



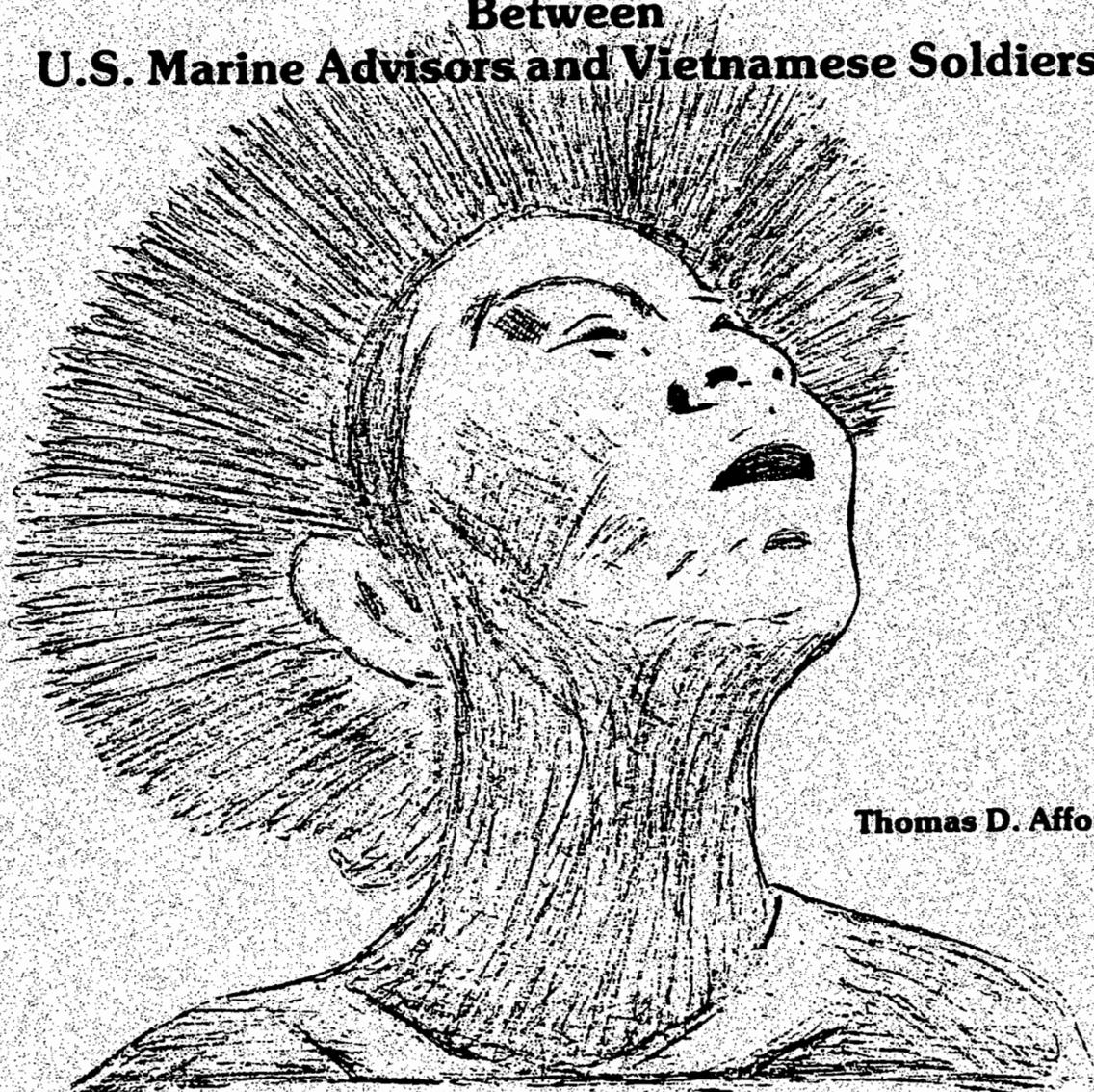
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ANALYSIS OF A CULTURE IN CONFLICT

**Comparative Personality Determinants
Between
U.S. Marine Advisors and Vietnamese Soldiers**



Thomas D. Affourtit



4428 ROCKCREST DRIVE, FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030

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Interaction Research Institute, Inc.
4428 Rockcrest Drive
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Abstract

A study was conducted in Vietnam to measure manifest personality characteristics and determine differential need states between American advisors and Vietnamese advisees. It was hypothesized that the selective perception that breeds intercultural conflict is a consequence of the process toward need satisfaction. Thirty-three U.S. Marine advisors and 125 Vietnamese military men who functioned as advisees participated in the study.

The results revealed significant differences in personality need states between the two groups which produced negative evaluative perceptions and ethnocentric judgments of each group toward the other. Many of the task-related characteristics that distinguished the U.S. Marine advisors from the Vietnamese also deviated significantly between the Marines and the U.S. male norm which served as the standard for percentile scale comparisons. For example, while the Marine advisors would judge the Vietnamese soldier as lacking in leadership and decision-making capability based on a Marine Corps frame of reference, they would also judge the average American male in the same vein.

Concerning socially oriented characteristics, the Vietnamese displayed many of the needs associated with females in the American culture, resulting in confusion over role expectations, negative value judgments, and intercultural conflict between groups allied toward a common goal.

These findings, presented as part of a series of studies, Analysis of a Culture in Conflict, have implications for developing selection and training programs designed to enhance advisor preparedness and increase mission effectiveness.

