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THE SOCIAL BATTLESPACE OF STABILIZATION OPERATIONS – ACTION AMONGST THE PEOPLE

Major (GS) Teemu Nurmela
Finnish Army

**Department
of Tactics**
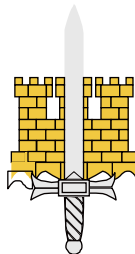
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THE SOCIAL BATTLESPACE OF STABILIZATION OPERATIONS – ACTION AMONGST THE PEOPLE

Major (GS) Teemu Nurmela
Finnish Army

Finnish National Defence University

Department of Tactics and Operational Art

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3

FOREWORD

Due to the complexity of conflicts, the human dimension in peacekeeping and stabilization operations has increased its significance. At the same time understanding of human dimension has not improved at the same rate. The lessons learnt from different missions differ from country to country and from mission to mission. Before this study, very little Finnish or international research exists on the human terrain of a conflict.

The purpose of this study is to explore the human dimension of the tactical land operating environment (battlespace) in stabilization operations and thereby interpret the tactical reality of deployed ground troops.

This study gives a new perspective and significant information understanding of the actors and situation in operating environment which usually is more than complicated.

On behalf of department of tactics and operational art, I would like to thank Teemu Nurmela for providing new scientific information to the broad field of military sciences.

Santahamina 25.1.2010

Colonel

Pekka Järvi

CONTENTS

5

ACRONYMS

9/11	The attacks of September 11th, 2001 in the USA
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANAP	Afghan National Auxiliary Police
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AO	Area of Operations
AOI	Area of Interest
AOR	Area of Operations and Responsibility
BCA	*Bataillon des Chasseurs Alpins* (Alpine Jaeger Battalion)
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear
CI	Counter Intelligence
CID	*Collège Interarmées de Défense* (French Joint Staff College)
CIMIC	Civil – Military Co-operation
CO	Commanding Officer
COL	Colonel
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CPT	Captain
DP	Displaced Person
DPKO	Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (United Nations)
EBAO	Effects Based Approach on Operations
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ETT	Embedded Training Team (OEF)
EU	European Union
EUBG	European Union Battlegroups
EUFOR	European Union Force
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan)
FDF	Finnish Defence Forces
FOB	Forward Operating Base
FSB	Forward Support Base
GOP	Guidelines for Operational Planning (NATO)
GTIA	*Groupement Tactique Interarmes* (French, a battlegroup)
HQ	Headquarters
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IEDD	Improvised Explosive Device Disposal
IFOR	Implementation Force (NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina)
IGO	International Governmental Organization
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
INS	Insurgent(s)
IPB	Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance
ISTAR	Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance
IW	Irregular Warfare

JMC	Joint Military Commission
KIA	Killed in Action (also Kabul International Airport)
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KMNB	Kabul Multinational Brigade
LCDR	Lieutenant Commander
LIC	Low Intensity Conflict
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel
LUP	Lying-Up Point
MAJ	Major
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
MOT	Mobile Observer Team
MPKK	*Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu* (Finnish National Defence University)
MPO	*Méthode de Planification Opérationnelle* (French GOP)
NA5CRO	Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NCW	Network Centric Warfare
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIC	National Intelligence Cell
NORDCAPS	Nordic Coordinated Agreement for Military Peace Support
NRF	Nato Response Force
NSE	National Support Element
NVG	Night Vision Goggles
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan)
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom (Iraq)
OMLT	Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (ISAF)
OP	Observation Post
OPSEC	Operational Security
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PE	Peace Enforcement
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PK	Peacekeeping
PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
PMC	Private Military Company
POW	Prisoner of War
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSC	Private Security Company
PSO	Peace Support Operation
QRF	Quick Reaction Force
RC	Regional Command (ISAF)
RIMa	Régiment d'Infanterie de Marine
RM	Royal Marines (UK)
RMA	Revolution of Military Affairs
RPIMa	*Régiment de Parachutistes d'Infanterie de Marine* (Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment)
ROE	Rules of Engagement
SASE	Safe and Secure Environment
SASO	Stability and Support Operations
SFOR	Stabilization Force (NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina)
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement

SOP	Standing Operating Procedures
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TF	Task Force
TIC	Troops In Contact
UK	The United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UN OHCA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US / USA	United States of America
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
VCP	Vehicle Check Point
WIA	Wounded in Action
WFP	World Food Programme
ZOS	Zone of Separation

LIST OF PICTURES AND TABLES

ANNEXES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has been written during my other studies at the French Joint Staff College (*Collège Interarmées de Défense*, CID). This required striking a balance between my family and the writing process. I thus want to thank my wife Jaana, who has not only taken care of the family during my writing nights but has also found the energy to be my supporter, co-editor and a source of positive attitude.

The e-mail questionnaire respondents have been an invaluable part of this research. Without their enthusiasm and their honest and spicy responses, this thesis would have lost one of its cornerstones. I would like to sincerely thank these anonymous respondents for their efforts.

I also want to thank those of my friends - Finnish and foreign - who share my interest in studying infantry action in modern and past military operations. Sharing books, exchanging opinions and comparing experiences has been a significant source of professional inspiration for me.

Very special thanks go to my good friend, Colonel William A. "Woody" Woodcock of the U.S. Air Force, for reading the manuscript and correcting my English.

THE SOCIAL BATTLESPACE OF STABILIZATION OPERATIONS – ACTION AMONGST THE PEOPLE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1   The purpose statement – discovering the tactical reality

Traditional Finnish "blue helmet" missions have been undertaken in situations where the parties have already consented to building peace. After the so-called revolution of U.N. peacekeeping, this kind of consent has been hard to find.[1] The Finnish military terminology has shifted accordingly from peacekeeping (PK) to peace support operations (PSO) and military crisis management (*sotilaallinen kriisinhallinta*). The terms "stabilization operations" or "stability operations" are not used in official texts to describe a certain phase or type of operations.[2] Yet under the UN Chapter VII mandate, such operations have been common since IFOR in 1995. Finland has chosen not to take part in actual warfighting, but rather to contribute follow-on forces to the land component.[3] Operations such as IFOR, SFOR, KFOR and recently ISAF have profoundly changed our operational environment. No longer is there a strong emphasis on post-conflict normalization. A recognized need for earlier action mandates a change in our approach.

This thesis will show the complexity of the tactical[4] level when undertaking stabilization operations. A military intervention is often a robust and violent event whose legal framework is based on the law of armed conflict. When the campaign finally reaches the point of normalization, the juridical base must shift its basis to the rule of law.[5] Stabilization, which lies between the two ends of the spectrum, does not neatly fall within

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[1] Connaughton (2001), pp. 41-52. Durch (2006), pp. 1-30. They refer to profound changes in peacekeeping after the end of the Cold War. Operations in ex-Yugoslavia, Somali, Rwanda and East-Timor showed that the traditional "blue helmet" operations had reached their limits.

[2] Author's observation based on the development of the NORDCAPS UN Tactical Manual of 1996 and the NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manuals of 2002 and 2007, as well as the Defense "White Papers" of 2004 and 2009. Although "crisis management" is the overall term, the training establishment in Pori Brigade (*Kriisinhallintakeskus*) is translated to English as the "PSO Training Center". The term PSO is clearly taken from NATO terminology.

[3] Author's conclusion based on the Finnish Defense Forces website. Ongoing and past operations are listed at http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/operaatiot/. Accessed 24 May 2009.

[4] The terms "strategic", "operational" and "tactical" are used in accordance with NATO terminology (AAP-6).

[5] *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines* (2008). See also Rosén – Parkkari (2004), p. 1-40, http://www.icrc.org/eng and http://www.un.org/law/.

one judicial model or the other. We may call this grey area between warfighting and peacekeeping peace support, nation building or counterinsurgency, but these terms will remain hollow. Such terms quickly lose their meaning especially for those deployed on the ground. Thus, the operational reality consists of concrete aspects such as the mandate, the mission, memorandums of understanding (MOU), the status of forces agreement (SOFA) and rules of engagement (ROE).[6] The tactical reality, however, incorporates varying levels of intensity and a multitude of actors and contexts. To visualize all this, the reader must have a working knowledge of how things really work during operations. Therefore, it is important to note that this paper is written for the experienced audience.

At the beginning of this research, there existed very little Finnish or international research on the human terrain of a conflict. This deficiency was particularly acute at the tactical level.[7] There are of course countless publications describing modern conflict, especially since the beginning of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. These books and articles usually focus on the strategic or operational levels of conflict, but seem to avoid the complexity, diversity, diffusion and lethality at the tactical level. Because most modern operations take place amongst populations, the stabilization phase has become the decisive step of a campaign. As a result, the ground component has become the decisive operational element. In the middle of reconstruction and nation-building activities, our ground forces are facing a plethora of asymmetric threats. The need for ground troops may even be greater in the stabilization phase of a conflict than during the preceding intervention phase. This underlines the need for both a high quantity and quality of ground troops.[8]

This preface has highlighted the changing tactical environment of Finnish troops and the complexity of stabilization operations. The purpose of this study is to explore the human dimension of the tactical land operating environment (battlespace) in stabilization operations and thereby interpret the tactical reality of deployed ground troops. Although this study is specific to Finland, the research results and conclusions should be applicable for a wider audience. The author has worked to combine existing information in a new way in order to generate further discussion and research.

This publication is based on the general staff officer course thesis written by the author during the 2008-2009 academic year for the Department of Tactics of the Finnish Na-

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[6] NORDCAPS PSO Training Manual (2007), pp. 36–38.

[7] The U.S. Army has developed a Human Terrain System program based on experiences from Iraq and Afghanistan. At the beginning of this research process, research reports on this topic were not publicly available. A search conducted on 31 May 2008 with the words "human terrain" produced only 5 relevant results out of the 20 matching documents on the U.S. Defense Technical Information Center's database (STINET), available online at http://stinet.dtic.mil/. On 16 August 2009, the same search produced 675 hits. The website had changed to http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/. The conclusion is that the significance of this subject has been noted and that a lot of similar research has been done during the timeline of this study. The Human Terrain System utilizes experts of anthropology, sociology, political science, languages and regional studies at the brigade level and above with a national "reachback" channel for further information. The aim is to help military commanders understand the societies and environments they operate in. See also the U.S. Army Website of Human Terrain System at http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/default.htm and Kipp - Grau - Prinslow - Smith (2006).

[8] See CDEF (2007): FT-01, pp. 10-14. See also Smith (2007) and Desportes (2007A).

tional Defense University. Investigations in the tactical operational environment continued intensively after the course as the author's first assignment was to be the operations officer for PSOs at Pori Brigade – the Finnish national command post for all our deployed land forces. This book can be considered an improved edition of the thesis, as some improvements have been made based on feedback from colleagues and further analysis of the major issues. These differences are not specifically highlighted, but a careful reader is likely to spot a few changes. The author hopes that publishing this improved edition will allow for broader distribution of the findings among the professional military audience both within Finland and abroad.

1.2   The quest for pre-understanding

John W. Creswell states that a researcher should first ponder whether a topic *can* and *should* be studied.[9] In this study, the question of *can* was difficult to answer. Because of ongoing operations, there were so many books, research papers and articles published during the writing timeline that the author faced constant pressure to add new elements and re-think others. In this area, the author's military experience and education helped identify important sources quickly. On the other hand, studying the human dimension required a multidisciplinary effort oriented primarily towards cultural anthropology and sociology. These subjects were almost completely foreign to the author when starting this project in the summer of 2007. Since the author's competence in this sector does not include any formal academic studies, the choices and interpretations are subject to criticism.

The question of *should* has already been partially answered in the earlier purpose statement. This thesis aims to contribute something new to the existing literature. The reactions of fellow officers, both Finnish and foreign, have been positive and encouraging from the beginning. Furthermore, the research subject dovetailed well with the author's simultaneous studies at the French Joint Staff College (*Collège Interarmées de Défense*, CID) as well as with expectations of future career possibilities within the Finnish Defense Forces.[10] During the research process, the author wrote an article for CID's journal "*La Tribune*" and published a monograph as a part of his scholarly activities at the CID. These parallel writing processes helped to bring the most relevant matters for this thesis into focus.

As a result of the questions of *can* and *should*, pre-understanding of the research subject was largely based on existing literature. The selection of sources was made after studying the results of different search engines, which included 1) The National Defense University (https://taisto.linneanet.fi/)[11], 2) Google (http://www.google.com/) and 3)

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[9] Creswell (2003), pp. 27–48. Identifying a researchable topic is also well covered by Hirsjärvi (1997), pp. 98-113.

[10] Creswell (2003), pp. 28-29. Creswell sees that these factors need to be weighed before proceeding with a major research work.

[11] This service is available in Finnish, Swedish and English. The use of actual library functions requires a clearance from the National Defense University library. This study was supported by another search engine in the research database of the Finnish Defense Forces intranet (only available for the Finnish military).

The Amazon internet bookshop (http://www.amazon.com/). Using key words such as "peace support operation", "peace operation", "stabilization", "peace enforcement", "counterinsurgency", "nation building" - and their Finnish translations - a list of countless of books and articles was produced. This was an ongoing process from autumn 2006 until spring 2009. It first served the purpose of the Senior Staff Officer Course and later, the author used it for this General Staff Officer Course thesis.[12] After selecting the most applicable sources, the second step was to sift through their references in order to produce the most robust body of research possible.[13] The following method was used to select the most pertinent sources:

- Was the publication written after 11 September 2001?
- Does the publication cover the tactical operating environment or the human terrain of either stabilization, peace support or counterinsurgency operations?
- Has the publication been referred to by other selected sources?

The author's studies at the French Joint Staff College provided an opportunity to confirm the relevancy and the currency of the sources used. Many of the key sources of this research were either used directly in teaching or were referred to by the visiting lecturers. These lecturers included General David Petraeus and General James Mattis. Major General Vincent Desportes, the author of *La Guerre Probable*, was the director of the CID during the 2008-2009 academic year. He underlined the importance of studying and understanding modern conflict and he encouraged officers to express their thoughts in writing. With the opportunity to discuss the topic and receive feedback from French and international fellow student officers and school cadre, one could not imagine better conditions for research work oriented towards multinational stabilization operations.[14]

1.3   Organization of this paper

Chapters 1 and 2 will outline the overall research problem and introduce the reader to the research process and the methods used in the various phases. In Chapter 3, we shall define stabilization and its overall contexts. The reader will be acquainted with various definitions of stabilization-related terms and concepts. As Jari Rantapelkonen has pointed out, almost all the countries and organizations use different doctrinal approaches and place emphasis on different terms.[15] The reader should therefore pay attention to the choices made and understand that the actual research process is largely

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[12] Author's comment: Senior Staff Officer Course = *esiupseerikurssi*, General Staff Officer Course = *yleisesikuntaupseerikurssi*.

[13] Creswell (2003), pp. 27–48. Creswell provides guidelines on how to use databases and how to build a "literature map" around the research topic. See also Flick (2006), pp. 57-64.

[14] The 16th class of the CID, "*Promotion Maréchal Foch*", included 342 students out of which 112 were foreigners representing 74 different nationalities. The operational experience amongst the students was considerable and professional discussion took place in everyday life, in the classrooms and during free time. This informal, undocumented interaction was very significant to this research process.

[15] Rantapelkonen (2000), pp. 35–58, 87–96 and 169-170. Jari Rantapelkonen has studied the concepts of conflict and conflict management. His research focuses on the conflicts of Former Yugoslavia of the 1990s and analyzes official concepts of different states (United Kingdom, Finland, Russia, and United States) and security organizations (EU, NATO, OSCE, WEU).

dependent upon these choices. As usually occurs with qualitative research, the initial definitions have evolved into new topics throughout the research and new perspectives and dimensions have been discovered.[16]

Chapter 4 is the core of this research work as it provides the tools for operationalizing the research problems. It introduces the concept of *battlespace* and specifically explores its human dimension. The social aspects of the human dimension are analyzed through the theoretical lens of Jürgen Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action*. The conclusion of this chapter introduces a new perspective for analyzing and categorizing the tactical reality in stabilization operations.

In Chapter 5, we will discover Afghanistan as a conflict environment. It provides a quick reference for those readers not familiar with the recent history and current conditions of the country. Chapter 6 represents the analysis portion of this paper. The "baseline" context is about the Finnish troops in Afghanistan and attempts to reflect the present style of Finnish stabilization operations. It is followed by a presentation of two "rival contexts", those of French and British operations in Afghanistan. The findings of the case study are compared with the theoretical parts examined in the earlier chapters.

Chapter 7 concludes the study by bringing together the research results and providing further insight by means of discussion and internal evaluation. A list of sources and the annexes are found at the end of the research report

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[16] Creswell (2003), pp. 142-147.

2 THE PARADIGM SHIFT AND MODERN OPERATIONS

> "We fight amongst the people, a fact amplified literally and figuratively by the central role of the media: we fight in every living room in the world as well as on the streets and fields of a conflict zone."

        -    General Sir Rupert Smith[17]

The Cold War could have been characterized as nuclear-centric and ideologically bipolar. The relatively clear paradigms of war of that era did not tumble down along with the Berlin Wall, but they continued to affect military and security policy environments long after. Doctrines, organizational structures, weapons systems and national identities were not easily adapted even if the contexts and situations changed rapidly. Raitasalo and Sipilä mention eight major discourses affecting this still ongoing shift of paradigms: 1) revolution in military affairs (RMA), 2) information warfare, 3) nuclear weapons, 4) professionalization of armed forces, 5) privatization of warfare, 6) new wars, 7) crisis management and 8) the war against terror.[18] The end of the Cold War can also be seen as an end to traditional peacekeeping.[19] Warfighting and peace operations seem to be blurred, as war nowadays is seldom declared and military force is used in varying contexts and situations. We tend to speak of "operations" rather than "wars" so as to avoid the political flipsides affiliated with the latter term.

There are three different schools that try to explain warfare of the 21st Century. The first school represents a transformational approach focusing on the technical revolution in military affairs (RMA), effects based approach on operations (EBAO) and network centric warfare (NCW). The second school provides a more traditional approach to interstate warfare and insists on maintaining traditional warfighting capabilities. The third school focuses on a "war amongst the people"; the leading thinkers of this group included Generals Rupert Smith and Vincent Desportes.[20] These semantic debates are necessary, as the paradigm of war seems to be changing. For this thesis in particular, the lengthy post-intervention phase is particularly interesting. Without taking sides in the overall debate, we will examine the approaches on stabilization according to the above mentioned third school of military thought. This is an ontological choice, which also gives a general framework for the thesis. This choice focuses the scope in the stabilization phase and provides a background for exploring tactical action.

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[17] Smith (2007), p. 19.
[18] Raitasalo – Sipilä (ed.) (2008), pp. 1-10.
[19] Connaughton (2001), pp. 41-52 and Durch (2006), pp. 1-30.
[20] Coutau-Bégarie, Hervé: Strategy lecture at the CID, 21 November 2008. Coutau-Bégarie was the professor of strategy at the CID for the 16th class. In Finland, Janne Malkki has reflected on the works of Mary Kaldor, Martin von Creveld, Kalevi J. Holsti, William S. Lind and Rupert Smith. He does not see a division similar to that noted by Couteau-Bégarie, but divides conflicts between "old wars" of interstate nature and "new wars" involving multinational effort in crisis management, non-state actors and globalized effects. See Malkki, Janne: *Uudet sodat*, an article in Raitasalo – Sipilä (ed.) (2008), pp. 89-98.

2.1   War amongst the people

Let us assume that stabilization operations are a follow-up phase for a legitimized international military intervention aimed at ending an ongoing conflict. Nils Marius Rekkedal's study of the modern art of war poses four classic questions: "what is war?", "how can wars be won?", "how can we best prepare for war?" and "how can wars be prevented?" He then adds a relatively new question: "how can conflicts or wars be terminated?"[21] A quick military victory in the intervention phase does not guarantee an end to the conflict. Conflicts, whether conventional, unconventional or a mixture of the two, may even change as the result of third-party intervention. Current trends include fighting non-state asymmetric enemies, operating in multinational coalitions and an increasing emphasis on civil-military cooperation. There is a need for a "comprehensive approach" instead of a pure military solution.[22] This leads us to the first proposition guiding this thesis: <u>Military action alone does not guarantee successful stabilization operations</u>.

Conventional "large wars" are becoming a rarity as the number of "low intensity conflicts" (LIC) remains high. A decisive factor in a LIC is the legitimacy assigned by the local population to the forces in theater. Without it, the conflict cannot be won.[23] Australian doctrine questions the use of such intensity scales stating that "*the intensity level of an operation now describes how often forces encounter high lethality, not whether they encounter it*". The Australians prefer to characterize the modern conflict environment in terms such as complexity, diversity, diffusion and lethality.

Furthermore, they see conflict as "*a human, societal activity rather than a technical or engineering problem*" and label the land environment as "human-centric".[24] This can be interpreted in two ways: first, it means that the human terrain is the key terrain and second, that high troop quality is an essential requirement.

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[21] Rekkedal (2006), pp. 17-23. Rekkedal, a Norwegian, is a professor of War Studies at the Swedish War College, *Försvarshögskolan*. See http://www.fhs.se/en/. The translation of the fourth edition (2006) of Rekkedal's book is currently used in teaching throughout the Finnish National Defense University.

[22] Rekkedal (2006), pp. 541-567.

[23] Rekkedal (2006), pp. 116–118 and 188-189. LICs are characterized by decentralization, continuous operations, minimizing own casualties and causing daily – even if minor in scale - casualties to the enemy. This action is aimed at bringing the enemy's resistance down by causing psychological and moral setbacks. Rekkedal sees that this type of LIC is difficult to comprehend in the context of "Western" paradigms of war and peace. A constructive approach to these conflicts is only possible if the boundary between military and civilian activities is dissolved and the means and ends of conventional military forces are redefined. As western societies are based on the separation of the military and the civilian components, this approach is problematic indeed.

[24] Complex Warfighting (2004), pp. 4-12. *Complexity* refers to complex physical, human and informational terrains and difficulties in maintaining a "visible" battlespace. *Diversity* of actors and differences in "defeat thresholds" is a major cause of asymmetry. Western forces typically have a high tactical defeat threshold but strategically they are vulnerable in terms of public opinion, political will and casualty aversion. Adversaries, conversely, tend to be easily beaten in single engagements, but they often have a relatively high strategic defeat threshold. *Diffusion* of conflict breaks traditional patterns, as tactical events may have direct strategic consequences. Non-state actors, virtual theatres, media impact, combatant and non-combatant identification problems, disaggregated battlespace and finally war-style operations in peacetime do not fit our conceptual boundaries of war. An increase in *lethality* means that each individual engagement may end in mass casualties with implications at the strategic level.

> "In one moment in time, our service members will be feeding and clothing displaced refugees – providing humanitarian assistance. In the next moment, they will be holding two warring tribes apart – conducting peace-keeping operations. Finally, they will be fighting a highly lethal mid-intensity battle. All on the same day, all within three city blocks. It will be what we call the three-block war."

- General Charles Krulak, U.S. Marine Corps, 1996.[25]

The American term "Three-Block War" refers to a full spectrum of military operations ranging from humanitarian assistance and counterinsurgency to combat operations. The key message behind this term was that a modern tactical reality now simultaneously involved both kinetic and non-kinetic action. Later, the Australians condensed this to occurrences on the same city block at the same time. When combat occurs, troops "*will encounter more lethal enemies, with less warning, in close combat, in complex terrain*". They claim that unless troops master close combat, the required non-combat functions cannot be executed peacefully.[26] This rather technical viewpoint guides our second proposition: <u>Stabilization forces need to master both combat and non-combat functions.</u>

Rupert Smith states that war, as we knew it, no longer exists. He concludes that a new paradigm of "war amongst the people" has replaced the old paradigm of industrial war. Smith points out a difference between *employing* force and merely *deploying* forces. Even with local military success, the original problems will not be solved with military solutions. In this sense, there has been no utility of force.[27] We should also understand that the campaign for "hearts and minds" is no longer an activity that only supports operations, but the overall objective.[28] While describing modern conflict in general and Bosnia in particular, Smith's conclusions on the primacy of political means over military power and the importance of the local level are in fact repetitions of certain classic counterinsurgency (COIN) concepts.[29]

Military engagements can now take place anywhere, and civilians in the battlefield are at once targets, objectives to be won and potential opposing forces. In fact, Smith states that the people *are* the battlefield. A guerilla fighter or an insurgent needs the populace for concealment and for sustainment. He can also target civilians because their will is the ultimate objective. The will and the opinion of the people will decide elections, influence politicians and affect the use of force, both locally and internationally. The media are used to make the world population at large aware of the conflict. The matters are

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[25] Krulak (1997).

[26] Complex Warfighting (2004), p. 7.

[27] Smith (2007), pp. 3-20. General Smith's book was published in 2007 and it is based on his experiences and observations of conflicts from low to high intensity, around the world. He sets the stage by studying the history of warfare from Napoleonic battles to present, in a style similar to that of Sir B.H. Liddell-Hart in his grand classic *Strategy*. Smith backs up his thesis with a case study on Bosnia organized according to his six trends. Although Smith works mostly from the strategic viewpoint, his study shows trends similar to those of Rekkedal (2006). The differences between these two are those of a theorist (Rekkedal) vs. a practitioner (Smith).

[28] Smith (2007), pp. 272–280.

[29] See for example Galula (1964), pp. 60-67. Galula's book is a counterinsurgency classic of the French colonial wars era and is frequently quoted in modern COIN books, including the U.S. Army FM 3-24 (2006).

discussed in public while views and opinions are formed in private, semi-public and public spheres. Therefore, according to Smith, operations take place amongst the people in a wider sense as well, through the media. This means that information is the "currency" on which the war amongst the people is waged.[30]

Vincent Desportes follows Smith's ideas but digs deeper into the tactical level. Whereas Smith stated that war no longer exists, Desportes sees that war itself has not changed, though the circumstances of warfighting are different. He demonstrates that operations take place amongst the people (*au sein des populations*) in urban environments and that the ground component has become more important than before. He also presents a continuum of operations where the stabilization phase has become decisive. The most likely war, now and in the future, will involve irregular warfare with irregular adversaries.[31] Desportes believes there is a need for unified action of different actors to solve the challenges of stabilization. A military force may at best only contain irregular adversaries, and it will require political means to defeat them. Intelligence, especially human intelligence (HUMINT), and small-unit tactics are the cornerstones of "the likely war". He recognizes the need to think globally and act locally with an emphasis on communication. There is a need to communicate within the force, with the local populations and with the global audience. Military action is also a strong way to communicate as "acts, even the smallest ones, speak louder than words.[32] This confirms our third proposition: Stabilization operations are human-centric.

2.2   Irregular Warfare and the irregular adversary

Participation in stabilization operations requires the capacity to deal with various forms of insurgent movements and terrorist groups that have established themselves as a local power. Stabilization operations are normally associated with failed or failing states and irregular warfare. This modern "hybrid" irregular warfare consists of various forms of insurgency, 'small wars', guerilla warfare, low intensity conflicts and some elements of modern international terrorism. The result is more complex than traditional counterinsurgency or information warfare.[33] During the fight against different adversaries, one has to secure and stabilize the populations, win the approval of the local audiences and reconstruct the failed state.[34] Irregular warfare is also referred to by both Smith and Desportes when they explain war amongst the people. As Rekkedal connects the stabili-

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[30] Smith (2007), pp. 3-20, 280–291 and 377–385.

[31] Desportes (2007A), pp. 43-65. Author's comment: Desportes' book *La guerre probable* does not clearly distinguish his own opinions from others, as footnotes are used scarcely. Yet he analyzes modern warfare in a detailed manner and each chapter offers a comprehensive synthesis on the subject matter. The book is invaluable for the French, as most relevant publications are in English. A review of this book in English by Judah Grunstein is available online at http://smallwarsjournal.com/mag/docs-temp/91-grunstein.pdf with a link to the interview with Desportes. Before becoming the director of the CID in 2008, Major General Desportes led the French Army doctrine center (*Centre de doctrine et d'emploi des forces,* CDEF) in 2005-2008. The French Army manual FT-01 published by CDEF in 2007 concurs with Desportes' ideas.

[32] Desportes (2007A), pp. 43-65, 131-135.

[33] Rekkedal's Power Point presentation on Hybrid and Compound Warfare is available online at: http://www.mpkk.fi/en/presentation/Symposium%20of%20Military%20Sciences/

[34] McCuen (2008), pp. 107-113.

zation of failed states with the framework of irregular warfare, we should state our fourth proposition: <u>Stabilization operations take place in a tactical environment of existing irregular warfare or its aftermath</u>.

The U.S. Department of Defense has examined modern conflicts in the light of the most recent American experiences. In their joint doctrine, they have replaced the term Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) with the term Irregular Warfare (IW). Irregular warfare is a form of armed conflict and a form of warfare that encompasses a range of operations and activities just short of major combat operations (MCO). The document states that people, not platforms or advanced technology, will be the key for success in IW. This calls for understanding of "*social dynamics of tribal politics, social networks, religious influences and cultural mores*". When dealing with this sort of warfare, it is essential to address non-state actors and armed groups.[35] The contrast between conventional warfare and irregular warfare is illustrated in Figure 2-1.
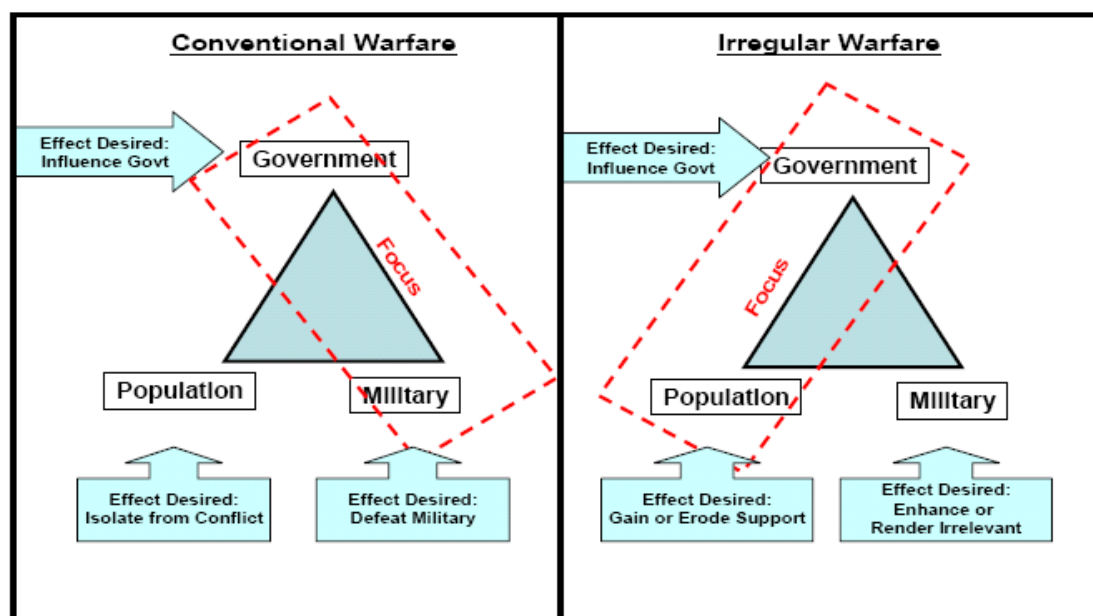
Figure 2-1. The contrast of conventional and irregular warfare. (Source: IW JOC (2007), p. 8)

According to the Americans, there is friction between the levels of war as the IW is contextually different at each level. At each level, the goal of influencing the government is attained by interacting with the local population. IW should therefore be seen as a political struggle to influence the population and win the support of the population, using

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[35] Irregular Warfare (IW) – Joint Operating Concept (JOC) (2007), pp. 1-16. A non-state actor is defined as "*a group or organization that is not within the formal structure of the government of any state, not limited by any state boundary, and operates beyond the control of any state and without loyalty to any state*". An armed group is defined as "*a group that employs force to achieve its objectives; is not within the formal military structure of any state, alliance of states, or intergovernmental organization; and is not under the control of the state(s) in which it operates*".

both violent and non-violent methods involved.[36] On the operational level, the Force HQ struggles to reach normalization and attain its strategic objectives. The combination of the so-called *strategic corporal*[37] and the media may, however, bypass the operational level and insert individual engagements within a strategic context. On the tactical level, the commanders and their units will execute different kinds of actions in order to provide a safe and secure environment and to fulfill their mission. At the same time, they have to co-habitate with, assist and support the local society. This may be described as an "*intricate web of actions*", especially on the lowest tactical levels.[38] As the primacy of tactical land environment is established, the friction between the levels of warfare is of special interest. We will again express this with a proposition to test to what extent this friction exists: <u>Tactical reality on the ground may conflict with the operational level mission statement in stabilization operations.</u>

The French doctrine states that military action against an irregular adversary is only useful if it supports the overall objective of dislocating the enemy. Adversaries may be irregular throughout the conflict (as in Afghanistan 2001 onwards), but regular adversaries may also transform into irregular ones after a shift from the major combat operations phase into stabilization (as in Iraq after 2003). Irregular adversaries may be very different in their motivations, ends and means.[39] <u>Guerillas</u> are predominantly indigenous troops fighting in enemy-held, hostile or denied territory. <u>Insurgents</u> try to overthrow a constituted government and therefore have a specific motivation and a desired end state. <u>Terrorists</u> use or threaten to use calculated, unlawful violence to pursue their goals.[40] The Australian list of possible adversaries is longer: "*The conflict environment has always included terrorists, rural guerrillas, bandits, tribal fighters and mercenaries. But today it also includes drug traffickers, multinational corporations, private military companies, unarmed protesters, environmental groups, computer hackers, rioters, militias, people smugglers, pirates, religious sects, urban guerrillas, media and diplomatic alliances.*"[41]

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[36] Irregular Warfare (IW) – Joint Operating Concept (JOC) (2007), p. 5-9. As seen in Figure 2-1, the strategic level focus is to control and influence the relevant population. At the operational level, the focus may be on indirect approaches for planning operations and campaigns. On the tactical level, the focus is on tactics, techniques and procedures, which have to be applied differently than in a conventional operation.

[37] Author's comment: *Strategic corporal* refers to a small unit leader or an individual soldier, regardless of his/her rank, whose decision and action on the ground is transmitted to global audiences by media resulting in significant national or international consequences. Well-known examples are the behavior of individual American prison guards at Abu Graib, Iraq, and the killings of civilians in the aftermath of an IED attack against an American unit at Haditha, Iraq.

[38] CDEF (2007): FT-01, pp. 20-22.

[39] PIA 00-180, pp. 5-10.

[40] JP 1-02, pp. 233, 267 and 544. The International Humanitarian Law defines also these groups from a legal perspective. See Rosén – Parkkari (2004).

[41] Complex Warfighting (2004), pp. 4-12.

2.2.1 Warlords and Warriors

In 1999, Ralph Peters predicted that in the future, Western military would be facing a new "warrior class" rather than soldiers. He categorizes these warriors into five classes, all of whom – in hindsight – have been present in ongoing conflicts in Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan.

1) "Losers". This type takes advantage of the situation as weapons offer them power and a lifestyle they otherwise would never attain. Coming from the underclass, they would have no stake, no education and no future in peacetime. The end of fighting for them means the end of good times.

2) "Foot soldiers". As the conflict has disrupted schools, employment, families and other structures of the society, youngsters without orientation are drawn to the warrior trade. The longer the conflict lasts, the harder it will be for them to return to normal life. This class may include children soldiers.

3) "Opportunists". Not constrained by moral issues, these entrepreneurs take full advantage of the situation for personal gain, influence and security. They may form alliances, change sides and cross ethnic boundaries to reach their goals. This group includes the so-called "warlords", who may rule cities, regions or entire countries in the absence of legitimate power.

4) "Patriots". Driven by religion, ethnic issues, nationalism or by personal motivation (such as traumatic events or personal losses), these warriors are heroes for their own kind. Their level of influence is dependent upon their character, context and the level of motivation. In the right circumstances, they may be reintegrated to society.

5) "Mercenaries". This group mostly consists of failed, marginalized or unemployed military men, who provide the nucleus of internationally available gunmen. They have the background to provide other warriors with the needed military skills. Depending on their charisma and leadership, they may also rise to the warlord status. There is also a branch of more or less legitimate mercenaries employed by Western corporations.[42]

Braden Hisey has studied peace building in warlord situations using Sierra Leone as a case study. He claims that warlord situations develop analogically to the structures of failing states (see Figure 2-2). In the final steps of the process, warlords gain access to the state's resources and thus consider any attempt to intervene unwelcome. The warlord's main interest is to sustain the instability by which he thrives, and not necessarily to win a war. The intervening power should therefore have enough force and authority to contain a warlord's operations and assets and to force him to a negotiation table. Hisey considers that those who intervene in the conflict should transform the belligerents from warlords into politicians. Disarming and demobilizing warlords and their warriors is only an intermediate step.[43]

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[42] Peters (1999), pp. 32-47.
[43] Hisey (2002), pp. 13-15 and 65-72.
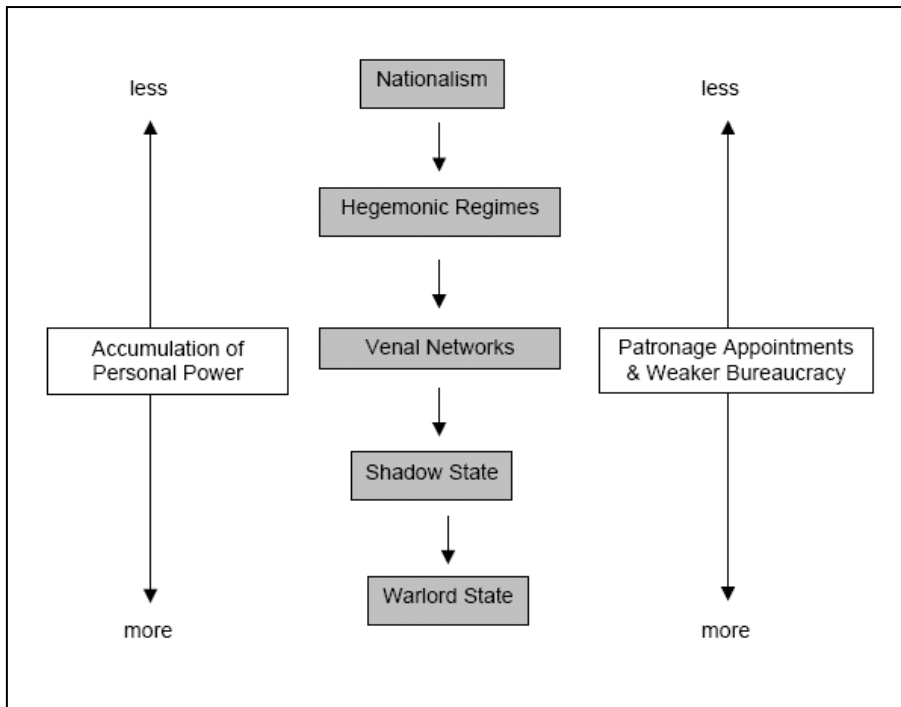
Figure 2-2. Development of "warlordism" in failed or failing states. (Source: Hisey (2002), p. 15)

Stabilization operations are likely to take place in a failed or a failing state and, by consequence, in a warlord situation. The economical aspects of war, such as the exploitation of existing natural resources, should be closely examined, as they may constitute a reason to continue the conflict. The beneficiaries may be local as well as foreign, and corruption may be widespread.[44] On the tactical level, our troops are likely to encounter a "warrior class" that represents a real authority as guns represent power and wealth. Our observations indicate that "warriors" have different motivations to engage or resist our troops. Some are afraid of losing their local or regional power or a profitable business. Some have ideological or personal reasons, while others are just trying to make a living. For example in Fallujah, Iraq, local guerillas hired ordinary people to conduct attacks against coalition troops. An observer was paid $50, IED installation went for $100 and the actual perpetrators of the attack got $200.[45] This leads to our sixth proposition: <u>Warlords and warriors with local and personal interests are the adversaries at the lower tactical levels.</u>

2.2.2 The Accidental Guerilla

Based on our study so far, the stabilization force is likely to encounter a variety of armed actors on the ground. These actors are not necessarily *our* enemies, unless our troops happen to get in their way. Ultimately, some become our enemies, as they engage us directly or fight against the supported host-nation's security forces. This leads to two traditional models of response from the intervening force. In the counter-terrorist model, the action would be "enemy-centric" i.e. the intervening force assumes that it will solve

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[44] Interview with Professor Liisa Laakso, 15 January 2008.
[45] West (2005), p. 30.

the problem by destroying terrorist networks. In the counter-insurgency model, the approach is "population-centric", based on the belief that protecting the population and obtaining its consent will isolate and ultimately exhaust the insurgents. These often-prolonged conflicts may produce what David Kilcullen calls the "Accidental Guerilla".[46]

> *"The local fighter is therefore often an accidental guerilla – fighting us because we are in his space, not because he wishes to invade ours. He follows folk-ways of tribal warfare that are mediated by traditional cultural norms, values and perceptual lenses; he is engaged (from his point of view) in "resistance" rather than "insurgency" and fights principally to be left alone. Whether or not he is manipulated by propaganda, advised or equipped by outside experts, or armed by an external sponsor, when he fights in his hometown or local hills in defense of traditional identity, he is a formidable opponent."[47]*

"The Accidental Guerilla Syndrome" involves a minor element of hardliner terrorists or insurgents setting up a foothold in a local community. The process then advances in four successive phases where the catalyst for locals allying with hardliners is, in fact, the actions of the intervening outside force. Eventually, the population starts to reject and fight the intervening foreigners, as they are seen as an occupation force. When describing this effect, Kilcullen uses a medical analogy in which "*the body rejects the intrusion of a foreign object, even one that serves an ultimately beneficial purpose.*"[48] A stabilization force often operates in the rejection phase, as the intervention force already has triggered the process of creating accidental guerilas.

