

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

Fourth Generation Warfare and the Cultural Divide

by

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A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

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Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

April 2006

Report Documentation Page		Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.		
1. REPORT DATE APR 2006	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2006 to 00-00-2006
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Fourth Generation Warfare and the Cultural Divide		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
		5b. GRANT NUMBER
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
	5e. TASK NUMBER	
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Air University Press (AUL/LP),131 W Shumacher Avenue,Maxwell AFB,AL,36112-6615		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited		
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
14. ABSTRACT "Because Roman civilization perished through barbarian invasions, we are perhaps too much inclined to think that that is the only way a civilization can die. If the lights that guide us ever go out, they will fade little by little, as if of their own accord. We therefore should not console ourselves by thinking that the barbarians are still a long way off. Some peoples may let the torch be snatched from their hands, but others stamp it out themselves." -- Alexis de Tocqueville 1 The world is in tension. Global conflict rages along cultural lines. The events of 9/11, the war in Iraq, and the undercurrent fear of terrorism lie close to the heart of democracies and, yet, America's shining light to the rest of the world has been dimmed. While America's exported culture becomes more prolific, many watch in disgust as their traditions, politics, and religion change to suit the influx of Western influences. Some feel that America is a rotting egg - bright and clean on the outside, decaying on the inside. This perception is not exclusive to non-Western citizens; many in America feel that we have lost our guiding principles and have lost the vision of the Founders. Multiculturalism, humanism, and political correctness have drowned the truth, but in a dichotomy of perceptions, those who espouse "progressive" ideas feel that America is a victim of her own socio-political agenda. While the West exports its brand of democracy, Islamists concurrently export their incompatible ideology to the West. Fourth Generation Warfare is not restricted to combat zones, but rages in time and dimension foreign to Westerners. The divisions in society that arise, whether in Iraq or America, will give way to a isolating cultural divide. Islam is not incompatible with democracy, but the free speech protected under democracy must not give way to extremist ideologies. A divided democracy can stand on principle, but once the torch is dimmed, it is only a matter of time before it is extinguished. The West will survive the invasion of cultural barbarians, but only if it recognizes the invasion and takes action.		
15. SUBJECT TERMS		

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 33	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

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Abstract

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The world is in tension. Global conflict rages along cultural lines. The events of 9/11, the war in Iraq, and the undercurrent fear of terrorism lie close to the heart of democracies and, yet, America’s shining light to the rest of the world has been dimmed. While America’s exported culture becomes more prolific, many watch in disgust as their traditions, politics, and religion change to suit the influx of Western influences. Some feel that America is a rotting egg – bright and clean on the outside, decaying on the inside. This perception is not exclusive to non-Western citizens; many in America feel that we have lost our guiding principles and have lost the vision of the Founders. Multiculturalism, humanism, and political correctness have drowned the truth, but in a dichotomy of perceptions, those who espouse “progressive” ideas feel that America is a victim of her own socio-political agenda. While the West exports its brand of democracy, Islamists concurrently export their incompatible ideology to the West. Fourth Generation Warfare is not restricted to combat zones, but rages in time and dimension foreign to Westerners. The divisions in society that arise, whether in Iraq or America, will give way to a isolating cultural divide. Islam is not incompatible with democracy, but the free speech protected under democracy must not give way to extremist ideologies. A divided democracy can stand on principle, but once the torch is dimmed, it is only a matter of time before it is extinguished. The West will survive the invasion of cultural barbarians, but only if it recognizes the invasion and takes action.

¹ Quoted in Jim Nelson Black, *When Nations Die* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1994), vii.

Introduction

While the Global War on Terror rages, another insidious conflict plays out not in traditional battlespace, but in the hearts and minds of the broad spectrum of modern civilization. For thousands of years people have warred over ideas, over fissures and chasms between differing ideologies, over religious and sectarian tensions, over poorly timed political statements, over art and poetry, and even over dates on calendars. Where history proves that the volatility of these issues can unite or shatter fragile unions, mutually inclusive issues that once were the only bonds between different cultures are now the last tenuous ligaments between societies torn internally by radical ideas and subversive threats. These links are the fronts in a culture war that rages daily across the entire spectrum of state-to-state and culture-to-culture relationships. In newspapers and on television around the globe, an emotionally explosive war rages: the underdog status quo of civility, mutual concern, and respect for inclusive facets of civilization versus militant extremism, subversive multiculturalism, and apathetic political agendas. The fronts of this battle lie not in the deserts of the Southwest Asia or the jungles of South America, but in global educational institutions, political and diplomatic forums, religious establishments, informational media outlets, and capitalist marketplaces. This paper will present a brief relevant history of American culture and the multicultural movement in the West; examine global influences in the culture war; and outline the Islamist and Salafist movements and their aggregate effect on the culture war played out in the United States and abroad. Finally, a presentation of possible results and prescriptions for positive outcomes will be presented in the context of the Global War on Terror from a Fourth Generation Warfare perspective.

4GW, Islamism, and the West

“Throughout the entire course of history, warfare is always changing.” -- Andre Beaufre¹

Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW) is nothing new. While experienced soldier-intellectuals like William Lind and Thomas Hammes focus on a shift in the way wars are fought, the reality is that warfare is merely coming full circle and 4GW is a small war tactic transformed into a grand concept of warfare. History proves that a name is just a name. Thousands of years ago, Sun Tzu emphasized the cultural aspect of war. Ghengis Khan nominally converted to Islam in order to appeal to inhabitants in the newly conquered Middle East. Communist movements from Mao Ze Dong’s revolution in China and Ho Chi Minh’s Vietnamese transformation prove that insurgency and 4GW are time-tested methods of war. While culture has always been an operational center of gravity in warfare, it is now also a strategic center of gravity. Unfortunately, Western states, focused for years on conventional warfare and technological superiority as the key to victory, have blinded themselves to the efficacy of guerilla warfare and the potency of insurgent movements. Likewise, the importance of synthesizing culture and warfare cannot be underestimated, especially in the critical fight for legitimacy in increasingly divergent societies.

