

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN THE SULU ARCHIPELAGO:
MOBILIZING VIBRANT NETWORKS TO WIN THE PEACE

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by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN THE SULU ARCHIPELAGO: MOBILIZING VIBRANT NETWORKS TO WIN THE PEACE, by Major Arnel P. David, 104 pages.

How might the United States military think about and interact with civil society organizations to help win a sustainable peace? In this paper, I use retroductive reasoning, the Delphi method, and a modified Institutional Analysis and Development framework to explore this question. While some adversaries must be pursued and eliminated, the military must also connect with the populace through deliberate and direct engagement with civil society groups in order to secure the peace. I check this thesis with a plausibility test of two experimental interventions in the Southern Philippines and find that a simple probe reveals complex webs of vibrant networks able to mobilize masses of people capable of transforming the conflict landscape. This study identifies future research agendas, offers recommendations, and presents a “rules of thumb” guide for future planning.

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ACRONYMS

ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
CA	Civil Affairs
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
HN	Host Nation
JSOTF-P	Joint Special Operation Task Force—Philippines
MIADF	Modified Institutional Analysis and Development Framework
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SOF	Special Operation Forces
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The supposed “clash of cultures” is in reality nothing more than a manifestation of mutual ignorance.

— Aga Khan, *The Next Front*

The United States (US) military’s lethality and technological superiority is unmatched on the world stage. No other nation can project force with such incredible speed and ferocity (U.S. Department of the Army 2012a). Despite this immense power, a fixation on technology and lethal force has hindered our ability to foster peace. An Imam in the Southern Philippines imparted this wisdom:

Your [US forces] efforts are admirable and they have helped thousands of people with their suffering. But you will never deliver a meaningful peace unless you ally with the Islamic leadership. Start with the religious groups and really learn the Tausug culture and its people. I can help work with other Imams to draft a fatwah to condemn violence and encourage reconciliation. If certain leaders put down their guns many others will follow. (Abdulla 2008)

This message from an Islamic Filipino Imam to a Roman Catholic Filipino-American was genuine, enlightening, and invaluable. While some adversaries must be pursued and eliminated, the military must also connect with the populace through deliberate and direct engagement with civil society groups in order to secure a sustainable peace.

As a result of the Imam’s compelling guidance, our civil affairs team began to work with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) able to animate thousands of people to rally at key events (see figure 1). The benefits of this CSO participation came at no cost to the US government.

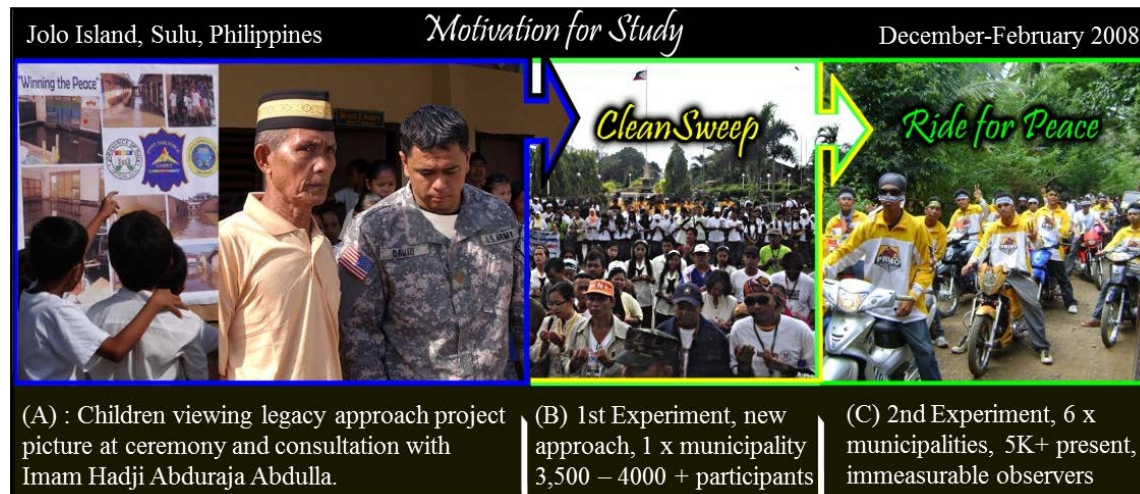


Figure 1. Motivation for Study

Source: Storyboard created by author. (A) shows a picture of children viewing a completed project's pictures at an opening ceremony for a school and a picture of Imam Hadji Abuduraja Abdulla speaking with author; (B) this picture was taken in front of governor's palace. People are participating in Islamic prayer at the opening ceremony for Operation Clean Sweep; and (C) this is a picture of PRIMO Motorcycle Club leading Operation Ride for Peace. Photos courtesy of US Navy by MC1 Roland Franklin.

These were large and powerful mobilizations of people who were energized to address local issues. Our interactions and relations with these groups grew and crystallized into partnerships with tremendous potential for continued cooperation. For many reasons, the follow-on team decided not to continue these efforts. Tragically, they also chose not to deal with Imam Hadji Abduraja Abdulla, who was a great supporter of US efforts.

I take responsibility for this failure. My inability to articulate the significance of these efforts compounded by perverse incentive structures within our organizations

contributed to this inadequate transition (Yingling 2010).¹ This study sheds light on the efforts to engage civil society and invites a healthy debate regarding this topic. The story of the Imam and his wisdom elucidate a problem central to this thesis: Is there something wrong with how we view civilians in the operating environment that limits our effectiveness?

Problem Statement

Traditionally, civilians are viewed as obstacles to avoid or as an information resource to exploit. In planning circles, the standing guidance is to prevent civilians from interfering with military operations. On a linear battlefield this view is still applicable; however, in a non-linear environment civilians can be more than an obstacle or information source. Therefore we ask: Can the support of CSO networks benefit the military, and if so, how? Enhanced engagements and cooperation with CSOs increases connectivity with the local populace and creates a potential capability to leverage local knowledge. Military use of civilian networks in this capacity has not been explored. Optimally, with small teams partnering with CSOs to better navigate the human terrain, might enable other US and host nation (HN) special operations forces to operate with increased precision in targeting isolated threat networks. The examples used in this study do not provide a definitive test of this concept. Rather, they demonstrate the initial plausibility of this theory and encourage future testing.

¹An example of these perverse incentives might be a team's need to begin new projects so that they can call something their own and get a better evaluation for their rotation. See, Paul Yingling's article: "Critical thinking and its discontents," *Perspectives on Politics* (2010): 117-1121, for more examples.

Research Question

The question driving this research and the ensuing proposal is: How might the US military think about and interact with civil society organizations to help win a sustainable peace? Figure 2 is a simple depiction of how the question evolved into a proposal.

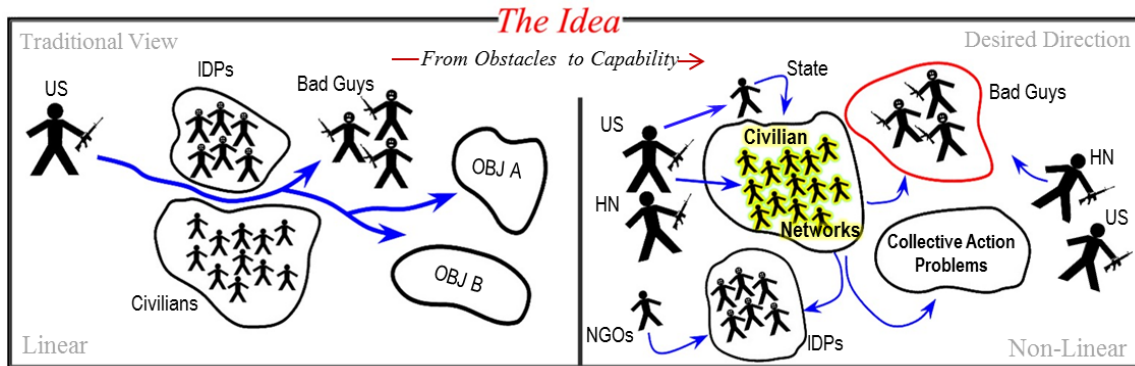


Figure 2. Proposed concept

Source: Created by author.

Scope

The hard-earned insights gained during the past decade of conflict coupled with a doctrinal transition to *Army Doctrine 2015* (U.S. Army Combined Arms Center 2013) present a unique opportunity to advance an idea. Two civil military operations: Operation Clean Sweep and Operation Ride for Peace are examined in detail to support this thesis' claim. Current operations in the Philippines are not addressed to avoid disruption of present efforts. Following the joint vision for concept and doctrine development, the scope of this idea and study is bracketed (see bracket "A" in figure 3) within the "unofficial concept" and "experimentation" phases (Mattis 2009).

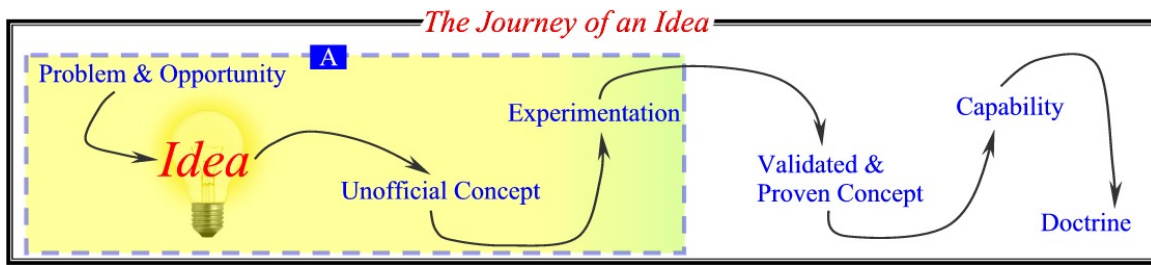


Figure 3. The Journey of an Idea

Source: Created by author from James N. Mattis, *Joint Concept Development Vision* (Norfolk: U.S. Joint Forces Command, 2009).

The joint vision advocates for the competition of ideas and concepts to be explored in order to identify gaps or new approaches for conducting joint military operations. Figure 3 reflects the scope of this study's idea within the parameters specified in the *Joint Concept Development Vision* (Mattis 2009). The problem and opportunity for better understanding civil society began as an unofficial concept in the field. The two operations serve as experiments to probe the plausibility of this concept. This idea still has a long journey of continued research and testing for it to be a validated concept that becomes a capability and is codified into doctrine. This study's distinctive approach to understanding the complex social space of civil society requires a clarification of key terms.

Definition of Terms

Clear distinctions must be made with several key terms. For the term civil society, there is no generally agreed definition, much less any commonly accepted understanding. However, a recent study in Afghanistan by a non-governmental organization (NGO) provides a definition that is suitable for this study:

Civil society is formed by individual and collective voluntary action around shared values, interests, purposes and standards which is intended to improve the lives of (local) men, women, and children without compromising their dignity. Action can take a variety of non-profit forms; from charitable work, through cultural activities, to advocacy and campaigning. (Winter 2010, 8)

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are the “community and self-help groups, art and cultural associations, women’s organizations, professional associations, trade unions, business associations, faith based organizations, umbrella groups and coalitions” (Winter 2010, 8). This study sees CSOs as local organizations opposed to NGOs which are external organizations.

NGOs are external organizations that are neither governmental nor from the local area. Distinguishing between these terms prevents confusion and builds on a shared understanding amongst military practitioners and civilian agencies.

Significance

The regulation of violence and peace constitutes a significant undertaking by both civilian and military practitioners. As the Army participates in increased regional engagements, this capability to mobilize and utilize CSOs can contribute to the success of those endeavors. The right balance between lethal and non-lethal efforts or direct and indirect approaches must be examined with due diligence. CSO engagement provides commanders with a valuable option to shape the operating environment.

Taken in sum, a theoretical lacuna exists between academic and military approaches to engage civil society in ways that yield operational significance. The difficult and complex nature of this social space calls for an approach that is both comprehensive and dynamic. Our nation’s security challenges cannot be addressed by technological platforms alone. The requirement to build relationships abroad remains an

inherent responsibility of the US military and its forces. Leaders must orchestrate a new approach to successfully navigate this under explored terrain. Amidst future uncertainty, the growing and interconnected world brings continued challenges for our American troopers. To succeed, new approaches must combine with the willingness, audacity, and vigilance to confront complexity and embrace the chaos that will inevitably emerge.

Thesis Structure

This thesis is organized into four subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 contains a review of literature on civil society and how the concept of engaging CSOs fits in current military doctrine. The analytical approach, style, and conceptual framework for the methodology used to answer the primary research question is presented in chapter 3. In chapter 4 the findings and analysis are flushed out and a “rules of thumb” guide is presented for future planning. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations, policy implications, and proposed future research agendas. As an overall goal, this paper seeks to generate a renewed perception of civil society organizations and their utility while encouraging continued testing and validation in order to improve ongoing and future interventions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The army must be versatile enough to succeed in regular wars, irregular wars, and wars that combine aspects of both. Those forces that can adapt with greatest speed will prevail. As a wealthy nation, the United States has tended to rely on technology and cutting-edge equipment to prepare for war...equipment becomes obsolete, but leadership and people do not. Ultimately, the U.S. military will succeed by cultivating leaders who can think critically, be adaptable, and embrace uncertainty.

— General David M. Rodriguez, *Foreign Affairs*

Introduction

The past decade of conflict has triggered a torrent of research on violence and order. Two domains of study, at the macro and micro levels, provide fascinating insight into wars and their causes (Staniland 2012, 244). On the macro-level, scholars have examined why stronger nations struggle and lose wars (Mack 1975; Arreguin-Toft 2001; Record 2005; Sullivan 2007). At the micro-level, fine-grained local metrics and patterns of violence explain causal mechanisms present in war (Kalyvas 2006; Christia 2012).

These studies are valuable and offer important theories for reflection but their immediate use for military practitioners is limited. Absent from these agendas is an approach that integrates military doctrine and cutting-edge scholarship to intelligently explore the local level. As many scholars and generals have discovered, all insurgencies and “struggles for democracy are local” (Petraeus 2010; Rodriguez 2013; McChrystal 2013; Odierno 2012; Walzer 2008; Perez 2013a).

What is missing and required is a study of fresh interventions that focus on interactions, patterns, and hidden dynamics at this fundamental level. Although most

military actions focus on the “ungoverned spaces” and malign networks of terrorists, criminals, and groups engaged in illicit activities, this study brings to life the civil space that contains networks of vibrant communities and organizations capable of introducing positive change (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 2010).² By studying this dimension of the environment, military professionals can formulate new ways to analyze complex social systems and develop plans for improved engagement.

The remainder of this chapter surveys the broad spectrum of literature on civil society and military doctrine by advancing in three parts. First, there is an explanation for the relevance of civil society for military professionals and why it is an urgent topic for today. Second, I review the evolution of the concept of civil society and the cross-pollination of related interdisciplinary concepts. Third, I show where the concept of civil society fits within current military doctrine. This chapter concludes with a summary of key points, the knowledge gap, and the primary research question for this study.

Why Civil Society and Why Now?

Relevance

As the military enters into an interwar period, the Joint Chief of Staff General Martin Dempsey emphasizes the importance of “the science of human relationships” (Freedberg 2012). General Odierno confirms that “conflict is a human endeavor, ultimately won or lost in the human domain” (2012) and Special Operations Command’s new theme “You Can’t Surge Trust” conveys the same message (U.S. SOCOM 2013).

²See *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats Joint Operating Concept 2.0* (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 2010; Gorka 2010). The abundance of attention given to these “ungoverned spaces” hampers the exploration of other dimensions in the environment.

The US military is active all over the world in various missions ranging from humanitarian assistance to full combat operations and the importance of relationships and human dynamics grows. As Odierno states in a foreword for Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 1:

Although some will argue that technology will simplify future military operations, the evidence overwhelmingly indicates that warfare remains a fundamentally human endeavor. Direct engagement with people has always been, and remains, a core strength of the United States Army. We must recognize and fully embrace the changes in the environment that offer us new avenues to maintain our preeminence. (U.S. Department of the Army 2012a)

The general's comments confirm the relevance of this topic and his recent correspondence on the strategic landpower initiative shows its urgency (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2013). Recent studies on past interventions highlight the timeliness of this topic.

