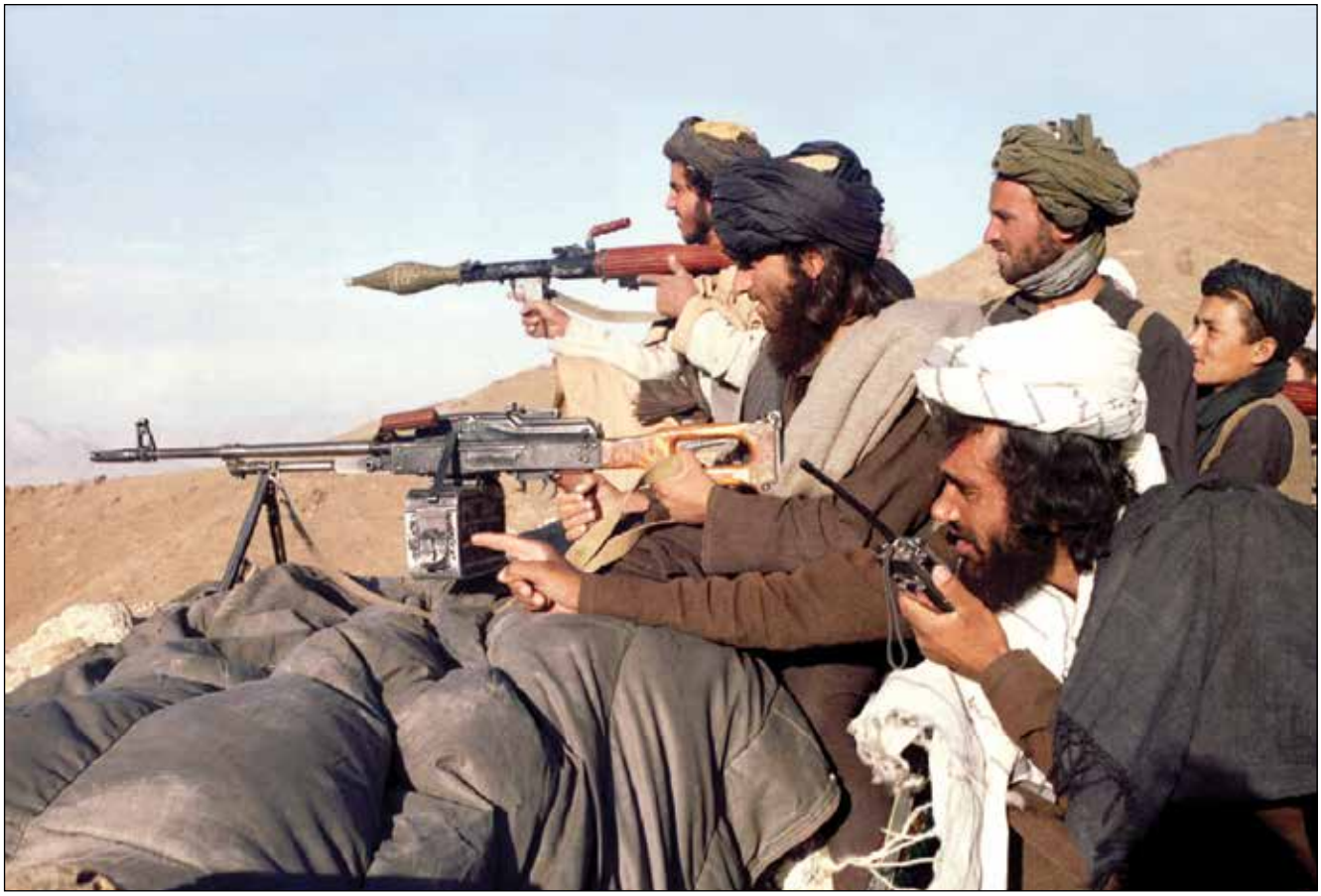

Reuters RTXFO1J by STR New

Fighters of the Islamic Taliban militia, 11 October 1995.