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Preface

This report is one in a series of cross-cultural studies that explore the conflict in Vietnam between the Americans and the South Vietnamese people. The Americans were sent to Vietnam to support and train their allies. The South Vietnamese were seeking, with U.S. support and expertise, an end to the war with the North and eventual self-determination in an atmosphere of peace and prosperity. The result of that alliance is history. The causes leading to the outcome are numerous and complex.

This series of reports, Analysis of a Culture in Conflict, examines one cause, the social-psychological interaction between two diverse cultures functioning together in a mutual endeavor. Understanding the cultural conflict that existed between these two peoples' attempting to defeat a common enemy and reach a common goal will uncover part of the reason for the eventual failure of the enterprise. The analysis will also lead to a better understanding of the intercultural phenomenon, an understanding that should promote more positive interaction between peoples of the world.

Each report in the series focuses on a different level of intercultural analysis, from the fundamental and most prevailing level of interaction . . . the need system . . . to the levels of values and attitudes, and finally to more superficial and tenuous expression of opinion. The rationale for this approach is to identify the genesis of behavioral conflict from the standpoint of various interconnecting levels of development. In this way it may be possible to prescribe specific methodological anecdotes for intercultural conflict by considering the depth and nature of the primary cause.

Introduction

The purpose of this research project was to investigate the similarities and differences in personality-need systems between U.S. Marine advisors and Vietnamese soldiers. The results of this study will provide insight into the problems associated with advisory and other cross-cultural missions and will generate data for use in overseas training orientation programs designed to enhance advisor preparedness. Further, the results will produce recommendations and help establish viable organizational goals for cross-cultural operations.

The program of research was conducted in Vietnam during 1972 and 1973.

Population

An analysis was made of two cultural subgroups: members of the U.S. Marine Advisory Unit (MAU) who operated with Vietnamese Marine Corps field units during the period of study and a group of Vietnamese military men of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) who functioned as advisees.

The Marine officers surveyed served as advisors to the Vietnamese Marine Corps during the closing phase of American involvement in the Vietnam conflict. Their period of duty was significant, since they participated in the conflict during the Easter Invasion of 1972 and witnessed what was essentially a test of the Vietnamization program prior to United States disengagement from the war.

All of the 33 Marine participants were career oriented and were members of the Marine Corps for at least 4 years, 6 months, but not more than 23 years, 5 months. The average time in service for the Marines was 12 years, 10 months at the time of data collection (March 1973). Half of the

Marines who responded held the rank of major, while 44% were captains. Two lieutenant colonels also participated in the study.

As shown in Table 1, the average age of the Marine advisors was 33.4 years. And, their educational level ranged from 12 years to more than 18 years of formal schooling with a mean of 16.2 years. Only two of the advisors did not hold college degrees. Concerning marital and family status, 85.3% of the advisors were married and only seven had no children.

Most of the Marines were on their second tour in Vietnam, while two were on their third tour. One advisor had no prior experience in country. Only four of the Marines indicated

Table 1
U.S. Marine Advisor and RVNAF
Population Characteristics

Category	Marine Advisors (N=33)	RVNAF (N=125)
<u>Age:</u>		
Range	26-42 yrs	18-29 yrs
Average	33.4 yrs	21.5 yrs
<u>Education:</u>		
Range	12-18+ yrs	6-15 yrs
Average	16.2 yrs	10.6 yrs
<u>Marital Status:</u>		
Now Married	85.3%	16.8%
Never Married	11.8%	83.2%
Widowed	-	-
Divorced	2.9%	-

they did not directly volunteer for their present tour of duty in Vietnam. The majority (88%) were volunteers for combat duty.

Although most of the Marine advisors were volunteers, the number of volunteers far exceeded the demand for available billets during this period. Therefore, the Marines in this study represent a highly select group who were chosen on the basis of superior fitness reports, commendable prior experience in Vietnam, significant accomplishments as career military officers, and other special skills. Generally, the group was comprised of what the Marine Corps considers its outstanding category of officers.

With regard to cross-cultural or advisory training, twelve of the advisors attended the 6-week MATA course at Fort Bragg, five participated in the 16-week Marine Advisor Course at Quantico Marine Base, and one went to the Navy DLICWB (language) course conducted at the Navy Post Graduate School in Monterey, California. Almost half of the Marines (47.1%) had no special training for their assignments.

The Vietnamese sample was comprised of 125 RVNAF enlisted men. While this group does not directly represent Vietnamese Marine Corps counterparts, their use as a comparison group is justified on the ground of the consistency of need structure that exists within the Vietnamese culture due to a heritage of traditional behavior. Variation of personality characteristics within the Vietnamese culture is not as great as with Americans (Affourtit, 1975).

Moreover, the RVNAF sample represents a group of Vietnamese military men who functioned as communication advisees or counterparts to American advisors located throughout Vietnam. Like the Marine advisors, the RVNAF sample represents a select group of men, assigned to their particular duty on the basis of superior ability, special aptitude,

and years of commendable service to the government of South Vietnam.

All of the Vietnamese troops looked forward to a career in the military, not necessarily by choice, however. Release from active service in the RVNAF was contingent upon the severity of wounds or injuries incurred in combat. Thirty-two percent of the RVNAF sample had not yet considered future plans, but 40% said they would remain in the communications field after military service. Seventeen percent were oriented toward private business or returning to farms.