1) INFECTION – The hardliners establish a presence in a remote, ungoverned or conflict-stricken area. Local relationships and support systems are reinforced by shared business interests, intermarriage and the start of initial operations, such as recruiting and training. Possible resistance is thwarted with violence and intimidation.

2) CONTAGION – The acquired safe haven is used to spread violence and ideology to other parts of the country. In some cases, this may include regional or global operations by terrorist activity or "virtually" through propaganda and media influence.

3) INTERVENTION – Outside forces intervene to deal with the threat and to disrupt safe havens. This may come in several forms, as the interveners may be local, regional or from a wider international community. An intervention of "foreigners" may range from a low-profile approach to a strong and persistent presence. This will cause a reaction amongst the locals who may close ranks against the external threat. High profile, violent and foreign-based action tends to increase support for the hardliners. Those who were once "strangers" may now be seen as locals or at least as defenders of locals.

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[46] Kilcullen (2009), pp. xiv-xv.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid. (2009), pp. 30-38.

4) REJECTION – The local population reacts negatively, rejecting outside intervention and allies with the hardliners. This may happen because the locals oppose outside interference and feel that local tribal or community interests are threatened or because they are alienated by the heavy-handed actions of the interveners.[49]

Based on his experiences in Iraq, General Chiarelli divides the local population in three groups: anti-coalition forces, coalition supporters and "fence-sitters". The last group is watching to see how the situation develops and waiting to decide whom to support. They are the bulk of the populace and considered by Chiarelli as the operational center of gravity.[50] General Mattis, also experienced in Iraq, emphasizes the importance of winning over the "fence-sitters" when diminishing local support for insurgency. He distinguishes a group of "irreconcilables", who would become targets for direct kinetic action, as these people cannot be convinced to change sides.[51] These observations are roughly in accord with the recent U.S. military publication, the FM 3-24.2 (2009), Tactics in Counterinsurgency, which labels the passive supporters as "the mass base".[52] The potential accidental guerillas are oriented amongst the "fence-sitters" - a group whose hearts and minds are contested by coalition forces and "irreconcilable" hardliners. Our seventh proposition: <u>The accidental guerilla syndrome is generated as a function of time and according to the chosen *modus operandi* of the intervener.</u>
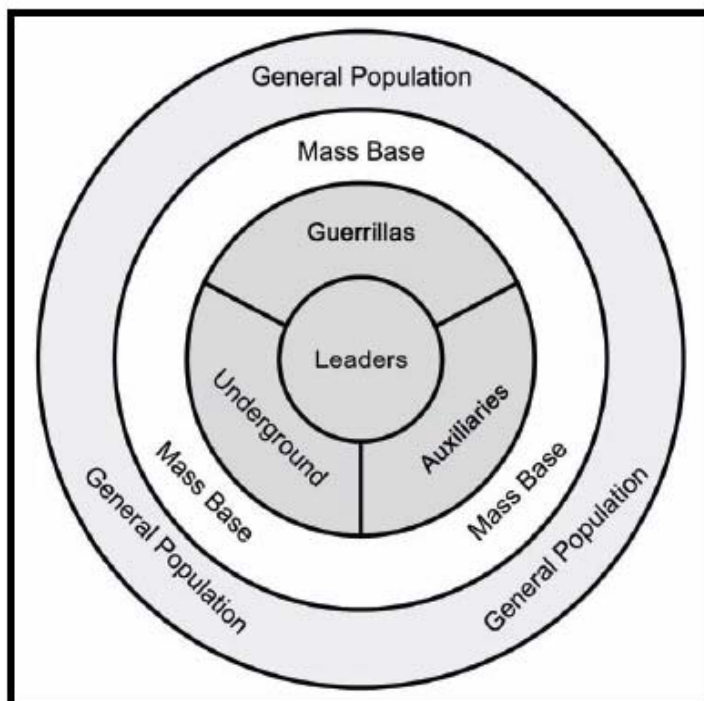
Figure 2-3. Organizational elements of an insurgency (Source: FM 3-24.2 (2009), p. 2-3.)

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[49] Kilcullen (2009), Author's comment: Kilcullen's uses al Qaeda in his example, but a more generalized approach to "hardliners" was better suited to this thesis.
[50] Chiarelli - Michaelis (2005), pp. 5-7.
[51] FM 3-24 (2006), p. 4-7.
[52] FM 3-24.2 (2009), pp. 2-2…2-15.

2.3   The scientific stance of this thesis

This second part of Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the hermeneutical research process as well as to the methodology used. The conclusions and generalizations of the written report are naturally a result of certain choices made along the way.[53] Uwe Flick describes the relationship between a qualitative research and its objects: "…*the object under study is the determining factor for choosing a method and not the other way around. Objects are not reduced to single variables but are studied in their complexity and entirety in their everyday context*."[54]   The ability to follow this process is important in terms of reliability and validity. It is also critical in order to understand the approach.[55] The paper has been composed with professional military officers in mind, although the fact remains that the thesis committee has been a key audience. This research report does not include a separate literature review, as it appeared more practical to discuss the existing material directly and in their relevant contexts.[56]

2.3.1   Philosophy of science and the theoretical context

In terms of the research background, recognizing the philosophical stance and the consequent claims is essential.[57] As we have already identified the object of study, we must now pinpoint the necessary ontological, epistemological, logical and teleological notions behind it. Rauno Kuusisto sees a qualitative research process as the development of a subjective truth documented and organized according to the traditions of the given scientific discipline.[58] We will see that a purely military approach is not sufficient to cover our research subject. Hence, a multidisciplinary approach that includes at least sociological and anthropological aspects is required. Interestingly enough, this observation is parallel to the nature of stabilization operations themselves. Nevertheless, as this thesis is prepared for the Department of Tactics, a tactical viewpoint will be the main focus throughout the report.

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[53] Hirsjärvi – Remes- Sajavaara (2005), pp. 114-122. The foundation of any research consists of analyzing the research problem properly and accurately, choosing a suitable philosophical stance, selecting applicable research methods and understanding the theoretical context. See also Creswell (2003), pp. 4-23.

[54] Flick, Uwe (2006), pp. 14-15.

[55] Yin (2003), pp. 33–39. In an ideal situation, the whole study should be repeatable by another investigator using only the research report and the research database. Using the same case, the investigator should arrive at the same findings and conclusions.

[56] Yin (2003), pp. 141–165. Author's comment: The reader should understand that this research report summarizes the author's conclusion. A separate research databank maintained by the author is available for those interested in specific details or for the verification purposes of the supervisors. It includes several early drafts of the report, which is proof of a hermeneutical process leading to this final stage. As research questions have been re-evaluated along the way, the whole research strategy has been continuously adjusted and the draft report redesigned accordingly. The databank also includes data and findings from the previous research completed in 2006-2007.

[57] Creswell (2003), pp. 4-13.

[58] Kuusisto, Rauno: *Tieteenfilosofia - ajattelun kehys*. An article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), pp. 21–33.

The Western idea of warfighting comprises three levels of war: strategic, operational and tactical levels.[59] The word "tactics" refers to the planning, preparation, execution and leading of battles. Equally, "operational art" refers to the principles and skills required to plan, prepare and conduct a series of battles. This level of war connects the tactical level with the strategic aims and objectives of a war or a campaign. Tactics, operational art and strategy are subsets or different planes of the art of war from the viewpoint of military science. In Finland, the combination of tactics and operational art is considered not as a fundamental military science, but a collective one. It may combine elements of military history, military technology, military pedagogy, military psychology and military sociology. This complicated description is clarified by Pasi Kesseli when he states, "*the art of war is a science when researched and studied, and an art when practiced*". Theory and practice should therefore be closely linked and developing new scientific data requires a multidisciplinary approach.[60]

Rauno Kuusisto explains hermeneutics as a doctrine of interpretation. It requires a firm base of knowledge to build on, a well-defined angle and finally a pre-understanding of the whole research process. The subjectivity of the investigator has to be recognized as he develops an interpretation of the phenomenon under study according to the so-called hermeneutical spiral. The end-state involves reaching a satisfactory level of abstraction in order to increase our knowledge.[61] This concurs with the purpose statement of this research, as its aim is to present an interpretation of the human dimension of the battlespace in stabilization operations. The goal is not to quantify or to model this kind of an environment, or to provide a field manual or a toolbox for suggested courses of action. This thesis has been written in a hermeneutical manner. Further supporting the hermeneutical approach is the lengthiness of the research process with two distinct starting points; the first study was launched in 2006 and the second stage began in the summer of 2007.

Ontologically the subject is two-fold, because the concepts of battlespace and stabilization operations have to be reviewed as phenomena.[62] *Stabilization operations* are viewed from the angle of the post-intervention phase of operations, i.e. the phase after the major combat operations phase. The mission spectrum is seen according to specific manuals describing this phase of operations. The grounding assumption is that operations are legitimate and authorized by the international community. *Battlespace* is seen as a conceptual operating environment that does not necessarily include combat action - even if the name includes the word "battle". On the other hand, operations within a battlespace may or may not include combat in many different variations, intensities and

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[59] Rekkedal (2006), pp. 23-28. The NATO terminology concurs with this - see AAP-6 (2006), NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions (English and French).

[60] Kesseli, Pasi: *Operaatiotaito ja taktiikka tieteenalana*, an article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), pp. 8–14. Colonel Kesseli is the professor of the Department of Tactics at the Finnish National Defence University. See also Rekkedal (2006), pp. 36-38. Author's comment: From the standpoint of the art of war, defining a paradigm in order to explain modern warfare goes well beyond the level of this thesis. Certain factors have been recognized and interpreted by scientists such as Nils-Marius Rekkedal and Hervé Coutau-Bégarie. Their publications are based on scientific research and both of them have acknowledged that irregular warfare has been evolving towards "war amongst the people". Kesseli's requirement for a practical counterweight has been achieved by studying the works of Rupert Smith and Vincent Desportes.

[61] Kuusisto, Rauno: *Tieteenfilosofia - ajattelun kehys*. An article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), pp. 22-26.

[62] Hirsjärvi - Remes - Sajavaara (2005), pp. 120–130.

levels. The "social" battlespace for a tactical land unit is a new approach developed in Chapter 4. It changes our classic terrain-oriented and enemy-oriented views in favor of a human-centric mindset.

2.3.2 Pre-understanding and consequent propositions

The purpose of this research and its overall context has been introduced in Chapter 1. The background of the overall problematic was described earlier in this chapter. After this short study on war amongst the people and irregular warfare, it is possible to say that there is a pre-understanding of the research subject.[63] Epistemologically, one has to recognize the objectivity hazards that relate to the author's own experiences in peace support operations and exercises.[64] To understand social environments, events and activities and their relationship to written texts as versions of the world, we have to recognize a process called *mimesis*. According to Uwe Flick, this process helps a researcher set up an epistemological background when using texts as empirical material.[65] Juha Varto, too, underlines the differences between the lifeworlds of the interpreter of a text and its author, and emphasizes that the selections made in the research process are always personal.[66]

The pre-understanding of this study is therefore largely dependent on the lifeworld of the author. Interpretations made in the mimetic process of reading texts are always personal and temporally influenced. As a result, choices made in the selection of sources may have great impact on this pre-understanding.[67] For that purpose, the methods of choosing sources were presented in Chapter 1 in order to separate the researcher and the

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[63] Varto (1992), pp. 55-72. Pre-understanding is a term of hermeneutics. In a hermeneutical interpretation process, the researcher approaches a subject based on his own pre-understanding. Based on his interpretations, the researcher develops his prior knowledge of the subject. Each new approach to the subject will develop this understanding a little further. The so-called hermeneutical cycle is therefore never complete, as each step of the research process brings the researcher closer to the subject and deepens his self-understanding.

[64] See Hirsjärvi - Remes - Sajavaara (2005), pp. 120–130 and Varto (1992), pp. 26-27. All the elements of qualitative research take place in a lifeworld, in which the researcher also exists and acts. Although this is more relevant to ethnographic and social studies, it still applies here, as a pure setting of natural scientific research is not possible. Author's comment: The author has served in KFOR, Kosovo (1999-2000) and in EUFOR, Bosnia-Herzegovina (2005-2006). He also has experience in Nordic peace support exercises and NATO crisis response exercises 1998-2005 in the framework of the Finnish Rapid Deployment Force.

[65] Flick (2006), pp. 82–93. According to Flick, texts can be used as empirical material in qualitative research to provide essential data, interpretations and also to present and communicate findings. Texts are therefore the basic material of qualitative research. The process of mimesis has also been referred in terms of constructing knowledge in general. It is also called "world making in the text".

[66] Varto (1992), pp. 55–72. According to Varto, interpretation must always lead to understanding. Understanding is relative, as lifeworlds of interpreters as well as time and purpose of the study will always be different.

[67] The author recognizes that this study has not been designed and conducted within the year of the General Staff Officer Studies (*yleisesikuntaupseerikurssi*). Instead, it is a continuum of his research started during the preceding Senior Staff Officer Course (*esiupseerikurssi*). In the background, there is also a career-long study of modern conflict in the form of operational experience, reading books and discussing with colleagues. It is also likely to be affected by Finnish military thought in regard to peace support operations and tactics, techniques and procedures. Studies at the French Joint Staff College (CID) have provided new possibilities, such as reading French publications not yet translated into Finnish or English.

research subject and to facilitate the reader's own interpretations. Recognizing the hazards involved when drawing conclusions, the case study has been selected from an operation with which the author does not have personal experience. It has been in the best interest of the author to seek objectivity with these measures taken.

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                          CONSTRUCTION
                            (TEXT)


        mimesis 2                       mimesis 3



EXPERIENCE                                    INTERPRETATION
                          mimesis 1

    mimesis 1 = a pre-understanding of human action

    mimesis 2 = processing experiences of social environments into texts

    mimesis 3 = the interpretation of texts according to one's own lifeworld
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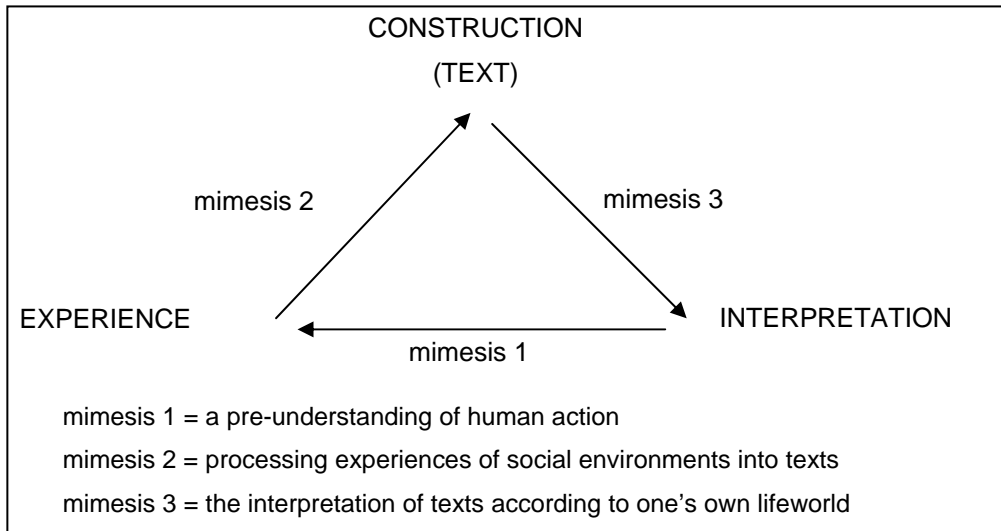
Figure 2-4. The process of mimesis. (Flick (2006), p. 88)

To summarize, Chapters 1 and 2 set up the overall framework for this study. By looking closely into modern conflict, we can imagine the dangers of limiting our views based on strategic missions and political terms, as tactical reality does not necessarily correspond to these high-level "arrows on a map". As a conclusion of this basic research, we have declared seven propositions[68] to further analyze our pre-understanding and to establish criteria for the case study environment:

(1) Military action alone does not guarantee successful stabilization operations.

(2) Stabilization forces need to master both combat and non-combat functions.

(3) Stabilization operations are human-centric.

(4) Stabilization operations take place in a tactical environment of existing irregular warfare or its aftermath.

(5) Tactical reality on the ground may conflict with the operational level mission statement in stabilization operations.

(6) Warlords and warriors with local and personal interests are the adversaries at the lower tactical levels.

(7) The accidental guerilla syndrome is generated as a function of time and the chosen *modus operandi* of the intervener.

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[68] Yin (2003), pp. 21-22. According to Yin, propositions guide the study towards important issues, and thus support and pave the way towards answers to the main research problems or questions.

2.4 The research problem and the qualitative approach

The overall research problem is expressed by the title of this thesis. It calls for a human-centric approach instead of classic terrain or enemy oriented approaches. Presuming that the local societies in crisis are the *raison d'être* of a given stabilization operation, the human dimension is far more important – and complex – than it would be on a classic traditional battlefield. <u>The main research problem therefore revolves around a possible new approach – the "social" battlespace of stabilization operations</u>.

Jussi Metteri agrees that qualitative methods should prevail when studying operational art and tactics.[69] According to Juha Varto, the object of a qualitative research is usually human and the lifeworld of humans. A lifeworld consists of meanings, and qualitative research of the lifeworld therefore observes it as a world of meanings. Meanings appear as human actions, goal setting, planning, administrative structures, community activities etc.[70] This fits well with the subject involving soldiers in the complex operational environment of a contemporary stabilization operation. The use of qualitative methods usually generalizes findings when compared with quantitative and mixed methods. As any efforts to quantify the tactical action or human terrain of an operational area would require access to confidential documents and statistics, quantitative or even mixed approaches seemed unsuitable.

An effort to describe and interpret the human dimension of battlespace results in an explanatory research problem. Possible research strategies would have included experiments, histories, archival analysis, surveys and case studies. Robert K. Yin suggests that when the major research questions include "why" or "how," and when the investigation is focused on contemporary events over which the investigator has no control, a case study becomes the most suitable research strategy.[71] Mika Huttunen has viewed case study methods in the context of operational art and tactics research. He agrees with Yin that the case study is more of an approach or a strategy than just a method.[72] The time and resources available made it possible to study only a single operational environment, Afghanistan, with three different tactical contexts as cases.[73]

2.4.1 The research questions

The central research question is "**How do human structures and social interactions affect the tactical level land operations of the stabilization force**"?

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[69] Metteri, Jussi: *Laadullinen tutkimus*, an article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), pp. 37-38.

[70] Varto, Juha (1992), pp. 23-25. See also Hirsjärvi - Remes - Sajavaara (2005), p. 155.

[71] Yin (2003), pp. 3-9, Creswell (2003), pp. 13-23 and Hirsjärvi - Remes – Sajavaara (2005), pp. 125-130.

[72] Huttunen, Mika: *Tapaustutkimus operaatiotaidossa ja taktiikassa*, an article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), pp. 127-134. There are, however, obvious limitations when studying contemporary military operations, as sources for evidence collection are usually limited.

[73] Yin (2003), pp. 39-53. Author's comment: Another way of doing a multiple-case investigation would involve studying several different operations, e.g. Kosovo, Chad and Afghanistan, separately in order to pinpoint differences. Nevertheless, as this thesis will show, it is possible to find different cases within a single operation. This underlines the contradiction between the operational and tactical levels.

This central question reflects the duality of the human dimension – structures and actions. To reach an answer, this pivotal issue must be broken down into several sub-problems. The supporting sub-questions are:

    1) How can stabilization operations be defined?

    2) How can the concept of battlespace be applied in the context of stabilization operations?

        - What is the relevance of social action in relation to the overall tactical action?

    3) What kind of land operating environment exists in an actual operation?

        - What human structures or social systems exist at the tactical level?

        - What kind of interaction exists between the force and other actors?

2.4.2 The frame of thesis and the scope of study

This explanatory, qualitative research aims to describe the human dimension of battlespace in stabilization operations. The overall timeframe for the study is post-9/11 (al Qaeda attacks in the USA and the following Global War on Terror), after which stabilization operations have taken on some specific nuances.[74] The stop line for evidence collection was July 2009 to maximize exploitable time, as operations unfold and develop constantly. Logically, the research results will only apply to this framed context. The theoretical background, the framework of stabilization operations, the process of operationalizing the thesis and finally the preliminary results are measured within the practical dimension of a case study.

The selected case study is nominally the stabilization phase of post-9/11 operations in Afghanistan. To separate the intervention and stabilization phases in Afghanistan is difficult indeed. A fair choice for a start line of the stabilization phase is 20 December 2001, when ISAF I was mandated by the UN Security Council Resolution 1386. A better milestone is 05 October 2006, when the Stage 5 (Eastern Afghanistan) expansion was implemented and ISAF took responsibility for the whole country.[75] The wide spectrum of ongoing operations in Afghanistan is not a negative issue, but – rather paradoxically – it provides a far better "battle lab" than a traditional and static Chapter VI peace-keeping mission would. In this sense, Afghanistan as a whole presents us with a *critical case* on the operational level of war, when considering its influence on post-9/11 doctrine. Furthermore, the varying tactical conditions allow a multiple-case study to be conducted within the same operational environment. This latter option was pursued, as will be highlighted later on. The purpose of the case study is to provide a test bench to confirm, to challenge or to extend the theoretical parts of this study.[76]

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[74] Author's comment: Samuel P. Huntington has written about the clash of civilizations. David Kilcullen has taken this further in the post-9/11 environment labeling current conflicts as "global counterinsurgency" - a defensive war against a worldwide Islamist *Jihad*. See Huntington (1996) and Kilcullen (2004A and 2004B).

[75] ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/ISAF/topics/expansion/index.html. Printed 01 January 2009.

[76] Yin (2003), p. 40.

This thesis centers on the lower tactical level of operations.[77] The "tactical level" is where battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish the military tasks assigned to the units. It includes the Regional Commands of ISAF and their sub-units, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and certain maneuver units. "Operational level" refers to the level at which the campaign and major operations are planned and executed. It is understood to include the ISAF HQ and its joint operational area. "Strategic level" refers to the multinational political framework behind the given operation. "Strategic consequences" therefore have something to do with the set political and/or military aims for the operation, the consensus of the alliance or other international actions that affect national or multinational decision-making.[78]

PRT / BATTLEGROUP
- Area of Operations
- Forward Support Base
- National Support, "Rear"

SCOPE

PRT

Conceptual Battlespace

The AO of an ISAF Regional Command
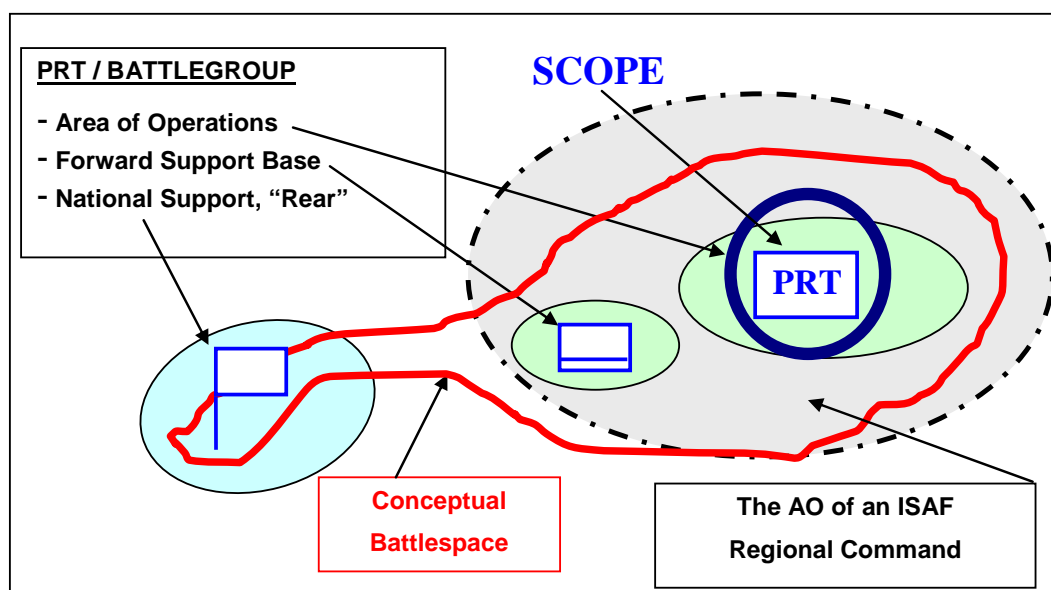
Figure 2-5. The scope of the thesis. The selected scope is presented with terminological references to the case study. The context is the AO of a Regional Command of ISAF, where the battlespace of a PRT or a battalion-sized maneuver unit is the point of interest. This picture roughly corresponds to the conceptual battlespace presented in the FM 3-0 (2001), see Figure 4-1.

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[77] FM 3-0 (2008), pp. 6-1 to 6-4. The U.S. Army further divides the tactical level into three subcategories: 1) battles, 2) engagements and 3) small-unit and crew actions. Tactical actions may produce strategic or operational effects. This field manual establishes that "*a battle consists of a set of related engagements that lasts longer and involves larger forces than an engagement*". Further, it defines an engagement as "*a tactical conflict, usually between opposing, lower echelons maneuver forces. Engagements are typically conducted at brigade level and below. They are usually short, executed in terms of minutes, hours, or days.*" See also Kesseli, Pasi: *Operaatiotaito ja taktiikka tieteenalana*, an article Huttunen and Metteri (2008), pp. 13–14. The use of these levels is always relative as the objectives and results of the actions of tactical units might be operational or even strategic. Finland uses the term "combat technical level" (*taistelutekninen taso*) for the levels corresponding to companies and below.
[78] These terms are used according to the NATO AAP-6 (2006). See also Rekkedal (2006), pp. 26–27.

To simplify the research problem, the scope of the study is that of a deployed task force or a battlegroup[79]. A Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) is also considered the equivalent of such a unit, as not all the troop contributors have deployed battalion sized maneuver units. The framework is provided by the area of operations of an ISAF Regional Command. The author's pre-understanding of such a tactical operating environment is shown in Figure 2-5. The study is limited to ground operations within the area of operations of a PRT. These operations may include the use of rotary-wing aircraft or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), but the operations of the actual ISAF or other coalition air or maritime components are excluded.

2.5   Methodology

According to Juha Varto, one must be able to clearly indicate the following when researching a relatively new subject:

1) how the research subject is constructed,
2) how it can be recognized,
3) how it can be observed and researched thematically and
4) how this research stands ethically.[80]

The framework of the human dimension of battlespace was established by observing and analyzing stabilization operations and the concept of battlespace. As mentioned earlier, these definitions are dependent on the ontological selections made earlier. The definition of "stabilization operations" required the use of a thematic coding method based on some of the principle doctrines.[81] As Finland does not use this terminology, the study was launched from the French doctrine onwards. This choice affected the whole thesis. The definition of battlespace required an equally analytical approach with thematic coding as the selected method. The study was started from Anglo-Saxon definitions of battlespace and these views were combined with other publications that describe the modern conflict environment.

Source triangulation was used to study the structures of human terrain. In this research phase, thematic coding helped serve to categorize different groups or actors and in comparing their status. The first outcome was a list of different groups (i.e. structures). The methods used were:

1) A legal approach based on international humanitarian law, i.e. which groups are recognized by the humanitarian law.
2) A doctrinal approach using different manuals and guidebooks, official military publications.
3) A practical approach with experience-based documents and publications.

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[79] Author's comment: Both terms refer to a reinforced combat arms (infantry, armor or cavalry) battalion. Task Force (TF) is the variant used by the U.S. Army and Battlegroup (BG) is more of a British origin. European Union Battlegroups are built around a combat arms battalion with combat support, combat service support and other attachments. In French, the expression is *Groupement Tactique Interarmes* (GTIA).

[80] Varto (1992), p. 37.

[81] Flick (2006), pp. 307-312.

The case study was used to confirm these results and to provide evidence of the significance of social action between the stabilization force and the other actors. This research report reflects the research process shown in Figure 2-6. The exact case study design and methods are explained in Chapter 5 and the related annexes.
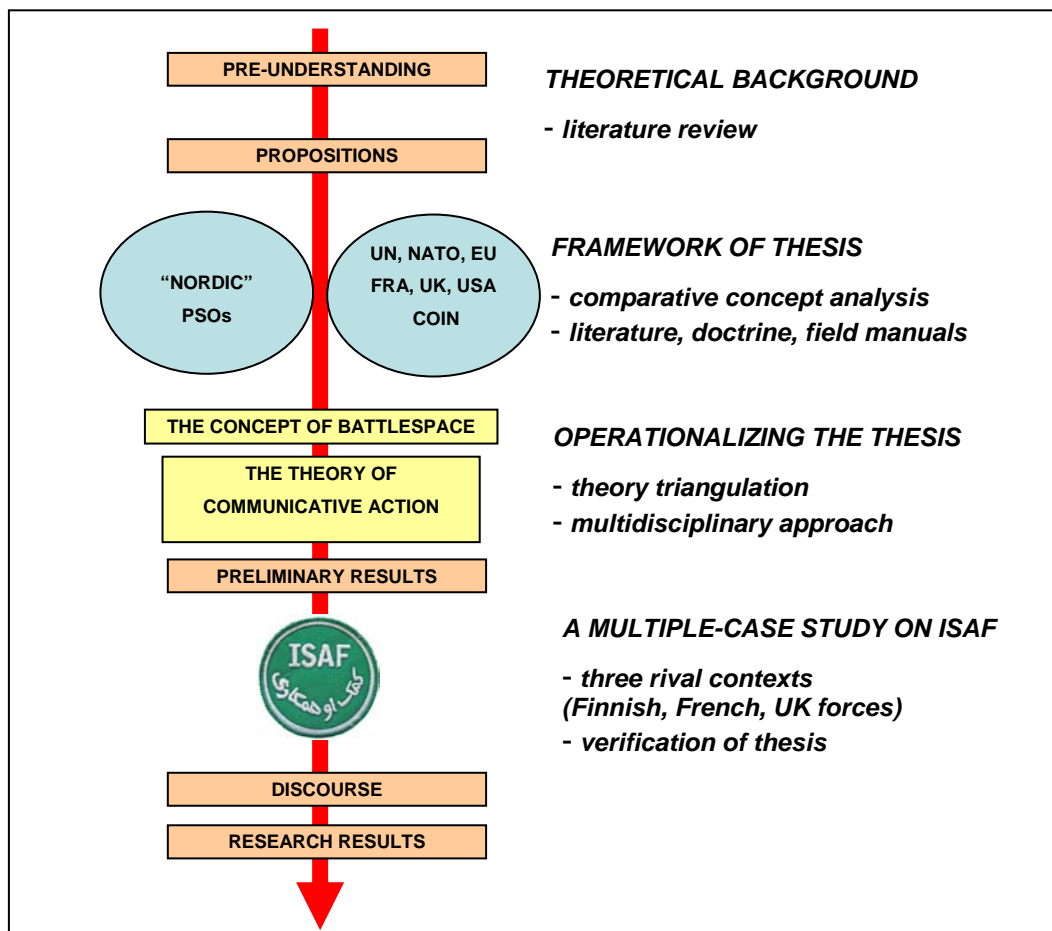
Figure 2-6. The research process.

3   STABILIZATION OPERATIONS

> "At some point in the counterinsurgency process, the static unit that took part in large-scale military operations in their area will find themselves confronted with a huge variety of non-military tasks which have to be performed in order to get the support of the local population, and which can be performed only by military personnel, because of the shortage of reliable civilian political and administrative personnel."

-   LTC David Galula, 1964[82]

The following study of field manuals and doctrinal publications will demonstrate the relevance of the term "stabilization operations". It will also show that the term "stabilization" actually articulates the desired end-state of any international intervention regardless of its overall context. As stabilization is not a Finnish term, we will begin by examining French doctrine, in which stabilization has been labeled as the decisive phase. Other examples presented in this chapter concur with the French view. All of the examples reflect post-2001 experiences and therefore give an adequate framework for this thesis.

3.1   The French emphasis on stabilization

According to recent French military publications, there is a continuum of three phases for Western involvement in modern conflicts: intervention, stabilization and normalization. Of these, the stabilization phase has proven the most demanding.[83] Figure 3-1 demonstrates the flow of these phases in relation to intensity and time. During the intervention phase, it is necessary to "win the battle". This phase usually includes a substantial amount of enforcement. The intermediate objective at the end of the intervention phase is often easily defined and almost purely military. The subsequent stabilization phase is supposed to end in a transfer of authority from the international military force to the international civil administration. "Building the peace" is the final, strategic objective of the campaign. Finally, the normalization phase includes a transfer of authority to the local civil administration.[84] In real life, however, these transfers are not likely to happen instantly in a single handover-takeover ceremony. More likely, the power balance shifts gradually and is dependent on a variety of factors including key leader personalities and politics. Therefore, the use of fading colors instead of strictly dividing phase lines in Figure 3-1 gives a more realistic vision than the FT-01 text does.

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[82] Galula (1964), pp. 66 and 50-55. LTC Galula (died in 1967) was a French officer who had fought in World War II and later served in China, Greece, Indochina and Algeria. Galula has listed four laws for counterinsurgency operations: 1) The support of population is as necessary for the counterinsurgent as it is for the insurgent. 2) Support is gained through an active minority. 3) Support from the population is conditional. 4) Intensity of efforts and vastness of means are essential.

[83] FT-01 (2007), pp. 10-14; PIA 00-150, pp. 13-15 and Desportes (2007A), pp. 66–71. Stabilization is labeled as the *decisive phase*.

[84] PIA 00-150 (2008), p. 15.
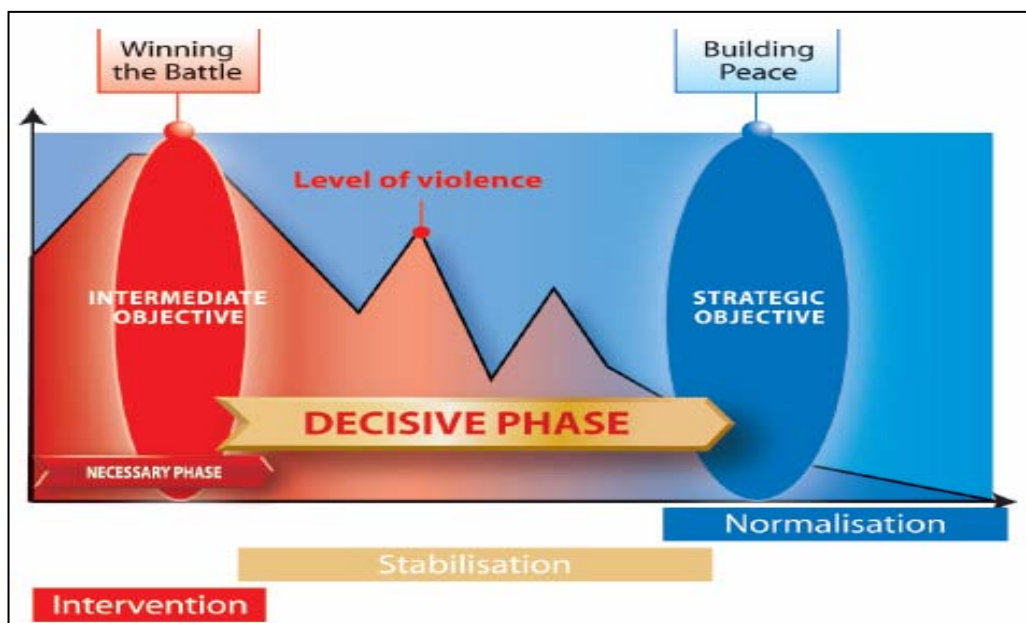
Figure 3-1. The three phases according to the French doctrine. (Source: FT-01 (2007), p. 13).

The bombings in Kosovo in 1999 did not resolve the conflict. Similarly, military triumphs of the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan 2001-2002 and in Iraq 2003 did not resolve those conflicts. In all of these theatres, the Western countries were still conducting military operations at the time this paper was being written. Hence, the intermediate objective of "winning the battle" seems to be easily mistaken as the desired end state of the whole campaign. Although the intervention phase remains the most essential job for the military, a lengthy stabilization phase seems to be unavoidable. In this sense, when labeling stabilization as the decisive phase, the French seem to be on the right track. In spite of that, we may question how to define the desired end state of "normality" or the process of "normalization" in each operational environment. Furthermore - does *our normality* correspond to *their normality*? For example, it seems that unfortunately, war is more normal than democracy in Afghanistan. Despite these reservations towards the French concept, we will continue to examine other examples of stabilization. Analyzing the end state of normalization has its own logic and therefore falls outside the scope this study.

3.2 The Nordic concept of PSOs

The co-operation of the Nordic countries has long traditions and its roots go back to the early 1960s. In 1997, the Nordic concept was transformed from UN peacekeeping to include all types of military PSOs. This development is reflected in the history of NORDCAPS tactical manuals, which are used as a reference by all the Nordic countries. The manual has been developed and revised based on Nordic PSO lessons learned. The Nordic UN Tactical Manual of 1996 was still a child of the peacekeeping era, whereas the NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual 2002 reflected the experiences from the Former Yugoslavia and especially from NATO-led operations. The 4th edition of the manual was published in 2007 after "drastic" [word used in the manual] evolution of

crises and related PSOs since the 3rd edition of 2002. Its aim is to provide a handbook for tactical level staffs and personnel involved in PSOs.[85]

Peace Support Operations (PSOs)

Support to Civil Agencies

Peace Support Operations

Military Combat Ops

General Principles
-Political Primacy
-Objective
-Composite Response
-Co-ordinating Mechanisms
-Exit Criteria

Principles for the PSO
-Unity of Command
-Unity of Effort
-Impartiality
-Consent of the Parties
-Credibility
-Transparency of Operations
-Use of Force
-Security
-Flexibility
-Mutual Respect
-Freedom of Movement
-Civil-Military Co-ordination and Liaison

Conflict Prevention
Peacemaking
Peacebuilding
Humanitarian Operations
Peacekeeping
Peace Enforcement

Figure 3-2. "NORDIC" PSOs. (Source: NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual (2007), p. 25)

All the Nordic operations are based on the legitimacy given by the UN. Today, however, most operations are led by NATO. Although homogenous at a first glance, the Nordic countries are in fact quite diverse. Denmark, Norway and Iceland are full members of NATO, whereas Finland and Sweden have opted to remain in the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP). On the other hand, Iceland and Norway are not EU members.[86] Perhaps with a more aggressive stance than others, Denmark has participated in combat operations in South Afghanistan. Norway has also taken part in OEF operations in Afghanistan and stabilization operations in Iraq. However, when looked at in terms of doctrine, the countries appear quite similar. Figure 3-2 shows the vastness of the Nordic PSO context. With full or partial membership in NATO and participation in EU Battlegroups and the NATO Response Force (NRF), it is clear that NATO doctrine plays an important role for the Nordic armies. Based on the experiences of last two decades, we may state that the Nordic countries prefer to participate in the post-intervention phases of operations and that they remain attentive to the legitimacy given by the UN.[87]

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[85] NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual, Volume 1 (2007), pp. 8-16. See also the NORDCAPS UN Tactical Manual (1996) and the NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual (2002).

[86] NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual, Volume 1 (2007), p. 17.

[87] Author's own conclusion. This statement is based on Nordic participation in operations in the Balkans, in the Middle East, in Africa and in Iraq and Afghanistan since 1990s.