The Grand Strategic and Strategic Roles of Armed Non-state Actors (ANSAs)

by James W. Moore

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Introduction

In an article previously published in the C*anadian Military Journal*,[2] I introduced the concept of the Armed Non-state Actor (ANSA), defined as *an autonomously operating planned group that has the capacity to use violence to achieve political ends*. In the article that follows, I will explore the strategic roles of ANSAs in the context of violent intergroup conflict, beginning with a statement of the central problem. Simply put, we, in the Canadian national security community, have an overly narrow view of the strategic roles of ANSAs. The picture we typically paint of these non-state adversaries—as found in Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) doctrine on irregular warfare and counterinsurgency (COIN)[3]—looks something like what now follows.[4] The lodestone for an ANSA is political power. At a minimum, an ANSA is committed to seizing political power from the established authorities; in the extreme, it seeks to transform society's fundamental political, economic, and social institutions and relationships in line with its (often Utopian) vision of the world. The ANSA sees 'the people' as the centre of gravity in its drive for power, and sees itself as the leading element in their struggle for survival. It tries to win, over the course of a protracted politico-military campaign, the *acquiescence* if not the *allegiance of* the local populace. The path to power, as far as the ANSA is concerned, does not lie in peaceful engagement with its opponents. Rather, it stands in implacable, violent opposition to the peaceful resolution of social conflict; its reliance upon violence, subversion, and intimidation only confirms its true, destructive intentions. Granted, at some point in its drive for power, the ANSA may agree to participate in a formal peace process. However, this is, at best, a tactical manoeuvre. The ANSA publicly proclaims its fidelity to the peaceful settlement of armed conflict, all the while working behind the scenes—often using carefully calibrated and deniable violent activity—to undermine the peace process and weaken

its enemies. The picture of an ANSA that emerges from CAF doctrine, then, is that of a violent, irreconcilable foe against whom the CAF must seize every opportunity "to pre-empt, dislocate and disrupt."[5]

This is very much a one-sided image of ANSAs. That, however, does not make it wholly inaccurate. Many ANSAs or elements therein are indeed ruthless, brutal actors who cannot be reconciled on any reasonable terms. Nevertheless, there are other roles open to ANSAs in the context of violent intergroup conflict. That is the purpose of this article: to develop an expanded typology of the roles ANSAs may enact at the grand strategic and strategic levels. First, we distinguish three distinct roles at the grand strategic level, those of *transformer*, *captor*, and *stakeholder*. Next, we consider the roles ANSAs see themselves as playing at the strategic level. Regardless of their ideological bent, ANSAs generally regard themselves as the *vanguard*, defined as a group that appropriates or arrogates to itself a leadership role in creating or fomenting the conditions necessary for socio-political change. Embedded within this overarching role identity is a second tier of generic strategic roles: *spoiler* and *partner*. In simple terms, a *spoiler* is an ANSA that sees peace as a threat, and resorts to violence to undermine its prospects. A *partner*, on the other hand, is an ANSA that has made a strategic commitment to achieving peace in the long run (though this does not necessarily mean that an ANSA will not resort to violence at various points along the bumpy road to that end state). Combining the role identities at the grand strategic and strategic levels yields an expanded typology of 16 archetypical roles that an ANSA may assume in the context of intergroup conflict. While this typology enhances our understanding of this class of complex social actor, the multiplicity of grand strategic and strategic roles frustrates the precise prediction of ANSA behaviour.

"In simple terms, a *spoiler* is an ANSA that sees peace as a threat, and resorts to violence to undermine its prospects."

Grand Strategic Roles: Transformers, Captors, and Stakeholders

Let us begin with the roles ANSAs may perform at the grand strategic level. We can identify at least three such roles. The first is the *transformer*, in which the ANSA seeks to create alternative structures to supplant existing state and social institutions. It sweeps aside the institutional structure of the *ancien régime* and substitutes its own idiosyncratic structures. In other words, it seeks to fundamentally remake society. This is most often associated with social and political revolution, as in the Chinese civil war (1927–1949) in which Mao Zedung's Communist Party eventually chased the ruling Kuomintang government from the mainland and imposed a radical communist system upon Chinese society. The second is the *captor*, in which the ANSA seeks to take control of existing state structures and institutions—in other words, preserve the structures but replace the incumbents. This is most often associated with a *coup d'état,* such as the 1954 Guatemalan coup in which the "Liberation Army" of Col. Carlos Castillo Armas—a rag-tag ANSA of some 400 fighters operating out of neighbouring Honduras and El Salvador, with indispensable covert and overt support from the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)—ousted the democratically-elected president, Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán. Finally, we have the *stakeholder*, in which the ANSA is willing to share in existing state structures and institutions, that is, to accept a parceling out of the power centres in the existing governance structures among the major players in a conflict. This is most often associated with power-sharing arrangements, such as the Good Friday Accord (1998) that divided the ministries of the interim administration in Northern Ireland between Sinn Fein and the Protestant parties.

Reuters RTRGBHF by Reuters photographer

A female guerrilla of the Fourth Front of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) stands to attention with her comrades-in-arms during a military training session, 11 August 1998.

