

Three Design Concepts Introduced for Strategic and Operational Applications

BY BEN ZWEIBELSON

Many discussions on design theory applications within military contexts often revolve around a small population of design practitioners using complex terms and exclusive language, contrasted by a larger population of design skeptics that routinely demand a universal, scripted, and complete examples for “doing design right.”¹ Design, a form of conceptual planning and sense making, continues to gain traction in strategic political and military institutions, yet faces misunderstanding, disinterest, and outright rejection from military strategists and operational planners for a variety of reasons. This article aims at moving this discourse toward how several design theory concepts are valuable for strategists and decision makers, and how select design concepts might be introduced and applied in a simple language where military practitioners can traverse from strategic intent into operational applications with tangible results. As a lead planner for the Afghan Security Force reduction concept and the 2014 (NTM-A) Transition Plan, I applied design to strategic and operational level planning using these design concepts as well as others.²

This article takes three design concepts that do not exist in current military doctrine, provides a brief explanation on what they are, and how military practitioners might apply them in strategic planning and military decision-making efforts drawing from real-world applications in Afghanistan. Design theory, as a much broader discipline, spans theories and concepts well beyond the boundaries of any military design doctrine.³ I introduce these non-doctrinal concepts intentionally to foster discourse, not to provide a roadmap or checklist on how to “do design” by simply adding these to all future planning sessions. What may have worked in one planning session on reducing Afghan security forces beyond 2015 may be an incompatible design approach for influencing Mexican drug cartels this year, or appreciating yet another emergent problem in Africa. Complex, adaptive problems demand tailored and novel approaches.

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Diplomats, strategists and operational planners across our military and instruments of national power might use these concepts, along with other useful design approaches, in their efforts to fuse conceptual and detailed planning in uncertain conflict environments.

Narratives: A Different Way to Think about Uncertainty and Complexity

Both our military and political institutions uses the term “narrative” in a literal sense within traditional planning lexicon and doctrine, whereas design theory looks to the conceptual work by literary historians and theorists such as Hayden White as a useful alternative.⁴ One definition does not substitute for the other; the military’s tactical version is distinct from the post-modern one introduced here. We shall call these “design narratives” to make the distinction clear. These design narratives are not included in any military doctrine, which helps illustrate how incomplete our individual service efforts to encapsulate design are for military planners.

White proposes that a design narrative is something beyond the direct control of an organization or society. We do not construct our narratives as a story unfolds, nor do we often realize that we perceive reality through powerful institutional filters that transpose symbols, values, and culture onto how we will interpret events unfolding.⁵ Instead, design narratives pre-configure (form in advance) how and why a series of events will form into a story.⁶ These stories have particular and often enduring meanings and structure that resonate within an organization or group due to shared values and culture. While the details within the narrative will contain the familiar specifics such as facts, information, plot structure, and the sequence of events that unite the information into a contained “story”, they do not establish the overarching explanation.

Instead, our organization pre-configures the information as a narrative unit, or genre, often regardless of the information as it unfolds in time and space. One might quip, “Don’t let the facts get in the way of the story.” This is important for political and military applications in that your organization may be unaware of their predilections when they seek to make sense of a situation and conceptualize strategic options.

White provides a series of narrative genres that build the overarching structure or theme that assists in explaining them. However, every society or institution will generate their own genres based on shared values and concepts. Consider your own organization for a moment, and think critically about what values, concepts, and cultural aspects resonate strongly. For example, we already construct categories for film, literature, and other entertainment where stories occur. “Romance”, “satire”, “tragedy”, and “comedy” comprise White’s narrative genres in his examples, although design theory would not limit narratives to merely these. The organizational culture of a group or institution such as a military unit, specialized department of government, or political party acts as a forcing function by pre-configuring narrative genres before we even observe something occurring in the environment. Our societies and organizations pre-configure sequences of events by attaching those genres to the information while it unfolds, thus design narratives exist and operate prior to actions occurring in a conflict environment. Critically, different cultures, groups, and organizations interpret the same event in profoundly different ways.⁷ Being able to recognize and understand the various narratives of rival groups within the environment is what provides value to this design concept for military planning.⁸

Consider some of the narratives on the Intercontinental Hotel attack on 28 June 2011, which erupted in downtown Kabul’s green zone.

Some media covered it with an overarching tragic or satirical narrative (hopeless or hapless situations), while both coalition military and political leaders preferred the romantic narrative (optimistic story where the protagonist inevitably triumphs). Are there any narrative themes from articles on the attack below, and do they reflect institutionalisms that attempt to explain the very same incident differently?

"Our muj entered the hotel," said Zabiullah Mujahid, the Taliban spokesman for northern and eastern Afghanistan, "and they've gone through several stories of the building and they are breaking into each room and they are targeting the 300 Afghans and foreigners who are staying." His claims could not be immediately confirmed.

- Alissa Rubin, Rod Nordland, The New York Times, 28 June 2011.⁹

"As the transition draws near, the attack on the [Intercontinental] hotel has only reinforced the belief of Afghans and foreigners that Afghan forces are not ready to take over security responsibilities."

- John Wendle, TIME Magazine, 29 June 2011.¹⁰

"[ISAF] joins President Karzai and the Ministry of the Interior in condemning the attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul last night..." This attack will do nothing to prevent the security transition process from moving forward," said Rear Admiral Beck."

- ISAF Headquarters Public Affairs Office release, 29 June 2011.¹¹

"Afghanistan's culture is too polite and fatalistic to take security seriously- plus Afghans are in denial over the roots of terrorism...first, there's

the widespread belief that terrorism has nothing to do with Afghans but is something outsiders do to Afghans...[this] denial [of] terrorism in Afghanistan...might be a reflection of a desperate psychological need to believe in Afghanistan as a good and safe homeland which owes all its problems to foreign interference..."

- Nushin Arbabzadah (Afghan reporter), guardian.co.uk, 30 June 2011.¹²

Mr. Amini said he saw police officers running, too, tightly gripping their own AK-47s as they raced away from the gunmen. "I said, 'Why don't you shoot? Shoot!' " he recalled. "But they just said, 'Get away from them.' And we all ran together... now we are hearing about a security transition to Afghan forces...if they give the security responsibility to the current government at 10:00 a.m., the government will collapse around 12 noon. They cannot live without foreigners."

- Alissa Rubin, The New York Times, 29 June 2011.¹³

"The insurgent movement sometimes issues highly exaggerated statements that reflect what its commanders would consider a best-case scenario for an assault...In this case, the Taliban version included a wildly overblown death toll.