Urgency

The military's global presence in over 75 countries provide the occasional exchange of interagency cooperation but it was the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns that forced large teams of military and civilian agencies to work closely together. These teams surmounted cultural and bureaucratic barriers to learn important lessons. However, Baumann claims that the policy community is now shifting away from nation-building and counterinsurgency capability focus. She warns that "a drop in political attention now heightens the risk of losing hard-earned insights from these operations" (Baumann 2012, 33). The present fiscal dilemma and shifting focus threaten the loss of valuable lessons gained through years of sacrifices and growing pains. If this is the policymaker view, it's important to ask how do other civilian agencies see civil-military cooperation?

There are studies and policy papers critical of military and civilian cooperation in terms of developmental assistance. A policy brief by InterAction Group wishes to divorce the military from developmental assistance altogether (2013). The brief concludes that the military can only fulfill a humanitarian role in disasters as required. There are many NGOs who share this view and concern. Poor accountability and project blunders, among many other reasons, may be to blame for these concerns but a critical self-examination captures and promotes worthy practices to retain and reveals those that should be abandoned.

While many studies show the value of civilian and military cooperation in “state-building”, there are no studies that delineate the role between military and civilian society organizations at the ground-level (Conflict Prevention and Resolution Forum 2011). The risk of losing important lessons from recent conflict and ongoing operational requirements creates this urgency for an exploration of civil society and its dimensions.

The Value of Civil Society

History of Civil Society

A rich history of this concept of civil society is replete with varying and contrary interpretations that have changed shape over time. In its classical origins, the term civil society was synonymous with the state or “political society.” Civil society and its translations emerged from generations of successive thinkers (Kumar 1993). Aristotle’s *koinōnia politikē* (political society) and Cicero’s *societas civilis* were early renditions of this concept (Rowley 1998, 402). In its infancy, the idea of civil society was often depicted as the state and civil public as one sphere. John Locke shares this view of “civil

government” as having a symbiotic relationship to “civil or political society” (Locke [1960] 1980).

Immanuel Kant’s translation of civil society was *bürgerliche gesellschaft*, in which the idea of political society evolved to form a constitutional state (Rowley 1998, 402). Jean Jacques Rousseau views *l’etat civil* as the state itself and it was in this tradition that civil society continued to be seen as a classical expression of order. This social order of citizenship allowed people to regulate disputes according to a system of laws, where civility reigned, and citizens took part in public life (Kumar 1993, 377; Rowley 1998; Ferguson [1767] 2007; Roepke 1996).

In studying America, Alexis de Tocqueville identifies three realms of society: the state, civil society, and political society ([1835 and 1840] 2000). In political society, he declares, the most important law governing human society was the “art of association” ([1856] 2001). These are the “intermediary institutions” that allow humans to flourish and congregate for common interests. He attributes this “general habit and taste for association” with the spread of politics. Within this sphere of “free schools,” citizens learn to contribute to the body politic ([1856] 2001).

Following Tocqueville but heavily influenced by Hegel and Marx, Antonio Gramsci presents a different formula for civil society. He found that the state equals political society plus civil society minus its economic dimension. More specifically, he viewed political society as a sphere of coercion and domination. They saw civil society as the arena of consent and political direction (Kumar 1993, 382; Gramsci 1971). Gramsci saw the relationship between civil society and the state as:

An equilibrium between political society and civil society (or hegemony of a social group over the entire national society exercised through the so-called private organizations, like the Church, the trade unions, the schools, etc.). [It's] precisely in civil society . . . that intellectuals operate especially. (Gramsci 1971, 56)

These intellectuals foster legitimacy and consensus amongst the various associations (Kumar 1993, 382). The involvement of intellectuals in civil society is not entirely lost overtime and the concept has resonance with leading scholars and more importantly, demands the attention of military planners (Walzer 2008; Fukuyama 1995; Putnam 1995).

Across multiple contexts, Tocqueville, Gramsci, and many others buttress the concept of civil society as a sphere of culture that embodies the manners and mores of a given society. It is an arena where values and meanings are challenged, contested, and changed (Kumar 1993, 383). The connection of civil society and culture continues to be debated today (Platteau 1994; Fukuyama 2001). Hence, learning about these networks of associations and studying civil society as a whole can provide an increased understanding of a people's culture. These characteristics of civil society help shape its concept and the discussion of civil society re-emerges in Eastern Europe with the revolutions of 1989 beginning with Poland.

Contemporary Views of Civil Society

The Solidarity movement in Poland set off flames of passion and hopes for an entire region (Kumar 1993, 386). Jacques Rupnik announces "the end of revisionism and the rebirth of civil society" (1979, 60). Agents of civil society triggered a powerful social movement and Poland's Solidarity became a prime example of self-organization and

concerted action (Arato 1982). It was civil society and not political or military policy that brought communism to end in these countries (Sharp 1973).

The revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe revitalized the idea of civil society. In the collapse of communist states, civil society played a pivotal role in transitioning various countries (such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany) towards democracy (Kumar 1993, 376; Keane 1988). In 1989, Pierre Rosanvallon proposed that the utility of civil society be increased by expanding its boundaries: “There must be an effort to fill out society, to increase its density by creating more and more intermediate locations fulfilling social functions, and by encouraging individual involvement in networks of direct mutual support” (1988, 206-7).

The prominent German theorist, Jürgen Habermas, developed another component of civil society: the public sphere or *Öffentlichkeit* (Cohen and Arato 1992). As a sociological variant, he viewed the public sphere as “a space or arena between household and state, other than market,” where it concerns “association, autonomy, and civility as well as communication” (Byrant 1994, 497). Habermas’s view of communication as a medium for dialogue and cooperation creates an intellectual atmosphere rich for engagement. Putnam expands the value of this atmosphere in a study of local governance in Italy.

Putnam develops a theory of social capital, where networks, associations, and trust enable actors to cooperate more effectively in pursuit of shared objectives (1995, 664). In multiple settings, he demonstrates that trust is amplified when more people choose to connect with each other. Putnam finds that “social trust and civic engagement are strongly correlated,” and this holds true across different countries (1995, 665).

Advancing the concept of social capital, Jonathon Fox applies a “political-construction” approach in rural Mexico to develop an “assembly of three building blocks” (1996, 1089). These building blocks “contribute to the emergence and consolidation of social capital” (Mustaffa 2005, 332). These are:

1. Political Opportunity—the outcome of shifting conflicts and alliances within societal elites, which may protect scaled-up collective action against government or elite backlash in a less-than-democratic political context.
2. Social Energy—the store of motivated activists who may be willing to bear the “irrational start-up costs of mobilization.”
3. Scaling Up—building connections across local, regional, and national scales (Fox 1996, 1091).

While Fox’s building blocks show the emergence of social capital and its consolidation by the state, subsequent studies by Elinor Ostrom (to include Evans 1996, Narayan 1999) further explain the value of positive interactions between the state and civil society (1996). The notion of “coproduction” generates wealth and services from the synergy between the state and civil society (Ostrom 1996).

Ostrom and Narayan convey the importance of complementarity between the state and civil society where “nongovernmental actors bring their local knowledge, relative efficiency, and greater adaptability to government’s greater legitimacy, resources, and specialized management structures to ensure better developmental outcomes” (Mustaffa 2005, 332; Ostrom 1996; Narayan 1999). In her continued study of development, Ostrom created a complex framework for the analysis of social and ecological systems (2009).

Aside from the positive aspects of social capital, Daanish Mustaffa warns of the creation of uncivil forces and anti-social capital (2005).

Mustaffa's study of Pakistan's civil society groups (Jamaat-E-Islami and The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan) demonstrates the negative effects of poor policy choices and the impact of polarization. In his review of civil society he shows that "social capital and civil society are primarily nested within an actor-oriented approach that emphasizes agency and contingency more than social structures and necessary relationships in explaining development of social capital" (2005, 332).

In contrast, Putnam concentrates on the erosion of social capital in America as a result of decaying structures and institutions (2000). Putnam cautions that a decline in associations and "social disconnectedness" cause dire consequences for the state and society writ large (Boggs 2001, 281). Hence, the government's effectiveness and democratic robustness is linked to the participation of social organizations and networks (Bernard and Karakoc 2007, 542). These complex networks, interactions, and self-organization phenomena within civil society require a cross-referencing of concepts and theories from other academic disciplines to gain a better understanding of the concept of civil society.

Cross-Pollinating Concepts

In the social sciences, the non-linear modalities resident within complex social systems attracts theoretical explanations from the natural and physical sciences. Ilya Prigogine, Nobel Prize-winning founder of chaos theory and one of the founders of complexity science defines open systems and the concept of self-organization (Connolly 2011, 20). Self-organization, also known as "emergence" in complexity science circles,

results from the spontaneous emergence of order at critical points of instability within complex structures (Capra 2002; Connolly 2011). Complexity science has shifted focus from the study of structures to the processes of their emergence (Capra 2002, 14). Prigogine's theory of dissipative structures and emergence bridged disciplines and spawned new methods for understanding social science with a particular emphasis on interactions and interconnections (Loode 2011, 70; Healy 2005).

A review by Sydney Tarrow of civil war scholarship (articles by Stathis Kalyvas 2006 and Elizabeth Wood 2003) finds "that it is not quantities but *interactions* that are the key to the dynamics of violence" (2007, 596). These complex interactions of people that take the form of structures, patterns, and properties for self-organization serve as the catalyst for what Jeffrey Goldstein calls "social emergence" (1999, 49). Alison Gilcrest's study of "well-connected" communities finds that strong communities emerge "as a result of the interactions within a complex web of overlapping networks" (2004, 19). These communities, as social systems, "thrive at the edge of chaos in which people's sense of community, their social identity, emerges from the unpredictable dynamics of mutual influence and interaction" (Loode 2011, 71).

To compound the complexity of these human systems, Jane Bennett argues that "actants" and unseen forces, what she calls "vibrant matter," have the capacity and varying degrees of agency to run through and impress upon systems (Connolly 2011). Bennett suggests that focus should not only be given to individuals and groups but to the web of forces affecting situations and events. Her focus on the environment, particularly landfills, expose chemicals that alter brain chemistry and can affect mood (Bennett 2010). These factors, among many others, show the limitless variables that persist within any

environment. A complex environment requires actors to make the best decision among a variety of possible wrong choices that may be incalculable and largely unpredictable (Bar-Yam 2004, 67).

Nonetheless, a fusion of academic theory and military doctrine combined with careful examinations of complex social systems illuminate opportunities to intervene and situations to avoid. For military planners, any activity or interference in a system can possibly do more harm than good. Attention to the local dynamics of political competition and power struggles amongst groups within a society should be examined to prevent inadvertently supplanting the wrong group to power (Donahoe 2013; Schmidt 2013; Perez 2013c). Rigorous analysis of civil society groups requires a robust and systematic approach that incorporates multiple theories and methods. These military concerns regarding civil society concepts require an examination of military doctrine.

Military Doctrine

Military doctrine is a guide for what “works best” predicated on combat tested concepts and principles. It is broad and authoritative, serving as a base foundation for the emergence of new concepts and ideas (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009). Doctrine is not a blueprint, but a manual for action based on circumstance and need (Albro 2010, 1088). In a critical view, General Mattis argues that “doctrine is the last refuge of the unimaginative” (Albro 2010, 1088) and General Casey exclaims “I need people who can think!” (Benson 2013). Good planning and innovation are derived from those who understand the nation’s strategic direction and are able to leverage doctrine for effective military operations (Perez 2013a).

The present transformation of *Army Doctrine 2015* is a momentous undertaking by the US Army Combined Arms Center (2013). Although many will expend energy pointing out its shortfalls, this study aims to capitalize on useful concepts (e.g., Army Design Methodology and Mission Command) and interweave cutting-edge academic scholarship to advance incremental changes to planning processes and analytical approaches that prepare leaders for uncertainty. General Dempsey describes future threats and this uncertainty as a “security paradox” (2012, 3) but despite their historical record of unreliability, trend-spotting and predictive analysis, continue to receive attention and resources (Gray 2005). This begs the question: What has the military learned from predictive analysis and trend-spotting that has benefitted strategic planning and operations?

Problems with Prediction: Open and Closed Systems

Clausewitz reminds us that “war is the realm of uncertainty,” as well as the “realm of chance” (1989). Gray advises that defense planner’s yield to this maxim and emphasizes the danger in forecasting (2005). Philip Tetlock would agree and recommend that praxis need to be more like “eclectic foxes,” exploring multiple theories and skeptical of predictions, rather than “hedgehogs” who operate with blinders and narrowly focus on a single theory (2007). Carl von Clausewitz’s “trinity of chance, uncertainty, and friction (will) continue to characterize war and make anticipation of even the first order consequences of military action highly conjectural” (Kelly and Kilcullen 2006, 90). Perez underscores the “socio-political phenomena, which include wars, are not susceptible to simple cause-effect analysis” (2011, 41). US Joint Forces Command

(USJFCOM) learned these painful lessons from the Effects Based Operations (EBO) concept.

After many exercises and testing, USJFCOM came to the realization that EBO was best suited for closed systems, such as the deliberate targeting process used by the US Air Force. It was not suitable for Army and Marine ground forces who encounter multitudes of open systems in the environment (Mattis 2008, 19). For embracing uncertainty and analyzing open systems, the Army Design Methodology (ADM or Design) proves most accommodating (Perez 2011; Zweibelson 2011).

In addition to the traditional detailed planning method, Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), Design offers a different approach albeit with no guarantees but dissimilar ways to tackle and frame difficult problems. For problems, Einstein says “that if he had one hour to save the world he would spend fifty-five minutes defining the problem and only five minutes finding the solution” (Kenney 2012). As in medical practice, “a misdiagnosis is unfortunate, but a flawed prescription based on such a misrecognition can be deadly” (McGovern 2011).³ This holds true for the military and “if you are working on the wrong problem, you will either have to change your plan, be really lucky, or . . . fail” (Kem 2012, 13). A study by Colin Jackson (2008) shows “that military efforts to ‘do politics’—through security and service provision—frequently misdiagnose the core political stakes of conflict” (Staniland 2012, 256).

³A critical review of Paul Collier’s books *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It* and *Wars, Guns, and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places*. McGovern warns of risky policy recommendations and prescriptions from misinterpreted symptoms and causes (2011).

To no surprise, Design was introduced to the military and met with heavy resistance: “This non-linear process of creation, destruction, and innovation frightens those that hold uniformity, repetition, and institutionalism in high regard” (Zweibelson 2011, 8). The debate over the usefulness and application of Design echoes through the halls of the US Army Command and General Staff College but its utility for analyzing complex social systems is undeniable.

Where Civil Society Fits in Doctrine

A preliminary step to any military undertaking requires that commanders at all levels gain an understanding of their operational environment (OE). This OE is a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 2011). The OE contains a multitude of interrelated variables and sub variables, to include their relationships and interactions (U.S. Department of the Army 2012b). The Army categorizes its operational variables with the acronym: PMESII-PT, broken down into (P) political, (M) military, (E) economic, (S) Social, (I) Information, (I) Infrastructure, (P) Physical Terrain, and (T) Time.

For specific missions, planners use another categorical device to distill variables that affect their mission: METT-TC which stands for (M) mission, (E) enemy, (T) terrain and weather, (T) troops, (T) time available, and (C) Civil Considerations. The latter variable has ASCOPE, among many other, categorical devices to filter more data: ASCOPE which divides information into (A) areas, (S) structures, (O) organizations, (P) people, and (E) events (U.S. Department of the Army 2012b). This “alphabet” soup of

categorical devices presents its challenges and frequently becomes a crossword puzzle for staffs to fill in.