Of the 125 Vietnamese participants (110 ARVN, 15 VNN), 79% were sergeants (E-5 equivalent), 1% were corporals (E-4), and 20% were PFC's (E-2). At least 15 were officer candidates. The average time in service for the Vietnamese sample was 2.7 years with a range of from 3 months to 5 years.

The RVNAF sample was somewhat younger than the Marines with an average age of 21.5 years as shown in Table 1. The Vietnamese also had considerably less formal education than their Marine counterparts, their mean educational level being only 10.6 years. Most of the RVNAF sample were unmarried (83.2%), a condition that was not uncommon in Vietnam for this age group.

Finally, religious backgrounds between the Vietnamese and Marines were quite divergent. Sixty-one percent and 28.5% of the Vietnamese claimed Buddhist or Catholic religious preference respectively, while 54.3% and 37.1% of the Marines were of Protestant and Catholic bent respectively. Religious influence, especially among traditional societies, has a strong influence on personality development.

Theoretical Foundation

The underlying framework of this study is based on the need-press theory of Murray (1938, 1948), expanded to include

the theory of perception in transactional-functional psychology (Ames, 1951; Cantril, 1947, 1957; Ittelson & Kutash, 1961; Kilpatrick, 1961). A synthesis of these two theories characterizes man as perceiving his environment on the basis of a set of standards or frame of reference that is acquired through cultural conditioning and represented by an expression of fundamental needs, called personality determinants. The perceptual processes (the process by which man experiences the world, both rationally and emotionally) are mediated by internal need states and are instrumental in man's adaptation to his environment. The primary tenet of this theory is that the selectivity in perception that breeds cultural conflict is a consequence of the process toward need satisfaction.

Personality is the description of man's behavior as he attempts to satisfy his acquired needs (or reinforce need corollaries, such as values, attitudes, and opinions). An individual within any society may be described by a behavioral pattern that deviates from or is similar to the norms established by that society or group. For example, on a relatively objective level (in one society), an individual may be perceived as either an underachiever or highly achievement oriented, as expressing strong leadership behavior or deficient in leadership. Such judgments are based on the direction and the degree to which the individual deviates from the expected or average standards of the society for achievement and leadership behavior. Again, the value placed on an individual's behavior . . . whether good or bad, positive or negative . . . is determined by the cultural frame of reference or set of standards of the particular group with which the individual identifies. Such value judgments represent an ethnocentric view of the world.

On a more subjective level, an individual may perceive himself and others on the basis of his own personal frame of reference. That is, he may see his own behavior or the

behavior of others as being similar to or deviant from his particular standards. This is the egocentric view of society.

Man tends to establish and maintain his own and his reference group's standards by evaluating others in relation to these accepted norms. The problems of stereotyping and cultural bias occur when individual variations among people are not considered and when evaluative interpretation is assigned to descriptive differences.

Since Americans, as well as Vietnamese, Turks, Russians, etc., view themselves as behaving appropriately and consider their cultural norms as being correct, there is a universal tendency to interpret deviations from individual or national standards in a negative vein. The evaluative interpretation of cultural differences . . . the assumption that the norms of one's group are appropriate and right for all groups . . . creates cultural conflict. It is this evaluative component of man's perceptual processes, the value placed on descriptive differences, that results in a distortion of reality, prejudice, ethnocentrism, and xenophobia -- not the fact that differences exist.

Opposed to the ethnocentric perspective is the concept of cultural relativism, i.e., the traits or characteristics considered negative or positive are determined by referent groups' cultural or societal values. This notion implies understanding and acceptance of descriptive cultural differences. The concept of cultural relativism provides a basis for understanding behavior when two divergent groups interact. This understanding can be used as a common ground upon which intercultural or cross-cultural standards are accepted by all groups as the most amenable for all concerned. Cultural relativism, therefore, is the prerequisite for growth toward a nonrelativistic value system. In theory, this process -- the analysis and synthesis of values -- may

be carried to its logical conclusion: the establishment of a common set of rules which enables human beings to function in cooperation and harmony.

Methodology

The Measurement and Analysis of Need Systems

Murray (1938, 1948) describes personality as a "process" toward the satisfaction of a goal or desire. Goals are defined as needs developed within the organism through learning and biological functions. The presence of these needs motivates the individual toward their satisfaction and thus are behavior-oriented. Normally, people behave in the way that best satisfies their needs. For example, in the U.S. an individual may be motivated toward a career in medicine if, among other factors, he has strong needs for achievement, nurturance, and perhaps recognition.

Needs may be strong or weak, positive or negative. Strong negative needs, or needs not to do something, are satisfied through behavior motivated away from situations associated with the negative need; the individual tends to move in the opposite direction.

People are "characterized" by their behavior that is directed toward the satisfaction of their strongest needs, or by their lack of behavior toward relatively unimportant needs. For example, an individual may be characterized as being interested in accomplishing something of great significance (high achievement need), but may not be considered very friendly or very social (low affiliation need). Moreover, an individual may be highly motivated by more than one strong need and his behavior may be in the service of two or more needs at the same time. In this case, characterization is more complex.

Some needs may conflict with or be blocked by the external environment, causing frustration. Moreover, since multiple needs may be gratified by a single course of action, an individual could develop appropriate strategies and plans toward overall need satisfaction in an effort to avoid frustration.