3.3 The international organizations (UN, EU, NATO)

To widen the perspective of military manuals, it was necessary to search for NATO, UN and EU manuals. On the website of the United Nations, the only available documents lacked the detail of the NORDCAPS manual. The most relevant document for this study is the 2008 version of Principles and Guidelines of UN Peacekeeping Operations (The Capstone Document), which provided insight for the UN PKO as a whole.[88] From the UN standpoint, military peace operations can be split roughly into two parts: peacekeeping (Chapter VI of the UN Charter) and peace enforcement (Chapter VII).[89]
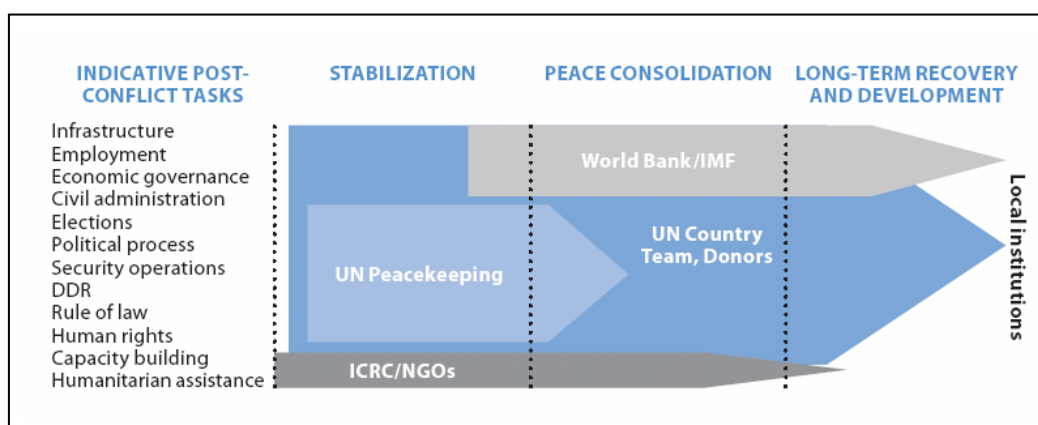
Figure 3-3. Multidimensional UN Peacekeeping Operations. (Source: UNPKO (2008), p. 23)

The United Nations presents stabilization as a phase in the "Core Business of Multidimensional UN Peacekeeping Operations" (Figure 3-3). The UN peacekeeping operations are divided in two categories that reflect the different shades of gray of modern conflict management. Firstly, "traditional peacekeeping" comprises observation, the supervision of a cease-fire and the interposition of forces. More demanding peacekeeping is called "multi-dimensional", with more emphasis in law enforcement support and co-operation between different actors.[90] Peace enforcement is strictly seen as a separate activity, during which the UN usually delegates the mandate to an international organization (such as NATO) or to a coalition of willing nations.[91] Therefore, the UN itself does not do initial interventions, but all the variants of UN operations are possible for the so-called stabilization phase.

Looking at the EU side, the planners of EU Battlegroups encourage contributing nations to rely on NATO standards and see the development of the NRF and EUBGs as an ana-

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[88] This study was done using the website of the UN DPKO, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/dpko.shtml. The pages of the PK Best Practices (http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/) contain many useful documents and links for a researcher. The document mentioned seems to be largely based on the analysis of the so-called *Brahimi Report* (2000).

[89] UN "Capstone Doctrine" (2008), pp. 13-25. Chapter VII based mandates have become more common in recent years, although UN PKO have traditionally been associated with Chapter VI.

[90] UN "Capstone Doctrine" (2008), pp. 17-25. The normative framework of UN peacekeeping operations is based on the UN Charter, human rights, international humanitarian law (also known as "the law of war" and "the law of armed conflict", and UN Security Council mandates (i.e. resolutions). The mandates include mission-specific tasks, the concept of operation and the Rules of Engagement (ROE).

[91] *The Brahimi Report* (2000), p. 9-12.

logous process.[92] Hence, the only comparable manuals with the NORDCAPS PSO Training Manual were those of NATO.[93] NATO terminology does not include a specific term for stabilization operations.[94] The most relevant manuals are ATP-3.2 Land Operations, AJP-3.4 Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations (NA5CRO) and AJP-3.4.1 Peace Support Operations.[95] These NATO manuals provide a good overview of NATO's operational concepts and the overall tactical operating environment. As the AJP-3.4.1 is a pure PSO manual, the AJP-3.4 contains the so-called NA5CRO tasks, which are close to EU's so-called Petersberg tasks.[96] Both the PSOs and the NA5CROs are possible contexts for the stabilization phase. In terms of doctrine, the EU and the NATO are highly similar.

3.4 The British Comprehensive Approach

According to the British doctrine, the comprehensive approach combines the three elements of power (diplomatic, military and economic) to execute national strategy. The human dimension of the operational environment in PSOs is one of the reasons the British launched this concept. The human dimension includes a "Complex of Actors" with governments, international organizations (IOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as private and commercial actors.[97] At the tactical level, the commanders engage directly with their adversaries, armed factions and civil populations. In Kosovo, the tactical level had been incapable of operating with this level of complexity, and as a result, civil-military action was assigned to the operational level. Later experiences showed a certain compression of the levels of war as the strategic level authorities wanted to directly influence actions at the small-unit level.[98] Consequently, the highest tactical levels (component commands) and the operational level had become intermediate and almost bypassed levels. The British after action analysis showed that a comprehensive approach is only executable from the strategic level, "top-down".

This approach is currently fielded with the concept of the "Stabilisation Unit". By means of cooperation of different ministries, other British agencies and consultants, this unit acts in post-conflict contexts. The goal is to protect the civilians and the institutions, to prevent violence, to promote the political process towards stability and to prepare for a long-term engagement. Most stabilization operations are launched by the UN

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[92] Lindström (2007), pp. 24–25. See also Ryter (2001).

[93] Author's comment: It was not possible to use these NATO manuals in detail because they are all classified as NATO or NATO/PFP Unclassified documents. Finland considers NATO UNCLASSIFIED as restricted material (*TLL IV Viranomaiskäyttö*). As this research report is public and unrestricted, none of this information may be quoted. The reader should note, however, that the author has good knowledge of the NATO manuals referred to in this thesis. This knowledge has influenced the selections made during the research process.

[94] AAP-6 (2006).

[95] These were mentioned in the presentation of Major Kovanen (FIN) regarding the development of interoperability of the EUBGs on 26 September 2006. On page 28, Kovanen presents these three manuals as key sources. http://www.mil.fi/paaesikunta/materiaaliosasto/liitteet/hankepaivat2006/07_Kovanen.pdf

[96] NATO Handbook (2006), pp. 43-50 and NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual, Volume 1 (2007), pp. 21–23.

[97] JDN 4/05 (2006), pp. 1-1…1-5.

[98] JDN 4/05 (2006) and JWP 3-50 (2004).

after a cease-fire. There is also a method called "Hot Stabilisation" that takes place in a high-risk situation such as Iraq or Afghanistan. It is typically run by regional organizations or by coalitions.[99] In this way, stabilization can be seen as a national project at the strategic level in an international context.

Concerning the military portion, the British operations are divided in three phases of "Intervene, Regenerate and Sustain" similar to the French phasing referenced in Figure 3-1. The respective force postures are "Enforcement, Stabilisation, and Transition".[100] The action of this military component of the "Comprehensive Campaign Plan" is run according to the principles of operational art. The four key functions protecting the friendly center of gravity (CoG) and attacking adversary's CoG are "Shape, Attack/Build, Protect, Exploit".[101] Stabilization is therefore a category of action rather than a distinctive phase. This force posture has more of "building" than "attacking", but all four key functions exist in any case. This approach is similar to the American concept of "Full Spectrum Operations", which will be discussed in the next section.

3.5   The American approach to stabilization

Although the American approach in Afghanistan is not a part of the case study, their doctrine is worth studying. No other country has more experience in managing large nation-building operations today. We should perhaps also note that six out of the last seven major U.S.-led interventions have taken place in Muslim countries. This means that the U.S. Army has more experience operating in Muslim societies than any other Western military during the last two decades.[102] The U.S. Army is capable of producing field manuals relatively quickly and has extensive resources available for drafting such manuals.[103] The level of experience combined with a high-quality and timely manual production makes the U.S. Army's visions relevant for our study of stabilization in general, and the case study of Afghanistan in particular. In the USA, a Department of Defense directive in November 2005 put stability operations on an equal status with offensive and defensive operations. Stability operations are therefore a category of tasks in the concept of *Full Spectrum Operations*, rather than a phase of operations.[104]

The reference for these operations is the Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations (2008). It introduces a comprehensive approach to stability operations in accordance with other U.S. government actors. Military forces play a supporting role for other ac-

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[99] Website of the Stabilisation Unit, http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/. Accessed 31 December 2008.

[100] JDN 4/05 (2006) and JWP 3-50 (2004).

[101] JWP 3-50 (2004), pp. 4-1…4-6.

[102] Dobbins et al. (2007), summary, page xviii. The countries mentioned were Kuwait, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq; Haiti was the only exception to this rule.

[103] This is the author's own conclusion, which is based on a career-long study of U.S. field manuals and comparing them with similar manuals from Finland and other countries.

[104] See FM 3-0, Operations (2008). Commanders have to use the right mixture of offensive, defensive and stability action and adapt them to the operational environment and the situation. Stability operations are defined in FM 3-07 (2008), p. Glossary-9, as "*An overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.*"

tivities, primarily contributing to the overall effort by providing a safe and secure environment. They are therefore enablers of other instruments of power, either domestically within the USA or internationally.[105] With this construct, the military component of a given stabilization operation truly has to plan and operate along with other actors. In fact, pure military operations will never exist, as the nature of the mission always contains political aspects and broader, non-military goals.[106]

FM 3-07 emphasizes unity of effort instead of unity of command. This means that as a result of cooperation and coordination, different actors are able to conduct unified action even if they are not under the same leadership. This comprehensive approach integrates the efforts of the U.S. national actors, IGOs, NGOs, multinational partners and private sector entities "*to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal*". On the other hand, NGOs and some other actors participate in this unified action at their own discretion and according to their own goals, which may be different than the nation's. The process of conflict transformation is at the core of stability operations, where violent conflict is converted into a process of constructive and positive changes.[107]
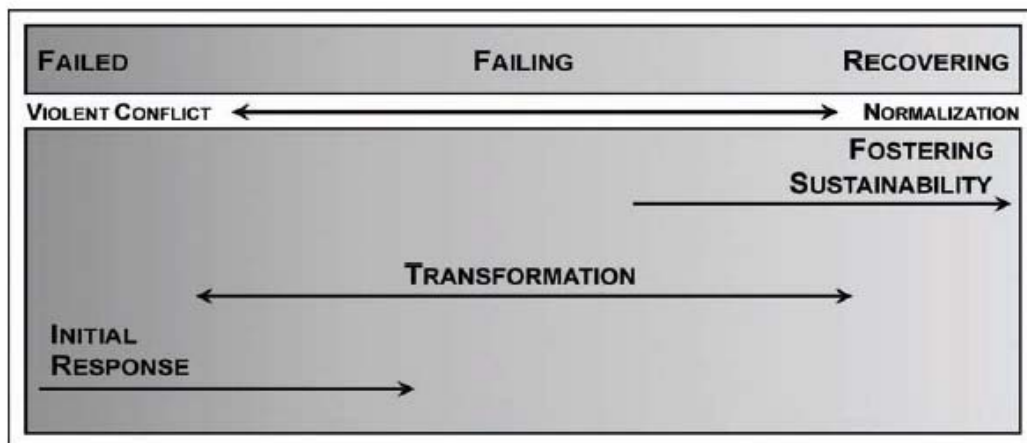
Figure 3-4. The three phases of stability operations correspond with the status of the host-nation, presumably a failed state. Failed states are defined as "nations unable or unwilling to meet the basic needs and aspirations of their people". (Source: FM 3-07 (2008), introduction and p. 2-13).

The American joint doctrine for peace operations treats peacekeeping, peace enforcement and nation building separately. Peace enforcement is an intervention where the use of force is not limited to self-defense, but may be used to enter the area of operations or to forcefully separate the belligerents. These operations include a phase of stabilization closely linked with enforcement and transition.[108] Figure 3-4 has many similarities with

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[105] FM 3-07 (2008), introduction pp. vi-vii. Stability operations are therefore aimed at stabilizing the conflict in order to allow for a transition to a civilian authority under the rule of law. Until that point, military forces "*establish or restore basic civil functions and protect them until a civil authority or the host nation is capable of providing these services for the local populace*". Operations are likely to be lengthy and the forces need to strike a balance between long-term and short-term gains

[106] FM 3-07 (2008), p. 1-3.

[107] FM 3-07 (2008), pp. 1-3…1-9.

[108] JP 3-07.3 (2007), pp. 53-56. The Americans use the term "peace operations" instead of "peace support operations" used by NATO.

the French idea of stabilization seen in Figure 3-1. The relationship of offensive, defensive and stability operations is the leading idea behind the American doctrine. Therefore, the phase of stabilization is dominated by stability tasks, though it does not exclude offensive and defensive operations. This corresponds to the ideas of French military thinkers, who describe stabilization with moments of varying amounts of intensity and violence. Stability operations may thus be seen as a phase, but more accurately as a non-violent component of a full spectrum of military action.

3.6   Classic counterinsurgency theories

Because of ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the participating countries have started to re-develop and re-visit the theory and practice of counterinsurgency (COIN) and "small wars". They have once again studied the texts of Mao Zedong, Lawrence, Callwell, Kitson, Galula and Trinquier. Early counterinsurgency studies began in the late 19th century and early 20th century and they were largely based on the colonial campaigns of the Great Britain and the USA against insurgent opponents. The second "surge" of counterinsurgency operations was just after the World War II and during the Cold War, during the period of a global communist revolutionary movement and decolonization. Western countries re-learned this trade in Indochina and Algeria (the French), in Malaya, Rhodesia, Northern Ireland and Aden (the British) and in Vietnam (the Americans), to mention some of the most important examples. The third "surge" can be seen as the fight against terrorism and Islamist insurgencies after the events of 9/11 in the USA. The most notable operations have taken place in Afghanistan and in Iraq.[109] This new wave of COIN has also been called a "global counterinsurgency", as some have begun to refer to an ongoing global Islamist insurgency.[110]

Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian have studied several cases of intervention-based counterinsurgency in order to explain the origins of the latest American field manual on COIN. These examples include American, British, French and Israeli campaigns from the 20th Century until today.[111] The most important lesson to be learned from this collection of experiences is that tactical brilliance alone does not bring success unless the political and social contexts of the conflict are considered. Approaches such as "search and destroy" or other tactics involving the excessive use of force simply do not work. Instead, it is necessary to isolate the enemy from the population and then protect the population with a mindset of "clear and hold" in order to establish the conditions for success. The COIN need for intelligence is different from conventional warfighting. Human intelligence capabilities, language skills and cultural awareness are essential. In addition to these needs of quality, troop quantity is also needed to dominate urban environments and to limit the enemy's liberty of action. Unfortunately, what may work in one area at a given time does not necessarily work later or in another area. One has to always adjust

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[109] Marston – Malkasian (2008), p. 13–18.
[110] See for example Kilcullen (2004B) and Huntington (1996).
[111] See Marston – Malkasian (2008). The manual referred to is the FM 3-24 (2006). For French experiences, see Galula (1964) and Trinquier (1964).

and adapt to the situation bearing in mind that military force can only provide the initial conditions for real progress.[112]
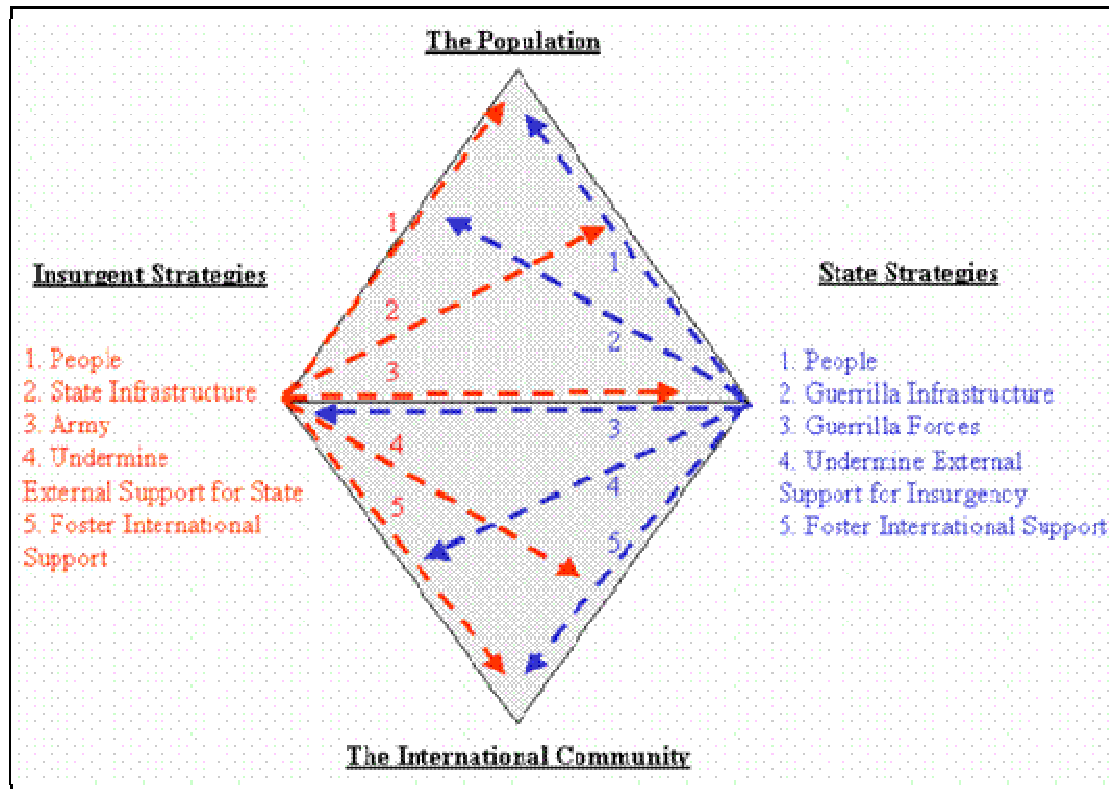
Figure 3-5. McCormick's "Mystic Diamond" (Source: Basilici - Simmons (2004), p. 33).

Roger McCormick has presented a macro-model for explaining insurgent and state (counterinsurgent) strategies (see Figure 3-5). The five strategies from both sides are aimed at influencing the populations and the international community, as well as undermining and disrupting the other party's activities. According to Basilici and Simmons, the advantage of this model is that it is not staged; instead, the five strategies are executed simultaneously. The model can be applied equally at the local, provincial or national levels.[113] McCormick's "Mystic Diamond" offers a simple way to visualize the direct and indirect approaches possible for both sides in counterinsurgency. Apparently similar considerations concern stabilization operations in general, as this model reveals the need for kinetic and non-kinetic action concerning each of the five lines of operations. It also helps to identify the required battlespace effects.

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[112] These ideas of Marston and Malkasian are very close to the ideas of General Rupert Smith. In fact, we could state that these authors, with these case studies, have fully described the "war amongst the people".
[113] Basilici - Simmons (2004), pp. 30-34. Dr. McCormick is teaching at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School. He is a former RAND analyst and continues to advise the U.S. Department of Defense on irregular warfare topics.
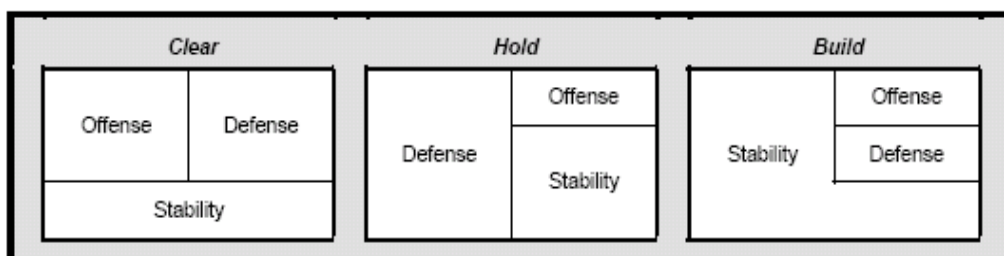
Figure 3-6. Aspects of counterinsurgency operations (Source: FM 3-24.2, p. 3-18)

The American field manual FM 3-24 and its tactical level counterpart, FM 3-24.2, give a framework for modern counterinsurgency operations. They introduce the principles of COIN founded solidly on historical vignettes. These principles are legitimacy, unity of effort, primacy of political factors, understanding the environment, intelligence-driven operations, isolating the insurgents from their support, security under the rule of law and being prepared for a long-term commitment. The operations themselves include kinetic operations – offensive and defensive – and non-kinetic stability operations. In counter-insurgency full spectrum operations, these elements are combined in varying propor-tions. In fact, three consecutive phases of "clear", "hold" and "build" can be separated (see Figure 3-6).[114] A counterinsurgency campaign could be perceived to contain these three phases. This division, once again, is not far from the French idea of intervention - stabilization - normalization. In the intervention/clear phase, offensive operations may take precedence over the others. In the stabilization/hold phase, defensive tasks are do-minant while stability tasks increase. Finally, in the normalization/build phase, the role of the military consists predominantly of stability tasks.

3.7   Conclusion

After reviewing some Western concepts and approaches on stabilization, we are able to draw conclusions on the nature of these operations. Of course, these conclusions remain purely theoretical because they are based on doctrines and manuals. Yet these sources reflect the lessons learned both from actual operations and from historical ones. The tradition of writing experiences down as manuals date back to C.E. Callwell's "*Small Wars*" of 1896 and the U.S. Marine Corps' "*Small Wars Manual*" of 1940.[115] The paral-lel study of stabilization and counterinsurgency concepts reveals that war amongst the people has been a reality for a long time. It is characterized by irregular adversaries and the intervention of a third party. Our analysis of these operations leads to at least three conclusions.

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[114] FM 3-24, pp. 1-19…1-20 and FM 3-24.2 (2009), pp. 3-17…3-22.

[115] Marston – Malkasian (2008), pp. 13-18 and Nagl (2005), pp. 50-51, 191-208. Military culture, heritage and traditions also play an important role in writing manuals and putting the principles of these manuals into practice. The countries with a tradition of small colonial wars and conflicts have not forgotten these lessons even though they may have temporarily engaged in conventional warfare. On the contrary, the Americans - who have been more focused on developing technological superiority on the modern battle-field with concepts like RMA and EBAO - have had more difficulties adapting to COIN or stabilization operations. The British and the French, as former colonial powers, find stabilization, peacekeeping or COIN much more familiar.

First, <u>stabilization is a phase of operations</u> when foreign military intervene in an existing conflict. This phase, which falls between the initial intervention and the subsequent normalization phase, involves transforming a "hot" conflict into peaceful development. It is therefore characterized by civil-military cooperation, moments of varying intensity and a long duration. The adversaries are primarily irregular and normally there are several sources of opposition. Depending on the overall political approach, peace may be enforced with neutral but robust means. The selected course of action may also be more oriented toward destroying the criminal or terrorist networks. This phase may exist in UN, NATO or EU campaigns as well as in any campaigns undertaken by nations alone or as a coalition.

Second, <u>stability operations are a non-kinetic component of full spectrum operations.</u> Globally speaking, these tasks include all the military functions outside of defensive and offensive operations: civil-military cooperation, humanitarian assistance, presence or framework operations, public order and policing, information operations, human intelligence, etc.[116] These operations are, without exception, undertaken amongst the populations. A particularity of modern operations is that these stability tasks are omnipresent in all the phases of any campaign. It is practically impossible to conceive of modern operations without a stability element. This applies to all aspects of the tactical level, down to the smallest unit level. At this level, troops can and will be affected by the aforementioned phenomenon of the "intricate web of actions".

Third, <u>the full spectrum (offensive, defensive, stability) operations of the tactical level constitute the military part of the comprehensive approach</u>. This approach, if well organized, integrates military and civilian actors in either a national or a multinational context. The British and American examples highlight the importance of strategic level planning and "top-down" execution. We should leave a question mark here, since there is a difference between troop deployment and employment. In the stabilization phase, the troops are already deployed and their tactical reality has changed since the first phase. Are the inputs from higher headquarters truly apt for solving the problems at the tactical level? Can the balance between offensive, defensive and stability tasks really be reached by strategic directives and operational level mission statements or is it in fact based on the real tactical situation? This thesis hypothesizes that there is a conflict between top-down inputs and bottom-level realities. Solving this dilemma appears to be a key issue of true stabilization.

We could question the logic of dividing modern military operations in distinct phases. More importantly, we should focus on the outcome. The strategic objective serves as a bull's-eye for all the lines of operations. However, if this end state has not been properly defined, there has been no utility in the use of military force, as Rupert Smith has pointed out. Based on the study so far, we may define the end state of a stabilization phase with two key phrases:
- A safe and secure environment is the expected end state of the stabilization phase, which allows for a shift towards the normalization phase.
- The stabilization phase includes a transfer of authority from the international military to the international civilian authorities.

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[116] See for example FM 3-07 (2008), FM 3-24 (2006) and JWP 3-50 (2004) for stability tasks.

The withdrawal of international forces can be seen as an indicator of successful stabilization and normalization. But how is normality defined and what is normalization in this sense? Has war not been "normal" in countries such as Lebanon, Somalia and Afghanistan for decades? Continuous violence is a sign of a failed state or a warlord state. The "failed state index" of the Fund for Peace in 2008 lists 35 countries as failed states.[117] Nation building in such conditions is a demanding task and the level of friction working against a transformation process is considerable. In military terms, the limited opportunity to use firepower usually dislocates the maritime component and severely limits the use of the air component. The stabilization problem then becomes mostly land-oriented, making the land and the Special Forces components stand as supported commands, with naval and air components playing a supporting role.

Finally, we shall make an observation on stabilization from the Finnish perspective. As the Finnish term of "crisis management" can be split into military and civilian components, it does appear to be a close relative of the ever-more-popular comprehensive approach. Nowadays, the Finnish military speaks of "crisis management operations" (*kriisinhallintaoperaatiot*) but still calls an individual soldier on operations a "peacekeeper" (*rauhanturvaaja*). The transfer from UN peacekeeping into a wider "Nordic" PSO concept is still very much visible in this terminology. As it considers intervention operations politically unacceptable, Finland should perhaps underline the difference between stabilization and normalization operations. Distinguishing between these two operations may seem irrelevant, as the deployed contingent composition is always adjusted on a case-by-case basis according to the situation and national resources available. Yet a doctrinal scale of the three phases might help to decide on participation; identify the right troops-to-task list; configure the weapons, vehicles and equipment inventory, and ultimately, to establish the right mindset for those deployed.

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[117] The Fund for Peace website, retrieved on 04 January 2009.
http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=292&Itemid=452,

4 OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE THESIS

"In accurately defining the contextual and cultural population of the task force battlespace, it became rapidly apparent that we needed to develop a keen understanding of demographics as well as the cultural intricacies that drive the Iraqi population.."

- Major General Peter W. Chiarelli, Baghdad, 2004–2005[118]

4.1 The Concept of Battlespace

Battlespace can be seen as a three-dimensional space including the ground level, the airspace and the electro-magnetic spectrum with a temporal dimension.[119] At a glance, a ground unit's battlespace could be considered synonymous to its area of operations (AO). As a commander must always look beyond his AO; he must study the adjacent area of interest (AOI) and his area of influence to understand the operational environment in its complexity.[120] Introduced in the 2001 edition of U.S. Army Field Manual FM 3-0 Operations, battlespace is a conceptual term focused on the area of operations of a certain unit. Although the U.S. Army has rejected the term of battlespace in the rewritten FM 3-0 of 2008, the U.S. joint terminology still uses it.[121] A more detailed definition is given by the American JP 1-02:

> *"The environment, factors, and conditions that must be understood to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, or complete the mission. This includes the air, land, sea, space, and the included enemy and friendly forces; facilities; weather; terrain; the electromagnetic spectrum; and the information environment within the operational areas and areas of interest."* [122]

The FM 3-0 Operations (2001) describes battlespace as a very wide and abstract unity and it emphasizes the ability to conduct full spectrum operations within it. These operations, as already explained in this thesis, vary between assistance to civilian authorities and warfighting. Battlespace is seen as conceptual and it is not supposed to be assigned by the higher commander. Therefore, it is not synonymous with the area of operation. Because the battlespace is conceptual, commanders conduct operations only within that

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[118] Chiarelli - Michaelis (2005), p. 5.
[119] Huttunen (2005), pp. 59–61. The research of Mika Huttunen provided the starting point for the research of the concept of battlespace in 2006.
[120] See AAP-6 (2006) for terminology.
[121] FM 3-0 Operations (2008), p. D-6, Table D-3: Rescinded Army definitions. See also JP 1-02 (2008) and FM 3-0 (2001). Besides the USA, the word battlespace is used in British and French military terminology and it produces more than 700 000 hits on Google. Despite the fact that neither the NORDCAPS PSO Training Manual nor the NATO manuals recognize this concept as such, it is a useful tool for analyzing the operational environment
[122] Joint Publication JP 1-02, p. 64.

portion of the battlespace that is situated within their AO.[123] This manual considers the visualization of battlespace a key process in operational planning:

"Upon receipt of a mission, commanders consider their battlespace and conduct a mission analysis that results in their initial vision, which they continually confirm or modify. Commanders use the factors of METT-TC, elements of operational design, staff estimates, input from other commanders, and their experience and judgment to develop their vision."[124]
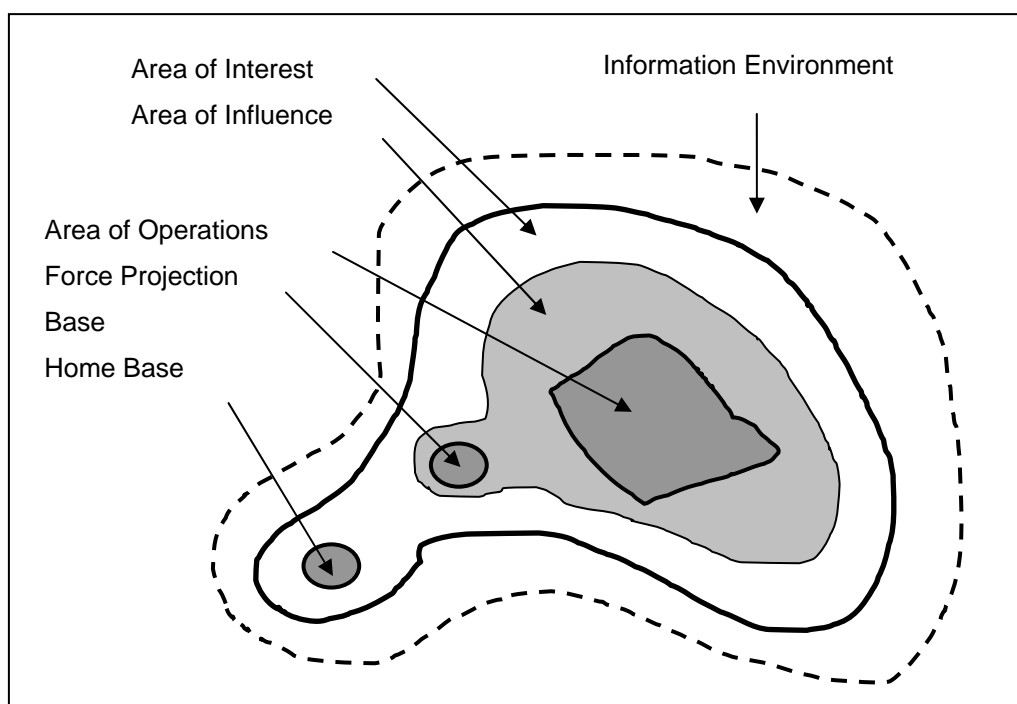
Figure 4-1. Battlespace components adapted from FM 3-0 Operations (2001).

In picture 4-1, we see a conceptual yet terrain-oriented drawing of battlespace. Battlespace components include the area of operations, the area of influence, the area of interest, a force projection base and the home station. These components are encompassed by the information environment. The area of influence is an area in which a *"commander can directly influence operations by maneuver or fire support systems normally under the commander's command or control"*. A unit's AO should not be substantially larger than its area of influence. The area of interest is *"an area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence and areas adjacent to it. It extends into enemy territory, to the objectives of current or planned operations"*. The information environment contains *"…information activities that collect, process, and disseminate information, …space-based systems that provide data and information to Army forces, …the*

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[123] FM 3-0, Operations (2001), Chapter 4.
[124] FM 3-0, Operations (2001), Chapter 5. METT-TC stands for <u>M</u>ission, <u>E</u>nemy, <u>T</u>errain and weather, <u>T</u>roops and support available, <u>T</u>ime available and <u>C</u>ivil considerations.

information activities that affect their operation and the capabilities of their own and opposing C2 and information systems."[125]

The battlespace of Figure 4-1 is, in fact, a conceptual snapshot at a given time of a certain unit's operational sphere. It seems to be territorially oriented as it is centered on a geographically defined AO.[126] FM 3-0 (2001) states clearly that the circles describing different battlespace components and drawn around this AO are overlapping. One should note that according to the definition of battlespace, the information environment is actually limited to the area of interest although it is graphically shown as a wider component. The force projection base and the home base are obviously seen only from the viewpoint of the operational unit placed within the AO portion of the picture. The support units stationed in those bases would have similar but not identical battlespaces when viewed from their perspective. We should observe that human terrain is not included in Figure 4-1, and the definition of battlespace does not include other humans, only the enemy and friendly forces.

As mentioned earlier, the latest version of the FM 3-0 (2008) has rejected the term battlespace. Instead, it introduces a process of "understanding the *operational environment*". This includes the following factors: political, military, economic and social aspects; information; infrastructure; the physical environment and time (PPMESI-PT). Understanding the operational environment is critical for the commander to visualize the end state, and the nature and design of the operation. This is done according to the METT-TC analysis and it remains practically unchanged since the 2001 version of the manual.[127] Yet the newer version emphasizes civil considerations more strongly and mentions that the area of interest in stability operations "*may be much larger than that associated with offensive and defensive operations*". In addition, the operational environment encompasses a wider variety of factors than the previous manual's concept of battlespace did.

FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency (2006) explains the term operational environment as a sum of the AO and the related AOI. In this field manual, special attention is given to the fluidity of the human and informational aspects: "*AOs may be relatively static, but people and information flow through AOs continuously*". It highlights five points in defining an AOI in a counterinsurgency operation:
- Family, tribal, ethnic, religious, or other links that go beyond the AO;
- Communication links to other regions;
- Economic links to other regions;
- Media influence on the local populace, U.S. public, and multinational partners;
- External financial, moral, and logistic support for the enemy.[128]

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[125] FM 3-0, Operations (2001), Chapter 4.

[126] Interview with Professor Timo Kaartinen, 08 Jan 2008. Kaartinen criticized this approach for being more centered on the terrain than on humans.

[127] FM 3-0, Operations (2008), Chapters 1 and 5.

[128] FM 3-24 (2006), pp. 3-2 and 3-3. See also FM 3-24.2 (2009), pp. 1-3…1-16, for more detailed information on operational and mission variables and civil considerations.

As the last edition of the U.S. joint doctrine still uses the term battlespace, the term battlespace may be considered valid.[129] As seen in the U.S. Army's field manuals, the concept of operational environment (battlespace) forms a basis of understanding and visualizing the very foundations of operations. The manuals reviewed are meant for the operational or the highest tactical level (land component command). The U.S. Army's field manual FM 3-90, Tactics (2001), mentions battlespace as a key element of the overall operational framework.[130] The concept of battlespace thus provides an acceptable starting point for a deeper study of the tactical operating environment of a land unit. However, for the purposes of operationalizing our research problem, this concept needs to be further analyzed and developed.

4.2   Challenging the concept

Many new doctrines and concepts support the idea that human terrain should be considered a significant portion of the battlespace. For example, a relatively new doctrinal paper from the Australian Army, *Complex Warfighting*, expresses this clearly. It underlines the complexity of battlespace and emphasizes that the army must be capable of multidimensional maneuvers in a multidimensional conflict environment. The Australians divide the battlespace in three terrains: complex physical terrain, complex human terrain and complex informational terrain.[131] The PPMESI-PT (political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment and time) factors introduced in the American FM 3-0 (2008) are well aligned with this view.[132]

In their work *Understanding Information Age Warfare* (2001), Alberts et al. describe the significance of information in military operations by the means of three domains (see Figure 4-2). The Physical Domain stands for "the reality" or the ground truth, where military action takes place. In the physical domain, there are objects and events that exist in the environments of ground, sea, air and space. The Information Domain is "where information lives". It is the domain where information, data and knowledge are created, manipulated and shared. The contents of this domain may or may not precisely reflect the reality. All the information we can access passes the information domain within the limits of our individual interaction capabilities, with the exception of direct observation (using one's senses). In addition, the social interaction of human beings takes place in the information domain by means of speech and discussion, telephone calls, e-mails and/or video conferences. Information technology sets the limits and possibilities of this domain.[133] This definition takes the idea of an information environment a step further in Figure 4-1.

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[129] JP 1-02.
[130] FM 3-90 (2001), p. 2-3.
[131] Complex Warfighting (2004), p. 1-12.
[132] FM 3-0, Operations (2008), Chapter 1.
[133] Alberts – Garstka - Hayes - Signori (2001), pp. 10–29.
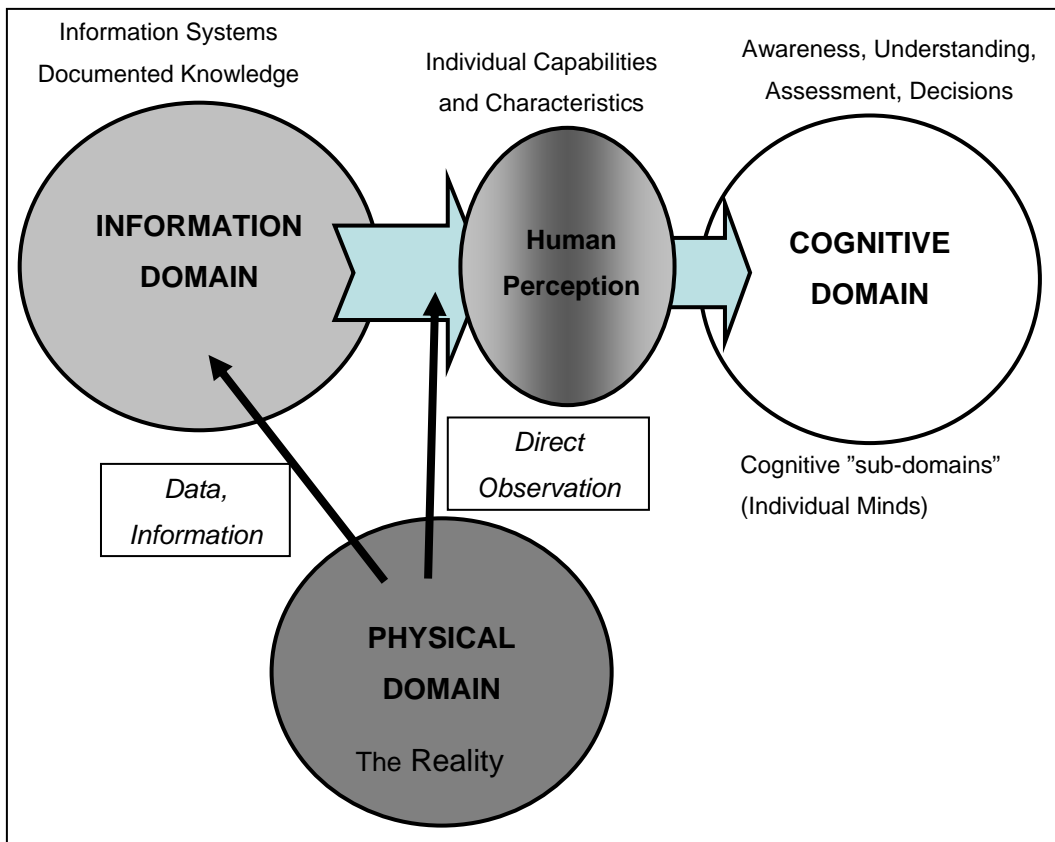
Figure 4-2. The domains, adapted from Alberts et al. (2001)

The Cognitive Domain is "the minds of participants". It includes perceptions, aware-ness, understanding, beliefs and values. It is where the decisions are made, based on sense making. This domain is also the residence of intangibles such as leadership, mo-rale, unit cohesion, level of training and experience, situational awareness and public opinion. All the contents of the cognitive domain pass through the filter of human per-ception. This filter consists of the individual's worldview, personal knowledge, experi-ence, training, values, intelligence, personal style and perceptual capabilities. Every filter of human perception is therefore unique, as are the individual cognitions.[134] The concept of battlespace presented in Figure 4-1 fails to recognize this domain.

