

Revitalizing Strategy Thinking: The Uses of Underdog Strategy in International Security

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Abstract: This paper explores several applications of underdog strategy in international security. First, there are two applications to show the analytical potential for what were problems with new urgency: identifying characteristics of underdog strategy in an insurgency, and identifying common mistakes of underdog strategy made by terrorists. The paper then considers government responses: the proposal for a strategic intervention, and how a government might deal with an insurgency. There are three benefits to this approach. The analyst can forecast developments and actions much more accurately by using action as the unit of analysis rather than the actor. Strategy presents two advantages as the starting point for mid-level theory. First, it is integrative. Second, it generates both high theory and practical applications, because strategy as a concept lies as the meeting place between thought and action. As a phenomenon, strategy presents considerable theoretical and practical interest. From a theoretical standpoint, it presents the advantage of being applicable to a wide range of situations. From a practical standpoint, a strategy generates a number of polyvalent tools and training programs, intelligible to the strategist, but more importantly to the non-strategist lay person as well.

Keywords: underdog strategy ,international security, analysis

INTRODUCTION

Centuries ago, Aristotle explicitly excluded from philosophical discourse *mètis*, the way of thinking of women and the vanquished [1]. Various Aristotelian revivals have encouraged that exclusion since, including that of the Renaissance [2]. It has had many consequences, but for the study of strategy, it has meant that its theory and practice quickly became restricted first to the study of victors. However, the practice of *mètis*, the strategy of the weak and powerless, did not disappear. This paper argues in favour of returning it to scholarly discourse in International Security by providing several different applications in the field. The present significance of reintroducing the *mètis* are obvious, both the fight against terrorism, and for the challenges posed by counter-insurgency in both Iraq and Afghanistan. However, the *mètis*, or, as I have called it in my previous publications, underdog strategy, has uses and significance far beyond the immediate problems of international security.

In order to follow the argument made here, it is necessary to define a few terms, which may not be familiar even to scholars of international security. These terms are: strategy, tactics, underdog strategy, core idea, and strategic intervention. A strategy is an idea that orchestrates actions to reach a goal. Tactics are actions that make up strategy. Where strong-side

strategy is concerned with reaching a goal, underdog strategy tries to answer this question: “What is the best thing you can do when you have no power and no money?” The characteristics of underdog strategy are captured by the core idea. For an underdog strategy, you need a metaphor, image or slogan that is intuitively clear to make all decisions in a complex or unpredictable or changing situation consistent. That is the core idea. The three main characteristics of underdog strategy, captured by the core idea, are: they are more holistic, they change their scope much more easily, and they use a greater range of tactics much more easily. Finally a strategic intervention is a particular type of tactic, one that answers the questions: “What is the best thing you can do, when you only have one chance?” in a crisis, or “How can I make a bad idea work?” outside a crisis situation.

The core idea of a strategy promotes the use of analogical thinking. Analogical thinking is one of those cognitive devices that are mental short-cuts for making decisions, large and small, and we all use them in every day life. Using analogies for decision making or problem solving simply means this: we ask ourselves if we have ever encountered this situation before, and try the solution that worked before. Analogical thinking is recommended for emergency responders, among others, in highly complex, uncertain situations [3]. But it has

spread beyond that sphere, Britain's largest children's hospital has revamped its patient hand-off techniques by copying the choreographed pit stops of Italy's Formula One Ferrari racing team. The hospital project has been in place for two years and has already helped reduce the number of mishaps." [4]. This has also been true for US hospitals. In the last five years, several major hospitals have hired professional pilots to train their critical-care staff members on how to apply aviation safety principles to their work [5]. Outside the delivery of health care, there have been interesting results. In a trial for a company with a high speed robotic assembly line, it took the algorithm for the waggle dance of bees identifying nectar location (developed by Cardiff University's Manufacturing Engineering Centre) just a few days to identify the most efficient way to run the machines, much faster than a more conventional program [6]. There has been structurally analogous thinking in the military sphere, going back to the Duke of Wellington [7]. And the study of emergency responders using intuitive methods of decision-making, including military people, is also established [8]. This author has also used the capacity for analogous thinking as a diagnostic test in assessing potential for effective counterinsurgency training in the Canadian Forces reserves. But adopting underdog strategy may well be required in order for military personnel if they are to learn to think like terrorists or insurgents. For regular armed forces, it means changing their defensive ways of thinking. Right now, they try to maneuver the enemy so that their advantages will be decisive. But in complex environments, the enemy avoid meeting in a decisive engagement, which they are convinced they will lose. They will attack the weak points, not the strong points, and are willing to wait because it is not being decimated [9]. This is just one of many differences between strong-side and underdog strategy.