Reuters RTRJ1WK by Reuters photographer

Marxist FARC rebels posing with their weapons after a jungle patrol in Colombia, 7 August 1998.

Strategic Roles: Vanguards, Spoilers, and Partners

Vanguards

What roles do ANSAs see themselves playing at the strategic level? Arguably, the role that is most salient for an ANSA is that of *vanguard*, defined as a group that appropriates or arrogates to itself the leadership role in creating or fomenting the conditions necessary for socio-political change. The Western notion of the vanguard has its roots in Marxist-Leninist thought. Marx and Engels first introduced this construct in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). Some fifty years later, Lenin set out the organizational and functional blueprint for a revolutionary vanguard organization in his 1902 pamphlet, *What is to be done?*[6] It is beyond the scope of this article to delve into the details of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the vanguard. Nevertheless, mention should be made of the key features attached to this role. The vanguard party sees itself as the advance guard or elite cadre—in other words, the 'cream of the crop'—of the primary group it claims to represent, by virtue of the character and conduct of its members, as well as through their superior consciousness and understanding of contemporary political realities and the broader tides of history. As such, the vanguard party sees it as falling to itself to mobilize, organize, guide, and direct the inchoate impulses of the primary group. It has the *right*, and, indeed, the *duty* to assume the leadership role of the revolutionary struggle. For an ANSA that sees itself in this vanguard role, the message to its opponents is simple: if you want to resolve this conflict, you've got to deal with *us*, one way or another.

Not surprisingly, given their ideological bent, revolutionary leftist ANSAs in the post-Cold War world naturally see themselves

Reuters RTXG71N by Wahdat Afghan

Fighters of the Afghan Shi'ite Moslem faction Hezb-i-Whadat, 9 March 1995.

in this vanguard role. However, this role is not the exclusive domain of avowedly Marxist-Leninist or Maoist parties. Indeed, the contemporary revolutionary vanguard parties of greatest concern to the West are not those on the Left, but rather, transnational jihadist ANSAs. As we shall see, the Leninist role conception of vanguard has infiltrated Salafist-jihadi thought, reinforcing the traditional Islamic notion of vanguard to become a cornerstone in the ideology of jihadist ANSAs, such as al Qaeda (AQ) and its affiliates.

"Mawdudi's influence upon subsequent generations of Islamic revivalist thinkers was profound."

The concept of vanguard is not foreign to Islam. In the commentary to his English-language translation of the Qur'an, Abdullah Yusuf Ali describes the vanguard thus:

> The vanguard of Islam—those in the first rank—are those who dare and suffer for the Cause and never flinch. The first historical examples are the *Muhājirs* [lit."emigrants"] and the *Ansār* [lit. "helpers"]. The *Muhājirs*—those who forsook their homes in Makkah [Mecca] and migrated to Madīnah [Medina], the Holy Prophet being among the last to leave the post of danger, are mentioned first. Then come the *Ansār*, the Helpers, the citizens of Madinah who invited them, welcomed them and gave them aid, and who formed the pivot of the new Community.[7]

The vanguard is not merely an artifact of early Islamic history. In contemporary terms, the *Muhājir* roughly corresponds to the activists of a jihadist ANSA, and the *Ansār* to the group's non-member supporters and sympathizers. In that sense, the vanguard of Islam can exist at any time or in any place.

Subsequent Islamist writers grafted Marxist-Leninist notions of the vanguard on to the traditional conception found in the Qur'an. One can trace the appearance of the vanguard role in 20th Century Islamist thought to the writings of Mawlana Sayyid Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi, a Pakistani Muslim activist who founded the *Jama'at-e-Islami* (Islamic Party—JI) in 1941. He became one of the most influential thinkers in the Islamic revival of the last century. Mawdudi's transformative vision of Islam drew heavily from modernist ideas, including Communist political philosophy, seizing upon, for example, the Leninist model of the vanguard party as the exemplar for JI. As international relations scholar Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr observes:

> …[the] similarity between the two movements is not just conjectural. Mawdudi was familiar with Communist literature, and true to his style, he learned from it, and from the Communist movement in India, especially in Hyderabad, in

Reuters RTRN6FO by Reuters photographer

A Pakistani Muslim makes a victory sign during a protest in Karachi, 23 September 2001. The banner with the Arabic phrase translates to: "I Must Win or I Will Die for Islam."

Reuters RTXKSU8 by Jerry Lampen

A Pakistani holds up a poster of Osama Bin Laden during a pro-Taliban rally of the biggest Islamic party, Jamt Ulma Islami (JUI), in Quetta, 2 October 2001.

