Third Prize

Mission Command-able?
Assessing Organizational Change and Military Culture
Compatibility in the U.S. Army

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"The success of my whole project is founded on the firmness
of the conduct of the officer who will command it."[1]

Frederick the Great, 1747.

How does a military coordinate its actions across time and space to achieve military and political objectives? Conversation, smoke signals, messengers, radios and satellite technologies provide some means for coordination. However, the presence of technology does not automatically produce coordination. Instead, the particular command-philosophy that a military utilizes structures these means of coordination. Command philosophies can range from highly controlled and centralized command

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[1] Frederick the Great, *Instructions for His Generals*, 1747 quoted in Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., *Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations* (Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1966), p. 59.

structure, to more decentralized or networked structures that are less dependent upon direct commands.[2]

Mission command – *Auftragstaktik* in its original Prussian – is a command philosophy that features greater decentralization compared to the centralized instructions of the order oriented *Befehlstaktik* command-philosophy. The essence of mission command is that it provides subordinates with room to adapt their tactics to the situation on the ground while still working towards their superior's overall goal. [3] In the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, Prussia adopted mission command as its underlying command-philosophy – which the officer corps quickly institutionalized – and this was widely regarded as a key to the success of the Prussian Army in the Franco-Prussian War.[4] Following these successes, many militaries have attempted to emulate this command style to achieve their own battlefield victories.[5]

A recent example of this is the United States Army's attempt to adopt mission command as its guiding command philosophy.[6] The ideas of allowing subordinates greater freedom of action on the battlefield is not new to those in the Army. In fact, the mission command concept has been a constant feature within the U.S. Army for over a

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[2] John Arquilla, *The Worst Enemy: The Reluctant Transformation of the American Military* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2008); Eitan Shamir, *Transforming Command: The Pursuit of Mission Command in the US, British, and Israeli Armies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).

[3] Uzi Ben-Shalom and Eitan Shamir, "Mission Command Between Theory and Practice: The Case of the IDF," *Defense & Security Analysis* 27, No. 2 (2011); John F. Antal (CPT), "Mission Tactics," *Armor* 96, No. 3 (1987): pp. 9 – 11.

[4] Jorg Muth, *Command Culture: Officer Education in the U.S. Army and the German Armed Forces, 1901 – 1940, and the Consequences for World War II* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2011); Martin van Crevald, *The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1990); Shamir Eitan, "The Long and Winding Road: The U.S. Army Managerial Approach to Command and the Adoption of Mission Command (Auftragstaktik)," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, No. 5 (2010): pp. 645 – 672.

[5] Douglas A. Pryer (LTC), "Growing Leaders Who Practice Mission Command and Win the Peace," *Military Review* 93, No. 6 (November-December 2013): pp. 31 – 41.

[6] Mission command has existed in one form or another for over a hundred years in the U.S. Army, mission command was first introduced, similar to the first definition above, following the Vietnam War in the 1976 Field Manual (FM) 100 – 5 *Operations*. Clinton J. Ancker III (COL), "The Evolution of Mission Command in U.S. Army Doctrine, 1905 to the Present," *Military Review* 93, No. 2 (2013): pp. 42 – 52; Shamir, *Transforming Command*.

hundred years – either implicitly within doctrine, or in professional discourse.[7] However, in 2009, there was an official effort by the Army's leadership to develop a mission command doctrine that would ultimately lead to mission command becoming the Army's official command-philosophy. This is particular to how the Army's leadership has conceptualized mission command.[8] This represents a significant change from the previous undirected conversation surrounding mission command. The Army has recognized that to adopt mission command in its entirety, comprehensive changes would be required in training, education, organizational design, material acquisitions, doctrine, personnel, and facilities.[9] Despite identifying these areas of change, there has been no discussion within the Army regarding how the Army's military culture relates to this proposed change. Or it has simply been assumed that the Army will naturally develop a leadership culture – which is only one facet of an organization's culture – that will enable mission command.[10] Culture can be defined as "the symbols, rituals, and practices which

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[7] The Army began emulating the Prussians instead of the French in the early 1900s, the ideas of *Auftragstaktik* were part of this. Pryer, "Growing Leaders Who Practice Mission Command and Win the Peace"; Andrew J. Bacevich (MAJ), "The Way We Train: An Assessment" *Infantry* 74, No. 3 (1984): pp. 25 – 29; Walter E. Kretchik, U.S. *Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2011).

[8] Robert L. Caslen Jr. (LTG) and Charles A. Flynn (COL), "Introducing the Mission Command Centre of Excellence" *ARMY Magazine* 61, No. 2 (2011): pp. 53 - 56; United States Army, "Gen. Raymond T. Odierno addressing the USMA class of 2013" *ARMY* (November 2, 2012) (accessed February 8, 2015) http://www.army.mil/article/ 90671/Gen__Raymond_T__Odierno_addressing_the_USMA_class_of_2013/; Martin E. Dempsey (GEN), "Mission Command," *ARMY Magazine* (2011): pp. 43 – 44; United States Army, Training and Doctrine Command, "Mission Command: TRADOC NOW!" *Youtube* (October 28, 2013) (accessed March 23, 2016) https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=x9ic8oJQdaQ.

[9] Dempsey, "Mission Command"; Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pam 525-3-3*: *The United States Army Functional Concept for Mission Command* 2016 – 2028 (Fort Monroe, VA: Training and Doctrine Command, October 13, 2010), pp. 9, 37 – 39; Caslen and Flynn, "Introducing the Mission Command Centre of Excellence."

[10] Mission Command Center of Excellence, *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-3 – The U.S. Army Functional Concept for Mission Command: Mission Command Intrinsic to the Army Profession 2020-2040* (Fort Eusits: Department of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2015); James M. Dubik (LTC), "Decentralized Command: Translating Theory Into Practice" *Military Review* 72, No. 6 (1992): pp. 26 – 38; Donald E. Vandergriff "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Mission Command versus the Army Personnel System" *The Institute of Land Warfare* No. 84 (2011); Tom Guthrie (COL) "Mission Command: Do We Have the Stomach For What Is Really Required?" *ARMY Magazine* 62 No. 6 (2012): pp. 26 – 28; Ancker, "The Evolution of Mission Command in U.S. Army Doctrine, 1905 to the Present."

give meaning to the activity of the organization."[11] For example, the *Army Mission Command Strategy*, released in June of 2013, outlines the institutionalization process for mission command.[12] While comprehensive in its recommendations, the strategy does not discuss how to ensure the compatibility of mission command with the Army's culture, only that the associated doctrine will act as an "instrument of cultural change."[13] Even though the areas recognized by the Army all have the potential to create significant changes in the Army, its culture underpins all of these aspects of the organization, and shapes the outcomes of a proposed military change.[14]

The differences between rhetoric and reality matter, and while mission command represents internal change for the Army, the outcome of the change is of greater importance. Doctrine can be one of the most visible expressions of a military's "belief system."[15] Yet, as Paul Johnston argues, "How armies fight may be more a function of their culture than of their doctrine."[16] Johnston posits that simply codifying certain precepts into doctrine does not in fact make it an organization's default operating procedure, and if doctrine is not in line with a military's culture then more needs to be done than creating doctrine to change the military.[17] As seen during recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, landpower remains a significant part of a state's national security capability.[18] For the near future, it is unlikely that the Army will be deployed on a

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[11] At this point in time a brief definition will suffice. Below, the theoretical components of organization will be expanded. Terry Terriff, "'Innovate or Die': Organizational Culture and the Origins of Maneuver Warfare in the United States Marine Corps" *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, No. 3 (2006): p. 478.