This paper will explore several applications of underdog strategy in international security. First, there are two applications to show the analytical potential for what were problems with new urgency: identifying characteristics of underdog strategy in an insurgency, and identifying common mistakes of underdog strategy made by terrorists. Then I turn to government responses: the proposal for a strategic intervention, and how a government might deal with an insurgency. An

application to military training, identifying the strategic corporal.

There are several other applications which are not covered by this paper, but which are mentioned in the conclusion.

UNDERDOG CHARACTERISTICS AND MILITARY OPERATIONS: US DEFEAT THE TALIBAN, 2001

For the most part, governments, groups, and individuals using underdog strategy share many of the same characteristics. These characteristics are meant to be relative: all countries, for example, can expect to be aware of what greater powers around them are doing, but underdogs devote more energy and time to such a consideration. The identification of the characteristics was made through direct observation of individuals and groups. (The analytical framework, on the other hand, was primarily developed for and applied to states and governments.) The characteristics are:

1. Underdog strategists are more aware of what the stronger groups or governments may do.
2. Underdog strategists are always adapting.
3. Underdog strategists are much more likely to play a waiting game.
4. Underdogs are more creative, because their means are so limited.
5. Underdog strategists are more holistic.
6. Underdog strategists spend more time scanning the environment for possible threats and opportunities.
7. Underdogs are more likely to design each action specifically to suit their strategy.
8. Underdogs are much more likely forecast for even the unlikeliest tactic and scenario.
9. Underdog strategists usually assume they will lose any direct confrontation.
10. If the situation gets bad enough, underdog strategists are much more likely to break their own rules of behavior.
11. Underdog strategists are usually much more (even passionately) committed.

In the case of the Taliban defeat at the hands of the US in 2001, we find the following evidence for each of the characteristics.

Table 1: Evidence of Characteristics of Weak-Side Strategy

Characteristic	Taliban insurgents
They are always thinking about what the strong are about to do	Opium traders moved to Nimroz from Helmand because it was more weakly policed
They are always adapting.	Changed from regular warfare to assassinations and kidnappings, insurgency, suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices, financing by opium trade.
They play a waiting game.	Took time to regroup after losing control of country

They are creative.	Adopting the method of roadside bombs, imported from the Iraq insurgency; opium traders exploit harsh terrain, easy corruption of officials, poverty of the population
They are holistic.	Abandoned goal of military victory over ISAF; now targeting unwillingness of domestic NATO populations, using unanswerable methods
They are always scanning their environment.	Quickly identified the poverty of farmers as a possibly way to exert power over them
They specifically design each action to suit their strategy.	--
They are always forecasting for all events.	--
They are convinced they will lose a direct confrontation.	Gave up regular warfare; did not compete in elections
They will break their own rules.	Banned opium when in power, relied on opium trade as insurgents
Their commitment is complete.	willing to fight on despite facing a much more powerful enemy

**COMMON UNDERDOG MISTAKES:
TERRORISM 1986-2002**

Mistakes terrorists make are in their reasoning and/or planning, which is difficult to document when they are successful, and difficult to document after their failure, since that usually means death or capture. Moreover, what can be discovered after their defeat, the information is not always completely available in a timely way in open sources. It is therefore no surprise that some mistakes cannot be illustrated. The mistakes are:

1. Working on the wrong problem.
2. Not specifying their objectives enough.

3. Not developing enough alternatives.
4. Giving inadequate thought to tradeoffs.
5. Disregarding uncertainty.
6. Failing to account for your risk tolerance.
7. Failing to plan ahead when decisions are linked over time.
8. Not trusting your intuition.
9. Not keeping things simple and discreet.
10. Going against the flow of events.
11. Ignoring the need to wait, rushing headlong into action.
12. Ignoring the unintended consequences of your actions.