> the 1930s and in the 1940s…That the Jama'at's and Lenin's ideas about the "organizational weapon" [i.e., the vanguard party] were similar confirms that the relation of ideology to social action in Mawdudi's works closely followed the Leninist example. Mawdudi argued that in order for his interpretation of Islam to grow roots and support an Islamic movement, he had to form a tightly knit party. An organizational weapon was therefore the prerequisite to making Islam into an ideology and using religion as an agent for change.[8]

Mawdudi's influence upon subsequent generations of Islamic revivalist thinkers was profound.[9] Of particular interest here is his notion of the vanguard role, adapted from Leninism, and the chain of transmission of this idea from Mawdudi's writings to the pronouncements of Osama bin Laden, the deceased leader of AQ.

Sayyid Qutb, the leading thinker of the *Egyptian al-'Ikẖwān al-Muslimūn* (The Society of the Muslim Brothers or the Muslim Brotherhood—MB) in the 1950s and 1960s, was a follower of Mawdudi's teachings. Historian Philip Jenkins notes that Qutb, "…loved the heroic image of the Islamist party as revolutionary vanguard."[10] In his manifesto for Islamic action, *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* (Milestones), Qutb described the conflict between the vanguard of the Islamic movement and *jahiliyya*—"the state of ignorance of the guidance from God"[11]—in the following terms:

> …history tells us that the *jahili* society chooses to fight and not to make peace, attacking the vanguard of Islam at its very inception, whether it be a few individuals or whether it be groups, and even after this vanguard has become a well-established community.[12]

As historians Ladan and Roya Boroumand remark, "…this was Leninism in Islamist dress."[13]

Qutb's ideas on the vanguard, in turn, served as inspiration for succeeding generations of Islamic militants. Of particular note was the Palestinian Islamic scholar Abdullah Azzam. Qutb was one of the key influences upon Azzam's thought.[14] While studying *shari'a* and Islamic jurisprudence at Cairo's Al-Azhar University in the early-1970s, Azzam met with Omar Abdel-Rahman (known as the 'Blind Sheikh,' sentenced to life in prison in the US for seditious conspiracy in the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Center), Ayman al-Zawahiri (Osama bin Laden's successor as leader of AQ), and other followers of Qutb. This exposure led him to embrace much of Qutb's ideology, including the concept of the Islamic movement and the vanguard. During the jihad against Soviet occupation forces in Afghanistan, Azzam spoke of the continuing need for an Islamist vanguard, a kind of Islamic "rapid reaction force,"[15] to come to the defence of oppressed Muslims everywhere, even after the Afghan jihad had ended:

> Every principle needs a vanguard (*Tali`ah*) to carry it forward and, while forcing its way into society, puts up with heavy tasks and enormous sacrifices. There is no ideology, neither earthly nor heavenly, that does not require such a vanguard that gives everything it possesses in order to achieve victory for this ideology. It carries the flag all along the sheer endless and difficult path until it reaches its destination in the reality of life, since Allah has destined that it should make it and manifest itself. This vanguard constitutes the solid base (*Al-Qa`idah al-Sulbah*) for the expected society.[16]

Azzam saw the role of this vanguard organization as mobilizing Muslims through "a common people's jihad."[17] In this sense, *al-Qa'idah al-Sulbah* would act "…like any revolutionary vanguard, as Lenin or indeed the French revolutionaries had imagined."[18]

Azzam's Qutbist ideas, in turn, helped mold the mindset of Osama bin Laden and laid the groundwork for the subsequent rise of AQ.[19] Azzam befriended the young bin Laden in the early-1980s while lecturing at King Abdulaziz University,[20] a relationship that carried over to their time in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan in the 1980s. He became bin Laden's spiritual and intellectual mentor: "Bin Laden revered Azzam, who provided a model for the man he would become," a modern version of the warrior-priest, an archetype of long standing in the Islamic tradition.[21]

"The notion of the vanguard…is the pre-eminent strategic role that ANSAs—whether militant leftist, religious, nationalist, or other—generally see themselves as playing."

