

# **A Canadian Project Camelot?**

*An Examination of the Use of Social Science in Military Operations, and Suggestions for Canadian Use*

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## Abstract

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Thus far, warfare in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has been more asymmetric than conventional, with the population rather than the landscape serving as the battlefield. The enemies have changed – instead of fighting against nations, non-state actors such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda are primary security threats. To succeed in combating modern insurgencies in areas of operation such as Afghanistan and Iraq, it is necessary to engage with the local population on a level only possible with the use of social sciences.

However, the military use of the social sciences remains controversial, due in large part to the aftershocks of Project Camelot, which alienated the field of anthropology from the US government. This leads to a difficult question: what are the issues involved in the military use of the social sciences, and what approach should the Canadian Forces take?

This paper provides a brief examination of the military use of the social sciences, and its issues. The paper begins with a history of the military use of social sciences in the last hundred years, from T.E. Lawrence to the modern Human Terrain System and the Minerva Initiative. The paper then takes a more detailed look at the two primary American implementations of social sciences by the US military, the Human Terrain System and the Minerva Initiative. This is followed by an examination of the professional and practical issues raised. The paper then closes with recommendations for building capability in regards to the social sciences and the Canadian Forces.

## Résumé

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Jusqu'à ce jour, la conduite de la guerre au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle a été plus asymétrique que conventionnelle; la population, et non le paysage, tient lieu de champ de bataille. Les ennemis ont changé – on ne se bat plus contre des pays, mais plutôt contre des acteurs non étatiques tels que les talibans et Al-Qaïda, qui sont devenus les principales menaces à la sécurité. Pour combattre avec succès les insurrections des temps modernes dans des secteurs d'opérations tels que l'Afghanistan et l'Iraq, il est nécessaire de mettre à contribution la population locale à un niveau qui n'est possible qu'en recourant aux sciences sociales.

Cependant, l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales demeure controversée, en grande partie à cause des contrecoups du Projet Camelot, qui a amené les anthropologues prendre du recul à l'égard des activités du gouvernement des États-Unis. Cela engendre une question difficile : Quels sont les enjeux de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales, et quelle approche doivent adopter les Forces canadiennes à cet égard?

Le présent article donne un bref aperçu de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales ainsi que des enjeux connexes. L'article brosse d'abord l'historique de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales au cours du siècle dernier, de T.E. Lawrence jusqu'au concept moderne de Système du contexte humain et à l'Initiative Minerva. Il présente ensuite de façon plus détaillée les principales utilisations des sciences sociales par les forces armées des États-Unis, à savoir le Système du contexte humain et l'Initiative Minerva. L'article examine ensuite les questions professionnelles et pratiques soulevées, puis conclut en formulant des recommandations pour le renforcement des capacités en ce qui concerne les sciences sociales et les Forces canadiennes.

## **Executive Summary**

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### **A Canadian Project Camelot? An Examination of the Use of Social Science in Military Operations, and Suggestions for Canadian Use**

**Robert B. Marks; DRDC Toronto CR 2011-044; Defence R&D Canada – Toronto .**

The use of social science research in direct support of military operations, and, by extension, the attainment of political goals, is not new. Over the past fifty years, however, the direct employ of social scientists and their work by military forces has generated numerous professional and ethical questions which have once again come to the fore with the development of the Human Terrain System concept in the US Army.

But in modern warfare, when fighting non-state actors such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, it is necessary to win the peace, so to speak, using social sciences to engage with local populations and undermine support for the insurgency by becoming the indigenous population's primary problem solver and ally. This raises certain professional and practical issues, particularly considering the history of social sciences and their interaction with the US military.

This paper has been driven by a primary question: what are the primary professional and ethical problems, real or perceived, that potentially hinder the closer engagement of social science practitioners by the Canadian Forces for expeditionary operations? After examining the history and issues of the military use of social sciences, this paper will take the position that due to the professional and ethical issues demonstrated by previous controversies such as Project Camelot, the Canadian Forces are better served by making use of social science research from an academic approach, using the expertise of social scientists to build internal capability.

#### **History**

The use of the social sciences, particularly anthropology, for strategic purposes goes back at least to the beginning of the 20th century. On a political side, by 1908 anthropologists were training British colonial administrators in locations such as the Sudan. On the military side, during World War I T.E. Lawrence used an understanding of culture to forge an alliance with the Arabs against the Ottoman Turks, stressing the importance of cultural sensitivity to local populations for strategic purposes in his "Twenty-Seven Articles."

The social sciences also remained an important strategic tool in World War II, where the United States government used cultural knowledge regarding Japan to ensure their surrender and for governance during the American reconstruction efforts after the war. In the Cold War that followed, American social sciences turned their efforts towards the Soviet Union, becoming a powerful tool in both strategy and diplomacy against Soviet efforts.

The close relationship between the social sciences and the US military came to an end in 1964 with the controversy over Project Camelot. Camelot was a US Army funded program

designed to research social change, unrest, and revolution in developing nations, with an eye towards building a model that could then be used to predict and manipulate the forces involved. When this became accidentally revealed, it caused a massive controversy resulting in the cancellation of the program before any research could begin, as well as painting anthropological research across Latin America as US government espionage, regardless of who was conducting the research or why.

In large part because of the damage caused, American anthropology pulled away from government research, creating a split between the social sciences and the military that has only recently begun to heal. It was only in 1994 that the CIA began funding the State Failure Task Force, now known as the Political Instability Task Force.

In 2005 the US Army created the Human Terrain System (HTS), a program that placed social scientists in the combat zones to gather cultural information that could then be used to win over the indigenous population. This proved controversial, although not for the same reasons as Camelot – safety, results, and ethics lay at the core of the HTS debate without any hint of espionage accusations. In 2008, the US Department of Defence began funding the Minerva Initiative, an academic research program on numerous security-related issues. Minerva was also controversial, raising questions in the academic community about openness of research, whether social scientists should be working for the military, and how military-funded research might later be used.

### **American Models**

The Human Terrain System is a program filling an intelligence gap by placing social scientists in conflict areas, where they conduct research and report back to the military on areas of cultural sensitivity and the needs of the indigenous population. All of the information they gather is stored in a central location for easy access and cross-referencing.

The research is conducted by the Human Terrain Team (HTT). Consisting of between five to nine military and civilian personnel, the team is required to have a team leader, at least one social scientist, at least one research manager, and at least two Human Terrain Analysts. Each team should also include at least one member who can speak the local language, and at least one woman. The HTT is attached to a specific unit in the field and considered a military asset under the control of that unit's commander, who employs the HTT as he would any other military asset. All HTT members are bound by ethical guidelines that do not allow them to cause any harm to their research subjects, meaning that they are not allowed to participate in setting targets or the collection of military intelligence.

The Minerva initiative, announced in April 2008, is a more traditional academic program, where the US Department of Defense provides around \$50 million in funding for proposals relating to national security in topics such as China, Iraq, and Terrorist perspectives. The research is open source and remains in the university environment. Research projects are selected for funding based on scientific merit, topical relevance, and the ability of the researcher to complete the task.

An ethical framework has been built into the Minerva Initiative, as have accountability measures. Federal research funding is not available to lobby groups, and all researchers are required to submit annual progress reports. Human subjects are also protected by ethical guidelines protecting their rights and welfare.

## **Issues**

As demonstrated by Project Camelot, the Human Terrain System, and the Minerva Initiative, the military use of social sciences does raise several practical and professional issues. The majority of these revolve around the “weaponization” of the social sciences – a concern about how the data collected by social scientists is used once it is in military hands. This can be both an ethical and practical issue for social scientists – once social science research becomes associated with the military, it may retain that association, even if military involvement is no longer present.

Other issues revolve around the skewing and cherry-picking of data. This can be both on the side of the researchers and the military. In some cases, inaccurate information can lead to decisions that have negative unintended consequences and aftershocks, such as the torture scandal at Abu Ghraib or the chain of events leading to the creation of the Iraqi insurgency. In other cases, attempts by researchers to tailor their research to military needs can result in important issues being missed, resulting in an increased risk of bad decision-making on the military side.

