



Asymmetry Is Strategy, Strategy Is Asymmetry

By Lukas Milevski

Much of the strategic studies literature of the past two decades identifies profound novelty in the conduct and challenges of modern war, novelty that ultimately calls into question the nature and even existence of war. War has allegedly now been transformed from a regular, conventional, purportedly symmetric exercise

into an irregular, unconventional, asymmetric event, which must be understood anew.

Of all the new descriptors for war, “asymmetric” is among the broadest. It has even been suggested that *asymmetry* does not bear definition: “to *define* the term *defies* its very meaning, purpose, and significance.”¹ Some, undeterred

by such extreme pronouncements, have attempted at least to categorize various existing and potential concepts of asymmetry. Thus, Jan Angstrom has identified four different prisms through which asymmetry may be interpreted: “power distribution, organisational status of the actor, method of warfare, and norms.”² Yet despite claims of newness, it has also been observed that asymmetry has infused nearly every, if not every, war in recorded history. (Possibly only the hoplite phalanxes of ancient Greece could be

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considered properly symmetrical in nearly all respects, for geography, demographics, and so forth make all politics fundamentally asymmetrical to some degree.) Misunderstanding asymmetry poses significant dangers: “our misuse of the terms asymmetry and asymmetric distorts those vital processes and leads us to make major strategic blunders. For example, by focusing on threats rather than enemy strategies we fail to understand their strategic nature, goals, and overall concepts of operations.”³

The question thus arises: how may one fruitfully discuss asymmetry as a separate phenomenon? Perhaps the time has come to abandon the endeavor as unhelpful and rather suggest that asymmetry in war, and even asymmetric strategy, are redundancies. *Asymmetry is strategy, and strategy is asymmetry.* This article argues the point in three parts. First, it suggests that observations of a novel change are overexaggerated. Second, it maintains that no matter the form war may take, the function of strategy is eternal. Third, it proposes that contemporary asymmetric conflicts are all comprehensible through the lens of strategy.

Form over Substance

Theorists of contemporary conflict, whether describing asymmetric or unconventional wars, war among the people, or other iterations of modern armed conflict, usually posit significant change in the character, if not actual nature, of war. Many of them accurately identify and analyze the characteristics of modern interventions. In perceiving significant differences between modern war and wars past, however, they caricature historical conflict.

Thus, Rupert Smith argues that “war as cognitively known to most non-combatants, war as battle in a field between men and machinery, war as a massive deciding event in a dispute in international affairs: such war no longer exists.”⁴ Martin van Creveld propounds the notion that “the demise of conventional war will cause strategy in its traditional, Clausewitzian sense to disappear.”⁵ Fourth-generation warfare theorists such as T.X. Hammes identify generations of

warfare with particular styles of conducting war; third-generation warfare is, for example, maneuver warfare, and fourth-generation warfare “uses all available networks—political, economic, social, and military—to convince the enemy’s political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is an evolved form of insurgency.”⁶

Yet their theories on the changes in war depend upon caricaturing what came before. They have succeeded somewhat in part because many centers of strategic education similarly caricature historical war. These caricatures rely on a Eurocentric perspective of strategic history. Smith’s war as a battle in a field between men and machinery and Hammes’s third-generation warfare as maneuver warfare, for example, both rely on the World Wars, especially World War II. These wars were fought among European or Western polities, all of which have similar strategic cultures. Yet modern interventions primarily take place between Western powers and polities elsewhere in the world, with significant differences in strategic culture. Theorists of change in war are comparing apples with oranges and perceiving change based on such flawed comparisons, which serve only to churn various fashions in strategic thought.

To analyze interventions, comparisons to the Third Afghan War of 1919 or the Rif War of 1919–1926 would much more accurately demonstrate how much war has actually changed. Similarly, conventional war must be compared to conventional war. Notably, Russia’s 2008 invasion of Georgia did not trigger a Georgian insurgency against the Russians, or even against the Abkhazians or South Ossetians. The war remained conventional throughout. The Iraq War of 2003 did transform into an insurgency, but not immediately. The period of a few months between the end of conventional operations and the serious beginning of the insurgency was terribly squandered by the United States, which visibly failed to begin righting the country. Although it would be incorrect to say that this great

strategic and political failure caused the insurgency, it certainly exacerbated it.