Azzam's conception of the vanguard permeated bin Laden's and his lieutenants' vision of AQ. As a vanguard organization, bin Laden saw AQ as standing at the forefront of the Islamic community's struggle against the global forces of heresy and apostasy. For example, in pontificating upon the roots of the conflict between the Saudi regime and the Saudi people in an audio-cassette tape released in December 2004, he argued that "…this conflict is partly a local conflict, but in other respects it is a conflict between world heresy—and with it today's apostates—under the leadership of America on the one hand, and on the other, the Islamic nation with the brigades of mujahideen in its vanguard."[22] When asked in a December 2007 video interview what had been the most important transformation recently witnessed in the Islamic world, bin Laden's second-in-command and later successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, replied:

> The most important and critical of these transformations—and Allah knows best—is the emergence of the Mujahid vanguard of the Muslim Ummah as a power imposing itself on the world stage, as a result of the intensifying Jihadi awakening surging through the Islamic world, refusing humiliation, defending the honor of the Muslim Ummah and rejecting the methodologies of defeat and culture of backtracking. And the groups of this Mujahid vanguard are now uniformly deployed and – by the grace of Allah – are coming together and uniting.[23]

Surveying these and other statements over a ten-year period, Christopher Blanchard, a US Congressional Research Service analyst, concludes:

> Bin Laden's statements from the mid-1990s through the present indicate that he continues to see himself and his followers as the vanguard of an international Islamic movement primarily committed to ending U.S. "interference" in the affairs of Islamic countries and supportive of efforts to overturn and recast Islamic societies according to narrow Salafist interpretations of Islam and Islamic law.[24]

Thus, we see from the foregoing how the historical Marxist-Leninist conception of the vanguard party, melded with the traditional Islamic notion of vanguard, has come to take root in the radical ideology of AQ in the present day.

Reuters RTRGT42 by Reuters photographer

Afghan Taliban and Pakistanis protest in Karachi, 31 August 1998.

Reuters RTRN9UP by Reuters photographer

A Sunni Muslim carries his child while protesting in Rawalpindi, 25 September 2001.

Spoilers and Partners

The notion of the vanguard, argued above, is the pre-eminent strategic role that ANSAs—whether militant leftist, religious, nationalist, or other—generally see themselves playing. However, embedded within this overarching role is a second tier of strategic roles, each associated with its own characteristic expectations, norms, and behaviors. What are these possible second-tier strategic roles?

The Spoiler Typology

One strategic role we can readily identify is that of *spoiler*. The seminal article introducing this role is Stephan Stedman's "Spoiler problems in peace processes," appearing in the journal *International Security* in 1997. In it, Stedman defines *spoilers* as "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it."[25] The precondition for a spoiler role, Stedman maintains, is the existence of a peace process, which is said to exist once "…at least two warring parties have committed themselves publicly to a pact or have signed a comprehensive peace agreement."[26] Within the context of a peace process, spoilers play the role of "destroyers of peace agreements."[27]

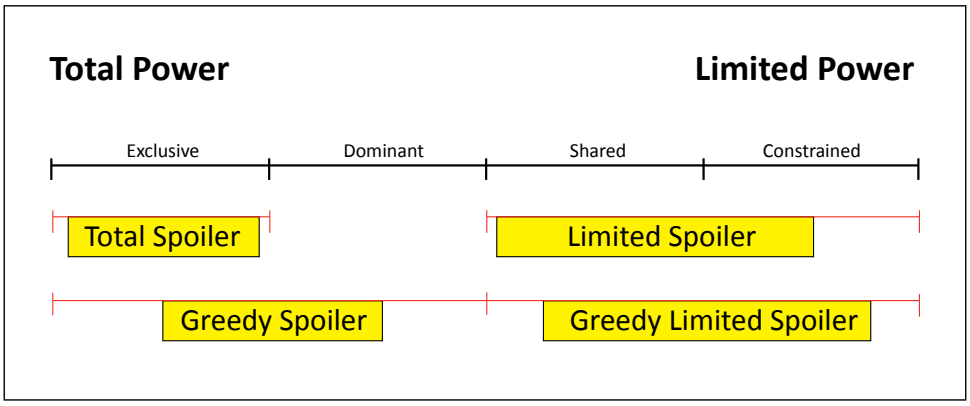
"Desired ends include recognition and redress of grievance and basic security of its followers. Limited goals, however, do not necessarily imply low or weak commitment."

In his typology, Stedman differentiates spoilers along four dimensions: (a) their standing or position in relation to the peace process, (b) the number of spoilers, (c) the type of spoiler, and (d) the locus of spoiler behavior.[28] Only the first and third dimensions are relevant to the elaboration of his descriptive typology. In terms of the first dimension—a spoiler's standing in relation to the peace process—Stedman notes that a spoiler may be either *outside* or *inside* the process. An *outside spoiler* operates external to the process, whether by choice or deliberate exclusion by other parties, and stands in implacable, violent opposition to it. It strives for maximalist goals, that is, to dominate the political structures of the state. An *inside spoiler*, on the other hand, operates from within the peace process, formally committing to a peace accord and its implementation, while at the same time duplicitously reneging on its obligations under that accord. It pursues what Newman and Richmond refer to as "devious objectives" under cover of its participation in the peace process: "…achieving time to regroup and reorganize; internationalizing the conflict; profiting materially from ongoing conflict; legitimizing [its] negotiating positions and current status; and avoiding costly concessions by prolonging the process itself."[29] An inside spoiler tends to minimize violence so as not to completely destroy its credibility as a partner in peace and to lose the advantages surreptitiously derived from continued involvement