In regards to the HTS teams, some issues revolve around training – whether the social scientists have the correct training and background to be able to do the work, and whether their lack of military experience endangers themselves and the soldiers escorting them. Other issues involve value and effectiveness – while the HTS program has proven useful in some areas, there is evidence to suggest that this success is not universal, and it has been argued that by supporting the HTS system, the US Army is depriving funds from its own intelligence organs, preventing them from developing the same information gathering capabilities. This raises the question of whether the US Army should be increasing its internal cultural information gathering abilities, or contracting these tasks to social scientists.

A general concern is the internal reaction in the social science community to military research, mainly in anthropology, where due to the aftershocks from the Project Camelot controversy, researchers may risk professional alienation. A frequent question asked by the anthropological community is whether social scientists can maintain their ethical requirements while performing research funded for defence purposes.

## **Recommendations**

Taking both the professional and practical issues into account, as well as the upcoming Canadian withdrawal from Afghanistan this year, this report recommends a focus on building internal cultural information gathering capability instead of creating an HTS-based program. This includes expanding the Social Science department of the Royal Military College of Canada to include disciplines such as anthropology, as well as requiring the social sciences to be a large part of officer education. At the same time, this report recommends that open and unclassified research be funded according to the Minerva Initiative-based model, with a peer-review system to ensure accuracy and quality control during all parts of the research process, and an ethical code of conduct to avoid any professional concerns by social scientists.

## Sommaire

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L'utilisation des recherches en sciences sociales à l'appui direct des opérations militaires et, par extension, de l'atteinte d'objectifs politiques, n'est pas nouvelle. Au cours des cinquante dernières années, l'emploi direct de spécialistes en sciences sociales et de leur travail par des forces militaires a entraîné de nombreuses questions éthiques et professionnelles, qui reviennent encore une fois à l'avant-scène avec l'élaboration, par l'armée des États-Unis, du concept de Système du contexte humain (HTS).

Mais dans la conduite de la guerre moderne, lorsqu'on se bat contre des acteurs non étatiques tels que les talibans ou Al-Qaïda, il est nécessaire de gagner la paix, pour ainsi dire, en utilisant les sciences sociales afin de mettre à contribution les populations locales et en minant le soutien aux insurgés pour devenir le principal allié des populations locales et la principale solution à leurs problèmes. Cela pose certaines questions professionnelles et pratiques, plus particulièrement compte tenu de l'histoire des sciences sociales et de leur interaction avec l'armée des États-Unis.

Le présent article a été motivé par une question principale : Quels sont les principaux problèmes professionnels et éthiques, réels ou perçus, qui pourraient empêcher une collaboration étroite des Forces canadiennes avec les spécialistes des sciences sociales pour les opérations expéditionnaires? Après avoir passé en revue l'historique de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales ainsi que les questions connexes, l'article conclut que compte tenu des questions professionnelles et éthiques soulevées dans le cadre de controverses antérieures notamment en ce qui concerne le Projet Camelot, les Forces canadiennes feraient mieux de recourir aux sciences sociales du point de vue éducatif, en utilisant l'expertise des spécialistes des sciences sociales pour renforcer les capacités internes.

#### **Historique**

L'utilisation des sciences sociales, plus particulièrement l'anthropologie, à des fins stratégiques remonte au moins au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Côté politique, vers la fin des années 1908, les anthropologues formaient les administrateurs coloniaux britanniques sur des endroits tels que le Soudan. Côté militaire, durant la Première Guerre mondiale, T.E. Lawrence s'est servi de la perception de la culture pour conclure une alliance avec des Arabes contre les Turcs ottomans, en soulignant l'importance de la sensibilité culturelle aux populations locales à des fins stratégiques dans un document de vingt-sept articles.

Les sciences sociales sont demeurées également un important outil durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, lorsque le gouvernement des États-Unis a utilisé ses connaissances culturelles sur le Japon pour les amener à se rendre ainsi que pour la gouvernance dans le cadre des efforts

de reconstruction par les États-Unis. Durant la période de guerre froide qui a suivi, les spécialistes américains des sciences sociales ont concentré leurs efforts sur l'Union soviétique, et celles-ci sont devenues un outil puissant sur le plan stratégique et diplomatique pour contrer les activités soviétiques.

La relation étroite entre les spécialistes des sciences sociales et les forces armées des États-Unis a pris fin en 1964 à cause de la controverse au sujet du Projet Camelot. C'était un programme financé par les États-Unis dans le but de mener des recherches sur les changements sociaux, les troubles et les révolutions dans les pays en voie de développement, en vue d'élaborer un modèle pouvant être utilisé pour anticiper les actions des forces en présence et pour les manipuler. Cette information ayant été rendue publique accidentellement, il y eut une controverse massive qui a entraîné l'annulation du programme avant le début de toute recherche, ainsi que la qualification, dans toute l'Amérique latine, des recherches anthropologiques comme de l'espionnage de la part du gouvernement des États-Unis, quel que soit l'auteur ou le motif de la recherche.

En grande partie à cause du dommage causé, les anthropologues américains se sont retirés des recherches du gouvernement, ce qui a créé une scission entre les sciences sociales et les forces armées, qui ne commence à se résorber que depuis peu de temps. Ce n'est qu'en 1994 que la CIA a commencé à financer la *State Failure Task Force*, maintenant appelée la *Political Instability Task Force*.

En 2005, l'armée des États-Unis a créé le concept de Système du contexte humain (HTS), un programme visant à placer des spécialistes des sciences sociales dans les zones de combat afin qu'ils recueillent des renseignements culturels pouvant être utilisés pour convaincre la population locale. Cela a provoqué des controverses, bien que ce ne soit pas pour les mêmes raisons que le Projet Camelot – le débat sur le HTS portait essentiellement sur la sécurité, les résultats et l'éthique, sans la moindre trace d'accusations d'espionnage. En 2008, le Département de la Défense des États-Unis a commencé à financer l'Initiative Minerva, un programme de recherche universitaire sur diverses questions relatives à la sécurité. L'Initiative Minerva a également suscité des controverses, soulevant au sein de la collectivité universitaire des questions concernant la transparence des recherches, la nécessité que des spécialistes des sciences sociales collaborent avec l'armée, ainsi que l'utilisation ultérieure des recherches financées par l'armée.

### **Les modèles américains**

Le Système du contexte humain est un programme visant à combler les lacunes en matière de renseignement en plaçant des spécialistes des sciences sociales dans les secteurs de conflit, pour qu'ils mènent des recherches sur place et informent les forces armées sur les secteurs comportant des sensibilités culturelles et sur les besoins de la population locale. Tous les renseignements recueillis sont stockés dans un endroit central afin d'en faciliter l'accès et la vérification des concordances.

La recherche est menée par l'équipe d'analyse du contexte humain (EACH). Celle-ci se compose de cinq à neuf civils et militaires, dont un chef, au moins un spécialiste des sciences sociales, au moins un gestionnaire de recherches et au moins deux analystes du contexte humain. Chaque équipe doit aussi comprendre au moins un membre maîtrisant la langue locale et au moins une femme. L'équipe (EACH) est rattachée à une unité particulière dans le théâtre et

considérée comme une ressource militaire sous le contrôle du commandant de cette unité, qui recourt à l'EACH comme il le ferait pour toute autre ressource militaire. Tous les membres de l'Équipe sont liés par les lignes directrices sur l'éthique, qui leur interdisent de compromettre leurs recherches, ce qui signifie qu'il ne leur est pas permis de participer à la détermination des cibles ou à la collecte de renseignements militaires.

Annoncée en avril 2008, l'Initiative Minerva est un programme universitaire plus traditionnel, dans le cadre duquel le Département de la Défense des États-Unis fournit environ 50 millions de dollars de financement pour des projets sur la sécurité nationale et des sujets concernant les perspectives relatives à la Chine, à l'Iraq et au terrorisme. La recherche constitue une source ouverte, et elle reste dans le contexte universitaire. Les projets de recherche sont retenus pour financement en fonction du mérite scientifique, de la pertinence du sujet et de la capacité du chercheur d'accomplir la tâche.