According to Alberts et al, there is only one "true" world - the physical domain. This translates into data, information and knowledge via the systems of direct or indirect ob-servation and the logic of the information domain. Knowledge can be loaded into the cognitive domain by at least four different paths: 1) previous education, training or ex-perience, 2) direct experience with the physical domain, 3) interaction with other hu-mans and 4) interaction with the information domain.[135] The terms of data, information and knowledge can be clarified with the simplified model of information hierarchy pre-sented by Rauno Kuusisto (table 4-3).

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[134] Alberts – Garstka - Hayes - Signori (2001), pp. 10–29.
[135] Ibid.

Level of Information	Definition	Process (examples)
Knowledge	Analyzed, proportioned, understood and explained combination of generalized information	Reasoning Justifying Uncertainty management
Information	Facts attached to context	Alignment Correlation Association Extrapolation
Data	Facts without contexts	Pre-processing Filtering Indexing

Table 4-3. Information hierarchy according to Kuusisto. (Source: Kuusisto (2004), p. 39, table 4).

Earlier in this work, we divided the battlespace into three terrains: physical, human and informational. We may easily visualize the physical and informational terrains in Figure 4-2, but the human terrain is much harder to grasp. Alberts et al. have positioned human minds in the cognitive domain, but their bodies are "targets" in the physical domain. Yet the interaction of humans takes place in the information domain. In conclusion, we could enlarge the idea of human terrain into a "human dimension" that overlaps all three domains distinctively with its human qualities. A key issue to be noted is the flow of information by means of direct and indirect observations. Both means connect at what is called the filter of human perception. Together with the cognitive domain, this conceptual filter affects the interpretations of information and presents a challenge for information sharing. We may summarize from this that every human being observes the same "real world" with different "lenses" and reflects his findings based on his own cognition.

4.3   Battlespace dimensions

In conclusion, it is evident that both the terrain-oriented model (Figure 4-1) of battlespace and the approaches involving different "terrains" or "domains" are inadequate to describe the complexity of battlespace. Using the word "dimension" will produce a more generic expression when analyzing the key contents of the battlespace. To provide a rough model that combines the elements of the earlier discussion, we may state that battlespace has four major dimensions: physical, human, informational and temporal.[136] We will now examine this reorganized model more closely.

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[136] Nurmela (2007), pp. 24–26.
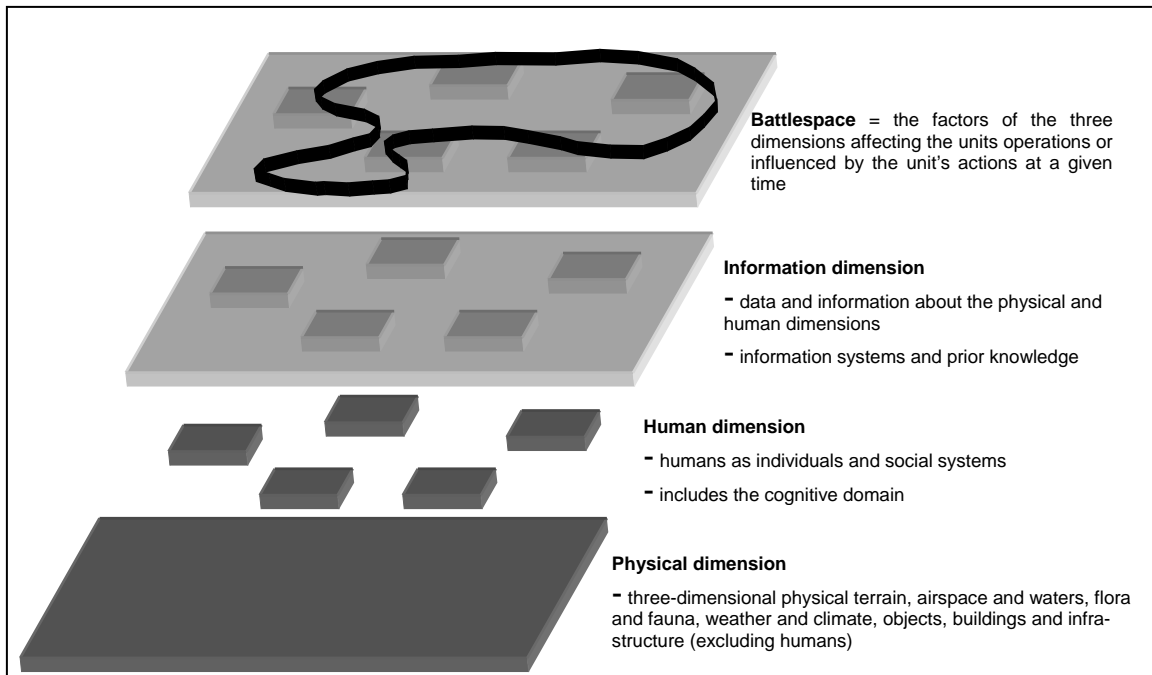
Figure 4-4. The conceptual model of a unit's battlespace and its dimensions. (Source: Nurmela (2007), p. 25, Figure 8). The information dimension has a different color, as its contents never fully correspond to the physical and human dimensions.

Based on the analysis, the author offers a refined definition of battlespace based on the American JP 1-02, but further developed to include the four-dimensional approach:

> *"A unit's battlespace includes the physical, human, information and temporal dimensions. All have impact on the units operations. They are also influenced by the unit's actions particularly in reference of time. These factors must be understood and taken into account in order to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, and complete the mission."*

4.3.1 The Physical Dimension

The physical dimension is defined as the objective (real) world excluding human beings. It forms the background for any social action between human beings. It is therefore both an enabling and a restricting factor. Urbanization is now a worldwide trend as is overpopulation. Unemployment, crime, poverty, famine, diseases and urban decay alone are problem enough. Destroyed or damaged infrastructure has a direct impact on peoples' lives. Modern conflicts involve ethnic violence and they split societies and even small communities. As a result, the administrative as well as the physical structures of a town (e.g. Mitrovica in Kosovo) or even a state (e.g. Bosnia-Herzegovina) are affected by ethnic division. People live in the existing physical dimension, adapt to changes in it, and finally shape and transform it as is needed.

Figure 4-5. The Physical Dimension. (Source: Puolustusvoimat, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/)

An Australian Army study indicates that more than 75 % of the world's population is living in *complex physical terrain*. This terrain includes urbanized areas, littoral regions, crop cultivation zones, swamps, estuaries, jungles and mountains. Such terrain typically comprises "a mosaic of open spaces" that act as maneuver corridors and compartments, as well as kill zones. There are also patches of restricted terrain that prevent movement and resist observation. In the complex physical terrain, the ability to detect the enemy from a standoff range is less likely than in predominantly open terrain. This means that the likelihood of close quarters combat is greater and that the methods of early warning based on indirect or direct observation are limited.[137] According to Nurmela's research on Finnish officers with PSO experience, units have to operate within the full range of the physical dimension and in all conditions. Because the tasks and missions are human-oriented, urban areas of different types are inevitable. While not as densely populated, other complex terrains, such as forests, jungles and mountains cannot be avoided, either.

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[137] Complex Warfighting (2004), pp. 4-12. "*A force's ISTAR threshold is the level of enemy activity it can detect in a given environment*." The more complex the environment is, the more threats will remain unnoticed. In complex conditions, a force must therefore be prepared to operate at or below the ISTAR threshold. See also FM 3-0 (2008), Chapter 1, where the complexity and the likelihood of close combat are also emphasized as a part of the operational environment.

Predominantly open areas are used primarily for movement and observation.[138] In a conflict area, the physical dimension itself contains several threats.[139]

Military field manuals provide the basics for categorizing and analyzing an urban environment. A good example is the U.S. Army Field Manual FM 3-06, Urban Operations (2003), which describes an urban environment as a complex "system of systems" consisting of the physical terrain, the society and the infrastructure linking these two. One aspect of this complexity is the multidimensionality of the urban terrain. A second aspect is the pattern of dependent neighboring urban areas and their connecting lines of communication. Thirdly, one needs to recognize street patterns and functional areas of each urban area. FM 3-06 divides these areas into the core area (downtown or central business district), industrial area, outlying high-rise areas, ribbon areas and residential areas (Figure 4-6). The fourth aspect is the society, which will be viewed in detail later. Lastly, the urban infrastructure contains both physical and human components. Infrastructure includes communications and information, energy, economics and commerce, transportation and distribution, as well as administration and human services.[140]
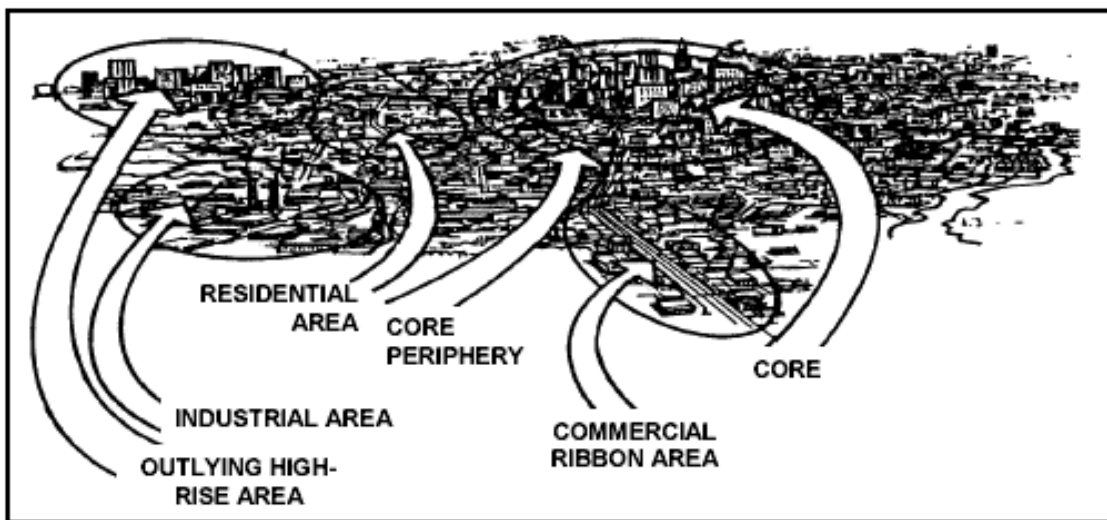
Figure 4-6. An urban model (Source: FM 3-06 (2003), Chapter 2, Figure 2-5).

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[138] Nurmela (2007), pp. 34-38. From the viewpoint of a stabilization force, it would be desirable to divide the physical dimension in two parts: the base areas and the areas outside the bases. The bases are necessary for the soldiers to stand down from a "stress mode" and to rest, refit and debrief. Outside the base areas, the soldiers need to stay focused and alert even if the task only involves transport to a holiday flight. This division is seldom possible, as the bases may also come under rocket or mortar attacks and face other threats.

[139] Nurmela (2007), pp. 34-38 and 47-49. Unexploded ordnance, mines, booby-traps, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), toxic or radioactive material and other CBRN hazards were mentioned by Finnish officers. A classic "rule-of-thumb" in PSOs is never to leave a tarmac road in order to avoid the threat of landmines. This ideal - described by the slogan "stay on the road" - was found useless by the Finns, as the nature of missions and the local conditions have made it impossible to follow. Additional dangers - either direct or indirect – may be caused by damaged or destroyed infrastructure and even by weather. The issues of force protection have to be carefully balanced with the possible gains of a given task especially when operating in a complex environment and under difficult conditions.

[140] FM 3-06, Urban Operations (2003), Chapter 2.
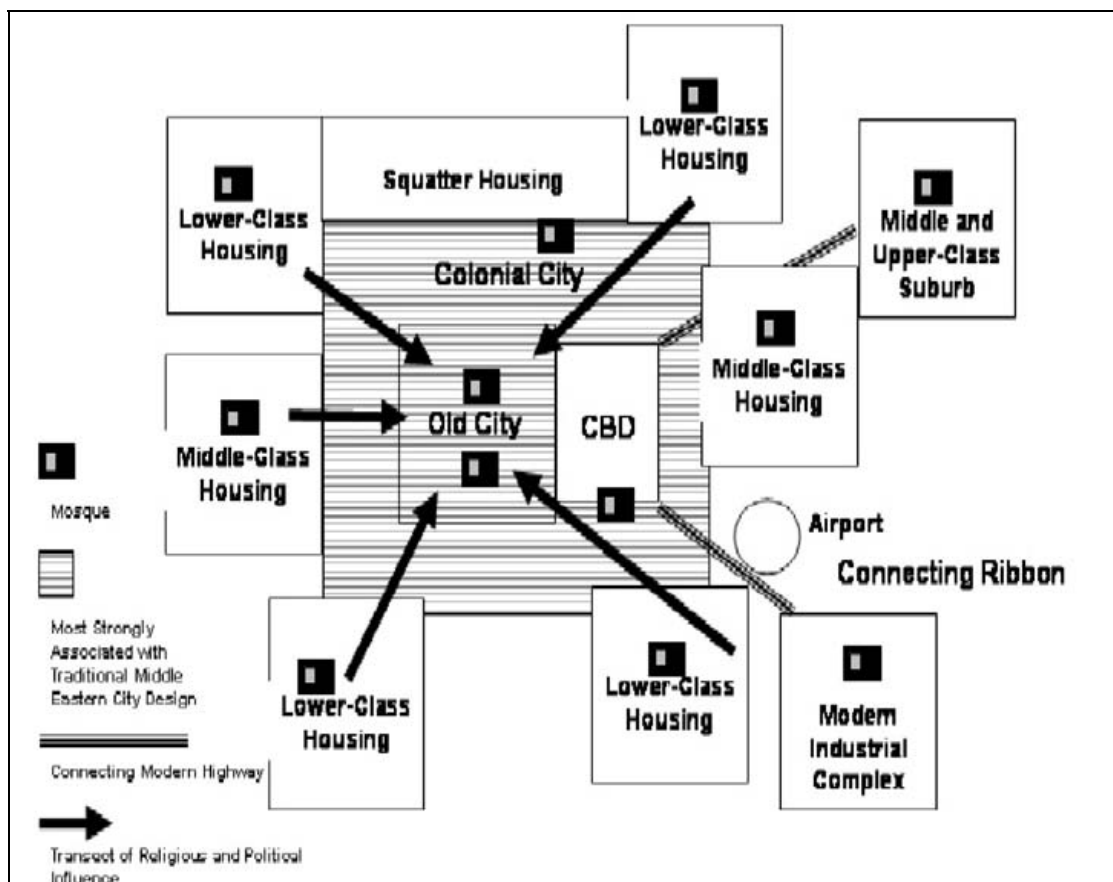
Figure 4-7. The Multiple-Nuclei Model (Source: DiMarco (2004), p. 9, Figure 3).

Modern conflict areas tend to be "third-world" oriented and predominantly Islamic.[141] Man-made terrain reflects the cultural traditions of these countries especially in urban centers. Louis A. DiMarco has studied Middle Eastern city design from the viewpoint of urban operations. According to DiMarco, every Middle Eastern city is actually a mix of several cities overlaying one other and centered on the traditional city of Islamic heritage. Although no single model can thoroughly explain the complexity, he presents three theoretic models for such a city:

- The Islamic City Model is based on the premise that Islam was the dominant factor in regional urban design as Islam is primarily an urban religion. The tenets involved are informality (as a lack of central city planning) and privacy (inwardly focused building styles). This model reflects the prevailing influence of religion.
- The Zeigler Model reflects the growth of the city outwards from the traditional "Citadel/Kasbah". The city has "interlocking zones patterned in time", the old city, the new city, the modern city and the urban expansion zone. This model demonstrates the growth of a city over time as the centers of social activity, housing, commercial activity and transportation move outwards from the old city center.

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[141] See for example Durch (2006), Kilcullen (2004A and 2004B) and Jokinen – Kullberg (2006).

- The Multiple-Nuclei Model is centered on mosques. The center nucleus of the city is the old colonial city with its mosque and the central business district. The city expands by a progressive integration of other segregated nodes. These are usually inhabited by a particular social class and are mosque-centered. This model underlines the importance of the old city and its central religious position.[142]

The International Humanitarian Law gives certain buildings, objects and environments a special status and these may not be targeted or used for military purposes.[143] Yet, irregular adversaries do not always follow these rules as their tactics may purposefully include the use of schools, religious buildings, hospitals and other protected facilities as sanctuaries or weapons caches. This presents our forces with a dilemma. There is hesitation to engage as the target is "illegal" and collateral damage may easily occur. On the other hand, not engaging the enemy means that the force must retreat from the scene to avoid friendly casualties. Playing this card gives our adversaries an advantage as they profit from a conceptual gap of the Western forces, thus creating true asymmetry. This is really a maneuverist approach in itself, even if it is not accepted by the international community.

4.3.2 The Human Dimension

The human dimension includes human beings as physical objects, but also incorporates the cultural and social aspects of the given geographical area. In a conflict area, there are several local, regional, national and international actors. This mixture of actors from different nations and cultures increases the complexity enormously. As the human dimension is the main issue of this study, we will need some conceptual cornerstones to build on. To begin with, we will need to define related key terms and concepts from the viewpoint of military operations. The questions related to culture are primarily anthropological or sociological.[144] However, considering the scope of this study, a practical approach focusing on the military applications of these sciences is more relevant than a purely theoretical one. Therefore, available related military sources are used rather than general anthropological or sociological sources.

The human terrain includes the people of the current battlespace as individuals, groups and social systems. The NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual lists several actors who might interact with a stabilization force. These include but are not limited to:
- the multinational force and its subunits,
- the local administration and authorities,

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[142] DiMarco (2004), pp. 1-15. According to DiMarco, Middle East is one of the most urbanized regions in the world, and the urbanization is continuing at an "unprecedented rate".

[143] Rosén - Parkkari (2004), pp. 211-253.

[144] According to the Random House College Dictionary (1984), **anthropology** is "*the science that deals with the origins, physical and cultural development, racial characteristics and social customs and beliefs of mankind*". **Sociology** is "*the science or study of the origin, development, organization and functioning of human society; the science of fundamental laws of social relations, institutions etc.*" The interviews with Professor Timo Kaartinen on 08 January 2008 and Professor Liisa Laakso on 15 January 2008 helped to establish the boundaries for the thesis.

- the local populations and refugees/IDPs,
- the former warring factions and other armed groups,
- international, national and non-governmental organizations,
- actors of civil crisis management such as the international police and
- members of the media.[145]

Figure 4-8. The Human Dimension. (Source: Puolustusvoimat, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/)

Rosén and Parkkari analyze the complexity of parties and individual persons in armed conflict as recognized by the international humanitarian law (IHL). Combatants, non-combatants, illegal combatants, mercenaries, terrorists and persons with a special protective status are all defined by several international conventions and articles.[146] Kari Takamaa simplifies the problem stating that there are only combatants and civilians, and no such thing as a "third group" exists in between.[147] It should be noted that this legal classification of human terrain is very "Western" and therefore not necessarily agreed upon or accepted by other cultures or civilizations.[148] Our adversaries may exploit this by wearing civilian clothes to conceal their approach and escape, and to gain protection

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[145] NORDCAPS PSO Tactical Manual (2007).

[146] See Rosén – Parkkari (2004). See also *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines* (2008), p. 14-16. The normative framework of United Nations peacekeeping operations is based on the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and UN Security Council Mandates.

[147] Takamaa, Kari T.: *Taistelukenttä, toimintaympäristö ja sodan oikeussäännöt*, an article in Raitasalo – Sipilä (2008), pp. 230-245.

[148] See Huntington (1996).

from civilian crowds. Again, our troops face the dilemma of obeying the rules and avoiding collateral damage while seeking to engage the enemy to avoid friendly casualties. A true problem also exists with the current privatization of armed conflict i.e. the use of private military or security companies (PMC/PSC). The IHL seems to be outdated considering current trends, and national legislation offer different solutions on their status. The status of prisoners of war has been damaged by episodes like Abu Ghraib or Guantanamo. Although the IHL remains the legal backbone of our operations, we might conclude – contrary to Takamaa – that the line between a combatant and a civilian is blurred, and there is in fact a large gray area beyond our control.

William D. Wunderle has presented a conceptual model to understand the importance of culture in military operations. According to Wunderle, "*Culture might be considered the "human terrain" of warfare, and it is a key terrain.*" He defines culture as a "*shared set of traditions, belief systems and behaviors*". It is shaped by many factors including history, religion, ethnic identity, language and nationality. Cultural awareness is the ability to recognize and understand these factors. In the military context, Wunderle defines cultural awareness as "*cognizance of cultural terrain for military operations and the connections between culture and warfighting*". He develops a three-part model to understand culture and to develop cultural awareness: cultural influences, variations and manifestations.[149] These stages presented in Table 4-9 are helpful when analyzing the term culture further.

Cultural Influences (Background)	Cultural Variations (Common ways)	Cultural Manifestations (Concrete display)
- cultural heritage or history - social organization - traditions - language - religion	Behaviors: - languages, customs, dress, religion - personal space - context sensitivity Values: - individualism vs. collectivism - power distance - formality vs. informality - uncertainty avoidance - relationship vs. deal focus - long-term vs. short-term orientation - time orientation Cognition: - reasoning styles - perception and attribution	- planning style - view of authority - negotiation style - willingness to compromise - risk avoidance - time for decision-making etc.

Table 4-9. Taxonomy of cultural awareness. (Adapted from Wunderle (2006), p. 9-19).

Elbridge and Neboshynsky have studied human terrain from the viewpoint of social systems analysis. They have observed that there are several ways of using the term hu-

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[149] Wunderle (2006), pp. 9-19. Author's comment: FM 3-24.2 (2009), pp. 1-18…1-26, uses almost an identical presentation of cultural awareness. It presents the term of 3C (Cross-Cultural Competency) which means "*general cultural knowledge, skills and attributes*".

man terrain, since it has not been defined by official U.S. military terminology. They conclude that the term can be split in two parts: a trait originating from an individual human or a group of humans tied to a geographic location. Therefore, they define human terrain as "*the aggregate of socio-cultural traits present at a specific temporal, geo-spatial point*". They claim that human terrain requires a foundation of cultural awareness and refer to the research of Wunderle. However, when seen in a spatial context, they reverse this claim: cultural awareness *may be* associated with a specific place, but human terrain *must be* related to a specific geographic location.[150]

According to Elbridge and Neboshynsky, the same geographical urban location can be seen in different layers, both physical and cognitive. Human interaction with the physical world includes different activities and interactions that take place in geographic locations. As a result, an individual can be understood to have a (spatial) physical status, a family status, a social status and an ethnic status. Based on their studies on geographically oriented social theories, they claim that if individual or group actions are quantified and associated with geospatial locations, predictive patterns may be found. In the "anchor point theory model", each human develops spatial knowledge and habits including anchor points (home, work, shopping) and routes between them. In the "master status theory", an individual changes his/her behavioral mode depending on his/her current location. Models like these have been utilized by law enforcement, governments, politicians and consumer corporations of the Western world, but military applications have lagged behind to date. Elbridge and Neboshynsky refer this as "*mapping the social dimension*".[151]

U.S. Army field manuals recommend several methods for analyzing the human terrain. These methods come with memory aids, such as the METT-TC, which has been discussed earlier. FM 3-0 (2008) and especially FM 3-24 (2006) open the letter "C" further and bring it towards the tactical level. Civil considerations comprise six characteristics expressed by the abbreviation ASCOPE (Areas, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People and Events). Of these six, the FM 3-24 underlines the importance of understanding the people. It presents a tool of socio-cultural analysis including the following key factors: society, social structure, culture, language, interests, power and authority. Social structures form a key element of the intelligence preparation of battlespace (IPB). These social structures include groups, networks, institutions, organizations, roles, statuses, and social norms.[152]

Based on these observations, it seems that the human dimension consists of three domains. The human terrain refers to the physical domain or the objective (real) world, if thought in terms used by Alberts et al. (see Figure 4-2). On the other hand, the cultural domain represents the cognitive part of the human dimension, thus resembling the cognitive domain of Alberts et al., and reflecting the taxonomy of cultural awareness presented by Wunderle. Finally, the social domain stands for all the action and interaction

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[150] Eldridge – Neboshynsky (2008), pp. 18–24.
[151] Ibid., pp. 25–31.
[152] FM 3-0 (2008), Chapter 5 and FM 3-24 (2006), Chapter 3 and Appendix B. The latter describes culture as follows: "*Social structure can be thought of as a skeleton, with culture being the muscle on the bones. The two are mutually dependent and reinforcing.*" See also FM 3-24.2 (2009), pp. 1-18…1-26, for a more detailed account on cultural factors.

between individual human beings and groups of humans. Consequently, it is closely connected with the information dimension of the battlespace. This layer-based model and its definitions will be used in this research report from this point onwards.

THE SOCIAL DOMAIN (action)

THE CULTURAL DOMAIN (cognitive)

THE HUMAN TERRAIN (physical)

Figure 4-10. The layer-based model of the human dimension of battlespace.

Concerning interaction, there is a need to distinguish the cooperation within the multinational force from other elements. Even when the possible language and cultural barriers are considered, the problem is more likely to concern tactics and interoperability, which is an issue of its own. Therefore, the inner working of the force is not the focus of this thesis. In addition, the interaction of the force with the other actors may be roughly split in two categories: armed actors and civilian actors. Dealing with armed and criminal actors is more likely to be very formal and delicate and will include communication challenges and conflicting interests. For other actors, like the NGOs, there is also a need to identify the interests and the stakes involved.[153]

4.3.3 The Information Dimension

The information dimension contains data, information and knowledge from all the dimensions, as explained in Pictures 4-2 and 4-4. Some of it is readily available as databases, information storages or documented knowledge. Some of it is produced by different sensors and shared in different information systems. Some of it is contributed by human beings as they share their cognitive capital or their direct observations from the physical (real) world. In fact, all means of communication take place in the information domain. Therefore, the information dimension is closely linked with the social (action) domain of the human dimension. We will focus on this aspect of the information domain and bypass many of the technical aspects, such as the characteristics of the electromagnetic spectrum. Thus, we are limiting this part of the study to the question of "what", rather than asking a whole battery of questions such as "why" and "how". This choice reflects the tactical standpoint of this thesis.

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[153] Interview with Professor Liisa Laakso, 15 January 2008.

Figure 4-11. The Information Dimension. (Source: Puolustusvoimat, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/)

As the interaction between humans - and by association, between groups of humans is of special interest in this research, it is worth analyzing these relationships based on of Rauno Kuusisto's ideas. He has presented an idea of relationships between structures, action and information. According to Kuusisto, social systems and their relationships are complex. To interpret the left hand side of Figure 4-12, we can imagine a single social system such as an infantry battalion (structure) operating in its AO (action) and therefore producing information. This battalion is receiving and processing information through its individual perceptual filter. The filter (eq. tactics, techniques and procedures, staff capabilities, available sensors etc.) specifies the amount, quality and contents of the information available. On the right hand side, we can visualize the relationship between different social systems (structures) and their interaction. We can see that system A is directly interacting with systems B, C and D, and that A's information on E and F is available only indirectly via other actors. Between each system, another perceptual and unique filter specifies the quality of their relationship.[154]

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[154] Nurmela (2007), pp. 19–20. Author's comment: Nurmela interviewed Rauno Kuusisto on 16 March 2007 and during this encounter, Kuusisto illustrated his concept as represented in Figure 4-12.
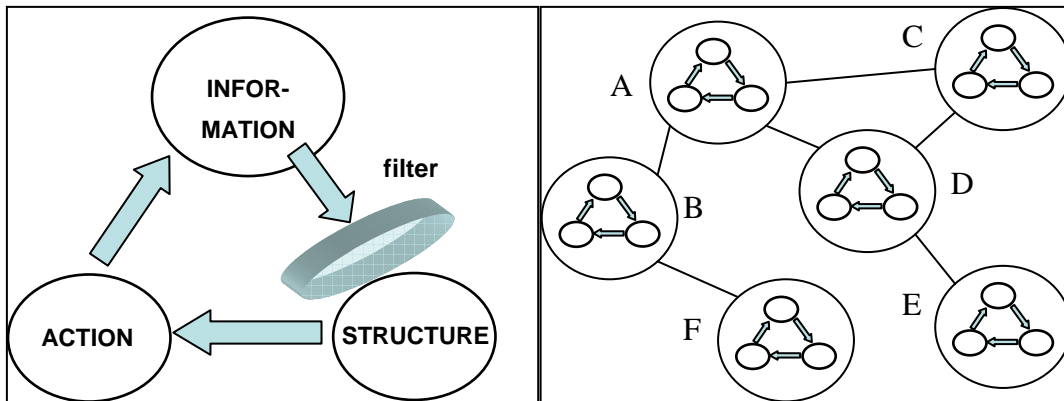
Figure 4-12. The system of structures, action and information according to Rauno Kuusisto.

The flow of information is easiest and most active in urban centers. In towns and cities, you may find the best mobile telephone, landline, wireless internet and television coverage. In addition recognized media actors, illegal radio stations, "underground" newspapers, leaflets, advertisements and posters are effective means of spreading information in an urban environment. Internet and mobile connections offer a cheap, flexible and effective way to command, control, coordinate and report.[155] In tribal societies, however, conversations, meetings and rumors from trusted sources and family members may be the principal source of information. This leaves little space for success of Western style information operations, as all the outsiders are subject to great skepticism.[156] In the Islamic world, it is critical to recognize the significance of the religious community. Besides being places of worship, mosques have social, educational, leisure and informational functions. The neighborhood of a mosque becomes crucial in terms of the information and human dimensions especially during times of prayer.[157]
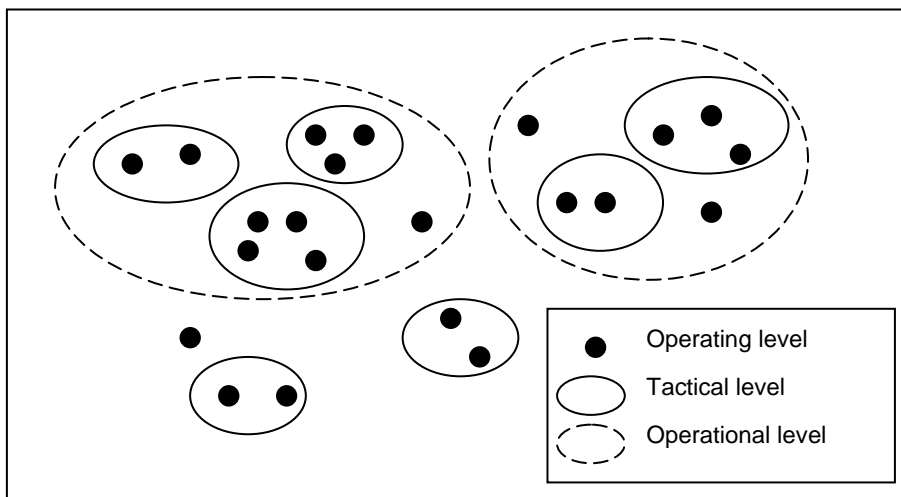
Figure 4-13. The levels of action below the strategic level, as adapted from Lund et al. (Source Kuusisto – Rantapelkonen (ed.) (2005), p. 138.)

Lund, Mikkola, Kuusisto & Kuusisto have examined different levels, functionalities and information needs of a military organization. They split the activities into four levels:

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[155] Kilcullen (2004A), p. 8.
[156] Barno (2006).
[157] Nurmela (2007), p. 46.

operating, tactical, operational and strategic levels. The operating activity stands for individual action while the superior levels comprise planning, organizational and controlling functions.[158] The presentation in Figure 4-13 seems applicable to a tactical unit with its subunits. Battlespace information should generally be more "visible" in areas where the operating activities take place. Information may be obtained from either direct or indirect observation and it is analyzed through the conceptual filters of each structure. This idea of battlespace and threat visibility will be developed further in Section 4.4.

An important part of the information dimension is managing data, information and knowledge within a tactical unit. This requires an effective means of internal communication and information sharing as well as the exploitation of computer and other information systems. Observations made by small units and individual soldiers should be able to be confirmed and corroborated with the whole unit in the information dimension. The same applies to the data and information feed of different sensors. Crucial factors are the relevance, timeliness and assurance of information.[159] This leads us to consider the availability of information in a temporal dimension, as well as the subjective visibility of the battlespace to each actor.

4.3.4 The Temporal Dimension

Time is both the most neutral and the most unforgiving tactical factor. In this study, we will observe the temporal dimension only from the physicists' approach, leaving philosophical questions and metaphysical mysteries aside. It is nonetheless worth noting that the other three dimensions of battlespace interact differently with time. The natural changes of the physical dimension are usually slow – unless they are constructively or destructively modified by humans. The attributes of the human dimension range from Western hectic urban life to the slow-paced rural communities of the developing countries. The information dimension reacts quickly or slowly depending on the technical solutions employed. Time is therefore closely related to both action and information.

Speed and tempo have become key elements of operational art in (classic) maneuver warfare. To achieve superior tempo, one has to master the OODA-loop (Observation, Orientation, Decision, Action). To be successful, one must be able to cycle through this process faster and more efficiently than the opponent.[160] It is necessary to pay particular attention to the cultural features presented as a part of the "Orient" phase (Figure 4-14) as they correspond closely to the concept of *lifeworld*[161]. High tempo is not a purpose in and of itself, but rather a means to prevent the enemy from adapting to the situation. Besides speed, the quality of the observation and orientation phases is crucial for success. The relative lengths of each phase are questionable and the OODA-sketch does not

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[158] Lund, Olli-Pekka – Mikkola, Tatu – Kuusisto, Rauno – Kuusisto, Tuija in Kuusisto – Rantapelkonen (ed.) (2005), pp. 134–148.
[159] Understanding Information Age Warfare, s. 95–117.
[160] Rekkedal (2006), pp. 507–515. The OODA-loop was developed in the 1970s by an American fighter pilot, Colonel John Boyd, as a way to analyze factors leading to victory or loss.
[161] The concept of lifeworld is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.5.

offer a perfect model to master time. The capacity to decide and act in uncertainty – in the "fog of war" – is necessary for any military leader.[162] To analyze the temporal dimension in detail, we will study four temporal characteristics relevant to military operations: duration, frequency, sequence and opportunity.[163]
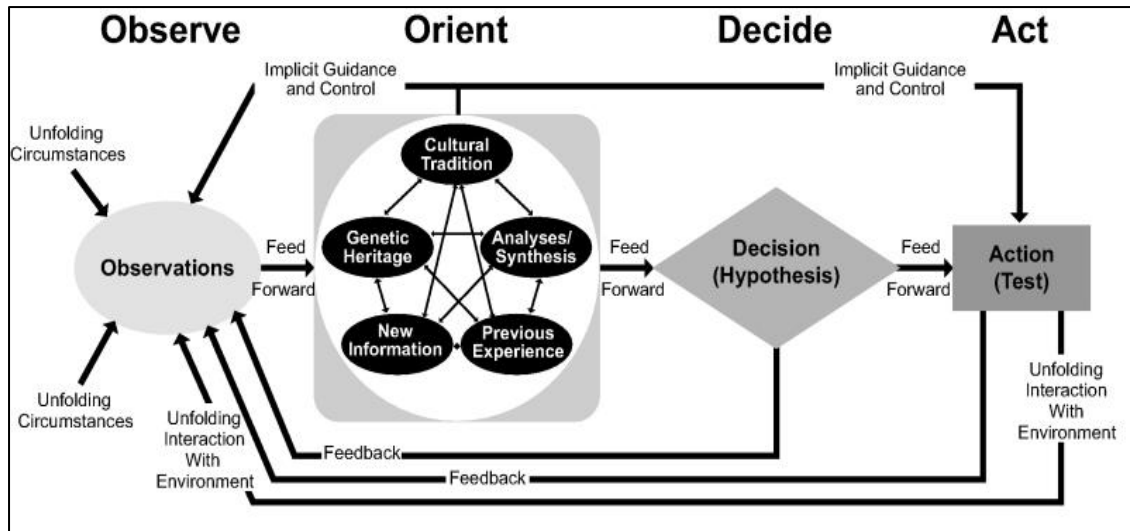
Figure 4-14. John Boyd's concept of OODA-loop. (Source: Ullman (2007))

Duration is closely linked to the objectives of an operation. The more distant the objectives are, physically or conceptually, the lengthier the process of "getting from here to there" will be. A tactical level commander usually does not have much control over the duration of his overall deployment, as it is based on national objectives and plans. Individual engagements, tasks, battles and operations all have their particular duration, which may be difficult to anticipate. Lengthy operations with multiple actors increase friction, which in turn makes operations more difficult and lengthy. Proper training and planning reduce friction and therefore shorten the duration of actions. By taking risks, a commander may try to reduce the "typical duration" of a specified action, just as a car driver can decide to overtake slower cars or ignore speed limits in order to get home earlier.

Frequency or tempo describes how fast and how often things happen. All actions have a "normal" or expected frequency. As this is a subjective issue, the frequency changes of certain events have different consequences in different contexts. Once the events, such as attacks, take place in high tempo, the rhythm first becomes difficult to bear and later unacceptable or even impossible to live with. On the other hand, a very slow tempo may have similar effects, because military units plan, train and operate according to an expected frequency. Maintaining a high level of force protection in a low-threat or no-threat environment is difficult. Guerilla or terrorist tactics combining low frequency and long duration do not reflect the Western expectations of high frequency action and pre-

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[162] See Desportes (2007B).
[163] Leonhard (1994B), pp. 10-11, 53-134. See also Yakovleff (2007), pp. 134-154. The four following paragraphs describing the characteristics of the temporal dimension are compiled from these two sources. Yakovleff's observations are almost identical to Leonhard's, as the latter is the former's main reference. Also Rekkedal (2006) refers to Leonhard's book.

set duration. Frequency and duration can also be combined to create higher levels of attrition.

Sequence means the order of events. The classic example of mastering sequential perception in chess is very inadequate as the operational environment is much more complex than a two-sided board game. Various events must be synchronized to achieve the desired effects, as different operating systems have different time scales. Well-sequenced or even simultaneous effects usually contribute to success. Perceiving and predicting events and their consequences (branches and sequels) is the key to obtaining and maintaining the initiative. However, the success or failure of tactical actions may often be impossible to evaluate until subsequent events have unfolded. Each event has a relative value that is dependent on future developments. Therefore, a successful tactical commander tries to control and anticipate the order of events for all of the actors involved – not merely his own actions. The importance of preparations cannot be underestimated and preparation, too, can be seen as a sequence.

An opportunity is a time-sensitive decision point. It occurs at a certain time and only lasts for a given duration. To exploit an opportunity, one must be able to decide and act within the given framework of time. This translates into a compromise between quality and timeliness of an action. The first problem regards being in a position to recognize an opportunity. The next question is about who has the authority to approve the action and who has the resources to act within the window of opportunity. This is an organizational and a cultural matter within any military system. To properly apply objective-oriented tactics, both the resources and the authorization need to be allocated and delegated before the action takes place.

4.4   The visibility of battlespace

The first challenge concerning visibility involves understanding the difference between the area of interest (AOI) and the concept of battlespace. First, we should expand the AOI to include all the dimensions of battlespace instead of just concentrating on the enemy and terrain. This "Enhanced" Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace obviously approaches the environment according to the information needs of the unit. Second, we should think about the consequences of actions in a sequential manner. Thus, we need to evaluate the causal effects of our actions in both the short and long term. This approach might reveal new concerns not discovered in a classic IPB process. It is likely that a more accurate understanding of the battlespace will be found during wargaming, the action itself or as a result of subsequent events. From a unit's point of view, battlespace is more interactive than the AOI, as discovered by Medby and Glenn:

> "The battlespace normally includes the AO and may include all or part of the AOI. Significantly, the battlespace also includes the areas or groups that can be influenced by events occurring within the AO. Its effects are therefore in a sense the reverse of those of concern when defining the AOI — which includes areas and other entities that can affect operations with-

in the AO. The key to distinguishing between the AOI and the battlespace is thus one of direction of cause and effect.”[164]

Let us now focus on the second practical challenge; the visibility and invisibility of the battlespace at any given time. First, we must realize that we have probably not been able to recognize the battlespace components correctly and we are therefore observing and orientating ourselves incorrectly or inadequately. Second, the known battlespace may be partially obscured or invisible to us because we do not have the resources to observe it or our methods are insufficient. Third, the information might not be available to us when needed for reasons outside of our control.