Generally, personality or need strength is stable and consistent, involving a continuous process of generation and reduction of need tension. However, some needs may become less important with constant satisfaction or with the development in strength of other needs. When this happens, there may be a significant change in personality which is more likely to occur only at certain stages in one's lifetime.

After many years of empirical research on need systems, Murray produced a list of manifest needs generally referred to as personality variables. The operational description of these need systems (considered to be universal or pancultural) lead to the development of various techniques of measurement.

The Personality Assessment Technique

The Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) was the assessment technique used to measure the personality characteristics of the Vietnamese and Marine sample populations. The EPPS was standardized on U.S. sample populations (Edwards, 1959) and applied cross culturally and evaluated for social desirability of response throughout the world (Abate & Berrien, 1967; Arkoff, 1959; Berrien, 1966, 1968; Berrien & Arkoff, 1967; Bhatnagar, 1969; Cowen & Frankel, 1964; Cruse, 1965; Edwards, 1953; Fenz & Arkoff, 1962; Fujita, 1957; Ghei, 1963, 1966a, 1966b; Gordon, 1968; Iwawaki & Cowen, 1964; Johnson, 1969; Kenny, 1956; Kikuchi & Gordon, 1966, 1970; Lovaas, 1959; Singh, Huang, & Thompson, 1962; Tarwater, 1966).

The EPPS is designed to provide a quick and convenient measure of 15 relatively independent normal personality variables. The items in the EPPS and the personality variables they purport to measure have their origin in Murray's list of manifest needs. The EPPS measures the relative importance of those needs or characteristics that presumably direct the individual's actions (Edwards, 1959). Table 2 presents a description of the manifest needs measured by the EPPS.

Interpretation of Results

EPPS results yield a personality profile for an individual or for a group of individuals. The profiles are interpreted in terms of relative need strengths -- that is, the strength of a characteristic is relative to the strength or weakness of every other characteristic in the profile. Therefore, a high score on one characteristic would necessarily lower the possibility of high scores on other characteristics and vice versa.

The personality profile produced by the EPPS provides a picture of relative need strengths that ultimately guide the behavior of the individual or group. Basic needs, as measured by the EPPS, provide a foundation for producing a comprehensive analysis of cultural similarities and differences. The personality profiles offer a fundamental set of variables that are then used as an analytical framework for cross-cultural comparison.

Since quantitative measures alone have little meaning unless compared with a standard, EPPS scores of the sample populations were interpreted in terms of significant mean differences between groups and converted to percentiles based on the national census-representative sample of U.S. male adults. This approach was taken since judgments or characterizations of others are usually made according to one's

Table 2
Description of EPPS Variables

Variable	Description
Achievement (n Ach)	To accomplish something very difficult or very significant. To do one's best. To excel.
Order (n Ord)	To have regular times and ways for doing things. To put things in order. To schedule.
Endurance (n End)	To complete anything undertaken. To avoid interruption. Singleness of purpose.
Dominance (n Dom)	To persuade and influence others. To supervise. To be regarded as a leader.
Deference (n Def)	To let others make decisions. To conform to what is expected. To yield eagerly to the influence of another. To praise or admire a superior.
Autonomy (n Aut)	To be free to act according to impulse. To resist coercion and restriction. To be independent of others in making decisions. To avoid responsibilities.
Affiliation (n Aff)	To remain loyal to friends. To participate in friendly groups. To associate, socialize.
Intrareception (n Int)	To analyze one's own motives and feelings. To observe and understand the feelings of others. To judge others by why they do things rather than by what they do.
Aggression (n Agg)	To overcome opposition forcefully. To criticize and confront others. To revenge an injury.
Succorance (n Suc)	To receive help and affection from others. To have others be sympathetic and understanding. To be indulged, supported, consoled.
Abasement (n Aba)	To become resigned to fate. To feel guilty for wrongdoing. To accept blame. To admit inferiority or defeat. To surrender.
Nurturance (n Nur)	To be sympathetic, compassionate, forgiving. To help those in trouble. To support, console, protect others.
Change (n Chg)	To do new and different things. To travel and meet people. To experience novelty.
Heterosexuality (n Het)	To be interested in the opposite sex. To form and further an erotic relationship. To be personally attractive.
Exhibition (n Exh)	To make an impression. To be noticed. To be the center of attention. To be personally superior.

established norm or frame of reference. Thus, Vietnamese and U.S. Marine group profiles are described in terms of the degree to which they deviate from or are similar to the average U.S. male and each other.

The method of analyzing the interactional nature of divergent need systems, therefore, involves the perception of one group from the frame of reference of the other group. This method, called transactional analysis, provides an understanding of reality on a purely subjective level . . . the level at which people perceive and interact with each other in accordance with their own needs and purposes.

Since the intent of this study is to identify some of the misperceptions and problems that occur when two cultures interact, the transactional approach is appropriate. While objective study of cross-cultural phenomena is important for the understanding of social interaction within a particular culture, the subjective approach to studying a very subjective world leads to more realistic representation of actual experience.

Attempts at cross-cultural understanding, therefore, must take into account the inherent differences that exist between individual and group standards of behavior. It is believed that this kind of analysis . . . examination of the behavioral standards that represent each group's frame of reference and by which each group evaluates the other . . . will lead to improved cross-cultural understanding and decreased negative evaluation, a condition that will promote effective interaction.

Results

The Marine Corps, as an organizational system, represents a subculture with a set of standards by which Marines evaluate the behavior of themselves and others. Successful officers in the Marine Corps represent a more refined set of accepted and

required behavioral standards by which they are judged and rewarded through promotion and retention.