Un cadre éthique a été élaboré pour l'Initiative Minerva, de même que des mesures de responsabilisation. Le financement fédéral de la recherche n'est pas accessible aux groupes de lobbyistes, et tous les chercheurs doivent présenter chaque année des rapports d'étapes. Les humains sont aussi protégés par des lignes directrices éthiques, dont le but est de préserver leurs droits et leur bien-être.

## **Discussion**

Tel que démontré par le Projet Camelot, le Système du contexte humain et l'Initiative Minerva, l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales soulève de nombreuses questions professionnelles et pratiques. La majorité de ces questions portent sur la militarisation des sciences sociales – une préoccupation concernant la façon dont les données recueillies par des spécialistes des sciences sociales sont utilisées une fois qu'elles sont communiquées aux militaires. Cela pose à la fois un problème pratique et éthique pour les spécialistes des sciences sociales – une fois que la recherche en sciences sociales est associée aux militaires, elle peut conserver ce cachet militaire, même si l'aspect militaire n'existe plus.

D'autres questions portent sur le biais et la sélectivité dans la collecte de données, aussi bien de la part des chercheurs que des militaires. Dans certains cas, une information inexacte peut entraîner des décisions ayant des conséquences négatives et des contrecoups non recherchés, tels que le scandale de la torture à Abu Ghraib où la succession des événements a conduit à la création de l'insurrection iraquienne. Dans d'autres cas, les tentatives des chercheurs d'adapter leurs recherches aux besoins militaires peuvent les amener à passer à côté de questions importantes, ce qui augmenterait le risque de mauvaises décisions par les militaires.

En ce qui concerne les équipes d'analyse du contexte humain (EACH), certaines des questions tournent autour de la formation; elles visent notamment à déterminer si les spécialistes des sciences sociales ont la formation et les antécédents requis pour effectuer ce travail, et si le manque d'expérience militaire met leur vie en danger ainsi que celle des militaires qui les escortent. D'autres questions portent sur la valeur et l'efficacité. Bien que le programme connexe au Système du contexte humain s'est avéré utile dans certains secteurs, il existe des preuves montrant que ce succès n'est pas universel, et des gens ont fait valoir qu'en appuyant le Système du contexte humain, l'armée des États-Unis prive de fonds ses propres organismes de renseignement, les empêchant ainsi de renforcer les mêmes capacités de collecte de données. Cela pose la question de savoir si l'armée des États-Unis ne devrait pas renforcer ses propres capacités internes de collecte de renseignements culturels au lieu d'attribuer des contrats de

recherche à des spécialistes des sciences sociales.

La préoccupation générale est la réaction interne au sein de la collectivité des sciences sociales à l'égard des recherches militaires, particulièrement en anthropologie où, à cause des contrecoups de la controverse sur le Projet Camelot, les chercheurs risquent de ne pas se conduire de façon professionnelle. La question qui est fréquemment posée par les anthropologues est de savoir si les spécialistes des sciences sociales peuvent maintenir les exigences éthiques tout en effectuant des recherches financées aux fins de défense.

### **Recommandations**

Compte tenu des questions professionnelles et pratiques ainsi que du retrait prochain du Canada de l'Afghanistan au cours de cette année, le présent rapport recommande de mettre l'accent sur le renforcement d'une capacité interne de collecte de renseignements culturels au lieu de créer un programme fondé sur le Système du contexte humain. Il faudra aussi élargir les activités du département des sciences sociales du Collège militaire royal pour y inclure des disciplines telles que l'anthropologie, et exiger que les sciences sociales occupent une grande part du programme de formation des officiers. Le présent rapport recommande également de financer des recherches ouvertes et non classifiées selon le modèle de l'Initiative Minerva, en prévoyant un système de vérification par les pairs afin d'assurer le contrôle de l'exactitude et de la qualité durant toutes les étapes du processus de recherche, ainsi qu'un code de déontologie et d'éthique pour éviter des préoccupations professionnelles aux spécialistes des sciences sociales.

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## Introduction

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The use of social science research in direct support of military operations, and, by extension, the attainment of political goals, is not new. Over the past fifty years, however, the direct employ of social scientists and their work by military forces has generated numerous professional and ethical questions which have once again come to the fore with the development of the Human Terrain System concept in the US Army.

This is of particular importance in modern warfare for the Canadian Forces. The most recent campaigns have been asymmetrical, against non-state actors such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. It was not enough to win the initial war in Afghanistan (or, for the Americans, Iraq) – it was also necessary to “win the peace.” In conflict areas, being able to engage with the local population, understand their issues and requirements, and provide actual help and support are key to combatting or preventing an insurgency. Without an understanding of local issues, power and influence brokers, culture, and history, this necessary engagement cannot take place. Whereas in conventional warfare the battlefield is the contested area, in asymmetric warfare and counter-insurgency, the population is the battlefield.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian Counter Insurgency manual defines an insurgency as a political problem, placing the military in a supporting, rather than primary role.<sup>2</sup> The primary tool for understanding the population-as-battlefield is the social sciences, and with the information collected by the social scientists, insurgencies can be defeated, mitigated, or prevented from forming, thus saving lives.

This paper will examine the use of social science for military purposes. In general, it is based on the assumption that research derived from the various fields of social science is highly valuable for the successful prosecution of military operations. Specifically, the research has been driven by this question: what are the primary professional and ethical problems, real or perceived, that potentially hinder the closer engagement of social science practitioners by the Canadian Forces for expeditionary operations? After examining the history and issues of the military use of the social sciences, this paper argues the Canadian Forces are better served by making use of the social science research from an academic approach, using the expertise of social scientists to build an internal capability. This paper is divided into four parts. The first is an examination of the history of how social science has been used for both political and military purposes. The second is a look at the current American methods of using the social sciences for military purposes, the Human Terrain System and the Minerva Initiative. The third part is an examination of practical and ethical issues involved in the use of social sciences for military purposes. The conclusion will outline policy recommendations regarding how the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence should use social sciences to support future operations.

## History

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While recent discussions over the Human Terrain System has brought the use of the social sciences by the military into at least an intellectual spotlight, anthropology and other social sciences have a long history of use in military operations. It is perhaps instructive to note that while ethical arguments both for and against the use of social sciences in military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq are made, in actual practice the historical equivalent of the activities now performed by the Human Terrain Team have been practiced for over a century.

The use of social science methods, and specifically anthropology, for political and military purposes dates back at least to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and probably earlier. The British used such methods to enable colonial governance, often by playing on deep-rooted tribal differences to maintain control over indigenous populations. In the British Sudan, social science was used for Imperial governance, with anthropologists training administrators of the Sudanese Civil Service starting in 1908. This became a standard practice, based on Bronislaw Malinowski's "Practical Anthropology" article, published in 1929, which argued for using the field of anthropology to solve colonial problems.<sup>3</sup>

This was a political rather than military use, however. The best example of a British use of cultural awareness for military purposes was in the Middle East during World War I, where T.E. Lawrence devised a campaign against the Turks via an alliance with the Arabs. Lawrence wrote an essay entitled "Twenty-Seven Articles," published in 1917 in *The Arab Bulletin*, where he warned of the importance of cultural awareness in dealing with his Arab allies:

The beginning and ending of the secret of handling Arabs is unremitting study of them. Keep always on your guard; never say an unnecessary thing: watch yourself and your companions all the time: hear all that passes, search out what is going on beneath the surface, read their characters, discover their tastes and their weaknesses and keep everything you find out to yourself. Bury yourself in Arab circles, have no interests and no ideas except the work in hand, so that your brain is saturated with one thing only, and you realize your part deeply enough to avoid the little slips that would counteract the painful work of weeks. Your success will be proportioned to the amount of mental effort you devote to it.<sup>4</sup>

While Lawrence's performance in the Middle East confirmed the importance of cultural awareness on a tactical level, it was also determined to be applicable on the strategic level. Lawrence's use of cultural intelligence is perhaps one of the best known, and oft-cited, examples of success. An example of the use of cultural intelligence at the strategic level is the US Government's acceptance of advice to frame the capitulation demands for Japan made in the July 1945 Potsdam Declaration in such a way that left open the possibility of retention of the Imperial system.<sup>5</sup> Although not the only factor, this helped to clear the way for the Japanese surrender some six weeks later. Moreover, General Douglas MacArthur used his knowledge of the socio-cultural, economic, and historical peculiarities of the Japanese people to devise and sustain his methods of military governance in occupied Japan from late 1945 to 1952.<sup>6</sup> These examples help

to illustrate the fact that, while there are normally many paths to the same goals, some are easier to tread than others. The use of cultural knowledge in these cases constituted an easier path than some of the alternatives.