[12] Jeff Allen (LTC) "Army announces Mission Command Strategy" *ARMY.mil* (June 19, 2013) (accessed March 2, 2015) http://www.army.mil/article/105858/Army_announces_Mission_Command_strategy/.

[13] United States Army, "US Army Mission Command Strategy," *Headquarters, Department of the Army* (June 2013), p. 4.

[14] Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, "Introduction" in Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff eds. *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2002).

[15] Aaron P. Jackson, *The Roots of Military Doctrine: Change and Continuity in Understanding the Practice of Warfare* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), p. 6.

[16] Paul Johnston "Doctrine Is Not Enough: The Effect of Doctrine on the Behavior of Armies" *Parameters* 30, No. 3 (2000): pp. 30 – 48.

[17] Johnston "Doctrine Is Not Enough."

[18] Theo Farrell, Sten Rynning and Terry Terriff, *Transforming Military Power Since the Cold War: Britain, France, and the United States, 1991 – 2012* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sam C. Sarkesian, John Allen Williams and Stephen J. Cimbala, *U.S. National Security: Policymakers, Processes & Politics* 4th ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2008).

comparable scale to Iraq and Afghanistan, however, the fact remains that the U.S. still maintains significant numbers of military personnel overseas that are not exclusively responsible for warfighting.[19]

Identifying whether the leadership's form of mission command faces cultural resistance or support reveals the degree of difficulty in making the Army mission command capable, and, ultimately, alter how it conducts operations. Therefore, the question is to what extent is the U.S. Army's recent transition towards mission command compatible with its unique military culture? I argue that despite some congruence between the Army's culture and the leadership's mission command, there are significant areas of discordance between the Army's military culture and the proposed command philosophy. This finding makes it clear that institutionalizing mission command in the Army is no easy task and that it is very likely that this attempted change will fail.

Approach

To determine the compatibility of mission command with the military culture of the Army I compare the leadership's espoused version of mission command with the recurring themes and traits that comprise the Army's culture. Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0, ADP 5-0, and Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0 form the doctrinal 'heart' of the leadership's view of mission command.[20] Besides these, additional sources regarding the espoused version of mission command are evident in the statements and articles published by the Army's leadership. These are important for two reasons. First, they delve into greater detail regarding some of the nuances surrounding mission command and how it is interpreted adding depth to the doctrinal analysis. Second, they contextualize mission command into broader issues within the Army, including the ongoing Long War. Together, these provide a holistic view of the

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[19] Julia Zorthian, "This Graphic Shows Where U.S. Troops Are Stationed Around the World" *Time*, (October 16, 2015) (accessed May 1, 2016) http://time.com/4075458/afghanistan-drawdown-obama-troops/; Karl W. Eikenberry, "The Militarization of U.S. Foreign Policy," *American Foreign Policy Interests* 35, No. 1 (2013): pp. 1 – 8.

[20] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0: Mission Command* (Washington D.C.: Headquarters Department of the Army, 2012), p. ii; Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0: Mission Command* (Washington D.C.: Headquarters Department of the Army, 2012).

leadership's form of mission command. In this paper, I do not seek to examine how the Army's leadership has interpreted mission command. This would involve comparing *Auftragstaktik* with mission command, and, while interesting, this study has already been completed.[21] Instead, I examine mission command's cultural compatibility, as described by the Army's leadership, to better understand how military organizations change.

To outline the Army's organizational culture, I reference academic literature concerning the culture of military organizations, and conduct a review of secondary source literature on the Army's culture and history, noting a series of themes and recurring traits. This survey will capture the essential elements of the Army's culture. It is appropriate to view the U.S. Army through its organizational culture, rather than its personnel policies or leadership structure, because mission command represents a holistic change to how the Army is expected to fight. The cultural analysis is well suited to conduct this intra-organizational study, especially given that the shift towards mission command does not involve budgetary fights with Congress or the other services, which would otherwise represent an additional shaper of the proposed change.[22]

The degree to which the published doctrine has been influenced by the Army's culture is of minor concern here. Unlike other doctrine, such as the 1982 version of *FM 100-5 Operations*, there has not been significant consultation on what is contained in mission command doctrine.[23] Further, the Army's senior leadership has acknowledged the fact that the transition to mission command is not complete.[24] The last justification for assuming that the espoused version of mission command has not been the product of the Army's culture, is the fact that both the leadership and other commentators describe the requirement for some kind of cultural change, although not *organizational* culture.

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[21] See Shamir, *Transforming Command*.

[22] David R. Eberhart, "Inter-Service Rivalry and the Joint Chiefs of Staff: A Comparison of Military Force Deployments Under the Weak and Strong Chairman Models" (Ann Arbor: PhD Dissertation, University of Denver, 2001); Charles A. Stevenson, *Warriors and Politicians: U.S. Civil-Military Relations Under Stress* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 208 – 209.

[23] John L. Romjue, *From Active Defense to AirLand Battle: The Development of Army Doctrine 1973 – 1982* (Fort Monroe: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command Historical Office, 1984).

[24] Dempsey, "Mission Command."

While some studies have examined mission command exclusively in terms of its compatibility with various organization's leadership structures and cultures, I expand this to include the whole of the organization's culture.[25] I do this to present the areas that mission command may come into conflict or congruence with outside of the officer corps, and reveals potential obstacles to the proposed change as well as avenues of potential success.

In the following sections, I present a framework of military culture and organizational change that will allow me to describe the processes I am examining. Following this, I describe the Army's military culture through a series of traits and themes. I divide these into how the Army conceptualizes warfare, how it problem solves, and its promotional structure for ease of reading. Lastly, I outline mission command as described by the senior leadership as well as the doctrinal manuals. Included in this is how mission command features into the Army more broadly. This comparison will demonstrate the significant cultural opposition to the leadership's espoused version of mission command.

Culture and Change

Culture and change are two paradoxical concepts within a military organization. A military's culture is not expected to change, yet the strategic environment can fluctuate rapidly and drive militaries to attempt change.[26] This process creates constant tension between culture and change. Within a military, the origins of change are a product of primarily top-down influences, although bottom-up change can occur.[27] These origins, and subsequently the processes of change, are shaped by strategic, political and military organization cultures, the availability of resources, bureaucratic politics, and the

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[25] Shamir, *Transforming Command*.

[26] For example, see Kretchik, *U.S. Army Doctrine*.