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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│               INVISIBLE BATTLESPACE                        │
│  CAMOUFLAGED SNIPER                    TERRORIST           │
│                    DATA FUSION                             │
│  STEALTH AIRCRAFT                      COMPUTER VIRUS      │
│                       ⬇                                    │
├──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│         HUMAN SENSING DIMENSIONAL BARRIER                  │
├──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│                       ⬆                                    │
│  BUILDING                              CIVILIAN            │
│                      STEALTH                               │
│  MAIN BATTLE TANK                      INFANTRYMAN         │
│               VISIBLE BATTLESPACE                          │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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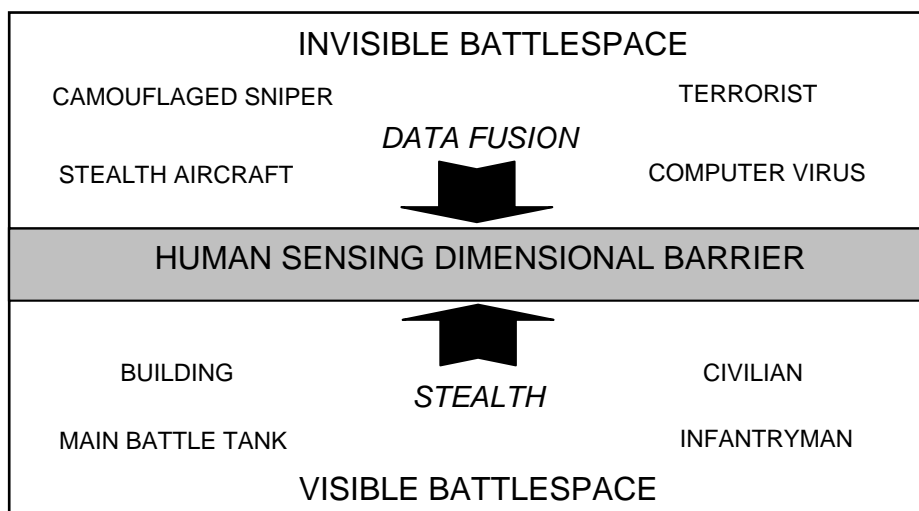
Figure 4-15. Visible and invisible battlespace as adapted from Bunker (1996).

The visibility of targets and threats is affected by opposite vectors of stealth masking and data fusion. If stealth is greater than data fusion, a target or a threat will remain in the invisible battlespace.[165] The principle is shown in Figure 4-15. Mastering the electromagnetic spectrum is the key in the detection, location, recognition, identification and tracking of targets. In this sense, data fusion allows us to deal with different threats - whether human, physical or informational. Yet the human dimension and especially its cognitive domain remain hidden if we rely solely on technical sources.[166] An important part of modern sensor fusion is therefore human intelligence (HUMINT). An example of a capable intelligence sensor fusion is a so-called ISTAR-unit (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance).[167]

The problem of recognizing threats and "seeing" the battlespace is different in each dimension of battlespace. Regarding the underline physical dimension, the lack of accurate maps – and especially mine maps - is often a serious issue. A GPS device itself provides little

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[164] Medby – Glenn (2002), p. 48.

[165] Bunker (1996).

[166] Nurmela (2007), pp. 51–54. See also Kosola – Solante (2003), pp. 187-195.

[167] STAE 2020 (2004), pp. 57-68. ISTAR-system includes Open Sources Intelligence (OSINT), Signal Intelligence (SIGINT), Imagery Intelligence (IMINT), Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT), Human Intelligence (HUMINT) and Counter Intelligence (CI). See also Välimäki (1999), pp. 132–137.

comfort if combined with inaccurate large-scale maps, minefields displaced by weather and conditions in which no roads are available. Small units such as patrols or convoys depend almost entirely on direct observation. Their "micro-battlespaces" are therefore equal to the range and capacity of their human senses and their technical aids. With modern technology, situational awareness can be improved by different data displays and individual radios. Tactical operation centers may share information with their sub-units, while the higher commanders may follow the current situation based on reports, digital photos and video feed. This leads to a risk of relying solely on indirect observation instead of doing a hands-on assessment of the battlespace.[168]

The human dimension is even more complex to conceive. The first difficulty lies in correctly identifying the actors. Background data such as a population register might not exist. Local workers and interpreters may come in handy as they offer some cultural expertise, but they themselves may pose a threat to operational security (OPSEC). Certain people might also have several "roles" as a peasant might be a guerilla by night. Tracking a human target may be relatively easy initially, but it becomes much harder if the individual enters a crowd. The first challenge is to anticipate the intentions of an individual. The second difficulty is the cultural and language barrier, especially in quick and stressful situations. Non-verbal communication may fail as easily as spoken language. Using an optical sight of a rifle for observation, wearing sunglasses, waving with the left hand or simply applying common hand signals are a few examples of gestures that can be misinterpreted. The third challenge is to avoid fratricide between friendly forces and the co-operating indigenous forces.[169]

Threats and targets of the information dimension are practically beyond the control of a tactical ground unit. News media may magnify local events and cause further troubles. They may even relay news of events outside the unit's AOI and thus cause tension or even riots within the unit's AO. A good example is the reactions of Muslim communities worldwide to the Mohammed cartoons in 2006.[170] Rumors or even reasonably reliable information may be spread in by local people to mislead units or to test their reactions. It would also be naïve to assume that adversaries or other actors do not possess sound SIGINT capabilities. Ultimately, even the troops might endanger OPSEC by writing blogs or publishing photos.[171] The informational "reachback" to home country is also a very important consideration. An individual small-unit engagement gone bad might cause parliamentary debates in the given troop-contributing country. The French experienced this after a single fatal ambush in Uzbeen Valley, Afghanistan, on 18 August 2008.[172]

Let us now examine the battlespace of a hypothetical infantry battalion in stabilization operations. As the area of operations (AO) of a battalion is usually very large, the visi-

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[168] Nurmela (2007), pp. 47–49.
[169] Ibid, pp. 49–51.
[170] Lindholm (2006). In Meymaneh, Afghanistan, this led to a full riot and an effort to overrun the PRT base.
[171] Nurmela (2007), pp. 45–46 and 51–52.
[172] Pons (2008), pp. 14–19. Author's comment based on personal observations: The ten soldiers killed in action and several wounded resulted in a widespread public debate in the French media and among the French military.

bility of even this portion of battlespace is a challenge, let alone the AOI.[173] The reach of organic weapons systems, the overall mobility and the capacity of ISTAR assets all limit the area of influence of any ground unit. The area of interest (AOI) should normally extend outside the AO and cover the possible contingency plans and the assigned "be prepared to" and "on order" type tasks. Some information requirements are routinely addressed to neighboring and supporting units and the higher headquarters. The battlespace, however, is not dependent solely on the unit's interests. First, the unit has to consider the causal relationship of its actions and the possible consequences. These links are always human or informational, as the physical dimension does not really react to stability operations (unless there is an environmental or a CBRN concern). Second, the unit has to consider the possibility of indirect outside influences, which can spark a reaction to events beyond the AOI. Again, these interventions occur in the human or information dimensions.

The following two illustrations attempt to graphically capture the problem of visible and invisible battlespace. The first picture has our imaginary battalion in a relatively static deployment and doing routine, framework operations. In the second picture, the same battalion has launched a focused, intelligence driven operation in the NW corner of its AO. Note how the AOI has changed according to the current posture. The "tunnel vision" effect can also be seen, as the AO outside the immediate area of concern has been left without coverage because of the surge in the NW corner. The changing shape of the battlespace (in red) demonstrates the significance and the unpredictable nature of the human and information dimensions. As the battlespace also has a temporal dimension, both pictures can be seen as conceptual snap shots at a given time. The home station (HS) and the area between it and the forward support base (FSB) remain outside the unit's AOI in both pictures, because they are relatively irrelevant in terms of the immediate ongoing tactical operations. They are, however, important pieces of the battlespace and should always be included.

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[173] Nurmela (2007), p. 30-31. Nurmela offers three examples of the size of an AO. The Finnish Battalion of KFOR in Kosovo in 1999 was responsible of an area of 550 km^2. The Nordic-Polish Brigade of SFOR in Bosnia in 1995 controlled an area of 75 x 150 km with three maneuver battalions. A Canadian battle-group in West Kabul, Afghanistan, supervised an area of 167 km^2 in 2003.
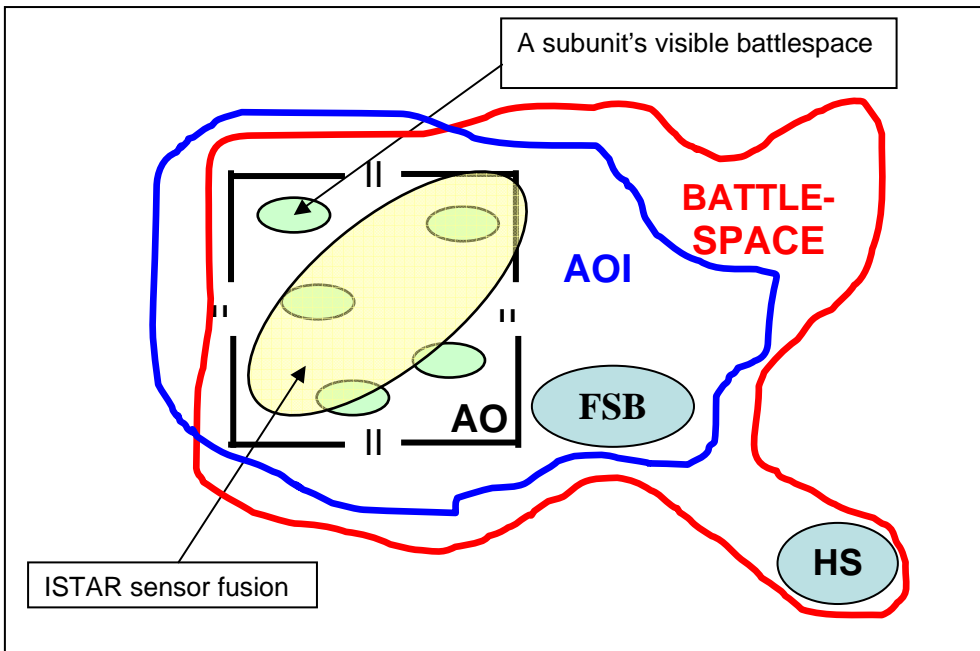
Figure 4-16. A battalion's battlespace in framework operations.
AO = Area of Operations   AOI = Area of Interest
FSB = Forward Support Base   HS = Home Station
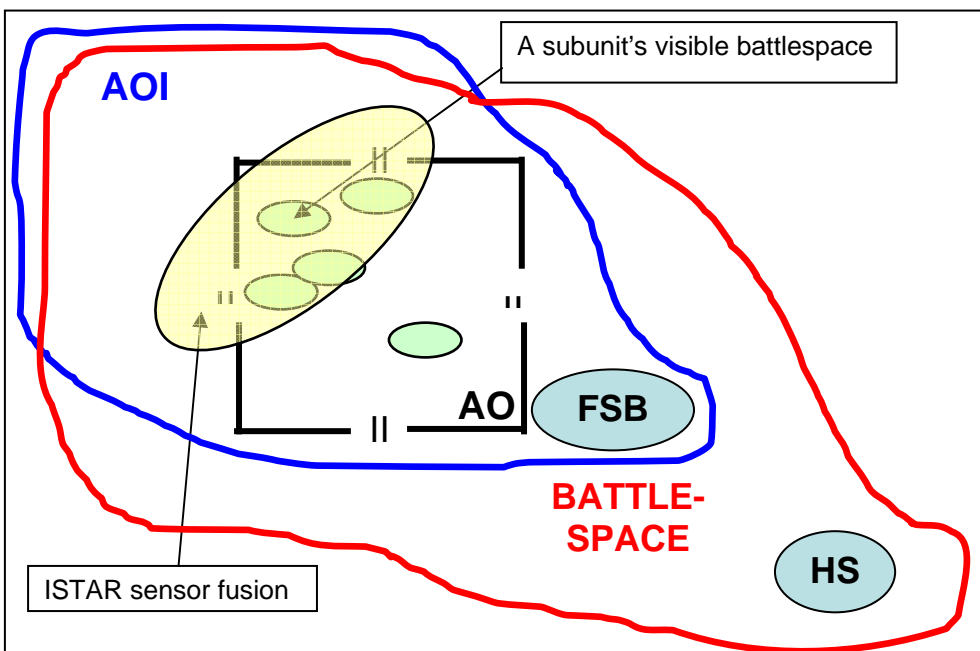
Figure 4-17. A battalion's battlespace in a focused operation.

4.5   Social action within the horizon of lifeworld

So far, we have developed a model of battlespace as a whole. Hence, to advance from the terrain-oriented approach towards a human-centric one, we need to focus on the relationship between the human and the informational dimensions. As a working hypothesis, this "social" battlespace should correspond closely to the paradigm of "war amongst the people". We have already identified the social domain of the human dimension as the domain of action. Human behavior becomes action if the actor attaches a subjective meaning to it. Logically, social action is a subset of action, when linked and dependent on the behavior of other people i.e. it is action meaningfully determined by the behavior of others. Not all our behavior has a specific meaning, as in everyday life we react to different stimuli and tend to repeat our daily routines. Some of our actions have a personal, subjective meaning, but this does not mean that they qualify as social actions.[174]

Human behavior (*verhalten*)
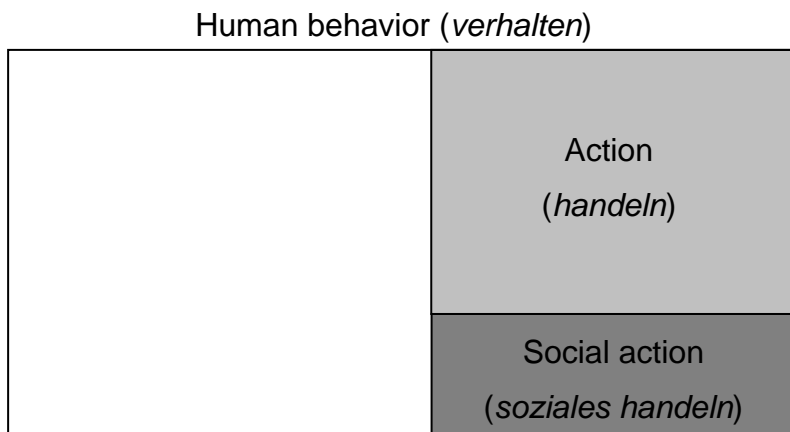
Figure 4-18. The relationship of human behavior with its subsets, action and social action according to Max Weber and adapted from the presentation of Jari Aro.

4.5.1   The Theory of Communicative Action

This thesis is based on the premise that actions by different actors generate information that each actor processes differently based on their perceptual filters.[175] The action element is studied from the point of view of the tactical ground unit in relation to the other human structures. A major portion of these actors are furnished by the local populace. Jürgen Habermas points out that the entire spectrum of social action should be taken

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[174] E-mail interview with Jari Aro 22 April 2009. Dr Aro is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Tampere. See also Aro (2009). The author also discussed Weber's theories during a telephone interview with Kaisa Ketokivi on 20 April 2009. Ketokivi is a PhD candidate and a researcher in the Department of Sociology, University of Helsinki.

[175] See Kuusisto (2004). Kuusisto's "information theory", as presented in Figure 4-12, does not construct a solid formal theory on social action. As Kuusisto borrows Habermas' thoughts on communicative action in his dissertation, the author decided to follow this line of thought. The author's interview with Professor Timo Kaartinen on 08 January 2008 suggested that Habermas' interests in public space and communicative rationality could provide a reasonable background for theory construction. He also pointed out some criticism of Habermas in terms of differing ideas of "modernity" and the realistic attainability of an optimal speech act.

into account when observing a society. He then presents the *paradigm of lifeworld* and its relationship with the *paradigm of system*, as these exist simultaneously. On one hand, society can be conceived as the lifeworld of a social group from the perspective of the acting subjects of that group. On the other hand, and from the perspective of a non-involved observer, society can only be seen as a system of actions.[176] If we recall the friction between the different levels of military action, the tactical level on the ground is likely to be more involved with local lifeworlds than the operational level, which in turn will be more focused on systems.

Focusing on the ground, we are likely to find the worldviews incompatible i.e. due to the language barrier and a cultural mismatch. In short, the lifeworlds do not match. Rauno Kuusisto describes lifeworld as "*the fixing point of an interactive event*". Life-world acts as a background of mutual knowledge and as a horizon of mutual under-standing. It takes into account the entire information flow as well as the social environ-ment.[177] According to Habermas, "*cultural values do not count as universal; they are, as the name indicates, located within the horizon of the lifeworld of a specific group or culture*". He cautions against seeking rationality in terms of a single worldview – in our case, the occidental understanding of the world and our presupposition of modernity.[178] This interpretation offers no right and wrong, no "good guys" and "bad guys" – it mere-ly highlights the likelihood of differences.

Specifying the idea of worldviews, Habermas presents three different perceptual "sub-worlds": the *subjective world* (the totality of the experiences to which a single individ-ual has privileged access), the *social world* (the totality of interpersonal relations that are recognized by its members as legitimate) and the *objective world* (the totality of facts that can be considered as true).[179] These worldviews allow valid claims to be made on social action. In order to reach an understanding of interaction that is coordinated through speech acts, an actor must present at least three *validity claims*.
- that the statement made is true (objective world => propositional truth);
- that the speech act is appropriate for the existing normative context (so-cial world => normative rightness);
- that the manifest intention of the speaker is meant as he/she had ex-pressed it (subjective world => subjective truthfulness).[180]

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[176] Habermas (1984), pp. 3-7 and (1987), pp. 117-118 and 320. According to Habermas, the institutional orders of lifeworld are divided into private and public spheres.

[177] Kuusisto (2004), pp. 69-70 and Habermas (1984), pp. 66–74. Habermas states that "*subjects acting communicatively always come to an understanding in the horizon of lifeworld*". The more the cultural traditions rule social action, the less ideal the situation is for the participants themselves in terms of mak-ing individual interpretations and contributions. As the lifeworld stores the interpretive work of preceding generations, the conceptualization of cultural tradition is of importance.

[178] Habermas (1984), pp. 42–53.

[179] Habermas (1984), pp. 52, 69–74.

[180] Habermas (1984), pp. 75–101. Besides speech acts, bodily movements, expressions or other gestures may be used by the actors in their efforts to communicate. Habermas states that "*bodily movement is an element of action, but not an action*". This is because movement is only a means to obtain an end, as a movement of a hand can be a part of friendly greeting or a damaging karate blow. In any case, both actors are translating these movements and gestures based on their own lifeworlds and individual perception.
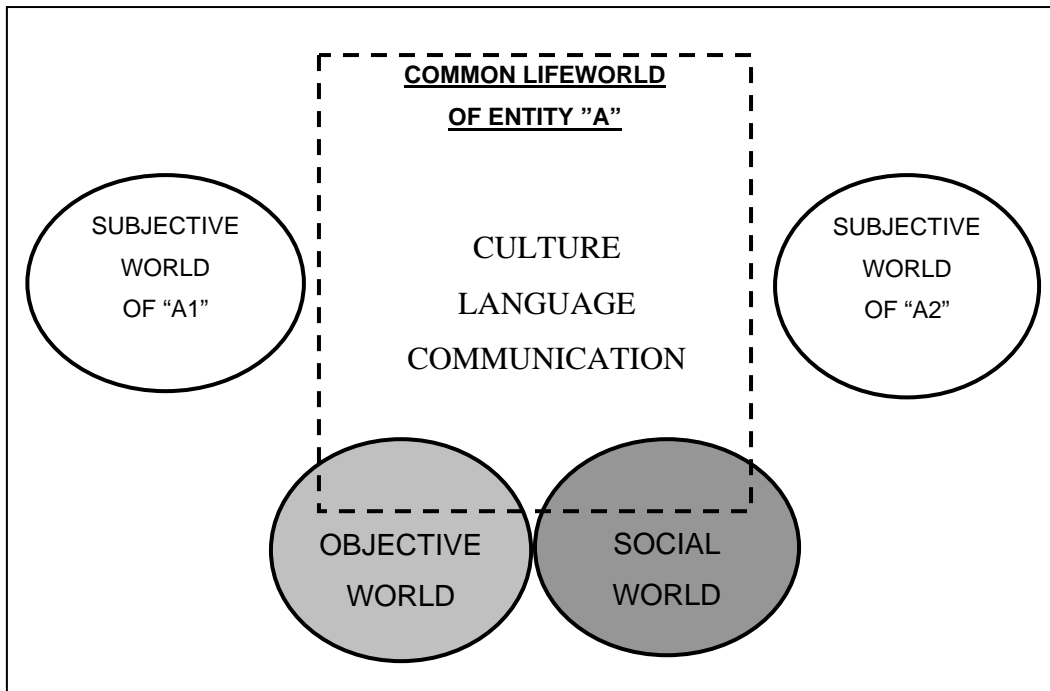
Figure 4-19. World-relations that the actors (A1 and A2) establish with their communicative action, when sharing the same lifeworld (as adapted from Habermas and Kuusisto).

To position language and culture correctly in this model, Habermas states that communicative actors always move within the horizon of their lifeworld. Lifeworld is constitutive for mutual understanding, if the actors share the same lifeworld (i.e. have similar cultural background and language skills, see Figure 4-19).[181] If the lifeworld loses its power as a background framework, actors must then rely on their own interpretive performances. When culture and language fail as resources for mutual understanding, there is a need for the "*repair work of translators, interpreters and therapists*". Thus, elements of the lifeworld that fail as resources have to be identified as cultural facts that limit the scope of social action.[182]

This model gives us a tool with which to analyze what can go wrong when our soldiers meet the local populations. In Figure 4-20, we see a problematic situation where two actors do not share a common lifeworld. They are still able to make direct observations regarding the social world or the objective world, yet they interpret these observations based on the background of their own lifeworlds. The margin of difference can be referred to as *social distance*[183]. This distance can be shortened if an interpreter is available. We should bear in mind that person C has his/her own subjective world and observes the situation accordingly. C may share the lifeworld of soldier A and thereby could communicate effectively with him, but only partially with the local B, because he has learned the language and parts of this culture through facts and norms but has not

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[181] Habermas (1987), pp. 120–127. The formal world-concepts (objective and social worlds as the common external world and subjective worlds of the actors as internal worlds) constitute a reference system for that about which mutual understanding is possible

[182] Habermas (1987), pp. 132–135. These assistants have to use the three world-concepts to replace the dysfunctional elements of the lifeworld.

[183] Ethington (1995). He analyzes social distance as psychological distance between two social groups and he introduces Emory Bogardus' 7-step "social distance scale". See also Simmel (1950).

fully absorbed the lifeworld of B. The second possibility is that C has been recruited locally, and his lifeworld is likely to be closer to B's, even if he does not belong to the same ethnic group. In the best circumstances, C qualifies as *a cultural mediator* – a level far superior to that of a traditional language assistant.
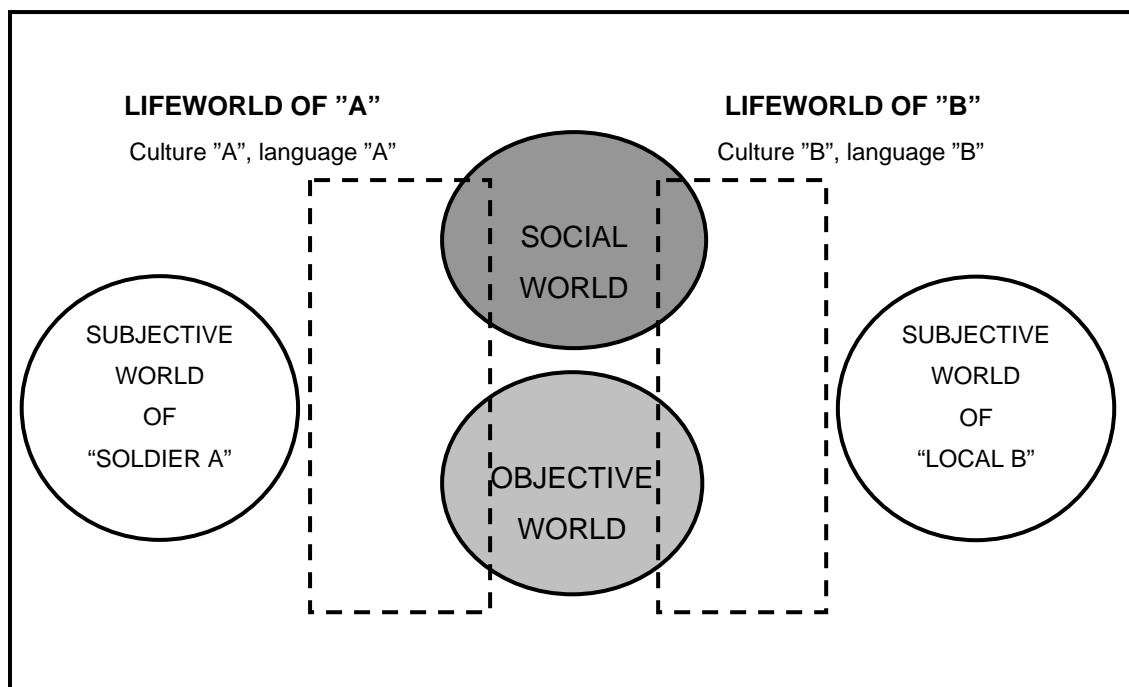
Figure 4-20. Actors "Soldier A" and "Local B" fail to establish mutual understanding, as they are not sharing the same lifeworld (as adapted from Habermas).

Habermas organizes social action into four different categories.[184] <u>Teleological or strategic action</u> involves at least two goal-directed actors and it can be considered to correspond to purposive rationality. The actors presuppose one world, the objective world, and each is oriented to his/her own success. As a result, they cooperate with others only to the degree necessary. This is likely to happen when an element of the stabilization force separates itself from the society and acts strictly according to its mission. An example would be a crowd-control unit intervening only when needed and then returning to base after accomplishing its mission.

<u>Normatively regulated action</u> refers to members of a social group who orient their actions toward common values. Individual actors may comply or violate the norms and thereby fulfill or fail to meet the generalized expectation of their behavior. It presupposes relations between an actor and two worlds: the objective world and the social world. A military unit that co-exists with the local society will ultimately deal with this issue. The normative context is likely to be that of the locals, and it will be very difficult to enforce other behaviors. Soldiers may be puzzled by the different sets of norms on and off the base.

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[184] Habermas (1984), p. 75–101. The following four paragraphs include the Habermasian definition followed by an example made by the author.

<u>Dramaturgical action</u> refers to participants in interaction that constitute a public for one another. It is not limited to drama or the arts, but also applies to the stage where politicians, police officers or just normal people act in different social situations. When presenting a view on one's self, the actor has to behave within his own subjective world while also presupposing the external world in general - though he/she does not exactly conform to the limits of the objective and social worlds. Units and individual leaders will have to learn this in order to pass "master messages", win the "storytelling contest" and deal with different practical situations. They should be warned that the locals could also use similar methods. Playing with normative rightness and truthfulness might mean losing face – which is tantamount to forfeiting one's honor in some cultures.

<u>Communicative action</u> refers to two or more equal actors who establish interpersonal relations and seek to understand one another. It is superior to the other three models, where language is conceived as one-sided in different respects. An understanding is reached against the background of a culturally ingrained pre-understanding. It may be impossible to reach honest, open and mutual understanding when interacting with local populations, as lifeworlds and agendas often do not match. It may happen between individuals, but will require a considerable amount of time in order for the actors to develop the necessary mutual trust.

<u>The situation</u> establishes an order for the action. Besides the real-life spatial-temporal distance of the situation, social distance is also a determining factor.[185] The participants will observe and interpret the situation according to their own point of view. When these views differ, there is a risk that the situation could be reinterpreted, as no participant has the monopoly on correct interpretation. Realistically speaking, communication in everyday life is diffuse, fragile, continuously revised and only momentarily successful – even if the actors shared a common lifeworld. While the actors may aim for understanding, they all pursue their own particular agendas.[186] Different lifeworlds combined with varying amounts of information available will result in misunderstandings and mistakes, and lead to unintended consequences.

This situational problematic combined with other factors of the human dimension incorporates several questions that need to be addressed before taking action. In this case, the action in question may range from kinetic to non-kinetic. Action may thus include using lethal force, as it is a very strong way of communicating. Planning one's agenda for a tea session with local leaders is therefore not necessarily different from deciding whether to engage armed insurgents on sight. Leaders should therefore ask themselves:
- What is the social distance between them and us? What level of interpreter or cultural mediators are available?
- Are we reading the situation correctly and do we have all the information available? On what basis might they act and what do they know?
- Who else is involved? What are the links and networks between them and the other actors?
- Should we pursue our own agenda, or should we adapt and adjust to the situation in order to create action that is more communicative?

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[185] Kuusisto (2004), pp. 70-71.
[186] Habermas (1984), pp. 75–101.

- At what point do we use dramaturgical action? Can we continue this action logically and persistently without failing the "validity checks"?
- From the options available, which is the less harmful in the short term? Have we also properly analyzed the long-term consequences?
- Is it necessary to act now? Does this situation represent an opportunity or should we wait?
- Are our actions predictable in a positive way? Are we trustworthy? What risks does this predictability generate in terms of protecting our force?

4.5.2 Soldiers and Strangers

Troops deployed in a foreign country are always considered strangers by the local people. Georg Simmel describes "a stranger" as a person who "*comes today and stays tomorrow*" and is fixed within a particular spatial group. His position in this group is determined by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning and has imported qualities that are alien to the original group. In spite of this, the stranger becomes an organic member of the group with a special relationship of nearness, distance and tension not found in other relationships.[187] Zygmunt Bauman describes "the stranger" as a third element between "them" and "us". While "us" represents everything familial and safe, "them" is a scary and alien group to be avoided. Human action is thus about building frontiers between "them" and "us" to establish order in an otherwise insecure environment. The stranger shakes up this setup by demonstrating that the world order according to "us" is not the only option. Strangers point out the artificiality of established frontiers and show that it is possible to redraw or cross boundaries.[188]

Lifeworld always remains in the background and forms an everyday, ever-present, taken-for-granted unity consisting of three levels: the culture, the society and the personal. Culture represents the stock of knowledge; society stands for memberships in social groups and personal for individual competences. The processes that correspond to these structural components are cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization. On table 4-21, we can identify the relationship between these factors when maintaining the structural components of the lifeworld (+) and manifestations of crises when processes are disturbed (-).[189]

With this table, we can follow the logic that is applicable to a "stranger" military unit amongst local populations. Successful integration may lead to a relationship that is too close and may even endanger the objectivity of the unit. Staying detached will lead to alienation and the loss of the "stranger" status. In the worst-case scenario, the unit will be marked with a "them" status, ultimately becoming intruders and enemies. This facilitates the "Accidental Guerilla Syndrome" discussed in Chapter 2. It is more likely that a unit will be somewhere in the middle of these two extremities. It is worth considering the effects of the integration process marked with (+) on the mission statement and tasks conducted by the unit. Successful co-existence is therefore likely to shorten the social

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[187] Simmel (1950), pp. 402-408. *The Stranger.*
[188] Bauman (1990), pp. 40-54.
[189] Habermas (1987), p. 135–145.

distance of any ordinary situation and therefore serve as booster for social action. Yet it may also create friction and inertia when undertaking kinetic/violent tasks within the familiar human terrain. This problematic is hardly seen when observing *systems* from a grand-tactical or an operational standpoint. However, it is plainly evident when dealing with *lifeworlds* on the lower tactical levels and especially in small unit action.

	CULTURE	**SOCIETY**	**PERSON**	**Dimension of evaluation**
Cultural reproduction	+ Valid knowledge	+ Legitimation	+ Socialization patterns/educational goals	Rationality of knowledge
	- Loss of meaning	- Withdrawal of legitimation	- Crisis in orientation and education	
Social integration	+ Obligations	+ Legitimate interpersonal relations	+ Social memberships	Solidarity of members
	- Unsettling of collective identity	- Anomie	- Alienation	
Socialization	+ Accomplishments	+ Motivations for normative actions	+ Personal identity	Personal responsibility
	- Rupture of tradition	- Withdrawal of motivation	- Psychopathologies	

Table 4-21. Relationships of structural components of the lifeworld and related reproduction processes (as adapted from Habermas).

4.5.3 Public and Private Spheres

So far, we have discovered that small units are more affected by lifeworlds than systems. Looking at table 4-21, soldiers operating on the ground need to understand the culture, but they are more concerned with the practical implications of societies and different personal encounters. The physical dimension with the local human terrain forms the context of interactions. These may include public encounters on streets and marketplaces or more delicate situations, such as meetings in churches or mosques, or even in private homes. If we bear in mind that people may change their social role according to the temporal and geo-spatial context, each encounter with the same person could be different depending on the time and place.

Theoretically speaking, we may distinguish the sphere of public authority from the "authentic public sphere", which is in fact the domain of private people. Public authority includes the state, the police and the courts, which represent the public administration system. The "authentic public sphere" includes politics, media and a variety of public

spaces as social platforms. These public spaces may include market places, coffee houses, streets etc. It should be noted, however, that not all of the so-called "public buildings" are in fact open to the public. State institutions or government buildings do not usually have open access, so they should be considered part of the public authority. Private sphere refers to homes and to family's internal space. It may also include elements of the civil society in a narrower sense, thus consisting of some sorts of social labor and commodity exchange.[190]

In practice, there are numerous different "public spaces" and "audiences" which do not necessarily correspond to the regions or territories controlled by authorities. The assumption of Western-style government control may be too hasty. Tribal societies may be transnational and therefore not follow territorial logic. Virtual public spheres may engage global audiences.[191] Religion is also a major factor when dealing with the concepts of public and private spheres. In the West, democratization has pushed religion into the private sphere and separated the church from the state. Islamic societies function with a different logic and religion is not merely private: it is also an important part of the public sphere in many ways. Religion may also be the same as authority, as *Shari'a* can provide the legal norms locally or centrally and clerics may wield considerable power.[192]

4.6   The "Social" Battlespace

The small units on the ground have to co-exist and interact with local people and with multiple actors present in an international stabilization operation. This social action is a part of their work as they conduct a full spectrum of military tasks ranging from humanitarian assistance to pure combat operations. The conclusion is that social action between the military force and other actors is a subcategory of the overall tactical action. Therefore, in stabilization operations amongst the people, the traditional idea of battlespace has to be shifted towards a "social" battlespace. The orientation has to be human-centric rather than terrain- or enemy-centric. The problematic involved is two-fold. First, one has to *deploy the force* on the ground based on good judgment generated by an enhanced IPB analysis. Secondly and more importantly, one has to *employ the force* efficiently while maintaining the ubiquitous "stranger" status and without triggering the "Accidental Guerilla Syndrome". All this requires a profound understanding of the mechanics of the "social" battlespace.

The human dimension constitutes the core of the "social" battlespace. The layer-based approach introduced in this thesis should help in recognizing the key factors involved. Mapping of the human terrain with the basic cultural influences establishes the base for further studies. Human terrain teams with databases and reachback links to national

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[190] Habermas (1989), pp. 1-5, 27-31.
[191] Interview with Professor Timo Kaartinen, 08 January 2008.
[192] Hefner (2001).

intelligence services will help when developing the picture.[193] Recognizing the cultural variations and manifestations (see Table 4-9) is the next step and is essential when analyzing the differences between the private and public spheres. Employing the force properly greatly depends on the correct interpretation of this social domain as a whole. A qualitative analysis of the multinational force has to be equally taken into account, as the cultural awareness level and the particular social distance aspects of each unit should be considered before deploying and employing them.

The physical dimension is both an enabler and a limitation to operations. At the tactical level, the traditional way for soldiers to consider the physical dimension is to estimate fields of fire, avenues of approach, key terrain, obstacles, cover and concealment.[194] An urban environment makes this more difficult, as the terrain is three-dimensional and complex. It greatly affects the local social domain as the layouts of villages and towns provide varying platforms for the public and private spheres. Rural or mountain environments offer far different challenges. The "ISTAR threshold" of different surroundings dictates greatly the relationship of visible and invisible battlespace as well as possible threats. Both kinetic and non-kinetic operations have to take into account the combination of the physical and human dimensions - that is, consider the infrastructure. Furthermore, the "anchor point" and "master status" theory models demonstrate that people can play different roles in different temporal and geo-spatial circumstances. Additionally, certain behavioral patterns can be discovered based on this kind of analysis.

The information dimension is where battlespace effects take place, as the tactical center of gravity in stabilization operations is likely to be the consent of populations. In essence, this is why all operations should be considered primarily as information operations backed up by other means as necessary. Recognizing the capabilities of other actors will help when estimating the flow of data and information. The fact that modern technology provides commercial off-the-shelf – and most of all, affordable - global means of communication, the information dimension flow within the battlespace will usually become impossible to control. Technology can network actors that reside in different physical environments, but who still share the same lifeworld, idealism or cause. This may include relatives, friends, members of groups, supporters, compatriots, brothers in arms, etc. Ultimately, a virtual lifeworld may become more valued than a lifeworld oriented to the physical world. These aspects may shade the meaning of citizenship, nationality, ethnicity and other social standings.

Another observation should be made regarding the mass media. As the local and international mass media operate in the information domain, their audiences will be subject to cultural mismatch and misinterpretations. The audience[195] may or may not share the lifeworld of the reporters, and therefore there is a need to check the "validity claims" by reconsidering the information. As the information flows mostly in one direction - when it comes to mass media - the formal world contexts of the information may also be

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[193] See the U.S. Army Website of Human Terrain System at http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/default.htm and Kipp - Grau - Prinslow - Smith (2006) for practical examples.

[194] FM 3-24 (2006), Appendix B.

[195] The word "audience" is used instead of "actor" because the people who constitute the audience in the days of mass media do not count as actors, unless the level of interactivity of a medium is real-time.

blurred. Though the same information is available it may be interpreted differently by different audiences. From the standpoint of the stabilization force, this should raise a few questions. Information may be understood differently outside the perimeter fence. Key messages transmitted as a part of information or even psychological operations campaigns should be "validity checked" by a test audience before it is released to the target audience.

The temporal dimension affects information availability, the (social) situation and regulates the causal logic of the battlespace. It causes great friction between tactical level execution and strategic level planning. The longer the units operate in the theater, the more they develop practical cultural awareness. Over time, their social distance from the local society should be reduced unless major setbacks occur. On the other hand, long deployments are always difficult to sustain and units may become fatigued under the cumulating stress. Unit rotations also limit operational tempo and create possible windows of opportunity for adversaries. The credibility of the force may be at stake as many other actors deploy for longer periods and therefore develop a different level of cultural awareness and lifeworld compatibility. The pace of life of the local society should also be taken into account. For example, harvesting and special feasts may have a significant impact on daily practical life.

This concludes our modeling of the "social" battlespace, which is a preliminary result of this study. Different human structures and interactions within and between them seem to have a central role in tactical level land operations for forces engaged in stabilization efforts. The key elements can be divided into four categories:
- the actors and their lifeworlds;
- the social distance between the force and the other actors;
- the availability of information and the visibility of battlespace;
- situations, their contexts and the potential consequences of actions.

5 CASE STUDY INTRODUCTION: THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF BATTLESPACE IN AFGHANISTAN

> "It's very complex, it's tribal, it's narco-related, it has religious sensitivities and Taliban all mixed in and there are no clear-cut divisions between who is enemy and who is not."

- LTC Stuart Tootal, CO 3 Para in Helmand Province, 2006.[196]

5.1 Case study design and methods

Afghanistan, once again drawn to international attention after 11 September 2001, is an extremely complex country. Decades of irregular warfare have made Afghanistan into a leading battle laboratory for guerilla/counter-guerilla warfare, for insurgency/counterinsurgency operations as well as for terrorist/counter-terrorist action. The country is also a prime example of a multi-ethnic state with disputed borderlines set by "The Great Game" of the colonial era.[197] Therefore, the international actors that intervene in the country do so with a multitude of agendas and for reasons that vary greatly. Some countries regard it as a forward line of defense against terrorism or as the front line in the war against narcotics. Others view it as yet another stabilization and reconstruction mission. Regardless, the fact is that as of 23 July 2009, there were 42 troop-contributing countries in ISAF with an approximate total strength of 64 500 troops.[198]

According to the ISAF website, operations in Afghanistan are officially in the stabilization phase as of the writing of this thesis. The initial intervention was not carried out by ISAF, but by a coalition led by the USA following the events of 9/11. ISAF operations were launched and initially worked in parallel with U.S.-led "*Operation Enduring Freedom*" (OEF). It was not until the end of 2006 that the area of operations of ISAF was extended to cover the whole country.[199] Interestingly, the fact that the intervention force is still there alongside the stabilization force adds a special nuance to this study. Therefore, a case study of the ISAF cannot be totally separated from OEF, as the division of these two is not clearly defined. Determining the boundaries of the case was a particular challenge because of the geographic and demographic diversity of the country in conjunction with the long duration of the international presence.