- Laura King and Aimal Yaqubi, Los Angeles Times, 29 June 2011.¹⁴

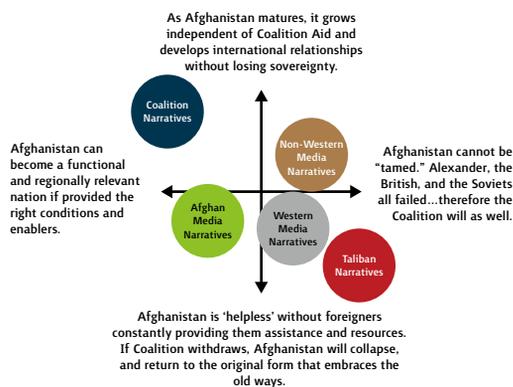
Narratives reflect powerful internal forces within an institution, and this design concept offers deeper explanation for an organization seeking to make sense of complexity as it occurs. This provides explanation through context and holistic appreciation of other perspectives than relying on the preferred one of our organization, institution, or society. Pop-culture such as, "The Daily Show" and late-night entertainment might

weave a comedic story with the same details on the same incident, while other media outlets and organizations apply different themes to match the preferred social construction of their respective audiences.¹⁵ The same event or objective in Afghanistan might be told within a satirical, tragic, or romantic design narrative depending upon what organization or society produces the story. The Taliban mirror coalition romantic design narratives, although they take an opposing position and swap the protagonists with the antagonists. Coalition forces might downplay the casualties or effectiveness of the attack, while the Taliban exaggerate the same details. Thus, even before a spectacular attack occurs and regardless of whether it is effective or not, the Coalition and rivals such as the Taliban as organizations pre-configure their narratives so that as the incident unfolds, their narratives establish the overarching meaning regardless of the information.¹⁶

Rival groups produce dueling narratives that battle to shape and influence our perceptions while comprised of the same details, actors, and plot. Only the genres and organizational preferences differ, which produces drastically different results despite containing the same information.¹⁷ Figure 1 illustrates one way our NTM-A operational planners attempted to frame the conflict environment for establishing deeper understanding after the hotel attack.¹⁸ As a conceptual planning product, it reflected the appreciation that those planners gained when studying the various narratives. Operational planners incorporated narrative concepts into the NTM-A transition plan for 2014 as well as the reduction plan for Afghan security forces beyond 2015.¹⁹ Although the competing narratives of rival forces in military conflicts might be visualized in many different ways, the critical reflection and holistic perspective of narrative tensions applied in these cases did offer military planners deeper

explanation and appreciation of the adaptive, complex environment. This provides deeper meaning and understanding to subsequent detailed planning.

Figure 1: Dueling Narratives within Afghan Conceptualization



White's narratives concept applied as a design tool is not a "stand-alone" planning process, nor does it fit neatly into a militarized procedure or doctrinal step. Understanding design narratives alone is not "doing design", nor will adding design narratives to a step within traditional military decision-making processes make existing planning "better." A senior political or diplomatic staff will not necessarily function better by mandating narratives as step five of their current planning process either. Design just does not work that way.

Design narratives aid political and military professionals with making sense of ill-structured problems by developing customized staff understanding and explanation during planning sessions. As the lead planner for the NTM-A design team for recommending reduction of the Afghan Security Forces from the current 352,000 to a planned 228,000 after 2015, we used narrative concepts (Figure 2) to build multiple scenarios for our Joint and interagency planning team to war-game all of our courses of action.²⁰ This

directly led to our planning concept, which senior policy makers, the Afghan government, and the coalition ultimately approved in April 2012.²¹ Whether this reduction continues or not is dependent upon future planning, however for an initial conceptual planning initiative, design theory directly contributed to these results.

Figure 2: Narratives in Action-the Future Afghan Scenario Planning for Proposed Force Reductions 2015



Figure 2 illustrates a quad-chart using elements of scenario planning and design narratives to help planners anticipate likely threat environments expected in Afghanistan beyond 2015. Dueling narratives and other design concepts helped build various threat environments for coalition planners to subsequently conduct extensive “war-gaming” sessions in with different combinations of Afghan Security Forces. The Afghan planning reductions represented a conceptual planning output, which will ultimately lead to further detailed planning efforts in the

future as political, strategic, and battlefield conditions continue to evolve.

While narratives might be less applicable in future planning, they were highly useful for these initial conceptual planning efforts where we needed to abandon our institutional predictions to avoid abstraction and uncertainty. These abstract considerations are part of what makes design theory resistant to any assimilation into military doctrine and practices, as each environment requires its own tailored approach. Using design tools such as design narratives often provide a richer environment for military planners to gain deeper understanding of complex, highly adaptive conditions, and breaks your team out of dangerous institutionalisms and “group-think” that often compounds existing planning shortfalls.

Assemblages: How Strategic Forces Influence Tactical Action, and Vice-Versa

Post-modern philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari offer the next design concept for military planning consideration, which they refer to as “assemblages.”²² Like design narratives, an assemblage is a design concept that does not integrate into a sequenced checklist or proceduralization within existing military doctrine. Where and when to apply them rests in the judgment and creativity of the strategist or planner.

While narratives rely on a pre-configuring process that later fits the facts into a collective theme that relates to group values and tenets, assemblages work on a grander scale using a vast range of items and concepts, often from the micro to the macro-level. This concept relies on the design term “synergy” along with the component of scale. Synergy is quite different from merely the sum total of the components, which may be, for example, a pile of automobile parts and liquids.²³ Synergizing the parts creates a

functional car that is more than just those components—something special happens when we assemble it completely. Yet, cars are constructed for a transportation need, with significant cultural and social forces at work at abstract levels well beyond the nuts and bolts of the actual vehicle. Explanation need not include every single detail, but it does require a synergist perspective to see the overarching behaviors and meanings.

Assemblages work in a similar fashion, and scale from the extremely abstract and broad down to the detailed nuances of sub-components within things we normally regard as “whole.” The relationship within an assemblage is adaptive, dynamic, and truly non-linear. The linkages between things blur, and many interrelated and transformative components span across what the military terms “strategic level” down to minute processes at the tactical level.²⁴ For a military example, we shall use the current “drug war” in Mexico to demonstrate an assemblage. To begin, it is useful to start with the large-scale or abstract end of an assemblage.

Western governments recognize and define drug activities as a component of the larger illicit commodity or illegal economy where profitable yet illegal items traffic from a source zone (cocaine production in Colombia) through transit zones (Mexico, trans-ocean routes) to the arrival zone (North American and European consumption).²⁵ Our government and military agencies tend to break the drug organizations down into extremely detailed components with various cartels, corrupt officials, and the exchange of money, power, violence, and influence across fixed geography populated by human societies.²⁶ Societies pass laws, and take actions that attempt to curb the numerous destabilizing effects of narco-criminal enterprise at the operational level, with tactical actions occurring at the tactical level throughout all three zones. At the local level, drug

production techniques and the micro-economic and social forces that drive farmers, cartel members, and new consumers also compose the vast, interconnected assemblage. It unifies the entire complex and adaptive “western narco-criminal” system into something that is greater than the mere sum of its parts.²⁷ To illustrate this, consider the abstract relationships between legal and illegal, and valued and non-valued as depicted in Figure 3.