The rise of the Cold War also gave rise to new requirements for grand strategy that only the social sciences could fill. A new field, Kremlinology or Sovietology, developed to study the Soviet Union and predict what it would do under certain circumstances – this information would then be used to inform foreign policy regarding the Soviets.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the 1950s, social science and the military had a comfortable relationship. And, with the Soviet Union and the United States playing a ‘massive game of chess’ in the developing world, both intelligence organs and the American military realized that the social sciences would be a key factor in a the ideological struggle.<sup>8</sup> Despite the use of social sciences to inform strategic planning, many incorrect assumptions and conclusions regarding opposing thinking and intentions were made by Western analysts.<sup>9</sup>

When socialist and communist ideological thought began to flavour the various revolutionary activities in Latin America in the 1960s, there was a concomitant lack of academic expertise on both the subject of Latin American nations and culture and the potential relationships to Soviet ideology.<sup>10</sup> The American response to this challenge, project Camelot, would break the long tradition of social sciences aiding the military, alienating the field of anthropology from government work (at least in the US).

The US Army established Project Camelot in 1964. The project was to provide socio-cultural information through the provision of large-scale funding for social science research. The project’s aims were to study the processes of social instability in developing nations, using a couple of Latin American nations as case studies. The results of these studies would then be used to combat supposed Soviet-backed government regimes or insurgent movements either by preventing social instability or (alternatively) creating it.<sup>11</sup> While the project itself was pitched to social scientists as pure research – and was met with enthusiasm by social scientists who desired a practical, applied end to their work,<sup>12</sup> the description of the project and its stated purpose was ill-conceived.

The release letter for the project stated that:

Project CAMELOT is a study whose objective is to determine the feasibility of developing a general social systems model which would make it possible to predict and influence politically significant aspects of social change in the developing nations of the world.<sup>13</sup>

The problem with the above statement was that, coming from the US Government, it could be (and it was) interpreted as a tool or mean for engaging in espionage. The project scope was ambiguous enough to enable interpretation arguing the project could be used both as a means of stabilizing a society in upheaval, but also destabilize a relatively stable society under the influence of what might be construed as an ideologically unfriendly government. The project scope might perhaps have been less controversial if it had only been declared as studying social instability in the developing world for the purposes of preventing it, although in the ideologically

charged atmosphere of the 1960s even this might not have prevented the controversy that occurred.

Hugo G. Nuttini, an Assistant Professor of Anthropology from Pittsburgh working as an independent contractor for the project, attempted to recruit one Johan Galtung (is a Norwegian-born sociologist) in Chile. Upon asking who was funding the project and its aims, Nuttini informed Galtung of the nature of the project, and that it was funded by the US Army. This alarmed Galtung, who brought it to the attention of many of his peers in Latin America, and eventually the Chilean government.<sup>14</sup>

The Chilean government asserted that Camelot constituted an espionage tool meant to destabilize them.<sup>15</sup> Other Latin American countries voiced concern, causing the American ambassador to Chile to demand the cancellation of Camelot activities in that country.<sup>16</sup> The project never got beyond the research proposal stage. The US Army's Special Operations Research Office (SORO), under whose umbrella Camelot was to operate, cancelled the project in mid-1965.<sup>17</sup>

However, the controversy did not end with the cancellation of the project. The entire field of anthropology found itself under close scrutiny in the fallout from the controversy. Many university-oriented, American-funded research projects, first in Chile and later in most of South America, were unable to continue due to accusations and suspicions of espionage.<sup>18</sup> In a panic, not only did the Chilean government claim that Camelot had already begun, but that contrary to the claims of the United States Government, the project had never been cancelled, and research was continuing.<sup>19</sup>

To a degree, the Chilean government was correct. While Camelot had been cancelled, it was one research initiative of SORO, and SORO's research continued.<sup>20</sup> However, the damage was done. While other researchers from other social science fields continued to work with the US government and military, anthropologists found themselves closed-out of work involving government funding, in particular the military.<sup>21</sup>

The alienation of anthropology occurred for a number of reasons. The first was that anthropology *did* have a history of being used as a cover for espionage. For example, in World War I, Sylvanus Morley had used his research in Central America as a cover for scouting the coast for German submarine bases, generating close to 10,000 pages of intelligence reports in the process.<sup>22</sup> The second was that when the Camelot backlash occurred, the effects were felt greatest in the field of anthropology, quite possibly because it was through practitioners in that field that the Camelot documents were made public. The biggest probable reason, though, was that there had also been a tremendous amount of damage done to anthropological research in South America.<sup>23</sup> Legitimate non-governmental research projects were now suspected of being a cover for espionage, regardless of who was funding the projects.<sup>24</sup> In at least one case, an anthropology research project funded by the Chilean government was shut down due to the involvement of American researchers.<sup>25</sup> If the field of anthropology was going to continue to conduct research, it had to distance itself from government-funded projects.

The US anthropological field's distancing from government-funded research caused much of its

research to become esoteric.<sup>26</sup> There had been a larger impact across the breadth of US-based social sciences. While other branches of social sciences had not reacted as strongly as anthropology to the Camelot backlash, a slow distancing from the military began to take place. In 1994, some of the first moves were made by the American government to re-establish its formerly held links with the social sciences. The Central Intelligence Agency funded the State Failure Task Force, now known as the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is a panel of scholars created at the request of senior American policy makers to study extreme state failures such as Somalia, although the mandate of its research expanded over time to cover subjects such as transitions into democracy. The stated goal of the project is an echo of Camelot: “using open-source data, the Task Force seeks to develop statistical models that can accurately assess countries’ prospects for major political change and can identify key risk factors of interest to US policymakers.”<sup>27</sup>

While the PITF provided some important research for policy planning purposes, its work did not prove sufficient for direct use by the military at the operational or tactical levels. The realities of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan drove demands for greater cultural intelligence than that available from the limited means of the military intelligence apparatus.<sup>28</sup> This led to the creation of the Human Terrain System (HTS) in 2005. The HTS program created teams of social scientists for deployment to operational theatres. Their purpose is to interact with the local population to identify their needs and concerns, determine who the key personalities are and illustrate the power structures in a given locale, and, in conjunction with their professional backgrounds, make recommendations as to who and by what means the military might best influence the key leaders to help advance military goals.<sup>29</sup>

Not surprisingly, the HTS program has generated considerable controversy, particularly in anthropology circles. Concerns were raised not just about whether a backlash would be provoked that would poison future research, but also regarding the qualifications of the social scientists deployed into the field, the degree to which the military could protect them, and whether that protection unnecessarily jeopardized the lives of the soldiers on their details.<sup>30</sup> Most importantly, ethical questions were raised regarding the use of human research subjects to gain information that would then be used to influence those same subjects.

The HTS was also controversial in military circles. In the March-April 2009 issue of the *Military Review*, Major Ben Connable of the U.S. Marine Corps wrote that the HTS system was actively hurting American military capabilities by outsourcing social science-based intelligence rather than using those funds to create a greater internal capability in the US Army and Marine Corps intelligence organs, which were designed to conduct culture-based intelligence gathering in the first place, but had lacked the ability.<sup>31</sup>

In 2008, the American Department of Defense began to build on the success of the CIA’s PITF, funding Project Minerva. Like Camelot and the PITF, this would consist of open source academic research projects selected for funding, although Minerva began its existence concentrated on Chinese defence strategies and technology, Iraqi perspectives, terrorist perspectives, and religious and cultural change in the Muslim world.<sup>32</sup>

Like Camelot, Minerva caused an instant controversy, with critics once again questioning the ethics and use of the research. This may have been more because of the Defense Department involvement than anything else – while the Department of Defense was providing the funding, Minerva did not have any statements in its mandate even approaching Camelot’s declaration that it would use its knowledge for both stabilization and de-stabilization operations. Instead, the controversy regarding Minerva was in regards to openness of research and whether social scientists should be conducting research funded by the military, and how that research might later be used.<sup>33</sup>

As of the beginning of 2011, both PITF and Minerva are continuing to fund research, and the American army is continuing to deploy HTS teams in Afghanistan.

