

# Adversary Intent: A Case Study of North Korea

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Overview:

The Question

Literature

Data

Method

Findings

Initial Conclusions

# The Question: Is there a way to measure adversary Intent?

- Specifically, can social science frameworks/models help to assess adversary intent?
- We argue that social science models help to identify behavioral actions and responses that could help explain specific adversary's beliefs, goals and needs.
- We tested two models using the case of North Korea, combining them into a hybrid model to assess adversary intent. Additionally, we are cross-examining these results with event data regarding specific 'actions' connected to the year communicated.
- This insight can help deterrence professionals in tailoring their deterrence message. Further more, this paper argues that this hybrid model can help policy makers and planners understand if an adversary has the '**intent**' to perform specific deterrence actions.

# The Literature

- Arvind Singhal, “**Wilbur Schramm: Portrait of a Development Communication Pioneer,**” *Communicator: Journal of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication* 22, (Jan – Dec 1987): 18-22.
- Gina Scott Ligon, Samuel T. Hunter, and Michael D. Mumford, “**Development of Outstanding Leadership: A Life Narrative Approach,**” *The Leadership Quarterly* 19, (2008): 312-334.
- Victor Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future* (New York: Random House, 2012)
- Ronald J. Deluga, “American Presidential Machiavellianism Implications for Charismatic Leadership and Rated Performance,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 12, (2001): 339-363.
- David A. Levy, *Tools of Critical Thinking: Metathoughts For Psychology* (Long Groves, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2010).
- Etc.

# The Data:

- We used Kim Jong-Un's (KJU) New Year's Eve speeches (2013-2018), extracting statements focusing on techniques that assessed the underlying facets of intent (e.g., beliefs and goals).
- These speeches served as viable secondary sources that identified objective markers to which we applied a coding scheme to extract the adversary's 'will' to use a capability.
- The average length of each speech was about 4,345 words.

# Method

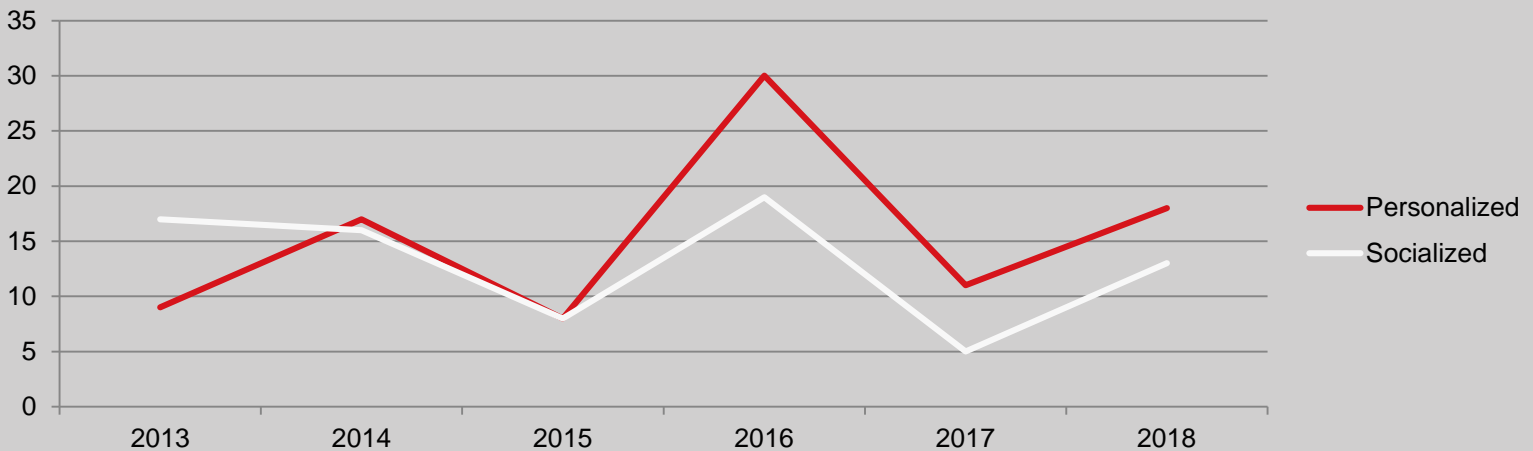
- Model 1: Schrams Interpersonal Communication Model
  - Argues that the messages delivered by leadership is coded, and the public receiving this messaging must de-code this message based on their cultural identity (Juche).
- Model 2: Ligon, Hunter and Mumford's Leadership Orientation Model
  - Argues that there are two categories of leadership that can be associated with “positive or negative behaviors for attaining outcomes”, specifically: ***socialized or personalized leadership***.
  - **Socialized leaders**, they argue, base the identification and solution of problems on the good of others, or for the collective interests of their group.
  - **Personalized leaders** are motivated by personal dominance regardless of the consequence of others. They control others with threats and use people to advance their own personal agendas.

## Method: Coding

- We used Kim Jong-Un's New Year's Eve Speeches to first identify how he was coding his messages (Beliefs and Goals)
  - An evidence based coding scheme was applied to measure intent.
  - Coding identified and assigned goals and beliefs from speeches and were tracked over time for observation.
  - The remarks were then identified as either a goal or a belief.
- Second, we categorized these messages into his leadership orientation
  - The purpose was to produce nation state leadership personality characterization as comprehensive as possible.
  - Each remark was compared to the 19 variables identifying a personalized or socialized style, they were coded as being present or not present within each remark from the speeches.
- Third, we are currently collecting event data in order to perform a timeline analysis which will determine if he accomplished the events he outlined in each speech.
  - This information will help validate the adversary intent based on his messages.