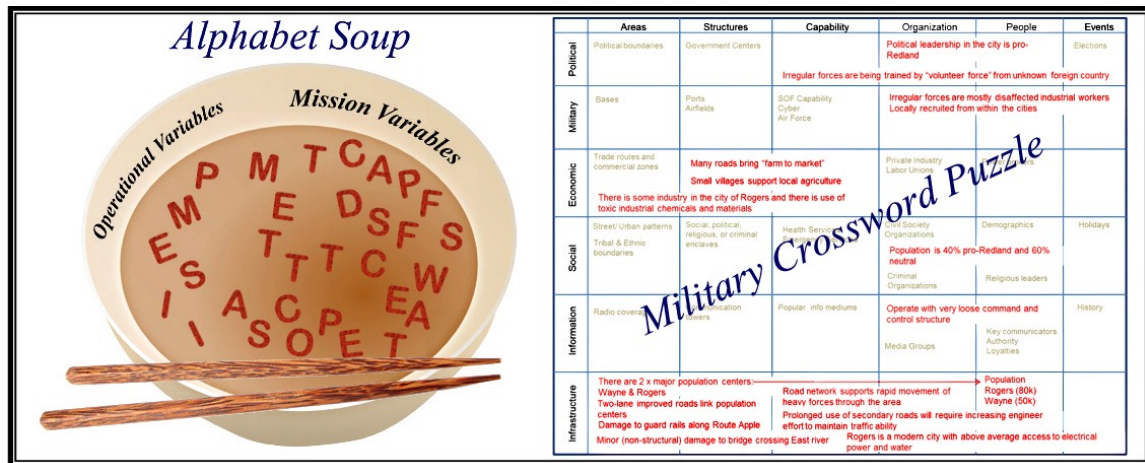


Figure 4. Categorical Memory Devices

Source: Created by author.

Consequently, these categorical devices prove useful for packaged and prepared PowerPoint presentation briefs. These inflexible semantics often get sold as taxonomies and methodologies that provide analysis for commanders (Demarest 2011, 390). Might these mental categorical exercises lead to an oversimplification of dynamic variables and elude the true complexity of the OE (Capra 2002; Taleb 2007)? In a classroom experiment with Local Dynamics of War Scholar Students at Command and General Staff College, Perez discovered that students who used the PMESII-PT model to categorize the environment wasted valuable time struggling to decipher which category to place variables. Moreover, these students missed opportunities to draw connections and make quality use of the data (Perez 2013b).

These analytical approaches and methods do not adequately explain the environment in a comprehensive fashion. They are a good way to filter information, but leaders need to go beyond these devices to incorporate theoretical lenses that will render a deeper understanding of the environment. In the human domain, the local mix of people, groups, families, tribes, religion, ethnicity, and many other factors blur and complicate lines between alliances, allegiances, systems, and networks that demand attention.

For campaign plans and operational approaches, counterinsurgency and stability operations might have lines of effort that focus capabilities on (1) civil security (police and security forces), (2) civil control (law), (3) restoration of essential services, (4) support to governance, and (5) infrastructure development. At the operational level, these efforts link to national level objectives and end states. Conversely, an additional effort needs to be created for the engagement and partnership with civil society organizations at the local level. In his view of COIN doctrine, Kalyvas vividly points out “the theory underpinning it (FM 3-24) as constructivist and point to a key problem, namely, the conceptualization of politics as ‘high politics’ and the concomitant downgrading of local politics into a fuzzy understanding of culture and social structure, which is effectively bracketed off” (2008, 351).

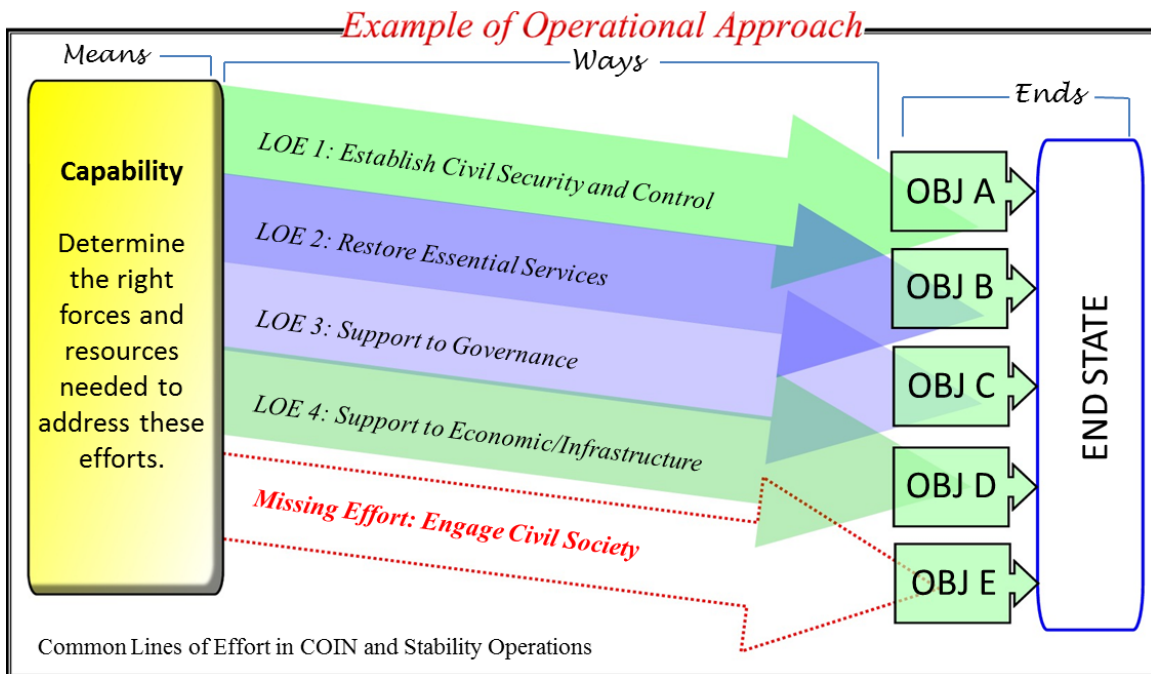


Figure 5. Example Operational Approach

Source: Created by author.

Summary

This review of literature and analysis of doctrine expose a key knowledge gap for military practitioners: there is no study, theory, or plan that explains the role between the military and civil society organizations abroad, much less any guide for effective engagement.

The literature, doctrine, and present operational demands narrow the inquiry of this study to this question: How might the US military think about and interact with civil society organizations to help win a sustainable peace? The next chapter will define the methodology used to explore this question and this chapter closes with a table of the top ten lessons synthesized from the review of literature and doctrine.

Table 1. Top Ten Lessons from Chapter 2	
10	Military and CSO members share similar values, inasmuch as they accept increased risks and endure hardships to serve the public and greater good.
9	Human dynamics and war are inextricably intertwined.
8	Civil space and public sphere foster an intellectual atmosphere rich for engagement and dialogue.
7	Understanding civil society provides increased insight to a people's culture.
6	Complex social systems are not reducible to linear causality.
5	Categorical memory devices help distill information about the environment but should not be sold as analysis.
4	A stronger civil society promotes democratic practices and boosts the legitimacy of the state.
3	Trust is built through increased interactions and interconnections.
2	The same level of care given to the termination of lethal targets must be equally applied to the engagement of the civil populace.
1	Mistaking symptoms as causes is dangerous, yet providing a prescription with the wrong diagnosis is fatal.

Source: Created by author.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Embrace complexity and context—or simply, *reality*; avoid distorting reductionism and overstated gains from simple models. Embrace systematic, evolutionary learning through various interdisciplinary methodologies, theories, and empirical approaches, including case studies; be aware of, and try to avoid, path dependencies from disciplinary or methodological blinders.

— Brett M. Frischmann, *Two Enduring Lessons from Elinor Ostrom*

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine if military forces can engage civil society to develop networks of capability, which can be employed in specific situations, and can energize masses of people into concerted action for peace. Studying contemporary intervention examples illustrate the plausibility of this capability and its implications. Rather than using a broad set of interventions, two experimental interventions are examined in detail.

This chapter is organized into six sections: (1) analytical style and research approach; (2) experimental intervention criteria; (3) the conceptual framework; (4) contemporary experiment data collection; (5) methodological limitations; and (6) a brief summary of the chapter. Overall, this chapter shows how data is collected, organized, and analyzed to support this thesis' argument.

Analytical Style and Research Approach

Ian Shapiro laments that “academics have all but lost sight of what they claim is their object of study” (2005, 2). Sil and Katzenstein’s solution is what they call “analytical eclecticism” (2010, 412). They and many other scholars recommend that

research embody “an ‘eclectic combination’ of diverse theoretical perspectives to avoid the ‘excessive simplifications’ required to apply a single theoretical lens to grasp the manifold complexities on the ground (2010, 412). Using this interdisciplinary style improves the chances of revealing hidden connections and dynamic patterns not visible with a single theoretical lens.

Bringing a conglomeration of theories to bear on a real world problem is retroductive reasoning, also known as abductive reasoning. This “inference to the best explanation” results from the use of mature theories to evaluate a set of incomplete observations (Shapiro 2005, 39). This type of reasoning is germane to military professionals who routinely face challenges on the ground that require them to take their “best shot” (sometimes literally). The first illustration below (figure 6) depicts the three modes of reasoning (inductive, deductive, and retroductive) followed by an illustration of retroductive reasoning and the approach used for this study (figure 7).

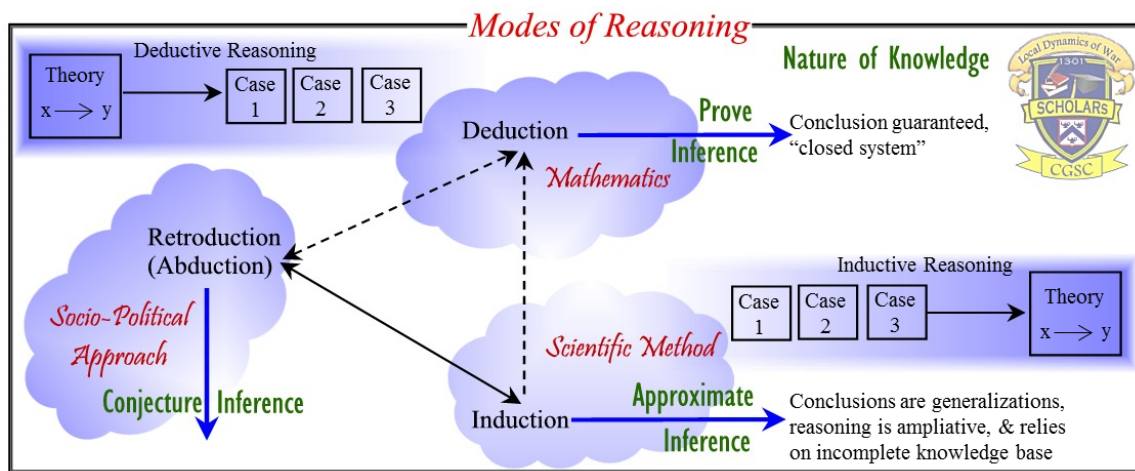


Figure 6. Modes of Reason

Source: Created by author from Celestino Perez, Local Dynamics of War (Lesson 1, Scholar Program Instruction, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2013); Local Dynamics of War Scholars Seminar; Jason Glynos and David Howarth, *Logics of Critical Explanation in Social and Political Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 18-48.

Retroductive reasoning can be compared to the type of reasoning that people use on a daily basis. People make the best decision based on the observations, facts, and evidence on hand. As shown in the illustration above deduction is linear mathematics: If $x = 4$, and if $y = 1$, Then $2x + y = 9$. Inductive reasoning is what scientist use to test their hypothesis. They test numerous cases to determine the most likely cause or explanation (Perez 2013a; Glynos and Howarth 2007; Cox 2011).

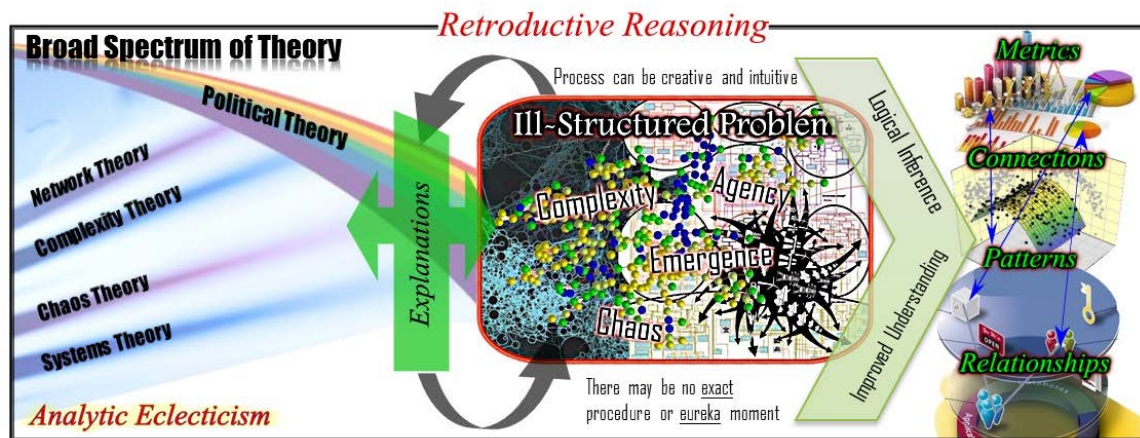


Figure 7. Research Approach and Style

Source: Created by author from Celestino Perez, Local Dynamics of War (Lesson 1, Scholar Program Instruction, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2013).

Perez cautions that the plurality of theories should not serve as templated answers, instead “as catalysts for the imaginative generation of possible explanations to explain a set of circumstances” (2013d; Cox 2011).

Experimental Intervention Criteria

The primary benefit of using fresh experiences is the access to available information and participants. Perhaps equally important is that the quality and integrity of

data collected has not been tarnished by the effects of time. To demonstrate the plausibility of this thesis' claim requires experimental examples that resulted in the mobilization of people as a result of some type of military intervention. The two examples used: Operation Clean Sweep and Ride-for-Peace Rally occurred within similar contexts on the island of Jolo in the Sulu Archipelago of the Philippines. These events and their systems offer a set of complex social circumstances that are ripe for analysis and exploration. See table 2 below for the screening criteria used to select the two examples.

Table 2. Experimental Intervention Selection Criteria		
Criteria	Operation Clean Sweep	Ride for Peace Rally
Collective action problem	Y	Y
CSO participation	Y	Y
Access to participants	Y	Y
Mass mobilization of people	Y	Y
US military involvement	Y	Y

Source: Created by author.

Conceptual Framework

Analytical eclecticism and retroductive reasoning describe the approach and style but it is the framework that brings structure and organization to the logic and intricacy of analysis. This study uses Perez's Modified Institutional Analysis and Development Framework (from here on referred to as MIADF). This framework is developed from Elinor Ostrom, Nobel-Prize winning founder of the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework (Gibson et al. 2005) and has influences from many other

scholars. The IAD framework is the product of decades of research on how individuals behave in collective action settings and the institutional foundations that influence these interactions (Gibson et al. 2005).

The MIADF is not a linear process but a functionalist approach that integrates multiple theories in a coherent manner. The framework’s suppleness allows the analyst to determine which theories are compatible for the questions being addressed. Equally if not more important is the framework’s particular attractiveness “for studying the complex interactions . . . (in) social systems because of the many different disciplines and methodologies that must be brought to bear if progress is to be made” (Frischmann 2013, 10). The following illustration (figure 8) shows the primary elements of the framework followed by a breakdown of the distal and proximate context.