The selected cases represent neither a particular phase of the campaign nor a certain area of operations of ISAF. Both approaches would demand strict temporal and geographical boundaries to frame the actual investigation. This would have been possible using ethnography or participant observation methods, which in turn would have re-

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[196] Lamb (2006).
[197] Jones (2008) and Marston – Malkasian (ed.) (2008).
[198] ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/isaf/ Accessed 01 March 2009.
[199] Ibid.

quired in-country experience from the author.[200] A holistic, countrywide single-case approach would have been relatively easy to accomplish with literature sources alone. However, the lack of precision of this option would have been a major issue when considering the tactical scope of this study. As some regions and operational areas have received more publicity than others, a balanced and detailed approach connecting them all seemed difficult to do. The soundest choice was to reach a compromise between a limited single study and a larger holistic approach. This resulted in a multiple case study involving three cases: the baseline case (the Finnish troops in North Afghanistan) and two rival cases (the French and the British contexts). It was expected that these three contexts would differ, as the amount of combat operations was significantly different in each context studied.[201]

> - *"Afghanistan is a very multicultural country. There are really many tribes, religions and ways of living. It's not possible to handle Afganistan as one piece."* (A Finnish respondent)[202]

Afghanistan itself can be seen as *a critical case*, as it has affected Western doctrine, manuals and training profoundly. Although labeled as a multiple-case approach, this thesis could arguably be considered a single-case investigation as well, as there is supposedly a common operational environment. This argument is only partially correct, however, as the tactical realities within the three contexts differ significantly. This contradiction between a common operational environment and the tactical "ground truth" actually establishes this thesis as a multiple-case study. Temporally, the research spans from 2002 to 2009 and geographically it focuses on three areas of operations.[203] The chosen contexts range from the relatively calm North Afghanistan to the warzone-like southern and eastern parts of the country. The approach emphasizes the first context, as the tactical operating environment of Finnish troops is the main interest. Other Nordic sources were used to compare the Finnish findings in order to identify any national biases. The two other contexts are labeled as "rival contexts", and their purpose is to provide insight into the differences and similarities of the Finnish approach.[204]

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[200] Yin (2003), pp. 85-97. Author's comment: A good example of such a method is in David Kilcullen's book, *The Accidental Guerilla* (2009), where one of the case studies is from Kunar Province, Eastern Afghanistan.

[201] Predicting contrasting results for predictable reasons fits with the logic of a multiple-case study. See Yin (2003), pp. 39-53.

[202] Author's comment: These excerpts from the e-mail interviews are used to provide practical experiences and insight. The selection of these comments is based on the analysis described in Annex 6, but each quotation naturally serves the purpose of underlining certain facts as well as inspiring the reader.

[203] Yin (2003), pp. 39-53, 143-151. The choice of three contexts was largely based on the availability of interviewees. A temporal limitation was not possible due to the dispersed service periods of the respondents. Another limiting factor was that most of them could not speak freely or in detail of their activities in Afghanistan. Therefore, their anonymity has been respected to the extent possible in order to obtain more information. The author also had to consider that a detailed compilation of publically available information together with interview data might turn out to be classified information.

[204] Huttunen, Mika: *Tapaustutkimus operaatiotaidossa ja taktiikassa*, an article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), p. 127.

The sources used include literature, armed forces websites, articles and most impor-
tantly, questionnaire forms filled out by the respondents.[205] Official Finnish non-
restricted documents were also available to the author. These may be considered reli-
able, although it is likely that they do not include the whole truth about threat evalua-
tions or exact accounts of dangerous events. Concerning France, many articles and
books have been inspired by the fatal ambush in Uzbeen Valley on 18 August 2008.
The 8ème RPIMa Battlegroup has received most of the attention, mainly because it was
the first French ISAF unit to engage in actual combat operations. Some of the French
texts seem to be aimed directly at criticizing French policy in Afghanistan. British op-
erations in Helmand have received extensive public coverage in the form of numerous
articles and books. In particular, the operations of the 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regi-
ment (3 Para) Battlegroup and the 42 Commando Group of the Royal Marines have
been covered in detail. Some of the reporters and authors were embedded with the units.
Their motivation must therefore be considered as partially commercial. Sources used to
describe the Afghan provinces under study are listed in Annex 5.
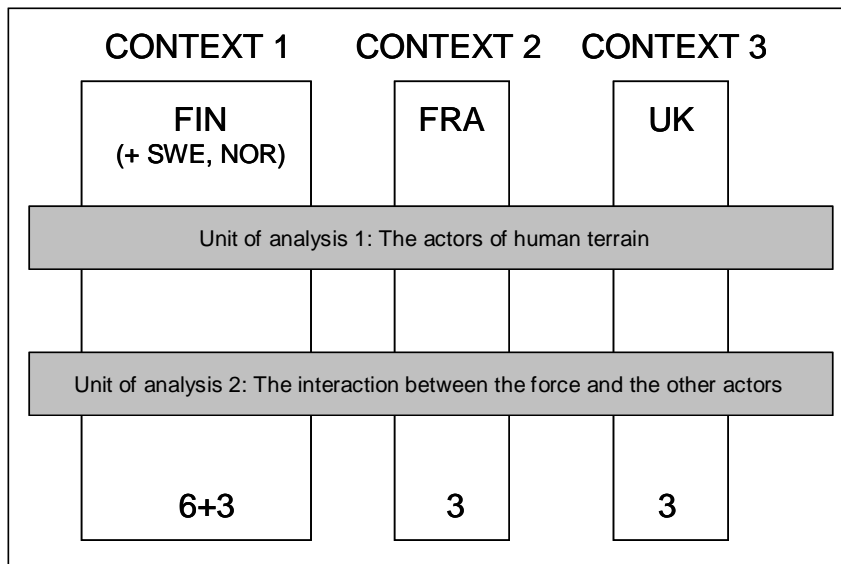
Figure 5-1. The picture shows the multiple-case study design with two units of analysis. The
numbers of interviewees per context can be seen below.

The two embedded units of analysis, the human terrain and the interaction between the
tactical unit and other actors, are used to facilitate the comparison. Cross-case analysis
as a method generalizes information appropriately to avoid producing restricted infor-
mation, which was a major concern for this report. Its downside is the risk of argumen-
tative interpretation, as a quantitative comparison was not possible with the sources
used and the resources available.[206] Although the selected cases do not represent the
whole ISAF area of operations, conclusions are possible as the units of analysis are not
sensitive to time and place. The overall frame is thus in the ISAF "stabilization style"
tactical action within the Afghan populations and spanning the Regional Command lev-
el and below.

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[205] Yin (2003), pp. 85-97 and Huttunen, Mika: *Tapaustutkimus operaatiotaidossa ja taktiikassa*, an article
in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), pp. 128-131.
[206] Yin (2003), pp.133-137.

This chapter will provide an overview of Afghanistan as a land operating environment. The human dimension of this tactical battlespace will be examined in detail according to its three "layers": the human terrain, the cultural domain and the social domain. This case study introduction will help the reader grasp the background before the analysis of the following chapter. It also develops large-scale conclusions on ISAF and operations in Afghanistan in general. The method used in this analysis was adapted from the French operational planning process (*La Méthode de Planification Opérationnelle*, MPO) which in turn was derived from the NATO planning guide.[207]

5.2   The land operating environment of the ISAF

Afghanistan is a landlocked country at the crossroads of Central, Western and Southern Asia surrounded by its neighbors Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Pakistan and China (See the maps of Annex 2). The surface totals 647 500 km^2, or about twice the area of Finland. The landscape is mountainous and almost 50% of the country lies at an average altitude of at least 2000 meters above sea level. The central highland ranges are mostly difficult and rough terrain consisting of high mountains and deep, narrow valleys. The *Hindu Kush* (translates as Hindu Killer) Mountains separate the northern plains from the southern regions. The heavily populated northern region is more suitable for agriculture and has a tradition of commerce that dates back to the Silk Route. The southern region consists of sandy deserts and semi-desert plains. It is scarcely populated, especially in the Southwestern areas. Most of the settlements are concentrated around rivers and streams, although water levels vary considerably according to the season and region.[208]

The climate varies drastically according to the geographic location. Summers are hot and winters are cold in Afghanistan while some high mountains have snow cover for most of the year. Summer temperatures often peak over +40$^\text{o}$C and wintertime night temperatures may drop below -15$^\text{o}$C. Drought is a current problem and the scarce rains are short but heavy. In winters, the weather in the northern region is dominated by cold air masses that generate rains as well as snowy and extremely cold conditions on the high ground. Mountain roads usually cannot be used during the winters. In contrast, the southern region is affected by tropical air masses created by the Indian monsoon, which brings humidity and rain between July and September. Wind, drought, dust and heat combined to create severe operating conditions in the central and southern regions.[209]

ISAF is not exactly a UN force, but rather a coalition of willing nations acting under a Chapter VII mandate of the UNSC. Commanded by NATO and enlarged in four con-

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[207] PIA-05.401 (2008), pp. 30-37. The author has been using both planning tools during his studies in France and in Finland. The NATO planning guide GOP (Guidelines for Operational Planning) is NATO restricted (releasable to EU and PfP countries), and therefore cannot be used as a source here.

[208] Information combined from the following sources: Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26, Finnish ISAF handbook 2/2008, pp. 8-13 and CIA World Factbook, Afghanistan (accessed 01 Nov 2008). There are various other definitions and ways to divide Afghanistan into geographical regions and the one presented here is only an overview.

[209] Ibid.

secutive stages from the original and small Kabul-oriented force, ISAF is legitimated by nine UNSC resolutions and a Military Technical Agreement.[210] The ISAF command structure differs from the NATO Combined Joint Task Force concept, where the theater headquarters usually represents the operational level and the component commands (land, air, maritime) are the tactical level. ISAF cannot be broken down into component commands, but rather includes five Regional Commands (RC) and an Air Task Force (ATF).[211] The operational level headquarters is in Brunssum, Belgium (Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum). The ISAF HQ represents the highest tactical level.[212] Figure 5-2 displays the challenges when seeking unity of command or unity of effort within the Afghanistan theatre of operations.
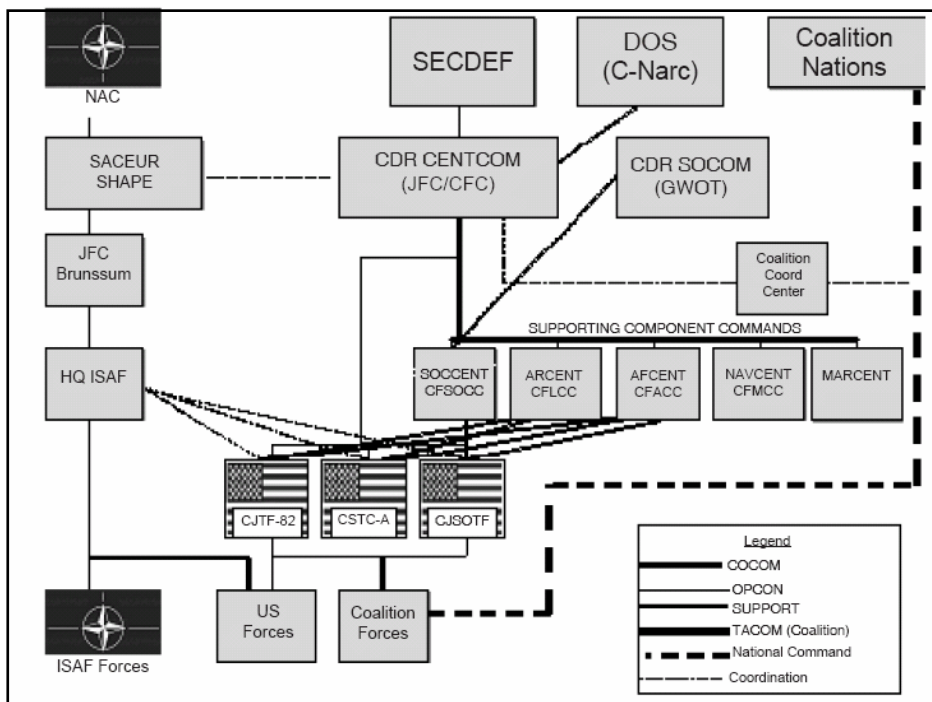
Figure 5-2. Command relationships in Afghanistan in 2008 from the American point of view. (Source: Hope (2008), p. 11)

The increase of troop strength for the stabilization force has been slow but remarkable after the initial 5000 soldiers sent in 2002. Without counting the troops participating separately in OEF, ISAF troop strength has grown 108% in two and a half years (see Table 5-3). OEF forces do not consist only of dedicated American troops, but also include British, Canadian and French units with a double mission. The main effort of OEF is in the south and in the east, where these nations have based their troops. Most of the units also belong to ISAF, but support the Americans in their fight against terrorism within the framework of OEF.[213] When troops are in contact with enemy forces and in need of air support, the air assets vectored in often belong to OEF.[214] The difference

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[210] ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/isaf/ Accessed 01 March 2009.
[211] ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/ISAF/. See also the NATO website for CJTF structure at http://www.nato.int/shape/issues/ncs/ncsindex.htm, Accessed 31 December 2008.
[212] http://www.jfcbs.nato.int/. Accessed 01 March 2009
[213] http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/enduring-freedom_orbat-01.htm. Accessed 01 March 2009.
[214] Connaughton (2008), pp. 27-28 and 381-382.

between the five regional commands is related to the quantity of maneuver units. RC(E) and RC(S) are not only composed of PRTs, but also have major maneuver units to supply the necessary combat power. The other regional commands only have a limited maneuver capability.

	05 October 2006	01 September 2008	23 July 2009	Change 2006 => 2009
RC(C)	4500 troops	6300 troops	6200 troops	+ 37,7 %
RC(N)	2700 troops	4200 troops	5600 troops	+ 107,4 %
RC(E)	10000 troops	15500 troops	19900 troops	+ 99,0 %
RC(S)	9800 troops	19100 troops	29400 troops	+ 200,0 %
RC(W)	1800 troops	2500 troops	3400 troops	+ 88,8 %
ISAF total	**31 000 troops** **37 countries**	**47 600 troops** **40 countries**	**64 500 troops** **42 countries**	**+ 108,1 %** **+ 5 countries**

Table 5-3. The increase in troop strengths and troop contributing nations between 05 October 2006 and 23 July 2009 according to ISAF official figures. (Source: ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/.)

PRTs are the heart of ISAF in terms of stabilization. They consist of both military and civilian personnel and their tasks revolve almost entirely around civil-military cooperation (see Annex 3). On 05 October 2006, there were 24 PRTs, and 2 more were added later under RC(E).[215] There are as many approaches and structures amongst PRTs as there are their lead nations. A common factor is the effort to achieve a comprehensive approach with the NGOs and different national agencies. The American PRT model traces back to 2002, when PRTs supported the counterinsurgency campaign of OEF. ISAF set up its first PRTs only in the more pacific areas. The main idea was to make a big impact while making only a minimal military footprint.[216] This concept has been working relatively well except in the south and in the east, where PRTs and other actors need maneuver units to provide additional security. Curiously, the security problem corresponds geographically with dominantly Pashtun areas, the areas of influence of the Taliban and the opium poppy cultivation (see maps 4, 6 and 9 of Annex 2).

A particular difficulty for ISAF is border control. In this arena, the Pakistani border poses a particular problem. The so-called Durand Line separates Afghanistan from Pakistani areas of Balochistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the North-West Frontier Province. It also separates the Afghan Pashtuns from the Pashtuns living in Pakistan. The Pakistani Pashtuns reside primarily in the FATA, which is administered *de facto* by the Pashtun tribal system and the *Pashtunwali* code. The Pakistani government has had severe difficulties in integrating the FATA with the rest of the country. The Durand Line zone has recently become a new trouble spot as a result of the

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[215] http://www.nato.int/. Run in practice by the lead nations, the PRTs come under OPCON of ISAF and TACON of their parent RCs. The only regional command not split into PRTs is the RC(C) around Kabul. Accessed 31 December 2008.
[216] Sellers (2007), pp. 8-15.

Taliban/al-Qaeda cross-border movement as well as the related military operations on both sides of the border. Earlier, the *Mujahideen* and the Western intelligence agencies exploited this area in their operations against the Soviet invasion in the 1980s.[217] The issue of *Pashtunistan*, an autonomous or even independent area unifying all the Pasthun people, has raised hopes and debates on several occasions during the 20th century.[218]

5.3   The human terrain

The multi-ethnic population of Afghanistan is comprised of 32.7 million people (estimation in 2008) and is growing slowly. Life expectancy at birth is only 44 years and the rate of infant mortality is very high. The majority of people are Muslims with some 80% Sunnis and 19% Shias. The biggest ethnic groups include Pashtuns (42%), Tajiks (27%), Hazaras (9%) and Uzbeks (9%). There are two official languages, Afghan Persian or Dari (50%) and Pashtu (35%), amongst more than 30 different spoken languages (the amount varies according to different sources). Tajiks and Hazaras are the primary Dari-speakers. Many Afghans speak two languages, but only 28% of people over 15 years can read and write. Each ethnic community has its own history, culture and language, although precise descriptions and data of these communities are difficult to establish.[219]

> -   "*Dari and Pashtu language structure is so different comparing e.g. English that it's impossible to translate a sentence in very accurate way. There are not even some words what we are using. No wonder why we sometimes had hard moments in this beautiful country.*" (A Finnish respondent)

The Pashtuns (also called Pushtuns, Pakhtuns or Pathans) are the largest ethnic group. They reside mainly in the southern and southeastern parts of the country with close links to Pakistan.[220] The Pashtuns are split into several tribal groups, who speak different dialects of the Pashtu language. They are mainly Sunni Muslims and follow a tribal

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[217] Mahmood (2005), pp. 2-5, 13-31 and 64-71. The Durand Line is the term for the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was originally drawn by the British Empire to separate Afghanistan from the British India. After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, the Afghan government rejected this border as it divided the Pashtun tribes on both sides. Pakistani government has refused to cede any territory and the line has remained as the international boundary between the two countries. It is also recognized as such by the international community. However, the border has not existed in practice because it is hardly controllable due to the difficult terrain, and because the Pashtuns have traditionally exercised a freedom of cross-border movement and trade.

[218] Mahmood (2005), pp. 33-59. *Pashtunistan* is also an Afghan national argument to counter Pakistani's influence in the area. The Afghans claim that the Durand Line expired at the end of its 100-year agreement in 1993. Pakistan denies that this agreement ever had a timeline. However, the *Pashtunistan* issue should also be seen as an instrument of internal politics in Afghanistan. See also Connaughton (2008), pp. 343-347.

[219] Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26 and Blood (2001), Part 2.

[220] Connaughton (2008), pp. 343-347. According to Connaughton, "*the heart of Taliban territory is around Quetta, while al-Qaeda is based in the far north of Pakistan's North West Frontier*" and "*many of the AFghans, who joined the Taliban are former students of Pakistani's madrassas* [religious schools]".

code called *Pashtunwali*.[221] This "way of the Pashtuns" is integral to their identity and forms the foundation of an honor-based society. A majority of Pashtuns consider that *Pashtunwali* and the Islamic law of *Shari'a* overlap but exist for different purposes. *Shari'a* is a moral code representing God's will on earth, whereas *Pashtunwali* is a code of honor.[222] The Pashtuns have always provided the hard-core resistance to invasions. The original Taliban of 1994 consisted mostly of Pashtuns and their areas have since 2004 been the most violent areas. Their will to resist derives from commitment to *Jihad* and from the strong martial tradition of bitter rivalry, feuding and blood revenge.[223] These factors should not be taken lightly when facing an insurgency or when otherwise operating amongst the people.

The Tajiks (the term *Tajik* means "non-Turk") are the second largest ethnic group and have an Iranian and Mediterranean background. Besides Afghanistan, Tajiks reside in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Russia and China. They live primarily in the northeastern and western parts of the country and extend into the central highlands. They are mostly Sunni Muslims and speak various Tajiki dialects of Dari. The Tajiks have little tribal affiliation and they instead identify themselves regionally, such as by the name of the valley they live in. Many of them have been urbanized and Tajik populations dominate the three major cities of Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and Ghazni. Rural Tajiks tend to mountain farming and herding, but may join the industrial workforce outside the agricultural season.[224]

The Uzbeks inhabit the northern region and speak a Turkic dialect, Uzbeki. They are Sunni Muslims of Mongol and Turkic origins. They have a strict patriarchal social structure with a strong heritage of marital endogamy. Some Uzbeks refer to themselves by tribal affiliation, but some identify with their towns of origin. Uzbeks also live in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Cohabitation with Tajiks and Turkmen exists, but antipathy to Pasthun is widespread. Uzbeks have been able to establish strong communities in the northern region from the 16th century until recent events.[225]

The Hazaras live in the central mountainous region known as Hazarajat. They are predominantly Shia Muslims and speak Persian dialects of Hazaragi. Hazaras are possibly a mixture of Eastern Turkic and Mongol origin and they have Mongolian-like features. Some Hazaras live in Iran and Pakistan as refugees or in the diaspora around the world. The Hazaras have been suppressed by ruling authorities throughout the history. They are predominantly mountain farmers although many have migrated to cities since the 1960s. Tribal affiliations have been disappearing among the Hazaras since the development of state structures in Hazarajat.[226]

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[221] Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26 and Blood (2001), Part 2.

[222] Kakar (2004), pp. 1-5. Confirmed in the interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009. Key related concepts of the Pashtun society are chivalry (*Ghayrat* and *Nang*), hospitality (*Melmastia*), gender boundaries (*Purdah* and *Namus*) and council (*Jirga*).

[223] Connaughton (2008), pp. 343-347 and the interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

[224] Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26 and Blood (2001), Part 2.

[225] Ibid.

[226] Ibid.

Other ethnic groups include several tribal groups of Turkmens and Tatars in the north, the Aimaq in the west and the nomadic Kirghiz people in the south. Indo-Iranian Sunnis such as Nuristanis, Brahuis and Balochis live in the south near the Pakistan border. Scattered but professionally well-positioned Qizilbash people can be found in major cities such as Kabul, Herat or Kandahar. Other groups include Tajiki-speaking Sunni Arabs in the north and dominantly Shia Muslim Wakhis in the northeast and Farsiwans in the south. Some non-Muslim minorities also exist; the most important are the Hindus and the Sikhs. Peter R. Blood also names a group called the Kabulis, which provides reference to the urban and heterogeneous population of the capital. These Dari-speaking, secularly educated and Western-oriented people were forced to move abroad or change their lifestyle during the Soviet-Afghan war and under the Taliban regime. The lack of their intellectual and professional capabilities is a severe blow to the reconstruction and development of modern Afghanistan.[227]

Amongst the populations, we may find several armed factions – legitimate and non-legitimate. The military vacuum after the fall of Taliban at the end of 2001 has again given room for the maneuvering of the local warlords. Map 7 of Annex 2 presents the regional situation of 2004 with only a marginal presence of the Taliban. Maps 8 and 9 show estimates of the Taliban influence in 2006 and 2007, respectively, and they tell a very different story. The return of the Taliban is a reality not just in Afghanistan, but also in Pakistan. There are also signs of increased al Qaeda and foreign fighter presence amongst the insurgents. According to a SENLIS report, South Afghanistan was out of the control of ISAF and the Afghan government in 2007. At the same time, the insurgents have started to use new tactics, with increasing amounts of IEDs and suicide attacks. Defeats in the security sector, counter-narcotic programs and the increasingly alarming force ratio between ISAF and the insurgents have led offensive and defensive action to replace stability operations.[228]

According to a RAND study, the six leading insurgent groups include Taliban and neo-Taliban, Hezb-i-Islami, the Haqqani network, foreign fighters, tribes based in Pakistan and Afghanistan and criminal networks.[229] A SENLIS study sums up the present day anti-government movements as a loose collection of neo-Taliban militias, operating somewhat independently from each other. These include:
- local commanders or warlords
- nationalist-Islamist Pashtuns
- opium smugglers and traffickers
- people who resent occupation forces or central government
- religious conservatives
- people forced or threatened to fight
- poor people and those affected by opium poppy eradication
- al Qaeda and affiliated Jihadists
- fundraisers and military trainers from Pakistan and Arab countries
- other autonomous groups.[230]

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[227] Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26 and Blood (2001), Part 2.
[228] See SENLIS (2006), SENLIS (2007A) and SENLIS (2007C).
[229] Jones (2008), pp. 37-48.
[230] SENLIS (2006), pp. 53-58.

On the Afghan government side, the principal actors are the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). The ANA was created in 2002 with an objective of 70 000 troops – a figure that had not been reached by 2007. Only two army corps out of the five are close to targeted strength. The American and British forces have been the main trainers, but many other ISAF countries have also participated in the so-called OMLT (Operational Mentor and Liaison Team) activity. Desertion is a major problem and the reasons are many: low salary and morale, lack of equipment and weapons, unwillingness to serve far from home and refusal to fight against fellow Afghans.[231] The ANP is organized in five regions with a desired end strength of 62 000 police. It is composed of uniformed police and specialized divisions. They share the same problems as the ANA, and corruption and criminal activity are common amongst the police. ANP's casualty rate was higher than that of the ANA (in 2007).[232] The police are easier targets, because they lack weapons and protection.[233] Concerning both organizations, tribal and ethnic affiliations seem to be stronger than the sense of duty or the official organization. Today, ANA and ANP remain as auxiliary forces for the ISAF and the OEF and alone they can be considered ineffective, ill-equipped and ill-trained.

Figure 5-4. Examples of armed actors in Afghanistan. (Source: SENLIS (2007B, p. 31)

The international actors add to the complexity of the human terrain. Firstly, ISAF and OEF troops come from several different countries with considerably different national

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[231] NPS Summary of Afghan National Army (2007). The foreign advisors of 26 OMLTs operate with ANA battlions (*kandak*), brigades, garrisons and army corps. When necessary, they engage in combat with their parent units and provide all kinds of logistics and fire support form the ISAF or the OEF. Author's comment: Similar OEF mentor teams are called Embedded Training Teams (ETT).

[232] NPS Summary of Afghan National Police (2007).

[233] Interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

caveats (limitations) and operational posture. Additionally, private security companies (PSC), other private contractors and certain intelligence services add to the complexity of the situation. According to a Swiss report, PSCs act in almost all fields of work but do not engage actively in combat operations. The identification of units, vehicles and individuals is often impossible, which further complicates the identification of friendly, neutral and hostile forces (see Figure 5-4).[234]

> - *"Before deployment, it was acknowledged that possession of a firearm was not an indication of an insurgent. Farmers would frequently own an assault rifle. The ANA and ANAP were more difficult as both possessed medium machine guns and RPGs. Whilst some of the ANP wore uniform, many of them, and all of the ANAP did not. Beyond established front lines (such as in Garmsir), carriage of a weapon did attract attention. However, there was the understanding that at the lower levels, many of these individuals were hired by the day rather than committed insurgents. Engagements were conducted on the balance of risk (i.e. an observation patrol or sentry was deemed a risk as opposed to the recovery of the dead or injured which was a task more associated with hired locals)."* (A British respondent)

Finally, there are the civil actors of the UN, governmental and non-governmental organizations – both international and Afghan. All these organizations recruit local people. The Afghan and the international media act throughout the country and enlarge the human terrain, adding regional and even global audiences. When speaking of the local populations, one always has to bear in mind the transnational links involved. Family, tribal, ethnic and religious networks are much larger platforms of interaction than may be initially assumed within a subunit's AO or within the artificial boundaries of a district or a province.[235]

5.4 The cultural domain

Besides being a geographical and ethnical intersection, Afghanistan has also always been a crossroads for invading armies. In the face of foreign invasion or occupation, Afghan people – despite their diversity - have united to fight against the common enemy. This has, without exception, eventually ended in the invaders' defeat. Instead of taking time to celebrate their victory, the different ethnicities and factions have returned to their normal business – fighting one other.[236] It seems that despite its diverse populations, artificial borders and the lack of central governmental control, the "Accidental

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[234] SwissPeace (2007), pp. 14-22 and 71-73. In 2007, there were 20 local, 57 international and 13 unknown PSCs operating in Afghanistan. They worked in consulting, training,, logistic, maintenance, intelligence, demining, poppy eradication, prisoner interrogation, static security, VIP and mobile security, surveillance and election support sectors.

[235] Interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

[236] Jokinen – Kullberg (2006), pp. 228-240; Emadi (2005), pp. 26–31 and Blood (2001), Part 1. The use of the word *Afghans* was introduced in the 14th century originally meaning only Pashtun tribes, but by the 19th Century, it extended to include all ethnic communities in the country. As *Stan* means land, the word Afghanistan has a meaning of "land of the Afghans".

Guerilla Syndrome" has always been easily triggered throughout Afghanistan's history. After the events of 11 September 2001, history seems to be repeating itself. After almost eight years of conflict, the Afghan population is uniting against the Western forces, which are generally seen as an occupation presence.[237]

In Afghanistan, ethnicity, tribalism and regionalism are dominant features and sources of tensions and conflicts. The society is multi-tiered and it is ruled by the rural elite of landowners, the urban elite of high-ranking officials and executives, and the religious elite. The continuous armed conflict since the 1980s has devastated the country's economy and infrastructure, prevented modernization and development and thus severely affected the people's lives. There are huge issues of unemployment, poverty and famine. It is estimated that about 80% of Afghans live in rural communities, where agriculture and animal husbandry are the main sources of people's income. People tend to have a deep attachment to their land and land ownership is an important issue.[238] Land ownership is closely related to power especially in rural areas. Local elders, *maleks*, may rule a single village or several small villages, and they usually come from large and respected families. *Maleks* also provide for their people by giving pieces of farmland and accommodation expecting loyalty and services in return.[239]

An Afghan identifies himself by *qawm* instead of nationality or purely ethnic affiliation.[240] In rural areas, there is no real government control, as disputes and problems are dealt with according to traditional ways. Province and district governors are chosen by the central government, but their only tools for control are the police and the army.[241] Local control mechanisms are organized in a pyramidal pattern of informal power and they are comprised of several key institutions. *Koranay* stands for an extended group of families, which guarantees the economic and social welfare of their members and represents the most fundamental structure of authority. At the level of *Kalay* (a self-sufficient small or medium-sized village), *jirga* is a local dispute-settlement and decision-making tool that follows traditional laws and rituals and is executed by the elders and landowners. Normally operating at the large village (*Qaria*) level; *shura* is a council used in semi-formal negotiation and decision-making. *Wolaswali* (district government) is the only formal link with the central government as it connects the local communities to provinces.[242] These social mechanics apply particularly to Pashtuns, but similar traditional ways are adapted by all Afghans. There may be, however, variations between ethnicities, regions and even between neighboring villages of same ethnicity.[243]

> - *"I was tasked with conducting "shures" (meetings) with local elders. This was at Coy level and occurred on a weekly basis or more often if the*

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[237] Interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

[238] Blood (2001), part 2 and Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26.

[239] Interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

[240] Blood (2001), part 2 and Emadi (2005), pp. 1-26. The term *qawm* defines one's individual identity in his social world expressing any form of solidarity. It usually refers to a family or a clan, but it may also refer to geographical residence or occupation. A village frequently corresponds to a *qawm*, but the term can also be used in a wider sense to explain affiliations, networks, kinship and professional life.

[241] Interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

[242] SENLIS (2006), Chapter 4, pp. 19-21. Efforts to form a central government for Afghanistan should take into account the traditional and decentralized structures of governance.

[243] Interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

situation required (for example several days prior to the end of a pre-arranged ceasefire)." (A British respondent).

ISAF and OEF troops, as well as all the other international actors, also come from several different societies and cultures. In February 2009, there were 41 troop-contributing nations in ISAF – each with its own identity, beliefs, values, attitudes, perceptions, language, religion and other cultural manifestations.[244]

   - "*Practical details of actions on needed to be clarified to all on every patrol. What to do and who is responsible of different actions during possible incidents. How is command and control organized? Language issues of not been able to command in native language. Level of language skills (Latvia) and the understanding of military English (what exactly does different abbreviations mean in practice).*" (A Finnish respondent)

In the eyes of the Afghan people, it is difficult to distinguish different nationalities amongst the foreign troops. The Afghans tend to generalize and speak only of "foreigners", or they may simply label everybody as "Americans". The comprehensive approach is incomprehensible for them, as what goes on in Kabul or with the central government does not have a concrete meaning for their lives. The only visible reference of the government comes in the form of ANA and ANP. Many Afghans see the neighboring countries as a part of the current insecurity and poverty problem. In the south and in the east, people know the Taliban well. In the north, people form their opinions on insurgents based on rumors and news, as they have less direct personal contact with them. Poverty and unemployment increase insurgent support, as the Taliban have real means to provide for the basic needs of families. For many people, opium poppy cultivation is the only way to make a living and eradication programs conducted by foreign troops create more trouble locally than they solve.[245]

   - "*Interpreters (IPs) softened the cultural and language barrier. Biggest challenge in cultural awareness is for palefaces to understand that in Afghanistan there is no lie or truth. One has the face or he has lost the face. It's always interesting to cooperate in this kind of environment.*" (A Finnish respondent)

5.5   The social domain

The missions and tasks of the ISAF and its PRTs (see Annex 3) correspond well with the stability tasks of the American FM 3-07.[246] This fact reinforces the idea that ISAF is in fact conducting stabilization operations. Working amongst the people and undertaking CIMIC, liaison, presence patrolling and ISR tasks, the PRTs act at all the levels of the Afghan society. They participate in *shuras* and patrol villages and rural areas, where the public and private spheres of urban dwellers, rural farmers and nomads are remarka-

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[244] See FM 3-24 (2006), pp. 3-6…3-9, for more detailed information on cultural manifestations.
[245] SENLIS (2007B), pp. 35-50 and the Interview with LTC Babagul 15 June 2009.
[246] FM 3-07 (2008), Chapter 3.

bly different from Western society. Media does not reach the whole population and as a result, the religious centres double as information centres. With an illiteracy level of 70%, the people depend on oral information. Radio has traditionally been the most important source of information, but the local people consider that its reliability has been compromised, as it is now serving the Western countries. Lack of electricity also prevents people from watching television or listening to radio. Internet is generally not available.[247] ISAF has to compete with the local narratives and win the battle of "storytelling" in order to win human terrain from the adversaries.[248]

- *"People met at marketplaces, mosques and shuras. They started also to meet at provincial councils, but it was only starting in 2005. They got their daily info from mullahs, village elders and other important locals. Most of the people are still illiterate. They used radios and mobile phones. It is difficult to fight against rumors and give information in this kind of environment. Some people came to PRT house and asked for info. It was not very often... We noticed rumors every time we spoke with locals. Rumors caused several riots even against ISAF. You can win the storytelling contest only with the people you meet and work. It takes a long time to create the confidence...Afghan people like stories and mullahs and village elders are the most important people."* (A Finnish respondent)

- *"In some areas the people would not directly hear what we are saying. The main problem as I see it is the information passed threw religious networks. We don't directly hear what the message of mullahs is. And if we do hear, it's difficult to confront it due to the afghans trust in religious thruth."* (A Finnish respondent)

Peaceful interaction between different actors does not always occur in Afghanistan. Despite the increased troop strength, the security situation rapidly deteriorated between 2006 and 2008. Since their summer offensive of 2006, the "Neo-Taliban" have gained ground as NATO, OEF and local security forces have been unable to respond.[249] According to a RAND study, the targets attacked include primarily Afghans: government officials, ANA soldiers, ANP police officers, normal citizens, NGO workers, teachers and religious figures. Between 2002 and 2006, the attacks have been multiplied by four and the lethality of these attacks by eight. Between 2006 and 2007, violence rates grew another 27% except in Helmand Province, where they skyrocketed by 60%. Insurgent tactics have also developed accordingly. In Helmand in 2008, for example, the Taliban occasionally maneuvered in company-battalion size formations instead of their former squad-platoon sized efforts.[250] Iraq-type tactics have been introduced including an increasing number of suicide attacks and IEDs.[251] Fatalities for the international forces

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[247] Interview with LTC Babagul 15 June 2009. According to Babagul, he had a better situational awareness of things happening in Afghanistan while staying in Paris than what he would have had in Kabul.
[248] See Casebeer (2006), pp. 29-38 for details on the concept of "storytelling".
[249] SENLIS (2007C), pp. 29-62.
[250] Jones (2008), pp. 48-53.
[251] SENLIS (2007C), p. 30. Between 2001 and 2004, five suicide attacks were reported in Afghanistan. The numbers in 2005, 2006 and 2007 were 17, 123 and 131, respectively.

have been mounting steadily (see Table 5-3). This has caused debates and reluctance in many troop-contributing countries to continue their efforts.

	2001	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009 (31 July)**
NATO-ISAF & OEF	12	69	57	59	131	191	232	294	**232**

Table 5-5. Yearly military fatalities of both ISAF and OEF between 2001 and 2008. The 2009 figure includes the reported casualties by 31 July 2009.
(Source : http://www.icasualties.org/OEF/. Accessed 13 August 2009).

To improve their security, the international forces conduct kinetic operations, both defensive and offensive. These operations take place mostly in South and East Afghanistan, the areas of major troop concentrations of the ISAF and OEF forces. As the numbers of combined security forces are insufficient, the forces rely on the use of heavy fire support from the air, artillery and mortars.[252] Collateral damage has become a major issue, as it is very difficult to distinguish combatants from non-combatants. This fact combined with the destruction of sources of income for the locals - such as the opium poppy cultivations - gives the insurgents the tools they need to win the battle of perceptions. In the north, with less drug production and less insurgent activity, the situation is much more under control. Nevertheless, the challenges are still the same in all corners of the country, as external support is centered in Kabul instead of the provinces and districts. The NGOs and UN activities also concentrate on Kabul, partly because of the overall approach to support Karzai's central government and partly because of the difficult security situation in the provinces.

> - *"Foreign Resourses: Now > 80% of development money goes to Kabul. Now > 80% of foreign actor's representatives; UNAMA and other UN agencies are working in Kabul."* (A Finnish respondent)

The locals have a very different opinion on the tactics used by the Western forces. As protecting the populations is now a trend, troops try to surge into towns and villages and patrol dismounted amongst the people. The locals see this as "hiding amongst the populations"; in their opinion, the insurgents should be engaged in the mountains and badlands where they are based. The presence of Western troops on the streets is seen as an occupation-type provocation. It is also a direct threat as the insurgents and criminals engage the troops in population centers thereby increasing the likelihood of civilian casualties. The results after almost eight years of occupation are disappointing for Afghans – little has been reconstructed, there has been a lot of fighting and collateral damage and people are still very poor. In their logic, the West has not fulfilled its promises and conditions are now worse than during the Taliban regime. As the Taliban are seen as fellow Afghans, the people with a background of personal losses find it easy to join their ranks. Resistance has naturally been heavier in the south and in the east, as Pash-

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[252] Connaughton (2008), pp. 27-28 and 381-382.

tuns have always been the toughest resistance fighters as well as providing the bulk of Taliban forces.[253]

- *Interaction with local population in Ghereshk was generally good apart from in the Taliban rich areas. In the other district centres it degraded the longer time we spent there, due to the increase in attacks we attracted from insurgents which forced many locals to leave the area.* " (A British respondent)

- *"They wanted us to leave. Farmers fields of poppy were avoided so as to reduce further antagonism of the locals. Even in our area of operations around the FOBs the Afghans wanted the quiet life, preferably under Taliban rule as they knew that system and felt it was a necessary evil such as death and taxes. For them the effect of conflict near them meant that they too were involved in terms of the interruption to their farming, threat to their children and the press-ganging of their children to fight against ISAF.*" (A British respondent)

5.6   Conclusions

We may conclude that ISAF is officially in the stabilization phase and that the troops are conducting stability tasks where possible. According to the auxiliary research questions posed, we have identified key actors within the human terrain and different ways and means of interaction between ISAF and the other actors. The tactical battlespace of the land operating environment seems to correspond to the seven propositions stated in Chapter 2. Stabilization operations in Afghanistan do take place amongst the people and in the difficult conditions of ongoing irregular warfare. The relationship between warlordism and a failed state seems evident. Several indicators also support David Kilcullen's concept of "Accidental Guerilla Syndrome". In this sense, the selection of ISAF as the case-study platform is well justified.

