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Harmony & Chaos: The Principles of China's Unrestricted Warfare

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Operations Specialist 2nd Class Gretchen Flint along with Operations Specialist Seaman Andrew Wilbanks monitor radar in Combat Information Center (CIC) aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan in 2006. US Navy photo by Pedro A. Rodriguez (Released)

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On the cover: *A Chinese Su-27 Flanker fighter makes a fly by at Anshan Airfield, China Mar. 24, 2007. DoD photo by Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen (Released)*

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Harmony & Chaos:
The Principles of China's Unrestricted Warfare

"Where is the battlefield? The answer: everywhere."
– Unrestricted Warfare

By Carson Thomas Checketts, J.D.

I. The Century of Asia

Last year in a speech at George Washington University, the former Director of National Intelligence, Admiral McConell spoke about how the world will look in 20-25 years. The Admiral was direct in his prediction: "the summary line is, it's the Century of Asia. The number one economy in the world will be China."[1] Assuming this assessment proves to be accurate, the US will continue to see a gradual transition of economic, military and political power from Washington to Beijing.

The US faces this decline in comprehensive national power (CNP), at a particularly inopportune time, with the war in Afghanistan ramping up, the ongoing commitment in Iraq and a painful recession resources are spread thin.[2] The combination of these factors has left little time for careful consideration of what the Century of Asia may hold for the future of the US A recent Australian Defense White Paper cites China's expanded defense budget, and suggests the outcome of China's rise will largely be determined by the bi-lateral relationship between the US and China.[3] The relationship between US and China was coined the "G-2" by the Council on Foreign Relations to highlight the significance of this relationship.[4] President Obama went further when announcing the new Ambassador to China, stating "I can think of no more important assignment than creating the kinds of bridges between our two countries that will determine the well being not just of Americans and Chinese, but also the future of the world."[5]

There are lively debates about whether China will choose a peaceful rise or come into its own through a more confrontational nationalism. The standard logic of a rising power is

Chinese tanker soldiers with the People's Liberation Army look on during demonstrations at Shenyang training base, China. DOD photo by Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen, U.S. Air Force. (Released)

that it reaches critical mass by engaging in a regional or international conflict.[6] These debates often cite the rise of European powers in an age un-touched by the Information Revolution in Military Affairs. The instruments of national power in the 18th, 19th and 20th century were far different from the broad array of tools available to China in the 21st century. The information revolution in military affairs has changed how nations engage in competition.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the emergence of superpowers in the past and China is the degree to which irregular warfare is capable of accelerating the pace of strategic gains against international rivals. One example of the danger posed is economic warfare in the form of industrial espionage. Mr. James Olson, the former chief of CIA counterintelligence has stated that China's economic warfare program is the "most pervasive," of more than 26 nations that conduct industrial espionage against the US.[7] Economic warfare is not new to the US or to the UK. In 1940 after Paris fell to Germany, Churchill famously instructed the Minister of Economic Warfare, Mr. Hugo Dalton to "set Europe ablaze."[8] The difference between the wartime economic warfare of World-War II and modern economic warfare is the political and technological environment permeating the international economy, which make an actual declaration of war unnecessary. Inflicting massive economic harm on a competing national power or the world economy is now possible without declaring war. Just last year MI-5 warned that China was spying on industries inside the UK.[9] Outside of industry, foreign governments are reportedly targeting our national infrastructure. *The Wall Street Journal* recently reported that foreign governments have penetrated the US electric grid.[10] With no prescribed method of either tracing or deterring such intrusions, elements of US infrastructure are at the mercy of nations capable of penetrating so deeply into our national boundaries.

An F/A-18F Super Hornet, from the "Red Rippers" of Strike Fighter Squadron Eleven (VFA) 11, fires off its flares while performing evasive maneuvers during an air power demonstration for officials from the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) in April 2007. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kristopher Wilson (Released).

Experts in Chinese information and irregular warfare cite *"Unrestricted Warfare"* by Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui (URW) as a turning point in how China views 21st century warfare.[11] As the title of the book implies, URW suggests a range of operations that go far beyond what the US defense and intelligence communities would put under any singular conceptual framework. URW incorporates components of information operations, irregular warfare, cyberwarfare, terrorism, economic warfare, lawfare, espionage and elements of foreign relations to advocate for a form of warfare that "breaks ideology," and moves in a completely new direction. The breadth of operations discussed in URW, make it a difficult book to discuss using US terminology. Rather than forcing the tactics, strategies and operations discussed in URW into US parlance, I have found it helpful to use a new term, sufficiently broad, to cover the operations discussed in the book. I use the term "offensive peacetime operations" or (OPTO) to cite the range of operations, tools and strategies that are employed individually or in conjunction with one another, short of open warfare, to influence, degrade or attack the components of a nation's comprehensive national power. This term enables us to consider the strategic implications of competing with a foreign nation whose strategy is focused on winning without fighting.

Before getting into the content of URW, it's important to consider how and why OPTO presents both an ideological and strategic threat to the international legal order as well as US national security. The strategic challenge to the US spelled out in URW is this: *Can the US win a long-term, strategic campaign in diverse, seemingly disconnected fields of competition during peacetime, or is US power so focused on conventional capabilities and advanced weapon systems that it will be surpassed by China as the primary political, financial and strategic influence over the next century?*

In a conventional war there are explicit thresholds and boundaries between nations. If an enemy fleet or army approaches a nation's geographic border, the nation being attacked has both a warning and a legal right to self-defense. The challenge with OPTO is that the operations, while offensive in nature, often fail to trigger any thresholds that would lead to political, legal or military reaction on the part of the nation being targeted. URW advocates for combining various components of OPTO that accumulate strategic victories over time, avoiding any head-on confrontation that would trigger a conventional military response. While OPTO has always been a part of warfare, the degree of our nations vulnerability has greatly expanded in the 21st century.

Returning to the legal considerations, the word "offensive," (in OPTO) raises some questions about whether or not these operations reach the legal threshold of "an attack," as defined by the law of war and the United Nations Charter. The lack of clarity regarding operations short of open war have already encouraged General Chilton, the Commanding Officer of US Strategic Command to suggest military force may be used in response to cyber-attacks.[12] The difficulty in analyzing the legality of OPTO is in large part due to the fact that international law seeking to restrict and deter acts of war is imbedded in a conception of warfare native to it's own century. The U.N. Charter views warfare as a primarily kinetic enterprise where one nation invades the geographic territory of another.[13] While some effort has gone into defining new national boundaries, unconstrained by geographic conceptions and based in national cyber, network, media or cultural boundaries, these theories often seek to fit 21st century developments into 17th century ideas dating back to the treaty of Westphalia, rather than seeking to create new conceptual frameworks for the new conditions.[14]

The 21st century is the virtual century. As the great philosopher Hegel predicted over a century ago, "actuality" (as a static, steady conception of reality) has "lost out" to the revolutionized world of ideas. What Hegel could not have realized as he watched the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire, is that it would take the advance of science and technology (now embodied in cyberspace and the electromagnetic field) to tip the balance of human experience from one based on limited epistemological experience to one supplemented and increasingly supplanted by the virtual world of ideas. The virtual century led to the arrival of virtual warfare. Modern war can no longer be separated from virtual reality. In prior centuries information was a tool used to report on kinetic events that were primarily significant due to the weight or the "gravitas" of the event in itself. In our virtual century individuals, governments and businesses have harnessed information, subordinating it as a tool, a weapon and a means of influence.

Virtual reality consists of more than man-made electromagnetic tools of communication (cyberspace/cell phones/TV/Radio). Our virtual reality is a hybrid virtual constellation that embodies both our man-made tools of perceiving reality and the symbolic, virtual and ideological space enunciated and given structure by human networks (and best explored by Jacques Lacan, Georg Hegel and Carl Jung). Politics and national interest can no longer be accurately defined as strictly local, regional or national; the interpenetration of virtual constellations defies those outdated models with a networked structure that is limited only by our own psychological limitations and human creativity. The relevance of physical national boundaries will continue their slide into history; though it is unlikely they will go quietly or peacefully.

Earlier this year, a private Canadian security group called SecDev publicized their findings of a large-scale cyber-espionage network that reached over a hundred nations.[15] According to the report, the network successfully penetrated foreign affairs ministries in Iran, Bangladesh, Latvia, Indonesia, Phillipines, Brunei, Barbados and the Bhutan. The report indicates that over 103 nations were penetrated. While the group was able to trace the intrusions back to China, they maintain that there is no way to attribute the intrusions to the Chinese government. While the *Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA)* has suggested some methods to resolve the problems of attribution in cyber-attacks, the geographic origin of an attack is, alone, insufficient to presume a government's involvement.[16] Nor should nations rule out the prospect of nongovernmental groups or terrorists launching cyber or other OPTO without government sponsorship or complicity.

Given the interconnectedness of the information age, re-establishing sovereign boundaries between states has become as complex a task as defining the digital, economic and political currents that interpenetrate them. China's 21st century OPTO exploits the openness of the global society that fuels it, and eliminates boundaries that separate war and non-war elements of national power.

This is because many tools of OPTO particularly those given emphasis in URW as "super-weapons," such as economic and media warfare often occur without leaving any trace and because both slowly accumulate strategic advantage by deliberately avoiding "trip-wires."[17] The twin problems of a lack of applicable laws, and an inability to attribute certain forms of attack, have created a widening problem for the US The US defense community is primarily organized to respond to conventional attacks in defined spheres of geographic and strategic interest. URW advocates for combining means and functions of warfare in such a way that conceptions of ground, air or land warfare are set aside, opening the space for new OPTO that do an end run around our armed forces and our conceptions of how war is waged. The US cannot hope to win wars ina virtual century it has yet to fully comprehend and prepare for.

II. Defining Offensive Peacetime Operations: The ingredients of 21st Century Warfare

The authors of URW introduce some types of warfare that can be used to "compel the enemy to accept one's interests." The authors list the means and methods, as including:

1. **Conventional Warfare**
2. **Space Warfare**
3. **Diplomatic warfare**
4. **Bio-Chemical Warfare**
5. **Sanction Warfare**
6. **Terrorist Warfare**
7. **Electronic Warfare**
8. **Smuggling Warfare** (throwing markets into confusion and attacking economic order);
9. **Regulatory Warfare**
10. **Guerilla Warfare**
11. **Virtual Warfare**
12. **Ideological Warfare**
13. **Psychological warfare** (spreading rumors to intimidate the enemy and break down his will);
14. **Media warfare** (manipulating what people see and hear in order to lead public opinion along);
15. **Drug warfare** (obtaining sudden and huge illicit profits by spreading disaster in other countries);

16. **Network warfare** (venturing out in secret and concealing one's identity in a type of warfare that is virtually impossible to guard against);
17. **Technological warfare** (creating monopolies by setting standards independently);
18. **Fabrication warfare** (presenting a counterfeit appearance of real strength before the eyes of the enemy);
19. **Resources warfare** (grabbing riches by plundering stores of resources);
20. **Economic aid warfare** (bestowing favor in the open and contriving to control matters in secret);
21. **Cultural warfare** (leading cultural trends along in order to assimilate those with different views);
22. **Ecological warfare:** Ecological war refers to a new type of non-military warfare in which modern technology is employed to influence the natural state of rivers, oceans, the crust of the earth, the polar ice sheets, the air circulating in the atmosphere, and the ozone layer.[18]
23. **Financial warfare:** defeat on the economic front precipitates a near collapse of the social and political order. The casualties resulting from the constant chaos are no less than those resulting from a regional war, and the injury done to the living social organism even exceeds the injury inflicted by a regional war.[19] Today, when nuclear weapons have already become frightening mantelpiece decorations that are losing their real operational value with each passing day, financial war has become a "hyperstrategic" weapon that is attracting the attention of the world. This is because financial war is easily manipulated and allows for concealed actions, and is also highly destructive.[20]
24. **International law warfare** (seizing the earliest opportunity to set up regulations);
25. **Cocktail Warfare:** "If we confine ourselves to warfare in the narrow sense on the traditional battlefield now, it will very difficult for us to regain our foothold in the future. Any war that breaks out tomorrow or further down the road will be characterized by warfare in the broad sense--a cocktail mixture of warfare prosecuted through the force of arms and warfare that is prosecuted by means other than the force of arms."[21]
26. "In addition, there are other types of non-military warfare which are too numerous to mention."[22]

