Foundations of War and Peace:

Introducing Class Analysis into the Contemporary Operating Environment

"The power to destroy a thing is the absolute control over it."
- Frank Herbert's Dune

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The challenges of the Global War on Terrorism and its subordinate campaigns from one end of the earth to the other have sparked numerous debates, conflicts, and even revolutions in military thinking[1]. While the introduction of new and reformed concepts in analysis and doctrine have enabled the military to increase its effectiveness in an unconventional battlefield environment, shortcomings still remain. Principally, even though the Department of Defense has defined "war", "insurgency", and "terrorism" in relation to political power and in the context of Clausewitzian theory, it has not done the same for "society". Therefore, the military does not have a doctrinal understanding of a structure of societies and cannot accurately depict them. Consequently, this absence of doctrine misleads analysis on the causes and effects of insurgencies, even contributing to debates on what constitutes insurgency in the first place. Ultimately, this undermines the analysis of an insurgency and hinders the effective targeting of those prime movers within an unconventional environment. Class analysis offers an opportunity to address this problem. It examines the underlying tensions that exist in society as a consequence of conflicting interests that arise from different social positions. By exploring the interests and relationships of a society's various classes, the analyst can identify the causes of conflict, the prime movers in society and in the conflict, and then determine how best to develop targeting strategies and packets.

Two methods of examination precede the introduction of class analysis: the OODA Loop and human terrain mapping (HTM). The Observe-Orient-Decide-Act Loop originally conceived by John Boyd aims to assess the decision-cycle of an actor. This examination enables the identification and targeting of enemy techniques, tactics, and procedures by providing a model for

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predictive analysis. However, it does not inherently explain the causes, motivations, and interests that drive the decision-cycle. As a partial solution to this problem, the Army has developed human terrain mapping. HTM aims to understand the cultural environment in order to gather allies, isolate enemies, and build social rapport with the members of a community[2]. Yet HTM remains incomplete insofar it does not explain the pressures and levers that determine and influence the causes, motivations, and interests of actors in a given area of operations. It offers solutions defined by the context of the situation it studies rather than providing explanations for that context. These two methods have contributed to the development of the Army's understanding of the social conditions of the contemporary operating environment but due to the lack of a doctrinal foundation in the military community regarding society, Army operations continue to be sub-optimal. Conversations about employing a surge-like strategy in Afghanistan indicate a heated debate driven in part by the absence of a basis with which to analyze and develop solutions. This gap in understanding undermines counter-insurgency efforts.

Class analysis enables communicators, analysts, and decision-makers to fill that void with a functional model. By examining the underlying tensions in a social structure, the analyst can more accurately assess the social environment, predictions of emerging developments, and decisive targeting packages. Class analysis does not simply identify and measure symptoms and attributes of a particular system (i.e. wages or education) but ascribe these features to an originating cause or combination of causes inherent to that system's stratification. Rather than describing that one social group may confront another, it explains what drives these groups into conflict in the first place and how the social conditions (economic, ideological, and cultural) reflect it. This identification of an underlying cause or causes enables a better assessment of an unconventional environment where the combination of economic, ideological, and cultural features may clutter analysis. This clutter encourages an analyst to mistake symptom, correlation, and coincidence for cause. For this reason, class analysis as an analytical foundation requires backwards analysis. By starting analysis at what can be seen and measured, the analyst can work backwards to the originating cause or causes by linking people, places, events, ideas, and objects. Claiming to know a cause before conducting backwards analysis will skew further

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assessment by determining the conclusion before the assessment has been performed. Such a mistake will only produce wasteful results.

Counterfactual questioning provides the best tool to facilitate backwards analysis. It enables the isolation of historical variables in order to identify relationships and decision points between people, objects, ideas, and events. By asking "what if", the questioner becomes able to isolate the subject from the clutter that surrounds it. A counterfactual question aims at a specific person, object, idea, or event and asks what would occur if that thing did not exist. Using existing information and defined standards for applying counterfactual questioning, it examines how a particular situation would then unfold[3]. An assessment can then determine the essentiality of that thing to the situation under examination. Asking, "what if Osama bin Laden had been captured at Tora Bora" drives at understanding the relationship between bin Laden and the Al Qaeda organization. Should it be assessed that bin Laden's essentiality has limitations or none whatsoever, targeting and economy of force can be adjusted accordingly. Counterfactual questions allow the analyst to dig past the clutter and white noise in the environment of his study. It further facilitates the resolution of superficial contradictions on a society's surface. That capability in turn enables the analyst to make full use of class analysis.