We have noted that since the beginning of Stage 5 expansion on 05 October 2006, the problems have severely increased. There is more violence, the Taliban control more areas and there are an ever-increasing number of ISAF troops and ISAF casualties. Official and political talk is of stabilization, but in fact, ISAF has been shifting towards warfighting operations. This is especially true in East and South Afghanistan where ISAF forces have assumed responsibilities in place of OEF forces. Is this just a temporary increase in intensity? This is to be expected in the stabilization phase (see Figure 3-1). Or is it a sign of lost control? The work towards normality continues, but we may wonder whether Afghanistan is about to return to its own normality (war) instead of ours. In any case, the troop contributing countries remain essentially the same as before, and OEF missions continue side by side with those of the ISAF. Some countries, such as France and the UK, participate in both operations with the same forces. Other coun-

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[253] Interview with LTC Babagul 15 June 2009. Author's comment: Throughout the academic year of 2008-2009 at the CID, LTC Babagul highlighted the difference of opinions between the people and the Western forces concerning the tactics used in Afghanistan.

tries seem to have missed the ongoing "mission creep" of ISAF. The ISAF/OEF mission today is not the same that it was in 2002.

- *"...But Afghanistan is different, one has to taste, feel, see hear and live there and even then we palefaces can not understand these people who we call Afghan. They are coming from different tribes and clans, they speak lot of different languages (main languages are Dari and Pashtu) Their Islam is different than we are used to in other missions. They are wahhabites, but not the same than Saudis and so... this is never ending story. My opinion is that we Finns we can not ever know this stone-aged culture."* (A Finnish respondent)

It seems that the comprehensive approach has failed in Afghanistan so far. The main effort has been aimed at supporting Hamid Karzai's central government so most of the effects have tended to stay in Kabul. Somehow, the Western actors have failed to grasp that Afghan society is based on local and tribal factors. Every province is a different environment, and the social networks do not correspond to the administrative frontiers. The resources and means available for the 26 PRTs are too limited and their operating methods are too dependent on the lead nation. There is no true unity of effort in ISAF, particularly when looking at the tactical level. The other actors on the ground (OEF, intelligence services and private contractors) just add to the overall confusion.

- *"Some locals (insurgents, clergy, warlords..) will never fully appreciate our efforts and western lifestyle, development, democracy etc. They have their power and support through the religious, cultural and criminal heritage and our presents are slowly changing that."* (A Norwegian respondent)

When studying relevant facts and their logical conclusions, we find some major challenges for the ISAF particularly at the tactical level. This analysis has been presented in detail in Annex 4.[254] Based on this study, we may state that the tactical center of gravity (CoG) in Afghanistan is the Afghan populations. If so, we return to the classic principles of COIN and irregular warfare. When reading the different doctrines and manuals, we see that they are largely based on lessons learned from recent operations in Afghanistan. Applying these new methods again in the same theatre of operations, we see that the forces operate with a circular logic. Despite a relatively quick learning curve concerning manual publication and creating new approaches, the problems on the ground have not really been solved.

Perhaps the international community has tried to do too much too fast. According to certain studies, successful COIN campaigns take approximately 14 years while unsuccessful campaigns take 11. Many campaigns of the past have ended as draws. The intervening powers have thought that external forces adapted to the situation would offer a solution. According to statistics, however, the best formula for success has had three

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[254] The method used in the analysis accords with the French *"Méthode de Planification Opérationnelle"* (MPO), which follows NATO's operational planning process principles. See PIA-05.401 (2008), pp. 30-37

determining factors: 1) a high level of competence of the local security forces, 2) a popular government and 3) the fact that external support has been denied to the insurgents.[255] The Center of Gravity analysis presented in Annex 4 leads to similar conclusions with regard to the tactical effects necessary to achieve or regain positive developments in stabilization operations.

- *"How has the theatre changed since your visit? Yes markedly much more reliance on IED and suicide bombers. Has your information been useful to successive units? I hope so but Taliban are a changeable enemy and quick to learn from their mistakes. Did your attitudes to the locals change the way in which they behaved towards you? Not at all – the positive things that we did could never outweigh the fear that the Taliban can exert by killing: terrorising the locals once we left them."* (A British respondent)

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[255] Jones (2008), pp. 7-24.

6 THE SOCIAL BATTLESPACE OF ISAF

"When you can conduct your operations without shooting any bullets, it's a good criteria of success."

-    COL Nicolas Le Nen, CO GTIA Kapisa, 2009.[256]

Three tactical contexts of the case study – the Finnish, the French and the British - are presented in this chapter. The cross-case comparison is built on two units of analysis, the human terrain and the interaction between the force and the other actors. This chapter ends with a crosscheck of the results in relation with the research questions and the propositions stated in Chapter 2. Annex 5 gives more detail on the Afghan provinces concerned and lists the primary sources used. The execution of the e-mail interviews and the principal findings are summarized in Annexes 6 and 7. Special attention should be given to the fact that data collection ended in July 2009 and that this thesis was finalized in August 2009. Any references to "present situation" refer to this final stage of the research process.

6.1   Context 1 – The Finnish forces (with Swedish and Norwegian troops)

Finland began its participation in ISAF in February 2002 with a CIMIC detachment working in Kabul AO. Since 2004, the Finnish troops expanded their activities in the North contributing to both PRT Meymaneh (Norwegian-led) and PRT Mazar-e-Sharif (Swedish-led). In 2007, the Finns focused their operations to Mazar-e-Sharif and brought their activities in Meymaneh to a close. Finally, the remaining Finnish troops were moved from Kabul to Mazar-e-Sharif in 2009.[257] Besides Kabul, Finnish forces have so far operated in five provinces of the Northern Afghanistan – Balkh, Faryab, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pol and Samangan.[258] This region has been relatively calm when compared with the rest of the country. The biggest incidents concerning the Finnish forces have been the attack against Meymaneh base in February 2006 and the death of a Finnish peacekeeper in an IED attack in Meymaneh in May 2007.[259] By 31 July 2009, Swedish troops had suffered two fatalities in a single IED incident and Norwegians had lost four soldiers in four separate hostile fire incidents.[260]

Between 2002 and 2009, the Finnish forces have consisted of small detachments instead of major formations with a total permanent strength peaking at 110.[261] In the RC(N), the

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[256] Warden (2009).
[257] FDF website news archives, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/uutiset/.
[258] Finnish ISAF Handbooks 2/06, 2/07, 2/08 and 1/09. See ANNEX 5 for provincial details.
[259] FDF website news archives, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/uutiset/.
[260] http://icasualties.org/OEF/. Accessed 07 August 2009.
[261] Author's comment: The deployment of the Election Support Force in July 2009 raised the strength temporarily to almost 200 troops. See FDF website news archives, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/uutiset/.

Finns have contributed strongly to liaison and intelligence gathering with Mobile Observer Teams (MOT). The latest contribution has been participation in the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) activity, but not at the small-unit level. In the Kabul area, the Finnish contingent concentrated mainly on CIMIC operations and co-located their National Support Element there. This was the case until all activities were collected to Mazar-e-Sharif in 2009. Some officers have served in the ISAF HQ and in the RC(N) HQ as well as in PRT staffs.[262] There have been no maneuver units at the company scale or above in the Finnish contingent so far.

Figure 6-1. The Finnish troops. (Source: Puolustusvoimat, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/)

The Swedish contingent also began with small intelligence and CIMIC detachments in Kabul before taking over the PRT Mazar-e-Sharif. Having grown from 350 troops in 2006 to the present 454, the Swedes have had tasks and a presence relatively similar to that of the Finns.[263] Norway, a NATO country, is in a situation similar to Sweden. Their presence has grown from 350 troops in 2006 to the present 500.[264] They are currently in charge of the PRT in Meymaneh. While their objectives have been similar in nature to those of the Finns and Swedes, they have also contributed to the overall effort with ma-

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[262] This information is compiled from the FDF website, http://www.mil.fi/, and the Finnish ISAF Handbooks. The Election Support Force of July 2009 consisted of a rifle platoon attached to a Swedish company and several observer teams under the PRT HQ. See FDF website news archives, http://www.mil.fi/rauhanturvaaja/uutiset/.

[263] This information is compiled from the Swedish Defense Forces website, http://www.mil.se/sv/Internationella-insatser/Pagaende-insatser/Afghanistan/ and the ISAF troop placemats at ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/isaf/ Accessed 04 August 2009.

[264] The Norwegian Defense Forces website http://www.mil.no/intops/start/operasjoner/ and the ISAF troop placemats at ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/isaf/ Accessed 04 August 2009.

neuver units that have participated in RC(N) offensive operations.[265] Norway has also participated in Special Forces activities since the beginning of OEF and later placed these units under the operational control of ISAF.[266] It seems that the Swedish and Finnish approaches – as is the norm - are very similar. Norway, having participated in operations in Iraq, has also had a wider role in Afghanistan. At the PRT level and in the cadre of ISAF, this has not been as evident.

- *"The Nordic countries established face 2 face contact with the locals. Germans stayed in APC:s when they were out on patrol. If threat level increased, they stayed in camp. (national caveats)... No unit actively searced for combat engagement but there was occaisitional attacks on patrols. These attacks occurred because the opponent was either testing us our sending us signals in case we "interfered" in their business."* (A Swedish respondent)

- *"The PRT* [Meymaneh] *did not actively search for the enemy to engage it alone, but it happened in cooperation with the QRF and the Regional ISAF Command (RC-N). The units where both attacked with IED`s and ambushed."* (A Norwegian respondent)

Like the other Nordic troops in Northern Afghanistan, the Finnish troops have been concentrating primarily on stability tasks, while continually preparing for defensive engagements. National instructions allow for the use of force only for self-protection and "to fulfill a mission that is in accord with the mandate".[267] This means that the Finns have a national caveat limiting offensive operations to practically zero. Even with the relatively safe operating environment and their non-offensive posture, the Finnish respondents have witnessed some incoming fire, although actual defensive combat has only recently taken place.[268] According to the respondents, these incidents have happened primarily when they were "in the wrong place at wrong time", or when interfering with local businesses.

- *"PRT troops were ambushed and attacked by small arm fire. My opinion is that these examples were INS* [insurgents] *or criminals attack against*

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[265] According to Wikipedia, Norwegian troops have participated at least in two major offensive operations, Operation "*Harekate Yolo*" in October 2007 and in Operation "*Karez*" in May 2008. This is confirmed by the Norwegian Defense Forces Website http://www.mil.no/languages/english/start/article.jhtml?articleID=147551 and by the references of these Wikipedia articles. The order of battle of Norwegian maneuver units in ISAF was not available from their defense forces website, but participation of the Telemark Battalion units in ISAF has been referred to by many internet sources. See e.g. the Institute for the Study of War (2009): Order of Battle, Coalition Combat Forces in Afghanistan http://www.understandingwar.org/files/AfghanistanOrbattoAugust2009.pdf

[266] See e.g. Norwegian Embassy in the USA website (2002): "*Norwegian Special Forces remain in Afghanistan*", http://www.norway.org/News/archive/2002/200201forces.htm, Pugliese, David (2008) and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007): "*Additional Norwegian troop contribution to ISAF*", http://www. regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/Whats-new/News/2007/Afghanistan-Additional-Norwegian-troop-c.html?id=451002

[267] Finnish Government report VNS 5/2001 vp.

[268] Author's comment: After the riot of Meymaneh in February 2006, Finnish troops returned fire for the first time in July 2009 after the so-called Election Support Force was activated temporarily as a part of the Finnish contingent. See the FDF website news archives, http://www.mil.fi/ajankohtaista/tiedotteet/.

ISAF and ANSF in Northern Provinces caused because PRT/ANSF joint operation is hampering their normal criminal activities, e.g. poppy harvest, illegal weaponry transportation or weapon cache." (A Finnish respondent)

- "*Direct contact to firefight was avoided but prepared for...PRT was attacked during the riot... Few MOTs encountered small arms fire on LUPs during patrols. Mostly misunderstandings or scary tactics...*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*The AOR was calm area with combatants or criminals mixing up with population and avoiding combat against ISAF and ANA. Actions were mostly IEDs and some TICs against small units. Attacks against ISAF were happening in my opinion if we were able to get too close to criminal networks.*" (A Finnish respondent)

The Finnish troops are either volunteer reservists under 6- or 12-month contracts, or professional officers and NCOs. The average age of a Finnish reservist peacekeeper is 27 and they usually have a civilian profession. Signing on as a peacekeeper requires a successful conscript service of 6-12 months and then passing a dedicated selection and mission specific training phase of about a month. Many peacekeepers served in other operations before coming to Afghanistan.[269] In the Swedish and Norwegian forces, professionalism is advancing more rapidly than in Finland, but many other factors remain similar. For example, the high overall educational background and the Nordic cultural heritage are shared qualities amongst these forces. The quality of training was a subject of debate amongst all the Nordic respondents and many compared their own system to others.

- "*Rotation training for us was three weeks long. Not long enough for units on the ground. If we refer to other Scandinavian countries – Sweden 3 months and Norway up to 6 months.*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*Our national cultural awareness was in general very high, ridiculously low for the Americans (ignorance is bliss maybe..)*" (A Swedish respondent)

- "*In my personally view, not good enough. Tour length normally 6 months. Mission specific training 3 month in 2007. From 2009 it will be 5 month.*" (A Norwegian respondent)

Finland originally launched its CIMIC-oriented contribution to ISAF as a peacekeeping mission, but recognized the hazardous environment and the need to co-operate with OEF in order to assure force protection. The Finnish government report to the Parliament on 04 January 2002 considered ISAF ROE the same as the ROE used in Kos-

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[269] This information is compiled from the FDF website, http://www.mil.fi/, and the Finnish ISAF Handbooks.

ovo.[270] In 2004, when Finland decided to participate in the PRT activity in Northern Afghanistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs underlined the fact that Finland was participating in a peacekeeping mission mandated by the UN, although with more extensive ROE than in a traditional PKO.[271] A new law concerning crisis management operations replaced the old law for peacekeeping in 2006, clarifying some aspects concerning the use of force. The Finnish government report of January 2009 concerning election support in Afghanistan still labels ISAF as a PKO. It addresses the need for more troops, both Afghan and foreign, to gain control of the security situation. This report mentions the improvement of ISAF warfighting capabilities and the increasing casualties of the insurgents, but underlines that in the North, the security situation is better than elsewhere.[272] The respondents did not fully agree with this opinion:

- "[The insurgents] *have increased a lot of they influence on ordinary people comparing the first time I was in Kabul. The whole situation is different. More actors and more money more even foreign soldiers, but …situation is getting worse day by day even in Northern Provinces.*" (A Finnish respondent)

The three above-mentioned Finnish government documents reveal the "mission creep" of ISAF resulting from the AO expansion and the gradual transfer of authority from OEF towards ISAF. Originally committed to a CIMIC role in a UN mandated PKO in Kabul, Finland is now participating *de facto* in warfighting activities as a part of the NATO – ISAF forces. Moreover, even if Finland does not really see it that way, it is considered a member of the U.S.-led coalition.[273] If the U.S. military sees it this way, it is hard to believe that the local population in Afghanistan could really tell a difference between ISAF troops of a PfP-nation and combat troops of the OEF. The Finnish as well as other Nordic respondents mentioned the OEF forces on many occasions. Sometimes the forces were mixed at a very low level:

- "*My MOT was ambushed during a joint foot patrol with ANA Coy and US ETT unit. Norwegian TACP was included…The reason for the ambush was due poor situational awareness or better, the lack of understanding the information available. The US ETT advisor was briefed and even double briefed by me personally about the tension… in the patrol area. Still the ANA Coy was pushed strongly… into fighting area. The contact was solved when I provided the ANA Coy Commander phone numbers to talk to the opposite side.*" (A Finnish respondent)

Globally, the Finnish contribution of just over 100 troops in relatively safe areas of Afghanistan can be seen as a symbolic effort. For every soldier on the ground, however, the personal exposure is far from symbolic. This makes domestic government policies and shoulder patches almost irrelevant. It remains to be seen if this stability-oriented approach will remain effective. The upcoming elections in 2009 will probably cause

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[270] Finnish Government report VNS 5/2001 vp.
[271] Ministry of Foreign Affairs report, UTP 13/2004 vp.
[272] Finnish Government report VNS 8/2008 vp.
[273] Finland is listed as a country supporting the Global War on Terror in the U.S. Central Command website, http://www.centcom.mil/en/countries/coalition/. Accessed 15 May 2009.

more tensions in the north and the increasing Neo-Taliban influence is likely to affect the Northern provinces. The ongoing surge in the South and East Afghanistan – especially in Helmand Province – may push the insurgents further north as their freedom of maneuver will become more limited.[274] The flow of development money might be the key, but it will only contain the situation until the moment when other armed actors take action. Some also feel that the Finnish troops should also be more aggressive, at least in the stability framework of operations:

> - *"Local security officials respected only power and this wasn't under-stand by PRT high ranking officials who liked interact with them in same manner you treat people in Scandinavian countries. This resulted many times that PRT and MOT was used by locals because we were prevented from using tough stand against corrupt locals... The leaders in MOT level i.e. troops going out would have liked to have tougher stand against the locals but higher level from PRT, RC (N) didn't want to act more aggressively in the area. This caused frustration among field leaders."* (A Finnish respondent)

6.2   Rival Context 2 – The French Forces

France was amongst the first countries to provide combat aircraft, naval presence and Special Forces to support U.S.-led Coalition troops since December 2001. They also made an early contribution, providing a 500-man strong battalion to Kabul in January 2002. Later, the French forces increased their presence from 1,000 troops (October 2006) to 3160 troops (July 2009). The main ground forces activities in early 2009 included the following:

- Lead nation of the Regional Command Capital, RC(C) - previously known as the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB)
- French Battalion (BATFRA) of the RC(C) near Kabul
- Combat Service Support Battalion (BCS) near Kabul
- French Battlegroup (GTIA Kapisa) of the RC(E)
- OMLTs in Kabul and Uruzgan
- *Opération Epidote* under OEF training the ANA officers
- ANA Special Forces training under OEF.[275]

As a result of committing their troops to both ISAF and OEF operations, the French have been engaged in direct combat operations since the beginning. By 31 July 2009,

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[274] In July 2009, 4000 U.S. Marines of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (TF Leatherneck) and 650 ANSF soldiers and police launched a major operation in central Helmand Province supported by air assets and in co-operation with the British forces. See http://www.centcom.mil/en/press-releases/marines-afghan-troops-launch-large-operation-in-helmand.html and http://www.janes.com/news/defence/land/jdw/jdw090710_1_n.shtml. This Operation Khanjar is aimed to secure the AO before the elections of 2009.
[275] This information is compiled from the website of the French Armed Forces http://www.defense.gouv.fr/ema/, and from the website of the U.S. Central Command http://www.centcom.mil/. Accessed 07 August 2009. See also Merchet (2008), pp. 103-115.

the French had suffered 28 casualties in Afghanistan.[276] Though they conduct varying types of stability, defensive and offensive operations, the French have decided not to take over a PRT.[277] Besides the Special Forces activities in support of the Coalition forces, the takeover of two specific AOs has been a clear indication for a more active role. The first was the so-called Combined Joint Operational Area (CJOA) of Surobi District east of Kabul, where the French have deployed a subunit to FOB Tora.[278] The French took it over from the Italians in August 2008 after a year's break, as this CJOA Surobi was traditionally run by the rotating lead nation of the RC(C). The situation had become much worse since their last stay before August 2007, with a distinct increase in insurgent activity and in opium poppy cultivation.[279] It was in CJOA Surobi, in Uzbeen Valley, where a French platoon was fatally ambushed on 18 August 2008 resulting in 10 French KIA and 21 WIA - the largest single fatal incident for the French military since the Beirut bombings of 1983.[280]

Figure 6-2. The French troops.
(Source: http://www.defense.gouv.fr/ema/operations_exterieures/)

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[276] http://icasualties.org/OEF/. Accessed 07 August 2009. Four fatalities have been caused by non-hostile incidents.

[277] Merchet (2008), pp. 150-151.

[278] Ibid. Merchet speculates that President Sarkozy's eagerness to close ranks with the Americans and to integrate into NATO structures were the reason for the major changes of 2008.

[279] Merchet (2008), pp. 17-18.

[280] Pons (2009), pp. 11-64 and Pons (2008), pp. 14–19.

The other major step forward was taking over the Kapisa Province from the Americans in RC(E) in July 2008.[281] The Kapisa Province has been labeled "Taliban's gateway to Kabul" with a lot of activity from both sides –insurgents and counterinsurgents.[282] A French Battlegroup (called as GTIA Kapisa or TF Chimera) built on the 8ème RPIMa took over this AO from the Americans setting their foothold in two FOBs, Tag Ab and Nijrab. According to the commanding officer of the unit, their tasks were three-fold: presence patrolling, engaging in large-scale operations with the ANA/ANP and direct support for the population. Throughout the 6-month tour, the regiment lost 15 WIA in Kapisa Province alone. They also lost 8 KIA and 11 WIA in the Uzbeen Valley ambush, as one of their subunits was stationed there to support the BATFRA.[283] The heat of battle has not been less intense later on, as the 27ème BCA (the successor unit to the 8ème RPIMa, also known as TF Tiger) reported firing thousands of small-caliber rounds, 150 heavy mortar rounds and using A-10 aircraft to support them with 1300 30mm rounds and two 250kg bombs – all in a single engagement on 06 February 2009.[284]

French combat aviation has been active in Afghanistan AO since December 2001. Operating from an aircraft carrier and from bases inside and close to Afghanistan, bombing sorties have increased significantly. 2007 seems to be the turning point, as French aircraft allegedly dropped more bombs in a single month than they had in the previous year. The exact numbers are classified, but bombing missions have allegedly averaged 20 per month.[285] Redeployment to CJOA Surobi in 2008 and the new AO in Kapisa Province have caused another leap in the intensity of French operations in Afghanistan. With the bolder measures and new AOs of the 8ème RPIMa, combat action became more frequent than before.[286] The next rotating units, the 27ème BCA and the 3ème RIMa, have suffered only two KIA during their period of service in Kapisa – Surobi AOs.[287] This may be due to the seasonal nature of Taliban operations in the area.[288] Otherwise, prior to the 8ème RPIMa's ventures, the French seemed to have relatively calm AOs. The two French respondents who served in Afghanistan before 2008 had responses very similar to those of the Nordic respondents. The third respondent from 8ème RPIMa, in the Kapisa Province, explained the action in a manner very similar to that of the British respondents from Helmand Province. The author's conclusion is that before 2008 (OEF missions excluded), the French emphasis was in stability tasks with some defensive action. Deployment to Kapisa – Surobi AOs added offensive operations to their toolbox.

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[281] Pons (2009), pp. 326-329 and the website of the French Armed Forces http://www.defense.gouv.fr/ema/.

[282] Dupee (2008).

[283] Statement of the commanding officer of the 8ème RPIMa, COL Aragones, on 05 March 2009. http://www.defense.gouv.fr/terre/breves/afghanistan_interview_du_colonel_aragones. Accessed 29 June 2009. According to an e-mail from a French respondent, the first French unit to operate in Kapisa Province was the OMLT from the 27ème BCA suppoting an ANA *Kandak* (a battalion-sized unit) in early 2008. In his opinion, prior operations were mainly the responsibility of the ANA, as the Americans were less numerous than the 8ème RPIMa.

[284] Asquin (2009).

[285] Merchet (2008), pp. 106-109. Author's comment: This book is obviously written as a criticism to President Sarkozy's policy in Afghanistan. It was inspired by the casualties of the Uzbeen Valley ambush.

[286] See Pons (2009) and Merchet (2008).

[287] http://icasualties.org/OEF/. Accessed 07 August 2009. Author's comment: This may be at least partially be explained by seasonal variations of insurgent and criminal activities.

[288] An e-mail comment by a French respondent.

- *"The situation in the RC-C AOR in 2007 was "quiet" and relations with population were generally speaking friendly. The town of Kaboul is a "mixed area": ISAF / OEF (Phoenix) / RC-C. The main problem according to me was the effect of "outside unit" going through the capital (convoy, OEF…) with no concern with the population and their feeling."* (A French respondent)

- *"As soon as the deployed troops were present everyday, and that they accept to discuss with the local people, I think they were quite well accepted. Mainly because they could be at the origin of a cimic action in their favor (medical services, school or well constructions, etc.)"* (A French respondent)

- *"We actively search for the enemy and we engaged it daily (at least several times in a week). Firefights occurred at all levels from battalion down to platoon. At Coy and Bon level, as operations were planned upon reliable information, this was not surprising to be involved in firefights. At platoon level (patrols), ambushes and IED attacks occurred sometimes very close around FOBs. In my opinion, this occurred because insurgents wanted to restrain our patrol. They wanted to restrain our will to execute patrol and they wanted to restrain our patrol area (e.g. by closing some valley entrances with IED)."* (A French respondent, Kapisa Province)

The French were confident in their training and rotation system. The only shortcoming was their limited ability to speak English, especially at the sub-unit leader and individual soldier level. This affected not only their interaction between other ISAF/OEF nationalities, but also the use of locally recruited interpreters, who rarely had any French language skills.

- *"The preparatory training is around 4 months (minimum, for OMLT it's 6 months). According to me the preparatory training educative is enough, due to the actual mission. Strength of cultural awareness is testimony of previous units. Shortcomings are mainly due to the "level" of the "public" (soldiers)"* (A French respondent)

- *"We were very well informed of the local culture and history, and of the way of mind, and socio-ethnical composition of the country. Before arriving in Afghanistan, and weekly on the theatre, we had lectures on various cultural subjects."* (A French respondent)

- *"Few were French – Pashto/ Dari translators, but most of them were English – Pashto / Dari translators. Translation was not an issue at GTIA level, because we used excellent translators at this level and because staff officers (esp. CO and S3) were fluent in English. On the contrary, at platoon level talks had to be very simple because translators were not always very proficient in both Afghan languages (Dari and*

Pashto) and because all of platoon leaders were not very proficient in English (esp. NCO platoon leaders)." (A French respondent)

6.3   Rival Context 3 – The British Forces

Following 9/11, the United Kingdom became involved in operations in Afghanistan alongside the U.S. beginning with the first attacks in October 2001. Under the name Operation Veritas, the first UK ground troops were deployed to Bagram in November 2001. UK Special Forces and Royal Marines also took part in ground combat in eastern Afghanistan. The UK was the first lead-nation of the ISAF, and the UK contribution peaked at 2100 troops under the name Operation Fingal. These two initial efforts were followed by Operation Herrick, which has continued ever since. Between 2002 and 2003, the British troops provided security and ANA training in Kabul before participating in the Stage 1 expansion to the North of ISAF. Together with the Nordic countries, the UK set up two PRTs in Mazar-e-Sharif and Meymaneh and provided a rapid reaction force for the area.[289]

In 2006, anticipating the Stage 2 and 3 expansions of ISAF into the western and southern parts of Afghanistan, respectively, the British forces withdrew from the north and concentrated in the south. The UK has participated in leading the RC(S) HQ, has provided a PRT in Lashkar-Gah of Helmand Province and contributed a brigade-sized maneuver force in Helmand. Operation Herrick IV was the first of these maneuver forces in Helmand centered initially on 16 Air Assault Brigade. The UK ISAF troop strength has climbed steadily from 5,200 (October 2006) to 9,000 (July 2009). In addition to the main effort in the south, one light role infantry battalion remained in Kabul area until 2008. They have also contributed strongly to the OMLT activity and ANA junior NCO and officer training. With six-month rotations, some of the infantry battalions have already served two or three rotations in Afghanistan in addition to their tours in Iraq.[290] The British forces are all professionals with some reinforcements from Territorial Army volunteers.

- "*Preparatory training lasted for between 5 and 6 months (based on the date of deployment). As the second formation to deploy, much of it was self-help however the OPTAG* [Operational Training and Advisory Group] *organization was able to provide external assessment and exercise facilities. Lectures, language training and Afghan civilians were all employed in this package (this is now a formal process, centrally run). A Brigade study period and train the trainer package enabled the cascade of information to the lowest level. Members of 16 AA Bde (the preceding formation to deploy) were consulted and assisted with the Mission Re-*

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[289] Compiled from information available at the UK Ministry of Defence website at. http://www.mod.uk/ and http://www.operations.mod.uk/ supplemented by information from the ISAF website, http://www.nato.int/isaf/ and Wikipedia http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/.

[290] Ibid. Author's comment: The 3 Para Battlegroup entered the Helmand province in 2006 under the formal command of OEF, but was later transferred under ISAF command at the end of July 2006. See Bishop (2008), p. 44. The same battlegroup returned to Afghanistan in autumn of 2008. See Bishop (2009).

hearsal Exercise (this is also a formally established practice now)." (A British respondent)

- "*7 month tours with cultural training given before arrival (short and largely ineffectual) however a handful from each Coy conducted language training of only 10 weeks that gave them very basic skills, which they could build on by working with the interpreters. OPTAG at the time was training for IRAQ and not AFGH so this needed to change as the threat level and MO* [Method of Operation] *of the enemy was very different.*" (A British respondent)

Figure 6-3. The British troops. (Pictures used with the permission of the Defense Image Database, MoD/Crown Copyright, http://www.defenceimagedatabase.mod.uk/fotoweb/Grid.fwx/)

The Helmand Province can be considered one of the most difficult and dangerous areas in Afghanistan. Insurgent activities as well as opium poppy cultivation have been on the rise especially since 2006, the beginning of the main effort in the south (see Maps 7, 8 and 9 of Annex 2). In their engagements, the British have used air support, artillery and infantry heavy weapons regularly. Attempting to apply a comprehensive approach to undermine the insurgents' support from the local population, the British have not really succeeded in calming the area down. Instead, they have been engaged in continuous combat with the casualty rate allegedly climbing to 10%.[291] Considering the 191 soldiers killed in Afghanistan by 31 July 2009, the British come in second on the casualty list after the USA (761 killed). They are followed closely by the Canadians (126 killed) who operate in the nearby Kandahar Province.[292]

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[291] Some UK magazines and journals claim that the casualty rate has reached World War 2 levels of 10%. According to these publications, the UK Ministry of Defence denies this. See Maddox (2006) and Harding (2007).

[292] http://icasualties.org/OEF/. Accessed 06 August 2009.

- *"Engagement with Taliban elements tended to be of the 5.56 and 7.62 variety! Only comms with them were intercepted ICOM conversations. These tended to be transmissions that were either designed to inform their commanders of progress or inform us of their plans – as they knew they were being listened in to."* (A British respondent)

As stability operations and attempts to maintain freedom of action failed, static defensive postures and limited offensive operations replaced reconstruction with destruction. Of particular note, the 3 Para Battlegroup, in 2006, was stuck in so-called "platoon houses" which were subject to heavy incoming fire almost daily.[293] Its successor unit, the 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines, was able to carry out focused offensive operations and strike at Taliban strongholds.[294] The British questionnaire respondents from these units described the situation accordingly.

- *"Yes, targets were sought to turn the battle from one that was defensive in the FOBs to wrestle the initiative from the Taliban and interdict their winter resupply from Pakistan (through Quetta). In the FOBs the battle was defensive fighting up to 10 different firing positions at the same time. Enemy strengths ranged from 5 to 80 depending on their level of commitment and was normally preceded immediately by mortars or 107mm rockets. They always sought to fight in the afternoon which would give them time to hit the FOBs and then escape in the cover of darkness."* (A British respondent)

- *"Urban patrols conducted in a Northern Ireland style within local areas. OPs and ambushes on MSRs [Main Supply Routes] and regularly used en routes. VCPs were also established – when possible with the ANP. The MOG (Manoeuvre Offensive Groups) were able to achieve surprise and target enemy concentrations. Recce forces often used offensive action on identified targets but the theatre was still immature and we had insufficient combat power. On RIPs [Relief In Place] we tried to surge manpower onto tasks to create 2 x Coy Gps often with Cdo HQ to strike areas that posed a threat to the FOB's existence."* (A British respondent)

- *"Wherever possible, wide ranging patrols were employed. Operational risk was taken on static sites wherever possible to free up combat power for Mobility Outreach Groups (MOGs). These would conduct patrols (usually about 2-3 weeks) in contested areas. Recce forces would deploy for up to 8 weeks at a time but could ebb and surge as required. Close range patrols would normally not exceed 36 hrs. Deliberate operations by the IX Gp [Information Exploitation Group] could last anywhere from 12 hrs to a week... The IX Gp employed both recce forces and technical means to actively identify insurgent locations and activities. Where ap-*

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[293] See Bishop (2008).
[294] See Southby-Tailyour (2008). Author's comment: In July 2009, a brigade of U.S. Marines was sent to reinforce the British and to take charge of the situation in Helmand.

> *propriate, these would be engaged in deliberate operations. C2 nodes and strong holds in particular were targeted.*" (A British respondent)

6.4 Cross-case analysis of the human dimension

This analysis is done in two stages to clearly separate the research subjects from their contexts.[295] The first part compares the tactical level contexts between the three cases; it corresponds to the vertical axes of Figure 5-1. It is followed by a closer study of the two embedded units of analysis. This cross-case study corresponds to the horizontal axes of Figure 5-1. The multiple-case study approach was founded on the assumption that the contexts would be drastically different – recalling the amount of combat action and casualties already seen. It was also a methodological choice, as Afghanistan could also be seen also as a single case - if only considering the operational level. The most interesting aspect of the study involved trying to find similarities and differences on the two horizontal axes despite the different contexts. This would either prove or refute the contradiction between operational and tactical realities. It should be remembered that the baseline case is the Finnish effort in Afghanistan. It was also necessary to verify some Norwegian and Swedish opinions, as the Finns have for the most part operated under their PRT commands. These Nordic approaches have not been lifted to the case status of rivals, and they are included only to provide some depth to the Finnish case.

6.4.1 Context comparison of the three cases

There seem to be two major differences between the French and Finnish forces operational posture. Willingness to expose troops in offensive kinetic operations is the first. The comments made by the French respondents demonstrate the changing nature of French land operations in Afghanistan. Apart from their OEF Special Forces contribution and air support activity, the Surobi and Kapisa AOs have changed their role profoundly. Assigning OMLTs at *Kandak* level also proves the willingness to engage the troops. The second point is that the French are genuinely responsible for their dedicated AORs. The two battalion-sized maneuver units operate together with other ISAF and OEF units as well as with ANA and ANP. As "battlespace owners", these battalions have to take charge of situations, no matter what is happening. This causes a completely different problem when compared with Finnish elements operating in the stability-focused cadre of a PRT. Of course, the professionalization of the French Army facilitates this approach.[296] This combined with the different threat level in the Taliban-infected areas of Surobi and Kapisa adds interest to this case. Although the human terrain is not so far from our baseline case, the mission profile of the French contingent differs already significantly.

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[295] Huttunen, Mika: *Tapaustutkimus operaatiotaidossa ja taktiikassa*, an article in Huttunen – Metteri (2008), p. 128.
[296] Author's comment: France abandoned obligatory military service in 1996 and the last conscripts finished their service in 2001.

Compared with the Finnish and French contexts, the British seem to have the most demanding area of operations in Helmand. Their tasks are similar to those of Finnish units when considering the Lashkar-Gah PRT, but the Helmand Task Force maneuver units have a completely different mission that includes offensive combat operations. The British forces have vast experience in irregular warfare and counterinsurgency operations tracing back to Malaya, Aden, Northern Ireland and the Balkans. This tradition combined with the professionalization and the strict regimental system of their military has unquestionable shaped their approach in Afghanistan.[297] The French have a similar background, with lessons learned from Indochina, Algeria, Africa and the Balkans.[298] They also operate a regimental system, although it was not professionalized until the end of the 20th century. These regimental "families", usually deployed with the strength of a reinforced battalion, have suffered as a result of the current operational tempo and the friction caused by downsizing the forces after the end of the Cold War. Battalions are rarely deployed with all their organic subunits, and they are more likely to include attached companies and other specialist detachments from different regiments and supporting arms.[299]

- *"Soldiers did not struggle from going from Ops to routine patrolling but did struggle when going from 6 weeks in a punchy district centre to routine patrolling where there was expectation that they must interact with the local population.*" (A British respondent)

	FINNISH	**FRENCH**	**BRITISH**
Has previous experience in "peacekeeping style" stabilization	YES	YES	YES
Has previous experience in "small war style" stabilization or counterinsurgency	**NO**	YES	YES
Army's main focus is in homeland defense	**YES**	NO	NO
Participated in the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom	**NO**	YES	YES
Has had responsibility in PRTs	shared (with Sweden)	**NO**	YES
Has contributed with battalion-sized maneuver units	**NO**	YES	YES
Operates a fully professional force	**NO**	YES	YES
Rotation length in-country	6 to 12 months	4 to 6 months	6 to 7 months
Has conducted offensive operations	**NO**	YES	YES
Troop strength from 2006 to 2009	**100 => 110**	1000 => 3160	5200 => 9000
Fatalities in Afghanistan by 31 July 2009	1	28	**191**

Table 6-4. Comparison of troop contributors and their action in Afghanistan. Finland differs from the others by almost every measure.

As we have already witnessed, the three contexts differ significantly in two ways. Firstly, the troop contributors and their actions in Afghanistan have been and still are different at least in the following categories:

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[297] See Marston-Malkasian (2008) and Nagl (2005).

[298] See Galula (1964) and Trinquier (1964) on the earlier French lessons learned from Indochina and Algeria.

[299] Author's observation based on both formal military education and personal studies.

- national doctrine, traditions and former operational experience,
- participation in ISAF (and OEF) concerning unit types and troop strengths and
- participation in kinetic operations (or possible national caveats).

	BALKH	SAMANGAN	FARYAB	JOWJZAN	SAR-E-POL	KABUL	KAPISA	HELMAND
Case study reference (FIN, FRA, UK)	FIN	FIN	FIN	FIN	FIN	FIN FRA UK	FRA	UK
Opium poppy cultivation (ha) 2005	10837	1960	3040	2024	2252	<100	115	**26500**
2008	<100	<100	291	<100	<100	310	436	**103590**
Opium poppy eradication (ha) 2007	14	0	337	122	114	14	10	**4003**
2008	0	0	0	0	0	20	59	**2537**
Violent incidents against NGOs 2007	19			22		**76**	29	28
2008	22			24		**79**	26	45
ISAF/OEF fatalities 2005	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	**2**
2006	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	**28**
2007	0	0	2	0	0	12	1	**57**
2008	0	0	1	0	0	15	2	**75**
Pashtuns are a majority in the province	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	**YES**
Strong Taliban activity 2006	no	no	no	no	no	some	**YES**	**YES**
2007	some	no	some	some	no	**YES**	**YES**	**YES**

Table 6-5. Comparison of the tactical operating environment by province. It should be noted that the French Battlegroup deployed to Kapisa province in July 2008 and the British Helmand Task Force deployed to Helmand in June-July 2006. Sources used include:
http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan_Opium_Survey_2008.pdf
- opium poppy cultivation and eradication numbers listed by province

http://www.afgnso.org/index_files/Page595.htm
- incidents against NGOs are listed by "province clusters" (Kapisa is connected with data from Nuristan and Laghman provinces, Kabul is connected with Logar and Wardak provinces and Helmand is connected with Kandahar and Zabul)

http://icasualties.org/OEF/Afghanistan.aspx
- counted ISAF/OEF fatalities include all forces without taking nationality into account but only include those resulting from hostile action; there may be inaccuracies as not all the locations were specified

SENLIS (2006) and SENLIS (2007B)
- the Taliban activity is interpreted from the maps (see Annex 2, maps 8 and 9)

The second main difference lies in the tactical environment. The significance of opium poppy cultivation and eradication varies between the provinces and so does the overall threat level. The metrics used here are from public sources and their accuracy may be questionable. Some incidents are probably not even reported and every stage of reporting is subject to interpretation. In 2009, there has been little information publicly available on insurgent activities and on the attack rates against ISAF and OEF troops, especially by province. Therefore, the only sources found refer to the years 2006 and 2007 and provide only annual statistics. The incident rates naturally depend on the activity levels. The NGOs, for example, are operating more intensely in Kabul than in other provinces. Even with these biases, these statistics provide a qualitative view on what is going on in each province. Table 6-5 gives an idea of these provincial differences. The

Helmand Province stands out by almost every measure and the ISAF/OEF casualty rate has climbed since the start of Op Herrick IV in 2006.