in the process. In other words, it pursues a *strategy of stealth* or deliberate *strategic deception*. Many commentators have argued that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was just such an inside spoiler, publicly professing his commitment to the Oslo Accords while refusing to fulfill his obligations under those agreements to fight terror and, indeed, encouraging violence against Israel behind the scenes, particularly during the second Intifada.

With respect to the third dimension—the type of spoiler—Stedman distinguishes spoiler type based upon the party's *goals* and its *commitment* to the pursuit of those goals. He argues that the goal at the strategic level is *political power*. All parties in a civil war seek power, he observes, but not all parties seek total power; they differ in their power aspirations, which span the spectrum from total to limited power. At the high end, the desire is for exclusive or at least dominant power. At the low end of the spectrum, aspirations are restricted to a significant share of power or to the exercise of power subject to democratic controls or constitutional constraints (see Figure 1).

The second distinguishing feature is the *commitment* of the parties to realizing their power ambitions. Stedman characterizes commitment in two ways: (a) the immutability of a party's preferences, and (b) a party's sensitivity to costs/risks. The more a party's goals are 'carved in stone' and the greater its willingness to tolerate risks and endure costs to achieve those goals, the higher its commitment is said to be. Conversely, the more open it is to compromise on its preferences and the greater its reluctance to accept risks and bear costs, the lower its commitment.



Author's visualization derived from Stedman, 1997, p. 10.

Figure 1: Spectrum of Power Ambitions

On the basis of goals (or power ambitions) and commitment, Stedman identifies four generic types of spoilers. A *total spoiler* seeks total power and exclusive recognition of authority, a goal to which it is highly or irrevocably committed. In counterinsurgency doctrine, total spoilers are generally labeled 'irreconcilables.' It is assumed that the only strategy for dealing with such actors is to marginalize or isolate them from society, and, ultimately, to physically remove them from the operating environment ('kill or capture'). A *limited spoiler* harbours more limited power ambitions, and is willing to share power with its competitors, or to accept the constitutionally-constrained exercise of power. Desired ends include recognition and redress of grievance and basic security of its followers. Limited goals, however, do not necessarily imply low or weak commitment. Stedman remarks that a limited spoiler may be highly or firmly committed to its goals and willing to sacrifice much in order to achieve them.[30] A *greedy spoiler*'s aspirations may range along the length of the power ambition spectrum. The difference between the greedy and the total or limited spoiler is that the greedy spoiler's goals expand or contract, depending upon its ongoing cost/risk assessment.[31] That is, its goals may be total (a *greedy spoiler* proper) or limited (a *greedy limited spoiler*), but its commitment to these goals is uniformly low.

These spoiler types can be located within a two-dimensional goals/commitment matrix (see Table 1):

Commitment level	Limited goals	Total goals
Low commitment	1 Greedy or limited spoilers	2 Greedy spoilers
High commitment	3 Limited spoilers	4 Total spoilers

Zahar, 2003, p. 115, Table 10.1.

Table 1: Stedman's Typology of Spoilers (as interpreted by Zahar)

The cardinal rule for classification schemes or typologies is that classes must be both *exhaustive* and *mutually exclusive*, that is, all possible cases or concepts should be captured and each assigned to one and only one class.[32] As set out in the table, Stedman's typology appears to violate the second requirement. Political scientist Marie-Jöelle Zahar—the originator of the table—points out that the two distinguishing dimensions do not sufficiently differentiate spoiler types. Two supposedly different spoilers—the greedy and limited spoilers in Cell 1—have the same goal/commitment profile. As well, two types each span two different cells—limited spoilers in Cells 1 and 3, and greedy spoilers in Cells 1 and 2.[33]

The apparent ambiguities in the typology lie in Zahar's misreading of Stedman's classification scheme, and in an unfortunate blurring of terminology on Stedman's part. Zahar counts five spoiler types in Table 1, whereas Stedman explicitly discusses only four.[34] She mistakenly distinguishes two limited spoiler types—one with low commitment, the other with high commitment—while Stedman describes the limited spoiler only in terms of high commitment. Therefore, we can eliminate the limited spoiler (limited goals/low commitment) in Cell 1 of the table above, and thereby resolve the 'spillover' problem.