In each society exists a thing from which power may be derived. That thing enables a person or persons to exercise power over others through coercion or influence. That thing can be described as a 'hub of power', or *the thing or sum of things from which power derives.* The hub shares similar characteristics to Clausewitz's Center of Gravity and Max Weber's three component theory of stratification[4]. The very existence of the hub relies upon how it influences relationships between people. The hub may be a capability, locality, characteristic, resource, or any combination of those four things. The control of the hub enables a person or group of persons to exercise power over others. The hub may be difficult to identify without backwards analysis and counterfactual questioning. On the surface, it appears that in most societies a monopoly on violence exists as the hub. However, it must be considered that there exists a thing that allows a person or group of persons to attain that monopoly on violence. In Saddam's Iraq,

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the country's oil revenues enabled the regime to establish a system of patronage, which included the creation of a large and effective security apparatus. In this sense, the hub exists as the centerpiece that holds a system together. A hub may exist locally or nationally, and multiple hubs may exist in any given geographic hub. Each hub has an orbit within which exist classes. The nature of the hub itself determines what classes exist in society. Iraq's hub (oil) not only required landowners and a security system to protect them, but also technical experts to exploit the resource. Other classes exist by default, such as a labor class. All of these classes exist in the hub's orbit, which defines the space that the hub influences. The closer a class to the hub, the more power it exercises on other classes within the hub. The more classes in close proximity to a hub, the more democratic the society. A class that influences the hub can be called a stakeholder. In Iraq, Saddam and his close cadre dominated the hub, with the security apparatus in close proximity. The nearness of that class endowed it with greater power than other classes, and for that reason Saddam engaged it differently than the technical experts and laborers.

Classes, as social categories of persons, have characteristics that affect their relationships: permanency, objectiveness, and materialist. So long as the hub of power remains the same, the classes created as a consequence of its existence will also remain the same. The individuals within them will certainly change, as may names, associations, and relationships of and between the classes. The classes exist because of the necessity for sustaining the hub. Because of the permanency of classes, membership within them becomes determined by a person's relationship with the hub. This objectivity of membership exists because a person may not know, understand, or care about his relationship with his society's hub, but that relationship nonetheless exists in a particular form as a consequence of living in society. Finally, given the objectiveness of classes and the nature of the hub, classes exist exclusively in the material domain. The reliance upon the capacity to coerce or influence others ensures that a class will always originate from a material hub of power. Different classes include landowners, military and security professionals, laborers, entertainers, and managers. In each society, these classes may hold different positions in relation to one another and with the hub.

The members of a class become identified with one another and those of other classes through four masks: ethnicity, religion, gender, and ideology. These masks serve several purposes. First, they link the members of a society together in a common identity and mobilize them for a defined purpose. The shared identity may be a combination of the masks, such as secular nationalism. Second, they distribute access to wealth, knowledge, prestige, and resources for the members of society on the basis of their class. The masks determine who in society will receive what partitions of a society's scarce resources. Ultimately, systems of patronage designed to perpetrate the status quo and promote stability emerge. Patronage ensures that the class or classes closest to the hub can maintain that position by allowing limited buy-ins by other classes. Third, they justify the conditions, positions, relationships, and actions of the classes in society. Not only do the masks establish a relationship of patronage between the classes of a society, but also reflect which classes will engage in revolutionary violence as a consequence of their position in society. Fourth, they form the clutter that disguises from an analyst the underlying motives and interests of the society's classes. In this part of analysis, the counterfactual questioning tool becomes most effective. It can be used to explain such superficial absurdities as Ba'athist Syria's 1976 intervention in Lebanon on behalf of Maronite Christians against the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The combination of masks form factions. Factions exist as the manifestation of class organization in a society. Factions too contain features particular to them: impermanent, subjective, and abstract. Because factions originate from the combination of ethnic, religious, gender, and ideological identities, they constantly evolve. New factions develop, and some disappear altogether, while many others continue on in different shapes. Given that nature of impermanency, membership in faction becomes subjective. Individuals define the relationships and members of factions, ascribing to them truth and universality. Furthermore, members may belong to a faction that does not promote the interests of their class. This disconnection enables manipulation, coercion, and influence to shape society. As a result, factions become abstract, as their origin lies in the propagation of the four masks and not in any material reality. Factions include political parties, terrorist organizations, trade unions, and religious sects.