## American Models

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The United States' Department of Defense currently has two programs utilizing the social sciences for military means. The first is the Human Terrain System, first deployed in Iraq in 2005, and now deployed in Afghanistan. The second is the Minerva Initiative. They will now be examined in detail.

The Human Terrain System is a United States Army initiative to fill in an intelligence gap by bringing skilled social sciences research onto the front lines. The mission statement of the program is to:

Conduct operationally relevant, open-source social science research, and provide commanders and staffs at the BCT/RCT and Division levels with an embedded knowledge capability, to establish a coherent, analytic cultural framework for operational planning, decision-making, and assessment.<sup>34</sup>

This research is used to supplement the material gathered by the U.S. Army's Civil Affairs units – while the Civil Affairs units deal with cultural concerns on the level of local government and tribal leaders, the HTS is used to fill in the cultural concerns of the local population itself.<sup>35</sup> Before entering into the field, HTS researchers write a proposal for funding for an Ethnographic Research Design covering the project's purpose, research methods, cost, timeliness, and significance, as well as a document detailing how the research plan will protect human research subjects according to ethical guidelines.<sup>36</sup>

The research is conducted by the Human Terrain Team (HTT). Consisting of between five to nine military and civilian personnel, the team is required to have a team leader, at least one social scientist and one research manager, and no fewer than two Human Terrain Analysts. Each team should also include at least one member who can speak the local language, and at least one woman.<sup>37</sup> The HTT is attached to a specific unit in the field and considered a military asset under the control of that unit's commander, who employs the HTT as he would any other military asset.<sup>38</sup>

The majority of the research work is conducted by social scientists, with the other team members offering analytical and data management support. The team leader serves as a primary liaison between the HTT and the military, while the research manager works with the social scientists to develop the research proposals, and assist with data collection and analysis. The Human Terrain Analyst is a local cultural and linguistic expert that can supplement any weaknesses the social scientists may have when it comes to the local population.<sup>39</sup>

This enables the social scientists to research the local area, come to an understanding of various cultural concerns, and advise the military on the best policies for interacting with the local population, and create a "Common Operating Picture in relation to the human terrain."<sup>40</sup> The HTS manual describes the role as being carried out as follows:

[U]sing pattern analysis to detect underlying cultural assumptions about the world and using cultural operational knowledge to keep units away from mistaken policy and practice and prevent the misapplication of force. They also support the commander's decision-making process by recommending options for the use of non-lethal effects to build trust, form partnerships and apply informed cultural knowledge to the problem solving and building solutions, all while mapping the human terrain of the unit area of operations as well as the local populations.<sup>41</sup>

The research conducted in this fashion is not only sent to the necessary recipients, but is also stored in a central repository, where it can be accessed by any officer or unit that requires it.<sup>42</sup>

In the field, the HTT has five primary roles incorporated into their mission to support the military unit to which they are attached. The first is to conduct a Cultural Preparation of the Environment (CPE), which consists of cultural research that can then be used to create the Research Design the unit requires. The second is to integrate its data and research into the Unit Planning Processes – in short, to bring the cultural data it has collected and use it for strategic planning for the unit prior to the launch of specific operations.<sup>43</sup> This will allow a unit to avoid cultural difficulties and interact with the local population in a positive way once the unit deploys.

Once the operations begin, the third role of the HTT commences. The HTT provides support to the ongoing operation, providing assessments to the unit commanders as events unfold, and helping to create adjustments based on the cultural landscape. The fourth role takes place both during and after operations, as the HTT assesses the impact of operations on the local population from a cultural level. The fifth role is one of training – the HTT provides training to every level of the unit it is supporting on all aspects of local culture, such as local religious holidays and tribal dynamics and local power structures.<sup>44</sup> These roles allow a military unit to increase its support from, and prevent accidental alienation of, the indigenous population. The HTT tours of duty are specifically designed to overlap the deployments of multiple units, so the training role extends to incoming units, providing a “cultural understanding start-point” for a new unit and its commander.<sup>45</sup>

The requirement for ethical behaviour is built into the HTS framework. Under best practices, the HTT handbook insists that research must adhere to the “ethics of Anthropology and Sociology.”<sup>46</sup> The HTT is forbidden to engage in Lethal Effects Targeting, and required to concentrate on the “non-lethal environment.”<sup>47</sup> Further, the HTT is not permitted to have any involvement with tactical questioning, in part due to the fact that such actions would endanger the relationship the HTT has with the local population.<sup>48</sup> This means that even if the HTT comes across intelligence regarding the location of a Taliban fighter in a village, they are not allowed to bring this to the attention of the unit commander.

While the HTS program places social scientists directly in the field, the Minerva Initiative is a more traditional academic research program. First announced on April 14, 2008 by US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Minerva funds university research related to issues of national security, with a stated goal of also building bridges between the social sciences and the Department of Defense.<sup>49</sup> This goal was approached via two methods: a Broad Agency Announcement in June 2008 and a partnership with the National Science Foundations in the same year.<sup>50</sup> The Minerva

Initiative's first call for proposals offered funding in its original five topics.<sup>51</sup> In 2010, the fifth topic was removed from the list, and two forthcoming topics of study were announced: "National Security Implications of Energy and Climate Change," and "New Theories of Deterrence."<sup>52</sup>

Approximately \$50 million was made available, with applicants receiving between \$0.5-3 million per year, with the average at \$1-1.5 million per annum. The research is unclassified and open-source.<sup>53</sup> While this is due to a requirement for openness, there is also a lack of information that needs to be filled. For example, in the case of Chinese Military and Technology Research, vast amounts of open source material existed without having been translated or made available to Western researchers and policy makers – Minerva research was funded to make this available.<sup>54</sup>

The guidelines set up for judging research proposals were as one might expect for funding for university-based research projects. The first two evaluation priorities are on scientific merit and relevance to the topic. The ability of the researcher's institution to perform the research is also taken into account, as is the impact of the research on other organizations conducting similar research.<sup>55</sup>

The two topics most directly related to influence and counter-insurgency operations are the Iraqi Perspectives Project and the Study of Terrorist Organizations and Ideologies. The Iraqi Perspectives Project examines the "political, social, and cultural workings and changes within Iraq during the years Saddam Hussein was in power."<sup>56</sup> While the exploration is a historical one, the projected impact is not – the Broad Agency Announcement states that it will "offer insights into the dynamics of how such authoritarian regimes retain power and legitimacy, how their social and cultural contexts may influence perceptions and decision making, and how they acted internationally,"<sup>57</sup> questions applicable to numerous regimes today.

The Study of Terrorist Organizations and Ideologies examines modern terrorism and its interactions on a cultural level, and also explores how to influence these interactions, providing an unofficial complement to the HTS system. The Broad Agency Announcement specifically identified the need for such studies:

[T]here is an urgent need to be able to locate the points of influence and characterize the processes necessary to influence populations that harbor terrorist organizations in diverse cultures as well as individuals who identify with terrorist group figures of note.[...] Development of models that can be used to explain and explore human behavior in this area – organized violence – will be especially helpful to the Department of Defense in understanding where organized violence is likely to erupt, what factors might explain its contagion, and how to circumvent its spread. Research on belief formation and emotional contagion will provide cultural advisors with better tools to understand the impact of operations on the local population. This research should also contribute to countermeasures to help revise or influence belief structures to reduce the likelihood of militant cells forming.<sup>58</sup>

Although some of the research in the Minerva Initiative is relevant to counter-insurgency, and all

of the research is applicable to policy, an ethical framework has been built into the project, as have accountability measures. Federal research funding is not available to lobby groups, and all researchers are required to submit annual progress reports. Human subjects are also protected by ethical guidelines protecting their rights and welfare, defined by Department of Defense guidelines, as well as Federal and State laws.<sup>59</sup>

## Issues

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As demonstrated by Project Camelot, the Human Terrain System, and the Minerva Initiative, the military use of social sciences does raise several practical and professional issues. This section provides a brief examination of a number of these issues. It is important to note that there is no question here of whether the social sciences should be used in conflict zones – an argument can be made that there is a moral obligation to make use of them to save lives, and in asymmetric warfare victory is difficult, if not impossible, without the social sciences. The issues revolve around the “how,” rather than the “whether” or the “why.”