URW suggests that each of these forms of warfare be deployed in various combinations to generate the desired effect. The authors quote Yue Fei, a military strategist from the Song Dynasty in China, stating: "the subtle excellence of application lies in one-mindedness." The best operations are considered those where the myriad methods converge into one.[23] This convergence is seen as a dynamic process that is constantly adjusted to maintain flexibility.[24]

III. War Without Limits: The Functions of Modern Warfare

". . . we have turned the entire world into a battlefield in the broad sense. On this battlefield, people still fight, plunder, and kill each other as before, but the weapons are more advanced and the means more sophisticated, so while it is somewhat less bloody, it is still just as brutal.[25]"

The authors of URW state, "that war itself has now been changed."[26] Going further, the authors declare an end to the "might make right," mentality of the 20th century, and announce the beginning of a "new period."[27] It is worth noting that President Obama recently stated in his speech at West Point that this era will be an era wher "right makes might." The authors of URW suggest this new era will require a strategy that surpasses national boundaries and precieves no limit to its operations. This new period is said to require a strategy that surpasses national boundaries, and perceives no limit to its operations. RAND noted this feature of Chinese strategy as, "feixianxing zuozhan," or a war without a front line.[28] URW suggests that this concept applies to China's geographic region, as it does with the reach of information warfare. URW states that "national security based on regionalism is already outdated," and that threats against one nations security are no longer limited to the "natural space" that the nation occupies.[29]

Citing the observations of German strategist Erich Ludendorff, URW suggests implementation of a "total war" theory, where battlefield and non-battle field elements are combined into an organic whole.[30] This theory explains in part, why exerting pressure and influence on a competitors population at home, is seen as a key component of OPTO. Implementing psychological warfare against the wife and family of a soldier deployed overseas, in conjunction with lobbying, targeted assassination, media warfare and turning another country's newspapers and television stations into tools of media warfare

The guided-missile cruiser USS Chosin (CG 65) performs a breakaway maneuver from a formation with the Chinese People's Liberation Army-Navy frigate Zhoushan (FFG 529) in the Gulf of Aden Nov. 19, 2009. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Scott Taylor (Released)

"may" all be necessary.[31] The breadth of targets explains in part why the primary change in 21st century warfare is not in the instruments, modes, or forms of war, but rather it's function.[32] Rejecting reliance on conventional military forces, URW states that war will no longer be carried out in ways with which we are familiar. [33] Citing the use of soldiers as the "hardware," of warfare and "purposefulness," as it's software, the authors discard these conventional separations declaring and end to the age of clearly drawn sides.[34]

The content of URW, taken on a whole suggests several possible new "functions," for warfare. The most strategically significant of these is the implementation of indirect strategies to attain one's goals, sublimating the need for what would be considered a conventional military victory.[35]

The authors present a view of OPTO that is "by no means second to that of a war," and refer to unrestricted warfare as the embryonic form of another kind of warfare.[36] It is here that the authors explicitly suggest that war has moved from the kinetic battlefields into the relatively hidden domains of irregular and virtual warfare.

"But whatever you call them, they cannot make us more optimistic than in the past. We have no reason for optimism. This is because the reduction of the functions of warfare in a pure sense does not mean at all that war has ended. Even in the so-called post-modern, post-industrial age, warfare will not be totally dismantled. It has only re-invaded human society in a more complex, more extensive, more concealed, and more subtle manner."[37]

This change in warfare has led to what the authors note as a "relative reduction in military violence," while leading to an increase in "political, economic, and technological violence."[38] This transition from military violence, to "soft" violence is by no means seen as a reduction in the amount of damage that can be inflicted on an enemy state. Nor is the possibility of combining OPTO with actual military operations excluded from the books strategy.

"If we acknowledge that the new principles of war are no longer "using armed force to compel the enemy to submit to one's will," but rather are "using all means, including armed force or non-armed force, military and non-military, and lethal and non-lethal means to compel the enemy to accept one's interests."[39]

The authors use the metaphor of a "charm" to ask who will have the power to control the rise and expansion of information technology.[40] Technological development, it is predicted, may result in one of two possibilities. The first is a rampant "barbarism of technology," where people lose their way and seek ever more convenient solutions to their problems. The second possibility is that the "unique features of exchanging and sharing represent the light of intelligence," will lead mankind out of barbarism.[41]

The proposed solution for technological barbarism is the use of a "bonding agent," lent to governments by the development of information technology, which can "lightly penetrate the layers of barriers between technologies and link various technologies which appear to be totally unrelated."[42] The term "bonding" likely refers to some of the PRC's policy of "harmonizing," political and religious dissidents within China.[43] Both the "bonding" power of information warfare and the authors' reference to China as "all under heaven," correspond to deep cultural traditions in Chinese culture that favor a highly controlled state.[44] With URW, the use of OPTO is seen as an equalizer that can level the playing field to Beijing's benefit.

IV. Combination Warfare or Modern Combined War that Goes Beyond Limits

Modified combined warfare is a theory focused on the power of combining and linking means and methods together to achieve superior effects. This principle appears to be the primary operational component of URW. The key principle of this form of warfare is "to blend together more means to resolve a problem in a range wider than the problem itself."[45]

The first metaphor used is that of the "Cocktail in the Great Master's Cup." This metaphor cites the victories of King Wu of the Zhou Dynasty and Alexander the Great, suggesting that they were "adept at ingeniously combining two or more battlefield factors together, throwing them into battle, and gaining victories. 1+1 is the most elementary and also the most ancient combination method."[46] The use of any individual weapon system or capability is considered to be less important than "whether or not the weapons have good characteristics for linking and matching them with other weapons."[47] URW also suggests combining or blurring the distinctions between each level of strategic action to avoid triggering thresholds that would require direct military confrontation. This concept is referred to as "omni-directionality," harmonizing different levels and forms of combat towards one aim. Omnidirectionality is said to apply to all levels of "beyond-limits combined war" and is broken down to each level of warfare below:[48]

- At the war policy level, it applies to the combined use of a nation's entire combat power, up to supra-national combat power, in an intercontinental or worldwide confrontation.
- At the strategic level, it applies to the combined use in warfare of national resources, which relate to military objectives.
- At the operational level, it applies to the combined use on a designated battlefield of various kinds of measures, and mainly an army or force of that scale, to achieve campaign objectives.
- And at the tactical level, it applies to the combined use of various kinds of weapons, equipment, and combat methods, and mainly one unit or a force of that scale, to execute a designated mission in a battle.
- It must be kept in mind that all of the above combinations must also include intersecting combinations among the respective levels.

There is more complexity in this principle, than the straightforward 1+1 formula suggests. URW states that the key is "whether or not one understands what goes with what to implement combinations, and how to combine."[49] It is the accumulation of effects over a range of different operations that generates strategic gains. Utilizing any one indirect strategy is seen as outdated. The goal of URW is to execute tactical, operational and strategic gains by harmonizing the efforts towards a singular end. URW suggest combinations of offensives in fields as diverse as stealth aircraft, financial wars, terrorist attacks and deterrence.

"…combining the battlefield and non-battlefield, warfare and non-warfare, military and non-military which is more specifically combining stealth aircraft and cruise missiles with network killers, combining nuclear deterrence, financial wars and terrorist attacks, or simply combining Schwartzkopf + Soros + Xiaomolisi [transliteration 1420 5459 6849 2448] + bin Laden. This then is our real hand of cards."[50]

While the benefits of combination are seen as critical to a successful strategy, combination alone is considered insufficient. URW suggests that all of the methods of operation be focused upon a singular specific target.[51] When the goal is reached or target eliminated then the method of operation also loses its remaining value. The authors invoke the metaphor of an "empty basket," in order to convey the idea of "utilizing the non-changing to deal with the myriad of changes"[52] and suggests that in the modern era, the overt and covert goals of war are two different matters.[53]

In considering practical applications of these metaphors, we can first note that both the great master's cup, and the empty basket – are "empty," before a specific target or goal is determined.[54] In terms of OPTO, this suggests that each specific target of a given operation is chosen specifically and approached with uniquely tailored "combinations," and that the deployment of pre-established tactics is limited. This principle suggests that China's 21st century OPTO may be more focused on human targets, including national leaders and populations, than on military hardware. This also suggests that each operation would be (on a relative scale) quite small, and that each operation would vary its methods based upon the unique characteristics of the target. An ability to alternate the means employed to attain the objective, also suggest that OPTO may seek to acquire target information from the easiest route, or to reach desired targets through indirect means. In a widely reported incident, China was recently accused of hacking into *Lockheed Martin* to steal information regarding the advanced F-35 fighter.[55] Incidents like these suggest corporations may be easier to target than governments.

Attacking multiple sources to attain information is suggested in URW, where attacks are to be used in "synchrony" with one another occurring simultaneously.[56] This operational stage combines different actions within different spaces operating towards the same objective.[57] That is not to suggest that all objectives are pursued with all means, available, rather specific means are tailored to specific targets, and those means are intended to operate simultaneously toward a single goal.

Rather than seeking to accomplish ambitious, or difficult goals, URW suggests a rule: "objectives must always be smaller than the measures."[58] The strategic reason for limiting the measures taken is based on URW's perspective of victory as an accumulation of smaller, and seemingly disparate operations that accumulate gradually.[59] The authors warn against "craving great successes," and instead advocate for consciously pursuing limited objectives, because "every objective which is achievable is limited."[60] Taking care to pursue smaller objectives is viewed as critical to avoid "disastrous consequences."[61]

The relative humility in the selection of objectives suggests a strategic preference for combining and deploying the tools of URW in OPTO without being detected. The flexibility in choosing the means, and the caution in choosing the ends, suggest a strategy that maximizes strategic gain in each realm, while maintaining plausible deniability.

V. Technology or Wisdom: Dangerous Asymmetry

The authors of URW view US obsession with technology as a strategic vulnerability, that is alone incapable of guaranteeing a strategic upper hand.[62] The authors suggest the key to victory is in "courage, wisdom and strategy."[63] The strategic perspective proposed in URW views the US as relying solely on "one pillar," (the strength of conventional military forces) as being insufficient to maintain it's strategic edge.[64] URW suggests that the emphasis of the US military on preparing to win a "major war," is an obsession employed by the military to justify their own existence, and a "hold-over" from the Cold War.[65] Some aspects of URW appear to be outdated. For instance, URW refers to West Point Military Academy as a "beast barracks style of training" that produces blood and iron warriors, unsuited for modern warfare.[66] The authors would be wise to note the four days of West Point cyber war gaming that occurred last May. Army cadets stood guard over a network around the clock while hackers from the National Security Agency attempted to hack into a network setup for the simulation.[67]

While the US military is working to adapt to irregular threats, the authors of URW believe that superior strategy and OPTO are capable of overcoming US advantages.

"As for determining the outcome of war, it is now very difficult for anyone to occupy an unmatched position. It may be leading, but it will not be alone, much less never-changing."[68]

Noting the generation gaps that exist between two opposing forces, the authors observe that it's "…difficult for high-tech troops to deal with unconventional warfare."[69]

The advancements of information warfare and 21st century technology are seen as creating "mutual helplessness," between nations, helplessness that the authors note the US must share. [70] There is an even greater vulnerability on the part of the US, which the authors perceive as fearful of sustaining any casualties.[71] 21st century warfare is seen as being capable of ending the uni-polar world. This is in part because, the means of engaging in OPTO are considerably less expensive than confronting a super-power on the conventional battlefield. Information as a strategic national asset opens opportunities for exploitation, manipulation and theft.[72]

The authors of URW note the "theoretical blind spots," and "thought errors," that exist in the US military due to rivalry and "long-standing sectarianism," between US military services.[73] Quoting US Marine Corps criticism of Department of Defense "joint doctrine," as possibly leading to the end of "distinctiveness," in the US armed forces,[74] the authors of URW suggest that DoD joint doctrine fails to comprehend the degree to which "joint" can be applied to all of the realms in which humans can produce confrontational behavior."[75] This concept of "joint" may parallel "whole of government" efforts that combine different elements of US national power towards accomplishing policy objectives.