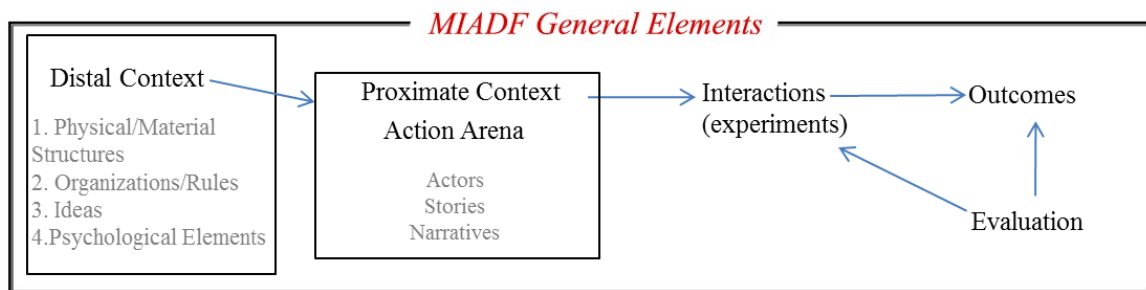


Figure 8. Primary Components of MIADF

Source: Created by author.

The distal context centers on Craig Parsons’s typology of core logics for the explanation of different causal mechanisms (2007). By understanding the core logic of an argument, scholars and practitioners use conceptual precision to formulate clear and distinct claims that contribute to the field of study. Despite the challenges of articulating

an incontestable claim for human action, greater integrity is obtainable through an increased understanding of the core logics surrounding various arguments (Parsons 2007, 172). The distal logics on the MIADF are broken into four types of efficient causation:

1. Physical/Material Structures: this is Parsons's structural-materialist logic. "Its core logic explains people's choice as a direct function of their position in a 'material' landscape—an obstacle course that is at least treated as if it were composed of intersubjectively present physical constraints and resources are presented as exogenously given. They may be dynamic, but they are manipulable by people over the temporal scope of the argument" (2007, 64).

2. Organizations/Rules: derived from Parsons's institutional claim, "argues that the setting-up of certain intersubjectively present institutions channels people unintentionally in certain directions at some later point. Due to the inheritance of a certain institutional obstacle course, actors confront unambiguous constraints that orient them to certain behavior" (2007, 67).

3. Idea: based on Parsons's "ideational causal claims (which) trace actions to some constellation of practices, symbols, norms, grammars, models, beliefs, and/or identities through which certain people interpret the world" (2007, 131).

4. Psychological Elements: Based on Parsons's psychological logic which is "claims about the causal effects of hard-wired mental processes that depart from a simple rational model. In most cases they point to irrational biases, misperceptions, instincts, or affects" (2007, 161).

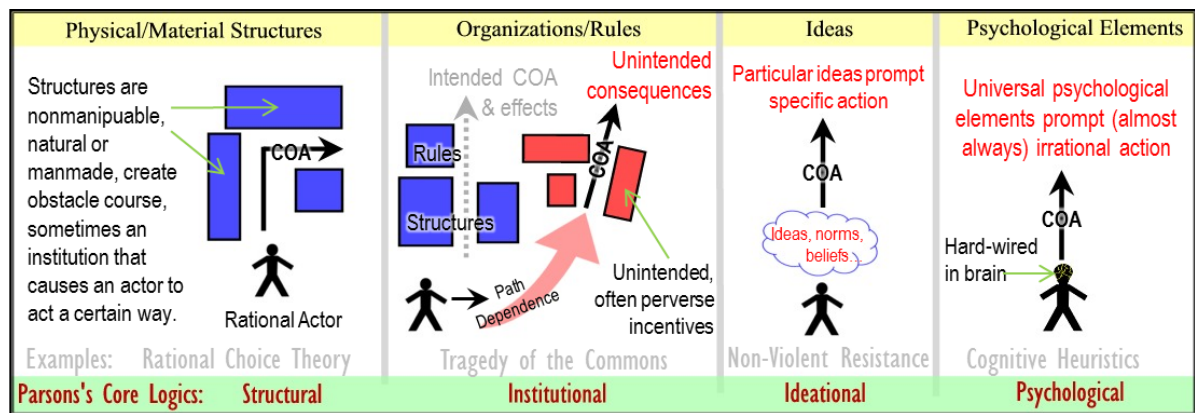


Figure 9. Breakdown of Distal Context Core Logics by Parsons

Source: Created by author from Celestino Perez, *Local Dynamics of War* (Lesson 3, Scholar Program Instruction, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2013); Craig Parsons, *How to Map Arguments in Political Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007).

Within the proximate context there is the action arena of actors, stories, and narratives, all of which are subject to interpretive methods of analysis (Perez 2013d). Ostrom describes this arena as the “social space where individuals interact, exchange goods and services, engage in appropriation and provision activities, solve problems, or fight” (Ostrom, Gardner, and Walker 1994, 28). The action arena comprises seven variables to construct the proximate context:

(1) the set of actors; (2) the set of specific positions to be filled by actors; (3) the set of allowable actions and their linkage to outcomes; (4) the potential outcomes that are linked to individual sequences of actions; (5) the level of control each actor has over choice; (6) the information available to actors about the structure of the action situation; and (7) the costs and benefits—which affect perceived incentives—assigned to actions and outcomes. (Gibson et al. 2005)

The analysis of these variables plus the stories and narratives of peoplehood (Smith 2003) identify perceived incentives and interests of actors, groups, and institutions involved.

Throughout the MIADF and during any intervention there is always the possibility of emergent causation (Connolly 2011). This is pertinent for complex social

systems which have open systems that are susceptible to self-organization or “emergence” (Capra 2002, 14). A new order emerges at critical points of disequilibrium. Normally, this is after a collision amongst systems where extant preadaptations and litter intersect (Connolly 2011).

In a stable system of equilibrium, a combination of one or more efficient causality (Parsons’s core logics) can be explored for an explanation. For periods of instability, agency, and autopoiesis, Connolly’s emergent causality is best suited. See figure 10 for a conceptual illustration of this distinction.

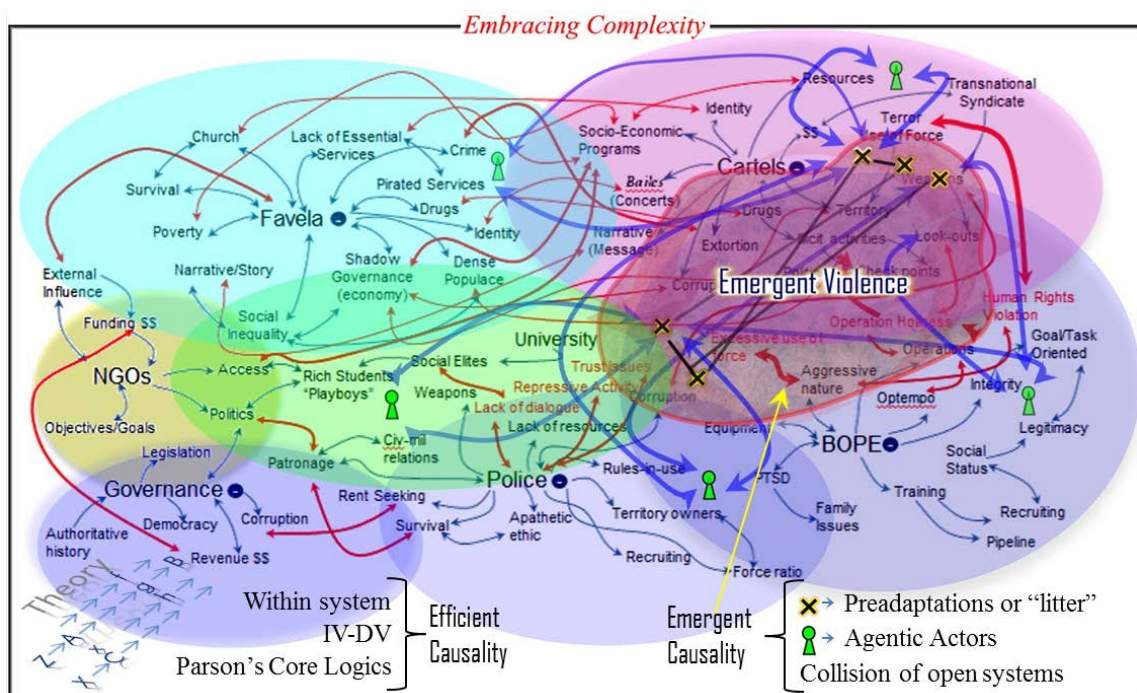


Figure 10. Efficient and Emergent Causality

Source: Created by author from Local Dynamics of War “Operation Elite Squad” Exercise, 2013.

At a glance, the above illustration may appear complicated. However, simplicity rests on the periphery of complexity and these visualization tools drive analysts to ask questions they might have never asked or ever thought of (Berlow 2010). Are we focused on the right system? Which systems do we need to focus our resources on? These tools and the MIADF are complimentary and beneficial to military planning processes.

The framework is infused with doctrinal concepts from *Army Doctrine 2015*. Two primary concepts: Army Design Methodology and Mission Command Philosophy underpin the overall process of the MIADF with a conceptual language and product deliverables required for a military setting. The latter is essentially an additional theory that explains military decisions, actions, and behavior desired for military operations (Perez 2013a). Additionally, the laborious work and analysis of the MIADF easily supplements, feeds, or augments the Design process and demonstrates its usefulness at all levels. Fusing these layers into the MIADF incorporates military ingredients more easily digestible for planners and leaders.

The MIADF is completed for this study, from the perspective of a notional field grade SOF officer, cycling through the preparation, conduct, and completion of military operations in the Southern Philippines. The patterns of interaction component consist mainly of the two experimental interventions chosen for examination. Analysis of the outcomes and evaluative criteria are supplemented by interviews of actors and participants present during these experiments. Figure 11 is a conceptualization of the MIADF.

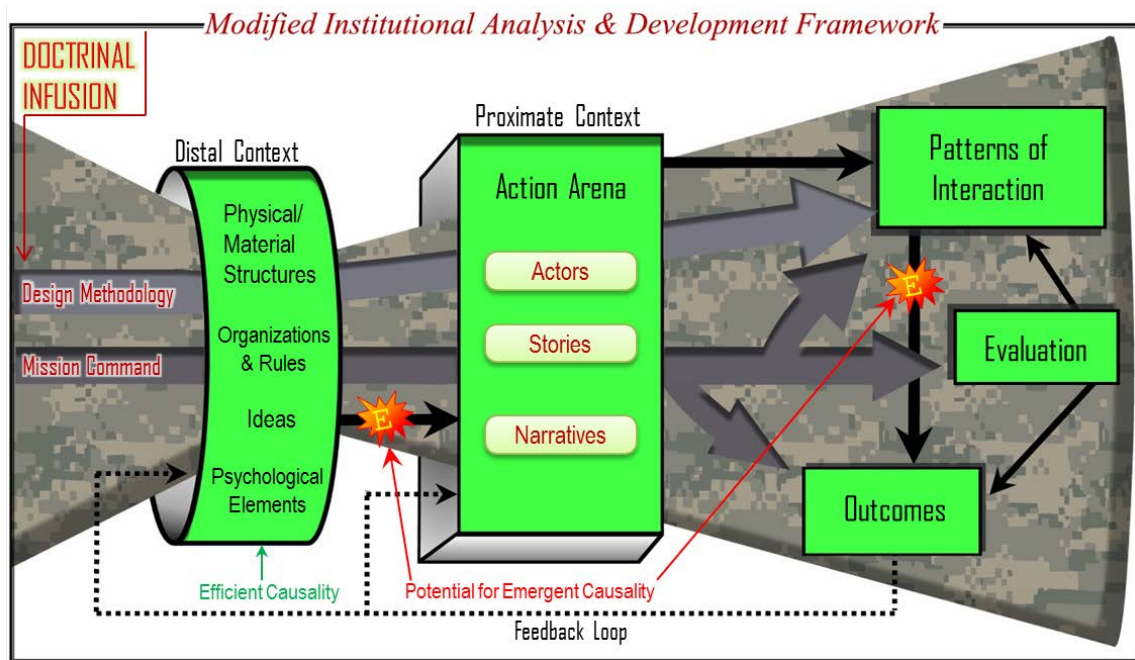


Figure 11. MIADF with Army Doctrine Infusion

Source: Created by author.

Contemporary Experiment Data Collection

Multiple methods will be used to collect data from these experiments. The primary method of interaction, known as the Delphi Method, is used to solicit the historical insight of those involved in these interventions (Facione 2012). This study leverages the expertise and experience of a variety of participants (i.e., CSO leaders, local governance, students, and military officers). The author completed these interviews through voice calls, email, and social media platforms (Facebook and LinkedIn).

The voice conversations are recorded for accuracy. These conversations and correspondence are available upon request. Cognitive heuristic traps, such as “anchoring,” are avoided by applying anonymity to responses as they get circulated

(Williams 2012). Two rounds of mixed questions gauge the efficacy of military cooperation with CSOs in the Philippines.

Methodological Limitations

The complex nature of interventions prevents determining all possible causal relationships resident within the environment. The infinite amount of variables and unseen dynamics prevent any definitive conclusions or deductions. Additionally, a potential weakness in data collection stems from the author's relationship to interviewees. Friendships and professional ties may affect responses and carry biases of those being questioned. Nonetheless, these limitations are mitigated by the robustness of the MIADF plus the added variance to collection methods (e.g., use of military and open source media reports).

Summary

This chapter covers the research style, approach, and conceptual framework used for analysis. The MIADF integrates multiple theories to analyze two experimental interventions in the Philippines. Data is collected to aid the analysis and multiple methods are employed to increase the fidelity of the framework. In terms of analysis, this eclectic process adds flesh to the skeletal bones of social objectivity which creates a renewed perspective illuminating a connected series of concepts and logics that help analyze social relations and processes, while remaining faithful to military commitments.

The following chapter provides the results of the analysis with connections and theoretical explanations interwoven into the delivery. The final chapter provides recommendations, policy implications, and proposed agendas for future research.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

We the willing, led by the unknowing, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful.
We have done so much, with so little, for so long, we are now qualified to do
anything, with nothing.

— Konstantin Josef Jireček, *1881*

Introduction

Jireček's thoughts continue to represent contemporary soldiers, diplomats, and civilians who confront adversity, take risks, and regularly accomplish what seems impossible. This chapter examines the experiences of a four-man Civil Affairs team operating in the Southern Philippines who challenged the prevailing wisdom to test a new concept. The results were successful and yet the approach was abandoned and the gains lost shortly after the team's transition out of the country. This story is not unique, yet successes of this type rarely garner the attention that could move this approach into mainstream practices of irregular warfare. This analysis examines military operations in the Philippines and answers the question: How might the US military think about and interact with civil society organizations to help win a sustainable peace?

The Philippines has been referred to as the model for the “indirect approach” (Petit 2010, 11; Robinson 2012; Hart 1991).⁴ This is due to the tremendous efforts by US Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to

⁴This indirect strategy is based on “building relationships, reinforcing legitimate institutions, building security-force capabilities, sharing intelligence and information, developing focused civil-military programs, and aggressively promoting local acts of good governance.” See also Hart, B. H. Liddell, *Strategy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Plume, 1991).

successfully target terrorist cells throughout the hinterlands. While these efforts receive deserved praise, scant attention is given to the efforts by ground-level civilian and military alliances which work relentlessly to win the peace. These relationships yield significant gains for the joint task force, US, and Philippines but are rarely examined.

I use the modified Institutional Analysis and Development framework (MIADF) to structure my analysis. The analysis process was conducted as an iterative process using the framework and Design methodology but the MIADF organizes this chapter into a logical flow. After reviewing the strategic direction and background on the Southern Philippines, I combine a mix of theories and data to develop the distal and proximate context which frames the problem and environment. I briefly review mission command theory and describe an operational approach for conducting civil military engagement in the Sulu Archipelago. This is followed by an analysis of two remarkable events, deemed experimental interventions, which demonstrate the viability of US forces enabling and empowering CSO networks into effective action. The chapter concludes with a discussion of a new theoretical lens for viewing the civil society dimension of the environment and offers some “rules of thumb” for consideration in current and future planning.