Hew Strachan has suggested that “the real problem may well be that our policy has failed to recognise war’s true nature, and so has mistaken changing characteristics for something more fundamental than they actually are.”⁷ This mischaracterization is frequently manifested in the belief, as apparent before Iraq in 2003 and during some of the advocacy for intervention in Syria in 2013, that war is not adversarial, that enemies do not reciprocally interact with, and against, each other. The character of any war is not unilaterally set by any one implicated polity, but by the reciprocal hostility of all those involved. Thus, in not accounting for the enemy’s own initiative against us, the Western powers are blindsided by actions that are then interpreted as integral to the structure of contemporary war rather than as the consequence of something inherent in war, which is more fundamental and eternal.

Asymmetry and Strategy

That which is eternal is strategy, the purposeful threat or use of violence to achieve desired ends. Strategy has no permanent form, although it always retains its enduring substance and function. Strategy has always been practiced, even though before the word’s rediscovery in the 1770s, strategies explicitly labeled as such may not have been expressly planned or implemented.⁸ The core task of strategy may be identified as Everett Dolman does: “strategy, in its simplest form, is *a plan for attaining continuing advantage.*”⁹ Dolman rightly observes that the strategist’s task is usually aided more by advantage than disadvantage. “Advantage,” like strategy, is not defined by a particular form. Advantage may take the form of materiel, political will, a superior grasp of how to translate forces deployed into aims achieved, or so on. Understanding war and all the influences on it is necessarily multidisciplinary; therefore, asymmetry may manifest itself in a similarly wide range.

Strategy may be thus cast in a more absolute manner than merely the



Special Forces Soldier crosses roof of compound during combat with Taliban forces in Bahlozi Village, Maiwand District, Kandahar Province (DOD)

achievement of continuing advantage. Rather, strategy may be interpreted as *the generation and exploitation of asymmetry for the purposes of the war*. Roger Barnett complains that:

*asymmetries arise if opponents enjoy greater freedom of action, or if they have weapons or techniques available to them that one does not. Perpetrators seek to void the strengths of their adversaries and to be unpredictable. They endeavor to take advantage of an ability to follow certain courses of action or to employ methods that can be neither anticipated nor countered effectively.*¹⁰

Yet this is the very essence of strategy. Strategy is an adversarial act; the enemy also has a will, a capability, and a vote in the outcome. This reciprocal nature of strategy is a primary source of strategy's nonlinearity, for defeat may beget renewed defiance and alternative attempts to achieve one's goals, rather than the desired submission. Thus, Edward Luttwak, for instance, identifies the very pinnacle of strategic performance as "the suspension, if only brief, if only partial, of the entire predicament of strategy."¹¹ The predicament of strategy is the enemy.

The pinnacle, therefore, is the removal of the enemy's ability, however temporarily, to influence outcomes. Suffering from a position of weakness in an asymmetric relationship restricts one's abilities to influence outcomes based on that relationship. To generate asymmetry effectively is to be, although not necessarily the only way to be, a skilled strategist.

The generation of asymmetry is the basis of much, if not most, strategic theory, particularly power-specific theories such as those pertaining to seapower or airpower. Command of the sea or of the air cannot mean anything other than the generation of a major operational asymmetry in either of those warfighting domains relative to the enemy. Similarly, the very idea of massing and applying one's forces against the decisive point, a theme in both Antoine-Henri Jomini's and Carl von Clausewitz's works, is to generate asymmetry in a particular location, to achieve the desired wider effects. The debates about the revolution in military affairs and transformation are also ultimately about generating significant asymmetry, albeit in the form of a particular silver bullet. Cold War nuclear strategy was similarly meant to establish asymmetries of commitment,

even when theorists might not be able to make operational sense of asymmetries of capability, particularly in the theories of Thomas Schelling. The strategic theories of Basil Liddell Hart were so steeped in the generation of asymmetry that it apparently affected his understanding of the moral component of strategy. He focused relentlessly on the indirect approach to create situations in which the enemy would be utterly helpless, therefore hopeless, and so would surrender without undue bloodshed, thereby removing killing from the concept of morality in strategy. Instead, "strategy is the very opposite of morality, as it is largely concerned with the art of deception," in reality not because killing had no place in morality, but because killing had no place in his idea of good strategy.¹²