The point where the soldier-intellectuals are correct and where 4GW intersects with traditional Clausewitzian military theory is in the assumption that there is nothing new about warfare in the here and now. Hammes writes:

There is nothing mysterious about 4GW. Like all wars, it seeks to change the enemy’s political position. Like all wars, it uses available weapons systems to achieve that end. Like all wars, it reflects the society it is part of. Like all previous generations of war, *it has evolved in consonance with society as a whole*. It evolves because practical

¹ Quoted in Col Qiao Liang and Col Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Panama City, Panama: Pan American Publishing Company, 2002), 25.

people solved specific problems related to their fights against much more powerful enemies. Practitioners created it, nurtured it, and have continued its development and growth. Faced with enemies they could not possibly beat using conventional war, they sought a different path.²

As America has discovered during the present conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, 4GW itself is a powerful method of warfare – and one that Western powers are reluctant to fight in a way that leads to victory. To paraphrase political commentator James Carville, it's common sense, Stupid.³ There is much ado about nothing in Washington these days regarding what America and the West need to do to win the self-styled Global War on Terror. Unfortunately, politicians listen not to the people who seem to best understand the methods, tactics, doctrine, and strategies needed to combat the growing threat of Islamism, but instead to the petulant, unconstructive banter of bureaucratic crowd-pleasers. The Departments of State and Defense wrestle with how to fit insurgency into the gigantic box built to fit conventional warfare. It is common sense: Learn from our past mistakes and those made by the enemy of the enemy, transform our combat methods, the way we relate to the Muslim world, the perception we have of their culture, and the internal threat we face in the well-intentioned, yet hyper-disinformed circles of academia and isolationist politics. An institutional transformation of the U.S. military is underway in an effort to combat the Islamist threat, but it must be done efficiently and effectively; it must have teeth and must meet what Samuel Huntington calls "the clash of civilizations" with aplomb and tenacity; it must lack not the ability to adapt; it must be the path to victory.⁴ Likewise, the understanding in political circles must be that this war is not like the Cold War or recent post-Cold War conflicts. It has roots deep in society; is centered on culture, religion, power, and

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

³ Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D., "It's the Economy, Stupid," *The Heritage Foundation: Press Room*, 16 May 1996, n.p., on-line, Internet, 25 March 2006, available from <http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ED051696b.cfm>.

⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), n.p.

control; and has placed a premium on time. America likes quick, clean wars. This war is neither.

Part of the transformational effort focuses on what our enemy is. But, in the vein of effects based operations (EBO) theory unfolding in military doctrine, the military needs to look past the what and begin to explore the how and predict the who, why, and where of insurgent movements. The West has been in a seemingly eternal struggle with Eastern and Middle Eastern cultures for most of recorded history. And that word – culture – is the key to asking about and understanding all of the critical issues surrounding the current and future conflicts. Once those questions are asked and answered by people who understand the intrinsic nature of insurgencies, once the culture of the enemy is explored and understood, once the experience of past wars is evaluated and implemented, once the West begins to understand the cultural dynamic of 4GW, only then can the West understand the gravity of winning and, more importantly, the cost of doing so.

If culture is the new battlespace, how can the West, so radically diverse from the Middle Eastern and Far Eastern cultures, relate to those cultures and how can it employ the Anglo-Protestant strengths of intellectualism, reasoning, and understanding leading to an end state of greater peace? The transformers must understand the innate nature of man apart from religion and culture. Semantics aside, war is instinctual in man. Sigmund Freud said, “Humans have only two types of instincts, those which seek to preserve and unite...and those which seek to destroy and kill.”⁵ Though many disagree with Freud on other topics, history has proven him correct regarding this aspect of humankind. Additionally, humans tend to identify themselves with others based on several elements defined by John Jay, one of our founding fathers: common

⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 25.

ancestry, language, religion, principles of government, manners and customs, or war experience.⁶ These commonalities are the framework of culture.

The definition of culture for the purposes of this paper means a group's religion, morality, language, political views, and social structure. Extrapolation leads to the definition of cultural warfare as a conflict between individual or group identities that have conflicting allegiances to one or more facets of society. If 4GW, as Hammes describes it, "uses all available networks – political, economic, social, and military" and is "an evolved form of insurgency," the connection between culture and 4GW is complex and comprehensive.⁷ They are, in effect, theoretical cousins in the family tree of warfare. Threads of familiarity between cultures must be explored in order to comprehend the effectiveness of 4GW. In other words, we in the West must take the fight to the enemy in his battlespace, but on our own terms. Freud's instincts of preservation and unification must be maximized and the destruction and killing must be a last resort. This connectedness with another culture should not come at the risky endeavor of equal compromise, but in an effort to force subversively the hand of the adversary in such a way that the resolution is a subjective equality in an objective reality. Again, we win on our terms without humiliating an entire culture.

One of the basic problems the West has encountered is a clear definition of who the enemy is. Speculation and disagreement fuel arguments over the who hides behind traditional Muslim *abayas* and *smaghs* executing hit and run attacks on Western coalition peacekeeping forces in Iraq. The decentralized command and control (C2) and decentralized execution of the insurgency confuse even the most astute planners working the box of conventional warfare. In defining who the enemy is in 4GW, one again can put it in the context of the DIME model with

⁶ Ibid, 60.

⁷ Hammes, 2.

relative ease, especially if viewed through the eyes of recent history.

Tony Corn's article "World War IV as Fourth-Generation Warfare" in *Policy Review* makes clear distinctions between reality and the perception of reality. He accurately deconstructs the networks of the global jihad, defines the true enemy, and illuminates the relationships between different facets of the GWOT. "The West," he says, "is obviously not at war with Islam...and its five traditional pillars; but it is most definitely at war with Jihadism, a pure product of Salafism, which posits that jihad is the sixth pillar of Islam."⁸ Much discussion has been had over the moderate versus extremist interpretation of jihad among Muslims, but Corn points out that that argument is irrelevant. "The only thing that matters is the praxeological distinction between the three modalities of jihad as practiced: jihad of the sword, of the hand, and of the tongue."⁹ Why does this distinction matter? Because the perception of reality is what matters most to the jihadists. If they can defeat the West in one of these areas, then they effectively win public acknowledgement of their cause, in turn leading to a marginal yet conclusive victory in public opinion. As it stands, the undeniable truth is that the insurgency appears to be winning the war of the tongue (informational instrument of power) and of the hand (diplomatic instrument of power). Depending on the perspective, the war of the sword is debatable.