Table 2: Evidence of Strategic Mistakes by Terrorists

Type of Mistake	Terrorist Group and Action
Not Keeping Things Simple, Honest, Moderately Discreet	JEM collected funds through donation requests in magazines and pamphlets (assets seized by Pakistani government); Kahane Chai declared terror organization by Israel after it supported a Feb. 1994 attack on the al Ibrahimi Mosque; FARC's internal politics, statutes defining the structure (squad, guerrilla, company, column, fronts, block of fronts, central high command); Tamil Tigers' newspapers, press and propaganda section, political wing, research and development wing, and intelligence wing.
Ignoring The Need To Wait, Rushing Headlong Into Action.	Al Qaeda, Khalid Shaikh Mohomammad had to introduce "losing and learning" doctrine, i.e. only a defeat if nothing is learned and mistakes repeated
Working on the Wrong Problem.	MEK expelled from Iran in 1979 for being Marxist, then perpetrated anti-Western attacks; Salafist Group for Call and Combat gained popularity through pledge to avoid Algerian civilians, then attacked them anyway
Failing to Plan Ahead When Decisions Are Linked Over Time.	Hizbollah repeatedly kidnapped Israeli soldiers or civilians; In 2006, kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers brought Israeli armed response
Not Specifying Their Objectives Enough.	Islamic Group of Egypt split into a faction supporting a ceasefire and a faction wanting to carry out attacks on US and Israeli interests; General Command of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine split from the rest of the Popular Front in 1968, wanting to fight more and politick less; Al Qaeda's Kalid Shaikh Mohomammad has to move from government, hard targets in Southeast Asia for soft targets like the Bali nightclub on October 12, 2002; FARC actual aims versus official, ideological struggle
Not Developing Enough Alternatives	Cease-fires used as stalling tactics by Hizbollah, IRA

Giving Inadequate Thought To Tradeoffs	Move from Marxism to nationalism to Islamism of PKK; move to enlarged campaign of violence in 1993; Sudanese walk-in from Al Qaeda over embezzlement, low pay; use of kidnapping, robbery and extortion by ETA for money, instead of bombings and assassinations of officials for political reasons; FARC turned to terrorism after political failure; got into narcotics smuggling for money; Abu Sayaf Group, Islamic separatists in south Philippines, uses kidnapping, bombings, assassinations, and extortion for money; its numbers, over 1000 in 2002-2001, now motivated by money rather than extremism
Disregarding Uncertainty	Discomfiture of Shining Path, JVP, Aum Shimkyo, and PKK after capture of leaders
Failing To Account For Your Risk Tolerance.	Kalid Shaikh Mohommad, third in command of Al Qaeda, used layers of operatives between himself and organizers to protect himself; Leader of the LTTE murdered several of his own commanders for suspected treason, wore a cyanide capsule around his neck in case of capture; captured leaders of PKK and JVP begged not to be tortured

PROPOSAL FOR STRATEGIC INTERVENTION: CANADIAN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 2000-2008

This application argues that the best next step to take is to refocus Canada’s concrete efforts to make it more strategic, more of a strategic intervention. Specifically, Canada’s programs for Palestinian refugees should also focus on de-radicalization or the prevention of radicalization in the Gaza strip.

The first step is to answer the question: are there any of the characteristics or typical mistakes by which one recognizes the underdog in Canada’s foreign policy in the Middle East? Table 3: Characteristics and Canadian Policy, provides a summary.

There are only four characteristics to which Canada’s foreign policy generally corresponds, and none specifically for its work in the Middle East. Turning now to the typical mistakes an underdog makes, another way of identifying underdog thinking,

we find that there are only two mistakes they typically make. The results are summarized in Table 4:

Typical Mistakes and Canadian Policy.