There remains Stedman's confusion of terminology. He gives two distinct spoilers—the "greedy spoiler with total goals," and the "greedy limited spoiler,"—the same root name, *greedy spoiler*. Confusing, but easily corrected: we simply assign a different name to one of these *greedy spoilers*. We shall retain the label greedy spoiler for the spoiler with total goals and low commitment, and designate the spoiler with limited goals and low commitment an *opportunistic spoiler*. Resolving the interpretation and terminology problems in this manner leaves us with four unambiguously distinct spoiler types, thereby satisfying the criterion of exclusivity.

Factoring in the position dimension—whether the spoiler is inside or outside the peace process—gives us a typology consisting of eight discrete types (see Table 2):

Commitment	Position	Goal type	
		Limited	Total
Low	Outside	*Opportunistic*	*Greedy*
	Inside	*Opportunistic*	*Greedy*
High	Outside	*Limited*	*Total*
	Inside	*Limited*	*Total*

Author

Table 2: Corrected Typology of Spoilers

Refining the Typology

In the years since the publication of his *International Security* article, Stedman's typology has come under close scrutiny and critique, much of it constructive, some of it less so. New directions and refinements have been suggested that sharpen his original concept.[35] I would like to suggest an additional refinement to the spoiler typology, specifically, broadening it to include the strategic role of *partner*. Although a definite advance in our understanding of the strategic roles ANSAs can play in relation to a peace process, the typology falls short in its one-sidedness: it focuses only upon those strategic roles that stand in some degree of opposition to a peace process. What is needed is an expanded classification scheme, a general, dichotomous typology that explicitly includes the binary opposite to spoiler: *partner*. Critical to defining the role identity of *partner* is a third dimension that distinguishes an actor's standing in relation *to a peace process*, alluded to at several points in Stedman's 1997 article: a party's commitment to the peace process. As with a party's commitment to its power ambitions (Figure 1), there is a spectrum of commitment to a peace process, ranging from *none* for the outside spoiler to *tactical* for the inside spoiler and *strategic* for the partner (see Figure 2):

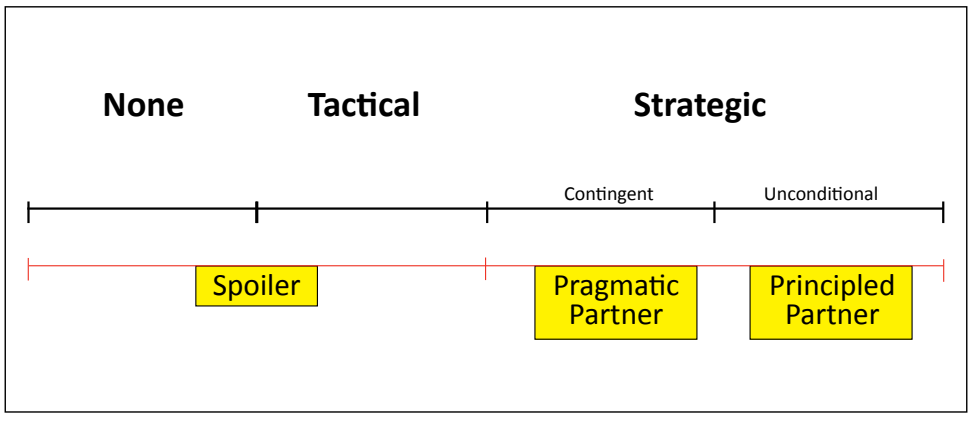
"I would like to suggest an additional refinement to the spoiler typology, specifically, broadening it to include the strategic role of *partner*."

Explicitly including this third dimension, we may define a *partner* as a party that pursues limited political ambitions and is willing to share political power with other actors (linking back to the stakeholder at the grand strategic level). What distinguishes the partner from the spoiler is that a spoiler is not sincerely committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict while a partner's commitment over the long term is genuine. That is, the partner has made a *strategic commitment to peace*, though not necessarily to a particular configuration of a peace settlement.

As with the spoiler, there are variants within this broad category of partner. Two spring immediately to mind, depending upon the nature of the actor's commitment to the peace process: the *principled partner* and the *pragmatic partner*. The first is a party whose commitment to the peace process is unconditional. Its devotion to the success of the process is unwavering despite the inevitable bumps encountered along the way to a settlement. Put differently, a principled partner reposes sufficient trust and confidence in the process and in the other participants to remain engaged regardless of temporary setbacks. It sees peace and the social stability and security that comes with it as an end in itself, the necessary environment within which it can work toward achieving its ambitions. Its limited political goals need not be completely satisfied in the immediate context of a peace settlement; it will compromise on these in order to secure an overall peace. Nevertheless, mechanisms must be in place (i.e., there must be some form of responsive, post-settlement political process) whereby the principled partner has at least a reasonable chance of realizing these ambitions over the long term.