Asymmetry is thus clearly compatible with conventional warfare, simply because it is good strategy. During World War II, the conventional war par excellence, the Allies ultimately established major asymmetries in military-industrial production and logistics, on the sea, and in the air over all the Axis countries. World War I was a bloody stalemate on the Western Front for so long in large part because until 1918 neither side was

able to generate the asymmetries required to break it. The belligerents who generated the most important asymmetries ultimately won. Not all asymmetries are equal; some may be more immediate than others, some may be ultimately more damaging to one's ability to achieve desired goals than others, and so on. Effective asymmetry, like effective strategy, is context-sensitive.

Asymmetry is strategy, strategy is asymmetry. Conrad Crane of the U.S. Army War College is reputed to have suggested that "there are two types of warfare: asymmetric and stupid."¹³ Generating effective asymmetry is good strategy. To condemn rhetorically our opponents for generating asymmetry reveals our conditioning born of understanding recent history through the prism of wishful thinking, of expecting one's enemies to be poor strategists such as those faced in 1990–1991, 2001, and 2003. Wishful thinking, operationalized as unrealistically optimistic assumptions, does not usually lead to strategic success, as our experience of the variably labeled "war on terror" or "Long War" clearly indicates.

One might counter that conventional asymmetries on land, sea, and air are far more easily understood than unconventional asymmetries such as guerrilla warfare. This may indeed be the case, but so what? One may understand a threat and still be incapable of countering it. German General Fridolin von Senger und Etterlin, who had participated in the Italian campaign of 1943–1945, once likened operating under Allied air supremacy to playing chess against an opponent who could play three pieces each turn to his one. No amount of understanding of the threat can help alleviate a situation if that understanding cannot be turned into operational plans and successful outcomes. This is just as true of conventional asymmetries as of unconventional ones. In fact, conventional asymmetries are usually the more dangerous of the two for their ultimate political effects are usually greater, as the experience of warlords from Darius III to Napoleon to Adolf Hitler may attest. Each lost his empire to enemies who were ultimately more capable of

generating effective asymmetry. Relatively few unconventional asymmetries have had the historical effect equivalent to losing an empire. One of the few pertinent, albeit inexact, examples is the American Revolutionary War, but even that war was "hybrid" rather than purely unconventional.¹⁴

Strategy in Contemporary War

Asymmetry today is most commonly associated with insurgency and irregular foes. Contemporary theories on strategies for counterinsurgency also implicitly emphasize the generation of effective asymmetry against the so-called asymmetric enemy. Unlike the generation of conventional asymmetries, many of which tend to be domain-oriented, contemporary counterinsurgency theory emphasizes asymmetry from the perspective of the population's support, through the provision of security and other services, including effective governance. David Galula is frequently identified as the progenitor of this theory. It is nevertheless significant that his proposed strategic blueprint for counterinsurgency only begins with the destruction or expulsion of insurgents as an organized body and ends, after the organization of local communities into effective and self-sustaining political entities, with the destruction of the last of the insurgents.¹⁵

Force does not lack utility against a foe that is generating unconventional asymmetry. Indeed, the very form of that asymmetry reveals a significant concern about one's own conventional military superiority over the insurgent. Unconventional asymmetry is guerrilla warfare, arising from military weakness and infused with concern for the survival of the insurgent force. Without that force, the insurgency is likely to fail. Galula noted that "in any situation, whatever the cause, there will be an active minority for the cause, a neutral majority, and an active minority against the cause."¹⁶ A neutral majority will acquiesce to whichever party appears most likely to succeed. One of the most publicly visible features of such a measurement is the apparent effectiveness of the respective

armed forces. The truism that the counterinsurgent loses if he does not win, but the insurgent wins if he does not lose, is indicative of this. Once the counterinsurgent, superior in strength, fails to win and so withdraws from the conflict, the only remaining viable power in the country will be the insurgent force. This truism is, of course, true only in the context of intervention because the counterinsurgent ultimately *must leave*; it is not an iron law of insurgency as such, as the example of Sri Lanka may attest.

