SHARING INTELLIGENCE CULTURE: WORKING WITH FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

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Abstract

United States (U.S.) civilian and military intelligence services increasingly have engaged with local intelligence services, either in an advisory role or direct coordination or liaison. In many cases, the intelligence officers have tended to try to remake the local intelligence services in the image of U.S. intelligence structures and procedures, with these efforts rather futile in most cases. One factor that has led to considerable frustration and potential failure has been a lack of understanding of the culture of local intelligence systems. Understanding both the subtleties of an area's social norms and mores, and the bureaucratic and historical cultures of other intelligence services remain critical factors in long-term success. Using case studies of environments in which established intelligence services have worked with emergent intelligence agencies, this paper examines the requirements for incorporating both larger cultural approaches and detailed knowledge of other intelligence bureaucracies.

Introduction

Three trends have done much to shape United States intelligence initiatives over the past two decades. The first is planning and (fitfully) initiating changes to the Intelligence Community structure and to improve analytical tradecraft. The second has been a push for improved intelligence sharing, both internally and with foreign countries. The third — particularly germane more recently — has been an emphasis on what has become known as cultural intelligence. Each of these areas has received considerable academic attention. Much less analysis, however, has been conducted on what might be viewed as the situations in which all three trends collide, namely how they interact with each other when U.S. intelligence trainers and educators work with foreign intelligence services to improve their capabilities and when U.S. intelligence personnel work as liaison officers with other countries' services.

The thrust of this paper is to examine some U.S. advise and assist missions and intelligence liaison roles with foreign intelligence services in an effort to draw lessons as to the impact of cultural issues on working directly with foreign intelligence services. Two lessons demonstrated by the case studies should be

stressed. First, broader cultural issues are important. Second, however, is that bureaucracies — including intelligence bureaucracies — also have their own bureaucratic cultures that also are critical to understand. Primarily using case studies, this paper argues that broadening the concept of cultural intelligence to include both larger cultural factors and idiosyncratic bureaucratic factors are critical in successful intelligence cooperation and training. Most of the attention in this paper is on U.S. efforts; both because those are the ones that the author is most familiar with, and because they have received the most public attention. Many of the lessons certainly can be expanded to the 'Five Eyes' agencies, all of whom have been involved in intelligence advisory missions in various geographical areas. Even within the Five Eyes world, however, it is probable that some cultural differences still exist between intelligence services even though there is "collective agency" among them (Dittmer, 2015). It should be noted that the stress in the discussion is on process, not theory. Several other authors have viewed the broader theoretical aspects of intelligence liaison (Lefebvre, 2003; Svendsen, 2009).

The Broader Concept of Cultural Intelligence

The term 'cultural intelligence' has become increasingly common in recent years. A good practical definition of cultural intelligence is "…the ability to engage in a set of behaviors that use language, interpersonal skills and qualities appropriately tuned to the culture-based values and attitudes of the people with whom one interacts" (Center for Advanced Research Studies, 2006, p. 1). One somewhat complicating factor is that the use of cultural intelligence has two rather different usages. The first is what might be considered the broader and rather academic usage. With this approach, the focus is on "…an individual's capability to function effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (Ang, et al., 2011, p. 582); Ng and Earley (2006) offer a similar conceptual basis. The second usage — and the one focused on in this paper — is its use as another and somewhat emerging intelligence discipline by governments and their security forces.

In some ways, the criticality of cultural intelligence may be even greater than usually assumed. Two examples suggest the normal, rather limited view as to cultural intelligence. Most intelligence training focuses on the traditional intelligence disciplines (commonly known as 'ints'): human intelligence, signals intelligence, and imagery intelligence. Benjamin T. Delp (2008) — who also argues that two types of new 'ints', ethnographic and cultural, should be used — suggests that "The War on Terror requires the United States and her allies to conduct military operations on foreign lands. When these foreign lands have

principles and traditions that differ from the Judeo-Christian roots seen in the U.S., the military is already handicapped" (Delp, 2008, p. 5). Parenthetically, it might be noted that the traditional 'ints' reflect the collection means; using the term 'int' for cultural intelligence might be somewhat of a misnomer in that it represents an intelligence 'target' rather than a means of collection, which would almost certainly focus on human intelligence, largely open source.