[27] While there are theoretical frameworks that encompass the *degrees* of change – innovation, sustaining or disruptive, and adaptation – this is not the focus of this paper. Given the on-going nature of the shift towards mission command I specifically focus on the origins, shapers, leaders, and goals of a proposed change. Theo Farrell, "Introduction: Military Adaptation in War" in Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga, and James Russell eds. *Military Adaptation in Afghanistan* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2013), pp. 1 – 23; Farrell and Terry, "Introduction"; Adam Grissom, "The Future of Military Innovation Studies" *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, No. 5 (2006): pp. 905 – 934.

organization's leadership.[28] The concept of top-down process of change is represented in the U.S. Army's leader directed change towards mission command. "Planned change" is when senior leaders within a military organization act as 'change agents' in their attempt to shift their organization towards a new vision of warfare.[29] The character of an organization's leadership heavily influences the chances of a change being successful. If the leadership does not support a change or it is "underled," it can fail because the proposed change does not benefit from the leadership's positional power within the organization. This power is required to "blast through the many sources of corporate inertia… [and] motivate the actions need to alter behaviour."[30]

Ultimately, the goal of any change is its institutionalization within the organization. Lynne Zucker describes the degrees of institutionalization as, "the greater the degree… the greater the generational uniformity of cultural understanding, the greater the maintenance without direct social control, and the greater the resistance to change through personal influence."[31] Zucker emphasizes the fact that with institutionalization comes the implicit acceptance *and* integration of any change's fundamental tenets. Concerning institutionalization, a planned change can exist in a grey zone where the change may be "espoused" within an organization but is not "in use." Espoused theories are "those that an individual claims to follow," while in use theories are "those that can be inferred from action."[32] This is an essential tension of leadership's

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[28] Terriff and Frans Osinga, "Conclusion: The Diffusion of Military Transformation to European Militaries," in Terry Terriff, Frans Osinga, and Theo Farrell, eds. *Transformation Gap? American Innovations and European Military Change* (Palo Alto: Stanford Security Studies, 2010), pp. 187 – 209.

[29] Farrell and Terriff "Introduction" p. 8; Grissom, "The Future of Military Innovation Studies," pp. 905 – 934; Terriff and Osinga, "Conclusion."

[30] Kotter argues that while a strategically designed and implemented change process is necessary for achieving corporate change, only with the addition of leader directed change can achieve a desired end-state be achieved for an organization. John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1995), pp. 17 – 31.

[31] Lynne G. Zucker, "The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence," in Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio eds. *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 103 quoted in Terriff, "'Innovate or Die'" p. 480.

[32] Chris Argyris, Robert Putnam, and Diana McLain Smith, *Action Science: Concepts, Methods, and Skills for Research and Intervention* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1985), pp. 81 – 82.

plan to institutionalize mission command. How the Army's culture shapes the potential for change is perhaps the most important feature to examine.

Simply put, an organization is greater than the sum of its parts. Manifested amongst and between its members, the culture of a military organization is representative of an organization's "in use" theory. Examining an organization's unique culture – "the symbols, rituals, and practices which give meaning to the activity of the organization" – can provide a greater depth of understanding that a functional approach may overlook.[33] Organizational culture provides a way to understand how implicit and explicit structures can *shape* preferences and actions. This cultural analysis reveals the *organism* within an organization.[34] Using organization culture to analyze militaries and state's foreign policies developed alongside movement to include culture, institutions, norms and environmental factors alongside functionalism and rationalism in International Relations.[35] The work of Elizabeth Kier played a key role in combining the non-material approach of change with the study of militaries.[36] More recently, the work of Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff has expanded the cultural framework associated with military organizations.[37] To better explain military culture a series of key principles will be outlined below.

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[33] Terriff, "'Innovate or Die,'" p. 478.

[34] Graham Allison and Phillip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* 2nd Ed., (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 1999), p. 145.

[35] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security" in Peter J. Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 1 – 32; Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security" in Peter J. Katzenstein ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 33 – 78; Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); Stephen Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

[36] See Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars," *International Security* 19 No. 4 (1995): pp. 65 – 93; Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and French Military Doctrine Before World War II," in Peter J. Katzenstien ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 186 – 215; and Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine Between the Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[37] As mentioned above, their studies of military change/transformation include culture as one important framework among many to understand military organizations. For example see Theo Farrell, *The Norms of War: Cultural Beliefs and Modern Conflict* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2005); Terriff,

First, culture, especially in highly institutionalized, 'strong' organizations, such as militaries, pervades organizations. While many organizations have a 'culture' militaries are particular in the relative strength of their cultures.[38] The strong culture means that they can be more disaster prone, and less open to adaptation or innovation in learning from their failures.[39] Second, not only does culture have an influence upon organizational dynamics, but on how militaries actually fight. Stephen Biddle's examination of the development of the "modern system" in warfare criticises explanations of military victory that rely on numeric superiority or technological advantages. Instead, *how* militaries use numbers and technology matters more than their mere existence.[40] In this view of warfare, organizational culture has a significant effect upon how a military actually fights, rather than merely being limited to internal politics.[41]

Third, cultural traits may be either explicit or implicit. Isabel Hull's examination of the Imperial German Army reveals the implicit cultural predilection within the organization towards the absolute destruction of enemy forces at the expense of other goals. This preference was the result of a combination of processes that impelled the military towards employing the means that were perceived to achieve absolute destruction. The planning and execution of the Schlieffen Plan and the March Offensive during the First World War are evidence of this implicit assumption shaping decisions.[42] Hull describes the implicit power of organizational culture to stymie divergent thinking.[43] Alternatively, the manifestation of culture can occur in very explicit forms. For example, the design of chapels at the service academies of the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force's emulate, respectively, the majesty and tradition of the Royal Navy and resemble

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"'Innovate or Die'"; and, Terry Terriff, "Warriors and Innovators: Military Change and Organizational Culture in the U.S. Marine Corps" *Defence Studies* 6, No. 2 (2006): pp. 215 – 247.

[38] Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

[39] Ibid., pp. 95 – 97.

[40] Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[41] Farrell, Rynning, and Terriff, *Transforming Military Power since the Cold War*.

[42] See chapters one, five and twelve in Hull, *Absolute Destruction*.

[43] Hull cites the fact that despite the 'cosmopolitan' thinking of General Erich von Falkenhayn in the First World War, the organizational culture of the German military restricted and stymied his ability to use unorthodox methods. Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, pp. 217 – 225.

aluminum airframes.[44] It can also take the form of mythologies regarding individual's exploits, such as the U.S. Marine Corps' lionization of lieutenant general Lewis B. Puller that "is etched indelibly in every Marine."[45] Common between both explicit and implicit forms is the fact that culture generally goes unexamined within militaries because it underpins fundamental assumptions and identities.

Fourth, culture is contextual and subject to changes. However, this process does not occur with great frequency, or without a major catalyst to propel an organization in a new direction.[46] Fifth, the organization's culture is inculcated into new members through formal education and training processes as well as 'micro-transactions,' which Terriff describes as "highly institutionalized cultural attributes [that] are transmitted from one individual to another."[47] Lastly, a military's culture may not consistently reproduce or mirror their respective nation's strategic culture. Furthermore, there are often stark differences between the cultures of the various militaries within a nation – navies, armies, and air forces.[48] This depiction of change and culture sets up the necessary framework and grounding from which to compare the culture of the U.S. Army with the proposed change in mission command. The intersection between leader directed change and organizational culture is not assumed to be even, but the product of a group of individuals – who are admittedly bestowed with great power within the organization – who attempt to change the organization's set of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols.

The Army's Culture

The U.S. Army's culture can be understood through a series of key themes. Broadly, the cultural preferences and tropes in the Army include a cultural preference for

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[44] Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 34 – 35.

[45] Terriff, "Warriors and Innovators," p. 217.

[46] The fact that cultures can change in response to external shocks does not mean that they always will. Thomas U. Berger, "Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan," in Peter J. Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 317 – 356.

[47] Terriff, "Warriors and Innovators," p. 218; Hull, *Absolute Destruction*.