We can now turn now to the question of strategic intervention: I begin by reviewing the initiatives by Canada, which are almost all in the area of refugees. Here at least, Canada has been active in more than public statements. There are several mains actions in this area. First, Canada participated in international refugee-related working groups. Second, it relocated Palestinian refugees from a camp in the Sinai back to Gaza. Third, it provided Palestinian women in Lebanon with scholarships. Fourth, it funded innovation in small non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) in the area. Finally it stated that any lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East must include a solution for refugees. Canada supports research and activities that aim to improve understanding of the core refugee issues.

Table 3: Characteristics and Canadian Policy

Underdogs are always thinking about what the strong are about to do.	Yes; Canada thinks about the US all the time in its foreign policy
The underdog is holistic.	Yes; in its foreign policy, Canada has put great emphasis on multilateral areas, to compensate for the heavy influence of the US i.e. paid up at the UN, participates in NATO
The underdog is always adapting.	No; Canada hasn’t changed in years in terms of its declaratory game. It makes declarations whether there is a crisis or not, viz. the current military operation in Gaza in Jan 2009, just ahead of the Obama inauguration and the Israeli election.
The underdog plays a waiting game.	No evidence either way
The underdog is creative.	No; there is not much originality or creativity, but there has been consistency; holier than thou, viz. East Timor crisis and withdrawal of ambassador from Indonesia, along with Netherlands and Sweden only.

The underdog sees the big picture.	Yes; Canada can fairly been accused of Atlanticism i.e. thinking only of north America and western Europe for all these years. Viz. the literature which is extremely limited, not just re: middle east, but in general.
The underdog is constantly scanning his environment.	No; Not with the size of military we have.
The underdog specifically designs each action to suit his strategy.	No; The declaratory phase is without forethought, it would appear.
The underdog is constantly forecasting for all events.	No; That would be absent or else the participation of Canada would be different.
The underdog assumes s/he will lose any direct confrontation.	No, since there is NATO behind us.
The underdog will break even his/her own rules of behavior in order to achieve his goal.	No, Canada is generally holier-than thou.
The underdog's passions or passionate feelings are engaged.	No; Canada is not passionately committed to anything. On the contrary we are rather middle of the road.
Thinking like an underdog is not just when there is a problem.	No; Canada operates in an atmosphere of great prosperity and security.

Table 4: Typical Mistakes and Canadian Policy

Not keeping things simple and honest.	No: The refugee program could hardly be simpler.
Going against, instead of with, the flow of events.	No. Canada is not doing enough to be going against the grain or ruffling any feathers.
Ignoring the need to wait, rushing headlong into action.	No, I believe Canada is thoughtful, although the jury is out about Afghanistan
Ignoring the unintended consequences of your actions.	No evidence either way
Working on the wrong problem.	Yes. Canada has not correctly identified the causes of the conflict, and therefore is ineffective
Not specifying their objectives enough	Yes
Not developing enough alternatives.	Don't know; hard to say what is in policy-makers minds
Giving inadequate thought to tradeoffs.	No; inadequate thought to what could be gained, or a contribution worthy of being made
Disregarding uncertainty.	No; disregards that doing nothing is also a decision
Failing to account for your risk tolerance.	No; risk tolerance is very low, probably a major factor in decision-making.
Failing to plan ahead when decisions are linked over time	No
Not trusting your intuition.	No

Before 2000, Canada held the chairmanship of the Refugee Working Group in 1992, and participated in it until its suspension in 1996. This working group organized four formal missions to refugee camps between 1994 and 1999. It also participated in similar missions to refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria. The goal here was to highlight the complexity of the problems and their urgency. It recently renewed an international dialogue on the issue through the Refugee Coordination Forum. Canada also funded a program to relocate Palestinian refugees from Canada Camp in the Sinai to Gaza between 1994 and 2000. All Palestinians in Canada Camp are now back in the Gaza strip.

More than 200 women from Palestinian refugee communities in Lebanon have received scholarships from this fund to pursue local undergraduate university degrees and develop professional and management skills in such sectors as business, engineering, biology and science. The fund is managed by the International Development and Research Centre on behalf of the Canadian International Development Agency. The Canada Fund is a development program administered by Canadian missions in the region which aims to assist non-governmental organizations to carry out small innovative development projects.