Despite the latter caveat, the term cultural intelligence certainly has entered the lexicon. Its recognized importance at policy level might be demonstrated by the statement of Major General Anthony Zinni, former commander of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia. This statement indicates that intelligence services likely will receive additional taskings for which they have not had traditional responsibilities:

> What we need is cultural intelligence. What makes them [the faction leaders and people] tick? Who makes the decisions? What is it about their society that's so remarkably different in their values, in the way they think, compared to my values and the way I think in my western, white-man mentality?...What you need to know isn't what our intel apparatus is geared to collect for you, and to analyze, and to present to you. (Coles, 2006, p. 8)

The point that might be made in both cases is that the need for cultural intelligence usually is stressed when dealing with cultures that might be viewed as particularly 'alien.' However realistic this might be in terms of current operations, it seems to presuppose that there are only certain areas where it might be critical. Moreover, in practical terms, cultural intelligence largely has focused on environments in which counterinsurgency is the driving interest; how well this has worked even as a counterinsurgency tool is debatable (Duyvesteyn, 2011). In many ways, the requirements for cultural intelligence have become simply a subset of the broader debates surrounding counterinsurgency strategy, broadly viewed as the 'population centric' camp by analysts such as Kilcullen (2010) and the (for want of a better term) the 'military centric' camp as exemplified by Gentile (2013). This debate continues to be very active, particularly given the failures in Afghanistan. Proponents of the military centric approach have tended to put much less emphasis on cultural intelligence.

The Countries That 'Look Like Us'

The requirements for cultural intelligence should, however, be considered more broadly than simply as a tool for counterinsurgency or as a focus on 'alien'

cultures. Even areas or countries that ostensibly somewhat 'look like' countries with long-established structures typically will have somewhat subtle, but very important cultural differences that easily can be missed. This certainly includes the foreign intelligence services with which the U.S. works. In practical terms, this might be particularly important in recently democratized countries, especially in Eastern or Central Europe.

One additional potential issue with cultural intelligence could be exemplified by a proponent: "Across the board, the national security structure needs to be infused with anthropology, a discipline invented to support warfighting in the tribal zone" (McFate, 2005, p. 43). It might be noted that the use of actual academic anthropologists — presumably a valuable asset for cultural intelligence — in Afghanistan as part of the Human Terrain Team concept became very contentious among many in the academic community (American Anthropological Association, 2007). It is unlikely that such attitudes will change.

Means of Acquiring Cultural Intelligence

There are several ways of gaining cultural intelligence; some can be 'in-house', such as the U.S. military's foreign area officer program under various titles in the different military services, intelligence case officers who have worked in particular geographic areas, and some special operations units. One potentially useful source that commonly has been overlooked (particularly in working with foreign intelligence services) has been the counterintelligence offices in intelligence services. The counterintelligence officers can provide very useful guidance on how other services operate and on their intelligence cultures. Diplomatic niceties aside, this can apply as much to 'friendly' services as those viewed as hostile.

In recent years, however, an equal stress has been placed on external sources. Perhaps the most common is through regional experts, or more directly by émigrés from the particular region (in many cases, the two categories may in fact be synonymous); the use of émigrés in particular deserves some consideration. The representativeness of émigrés can vary broadly, especially in the case of a country like Iran where many of the émigrés are outside of the country as a result of the revolution. This could be broadened to cover other countries in which émigrés left due to political reasons. In some ways, the situation may be analogous to the historical example going back to the Russian Revolution. There were significant groups (at least in numbers) of 'White Russians' and royalists who were scattered all over Europe and to a lesser degree, the U.S. For decades after the revolution, they were famed for hanging around coffee houses, plotting

and scheming to no great purpose. At the same time, many European governments relied on their cultural 'expertise' and their connections (frequently fictitious) to contacts still within the Soviet Union.