Strategic Direction

Among the greatest challenges our military faces today is an innate ability to recognize the underlying complexities of our operating environment. Uncertainty and the unpredictable nature of differing societies require a deeper appreciation for the integration of multiple disciplines. Examining a variety of theories from leading scholars serves to illustrate possible causal mechanisms resident within the environment and a careful review of strategic guidance helps link policy to operational objectives. Military

leaders must remain cognizant of the political atmosphere that drives policy to create a plan that is reasonable and achievable (Rose 2011). Clausewitz posits “war is an extension of policy by other means” (1989). For nations to achieve an enduring strategic effect requires a persistent and connected plan that is “linked and sustained via a campaign design that is nested in the larger theater and mission plans and overall U. S. policy (Robinson 2012).

In the political arena, recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have shaped the domestic climate to be wary of any future large-scale military intervention (Rosato and Schuessler 2011, 803). Mueller describes this sense as an “Iraq Syndrome” which will inevitably constrain future interventions (2005). Some realists argue that a policy of realism “offers the prospect of security without war” (Rosato and Schuessler 2011). In Restoration doctrine, Haas contends that wars of choice are over but an active foreign policy is essential for national security (2012). The National Security Strategy postulates that comprehensive engagement provides the ability to shape outcomes on “the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect” (White House 2010, 11). Defense strategy directs the building of partnership capacity and “innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives” (U.S. Department of Defense 2012, 77).

The operations in the Philippines reflect this strategic direction and serve as an ideal template for analyzing small-scale military interventions that can inform present and future planning. Before conducting a review of applicable theories, a short background helps set the scene.

Background on Southern Philippines

The US and Philippines have been working together to combat terrorist organizations in the Southern Philippines since 2001. These terrorist groups seized regional and international attention with bombings, kidnappings, and random acts of violence, but it was a kidnapping of American missionaries (Burnham 2003) and 9/11 that revealed connections between Al Qaeda and Filipino terrorist groups that warranted a US response (Anonymous 2002; Petit 2010).

The Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) was created to focus on the Sulu Archipelago, a vast island chain nestled between the Sulu and Celebes Sea in close proximity to Malaysia and Indonesia (Petit 2010). The principal stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), the primary terrorist group in the Southern Philippines, was on the island of Jolo. The ASG not only have ties to Middle Eastern terrorist networks, they are affiliated with regional groups like Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) from Indonesia (Anonymous 2002; Bond and Simmons 2009). A small island paradise, Jolo does not have the appearance of a terrorist sanctuary. Figure 12 is a map of the Sulu Archipelago and a photo of the Sulu government palace.

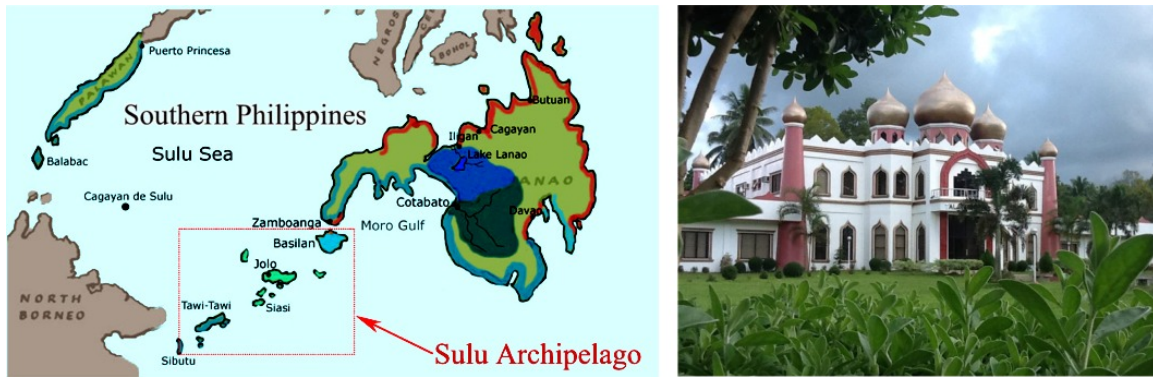


Figure 12. Sulu Archipelago

Source: Map from Robert A. Fulton, Moroland history website, <http://www.morolandhistory.com> (accessed 3 May 2013); photo of Sulu palace courtesy of Sulu PhotograPeace Club.

Jolo has a population of over one hundred forty thousand inhabitants (Philippine Islands 2007), 97 percent of whom are Muslim (Bond and Simmons 2009). Figure 13 shows the island of Jolo and its Grand Mosque. Although the term “Moro” describes all Filipino Muslims, the predominant ethno-linguistic groups on Jolo are the Tausug and Samal (Kaufman 2011). These groups, mainly the Tausugs, have resisted external rule for over four centuries against the Spanish, American, and Philippine governments (Turner 2004). The long term sociopolitical effects of power struggles, conflict, and turbulent governance make for a difficult analysis. However, a cursory review of academic research shows a variety of theoretical explanations that can aid planners through their initial planning process.



Figure 13. Island of Jolo and Grand Mosque

Source: (A) Landscape photo of Jolo and (B) aerial photo of Jolo's Grand Mosque. Photos courtesy of Sulu PhotograPeace Club.

Framing the Environment with Multiple Lenses

Distal Context

Looking beyond the conventional wars of states' armies clashing on battlefields, scholars have shifted their attention to intrastate violence and the study of unconventional conflict (Kalyvas, Shapiro, and Masoud 2008). While useful, many studies of violence have overlooked cases like the Philippines for not meeting a numeric threshold of battle deaths⁵ (Gleditsch et al. 2002). Scholars argue that a binary view of violence neglects explanations that illuminate the conditions under which violence emerges (Chenoweth and Lawrence 2010). In other words, a dichotomy of violence or no violence does not

⁵Many large-N studies often code wars as present or absent (1 or 0). Therefore, cases like the Philippines that have low levels of violence do not meet the numeric minimum of 1000 battle deaths for inclusion in many studies. See also (Collier and Hoeffler 2000; Fearon and Laitin 2003) and the Correlates of War data set critique in (Gleditsch et al. 2002).

address the options that actors have and it ignores why they might choose violence over non-violent strategies (Chenoweth and Lawrence 2010). Beyond actors, many studies focus on state weakness and economic inequality to explain the rise of violence and failed states (Ghani and Lockhart 2008).

The research that focuses on state and economic conditions claim poverty and lack of opportunity are the cause of violence (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Turner 2004). In the Philippines, poverty and systemic corruption permeate state institutions. For example, reports reveal AFP and government officials regularly selling shipments of weapons to the ASG and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) (Vitug and Gloria 2000; Turner 2004; Bonds and Simmons 2009). These weapons are used to kill AFP soldiers and police in insurgent attacks and operations (Griswold 2006; Turner 2004). Nonetheless, weapon proliferation coupled with poor state policy, while important; do not fully explain why people resort to violence (Kaufman 2011).

Chenoweth and Lawrence argue that state weakness is an incomplete explanation for two reasons: (1) there are many weak states that do not necessarily fail and descend into violent conflict and (2) violence has the tendency to erupt at particular times making it difficult to connect “changes in weakness to episodes of violence” (2010, 8). Other variables in the environment such as the external financial support to Muslim groups stymie an assumption that actors become violent due to desperation (Anonymous 2002).

Rotberg confirms that no single indicator of weakness can explain state failure and violent conflict (2003, 11). He finds that:

Research on failed states is insufficiently advanced for precise tipping points to be provided. It is not yet correct to suggest that if GDP falls by X amount in a single year, if rulers dismiss judges, torture reporters, or abuse human rights of their

subjects by X, if soldiers occupy the state houses, or if civilian deaths rise by more than X per year, that the state in question will tip for sure from weak to failing to failed. (Rotberg 2003, 25)

As determined by these different scholars it “is very difficult to act upon structural factors such as poverty and state weakness, which are sadly ubiquitous in much of the world” (Chenoweth and Lawrence 2010, 18). Loode’s seminal study of peacebuilding illuminates the problem of focusing on “so-called fragile states” (2011, 75). Viewing these fragile states as dysfunctional social systems causes the international community to focus their attention on state institutions rather than the dynamics of protracted social conflict situations (Loode 2011). Therefore, a more comprehensive approach integrating multiple disciplines is useful to explain the root causes of violence. In terms of the Philippines, more specifically the conflict in Sulu, Kaufman’s symbolic politics theory is most applicable (2011).

Building on findings from psychology, neuroscience, and cultural anthropology, a symbolic politics theory approach explains “ethnic conflict behavior across time and space” (Kaufman 2011, 937). The theory begins with:

[G]roup myths justifying hostility on both sides, [which is] the result of past Christian-Muslim warfare. Combined with fears of group extinction, opportunity factors, and hostile popular attitudes, these myths enabled group elites to manipulate emotive symbols to justify mobilization against the other group, creating a security dilemma spiral that resulted in the outbreak of war. (Kaufman 2011, 937)

This theory provides a more complete explanation that fills logical gaps, incorporates multiple disciplinary lenses, and cleanly connects the distal and proximate context to clearly frame the environment in the Southern Philippines.

Proximate Context

The examination of elements in symbolic politics theory helps develop the proximate context where actors, stories, and narratives help explain the perceptions, incentives, and interests of different groups of people. This layer of analysis moves planners closer to understanding the conditions which drive the discontent that fracture a society. Analyzing ethnic groups, Kaufman's theory uses a "myth-symbol complex" to encompass memberships, homeland, and history of a particular group. Similarly, Rogers Smith's theory of "people-building" goes further to explain "political peoples" and their narratives (2003, 9).

Smith argues that "no political peoples are natural or primordial. All are the products of long, conflict-ridden histories . . . (and) no extant sense of political peoplehood can be shown to have endured over long periods of time without quite fundamental transformations" (2003, 32). In the case of the Southern Philippines two stories and myths of peoplehood: Christian Filipinos and Muslim Moros illuminate the fundamental perceptions and prejudice resident among people in the Sulu Archipelago and Philippines. The Christian Filipinos' narrative and myths have Spanish and American influence from past colonial rule (Kaufman 2011).

Christians view the "Moro image" of Muslims as "violent, uncivilized, and dangerous" (Kaufman 2011, 953). The Spanish categorized all diverse Muslim ethno-linguistic groups under the one label "Moro" (Turner 2004, 390) which was "a cunning, ruthless, cruel, treacherous savage; a pirate; a raider; a slaver" (Gowing 1979, 41). The term was engrained further after Tausug *ulema* declared a holy war in 1878 and unleashed suicidal warriors known as *juramentados* to attack Christians by looting their

homes and chopping off their heads (McAmis 1974, 53). From the Moro point of view, they viewed their centuries of struggle as a defense to “their fundamental right to self-determination” (Tan 2003, 132).

For Muslim Filipinos, they saw Christians as “invaders and land-grabbers who wanted to eliminate Islam” (Kaufman 2011, 953). Increasing Christian settlements in traditional Muslim areas combined with the Spanish “Christianization” goal instilled fear amongst the Moro population (Kaufman 2011, 949). In their view of Americans, many Tausugs remember the Moro Massacre of 1906 where an estimated six hundred to one thousand men, women, and children were killed by American military legends: Bliss, Pershing, Drum, and Leonard Wood (Griswold 2006; Fulton 2007; Arnold 2011). Mark Twain sarcastically described the massacre as “the greatest victory that was ever achieved by the Christian soldiers of the United States” (1992, 172). See picture (figure 14) of the Moro Massacre aftermath.



Figure 14. Moro Massacre at Bud Dajo on Jolo Island

Source: Robert A. Fulton, Moroland history website, <http://www.morolandhistory.com> (accessed 3 May 2013).

Kipling foretold of these “savage wars of peace” in a poem after the end of the Spanish American War (Bolger 1991). Imam Abudlla confides that “many people don’t know that one of America’s first battles with Muslim insurgents is here on Jolo” (Abudlla 2008; Fulton 2007; Arnold 2011). These narratives and stories are boundless but a continued enquiry builds on a cumulative understanding of the environment and shows how groups might stir emotion to justify violence (Kaufman 2011).

Following the symbolic politics theory, three preconditions must exist for a possible eruption of ethnic war and conflict:

1. If “group myths justify hostility toward a local outgroup” then members can respond with violence,
 2. “Political behavior is motivated more by emotion than by calculation of interest and that fear is the necessary emotion motivating ethnic warfare,”
 3. An opportunity to rebel from a geographical base, without state repression, and no venues for mediating and “addressing group fears and desires” exist
- (Kaufman 2011, 946).

Of note, even with these preconditions present, ethnic war and violence does not necessarily occur. As Kalyvas and Kocher find with ideological and ethnic conflicts, ethnic cleavages may be exogenous and endogenous (2007). With the latter explaining Jolo, war and intervention may create new cleavages or aggravate existing ones. In the Philippines, ethnic conflict does not always equate to ethnic war (Kalyvas and Kocher 2007).

On Jolo, with an array of armaments, it is not uncommon for tribal rivals to exchange mortar fire (Gutierrez 2000, 67). The dire security situation and punctuated spurts of violence force people to choose sides between the disparate groups on Jolo (Turner 2004). Among the main groups (i.e., ASG, MNLF, MILF) alliances form and change regularly making it doubly hard to determine group membership amongst the populace (Christia 2012). Additionally, these groups thrive on religious associations, patronage networks, and family members in government to elude identification and capture (Bond and Simmons 2009). Making the environment more complicated is the large amount of aid and money brought to Jolo by various agencies (Garcia 2009).

With millions and millions of dollars pouring unto the small island of Jolo in the past decade, leaders must question the effectiveness and accountability of varying programs (Fishstein and Wilder 2012). Do dollars necessarily equal influence and are US foreign policy objectives being met? Recent findings in Afghanistan shows reckless spending by USAID and money wasted on large unsustainable programs (Fishstein and Wilder 2012; Chandrasekaran 2012). On Jolo, USAID and many other organizations use sub-level contractors to manage large projects on the island. The poor security situation prevents USAID personnel from operating on the ground and these contractors (not US citizens) have the latitude to further sub-contract and coordinate with local governance for the implementation of US programs. Many of these projects inadvertently contribute to the rampant corruption on the island.

Focused on building capacity and legitimacy for the AFP, JSOTF-P projects are conducted by, with, and through partner AFP units. Ranging from water wells to schools to roads, these projects are managed by US SOF operators on the ground and are implemented over several rotations of personnel. Like USAID projects, these projects are handled by local contractors with US military and AFP supervision. This project system is problematic for two reasons. First, like USAID projects, it is near impossible to prevent corrupt practices from occurring with many of these construction projects. For instance, many contractors have expressed their frustration with paying local barangay (neighborhood district) captains and mayors fees for their cooperation (Ruiz 2008; Kiley 2013). Secondly, there is an enduring problem with ownership and sustainability. Signing memorandums of understanding is not enough to establish real ownership and

maintenance of projects. Although many projects are successful and help people, an equal amount or more are wasteful, insignificant, and burdens for follow-on teams.

Upon arrival to Jolo, Civil Affairs Team 721 (CAT 721) was immediately overwhelmed by the saturation of development projects across the island. There was a total of \$6 million worth of development that encompassed “60 projects that include 13 road constructions, eight water distributions facilities, five well projects, seven school building projects and eight additional infrastructure projects such as a market, a pier, a radio repeater, a drying platform and a health center” (Garcia 2009). This is from years of hard work and laudable efforts but the influx of aid caused a paralyzing effect on multiple communities and possibly worse, destroyed local capability or forced it to move away.

The introduction of service goods like medical care and humanitarian aid established a dependency on external solutions for local problems. These problems coupled with a lack of ownership are synonymous with what is called the “Samaritan’s Dilemma” (Buchanan 1977). In short, a Samaritan, “as per the parable in the New Testament,” confronts a situation where a recipient is in need of help (Gibson et al. 2005, 38). In a two-person game model, the Samaritan chooses to help or not help and the recipient, on the other hand, determines how much effort must be made to obtain the help: a high or low effort level (Gibson et al. 2005, 38). See table 4 for this game with ordinal payoffs:

Table 3. Samaritan's Dilemma

		Recipient	
		High Effort	Low Effort
Samaritan	No Help	2,2	1,1
	Help	4,3	3,4

Source: Created from Clark C. Gibson, Krister Anderson, Elinor Ostrom, and Sujai Shivakumar, *Samaritan's Dilemma: The Political Economy of Development Aid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 38.