Compared to the declaratory policy, this certainly represents more activity and more practically

meaningful contributions. What is interesting from an analytical standpoint is that while there are many themes in declaratory policy, there is only one area where there is activity, that of the refugees. It also happens to be an area where Canada has considerable expertise, and has acted with distinction.

My argument here is that, if Canada does not want to become a major player and implement a strategy in the Middle East, and there are no signs that it does, then it should at least conduct a strategic intervention. We need strategic intervention when, instead of designing a strategy, we look at the other parties' actions and instead of creating a strategy, we reverse engineer the best tactics that can be designed. We do so by identifying the do-or-die moments, by determining who are the significant political actors in the country, individuals or groups, by distinguishing between significant and insignificant actors, by examining what influence various actors have on a particular action, by determining which resources support the political system, which are scarce, and which are essential, by looking at how political actors manage them, what factors favor which political actors. We also ask these latter questions about tactics, actors, resources, rules. Only then do we design a response, and that response is much more likely to have an impact. That analysis reveals that in the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the key to the rest of the peace negotiations really are the refugees. I.e. the Palestinians who became concentrated in Gaza and the West Bank.

A GOVERNMENT DEALING WITH AN INSURGENCY: AFGHANISTAN 2001-2006

I consider *prima facie* evidence regarding a government or group being in a disadvantaged or underdog situation, and whether this amounts to enough to justify assigning them underdog status. I then examine the characteristics and mistakes typical of underdogs.

***Prima Facie* Evidence of Underdog Status**

The case that Afghanistan is an underdog in the international system rests on evidence of how its political instability and inability to implement social and political reforms compare to other nations. Once the government takes on the characteristics of an underdog, however, these characteristics will show up in both domestic and international actions. Unfortunately, Afghanistan has suffered from such chronic instability and conflict during so much of its modern history, that its economy and infrastructure are in ruins, and many of its people are refugees.

Afghanistan state institutions have been weak for decades, giving rise to instability and unsuccessful attempts to modernize the society. These efforts go back to 1926 and the defeat of King Amanullah's social reforms by conservative forces. In 1953, Prime Minister

(and General) Mohammed Daud introduced social reforms again, including the abolition of the seclusion of women. After he left power, the introduction of a constitutional monarchy led to political polarization and power struggles. But in 1973, Daud seized power again. In playing the USSR against Western powers, he alienated left-wing factions which overthrew and killed him in 1978. The victors, the People's Democratic Party, had Khalq and Parcham factions. The Khalq faction eventually purged and exiled most Parcham leaders, as conservative Islamic and ethnic leaders in the country revolted against social changes. In 1979, the Soviets backed the Parcham faction leader, Babrak Karmal, who was duly installed, while the US, Pakistan, China, Iran, and Saudi Arabia supplied money and arms to anti-Soviet mujahedeen groups. Civil war raged from 1988 to 1993 as rival militias vied for influence after the Soviet withdrew. These militias eventually agreed to form a government with Burhanuddin Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik, as president, though factional contests continued. In 1995, the Pashtun-dominated Taliban emerged and seized control of Kabul in 1996. By 1997 they, and their extremist version of Islam, controlled about two-thirds of country.

There matters rested until terrorists attacked the United States on September 11, 2001. In October, the U.S. invaded Afghanistan after the Taliban government refused to hand over Osama bin Laden, the architect of those attacks. Once the U.S. had defeated the Taliban government, meetings of various Afghan leaders, sponsored by the United Nations, produced an interim government and an agreement to allow a peacekeeping force to enter Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai, who headed the provisional administration, won a five-year term in Afghanistan's first direct presidential elections in October 2004, with 55.4% of the vote. Karzai, a Pashtun, was an effective player on the world stage who also enjoyed strong American backing, persuading international donors to pledge \$US 4 billion in 2002.