US Navy Rear Adm. Joe Walsh greets Chinese Lt. Gen. Zhang Qinsheng, commander of Guangzhou Military Region, China, as he tours the fast-attack submarine USS Santa Fe (SSN 763) at Naval Station Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in 2008. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Cynthia Clark (Released)

VI. The Virtual Century: Harmonizing Chaos

". . . [the indirect approach] was seen to be the key to practical achievement in dealing with any problem where the human factor predominates, and a conflict of wills tends to spring from an underlying concern for interests. In all such cases, the direct assault of new ideas provokes a stubborn resistance, thus intensifying the difficulty of producing a change of outlook. Conversion is achieved more easily and rapidly by unsuspected infiltration of a different idea or by an argument that turns the flank of instinctive opposition."[76]

The National Intelligence Council predicts that by 2020, "China will continue to strengthen its military through developing and acquiring modern weapons, including advanced fighter aircraft, sophisticated submarines and increasing numbers of ballistic missiles."[77] As China's conventional arsenal continues its modernization, there is some question as to whether or not China will continue to employ the principles of URW as a cornerstone of it's grand strategy. The recent discovery of GhostNet, as well as calls for dumping the US dollar as a reserve currency suggest that China may actually become more bold in its employment of OPTO as it becomes more confident in its conventional armed forces.

The cultural traditions of China, as well as it's preference for indirect strategies suggest that URW and OPTO will likely continue to play a role in China's grand strategy throughout the 21st century. URW cites British strategist Liddell Hardt's timeless advocacy for using indirect means to obtain both military and political objectives.[78] Looking forward there are specific types of disputes that the authors of URW consider as possible catalysts for expanded confrontations or disputes. These areas include conflicts ranging from ideology to market shares.[79]

More conventional flash points, between the US and China include possible conflicts over the independence of Taiwan, the legal status of the South China Sea, oil drilling rights surrounding Japan, satellite weapons and any open war on the Korean peninsula. Whether these areas of potential conflict reach the point of open war or not, the US should anticipate and plan to defend against aggressive OPTO. The 21st century, as the "virtual century" requires the US to combine elements of URW, OPTO and conventional warfare together into integrated systems, tools and strategies, both to defend our nation and our allies and to maintain our comprehensive national power. It's worth noting that OPTO exploits unregulated spheres of connectivity where our strategic awareness or ability to influence is limited. Beginning a dialogue about these areas of mutual concern (such as cyber and economic warfare) could lessen our vulnerability to the strategies proposed in URW. There is a historic example of using strategic dialogue to decrease mutual vulnerability. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (commonly known as "SALT") between the US and former Soviet Union, were initially viewed as a useless political gesture, but eventually grew to be the most strategically useful dialogue between the two super-powers.[80] Establishing common definitions and setting boundaries could help both nations avoid passing unspoken thresholds leading to un-intended escalations.

Unfortunately not every component of OPTO lends itself to strategic dialogue. While there is ample evidence that both nations engage in unregulated cyber warfare, other spheres of OPTO remain more difficult to define. URW explicitly advocates for strategies and tactics where plausible deniability can be maintained. Meaningful bilateral negotiations would require both China and the US to have the courage (Yung) and integrity to negotiate in good faith and froma perspective of mutual respect and responsibility. The US is late in laying the groundwork for confronting China's new approach to warfare. URW was published ten years ago, and we need to consider what new forms of OPTO have been developed during this period. While URW changed the course of China's strategic endeavors, the principles of URW suggest agility is the key to victory. The most substantive threats posed by URW accumulate over time. Ignoring the threats and risks posed by URW, enables the synergy between these methods to gradually erode our strategic assets. The US needs to move beyond playing catch up with OPTO and re-orient its strategic vision of how 21st century war is waged. Learning from the principles of URW, the US should accelerate efforts to engage in combination warfare and OPTO that can shape the strategic landscape of the 21st century.

* *The author would like to thank Mr. Tim Thomas, of the Foreign Military Studies Office, both for his ongoing work on China's Unrestricted Warfare, and for his assistance with this article.*

Endnotes

[1] See: Remarks by the Director of National Intelligence, Mr. Mike McConnell, May 17, 2008.

[2] The third war, the "global war on terrorism," also remains a high priority, while the definition, scope and means of carrying out this campaign are still transitioning since the election of President Obama.

[3] See: *"Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, p. 33, stating: "The crucial relationship in the region, but also globally, will be that between the United States and China."

[4] Secretary of State Hillary Clinton referred to the potential for cooperation between China and the U.S. by noting that "the opportunities for us to work together are unmatched anywhere in the world." See: May/June Foreign Affairs at: http://www.cfr.org/publication/19209/g2_mirage.html

[5] See: New York Times, May 16, 2009 *"Utah Governor to Become Ambassador to China."*

[6] See: Foreign Affairs Magazine, *"The China Challenge,"* Sep./Oct. 2005.

[7] See: *"Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying,"* James M. Olson, 2006. P. 177-178.

[8] See: BBC: *"Peoples War; Bedfordshires Secret War,"* available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/content/articles/2008/03/19/beds_pw_secret_war_feature.shtml.

[9] See: *"China is Spying on UK business, warns MI5,"* Nov. 30 2007 at: http://www.computing.co.uk/computing/news/2204756/people-liberation-army-spying.

[10] See: Wall Street Journal, *"Electricity Grid in U.S. Penetrated by Spies,"* Apr. 08 2009 at: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123914805204099085.html.

[11] See: Mr. Timothy Thomas, Foreign Military Studies Office in comments made at *"InfoWarCon 2009."* Unrestricted Warfare, 1999 Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House, February 1999.

[12] See: Times of India, *"US Threatens Military Force Against Hackers."* 09 May 2009.

[13] See: Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, available at: http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/.

[14] There have been some efforts to begin drafting international cyber-regulations. A 2005 United Nations report advocates for the formulation of national and international laws that would criminalize concealing ones identity online in order to commit a crime. See: *"The Law of Cyberspace,"* by Ahmad Kamal, published by the United Nations Institute of Training and Research. (Also available at: http://www.cfr.org/publication/9161/law_of_cyberspace.html_/)

[15] See: BBC *"Major Spy Network Uncovered,"* March 29, 2009. The *"Information Warfare Monitor,"* also assisted SecDev in their research.

[16] See: Institute for Defense Analysis: *"Techniques for Cyber Attack Attribution,"* Oct. 2003. See also: *"CRS Report For congress: Information Operations, Electronic Warfare, Cyberwarfare capabilities and Related Policy Issues."* 05 June 2007.

[17] For more information on the difficulties associated with attribution see: Institute for Defense Analysis: *"Techniques for Cyber Attack Attribution,"* Oct. 2003. See also: *"CRS Report For congress: Information Operations, Electronic Warfare, Cyberwarfare capabilities and Related Policy Issues."* 05 June 2007.

[18] URW P. 54.

[19] URW P. 51.

[20] URW P. 52.

[21] URW P. 56.

[22] URW P. 56. Ten additional Chinese IO/IW methods are listed by Tim Thomas, in his paper *"Like Adding Wings to a Tiger,"* these include: "planting information mines, conducting information reconnaissance, changing network data, releasing information bombs, dumping information garbage, disseminating propaganda, applying information deception, releasing clone information, organizing information defense, establishing network spy stations." P. 4.

[23] URW P. 148.

[24] See: URW P. 215:"Warfare is a dynamic process full of randomness and creativity. Any attempt to tie a war to a set of ideas within a predetermined plan is little short of absurdity or naïveté. Therefore, it is necessary to have feedback and revisions throughout the entire course of a war while it is actually happening, in order to keep the initiative within one's grasp. This is what is meant by "adjustment and control of the entire process."

[25] URW P. 221.

[26] URW P. 4.

[27] URW P. 5

[28] See: *"People's Liberation Army in the Information Age,"* RAND, National Security Research Division, supported by the Center for Asia-Pacific Policy and the U.S. Air Force, edited by James. C. Mulvenon and Richard Yang. P. 183-186.

[29] URW P. 117.

[30] URW P. 40.

[31] URW P. 191.

[32] URW P. 5. "A war which changed the world ultimately changed war itself. This is truly fantastic, yet it also causes people to ponder deeply. No, what we are referring to are not changes in the instruments of war, the technology of war, the modes of war, or the forms of war. What we are referring to is the function of warfare." See also: P. 196, stating that wars need not progress "level by level to some fateful moment of destiny," but rather by "continuously," creating such moments of opportunity and by taking advantage of them.

[33] URW P. 5-6.

[34] URW P. 36.

[35] URW cites to British strategist Liddel Hart, and his work on Grand Strategy. P. 169.

[36] URW P. 6. The authors include: "financial attack by George Soros on East Asia; the "terrorist attack on the U.S. embassy by Usama Bin Laden; the gas attack on the Tokyo subway by the disciples of the Aum Shinri Kyo, and the havoc wreaked by the likes of Morris Jr. on the internet."

[37] URW P. 6.

[38] URW P. 6.

[39] URW P. 7.

[40] URW, See Chapter 1, section 2.

[41] URW P. 9.

[42] URW P. 10.

[43] The Congressional Research Service described some of China's efforts, stating that: "Empirical studies have found that China has one of the most sophisticated content-filtering Internet regimes in the world. The Chinese government employs increasingly sophisticated methods to limit content online, including a combination of legal regulation, surveillance, and punishment to promote self-censorship, as well as technical controls. U.S. government efforts to defeat Internet "jamming" include funding through the Broadcasting Board of Governors to provide counter-censorship software to Chinese Internet users to access Voice of America (VOA) and Radio FreeAsia (RFA) in China. CRS Report for Congress, *"Internet Development and Information Control in the People's Republic of China."* 10 February 2006.

[44] See: *"The Chinese World Order,"* John K. Fairbank, Harvard University Press.

[45] URW P. 182. See also p. 118, Where the range of issues considered in

analyzing a target are called a "large strategic situation map: "The increased load of this type of large security view brings with it *complications of the target* as well as the means and methods for realizing the target. As a result, the national strategy for ensuring the realization of national security targets, namely, what is generally called grand strategy, also necessitates carrying out adjustments, which go beyond military strategies and even political strategies. Such a strategy takes all things into consideration that are involved in each aspect of the security index of the interests of the entire nation, as well as superimposes political (national will, values, and cohesion) and military factors on the economy, culture, foreign relations, technology, environment, natural resources, nationalities, and other parameters before one can draw out a complete "extended domain" which superposes both national interests and national security - a large strategic situation map."

[46] URW P. 137.

[47] URW P. 21.

[48] URW P. 207

[49] URW P. 142.

[50] URW P. 142.

[51] URW P. 147.

[52] "It is not the same as any of the very strongly directed methods of operation of the past, for only when the basket is filled with specific targets and contents does it begin to have directionality and aim. The key to whether or not victory is won in a war is nowhere else but in what things you are able to pack into this basket." URW P. 147.

[53] "Only a handful of soldiers are likely to grasp a principle that every statesman already knows: that the biggest difference between contemporary wars and the wars of the past is that, in contemporary wars, the overt goal and the covert goal are often two different matters." URW P. 39.

[54] This "emptiness," is also referenced in URW when the authors discuss "breaking ideology," and eliminating assumptions about the progression of warfare.

[55] See: The Air Force Times, *"China denies hacking into F-35 Data,"* April 23, 2009. http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2009/04/ap_f35_china_denies_hacking_042309/

[56] URW suggests a synergistic effect can be had by the employment of multiple weapons, and multiple generations of weapons, towards the same goal, *"If one can find a good point of agreement, which is to say, the most appropriate tactics, the pairing up and use of new and older generation weapons not only makes it possible to eliminate the weakness of uniform weaponry, it may also become a "multiplier" to increase the weapons' effectiveness."* URW P. 20.

[57] URW P. 207.

[58] URW P. 208.

[59] "When setting objectives, one must overcome the mentality of craving great successes, and instead consciously pursue limited objectives and eliminate objectives which are beyond one's abilities, even though they may be proper. This is because every objective which is achievable is limited. No matter what the reason, setting objectives which exceed allowable limits of the measures available will only lead to disastrous consequences. URW P. 196, see also P. 209.

[60] URW P. 196.

[61] URW P. 209.

[62] URW P. 95.

[63] URW P. 95.