More recently, there was a similar pattern in the case of Iraq; Ahmed Chalabi and other members of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) in exile had significant impact on the U.S. administration in its images of Iraq under Saddam and in reporting on conditions on the ground. Again, their actual contacts with people still in Iraq were questionable at best. Some U.S. policies seemed to be based directly on INC images of the situation, rather than potentially more accurate (and less biased) Iraqi sources (Bonin, 2011).

In practice, a common external source, particularly for military intelligence units, has been the use of contract interpreters in countries such as Iraq or Afghanistan for 'explaining' local norms; this has presented its own set of problems. In the author's case in Iraq, he worked with interpreters who had been anything from a taxi driver to a liquor store owner. In some cases, they had been living in the U.S. for up to 20 years; although their Arabic might have been fine (although not necessarily close to the Iraqi dialect), most were thoroughly assimilated in U.S. culture. As such, de facto reliance on them (which was all too easy) for understanding local culture was largely ill-advised.

There have been many critics of cultural intelligence — particularly of shorter cultural intelligence training programs — who argue that it can easily devolve into reinforcing stereotypes. One study found that high-performing students in such courses increased their cultural awareness and cultural intelligence, but lower-performing students "increased their endorsement of stereotypes that were not endorsed by cultural psychology research" (Buchtel, 2013, p. 40). At worst, these types of approaches can lead to what Edward Said describes as 'orientalism' (Said, 1978). Porter (2007) further argues that such stereotypes have had direct impact on U.S. military strategy. One of the issues involving stereotypes is how to distinguish them from cultural studies and analysis; the line between cultural patterns and stereotypes can be very hazy. One example might be offered in the case of Iraq; much of the 'cultural' training focused on might be viewed as traditional Arab culture and in effect rural cultural patterns. The main strategic focus, however, was on Baghdad and other urban areas whose populace had different social patterns. A somewhat vague and overly broad view of culture, particularly when used in terms of regional cultures (that in fact normally differ significantly within regions) is unlikely to provide the tools necessary for effective coordination with and adequate support to other countries' intelligence services. Ultimately, the key difference is acquiring sufficient actual knowledge

of a particular culture (and ongoing changes to it) that valid assessments can be drawn.

Having said that, the issue of national or cultural psychology can be very slippery. It is certainly fair to say that many if not most members of non-Western cultures view the world differently than do Americans or other Westerners. What complicates things, though, is that cultural boundaries are very permeable. This probably is especially the case with decision makers, who are much more likely to have had better education and more exposure to other cultures. As such, coming up with a template that "Iranians/Arabs think this way" might be a somewhat useful shorthand cultural exercise, but can be terribly misleading if applied too broadly.

The Issue of Intelligence Culture: Bureaucratic & Operational Cultures

Although these broader issues of culture — whether Western or otherwise — have considerable impact on governance in particular countries and areas, established bureaucratic cultures also play a critical role. This certainly has been the case with intelligence services; there have been an increasing number of studies dealing with the impact of 'national culture' on intelligence services and their operations (Bonthous, 1994; Gill et al., 2008). All these cultural issues may apply when working with a foreign intelligence service, but most intelligence services have their own relatively unique bureaucratic and operational cultures. This, of course, applies to any organization, not only intelligence services. Kubicek et al. (2019) found that "cultural intelligence is positively related to organisational culture, while cross-cultural role conflict, ambiguity and overload are negatively associated with organisational culture" (p. 1059). Even if bureaucratic structures might look identical on paper, the organizations' members and operations are shaped by history, political systems, and broader cultural norms. The key point is that even where these factors may be generally similar, there almost always will be local peculiarities in how the organizations actually function. This certainly is as true of intelligence services as it is of other groups.