Given this history, then, it is no wonder the UN Security Council found Afghanistan at risk of becoming a failed democracy in November 2006 because of its fragile state institutions, the increase in Taliban violence, and the growing illegal drug production. In addition to these reasons, the Karzai government has yet to achieve national unity. National unity has been elusive both because the nation is diverse and because has a poor history of human rights. In the 1980's, the Soviet invasion brought mass killings, torture, and a landscape littered with land mines. The subsequent civil war brought extensive abuses by the armed factions vying for power. When the Taliban were in power, they were particularly notorious for their human rights abuses against women. Without a tradition of respect and participation by various groups, it is not

possible to hope for a strong central government being established other than by force.

If the government of Afghanistan can be considered an underdog because of politics, the Taliban

after 2001 can be considered underdogs for military ones. The case here rests on the military defeat of the Taliban government by the U.S. in late 2001 having an impact on future governments.

Table 5: Evidence of Characteristics of Underdog Strategy

Characteristic	Karzai government
They are always thinking about what the strong are about to do	Smaller political parties watched Hamid Karzai's party to take advantage of any misstep.
They play a waiting game.	Slow, gradual development of legal system, modest Afghanistan Compact benchmarks on development
They are holistic.	Willingness to work with governments of other countries over development and reconstruction
They are always scanning their environment.	Starvation, refugee problems failed to materialize
They specifically design each action to suit their strategy.	Clearly conscious of the necessity for development and economic progress to support their efforts at democracy
They are always forecasting for all events.	Decision-making processes slow and ineffectual
They are convinced they will lose a direct confrontation.	Accepts both foreign troops, even when unpopular
They will break their own rules.	Bargains with warlords who operate outside the law, maintaining private armies and jails and threatening people who speak out against them in the Loya Jirga
Their commitment is complete.	ministers continuing to hold office despite the dangers of assassination

Table 6: Evidence of Strategic Mistakes

Type of Mistake	Karzai Government
Working on the Wrong Problem.	Foreign forces conquer the country, but not well suited to counter-insurgency
Not Specifying Their Objectives Enough.	Unclear terms of reference, procedures for: ministries, provincial offices, liaison between legislative and executive; too little accountability to prevent patronage, misuse of public funds, abuse of public land management, and corruption in the privatization of state-owned enterprises; policies sidelined increasing popular dissatisfaction, and favored marginalization and intolerance of political opposition
Giving Inadequate Thought To Tradeoffs	Inadequate vetting of army/police candidates led to harassment and threats to political organizers and journalists
Disregarding Uncertainty	Corruption of government officials
Failing To Account For Your Risk Tolerance.	History of ethnic and tribal lack of unity; domination of one ethnic group to the exclusion of others
Failing to Plan Ahead When Decisions Are Linked Over Time.	Allowing the opium trade to develop to the point of being a parallel power structure

IDENTIFYING THE STRATEGIC CORPORAL IN A CROWD

With a single half day's worth of training, it is possible for armed forces to identify those who are already thinking in the same terms as the insurgents, the so-called strategic corporals, and to introduce the others to the basics of that way of thinking [10]. The main obstacle to the proposed training is habitus, their usual ways of thinking, which tends to become more rigid over time [11].

Habitus is the system of durable, transferable dispositions produced by the conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence. The conditions of existence produce generating, organizing principles of practice and of mental representation of situations, which can be objectively adapted in their aim, but without the awareness of those aims and the mastery explicit of the operations necessary to attain them. The more specialized the training, the more affluent and/or successful the people, the more resistance there can be to learning, the more rigid the

way of thinking. However, the habitus usually will become less rigid in times of crisis: the more severe the crisis, the more open people will become, and while it may be too late to help solve the crisis at hand, it is possible to introduce training at that time.

In a range of people trained so far, there have always been a proportion of individuals who used strategy including *mètis*. There is no reason to think that NATO personnel would be an exception, although the proportion of those natural strategists is unknown. Moreover, the proportion of natural strategists among visible minorities, women, the disabled, and others with some sort of permanent disadvantage is much greater. If this also holds true for armed forces, then those who have made efforts at diversity may be receiving an unexpected dividend.