Can we take all items within the western hemisphere and place it somewhere on the abstract spectrum of belongings that our collection of societies value, and belongings that we tend not to value? Can we also do this with items that are generally legal, and items that are not? Take these two abstract paradoxes arranged along a quadrant model, and consider Figure 3 below. Can you think of items that, at a broad level, do not fall into a quadrant? Also, notice how these questions guide a strategist towards abstract, conceptual planning instead of into reductionist, tactical considerations.²⁸ Categorization leads towards more details, whereas conceptualization leads towards explanation.

Figure 3: Quadrants and Abstract Phenomenon-building an Assemblage

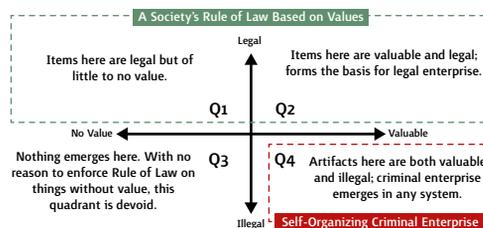
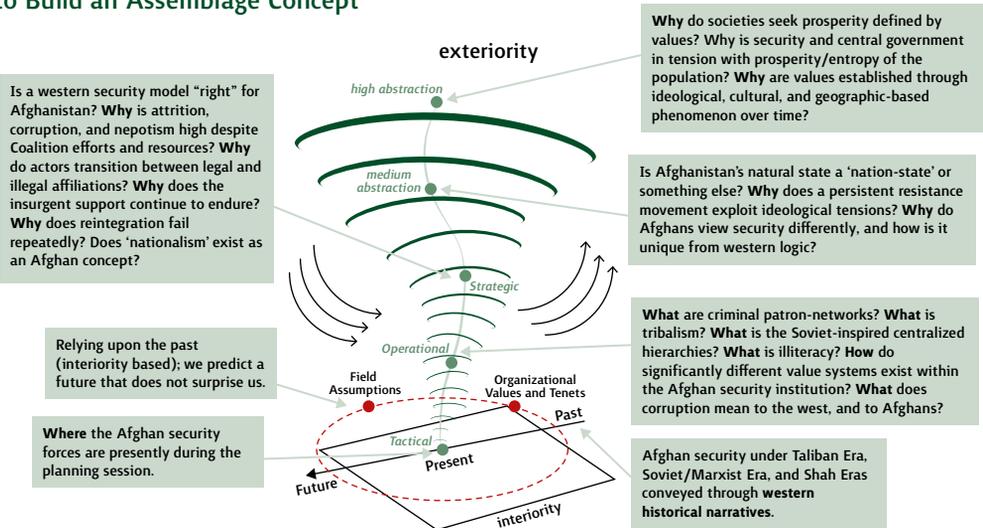


Figure 3 helps illustrate the highly abstract end of the forces that drive the western narco-criminal assemblage; yet why does something so abstract even matter to the strategist or planner? Military planners should not use assemblages to focus only on the tactical details of how

Figure 4: Using a Tornado Metaphor to Build an Assemblage Concept



a drug cartel links command and control within a particular section of key terrain. Instead, all of the tactical details that our military institution often finds engrossing are an interrelated part of the heterogeneous "soup" that composes the entire assemblage. We cannot become so engrossed with the details that we lose sight of the big picture.²⁹ This means that military professionals might explore non-linear linkages and complex relationships that extend from any particular tactical detail, up to the abstract levels where operational and strategic phenomenon influence the emergent state of the entire system.

In the reduction of Afghan Security Forces planning event, NTM-A planners used assemblages in early conceptual planning using a tornado metaphor as shown in Figure 4. The tornado moves along the familiar linear axis of time, with tactical and detailed elements occurring at the surface while greater levels of abstraction swirl upwards into the larger and transforming cloud mass. Critically, the flat plane upon which the tornado swirls is termed the "interiority", which is a concept that Deleuze and Guattari use

with assemblages.³⁰ The concept of interiority represents how an organization bounds what it knows about the world, with everything unknown and undiscovered remaining outside in the "exteriority."

Thus, what the military says a terrorist organization is motivated by exists in our interiority as planners, while those motives that are unknown, rejected, ignored, or undiscovered exist in the exteriority—a place that many are prevented from traveling to due to organizational resistance.³¹ This application of an assemblage helped NTM-A operational planners appreciate overarching tensions within the Afghan environment, which later shaped the scenarios and war-gaming of various options, although much of the initial conceptual work remained within small planning circles and was not briefed to senior decision-makers.

Drawing a tornado on a white board will not necessarily help anyone visualize how the concept of assemblages dynamically links the many elements of a complex environment into a transforming, adaptive phenomenon that transcends

Figure 5: Categorization Approaches in Operational Planning for Mexican Cartel Violence Problems

Military planning doctrine directs strategists and planners to categorize complex systems into “bins”- we seek to reduce complexity through scientific approaches, reductionism, and structure. This breaks down relationships, destroys linkages across scale and time, and through over-simplification promises a false reduction of uncertainty.



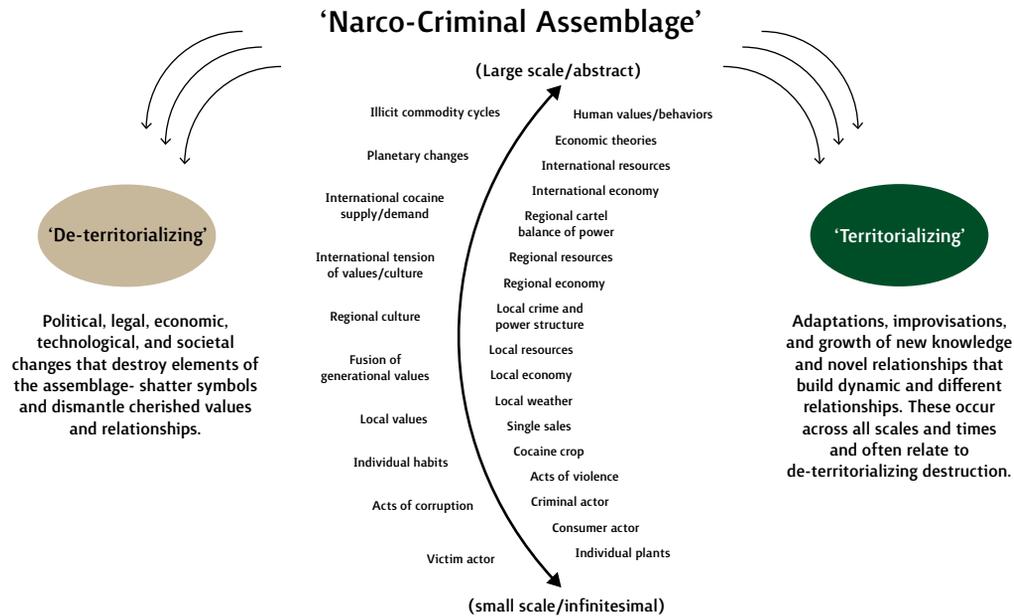
time and scale. Presenting such a drawing to senior policymakers or military leaders will also result in unfortunate outcomes—these conceptual products are not intended as deliverables. They are concepts that aid planners in gaining the understanding so that they can then build planning deliverables that are the result. There are important reasons why early abstract work must not be confused with final products. However, early abstract work must be done effectively so that later products emerge as clear, explanatory, and holistic.