The Samaritan's dilemma expressed in table 3 shows donors "are better-off helping no matter what the recipient does" and it benefits the recipient to exert less effort (Gibson et al. 2005, 39). Donor dilemmas pervade development aid in other places such as Africa and Central America. In the Sudan, farmers stopped farming for three years after being spoiled by United Nations food programs. Despite the strong desire to help, donor aid "produced poor—and sometimes catastrophic—outcomes" (Gibson et al. 2005, 39). Any plan must be mindful of its potential unintended consequences and external agencies should carefully determine the appropriate type of development.

The environment and problem frame, which are products of Design, can be created during the MIADF process. Figure 15 shows the observed, current environment, and the desired environment with an abstract sketch in the middle. The problem is framed from the observed and desired systems. In the sketch, a busy system of money and weapons are flowing between groups and actors. There are many projects that are spread across a small island and the CA team will have to contend with these projects. The contractors are mediating elements that have power to distribute projects and money amongst different groups and locations.

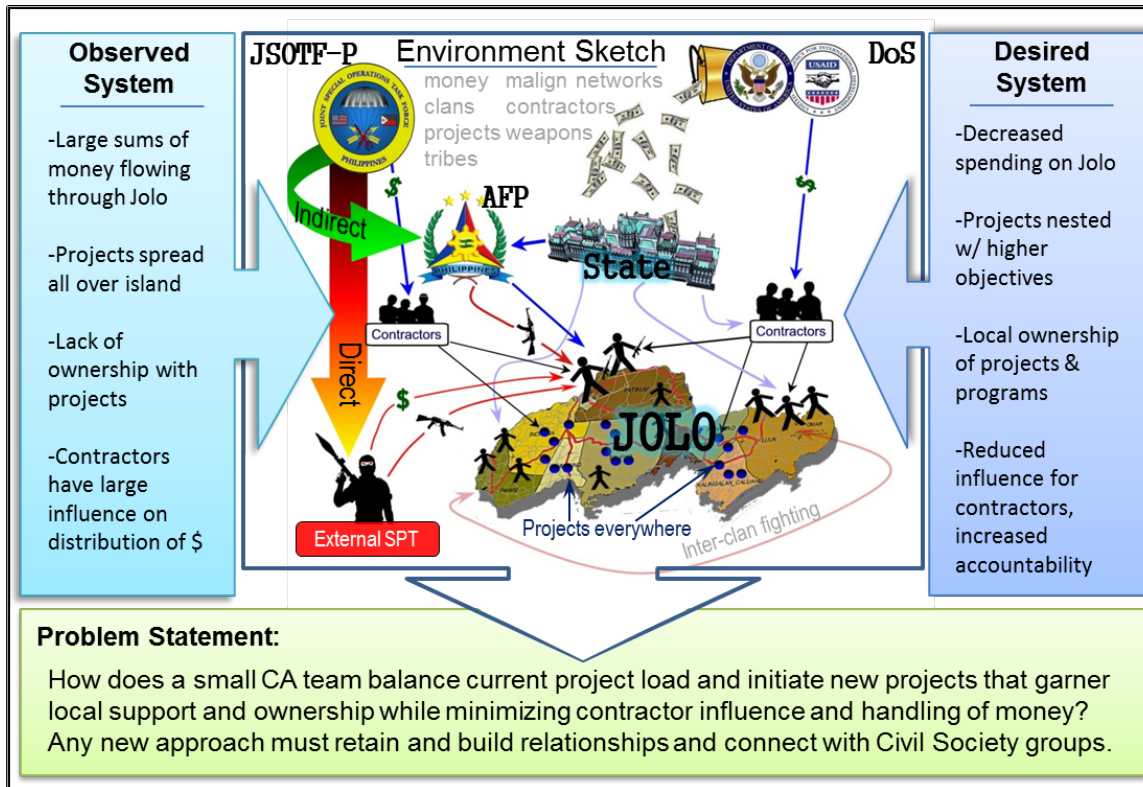


Figure 15. Environment and Problem Frame

Source: Created by author.

The current environment shows the need for an alternative approach to “aggressively erode the conditions that foster extremist activity” (David 2012, 19). Incidentally, the constraints created by a strict Visiting Forces Agreement (U.S. Department of State 1998) serve as a structural mechanism driving new creative approaches (Lambert, Lewis, and Sewall 2012). The agreement between the GRP and US prevents any direct combat role in operations and unlike OIF or OEF; forces in the Philippines could not primarily focus on kinetic operations (Lambert, Lewis, and Sewall 2012). Framing the current and desired environment showed a void that motivated the

CA team to create a new approach and it is here that the theory of Mission Command is most useful and promising.

Mission Command Theory

In SOF, the principles of mission command are alive and well in the organizations and operations for SOF personnel (Conley 2013). Decentralized operations and “disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent” empower “agile and adaptive leaders” (U.S. Department of the Army 2012b) to use freedom of action to capitalize on “forking moments”⁶ (Connolly 2011). These actions are realized through developed trust and cohesive teams that are trained to accept calculated risks. In contrast to conventional units, SOF members are individually and collectively validated through a series of training events and exercises. These elements undergo rigorous pre-mission training that will determine their capability, readiness, and maturity for a specified mission set. Ideally, the availability and competition of teams allows the selection of the most qualified team to go forward. Like SOF operations, many regional engagements will require smaller and younger elements to conduct decentralized missions in challenging contexts.

The “increasingly complex operating environment” requires “a greater balancing of the art of command and the science of control” for increased mission effectiveness (Dempsey 2012). Soldiers are an image of the US and tactical errors on the ground can quickly bring strategic consequences (Stone 2013). The resource constrained government and forced troop reductions provide a period of time that military forces can use to

⁶William Connolly describes these moments as opportunities to “cultivate the capacity to dwell sensitively in historically significant forking moments” (2011, 165).

embrace this theory. Mission command is applicable through the range of military operations (COIN, HADR, FID) and all its phases: zero to five⁷ (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 2011). With mission command in mind, planners can better frame problems and creatively construct operational approaches that accomplish the mission.

Operational Approach

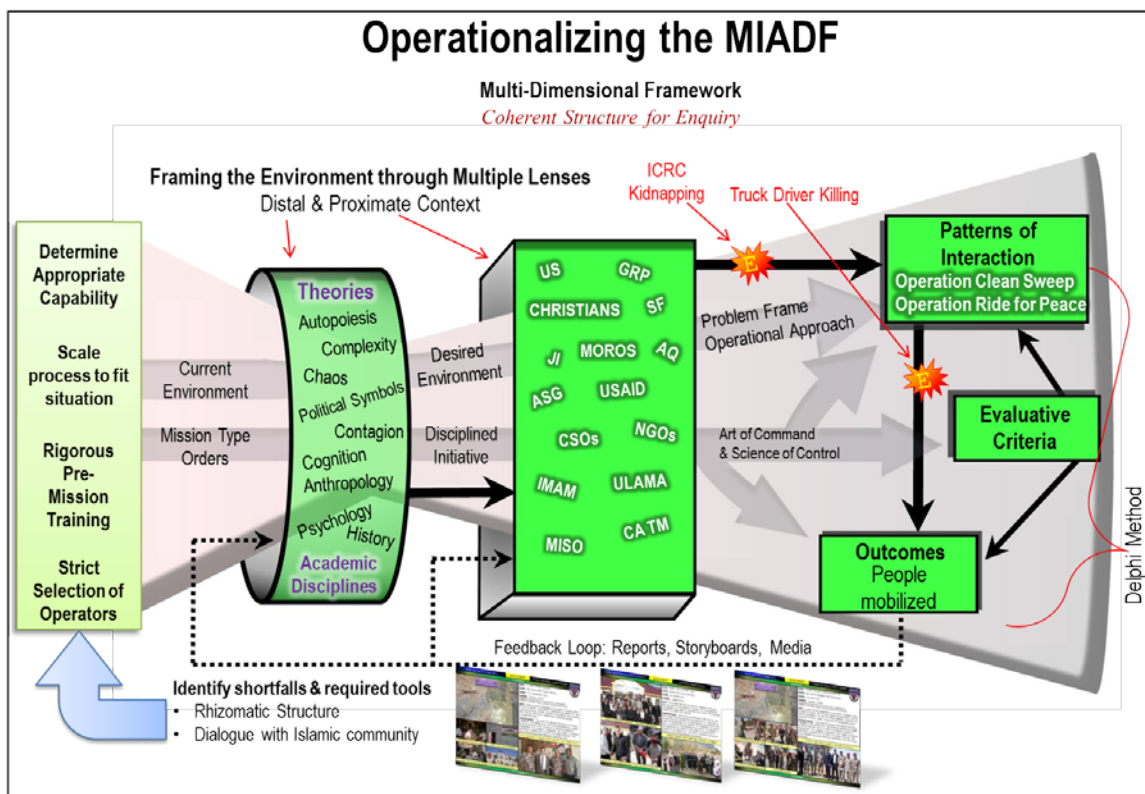


Figure 16. Operationalizing the MIADF to structure analysis

Source: Created by author.

⁷In Joint Publication 3-0, v-6, the phases of operations are: Phase 0, Shape; Phase I, Deter; Phase III, Dominate; Phase IV, Stabilize; and Phase V, Enable Civil Authority.

As depicted in figure 16, the MIADF is used as the framework to structure the analysis for this study. Starting on the far left, the type of force, training, and validation are determined for the operation. The components of the framework are dynamic and it is an iterative process with no linear steps for proceeding. Instead, this cyclical process helps planners confront complex problems and can be used to supplement military planning processes.

Based on the view of the civil society concept described in the literature review, figure 17 is a visual concept of an operational approach that can show commanders and teams where they can focus their efforts. These are Design products that can aid the planning process. They are not intended to be a substitute for the deliberate planning process required to produce an operations plan. These additional tools are created from academic theory and technological applications which can be used to enhance the commander's conceptualization of the environment.

Under the auspices of unified action, "army forces operate as part of a larger national effort" and the indirect approach used in the Philippines requires the synchronization of all U.S. efforts (U.S. Department of the Army 2012b). Military professionals often view unified action in terms of cooperation with U.S. and other states' bureaucratic and ministerial civilians. However, unified action also entails working with civilians within indigenous populations and civil-society organizations. This study contributes to the unified action ethos precisely by calling military professionals to a greater awareness and inclination toward engagement with the civil-society sphere in those countries where soldiers are deployed.

During deployments, units must always develop plans for contingencies but there are times where emergent activities arise and change the environment. The NGO kidnapping in Jolo of 2009 was one of those activities.

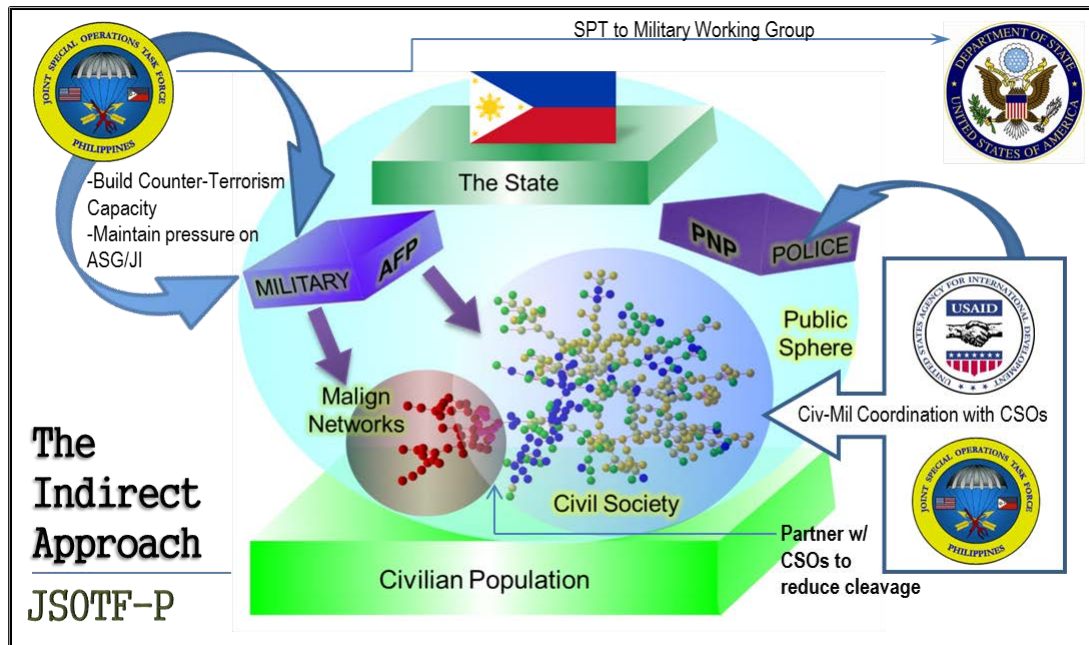


Figure 17. Visual concept of an Operational Approach

Source: Created by author.

Emergent Violence with ICRC Kidnapping

In 2009, a team of three International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) personnel was kidnapped by the ASG (Teves and Romero 2009). Examining the full account of this incident would exceed the scope of this study but a few details help reinforce some points later in the study. The picture below (figure 18) is of the three in captivity with the vice governor of Sulu, Lady Ann Sahidulla.



Figure 18. ICRC kidnap victims

Source: Photo courtesy of Lieutenant General Juancho Sabban.

Upon the ICRC team's arrival to Jolo they met with CA team 721 to share and discuss development efforts on the island. Andreas Notter, the ICRC team leader, expressed an interest in going to some contested areas that had high levels of ASG activity. The CA team warned that they should work with the host nation security forces and operate in approved areas. Notter argued that they did not want to jeopardize their neutral status by working with any military and they followed an "acceptance" model that would protect them and other NGOs from harm. (Acceptance Research 2013).⁸ Several weeks later they were abducted and this changed the dynamics on the island. A new emergent order took form and the bulk of resources for the AFP and US task force were

⁸For more information on this "acceptance" model see the Acceptance Research website at <http://acceptanceresearch.org>.

shifted to recover these ICRC workers. A series of violent operations and activities followed. In an attempt to restore order and pursue peace, CAT 721 planned, coordinated, and executed two different experiments.

Experimental Interventions

Operation Clean Sweep

Among the myriad of projects managed by CAT 721, the waste management program was the team's first attempt to involve multiple agencies and civil society organizations. This interagency effort spanning two months' of meetings, assessments, and collaboration manifested into Operation Clean Sweep, known as Operation *Maglanuh* (clean-up in Tausug) for Sulu residents (Presidential Communications Operations Office 2009a). The waste management program grew from multiple interactions with the indigenous populace and local governance. The issue of "trash" was echoed throughout multiple municipalities and neighborhoods. Overall, the issues fell under three main concerns:

1. Excessive flooding in the city was the result of clogged drainage canals and waterways. The increased urbanization and squatters in dense areas aggravated the blockage of trash in the city's sewer system.
2. Trash dumping in Tugas barangay blocked key roadway to landfill and prevented farmers from delivering goods to markets.
3. The overall lack of services was being used as propaganda to fuel dissent amongst communities in ASG contested areas.



Figure 19. Photos of Jolo flooding and trash problem

Source: Created by author. Picture (A) is flooding in downtown Jolo, (B) CA team meeting with Jolo municipality and mayor, and (C) a photo of the Tugas road blocked by trash. Photos courtesy of US Army by SGT John Kiley.

Major General Juancho Sabban, AFP senior task force commander in Sulu, advised CAT 721 on the complexity and sophistication of the problem and pledged his support. Research conducted by CAT 721 revealed a past project that cost the US government over \$160 thousand dollars to remove trash on the same road in Tugas. The team and task force agreed that repeating this project would be putting a “small band aid on a sucking chest wound” and it would reinforce failure in a broken system (Kiley 2013). During a trip to the US Embassy in Manila, the CA team leader consulted with USAID.