In particular, larger national issues and traditions can drive the analytical mindsets of intelligence members. O'Connell's argument is very germane to this issue:

> States may also take different approaches co analysis founded in their societal, political, and historical context. National cultural perspectives on the world influence the perception of national threat and opportunity,

cultural and ethical boundaries, limits on the pursuit of intelligence information, and the link between intelligence and covert operations. Even in regions that ostensibly share somewhat similar cultural perspectives and priorities, such as Britain and continental Europe, nuances create vastly different structures for intelligence gathering. (O'Connell, 2004, p. 193)

At times, simply getting into the cultural mindset of governments and their publics on the local connotations of the term 'intelligence' can be the most critical starting point. In many cases, even seemingly synonymous words can have very different connotations. As one example, in Arabic, either 'mukhabarat' or 'istaqhbarat' can be used for intelligence services. In Iraq, the former term however was used for Saddam's secret police and decidedly was not popular if used instead of the more currently used 'istaqhbarat;' Such subtleties must be accounted for when working with other services. Matei and Bruneau note similar linguistic distinctions in some European countries (Matei & Bruneau, 2011).

The organizational and bureaucratic culture within intelligence services can have a major impact on their receptivity to foreign instruction and advising. Although couched in terms of intelligence liaison, Fagersten's description of intelligence organizational culture can apply equally well to problems with liaison or advising. He argues that intelligence agencies are "particularly effective environments" for developing unique bureaucratic structures because of low staff mobility, and their contacts with other organizations circumscribed (Fagersten, 2010, p. 504).

As one author notes, one likely background reason for the long-standing United States-United Kingdom (U.S.-U.K.) intelligence cooperation extends beyond simply effective transactional needs: "Close personal ties between the social and political elite of the two countries provided cultural insights, trust, and goodwill that encouraged cooperation" (Moe, 2015, p. 120). This point was further emphasized by Sir Stephen Lander, the former Director General of the U.K. Security Service, who argued that the U.S.-U.K. intelligence relationship involved "… a list of softer issues about personalities, shared experiences, friends in adversity, etc. which may not carry political or public weight but matter in institutional relationships, particularly those which have an operational element" (Lander, 2004, p. 487). The expectation that such seemingly close broader cultural ties will lead to easy intelligence cooperation should be tempered, however. Bureaucratic cultures within the intelligence services themselves can play an equally important role (De Graaff et al., 2016); at times, in fact, despite very compatible societal and governmental systems, cooperation can remain very

problematic (Fagersten, 2010). This case is even more convoluted because domestic police and intelligence services of the countries involved reportedly have difficulties in cooperation, much less collaboration between the countries' services.

An important factor is the starting point from which some foreign intelligence services have begun; this certainly was the case with many (if not the vast majority) of former Eastern Bloc countries as they were trying to establish new intelligence systems. One of the major — if not the overwhelming — impetus for most former communist countries was to purge the former security officials. Maior has argued that "escaping the legacy of past practices" was the main goal of the newly established intelligence services, with effectiveness likely a much lower priority (Maior, 2012, p. 221). This is not to argue that this was in fact not an absolute necessity for any number of reasons, but at the same time, for many foreign services it created essentially a tabula rasa in terms of actual experience and knowledge of intelligence processes. The Czech Republic offered a typical example of the underlying issues: " …former dissidents were not usually a good match for intelligence work, and in its first ten years the Czech intelligence community 'suffered some spectacular failures, registered a few considerable successes and had its fair share of scandals, particularly in the mid-'90s'" (Lefebvre, 2011, p. 693).