Consider the difference between using metaphoric content that implies fluidity, change, and complex relationships and the traditional linear planning approaches where simplistic “lines of effort” or similar planning products chart out the future in predictive, lockstep formats. Uncertainty and change are two elements that we traditionally seek to reduce or eliminate; yet these are two essential aspects for building assemblage

concepts. Traditional military decision-making procedures and military doctrine exploits the tangible things- places, events, actors, and details. This eliminates the tornado form and the swirling interrelated process where forces often unseen continue to influence an environment in ways that we quickly describe as unpredictable, chaotic, or crazy.

Instead, consider the intangible components of the assemblage such as cultural values, economics, climate change, politics, and population changes over time, and avoid simply categorizing them within traditional reductionist approaches such as “political”, “social”, and “economic” categories. Categorization fractures the assemblage and renders explanation meaningless for planners seeking design explanation.³² Routine categorization ignores linkages across scale and beyond narrow boundaries of groupings.³³ Even our administrative concepts of task and purpose within an assemblage appear meaningless, where

Figure 6: One of Many Ways to Visualize Aspects of an Assemblage



Constantly transforming; cannot be 'framed', 'bounded', or categorized...the assemblage moves in unexpected directions while creating novel, unseen formations...cycles of creation and destruction.

the task to type a key has the purpose to form a word, which links to forming a sentence, and so on. Typing is linked in a long series of tasks and purposes up to an abstract level of influencing a society on an anti-drug policy; yet our traditional reductionist approach in military planning wants us to shatter the linkages and reduce complexity.³⁴ The next figure illustrates the traditional, categorizing approach that military doctrine prescribes for making sense of uncertain environments.

Instead of categorizing, strategists and operational planners that apply the design theory "assemblage" concept may avoid the pitfalls of breaking dynamic linkages, or ignoring the importance of scale, time, and transformation within an uncertain and volatile system. All of these tangible and intangible actors and forces interrelate in the dynamic and adaptive

assemblage where tactical components connect, disconnect, and establish new relationships within a non-linear web of operational and strategic developments.³⁵ While there are many ways to illustrate an assemblage such as previous Figure 4, Figure 6 continues with the narco-criminal example to offer yet another way to help planners visualize this useful design concept.

Skeptics may take the assemblage concept and say, "that may be interesting for conceptual planning, but what good does the assemblage concept bring to military decision making or diplomacy?" Design planning with assemblages helps draw your staff out of the standard over-tactical emphasis where we immediately seek to reduce and categorize a problem into more manageable "chunks" whether at the strategic or operational level.³⁶ In the NTM-A transition-planning group for 2014, our planning team was tasked to

design a unified plan to transition all bases and facilities over to the Afghan security forces by 2014. Using assemblage concepts in the initial conceptual planning phase, our team determined that the institutionalisms of our own military organizations as well as those of the Afghan security forces were far more significant than they appeared. Although the final deliverable was a highly detailed plan for military action over time, the initial conceptual planning avoided simply building a large checklist for transitioning facilities over to the Afghans. Instead, due to assemblage constructs highlighting the myriad tensions between ISAF military forces, the NATO forces, and the various Afghan ministries and different security forces that occurred across different scales, times, and processes, our planning team sought solutions to deeper problems.

Instead of treating symptoms, design approaches help identify and influence the underlying and often pervasive problems. Or, it hardly matters to hand an instillation over to Afghan control based on a calculated date if we fail to appreciate the tensions preventing higher elements in the Afghan ministries from transferring resources. If our own advisors in the ministry do not appreciate what advisors on the ground in a sister organization or agency are also doing, how can another associated element execute if no one gains a holistic picture and identifies the key tensions?

Assemblage thinking not only channels your staff to “seek the big picture” but helps drive explanation by seeking WHY-centric inquires instead of WHAT-centric behaviors.³⁷ Returning to the cartel example, leaders can encourage abstract and non-linear conceptualization on what motivates a cartel, and whether eliminating any particular drug cartel will “end” the drug problem, or merely influence a different adaptation where future drug cartels emerge able

to avoid their predecessor’s demise. Why does our society glamorize drug use? Why do farmers plant drug crops over legal ones? Why is a secured border so symbolic in political realms? Why do cartels adapt ahead of legitimate government action? Where is the next illegal and profitable commodity going to emerge from, and why? These are inquires that help make sense of an assemblage, and prevents over-simplification of uncertainty.

Problematization: Actual Critical Thinking Threatens Institutionalism

In order to encourage comprehensive assemblages that include our own military organization, strategists and planners may find a third design theory concept called “problematization” useful for its critical reflection on how we think, and how we think about thinking. This concept permeates all major design actions and was a cornerstone in my own design efforts in Afghanistan as an operational planner linking strategic guidance to tactical applications.

This third design concept comes from the work of philosopher Michel Foucault.³⁸ Foucault uses the term “problematization” to explain the unique interrelationship between an organization and a person within the organization that risks thinking critically and creatively. Risk is a key element of Foucault’s concept because the “problematizer” often confronts his own organization with painful truths and “destructively creative” approaches to improving how the organization functions.

To problematize is not just another cumbersome design term, but also a critical concept that has neither synonym nor equivalent in existing planning doctrine or military lexicon. One does not only critically reflect and question, for the problematizer fuses creativity and novel approaches to appreciate complexity and

deliver explanation that generates substantial change. Of course, he that dares to tell the king that he is naked does risk the sword. More importantly, a problematizer threatens the institutional tenets by not only revealing to the king that his is currently nude, but also delivers explanation on why the king was unable to see this before now, why his staff feared to disagree, and how he might improve his organization to prevent such reoccurrences. Critical reflection coupled with explanation and novel discovery becomes key in problematizing.