[64] "The security vault of a modern national building is far from being able to be supported by the singular power of one pillar. The key to its standing erect and not collapsing lies in whether it can to a large extent form composite force in all aspects related to national interest." URW P. 119. It is worth noting that China's I-Ching, hexagram #26, Ta Ch'u or the "Taming power of the Great," combines the principle of "emptiness" with that of heavenly virtue and "great corrrectness."

[65] " Given their state of mind of "looking around in the dark with daggers drawn," the American soldiers who had lost their opponent due to the collapse of the former Soviet Union are vehemently searching for a reason not to allow themselves to be "unemployed." This is because from the generals to the common soldiers, from the spear of attack to the shield of defense, from major strategies to minor methods of operation, everything that the American military does is done in preparation of gaining victory in a major war. It should not be said that as soon as there were no longer two armies facing off against each other that American military circles and even he American Congress would produce an empty feeling at having lost their goal. The result was that without an enemy, one still had to be created. Therefore, even if it is a tiny area such as Kosovo, they cannot pass up an opportunity to try out their frosty blades." URW P. 127.

[66] URW P. 95.

[67] See: New York Times, *"Cadets Trade the Trenches for Firewalls,"* May 11, 2009.

[68] URW P. 18.

[69] URW P. 21.

[70] URW P. 19.

[71] "Reducing casualties and achieving war objectives have become the two equal weights on the American military scale. These common American soldiers who should be on the battlefield have now become the most costly security in war, like precious china bowls that people are afraid to break. All of the opponents who have engaged in battle with the American military have probably mastered the secret of success - if you have no way of defeating this force, you should kill its rank and file soldiers." URW P. 93.

[72] See: *"Sun Tzu & Information Warfare: Knowledge Strategies,"* National Defense University p. 6-7, Lieutenant Colonel William Fast, U.S. Army.

[73] URW P. 84.

[74] URW P. 102.

[75] URW P. 103.

[76] *"The Way to Win Wars,"* Liddell Hart, preface p. 5.

[77] See: "*Mapping the Global Future; Report of the National Intelligence Council's 2020 Project*," Dec. 2004, P. 49.

[78] "Moreover, philosophical, scientific, and artistic methods are also effective in supporting military wisdom and military action. This is why people often refer to military ideology, military theory, and military practice as military philosophy, military science, and military art. Liddell Hart [British officer and military theorist] defined the word strategy as "the art of using military means to achieve political objectives." From this we can see that the concept of means covers a lot of territory, on numerous levels, with overlapping functions, and thus it is not an easy concept to grasp. Only by expanding our field of vision and our understanding of means, and grasping the principle that there is nothing which cannot be considered a means, can we avoid the predicament of being confronted with too many difficulties to tackle all at once and being at wit's end when we employ means." URW P. 193.

[79] URW P. 38, "Territory and resources, a dispute over religious beliefs, hatred stemming from tribal differences, a dispute over ideology, a dispute over market share, a dispute over the distribution of power and authority, a dispute over trade sanctions or a dispute stemming from financial unrest."

[80] See: *"From the Shadows,"* Robert M. Gates, p. 44-49.

China's Public Diplomacy Institution:

Its Development, Challenges and Prospects of Its Practice

Dr. Zhang Zhexin
Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS)
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With China's increasing efforts to develop its soft power and national image over the past few years, the academia have paid ever greater attention to the theory and practice of "public diplomacy." Contrary to people's hope, however, it appears that China's image has not improved much, but many a time deteriorated instead.[1] Such paradox both proves that it may take rather a long time to improve a country's image, and indicates that there must be some structural weaknesses with regard to China's public diplomacy. I think the biggest problem for China's public diplomacy is not an inadequacy of national resources put into it, but that too much emphasis is paid on technical issues rather than many fundamental aspects, which results in a lack of an effective strategy and corresponding institutions. Based on a brief review of the three phases of the institutional development of China's public diplomacy over the past 60 years, this paper analyzes the major challenges faced by China's current public diplomacy institution as well as some prospective measures still under nationwide debate. In the end, the paper discusses how China and other major powers—especially the US—may interact in the future world arena to maximize the effect of their respective public diplomacy strategies.

I. Three Phases of the Development of China's Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is "the process by which direct exchanges and communications with people in a country are conducted to advance the image and extend the values of those being represented," and "public diplomacy institution" refers to the organization of public diplomacy-related agencies, their separate responsibilities and means of public diplomacy practice.[2] China's public diplomacy is mainly comprised of international information communications (IIC) that aim at relatively short-term goals and international cultural communications (ICC) that aim at rather long-term objectives. Although such practices as foreign aids and peace-keeping operations are more and more widely acknowledged as parts of China's public diplomacy, they have played a minor role both in scale and in effect. Therefore, this paper only focuses on the two most popular forms but leaves the other forms for future discussion. The term "public diplomacy" was seldom used in China before the 21st century, yet its practices—mainly IIC and ICC—have been among the topmost concerns of central leaders since the beginning of New China history. Looking back at the development of China's public diplomacy institution since the country was established, three phases can be found, each with its distinct characteristics.

Chinese army Gen. Xu Caihou, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, presents an artifact recovered from the 1950 crash of a US aircraft in Guangdong province, China, to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates during a meeting at the Pentagon in October. DOD photo by R. D. Ward (Released)

The first phase extended from 1949 to late 1980s, marked by a strong orientation towards "foreign propaganda." Influenced by the Cold War and the lack of openness of the country, China's public diplomacy institution developed mainly around the goal of "glorifying China." International News Bureau was set up in the early days to administer international reporting, and later became a branch of Xinhua News Agency in 1952, while decisions of international reporting guidelines and on major events were made by Division of International Propaganda, Department of Propaganda of Communist Party of China (CPC). In 1958, the CPC Central Committee decided to shift those responsibilities to the Central Leading Small Group (CLSG) on Foreign Affairs headed by Chou En-lai. In 1961, a Central Leading Group on International Propaganda was set up to coordinate the work of relevant agencies, including the Foreign Affair Office of the State Council, the Foreign Ministry, Central Liaison Department, Department of Propaganda, International Cultural Commission, People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency, and Central People's Broadcasting System. When the modern reform began in 1978, the Central Committee decided to further enhance China's foreign propaganda. Thus a CLSG on Foreign Propaganda (later changed into Central Foreign Propaganda Office, or CFPO) was formed in September 1980, and the Association for International Cultural Exchanges (AICE) was formed in 1986 as a quasi-official agency affiliated to the CLSG.

Therefore, it can be seen that, during this period, China's public diplomacy institution mainly features an orientation towards foreign propaganda, overall central control, and the key role of central governmental agencies. With joint efforts of all these new agencies, China witnessed the foundation of dozens of international newspapers and magazines, such as *People's China, China's Pictorial* and *People's Daily-Overseas Edition*; China's International Broadcasting System ranked only after the US and the Soviet Union in the languages and time length of its broadcast; Xinhua News Agency kept setting up new branches abroad; China's cultural products—films, music and art shows—also began to be accepted by foreign audiences, especially those from "the Third World."

Thanks to the developing public diplomacy institution, China's image as a dynamic and thriving country was established in the international society. Especially since the reform began, people were surprised to find in China's international reporting some minor criticisms on China's domestic events, and the reporting was made more interesting for the international audiences as well.[3] Nevertheless, as foreign propaganda still constituted the core of China's public diplomacy thinking, other forms of public diplomacy including international educational programs or cultural exchange programs developed

quite slowly, resulting in a rather abstract and one-sided national image. In other words, the international public learned much more about China's political development than about its economic, social and cultural aspects.

The second phase roughly started from the end of the Cold War (after the Tiananmen Incident) and lasted till the beginning of the 21st century, during which period China's public diplomacy institution began shifting from one-way foreign propaganda to two-way international communications. Two landmarks can be found: one is the establishment of the News Office of the State Council in January 1991 as well as the change of its goal from "glorifying China" to "publicizing China in an authentic, colorful, lively and timely way"; the other is the announcement of Central Propaganda Department to change the title "propaganda" to "publicity," in order to downplay the negative implications of "propaganda."

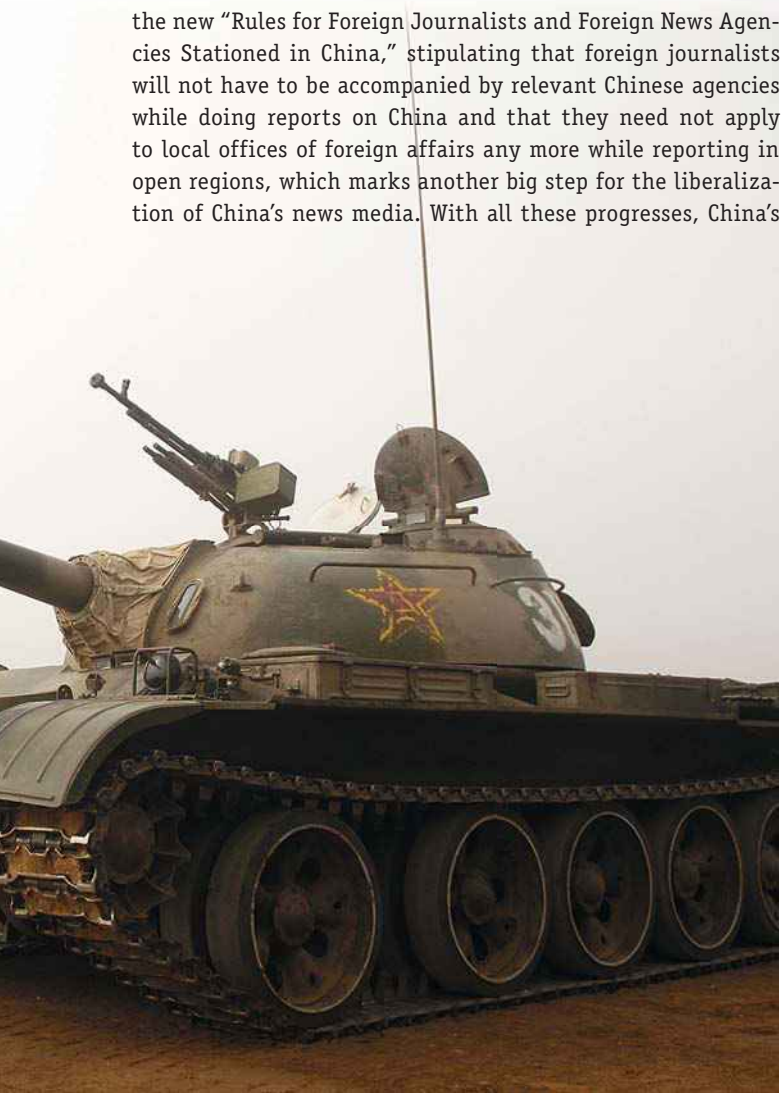
Together with the advancement in such thinking, China's public diplomacy institution made great progress in its structure, functions and scale: First, former foreign propaganda organs were in large part integrated into a multi-form, -channel and –level international reporting system, especially TV broadcasting and internet communications. At the turn of this century, CCTV-9 (the international channel) covered as many as 126 countries or areas around the world, while most provincial TV stations began broadcasting English programs as well; a "national internet broadcasting system" also came into play, featuring People's Daily Online, Xinhua News Online, China Online, CRI Online, and China Daily Online. Next, international cultural programs began to constitute a larger proportion in China's public diplomacy. Despite that governments of various levels still played a key role in guiding and funding such programs at most of the times, many semi-official, even private organizations also joined in this cultural exchange practice. A most remarkable example is the hundreds of student exchange programs newly started in universities all over China, which is undoubtedly of commercial rather than political nature. Lastly, Beijing grew increasingly open and supportive to foreign media and reporters in China. Although the 1990 "Rules for Foreign Journalists and Foreign News Agencies Stationed in China" still set three forms of restriction on foreign reporters' activities, it did greatly facilitate their work in that they now had clear rules to follow, instead of having to surmise what might happen to them if they reported something "the government didn't like." This indicates that Beijing began to learn to lend help from international media in molding China's national image.