The majority of these involve what can be called the “weaponization” of the social sciences.<sup>60</sup> For example, with Camelot stated to be a project designed to understand civil unrest in the developing world for the purpose of manipulating that unrest, this meant that research done could be used to either prevent a necessary revolution or cause an unnecessary revolution.<sup>61</sup> In both cases, a great deal of harm could be done, and thousands of lives lost.

This is not just an ethical concern. While the question of how research will be used is important, the military use of research can also have a negative impact on the ability of social scientists to conduct future research – as demonstrated by Project Camelot, once social science is associated with the military, the association may remain.<sup>62</sup> This impact can be a lasting one. Having set a precedent with the Human Terrain System where research was conducted under the aegis of the American Army, further social science research in Afghanistan and Iraq may be considered to be under that same aegis, even if it is not.<sup>63</sup> This can have an impact on the data, as Iraqi or Afghan locals may respond to a social scientist connected to the military differently than they would to an independent social scientist.

The question of who the research is conducted for, however, does lead to an additional problem, and that is the skewing of data by the researcher. For example, if social science research is conducted for military purposes, there is a risk that the research will only collect data useful for what the researcher thinks the military requires, leaving important data out.<sup>64</sup> This is one of the reasons that such care is taken to ensure the independence of researchers in the Minerva Initiative – when foreign policy and military activities are based on social science research, it is vital that an accurate picture is created so that the said policies and activities can be successful, and not create a backfire. In a worst-case scenario, this can be called “bad anthropology,” creating terrible unintended consequences. While these consequences may not always reflect on the data collection itself, their potential severity illustrates the necessity of accuracy and completeness in data collection and analysis.

A clear case of this happening was the torture scandal at Abu Ghraib in Iraq. The American military had come to believe through a 1973 study of Arab psychology that the Iraqis would respond to blackmail based on sexual humiliation, and attempted to use this to turn Iraqi men into informants against the insurgency.<sup>65</sup> However, while it was accurate that the Iraqi men would be shamed by sexual humiliation, the military had missed the fact that the Iraqis would

consider it a loss of honour that could only be regained by shedding blood.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, instead of influencing the Iraqis, the American military only tortured them while accomplishing little in regards to intelligence gathering or influence activities, causing ill will in the international community, with the Iraqis, and with the American public. While the Abu Ghraib incident serves as a cautionary tale of the dangers of using incomplete cultural information, it is also more likely a case of data having been ‘cherry-picked’ by the American military than on the side of the researcher. Had more recent, complete and accurate cultural information been used, the scandal and its aftershocks could have been avoided.

Some concerns regarding the use of social science in conflict areas are highly political. One concern is the reinforcement of colonialism or some form of neo-colonialism, where indigenous populations start being seen as ‘less-capable’ and in need of a ‘helping imperial hand’.<sup>67</sup> Particularly in conflict areas such as Afghanistan this may be a legitimate concern. Influence activities do attempt to manipulate the subject culture to achieve a specific result,<sup>68</sup> such as the defeat of Taliban or Al-Qaeda insurgents. While these activities can have an overall positive impact, such as taking measures against the narcotics trade and improving the status of women, it can be very easy to also attempt to impose to negative effect a specific world view reflecting our own cultural ideals, as opposed to the cultural and physical realities of the subjects, such as was attempted to disastrous effect during the first year of the American occupation of Iraq.

The rise of the insurgency in Iraq represented a worst-case scenario of post-conflict mismanagement and the imposition of cultural realities with little relation to the actual indigenous population. The occupation itself had been poorly planned from the beginning – the Defense Department planners had been denied access to the State Department’s long-term study of the requirements of an Iraq occupation.<sup>69</sup> The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), led by Paul Bremmer, proceeded to make mistake after mistake, all of which had a cumulative effect of alienating the local population. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, a major and influential religious power broker demanding that a constitution not be written until elections could be held, was ignored, alienating further sections of the population.<sup>70</sup> Despite warnings that it would render a large portion of the population unemployed, an aggressive program of de-Baathification was imposed,<sup>71</sup> with appeals placed in the hands of Ahmed Chalabi, an Iraqi exile who used his influence to disadvantage political opponents.<sup>72</sup> A final straw leading to the creation of a skilled insurgency was the disbanding of the Iraqi Army, which disenfranchised a large trained force.<sup>73</sup> Within one year, an invasion that had been viewed by the Iraqi public as a liberation became seen as an occupation.

With the CPA being increasingly disconnected from reality – major issues such as reopening the Baghdad stock exchange to restart basic commerce were set aside in favour of grand projects such as building a brand new, modern, and computerized stock exchange<sup>74</sup> – the number of unintended consequences increased. The militias took control of Iraq,<sup>75</sup> giving Al-Qaeda the opportunity to begin operations and find a new home. By February 2006, Al-Qaeda was able to increase sectarian tensions to the point of a full-scale civil war through a campaign of suicide bombings against Shia religious targets, solidifying its control over the Sunnis as their protector against Shia retaliation, and beginning undeclared state operations, imposing a harsh and brutal Taliban-style rule over what they would call the “Islamic State of Iraq.”<sup>76</sup> This situation would only be resolved once American forces were able to reconnect and align themselves with the

Iraqi people.<sup>77</sup>

Preventing such a disconnect between friendly forces and insurgents using the Human Terrain System in combat areas raises several issues of its own. The first is in regards to manpower and qualifications. While a skilled social scientist can be very effective in an HTS role, the program must first be able to attract skilled and professional social scientists. With the controversial nature of the program, at least in anthropology circles, the most qualified social scientists may not be willing to assist in the program for fear of professional ostracization.<sup>78</sup>

Social scientists are not soldiers, and a pre-deployment period of training, while providing some background for dealing with a crisis in a hostile environment such as Afghanistan, is no substitute for the basic and advanced training undertaken by soldiers.<sup>79</sup> HTS social scientists are placed in an extremely hostile environment, with one HTS social scientist informing this author that he had been subject to dozens of ambushes and IED attacks in the field, and dozens of rocket attacks in his place of billet. Soldiers attached to an HTS team are placed in a position where they must not only protect themselves, but also a number of civilians who may lack necessary training.<sup>80</sup> It can be argued that soldiers are under increased risk whenever untrained civilians are being escorted in a combat zone, and due to the fact that they have at least some training, that risk is lower when escorting HTS personnel. However, this is a more difficult proposition – an HTS team has extended interactions with the indigenous population in the combat zone (more so than other civilian observers and contractors may have), which places the social scientists and soldiers more directly in harm's way. And while there may be less risk than untrained civilians on average with an HTS team (due to the team's pre-deployment training), there remains an increased risk that can create casualties in both the HTS teams and their military escorts.

One possible solution is to increase the training of the HTS teams and provide them with enhanced weaponry. While this would decrease the risk factor for both the HTS team members and their military escorts, it would also risk placing the social scientists in a position where they can be perceived as having become soldiers. Part of the ability of the HTS teams to conduct their research relies on them being researchers first – as noted above, the HTS manual specifically states that the researchers must do no harm. To provide the researchers with proper military training would risk creating an ethical dilemma: are they soldiers or researchers, and if they are soldiers, how can they maintain the ethical requirements of the HTS?

Questions have also been raised about whether the HTS teams have been as effective as advertised. While newspapers such as *The New York Times* have advertised the effectiveness of the program,<sup>81</sup> this has been met with scepticism in some circles. The CEAUSSIC report found that quality control was an ongoing concern among military units, with some HTS teams providing material below the standard of information already acquired by troops on the ground and intelligence officers.<sup>82</sup> One HTS participant expressed similar concern to this author – the social scientist had found that while she had done useful work, at times the information she collected was not properly disseminated, and she noted a lack of teamwork in the social scientists in the program.

