoning the towns and extensive attacks, including air assaults in Kennesaw Dragon. Op. cit. Long

⁵¹ Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco* (London: Penguin, 2007) 194.

⁵² Ricks, *Fiasco*, 192

⁵³ *Fiasco*, 194

⁵⁴ quoted in Ricks, *Fiasco*, 235

⁵⁵ *Fiasco*, 224. Ricks notes that Odierno made a remarkable philosophical shift towards classic COIN practices, becoming a sort of unsung hero of the surge. (citation needed)

⁵⁶ *Fiasco*, 224

⁵⁷ Ricks, *The Gamble*, 72.

Delayed Recognition of Image Incoherence

Jackson writes of a syndrome in counterinsurgency in which a series of small tactical victories fuels the illusion that conventional operations are meeting with strategic success, in line with H1.⁵⁸ This syndrome was clearly in evidence in the early debates over the course of strategy from late 2003 through 2006. For example, division commanders Maj. Gen. Charles Swannack of the 82nd airborne division and Lt. General Raymond Odierno of the 4th Infantry Division both pursued firepower intensive, cordon-and-sweep type operations early on in the war, and largely concluded that their operations were effective, at least at first.⁵⁹ When problems were identified with the large-scale operations in North Baghdad that alienated local populations, the response of Generals Sanchez and Abizaid in late 2003 was to switch to more surgical raids that nevertheless aimed at directly isolating and capturing the insurgents.⁶¹ More generally, results from kinetic operations early in the war were often misinterpreted as generating the requisite depletion in insurgent capability for victory.⁶²

More generally, the debate that grew from 2003 onwards over how to respond to the deteriorating situation in Iraq generally featured the military resisting diagnoses of the problem that would lead to more unconventional strategy prescriptions, as H1 would suggest: General Casey, who took over command of Iraq in June 2004, attempted to develop approaches that drew upon the lessons of previous COIN operations and scholarship, even opening a counter-insurgency academy in 2005.⁶³ Nevertheless, the strategy that grew out of this thinking essentially violated many of the classic tenets of COIN: as Ricks summarizes, Casey's strategy amounted to withdrawing to large bases outside of major population centers (so-called super-FOBs), speeding up transition to Iraqi security forces and allowing Iraqi forces to handle fighting inside cities.⁶⁴ Thus,

⁵⁸ Op.cit. Jackson, 1-3.

⁵⁹ Ricks, *Fiasco*, 232, 319. Odierno, for example, commented in 2004 that "The former regime elements we have been combating have been brought to their knees" and that the insurgency was "a fractured, sporadic threat, with the leadership destabilized, finances interdicted, and no hope of the Bathists' return to power," 263.

⁶⁰ Thomas E. Ricks, "Dissension Grows In Senior Ranks On War Strategy (washingtonpost.com)," *Washington Post*, May 9, 2004, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A11227-2004May8.html>.

Swannack, for his part, recognized that the early approach in Iraq was succeeding tactically but probably failing strategically.

⁶¹ "AFTER THE WAR: STRATEGY; G.I.'s Shift to More Precise, Smaller Raids", n.d., <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/02/world/after-the-war-strategy-gi-s-shift-to-more-precise-smaller-raids.html?pagewanted=3&src=pm>.

⁶² E.g. Ricks, 405, notes that, despite pockets of opposition, the second battle of Falluja, a large conventional operation, was widely viewed as a success and a template for operations to come.

⁶³ *Fiasco*, 12

⁶⁴ *The Gamble*, 111. See also David E. Sanger, Michael R. Gordon, and John F. Burns, "Chaos Overran Iraq Plan in '06, Bush Team Says - New York Times," *New York Times*, January 2, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/02/washington/02war.html>.

Casey's COIN thinking amounted to abdicating any role in a political war. US forces were viewed as an irritant and impediment to the crafting of an Iraqi-led political settlement. US forces would thus continue to hunt down insurgents in Model 1 style, while leaving any attempt to craft a political settlement, as Model 3 would prescribe, to Iraqis.

Military decision-makers thus chose courses of action that would maximize their returns in terms of the dominant image—i.e. through success in performance of routine conventional operations—and allow them to avoid activities that didn't conform to the MOC's performance metrics, i.e. activities resembling political war.

Exploitation versus Exploration

Various evidence thus exists that the dominant MOC image delayed recognition of failure in Iraq from 2003-2006, in line with H1. Jackson's model also suggests that, when adjustments to strategy were attempted in response to failure, they would likely first exploit existing conventional solutions rather than exploring for new ones.

The best evidence for H1 is Casey's approach prior to the rise of the General Odierno and Petraeus's new COIN strategy. Casey eventually landed on a strategy of retreating to large bases outside of major population centers in order to focus on training Iraqi forces, and of engaging in what David Killcullen called "kiss of death" operations: selective raids of suspected insurgent hold-outs without any consistent follow-on presence in the area.⁶⁵ The overall military search process thus remained constrained to conventional solutions, eschewing the broader adoption of unconventional tactical approaches being developed concurrently by some units (e.g. enhanced efforts at tribal outreach and basing of troops amidst the population in order to develop more police-type local security services).⁶⁶ The military overall thus initially avoided exploring for a new, more unconventional approach to counter-insurgency operations, despite considerable innovation from lower-level units, preferring instead to stick to conventional, coercive approaches.

The determinants of innovation: H2

Despite the overall conventional mindset evident in Casey's strategic responses, considerable innovation occurred in tactical approaches throughout 2003-2006. Then, in late 2006-2007, the new approach coalesced in the publication of the new counterinsurgency field manual FM 3-24, the result of a wide-ranging search process both within and outside the military, and was imposed upon the military through the blessing of President Bush's "surge" orders. Thus, the full cycle of adaptation in figures 2 and 3 took place, from initial image incoherence stemming from on-the-ground learning, t0-t2, to the effect of civilian intervention in pushing the military's image of operations towards unconventional warfare, t3b. In terms of Jackson's model, the question then

⁶⁵ Ricks, *The Gamble*, 51.

⁶⁶ E.g. Ricks, *The Gamble* 72-80 and Russell, chapter 4, highlight the innovative efforts of Colonel Sean MacFarland and the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

becomes whether this innovation was the result of his hypothesized variables—civilian intervention and/or resource constraints, H2.

Evidence on this aspect of H2 is mixed: civilian intervention into strategy-making clearly played a role in ensuring that the new approach to COIN developed by Petraeus and others was adopted more broadly in the Army and Marines.⁶⁷ On the other hand, one crucial piece of evidence suggests Jackson’s model does not entirely explain the tactical and strategic innovations undertaken in Iraq: a large number of the battlefield innovations and general innovations in strategic approach occurred before the surge and before the publication of FM 3-24, significantly preceding the official shifts in policy directed by General Odierno and implemented by Petraeus. These innovations thus arose not because of civilian intervention, or (arguably) due to resource constraints, but rather due to the innovative thinking of their individual commanders. The image model theorizes two routes to image change: distribution of organizational incentives aimed at altering images, or shifts due to the personal learning processes of the sub-unit (i.e. responses to personal incentives) (i.e. being burned by the stove or being told not to touch it). Several units responded to failure by engaging in the latter process, e.g. those under the command of General Petraeus, Lt. Colonel H.R. McMaster, and Colonel Sean MacFarland. As the process in figure 2 depicts, this “image drift” was often aided by a lack of specific direction from authority structures (i.e. a lack of distribution of corrective organizational incentives).

To test H2, I will consider below two specific cases of COIN innovation occurring in the earlier phases of the war: Colonel Sean MacFarland’s Ramadi operations with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division (the 1/1) and Major General Petraeus’s operations in Mosul with the 101st Airborne Division. MacFarland’s efforts in Ramadi conform to a Model 3 approach, while Petraeus’s fit a Model 2 approach. Additionally, while both commanders brought to their tasks considerable creativity and original thinking, they faced quite different circumstances. Ramadi is the capitol of Al Anbar province, a largely rural and sparsely populated region of Iraq where tribal power largely determines local politics.⁶⁸ Mosul, on the other hand, is the third largest city in Iraq with considerably more formal government infrastructure.⁶⁹

Colonel MacFarland in Ramadi: Model 3 experiments

⁶⁷ The story of the “surge” told in accounts such as Thomas Ricks “The Gamble” explain it largely in terms of the rise of a group of policy insurgents within the military, with a crucial assist from retired General Jack Keane and some other civilian thinkers, i.e. civilian intervention of a sort. Bob Woodward’s trilogy of books on the wars places the emphasis on changes in thinking within the administration, again suggesting that civilian intervention played a role.

⁶⁸ Clary, John, “The Anbar Awakening: An Alliance of Incentives”, *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009.

⁶⁹ “The Accidental Statesman: General Petraeus and the City of Mosul”, Kennedy School of Government Case Study C15-06-1834.0.

Colonel Sean MacFarland arrived in Ramadi in June of 2006 after four months spent relieving McMaster's 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. This experience would prove crucial in generating a basis for an alternative image of operations: MacFarland's operations have been widely noted for developing several tactical innovations that amounted to a meaningful strategic shift towards genuine COIN operations: MacFarland significantly developed TTPs on the construction of small combat outposts (COPs) located among the population. These outposts were jointly manned with Iraqis and allowed coalition forces to maintain a consistent presence in cleared areas in order to project stability and empower locals to report on insurgent movements. Resource-intensive tactics such as these suggest that Jackson's hypothesis about the role of resource constraints in encouraging Model 2 and Model 3 responses is not supported: many of the tactical innovations of COIN were resource intensive, such as COP construction and beefed up intelligence systems.⁷⁰

MacFarland also increased efforts to build ties with the local tribal leadership, building on operations by the previous unit in the area aimed at building a local police force. Crucially, MacFarland broke with official policy in giving police jobs to local tribal militia members and allowing them to only operate in their own neighborhoods.⁷¹ MacFarland also allowed tribes to retain control of their lucrative smuggling trade and offered them a hand in reconstruction projects. MacFarland also dared to directly fund tribal militias MacFarland's effort thus had a strategic component, aiming to co-opt tribal power and political processes in place rather than focusing on bolstering the legitimacy of the Iraqi government. They thus conformed to a Model 3 strategy in Jackson's typology: rather than attempting to get the neutral population to support the central government, MacFarland's approach focused on negotiating a settlement with erstwhile hostile tribal sheikhs.⁷²

As Russell notes, MacFarland faced resistance from his commanders to the latter efforts to co-opt the tribes (organizational resistance, t3a), as they broke with the official policy of supporting the Iraqi government, though he eventually won the argument with his superiors.⁷³ Russell generally notes that MacFarland, and many of the other units he observed engaging in meaningful tactical innovations, did so because they were granted leeway from their commanders to do so, in line with the process portrayed in figure 3: the lack of direct exercise of authority over MacFarland's sub-unit's guiding images in the form of distribution of incentives from his superiors (t3a) allowed his guiding image to "drift" far away from what was prescribed by military doctrine.

While MacFarland's operations were often resource intensive in terms of material, the resource constraints aspect of Jackson's model may be borne out in one

⁷⁰ One may argue that the primary resource constraint to focus on was manpower: a reasonable conjecture, for example, is that a lack of adequate manpower led to some of the strategic choices such as the retreat to larger bases. It is difficult to argue, however, that the US military was significantly lacking in any material resource.

⁷¹ Jim Michaels, "An Army colonel's gamble pays off in Iraq - USATODAY.com," *USA Today* (Friedberg, Germany, May 1, 2007), sec. World, http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-04-30-ramadi-colonel_n.htm.

⁷² op.cit. Russell, 114.

⁷³ Op.cit. Michaels.

respect at least: forces in Al Anbar province were clearly insufficient to running the type of fully-resourced population-centric counterinsurgency effort later prescribed by FM 3-24. Prior to the innovations in tribal relations undertaken by MacFarland, military commanders had concluded that Anbar had largely been “lost” and that military forces were not capable of defeating the insurgency.⁷⁴ It was in this environment that MacFarland and the Marine commander Brig. Gen. John Allen began to court the sheikhs. Thus, as in Jackson’s model, resource constraints may partly explain the military innovations of the Anbar Awakening.

Petreaus in Mosul: Model 2 operations

Then Maj. Gen. David Petraeus’s 101st Airborne Division’s operations in Mosul are another example of bottom-up innovation preceding any civilian intervention into strategy-making. Taking advantage of a lack of specific strategic guidance flowing from commanding General Sanchez⁷⁵, Petraeus’s operations in Mosul presented a clear contrast with the early approaches of other invasion units: Petraeus moved quickly to establish a consistent security presence in the city, and also moved to quickly restore basic services and civil administration. Petraeus eschewed the large-scale cordon-and-sweep approach, instead advising his soldiers to exercise high levels of discretion and courtesy in operations aimed at isolating insurgents.⁷⁶ He also innovated the practice of using coalition funds to buy off local elites and build support for the occupation.⁷⁷

Drawing on his academic background studying counterinsurgency operations, Petraeus clearly conceived of his task as one of political war, and he was allowed to enshrine his general approach in the counterinsurgency field manual. Two aspects of his operations in Mosul, elections and reconstruction efforts, suggest that his approach erred closer to a Model 2 than a Model 3 approach. That is, Petraeus’s operations tended to emphasize the development of a legitimate government, but his route to doing so was not through attempts at co-opting local power structures and processes, as in MacFarland’s tribal outreach efforts, but rather in attempting to generate processes of democratic governance out of whole cloth. Reconstruction efforts and other civil-military operations thus stressed generating support and legitimacy for the government being developed through military efforts rather than in crafting a political settlement based on the local balance of power.

First, Petraeus was notable for moving before any other unit towards holding local elections. Petraeus sought to capitalize upon the window of opportunity created by the initial invasion, during which his forces were essentially “omnipotent”, to move towards creating a political settlement.⁷⁸ To do so, Petraeus himself acted as the ultimate arbiter of political legitimacy, personally vetting the candidate’s lists and establishing the procedures of the election. As Petraeus remarked, “The election was all about trying to

⁷⁴ *op. cit.* McCary

⁷⁵ Ricks, *Fiasco*, 227-228.

⁷⁶ Ricks, *Fiasco*, 231.

⁷⁷ “The Accidental Statesman: General Petraeus and the City of Mosul”, Kennedy School of Government Case Study C15-06-1834.0

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

ensure representation as fairly as we could of all the different tribes, districts, interest groups, political parties, and ethnic groups.’’⁷⁹ Thus, in the absence of any legitimate power center, Petraeus attempted a Model 3 approach of crafting a political settlement out of many competing interest groups. Nevertheless, he pursued a maximal approach in which US forces stood as the final arbiter of political legitimacy, essentially preserving a Model 2 view that a political settlement could be achieved through the exercise of coercive force. This strategy presents a clear contrast with MacFarland’s attempts at co-optation of tribal power. This general Model 2 emphasis is also evident in Petraeus’s approach to reconstruction: facing a vacuum of civil authority, Petraeus took the tack of assigning a civil affairs officer to every ministry, thus granting occupation forces total oversight over the reconstruction and state-building process.⁸⁰

The examples of operations under MacFarland and Petraeus all illustrate that innovations towards Model 2 and Model 3 approaches were tried before the significant intervention of civilians into strategy-making, or due to resource constraints (indeed, many of these operations were resource intensive), though lack of manpower may have played a role in MacFarland’s Ramadi operations.⁸¹ In each case, as the process model suggests in figure 2, t3a/t3b, this lower-level “image drift” by these commanders was facilitated by a lack of specific strategic direction from above: Petraeus benefitted from commanding General Sanchez’s lack of strategic guidance and his general granting of a free hand to lower level commanders; MacFarland was likewise given considerable leeway by his superiors⁸². H2 is thus only partially supported in the case of Iraq: rather than civilian intervention driving initial innovations, the story is one of a authority vacuum encouraging innovation by creative ground commanders, innovation that was eventually built upon to change the strategic course of the war in general. Thus, incentive processes at a personal rather than organizational level prevailed: each of these commanders drew on their intellectual grounding in COIN to craft different approaches.