One example of an organization exercising the instruments of power is Hamas. On the United States' list of terrorist organizations, it is a driving force in Middle East politics. Formed in the ghettos of Palestinian refugee camps, it began with the overall goal of forming an Islamic state on the ashes of a destroyed Israel. Secondly, it focused on impacting regional politics through attacks on Western and Israeli targets. Hamas also established charitable networks –

⁸ Tony Corn, "World War IV as Fourth Generation Warfare," *Policy Review.com*, January 2006, n.p., on-line, Internet, 3 March 2006, available from <http://www.policyreview.org/000/corn.html>

⁹ Ibid, n.p.

social, informational, and medical services – in the refugee camps. However Hamas appears to the West, it is a powerful force in the Middle East. In 2004, the Christian Science monitor reported that U.S. support for Israel and daily deterioration in the quality of life for Palestinians was empowering Hamas and marginalizing moderates. The article continued, “A December 2003 poll showed that Hamas has overtaken Fatah as the most popular political grouping in the Gaza Strip. The movement is advancing not only because it is at the forefront of ‘armed resistance’...but also because it strives to serve the public’s daily needs.”¹⁰ These predictions came true when Hamas won the Palestinian Authority elections in 2006 because it countered the perceived Israeli threat and because it actively supported Palestinians from within. If other Islamic groups follow Hamas’ example, their expansion into the realm of global cultural and political influence could be unavoidable.

The assumption among Western countries is that the enemy in the GWOT is a collection of organizations divided by geography and political agendas; however, it is increasingly clear that ties between these organizations go much deeper. There is evidence that they train together and fight together; that traditional sectarian lines are disregarded and the Muslim identity cements their bond; that a mutual hatred of the West cannibalizes any moderate, Western-friendly influence inside Islam and creates a pernicious threat to America’s interests in the region.

Like siblings who fight each other at the drop of a hat, they will also quickly join forces to combat an outside enemy like America and its allies. Hezbollah, Hamas, the P.L.O. and others have united in a struggle that now defines the Middle East. Their perceived legitimacy stems from cultural similarities, such as religion and ancestry, to the aforementioned destruction

¹⁰ Quoted in H. John Poole, *Tactics of the Crescent Moon: Militant Muslim Combat Methods* (Emerald Isle, N.C.: Posterity Press, 2004), 54.

of Israel and establishment of a Palestinian state. Additionally, they have been internationally recognized through democratic elections, to the dismay of Western governments. “There are ambiguous assortments of terrorist and fundamentalist groups whose organization, reach, network, structure, and origins are difficult to define. The fundamentalists include followers of the Wahabbi sect of Islam, *mujahedeen* forces committed to a holy war against the West; and imams who preach anti-Western messages in Iraqi mosques. These groups mixed with foreign terrorists such as al-Qa’ida and Ansar al-Islam, and Iraqi Kurds compose a very dangerous enemy, which threatens the stability of Iraq,” states Colonel G.I. Wilson.¹¹ Clearly the West’s perception is flawed – the Islamist threat is a union of like forces, fighting against perceived injustice in the name of a religion that seeks the conversion of the world through force.

Arguments regarding the latter are irrelevant. Islam itself is a force and history has proven that it is a religion based on belligerence. The real exposition needs to focus on the root causes and not the symptoms. It is the fundamentalist interpretation of Islam that generates violence.

Salafism is a term often used to describe fundamentalist Islamic thought.¹² Most Westerners are familiar with Wahhabism as the official religion of Saudi Arabia. This state sanctioned religion is founded on theological Salafism and affords Islamists and jihadists justification in carrying out violent attacks on Western targets. They live, at least nominally, under the *sharia* or Islamic law and their ultimate goal is the creation of an Islamic state, or *umma*, under the rule of an Islamic Caliphate. *Sharia* refers not specifically to Islamic law, but means “based upon the Koran, the will of God.” It is more than the law; it is the governance of political, social, religious, and private life. While moderate Muslims view this *umma* more as a

¹¹ G. I. Wilson, “Iraq: Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW) Swamp,” *Defense and the National Interest.com*, 10 March 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, 25 February 2006, available from http://www.d-n-i.net/fcs/wilson_4gw_swamp.htm.

¹² “Salafi Islam,” *Global Security.com*, February 2006, n.p., on-line, Internet, 17 February 2006, available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-salafi.htm>.

united community of believers in Islam and less in geographical terms, extremist and fundamentalist interpretations of the *umma* include the entire world population and geography as a part of the Islamic empire under *sharia*. The crux in Corn's distinction between a war with Islam and a war with jihadists is at this intersection of internal ideologies.¹³

However, other pundits view the distinction between moderate and extremist as irrelevant, instead defining the enemy as Islam itself. Editorialist Diana West recently commented on this in the aftermath of the London bombing in July 2005:

How strange, though, that even as we devise new ways to see inside ourselves to our most elemental components, we also prevent ourselves from looking full-face at the danger to our way of life posed by Islam. Notice I did not say "Islamists" or "Islamofacists" or "fundamentalist extremists." I've tried out such terms in the past, but I've come to find them artificial and confusing, and maybe purposefully so, because in their imprecision I think they allow us all to give a wide berth to a great problem: the gross incompatibility of Islam – the religious force that shrinks freedom even as it "moderately" enables or "extremistly" advances jihad – with the West.¹⁴

Diana West's reluctance to distinguish between extremist and moderate Islam is reflective of a perspective taken by many Westerners. Whereas Muslims focus almost exclusively on sectarian or religious doctrine, much of which is distorted by personal interpretation by Islamist clerics, Westerners view their world in a more kaleidoscopic manner.