The relationship between the hub of power, classes, masks, and factions can be illustrated. The model also demonstrates that factions develop several types of decisions.

First, factions may make status quo decisions. These decisions support the current arrangement of classes in society. Second, factions can make reactionary decisions that aim to rearrange class relationships but maintain the hub of power. Third, factions can make revisionist decisions that aim to replace the current hub with a new one. The factions that engage in insurgency make reactionary and revisionist decisions based upon the position of the classes that contribute to the existence of the factions.

This model enables two capabilities: predictive analysis and targeting. By examining the relationships between hubs, classes, masks, and factions, an analyst can make better assessments of motivations, intentions, and strategies of actors in the area of operations. It also exposes the strengths and weaknesses in those relationships, enabling more effective targeting in a non-linear and social environment. A 3-D representation of the model would further clarify the relationships in a complex society. These refined capabilities materialize into updated intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) and the targeting process.

Intelligence preparation of the battlefield can be significantly enhanced by adding "Describe the Social Environment" as the new step two. This step will enable an intelligence section to model and describe the effects of a society's organization on its actors' decision-

making. It will consist of several sub-steps, working through backwards analysis: 1) Identify the Social Actors in the AO, 2) Determine the Linkages (masks) of the Actors, 3) Identify the Classes in the AO, 4) Determine the hubs of power in the AO, and 5) Determine the hubs of power in the AI. These steps will allow the analysts to make an accurate picture of the social environment. It will also provide a useful model that can facilitate other processes, including targeting.

The model enables the targeting of a society's structure by exposing its foundations and also the relationships between the classes of a society. Rather than engaging in reactive and active targeting against a society's surface features, structural targeting aims at the core of a society. By rearranging or redefining the hubs and classes of a society, operations can reshape the social environment into a more acquiescent atmosphere. Modernization in the Middle East, specifically the introduction of irrigation systems, removed the previous hub of oases owned by local and distributed Bedouin chiefs and replaced it with the state by changing who had access to water. These kinds of operations do not simply address the symptoms of an insurgency, but also can potentially remove the catalyst for conflict. The structural targeting process therefore aims to create new stakeholders by disenfranchising old ones. It can be non-lethal, such as in the modernization of the Middle East, or lethal, such as the destruction of capabilities, localities, and resources that form a hub. It follows the same format of Find-Fix-Finish-Exploit-Analyze. It only adds that the process remains continuous by regularly analyzing a society to reassess the status and conditions of stakeholders in order to continue targeting.

The tools and models described in the foregoing paragraphs serve only one purpose: to provide the military with a universal understanding of society that enables the exploitation of its strengths and weaknesses to accomplish predefined aims. It does not seek to ascribe right or wrong, or pursue some kind of normative assessment of a society's beliefs and values. It seeks to define, identify, and engage targets in order to accomplish political and military objectives. Not only will it assist in the development of predictive analysis and targeting, it will also contribute to the synchronization of ends and means both vertically and horizontally among blue forces by providing a common frame of understanding. The model allows analysts to form a foundation upon which to build an assessment of a society and its members. That in turn enables more

effective targeting and assists in assessing the effects of destroying and building things other than military objects. In the contemporary operating environment, it will assist the military in explaining the motivations and interests of enemies and allies of the United States. By enabling the targeting of society, it will allow the control of it.

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Insurgency

Reactionary

Revisionism

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Class

Class

Class

Faction

Hub of Power