This observation is not new to contemporary war. C.E. Callwell, one of the major luminaries of historical British strategic thought on small wars, offered an explanation at the end of the 19th century: "It is a singular feature of small wars that from the point of view of strategy the regular forces are upon the whole at a distinct disadvantage as compared to their antagonists." In battle, however, regular troops have the tactical advantage: "Since tactics favour the regular troops while strategy favours the enemy, the object to be sought for clearly is to fight, not to manoeuvre, to meet the hostile forces in open battle, not to compel them to give way by having recourse to strategy."¹⁷ The imbalance of military power between intervener and insurgent was, and remains, the basis for the guerrilla's choice of strategy.

It is noteworthy in this context that, of the four great theorists of insurgent warfare, T.E. Lawrence, Mao Zedong, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Ernesto "Che" Guevara, only Lawrence did *not* theorize the eventual transition from guerrilla to relatively, if not absolutely, conventional warfare for the final campaigns definitively to seize power from the government forces. Lawrence, of course, fought as part of a larger conventional operation commanded by General Edmund Allenby and so had no need to turn his fighters into a conventional force. This is not to argue that members of the Taliban are running around the Hindu Kush with Mao's little red book in their pockets, but rather that these authors identified the limits of guerrilla warfare. Thus, not even insurgency may violate the fundamental truth which J.C. Wylie observed: "the ultimate determinant in

war is the man on the scene with the gun. This man is the final power in war. He is control. He determines who wins.”¹⁸

The enemy relies upon unconventional asymmetry if he believes himself unable to succeed without it. The Taliban in Helmand Province only turned back to tried-and-tested guerrilla tactics after suffering disastrous casualties in futile frontal assaults on British bases. This adaptation coincided with the loss of widespread local support, as “the cost of aligning themselves with the Taliban turned out to be very high for many communities in terms of destruction and loss of life,” as well as with consequent Taliban attempts to regain some local legitimacy and support.¹⁹ The generation of asymmetry through guerrilla tactics has both advantages and disadvantages, which must be examined with respect to the function of strategy, that is, the conversion of violence into desired political effect for both the insurgent and the counterinsurgent.

The basis of strategy is war, the purpose of which “is some measure of control over the enemy.” Control is a rarely defined term whose limits are quite broad, being “neither so extreme as to amount to extermination . . . nor . . . so tenuous as to foster the continued behavior of the enemy as a hazard to the victory.”²⁰ The pattern of events in war is driven by the reciprocal interaction of adversaries, “a contest for freedom of action.”²¹ Since control pertains to freedom of action, one might identify three different categories of control. The weakest form of control is merely the denial of control, or preventing the enemy from unduly restricting one’s own freedom of action. Once a belligerent is relatively strong enough, he may attempt to take control and threaten actively to limit his opponent’s freedom of action. The final type of control is its exercise after having taken it, to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion. Much of strategic theory assumes that a belligerent without freedom of action or the ability to pursue his political goals will ultimately abandon his endeavor.

Unconventional asymmetry is capable only of denying control to the superior enemy. Despite being the weakest form of control, it remains potent. A strategy



Special Forces Soldier exits building during operations in Arghandab District, Afghanistan (U.S. Army/Gino Palu)

based upon the accumulated effect of minor actions and continued elusiveness to deny control of the operational pattern of the war presents significant difficulties for the opposing side. Presenting no single set of targets and acting against and among civilians across geographies larger than their opponents may completely secure provide the counterinsurgent with a wide array of potential choices, whose strategic worth may be estimated but hardly known. Thus, Harry Summers caustically noted that during the Vietnam War, the United States identified up to 22 different wartime objectives.²² This plethora of choice encourages unproductive or even counterproductive actions and contradicting policy goals on the part of the conventionally superior force. For instance, in Afghanistan, U.S. policies simultaneously require the local warlords to be liquidated for purposes of state-building and to be preserved to fight the Taliban.²³ Unconventional asymmetry targets the stronger foe’s strategy rather than the enemy himself.

The counterinsurgent, if unable to bring force or other tools effectively to bear to weaken the insurgency, merely marks time with blood. Time is a precious commodity in strategy and must be used wisely, but the substantial intellectual challenge facing the counterinsurgent places significant obstacles on the path of so doing.