Similarly, RVNAF soldiers represent a subgroup within their culture that may have developed specific standards. The analysis that follows will describe the perceptual impact these two groups had on each other while working toward a common goal.

Figures 1 and 2 on pages 13 and 14 respectively show the EPPS personality profiles of the U.S. Marine advisor and RVNAF sample populations in percentile form. These profiles are based on percentile scores for each of the 15 personality characteristics described in Table 2 (page 10) and represent comparisons with U.S. male norms. Percentile comparisons provide a measure of the degree of similarity and difference in need systems that exists between the sample populations as well as the average American male. The 50th percentile represents the average American.¹

Table 3 (page 15) lists the mean scores and standard deviations for each of the 15 EPPS variables for the sample groups. Using this table, it is possible to compare group scores and determine which personality variables are divergent enough to be beyond chance variation and, therefore, to be considered culture or subculture specific.

Table 4 (page 16) presents a more graphic mean score comparison of the sample groups in terms of the personality characteristics that are significantly associated with each pair. Personality variables that are significantly associated (higher mean score) with one group when compared with another

¹The standard American male norm established for the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Edwards, 1959) was used as a general U.S. comparison group. This norm is reported as representative of adult household heads in urban and rural areas of the United States.

Table 3

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations
of Personality Variables for U.S. Male,
U.S. Marine, and Vietnamese Sample Populations

Personality Variable	U.S. Males (N=4031)		U.S. Marines (N=33)		RVNAF (N=125)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Ach	14.79	4.14	**19.21**	3.47	**15.99	3.52
Ord	14.69**	4.87	10.55	4.17	**19.39**	3.49
End	16.97	4.90	15.39	3.72	**18.41**	4.14
Dom	14.50	5.27	**21.39**	3.89	13.29	4.22
Def	**14.19**	3.91	10.27	2.83	12.89**	3.36
Aut	**14.02	4.38	13.97	3.39	11.82	4.32
Aff	**14.51	4.32	**13.79	3.99	10.88	3.55
Agg	*13.06	4.60	**15.15*	3.88	12.33	4.09
Int	14.18	4.42	13.97	4.93	14.81	3.99
Nur	15.67**	4.97	10.09	4.81	15.36**	3.58
Suc	10.78*	4.71	8.88	4.20	**13.51**	4.00
Aba	14.59**	5.13	9.21	5.79	*15.65**	3.83
Het	11.21	7.70	**18.48**	5.16	10.49	6.00
Exh	**12.75	3.99	**13.73	3.82	10.75	4.08
Chg	13.87	4.76	15.91*	3.66	14.43	3.99

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

Asterisks (*) to the left and right of the U.S. male mean scores indicate a mean significantly larger than the corresponding mean for the RVNAF and U.S. Marine groups respectively.

Asterisks (*) to the left and right of the U.S. Marine mean scores indicate a mean significantly larger than the corresponding mean for the RVNAF and U.S. male groups respectively.

Asterisks (*) to the left and right of the RVNAF mean scores indicate a mean significantly larger than the corresponding mean for the U.S. male and U.S. Marine groups respectively.

Table 4

Comparison of Personality Variables
Associated with Vietnamese
and American Groups

U.S. Male	Neutral	U.S. Marine	U.S. Male	Neutral	RVNAF	U.S. Marine	Neutral	RVNAF
Nur	Exh	Dom	Aff	Int	Ord	Dom	Aut	Ord
Aba	Aut	Het	Aut	Dom	Suc	Het	Int	Aba
Def	Aff	Ach	Exh	Nur	Ach	Ach	Chg	Suc
Ord	Int	Agg	Def	Chg	End	Aff		Nur
Suc	End	Chg	Agg	Het	Aba	Agg		Def
						Exh		End

are listed under each respective group in rank order, according to the strength of association. In addition, those characteristics that were not found to be culture or sub-culture specific or that did not represent a significant difference between groups are listed under the Neutral column.

Percentile and mean score comparisons provide a definitive picture of characteristic differences between the groups under study. These differences represent a subjective description or perceptual reality for each group and provide for an interpretation of how each cultural group will perceive the other during an encounter.

U.S. Marine Advisors vs. U.S. Males

Beginning with the need for Achievement, the Marine officer group reaches the 87th percentile on the U.S. standard,

indicating a very strong desire to excel or to accomplish significance in life (+nAch). This factor, combined with an exceptionally strong drive to control and influence others (+nDom) and a relatively low deference level (-nDef), reveals a group of men highly disposed toward top-level leadership and management positions. Only 13% of the entire American male norm scored higher on Achievement and only 9% scored higher on Dominance than these Marine officers. Moreover, when viewed in light of the above characteristics, the very strong motivation for interpersonal challenge and confrontation (+nAgg) exhibited by the Marines signifies their highly competitive nature.

Although these officers will display a high degree of initiative in making important decisions (+nAch, +nDom), they may be somewhat impulsive compared with the average U.S. male, as indicated by a relatively low need for Order (-nOrd) -- a characteristic related to the planning of events.

A strong need for variety and adventure (+nChg) combined with an average desire for Autonomy (nAut) provides for an easy adjustment to military life for these career-oriented officers. An average need for recognition and attention (nExh) also predicts military career motivation and satisfaction.