[48] Terriff, "Warriors and Innovators", p. 217; Lawrence Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture and Ways of War* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Builder, *The Masks of War*; and, Kier, *Imagining War*.

conventional conflict, a future orientated military, a reliance on technology to achieve goals and solve problems, the importance of massed firepower, the managerial/corporate command style, and a particular strain of anti-intellectualism. Following upon the principles outlined above, these themes may in fact contradict one another in some cases. Nor is it certain that they will all shape an action or belief in the same way or at the same time.

The Army and Warfare

Within the Army, there is an aversion to irregular wars – such as peacekeeping, foreign internal defence, counterinsurgency, or humanitarian aid. Historically, the U.S. has preferred and correspondingly prepared to fight what Colin S. Gray calls "real war… combat against a tolerably symmetrical, regular enemy," or conventional war.[49] The Second World War – the "good war" – still provides the U.S. military with its culturally preferred definition of combat, conventional battles between two states' militaries.[50] Arquilla makes clear the influence the Second World War had on the Army:

> The remarkable successes of the greatest American field general of WWII, George S. Patton – and his colleagues – inspired a new and highly appealing orthodoxy. It was based both on the traditional American affinity for accurate, powerful weaponry and on a newfound attraction to speed of movement.[51]

The Vietnam War provides the greatest contrast to the Army's preference for conventional warfare. Following its defeat and withdrawal in 1973, the Army attempted to rationalize its experience, eventually coalescing into the "Never Again School" – the belief that the Army should avoid similar unconventional conflicts.[52]

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[49] Colin S. Gray "The American Way of War: Critique and Implications" in Anthony D. McIvor ed., *Rethinking the Principles of War* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2005), p. 31.

[50] William A. Stofft (MG, Ret.) in Henry G. Gole, *General William E. DePuy: Preparing the Army for Modern War* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008), p. ix.; John R. Ballard, *From Storm to Freedom: America's Long War with Iraq* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2010).

[51] Quoted in, Arquilla, *The Worst Enemy* p. 31.

[52] Brian McAllister Linn, *Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 194 – 195; Robert M. Cassidy *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror: Military Culture and Irregular War* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2006).

Mirroring the nation, the Army is orientated towards the future. This contributes to an aversion to codifying lessons learned and deriving questions from the study of history.[53] Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates railed against "[the] tendency towards what might be called Next-War-itis — the propensity of much of the defense establishment to be in favor of what might be needed in a future conflict" rather than what was needed for the current conflict.[54] This does not imply that the Army succeeds at 'fortune telling,' but that it is culturally wedded to the idea that if the organization can most closely predict the future then it will be better prepared than its potential rivals will. Therefore, learning from history is of secondary importance.

Solving Problems

Alongside the futurist orientation, the cultural preference for technology is an important aspect of how the Army approaches warfare. There is a tendency for Western militaries to move away from the human elements of war and try to find technological solutions to problems.[55] In a manner similar to mass, the Army tends to rely on technology to solve problems and overcome obstacles. One example of this is the changes that accompanied the Revolution in Military Affairs in the late 1980s and 1990s, an essential part of which was the fixation on attaining complete situational awareness. Described by Major General Robert Scales as "a robust, redundant, and flexible network of communications and intelligence systems interwoven into a seamless surface-to-space continuum… [Providing] an *unblinking eye* of constant surveillance."[56] The belief in the superiority of technology is clearly seen in the Future Combat System that sought to replace numbers with enhanced capabilities. [57] Related to technology is the reliance on

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[53] Gray "The American Way of War" p. 28.
[54] Gates is referring to the Iraq War. Associated Press "Military must focus on current wars, Gates says" *NBC News* (May 13, 2008) (accessed February 26, 2015) http://www.nbcnews.com/id/24600218/ns/us_news-military/t/military-must-focus-current-wars-gatessays/#.VO-ne_nF8kV.
[55] Colin S. Gray, "Strategy in the Nuclear Age, 1945 - 1991" in Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein eds., *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States and War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[56] Robert Scales quoted in Farrell, Rynning, and Terriff. *Transforming Military Power Since the Cold War*, p. 47.
[57] Ibid., p. 83.

machines in war. Gray states "The exploitation of machinery is the American way of war."[58] General George S. Patton once stated that

> Americans as a race are the most adept in the use of machinery of any people on earth, and… the most adept at the production of machines on a mass production basis. It costs about $40,000 for a man to get killed. If we can keep him from getting killed by a few extra dollars, it is a cheap expenditure.[59]

The U.S. also has a history of overcoming geography and distance through the exploitation of technology and mass, making them, what Grey calls "[masters] of logistics."[60] This is a function of the fact that the United States had to deal with the expanse of continental geography in its formative years of the 18th and 19th century.[61] This has propelled America to have a global reach at the expense of a large "tooth-to-tail" ratio, in which the majority of the 'tail' does not operate in combat, distancing them from the conflict in general.[62] This was demonstrated in the First and Second World Wars, Korea, the First Gulf War, and the lead up to Operation Iraqi Freedom.[63] The distancing of soldiers from direct conflict by expending material resources rather than manpower provides a crucial understanding of U.S. Army culture. The distancing, through technology or materials, creates a specific culture that is averse to interaction on a more human level.

There is also a tendency for the Army to be astrategic. This is a result of a series of interlinking themes. For example, General Schwarzkopf, quoted in FM-1, 2005, notes that

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[58] Gray "The American Way of War," pp. 29 – 30.

[59] Quoted in, David Fitzgerald, *Learning to Forget: U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Practice from Vietnam to Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford Security Studies, 2013), p. 7.

[60] Ibid., p. 590.

[61] Gray "Strategy in the Nuclear Age"; and, Peter Maslowski, "To the Edge of Greatness: The United States, 1783 – 1865" in Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein, *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 205 – 241.

[62] The "tooth-to-tail" ratio is military vernacular for the ratio between those that do the actual fighting and those that support the teeth. Gray "The American Way of War," pp. 32 – 33; Dima Adamsky, *The Culture of Military Innovation: The Impact of Cultural Factors on the Revolution in Military Affairs in Russia, the US and Israel*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

[63] Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 196 – 197; Cassidy, *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror*, pp. 33 – 34.

"leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without the strategy."[64] If, as Gray states, "strategic necessity is the mother of invention" then America is not burdened with this dilemma, rather it can spend its way to a solution. Further, America's preponderance of wealth excludes "campaign conditions of unnecessary discomfort."[65] The Army expects to be fully supported, without having to innovate extensively. Relatedly, the Army has developed an appreciation for mass. General Donn Starry said, "it is fair to say that with very, very few, very, very striking exceptions, U.S. military thought to 1945 produced a military system designed to overwhelm by mass in a battle of mass."[66] This results in the belief that mass, rather than the skillful employment of forces, will result in eventual victory. Further, Gray identifies that while there is an emphasis on the human soldier, it has always been subsumed to the primacy of applying technology in warfare.[67] The technological reliance leads to the additional cultural factor that enshrines the fact that there is a solution or an "engineering fix" to every problem, and that this then leads to an optimistic view of the world. This can lead the armed forces and civilian leaders to "attempt the impossible." Instead of accepting the intransigence of some problems, the Army approaches its goals with a strong belief in success regardless of the difficulties.[68]

The Army emphasizes the importance of firepower for the organization. The Army's chosen firepower delivery methods combine both the preference for overwhelming force as well as technological superiority.[69] The tendency to employ massed firepower in all situations interferes with the possibility of other, potentially more subtle, tactics that would achieve the tactical, operational, or strategic aim. This firepower based targeting process can result in 'dehumanizing' the enemy, rather than perceiving them as an adaptable and complex force.[70] Echoing the reliance on machines, firepower

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[64] H. Norman Schwarzkopf (GEN, USA ret.) quoted in Don M. Snider, Paul Oh, and Kevin Toner, *Professional Military Ethic in an Era of Persistent Conflict*, Vol. 1 (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009).