Subsequent to these initial innovations, the process portrayed in figure 2 and 3, t3b, clearly took place in the process that led to the “surge” orders. As portrayed in accounts by Bob Woodward and Thomas Ricks, a group of policy entrepreneurs led by retired General Jack Keane and supported by administration figures were able to work with military leaders like General Petraeus and, crucially, General Raymond Odierno, to institutionalize the COIN innovations of Petraeus, MacFarland and others in the form of new doctrinal guidance in FM 3-24. The Jackson model would suggest that these innovations would most likely fall into a Model 2 rather than Model 3 approach, as Model 2 retains the military’s dominant coercive approach to solving problems, H3. In the next section, I turn to primary source evidence from doctrine documents and field reports from the war in Afghanistan to test H3.

⁷⁹ *ibid.* 12

⁸⁰ *ibid.* 25

⁸¹ James Russell reports several other examples of bottom-up COIN innovations preceding the official strategy shifts of “the surge” in “Innovation, Transformation and War”, *ibid.*

⁸² Ricks, *The Gamble*, 63.

Slouching towards empire: choosing Model 2 over Model 3 approaches, H3

As suggested above, these initial efforts at COIN innovation in Iraq fell into both Model 2 and Model 3 categories. Jackson's model suggests that, to the extent that innovations to non-Model 1 approaches are tried, they will more often not fall into the Model 2 category, which retains the military's dominant coercive problem solving approach, H3. The contrast between Petraeus and MacFarland's operations noted above suggests this aspect of his theory is borne out, highlighting the power of the dominant MOC image. To be sure, part of the contrast between MacFarland and Petraeus's operations is owing to the fact that willing tribal structures existed for MacFarland to co-opt in the more isolated region of Anbar, while Petraeus had to deal with a more diverse polity.⁸³ Nevertheless, Petraeus's approach and the approach of the Anbar "Awakening" presented two distinct theories of victory: in Model 2, COIN is political war in which victory is achieved by incentivizing the population to reject the insurgency and support a government already in place (the "Host Nation" or HN in the language of FM 3-24). Under Model 3, COIN is violent negotiation with hostile forces in which attempts are made to co-opt aspects of the insurgency into the government, or at least into a stable local political order.

In this section, I consider evidence on H3 from doctrine documents and from field reports from Afghanistan. If H3 is correct, we should see Model 2 approaches dominating these sources rather than Model 3 approaches. The difference between Model 2 and Model 3 approaches in doctrine should be evident in the theory of victory they contain: under Model 2, the insurgency is defeated by inducing the neutral population to reject the insurgents and support the legitimate governing authority. Under Model 3, the emphasis is instead on using violent negotiation with insurgents or other non-state organizations that may support them so as to craft a political settlement.

With respect to the field reports from Afghanistan, the difference between Model 2 and Model 3 should be evident from the military's treatment of the tribes. Under Model 2, one would expect to see tribal relations mainly aimed at generating support for the central government. Under Model 3, one should expect to see operations aimed at directly mobilizing the tribes to provide security and governance. In addition to the form of operations, images also prescribe performance metrics as theorized above. We should therefore also see assessments of the results of operations falling into either Model 2 or Model 3 patterns. Under Model 2, for example, unconventional operations such as

⁸³ Indeed, Lindsay and Petersen (2011) argue that US forces may have needed to lose before they won in Anbar, as Sunni groups were only willing to "flip" to supporting US forces after they had been effectively countered by outside insurgent group. E.g. Long (ibid.) notes that "As late as November 2006, Marine intelligence painted a grim picture of al-Anbar despite the doctrinally sound efforts in places like Al Qaim and Ramadi.¹¹⁴ However, many tribes were in the process of splitting from Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and realigning with the United States (and to a lesser extent the central government of Iraq). While the United States proved flexible in exploiting some of these fractures, U.S. successes occurred independently of doctrinal change." John Lindsay and Roger Petersen, "Iraq Case Study for the Center for Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups".

reconstruction projects and other efforts to change “hearts and minds” should be assessed in terms of their ability to generate support for the central government. Under Model 3, on the other hand, political operations should be evaluated in terms of their ability to empower tribal governance in order to reject the insurgency.

The next section elaborates further on the differences between Model 2 and Model 3 approaches by reviewing evidence on variation in strategic approaches in Iraq. The following section considers evidence on H3 from doctrine documents, and the last section considers evidence from field reports from Afghanistan. I consider evidence from Afghanistan following the strategic shifts in Iraq because they allow one to consider how the newly formed organizational image surrounding COIN capabilities was institutionalized: As Lindsay and Petersen (2011) note, COIN became the “new conventional wisdom” in Afghanistan following the perceived successes of the surge. If Jackson’s theory of the influence of the dominant military image of operations as violent coercion is correct, we should see the new COIN image as replicating the dominant coercive approach to problem solving in the unconventional context of COIN.

Model 2 versus Model 3 in Iraq

In this section, in order to clarify the difference between Model 2 and Model 3 approaches before turning to the primary source evidence reviewed below, I review evidence on strategic variation in Iraq. Jackson’s model suggests that, to the degree that COIN became institutionalized within the military over the course of the war, one would expect a Model 2 versus Model 3 conceptualization to prevail: as Posen’s theory of military doctrine suggests, militaries seek doctrines that attempt to deny the enemy their standard scenarios, and dislike doctrines that rely on breaking the political power and will of the enemy since they are not accustomed to gauging it (e.g. deterrent strategies). They generally prefer to see war as a coercive battle aimed at breaking the military will of the adversary. Thus, they should dislike Model 3 approaches that rely upon gauging and co-opting various sources of political power in a society in order to craft a political settlement, and possibly involve negotiating a settlement with the enemy; this view of war places the emphasis on achieving conciliation rather than capitulation and thus breaks out of the coercive mindset of the MOC. It also potentially grants violent agency to erstwhile enemies, which surely does not help deny the enemy their standard scenario.

Lindsay and Petersen (2011) report the results of a regional study of variation in counterinsurgency strategies. They argue that several COIN strategies are in evidence in Iraq, from the population-centric, hearts and minds approach of FM 3-24, to “tribal mobilization”, to assassination of leaders (“decapitation”), to ethnic homogenization of neighborhoods. Each of these strategies engaged various levels of US military capability, e.g. the Special Forces mainly pursued a decapitation strategy, while ethnic homogenization of neighborhoods largely took place without coalition prodding. On the other two, Lindsay and Petersen draw a clear contrast between the tribal mobilization strategy pursued largely in Anbar province with the FM 3-24 inspired clear, hold, and build approach pursued in Baghdad and elsewhere: while both strategies aim at the establishment of stable and legitimate local governance, tribal mobilization strategies aim to do so primarily through the cooptation of existing local power structures and political processes, and thus to craft a local political settlement; FM 3-24, clear-hold-and-build

strategies, on the other hand, aim at bolstering the legitimacy of the central government through motivating buy-in. Thus, tribal mobilization strategies largely ignore the “neutral” portion of the population unaffiliated with either the insurgents or the government, viewing the operational landscape more as one populated by competing interest groups and political power structures. FM 3-24, on the other hand, imagines COIN as a “triangular contest” between counterinsurgent forces, the insurgency, and a local population who may potentially ally with the counterinsurgent by informing on the insurgency:

FM 3-24 assumes that popular grievances cause small radicalized groups to take up arms against the government, and thus that the restoration of government legitimacy should redress these grievances. It represents the war as a triangular contest between government security forces and coalition partners (+3), “a neutral or passive majority” of the population (-1 to +1), and irreconcilable insurgents (-3). Proactive community resistance (-2) and government aligned local militias (+2) are ignored or lumped into the other categories.⁸⁴

In their analysis, FM 3-24 thus presents a clear Model 2 epistemology: the population is treated as a target for the distribution of positive and negative incentives in order to encourage them to support the government (-1 to +1) and inform on the insurgents (-3) who are targeted by military force alone. Thus, the military attempts to coerce and induce the population via reconstruction and other positive goods and to coerce the insurgents via force. Tribal mobilization, on the other hand, presents a Model 3 logic: rather than lumping all insurgent forces together, tribal mobilization attempts to craft a settlement out of erstwhile hostile forces. The insurgents are thus not solely targeted by coercive force, but are rather selectively engaged. Tribal mobilization thus rejects the Model 2 epistemology of political war and substitutes one of violent negotiation aimed at stability: “Whereas FM 3-24 assumes that the solution to civil war anarchy is a Weberian monopoly on violence invested in the state, the tribal mobilization strategy gives rise to a stable truce among an oligopoly of feudal warlords”.⁸⁵

Although considerable variation exists in the approaches taken by units in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (where FM 3-24 became the “new conventional wisdom” following the perceived successes of Iraq⁸⁶), evidence suggests that COIN efforts more often than not fall into Model 2 versus Model 3 approaches, as Jackson’s theory and the image model more generally predict (H3). Lindsay and Petersen (2011) suggest, for example, that Anbar was one of the few places where a genuine Model 3 strategy was tried, while Model 2 FM 3-24 and Model 1 SOF decapitation strategies prevailed elsewhere in Iraq.⁸⁷ As noted earlier, Colonel MacFarland’s attempt to arm the local power elite, an explicit Model 3 strategy, met resistance from his superiors due to its

⁸⁴ Lindsay and Petersen Case Study, 22

⁸⁵ *ibid.* 24

⁸⁶ *ibid.* See also, Gian Gentile, “A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army,” *Parameters*, no. 2009 (n.d.).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 30

break with official policy to support the central government (t3a).⁸⁸ His attempts at arming and co-opting local elites and militias into the local police force can be clearly contrasted with attempts to build a police force in Mosul, which featured centralized training of recruits at the Hamam al Alil training center in Southern Mosul, and drew recruits mainly from ill-prepared neutral civilians.⁸⁹

The new COIN doctrine: Model 2 institutionalized

Evidence that Model 2 approaches prevailed following the surge as COIN capabilities became institutionalized is evident in FM 3-24, the new counterinsurgency doctrine promulgated in late 2006 after an extensive (and unorthodox) drafting effort led by General Petraeus.⁹⁰ To the extent that doctrine guides actual operations, the language of FM 3-24 heavily suggests that Model 2 approaches to COIN dominate military thinking. For example, the manual conceives the main problem of counterinsurgency as one of bolstering the legitimacy of an existing government. For example, section I-2 states that “insurgency is an organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control.” Likewise, I-4 states that “Long-term success in COIN depends on the people taking charge of their own affairs and consenting to the government’s rule.”⁹¹ More generally, the manual views foreign-incumbent counterinsurgencies as a problem of bolstering “host nation” legitimacy (chapter 6 is entitled “Developing Host-Nation Security Forces”) in order to dry up support for the insurgency⁹². FM 3-24 thus stresses a view of COIN as political war aimed at generating support for an existing government (Model 2), not the crafting of a new political order out of disparate interest groups (Model 3).

As introductions to the public version of the field manual make clear, the philosophy of COIN contained in FM 3-24 draws heavily on British colonial practices⁹³. It is thus unsurprising that, in its emphasis on Model 2, it seems to recreate a quasi-imperial notion that the invasion force and the “host nation” it supports possesses a *de facto* monopoly on political power; COIN is simply an attempt to get locals to recognize this inherent legitimacy. Model 3 conceptualizations, on the other hand, would view invasion forces as a facilitator and selective intervener in local politics, moving to craft political settlements by selectively supporting and opposing various competing interest groups; political legitimacy arises from crafting a settlement amongst various groups that optimizes stability and access to political power. Model 2 approaches thus seem to contravene America’s self-image as a non-colonial power. This suggests that the incentive structures of military professionals, which generate preferences for coercive approaches to war, exhibit a strong influence on counterinsurgency strategies chosen: as

⁸⁸ op. cit. Russell, 114.

⁸⁹ op.cit. Russell, 154.

⁹⁰ Ricks, *The Gamble*, 95,

⁹¹ “FM 3-24, US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual,” University of Chicago Press, 2007, p. 2.

⁹² E.g. I-147

⁹³ *ibid.* xxiv

Posen theorizes, militaries should seek to avoid strategies that require non-military metrics and non-military capabilities. Thus, despite the field manual's emphasis on understanding and responding to local grievances, its prescription is to treat these as an undifferentiated variable to respond to: grievances are to be addressed so that the local population can be incentivized to support the government. The manual thus retains a coercive, rather than cooperative, approach to generating political legitimacy. Distribution of positive incentives such as roads, schools, and other reconstruction projects to induce the local population to support the government is just the flip side of applying bullets to the bodies of the enemy to induce their capitulation to the government.

Thus, despite its unconventional character, COIN as envisioned in FM 3-24 remains an offensive doctrine: it seeks to achieve its objective through a pro-active application of military power, albeit non-kinetic power in many cases. Its rise within the US military is thus likely attributable not to factors encouraging the rejection of the MOC, but due to the MOC itself. Indeed, COINs broad adoption during the "surge" came at a time when General Casey was encouraging a defensive retreat to large bases outside major population centers, recasting forces in an offensive posture dispersed amidst the population. Jackson's model of military decision-making is thus broadly borne out: the MOC's coercive emphasis played a dispositive role both in conditioning a sub-optimal initial Model 1 response, but also in encouraging Model 2 responses as a pro-active, offensive reaction to strategic failure. While Model 3 solutions were tried, this was more due to a response to regional exigencies (e.g. tribal receptivity to cutting deals in Anbar) and the contributions of specific creative commanders such as Colonel MacFarland than any doctrinal shift. Rather, coercive, Model 2 type strategies became the institutionally preferred solution as enshrined in FM 3-24.

Evidence from the field:

This section considers evidence on H3 from field reports from the War in Afghanistan. If Model 2 approaches dominate, we should expect to see evidence of this in the evaluative criteria applied to after-action reports from unconventional operations such as reconstruction efforts and tribal outreach. These efforts should be evaluated mainly in terms of their affects on inducing the neutral or loosely affiliated population (-1, 0, +1) to support the government, rather than in terms of coercing or empowering local non-state or even insurgent groups into supporting a political or security settlement. Model 3 thinking, on the other hand, should be seen in attempts to directly empower tribes and other non-state political groups (the +2, +3, -2, and -3's, rather than the -1, 0, and +1's). Examples of Model 3 operations are those attempting to directly empower or arm tribes, or to engage in political reconciliation with insurgents. Model 2 engagements should instead aim to empower the central government (+3) and engage the neutral population (-1, 0, +1).