Another issue raised is whether the results gained by the HTS is worth the cost, both in funds

spent and the military impact. As Connable pointed out, the HTS was a “quick fix” used to rapidly build knowledge on the ground for soldiers coming into theatre<sup>83</sup> – however, both American army and marine intelligence organs are trained to conduct the same influence and intelligence gathering operations.<sup>84</sup> Rather than using the HTS to provide a band-aid solution while building army intelligence capabilities, the Department of Defense has instead increased funding the program, with the apparent intention of making it a permanent feature of U.S. Army operations.<sup>85</sup> This has been met with some resistance, particularly in the Marines, whose intelligence organs were able to perform the same services as the HTS program without the need for civilian social science contractors.<sup>86</sup> Connable has argued that by solidifying the HTS program into American military operations at the expense of building internal capability, the Department of Defense is sabotaging the development of sustained intelligence capability.<sup>87</sup>

This raises an important question. Should the American Department of Defense be solidifying what was originally a “quick fix” solution, or building capability? On one hand, it is important to have internal capabilities for gathering cultural information that can be useful in influence activities, and a soldier capable of gathering this information will not only be at less risk in the field, but also know what is the most important information to gather for military purposes. On the other hand, a civilian social scientist will be trained to pick up on aspects of culture that a military intelligence officer may miss, and the use of contractors allows the HTS to adapt itself to new theatres of war through the simple expedient of hiring the appropriate experts.

Much of the issue revolves around the duplication of services. While the HTS is used to gather cultural information that can be used for influence activities, this is not a new idea in doctrine. The British army doctrine states that culture-specific training must be built into future operations both in preparation and on the ground,<sup>88</sup> and the Canadian Forces doctrine calls for counter-insurgency forces to gain the support of the local population through many of the same principles.<sup>89</sup>

Finally, the controversial nature of the HTS program does raise concerns inside the social science community. While much of the social science community has few issues with assisting government and military operations, American anthropology remains highly sensitive to the concerns raised by Project Camelot, and the danger of a backlash against the participating social scientists exists.<sup>90</sup> While at this point the American Anthropology Association has expressed concerns more in regards to the competence of the execution of the HTS program than the ethics, it does raise questions such as whether participating anthropologists can maintain the ethical standards required both by the field and the HTS program, given the temptations towards acting in a military intelligence capacity.<sup>91</sup> When considering recommendations on these issues, any use of the social sciences for military purpose, either in regards to research or practical work inside a conflict zone, must keep the potential impact on the social scientists in mind.

## Recommendations

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Canadian combat operations in Afghanistan are on the verge of ceasing, allowing the Canadian Forces an operational pause in which to learn from the Afghanistan campaign and build new capabilities. This has a major impact on the following recommendations.

While the United States military has made some effective use of the Human Terrain System and Human Terrain Teams, this is not likely the best road for the Canadian Forces to follow. There are both operational and ethical concerns in the use of Human Terrain Teams, which were implemented in the American Army in large part because of an intelligence deficit on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Canadian Forces counter-insurgency doctrine already calls for engaging with the local population on a cultural level to gain support.<sup>92</sup> While these requirements may be enhanced by the use of civilian specialists in the battlefield, the risks are likely greater than the rewards, particularly considering the funding levels of the Canadian Forces in comparison to the American Army. With a smaller organization and an operational pause, the Canadian Forces are in a situation where a short term or immediate solution is not necessary, and a wiser course of action would be the expansion of internal capability in regards to the social sciences.

Part of this should be in terms of officer education. If asymmetric warfare and counter insurgency are to be primary roles of the Canadian Forces for the foreseeable future, the social sciences should play a large role in all officer education. The next generation of Canadian officers should have a firm grounding in anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies. This will allow them to undertake actions similar to the Human Terrain Teams in conflict zones. This would also require the expansion of the current Social Sciences department of the Royal Military College to become a multidisciplinary department incorporating anthropology and cultural studies, and a selection of whose courses would be required for all degrees. The expansion of capabilities to allow trained military officers to conduct similar tasks as the Human Terrain System would take only four years from the expansion of the Social Sciences department – in short, the length of time it would take to graduate a class at Royal Military College of Canada.

This does not mean that civilian social scientists should not be involved in military activities – indeed, up-to-date research and new perspectives are necessary for the application of influence activities in asymmetric warfare. However, where possible, this should take the form of cultural briefings during pre-deployment training of troops on their way to the battlefield. This is already doctrine in the Canadian Forces – troops deploying to Afghanistan receive training regarding Pashtun and Afghan culture prior to deployment. The increased involvement of social scientists and cultural experts in this pre-deployment training would ensure that much of the intelligence gap noted by the American army in Afghanistan and Iraq would be mitigated, if not avoided, in future Canadian deployments. This would also protect the involved social scientists from any backlash caused by any potential harm done in the field. Since they are only involved in training, they are not directly involved in the actions of soldiers on the ground, and should mistakes be made, it would be the responsibility of the Canadian Forces, rather than social

scientists.

It is, however, important that all information used by the Canadian Forces remain as up-to-date as possible, and this would require additional social sciences research regarding conflict zones, both specific and in general. For this, the best implementation would likely be to fund social sciences research *a la* the Minerva Initiative and Project Camelot. This funding must be structured in a manner informed by both the successes and failures of the American models. The backlash of Project Camelot must be avoided, and social scientists must be permitted to research in a free and open way that will not cause harm to the research subjects, the reputations of the researchers, or Canadian soldiers in the field.

Openness is key to any military social science research. Any research conducted funded by the Canadian Forces must remain open and unclassified, and made accessible to other social scientists. This serves a number of purposes. First, it prevents any accusations of the misuse of research, as nothing is hidden. Second, it allows social scientists to publish their research openly, not only adding to their own prestige, but also increasing the attractiveness of seeking military funding. Third, every publication will increase knowledge in general, ensuring a higher quality of work for future projects.

Part of this openness would be following the American example of Minerva, where research projects would be required to declare military funding. This requirement would also serve as a safety net for the rest of the social sciences – if all projects involving military funding must have that funding declared, then it will protect projects that do not receive military funding from having a military association assumed.

In regards to ethics, the American Army and Department of Defense are already engaged in practices worthy of duplication. For military funded research, a declaration of principles should be drafted, in line with current academic ethical practices regarding research involving human subjects. All social scientists receiving funding from the Canadian Forces or working with them should be required to sign this declaration. Any researchers who violate the terms of this declaration in their research should be stripped of their funding. To take these measures would not just provide protection to the funded researchers from a backlash from their fellow researchers, but it would also send a clear message to the social science community that the Canadian Forces understands their ethical concerns, and is prepared to do what is necessary to address them.

While these measures should provide a steady stream of enthusiastic researchers, there remains the issue of quality control. While good and accurate research can mean the difference between victory or defeat in an asymmetric campaign, bad research can cause a large number of unintended negative consequences, such as the misunderstandings in Iraqi culture that led to the torture scandal at Abu Ghaib. Therefore, it would not be sufficient for the Canadian Forces to merely fund research, but this research must be funded and vetted in such a way to ensure quality and accuracy.

Part of this must be a projected attitude from the Canadian Forces – it must be made clear to researchers and the public that the Canadian Forces are not afraid to receive bad news, and will

not penalize researchers for findings that contradict perceived beliefs, or suggest that a current strategy or doctrine is incorrect for the current campaign. This is important for two reasons. First, with the lives of Canadian soldiers and local civilians at risk in any asymmetric campaign, the ability to adapt to new situations is vital for success, and necessary to minimize casualties. Second, this will mitigate, and hopefully minimize the danger of skewed data, as researchers will feel free to pursue data no matter where it may lead, rather than tailoring it to what they perceive the Canadian Forces require. Additionally, in response to the likely controversy caused by the revelations in *Rolling Stone* regarding American influence activities against senators,<sup>93</sup> the Canadian Forces must make it a public mandate that social sciences and influence activities will be used only for military operations, and never against Canadian policy makers.

Maintaining the professionalism of social scientists working with the Canadian Forces would also help ensure the quality of their work. Where possible, social scientists should be working through their universities rather than through the Department of National Defence – funding should be according to the same model as Minerva, where researchers apply for funding for their projects, and it is provided to the researcher via their institution. This separation between the Canadian Forces and the researchers would maintain the military involvement as one of funding – rather than directing – research. It would also ensure that the researchers remain in a professional academic environment, which may have a distinct positive impact on the quality of the research they conduct.