One aspect of this is that in some cases of countries emerging from dictatorship, they have begun their intelligence operations by stressing their relative degree of transparency. Using Romania as an example, the SRI [Serviciul Român de Informații] created the Center for Information on Security Culture on 30 September 2003 in conjunction with civilian academics, many viewed as dissidents by the previous regime. This Center operates in conjunction with the European Institute for Risk, Security, and Communication Management, and it is "opened for co-operation with experts from Non-governmental Organizations, independent civil specialists and universitarians [sic]" (Romanian Intelligence Service, n.d.). In discussions with some of the members of the center and SRI officials, it was clear that one of the main goals of the center was to increase trust by key academics and opinion leaders in the SRI. Mirroring this effort, the SRI also formed the Department for the Liaison with Public Authorities and Non-Governmental Organizations. Such outreach efforts certainly have become more prominent among the U.S. and other Western countries but are less advanced than in many Eastern countries. Understanding these historical precedents and how they drive structures and operations is important for working with these agencies.

Focusing primarily on Romania, Matei and Bruneau noted (correctly) that "we learned that in many countries, policymakers, for various reasons, either do not care, or even if they do, do not know how to deal with intelligence reform" (Matei & Bruneau, 2011, p. 658). This attitude — which may be more common than commonly assumed — certainly can impact on the actual effectiveness of training and advising programs. In a real sense, in many cases the key for effective intelligence advising may lie at a higher level than with the services themselves. Unless the issues are addressed at multiple levels, actual long-term improvements may be very difficult.

Again, using the Romanian Intelligence Service as a model, there were two somewhat competing cultural patterns in working for improvement; the first might be called the remnants of previous patterns. Even though the SRI has been trying to turn its back on the Securitate era and is intended in some ways to be the 'anti-Securitate', internal operational patterns do not necessarily vanish as a result of good intentions. As one participant noted, this particularly has been the case with the analytical side, where the habit of adhering to the 'official line' in conducting analysis has been difficult to eradicate (Matei & Niţu, 2012).

The other aspect of internal culture is the input of new blood into the intelligence services versus the old ways of doing things. Almost all post-communist states that have developed fully democratic regimes (which of course certainly does not include all these countries) have made concerted efforts to incorporate new members into the intelligence services. In large measure, this was not only a matter of internal dynamics, but even more importantly to gain public acceptance of the new agencies; a further complication was finding new hires that had the background for intelligence work. For example, the Romanian SRI hired mainly "from university faculties of literature and law" because disciplines such as political science and international relations had not thrived under the communist regime (Matei & Niţu, 2012, p. 712).

Clearly, such an influx of new personnel and their educational background created a generation gap between the new entries and the few remaining older intelligence officers. Such a cultural shift was not limited to new junior officers; a CIA officer who was sent to Lithuania as it was regaining its independence tells an interesting anecdote about the newly appointed chiefs of its intelligence services:

> Laurinkus and Butkevicius…both confessed to knowing little about intelligence. Laurinkus, who spoke some English and had visited friends in Massachusetts several times in the recent past, showed me two

paperbacks. "This is all I know about intelligence. They are my guides but I think we need more," he laughed nervously…Neither book would make CIA's recommended reading list. One was *CIA Diary* by Philip Agee, an exposé by an Agency-officer-turned-traitor who cooperated with Cuban intelligence to reveal the identities of CIA officers. The other was *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* by John Marks and Victor Marchetti, a harsh critique of the Agency published in 1974. Max had bought both in a Boston bookstore after learning he would be tapped to run the nation's spy service. (Sulick, 2006, p. 6)

Many of the same countries also made a point of avoiding having too close a connection between their intelligence services or giving any one service too much power; historical lessons certainly provided ample grounds for this approach. At the same time, however, in practical terms this certainly has had impacts on U.S. and long-standing NATO countries' efforts to stress intelligence interagency cooperation among the host country's services. However effective or ineffective the U.S. interagency process has in fact been, this typically has been a standard training and advising thrust of U.S. efforts with other countries. Understanding the historical realities of the barriers to such training goals can either facilitate these training outcomes through better approaches, or in fact, may provide grounds for simply not stressing this topic as an achievable goal, at least in the near term.