Americans, in particular, are inexorably coupled to the idea of freedom; however, the freedom of unbelief is intolerable in Islamic terms. Freedoms of the press, speech, and choice of religion are fundamental tenets of American law and Muslim law. Michael Novak, in his book *The Universal Hunger for Liberty*, says, "In a word, there are four universal liberties, which are also Muslim liberties. Liberty of worship, liberty of speech, liberty from poverty, and liberty from tyranny. Basic human liberties." He continues, "There is, I think, a vision of the world in

¹³ Corn, n.p.

¹⁴ Diana West, "Burnt Offerings on the Altar of Multiculturalism," *Townhall.com*, 18 July 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, 5 March 2006, available from <http://www.townhall.com/opinion/columns/dianawest/2005/07/18/154932.html>.

which the profound pluralism that separates people and also the profound unity in basic rights and dignity that holds us together can be formulated in terms that make cultural, economic, and political sense.”¹⁵ Many Americans cannot see past the gruesome battle reports from the media. They are biased by limited viewpoints and preconceptions without the critical understanding of the culture of the enemy. Muslims see the world the same way as Christians, atheists, or Jews, only from different sides of a small divide. Over time, cultural earthquakes and aftershocks widen the divide into a chasm and eventually into a canyon. The goal of the West, in order to appease the universal hunger, is to close that divide and ensure that cultural differences do not lead to conflict.

¹⁵ Michael Novak, *The Universal Hunger for Liberty: Why the Clash of Civilizations is Not Inevitable* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 21.

The Cultural Chasm

“Of all the disposition and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports.” – George Washington¹⁶

Americans in particular ostensibly adhere to the native creed of Western citizenry, which is founded on Anglo-Protestant principles. Samuel Huntington clearly states and accurately defines the history of American culture and what differentiates it from Eastern cultures:

America’s core culture has been and, at the moment, is still primarily the culture of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century settlers who founded American society. The central elements of that culture can be defined in a variety of ways but include the *Christian religion, Protestant values and moralism, a work ethic, the English language, British traditions of law, justice, and the limits of government power*, and a legacy of European art, literature, philosophy, and music. Out of this culture, the settlers developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the American Creed with its *principles of liberty, equality, individualism, representative government, and private property*. Subsequent generations of immigrants were assimilated into the culture of the founding settlers and contributed to and modified it. *But they did not change it fundamentally*. This is because, at least until the late twentieth century, it was *Anglo-Protestant culture and the political liberties and economic opportunities* it produced that attracted them to America.¹⁷

Huntington’s description of Western culture (if defining Western culture can be described in terms of American culture) indirectly corroborates Diana West’s commentary. While a discussion of the American Creed is certainly relevant, the tangible evidence of it exists in distinctly Western institutions such as representative government, the Constitution, educational institutions, and a market economy. Intangible evidence lies in one word: freedom.

Freedoms, religious and otherwise, are guaranteed under the penned words of the American Constitution. Sometimes taken for granted, freedom nevertheless remains the cornerstone of Western society. Though the exercise of freedom within a society varies base on the governing authority, it ranges from semi-anarchic to heavy-handed government. The West

¹⁶ Quoted in *The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: Coral Ridge Ministries, 2005), vii.

¹⁷ Huntington, *Who Are We*, 40.

remains committed to the preservation of freedom for its inhabitants. Islam's dissimilarity with Western culture on a broad scale is best described by the Arabic word *ijtihad*, meaning "a battle of interpretations."¹⁸ Westerners vehemently oppose submission to authoritarian rule, especially if they perceive a violation of their innate rights. This perception is individualistic and remains extremely subjective. Conversely, Muslims view freedom as something found only within their religion: free from corruption of the West, free from Western vices, free from Christian prosthletization, free to worship under the *sharia*. Westerners have the same perspective of their freedoms; hence, it is an *ijtihad*. These interpretations feed a respective mistrust, racism, misconceptions, and anger. How cultures manage these differences reveals the nature of the conflict.

Westerners nominally celebrate multicultural diversity yet neglect to investigate critical differences between cultures. Wall Street Journal editorialist Mark Steyn candidly remarked, "The great thing about multiculturalism is that it does not involve knowing anything about other cultures...all it requires is feeling good about other cultures. It is fundamentally a fraud, and...subliminally accepted on this basis. Most adherents to the idea that all cultures are equal do not want to live in anything but an advanced Western society."¹⁹ Though the sentiment of multiculturalism is appealing to a degree, its intrinsic ignorance breeds a profoundly unacknowledged contempt for the religion of Islam. It accepts without question the claims that Islam is a peaceful, mono-theistic religion; that Christians (especially the Crusaders) and Jews have oppressed Muslims for 1,400 years; that the Muslim world is comprised of inherently passive people content to live in harmony with themselves and others; that Israel is the aggressor in their conflict with the Arab/Muslim world; that America exploits Muslims and the regional oil

¹⁸ Corn, n.p.

¹⁹ Mark Steyn, "It's the Demography, Stupid," *Opinion Journal.com*, 4 January 2006, n.p., on-line, Internet, 2 March 2006, available from <http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110007760>.

resource; and that America and the West provoke extremist groups in Islam (such as al Qaeda and Hezbollah) to commit terrorist acts in the name of their religion. While there may be a kernel of truth in some of these statements, multiculturalism's use of hyperbole flagrantly misinforms a gullible public into believing that no threat to the West exists in Islam's subversive westward expansion.

The problem in America is that the idea of multiculturalism appeals to the idea of fairness; for things to be right or just, they must be fair. However, American culture has been successful because of the American Creed and the socio-political philosophy of Americanism, which clearly champion a strong work ethic and the idea that liberty and equality are inalienable from the individual. President Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Americanism means the virtues of courage, honor, justice, truth, sincerity, and hardihood – the virtues that made America. The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living, and the get-rich-quick theory of life."²⁰

Multiculturalism diverges from the American Creed in that it claims all cultures are equal even if they do not conform to the same ideals. In effect, the madness of Mao's Little Red Book is equally erudite and relevant as the Declaration of Independence. Multiculturalism touts extreme moral relativism, which is not in concert with natural or moral law and, therefore, doomed to fail. While academia has become a breeding ground for sensitivity and tolerance, it has failed in the modern era to support Roosevelt's "virtues that made America" and has horrendously collided with the humanistic, egocentric tendencies of self-preservation, comfort, and peace and prosperity at any price.