Problematizers risk alienation, marginalization, or elimination when the organization rejects their novel perspective, regardless of whether they are correct. Many visionary thinkers and military pioneers challenged the tenets and rigid concepts within their own institutions, only to be vindicated later when a military paradigm shift validates their original advice and understanding. Consider the following questions that an interagency or military organization might consider with significant narco-violence spilling over the southern border between America and Mexico. Which of these would be readily accepted by some organizations, but quickly rejected by others? Which are “off limits” due to institutionalisms or cultural tenets, and thus would not even be explored in any conceptual planning efforts?

- Should a military operation led by the Army secure the border?
- Should a military operation led by the Navy secure the border?
- Should the military work under Federal Law Enforcement at the border?
- Should religious organizations such as the Catholic Church be engaged to assist?
- Should American military and state assets work under Mexican control?
- Should Mexican military and law enforcement pursue criminals into American territory?
- Should we value American casualties over Mexican ones?
- Should our nation legalize the drug in question? Should other nations do this?
- Should we increase drug penalties and expand our penal infrastructure?
- Should we consider censorship of drug glamorization in order to reduce use?
- Should we coordinate with one Cartel in order to eliminate the others?
- Should we encourage more Cartels, in order to weaken existing ones?
- Should we allow the local territory to fall under Cartel control so that they become centralized and easier to target?
- Should our police gain greater military capabilities and resources?
- Should our military assume a police role and modify the rules of engagement as such?

Many of the above questions trigger strong reactions, depending upon which institution, branch of government, or society the reader associates with most. Also, with every answer a question generates, the problematizer must follow up with asking why this is. It is the “why” that helps explain our institutionalisms, and aids a planner in reaching a holistic picture that breaks through internal barriers, biases, and other institutionalisms that bound the interiority of an organization’s knowledge.

Consider that all of the questions will generate healthy discourse during conceptual planning sessions, yet our own organizations might inhibit contemplation due to our own institutionalisms. As a modern military organization in the 21st century, we need to encourage problematization within our organizations, and realize when our own institutionalisms are blinding us as the

world changes around us. The more that conflict adapts, the stronger the desire for military services to return to historic and traditionally defining behaviors and actions—we seek to fight tomorrow’s conflict with last year’s successful action, particularly if it enhances institutional self-relevance.³⁹ No military force remains the same, yet once we symbolize an item or behavior, we attach values and assumptions about ourselves to them that inoculate them as resistant to critical inquiry or adjustment.⁴⁰ Non-military government organizations should also value this concept, as it aids in confronting problematic actions by military services.

Organizational theorist Mary Jo Hatch proposes that we cycle through these actions gradually over time, assigning symbols within our organizations.⁴¹ Only through a gradual rejection of our original assumptions, often over periods that exceed traditionally constructed military campaigns, do we de-symbolize structures, items behaviors. Often, our military holds onto behaviors, techniques, and systems that we consider “traditional”, “self-defining”, or “universal in combat” despite their irrelevance in the current conflict.⁴² If we symbolize military tools and techniques and therefore require greater periods to de-symbolize them, then the military problematizer must foster change and adaptation against these institutional forces while often battling their own institution in the process.

However, “naked kings” in your organization usually seek to kill any truth-tellers that come offering insight because transformation of the institution might promote greater uncertainty than sticking with reliable, although ineffective approaches and behaviors. For example, the original NTM-A planning guidance for our team to tackle the 2015 Afghan Security Force reduction featured several requirements that largely reflected our own institutionalisms. Our final

proposals had to include an Afghan Air Force, all of the fielded systems provided to the Afghan forces, and retain relative structures that the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense were accustomed to in terms of command and control. Since NTM-A had a large Air Force element that built and integrated into the Afghan Air Force, our own institution was not going to entertain questions on whether Afghanistan even needed an Air Force after 2015 at that time. Similar questions on whether the Afghans required special police tactics teams, special forces assets, or armored vehicles all were dismantled due to existing institutional tenets within ISAF and NTM-A where eliminating a major program represented the “defeat” of values or concepts that an organization defined self-relevance with. Additionally, our planners were unable to question the overarching ISAF Campaign Plan with respect to whether the enemy’s strategic center of gravity remained valid.⁴³ Such engagements with superior staff met with a quick dismissal, because changing centers of gravity requires extensive revisiting of the entire overarching counterinsurgency plan. When practicing design, one must rise above one’s own institutionalisms, appreciate them, and seek abstract, holistic contemplation of complex environments in order to better understand why they are adapting as they are.

Instead of reaching back into traditional, familiar processes and concepts, problematization is destructively creative to an organization because we question whether a future conflict or operation requires the very things and concepts that our organization symbolizes and seeks self-relevance with currently. The Air Force might resist discussing eliminating the Afghan Air Force, while Military Intelligence might resist eliminating information collection systems. Special Operations ties the local militia forces to their self-relevance with respect to foreign internal

defense, thus the Afghan Local Police should not just be exempt from reductions, but expanded.⁴⁴ It is in the best interests of the organization to silence a member that promotes contrary ideas, which identifies the primary danger of becoming a problematizer. The problematizer is one that both belongs to the organization, and critically considers beyond these symbols to focus on what is healthy within the institution and what potentially is not.

Destructive creativity reinforces the earlier concept of assemblage and the constantly adaptive heterogeneous conflict environments labeled complex or “ill-structured.”⁴⁵ Nothing is sacred or off-limits, yet if a problematizer threatens his organization by seeking to destroy a cherished value or core tenet, Foucault, as well as scientific philosopher Thomas Kuhn warn that the self-interests within an institution will strike out at those that usher in revolutionary change, even at the expense of clinging to an outdated or inferior concept.⁴⁶ RAND analyst Carl Builder also echoes the dangers of military problematization in *‘The Masks of War’* by arguing that military services may jeopardize the security of the nation in pursuit of self-interests and continued military relevance. A problematizer on your staff will challenge your organization, and break a staff out of “group-think” and other institutionalisms that often obscure our understanding of the true nature of an ill-structured problem whether strategic or operational in form.