Over time, of course, some bureaucratic cultures between intelligence services can converge; this particularly is true of some of the newer established democracies in Europe. Also, some European initiatives on mutual intelligence cooperation such as the Club of Berne and other EU and NATO initiatives likely have created some convergence of national intelligence cultures (Lander, 2004, p. 489). This also has applied to at least some transatlantic intelligence relationships (Aldrich, 2009). Nevertheless, it is very unlikely that many of the differences actually will be eliminated. Studies on the various European Union intelligence services continue to find differences in their operational cultures (Estevens, 2020).

Sharing Intelligence Culture: Developing Countries

If advising and liaising with intelligence services of generally similar countries is difficult, it is even more complicated with countries of very different political cultures and history; in recent years, this has become increasingly salient. In a quantitative study of U.S. cooperation with foreign intelligence services, Aydinli and Tuzuner found that from 2000 to 2009, "the United States was more likely

to engage in intelligence cooperation with *less* democratic states." (Aydinli & Tuzuner, 2011, p. 679).

Zakia Shiraz argues that what he calls the Global South has a different intelligence culture that is common across different countries (Shiraz, 2013). These cultures are based predominantly on internal security and maintaining the political regime in power. In his view, intelligence services are: "focused on protecting precarious regimes and reflecting the fact that intelligence support for the dominant ruling party often takes precedence over intelligence support for government machinery or policy. Indeed, intelligence services are, not uncommonly, an expression of the ruling party rather than the state" (Shiraz, 2013, p. 1755). A similar argument is made by Daniel Byman (2017).

Although the brush Shiraz uses to describe the commonalities of the intelligence systems and operational goals of the intelligence agencies across these countries may be overly broad, the stress placed on the maintenance of the ruling parties in power likely is very accurate. This likely goes against what most non-"Global South" countries' intelligence services are chartered to do. As such, both advising and liaison relationships will be more difficult. The one probable exception — certainly germane to many if not most intelligence advising missions in recent years — are in environments where there are active insurgencies. In these cases, maintaining the ruling party in power typically has been equated to maintaining the government regime itself. As such, advising efforts and the local intelligence agencies' goals might coincide.

An unfortunate, but rather typical, pattern has been for U.S. and Western intelligence officers to assume that structures and procedures that have worked (however well) in their own countries will be effective for the services they are training and advising; this certainly has not always been the case. A particular issue has been a lack of understanding of the networks of local intelligence systems, particularly in developing countries; these networks are more than simply the human intelligence source networks. More importantly, they include the informal networks between the local intelligence services and the government, sectarian or ethnic group networks that drive the sourcing of intelligence and its uses, and networks with other actors that can influence how the intelligence is used. Developing a thorough understanding of how these 'non-intelligence' networks function by local intelligence services may be critical both in assisting their development and in establishing useful intelligence coordination.

In many cases, advisors will find roadblocks in national intelligence sharing. Usually known as stovepipes, these represent an engrained pattern of information sharing up and down individual agencies, without sharing with other agencies or services. In some situations, these may be simply a matter of bureaucratic policies that have not been adapted for new security environments and can be resolved with relatively little effort. In many countries, however, such stovepipes are deeply embedded in the government and are almost impossible to overcome. With these sorts of cases, at times the best — or perhaps the only — approach for advisors, is to develop workarounds for such stovepipes. According to one source, the U.S. in Iraq, in fact, may have reinforced these stovepipes by providing dedicated systems to the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Command, which was provided secure networks distinct from those used by other Iraqi security forces (Witty, n.d., p. 14). The author noted that a common system finally was established in 2009, but the reporting system remained discrete.