Contemporary examples of Western societies that have adopted multiculturalism to their detriment are plentiful. The West's careless failure to identify the threat of multiculturalism is

²⁰ Black, 91.

also the link to the threat of militant Islam; however, the pernicious threat echoes in different ways across different cultures. The West has allowed multicultural invective to seduce the halls of academia in America, while the Islamic world has few legitimate educational institutions and a plethora of schools teaching Islamic fundamentalism as the core or sole curriculum. To put this in perspective, approximately 38% of the population in the Middle East is illiterate, whereas more than 97% of Americans can read, and more than 85% of Americans age 25 and older have completed high school.^{21 22} Additionally, the West has transitioned to a post-Christian society, adopting secular ideals fully undermining the primary objective of early educators, many of who centralized instruction on the tenets of Judeo-Christian morality and ethical standards. Multiculturalism and its theoretical offspring have poisoned students and educators alike into blaming America, Christianity and, more specifically, Anglo-Protestantism for the failure of the West to solve the problems of the world. Unfortunately, a failure to truly understand Christianity and a desire to “feel good” about other cultures instead of seeking to define the differences and actually solve global problems brought about by the dichotomy of human nature, as Mark Steyn so aptly put it, is a foundational dilemma in the relationship between Christian apology and academic legitimacy.²³

As the West’s educational institutions have adopted multiculturalism as a standard, they have adopted the idea that America is at fault for the problems of the world. “The modern code of the humanists who dominate the culture today,” says Jim Black in *When Nations Die*, “tells us that the Christian principles upon which [America] was founded are dangerous, destructive, and divisive. Advocates of political correctness have begun to rewrite the entire lexicon of Western

²¹ Corn, n.p.

²² *Educational Attainment in the United States: 2003*, United States Department of Commerce: U.S. Census Bureau (Washington D.C.: Department of Commerce, 2003), 1.

²³ Steyn, n.p.

thought and to invent a new vocabulary of ‘victimization’ more suited to a cultural tradition of bigotry and exploitation.”²⁴ Any appearance of neutrality disappears when college professors equate the President of the United States with Adolf Hitler or compare America to Nazi Germany. Unfortunately, the fallout of this shift is the open door to extremist ideas. When a proponent of one argument takes an extreme, his opponent will not stay centered; he must balance the argument by going to the other extreme. Unfortunately, academia has begun to subvert the intent of the Founders and has left its door open to radical ideas that, all too often, come from sources outside America. Tony Corn says, “Ever faithful to its historical role of ‘useful idiot’ (Lenin), [academia] is increasingly providing both conceptual ammunition and academic immunity to crypto-jihadists, making Western campuses safe for intellectual terrorism.”²⁵ Under the guise of tolerance of new ideas and in an effort to appease the soldiers of political-correctness, academia and acquiescent politicians have unwittingly become the utensils for Islamism and jihad.

Extremist Muslims, on the other hand, feel that any effort to understand Western culture results in a contamination or pollution of their faith; more moderate clerics and rational Muslims understand exactly the consequence of ignoring Western culture. Geopolitical isolation and marginalization and constant scrutiny of their global intentions confine the Islamic world not only geographically and politically, but also intellectually, theologically, and culturally. It must be noted that Islamists’ accusations of cultural imperialism by the West are a matter of perspective. Acculturation can be compulsory or voluntary; cultural influence is not unidirectional. Characteristics of Islamic culture have both harmfully and constructively influenced Western culture. Likewise, the West’s greatest attraction to oppressed peoples –

²⁴ Black, 9, 89.

²⁵ Corn, n.p.

freedom – has both negative and positive impacts in its exportation. Traditionalists on both sides exaggerate the detrimental effects, while progressives believe that conservation of culture is impossible in the current trends of globalization. Muslims, however, fiercely defend their religion despite globalization. The multicultural West has become a post-Christian, secular society. “Religious cultures have a much greater sense of both past and future, as we did a century ago,” says Steyn, “If secularism’s starting point is that this is all there is, it’s no surprise that, consciously or not, they invest in the here and now with far greater powers of endurance than it’s ever had.”²⁶ In other words, secularism has no future because it has no foundation; while Muslims accept that their religion is infallible and the cornerstone of their culture. Multicultural secularism, to paraphrase Jesus’ parable in the Bible, is a “house built on sand.”²⁷ It is based on artificial reality and the shallow concept of fairness. Most Muslims do not view intrusion of a post-Christian, secular, hedonistic, progressive, decadent culture as their future. However, neither do Christians and cultural conservatives in the West. The argument is three-sided between Western cultural conservatives, Islamist extremists, and progressive radicals on a mission to right the perceived wrongs of history.

While the pluralistic West contends with an ethnographic shift in society due to a large migration of Muslims from Southwest Asia, they are forced to accommodate a religion unaccommodating in itself. Western liberal democracies pride themselves on open door policies and tolerance of different cultures; indeed this is what contributes to a nation’s greatness. However, previous generations of immigrants came with the idea of better lives in a free society. Many Muslim immigrants now expect those same free societies to accept them under the law, yet then expect the law to change to accommodate their respective religious intolerance. This

²⁶ Steyn, n.p.

²⁷ *Life Application Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), 1661.

double-edged sword is, arguably, what will bleed the West of freedom. During an official meeting on Islamic-Christian dialogue, an authoritative Muslim, speaking to the Christians participating, at one point said very calmly and assuredly, “Thanks to your democratic laws we will invade you; thanks to our religious laws we will dominate you.”²⁸ Americans, with an ignorant perception of invulnerability, have no concept of the seditious nature of radical Islam. The drumbeat of multiculturalism and tolerance has deceived well-intentioned democrats into believing that acceptance without question is the key to global peace. Unfortunately, security lies not in acquiescence, but in constant objective analysis and constant scrutiny of the Islamic threat. The ivory tower elites in academia and politics address the threat of militant Islam by demonizing U.S. diplomatic, economic, and military policies. Isolationists refute a “preventative and preemptive” policy citing human rights and relativistic interpretations of moral law. Though not completely untrue, their exercise of hyperbole and disgust for different socio-political viewpoints drive the wedge deeper between the radical, academic elite and political and social conservatives attempting to protect the country from external and, increasingly, internal threats.