As China's public diplomacy became more open and involved much more actors, China's image as a "rapidly-rising power" was established; foreign public, especially many elites among them, began to develop a much more overall perception of the progress in China's economy, social structure and modern culture. However, mostly due to the rapid growth of China's economic and political power since early 1990s, a sense of "China threat" was on the rise among the international society. Yet China's public diplomacy organs were relatively slow in readjusting their thinking and strategy but kept on the old rationale and approaches of IIC and ICC. One good example is that various news agencies still spoke with one voice—sometimes too dull in contents or style for the international audience to hear out, not to say to convince them. As a consequence, despite China's development of its public diplomacy institution and great efforts put into practice, little effect was achieved in either persuading the international audience with IIC or impressing them with ICC, and China's image stayed under serious influence of "China threat," which shows that China's public diplomacy on this phase could hardly generate the ideal results of "actively leading the international public opinion."[4]

The third phase started from around 2003 when "public diplomacy" suddenly became a hot topic both for China's political leadership and for the academia. This phase can be called an "overall developing period of China's public diplomacy," as much progress has been achieved in theory and institution building as well as in practice, mainly shown in four aspects: first, breakthroughs have been made in public diplomacy theory building. Only a few years since the term "public diplomacy" was introduced into China, thousands of articles have been written in academic journals or in books around this topic and

Chinese tanks in formation. DOD photo by Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen (released)

some even managed to draw attention from the central leadership.[5] Secondly, much more efforts have been put to ICC. Since the beginning of the "Cultural Year" between France and China from 2003 to 2005, this new form of public diplomacy has been successfully conducted many times and becomes a major platform of international cultural exchanges for China; in 2004, China's Foreign Cultural Exchange Group was established, the first large-scale state-owned enterprise in conducting international cultural exchanges and communication; meanwhile, 256 Confucius Institutes have been set up in 81 countries—the number to reach 500 by the end of 2010—with the guidance and funding of China's National Leading Group Office on Foreign Chinese Teaching affiliated to Ministry of Education.[6] Thirdly, various platforms including the internet and mobile phones have been actively explored for public diplomacy both to help foreign audiences to learn about the dynamics in China, and to enhance Chinese audiences' knowledge of the outside world. For instance, China's cyber population has grown from only 620,000 in 1997 to nearly 300 million today; over 2,000 press conferences are held each year by governments of municipal levels and above.[7] Finally, many restrictions on foreign journalists and news agencies have been cancelled or at least much loosened. On Oct. 17, 2008 the State Council issued the new "Rules for Foreign Journalists and Foreign News Agencies Stationed in China," stipulating that foreign journalists will not have to be accompanied by relevant Chinese agencies while doing reports on China and that they need not apply to local offices of foreign affairs any more while reporting in open regions, which marks another big step for the liberalization of China's news media. With all these progresses, China's public diplomacy institution has improved very fast over the past few years, laying a solid foundation for future practice and improvement.



II. Challenges Faced by China's Public Diplomacy Institution

It can be found that China's public diplomacy institution has developed from one-way "foreign propaganda-oriented" to two-way, multi-dimensional "overall development" while the current objective is to meet the international standards in as short time as possible. Yet restrained by both current organization of relevant agencies and traditional diplomatic thinking, China's public diplomacy still has a long time to go to catch up with that of the US, Japan and other countries with stronger soft power. In short, three structural challenges stand in the way of further progress for China's public diplomacy institution:

The first challenge is the somehow deficient organization of governmental agencies in public diplomacy—sometimes a central agency is absent to coordinate the work of different organs and at some other time different agencies overlap in function. Although China's public diplomacy is under the direct responsibility of CFPO in principle, it is to be practiced by about a dozen ministries and agencies, mostly equal in rank (ministry-level) with CFPO, thus making it very difficult for CFPO to exercise its authority. Meanwhile, some key agencies on public diplomacy—Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education to be only two examples—are excluded from the strategy-planning and decision-making processes, many a time resulting in poor effect of public diplomacy due to lack of necessary information as well as other resources.[8] Under this circumstance, China's public diplomacy has been exercised as two almost completely separate practices (ICC and IIC), which sometimes tends to create quite different images of China for lack of a unified strategy and coordination. An interesting example is that China's ICC efforts center on the rich culture and history and thus enhance the image of a seemingly harmonious China of ancient values, while IIC keeps promoting another picture for China that is dynamic, quickly getting open and commercialized, and tending to embrace international values and norms of behavior. Especially such major IIC actors as CCTV and People's Daily inherit much of the previous content and style of reporting, emphasizing on political and economic news reporting (especially news related to national leadership) rather than more interesting, yet not necessarily less important reporting on other kinds of events or stories. As a result, the international society's China image is mostly made up of political and economic pictures; even Beijing's image marketing campaign on the Olympics last summer was marked by a pageantry of ancient cultural symbols instead of modern cultural and social development. No wonder China remains largely a mystery to most foreigners who have not had a chance to visit it—still much so 30 years after it began opening up and reform.

The second challenge for China's public diplomacy institution is the imbalanced structure of actors in practice, with the preponderance of governmental control and functions. The core objective of public diplomacy is to develop among

Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Peter Pace, and Chinese Army officers conclude a visit to the Sun Yat Sen Mausoleum in Nanjing, China in 2007. DOD photo by Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen (released)

the public in the target countries a favorable national image that appears as a panorama of images of different facets: the government, political leaders, public, social cultures, etc. However, influenced by traditional diplomatic thinking, the government seldom gives ample trust and support to other actors in public diplomacy. China boasts sufficient semi-official and private resources, including hundreds of qualified think-tanks and educational institutions, over 350,000 NGOs as well as many other student and business organizations. In recent years, China did render more support to many non-governmental actors, especially those that participate in the so-called Track II Diplomacy, yet their activities usually have to go through strict ad hoc review and control throughout the process, which makes it difficult for them to come into full play.[9] Naturally, one cannot expect to create a national image of ever developing democracy and social harmony by means of bureaucratic orders.

The third challenge is the lack of openness of China's public diplomacy institution, mainly shown from the principle of "differentiating domestic reporting from international reporting," a guiding principle that is deeply rooted in China's foreign strategic thinking. This principle has three meaning: one, some can be reported only domestically but not to the international audience; two, "we should reserve negative news only to ourselves [in case we lose face in front of foreigners]," so that we must make sure to confine negative reporting beyond an acceptable level; three, some news can be reported only to the international audiences but not to the domestic ones.[10] For example, many brilliant films won wide international recognition but were banned from Chinese cinemas for years in history. It has been proven that the practice of "reporting with a unified voice" not only fails in diverting the tendency of negative reporting from the international media, but it has also become a large part of Western stereotype about China—that all news reports from Chinese media are open to doubt as "they must be deliberately unified." Whether public diplomacy is successfully done depends on adequate communications with the target audience with a sincere and open attitude; in contrast, public diplomacy dominated by official rhetoric will only generate an incomplete national image. As Ingrid d'Hooghe correctly observed, "official messengers are never fully trusted, even less when they come from a country with an authoritarian leadership. No matter how well China is developing its public diplomacy, things sometimes still go utterly wrong because of lack of transparency."[11]

Fortunately, Beijing seems to have noticed these challenges and begun taking measures to tackle them so as to improve its national image: many past restrictions on foreign news agencies and on Chinese NGOs have been lifted around the Beijing Olympics; since April 2009, such leisure reports as Guinness

competitions or a funny story about a cute cat have begun quietly sneezing into CCTV news reports, which used to be dominated by serious event reporting; there are also guesses that Beijing may be planning to set up a new state organ higher than the old CLSG on international propaganda, in order to integrate and coordinate China's IIC and ICC efforts. It is expected that, with all these unnoticeable yet important changes, China's public diplomacy will take on a rather new look to the international audience, which may very well develop a more accountable and appealing national image to accompany China's economic growth in the next decade.

III. Prospects of China's Public Diplomacy

China's active measures to enhance its public diplomacy especially since the Beijing Olympic Games seem to have drawn much attention from many Western observers who envision an ever clearer picture of an emerging power that intend to integrate its increasing soft power into its international strategy, which may confront those status-quo powers sooner or later, especially in the sense of managing the global information flow. However, as China's public diplomacy mainly focuses on national image building with Ministries of Foreign Publicity, Foreign Affairs and Education as key apparatuses (none of them concerning military information operations), the chance is very low that China will get involved in hostile competition with other countries in the field of public diplomacy.

The simple logic is that China's public diplomacy serves a very different objective from that of the US and most other Western countries. Take the US as an example. With a rather clear global strategy, the US aims to build the legitimacy of its hard power approach in foreign policy with the help of public diplomacy, which was interpreted by President Theodore Roosevelt over a century ago as "Speak softly, but carry a big stick." In contrast, China has been following an inward-looking strategy since 30 years ago, whose foreign policy objective is mainly to create a favorable international environment for the materialization of its national development agenda. In other words, although improvement of China's public diplomacy necessarily increases its soft power, it is not to challenge or even impair other countries' images, but to create a confident, open and responsible image for itself, represented in the vision of a "harmonious world." Idealistic at its core, this vision has been increasingly acknowledged by both the government and the public as the long-term goal of China's foreign policy, and its public diplomacy is nothing but an important part of the overall policy to market to the international audience a China image with that vision. Therefore, China's public diplomacy is not likely to go back on the track of the 1950s and 60s when everything the US said about China on the international forum would be countered and labeled as "vicious attack from a paper Tiger."

There are indeed some scholars in China who believe that China's public diplomacy is competing with that of the US and Japan, etc., that they are striving after more international influence and soft power, often by rhetoric competition to glorify themselves while defaming others. However, they also point out that such competition will only cause a lose-lose situation for all countries.[12] That comes back to the cliché that "if you take somebody as your friend, he'd most probably behave in a friendly way." It is true to say China and other major powers have been trying their best to expand their respective influence in the international arena, but in the field of public diplomacy, the public has the final say. With the rapid growth of China, it can be expected that it will join other big powers in this game of "winning people's hearts and minds" with ever more confidence, patience and tolerance. If other powers follow suit, then it will prove very conducive to creating more peaceful and stable international relations in the new decade.

Mr. Zhang Zhexin, Ph.D., research fellow of Center for Asia-Pacific Studies, SIIS and editing board member of Journal of Political Marketing. Upon receiving his PhD in International Politics from Fudan University in 2008, Dr. Zhexin Zhang began working as a research fellow with Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS). His research focuses on political marketing, China's public diplomacy and US-China relations. He is also on the editing board of Journal of Political Marketing. Over the past few years he has published a few articles on evolution of China's public diplomacy, signing statements as a Presidential power, and theory of international relations. He is translator of Marketing of the President: political marketing as a campaigning strategy (2007), and his book on political marketing of the White House—focusing on the governing strategy—is upcoming next year. Before his PhD studies, he had worked as a professor of English at School of Western Studies, Heilongjiang University for ten years.

Endnotes

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Information Operations:

Not Just a Set of Capabilities

Michael L. Williams and Marc J. Romanych

Military operations are not planned for the purpose of employing any particular capability. Mission requirements – including campaign objectives, the operating environment, and enemy and friendly forces – dictate what capabilities a commander uses, and how they are employed.

Information operations (IO) are no different. Although often described as a discrete set of capabilities, in reality, IO is much more than that. An effective information operation cannot be bounded by the doctrinal concepts and definitions of "core, supporting, and related capabilities." Fundamentally, IO is the use of information to gain an advantage over an opponent. Such an advantage is created through a series of actions by military forces to impact both *enemy forces* and the *information environment*. The capabilities used for the information operation should be selected based on mission requirements , not according to an artificial doctrinal construct.

The same is true for IO's doctrinal core capabilities, particularly psychological operations (PSYOP), electronic warfare (EW), and computer network operations (CNO). These capabilities were developed in response to the evolving nature of military operations, and are employed when their application is both appropriate and feasible. As the character and scope of the information environment evolves, so too does our need for new IO capabilities that can give our military an advantage over its opponents. Such was the case for PSYOP and EW in the last century. Now, with the rise of cyberspace, CNO is an enabler for military success. The best means of understanding how to apply CNO within cyberspace is thorough an understanding of the information environment.