Socially, this group of Marines is not significantly more or less oriented toward Affiliation (nAff) than the average American male. In addition, they are about average with regard to Intraception (nInt), a characteristic considered most important for effective intercultural relations (Affourtit, 1974). Moreover, the Marines are not disposed toward sympathetic affection for others (-nNur) -- the lowest drive for the Marines. However, they are only slightly less inclined than the average American male toward being indulged in this manner (-nSuc).

A negative or defeatist attitude is definitely not the

Marines' normal disposition, as indicated by their exceptionally low abasement score (-nAba). Furthermore, the advisors may tend to be somewhat reluctant to yield to the demands of higher authority (-nDef), a fact that may cause conflict in the hierarchy of military life.

Finally, the strong drive expressed for heterosexual activity (+nHet) by the Marines could be attributed to the youth of the sample population combined with a long separation from wives and girlfriends. Although, there is usually a positive correlation between the need for sexual attraction (+nHet) and the need for personal superiority (+nDom) on the part of males in the U.S. culture -- the "macho" image.

Overall, the Marines display a strong character pattern that is very descriptive of career Marine officers. The fact that this group chose a career in the Marine Corps and has been successful in that endeavor gives validity to the EPPS as a measure of basic need systems. Additional verification of the authenticity of this profile comes from the results of Ogilvie (1967a, 1967b, 1968, 1974), whose studies of risk takers and danger seekers (competitive skydivers, race car drivers, and aerobatic pilots) using the same technique, revealed profiles similar to these highly select career Marine officers.

RVNAF vs. U.S. Males

Again, American males as well as American females possess certain assumptions and expectations about male roles that cause them to make evaluative judgments about male behavior in other societies. The basis of these judgments is their acceptance of the American male role in their own culture as appropriate for all males. Marines, as military men, also possess certain expectations about the role of military men anywhere. Obvious variations in male behavior in other cul-

tures, therefore, may be considered at the least unusual or distasteful, or, in the extreme, deviant to a pathological degree.

According to the average American frame of reference, the RVNAF men would be considered highly motivated toward accomplishment and interested in doing their best in whatever endeavor they undertake (+nAch). The Vietnamese in this group are also highly structure-oriented; that is, a lifestyle of proper order and balance is quite important, considering the magnitude of Order needs displayed (+nOrd). Furthermore, once a task or goal is established, the RVNAF group would be quite persistent and highly motivated toward its singular completion (+nEnd). Considering these characteristics, deviation from an established plan of action would be difficult for the RVNAF troops -- an absence of flexibility.

As Table 3 reveals, the RVNAF group is not significantly different from the average American male with regard to the need to supervise, make decisions, and influence others (nDom). However, the Vietnamese are less inclined to respond to the directions of others (-nDef). This Dominance-Deference ratio is an essential dilemma within the Vietnamese male character structure and a cause for contradictory and confusing statements about them.

Not only would this group of Vietnamese males be viewed as less assertive in taking charge of a situation and somewhat unresponsive to the commands of others (nDom, -nDef), but they would also not be considered as independent as U.S. males with regard to making decisions (-nAut). Thus, the RVNAF may be judged as somewhat less impulsive than the average American male, as well as hesitant, and rather dependent upon group reinforcement. Decisions for this group of Vietnamese are made only after sufficient reflection, consultation with all involved (to insure that no one concerned is offended or loses "face"), and very careful planning (+nOrd, -nAut).

In light of the developments leading to the collapse and ultimate defeat of the armies of South Vietnam, precipitated by the reluctance of the U.S. to support the South Vietnamese military on the grounds of alleged lack of leadership under fire, it is important for historical analysts to emphasize the personality characteristics associated with Vietnamese leadership and decision making. Although motivation for leadership is a function of the total character, certain traits or needs are primarily associated with leading others and making decisions, especially in a crisis. The need to take command (Dominance), as well as responsiveness to authority (Deference), individual initiative (Autonomy), and, depending on the situation, both flexibility (Order) and tenacity (Endurance), all play significant parts in predicting success and analyzing events.

For this sample of RVNAF men and for the Vietnamese as a whole, the integrity of the individual is related to a collective continuity. The concept of strong family responsibility, instilled early in Vietnamese development, fosters a strong reliance on the group in the decision-making process. Further, group dominance, as opposed to individual dominance, is instrumental for survival in the Vietnamese culture as a defense against loss of "face." Responsibility for any action is always diffused throughout the group.²

²Diffusion or avoidance of responsibility can be measured in other Asian cultures also. Niyekawa (1968) found an extreme sensitivity to individual responsibility among the Japanese. Semantic analysis of Japanese-to-American and American-to-Japanese translations revealed that the quality of "personal non-responsibility and avoidance of self-blame" was clearly present in Japanese statements; and this quality disappeared when translations to English were made. The same quality was apparent in the Japanese translation of English passages in which no such meaning was originally evident or intended.

Diffusion of responsibility among U.S. subjects under experimental conditions has been extensively studied over

Predictably then, the Vietnamese in general and the RVNAF sample in particular are prone to group pressure, and an action instituted in any form will most likely result in a contagious response or, in extreme instances, a fanatic or panic reaction. Such a reaction is certainly not peculiar to any one culture. There are many universal examples of panic in the face of a perceived threat to survival, including the panic of acquisition displayed in the U.S. during relatively minor threats of oil and gasoline shortages, as well as depletion of other commodities. The point to be made here is that the Vietnamese and perhaps Asians in general are relatively more prone to contagious group reaction than the average American, the difference being a matter of degree rather than kind.