The data considered here is drawn from the Wikileaks "Afghan War Logs" document dump. The Afghan War Logs constitute over 75,000 field reports drawn from the US military's SIGACTS or significant activities database, covering the period from January 2004 to December 2009. The documents cover a range of operations, from reconstruction efforts to raids on insurgent positions to injury reports, etc.. The process

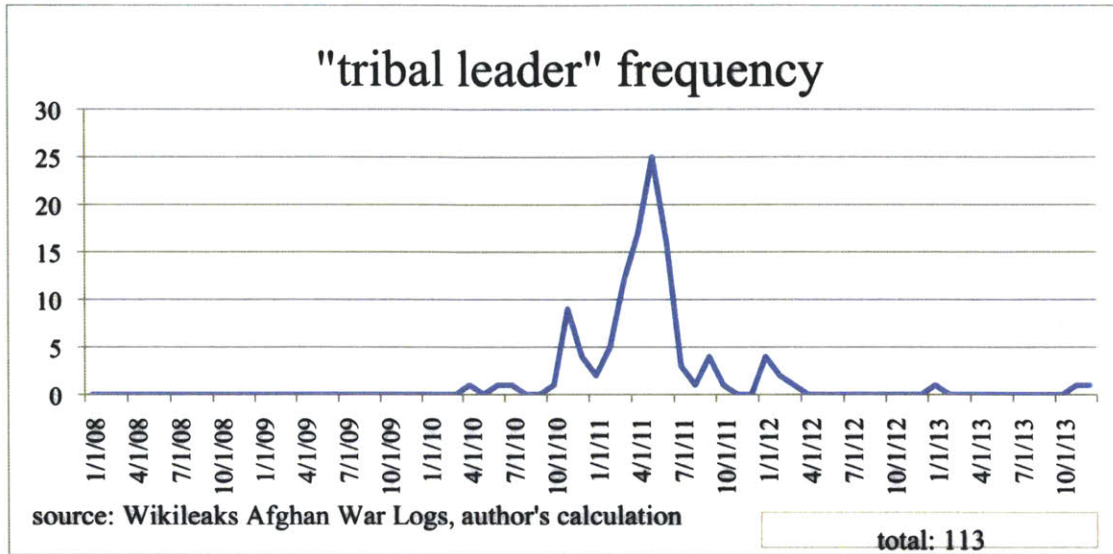
that generated the sampling of documents represented in the document dump remains unknown, so it is difficult to assess how much coverage of the universe of field reports the Logs represents.

The following analysis is based on a review of the 113 documents in the Logs that contain the key string “tribal leader”.⁹⁴ This search was utilized to pick up any reference in the Logs to efforts to engage tribal leaders (or “tribal leadership”, which would also be picked up by the search) since this evidence would provide the starkest test of whether Model 2 or Model 3 approaches were being tried with respect to these most crucial non-state political groups in Afghan society.⁹⁵ It is interesting to note that this key-string search does not turn up any matches until late in 2006 around the time the new COIN doctrine was promulgated, though it is difficult to draw any conclusions from this since the process that generated the sample of reports in the Logs is unclear. An additional interesting but inconclusive fact is that the majority of the reports produced by the search are also clumped around the time the new counterinsurgency doctrine was being implemented in early 2007 (see graph 1) and then decrease in frequency. Graph 2 also portrays the report frequency for the key-string “leader engagement”, a specific type of operation reported in the logs aimed at engagement with key tribal and government leaders. Some of the reports assayed below are drawn from this broader search as well. 1076 of the 1169 documents from the “leader engagement” search, and 101 of 114 of the “tribal leader” matches come from Regional Command East, so the analysis below does not necessarily cover much regional variation in strategy. A large number of them cover provincial reconstruction team (PRT) reports. Focusing on the work of these groups should reveal how the military viewed the purpose of providing positive political incentives: the question is whether these were viewed in a Model 2 view as a way of inducing the neutral and homogenous population to support the central government, or in a Model 3 view of inducing and empowering tribal groups such as militias to produce a local political settlement that opposes the insurgency.

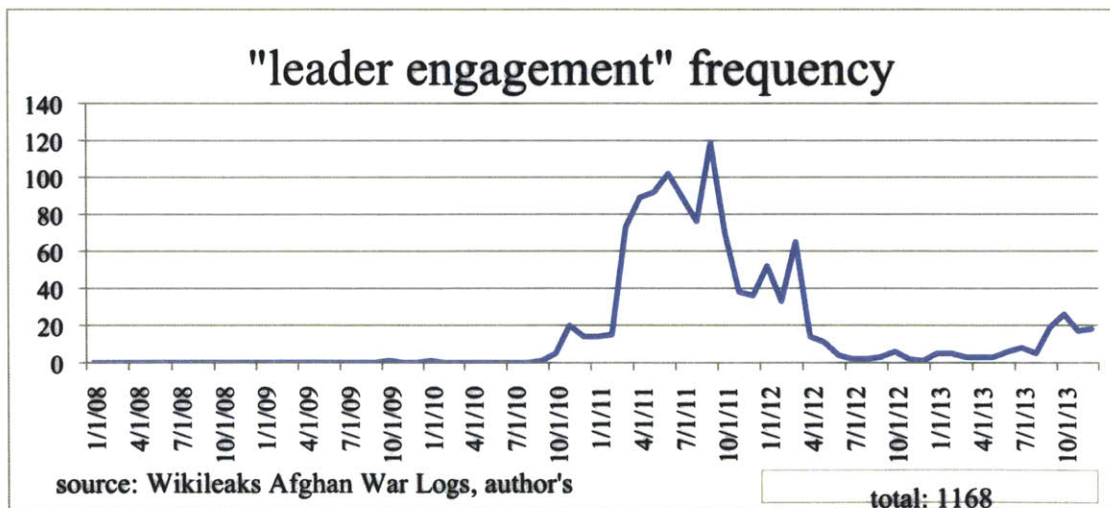
⁹⁴ The search was performed using author’s code.

⁹⁵ After much experimentation, this key-string search was also found to outperform many related searches in terms of producing a high density of reports related to tribal engagements and meetings; related searches tended to throw up a lot of irrelevant data in terms of the goals of the present analysis, e.g. injury reports and reports of firefights.

Graph 1:



graph 2:



The field reports allow one to see images at work directly: images tell you what you're seeing, how to interpret it in terms of the value metrics and goals of the organization, and what behaviors to chose in response to it. The field reports describe specific operations and post-operation assessments of results. They thus provide evidence on what types of operations are chosen in response to environmental stimuli, and how

their results are assessed. They also generally illustrate the cognitive frameworks through which the operating environment is interpreted.

In the first section below, I present a fairly random sampling of illustrative reports from the “tribal leader” and “leader engagement” key-string searches. While I only directly quote from a few reports, these were selected to be representative of the sample of reports falling into similar categories (village assessments, security meeting reports, or PRT reports). Overall, they show strong evidence of a Model 2 mentality, in line with the prescriptions of FM 3-24 and the prediction of H3. Tribal engagement operations are aimed almost exclusively at empowering the “Host Nation” central government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRoA), and are assessed in those terms. Model 3 thinking is not totally absent, however: in the second section, I focus on a specific and widely covered incident in the war, the rise and fall of Combat Outpost (COP) Keating. Operations at COP Keating originally proceeded in a Model 2 mode, as evidenced by field reports; however, as severe manpower constraints began to hamper these efforts, commanders at Keating shifted to a Model 3 approach of seeking political reconciliation with the insurgents, as evidenced directly in the field reports. Additionally, interviews with the commanders at Keating reported by the Washington Post reveal that these efforts were undertaken in contravention of official policy, and were resisted by the commander’s superiors and the Afghan government (as in figure 2/3, t3a). Thus, the story of Keating is broadly similar to that experienced by then-Colonel MacFarland in Anbar and theorized by Jackson: after a long period of Model 1 and Model 2 experimentation, the cumulative effects of resource constraints (in terms of manpower) and a willing and creative ground commander led to brief Model 3 experiments (t1 and t2). This both validates the process model presented in figure 2 and figure 3 and confirms H3. Additionally, the organization resisted these innovations and re-imposed Model 2 (t3a and t4), though here this resistance came from an affiliated organization, the Afghan government.

Field Reports from Afghanistan:

As noted above, Model 2 thinking should be evident in the field reports in the types of operations chosen and how they are conceived of by commanders, and in how their results are assessed.

Concept of operations:

Under Model 2, military forces attempt to engage the neutral population (-1, 0, +1) in an attempt to build support for the government (+3) and erode support for insurgents (-3). If this model dominates operations, tribes should be seen as a neutral and homogenous group (“the people”) whose support can be won or lost based on the provision of positive or negative payoffs such as reconstruction efforts. They should not be viewed as political actors in and of themselves, capable of generating a legitimate political settlement.

The majority of the field reports clearly conceive of the tribes in this way. The following report is representative of reports following leader engagement operations in the Logs. It reports the result of a security meeting held with tribal elders and conducted

in concert with the Pech district governor (many leader engagement operations reported in the Logs are conducted in concert with IROA government representatives). Consider the highlighted text:

Exhibit 1:

Reference ID Region Latitude Longitude
AFG20080123n1109 RC EAST 34.8727684 71.15371704

Date Type Category Affiliation Detained
2008-01-23 07:07 Non-Combat Event Meeting NEUTRAL 0

Enemy Friend Civilian Host nation
Killed in action 0 0 0 0
Wounded in action 0 0 0 0

KLE Report

CF Leaders Name: LTC OSTLUND, WILLIAM B.

**Company: Platoon: Position: Battalion Commander, Task Force
Rock 2-503rd Infantry Battalion**

**District: N/A Date: 23 JAN 08 At (Location): Kunar
Provincial Coordination Center (PCC) in Asadabad**

Group Name: N/A

Individual Name: Governer Rakman

Individual Title: Pech Governor

**Security Meeting Objective/Goals: Goal was to discuss security in the
Korengal**

Was Objective Met? All objectives were met

Key Themes & Issues Discussed:

Governor Rakman

- o IROA and ANSF are here to help, not hurt do not fight against us and divide our country
- o Join hands together as the unified tribe that we once were, and together we will provide security to the Korengal
- o If your sons need jobs and livelihood, we will gladly accept them in ANP, ANA, and road construction workers
- o You have more power than you think you do over the ACM (anti-coalition militia)
- o If you cooperate, the road into the Korengal will be finished at the end of this year, if there is no security, the road will take 10 years.

ANP Chief Gulmanh Pashartoust

- o One part of the body hurts, the whole body hurts the same goes with Korengal and all of Afghanistan
- o What are you opposing, what for? How long must we fight? How

long must we die?

o If we do not take this opportunity now (coalition forces willing to help re-construct the Korengal and bring peace), then who will we rely on to help us stand up and survive?

o Do not make Korengal a sick place!

o Why fight back? You say there is nothing wrong then why do you oppose?

o The ACM fight a false Jihad!

LTC Adam Khan

o Security is everyones responsibility

o Too much talk, too much shura, the time for action is now!

o Foreign fighters ruin our hard work and our country.

o We (the ANSF) are not infidels, infidels dont pray, they dont go to mosque, the disgrace Islam we (the ANSF) are Muslim, the same as you.

o There is no need for Jihad. In our history there was a need for Jihad against tyranny, against corruption. What is it for now? Jihad against road construction? Against commerce? Against progress? This is a FALSE Jihad, and it is wrong.

o Shura is not enough, be serious with our words today!

o The ANSF and CF agreed not to fire during Ramadan and Eides; the ACM still attacked!

o The ACM make business and decide to spill the blood of your sons, all under the name of Jihad

o This (false jihad) is an infectious disease

o This is a golden opportunity to re-build and flourish we are poor, when are we ever going to get this chance? The international community will not be interested in helping us forever

o Show me what the Taliban have done for you. Show me the schools they have built, the mosques they have refurbished, the road they paved, the supplies and food that they have distributed. Show me all they have done for the prophet of the Korengal, show me!

o Heed my words, do not choose to kill yourself, or your country.

o Out of 20 dead in the Shuryak, 17 of them were Korengali

o Tell the ACM to turn themselves in, were ready to accept them and make a better Korengal together

LTC Ostlund

o Weve given so much into your valley, and have gotten so little in return; several of my soldiers have lost their lives in the Korengal but you have lost many more

o The ACM rape your lumber, lead your sons to their deaths and lie and intimidate you. What next? Where will they stop are your daughters next?

o From our comparative efforts for security in the Korengal Valley, I can say that I care more about your valley and your culture than you do.

o Should I hire 1000 Safi men to march into the Korengal and fix my problem?

o Who will take responsibility for the security of the Korengal? Korengali Elders (Babyal Teacher)

o We do not oppose the government, we are with it! The Korengalis are good people

o We are defenseless against the ACM so this is not our fault nor our doing we do not feed or house the enemy

o What about the 18-19 people that you have detained? What happened to them? We want them back.

o If you move 1000 Safi tribe into our valley, then we will have two enemies (the ACM and the new tribe)

Other Meeting Attendees: Governor Rakman (Provincial Governor), LTC Adam Khan (ANA Kandak BN CDR), LTC Byron (ANA ETT), CPT Ahmed Zay (Korengal ANA Commander) Gulmanh Pashartoust (Provincial ANP Commander), Battle 6 (Korengal Company Commander, CPT Mantle (FECC OIC), SFC Hinojosa (FECC NCOIC)
Report key: 3A64F0DA-3D69-49C8-A214-4D57A898E006
Tracking number: 2008-025-000926-0437
Attack on: NEUTRAL
Complex attack: FALSE
Reporting unit: TF ROCK 2-503 IN
Unit name: TF ROCK 2-503 IN
Type of unit: None Selected
Originator group: UNKNOWN
Updated by group: UNKNOWN
MGRS: 42SXD9685161050
CCIR:
Sigact:
DColor: GREEN

[Author's highlights]

The structure of the meeting is fairly clear from the report: coalition forces and representatives of the Afghan central government presented a united front to tribal elders, imploring them to support government efforts to provide security and oppose anti-coalition militias (ACM, a -2 or -3 entity). Consider the five bullet points in the highlighted section: while the tribal leaders of Korengal are implored to aid in the security of the region, they are told to do so through the auspices of the Afghan National Police (ANP), IRoA, and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), i.e. the central "host nation" government. This is clearly obvious simply from the structure of the meeting: coalition forces meet jointly with representatives of the central government and the tribal leaders to bolster the legitimacy of the former. Additionally, the last bullet presents a specific conception of how positive incentives such as road reconstruction are supposed to operate: the governor states that support for the government's efforts can be traded for reconstruction projects. This typifies Model 2 thinking: resources are directed at the neutral population (-1, 0, +1) so as to coerce or induce cooperation with the central government (+3).

The coercive, Model 2 tone of Lieutenant Colonel Ostlund is also fairly unmistakable. In this engagement, coalition forces are facing a -2 or -3 entity, an anti-coalition militia—that is, a fairly organized force opposed to the government and the Coalition Forces. The operation featured in the report attempts to oppose them through pressuring of the neutral population (-1, 0, +1) to support the IRoA with a combination of harsh words and potentially positive inducements such as further reconstruction efforts. A Model 3 approach, however, would seek to engage the militias directly in an effort at political reconciliation. While the existence of this report does not necessarily indicate that these other efforts were not tried, Lieutenant Colonel Ostlund's exasperated tone is fairly indicative of the attitude taken towards Model 3 approaches: in the last two

highlighted bullets, he rhetorically considers and then rejects an explicit Model 3 strategy of tribal mobilization of the Safi tribe for the sake of opposing the ACM.

The highlighted portions of the following two reports also reveal a Model 2 orientation.

Exhibit 2:

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude
AFG20080221n1171	RC EAST	34.85280991	71.13514709

Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
2008-02-21 14:02	Other	Other	NEUTRAL	0

	Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation
Killed in action	0	0	0	0
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0

14 FEB Additional Summary Details:

On 14 FEB 08, the Kunar PRT moved with the provincial governor from Abad to the bridge construction site opposite the Saw Valley and to the Naray District Center IOT conduct a groundbreaking ceremony. Over recent months, the Saw elders have been taking a more active role in the Naray District govt. along with engaging with CF forces to better their villages and provide for their people. The Saw valley has been disconnected from the west side of the river and everything it offers. Theyve had a hilux-capable suspension bridge, but this truck bridge being built along with a basic health post as part of the Kunar Health package, a school that 1-91 CAV coordinated through a NGO donation, and other low-cost projects that provide a lasting impact - are creating very positive effects.