The Criticality of the Information Environment

For many people, especially the general public, General Norman Schwarzkopf's press briefing after the cessation of operations in the 1991 Gulf War represents the quintessential way to explain a modern military operation. Armed with a map of the area of operations, and using plain language, General Schwarzkopf clearly described how Coalition forces maneuvered on the land, sea, and air to defeat the Iraqi military. Imagine though, how successful the briefing would have been if General Schwarzkopf had described the operation without a map or any reference to geographic features. Excluding borders, rivers, cities, and highways from the briefing would have resulted in a disjointed discussion of assets used by the land, air and maritime component commands to defeat Iraqi forces. At best, such a briefing would be unremarkable. At worst, it would be confusing. Unfortunately, Joint and Service IO staffs make a similar mistake when they plan and brief an information operation without describing the character of the information environment in their operational area. Just as General Schwarzkopf's map-less brief would have puzzled his audience, an IO staff's capabilities-focused description of an information operation confuses commanders about IO's role in operations.

The information environment has existed since humans first began communicating. In fact, without humans, there is no information environment. That is because information resides in the minds of humans, is communicated between humans, and is an end result of how humans perceive themselves and their surroundings. The information environment has always been important to the conduct of military operations. For example, Napoleon skillfully employed a new means of command and control through his organization of a Corps with Division, Brigade, and regimental commanders able to carry out his intent. At the very top, Napoleon exercised ultimate authority as the chief planner and strategist but his subordinate commanders had full-control of their units and were thus able to overcome the cumbersome decision-making used by opposing armies of the day which required even small

Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Gen. James E. Cartwright speaks at the Air Force Cyberspace Symposium in Marlborough, Mass in 2008. Cartwright spoke about the importance of experimenting with cyber warfare implementation for the battlefield. DOD photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Adam M. Stump. (Released)

decisions to be made by the highest battlefield commander present. This same ability to assimilate information, synthesize it into a plan, and then issue orders within one person later became Napoleon's downfall when he failed to use the decision-making structure of his own staff to adequately plan for supporting activities such as logistics. As simple as the information environment was in the time of Napoleon, mastery of it was still a decisive enabler to victory.

Since Napoleon's time, the information environment has evolved. Starting in 1838 with the invention of the telegraph, a series of paradigm shifts have expanded the information environment and increased its importance to military forces. Prior to 1838, the military information environment was small. By and large, the means of information transmission was limited to the distance seen through a telescope. Then, the invention of the telegraph provided military forces with the ability to transmit information faster and further than troops could move; expanding the information environment in terms of time and space. This innovation was followed in the 20th Century by the development of mass media (World War I), the creation of electronic devices such as radio and radar (World War II), and the invention of digital technology and networks (post-Gulf War). These led, in turn, to the development of the media environment, the electromagnetic spectrum, and cyberspace. The rise of these new characteristics of the information environment generated the development of military capabilities to take advantage of them. PSYOP by and large came about as a way to leverage mass media, electronic warfare (EW) was a response to military use of the electromagnetic spectrum, and now CNO is a response to adversary use of cyberspace. The expansion and melding of the media, electromagnetic spectrum, and cyberspace have resulted in a new military operating environment - the information environment.

Enter Cyberspace

The newest part of the information environment is cyberspace. As of 12 May 2008, the department defined cyberspace as another domain in which military operations can occur.[1]

> Cyberspace: A global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent

network of information technology infrastructures, including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers. (Joint Publication 1-02, DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms)

As the cyberspace domain grows and expands it reach into decision-making, CNO will no longer be limited to the operational and strategic levels of war. An understanding of cyberspace and its linkages to the information environment are now important to the practitioners of tactical Information Operations as well.

Like its predecessors – the media environment and electromagnetic spectrum – operations in cyberspace must be planned and executed in consideration of the larger information environment. IO staffs must accurately describe the information environment and its impact on friendly, enemy and neutral forces and populations in relation to the air, maritime, land, space and cyberspace operating domains. Each of these domains contains aspects of the information environment – without exception. Not all of the operating domains overlap, however, each of them will always overlap with the information environment and IO is pertinent to every operating domain.

Chris Falster, an F-16 pilot, prepares for a combat training mission during a Red Flag exercise at Nellis Air Force Base, NV. Red Flag is a combat training exercise that pits US and allied nation air forces against simulated enemy forces in an air, ground, cyberspace and electronic threat environment. US Air Force photo by Tech Sgt Beth Holliker (Released)

Our knowledge of the information environment requires a model to explain how humans, assisted by machines, receive data from the physical world and convert it into perceptions and then decisions that determine their behavior. Joint Publication (JP) 3-13, *Information Operations*, presents a useful model of three interrelated dimensions; the physical, informational, and cognitive:

- The physical dimension is that part of the information environment which coexists with the physical environments of air, land, sea, and space. It is where information and communication systems and networks reside, whether they are either technology or human-based.
- The cognitive dimension is the individual and collective consciousness that exists in the minds of human beings. It is where perceptions are formed, and more importantly, where decisions are made.
- The informational dimension is an abstract, non-physical space created by the interaction of the physical and cognitive domains. As such, it links the reality of the physical dimension to the human consciousness of the cognitive dimension. It is the means through which individuals and organizations communicate.[2]

When taken together, the information environment's three dimensions explain how the creation and movement of information can create real world effects. At a more practical level, analysis of the dimensions can explain the character of the information environment in any specific operational area and its impact on military operations. The addition of cyberspace as a domain for military operations does not change this basic nature of the information environment.

Relative to cyberspace, the physical dimension is the foundation of our understanding of cyberspace as we map routers, fiber networks, and people via computers, voice devices, etc. But it is the information dimension that explains the utility of information within cyberspace.

The creation and movement of information between humans through, and within, cyberspace continues to grow with a subsequent impact on the cognitive dimension of the information environment. Information in cyberspace affects the perceptions and decision-making of various populace groups and our adversaries, yet we fail to apply this to accomplishment of military objectives.

Efforts to develop and use military capabilities in cyberspace have distracted policymakers and IO staffs alike from the core concern of understanding how information moves in cyberspace and is used by our adversaries to further their goals. The essence of IO has always been in its understanding of the information environment's effect on decision-making. Without this understanding we are left with a list of information infrastructure links and nodes that lack importance in the information environment and relevance to our military objectives.

Successful IO staffs are not tied to the doctrinal "core, supporting, or related" capabilities. The experienced staff considers what effects are needed to achieve superiority over the adversary in the information environment and then identifies and coordinates for use of those assets needed. Rarely does this mean using a list of tools in a checklist fashion. In this respect current capabilities to affect cyberspace may not be serving the combatant commander well.

The IO staff needs to understand how cyberspace affects the information dimension of the information environment. To know that a website disseminates information about

constructing IEDs is only marginally useful unless we understand who uses the information and how. The hardware and software 'characteristics' of cyberspace require technical understanding and, for this, the IO staff must rely on those organizations and people with the requisite expertise. This technical data and understanding may be required only during orders development and mission planning at the execution unit level and not when developing IO courses of action.

Cyberspace has significantly contributed to the greater movement of information across the globe. With this increased availability of information, there is a corresponding decrease in the ability of military forces to affect the information environment.[3] Building more cyberspace capacity will not substantially alter this situation. The IO staff must remain focused on understanding the information's effect on decision-making. Instead of the technical characteristics, the planner should first understand where cyberspace exerts its influence on the information and cognitive dimensions. Only then can we determine what capabilities are needed and synchronize these and other capabilities that affect the flow and content of information.

The Meaning of the Increased Availability of Information

The information environment is dynamic. In modern history it has undergone several revolutionary shifts that have changed its character and impact on human society. The first shift was in the 1830s with the invention of the telegraph. For the first time, significant amounts of information could be reliably transmitted faster than humans could physically travel. Another shift occurred in the 1920s with the advent of nationwide radio networks, mass-circulation newspapers and magazines. It was then possible to communicate messages to mass audiences. A third shift took place in the 1990s with the development of digital, computerized, and networked information and communication technologies, often termed "the new media." These technologies are currently an agent of social change that is only recently being felt. With each shift in the information environment, there has been a corresponding shift in military capabilities and warfare. Each change has come at an ever-increasing pace. If history is a guide, the next shift in the information environment will be sometime around 2015 or 2020.

The explosion of information technologies enabling communication and decision-making over the past 20 years has extended to real and potential adversaries as well. We must now react to significant changes in the information environment within months, not years. 'Terrain analysis' may address the population (which has always been a feature of military planning), but the population within any operational area can now be as aware and informed of military movements as enemy and friendly military commanders through the rapid transfer and centralization of the flow of information in cyberspace. Now, instead of considering population as relatively immobile and well-understood terrain, it has become another variation of the battlefield which when fed information can be used to support or hinder military operations. The information environment feeding this population can often not be disentangled from that supporting military decision-making.

Master Chief Petty Officer of the US Navy Rick D. West speaks with cyberspace recruiters in March 2009, about bringing qualified people into the Navy during a visit to Navy Recruiting Command in Millington, TN. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Michael Russell (Released)

What we do not yet understand in detail is how cyberspace integrates with the other dimensions given the unique circumstances of each operational area. If we could observe a physical representation of information flow by using information environment oriented IPB/JIPOE we should see over time that the number of points of information convergence continue to grow in number. These new nodes represent the convergence of physical components of the information environment in addition to a central social point for decision-making as societies adapt to this new point of information convergence. This point of convergence of physical, biological and social networks enabled by increasingly smaller microprocessors and higher wireless bandwidth enabled by the continued free flow of information worldwide through cyberspace and into handheld, wireless devices has been described as "Ubiquity" in recognition of the ubiquitous nature of information in the modern world and the convergence of the three networks around the increasing number of nodes where information can affect decision-making.[4]

The concept of "ubiquity" necessitates a new look at how cyberspace affects the information environment and the cognitive dimension. Information operations have suffered in some planning processes because of the incomplete picture of the information environment created in the mission analysis phase of the planning process. Cyberspace, as a component of the information environment is similarly suffering from an incomplete representation. With the technical understanding of networks and associated computers and communications, planners must also understand where and how cyberspace impacts the flow of information and the cognitive dimension.

Applying Capabilities within the Information Environment

Military planners do not begin with a set of capabilities and attempt to apply them to the problem of achieving military objectives. Such is the case with the IO planner as well. As already described, the planner must begin with an adequate characterization of the information environment which, at a minimum, describes information flow and content, the basic physical characteristics of the environment, and the factors affecting the cognitive dimension – such as culture and language. Determining the need for specific capabilities is then identified during the military decision-making process. It is not academic to say that the list of "core, supporting, and related" capabilities is irrelevant to IO planners. Obviously, the list is not ignored and a great deal (perhaps too much) emphasis is given to the list of capabilities outlined in department policy. However, the IO planner must be prepared to employ a specific kinetic or other capability outside of those listed as "core, supporting, or related." Information Operations is inherently joint and must consider the effects of capabilities generated in other agencies and departments of the U.S. government. The increasing convergence of networks in all three dimensions and the subsequent effect on military operations necessitates we develop an understanding of the information environment throughout the Joint Operations Area. The military planner can then synchronize actions with other government and allied information related activities.

Conclusion

The information environment remains the key to understanding employment of information to support military objectives. Information Operations remains a valid construct for synchronizing information activities within the information environment whether these activities are conducted on land or sea, or in air, space, or cyberspace. Cyberspace has a significant impact on the content and movement of information within the JOA but its impact on military operations can only be understood through an analysis of the information environment. The flow of information across the battlefield is likely to grow as the impact of cyberspace on the quantity and flow of information increases. "Ubiquity" helps us understand how cyberspace will interact with other aspects of the information environment and describes the rapid convergence of biological, social, and physical networks. Military planners need new tools to help them understand the impact of this rapidly expanding information environment on operations. The concept of "ubiquity" can help us understand where to look for and find these nodes of convergence. This is the key terrain of the future.

A US Soldier questions an Afghan businessman during a patrol in the village of Daftani, Afghanistan, Nov. 3, 2009. The Soldiers are working to gather information about the Taliban presence in area villages. US Air Force photo by Tech Sgt Efren Lopez (Released)

Endnotes

1 Memorandum, Deputy Secretary of Defense, 12 May 2008, Subj: Cyberspace.

2 Joint Publication 3-13, ch I, page I-2.

3 Romanych, Marc, "A Look at the Information Environment," IO Sphere, Spring 2007.

4 Concept of "Ubiquity" is attributed to Gary Burnette, a senior advisor at Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command – Pacific.