[65] Gray "The American Way of War," pp. 30 – 31.

[66] Quoted in Richard Lock-Pullan, U.S. *Intervention Policy and Army Innovation: From Vietnam to Iraq* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 19.

[67] Gray "The American Way of War," pp. 29 – 30.

[68] Ibid., pp. 28 – 29.

[69] Alastair Finlan, *Contemporary Military Culture and Strategic Studies: U.S. and UK Armed Forces in the 21st Century* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

[70] Gray "The American Way of War," p. 30

is also seen as a way to reduce casualties.[71] The 'Army Concept' outlined by Krepinevich introduced the philosophy that, "it is better to send a bullet than a man" where using overwhelming material force is preferable to potentially expending soldier's lives.[72] Firepower, along with technology and machines, is a culturally preferred way to fight and solve problems.

Command and Officers

Another important aspect of the Army's culture is the corporate managerial practices that underwrite the Army's command traditions. Shamir Eitan argues that following the Vietnam War the Army began adopting corporate business practices, and assumed that these would lead to success in modern warfare.[73] Army officers began to imitate members of the business world, where a set of parameters that artificially defines "success" around a small series of "career enhancing positions and experiences" such as command, acting as an aide-de-camp, as well as key or essential staff positions. Promotions are based upon individual evaluation systems, which are seen to be not related to the suitability of an officer.[74] This contributed to the creation of a "toxic" environment in the 1990's characterized by the "zero-defect army" where one failure, based on quantitative measures of success, would be enough to bar an officer's advancement.[75] The notion of a "zero-defect army" is intriguing as it demonstrates an aversion to risk taking. Thornton notes that during the 1990s, the fear of casualties and the implications that it carried for an officer's career became such a "debilitating obsession" that in the Balkans, soldiers had to wear body armour at all times, even while on base and off duty.[76] The risk-averse nature of the Army's culture also perceives

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[71] Ibid., p. 33.

[72] Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, p. 5.

[73] Shamir, *Transforming Command*, p. 57 – 66.

[74] Donald Vandergriff *Manning the Future Legions of the United States: Finding and Developing Tomorrow's Centurions* (Westport, CN: Praeger Security International, 2008), p. 166.

[75] See Walt Ulmer (LTC) and Mike Malone (LTC), *Study on Military Professionalism* (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 1970); Rod Thornton, "Cultural barriers to Organisational Unlearning: The U.S. Army, the 'zero-defects' culture and operations in the post-cold war world," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 11 No. 3 (2000): pp. 139 – 159.

[76] Robert D. Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground* (New York: Random House, 2005), pp. 50 – 52.

casualties as the result of a commander's mistakes. Therefore, avoiding risks is extended to the whole of the operating force.[77]

While the Army may prefer technological and 'engineering' solutions to problems it remains a very anti-intellectual institution. This trait is not meant as an insult, but a reflection of the institution's inability to produce officers that can *critically think* as well as its inability to *accept* and *incorporate* critical thought. Vandergriff states that the Army has an "odd and illogical (irrational) culture of masking our persona."[78] The Army's culture promotes the advantage of being a down-to-earth, simple thinker rather than an intellectual, demonstrated by the statement "everyone has his place, and I accept mine. I'm just happy being a sergeant, what do I know?"[79] This is rooted in the assumption that 'doing' or 'acting' are not possible if you are 'thinking.'[80] The Army's training program has the effect of producing an officer corps that limits autonomy and individual action.[81] Even senior officers and non-commissioned officers self-deprecatingly refer to themselves as "soldiers" or "shoot, I'm just an old soldier."[82] The anti-intellectualism within the Army has other consequences, such as the tendency to be ignorant of foreign cultures. The failure to *understand* the enemy has led to a significant amount of problems that the U.S. has faced during wartime.[83] This cultural theme is a widespread phenomenon throughout the Army. Following the Vietnam War, the Army's managerial culture relied on doctrine to restructure the Army. Doctrine provided "a potentially unifying influence and [supported] the coordination of operations, tactics, training, and modernization."[84] Since the 1970s, the Army has instituted numerous measures to ensure

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[77] Thornton, "Cultural barriers to organisational unlearning."

[78] Vandergriff, *Manning the Future Legions of the United States*, p. 39.

[79] Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts*, p. 87.

[80] The story of Lieutenant Joesph Riley's promotion pathway is a contemporary example of this. Riley, both a top ranked ROTC cadet in 2013 and a Rhodes Scholar, was being passed over for promotion because he did not pursue the traditional military jobs expected of young officers. David Barno and Nora Bensahel, "First Steps Towards the Force of the Future," *War on the Rocks* (December 1, 2015) (accessed December 3, 2015) http://warontherocks.com/2015/12/first-steps-towards-the-force-of-the-future/; Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts*, p. 77; Vandergriff, *Manning the Future Legions of the United States*, p. 39.

[81] Douglas A. Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century* (Westport: Praeger, 1997), p. 158.

[82] George R. Mastroianni, "Occupations, Cultures, and Leadership in the Army and Air Force," *Parameters* 35, No. 4 (2005): pp. 76 – 90, here pp. 79 – 81.

[83] Gray "The American Way of War," p. 29.

[84] Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx*, p. 144.

doctrinal conformity throughout the organization. This has the effect of stifling independent solutions to problems.[85]

Higher up the chain of command, organizational change is hindered by the resentment towards innovators – those who engage critically with the organization, discover flaws, and propose solutions – within the Army.[86] The obstruction is in part caused by the Army's own promotion system that is based upon seniority rather than "advanced experience, knowledge, and capacity for thinking."[87] This system restricts and controls who has a voice or access within the U.S. Army. Richard Lock-Pullan echoes Vandergriff's arguments, quoting General William E. DePuy, the commander of Training and Doctrine Command at the time, as stating "we do not train brigade, division, and corps commanders in the U.S. Army. We simply take a chance that an intelligent officer who has survived the promotion system must have some built in intelligence and instincts that will make him an effective commander."[88]

The U.S. Army's culture has a broad range of characteristics. Firstly, the Army's cultural preference for conventional conflicts includes the belief that wars should be terminated as quickly as possible, the war should be fought on a large scale with an astrategic perspective. Second, the future orientation of the Army means that it constantly looks to future possibilities and generally disregards historical lessons. Third, is the Army's infatuation with technology to achieve victory, solve problems, and contribute to the mechanization of warfare. Fourth, the percieved concept of massed firepower – including its above mentioned centrality to problem solving – influences how the Army's perceives its enemies. This cultural trope mutually reinforces and is reinforced by the inclination to prosecute wars using large-scale means. A corollary to the use of massed firepower is the desire to avoid risks that might result in casualties. Fifth, the Army's command practices have a distinct corporate/managerial culture to them, where career success is defined around specific parameters. Lastly, the anti-intellectualism that is part of the Army's culture manifests itself as a preference on action, rather than critically

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[85] Kretchik, U.S. *Army Doctrine.*

[86] Vandergriff, *Manning the Future Legions of the United States*, p. 40.