To capitalize off of these positive circumstances with the Saw elders, recent development and progression in northern Kunar, and to further legitimize and connect the govt., Kunar Governor Wahidi and some of his staff made the trip up north with the PRT. The impact of this trip, atleast initially, seems very good. Elders and local leaders from Naray, Ghaziabad, Asmar, and Shigal were all at the groundbreaking and the ceremony. Gov. Wahidi said he intends to do this more, to get out with the people. As the joint PRT-Govt. element moved up the MSR to Naray, multiple sub-governors and their shuras joined the convoy to take part in the day. People were out in mass to greet the Governor as he moved through their villages. He stopped many times to shake hands, introduce himself, pray with people along the road, and sometimes give out gifts.

There was a prominent ANP presence along the entire MSR, showing joint coordination b/w districts and also the ability of the provincial CoP to organize protection and police ops in the province. At the Naray district center, where all parties moved to after the bridge groundbreaking in Saw, the Naray ANP in conjunction with ANA from Naray conducted security operations for the ceremony that was attended by aprx. 250-300 people. The ceremony area around the district center was cordoned off and guarded by the joint ANA-ANP elements. ALL personnel entering the area were searched.

During the ceremony at Naray, all prominent figures spoke with Gov.

Wahidi speaking last. The speeches focused on how siding with the govt. increases opportunities for districts and villages to receive development projects. All speakers tied security to development and then development to opportunities for Kunar and Afghanistan in the future. While security from ANP and ANA was talked about, many speakers made mention to the fact that tribal leaders and elders of villages had to do their part to just like during the fight against the Russians. Comments such as these drew loud applause and cheering from the attendees.

Overall, this was a well attended event that connected to local and provincial governments to the people, but also connected the government to itself.

Where:

Saw Bridge Construction Site: 42S YD 236 945
Naray District Center: 42S YE 298 010

Who:

Kunar Governor: Haji Syed Faizullah Wahidi
Kunar Parliamentarian: Haji Salee (from central Kunar)
Kunar Parliamentarian: Gul Har (female from northern Kunar)
Naray Sub-Governor: Haji Gul Zamon
Naray CoP: MAJ Ahmed Din
Naray Deputy CoP: Haji Youseff
Naray Deputy Sub-Governor: Haji Brundandine
Saw Valley Elders to include: Akbar Khan, Mullah Latif Ullah
Multiple Naray elders and members of district shura
Ghaziabad Sub-Governor: Mustafer Khan
Multiple Ghaziabad elders and members of district shura
Shigal Sub-Governor: Abdul Zahair
Shigal CoP: Mohammed Afzal
Multiple elders and local leaders from surrounding villages.

15 FEB Summary of Activities:

No significant activities reported.

16 FEB Summary of Activities:

No significant activities reported.

17 FEB Summary of Activities:

1) CA-North

KLE with Farooq Jehan, subgovernor of Dangum, who reports the ANP and ABP have been holding meetings with the shura and elders from border villages in order to improve border control in Dangum. Additionally, Dangum will be appointing a new 30 person development shura, which is

supported by Governor Wahidi. Fifteen of the 30 shura members will be women. The shura and its female members are welcomed as a new direction in development. Shura training will begin Wednesday at the Asmar district center. The training will also be attended by new shuras from Ghaziabad and Naray.

18 FEB Summary of Activities:

No significant activities reported.

19 FEB Summary of Activities:

1) EM

Performed road assessment of the Pech Valley road. Assessed Waygal truck bridge and Waygal district center. Assessed three schools in Waygal, which are the Bar Kanday school, the Tarale school, and the Tantil school.

20 FEB Summary of Activities:

1) CDR

Met with Governor Wahidi, his staff, the NDS Chief and the Chief of Police in a weekly security meeting. Additionally, preparations made for CODEL visit.

2) CMO

Met with Qudsia Majeedyar, a Kabul NGO, to discuss USAID women's training program funded through the British and Canadian embassies.

21 FEB Summary of Activities:

1) CDR / CMO

CODEL

Report key: 93CD3847-9FFA-48E2-BF85-C6A9E3AE9DB4

Tracking number: 2008-052-145618-0609

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: ASADABAD PRT (351 CA BN)

Unit name: ASADABAD PRT

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SXD9520058799

CCIR:

Sigact:
DColor: GREEN

This report shows strong evidence on the concept of operations held of provincial reconstruction teams (PRT's): as the first highlighted section makes clear, assessments of these engagements are seen in terms of their ability to bolster the legitimacy of the central government, an explicit Model 2 approach. The next document is similar:

Exhibit 3:

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude
AFG20070602n727	RC EAST	33.13362122	68.83656311

Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
2007-06-02 18:06	Non-Combat Event	Other	NEUTRAL	0

	Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation
Killed in action	0	0	0	0
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0

Last 24:

Summary of Activities: Unit: PRT SHARANA

DTG: 2007-06-02

Commanders Summary: (S//REL). Today was the Governors first day back in Sharana after a week in Kabul discussing security issues with the Minister of Interior.

At the Governors office this morning were SHURA members from the Zako Khel Sub-Tribe of the Kharoti Tribe from the district of Sarobi. (There are two main sub-tribes in Sarobi, the other being the Adi Khel.) Attempts to build a new district center in Sarobi have been hampered by a land dispute. Locals do not want to give up what they say is their land for a new district center. The Zako Khel tribe blamed the Adi Khel tribe for being uncooperative in finding land for a new district center. The SHURA members were there to secure the release of some detainees taken earlier. The Governor was adamant about not releasing them. This was a key engagement and illustrative of the political effectiveness of the Governor. The Kharoti Tribes extend around Sarobi district north to Orgun, northwest to Sar Hawze, west to Charboran, south to Gomal and to a small degree, east into Bermel. There has been a great deal of ACM activity in these areas recently. (In fact, 32 incidents including two attacks on the District Center in Gormal in May alone.)

The Governor refused to help get these detainees released citing poor security in these Kharoti areas and the fact that the Kharotis were allowing Taliban forces to live and operate in their areas, fighting the government. He held the tribe accountable for security in the area. It was impressive to see the Governor lay the wood to the tribal SHURA leaders on the issue of security and presence of ACF members. He placed two conditions on the release of the detainees; build a District Center and support the government. The message from the Governor was clear; convince the other sub-tribes within the Kharoti giving Taliban forces safe haven in their homes, support the government and the government will work for you.

Also at the Governors office were the Chief of Police from Janikhel and the District Commissioner from Sar Hawse (who was also acting Police Chief). Notable exchange during this meeting was the governors message to them regarding recruitment of ANAP applicants. He stressed good pay, paychecks on time, quality food, and fuel problems would be taken care of. He expressed a desire to make the Janikhel Chief of Police the Commander for a new QRF force in Shaklabad. He stressed he needed at least 50 recruits for this so the Chief needed to get hot on recruiting members for ANAP training.

The Governor met shortly with the leaders of a new Provincial QRF force sent from Kabul. He would meet later with them to discuss CONOPS.

Finally, he stated he was going to have NDS arrest the Chief of Police and District Commissioner from Charboran District on the basis that they have been implicated in the attack on the Gomal District Center back on 4 May. Government vehicles stolen from the Gomal DC were later found in houses that were associated with these two leaders.

From these exchanges it is clear the Governor has taken solid actions to improve the security situation within the province.

One thing to note, the Governor expressed to me the importance of continued support from the PRT in the area of monitoring ANP forces in the District Centers throughout the province. He specifically cited status reports from PRT district visits regarding number of ANP personnel present at District Center headquarters, presence of the Chief of Police, and supplies/equipment available to the ANP, are invaluable to his assessment (and that of the Provincial Chiefs) regarding ANP effectiveness and their weak areas.

CAT-A Team A, led by CPT Stockamp, continued their mission to districts in western and southern Paktika. They plan to engage district shuras and tribal leaders, conduct governance and project assessments, and conduct district and village censuses regarding numbers of police and teachers. They will also verify the identities of district officials. They will RON in Shakhilibad after discovering and clearing (with EOD) an IED hastily placed ahead of their route. We have twelve of seventeen M114s that are FMC. Four vehicles have critical parts on order. We have three of four MK19s FMC; parts have arrived from BAF. M2 slant is four for four.

Report key: 5B74109A-8D39-4AD0-9268-F8023C3F303D

Tracking number: 2007-153-175722-0001

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: SHARANA PRT

Unit name: SHARANA PRT

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SVB8475566112

CCIR:

Sigact:

DColor: GREEN

This report again suggests that the concept of operations for reconstruction teams in particular was focused on bolstering the central government. As suggested by the highlighted section, the connection sought is between the central government (+3) and the neutral population (-1, 0, +1) here assumed to be represented by tribal elders. This contrasts with Model 3, in which non-state groups (+2, -2) are considered a source of

political settlement in and of themselves, as in Colonel MacFarland's attempt to "flip" whole tribes in Ramadi.⁹⁶

One specific test of whether operations fell generally into a Model 2 or Model 3 conception in Afghanistan is the degree to which Coalition Forces attempted to directly arm the tribes and empower them to police their own areas, thus treating them as an empowered +2 or -2 entity. As discussed above in reference to the Anbar Awakening, Colonel MacFarland and Marine Brigadier General John Allen sought to directly arm and finance the tribes in order to induce opposition to Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia (AQI). They also cut deals with them to allow tribesmen to provide policing in their tribal areas, in explicit contrast with the policies of the Iraqi government and coalition forces to use police from outside of a specific district. They thus sought to empower +2's and -2's rather than delegitimizing or ignoring them.

Some of the field reports from Afghanistan provide direct evidence that MacFarland's ideas on arming the tribes and allowing local policing were specifically opposed by coalition and IROA forces. This indicates that the dominant image of operations revolved around the application of coercive power to the neutral population rather than engagement with more organized non-state groups. Consider the second highlighted section below:

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude		
AFG20070606n913	RC EAST	33.33778	69.95832062		
Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained	
2007-06-06 15:03	Non-Combat Event	Other	NEUTRAL	0	
		Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation
Killed in action	0	0	0	0	
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0	
UNIT: PRT KHOST			DTG: 061930ZJUN07		

LAST 24:

The PRT CA director attended the bi-weekly sub-governors meeting at the governors office compound. Governor Jamal left early this morning for business in Kabul and will return sometime next week. The Deputy Governor conducted the meeting today and only six sub-governors were present as well as representatives from DIAG. Sub-governors not present were Nadir Shah Kot, Jaji Maidan, Bak, Mando Zayi, Gurbuz, and Sabari.

PRT element in Qalandar remains with downed vehicle awaiting additional repair parts. Anticipate re-supply GAC to arrive on site tomorrow AM. If additional repairs do not work, alternative recovery methods (e.g. air recovery) will have to be further explored.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

⁹⁶ Jim Michaels, "An Army colonel's gamble pays off in Iraq," *USA Today* (Friedberg, Germany, May 1, 2007), http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-04-30-ramadi-colonel_n.htm.

POLITICAL:

Sub-governors meeting:

The deputy governor opened the meeting stating the three issues they would focus on: security, recruitment in the ANA and ANP, and the DIAG program. DIAG has prepared and sent to each district lists of people they believe have illegal weapons. They are asking that the sub-governors help them by sending these people to DIAG to either turn in the weapons or verify that they don't have them.

The Qalandar sub-governor reported that he received a list from DIAG of people in the district who supposedly own illegal weapons. Of the five on his list he sent four to DIAG and the fifth is now in Pakistan but as soon as he returns he will send him to DIAG also. The sub-governor talked with tribal leaders about the importance of them providing security in the district. He also discussed issues with police and police officers working in the district in which they're from. Several of the Qalandar police are from Qalandar and this erodes their effectiveness as members of a legitimate police force. He strongly recommends they come from outside the district in which they work. The Qalandar sub-governor said there are no problems with security in his district nor are there any problems with the new DC site.

The Musa Khel sub-governor reported that security is good in his district. He wants the PRT to talk with contractor working on new district center about the surrounding wall. He says the contractor may attempt to build wall on loose earth pushed from the top of hill where DC is being built. He also wants us to track 13-15 missiles he said a villager in MK is voluntarily turning in. He doesn't know what kind of missiles they are. The sub-governor brought up an issue that solicited input from all SGs. He said that DIAG contacted them via radio to schedule meetings, etc. The SGs say that DIAG shouldn't call them on the radio to schedule anything; it compromises security and allows ACM to monitor and disrupt their actions. They recommend this type of coordination be done via mobile or satellite phone.

The Spera sub-governor requested more police in a security meeting about one month ago and was promised by the governor to get 45 more. So far he has only two. He reported that there is a group of about 250 ACM and are being led by Mullah Mohammad Omar who works for Siraj Haqqani. He said there are two other leaders there as well, but not as senior as the other one. He just got this information yesterday and it is unclear if he gave it to anyone else. He said the people of Spera are supporting the government more than ever before, and that security is getting better, but he wants to address the concerns he has with ACM movement in the district.

The Tere Zayi sub-governor reported that security isn't as good as he wants. District residents that work for the government or CF are having their compound doors blown off, IEDs planted near their compounds and receiving night letters warning them to not associate with the local government or CF. The sub-governor has complied with DIAG and sent some people from his list to them and they are now being investigated.

The Shamal sub-governor reported that security is OK in his district. He held a tribal shura with over 100 participants and they are acting on info from the PCC. He said that they give info to NDS but receive no feedback or no info in return. They are looking for intel updates

in order to address security concerns in the district. He talked about strict measures he will implement against families and anyone who supports ACM, including burning their houses. He will soon have a problem with police forces in his district as many of their contracts are ending soon and they wont work anymore after that. But he also said that the ANP in his district are now making almost as much as ANA. The deputy governor then said that the increase they received was form a bonus that they will receive every month unless they get a salary increase. The sub-governor also said the ANA and ANP arent supporting each other in his district and the he is not getting CF support for IEDs discovered or turned in.

The Tani sub-governor reported that security is good but there is a small group that is telling teachers and students not to go to school in the district. He is getting good cooperation and coordination with provincial security forces and talked about the visit to the district center yesterday by the governor, ANA commander, NDS chief and Professional 6. He received the list from DIAG and has already sent some from it to speak with DIAG reps.

DIAG reported that they made the decision last month to prepare these lists and send the people on the lists to speak with them. Their hope is to get these people in and possibly get more names of people with illegal weapons.

The deputy governor finished the meeting by asking the sub-governors to do what they can to advertize in try to increase recruitment in their districts for ANA and ANP.

MILITARY:

NSTR

ECONOMICS/INFRASTRUCTURE:

NSTR

SOCIAL:

NSTR

INFORMATION:

NSTR

INTEL:

CF, while responding to an IED in the Tere Zayi District were struck by a second IED vic WC 998 002. No casualties or major damage to any equipment reported.