A Short History of Religious Leader Engagement Operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom

Master Sergeant John Proctor, US Army

After major combat operations (MCO) ceased in April 2003, Coalition Forces (CF) began stability operations among a population of 26 million people with only 160,000 troops. The Baath Party government of Saddam Hussein completely melted down and dissolved all semblance of infrastructure. The only people left in post-MCO Iraq that could draw a crowd and issue a message were the mosque preachers. This was all the more critical in urban areas where tribal politics were less important than mosque politics.

The author (l) with Chaplain (Major) Jim Murphy in Baghdad in July 2003.

Five days after Baghdad fell, the Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq[1] (AMS) began issuing *fatwas* about what could and could not be done by Sunni Muslims in the post-Saddam occupation. Into the vacuum created by Saddam's deposition stepped Iraq's influential clerics – and Shiite religious leaders began to flex their newly found political muscle as never before.

In Mosul, MG David Petraeus employed the light infantry forces of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in what is today recognized as a counterinsurgency (COIN) posture. The 101st operated from platoon and company sized combat outposts (COPs) while living and patrolling among the people. This limited insurgent activity and maximized human intelligence (HUMINT) collection. The 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82nd Airborne Division also employed similar tactics in the Al Rashid District of southern Baghdad, in which I participated from April 2003 through January 2004[2].

Because we quickly learned that the clerics were the most important information operations (IO) transmitters and that the people trusted them (they were not predisposed to trusting in government, no matter how much we pitched democracy), we (religious support teams or RSTs) were ordered to engage the clerics in order to build positive relations. This directive came from the General Officers, not the chaplains. MG Petraeus piloted the program in Mosul with Chaplains (LTC) Ken Brown and (LTC) Chester Egert. CJTF-7 quickly recognized the effectiveness of the tactic and adopted it in Baghdad. Task Force (TF) 1st Armored Division (MG Ricardi Sanchez followed by BG Martin Dempsey) ordered more than 400 religious leader engagements (RLEs) in Baghdad in 2003 alone. CH(LTC) Alvin Sykes led the historic execution of these RLEs as TF 1st AD Command Chaplain.

Through RLE operations[3] (or as the term would later take hold, RLEOs), CF established the first neighborhood advisory councils (NACs) and district advisory councils (DACs). These were the first halting steps of a nascent democracy in Iraq. Our BCT stood up NACs 30 days earlier than any other unit in OIF largely because of our aggressive RLEOs. Conditions were anything but favorable as Sunnis were in no mood to cooperate with a pro-Iranian Shia majority and Shia clerics frequently dispatched proxy negotiators so as not to appear unduly influenced by "infidel" foreigners.

Mosques were frequently used as weapons caches, command posts, and coordination centers for insurgent activity. To that end, CF began mosque monitoring as a part of our intelligence collection efforts. Originally, mosque monitoring was just a tool to detect which mosques were broadcasting messages through the call-to-prayer (issued five times a day through loudspeakers) that were overt calls to hostile action against CF. As our methods for collecting improved, CF began summarizing the mosque sermons to see what linkages existed between confederated mosques. We focused primarily on Sunni mosques at first because they were the big loser of the regime change operation and were calling for direct action against CF (and in some cases against Shia and Christian 'collaborators') no doubt with an eye towards Iran's designs on Iraq, especially in the south. The mosque is the center of gravity for IO transmission in Iraq[4].

A news report[5] filed by our own Public Affairs Office shows how our BCT dealt with the emerging Sunni insurgency in Baghdad in 2003. In the report, our commander says with a nearly prophetic insight,

> *". . . (The extremists) have been able to convince large numbers of followers that the issue is a religious one and not a legal one," [2nd BCT, 82nd Airborne Commander COL] Kurt Fuller said. "How this plays out will more than likely determine the future of the conflict and of Iraq."*
>
> *"Task Force Falcon is working to reduce the extremists' influence on the people of Iraq by working directly with local leaders," Fuller said.*

Some of that work with local leaders included the religious leader engagements (RLEs) in which our RSTs participated. According to the Deputy Division Chaplain of TF 1st AD[6], of the 400+ RLEOs performed by the 6 BCTs in the Baghdad area of operations (AO), ours performed more than any other by a wide margin. As

with the 101st, our organizational design did not equip us with armored columns or mechanized formations – we patrolled our AO mostly on foot and got to know it very well. Our RSTs participated in many patrols as a ministry of presence and developed a thorough working knowledge of local dynamics. I estimate 2-82nd BCT conducted about 150-200 RLEOs from April 2003 – January 2004.

A great deal of our understanding of the Baghdad religious scene came from our close relationship with the Christian leadership in the city. While they never once provided us with anything that could be considered intelligence, they did offer their respectful insights into local Muslim belief and practice. This assisted us in our RLEOs immeasurably. We engaged Shiite, Sunni and Christian religious leaders in the AO, which greatly contributed to our commander's knowledge of his operating environment. The RLEOs also facilitated the NACs and DACs that we stood up. In fact our work was so valued, our commander selected Chaplain(MAJ) Jim Murphy to moderate the DACs, and charged me as facility NCOIC. These important first steps toward Iraqi self-government in our BCT AO included such high-visibility participants as US Senators Joe Biden, Dick Lugar and Chuck Hagel[7].

Army doctrine has long supported interface between religious support and civil military operations[8] (CMO). One way we integrated with CMO was through the disbursement of commander's emergency response program (CERP) funds. An outgrowth of our RLEOs with a key Shiite tribal leader (a Sayeed, or descendant of the Prophet Mohammed) was the erecting of an intercultural community center on the site of a former Baathist torture cell. CERP funds also paid for procuring generators, repairing facilities, and supporting Iraqi religious congregations in various ways.

In the fall of 2003 CF were ordered to retrograde to forward operating bases (FOBs). This signaled the end of much of our direct relations with key leaders and IO transmitters in Baghdad. Our BCT's HUMINT collection fell off sharply. Our motorized patrols were now easily victimized by IED operations. Most importantly perhaps, we left our former RLE contacts between the jaws of ruthless insurgent groups.

One fact that must be emphasized in a COIN fight is that the enemy also conducts KLE operations. The enemy has all the advantages of culture, ethnicity, religion and proximity. Task number one in a COIN operation is to protect the population from the insurgents. By not protecting clerics, most especially the ones that had already assumed tremendous risk in engaging with CF, we exposed them to severe pressure from the enemy, harassment, kidnapping and even death. This resulted in the emanation of a strident tone from the mosque sermons, which emboldened the insurgency (on both Sunni and Shiite fronts) and probably contributed to the deaths of many Iraqis, CF Soldiers and Marines.

The FOB-based postures were not well suited for the type of warfare we were waging. The fact that Iraq's most influential leaders[9] were no longer deemed key SOIs by commanders (many whom interpreted their key task as killing insurgents) exposed the clerics to constant pressure by terrorists, extremists and insurgents and left them with little choice but to preach vociferously against the GOI and against CF. This also invited the enemy's exploitation of sermon messaging throughout the internet as a recruiting tool for insurgents, which included many foreign fighters. This IO exploitation created the impression that a majority of Iraqis were hostile to the government of Iraq (GOI) and against the CF mission of stabilizing Iraq under a pluralist government.

KLEs continued in the period of 2004-2006 but misguided efforts at legitimizing the GOI marginalized the role of Iraq's religious leaders[10]. A Westernized focus on political development at the expense of religion exacerbated the situation. Iraq's religious leaders stepped into the perfect storm provided by Saddam's fall in 2003 and their influence has not waned.

During the FOB-based period of 2004-2006, some commands continued to build on and even expand relations with religious leaders into provincial councils. Due to the rotational system in place, not all units regarded RLEOs equally. The below excerpt is from the 101st Airborne Division Chaplain's view after completion of OIF III:

Many RLEOs were conducted in the years 2004-2006. By the quote from a 2006 MNF-I fragmentary order (FRAGO) below however, it is clear that senior leaders acknowledge the failure to fully exploit them:

> *"Our operations must put Iraqis in the lead, move us to a supporting role, and solve Iraqi problems with Iraqi resources. One of those underutilized resources is the indigenous religious leadership that* ***has not yet been thoroughly engaged.****"*

During this period, significant resistance to RST involvement in KLE

5. Chaplain Activities.

a. During OIF I, many of the Brigade and Division chaplains were actively engaging local clerics. These efforts clearly aided their commander's mission. Central to their efforts were humanitarian projects such as providing school supplies, clothing to orphanages, and small construction efforts.

b. 1 ID Chaplains were very active in the MND-NC area. ***The 42nd ID Chaplains did little to continue cleric engagements. When the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) took control, many of the cleric SOIs no longer found it advantageous to meet with CF chaplains. Some of the BCT S9's (CMOCs) discouraged chaplains for engaging clerics believing chaplains brought nothing to the table.*** Behind the lack of interests to engage the clerics was due in large measure to not having a clear end state. Added to this was the reduced availability of CERP funding to support cleric projects thus keeping clerics appeased ***but more importantly engaged***.

c. Currently, 1/101 BCT has a strong Religious Unity Council engagement in Kirkuk. 172nd SBCT has started efforts to establish a Religious Unity Council in their AO; the same effort is underway for 3/4 BCT and 3/101 BCT.

presented difficulty for commanders. Some chaplains balked at the idea of engaging Muslim religious leaders in such a non-permissive environment. Others took a rigid approach to current doctrine that they felt prohibited this activity. Some commanders considered the clerics such important SOIs that they preferred to engage with them directly. There are clerics in Iraq who are in fact formidable political and militia leaders. What seems to have been lost during this period is the institutional and operational memory of the success of RLEOs in OIF I.

The good will developed in the 2003 RLEOs by CJTF-7 had nearly completely deteriorated by 2007. At least one could draw that conclusion looking at the Mosque speeches during the period. These conditions were in some degree created by the enemy's exploitation of the FOB-based posture utilized from 2004-2006 and to some degree exacerbated by a glaring lack of meaningful, relevant religious analysis from CF chaplains[11]. The lack of a unified, cogent and operationally relevant religious analysis effort from CF RSTs frequently left commanders navigating the religiously charged operational environment without mission-essential religious advisement. Individual RSTs did in fact forge ways to provide religious analysis to targeting efforts, but this sometimes occurred in spite of and not because of senior RST leadership guidance.

Three years into OIF, we still had not realized the potential of RLE in support of CF efforts. The MNF-I HQs issued the above FRAGO to the MNF-West HQs for all subordinate units to conduct religious leader engagement operations in the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force Joint Operational Area. TF 1-36 Infantry from the 1st BCT, 1st AD was attached to the USMC 7th Regimental Combat Team and operated in the Hit/Hai al Bekr area. The TF executed RLEOs in accordance with the FRAGO issued by the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and made the TF RST the main effort with the full support of the unit commander. During the 14-month deployment, the TF conducted 99 RLEOs reaching all 30 mosques in the TF AO.

Hit/al Bekr was a key seat of the AMS. The TF 1-36 Chaplain's heroic work in conducting 99 RLEOs in a very non-permissive environment was instrumental in procuring the support of key clerics for the Concerned Local Citizens program that would mature into the Sons of Iraq program – the momentous turning that we now recognize as the Anbar Awakening. General Petraeus has called it "a dramatic shift[12]." Without the buy-in from Sunni Imams, the programs would have never gotten off the ground. In contemporary Iraqi politics, the clerics can oppose the tribal sheikhs; the sheikhs cannot oppose the clerics[13].

CH(CPT) Masaki Nakazono, 1-36th Infantry Chaplain meets with Sunni mosque leader in al Anbar Province, Iraq, 2006.

The 2007 'Surge' sent five additional BCTs into Baghdad and formed a ring around the perimeter of the city. Most maneuver units pushed off FOBs into COPs, Joint Security Stations and Platoon Patrol Bases. Units were directed to engage social spheres-of-influence (SOIs) regardless of governmental position. This occurred during the height of the internecine Shia-Sunni fighting. After a massive initial spike in large-scale lethal engagements, the new strategy quickly provided conditions whereby non-lethal engagement could become the main effort. Once again, Baghdad's clerics became targets of significant non-lethal engagement activity.