Despite its deleterious effects on the stronger opponent’s strategic performance, unconventional asymmetry is a serious strategic gamble. Although it denies control to the enemy, the insurgents themselves also do not gain control over the pattern of the war. Both sides tend to have the maximum freedom of action possible in an otherwise reciprocally adversarial context. The Viet Cong might skulk into Saigon to plant explosives, but the Marines could hold Khe Sanh, within spitting distance of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which was absolutely vital to the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army in South Vietnam. In such a situation, barring any dramatic changes, rarely



M1 Abrams tanks maneuver in streets of Tall Afar, Iraq, as they conduct combat patrol (U.S. Air Force/Aaron Allmon)

is there a clear indication of who holds the advantage until the conflict itself actually ends.

Strategy poses a difficult challenge due to the nonlinearities involved, many of which stem from the active presence of an independently acting adversary. Yet on the sliding scale of difficulty, the generation of asymmetry through guerrilla warfare may almost be a leap of faith. Although the skilled guerrilla retains initiative in being able to choose his own battlefields, the power of decision is preserved for his foe. The denier of control has no direct influence on the perception of his efforts in the opposing headquarters; he cannot impose a victory, but can only wait until his opponent acquiesces to defeat. Although today insurgents are able to fight figuratively in the media as well as literally on the ground, the pressure of public opinion seems to count for less in wartime than in peacetime because of the other pressures war generates: “The declaration of war, and more

immediately the use of violence, alters everything. From that point on, the demands of war tend to shape policy, more than the direction of policy shapes war.”²⁴

The generation of asymmetry through use of guerrilla tactics may be a strategy that Western powers find difficult to defeat, despite more than a decade of constant experience with attempting to combat it. It is nevertheless fundamentally the same phenomenon as generating asymmetry through commanding the sea or the air and may be understood with the same basic toolbox of strategic concepts. British mastery of the seas largely bewildered French attempts to defeat it for over a century and resulted in the French development of a number of methods by which to strike at British command of the sea without directly challenging it, including the *guerre de course* and the later *jeune école*, which was obsessed with the potential of torpedo boats. Today the roles are reversed, for the weaker belligerent has bewildered the

Western powers and left them scrambling to determine how to combat the threat.

Many time-tested methods of defeating guerrillas directly are unacceptable to liberal powers today. As David Kilcullen puts it, “Indeed, any given state’s approach to counterinsurgency depends on the nature of the state, and the concept of ‘counterinsurgency’ can mean entirely different things depending on the character of the government involved.”²⁵ These methods may also be inappropriate for the specific conditions in which Western powers find themselves. Treating counterinsurgency as social work is more amenable to Western sensitivities than treating it as war. Although counterinsurgency definitely is the latter, it may well be both. Violence remains the base coinage of strategy, but this does not rule out the utility of counterfeits or other instruments of political power. One must remember that these tools are merely used as replacements for violence in specific circumstances where they may effectively

take the place of force. War is war, but war is also politics. The other instruments of political power do not lose relevance once violence begins, but their utility is tempered by the introduction of force.

Moreover, it may be possible that today, compared to all prior historical experience, it is easiest for liberal powers to track and target insurgents. This is due to a number of factors, including the widespread use of new communications and other technologies, and new techniques to use this technology.²⁶ Taking the fight directly to the insurgents has become a plausible option for liberal democracies in a way that would not have previously been allowed, with massive cordons and conscription of locals to serve in temporary militias. With an increasing ability to strike desirable insurgent targets directly and relatively precisely comes an opportunity, in theory but also necessarily tempered by the actual circumstances of practice, to render relatively ineffective the generation of asymmetry through guerrilla tactics. The particular character of specific asymmetries does not change the fact that they all may be comprehended through the lens of strategy.

Conclusion

Rupert Smith is skeptical of the idea of asymmetric warfare. He rightly indicates that “the practice of war, indeed its ‘art,’ is to achieve an asymmetry over the opponent. Labeling wars as asymmetric is to me something of a euphemism to avoid acknowledging that my opponent is not playing to my strengths and I am not winning.”²⁷ Smith’s euphemism implies that the opponent is practicing strategy better than the Western powers are; since the practice of strategy determines how any particular polity engages in warfare, the implications of poor strategic practice are grave.