Notwithstanding the similarities between cultures that may be measured by degree, the differences in leadership style that exist between the Vietnamese and Americans go deep to the roots of cultural needs. These differences are the culmination of hundreds of years of cultural development, and, therefore, are not subject to easy change.

With regard to the more socially oriented needs, the RVNAF group appears considerably less inclined toward friendly associations than the average American male, and they are also less likely to maintain loyalty to associated or social groups (-nAff). Deep relationships are usually formed only with the family and extended family unit. Outsiders, those not included within the family situation, have their own strong family ties that generate the possibility of conflict, should the interests of both families collide.

the past decade by Milgram (1974) and others. The results of many studies revealed a common reluctance to become involved in helping others and a willingness of the majority to acquiesce or be instrumental in causing severe pain and even death to others, so long as a higher authority would be held responsible for the action committed.

Insofar as an interest in the feelings, needs, and motives of themselves and others is concerned, the RVNAF group shows a similar drive in this direction (nInt) when compared to the average American. In addition, the RVNAF is on a par with American men regarding needs for opposition and confrontation with perceived adversaries (nAgg).

Although the need to overcome opposition and to revenge an injury is not different between the RVNAF group and the American male standard, the expressive direction or type of reaction may vary considerably. For example, it is more acceptable in U.S. society to speak out, or speak one's mind on occasion to "let off steam." A feisty manner may even be applauded by Americans in some quarters. In Vietnam, however, outward display of interpersonal hostility is severely sanctioned. Only in the extreme, when the aggressive need (which is normally repressed and turned inward) reaches its high threshold boiling point, will confrontation occur.

Failure to release pent-up tension regularly, in the presence of a drive to do so, results in repressed hostility that, when released, appears inappropriately excessive. Cultural endorsement of this type of behavioral response may account for the Vietnamese (Asian) overreaction to some situations and their excessively cruel treatment (by U.S. standards) of perceived enemies.

The RVNAF group exhibits about the same amount of sympathy and compassion for others as the average U.S. male (nNur). On the other hand, the Vietnamese possess an exceptionally stronger need for receiving support, sympathy, and affection from others compared with what is expected of the American male (+nSuc). Furthermore, the Vietnamese are relatively more inclined than American males to display self-effacing, inferior, or defeatist behavior (+nAba).

Finally, compared to the American male standard, RVNAF troops appear no more interested in heterosexual activities

(nHet), are similarly inclined toward experiencing novelty and travel (nChg), but are less motivated toward making impressions or being the center of attention (-nExh).

U.S. Marine Advisors vs. RVNAF

Both the RVNAF and U.S. Marine advisor groups represent strong characterological differences when compared to the American male standard. With the U.S. male norm as a background, descriptions will be presented in terms of how these two groups perceive and interact with each other through transactional analysis of profile differentials.

Tables 2 and 3 reveal that the Marine advisor and the RVNAF exhibit significant character differences on 13 of the 15 personality variables measured. These differences, which exist at a deeply rooted level, represent the potential for a considerable personality clash between two groups functioning in a cooperative venture toward the same goal. In light of the magnitude of these differences, the opportunity for conflict is strong.

Task-Oriented Needs

In the area of Achievement orientation, the Marine advisors would probably perceive the RVNAF group as relatively unmotivated or possibly lazy based on Marine Corps standards, even though the RVNAF group is significantly more motivated toward achievement than the average American male. The average American male would also be considered somewhat lacking in this drive by this Marine group.

The RVNAF, on the other hand, would probably view the Marines as overly interested in excelling and perhaps too pushy. Although the Vietnamese may admire the Marines' strong Achievement orientation, in light of their own inclination in this area, the conflict occurs when a positive attribute becomes overbearing or difficult to live up to.

The Marine advisors' exceptional desire to command, control, and influence others is their strongest individual drive. Further, the Dominance variable represents the second largest difference between the Marines and the RVNAF group. As a result, the Marines would perceive the RVNAF as unassertive or very weak in the area of personal leadership. Again, the Marines would also have the same opinion of the average American male.

The Vietnamese, therefore, may react defensively toward their Marine counterparts. They may interpret the advisors' dominant behavior as a desire to usurp their authority or to assume command of their units. In an effort to maintain control of his unit, an RVNAF commander may resist advice or block any U.S. influence over Vietnamese troops. The Marines, on the other hand, may feel pressure to submerge or inhibit expression of the strongest drive in their character structure, the manifestation of which has been positively reinforced during their military careers. This internal conflict -- a general condition of advisory teams -- could surface as general discontent or confrontation between allies.

The dilemma that the RVNAF faces with regard to this reluctance to take individual control of a situation and, at the same time, resist control by others (signified by a low Deference score), is compounded when they are involved with a Dominance-oriented counterpart who is also somewhat unwilling to take direction from others. Moreover, Marines would be especially reluctant to respond to an ally whose leadership ability is doubtful according to U.S. Marine Corps standards. The situation could, in the extreme, lead to an evaluative perception of the Vietnamese as resistant and stubborn insofar as accepting and responding to advice is concerned -- a not uncommon judgment of counterparts by advisory teams.