SCHEDULED IO EVENT:

Spera District Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

DC/PCC UPDATES:

NSTR

KEY LEADER ENGAGEMENTS:

Non-scheduled

NEXT 96 HOURS:

07JUN07:

PRT CDR, SECFOR

T: Conduct GAC to location of disabled vehicle in Nadir Shah Kot District

P: Successfully return all vehicles and pax to FOB Chapman

08JUN07:

All Hands

T: Vehicle Maintenance and Refit

P: Prepare for equipment and personnel for the upcoming weeks missions

T: Rodeo

P: Provide Finance Support, Mail and Chaplin Services for all soldiers/sailors

09JUN07:

PRT CDR/ J-2

T: Attend weekly PCC security meeting

P: Discuss provincial security concerns

10JUN07:

PRT CDR, DoS, ENG

T: Conduct Groundbreaking Ceremony at New Spera District Center

P: Show CF support for an important reconstruction milestone

Report key: 8F8ED907-F258-4132-9D78-BF461363AFDE

Tracking number: 2007-157-174256-0837

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: KHOST PRT

Unit name: KHOST PRT

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SWB8918189144

CCIR:

Sigact:

DColor: GREEN

Assuming that the sub-governor's policy on police working in their own districts reflects Coalition as well as IRoA policy, this report suggests that Coalition forces pursued the development of a more nationally oriented police force. This contrasts directly with MacFarland's deal-making with various tribes to allow tribe members to police their own areas. This policy assumedly allows militia penetration into the police force, supposedly delegitimizing the force. MacFarland's approach treats local tribal militias as a -2 force, i.e. a non-state organized political group that can possibly be co-opted into a +2 local police force. The sub-governor's policy evidenced in the document above, on the other hand, exhibits a Model 2 approach of treating potential police recruits from tribes as part of the neutral population to be coopted into a structure of the federal government, the Afghan National Police (+3).

The meeting described in the report above, and a few other reports in the "tribal leader" search, indicate Coalition support for the UN Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) program. The DIAG program seeks to disband militia groups through weapons collection programs and through providing socio-economic development projects. A 2010 report from DIAG states their goal to achieve their goals through

“assisting the Government of Afghanistan in disarming and disbanding illegal armed groups, collecting weapons, and in delivering development projects to enhance socio-economic outcomes in compliant districts.”⁹⁷ The military’s apparent support for this program again confirms a Model 2 bias: Model 3 approaches would treat local militias as potential actors in a future political settlement, as was done in Anbar. The DIAG program, on the other hand, seeks to disarm these groups in order to bolster the Afghan governments monopoly on force, and additionally treats development projects as a carrot to induce compliance. This approach fits the coercive approach to political war that typifies Model 2 approaches in Jackson’s analysis.

Overall, the “tribal leader” and “leader engagement” sub-sample of the Wikileaks Logs show a strong Model 2 orientation in terms of the concept of operations portrayed. Civil-military operations such as reconstruction are undertaken for the purpose of inducing support for the central government, and the tribes are viewed as neutral players who can either support the IRoA or oppose it, but are not seen as potential political or military actors in and of themselves. The evidence in these reports confirms broader reportage about the general structure of the strategy in the War in Afghanistan that suggests that military policy favored working to bolster the institutions of the Afghan central government rather than seeking local political settlements based on tribal power and agency.⁹⁸ Some commanders notably tried to break out of this image of operations, as will be reviewed in the section on COP Keating below, but as in step t3a these innovations were generally opposed by the chain of command and the Coalition-supported Afghan government.

In the next section, I review limited evidence on the assessment or value metrics side of the image concept.

Assessments:

The previous section presented evidence on the types of operations chosen in response to the Afghan insurgency. In this section, I review limited evidence on how the operational environment was perceived, another aspect of the dominant operational image. This evidence mainly comes from assessments of village dynamics and in how meetings with tribal leaders are assessed. How exactly was this basic terrain of the war—tribal and village power structures—viewed and processed by members of the military? I also present some evidence on how tribal outreach efforts were assessed. This information should provide further evidence on whether they viewed -2 entities as active agents in the political process or a neutral group to be coerced or induced into supporting the central government.

⁹⁷ United Nations Development Programme, Afghanistan, Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) First Quarter Report, 2010, www.undp.org.af/Projects/Q1.../ANBP_DIAG_QPR_Q1_2010.pdf.

⁹⁸ Greg Jaffe, “Combat Generation: Trying to work with an Afghan insurgent,” *Washington Post* (Naray, Afghanistan, May 17, 2010), http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/16/AR2010051603492_2.html?sid=ST2010051603629.

Considering assessments and perception of the operating environment first, images should condition how the military organizations environment is interpreted by conditioning perceptions and by dictating the types of information that the organization seeks out. Images are cognitive templates, and organizations will pursue information so as to fit it into those templates. The "tribal leader" key-string search turns up reports on 11 village assessment operations. These all proceed in a structured pattern which is represented in the following report:

Exhibit 4:

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude
AFG20070607n854	RC EAST	34.80860138	69.42311859

Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
2007-06-07 05:05	Non-Combat Event	Meeting	NEUTRAL	0

	Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation
Killed in action	0	0	0	0
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0

JM 42 Conducts village Assessment of Senjalay
Individual interviewed was Nazik Mire who can be reached at 07183565

Political:

- *The tribal leaders are working in the intrest of the people.
- *There are no TB in the area nor is there any TB or HIG support.

Military:

- *The ANP are effective in the area.
- *The ANP are paid on time and are quick to respond when called.
- *The ANP do not conduct independant operations.

Economic:

- *There is no crime in the area.
- *There has not been a solid market for goods in the area due to the fact that there is not a high demand.
- *Unemployment is the biggest problem in the area.

Social:

- *The village is Pashtun.
- *The women are uneducated and cannot run for local office. They are allowed to vote however.
- *The nearest clinic is in Dandar which is two hrs away by foot.
- *There is a nurse in a nearby village that helps with emergencies.

Infrastructure:

- *There is a local spring which serves as a water source and is adequate to support the villagers.
- *There are no wells.
- *The children attend school at the mosque because there are no nearby schools.
- *The only urban development is the building of schools.

Information:

*The only source of media in the village is brought by word of mouth from the shuras.

Report key: 1ADE28E9-671D-4D7C-B488-56B8AD2D2D6E

Tracking number: 2007-158-111104-0567

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: TF GLADIUS (DSTB)

Unit name: TF GLADIUS

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SWD3870051900

CCIR:

Sigact:

DColor: GREEN

The first line assessing support for tribal elders is repeated in the other village assessments. This evidence alone suggests a Model 2 orientation, as it largely views tribal leaders, -2 or potential +2's, in terms of how they assist the people, -1, 0, +1. Additionally, it is clear that the village is assessed in terms of central government penetration in the second highlighted section. While the evidence in this report is certainly not conclusive as to the conceptual frames of the military as a whole, the information it pays attention to in village assessment suggests a strong Model 2 orientation.

Turning to meeting assessments, Exhibit 2 above shows some evidence of how tribal outreach efforts were assessed, for example in the assessment that "Overall, this was a well attended event that connected to local and provincial governments to the people, but also connected the government to itself." Exhibit 1 also portrays military approval of the results of a security meeting whose main purpose was to reinforce central government authority. Additionally, consider the report below.

Exhibit 5

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude	
AFG20070825n824	RC EAST	34.42477036	<u>70.48674011</u>	
Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
2007-08-25 07:07	Non-Combat Event Meeting	- Security	NEUTRAL	0
	Enemy	Friend	Civillian	Host nation
Killed in action	0	0	0	0
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
PRT Jalalabad
APO AE 09354

25 August 2007

MEMORANDUM THRU

Civil Affairs OIC, PRT Jalalabad, APO AE 09354

Commander, PRT Jalalabad, APO AE 09354

SUBJECT: Trip Report for Chaparhar Key Leaders Engagement

1. SUMMARY. Civil Affairs (CA) and the PRT XO conducted a Key Leaders Engagement for the political and tribal leaders in the Chaparhar District at the PRT (42S XD 36616 10258).

2. BACKGROUND

a. General. There has been an increase in IED activity as well as numerous reports of rocket and mortar POO (point of origin) sites in Chaparhar in the recent past. The PRT Commander spoke with the Chaparhar Sub-Governor and Police Chief at the Sub-National Consultation about the security issues in the area and wanted to have a luncheon with some village elders to further discuss ways to decrease the amount activity.

b. Mission Specifics.

(1) The following Coalition Forces organizations were present: 173rd STB; TF Fury and THT. The following Afghans were present: Muslimyar, Chairman of the Provincial Council; Sayed Ali Akbar, Chaparhar Sub-Governor; Yar Gul, Chaparhar Police Chief and Masood, Governors Assistant.

(2) The lunch opened with Mullah Hassan Khan giving prayer and was followed by the PRT XO welcoming everyone to the PRT. Lunch was served and immediately following the PRT XO spoke again, but this time addressing the security issues and IED activity going on in Chaparhar. The Department of State (DOS) Rep followed, speaking about how successful the Sub-National Consultation (SNC) was and how the representatives from Chaparhar did an outstanding job. The DOS rep transitioned into security by explaining how the 80 projects that were the result of the SNC cannot be implemented without a secure environment. The STB S-3 spoke next and also discussed security and how it puts the Afghan children at risk because they are often the ones who find explosives and bring them to the proper authority. Next, the STB S-2 spoke about IED activity in Chaparhar and how it has increased in the recent past.

(3) The first Afghan to speak was Muslimyar who addressed the village elders and the Coalition Forces separately. Muslimyar addressed the elders, saying that it is incumbent upon them to clean up the security situation in their areas. The Afghan government and international community want to help reconstruct the area, but cannot do so if the security situation remains the way it is. Muslimyar also said that they must eliminate the security issues so that it will no longer be an excuse why the international community cannot implement projects in the Chaparhar District. Muslimyar then addressed the Coalition Forces saying that the Chaparhar elders have been proactive in trying to reduce the amount of activity in the area by forming a security council and volunteering to patrol their own neighborhoods. They have been asked to stop patrolling their own areas and told that it is the responsibility of the ANP and ANAP, but there is a lack of police

forces. Muslimyar stressed that they cannot do anything because when they try to do their plan (patrol own neighborhoods) they are told to stop and there is no other plan in place to provide extra police forces to patrol the area for them. Muslimyar asked for an additional 100 ANAP to help reduce the activity in Chaparhar. Muslimyar was followed by Sayed Ali Akbar, Chaparhar Sub-Governor, who spoke briefly about the security issues, but mostly reiterated what Muslimyar said. Mawlawi Abass spoke last. His attitude was different than that of Muslimyar and Sayed Ali Akbar. Mawlawi Abass said that the people of Chaparhar should be appreciated because of the IED, rockets and mortars that are turned in to the proper authorities. He also stated that security in the past has been an issue because of the mistakes that Coalition Forces have made. Mawlawi Abass commented that if CF reduce the number of mistakes made then the security situation would be better.

3. Additional Data and Analysis

All in all, the luncheon was a success. The village elders are now aware of the concerns of the Afghan government and Coalition Forces in regards to security. Mawlawi Abass comments were described as rude by some locals that were approached after the luncheon. It was explained that is Mawlawi Abass personality and he has always been that way. CA recommends that missions are conducted in the villages that were represented today to see if the word is spreading throughout the villages.

4. Point of Contact for this memorandum is CPT Middleton at DSN 231-7341.

Maurice Z. Middleton
CPT, CA
CAT-B Team Leader
Report key: 05CB6CAC-C071-4F8B-ADCC-2867B3BD341E
Tracking number: 2007-237-133528-0172
Attack on: NEUTRAL
Complex attack: FALSE
Reporting unit: PRT JALALABAD
Unit name: PRT JALALABAD
Type of unit: None Selected
Originator group: UNKNOWN
Updated by group: UNKNOWN
MGRS: 42SXD3661610258
CCIR:
Sigact:
DColor: GREEN

The second highlighted section again shows tribal engagement being assessed in terms of its ability to link local leaders to central government institutions, in the Model 2 mode. (The last highlighted section presents further evidence on the policy of not allowing tribe members to police their own districts.)

Overall, the sample of the reports reviewed above show a strong Model 2 orientation both in the concept of operations portrayed, in how the results are assessed,

and in how the operating environment is perceived. These aspects of the dominant image all conform to the military's dominant coercive image of its methods: even in evidence on civil-military operations such as reconstruction, the purpose is seen as inducing a neutral and homogenous population into supporting the institutions of the central government. Operations are not conceived in terms of violent negotiation with non-state political groups such as insurgent groups such as the anti-Coalition Militias (ACM) or the tribes themselves. The approach is typified in villagers complaints from one report in the "tribal leader" subsample: "The villagers repeatedly reiterated that they are stuck in the middle between CF/ANSF and the ACM and that they do not have the power to rid the ACM from their village and stop them from shooting at CF." This reveals the lack of a Model 3 approach of arming villagers and tribes directly and the potential pitfalls of trying to work solely through the auspices of the Afghan National Security Forces.

Exhibit 6:

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude	
AFG20071212n1075	RC EAST	34.9454689	<u>71.04229736</u>	
Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
2007-12-12 09:09	Non-Combat Event Meeting	NEUTRAL	0	
Enemy Friend Civilian Host nation				
Killed in action	0	0	0	0
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0
Face to Face/Shura Report				
CF Leaders Name: CPT Frketic, 1LT Hauger, 1LT Levay, 1LT Root, 2LT Kennedy				
Company: Able	Platoon: Able Co	Position: Able CMD Group		
District: Watapor	Date: 12 DEC 07	At (Location):		
Combat Main				
Group's Name: Watapur Village Elders				
Individual's Name:	Village:			
1. Gul Dali Khan	Gambir			
2. Abdul Ahad	Azar Bagh			
3. Habib	Gambir			
4. Anwarullah	Kafar			
5. Abdul Jabar	Mahsogal			
6. Nazur Gul	Gambir			
7. Shah Wali	Mashogal			
8. Zarif Khan	Gambir Paskalay			
9. Mohammad Amir	Kafar			
10. Malik Rahimullah	Gambir			
11. Malik Abdul Wali	Garochar Kalay			
12. Malik Rahmatullah	Katar Tor Kalay			
13. Malik Mir Zaman	Garo Shahid Kalay			

14.	Noor Mohammad	Gambir Paskalay
15.	Mohammad Akbar Katar	
16.	Sayad Azim	Katar Nurstan
17.	Malik Mohammad Aziz	Katar Nurstan
18.	Hazrat Ali	Tsangar Jebi
19.	Amir Salam	Tsangar
20.	Malik Manaqar	Katar Nurstan
21.	Wazir Mohammad Katar	Afghan
22.	Mohammad Azim	Garo kalay
23.	Yagoub	Katar Tor Khail
24.	Shawali	Katar Tor Khail
25.	Malik Arsala Khan	Garo Dak Kalay
26.	Haji Janat Gul	Gambir Kalay
27.	Hassan Afi	Gambir Soro Kalay
28.	Haji Abdul Mateen	Tsangar
29.	Abdul Gayoum	Tsangar
30.	Sabir Khan	Tsangar
31.	Mohamad Razig	Gambir
32.	Mahtab	Watapur Mashagal
33.	Gul Mira	Gambir Kalay
34.	Gul Mohammad Khan	Gambir Norstan Kalay
35.	Najebullah	Gambir Norstan Kalay
36.	Hazrat Gul	Gambir Bar Kalay
37.	Abdul Rashid	Gambir
38.	Sayedullah	Gambir
39.	Mir Akbar	Norstanokalay
40.	Mohibullah	Gambir Manz Kalay
41.	Rohullah Amin	Ghondai Kalay
42.	Matiullah	Ghondai Kalay

Individual's Title:

Was Objective Met?

Elders agreed to secure the Watapur Valley from ACM, and will attempt to change ACM into good people.