The religious laws spoken of by the Islamic cleric are inherently in conflict with the Judeo-Christian morality found ubiquitously in Western cultures. Although moral relativists may argue that one man’s laws are not necessarily applicable or beneficial to another, the natural law on which the fundamental propositions of democracy are based is not unlike many Muslim laws. Natural law is based on objective principles of human nature, ordained by divine precepts found in monotheistic religious texts. At issue are not common tenets of good versus evil or right versus wrong, but interpretations of canon that put into conflict inherently different elements of global society. If these interpretations can be suspended for the sake of

²⁸ Letter of H. Exc. Most Rev. Giuseppe Germano Bernardini to Vatican, 7 October 1999, *The Dangers of Being a Christian in Muslim Turkey*. n.p., on-line, Internet, 25 February 2006, available from http://www.islamreview.com/news/1999_news.htm.

reconciliation, mutual respect for natural law provides a fragile link between cultures. If this link can be strengthened, more common ground uniting these cultures may be revealed contributing to a better state of peace.

In an interesting study, two social scientists remarked in *The Columbia History of the World* on “the irony that the seed of national decay is often discovered in the idea of change for the sake of change. With change, they say, comes loss. The greater the change, the greater the loss. The loss of the foundational principles and core values that made the culture great will lead inevitably to the weakening and ultimate collapse of the entire nation. No nation that loses its *raison d’être* can long survive.”²⁹ This study does not discriminate by religion, creed, or race. It does not unnecessarily distinguish between Christian and Muslim. It merely corroborates what has been previously discussed: a culture cannot survive if it rejects the tenets it was founded on. Tocqueville’s analogy of the dimming torch is a perfect illustration of why Muslims are afraid of Western culture, and reflexively, why Westerners fear the westward expansion of Islam.

Historical revisionists have slanted the impact of different religions on society. Christianity has been crucified on the altar of appeasement in deference to multiculturalism, political correctness, humanism, and tolerance. Islam, however, has become the poster-child religion of the downtrodden, drawing the empathic gaze of those seeking a reason to vilify Christianity. James Burnham, a former Socialist radical, explains,

“Politically correct thinking grows out of the need to sympathize with the underprivileged and the hurting. It demands that the dominate culture, regardless how virtuous or how long established, must change to accommodate the emotional sensibilities of even the smallest and least represented minorities. Cultural relativism and historical revisionism, by the same token, spring from the desire to deny inconvenient facts and to change appearances by redefinition of everything, from history to language.”³⁰

²⁹ Black, 106.

³⁰ Ibid, 103.

To view history in the dim light of a single interpretation stymies the truth. The elucidation of the true intentions of truth-blind educators, politicians, and philosophers becomes obfuscated by thoughtless, pithy condemnation of superpower influence in the world.

What the multiculturalists obstinately refuse to acknowledge is that they are unwitting tools of the radical Islamic movement. The hatred of Christianity within the multicultural ideology reinforces Islamists knowledge that little action is required to promote the advancement of Islam; the seed, once planted, will grow in the soil of gullibility on which the armies of tolerance and multiculturalism stand. Many in education, politics, and other societal institutions have capitulated intellectually catalyzing the collapse of freedom and democracy. Tony Corn makes no mistake in pointing out that this surrender of objectivity is not necessary or inevitable.³¹ It is a matter of choice, and the choice must be made to stand boldly in defense of freedom. Historian Will Durant said, “There is no significant example in history, before our time, of a society successfully maintaining moral life without the aid of religion.”³² Though he is contextually referring to Christianity, a moderate Muslim would not disagree with this statement but would have a different image of a utopian society. Ironically, the very culture that espouses tolerance and relativism is the same society that will be engulfed by radical Islam.

The disparity between the cultures of the West and the Islamic world has been amply illustrated. However, one area that clearly magnifies the cultural chasm between these societies is the reluctance of Muslims to question the interpretation of the Koran they receive each day. Because authority rests in the hands of Islamist preachers, or *imams*, the political spectrum in Muslim countries is incredibly small. Many of these belligerent *imams* spread vicious invective about the West to an uneducated public that takes at face value what they are told. This

³¹ Corn, n.p.

³² Black, 9.

invective is based on an interpretation of the Koran, again a factor of *ijtihad*. Because *sharia* does not permit a Muslim to question the Koran, doing so is punishable by death. According to Reza Safa, author of *Inside Islam*, “Muslims believe the Koran must be read in the Arabic language, which is spoken only by Arabic Muslims. Many Muslims have not read the Koran...since few Muslims are able to read Arabic.”³³ Additionally, he points out that the rate of illiteracy among Muslims is very high and in some Muslim countries, 75 to 85 percent of the people cannot read or write.³⁴ This leads to mass indoctrination of Muslims in what, in many cases, is the delusional diatribe of men so consumed with hatred for the West that they are blinded to reality. The West is confronting with less than palatable results this ideological battlespace and must begin to understand issues like this if the extremist facets of Islam are to be defeated.

³³ Reza Safa, *Inside Islam* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House Publishing, 1996), 83.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 83.

Winning the War

“The Pentagon as an institution appears...unable to shift from a network-centric warfare to a culture-centric warfare paradigm.” – Tony Corn³⁵

This unfamiliar battlespace is a new frontier more dangerous than the American Wild West. It is infinitely more complicated and multi-faceted than any conventional war ever fought. There are, however, similarities that allow us to translate the war into terms the West understands. Unchecked application of Clausewitz or Jomini would be to lose the war before it began. However, understanding the concept of centers of gravity and decisive points is of utmost importance. Because of the decentralized nature of the enemy, finding tactical COGs can be difficult, but examining the cultural foundation of the Islamist movement reveals very clearly several operational COGs against which force can be brought with maximum effect. In the spirit of the EBO doctrine, exploitation of educational institutions, combatant forces, informational operations, and religious institutions can reap incredible results, but it must be done carefully and insightfully to avoid detrimental second and third order effects. Any critical preparation for battle also requires examination of friendly COGs and courses of action, and an attempt at predicting the enemy's most likely and most dangerous courses of action is imperative. In an ambiguous battlespace such as cultural warfare, the process leading to a greater understanding of the enemy may seem impossible because of the fragmented nature of their networks. However, strategic and operational COGs remain vulnerable. Time spent discovering and exploiting them is well worth the effort.