USAID representatives were apprehensive about new projects and programs in Sulu and instead offered to share technical expertise for the situation. USAID lent their locally contracted organization Environmental Governance (ECOGOV) to assist. An initial meeting was facilitated in Zamboanga City, located in the Southern Philippines close to but safer than Jolo (Lim 2008). CAT 721 coordinated the participation of municipal engineers, Sulu government leadership, AFP planners, and local government

representatives in a joint planning session with ECOGOV. The group brainstormed and determined a road map for further progress on Jolo.

To begin tackling the issues of waste management, the group identified three objectives to focus on: (1) create an awareness campaign that promotes cleanliness in accordance with Islamic teachings; (2) ECOGOV conducts a ground assessment on Jolo; and (3) obtain and pool local resources to clear road.

For the first time, ECOGOV conducted a site visit on Jolo to assess the waste issues and provide technical advice for addressing the problems (see figure 20). One expert found that the “problems were worse than expected and only a miracle can fix it” (Lim 2008). Concerned but not discouraged, CAT 721 convinced several municipal leaders to pool resources for a coordinated and synchronized effort. Manual labor and funds were aggregated from different barangays and municipalities. Absent from the plan was the inclusion of the Sulu governance and this was gained through CSO support.



Figure 20. Photos of ECOGOV meeting and assessment

Source: Created by author. Picture (A) is a meeting of planners and ECOGOV in Zamboanga, Philippines, (B) ECOGOV escorted by CA team to conduct trash site assessment, and (C) ECOGOV member conducting assessment. Photos courtesy of US Army by SGT John Kiley.

The CA team garnered initial CSO interest and support from five organizations that grew quickly to over twenty CSO groups pledging to participate (see Appendix A for list of Sulu CSOs). This growing interest and dialogue, allowed the CA team to meet with Islamic leaders and the governor to gain their support. Governor Sakur Tan not only offered support, he took full ownership of the project and Operation *Maglanuh* was planned.

With the governor's decision to lead, the Sulu Provincial Area Coordination Center (ACC) director took over and brought all CSOs into the planning process. The planning group created a week-long operation that would include government resources to clear the road, a neighborhood cleanliness competition, student slogan competition, information drive, and opening parade to "kick-off" the week of events. As a kind gesture, the ACC director requested the CA team's help grading the competitions.



Figure 21. Photos with Sulu leadership and meeting

Source: Created by author. Picture (A) CA team meeting with Nur Misuari, MNLF founder, and Sulu Governor Sakur Tan, (B) team meeting with Sulu ACC and municipal leadership, and (C) Sulu ACC leading planner meeting with CSOs. Photos courtesy of US Army by John Kiley.

The operation was a huge success and the parade was a spectacular event that drew thousands of supporters and spectators. Amidst the many participants, planners, and leadership present, it was the vibrant CSO groups that stole the show (Stone 2013; Horn 2013). Governor Tan announced the theme: “*Basura Makamula, Maglanuh Magsama-sama, Magad ha dan sin Agama* (garbage can harm, lets clean together, and follow the path of our faith)” (Mindanao Examiner 2009). The CSOs mobilized masses of people to clean different neighborhoods and this behavioral shift was contagious and peaceful (Stone 2013). Unfortunately, early in the week, the ASG attacked a convoy of dump trucks and killed one truck driver (Kiley 2013). This dreadful attack was seen by analysts as an indicator of success for the program given the ASG feeling compelled to attack (Stone 2013).



Figure 22. Photos of Clean Sweep grading and parade

Source: Created by author. Picture (A) is CA team and Sulu ACC grading neighborhoods for clean up competition, (B) Governor Tan delivering opening speech for Operation *Maglanuh*, (C) youth groups leading parade, and (D) bull dozers and heavy equipment pass in front of governor’s palace during parade. Photos courtesy of US Navy by MC1 Roland Franklin.

The attack might have slowed events but a resilient network of CSO groups pushed forward with their resolve strengthened. At the end of the week for Operation

Maglanuh the Tugas road was cleared, neighborhoods were cleaned, and new relationships formed. This intervention spawned the creation of *Al Khalifa* (Arabic for Steward), an environmental source book that was designed to “help the Filipino Muslim understand what is environmental preservation and protection in there [sic] language” (Online Mindanao 2009). This guide book was created and endorsed with the help of Islamic scholars (Lim 2008). The connections and processes from Operation Clean Sweep helped inform the next big experiment: Operation Ride for Peace.



Figure 23. Photos of Operation Clean Sweep

Source: Created by author. Picture (A) is heavy equipment used to clear road at Tugas dump site and (B) winner of neighborhood clean up competition: Barangay Sanraymundo led by Bansag Babai CSO group. Photos courtesy of US Navy by MC1 Roland Franklin

Operation Ride for Peace

The lessons and best practices from Operation Clean Sweep made Operation Ride for Peace a larger and more successful experiment (Kiley 2013). Many of the relationships developed from Operation Clean Sweep were leveraged to plan, coordinate,

and facilitate this new event. Unlike the past event, this experiment focused on the youth and their different groups (Horn 2013). A young bike club, PRIMO Motorcycle Club, became the key leadership for the event. Additionally, new uses of messaging were tested to determine the most effective mediums for communicating on the island (Horn 2013).

Working with radio stations and distributing hand held crank radios increased participation and interest in the planned riding event. The exponential growth of intended participation unearthed a key interlocutor (Horn 2013). According to a MISO planner, this key interlocutor, a religious communications broadcaster, used innovative methods to reach thousands of Tausug people all over the island. His hand held two-way radio network was popular amongst religious circles and connected over 15 madrasas (Horn 2013). This was the first time this communication venue came to light for the task force and it was seen as a significant discovery.

This event demonstrated the value of synergy between all agencies involved. With multiple agencies operating in the same space there is no reason not to bring all capability to bear on the given problem. The Ride for Peace operation was successful because of the behind the scenes coordination by many agencies.



Figure 24. Photos of Operation Ride for Peace

Source: Created by author. Picture (A) is LTG Sabban conducting interview with media, (B) Ride for Peace ceremony recognizing planners and supporters, and (C) bike riders on route. Photos courtesy of US Army by SGT John Kiley.

For the one day event, thousands of bike riders would travel a distance of approximately 90 kilometers through four main municipalities using newly constructed roads provided by the US task force and AFP (Kiley 2013). Participation “cut across ethnic, religious, political, and clan divides” (Presidential Communications Operations Office 2009c). The ride brought people from one side of the island to the other side. For some this was a first (see figure 25 for route).

Fadzrama shares “I am a native of Sulu, but this is my first time to be in Luuk. I enjoyed its people and its breathtaking scenery” (Presidential Communications Operations Office 2009c). Clans from opposite sides of the island frequently fought each other with violent attacks but this event brought many of them together (Sabban 2009). Major General Sabban, who participated in the event with his motorcycle, considers “the ride for peace activity as the road to recovery through the virtue of strengthening the people to people ties” (Presidential Communications Operations Office 2009c).

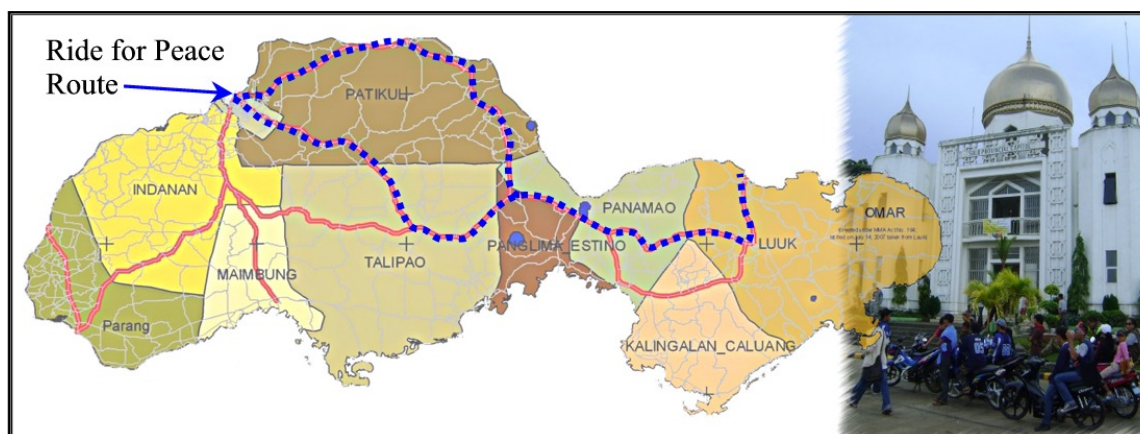


Figure 25. Operation Ride for Peace Route

Source: Created by author from map provided by Sulu ACC. Picture of bikers at starting point in front of Sulu palace is courtesy of US Navy by MC1 Roland Franklin

This event was reported by mainstream media outlets and received Philippine national attention (Horn 2013). The vice governor of Sulu, Lady Ann Sahidulla concludes to “let us use this event as proof that we are capable of reconciling with one another amidst differences in our special way” (Presidential Communications Operations Office 2009c). The youth groups comprise the same demographic of those fighting with the ASG and MILF. These events help stir these young men from joining these groups and provide hope for an enduring peace (see photo of youth group in figure 26 below).

The leader of PRIMO Motorcycle Club, Datu Gandi Julkarnain underscored the importance of the event by saying “riding is a source of adventure. But more than that, it also creates the needed fun for people to interact with each other, meaning it can quickly address differences. With a motorcycle, all the barriers are down, instantly we have met and gained more friends” (Presidential Communications Operations Office 2009c).



Figure 26. Photo of PRIMO Motorcycle Club

Source: Picture of youth group: PRIMO Motorcycle Club, lead organizer for Operation Ride for Peace courtesy of US Navy by MC1 Roland Franklin.

Overall, both events provide valuable insights for the conduct of civil-military cooperation. The beauty of a bottom-up and grass roots approach gains buy-in and local ownership of projects by host nation elements. Military forces might serve as the initial engine for startup but host nation organizations drive projects and institute positive changes in the environment. More specifically, civil society organizations can significantly increase the effectiveness of civil military operations and help limit the footprint required by US forces. Cultivating the relationships and interactions within civil society will require a new theoretical lens for improving our understanding of this critical social space.

New Theoretical Lens

This study can be contested in two ways. First, some leaders and policy makers believe that this type of cooperation and work with civil society elements belongs solely

to the US Department of State and USAID (Perez 2012, 187). Second, there are many NGOs who argue that civil-military cooperation will endanger and compromise their neutral status. For the first argument, Perez's study of Hannah Arendt's theories shows that nations "are not preordained in engineering blueprints; they are the unpredictable result of Arendt's Action" (2012, 187).

Arendt describes action as a "means to take an initiative, to begin . . . to set something into motion" (Perez 2012, 188; Arendt 1998, 177). The Department of State and USAID simply do not have the capacity to act alone and when the military is called into action they can help "cultivate the conditions for Arendt's politics to occur" and allow for "a durable polity to emerge" (Perez 2012, 191-192). Political processes require consent and recent work on non-violent resistance highlights the primacy of participation (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

In times of conflict, Chenoweth and Stephan find that people are more apt to participate in a non-violent movement over an armed struggle and that non-violent resistance campaigns, between 1900-2006, were twice as effective as their violent counterparts (2011). A critical component of non-violent resistance was consent (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Gene Sharp confirms that the regulation of political power depends on the consent of the ruled (1973, 4-12). Sharp champions the concept of a new type of non-violent combat that fights with "psychological weapons, social weapons, economic weapons, and political weapons, and this is ultimately more powerful against oppression, injustice, and tyranny than is violence" (Arrow 2011).

In fact, Sharp and other scholars (Helvey 2004; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011) claim that more effort is invested in increasing the efficiency of violent conflict and "no

comparable efforts have yet gone into making non-violent action more effective (1973, 4). Like Deleuze and Guattari (2005, 400), Sharp uses martial arts metaphors to describe the application of non-violent action. Similar to jiu-jitsu, the refusal to submit to your opponent's weapons, while wielding non-violent ones, allows you to push your opponent off balance (1973). Martial artists master multiple ways to use or "unuse" weapons that follow the best path to strike their opponent (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 400). Although Sharp had a civilian-based defense in mind, this brings me to counter the second contestation to my argument (1990).

Sharp's refusal to serve in the US military during the Korean War and his subsequent jailing may impose his biases towards the use of the military to carry out non-violent action (Arrow 2011). However, as seen with the ICRC worker kidnapping on Jolo, NGOs and external agencies are extremely vulnerable and serve as "soft-targets" for terrorist organizations (Lacey 2008). Their lack of security presents not only a liability for their personnel but to the society in which they are serving (Horn 2013). These societies fall victim to the negative perceptions and heighten security that comes from such an incident. The enemies of strong states will always do their best to strike weaknesses and elude strengths of stronger opponents (Liang and Xiangsui 2002). For this reason, I believe there is utility in civil-military cooperation.

With increasing regional engagements, military units and civilian organizations (e.g., NGOs, CSOs, DOS, USAID) continue to occupy the same space. For progress to be made more experiments of this concept need to be conducted to further validate this thesis. As a result from this study's analysis and "best practices" collected, this chapter

closes with “rules of thumb” that offers some considerations to assist with thought and planning for future civil-military engagements overseas.

Rules of Thumb for Consideration

Relationships are pacing items. Like critical parts that are carefully tracked through a distribution system, relationships are futile without some kind of tracing mechanism. The discovery of key interlocutors and communicators must be flagged and managed (Horn 2013).

Act tactically but think strategically. Years of progress can vanish in the blink of an eye with one strategic error (Stone 2013). Civil military engagement requires exceptional talent and skill with warriors able to operate with precision while simultaneously thinking about their actions. There is no substitute for the intellectual faculty needed for these operations. The wrong person can do more harm than a right person can do good (Horn 2013).

Working with civil society organizations requires patience and listening skills. These traits must be present amongst those chosen to go forward and conduct operations. Their conduct is an image of the US and an appearance of genuine care must be displayed consistently if we are going to win the war of perceptions.

Small is beautiful. For engagements amongst the populace there is an inverse relationship with the size of the element and the effectiveness of the engagements. It does not take a Leviathan force to conduct small-scale missions (Barnett 2004). Quality is better than quantity but the right makeup of a force must be carefully planned out and “the smaller the unit, and the farther forward it is deployed among the indigenous population, the more it can accomplish” (Kaplan 2006).

When possible, go green. Environmental concerns grow by the day and organizations feel good about joining environmentally sound projects. More importantly, the US shows its commitment to the global good by contributing to these initiatives and promotes the “diversity of life and the fecundity of the earth” (Connolly 2011, 79).

Do not allow a Western secular lens to distort the importance of the religious component of the environment. Moderate Islam is reaching out and opportunities for dialogue are ripe for engagement (Muhaiyaddeen 1987; Abou El Fadl 2002). Some Islamic ideological issues will only be resolved from within Islam itself (Abou El Fadl 2002). By increasing interactions and connections we are “creating a web of interlocking personal relationships among people of different faiths. This is America’s grace” (Putnam and Campbell 2010, 550).

SOF and conventional forces interdependence is a must. Is it possible to exercise interagency unity of effort and unified action with our own tribal divides? The strategic land power task force is focused on this issue but the risk of losing hard-earned insights from years of combat experience is at stake (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2013). A 7th warfighting function, “shape and influence,” aims to bridge both communities in USASOC’s ARSOF 2022 plan (U.S. Army Special Operations Command 2013).

There is no substitute for context. Often taken for granted, US forces may be the sole element forward beyond the reach of USEMB elements and other agencies. The ability to contextualize the environment through solid reporting and the timely sharing of this information is essential for building trust amongst interagency partners. Additionally, capturing our efforts provides recognition for some of the pioneering work being

completed by our soldiers and units. A persistent presence forward also provides an increased responsiveness to crises and emergent situations.