Conclusions: Design Theory cannot be Caged; It Remains a Useful Free-Range Animal

Design theory remains its own assemblage of sorts, continuously transforming and ushering in new combinations and fusions of different disciplines, concepts, vocabulary, and ideas. This is perhaps the most frustrating aspect of design

theory for military organizations and strategists dealing with senior policy makers! It is hard enough to grapple with military professionals that use a wide lexicon of terms and concepts unique to military organizations without also requiring the even more abstract concepts, terms, and approaches that design offers. Most military professionals remain confused on design theory, so how can we expect interagency and other national-level members to engage in real design discussions? Part of this relates to how there is no overarching planning approach or shared concepts across all of the military services that could be called “design” without encountering rival institutional interpretations.

adaptive concepts, language, and approaches resist codification into handy executive summaries or PowerPoint presentations

While major military organizations continue to produce their own versions of design with a variety of monikers, self-relevant logic and shared values, we cannot expect to find any final or complete “design” answer for military planning within a service doctrine or school course. This frustrates policy makers as well as our military practitioners. Adaptive concepts, language, and approaches resist codification into handy executive summaries or PowerPoint presentations for mass consumption. Our professional military education system should not conduct a quixotic quest for a better design doctrine chapter or improved planning checklist, nor should policy makers and strategists shy away from design due to these uncertainties. At a minimum, we might seek “social knowledge production” methods such as a Wikipedia-style process to share and discuss design theory—yet this does not marginalize the need for discourse on novel

design approaches such as the three examples in this article.⁴⁷ Perhaps a shared understanding of design theory across all service branches and major federal departments might produce a flexible and adaptive body of concepts and terms where it is less important where you come from but why you are seeking explanation of a complex environment. Additionally, the further we get away from internal languages, acronyms, and ‘military-jargon’ that break down and eliminate inter-agency and inter-governmental communication, the better we can achieve true “shared understanding” of these complex, adaptive environments that demand foreign policy decisions.

transformation will occur whether we lead in that change or our rivals drag us there through competition or defeat

Codifying one narrow interpretation of “how to do design” into doctrine produces a similar output where planners are expected to innovate and be creative, but still have to “follow the rules” as established by the individual service. This is a terrible contradiction, and likely fosters much of the current confusion and frustration with fusing design with military decision-making today between rival services, policy makers, and other governmental appendages.

Instead of attempting to domesticate design theory into doctrine or “paint-by-numbers” procedures, this article takes several useful design theory concepts that do not appear in military doctrine and demonstrates their utility in strategic and operational planning. All three of these concepts were successfully applied in design deliverables for planning Afghan security reductions beyond 2015 as well as the 2014 transition of security missions from NATO to the Afghans.⁴⁸ Design theory features a higher degree of artistry,

which is something that makes military hierarchical organizations rather uncomfortable. Despite our inherent resistance to improvisational and unorthodox approaches, modern military operations demand a fusion of conceptual and detailed planning to forge tactical applications from usually indistinct strategic guidance. Strategists and operational planners struggle with precisely how to accomplish this.

Assemblages, narratives, and problematization come from different disciplines and fields that are often not associated directly with military planning considerations. Just because something comes from a completely non-military discipline or field, we should not dismiss it as quickly as we often do. While we cannot waste time and resources aimlessly wandering in an intellectual journey without a destination, we also cannot expect the narrow gaze of institutional doctrine and our desire to retain all of our traditional behaviors and concepts prevent us from transforming into the next military form. This transformation will occur whether we lead in that change or our rivals drag us there through competition or defeat.

Some opponents of design argue that until the military regain proficiency on traditional planning and best practices for full-spectrum operations, we should not “waste time on design.” This sounds of naked kings demanding that their attendants find better mirrors or glasses so that they can join him in admiring his imaginary garments. Design theory is not an intellectual boogie man, but it may provide the holistic vision for your organization to visualize the real monsters lurking in the fog and friction of war—particularly the ones that most threaten the relevance of cherished traditions, techniques, and favored systems.⁴⁹ These three design concepts demonstrate the utility of a methodology that operates beyond existing military doctrine

and sequential planning procedures that attempt to reduce uncertainty through reduction and categorization.⁵⁰ Leaders, whether military or political, that promote critical and creative thinking through various design theory approaches may guide their organizations more effectively through the inevitable transformations that the military institution must undergo as time marches on. PRISM

Notes

¹This article uses “Design Theory” to avoid institutional pitfalls of service-unique terms such as “Army Design Methodology” or “Systemic Operational Design.” See: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Field Manual 5-0; The Operations Process* (Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2010), Chapter 3, “Design.” See also: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Field Manual-Interim 5-2; Design (Draft)* (draft under development-Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2009) for examples of U.S Army design doctrinal approaches.

²Ben Zweibelson, “Military Design in Practice: A Case from NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan in 2012,” *Small Wars Journal*, (June 4, 2012), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/military-design-in-practice-a-case-from-nato-training-mission-afghanistan-in-2012>>. See also: Ben Zweibelson, “Does Design Help or Hurt Military Planning: How NTM-A Designed a Plausible Afghan Security Force in an Uncertain Future, Part I and II,” *Small Wars Journal*, (July 9, 2012), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/does-design-help-or-hurt-military-planning-how-ntm-a-designed-a-plausible-afghan-security-f>>.

³Design introduces a challenging series of concepts to incorporate into military fields; this article cites a variety of post-modern philosophy and other sources that serve as a good starting point for those interested in how design differs from traditional military planning and decision-making doctrine.

⁴Hayden White, “The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory,” *History and Theory*, 23, no. 1, (February, 1984), 1-33.

⁵Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967). Berger and Luckmann make the case that all knowledge is socially constructed within groups and societies, and

over time are institutionalized into vast, complex, and expanding bureaucracies.

⁶Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse; Essays in Cultural Criticism*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), 6. “Rational or scientific knowledge was little more than the truth yielded by reflection in the prefigurative modes raised to the level of abstract concepts and submitted to criticism for logical consistency, coherency, and so on.”

⁷Berger, Luckmann, *op. cit.*, 138-147. “There are also the more directly threatening competing definitions of reality that may be encountered socially.” Berger and Luckmann discuss how societies construct their own social constructs complete with different role-specific vocabularies, institutionalisms, and symbols that are perpetually maintained, modified, and defended against rival social constructs of reality.

⁸Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), 7. “The arrangement of selected events of the chronicle into a story raises the kinds of questions the historian must anticipate and answer in the course of constructing his narrative.” White explains in *Metahistory* the construction of narratives so that humans relay information through conceptual constructs that relate to language, society, period, and intent. See also: Paul Ricoeur (translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer), *Time and Narrative, Volume 3*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 107.

⁹Alissa Rubin, Rod Nordland, “Raid by Afghan Forces and NATO Ends Attack on Hotel in Kabul,” *nytimes.com*, June 28, 2011, available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/29/world/asia/29afghanistan.html>>.

¹⁰John Wendle, “The Kabul Intercontinental Attack: The Taliban’s Clear Message,” *Time Magazine*, June 29, 2011, available at <<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2080498,00.html>>.

¹¹ISAF Headquarters Public Affairs Office 2011-06-CA-007 (for immediate release), “ISAF Joins President Karzai in Condemning Insurgent Attack & Praising Afghan Security Force Response,” June 29, 2011, available at <<http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/isaf-joins-president-karzai-in-condemning-insurgent-attack-and-praising-afghan-security-force-respon.html>>.