Items of Discussion:

The CF expressed their respect for the Religion of Islam and their concern to help the people of the Watapur. The CF stated that they believed that there were two reasons why the Taliban fight against the CF; one, because the Islamic extremists believe that the CF do not respect the religion of Islam; two, the Taliban fight for money because they poverty stricken. Through deduction, since the CF do not disrespect Islam, then the only logical reason why the Taliban continue to fight is monetary reasons.

The Village leaders of the Watapur expressed their concerns and stated that they continue to drive out the rebel fighters from their villages. The village leaders thought that they should have a weapon per household IOT to possess the weapons to keep the Taliban out. The elders expressed their interest projects coming to the Watapur.

The CF ensured that projects were on their way to the Watapur to include a road, and to start with, small mosque refurbishment projects

to build a trusting relationship. The CF emphasized the importance of security, and that it facilitates projects and development. The village elders signed a pact to enforce security in the Watapur Valley, and they agreed to bring down a 3 ACM leaders in 10 days for reconciliation.

Other Meeting Attendees (Name, Title) Media Interest? Describe Media Presence, Interest, Coverage

PRT Assessment

Grade:

**Line(s) of Operation Affected
Negative/Neutral/Positive**

Counter Insurgency Operations

Development of ANSF Capabilities

Develop/Demonstrate GoA Capabilities

Promote Reconstruction and Seek Economic Development

Report key: EDD473A2-A541-4F08-BADE-B7D2B19D7F60

Tracking number: 2007-347-122021-0533

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: TF ROCK 2-503 IN

Unit name: TF ROCK 2-503 IN

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SXD8650168900

CCIR:

Sigact:

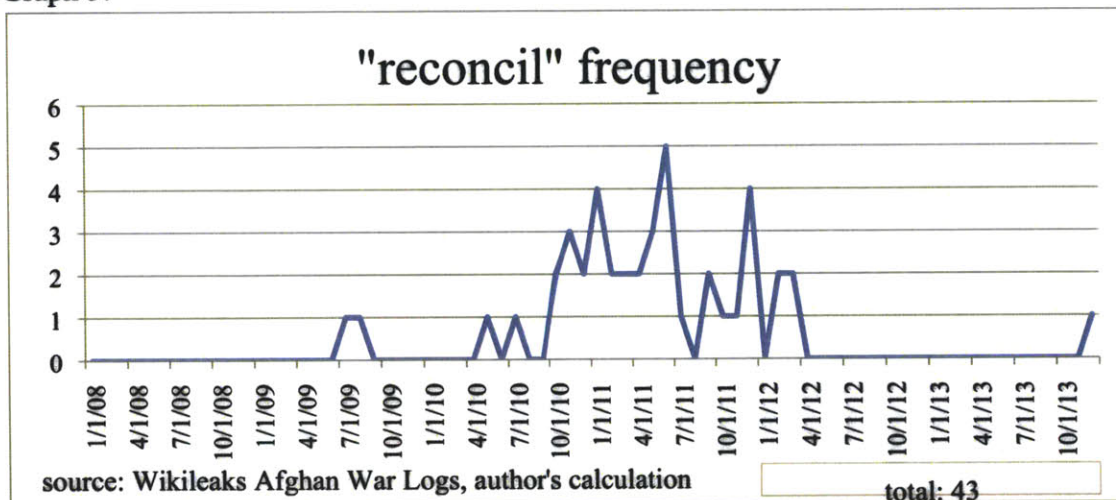
DColor: GREEN

It is important to emphasize that the selective evidence presented above is not conclusive as to the effect of the dominant military image on the course of operations, as it presents a limited picture of overall operations. Nevertheless, the field reports present a rare, undiluted internal view of military discourse that seems to support the view that Model 2 thinking dominated COIN approaches in 2006-2009. If these reports are indeed representative of broader trends in the Coalition's strategic and tactical approaches, they suggest a strong Model 2 orientation.

Reports from COP Keating

Despite the dominant Model 2 orientation of the US military effort in Afghanistan suggested by the evidence above, the field reports do show evidence at some tentative Model 3 experiments at reconciliation. Graph 3 shows the results of a key-string search for “reconcil” (to pick up “reconciliation”, “reconcile”, “reconcilable”): as the following reports show, the GIRoA and Coalition wasn’t necessarily opposed to reconciliation with insurgents (see the highlighted sections of the exhibit 6 above). At the same time, this was not pursued as an explicit goal of operations but rather as a result of military pressure, thus fitting more of a Model 1 than Model 3 conception. While tribes were pressured to turn in militia members, it does not seem that they were directly armed or funded in order to facilitate their direct military opposition to insurgents. It is also notable that, in some ways, the IRoA pursued a Model 3 approach even as Coalition forces didn’t: as suggested by some of the reports above, Afghan government forces were not shy about pressuring tribes to rein in insurgents themselves, even as no policy existed to give them the resources to do so (except through the auspices of the ANP or ANA).

Graph 3:



One operation in which Model 3 was explicitly tried was the latter half of the engagements surrounding COP Keating. As the story of Keating has been well-documented, focusing on the field reports from this incident should allow us to get a fairly full picture of events and examine how well Jackson’s model of the determinants of Model 2 and Model 3 innovation fits the data.

Combat Outpost Keating was a remote combat base in Nuristan Province established in 2006 to support provincial reconstruction teams⁹⁹. It was located in the Kamdesh valley in Nuristan Province in a deep bowl surrounded by high ground. The establishment of the Combat Outpost followed changes in tactics reflecting innovations mentioned above in the example Colonel Sean MacFarland's Ramadi operations: the practice of locating small combat bases in locations dispersed among the population in order to facilitate the new protect-the-population strategic paradigm.¹⁰⁰¹⁰¹ Thus the new FM 3-24-inspired COIN orthodoxy became the new dominant strategic image for operations in Afghanistan following its apparent success in Iraq. The question is whether resulting operations actually followed Colonel MacFarland's Model 3 approach, or the Model 2 approach that is more in line with the military's dominant MOC image.

The story of Camp Keating in terms of counterinsurgency strategies¹⁰² is one of Model 2 failure and tentative Model 3 experimentation. After an initial period of enthusiasm for COIN following the establishment of the outpost, it quickly became clear to commanders at the base that they lacked the resources to conduct the sort of population-centric counterinsurgency tactics that were becoming standard doctrine following the Iraq "surge."¹⁰³ The account in the Wikileaks field reports paint a picture of quickly deteriorating security around the base, with insurgents conducting increasingly sophisticated probing attacks culminating in a final assault that led the military to abandon the base. It was only late in the life of the COP and following its demise that the erstwhile base commander, Lt. Col. Robert Brown, turned to a strategy of funding and arming a local power broker, Mullah Sadiq, whose followers were suspected of taking part in the Keating attacks, in an attempt to generate local stability.¹⁰⁴ It was thus only after a long period of experimentation and a flirtation with total failure, combined with resource constraints on military forces, that led to a brief Model 3 experiment. The story thus fits Jackson's model and echoes the experience of Colonel MacFarland in Ramadi.

Initial Model 2 strategy

99 Bill Roggio, "Army releases report on battle at Combat Outpost Keating - Threat Matrix", February 6, 2010, http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2010/02/army_releases_report_on_combat.php.

100 Fred W. Baker III, "Combat outpost serves as front line in Afghanistan fight | Article | The United States Army", April 1, 2009, <http://www.army.mil/article/19059>.

101 C.J. Chivers, "Strategic Plans Spawned Bitter End for a Lonely Outpost - NYTimes.com," *New York Times*, July 25, 2010, sec. Asia Pacific, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/26/world/asia/26keating.html?scp=1&sq=combat%20outpost%20keating&st=cse>.

¹⁰² Controversy surrounds the COP Keating incident for other reasons, namely due to allegations that the chain of command was not reactive to requests to close the COP and that the deteriorating security situation in the surrounding areas was not responded to with appropriate alacrity. There are also allegations that the COP was kept open for political reasons, as President Hamid Karzai allegedly drew support from the region via vote rigging (see, e.g. <http://www.captainsjournal.com/category/cop-keating/>)

¹⁰³ Op.cit. Chivers.

¹⁰⁴ Op.cit. Joffe.

Despite being severely under-resourced for the task, military forces nevertheless attempted to apply the new counterinsurgency doctrine in the surrounding Kamdesh region. The new COIN doctrine was rapidly spreading quickly throughout the military (t4 in figure 3) and commanders at Keating attempted to implement its prescriptions:

Exhibit 7:

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude		
AFG20070130n446	RC EAST	35.40571976	71.31590271		
Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained	
2007-01-30 00:12	Non-Combat Event	OTHER	NEUTRAL	0	
	Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation	
Killed in action	0	0	0	0	
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0	
District: Kamdish Village: Agro HCA Type: Non-CDS HCA Date 01/30/2007 MGRS					
Location of Drop:					
42SYE1030020500					

Rice 5
 Beans 5
 Tool Kits 1
 Blankets 14
 Men's Coats 14

Camp Keating overall assessment of Agru: Expressed their appreciation for assistance and the continuing mission of the ANA and CF's of reconstruction of Agru. The general assessment is that the populace generally viewed the distribution of Supplies by the ANA was greatly appreciated for their support and showed support to the CF's and ANA's mission in Agru.

Report key: FA69D92C-CD70-4D0B-9B1E-918B610A099E
 Tracking number: 2007-033-010435-0159
 Attack on: NEUTRAL
 Complex atack: FALSE
 Reporting unit: -
 Unit name: -
 Type of unit: None Selected
 Originator group: UNKNOWN
 Updated by group: UNKNOWN
 MGRS: 42SYE1030020500
 CCIR:
 Sigact:

DColor: GREEN

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude	Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
AFG20061212n502	RC EAST	35.4169693	70.79104614	2006-12-12 00:12	Non-Combat Event	Meeting - Development	NEUTRAL	0
		Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation			
		Killed in action	0	0	0	0		
		Wounded in action	0	0	0	0		

Agru Village Shura.

Meeting with Muhammad Juma, Head Elder. PRT Distributed HA to Agru elders.

Discussion Items: Education

Problem Mitigation Before Next Meeting: Need tent for temporary school.

Additional Meeting Attendees: Ismatulla (Malik), Muhammad Jaleel, Muhammad Juma, Sher Afzel, Mir Afzel, Zakir Hussein, US Attendees: CPT Lanigan, Ali

PRT Assessment: Agru Shura received 150 school kits (pencils, notebooks, grammar exercise books, erasers, pencil sharpeners). Prayer rugs 25, sack of shower kits, childrens gloves 24, socks, radios. ANA CPT Muhabeen and his men acted as the government face on distribution. Agru elders have visited Camp Keating several times. It felt good to reciprocate by visiting them. Able Troop is upgrading a MHP there and we are trying to assist them with their education efforts. We invited them to pick up school supplies at the PRT at their earliest convenience and that we were working on their temporary school idea (tent). So it was clear our meeting had produced tangible results. ANA CPT Muhabeen addressed the Shura with various compliments regarding US forces and our PRT. A few Shura members were traveling to Kabul for MHP parts.

Report key: E553E660-AED6-47C0-93A4-FB1C71997FEC

Tracking number: 2007-033-010244-0839

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: -

Unit name: -
 Type of unit: None Selected
 Originator group: UNKNOWN
 Updated by group: UNKNOWN
 MGRS: 42SXE6261120758
 CCIR:
 Sigact:
 DColor: GREEN

(emphasis added)

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude		
AFG20070216n559	RC EAST	35.42303085	71.32961273		
Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detailed	
2007-02-16 00:12	Non-Combat Event	OTHER	NEUTRAL	0	
	Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation	
Killed in action	0	0	0	0	
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0	
Blankets: Each: 30 per bundle: 8					
Tarps: Each: 20 per bundle: 15					
Radios: Each:: 10					
Women's Coats: Each: 40 per bundle: 6					

At the Shura, the eyes of the district leadership opened up, when the talk went around about how much HA we were giving out in their district. The district leadership wanted to thank all the CFs and ANA for their protection and added support to their ANP program and training. They see their ANP growing stronger everyday thanks to the training happening at Camp Keating. ANP at this program receive HA to counter the pay issues in this district.

PRT Assessment

The District Governor thanked coalition forces for the much needed HA in their district.

Report key: 9F2BD03C-BBE0-4AB4-BA15-7C80732CA545

Tracking number: 2007-048-081346-0104

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: -

Unit name: -

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SYE1150022450

CCIR:
 Sigact:
 DColor: GREEN

The three reports above all illustrate Model 2 thinking in line with that reviewed above in exhibits 1-7: reconstruction projects aim at building support for the central government. The primary thrust of outreach efforts is to produce legitimacy for IRoA institutions (+3). The last report in exhibit 7 in particular illustrates the degree to which the image of operations contained in the new counterinsurgency doctrine could color soldiers interpretation of feedback from outreach efforts. The rapid deterioration in security following this initial enthusiasm suggests that military forces may have been deeply misinterpreting the attitudes of local leaders, as these very leaders may have provided support for subsequent attacks.

An army report on the COP Keating incident, as well as a review of the field reports, indicates that security rapidly deteriorated around the COP, with insurgent fighters, presumably from the local area, engaging in increasingly sophisticated attacks on the base.¹⁰⁵ Limited evidence suggests that, as the security situation deteriorated, US forces engaged in some tentative experiments with Model 3 approaches, for example in encouraging local leaders to engage in reconciliation efforts with insurgent fighters and in pursuing a peace treaty with the tribes and (presumably) militia forces in the area:

Exhibit 8

Reference ID	Region	Latitude	Longitude	
AFG20071106n1205	RC EAST	35.42259979	71.32849121	
Date	Type	Category	Affiliation	Detained
2007-11-06 15:03	Non-Combat Event Meeting - Development	NEUTRAL	0	
	Enemy	Friend	Civilian	Host nation
Killed in action	0	0	0	0
Wounded in action	0	0	0	0

Attendees:

Sub Governor Anayatullya

ANSF: ANA CDR LT Noorullah, ASG CDR Chrisrolla, ANP CDR Jalil

Kandesh: Jan Mahamad, Abdul karem, Sidjan, Shamsul Raman, Fate Khan, Noor Mahamad, Abdul Ghfar, Akter Mahamad, Akram Khan, Mahamad Salam, Abdul Mahd

Kamu: Mbark Shah, Ghulam Noor, Mahamad Hasham

Mandagal: Hmidullah, Moustafa, Naurul Age, Hasham Khan, Mahamad Hasham

Samar Bach: Malawei Abdul Kabir

Engagement Purpose: To discuss the results of the village inputs on the Peace Treaty, the LOC break-down for area of responsibility, discussion on the land dispute over Keating/Warheit, and proposing the PTS program to all insurgent fighters.

¹⁰⁵ "Executive Summary – AR 1 5-6 Investigation re: Complex Attack on COP Keating – 3 Oct 09", graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/world/AR15-6Sum.pdf.

Prepared Talking Points / Themes / Messages / Subjects: Same as above

Desired Effects: A list to be provide to the CF of WHO will be responsible for the security of the LOC, a proposal for a fair price for renting Keating/Warheit for Bulldogs tenure in this AO, and results from the Jirga held in Kamdesh on 25-26 Oct 07.

Summary:

Prepared by the ANA CDR Approximately 100 people attended the Shura held in Urmul. About 60 people from the Shura attended a lunch hosted by the ANA on Camp Keating. The Sub-Governor started the meeting and discussed about security is a huge problem and it is the Afghans problem to fix. The ANA CDR was introduced for those who did not meet him at the Mega-Shura and he explained that his wife was from Nuristan. LT Noorullah said he would do his best to serve his country and help the Kamdesh district. The problems they face are not too difficult to accomplish if the whole district would get involved. If some villages allow insurgents to stay the night, feed them, and provide them with weapons they are not supporting Afghanistan. If they do not do those things the insurgents will move to other places and we would have security. The elders agreed they would have everyone help with security and no one would harm the construction contractors.