In at least some cases, the conflicts between intelligence service may be significantly more acute than simply bureaucratic competition. The U.S. Congressional Research Service noted this as a particular problem in the case of Iraq:

> The Iraqi National Intelligence Service (INIS) provides a similar example of both the benefits and risks of intelligence-training relationships with foreign partners. This organization, established with the CIA's support, was one factor — among others — in turning the tide against the Sunni insurgency of 2004-2008. However, it also became caught up in Iraq's Shia-Sunni sectarian conflict and linked to a proxy fight for influence in Iraq between the United States and Iran. Iran reportedly was involved in an assassination campaign against the Sunni-dominant INIS, 209 of whose officers were reportedly killed from 2004-2009. This was partly a consequence of a rivalry with Iraq's Shia-dominant — and unofficial — intelligence organization within the Ministry of State for National Security, operating under Iran's influence and aligned with Iraq's then-Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. (DeVine, 2019, p. 17)

Due to the sensitivities involved, this author will not comment further on this particular case, but it can represent a significant problem in countries in which multiple U.S. intelligence agencies are operating with multiple local services. This certainly would apply to cases, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, where both civilian and military intelligence services were operating. Further complicating this, of course, was that multiple countries were providing training and conducting liaison with the local intelligence services. Although, at least in the

case of the various military intelligence support missions, officers from different countries in the coalition were operating jointly, continued national nuances were almost inevitable.

The differences in establishing viable intelligence networks may also be dependent on the ministries involved. Speaking broadly, ministries of defense and ministries of interior frequently are highly competitive with each other, and with both having their own intelligence systems. In theory, advising a truly national separate intelligence service is not subject to these issues, but most countries also will have intelligence elements supporting the military and police. Analysts have noted other possible differences between ministries, many of which will have a decided impact on their intelligence operations; in particular, ministries of interior normally control police forces. The relatively greater opportunities that police have to engage in corruption may (and almost certainly have) been reflected in the work of the interior ministries' supporting intelligence services.

The issue of multiple power centers may be particularly salient in the case of Afghanistan. By force of circumstance, the Afghan government had to rely on local powerbrokers — or to use a more pejorative term, warlords — for security in many outlying areas. These powerbrokers certainly have developed their own local networks for gathering necessary intelligence in the regions of their control or influence, even if limited in geographical scope. How to get such security intelligence into government systems appears to have remained a largely unresolved issue. What makes this situation particularly problematic is that the powerbrokers in many cases have developed networks to target other nearby power centers (and perhaps to protect them from the Afghan government itself.)

As noted early the narrow line between cultural intelligence and stereotyping can always be problematic but can represent an even greater issue in dealing with local intelligence services. It seems all too easy for many U.S. intelligence trainers or liaison officers to take what they have learned to be local cultural norms and to try to use these in dealing with their foreign counterparts. In practice, however, most foreign senior intelligence officials likely will be better educated and perhaps more urbane than what might be viewed as the average citizen. Understanding and following local norms certainly is important, but it is easy to forget that a senior official in Baghdad, for example, almost certainly will have different cultural references then will a local tribal leader in Al Anbar.

Liaison (as opposed to training and advising) in these environments can come with its own difficulties. First, as Jennifer E. Sims notes, "intelligence liaison is

actually better understood as a form of subcontracted intelligence collection based on barter" (Sims, 2006, p. 196); as such, relationships can range from cooperative to rather adversarial. For countries that have significant adversarial foreign or security policies, some level of intelligence liaison and assistance might still exist on particular targets — with terrorism of course being the most salient in recent years — but any sharing likely will very much be at arm's length, and full cooperation is very unlikely. Although somewhat beyond the scope of this paper, Sims provides an excellent description of adversarial cooperation. As she notes, at its most extreme, it might go as far as ''I'll give you intelligence if you promise not to invade my country" (Sims, 2006, p. 200).

This factor may play out particularly for Western democracies in with more authoritarian regimes: "Democratic states with free media and open courts are often considered unreliable intelligence partners because of the higher probability of media leaks and exposures attending the oversight and judicial processes" (Sims, 2006, p. 205). This (perhaps valid) skepticism about the ability of Western intelligence agencies to keep details of cooperative efforts or even more limited intelligence sharing programs from the media over the long term is very unlikely to result in much trust between intelligence services.