Despite the apparent unraveling of Iraqi society and threat of civil war, dramatic progress took place behind the scenes in 2007 at the most senior levels. Fueled by the relentless negotiating of Anglican Canon Andrew White, the Iraqi Inter-Religious Initiative brought 41 of the country's most influential clerics together in the Inter-Religious Congress in Baghdad in June of 2007[14]. Representing Coalition Forces at this historic conference was CH(COL) Michael Hoyt, Command Chaplain for MNF-I, who later told a roundtable of military bloggers on June 21st 2007,

"As it evolved, what kept coming up from these religious leaders was they wanted to engage with an American clergyman, because this was a religious issue and they wanted to talk to what they decided was their religious counterpart. It had to be a guy with some status. They didn't just want to talk to any old body.

So they decided that the senior chaplain in Iraq would be the guy that they wanted to engage with, because that position represented for them the leading religious leader for the coalition forces. And it has been amazing. I've had hard discussions, disagreements over and over with them, as well as very positive agreements. And being a soldier, there has not been a problem.[15]"

The members of the Inter-Religious Conference produced a signed agreement denouncing Al Qaeda, religious terrorism, and sectarianism. In a subsequent session in September 2008, they issued a joint Sunni-Shia fatwa against suicide bombing.

In January 2008, the MNF-I Command Chaplain was directed to formulate a Religious Leader Engagement policy for implementation throughout the ITO. Responding that the Army Chaplaincy possessed no mature doctrine for this enterprise, GEN Petraeus directed the MNF-I Chaplain to convene a contingency work group and present a policy draft with 30 days. I was a part of that work group which developed the policy in February 2008 and formed the basis for what is now the Chief of Chaplains Religious Leader Liaison Policy. Our work drew heavily on lessons learned from the OIF battlefield and to a lesser degree on established doctrine. Legacy doctrine[16] has been a significant impediment to advising on targeting efforts in COIN operations.

Chaplains were also instrumental in counterinsurgency operations within theater interment facilities (TIF) in OIF during the period of 2007-2008. In support of the COIN efforts of Task Force 134, RSTs coordinated for local religious leaders to enter the TIF to teach more orthodox versions of Islam to detainees with tremendous success. By combating the enemy's IO directly on theological and religious terms, reconcilable detainees sided with the clerics promulgating more traditional interpretations

of Islam. This resulted in many military age males returning home to head their families and take part in resistance against extremism. Cleric involvement proved to be the pivotal factor.

RLEOs are the outcomes of modified adaptations of the military decision making process (MDMP). In targeting boards or meetings, prospective non-lethal targets are nominated by effects coordinators and war-gamed in the course of action comparison process. The commander selects a course of action, which sometimes requires a chaplain to participate in a RLEO. RLEs are a subset of the commander's KLE program and are subject to the same planning and execution requirements. KLE, while not clearly defined in current doctrine emerged from civil affairs doctrine. The doctrinal basis for Army chaplaincy participation in RLEOs[17] is based on religious support tasks that cross walk to civil affairs tasks.

Chaplain(CPT) J. Nathan Kline shares ideas with Sheikh Abdulla Jalal Maklf through a linguist in al Anbar Province, May 2007.

Religious leader engagement in OIF has traversed a circuitous path back to its initial utility value with many added improvements along the way. In a counterinsurgency operation among a religious population, RLE of some sort is mission essential. The enemy conducts RLEOs and exerts his influence through the most credible SOIs in theater: the clerics. The Friday sermon remains the most well respected IO transmission in Iraq. Previous efforts at legitimizing the GOI that marginalized religious leaders have failed. Much of the success of the Surge is due to non-lethal engagement operations and not merely the influx of addition combat power.

When indigenous clerics step forward to engage CF, every effort must be made to protect that cleric and his congregation from insurgent pressure. The failure to do so when CF retrograded to FOBs in 2003 initiated a downward spiral that alienated the religious leaders to a serious degree. Once Islamic clerics begin to issue *fatwas*, it is difficult for them to change position. Lesson learned from counterinsurgency operations in Iraq: engage and protect key IO transmitters and SOIs.

While few foresaw the prominent role religious leaders would play in a post-Baathist Iraq, lessons from Bosnia-Herzegovina provided some indicators that a religious revival could occur once the repressive regime was removed. Religious relations between Iraqi and Iranian Shiites remain an elusive subject to many CF leaders. Without a unified, cogent and comprehensive approach to advising CF commanders on the impact of religion on current operations, processes set in motion by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 could still cause our gains to unravel. US Military Chaplains are required by the Department of Defense to advise their commanders on the impact of religion on military operations. Much of our most valuable advisement in OIF has come from our direct interactions with Iraqi religious leaders.

Master Sergeant John Proctor serves as the Command Chaplain Noncommissioned Officer for the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Eighth US Army, Korea. John.w.proctor@us.army.mil.

Any factual errors in this document are the responsibility of the author. All opinions expressed are those of the author and do not represent the views of the Department of Defense or any of the individuals named or quoted in this paper.

Endnotes

1 The *Hayat Al-Ulama Al-Muslimin* [Association of Muslim Scholars (AMS] is also known as the Muslim Scholars Association, Association of Muslim Clerics, Muslim Ulema Council and the Ulema Council. The Ulema Council was created on 14 April 2003, five days after the fall of Saddam Hussein. It grouped all the country's Sunni ulema. The Muslim Ulema Council is the highest Sunni authority in Iraq. The Council comprises several religious institutions that existed before the occupation of Iraq in April last year. It has many activities on the political, social, economic, and religious levels. After the occupation, the Council assumed the work of the Iraq *Awqaf* (regulation of *zakat*, or offerings that finance religious activities) Ministry and took upon itself the task of looking after mosques and meeting the needs of mosque imams and preachers. The Council carries out social activities aimed at helping as much as possible those who lost their sources of income. The Council also looks after the Iraqi families of martyrs, wounded, and those captured by the US forces.

2 For a detailed chronicle of our BCT's COIN operations in Baghdad, see *Dawn Over Baghdad*, Karl Zinsmeister, Encounter Books ISBN 1-59403-090-1

3 *Religious Leader Liaison* is the official terminology utilized by the US Army Chief of Chaplains Office. In order to render fidelity to past operational actions and records, the term RLE is used in this article.

4 *Fighting Insurgency on Sacred Ground*, Ron E. Hassner

5 *Paratroopers Take on Extremists in South Baghdad*, Oct. 23, 2003 by Army Sergeant Brent M. Williams

6 Telephone interview with CH(LTC) Bryan Walker, Office of the US Army Chief of Chaplains, January 2008

7 http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/jan-june03/iraq_06-25.html

8 US Army Field Manual 1-05, Appendix A

9 "These are three of the most important political figures in Iraq today. Their edicts and counsel go out to millions of Iraqis every Friday at the mosques, and to members of the national government and parliament throughout the week. In short, if there is to be reconciliation in Iraq it must be led by these men… clearly the most authoritative word in Iraq comes from its most respected institution, religion." Voices from Iraq, *Wall Street Journal* 26 March 2008 by Robert McFarlane

10 "I firmly believe that what is approved religiously eventually works its way out socially. What is ignored religiously also works its way out socially. We were marginalizing religion in Iraq. When you marginalize a significant power structure, that power structure over-reacts." - CH (COL) Mike Hoyt, MNF-I interview by Department of Defense Bloggers' Roundtable (via teleconference) on the Iraqi Inter-religious Conference, Arlington, VA 21 June, 2007

11 DoDD 1304.19 requires chaplains to serve as principal advisors to the commander on the impact of religion on military operations.

12 http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2007/12/how_petraeus_turned_around_ira.html

13 On matters of Islamic jurisprudence, Iraqi tribal leaders respectfully defer to scholars and clerics.

14 Religion a Major Player in recent Iraqi Success, by Jane Hampton Cook

15 Department of Defense Bloggers' Roundtable with Chaplain(Colonel) Michael Hoyt (via teleconference) on the Iraqi Inter-religious

Conference, Arlington, VA 21 June, 2007

[16] The current edition of FM 1-05, *Religious Support* (April 2003) states that Chaplains should not perform target acquisition (Appendix A, par A2). In current operations, chaplains advising their commander must participate in target acquisition ("targeting") in order to apply the required capability described in DoDD 1304.19 and JP 1-05. It may be noted that FM 1-05 refers to US Code Title X as a source for the practice of refraining from targeting. However, Title X contains no such prohibition.

[17] "A-1. Chaplains will support the commander through advisement in the following areas that may influence CMO:

- Indigenous religious, ethnic, and cultural influences.
- Beliefs, practices, and customs of religious groups in the AO.
- Religious issues related to displaced civilians.
- Human welfare needs as requested by religious NGOs and IOs.
- Relations with indigenous religious leaders when directed by the commander." *FM 1-05, Appendix A*

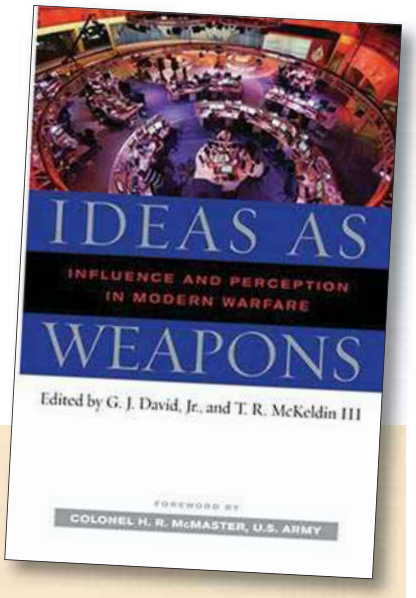
book review

Arm Yourself with "Ideas as Weapons"

Information warfare is arguably the dominant subject in the debate over strategy in the war against Al Qaeda. However, surprisingly few officers, regardless of career field, are familiar with the literature and theories that influence the military today. *Ideas as Weapons: Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare*, edited by G.J. David Jr. and T.R. McKeldin III, presents a remedy for this malady. This anthology gives readers an extensive look at the current issues surrounding the use of information in modern warfare and the use of Information Operations in counterinsurgency. I recommend *Ideas as Weapons* to military leaders searching for a single source that covers a wide range of topics related to information warfare, from Fourth Generation Warfare to the tactical IO planning process.

The contributing authors are *Ideas as Weapons*' primary strength. They reflect extensive diversity in both national service and combat experience. Writers such as General David Petreus, Commander of Central Command, Dr. David Kilcullen, former-Senior Counterinsurgency Adviser to the Multi-National Force – Iraq, and Lieutenant General David Fridovich, director of the USSOCOM Special Operations Center, prove the relationship between information warfare and the current conflicts through an in-depth discussion of the US's application of Information Operations. The authors also provide the reader with insight as to how senior Department of Defense officials regard information warfare at the geopolitical, strategic, and operational levels.

Although Iraq and Afghanistan make up the majority of the articles, it was pleasing to see that the discussion was not limited to these theatres. David and McKeldin include articles on the 60-year insurgency in Colombia and the ongoing US efforts in the Philippines.



Ideas as Weapons: Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare. Edited by G.J. David, Jr. and T.R. McKeldin III. Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2009. 406 pages. $29.95 (paperback). Reviewed by MAJ Edgar A. Jimenez, a US Army Special Forces officer and currently a student at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.

Despite *Ideas as Weapons*' appeal, the reader should be cautious. Those who have read extensively on the subject of information warfare will not find many new ideas within the writings. For the most part, the authors have borrowed ideas from primary sources and applied them to their own experiences. Two specific examples are the concept of Fourth Generation Warfare and the intricacies of cultural awareness in crafting Information Operations. Additionally, several of the writings contained within this 406-page anthology become redundant, particularly William S. Lind's "Power of Weakness."

Overall, *Ideas as Weapons* is a good bet. As technology increases each individual action's strategic impact, all military professionals must understand information warfare as scholars understand related fields of study. *Ideas as Weapons* is an excellent opportunity to begin learning about information warfare or expanding intermediate knowledge of the subject. The articles will provoke valuable thought and discussion within an individual or a combat focused unit.

Edgar A. Jimenez is a major in the U.S. Army Special Forces. Major Jimenez has served in Afghanistan, Colombia, Bahrain, and Kuwait. He holds a BA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champagne. Previous assignments include the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). Major Jimenez is currently a student at the Naval Postgraduate School at Monterey.

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