Secondly, we have the *pragmatic partner*. Like the principled partner, the pragmatic partner is committed to the ultimate success of the process. However, this commitment is contingent upon securing the limited goals to which it is highly committed or upon the continued flow of material and/or political rewards for compliant behaviour.[36] In other words, for the pragmatic partner, peace is instrumental; it is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Its commitment is also contingent on the prior or, at a minimum, simultaneous fulfillment of the other parties' obligations under the peace process. The pragmatic partner does not have the same degree of trust and confidence in the process and the other participants as does the principled partner. Confidence-building measures are essential in order to lessen suspicion and mistrust of the other parties' intentions.

Incorporating the category of *partner* allows us to expand the typology of ANSA roles at the strategic level. Stedman's typology identified eight strategic roles (Table 2): four spoiler types, each of which can be outside or inside the peace process. In our refined and expanded typology, we have a total of 16 archetypical roles that an ANSA may assume in the context of intergroup conflict:



Author

Figure 2: Spectrum of Commitment to the Peace Process

Grand Strategic Role	Strategic Role	Goals	Commitment to Goals	Commitment to Peace Process	
				Outside	Inside
Transformer	Total Spoiler	Total	High	None	Tactical
Captor	Total Spoiler	Total	High	None	Tactical
Captor	Limited Spoiler	Limited	High	None	Tactical
Transformer	Greedy Spoiler	Total	Low	None	Tactical
Captor	Greedy Spoiler	Total	Low	None	Tactical
Captor	Opportunistic Spoiler	Limited	Low	None	Tactical
Stakeholder	Pragmatic Partner	Limited	High	Tentative	Contingent
Stakeholder	Principled Partner	Limited	Low	Tentative	Unconditional

Author

Table 3: Expanded Typology

Reuters RTR49BED by handout

A masked man speaking in what is believed to be a North American accent in a video that Islamic State militants released in September 2014 is pictured in this still frame from video.

Stedman's eight spoiler types, further classified by grand strategic role (transformer, captor, and stakeholder) for a total of 12 spoiler types; and our four partner types (see Table 3):

Conclusion

The multiplicity of roles identified in our expanded typology is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing in that it helps us to better appreciate the essential complexity of this class of social actors. It is a curse in so far as it frustrates our attempts at *precise* prediction of ANSA behaviour. Recall, we began this analysis with a description of the Canadian national security community's stereotypical view of an ANSA. Specifically, CAF irregular warfare and COIN doctrine paints a single-hue picture of an ANSA as a violent, irreconcilable foe. Situating this view within our expanded typology (the rows highlighted in yellow in Table 3), an ANSA is a *transformer* or *captor* that considers itself, at the strategic level, to be the vanguard of 'the people,' engaged in a protracted popular war using violent action to attack and subvert the established authorities and their supporters (i.e., it is a *Total Outside Spoiler*). If it joins in a peace process, it does so only as a *Total Inside Spoiler*, employing a strategy of stealth to deceive its opponents and to mask its limited, tactical commitment to the process.

The advantage of this conventional picture of ANSAs lies in its simplicity—the ANSA as *Total Spoiler*. However, as our analysis demonstrates, there are many roles apart from *Total Spoiler* that these complex actors may assume, *not all of which are oppositional*. This is the critical point. ANSAs are not always and inevitably roadblocks to peace. Sometimes they may hold the key to the peaceful resolution of violent social conflict. Indeed, the challenge for the counterinsurgent in the future security environment is to recognize when the potential for partnership exists, and to determine the appropriate mix of strategies that, ideally, will encourage the ANSA to transition to the role of *Principled Partner*.

Reuters RTX18VH3 by STRINGER Iraq

Shi'ite fighters chant anti-ISIL and anti-FSA slogans at the Sayeda Zainab area in Damascus, 15 February 2014.

NOTES

1. At DRDC, Toronto Research Centre, Dr. Moore is engaged in exploratory and applied research on human cognitive and social performance in adversarial contexts related to defence and security, specializing in the psycho-sociology of insurgency and terrorism. He was the Project Manager for a multi-year project developing a conceptual framework for understanding the motivations, intentions, and behaviors of Armed Non-state Actors (ANSAs). The views expressed here are the responsibility solely of the author.
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