[87] Ibid., p. 40.

[88] General William E. DePuy quoted in Lock-Pullan, U.S. *Intervention Policy and Army Innovation*, p. 17.

analyzing a situation. These characteristics of the Army's culture all have an influence when proscribing, prescribing, regulating, or constituting U.S. Army actions and identities, including changes.

Mission Command

The Nature of Mission Command

The Army defines mission command as "the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations."[89] Mission command is based on the assumption that wartime operations are complex human endeavors, subject to human interactions both friendly and adversarial, where the results of "interactions are often unpredictable – and perhaps uncontrollable."[90] According to the Army, there are six foundational principles for mission command: mutual trust, shared understanding, disciplined initiative, commander's intent, mission orders, and prudent risk. The primary doctrinal manual for mission command, *Army Doctrine Publication 6-0:Mission Command* (ADP 6-0), links these six principles together to describe mission command as functioning through the communication of a commander's intent, structured using mission orders, within an environment of shared understanding and mutual trust that enables subordinates to use disciplined initiative to reach an objective.[91] These are a product of the Army's conception of mission command, and they are the foundation of the leadership's conceptualization of mission command. ADP 6-0 and ADRP 6-0 describe how these six principles comprise the "mission command philosophy of command." The doctrine notes that this philosophy can "exploit and enhance uniquely human skills [through] the balancing of the art of command with the science of control."[92]

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[89] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 1.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 2.
[92] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 5; and, Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0.*

Mutual trust is the "shared confidence among commanders, subordinates, and partners."[93] Establishing mutual trust takes time; and, ADP 6-0 notes that the constant promotion of the Army's values is one way to achieve this.[94] Mutual trust also facilitates greater decentralization; giving subordinates the opportunity to pursue disciplined initiative and create opportunities. Lieutenant General David G. Perkins, the head of the U.S. Army's Combined Arms Center, has argued that the Army has developed a certain degree of decentralization of command during its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.[95]

A shared understanding of the operational environment encompasses the whole of a proposed operation including planning, preparation, execution and assessment. These include potential problems, and possible solutions that the commander, their staffs, and the force as a whole collectively understand. The key for communicating this shared understanding is through collaboration, and doing so through the medium of a forum is seen as vital to enabling effective communication.[96] In this forum, collaboration is not merely a one directional form of communication but includes essential "human connections" built through dialogue and "a culture of collaboration."[97] Additionally, the application of creative and critical thinking also relies on a shared understanding between commanders, staffs, subordinates and peers. Mission command doctrine defines critical thinking processes as:

> Examining a problem in depth from multiple points of view. It involves determining whether adequate justification exists to accept conclusions as true based on a given inference or argument. Critical thinkers are purposeful and reflective thinkers who apply judgement about what to believe or what

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[93] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 2.

[94] Ibid., pp. 2 – 3.

[95] David G. Perkins (LTG), "Mission Command: Reflections from the Combined Arms Center Commander," *ARMY Magazine* 62, No. 6 (2012): pp. 30 – 34.

[96] The operational environment is "a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander." Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 3; Department of the Army, *ADP 5-0: The Operations Process*, (Washington D.C: Department of the Army, Headquarters, 2013), p. 2.

[97] This culture of collaboration is necessary for commanders to receive information from subordinates, it requires a certain mindset amongst the commander. Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, p. 2-2; Perkins "Mission Command."

to do in response to known facts, observations, experiences, oral or written information sources, or arguments.[98]

This, it is argued, provides for better decisions, actions, and understandings in all types of situations.[99]

The concept of disciplined initiative is of particular importance for mission command and its cultural incompatibility. Disciplined initiative involves giving subordinates the authority and latitude to make decisions based upon facts on the ground in accordance with other units and the operation's goals as outlined in the commander's intent. It does not imply that subordinates can operate outside the chain of command.[100] Disciplined initiative involves "[actions] in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise."[101] Simply, disciplined initiative depends upon balancing subordinate freedom of action with the commander's intent and other elements within the operation.

Supporting the communication of the commander's intent are mission orders. They provide guidelines to achieve an operation's goals. These orders are *not* systematic sets of instructions that have the effect of restricting a subordinate to a series of minute actions, but are "directives that emphasize to subordinates the results to be attained."[102] Mission orders are specifically important during the preparation and planning stages of an operation. This reflects the commander's importance during these stages, but during the implementation of the operation, the commander's role becomes reduced.[103] During the operations process, mission orders, in the words of General Odierno, "empower leaders at all levels to seize and exploit the initiative."[104]

With doctrine, a key factor in allowing subordinates greater freedom to make decisions on the ground requires the acceptance of risk. Furthermore, to outfight

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[98] Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, pp. 2-7 – 2-8.

[99] Department of the Army, *ADP 5-0*, p. 5.

[100] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 4.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 5

[103] Department of the Army, *ADP 5-0*, p. 3

[104] Raymond T. Odierno in an online video describing mission command. Drew Meyerowich "Mission Command by the Chief of Staff of the Army" *YouTube* (October 12, 2012) (accessed March 25, 2015) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2l1I8hY9Wo.

potential enemies, prudent risk is a way to give the Army a distinct advantage when implemented well. It is the "deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment as worth the cost."[105] Accepting prudent risk centres upon the assumption that risk is an inherent and an unchanging part of military operations. The leadership acknowledges the fact that there is still a difference between *prudent* risk and *gambling*. The goal is to realistically assess where and when to accept risk in order to create opportunities rather than just preventing defeat. Alternatively, gambling is when operational success is reliant on one action without due consideration of the risks involved.[106] ADRP 6-0 advocates for the appreciation of risk during the planning stage of an operation, requiring shared understanding between the entire force to appreciate the risks, including how to manage and take advantage of them.[107]

Besides the six principles of mission command listed above mission command doctrine emphasizes that success in war requires balancing the "art of command" and the "science of control." The art of command is the "creative and skillful exercise of authority through timely decision making and leadership."[108] Command includes both authority and responsibility, and is not subject to rules, laws, or checklists that inform a commander of what action should be undertaken, there are no right answers.[109] Mission command doctrine emphasizes that the ability to learn from mistakes is key part to the 'art' of command. This assumes that there will be sufficient latitude given to subordinates to fail in the first place; only then can they learn. It is the role of a superior to determine if those mistakes were due to a lack of judgement, or were genuinely the result of a mistake.[110] The art of command uses leadership to "[exploit] the dynamics of human relationships to the advantage of friendly forces and to the disadvantage of an enemy."[111] Success is based "on understanding the human aspects as it does on any numerical and

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[105] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 5

[106] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 5; Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, p. 2-5

[107] Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, p. 2-5

[108] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 5

[109] Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, p. 2-6

[110] Ibid., p. 2-6

[111] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 7

technological superiority" or "commanders cannot let the perceived advantages of improved information technology compromise their obligation to lead by example, face-to-face with Soldiers."[112] In February of 2014, General Robert Cone, the then commander of TRADOC, asserted that science and technology do not represent where the Army wants to be in 2025.[113] The art of command requires significant nuance to operationalize, and is heavily reliant on the human element in warfare.