Another important step would be the appointment of a peer review panel for all research, both at the proposal stage and in regards to the final product. This would serve as additional quality control, as well as establish to the social science community the commitment of the military to good and useful research. This panel would ideally be of experts from a number of related fields, and include experts on the research topic on hand. A possible model for the final peer review could be the thesis defence model used by universities for graduate student dissertations.

## Conclusion

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The importance of military strategy informed by the social sciences cannot be underestimated. It must also be understood that this is not a new, or recent relationship – the social sciences have been a part of governance and military strategy since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. What is recent is our efforts to define this relationship, and make better use of it.

In these efforts, particularly in regards to Project Camelot, there have been missteps. While the social sciences are important to counter-insurgency operations, how they are used remains an important ethical question. In regards to Camelot, massive damage was caused between the social sciences and the military in the United States when these questions were not addressed prior to the commencement of the project. Indeed, the Project Camelot stated aims were such that it would have been surprising if they had not caused such a backlash.

The current American military approach to the social sciences is far more informed by ethics today than it was in the 1960s. Both the Human Terrain System and the Minerva Initiative are built with ethical concerns in mind – researchers are not allowed to do direct harm, even if their research will be used to defeat insurgencies and influence the policy and actions of American adversaries. This extends to information on the ground that may be of military use – HTS operatives are not permitted to turn over data for targeting insurgents.

This incorporation of the social sciences into military operations is as important to Canada and the Canadian Forces as it is to the United States military. The Canadian Forces will be fighting asymmetric wars in the future, and these wars cannot be won without the use of the social sciences in influence activities. To set the best policy for this use requires Canadian policy makers to learn from American successes and failures, and create a policy that meets Canadian Forces needs. This includes the increased development of internal social sciences capabilities and cultural information gathering capabilities during our upcoming operational pause, as well as the funding of new and useful social science research into potential conflict areas. With a carefully considered policy and funding to social science research and improved intelligence and influence activities capabilities, the Canadian Forces stands a better chance of being prepared for the next war, no matter where it may be.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> *The Significance of Culture to the Military*. Joint Doctrine Note 1/09. Ministry of Defence, UK, 2009. p. 4-2 to 4-5. Also Bergen, p. 276-277. Also Paul K. Davis & Kim Cragin, eds. *Social Science for Counter-Terrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*. Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 2009. p. xxvii-xxviii, xlv-xlv.

<sup>2</sup> *Counter Insurgency Operations (English) B-GL-323-004/FP-003*, 2008-12-13. p. 3-2.

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<sup>11</sup> Irving Louis Horowitz. "The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot." Published in Horowitz, ed. *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship between Social Science and Practical Politics*. p. 4-5.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6, 8.

<sup>13</sup> "Document Number 1." Published in Horowitz, ed. *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship between Social Science and Practical Politics*. p. 47-48. The document goes on to state:

Somewhat more specifically, its objectives are:

*First*, to devise procedures for assessing the potential for internal war within national societies;

*Second*, to identify with increased degrees of confidence those actions which a government might take to relieve conditions which are assessed as giving rise to a potential for internal war; and

*Finally*, to assess the feasibility of prescribing the characteristics of a system for obtaining and using the essential information needed for doing the above two things.

<sup>14</sup> Horowitz, "The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot," p. 11-13.

<sup>15</sup> Jorge Montes. "A Communist Commentary on Camelot." Published in Horowitz, ed. *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship between Social Science and Practical Politics*. p. 232-233.

<sup>16</sup> Horowitz, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>18</sup> Marshal Sahlins. "The Established Order: Do Not Fold, Spindle, or Mutilate." Published in Horowitz, ed. *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship between Social Science and Practical Politics*. p. 72-73.

<sup>19</sup> Montes, p. 234-235.

<sup>20</sup> Horowitz, p. 16-17.

<sup>21</sup> A.L. Madian and A.N. Oppenheim. "Knowledge for what? The Camelot Legacy." *The British Journal of Sociology*, 20,3 (1969). p. 328-329. Also McFate, "Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship."

<sup>22</sup> McFate. "Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship." McFate notes that other anthropologists, such as Tom Harrisson and Cora Du Bois were engaged in covert operations and running resistance movements in World War II.

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- <sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 90-91, 273.
- <sup>71</sup> Peter L. Bergen. *The Longest War: The Enduring Conflict Between America and Al-Qaeda*. New York: Free Press, 2011. p. 156.
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- <sup>73</sup> Bergen, p. 156. Also Chandrasekaran, p. 86-88.
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- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 289-290.
- <sup>76</sup> Bergen, p. 164, 267.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 267, 271-272, 288-296.
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- <sup>81</sup> David Rohde. "Army Enlists Anthropology in War Zones." *The New York Times*, October 5, 2007.
- <sup>82</sup> CEAUSSIC, p. 27, 31.
- <sup>83</sup> Connable, p. 59.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 62-63.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 64.
- <sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 62.
- <sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 64.
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Thus far, warfare in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has been more asymmetric than conventional, with the population rather than the landscape serving as the battlefield. The enemies have changed – instead of fighting against nations, non-state actors such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda are primary security threats. To succeed in combating modern insurgencies in areas of operation such as Afghanistan and Iraq, it is necessary to engage with the local population on a level only possible with the use of social sciences.

However, the military use of the social sciences remains controversial, due in large part to the aftershocks of Project Camelot, which alienated the field of anthropology from the US government. This leads to a difficult question: what are the issues involved in the military use of the social sciences, and what approach should the Canadian Forces take?

This paper provides a brief examination of the military use of the social sciences, and its issues. The paper begins with a history of the military use of social sciences in the last hundred years, from T.E. Lawrence to the modern Human Terrain System and the Minerva Initiative. The paper then takes a more detailed look at the two primary American implementations of social sciences by the US military, the Human Terrain System and the Minerva Initiative. This is followed by an examination of the professional and practical issues raised. The paper then closes with recommendations for building capability in regards to the social sciences and the Canadian Forces.

Jusqu'à ce jour, la conduite de la guerre au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle a été plus asymétrique que conventionnelle; la population, et non le paysage, tient lieu de champ de bataille. Les ennemis ont changé – on ne se bat plus contre des pays, mais plutôt contre des acteurs non étatiques tels que les talibans et Al-Qaïda, qui sont devenus les principales menaces à la sécurité. Pour combattre avec succès les insurrections des temps modernes dans des secteurs d'opérations tels que l'Afghanistan et l'Iraq, il est nécessaire de mettre à contribution la population locale à un niveau qui n'est possible qu'en recourant aux sciences sociales.

Cependant, l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales demeure controversée, en grande partie à cause des contrecoups du Projet Camelot, qui a amené les anthropologues prendre du recul à l'égard des activités du gouvernement des États-Unis. Cela engendre une question difficile : Quels sont les enjeux de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales, et quelle approche doivent adopter les Forces canadiennes à cet égard?

Le présent article donne un bref aperçu de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales ainsi que des enjeux connexes. L'article brosse d'abord l'historique de l'utilisation militaire des sciences sociales au cours du siècle dernier, de T.E. Lawrence jusqu'au concept moderne de Système du contexte humain et à l'Initiative Minerva. Il présente ensuite de façon plus détaillée les principales utilisations des sciences sociales par les forces armées des États-Unis, à savoir le Système du contexte humain et l'Initiative Minerva. L'article examine ensuite les questions professionnelles et pratiques soulevées, puis conclut en formulant des recommandations pour le renforcement des capacités en ce qui concerne les sciences sociales et les Forces canadiennes.

14. **KEYWORDS, DESCRIPTORS or IDENTIFIERS** (Technically meaningful terms or short phrases that characterize a document and could be helpful in cataloguing the document. They should be selected so that no security classification is required. Identifiers, such as equipment model designation, trade name, military project code name, geographic location may also be included. If possible keywords should be selected from a published thesaurus, e.g. Thesaurus of Engineering and Scientific Terms (TEST) and that thesaurus identified. If it is not possible to select indexing terms which are Unclassified, the classification of each should be indicated as with the title.)

**military; social sciences; professional and ethical issues; non-state actors**