Adding to the problem of advice and consent in advisory functions is the differential that exists between the two groups on needs for Order and Endurance, and to some degree, Autonomy. The Vietnamese place greater emphasis on planning and completion of individual tasks, and exercise more caution in and less inclination toward deviating from established procedures; while Marines display more individual initiative, they are less dependent on sequence or tradition, and possess a desire to address many issues at the same time. Value judgments by both groups are obvious: compulsive, inflexible, hesitant, and weak commitment on the one hand, impulsive and reckless on the other.

The personality variables described above can be considered functional or task-oriented characteristics. An analysis of the perceptual and potential evaluative interpretation that can be assigned to differences on these characteristics reveals some rather severe personality conflicts that may exist when these two groups interact in a task-oriented venture.

Social Needs

The next cluster of variables to be considered emphasizes more socially oriented characteristics. Although these variables are not directly related to mission or task activities, they are important in evoking a spirit of cooperation and comradeship based on understanding and acceptance between the groups. In the negative sense, such needs may lead to an attitude of contempt or rejection, further amplifying task-oriented personality difficulties.

Considering the needs for Affiliation, Heterosexuality, and Exhibition, the Marines would probably consider themselves more social and outgoing than their Vietnamese counterparts. They would view the RVNAF as somewhat withdrawn socially and rather reticent toward interpersonal and

heterosexual interests. The Marines would probably judge the Vietnamese group as difficult to know personally and affectively shy.

The RVNAF would perceive Marines as placing too much emphasis on social activities and as being too demonstrative and overly interested in making an impression or drawing attention to themselves. In addition, the RVNAF may consider the Marine advisors' attitude and display toward heterosexual activities as somewhat crude and, in some instances, even barbaric for their own taste.

While the RVNAF may perceive the Marine advisors as gregarious types, they would enigmatically judge the same group of men as only critical and argumentative, due to the Marines high Aggression tendency. The above condition would be highly confusing to the Vietnamese and represent a cultural conflict often misunderstood -- since to be friendly in Asian cultures means to be polite and, especially, non-argumentative and non-aggressive toward friends. The American, therefore, may be considered somewhat inscrutable by their counterparts in other cultures.

Since Intraception needs are similar, the RVNAF group would probably be perceived by the Marines as interested in understanding their American counterparts and perhaps somewhat tolerant of differences. The Vietnamese, in turn, would appreciate the Marines' interest in them and their culture which may represent much more concern than either the French or other Americans had displayed over the years.

Some very strong differences exist between the Marines and the RVNAF with respect to needs to receive and provide emotional support and affection (Succorance, Nurturance). Because of the high value placed on "proper" male behavior in the U.S. culture, the Marines may be negatively disposed toward the Vietnamese men's overt display of affection and

sympathy and their strong need for emotional support. Although the advisors may view the Vietnamese expression of softness, sensitivity, and kindness toward others with mixed emotions, they would probably perceive the RVNAF's desire for emotional support as a patent weakness.

The Marines may be even less tolerant toward the Vietnamese pessimistic, self-effacing, and remorseful attitudes and their resignation to fate, as the disparity between the two groups on Abasement would reveal. This comparative attitude of inferiority expressed by the RVNAF would be considered a severe handicap for a military man to possess.

Since a relatively strong expression of Nurturance, Succorance, and Abasement is associated with women in the American culture, Americans of either sex may consider them to be profound weaknesses when displayed by males.³ It may be difficult then for the Marine officers to accept and respect men who behave in a manner which is generally alien to their own culture, especially in a military context. Since many Americans have strong negative attitudes toward males displaying traits considered inherently feminine, most would view this RVNAF group with contempt.

Conversely, the RVNAF troops would find the Marines' friendly, outgoing, gregarious behavior further contradicted

³The difference between the American male and female norm, based on the original national census-representative sample, with regard to Nurturance, Succorance, and Abasement is significant at the .001 level (Edwards, 1959). A recent review of research using the EPPS revealed that norms and sex differences remained substantially consistent (Fitzgerald & Pasework, 1971). These differences are probably due to developmental or learned patterns of behavior or role emphasis rather than inherent physiological determinants. In the Vietnamese culture, the expression of these characteristics by males is considered appropriate, acceptable, and normal. No negative value judgments are placed on these traits when displayed by Vietnamese males. The problem occurs when an American interprets behavior specifically associated with females in their own culture as sexual deviancy when displayed by males of another culture.

by their apparent lack of feeling and compassion toward others, their rejection of any indulgence from others, and their projection of blame for misadventures. In a culture that views self-blame as a polite necessity, the Marines may appear somewhat defensive or at least discourteous. At the same time, however, for a people so long immersed in war, the Vietnamese may have admired the Marines' abject pragmatism and lack of pessimism regarding life in general, and the defeat of the enemy in particular.

Conclusion

The preceding descriptions represent a relatively static analysis of how these two groups may interact and perceive one another. On these grounds, it is possible to predict behavior and intervene with appropriate orientation or training programs in an effort to avoid a potential confrontation.

There are other variables to consider also: the situation, the level and nature of interaction, and the immediate and long-range goals of involvement. The Vietnamese long and significant association with Americans may have promoted more tolerance and understanding on their part. Individual American involvement was relatively short, perhaps based on stereotypical, preconceived impressions, and crowded with critical, life-threatening events. The fact that the Vietnamese needed U.S. assets and both needed a victory over a common enemy may have dissolved any conflict in personality. Or, this condition may have intensified the differences and made cooperation and understanding even more difficult. These conditions, as well as other variables, will be covered in further reports in this series, Analysis of a Culture in Conflict.

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