Prepared by Anayatullyas report: Malawie Abdul Kabir started the shura by reciting the Holy Quran. He added that supporting the government was the only hope we have. Anytime you have problems you should first report things to your elders. Be careful just killing people because innocent people could get killed. Without the elders and the shuras talking, we can not have peace. Anayatullya added that Afghanistan can not have peace and stability by just criticizing the government and others. We cant keep wasting our time by talking security and come up with plans to establish security. We should not say anything about the CF because they came to Afghanistan to bring peace and help with our future. The ANA CDR from the Panjshare Tribe said the Nuristani people are honest people and thats why the government is willing to assist in security, education, and reconstruction. **It is time to reconcile with the fighters and finally stop the fighting.** If we do not act now we will miss our chance. The ANP CDR Jalil added he agreed w/ the ANA CDR and the shura needs to meet with the shuras who did not show and get their input on the security and peace plan. Ghani from Pittigal added we need the same right from the government that other villages get. They should pay us for reconstruction of Pittigal because they help destroy our village. We can build roads by the people of our village so we do not need the contractors. The final person to speak was Abdul Ghafar security must be the first thing we try to fix. If we get security we can have a bright future.

Achieved Effects:

A few key points were addressed but no actions were taken. Weve asked about the peace jirga and the Peace Treaty but we are told that it will be produced at the next shura. It is a positive effect that the Sub-Gov and elders are scheduling their own meetings and is willing to invite the insurgents to discuss the future. However, Anayatullya needs to have the elders complete the Treaty and have it signed.

Additional Information:

Upon receipt of the additions and omissions to the Peace Treaty, I will submit the Treaty to Saber to have it translated and vetted. We have added the US input and ensured the leaders we would stick to our agreement and encouraged them to do the same. To move forward, everyone must be willing to adapt to changes and continue to promote and support the IRoA.

Report key: ODA3DD56-AF6E-4296-ACB8-8A31B7A1D17F

Tracking number: 2007-318-150330-0024

Attack on: NEUTRAL

Complex attack: FALSE

Reporting unit: TF SABER 1-91 CAV

Unit name: TF SABER 1-91 CAV

Type of unit: None Selected

Originator group: UNKNOWN

Updated by group: UNKNOWN

MGRS: 42SYE1140022400

CCIR:

Sigact:

DColor: GREEN

Here we see US forces moving towards a Model 3 conception of operations, most likely in response to severe manpower constraints, in line with Jackson's model: the PTS program refers to the Afghanistan National Independent Peace and Reconciliation Commission, a halting Afghan government attempt to induce Taliban fighters to reconcile with the government.¹⁰⁶ The report generally features the units around Keating attempting to shift to efforts at reconciling insurgent fighters.

Following a massive attack on COP Keating on October 3, 2009, the base was shut down and the remaining assets were bombed by the air force to prevent looting. Following the COP's demise, the erstwhile commander at the base, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Brown, engaged in a genuine Model 3 approach at pursuing stability by entering into negotiations with a local power broker who had engaged in a long battle with the Taliban for the allegiance of local fighters, Mullah Sadiq.¹⁰⁷ Sadiq, who had been on the US kill-capture list since 2005, had been a commander in the anti-Soviet insurgency and had fought with Hezb-i-Islami, a group led by warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Under Brown's direction, in the months after the demise of COP Keating US forces began financing Sadiq's local militia forces to the tune of \$25,000 a month, which he organized into an informal police force. The Afghan Army also began supplying him with guns. The deal held for some time but, according to a Washington Post analysis, began to fall apart as US forces began to face resistance to the deal from the Afghan government, who feared that Coalition forces were empowering Hezb-i-Islami. Thus the broader counterinsurgent organization began to oppose the Model 3 approach, as in t3a in figure 3, though the US military itself was willing to go along with these experiments. In

¹⁰⁶ Patrick White, "Fewer Taliban insurgents defecting in Afghanistan | ScrippsNews," *Toronto Globe and Mail* (Kandahar, Afghanistan, January 7, 2010), <http://www.scrippsnews.net/content/fewer-taliban-insurgents-defecting-afghanistan>.

¹⁰⁷ Op.cit. Joffe.

an interview with the Post, Brown speculates that his replacement in command in Kamdesh wouldn't face the same incentives to work with Sadiq.¹⁰⁸

The story of Keating thus follows the contours of Jackson's model: COIN in the FM 3-24, Model 2 mold had become the new conventional wisdom in Afghanistan, and dictated the concept of operations at Keating.¹⁰⁹ The persistent effects of manpower constraints and task pressure arising from failure to generate security in the area promoted brief Model 3 experiments. These experiments, in turn, were resisted by other forces in the counterinsurgent organization, though this resistance was more likely the result of Afghan political dynamics than the professional biases of the Afghan Army as in Jackson's model. Nevertheless, resource constraints seemed to play a role in encouraging a persistent commander, Lt. Col. Brown, to attempt a Model 3 approach of promoting stability through reconciliation with a former insurgent, Mullah Sadiq.

Conclusion:

In line with H3, the evidence from Afghanistan, where the newly institutionalized counterinsurgency doctrine in FM 3-24 was being deployed following its publication in late 2006, suggests that these approaches generally followed a Model 2 concept of operations. Additionally, FM 3-24 itself contains a strong Model 2 orientation. This suggests that the dominant coercive approach to performing its core tasks, as embodied in the Military Operational Code image, exhibited a strong effect on how the military approached unconventional war.

One may wonder if the Model 2 approach of supporting the development of a legitimate central government in evidence in Afghanistan was really the result of a coercive bias in military thinking. Perhaps this was simply the only way to pursue population-based stability operations given the complex human terrain of Afghanistan's tortuous relations of tribal power.

Along this line, it is interesting to note that British Forces operating in same areas as US forces though in the 1920's through 1940's faced similar challenge of containing a protracted insurgency led by the infamous Fakir of Ipi, yet developed very different tactics for providing stability. As Andrew Roe remarks in a insightful analysis in *Waging War in Waziristan*, these tactics were successful enough at producing peace in the tribal regions of Waziristan that the Pakistani government largely kept them in place until late 2001 and the invasion of Afghanistan by Coalition forces and attendant US political pressure. He concludes that many of these tactics could be used today if Coalition Forces dialed back their expectations of what could be achieved in terms of promoting a democratic, centralized government in Afghanistan. Many of these tactics typify a Model 3 approach. For example, Roe concludes that the payment of allowances to tribes, the employment of locals as political officers and the hiring of indigenous scouts, and the empowering of tribal police forces have all been successful at pacifying the tribes of

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Though it should be noted that the outpost was originally established to intercept fighters crossing the Pakistani border. *Op. cit.* Chivers.

Afghanistan and winning their support in broader efforts to contain insurgent forces.¹¹⁰ These efforts also typify the Model 3 violent negotiation approach to counterinsurgency theorized by Jackson. Consider Roe's description of how British forces dealt with tribes suspected of supporting the Fakir's insurgency:

Annoyed by the upsurge in violence, the government announced to a Madda Khel *jirga* on 8 February that they must give security to the Fakir or expel him from their land. The *jirga* denied the presence of the Fakir in their territory but were told that the government did not accept their denial and that the onus was on them to prove he was not with them and to explain where he had gone. Adjourning for a short time, the *jirga* reassembled, stating that given extra time they would make every effort to encourage the Fakir to live among them at peace or, failing that, would evict him. Accordingly, an extra ten day's grace was granted to the tribe. However, the tribe proved incapable of meeting the government's demands and were attacked by aircraft as punishment.¹¹¹

The concept of operations as violent negotiation with non-state political groups is clear. The British treated the tribes as genuine political actors rather than as a passive population to be induced into supporting a central government. One may argue that the central government infrastructure at the time was less extensive, promoting such a policy, but a lack of central government coverage arguably also describes Afghanistan today.

A more compelling explanation of this difference in approaches between the imperial British and the Coalition approach is that the goals of the US government and the British government were quite different. While the British aimed at stability in order to allow imperial trade to proceed, the US engaged in a much more maximal policy of promoting a fully functioning and representative central government. Additionally, whereas the US approach was dominated by military forces, encouraging a military professional bias, British forces featured a greater balance between civilian imperial officials and military leaders, arguably leading to a decidedly different conception of operations. Recent evidence suggests that US forces may have dialed back their expectations in this regard under the influence of increasingly concerned civilian officials, and have started to experiment with Model 3 approaches such as reconciling and negotiating with Taliban forces.¹¹² The US military and British imperial forces also had differing time horizons, with the US military expecting an end to operations at some point in the future while the British imperial effort was open ended in nature; this too may have generated differing incentives to invest in unconventional approaches.

¹¹⁰ Roe, Andrew, *Waging War in Waziristan*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 2010, 253.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* 178-179

¹¹² Matthew Rosenberg, "U.S. Secretly Met Afghan Militants," *Wall Street Journal* (Washington, DC, October 5, 2011), sec. Asia News, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204524604576611233949274212.html>.

The preceding case study of various military campaigns in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan confirm the hypotheses stated above: in line with H1, conventional solutions both dominated the early approach to the war in Iraq and colored the interpretation of subsequent strategic failure. The military's Model 1 approach can be contrasted pointedly with the CIA's initial efforts in the War in Afghanistan, which followed a Model 3 approach of working through the tribes of the Northern Alliance. It took a long time indeed for large numbers of US forces to take tribal engagement seriously. When these innovations did occur, as in the case of Colonel Sean MacFarland's operations in Ramadi and then Lieutenant General Petraeus's Mosul operations, they were attributable to creative commanders with their own unique guiding images of operations, as well as to resource constraints, in line with H2. Civilian intervention played less of a role, as many of the innovations preceded the "surge" orders that were undertaken due to changes in administration policy. T1 and T2 of the process model are borne out as well, as initial innovations clearly stemmed from the "image drift" attributable to the original thinking of ground commanders reacting to the exigencies of the operating environment. Only later on did civilian pressure push the military organization towards institutionalizing COIN (t3b), and ample evidence suggests that they also resisted this adaptation (t3a).

In line with H3, analysis of primary sources from the War in Afghanistan and also of the counterinsurgency doctrine developed during the war and codified in FM 3-24 suggests that, when COIN approaches were institutionalized, they followed a strong Model 2 orientation. As Jackson's theorizing suggests, this is not surprising as Model 2 approaches retain the military's dominant approach to performing its core tasks: counterinsurgency is seen just like conventional war: the one-way application of resources to the target. It is just that the target is expanded to include the neutral population, and resources applied extend beyond conventional force to positive political inducements such as development projects. This orientation is evident in how these efforts are assessed, essentially in terms of whether outreach efforts brought the right people together and promoted support for the central government. They are not assessed in typically non-military, political terms such as their ability to foster local political settlements.

Thus, if Jackson's theory is correct, the professional biases of the military to view problems in terms of violent coercion strongly determine the types of operations they chose and the way they interpret the operating environment and feedback stemming from their operations. The evidence from Iraq and Afghanistan provide strong support for his theory, pointing to the strength of its dominant image, the military operational code. The evidence from Iraq follows the pattern Jackson identifies in his case studies, which cover a wide variety of historical contexts and different levels of experience of the counterinsurgent organization, suggesting that the military's professional and cognitive biases—its dominant image of operations—indeed plays a crucial determinative role in guiding its strategic choices. The evidence from the field reports in Afghanistan serve to illustrate these cognitive biases, most evidently in the mechanical interpretation applied to the results of political operations.

Chapter 4: Images and Organization theory

The preceding theoretical and empirical discussion was hopefully convincing in establishing inductively that organizational images are an important theoretical concept in the analysis of certain organizations. As Jackson argues, the MOC outperforms other competing explanations of COIN strategy choice across a number of different cases, for example theories emphasizing cultural influences, or variations in insurgent or regime types, or organizational history; rather, the MOC—militaries’ characteristic way of seeing the world—determines their behavior in counterinsurgency engagements across a wide variety of cultural and historical contexts. The case study above is another entry in this argument. While images may be important for understanding militaries and COIN, however, the image model foregrounds these “images” as a primary theoretical concept in understanding organizational behavior in general. One may thus wonder what this concept adds that is not already covered by concepts in the organization theory literature such as standard operating procedures, organizational frames or “organizational essence”, or what the model in general adds beyond models already available. In this section, I briefly review the model’s relationship to other models and ideas in the literature and clarify what I believe it adds.

Images as a basic analytical concept

One attempted contribution of the image model is to ground a theory of organizations on primitive scientifically identifiable components that make up all organizations. The early seminal works in political science on organization, such as Simon’s *Administrative Behavior* and Wilson’s *Bureaucracy*, aimed at identifying the basic components that would unify all organizational analyses.¹¹³ Yet at present there does not seem to be much consensus on the components that make up organizations. As Allison notes in *Essence of Decision*, political scientists have developed some characteristic ways of looking at organizations, e.g. through concepts such as standard operating procedures, bureaucratic incentives, information processing theories, and through various game theory formulations such as principal-agent theory. Yet no unifying, agreed upon set of variables exist to characterize organizations in general.¹¹⁴

“Images” as defined here offer a good foundation upon which to erect a theory of organizations. As Simon and Chester Barnard note, organizations at root amount to psychological entities, constructs in the brains of organization members that allow their behaviors to be coordinated to some degree.¹¹⁵ In theorizing them, the primitive variables

¹¹³ Op. cit. Simon, 50.

¹¹⁴ One may argue that such unifying theoretical viewpoints are not helpful and, indeed, as in common critiques of rational choice theory, counterproductive to good analysis, since they are often applied inappropriately given their universalist appeal. On the other hand, political science is largely the science of human organization, so it seems useful for the science to have an agreed-upon framework for describing these objects of scientific analysis. All sciences, despite their theoretical diversity, have an agreed-upon vocabulary for characterizing their subject of interest, yet political scientists have yet to develop such a language for addressing organizations.

¹¹⁵ E.g. Barnard refers to organizations a “system of consciously coordinated activity or forces of two or more persons” (Chester I. Barnard, “The Function of the Executive”,

of interest must be psychological in nature as well. While a concept like “standard operating procedures” provides useful analytical leverage, SOPs are simply physical expressions of patterns of cognitive response: standard operating procedures simply represent the forms of behavior that are normally triggered within the organization by a given set of environmental stimuli. When the analyst observes SOPs in practice, they are proxying for these patterns of mental response. Nevertheless, the “image” that SOPs express is broader in its content than the SOPs themselves: e.g. “population-centric counterinsurgency” is both a set of tactical approaches, but also an epistemology of the battlefield environment and a philosophy of victory in specific types of conflict. Thus, one term to give the set of ideas that make up population-centric COIN is perhaps an “ideology” or “belief system”, yet, on the other hand, both those terms don’t cover the notion of associated standard operating procedures within the organization, i.e. the organizational capabilities developed to execute the ideology. “Images” encapsulate the practical, physical responses of the organization to certain situations—the standard operating procedures—but also the cognitive frames through which it sees reality, i.e. the more ephemeral psychological aspects organizations. In reality, these are simply two sides of the same coin: the patterned responses, both mental and physical, to a certain set of environmental stimuli: they define how to see the world, including one’s self’s place in it, and value it in terms of achievement of certain goals (the psychological aspect), and what behaviors to chose in response to stimuli to achieve the goals (the physical aspect). Though it is far beyond the scope of this paper to assert, it is not outlandish from the current state of cognitive science that these “images” have a physical reality in the memory structures of the brain.