# Findings: Beliefs

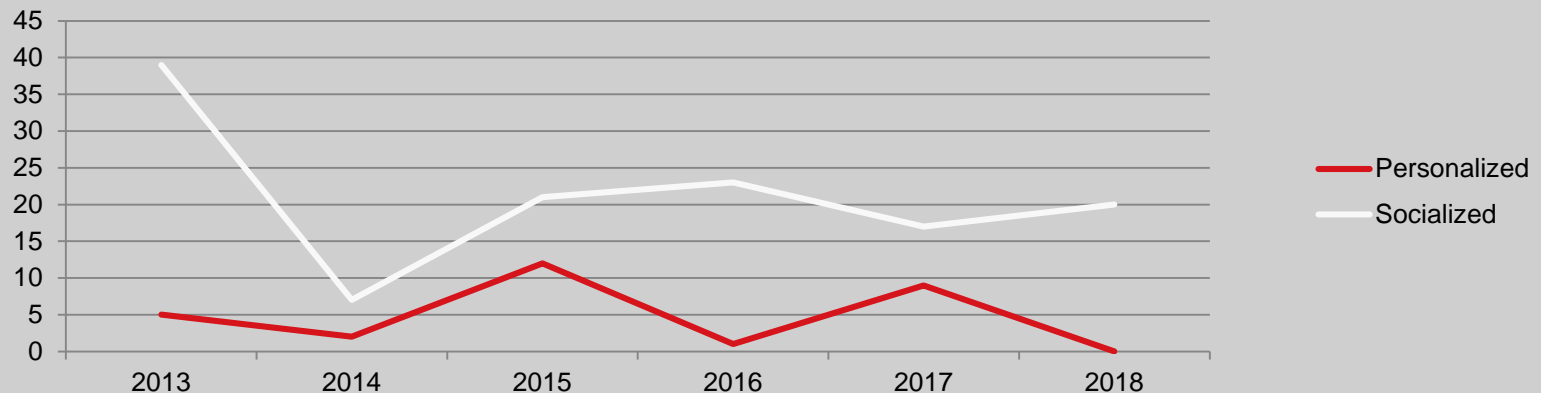
- Kim Jong-un's beliefs are largely personalized rather than socialized.
  - If personalized leaders feel their personal power is threatened they have a need to protect his personal power by influencing the group.
  - Therefore, during his belief comments during his speeches, his coded messages are more of a personalized nature.
  - He focuses on superiority, status, and setting destructive goals for followers to pursue, which translate into a personalized leadership orientation.





# Findings: Goals

- Kim Jong-un's goals are Socialized
  - Once he communicates his beliefs in a personalized manner, he switches his orientation towards a socialized delivery while he communicates.
  - Kim Jong-un's goals are constantly delivered through socialized messages
  - Essentially he is coding his messages of beliefs into personalized, but decoding his goals to his followers as socialized. We find that he is able to do this switching back and forth because of the constant indoctrination process of the Juche ideology.



# Initial Conclusions

- Methods can assist in understanding adversary intent
  - Through our research and case study for North Korea, we discovered that intent can be measured and provide understanding on actors who may seem secluded and secretive.
  - We argue that due to this insight, DoD leadership can tailor deterrence efforts based on the coding of speeches and leadership orientation.
  - Furthermore, if an adversary has a roadmap of his socialized goals in which he communicates to his constituents, accomplishing those goals will contribute to his survival.



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# Juche

- To understand how Kim Jong-un codes and de-codes his messages, you first need to understand the ideology of the Korea culture: Juche.
- The “birth” of Korea does not begin with the rise of Kim Il-sung like many North Koreans believe today.
- Through this ideology, the North Korea people are taught that they will not depend on any other country for assistance.
- Juche means “self-determination” the people need to rely on themselves which also gives them a sense of nationalism, something to believe in.
- They are taught that the foundation of Juche is to demonstrate complete loyalty to the leader.
- Under Juche ideology in order to remain true to the Korean identity if there were any contradictions in the practice of Juche the people were told that what was happening was for the good of Korea and used as acceptable justification.

## Method

- The 19 variables depicting personalized and socialized leadership identifiers were:

### **Socialized:**

- Humility
- Follower empowerment
- Collective Leadership/Power sharing
- Emphasis on success of group/people
- Focus on succession planning/long-term goals
- Setting destructive goals for followers
- Use of destructive influence tactics with followers
- Concern for others (altruism)
- Focus on Social Consensus

## Method

- The 19 variables depicting personalized and socialized leadership identifiers were:

### **Personalized:**

- Focus on dependency of followers to leader
- Object Beliefs (others are objects, not people)
- Negative Life Themes
- Superiority/Self-aggrandizement
- Status
- Supernatural Divinity bestowed on leader
- Power Differences
- Setting destructive goals for followers to pursue
- Using destructive influence tactics with followers  
(coercive, threatening)
- Paranoid tendencies (e.g., actively seeks and attends to signs of mistreatment of others)