Asymmetry as now commonly used—to denote a supposedly particular new type of war—is not a useful term and, for some, implies strategic ethnocentric hubris that “assumes there is only one truth and model for warfare, and that we alone have it.”²⁸ In fact, today and historically, most strategies seek to generate asymmetry as a way of minimizing the enemy’s

vote on the character and outcome of the war. Lawrence Freedman once defined strategy as “the art of creating power.”²⁹ Given that power is a necessarily relational quality—for one cannot have power in the absence of an entity on or against which it may be exercised—the generation of asymmetry is the restriction and minimization of the enemy’s effective power vis-à-vis oneself and the multiplication and maximization of one’s own against that adversary.

Labeling only a certain segment of strategies as asymmetric risks obscuring the enormous real asymmetric advantages liberal democracies have over those insurgents who purportedly employ the asymmetric strategies. This practice threatens conceptually to detach asymmetric warfare from war and strategy by treating it as something else, and in doing so it contributes toward preventing the Western powers from fully and effectively employing force against weaker challengers, as the popularity of asymmetry in strategic literature is a self-reinforcing symptom of our diluted grasp on strategy. Asymmetry will ever remain strategy, and strategy will ever remain asymmetry. JFQ

Notes

¹ Jesse G. Chace, “Defining Asymmetric Warfare: A Losing Proposition,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 61 (2nd Quarter 2011), 124.

² Jan Angstrom, “Evaluating Rivalling Interpretations of Asymmetric War and Warfare,” in *Conceptualising Modern War*, ed. Karl Erik Haug and Ole Jørgen Maaø, 31 (London: Hurst & Company, 2011).

³ Stephen J. Blank, *Rethinking Asymmetric Threats* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), v.

⁴ Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Penguin Books 2006), 1.

⁵ Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).

⁶ T.X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul: Zenith Press 2004), 2, 3.

⁷ Hew Strachan, “Introductory Essay: The Changing Character of War,” in *Conceptualising Modern War*, 25.

⁸ Beatrice Heuser, “Strategy Before the Word: Ancient Wisdom for the Modern World,” *RUSI Journal* 155, no. 1 (February/March 2010), 36–42.

⁹ Everett C. Dolman, *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age* (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 6.

¹⁰ Roger W. Barnett, *Asymmetrical Warfare: Today’s Challenge to U.S. Military Power* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2003), 15.

¹¹ Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2001), 4.

¹² Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: Meridian, 1991), 220.

¹³ Quotation from Emile Simpson, *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First-Century Combat as Politics* (London: Hurst & Company, 2012), 140.

¹⁴ Williamson Murray, “The American Revolution: Hybrid War in America’s Past,” in *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present*, ed. Williamson Murray and Peter R. Mansoor, 72–103 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹⁵ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 55.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁷ C.E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 85, 91.

¹⁸ J.C. Wylie, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1989), 72.

¹⁹ Theo Farrell and Antonio Giustozzi, “The Taliban at War: Inside the Helmand Insurgency, 2004–2012,” *International Affairs* 89, no. 4 (2013), 854.

²⁰ Wylie, 66, 70.

²¹ André Beaufre, *An Introduction to Strategy*, trans. R.H. Barry (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 110.

²² Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (New York: Presidio Press, 1995), 98.

²³ Mark Peceny and Yury Bosin, “Winning with Warlords in Afghanistan,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 4 (September 2011), 603–618.

²⁴ Hew Strachan, “Strategy in the Twenty-First Century,” in *The Changing Character of War*, ed. Hew Strachan and Sibylle Scheipers, 508 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁵ David J. Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (London: Hurst & Company, 2010), 155.

²⁶ Michael T. Flynn, Rich Juergens, and Thomas L. Cantrell, “Employing ISR: SOF Best Practices,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 50 (3rd Quarter 2008), 56–61; Mark Urban, *Task Force Black: The Explosive True Story of the SAS and the Secret War in Iraq* (London: Little, Brown, 2010).

²⁷ Smith, 4.

²⁸ Blank, 15–16.

²⁹ Lawrence Freedman, “Strategic Studies and the Problem of Power,” in *War, Strategy and International Politics: Essays in Honour of Sir Michael Howard*, ed. Lawrence Freedman, Paul Hayes, and Robert O’Neill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).