It might also be worth examining some of 'smaller' cultural issues involved in routine intelligence operations. In many cases, somewhat basic factors might be the most critical. One U.S. intelligence advisor in Afghanistan noted that he found three key elements among his Afghan counterparts that offered him "leverage": "They are big on trying to look good in front of others. They are captivated by all forms of graphics—for example, maps, charts, matrices and pictures. Americans are respected as technical gurus" (Company Command, 2013, p. 55). What might be termed as 'traditional' patterns of operations by intelligence officers in other countries might also run counter to U.S. expectations. One advisor to an Iraqi brigade S-2 noted that

> Rather than thinking of themselves as a source manager and a Battalion S2, they saw it as their primary responsibility to be Human Intelligence (HUMINT) collectors. In reality, this commitment to source operations translated into direct involvement in all source operations. He [the Iraqi brigade S-2] ran all brigade sources himself, rarely showed up to any staff events, and often went missing for days at a time to work on source operations. (Padlo, 2009, p. 2)

This approach certainly was not limited to Iraqi tactical units, with the author of this article noting a similar process at the strategic level in Iraq; analytical leaders

and their analysts were prone to collecting from their sources 'on the street.' In many cases, this essentially involved acquiring information from their networks of friends and family. This approach certainly went against the U.S. pattern (and training intentions), but in fairness, it should be noted that some of the information they collected was in fact quite useful; on the other hand, formalized source reliability assessments were rare. A similar dynamic at brigade level was noted by Padlo (2009).

Some cultural issues had a direct impact on the end products provided by Iraqi intelligence analysts. Padlo noted that his experience at tactical-level intelligence briefings was that in many cases, the briefings were too generalized to be of significant value. He ascribed this problem to larger cultural patterns including "cultural barriers against being wrong, unwillingness to give precise information in large groups, and analysis based on previous knowledge" (Padlo, 2009, p. 4). Of course, in fairness, these cultural aspects of intelligence officers certainly might not be limited specifically to Iraqis, with some U.S. intelligence officers displaying similar norms.

One additional issue might be noted. This is the recognition by supporting intelligence officers that they also come into intelligence advising and cooperative efforts with their own cultural baggage (Aldrich & Kasuku, 2012); it is very easy to overlook this factor. In practice, this has become even more complicated in environments, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, where there have been multiple Western countries involved in advising; each country's intelligence officers have approached their missions with a slightly different mindset. Although coordination among these various advisors have helped reduce some of the competing cultural mindsets, it is very unlikely that they ever were eliminated completely.

Conclusion

Perhaps the worst thing the U.S. or other established intelligence services can do, is to try to recreate other services in their own image. This sort of attitude was exemplified in a curious statement by the Congressional Research Service in an otherwise cogent paper: "Simultaneously, the U.S. IC has found that nontraditional partners remain loyal to their own interests and internal dynamics despite heavy inducement by the U.S." (DeVine, 2019, p. 6). 'Inducing' a local intelligence service to prioritize foreign interests over their own country's is quite unlikely to lead to useful results. In some ways, there of course, are significant differences between working with countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, which essentially were under foreign occupation and those countries that actively seek

foreign support. In either case, however, maintaining an appropriate understanding of what intelligence systems are most likely to be successful in the long term remains critical.

The actual processes of intelligence cooperation — whether training and advising or 'simpler' liaising — will remain subject to pitfalls and misunderstandings. As Byman notes, "[t]raining, technical support, and other programs are still valuable, but they are more influential as ways to buy influence and gain goodwill than to transform how business is done" (Byman, 2017, p. 146). Even given this more limited goal, the chances of success are greatly increased if an early and accurate understanding of the subtleties of cooperating intelligence services are achieved.

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