¹²Nushin Arbabzadah, “The Kabul Hotel Attack was Destined to Happen,” *guardian.co.uk*, June 30, 2011, available at <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/30/kabul-hotel-attack-afghanistan>>.

¹³Alissa Rubin, “Attack at Kabul Hotel Deflates Security Hopes in Afghanistan,” *The New York Times*, June 29, 2011, available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/30/world/asia/30afghanistan.html?page-wanted=all>>.

¹⁴ Laura King and Aimal Yaqubi, "Afghan Taliban Sends Message with Hotel Attack," *Los Angeles Times*, June 29, 2011, available at <<http://articles.latimes.com/print/2011/jun/29/world/la-fg-afghanistan-security-20110630>>. See also: MSNBC.com news services, "Everybody was shooting: 18 die in Kabul hotel attack," *MSNBC.com online*, June 29, 2011, available at: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/43572981/ns/world_news-south_and_central_asia/t/everybody-was-shooting-die-kabul-hotel-attack/>. The MSNBC article also prominently features the Taliban perspective and makes a lone warning to the reader that the Taliban "often exaggerate casualties from their attacks."

¹⁵ Clarence Jones, *Winning with the News Media: A Self-Defense Manual When You're the Story* (Clarence Jones: Winning News Media, Inc. 2005), 5. "Many story ideas are thought up by the editor, not the reporter. Remember, all of us view the world from our own, isolated cubicles. Editors are no different."

¹⁶ I discuss this topic at length concerning Afghan narratives in 2011 on various attacks within Kabul. Depending on the organization, the same attack gets a completely different narrative. See: Ben Zweibelson, "What is Your Narrative, and Why?," *Small Wars Journal*, (October 15, 2011), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/what-is-your-narrative-and-why>>.

¹⁷ Mats Alvesson, Jorgen Sandberg, "Generating Research Questions Through Problematization," *Academy of Management Review*, 36, no. 2 (2011), 255. "A key task is...to enter a dialectical interrogation between one's own and other meta-theoretical stances so as to identify, articulate, and challenge central assumptions underlying existing literature in a way that opens up new areas of inquiry."

¹⁸ As an operational planner for NTM-A, I wrote an unclassified document on dueling narratives based on both the International Hotel attack and the assassination of Karzai's brother to assist our organization in planning future operations. See: Ben Zweibelson, *What is Your Narrative, and Why?*, op.cit.

¹⁹ Refer to footnote 2 of this article. This meta-narrative approach was modified and applied in different contexts as I led various planning teams for the ANSF reduction plan and the NTM-A 'Unified Transition Plan'.

²⁰ Ben Zweibelson, "Does Design Help or Hurt Military Planning: How NTM-A Designed a Plausible Afghan Security Force in an Uncertain Future, Part I and II," *Small Wars Journal*, (July 9, 2012), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/does-design-help-or-hurt-military-planning-how-ntm-a-designed-a-plausible-afghan-security-f>>. Figure 2 comes directly out of this unclassified summary of design applications for this strategic planning initiative.

²¹ Thom Shanker, Alissa Rubin, "Afghan Force Will Be Cut After Taking Lead Role," *The New York Times*, April 10, 2012. "The defense minister...noted that the projected reductions beyond 2014 were the result of "a conceptual model for planning purposes" of an army, police and border-protection force sufficient to defend Afghanistan." See also: AFP, "West to Pay Afghan Military \$4bn a Year" *The Times of India*, March 22, 2012, available at <<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/West-to-pay-Afghan-military-4bn-a-year-Karzai/articleshow/12370336.cms>>. Although the article confirms that nothing was final about the future ANSF, President Karzai's public acknowledgement of the plan to build a sustainable and affordable security force demonstrates the acceptance of the NTM-A planning proposal as a conceptual model. See also: Matthias Gebauer, NATO Members Spar over Post-Withdrawal Financing, *Spiegel.de*, April 19, 2012, available at <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/nato-members-are-sparring-over-funding-for-afghanistan-a-828627.html>>.

²² Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, (translated by Brian Massumi) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

²³ Gerald M. Weinberg, *Rethinking Systems Analysis and Design*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 12. "If our previous experience with systems analysis proves anything, it proves that anyone who tries to use *all* the information- even about the simple systems existing today- will be drowned in paper and never accomplish anything...The synthesist is someone who makes very specific plans for action, and more often than not stays around during the execution of those plans to adjust them to ongoing reality."

²⁴ Deleuze, Guattari, 360. "The State-form, as a form of interiority, has a tendency to reproduce itself, remaining identical to itself across its variations and easily recognizable within the limits of its poles..." Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of interiority and exteriority form assemblages which constantly interact. "It is in terms not of independence, but of coexistence and competition *in a perpetual field of interaction*..." The state-form correlates to the military institution, whereas their assemblage concept termed a "war machine" relates to the meta-themes of human conflict and force of will through violence or obedience/submission.

²⁵ Source, Transit, and Arrival Zone terminology reflects current U.S. government illegal drug enforcement doctrine and protocol. "Transit Zone Interdiction Operations," *Office of National Drug Control Policy*, accessed at <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/international/factsht/transit_zone_interdic_op.html>

²⁶ Gerald M. Weinberg, *Rethinking Systems Analysis and Design*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 121.

"Reduction is but one approach to understanding, one among many. As soon as we stop trying to examine one tiny portion of the world more closely and apply some close observation to science itself, we find that reductionism is an ideal *never* achieved in practice."

²⁷ Huba Wass de Czege, "Thinking and Acting Like an Early Explorer: Operational Art is Not a Level of War," *Small Wars Journal*, March 14, 2011, available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2011/03/operational-art-is-not-a-level/>>. Wass de Czege discusses how tactics "operates in a system that can be assumed "closed" within a time frame of planned tactical actions...strategy operates in a system that we must assume to be "open" within the time frame we are exploring."

²⁸ Shimon Naveh, Jim Schneider, Timothy Challans, *The Structure of Operational Revolution; A Prolegomena* (Booz, Allen, Hamilton, 2009), 88. According to Shimon Naveh, Army Design doctrine demonstrates repetitive *tacticization* where military institutions "are inclined to apply knowledge they have acquired from their tactical experiences to their operational functioning sphere. In such cases, they either reduce the operational inquiry of potential opposition into a mechanical discussion or completely reject the need for a distinct learning operation."

²⁹ Fritjof Capra, *The Web of Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), 29. "In the analytic, or reductionist, approach, the parts themselves cannot be analyzed any further, except by reducing them to still smaller parts. Indeed, Western science has been progressing in that way." See also: Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan*, (New York: Random House, 2007), 16. "Categorizing always produces reduction in true complexity."