Obtain and maintain a granular understanding of the local environment. Perez engrains this principle into his students and notes Petraeus's complaint that units were not "gathering, responding to, and passing along . . . a 'granular understanding' of the sociopolitical variables in the villages, cities, districts, and provinces of Afghanistan" (2012, 182). In other forward locations, operators on the ground can provide real-time context to help planners better shape and tailor responses for required interventions.

Embrace the philosophy of Mission Command. SOF do this well and it is needed for effective interventions. Leaders must provide a clear intent that gives subordinates the freedom needed to coordinate, plan, and conduct small-scale joint operations with a multitude of agencies and actors. Direct liaison authority approvals should not prevent communication flow between teams and partner agencies, embassy teams, NGOs, CSOs, and the academic community.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

All men dream: but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recess of their minds wake in the day to find it was vanity, but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act on their dream with open eyes, to make it possible.

— T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*

Conclusions

This study began with the hypothesis that military forces could connect with the populace through deliberate and direct engagement with civil society organizations to develop relationships and networks of capability which could be employed in specific settings to secure a sustainable peace. The review of literature, theories, and analysis show the plausibility of this concept. Applying a new lens to view civil society and non-violent methods of engagement reveals vibrant and complex overlapping networks that can be leveraged operationally with the right military capability.

Situations and circumstances dictate the appropriate response but we must always view the world as it is and not over react to make it the way we think it should be. Pairing an understanding of the complex operating environment with the right capability and demanding that quality people engage critical thinking, decision-making, and executing with this world view in mind, arguing for military support to civil society organizations not only makes sense, it makes it compulsory. The active and effective engagement of CSO networks can conceivably prevent the onset of conflict and avert suffering and unnecessary loss of life. As Ben Franklin once said “an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure” (David 2012). Civil military engagement with CSOs is not a panacea

but working with and influencing people remains essential to securing U.S. interests (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2013).

As the military participates in increased regional engagements, this capability to mobilize and utilize CSOs can contribute to the success of those endeavors. With the fascinating mix of theories applicable to this research and their implications for future studies, I make two recommendations.

Recommendations

First, for continued research, I recommend that we explore the idea of creating a rhizomatic structure for managing engagement data. The mix of databases and costly military software suites have not provided a data cloud that can share sociopolitical data, aid in managing relationships, capture atmospherics, and be accessible to all relevant communities.

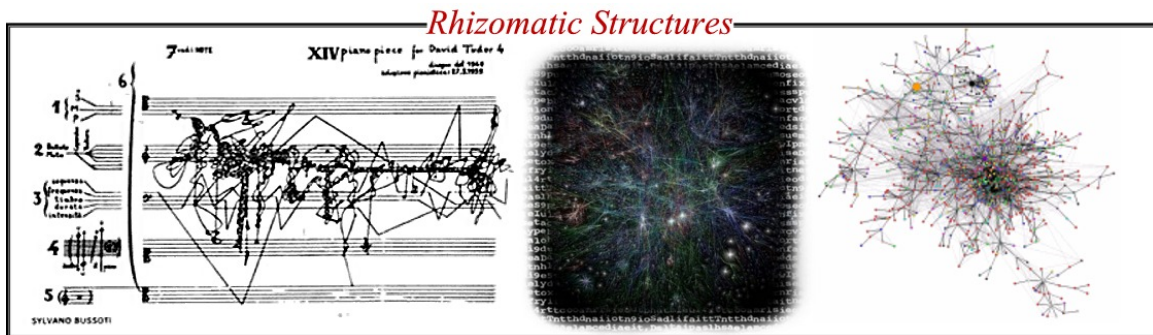


Figure 27. Rhizomatic structures

Source: Created by author from Rhizome theory. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

Deleuze and Guattari define the theory of rhizome or rhizomatic structuring (2005). There are many interpretations but they used the sheet music to conceptually illustrate their idea (see figure 27). Basically, they postulated the creation of a non-hierarchical system with multiple entry and exit points in data representation (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 3-25). The internet and Wikipedia are examples of rhizomatic structures. For non-lethal and non-violent methods of data collection, the military needs this type of structure to index, sort, and centralize data collection from the field. The current suite of various independent platforms does not do this and the data cloud needs to be fixed for progress.

With a rhizomatic structure the military can benefit from including free visualization tools that are available to the public and are being used by social scientists. The Graph Exploration System, abbreviated as GUESS, is an open source platform that can make real-world case studies, social network analysis, and systems analysis into powerful 2D and 3D visualizations (see figure 28 for screenshots of the program). Army elements can use the program to map out and disaggregate complex social network systems. Using these new views of the environment provides new metrics and allows us to measure and observe connections, interactions, and relationships with these complex networks. The globally interconnected world has a rising velocity human interaction and urbanization that is changing the strategic environment at an accelerating rate (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2013). These types of tools are essential for planners and units to use for visualizing the operating environment.

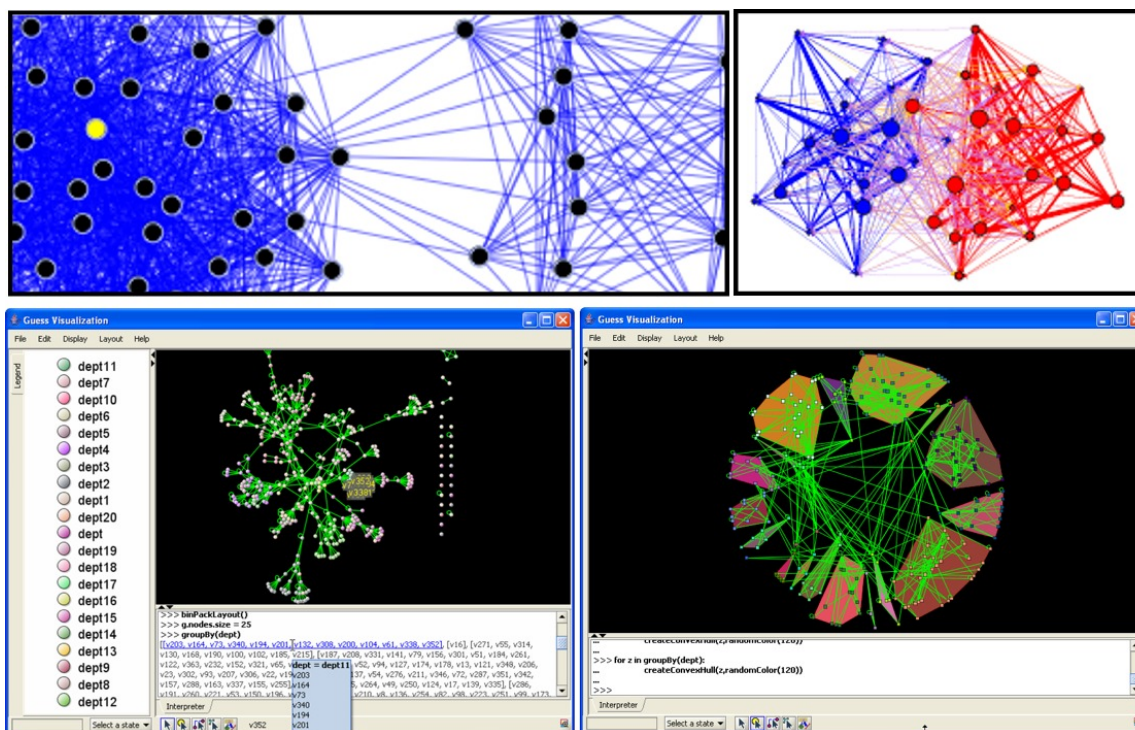


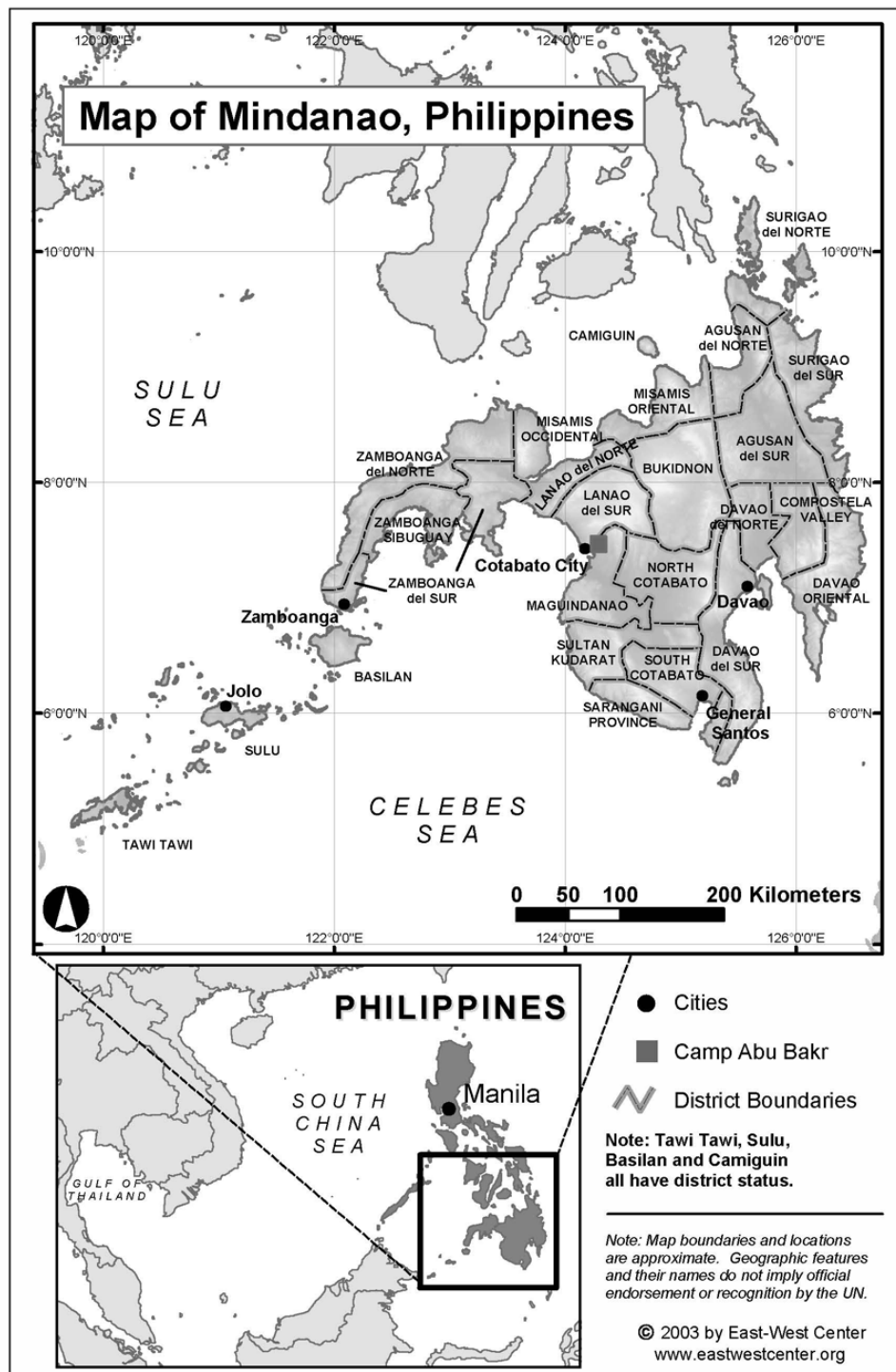
Figure 28. Screenshots of GUESS Visualization System

Source: Created by author from demonstration of GUESS system to thesis committee. Demonstration example data from GUESS website, <http://graphexploration.cond.org/look.html> (accessed 23 May 2013).

For my second recommendation, I believe that the progress made in Sulu and the Philippines provide the right venue for an increased dialogue with the Islamic community. The ultimate defeat of Islamic fanaticism can be accomplished within Islam circles and that will require patience and creative approaches. As General Mattis once exclaimed “The most important six inches on the battlefield is between your ears” and “you are part of the world’s most feared and trusted force. Engage your brain before you engage your weapon” (Ingersoll and Szoldra 2013). The war of perceptions and clash of wills is a thinking contest that will be fought in both the physical and cognitive domain (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2013).

Aside from these recommendations, changing the military's mindset to view civilian engagement and cooperation as a potential capability will take time. If the military created Sharp's proposed non-violent weapons system, it would have the ability to mobilize masses of people to remove dictators, change regimes, and bring sustainable peace (1973; Arrow 2011). Although defined as a non-lethal and non-violent combat, this capability can be more effective and less costly than killing one person, dropping one bomb, or conducting one joint exercise.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Source: East-West Center.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF CSOs IN SULU

Civil Society Organizations in the Sulu Archipelago

CSOs		
ORGANI ZATI ON	HEADS	POSI TI ON
BANSAG BABAI	Lolita Asiri	President
CHD-Center for Humanitarian Dialogue	Vandrazer Birowa	HD Project Officer
D' Alert Lupah Sug	Engr. Abdel Jalani	President
EAGLES CLUB	Dr. Amirul Sahiron	President/CSOs Convenor
Gawad Kalinga	Jainab A. Abdulmajid	Coordinator
JCI (Junior Chamber International) - JOLO	Mrs. Lanni A. Lukman-Tulawie	President
JERN (Jolo Emergency Rescue Network)	Hji. Jayson T. Ahijon, RN, EMT	OIC, Executive Director
Justice Peace Integrity of Creation (JPIC)	Fr. Romeo Villanueva	Director
LIPAD-Literacy for Peace & Development	Ms. Fatima Darwiza A. Yusah	Project Coordinator
LSAPDI	Alhajar B. Abdulgafor	Field Coordinator
MATAUKASI INC.	Ms. Mercia Alli	President
Mindanao Integrated Resource Development	Romeo C. Bachero, Jr.	Project Manager
Muslim Student Association - Lupah Sug	Prof. Abdelnazer Tagayan	Sec. General
Muslim Women Peace Advocate	Dr. Norma Abdulla	Adviser
Noorus Salam	Hja. Munira Isnirul	President
Philippine Red Cross - Sulu Chapter	Ms. Preciosa S. Chiong	Chapter Administrator
PICE - Sulu Chapter	Engr. Munir M. Arbison	President
Regional Commission on Bangsamoro Women	Hja. Nurunnihar B. Mohammad	Commissioner- Sulu
SDM / KFLC	Sr. Jo-Anne C. Lorilla, OND	Project Manager
SILSILAH DIALOGUE FORUM	Mrs. Juludy Elam	Focal Person - Christian
SILSILAH DIALOGUE MOVEMENT	Datu Yldon T. Kiram	Focal Person - Sulu
SUARA MAHARDIKA	Mr. Roing Alim	President
SUARA PAGHAMBUOK	Ronald Hassan	President
SUGPAT - Sug People's Alliance of Tausug	Dr. Hannbal Bara	Executive Director
SULU EDUCATOR'S FORUM INCORPORATED	Jakaria A. Rajik	President
SULU PROVINCIAL WOMEN COUNCIL	Hja. Nurunisah A. Tan	Chairwoman
Tausug Active Youth Organization	Munir Jr Sahi	President
ULANGIG MINDANAO	Dr. Amildasa Annil	President
ULIMBANAG SIN KABABAIHAN ORGANIZATION	Embang Adidul	President
RELIGIOUS SECTOR		
MUFTI OF SULU	Habib Jul Asiri Abirin	Mufti
NOTRE DAME VICARIATE	Fr. Jose Ante OMI, DD	
PROTESTANT SECTOR	Ptr. Niconias C. Devalgue Jr.	Pastor
SUCPD- Sulu Ulama Council for Peace & Dev't.	Aleem Muhaimin Abubakar	Chairman
BISHOP OF SULU	Most Rev. Angelito Lampon, OMI, DD	Bishop
GRAND IMAM	Imam Wadhumar Alam	
AMEER SABILAL MUHTADEEN	Tuan Saukhani Kimpa	
SULU CENTRAL MOSQUE & CULTURAL CENTER	Tuan Abuharis Usman	Administrator

Source: Report of Civil Society Organizations provided by Sulu Area Coordination Center, 23 April 2013.

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