Related to the art of command is the science of control, which provides the necessary tools for a commander to succeed.[114] The science of control emphasizes systems and procedures used to improve the commander's understanding and support towards accomplishing missions.[115] "Objectivity, facts, empirical methods, and analysis" form the basis of the *science* in control.[116] The science behind control establishes the confines in which an operation can take place. This includes issues of fuel consumption, weapons effects, and rules of engagement – tangible, quantifiable factors. "Commanders impose enough control to mass the effect of combat power at the decisive point in time while allowing subordinates the maximum freedom of action to accomplish assigned tasks."[117] Information is also a formative element of the Science of Control, as it forms the basis from which leaders implement decisions.[118] These elements form the doctrinal foundation for mission command. The linkages between how mission command functions at the operational level is directly shaped by balancing art and science.

The Application of Mission Command

While analyzing mission command doctrine is a key part of this paper, a complete picture of mission command requires an examination of how the Army's leadership has discussed mission command. These statements make clear the importance that the Army's leadership assigns to mission command, and also demonstrates the ideas that underpin the adoption of a mission command philosophy. For the leadership, mission

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[112] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 7; Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, p. 2-12.

[113] Tolson "TRADOC Commander Shares Focus for Force 2025."

[114] Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0 Mission Command*, p. 8.

[115] *Ibid*.

[116] *Ibid*.

[117] *Ibid*.

[118] Information requirements are "any information element the commander and staff require to successfully conduct operations." Department of the Army, *ADP 6-0*, p. 8; Department of the Army, *ADRP 6-0*, p. 2-13.

command is vital to not only commanding troops but also how the Army will fight in the future. Since 2009, it has been the senior leadership's goal that the Army's officers be able to practice the mission command philosophy, and the organization as a whole be able to utilize the tenets of mission command's warfighting function.[119] Former Army Chief of Staff, General Raymond Odierno, noted that the complete institutionalization of mission command into the Army will allow it to "empower agile and adaptive leaders to successfully operate under conditions of uncertainty, exploit opportunities, and most importantly achieve unity of effort", and that it is fundamental to fight in the situations in the future.[120] In contrast to mission command, the previous methods of command and control is described as only focusing on the commander's role to "translate decisions into actions – by synchronizing forces and warfighting functions in time, space and purpose – to accomplish missions." What they did not address was the ability to respond to changes in the operating environment, nor the need to include non-military organizations into their operations.[121] When discussing the scope of mission command the deputy commander of TRADOC, Lieutenant General David Valcourt, stated that "battle command brings to mind major combat operations; what we're seeing is much broader than that." Valcourt states that the goal of mission command is to "develop leaders that can operate outside the traditional military framework of hierarchical and deliberate decision-making and control of forces."[122] Here, the assumption is that mission command facilitates the integration of non-military, governmental organizations into the Army's operations, clearly divorcing the Army from its cultural focus on conventional warfighting. Furthermore, the leadership believes that the previous forms of command did not give commanders this ability.

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[119] Raymond T. Odierno (GEN) "Army Mission Command Strategy" in Department of the Army U.S. *Army Mission Command Strategy, FY 13-19*, (Washington D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2013).

[120] General Raymond T. Odierno quoted in Thomas S. Gibson "Army Leaders Discuss Mission Command" *ARMY.MIL* (June 19, 2012) (accessed March 19, 2015) http://www.army.mil/article/82091/Army_Leaders_Discuss Mission_Command/.

[121] Dempsey, "Mission Command."

[122] Kate Brannen, "US Army to Create a Mission Command Center" *Defense News* (March 4, 2010) (accessed February 10, 2015) http://archive.defensenews.com/article/20100304/DEFSECT02/3040305/U-S-Army-Create-Mission-Command-Center.

According to General Dempsey, the uses of mission command cover the entire spectrum of conflict, ranging from stability operations to conventional, combined arms warfare - the Army's preference.[123] However, the general description of mission command has pertained to unconventional conflicts. Some of the Army's leadership argue that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrated the importance of mission command. Adding to the complexity of these operating environment's local politics and cultures was the variety of actors at play, which included friendly forces and organizations, allies, and enemies. However, it was the small units and decentralized operations that were features of these two wars and proved, in the eyes of the leadership, the Army's ability to fight using mission command.[124] Lieutenant-General David Perkins states that during these wars, the Army evolved "To meet and exceed the operational tempo of our enemy required a requisite decentralization of the formal decision-making processes within our fighting units."[125]

The Army expects to fight similar wars in the future; this links the usefulness of mission command to the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan. It is assumed, that by institutionalizing mission command, it will allow the Army to fight more effectively in unconventional conflicts, like Iraq and Afghanistan. Key to this is the decentralization within mission command. The leadership expects the Army to fight unconventional wars in the future against decentralized enemies, therefore the Army must fight in a similarly decentralized manner.[126] The ability to move quicker than an enemy is one of the advantages of mission command.[127] Odierno notes that there is new range of potential threats that the U.S. must face, which do not always fit into conventional warfighting mindsets. Centralized command and control cannot achieve desired operational results.[128] While the leadership acknowledges that mission command will enable the

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[123] Combined arms operations involves the utilization of various branches of the Army, infantry, armour, artillery, or airmobile etc., to carry out an operation. Dempsey "Mission Command."

[124] United States Army, "Maneuver Self Study Program" U.S. *Army Center of Excellence* (January 20, 2015) (accessed March 23, 2015) http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/Mission%20Command/.

[125] Perkins, "Mission Command," pp. 30 – 34.

[126] H. R. McMaster in Eitan Shamir *Transforming Command*; and, Dempsey "Mission Command."

[127] Wayne W. Grigsby Jr. (MG), Todd Fox (COL), Matthew F. Dabkowski (LTC), and Andrea N. Phelps (CDR, USN), "Globally Integrated Operations in the Horn of Africa through the Principles of Mission Command," *Military Review* 95, No. 5 (2015): pp. 8 – 18.

[128] Raymond T. Odierno in an online video describing mission command. Meyerowich "Mission Command by the Chief of Staff of the Army."

Army to fight in conventional conflicts, the majority of the focus is upon better preparing the Army for unconventional conflicts that resemble those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Speaking at the June 2013 announcement of the U.S. Army Mission Command Strategy, Brigadier General James E. Rainey stated that mission command is a form of command that allows the Army to function in the event of the loss of technological systems. "Mission Command sets us up for success when we temporarily lose those systems."[129] Assumed to be a critical part of mission command is that it will "move the Army beyond a technological focus, strike a balance between the art and science of command, and re-establish the importance of the Army's people over its enabling technologies."[130]

As an idea, mission command is designed to make those within the Army think about their situation and then be able to address that situation. Lieutenant-General Perkins describes this as the 'philosophy' behind mission command. [131] For the Army's leadership, mission command's shared understanding also gives the Army the capability to fight jointly with other services as well as alongside other organizations in the U.S. government. General Odierno describes mission command as facilitating "the decision-making of leaders and Soldiers across all tactical echelons for Unified Land Operations in support of the Joint Force and allies."[132] Cooperation with these other services and agencies is seen as vital because of the uncertainty of the future and the need to become adaptable, not only as a warfighting organization, but as a partner. This allows the Army to utilize and rely on other partners to use their own skills rather than having to develop

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[129] Brigadier General James E. Rainey quoted in Jeff Allen (LTC) "Army Announces Mission Command Strategy" *ARMY.mil* (June 19, 2013) (accessed March 2, 2015) http://www.army.mil/article/105858/Army_announces_Mission_Command_strategy/.