³⁰ Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, (translated by Brian Massumi) *A Thousand Plateaus; Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 360. "The State-form, as a form of interiority, has a tendency to reproduce itself, remaining identical to itself across its variations and easily recognizable within the limits of its poles..." Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of interiority and exteriority form assemblages which constantly interact. "It is in terms not of independence, but of coexistence and competition in a perpetual field of interaction..."

³¹ Naveh, Schneider, Challans, Naveh, Schneider, and Challans state that military planners are "confined to the 'shackles' of inferiority determined by institutional paradigm, doctrine, and jargon...[they] are cognitively prevented, by the very convenience of institutional inferiority...because the 'shackles' of ritual hold them in place."

³² See U.S. Army, "Army Doctrine Publication," (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (2012) for military operational variables consist of political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment,

time (PMESII-PT). See also "Army Doctrine Reference Publication" (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (May 2012) for additional information.

³³ Gary Jason, *Critical Thinking: Developing an Effective System logic*, (San Diego State University: Wadsworth Thomson Learning, 2001), 337. "People tend to compartmentalize: they divide aspects of their lives into compartments and then make decisions about things in one compartment without taking into account the implications for things in another compartment." See also: See also: Valerie Ahl and T.F.H. Allen, *Hierarchy Theory: A Vision, Vocabulary, and Epistemology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1. "In all ages humanity has been confronted by complex problems. The difference between then and now is that contemporary society has ambitions of solving complex problems through technical understanding."

³⁴ Herbert A. Simon, "The Proverbs of Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 6, no. 1, (Winter 1946), 59. "Processes, then, are carried on in order to achieve purposes. But purposes themselves may generally be arranged in some sort of hierarchy."

³⁵ Deleuze, Guattari, *op. cit.*, 361. "The model is a vortical one; it operates in an open space throughout which things-flows are distributed, rather than plotting out a closed space for linear and solid things."

³⁶ Design pioneer Shimon Naveh terms this behavior 'tacticization' and charges that military organizations are unable to break free of this compulsion to measure and compartmentalize things into the procedures and categories that our doctrine dictates. See: Naveh, Schneider, Challans, 88.

³⁷ Ervin Laszlo, *The Systems View of the World; a Holistic Vision for Our Time*, (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1996), 16. "Systems thinking gives us a holistic perspective for viewing the world around us, and seeing ourselves in the world." See also: Valerie Ahl and T.F.H. Allen, *Hierarchy Theory: A Vision, Vocabulary, and Epistemology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 18. "Meaning, and explaining the "why" of a phenomena, come from the context. The lower-level mechanics, the "how" of the phenomena, have nothing to say about "why."

³⁸ Michel Foucault, *Discourse and Truth: The Problematization of Parrhesia*, (originally covered in six lectures given by Michel Foucault at the University of California, Berkeley in October-November, 1983), Available at <<http://foucault.info/documents/parrhesia/>>.

³⁹ Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War; American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 11-17. Historian Carl H. Builder argues in *The Masks of War* that military institutions are generally motivated towards institutional

survival, evoking “golden eras” of past wars, and the continued idolization of self-defining behaviors, traditions, and structures.

⁴⁰ Mats Alvesson, Jorgen Sandberg, “Generating Research Questions Through Problematization,” *Academy of Management Review*, 36, no. 2 (2011), 257. Alvesson and Sandberg identify “field assumptions” and “root metaphors” as unquestionable theoretical concepts within an organization’s preferred manner of viewing the world that are “difficult to identify because “everyone” shares them, and, thus, they are rarely [questioned] in research texts.”

⁴¹ Mary Jo Hatch, Ann Cunliffe, *Organization Theory, Second Edition* (Oxford: University Press, 2006), 210-211. Hatch adapts her model from Pasquale Gagliardi and uses a cycle of assumptions, values, artifacts, and symbols where a society rotates through each of the processes and eventually changes them.

⁴² Shimon Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence; The Evolution of Operational Theory* (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), 220. “Due to a traditionally non-systematic approach in the area of learning and assimilation of operational lessons, field leaders and staff officers lacked uniform conventions in both planning and analysis...in most cases the learning process focused exclusively on the tactical field and technical issues.”

⁴³ Chris Paparone, *The Sociology of Military Science; Prospects for Postinstitutional Military Design* (New York: Bloombury, 2013), 188-189. Co-Authors of chapter 6, Grant Martin and Ben Zweibelson, discuss institutionalisms and design in practice. Zweibelson describes how his planning team’s higher headquarters rejected their adjustment of a center of gravity because they were unwilling to entertain that their plan might not be relevant anymore.

⁴⁴ Nick Walsh, “U.S. Admiral Endorses Expanding Number of Armed Afghans Paid to Protect Villages”, *CNN*, December 11, 2011, available at <<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/12/11/world/asia/afghanistan-nato/index.html>>. “The head of America’s special operations troops has endorsed a likely controversial plan to boost the numbers of armed Afghans paid by NATO to protect their villages under a plan once described as “a community watch with AK-47s.”

⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari use the terms “territorialization” and “de-territorialization” to explain the creation and destruction of social constructions of reality; for brevity I use the simpler yet less accurate term “destructive creativity.”

⁴⁶ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Kuhn warns of how during a paradigm shift within a field, those that cling to the old system will either strike out against the new transformation, or attempt to continue

in old methods. Over time, these practitioners will self-exile due to loss of relevance in the new paradigm.

⁴⁷ Paris Tech Review Editors, “It’s a Wiki Wiki World, Wikipedia and the Rise of a New Mode of Production,” *Paris Tech Review*, February 18, 2011, available at <<http://www.paristechreview.com/2011/02/18/wiki-world-wikipedia-new-mode-production/>>. The editors of this article use the term “social production model” to define how social networks collaborate anonymously to generate new knowledge in a self-organizing non-hierarchical fashion.

⁴⁸ AFP, “West to Pay Afghan Military \$4bn a Year,” *The Times of India*, March 22, 2012, accessed at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/West-to-pay-Afghan-military-4bn-a-year-Karzai/articleshow/12370336.cms>. Although the article confirms that nothing was final about the future ANSF, President Karzai’s public acknowledgement of the plan to build a sustainable and affordable security force is a direct reference to the approved NTM-A reduction plan. Planners used these design concepts to deliver the final recommendations.

⁴⁹ Qiao Liang, Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Beijing: People’s Liberation Army Literature and Arts Publishing House, February 1999), 13-14. “Some of the traditional models of war, as well as the logic and laws attached to it, will also be challenged. The outcome of the contest is not the collapse of the traditional mansion but rather one portion of the new construction site being in disorder.”

⁵⁰ Weinberg, *op.cit.*, 121. See also: White, *op.cit.*, 6. “Rational or scientific knowledge was little more than the truth yielded by reflection in the prefigurative modes raised to the level of abstract concepts and submitted to criticism for logical consistency, coherency, and so on.”