Additionally, “images” as defined here have a long history in the political science literature on organizational behavior, though they may not always be referred to directly as such. For example, Morton Halperin and Priscilla Klapp refer to the “organizational essence” of bureaucratic sub-entities as a determinative factor in their choice processes:

Organizations have considerable freedom in defining their missions and the capabilities that they need to pursue those missions. The organization’s *essence* is the view held by the dominant group within the organization about what its missions and capabilities should be. Related to essence are convictions about what kinds of people—with what expertise, and knowledge—should be members of the organization.¹¹⁶

They go on to observe the specific “essences” of the military service branches and the foreign service and CIA. The “essence” is thus part of the organization’s guiding image. Halperin and Clapp also explicitly refer to “images” as shared epistemologies and operational philosophies that strongly determine organizational behavior.

Likewise, James Q. Wilson’s seminal work *Bureaucracies* provides a long meditation on the role of organizational images, though he may not refer to them as such.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 72) while Simon refers to organizations as “the pattern of communications and relations among a group of human beings, including the processes for making and implementing decision”, op.cit. Simon, 18.

¹¹⁶ Op.cit. Halperin and Klapp, 27

E.g. one of the primary theoretical concepts in the work is the “situational imperative” faced by organizational operators: an organizations functionaries, who do the actual work of the organization vis-à-vis the outside world, can develop a very different concept of their job responsibilities from those set by higher-level organizational decision-makers. Wilson gives the example of rookie beat cops who quickly learn that their actual job, day to day, has less to do with enforcing the law, as the police academy would have them believe, and more to do with “taking charge” and directly enforcing social order. This is because the incentives they face while actually on the job—the danger of being a cop on the street in threatening and uncertain situations—interacts with their personal incentives to alter their guiding image for the job in a way that contravenes the broader organizational image:

Now, it may be objected that a situational imperative such as “take charge” is not much of a job description, especially if there are many different ways of taking charge. This is true. What these difficult, face-to-face situations produce might be described more accurately as an overriding concern with which the operator must somehow cope. The situation defines the outer limits of his or her freedom of action, and thus the outer limits of what will be determined by organizational goals and individual personality.¹¹⁷

As Wilson notes, this phenomenon whereby operators’ images become discoordinated with the organizational image is at the root of a great deal of bureaucratic pathology: “the heads of government agencies often ignore these situational factors and thus either allow operators to manage them by instinct or induce them to manage them in ways that lead to ineffectiveness, disorder and corruption.”¹¹⁸ This story is similar to the story told in the case study of Iraq above: lower-level units, e.g. in Anbar and Mosul, faced a situation that challenged conventional approaches to fighting insurgencies. Under this pressure, certain commanders developed a fundamentally different view of operations, i.e. a different guiding image that eventually clashed with the broader organization’s image of operations. In sum, lower-level units faced very different incentives than higher-level decision-makers and their guiding images “drifted” away from the organizational image blessed by authority structures (t1-t2).

In addition to providing a basic theoretical grounding for understanding organizations, “images” are highly observable phenomena via ethnographic methods. In the analysis of militaries, doctrine documents and professional discourse offer fertile sources for understanding an organization’s dominant epistemology and prescribed procedures for dealing with certain scenarios. More generally, interview evidence should be replete with evidence on dominant organizational epistemologies.

Incentives and Choice: why images change

The organization theory and governmental politics models presented in Allison’s *Essence of Decision* both refer to several important concepts in the analysis of

¹¹⁷ Bureaucracy, Kindle edition, 10%

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

organizations that are touched on in this study: the organization theory model grounds analysis of organizational decision-making on the notion that organizations largely respond to situations via set standard operating procedures that possess their own inertia. Present problems are thus addressed in terms of past problems (exploitation versus exploration). SOPs only change through slow processes of iterative learning. Likewise, the governmental politics model views decision-making largely through the prism of competing interest groups within governments with their own epistemologies and goals, and the processes by which they come to collective decisions. The primary insight from this model is summarized by the classic phrase “Where you stand depends on where you sit”: as Allison and Zelikow summarize: “The diverse demands upon each player influence priorities, perceptions, and stands.”¹¹⁹

Both sets of insights from the organization theory and governmental politics models are necessary for understanding the Iraq case: as noted above, the initial innovations in Anbar, Mosul and elsewhere by Colonel MacFarland, General Petraeus and others occurred through an iterative process of changing SOPs in response to on-the-ground learning. Likewise, subsequent to these developments, the ascendance of COIN into a full military doctrine involved battles between groups with divergent interests and viewpoints, with Petraeus, Odierno and others outmaneuvering broad elements of the chain of command to get access to the president and implement their new conception of operations. Thus, while the organization theory and governmental politics models may apply in different situations, with organization theory applying to more structured organizations and governmental politics applying to less structured bureaucracies, elements of both models are most likely present in many organizational scenarios: the development of SOPs by sub-units proceeds in response to specific incentive structures they face (their “situational imperatives” in Wilson’s phrase), while the resulting differential viewpoints and interests often lead to problems of broader organizational coordination.

The image model thus treats these two viewpoints on organization within a single framework: SOPs and images more broadly develop in response to specific incentive structures, while they are coordinated through often conflictual relations between organizational players. The form of this conflict can be encapsulated theoretically through the notion of the distribution of organizational incentives (incentive supply and demand): when two sub-groups have conflicting images, they may fight to promote their preferred image to authority structures by attempting to manipulate the other group by affecting their incentives (e.g. attacking their reputations, prestige, or expertise), while members with authority may attempt to coordinate the errant images of sub-groups by affecting their organizational incentives (e.g. budgets, promotions, access to decision-making power, etc.). The results of these battles are then crystallized in a new organizational guiding image with its own attendant SOPs.

One issue not addressed at length by either the governmental politics or organization theory models in Allison’s analysis is how interest groups form within organizations, and why exactly SOPs change (besides simple failure); in short, they don’t address explicitly why images change. The image model above provides a specific mechanism by which images change: they change through the interactions of individuals’

¹¹⁹ *ibid.* 65%

incentive structures with the environment and with their memories: as in the example of the burning stove above, the choices that images dictate in response to specific environmental stimuli are the result of past similar experience in which incentives (organizational or personal) interacted with the environment to dictate choice. We remember how we got things we wanted from the environment in the past, so we follow those methods when encountering similar environments in the future. This is a very basic idea that nevertheless exhibits a stark contrast with rational choice theories: rather than comprehensive rationality, we enjoy a form of rationality highly bounded by our limited memories and calculative powers. Thus, in response to failure, we are likely to engage in exploitation of known solutions before exploration for new ones, in the words of James March (reflecting broader viewpoints drawn from complexity theory); likewise, learning in response to failure will generate new SOPs mainly by recombining older SOPs¹²⁰ and random observations drawn from broader experience. Images thus change through an ongoing process of choice and random experimentation and observation. Another way of saying this is that organizational images change through the influence of other, outside images in response to incentives (e.g. “common sense” comprises on such image source).¹²¹

The relevant incentives in the Iraq case for theorizing the shifting guiding images of COIN were not what one would normally consider an incentive: these “personal incentives” often amounted to incentives of individual commanders to achieve success in their operations. This is not the type of payoff one would normally associate with an analysis of individual or group choice. Nevertheless, this view of incentive systems has a solid grounding in organization theory and is supported by recent psychological research: e.g. in “An Incentive Theory of the Firm”, James Q. Wilson and Peter Clarke differentiate three categories of incentives: material incentives like salaries and benefits, “solidary incentives” arising from returns to simply being in an organization (e.g. the status that may come with being part of a social club or the solidarity derived from being part of a union), and “purposive incentives”, i.e. those payoffs that members derive from achieving the organization’s purpose, e.g. “job satisfaction”. While “solidary” and “purposive” incentives don’t seem like important payoffs compared to money or other material benefits, recent psychological research suggests that the belief that workers are doing meaningful work is a very significant input into their personal feelings of happiness and, by extension, to the productivity of the organization.¹²²

¹²⁰ op.cit Allison and Zelikow, chapter 3.

¹²¹ The Iraq case shows this process at work: e.g. commanders who did relevant academic work to counterinsurgency, such as H.R. McMaster, used this experience to craft a very different image of operations in response to the imperatives of their operating environments, drawing on broader sources of images than the organizational guiding image. op. cit. Ricks, 72.

¹²² E.g. the Gallup organization estimates that low worker satisfaction costs the US \$300 billion in lost worker productivity annually, while researchers Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer note that from a large case study of worker diaries that a primary source of worker well-being is the belief that they are making progress on meaningful work. Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer, “Do Happier People Work Harder? - NYTimes.com,” *New York Times*, September 3, 2011, Opinion edition,

If the notion of incentives is expanded to include these non-monetary payoffs, it is easy to theorize processes of authority and group coordination via the notion of a supply and demand of incentives: e.g. an individual military commander may have a certain notion of how to conduct operations in his area that contravene the ideas of his superiors. Thus, his purposive incentives lead him to a differing image of operations. To correct this drift, they could alter his material incentives, e.g. threatening to dock his pay or rank, but in a tightly structured organization that exerts a hegemonic influence on one's life like a military, this step is probably unnecessary. Rather, they may simply imply that his non-compliance may threaten his chance of promotion or his reputation in the organization, which is a way of distributing negative "solidary" or, simply, "organizational" incentives. Indeed, many professionals, like military professionals, respond to non-monetary payoffs having to do with following the codes of their profession (e.g. doctors, engineers). Additionally, cultural constraints that are also non-material in nature also constrain choice.

More generally, Wilson and Clarke note that organizations' ability to coordinate behavior over a large number of individuals can be understood according to their dominant incentive structures. E.g. business firms that are organized around material incentives may not be able to extract sacrifices from their members as easily as those organized around purposive incentives, such as certain volunteer service organizations like the US military. Thus, the guiding images of organizational sub-units are determined both by the organizational incentives members possess, i.e. those incentives related to following the organizations rules, but also the outside incentive structures they face (their "personal incentives"). E.g. an employee of a business firm with considerable outside employment options may have a less malleable guiding image than one with few outside options; a doctor with significant professional incentives may be less amenable to guidance from hospital management than an orderly. When analyzing a given organization, it is thus useful to differentiate their organizational and extra-organizational ("personal") incentives and payoffs as the image model presented in chapter 1 suggests.

Applying the model more broadly

This paper has aimed at sketching the elements of a general theory of organizations. The model developed here should thus apply to other political phenomena besides military behavior. Indeed, the model here presents a characteristic view of politics in general as one of "image competition": organizational and (by extension) political outcomes are determined by a battle over the adoption of competing understandings of reality (images). As such, the theory developed here shares an interest with the various strands of the "new institutionalism" in the social sciences with providing general theoretical conceptions of political behavior.¹²³

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/04/opinion/sunday/do-happier-people-work-harder.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=job%20satisfaction&st=cse.

¹²³ Peter Hall and Rosemary C.R. Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* XLIV (n.d.): 936-957.

To take one example of the utility of the theory, we can deploy the image model on the issue of insurgency itself: insurgencies are organizations, both in the common sense of having an organized structure and in Simon's sense of constituting a shared mental plan for action. Petersen, in *Resistance and Rebellion*, theorizes insurgency as comprising a spectrum of roles, ranging from neutral individuals (0), to unarmed or unorganized individuals (+1) who may e.g. attend protests or mass meetings, to locally organized militias resisting the regime (+2), and finally to mobile, armed insurgent organizations (+3). One can think of this spectrum as a spectrum of organization members in the insurgency depending on the mix of organizational versus personal incentives that structure their guiding images. +1's act mainly on personal incentives, +2's begin to act on organizational incentives, and +3's are coordinated mainly through organizational incentives.

Petersen theorizes that specific mechanisms move individuals along this spectrum of insurgent support. The image model views the choice to join an organization as an act of allowing one's guiding image to be colonized by the organizational image; this choice is guided, as in Simon's satisficing model, by an explicit calculation of payoffs based on the individual's (limited) memory, past experiences, and calculative capacity. E.g. mechanisms that move individuals from 0 to +1 include resentment formation, threshold-based safety calculations, status considerations, and "focal points". Writing about focal points, Petersen comments:

How do those resentful of a powerful regime find each other and communicate to one another the desire to resist? They use focal actions that embody symbols that are clear and unambiguously anti-regime. [...] For example, singing or humming a religious hymn is an act of resistance against an atheist-totalitarian regime, and, importantly, others immediately recognize that particular act as resistance and an indication of risk acceptance.¹²⁴

In other words, the decision to move from 0 to +1 and become an informal member of the rebel organization (in a broad sense) results from a communication of future potential payoffs or incentives. I.e. the focal point of the hymn communicates to those who hear it that they will receive support from others for the cause—solidary and purposive incentives—if they join the rebel organization, and to join it at the +1 level they simply need to accept the guiding image by singing back. Thus, the focal point communicates potential payoffs in terms of known past payoffs as in the bounded rationality model, with the hymn representing a ready community of support for the rebellion. It thus serves to identify an alternative image to compliance with the dominant power and may start a process that culminates in the establishment of an organized rebellion.

The formation of rebellions at the early stages can thus be seen as the random generation of a new guiding image in response to various mechanisms that affect "personal" incentives and choice, e.g. safety calculations and resentment formation. The move to a more organized rebellion, +1 to +2, should involve the distribution of more explicitly organizational incentives (i.e. those incentives related to following the rules

¹²⁴ Roger D. Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 37.

and procedures of the organization) as the rebellion image becomes more sophisticated and pervasive. As Petersen notes, these may include explicit organizational incentives and payoffs such as community norms of reciprocity, as well as salaries and other trappings of formal organization.¹²⁵

As this example and the discussion of the Jackson model above shows, the image model can be applied to various issues of organizational or political participation as well as to the structure of organizational decision-making. In this sense, it attempts to purvey a theoretical “paradigm” for analysis of politics in the style of Allison’s “models” of foreign policy decision-making rather than a specific theory of a specific phenomenon.

Conclusion

This study has aimed at sketching a general model of organizational behavior based on the concept of “images”—information sets that guide human and organizational choices. It has also attempted to validate it by showing that an entire class of military behavior—the prosecution of counterinsurgency campaigns—can be theorized based upon the notion of the dominant military image; I attempted to do so by reviewing a case study in line with Colin Jackson’s image-based model of counterinsurgency behavior, arguing that, if Iraq and Afghanistan can be explained in these terms just as the other cases in his study, the notion that organizational images matter is bolstered. I have also attempted to present some ethnographic evidence of the effects of the dominant military image via the field reports from the War in Afghanistan.

The view of organizations presented here may seem simplistic and highly mechanical, and perhaps not very widely applicable. Nevertheless, I have attempted to argue that this simple, mechanical view of images as represented in figure 2 can serve as a useful framework in analyzing all forms of organization, and is indeed reflected in seminal works of political science. Organizations are nothing more or less than shared mental maps; they should thus be theorized in these terms. The basic assertion of the theory is that, while the processes that lead to the formation of images of operations may be complex, how images operate and clash subsequent to this formation is quite mechanical, and can be summarized through the concepts of incentives and authority, which amounts to the distribution of organizational incentives. It remains to be seen how useful this pithy conceptualization may be, but this study has hopefully been convincing in showing that in one particular, complex area of organizational behavior—military decision-making—the notion that organizational “images” play a strong role in determining behavior is compelling.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

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