No competent commander should commit forces without an understanding of the battlespace. Preparatory work reveals weaknesses of the enemy. While the battlefield has

³⁵ Corn, n.p.

changed to battlespace, equine-centered cavalry to heavy tanks and artillery, and battleship naval gunfire to air launched standoff weapons; fundamental preparations for battle remain a constant. The variables may change, but without understanding the variables, the battle will surely be lost. The COGs for the GWOT have certainly changed the conventional battle oriented mindset of American power projection. If winning this war is so vital to the preservation of Western culture, why has the West not confronted its enemies in a way that will result in total victory? The answer to that question lies in the identification of the COGs in the GWOT.

The passionate political discourse regarding the war in Iraq illustrates perfectly the lack of understanding many denizens of the West retain. Driven by intensely different viewpoints on other polarizing issues, the war has become a magnet of condemnation of the United States and other Western governments. Politicians exaggerate non-critical issues while ignoring pertinent facts that would simply refute their case against the war. Western media contains few rational actors that have a grasp on the true environment in Iraq. Public perception is fueled by emotion, not facts. The most influential actor in this war is not an individual or group; it is not even human. The internet, exploited handily by Muslim extremists, is at the forefront of the insurgent movement and has given rise to a new battlespace in 4GW. The U.S., still stuck in the anachronistic paradigm of conventional warfare, has been slow to adapt to the capital “I” of the informational instrument of power. Despite technological domination, the U.S. has lost control of the rapidly expanding, easily exploitable realm of electronic warfare in the informational realm. This aspect of 4GW is more important than in the past and has the potential to be the fulcrum on which a 4GW war is won or lost. The Internet has become the medium of choice due to its simplicity and availability.

Less than a decade ago, the West controlled the entire spectrum of media. Few

respectable news services existed in the Islamic world and even fewer periodicals published were more than a foggy reflection of reality. Today, however, television and the Internet are flooded with media and propaganda sites promoting the subversive and flagrant agenda of radical Islam. Al-Jazeera, an Arabic television and Internet news outlet with the motto of “objectivity, accuracy, and a passion for truth,” has had an incredible impact on the population of the entire Middle East since its founding in 1996.³⁶ Cynicism regarding Western broadcasts proliferated the Islamic community, yet concurrently a cultural shift was underway. In Muslim professor Akbar Ahmed’s book *Living Islam*, he says, “The restless generation coming of age in Muslim societies is another factor. It has grown up with the media and feels familiar with American culture. It is ambiguous about what it sees: it cannot live by the American standards it observes; yet paradoxically it wants them. It also feels contempt for much of what it sees on television (particularly sex and violence) and believes it to be representative of American society. Frustrated, it finds its only legitimate sense of identity in its own traditional civilization, which is Islam. *This generation therefore emphasizes its Islamic identity by rejecting the West.*”³⁷ Note that “Muslim societies” refers to the entirety of the Middle East and expatriate Muslims living in Western locales. Additionally, the generation Ahmed describes is the one coming of age in the post-Desert Storm world. It is also the generation that fuels the insurgency in the GWOT.

Michael Novak, a Catholic writer, corroborates Ahmed’s statement:

“The young men and women can *either* hear the siren call of the political extremists and terrorists, who promise almost nothing by way of economic opportunity or political liberty to their people but only humiliation of the secular enemy. *Or* they can join in the effort to build societies of open economic opportunity and prosperity, conjoined to a regime of liberty and individual

³⁶ *Al Jazeera.net* available from <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/5D7F956E-6B52-46D9-8D17-448856D01CDB.htm>.

³⁷ Akbar Ahmed, *Living Islam: From Samarkand to Stornoway* (London, U.K.: BBC Books Limited, 1993), excerpt, n.p., on-line, Internet, 1 April 2006, available from <http://muslim-canada.org/livingislam2.html>.

dignity, under a form of democracy compatible with Islam.”³⁸

The latter part of Novak’s statement is exactly what coalition forces and Western governments desire. However, young Muslims viewed U.S. deployment in Saudi Arabia and other countries as imperialistic and unwelcome. Without a relevant, objective discussion of Western employment of the DIME, any explanation is ignored. Exploitation of the Internet and other media foment the cultural and militaristic view of the West, leading to a cultural conglomerate of radical and moderate Muslims who despise the West yet welcome Western technology. If the West is to compel disenchanted Muslims to adopt Western-styled democracy, then the West must learn to affect the culture without upsetting the equilibrium that glues societies together. Gross manipulation of the media is not effective; furtive efforts to do so, however, achieve remarkable results.

As difficult as it may be, Western countries must undertake an informational campaign combating the current Islamist exploitation of electronic media and Internet. “The grammar and logic of cross-cultural communication,” as Corn describes, must replace the current language of Western efforts.³⁹ America is beginning to realize that it is embroiled in a 4GW war, and with that, the understanding that the cultural economy in warfare is a matter of balance. Exclusive utilization of the military IOP results in a one-sided fight where the U.S. will expend its invested capital quickly with few tangible results. Conventional focus on decisive points and COGs has little return little in terms of cultural change; however, it does dramatically affect the tide of battle and the outcome of a war. Conversely, John Boyd’s emphasis on “pressure points” keeps battle fluid and victory definable only in a set of controllable parameters.⁴⁰ For example,

³⁸ Novak, 202.

³⁹ Corn, n.p.