The proposed training proposed below takes about two hours. The two exercises are: discovery and diagnosis, and development of the core idea.

Exercise 1: Discovery and Diagnosis

This exercise takes one to one and a half hours. Its objective is to introduce the participants to the basics of strategy including *mètis*. The trainer asks participants to play a simple board game, such as checkers or chess. The materials required are simple: board games for every two or four participants, since the exercise works for people working in teams of two in playing the board game; pads of paper and pens; and either a chalkboard, a flipchart, an overhead projector or a document camera. The board game should be culturally appropriate and its rules common knowledge. The exercise allows for the use of translators if necessary. Once the matches are under way, gives participants a structured set of tasks of increasing complexity to force the failure of rational thought alone. The trainer then asks participants to come up with a core idea, and use it. The trainer observes participants and coaches them as necessary. What the trainer is looking for is the ability to predict outcomes in increasing numbers of scenarios, and the ability to think ahead to a much greater extent. People who can do this

are likely to be natural strategists, and are much more likely to be practicing the strategy of the weak. The trainer confirms with participants when they are using *mètis*. At the close of this exercise, the trainer facilitates a discussion about the effectiveness of the first experience with a core idea. In the alternative, the trainer can assign the worksheet shown below, an integration learning tool commonly used in management or business

Exercise 2: The Core Idea

Because coming up with a core idea is often the most difficult part of thinking like an underdog, this exercise can be completed quickly that will stimulate the thinking of the participants.

Here, the participant must start thinking in metaphorical terms about the tasks at hand. This worksheet is deliberately simple, to facilitate the focus needed for *mètis*. In completing this worksheet, the participant will see that not all metaphors are equally practical or helpful -- it is therefore useful to develop a number of them so that the participant can choose the best one. The present worksheet should be completed for the same sample task described above.

There are a number of caveats to the training proposed above. First, the workshop and training are, at the time of this writing, untried and untested in this proposed application. Second, the proportions of types of practitioners of underdog strategists in the military is not known and the first type of learner may be found in much lower proportions than in other walks of life. Third, the training of troops proposed can be ordered, but the learning cannot. They may participate in the workshop while resisting the learning. Fourth, the people being trained are going to be primarily young men not given to introspection, to say nothing of abstract thought, and the habitus may prove an even greater obstacle than foreseen here. Fifth, the optimum effectiveness for this training is no doubt to have it integrated into the regular training, about which the author needs to know more.

Sample Worksheet: Core Idea			
Category	Suggested Images, Analogies, Models	Your Metaphors, Images, Role Models, Analogies	Core Idea
Military	Machine gun, rifle, tank	Battalion, submarine, armored personnel carrier	Work together like a C-3 gun and a shell
Geographical	River, waterfall, creek	Mountain, plateau, desert	A 24-hour oasis
Plant	Tree, fern, Venus flytrap	Flower, tomato, potato	Let's close up camp like one of those evening prayer plants
Transportation	Bus, golf cart, car	Truck, walking, running, bicycle	Let's make our break like a cruise ship for the night
Sports	Caddy, gymnastics, football	Soccer, tennis, ping pong	
Mechanical	Wrench, Allen key, ratchet	Silicone gun, screwdriver	
Insects	Mosquito, ant, butterfly	Bee, wasp, slug	Let's circle around the queen bee
Animals	Cougar, puma rhinoceros	Tiger, lion, gazelle, turtle	
Role models	Princess Diana, Donald Trump, Gandhi	Mother Theresa, Montgomery of Alamein	
Your own Category:	Your own metaphors:		

CONCLUSION

There are three benefits to this approach.