[130] Mission Command Center of Excellence "TRADOC Pamplet 525-3-3," p. 6.

[131] Lieutenant General Joe Perkins in Fort Benning Television "LTG Joe Perkins CLSP Address to MCCC" *vimeo* (April 7, 2014) (accessed March 20, 2015) https://vimeo.com/91292851.

[132] John M. McHugh and Raymond T. Odierno (GEN) "The Postures of the Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force" *United States Senate Committee on Armed Services* (March 18, 2015) (accessed April 15, 2016) http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/McHugh_Odierno_03-18-15.pdf.

the Army's own.[133] These two ways of examining mission command not only describe the key doctrinal elements associated with mission command, but also contextualize it within the Army.

Conclusions

Mission command, as espoused by the Army's senior leadership in both doctrine and public statements, suffers from a high degree of incompatibility with the Army's military culture. Reflecting the web of connections, and sometimes controversies, in the U.S. Army's military culture, the compatibility of mission command with said culture features significant overlap and connections. The Army's culture of risk aversion, including casualties, poses a challenge to the principle of mutual trust as well as the pursuit of prudent risk. Without a culture that accepts these two tenets of mission command, it will be difficult to institutionalize it in its current form. The more problematic of the two is mutual trust, without which the ideas of disciplined initiative and mission order cannot be implemented fully, as per doctrine. In fact, disciplined initiative suffers from the Army's cultural preference for firepower, technology, and machine solutions to problems. Adherence to disciplined initiative requires that the Army move away from these linear approaches and utilize a range of possible solutions – which includes the scientific and engineering fixes already mentioned. Part of this problem stems from the strain of anti-intellectualism that persists within the Army. This restricts the potential for critical thinking and investigation of other avenues from which to pursue the initiative.

The concept of shared understanding also suffers from cultural incompatibility with the trait of anti-intellectualism. A key factor in this is the proposal for open dialogue between subordinates and commanders that allows for questions and critical thinking, especially in the planning process. The belief that the Army's operations will include non-military, governmental organizations is a clear rejection of the cultural preference for conventional warfare as well. This approach seeks to include these organizations.

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[133] James Kitfield, "Odierno: Ukraine Shows U.S. 'You Never Know What's Around the Corner'" *Defense News* (May 6, 2014) (accessed February 10, 2015) http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2014/05/odierno-ukraine-shows-us-you-never-know-whats-around-corner/83914/.

However, if the Army were refighting the Second World War, its preferred form of warfare, it would not think to include these organizations in such a conventional setting. Anti-intellectualism also grates against the idea of a commander's intent, because it requires critical thinking to link tactical actions, to operations, and even strategy. Here is one of the few cases of conflict with the astrategic theme in the Army's culture. The compatibility of mission orders suffers from the aversion to risk but also the trend towards doctrinal conformity. Like disciplined initiative, mission orders advocate for actions based upon a subordinate's appreciation of the situation. This presents the possibility for actions to be beyond the strict tradition of doctrinal conformity that has become a feature within the Army.

Mission command's rejection of technology is a significant incompatibility, because not only does it reject technology, but it also describes the Army as being too fixated on technology at the expense of the human element of warfare. The art of command's fixation on the human aspects of warfare – and its associated complexity – conflicts with the Army's ability to structure combat and propose engineering based solutions to problems. As stated, the Army's senior leadership acknowledges that mission command will be applicable across the spectrum of conflict. However, the continued reference to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as potential future unconventional conflicts situates the mission command philosophy in disagreement with the Army's conventional warfare focused mindset. The leadership's promotion of a command philosophy as an asset in unconventional conflicts – one that the Army does not want to undertake in the first place – is bound to encounter resistance because of the irrational characteristics of military cultures.

Overall, while mission command is largely incompatible with many traits and characteristics of the Army's culture there are some areas of cultural compatibility. The futuristic orientation of mission command is one example. The belief that past methods of command were too structured and reliant on centralized command is representative of a futuristic outlook. Furthermore, while mission command may be restricted in its institutionalization by the Army's culture of conformity, there is congruence in its application for the whole of the force. In part, the science of control does agree with the

Army's military culture. However, the low importance of the science of control relative to the art of command makes any compatibility tangential at best.

These significant differences between what the leadership wants mission command to do for the Army and the Army's current culture mean that the change towards a mission command capable Army will ultimately have to involve comparable cultural change. This cultural analysis is not a definitive study on the processes of mission command related changes underway within the Army, but it is a vital one. Given the fact that the shaping effects of culture pervade the areas of change described by the Army's senior leadership – training, personnel, materials, education etc. – cultural analysis reveals areas that may be overlooked in changes that are more prescriptive.[134]

If the Army's military culture is such an important factor in shaping the proposed mission command change, where should the Army go from here? The successful institutionalization of a change – doctrinal, organizational, or operational – in military organizations is difficult; however, this does not mean it is impossible.[135] Mission command is an effective method of force employment useful for the Army's current strategic situation, meaning that it should not be abandoned. Technological and numerical factors are not the sole indicators of success in a military operation. Success is often the result of how a military employs its technology and numbers.[136] Mission command represents a way of war that has the potential to significantly alter the Army's methods of employing its technology and personnel, thus making it more 'Boydian' in its approach to warfare.[137]

One possible avenue to pursue is to divide the proposed changes associated with mission command into more manageable sections. While it is important to acknowledge that mission command relies on the connections between the components within the doctrine, some can be separated out initially. For example, shared understanding is a key part of the planning process for an operation, and achieving this would provide a

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[134] U.S. Army, "US Army Mission Command Strategy".

[135] Terry Terriff and Theo Farrell "Military Change in the New Millennium" in Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2002), pp. 265 – 285.

[136] Biddle, *Military Power*.

[137] Frans Osinga "'Getting' A Discourse on Winning and Losing: A Primer on Boyd's 'Theory of Intellectual Evolution'" *Contemporary Security Policy* 34 No. 3 (2013): pp. 603 – 624.

platform from which other elements of mission command could be established from. 'Managing' these elements of mission command into workable goals has the advantage of directing the whole of the organization's energy onto one issue at a time, potentially increasing the overall ability to foster change. Besides this, the continued support and involvement by the Army's senior leadership is an absolute requirement. Stephen Rosen postulates that it takes up to 25 years – a generation of officers – to change the fundamental characteristics of a military.[138] This will be an important determinant in measuring the Army's continued commitment to institutionalizing mission command. Fundamentally, those in the Army's leadership that seek to institutionalize mission command have to face the fact that they seek to change the Army's military culture – a daunting task in the current strategic environment.[139] The sources of cultural resistance that this paper has presented will prevent the Army's leadership from easily institutionalizing mission command. The inherent difficulties that are a result of mission command's proposed changes are too ambitious of an undertaking to be successful without first subdividing it into manageable parts.

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[138] Rosen, *Winning the Next War*.

[139] Williamson Murray and Mark Grimsley, "Introduction: On Strategy" in Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein eds., *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 1 – 23.

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