⁴⁰ Dr. Grant Hammond, “Colonel John Boyd,” lecture, Transformation of Warfare in the 21st Century Seminar, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL, 3 March 2006

insurgents in Iraq accomplish this well through effective use of improvised explosive devices (IED). The tempo and timing of IED attacks reduce the effectiveness of coalition forces by keeping them off balance; by shifting the focus from stability to damage minimization; by implementing high density, low cost, low-tech weapons with devastating results. Hypothetically, if the West were to, as formerly stated, take the fight to the enemy with his tactics but on our terms, what would happen? What must the West do to combat effectively the enemy across the broad spectrum of the DIME? Can the West effectively wage a 4GW war, or is 4GW only a method with which a smaller power can defeat the colossus of Western power? These questions raise serious concerns for the West about its tactics, operations, and strategy in the GWOT. They are also, however, very answerable and the answers, in turn, easily implementable.

Presenting problems without solutions begs the reader to criticize any written work, especially when discussing a topic so mired in the subjective topic of culture. A simple solution to the West's dilemma is to transform the ideology of multiculturalism to transculturalism. Multiculturalism focuses on the differences of people; transculturalism transcends culture and emphasizes the commonalities of individuals and groups. Realistically, this utopian concept may be unrealizable on a grand scale, but in the microcosm of a military engaged in a "three-block war" and 4GW, highlighting on the similarities between the warfighter and the person he is fighting for creates bonds. Transculturalism is a concept that can be easily implemented in the informational and diplomatic spheres. Unlike multiculturalism, it is not relativistic but encourages inclusion of an individual's uniqueness in the melting pot of culture. Inserting this type of "cross-cultural language" in the lexicon of military professionals is simple, yet incredibly effective. A 4GW war requires a different way of thinking and a shift from the vocabulary of bombs and guns, to the vocabulary of strangers and strange lands.

Conceptually, a 4GW war is more about conflict than about combat. The Chinese version of 4GW, labeled *Unrestricted Warfare*, advocates a constant state of conflict.⁴¹ Additionally, it covers military, trans-military, and non-military domains. To win in Iraq, which is a microcosm of the greater GWOT, America and its allies must have an ideological goal and a prescriptive methodology. The Vietnam War cliché of “hearts and minds” is not only applicable, but should be a mantra for coalition forces. The battle for hearts and minds, as one author states, must focus on irrationality, emotion, intellection, seduction, persuasion, images, ideas, memories, policies, identity, and freedom.⁴² Transculturation persuades an individual to accept a new definition of identity and welcome freedom. It is integral to the battle for hearts and minds. The subjectivity and fluidity of these cultural pressure points make war difficult, but if the goal is to keep the enemy unbalanced and out of sync, then variable tempo and explicit timing in conflict makes them all the more potent and the results much more emphatic. Conversely, the goal must not be elusive or vague, but ideological and direct. Corn outlines a rational, realistic goal for winning in Iraq and for winning the GWOT: “Exploit systematically all rivalries and dissensions, be they strategic, operational, tactical, doctrinal, organizational, ideological, personal, generational, material, confessional, or ethnic and tribal.”⁴³ Dr. Grant Hammond puts it another way: Use cultural predispositions, genetic heritage, and value sets to influence the enemy.⁴⁴ If Muslims view the conflict as religious, then the West must influence that perception. If Muslims are more loyal to their neighbor than to Osama bin Laden, the West must encourage the constructive loyalties and manipulate ideological and ethnic divisions. Potential applications of 4GW tactics are plentiful and available, but if Western militaries and diplomats ignore the effectiveness of

⁴¹ Liang and Xiangsui, 121.

⁴² Corn, n.p.

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Hammond, n.p.

these tactics, then the West is doomed to failure.

Twenty-five hundred years ago, Sun Tzu said that the one must understand the enemy in order to win a battle.⁴⁵ Cognitively, little separates knowledge and understanding; semantically, the difference is more pronounced. Knowledge comes from perception, discovery, and learning; understanding implies indirect comprehension and significance. Analysis and scrutiny of the enemy's fear, values, purposes, and capabilities over an extended period leads to a greater understanding of the psychological, axiological, intentional, and physical components of the insurgent movement. Manipulation of the environment to affect those pressure points tilts the balance in our favor and creates instability for the enemy. T.E. Lawrence's famous quote from the Seven Pillars of Wisdom, "Maximum disorder was our equilibrium," is the foundation of 4GW.⁴⁶ If coalition forces merely maintain the status quo then the insurgents will have no problem controlling the environment. However, if coalition forces constantly inflict maximum disorder on the insurgent network and affect their pressure points, then the insurgents will be forced to adapt and can not control the environment. This is not to say that the infrastructure or networks need to be annihilated, only that they need to be influenced enough to achieve an effect. Once the desired state of disorder has been achieved and established as the equilibrium, the environment can be manipulated as desired to realize the end state of a better state of peace.

Much discussion has been had regarding the effect of multiculturalism and its link to the Islamist agenda. If the goal of Western governments is to mitigate the influence of Islamist rhetoric on Middle Eastern culture, adjusting the way a 4GW war is fought requires a cataclysmic shift in military ideology. Transformational efforts underway address many of the symptoms of the current Muslim insurgency and some progress has been made to date, but

⁴⁵ Air Command and Staff College, *Strategy and War Coursebook* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2005), 249.

⁴⁶ T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1926), 338.

Corn's indictment that Western military leaders have been slow to adapt to the only type of warfare that has deposed a superpower should be the impetus to begin more than a mechanical shift. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines must become well versed in the ways of cultural warfare. Carrying pocket copies of *The Art of War* is a beginning, but it must begin much earlier than that and must be an overwhelming aspect of boot camp indoctrination. Every military member must understand what Special Operations Forces have practiced for years: To win a people, you must know the people. Transcultural language must become a part of everyday training. Individual patriotism must not be forgotten, nor should the words penned in the American Declaration of Independence: "...that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."⁴⁷ We must not let the torch of liberty be snatched from our hands or allow it to extinguish on its own. The only way to win the war is to fight it on all fronts. Make no mistake: culture is the new battlespace.

⁴⁷ *Declaration of Independence*, 1.

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