(1) Unit of analysis

The analyst can forecast developments and actions much more accurately by using action as the unit of analysis rather than the actor. If the analyst uses patterns of actions, like strategy, it is even better. It is a little like playing chess. A player begins by observing the opponent's moves. If these seem to be uncoordinated or going in a variety of different directions, so much the better. It means that the opponent is not thinking strategically, and will be that much easier to defeat. On the other hand, it may not be in the player's best interest to make assumptions about an opponent's confused state of mind or ineffective planning. Instead, the player has information about that opponent and can use it to predict the kind of strategy the opponent is most likely to use, based on that information. At that point, it is much easier to determine which strategy the opponent is actually using. Once the strategy is known, then the rate of success in predicting the tactical decisions will increase exponentially, whatever the circumstances. The main drawback is that strategic analysis based on the new definition of strategy provides insight only into the specific scope or level of the analysis, neither above nor below it. It means, in practical terms, that the analysis of national health policy will not provide guidance in the reform of radiology services in a hospital or private clinic, for example. It also means that the analysis will provide probabilities rather than certainties in its predictions.

(2) Mid-Level Theory

When David Easton outlined the three major levels of theory in political science, he discussed grand theory and low-level theory in the most detail [12].

Most difficult of all to grasp and to discuss was mid-level theory. Theories in International Relations or in public administration, for example, oscillated between grand and low-level theory. The potential contribution of a general theory of strategy and *mètis*, built around an old concept broadened out to apply to more than business or war is significant. At that time, strategy, to the extent it was studied at all, was considered to be within strategic studies, which was within international relations, which was within political science. If studied theoretically, then it had the potential to change the context easily – but there were few general theories of strategy at the mid-level, as Easton predicted, and none which were useable for non-military application.

Strategy presents two advantages as the starting point for mid-level theory. First, it is integrative: it takes as its units of analysis action or patterns of action, rather than actors as does most other theory of political science. Second, it generates both high theory and practical applications, because strategy as a concept lies as the meeting place between thought and action. Students of strategy can therefore easily move towards the more abstract or the more practical, depending on his/her goals in research. This is what the theory and method has allowed.

(3) Polyvalence

As a phenomenon, strategy presents considerable theoretical and practical interest. From a theoretical standpoint, it presents the advantage of being applicable to a wide range of situations. Because it analyses action rather than the actor, it can be applied to any actor. Developing a general theory for strategy also frees its validity from any regional or thematic context. Strategy can therefore be applied to any context. From a practical standpoint, a strategy generates a number of

polyvalent tools and training programs, intelligible to the strategist, but more importantly to the non-strategist lay person as well. These methodologies present the advantage of allowing learning from a book and a set of theoretical exercises, or by experiential pedagogy. They can be broken down into components requiring as little as one hour's training for proficiency, as experience shows. These methodologies have been proposed as valid irrespective of the goals, aspirations, values, socio-economic circumstances, or worldviews of the individuals, groups, or institutions involved.

The polyvalence should be assessed on the basis of three strands of research. The first strand focuses on methodological and theoretical development of this new theory of strategy. The second strand presents several structured sets of case studies focusing on the various types of actors in political science, broadly defined. The third strand presents a series of exercises and worksheets which pertain either to particular applications of strategy or which spans the intellectual development of a good strategist. There are several studies needed, summarized in Table 7. The studies already completed can be found in Table 8, Summary of Completed Studies, by Unit of Analysis.

Table 7: Summary of Necessary Research, by Unit of Analysis

Level	Theory	Cases	Applications
Phenomenon	Strategic Research	Strategic Research	Strategic Research
Supranational group	Strategy and the Catholic Church	Strategy and the Catholic church	Strategy and Counterinsurgency
Systems		Strategy and health cases	Strategy and health

Table 7: Completed Studies, By Unit of Analysis

Level	Theory	Cases	Applications
Phenomenon	Bioterrorism and Medical and Health Services Administration	Bioterrorism and Medical and Health Services Administration	Bioterrorism and Medical and Health Services Administration
Individual	Strategy for individuals	Strategy for individuals	Strategic activism, More Strategic Activism
Infranational group	Campaign Strategy	Campaign Strategy	Political strategy and politics
Supranational group			
Systems	Prescription for Change		
States	Strategy and Ethnic Conflict	Various articles	Analyzing National and International Policy
Group of states	Strategy for the Pacific Century	NATO and Eastern Europe After 2000	Path to peace

My own desire is to have strategy used to improve the common good. Nonetheless, I cannot help but acknowledge, however, that strategy is an ethically neutral concept. Its application and results depend entirely on the user.

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