6.4.2   The actors of the human terrain

Considering our first unit of analysis, the human terrain, there are no remarkable differences between the three cases studied. The ISAF force composition naturally varies, as there are different troop contributing countries in each RC. The OEF presence was recognized in all three areas and at all times. The local human terrain does vary according to our cases studied. In the north and in Kabul, the population is of mixed ethnicities. The Pashtun-dominated areas include the whole Helmand Province, the troubled districts of Kapisa Province (Tag Ab and Nijrab) and the Surobi district of Kabul province. Pakistani border proximity with cross-border insurgent and terrorist activity puts the eastern and southern parts of the country in a different situation than the relatively peaceful north. The closeness of Iran may also affect the situation in Helmand. Locally, the human terrain dictated the difference between friendly and hostile encounters.

- *"Acceptance of local population depended of the area. Pashtun areas didn't like us so much (it was hard to get the contact to the population). Often we checked how children reacted when we arrived - if they ran away we usually raised the guard."* (A Finnish respondent)

- *"This would depend on the proximity and size of insurgent forces. Labels such as 'friendly' or 'unfriendly village' were often used. In many cases, the negative response in an 'unfriendly village' would be an elder asking us not to enter as it would illicit a response by the insurgents. In other locations (particularly in the irrigated green-zone) there was a direct correlation between proximity and hostility – usually at 100 – 200m or tied to a specific geographic feature such as a canal."* (A British respondent)

All respondents emphasized the relationship with the ANSF, primarily between the ANA and the ANP. On the adversary side, criminals and insurgents or Taliban were mentioned almost without exception. Warlordism still exists and many warlords have legitimate roles in province, region or national levels. There is a blurring of roles between officials, politicians and warlords. Many people may have dual roles; they are farmers by day and guerillas or criminals by night. The insurgents and criminals were well aware of ROEs and possible caveats and could exploit them by traveling unarmed and even participating in *shuras*. Many respondents mentioned that the activities of different ISAF units were observed closely and systematically by the locals.[300] In this sense, the theory of different spatial or contextual statuses Elbridge and Neboshynsky mentioned in Chapter 4 seem to be accurate. Combatant identification was named as a

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[300] Author's comment: The term "dicking" is used by the British Army and it refers to apparently casual, apparently civilian but very purposeful surveillance, where the information is passed to possible assailants. The term has its origins in operations in Northern Ireland.

major challenge – an almost impossible one to overcome – when describing the local conditions.

- *"The main illegal armed groups operating and fighting in the province were Azadi and Jumpesh. Both were listed as political parties but were repeatedly argued to lose their status due to illegal activities and armed action... The fact was that they had the guns so they had the power → they were contributing to the decision making process in the district/province... Most combatants did not carry any uniform, weapons or patches in order not to be recognized. Some of them had an official status as well as an unofficial position in an illegal armed group."* (A Finnish respondent)

- *"The amount of TIC was low in northern Afghanistan. The problem is more to understand the networks that Afghans have. The officials that have connections to criminal networks and to insurgents are perhaps the bigger problem. Other challenge is to understanding how insurgents use the more calm area as safe heaven for operations conducted in other provinces."* (A Finnish respondent)

- *"Melting pot with Taliban, warlord, Al Qaîda, criminal and civilians: no uniform, no sign, easier to say that every body is an insurgent. Also according to national security forces, a lot of strangers among insurgents. Also confusion in language or traduction: for example Chechen is a fighter for afghan, someone coming from Chechnya for ISAF."* (A French respondent)

- *"Everybody is a non-combatant as long as there is no evidence he is a combatant. Evidence is the use of firearm against you or the ownership of IED parts. Insurgents used weapons cache, so they were able to travel without weapons." (*A French respondent)

- *"...combattants would regularly disguise themselves as locals, knowing the ROE and conduct "dicking" missions on mopeds. The only way of determining friend from foe was by fighting age and attitude." (*A British respondent)

The presence of the international community, the media and NGOs is most visible in Kabul. Elsewhere the footprint of these actors is largely dependent on the security situation. The media includes all kinds of actors, but national armed forces and NATO/ISAF reporters were mentioned more than commercial reporters. The British respondents seemed to have had more experiences with embedded journalists.

- *"The local media was build from the religious perspective. Every time we met with the local mullahs and elders we tried to influence with our main messages and to discuss the problems and issues at hand to our favor. Local radio was also involved. The PRT had a media team to make local news witch could be sent out in radio or leaflets. MOTs distributed thou-*

sands of ISAF news during their patrols. National freelance news team was sent to film and interview my team for television." (A Finnish respondent)

- "*News, rumors and hearsay spread around villages was the "truth" for the most people. They had an affect on how the locals felt about you. The worst example was the 2006 riot against the Meymanah PRT. Local power brokers used the Danish cartoon incident to provoke the people to demonstrate and attack the PRT compound. A number of armed men with small arms, hand grenades and RPG were among the demonstrators and tried to over run the PRT.*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*Journalists could be attached to Coys for upto 7 days, undertake routine patrolling etc we also ran large press visits consisting of usually 15-20 pax over a 3 day period in upto 3 locations.*" (A British respondent)

- "*International but predominantly UK media frequently visited HTF locations (whenever the security situation permitted). Media liaison officers facilitated their movement. TV, radio and print product was produced in accordance with the 'lines to take' and within the speaker's area of responsibility/expertise. Interviews were conducted at all levels from the Commander down to individual Marines.*" (A British respondent)

The questionnaire results confirm that the overall structures of the human terrain match those already outlined and predicted in Chapter 4 and no new groups were listed. A more detailed summary can be found from Annex 7. The lack of surprises is probably owed to two reasons: the solid knowledge already obtained from written sources as well as the questionnaire design, which guided the respondents to some extent. The importance of public sphere contacts at the local level was clearly highlighted by all the respondents, whereas central government and regional official authorities were less emphasized. This is natural given the level of work and the rank of respondents (the highest were at Regional Command HQs).

6.4.3 The interaction between the force and the other actors

Concerning the interaction, cultural and language barriers were a major concern and the problem of mismatching lifeworlds was identified by all the respondents. Interpreters were therefore mentioned as having a key role and could be considered a high-value asset, whereas local contractors were useful partners at best or just a means to promote employment. Not all of the respondents were happy with their locally employed civilians, though some had good experiences when using locals as indicators or even as cultural guides.

- "*The interpreters were local youths, ageing from 22 to 35 years. Most of them had reasonably language skills and were able to perform to their tasks… The interpreter was a very good sign of threat level in the area. If*

they were quiet and scared something usually was wrong in the meeting or area." (A Finnish respondent)

- "*We were forced to use IP and didn't have any practical knowledge of local language which made conversations long and difficult. Actual information was often/sometimes very little because of this interaction. Even the IP's couldn't be trusted because they might have had their own interests in these meetings.*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*We both used locally recruited interpreters and national ones. For the more general and less sensitive ops we used the locally recruited interpreters... Many times they worked as "door openers" for us. Many times we used the local population to "leap frog" a trace of promising information. That is, they went in our vehicles to show us a "safe" route to a possible "next" meeting.*" (A Swedish respondent)

- "*Interpreters were local employees. They had all kind of levels and very few were able to speak French. This last point constituted a major difficulty for our NCO platoon leaders who speak bad English.*" (A French respondent)

- "*Locally employed civilians (LECs) were used of Pakistani or Afghan origin. Not always the best as bloody lazy on the whole. When they put their body armour on you knew you were in the shit! Inshallah...*" (A British respondent)

- "*…I had several Pakistani / Afghan interpreters. They were loyal but lacked emotional robustness. They had to be kept out of the Ops Room for Opsec reasons but were generally of great benefit. Liked to shag each other too!*" (A British respondent)

Cooperation, support and assistance to the Afghan National Security Forces (mainly ANA and ANP) had been daily business for all the respondents. Not all the experiences were positive and especially the ANP was mentioned as corrupt and incompetent. OMLTs (and OEF ETTs) were used as liaison teams and force multipliers.

- "*People liked to see and interact with us. They liked to see us working together with the ANA. We felt always well come (it was year 2005 in northern Af!). Interaction between ANA was easy, because there was US led ETT in between.*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*Co-operation with Afghans is the only way to mentor their development and handing over actual responsibility step by step. The ambition level during last months was that 25-50 % of for example patrolling should be conducted jointly with ANP / ANA. I already mentioned the distrust locals had especially towards police organizations. In supporting some heavily corrupted police chief you can discredit ISAF as well.*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*ANP and ANA operated with us at Coy level. During Ops they could be attached to Pl level. The British military boys often found the 'physical closeness' of ANA/ANP and there seemingly over familiarity with one another uncomfortable.*" (A British respondent)

- "*I had a detachment of 6 x ANP (Afghan National Police). They were corrupt, lacked training, sought to conduct their bribery and extortion under the umbrella of security that I provided. They were extremely disliked and not trusted by the local inhabitants and my association with them made me equally unpopular for supporting them logistically and providing them with security. Additionally they would "dick" my patrols prior to departure necessitating the requirement to conduct "dummy" callouts to observe their actions and when concerned that they were informing the Taliban about my pending departure I had them removed. Finally they shared a small FOB with my Coy and spent much time engaged in homosexual activities which my men found extremely unpalatable.*" (A British respondent)

Interaction with the locals included meetings of all kinds: *shuras*, HUMINT contacts and so on. The official sphere (provincial and district offices) was mentioned, but the local public sphere (marketplaces, bazaars, village squares) was usually in the context of meetings. *Malek* houses are somewhat semi-public, as their homes need to be large enough for meetings.[301] The private sphere (homes) was otherwise not really mentioned in the responses. Contact arrangements were organized horizontally according to the ISAF military hierarchy, so for example a PRT HQ was responsible for the liaison with the provincial governor's office while MOTs worked at the district level. Maneuver units had much less interaction with the local authorities than the PRTs. The current task, unit posture (dress code, moving mounted or dismounted, openly or discretely) and the situational context dictated the outcome of the encounter. "Habermasian" validity checks were done on both sides, to determine the intentions and truthfulness of the other party.

- "*Normally ISAF and all other foreign actors were accepted. That is obvious because so much money is coming to the country from foreign nations. Every third month some of our four provincial governor noticed that PRT has done more project or development work in other province than his own. He normally launched a media campaign against PRT Commander. Only actors against PRT were of cause INS [Insurgents], but they are trying to improve their own agenda and that is understandable.*" (A Finnish respondent)

- "*The posture among the locals was mostly friendly and light and caused no problems. Sometimes we used full combat gear to show capability and strength in certain areas or meetings. People understood the fact that we had orders and procedures we had to follow as soldiers. We had to de-*

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[301] Confirmed in the interview with LTC Babagul, 15 June 2009.

> *cline offers of staying in the village and house for a night several times. If we managed to show up to an area or a compound undetected it made people (key players) nervous. It showed them that we could get passed their guard and follow their actions (legal and illegal) when we want to."*
> (A Finnish respondent)

- *"You had to adapt the behaviour according to whom you were meeting and in which circumstance. The only problems we encountered and situations that we had problems with were when we interacted with the "former" warlords and their personnel. In these situations you had to promote a very self assure, "commander-like", war fighting, professional and "no bullshit" attitude. A stone throwing competition didn't impress a "general" whom had been fighting the Russians. So, accepted in a professional, brothers-in-arms, war fighter kind of way."* (A Swedish respondent)

- *"The major cultural difficulties or limiting factors were that our contacts always looked over the shoulder in a way "to see if the wolfs were coming". That is, there was always an imagined but very real line which they never crossed. We always felt, and sometimes they said so out loud, that they told us just so much as not to endanger their future position (life) if the wind changed."* (A Swedish respondent)

- *"All patrols left the DC* [District Centre] *expecting to conduct high-intensity combat ops if the need arose – complete with NVGs* [Night Vision Goggles] *etc even if doing a daylight patrol expected to be finishing before darkness fell. A QRF was always stood by for any eventuality. When hearts and minds patrols were needed they were conducted in berets with the troops ready to put helmets back on if the need arose."* (A British respondent)

Respondents were not especially interested in dealing with the international community and the NGOs. This was especially true in the south, where the volatile security situation made cooperation difficult. Information flow was primarily one-way, and the need to de-conflict projects and actions was mentioned in many responses. Despite the wide range of actors, such as the diverse NGO community and the private contractors of different trades, regular meetings were the interaction platform. UNAMA's role was mentioned, but the PRT lead-nation civilian contribution seemed to have more weight in the practical life of the respondents.

- *"Most of the NGOs didn't want to operate together with ISAF and they limited also information exchange directly. They could pass information threw UNAMA or ANSO (security organization supporting NGOs)."* (A Finnish respondent)

- *"In Ghereshk it was easy* [to interact] *as key players were easily reachable and happy to talk. In other areas it was a lot harder and very de-*

> *pendant on insurgent activity and therefore when meetings could be held there was often a presumed Taliban presence*" (A British respondent)

> - "*The link... was through the Joint CIMIC group and at all times was without satisfaction due to their reluctance to be involved in what was a volatile situation in Helmand Province.*" (A British respondent)

When considering the interaction, the respondents emphasized the significance of previous mission experience and sufficient rotation lengths. They also evaluated the effects of the accumulating stress caused by the constant danger. The respondents least worried about stress were the British and French respondents. This may reflect the difference of professional units and reservists.

> - "*If MOT commander stayed in the same area for 12 months he was able to have very good sources. Some could do this with 6 months deployment as well… Deployment time with 6 months is understandable in the view of well being of soldiers, but it is limiting the understanding and experience you get on the ground.*" (A Finnish respondent)

> - "*One factor of success, in my opinion, was that my units' average age was 29. This combined with earlier experiences gave everyone a solid ground to stand on. Of course we didn't know everything. And these blind spots were overcome by an attitude to "move slowly" and to get a feel of the situation before acting. We also used our "free time" to socialize with the locally recruited interpreters. That is, discuss Afghanistan's history, culture etc in a "no-ops" way.*" (A Swedish respondent)

> - *Our unit operated a 6-month rotation without leaves. The mission specific training was also 6-mont long. Specific training included cultural awareness training. However, and as already written above, our battalion was used to deploy abroad, esp. in Africa and in Ex-Yugoslavia. Each Coy spends roughly 4 months abroad every year. Personally, this was my ninth mission. So, we had to learn specific customs about Afghan people, but we were already prepared to meet a different culture. You can always do better on any subject, but our preparatory training was really educative enough.* (A French respondent)

6.5 Amongst the people in Afghanistan

The first significant observation is that despite certain contextual differences (participating ISAF troop, contributing nations and the local indigenous human terrain mixtures), the first unit of analysis revealed no major differences between the three cases. When listed by category, the actor list is similar. The real difference lies within the lifeworlds, which means that the force composition interlinked with the local human terrain is a crucial factor. The combination of cultural backgrounds, variations and manifestations will always produce a different mix in each case. This setup of lifeworlds with each

contextual situation will progressively affect the relationship of the stabilization force and the other actors.

The second observation has to do with the volume and the nature of interaction. Maneuver units had less non-kinetic interaction with the local human terrain than the PRTs. The more active the units are, the more likely it is that they are interfering with the locals' businesses. As the reinforced Finnish contingent (the election support force of July 2009) has increased its maneuvers, it has encountered more "troops in contact" situations than during all the previous years combined. The Kapisa province was more or less untouched by OEF/ISAF forces before the deployment of the $8^{\text{ème}}$ RPIMa in July 2008. Helmand was already hostile before 2006, but after the insertion of 3 Para, things got worse. The yearly casualty list of ISAF/OEF forces has been increasing steadily since Op Herrick IV began. The fatality figures have climbed proportionally with the RC(S) and the UK contingent troop augmentations. In the Pashtun dominated areas of Helmand, the resistance peaked as soon as active operations began. In the North and in the East, where there are fewer Pashtuns, there has been less resistance so far. The conclusion is that increasing the volume of military activities and especially forceful interventions within the local public sphere increases the probability of triggering the "rejection phase" of the Accidental Guerilla Syndrome (see Section 2.2). The local human terrain and its cultural manifestations dictate the quality and quantity of this response.

The third observation concerns the deployment and maneuver options used. In Afghanistan, the bigger bases (Forward Support Bases of the RCs and the PRT/maneuver unit main bases) are large and relatively secure. The smaller bases (such as temporary or permanent FOBs, Provincial Offices, and even the observation posts and checkpoints) are usually close to or directly amongst the people. Offensive and defensive operations can take place anywhere, but non-kinetic tasks - stability operations - are naturally conducted in various population centers. Besides trying to provide a safe and secure environment, being where the people are can be seen as an effort to achieve or maintain a positive "stranger" status (see Section 4.5). According to our Afghan interviewee and other evidence, the Afghans see it the opposite way – the Western troops are "hiding amongst the people" and acting as an "occupation force". In the Afghan cultures in general and amongst the Pashtuns in particular, it seems impossible for an ISAF soldier to be a "stranger" after eight years of unfulfilled hopes, substantial collateral damage and civilian casualties and no real unity of effort on the part of ISAF/OEF.
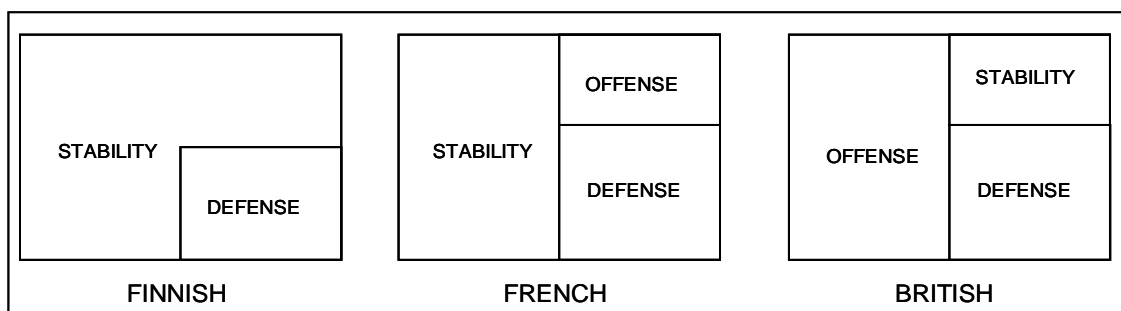
STABILITY DEFENSE	STABILITY / OFFENSE / DEFENSE	OFFENSE / STABILITY / DEFENSE
FINNISH	FRENCH	BRITISH

Figure 6-6. Author's estimation of the proportions of full spectrum operations within the three contingents of ISAF. The French part is from 2008 onwards and the British part from 2006 onwards. The estimation is based on the three case studies and their evidence material.

According to public sources, the overall missions of ISAF and the tasks executed by the PRTs have remained the same throughout the operation. With a graphic overview, we can give a rough estimate of the percentage of stability, offensive and defensive actions within the three tactical contexts (see Figure 6-6). This is worth comparing with the "clear - hold - build" model of FM 3-24.2 (Figure 3-6).

One conclusion could be that the Helmand and Kapisa Provinces are still in the "clear phase", while other provinces are staggering between "hold" and "build". On the other hand, we could question whether the North has been "cleared" at all, as stability tasks have been emphasized by some of the troop contributors. We could also argue that non-kinetic effects have been more efficient in some battlespaces due to the methods used or because of shorter social distances created by the actors. As it is impossible to duplicate the whole ISAF experience with a different force mixture to verify these results, we can only speculate with three possible explanations for the varying situations.

1) The local human terrain has been a decisive factor.
2) Troop *deployment* has created a favorable or an unfavorable social distance between the stabilization force and the other actors.
3) Troop *employment* has either increased social integration and prevented the "Accidental Guerilla Syndrome" or increased alienation and triggered the rejection phase.

Concerning the temporal dimension of the battlespace, the duration of the operation as a whole – with the kinetic and non-kinetic battlespace effects that have taken place to date – is working against the ISAF and OEF forces. The tactical units have no control over this, as they are deployed according to force generation meetings and strategic level decisions. With a typical frequency of 6-month rotations, they are re-learning and re-adapting all the time. Most of the time, the low-level tactical commanders have few options when it comes to employing their forces, as they inherit static tasks and other obligations from their predecessors. Maneuverist approaches are hard to execute if hands are tied from the start by a top-down phasing of operations. This problem is exacerbated by nationally controlled rotation frequency and set durations.

On the whole, the information environment is also out of the tactical commanders' control, as the various field-deployed media will report in close to real time. National concerns of the troop contributors combined with the modern media effect will easily bypass the ISAF and RC headquarters as events can be pinpointed down to the PRT or

Battalion level or below. The storytelling contest between the force and the other actors also remains impossible to win unless the commander has the means to get inside the local communities to influence or at least track the indigenous discourse. The strongest battlespace effects take place in the information dimension. This holds true even if some of the initial effects were kinetic. All of this creates recurring opportunities that the adversaries can exploit. Getting inside their OODA-loop in terms of speed should be easy with our technology and well-trained battle staffs. We should, however, question whether our own OODA-loop was broken from the beginning, particularly if we have in fact failed in our intelligence preparation of battlespace concerning the significance of the human dimension.[302]

When seeking success at the tactical level, the significant factors concerning the human dimension of battlespace in ISAF seem to be:
1) the social distance between each tactical unit and/or a national contingent and the local human terrain (each group has to be estimated separately),
2) the volume and nature of kinetic operations and other non-kinetic activities,
3) the deployment and maneuver options used in kinetic and non-kinetic approaches,
4) the predictability and the amount of maneuverist approach in terms of the duration, the frequency and the sequence of operations,
5) the amount of "mission tactics" available for tactical level commanders and
6) the amount of cultural awareness and information operations resources available for tactical level commanders.

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[302] See also Ullman, David G. (2007): "OO-OO-OO!" The Sound of Broken OODA Loop. Crosstalk, April 2007 issue. http://www.stsc.hill.af.mil/Crosstalk/2007/04/0704Ullman.html

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Research results

The main research problem revolved around a possible new approach – the "social" battlespace of stabilization operations. The central research question was "**How do the human structures and social interactions affect tactical level land operations of the stabilization force"?** It was broken down in sub-questions, which have already been answered in the respective chapters of this final report. Following the research process of Figure 2-6, the discourse leading to the actual research results begins at the pre-understanding stage. The discourse leads to certain general conclusions based on the case study. The validity and reliability of these results and conclusions are evaluated in the next part. The last part of this chapter will give some recommendations for future research subjects.

This thesis was based on seven propositions describing the tactical level of a suggested new paradigm of war – *war amongst the people*. Derived from the initial research work and aimed at providing a pre-understanding for both the research design and the final report, these propositions also guided the choice of the case study environment. In Afghanistan, all seven propositions are matched by the tactical reality. Therefore, on a whole, ISAF can be accepted as a critical case of modern stabilization operations. Two of the propositions rise above the others in importance. First, the contradiction between the operational level and the tactical level is evident. With an operational perspective, one could easily have been tempted to prepare a single-case study, because ISAF seems to have a unity of command and a unity of effort. This thesis has shown that tactical realities are diverse and the dictating element is the human dimension of the battlespace. Secondly, the importance of the "Accidental Guerilla Syndrome" has been concretely visible in post-2006 ISAF operations throughout the country.

The case study showed no surprises in terms of the generic actor list of a stabilization operation. Even though this list may be predictable at the operational level, the tactical level human terrain is more complex and variable. The local indigenous human terrain and the diverse origins of the international actors will always produce a unique mix of actors. Analyzing the human terrain in geo-spatial terms is, however, not the right approach. The three-layer model of the human dimension of battlespace presented in this thesis becomes important when conducting a complete tactical level IPB and estimating friendly forces. It is necessary to look closely at the cultural domain and especially the possible combinations of lifeworlds *before* deploying any units on the ground. Deployment decisions should not be based solely on the evaluations of tables of organization and equipment or on the different kinetic capabilities of units.

Military actions are powerful tools for communication. In stability operations, communicative action may be the optimal category of action. In real life situations, however, this is rarely the case even amongst the multinational force itself. The lower planes of

the Habermasian scale - dramaturgical action and normatively regulated action - provide a desirable and a realistic theoretical framework for deployed troops. If a unit separates itself from society and acts strictly according to its mission, it is likely to unleash counterproductive processes. Our case study on ISAF also highlighted the possibility of negative effects when over-emphasizing presence amongst the people. This example can be seen as a typical validity claim failure of both the normative rightness check (the Afghans see urban operations as an insult and as an act of an occupation force) and the subjective truthfulness check (the Afghans consider that the Western troops are "hiding amongst the people" even though the troops claim to be protecting them). Though honestly aiming for social action, ISAF has lacked true cultural awareness to get it right.

Social action was defined as a subset of any human action, but linked and dependent on the behavior of other people - i.e. it is action meaningfully determined by the behavior of others. A military reader should not be blinded by this term, as returning fire or ambushing the enemy can also be seen as social action. Any socially oriented action should only be taken after evaluating the short and long-term consequences within the context of the tactical battlespace. Action without prior considerations of possible consequences and culturally based validity checks is likely to undermine a positive "stranger" status. This socially ignorant action is more likely to trigger the rejection phase of the "Accidental Guerilla Syndrome" than a socially oriented action. Whether non-kinetic or kinetic by its nature, using social action is the best way to react to situations and to anticipate future events within the causal logic of tactical battlespace.

Specific operational mindsets, such as a peacekeeping-style deployment, an enemy-centric counter-terrorist campaign or a population-centric counterinsurgency approach, are likely to become blurred in the various tactical realities of an operation. This is especially true for units whose areas of responsibility involve co-existence amongst the people. When tasking a unit to pursue a violent kinetic task, commanders will face the dilemma of whom to choose to execute it. A local unit responsible for its AOR is more likely to use socially oriented means even in a high intensity situation. The risk is that this unit is too closely related to the local human terrain, a fact that may endanger its objectivity. A reinforcing QRF unit is probably less vulnerable in terms of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization processes affecting the local unit. On the other hand, such mobile units are likely to be less hesitative to use force, as they will not face the consequences of such force. After any type of event, "the battlespace owner unit" ultimately has to deal with consequences. "Battlespace owner units" must possess a high level of cultural awareness and operational experience in order to act responsibly in the framework of full spectrum operations.

The forecasted intensity, volume and nature of kinetic and non-kinetic operations in each tactical context should be taken into consideration *before* deciding on unit deployment. This factor, combined with the cultural capabilities and lifeworld compatibility of a given unit in relation with the other local actors, is a major consideration in force generation. Missions aimed at stability and human intelligence should be done by units with a high level of cultural competence. Predominantly kinetic missions should be given to professional units trained and equipped for dealing with this kind of environment. Other units (not qualifying as highly cultural-competent or very combat-

effective) should be utilized in static security and support tasks in which less importance is placed on social success.

It is realistic to think that the British forces in Helmand have been the right asset at least qualitatively, even though we may question the sufficiency of quantity. Such a hostile environment has called for high professionalism and a willingness to engage in combat. The French were surprised in August 2008 by a single fatal ambush, but they have been able to adapt to the new environment - at least since then they have not suffered such losses in a single engagement. It is probably also reasonable to consider that the Finnish troops are in the correct tactical environment considering their background, competences and national views. We will never know what would have happened had a Finnish infantry battalion taken over as the Helmand task force in the summer of 2006. We may also wonder whether the French or British paratroopers would have conducted successful non-kinetic stability operations in North Afghanistan.

Based on these three cases, it looks like that ISAF has *deployed* its troops fairly well according to these particular troop contributor capacities. The ways of *employing* the force locally leaves room for speculations, as the ratio between stability, defensive and offensive operations is always questionable. However, a precise evaluation of force employment would require a comprehensive analysis that includes national political agendas, economic resources available and techniques, and the tactics and procedures used at the local level. An intricate local web of actors with varying contexts and situations also affect force employment. We could argue that planning should be done simultaneously from the top-down and the bottom-up. A human-centric enhanced tactical IPB templated with an honest friendly force capability estimate and different courses of action could be the key in avoiding mistakes in deployment. Deploying the wrong mixture of assets in relation to the demands of the human dimension of battlespace may lead to losses in the battle for "hearts and minds" and media images. It may therefore ultimately cause a failure of mission. Strategic corporals or privates do not self-deploy; they are deployed by the force generators and decision makers. Thinking tactically and practically is essential to pave the way for success in the stabilization phase.

7.2 Validity and reliability evaluation

The idea behind this thesis is the relevance of a possible new paradigm of war – the war amongst the people. Theorists such as Nils Marius Rekkedal and Hervé Coutau-Bégarie have included this school of thought in their works and presentations as a rival paradigm explaining modern warfare. They have referred to certain practitioners, the Generals Rupert Smith and Vincent Desportes, as the leading authors who have attempted to explain this paradigm. With no serious scientific publications available at this time, the author has chosen to use these sources as the cornerstone of this study. One should not forget that the practical portion of operational art takes place continuously in different battlefields, but the scientific portion of it suffers a certain delay. This thesis, apparently caught in the gap between practice and theory, is therefore not founded on exact or solid scientific research concerning this particular paradigm of warfare. The author has accepted the risks involved in an investigation whose research background is readily compromised. The possible benefits of creating new information outweighed this shortcom-

ing. It is said that science should correct itself in time, and any erred conclusions can be improved in future research.

Defining stabilization has probably not contributed much to the overall semantic debates on how to categorize military operations. However - at least in the author's opinion - it did highlight the differences in perspectives, doctrines and practices. This should be seen as a prelude to the confusing complexity of the strategic level. The operational level is squeezed in between tactical realities and political-strategic agendas and dialogues. This thesis follows NATO's logic on the levels of war and on the execution of an expeditionary campaign. For a reader who disagrees with these basic assumptions, this thesis probably lacks rationality. As it was written by a Finnish officer, this thesis may be considered as predominantly Western-minded, and it is written for a like audience. Readers with other cultural backgrounds may disagree or disapprove any of the grounding assumptions, methods for analysis or the conclusions reached here. In this sense, the strong effect of the ontological choices can be seen as a weakness of this study.

Constructing the model of "social" battlespace has been paramount to this thesis. The usefulness of challenging an existing conceptual framework can of course be questioned. Human, physical, informational and temporal dimensions could also be organized differently, as some aspects do not necessarily belong to a single dimension. As the boundaries are obscured, some critics could deny, for example, the existence of the human dimension as such. A technically oriented study would probably categorize humans as physical objects or targets, while human communication could be seen in the context of the electromagnetic spectrum. The object of study is a decisive factor in determining the scope and the methods in each case. This study has focused on post-intervention stabilization in the framework of irregular warfare. The question as to whether the "social" battlespace is applicable to modern high-intensity warfare should be studied separately.

Collecting case study evidence from written sources was an almost never-ending process hampered by the fact that reliable (and therefore restricted or confidential) sources could not be used. The use of open sources alone meant dealing with texts written for commercial purposes as well as texts written according to national agendas of the nations contributing troops. The other means of gathering information was the e-mail questionnaire. Annex 6 describes the difficulty of selecting the interviewees. In many ways the questionnaire structure, the availability of respondents and the subjective narratives of each respondent strongly affected this research. The questionnaire was probably too long and complicated and the questions may have guided the answers. A lengthy single-round interview was necessary, as the time available did not allow for the multiple interview rounds necessary for the Delphi method. Face-to-face interviews were not possible because of the distances involved between the author and the respondents. The author still feels that the e-mail version produced more complete and conclusive information than an oral semi-structured interview would have. This is because the respondents could take their time and reflect on their experiences without interferences from the interviewer.

Despite the challenges in collecting evidence, the author feels that the process of gathering evidence through research questions, the case study protocol, the research database and the final report was a success. This especially applies to the questionnaire, as the database was based on the evidence and utilized a two-step analyzing method (see Annex 6). This part of the research should be repeatable by other researchers. All the written sources have mainly been used to increase the author's knowledge hermeneutically through continuous interpretation. The observations based on the literature have not been documented systematically. The case study database therefore does not include a complete analysis of each written source. This is a result of the time-constraints and the working method of the author. The findings were often added directly to "a living document", the research report draft. As this process is related to the pre-understanding, the personal experiences and the lifeworld of the author, any other researcher attempting to repeat this process would probably have a different approach when drafting the results and report.

Objectivity has been sought throughout this study. The author has not served in Afghanistan and has never even visited the country. The choices made along the way were detailed in Chapters 2 and 5 and in Annex 6 when explaining the methods used. Other cases could have been selected had the author had access to other interviewees and balanced previous knowledge on other regions, provinces or troop contributors. The question remains, whether the attempt to provide a practical approach through three cases only is valid enough. Another question is whether the results would be dramatically different if another type of sample had been used. The generalization of the research results is the third question that should be posed. It is of course clear that every operation is different and unique. Therefore, the results of this research are approximate at best. In any case, they only apply to the stabilization phase of operations. The human dimension of battlespace in the intervention or normalization phases should be studied separately.

7.3   Recommendations for future research

This thesis has evaluated the social battlespace at a very theoretical level and within a relatively limited scope. Future research could examine the possibilities of applying this concept more broadly i.e. in high intensity warfare and in calmer peacekeeping operations. It would be interesting to examine whether the battlespace would remain human-centric in scenarios of different intensities, in different phases of an expeditionary campaign or in different operational environments. The usefulness of the enhanced conceptual model of tactical battlespace introduced in this thesis should be re-examined when each new research project is undertaken.

A practical way to extend this research would be to investigate the influence of the social battlespace to different planning tools and processes. A friendly force capability evaluation should perhaps include a detailed estimation of cultural capabilities for each unit. Current IPB processes could be enhanced to offer an in-depth analysis of the local human terrain and its cultural influences, variations and manifestations. A specific social template could be developed to analyze the social distance between each unit and the local actors likely to be encountered. Finally, courses of action evaluation, wargam-

ing and other related analysis could be expanded to include the factors of social battlespace. Each of these four categories offers a practical level research problem that could be investigated in the framework of national or NATO planning procedures.

Understanding the logic of the social battlespace is critical to battle staff, individual leader and pre-deployment unit training. Future research could be directed to improving these training programs at a general level or mission-specifically. Another application would be to examine a current table of organization and equipment (such as a European Union Battlegroup or a NATO Response Force maneuver unit) and how it could be task organized to dominate its social battlespace. This kind of research could be centered on intelligence gathering, information management, command and control, or perhaps on kinetic and non-kinetic battlespace effects. Developing specific measures of effectiveness is another possible approach to future research. The author firmly believes that it is possible to execute a maneuverist approach in a tactical environment of irregular warfare and when acting amongst the populations.

For the Finnish Army – as mentioned in Chapter 3 – this thesis should provoke a doctrinal debate. Understanding the differences between the three phases – intervention, stabilization and normalization – is one thing; designing the national contingent based on real tactical needs is another. A key question for the future is whether we plan to deploy a "battlespace owner" unit all by ourselves or, for example, with our Nordic friends. An EU Battlegroup is likely to be a combined venture, but we do have a tradition of deploying a full Finnish battalion if needed. Whether we prefer to invest in multinational maneuver units or, less importantly, decide to provide only specialized small-units, this question is not only national. However, if we continue to consider the option of the national battalion in the future, we should make a concentrated effort on studying the requirements of modern full spectrum operations.

The Finnish Army should launch studies on how to increase its preparedness for future expeditionary land operations. Ruling out the intervention phase, we should concentrate our national effort on studying the decisive phase and the most likely context for our future deployments: the stabilization phase. First and foremost, we should improve the national toolbox to improve our social battlespace proficiency. This should be done in order to close the social distance gap between our national force and the other actors. It should always start with interoperability with the other troop contributors, but ultimately our efforts should be aimed at social integration within a tactical operating environment. At least three categories of study are readily identifiable:

- Unit and individual cultural awareness levels and skills (overall factors and mission-specific factors).
- Means to overcome potential mismatched lifeworlds within the future tactical operating environments (interpreters, cultural mediators, language skills, pre-deployment training packages etc.).
- A national or multinational enhanced IPB process with a strong emphasis on the human dimension. This should include "reachback" links via National Intelligence Cells or their multinational equivalents.

Further development of social battlespace metrics via quantitative and qualitative research is a vital task. The abovementioned categories could also be used in developing a system to measure our social battlespace proficiency. This will be invaluable for any attempts to provide an effective multinational stabilization force in the future.

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135

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3. INTERVIEWS

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BABAGUL, Haqmal, Lieutenant Colonel, Afghan National Army. Interview (in French) in Paris on 15 June 2009. Notes and the recording of the interview in the author's possession.

KAARTINEN, Timo, Professor in Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Helsinki. Interview in Helsinki on 08 January 2008. Notes and the recording of the interview in the author's possession.

KETOKIVI, Kaisa, PhD candidate and a researcher in the Department of Sociology, University of Helsinki. Telephone interview on 20 April 2009.

LAAKSO, Liisa, Professor in Development and International Cooperation, University of Jyväskylä. Interview in Helsinki on 15 January 2008. Notes and the recording of the interview in the author's possession.

+ 15 questionnaire respondents - see Annex 6

145

ANNEXES

LIST OF ANNEXES

ANNEX 1   History of Afghanistan
(2 pages)

ANNEX 2   Selected maps of Afghanistan
(6 pages)

ANNEX 3   Missions of the ISAF and tasks for the PRTs
(2 pages)

ANNEX 4   Analysis of the human dimension in Afghanistan
(2 pages)

ANNEX 5   Provincial overview of the case study
(6 pages)

ANNEX 6   Execution of the interviews
(3 pages)

ANNEX 7   Analysis and a summary of the questionnaire
(7 pages)

Major Teemu Nurmela's GSO thesis   ANNEX 1   1 (2)

HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN

330 – 327 B.C.	Alexander the Great conquered Afghanistan
652 – 664 A.D.	The Arabs conquered the ancient Afghanistan
1220	Genghis Khan and his Mongol army invaded the country
1839 – 1842	The first Anglo-Afghan war
1878	The second Anglo-Afghan war
1893	The Durand line is established between Afghanistan and Pakistan
1919	Independence of the country after the third Anglo-Afghan war
1979 – 1989	Soviet occupation and the war of Afghanistan
1994	The Taliban militia seizes Kandahar at the end of the civil war
1996	The beginning of the Taliban regime in Kabul
1998	U.S. cruise missile strikes on Al Qaeda training camps
2001	The attacks of September 11th in New York and Washington D.C. The beginning of *"Operation Enduring Freedom"* ISAF mandated by the UN on 20 December
2006	ISAF became responsible for the whole country on 05 October

The history leading to the present conflict

The long War of Afghanistan ended when the Soviets pulled their last forces out in 1989. The ten years of guerilla warfare had brought in many players. Pakistan became the main supply route for weapons, volunteer fighters and their training. Pakistani intelligence service ISI channeled these resources into Afghanistan with the support of Saudi Arabia and the USA. This included educating poor people in *Madrassas* to become fanatic fighters - these students were called *Talibs*. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and his *Hezb-I Islam* party were able to gain a big part of Pakistani and CIA support despite their radical and anti-Western mindset. His biggest competitor was Ahmad Shah Mahsood, a Tajik who had fought well in the Panjshir valley. When Masud's Afghans guerillas liberated Kabul and set up a Tajik-led government, a civil war ensured. Hekmatyar's Islamists were not able to win Mahsood's army and he lost Pakistan's support. Dostum's Uzbeks took over the Mazar-e-Sharif area. There was no end in sight for the civil war.[303]

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[303] Jokinen – Kullberg (2006), p. 232-242. Madrasa means a religious school.

A new movement, the extremely religious Taliban, gradually took the leading role in the fight against the Mujahedin government. Starting in the region of Kandahar in 1994, the *Taliban* quickly grew stronger under the leadership of mullah Omar. They were able to assemble former communist officers, former warlords, and a considerable amount of Soviet weapons; in addition, they won the support of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Sheikh Osama bin Laden provided funding and ideology and was allowed to set up a support and training network for al Qaeda. After taking Herat in 1995, Taliban seized Kabul in 1996 and set up a new regime. Al Qaeda supported the Taliban financially, but the Taliban also profited from drug production and trafficking. However, the Taliban were unable to take control of the whole country as Mahsood, Dostum, Rabbani and other local warlords – later called the Northern Alliance – held their ground.[304]

Following the bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the U.S. military struck al Qaeda training camps with cruise missiles in Afghanistan. The ensuing sanctions against Taliban regime were counterproductive. They did not hand over bin Laden and al Qaeda and Taliban formed an even closer alliance. On 09 September 2001, Mahsood was assassinated and two days later, New York and Washington were devastated by terrorist attacks. Operation Enduring Freedom commenced 07 October 2001, only 26 days after the 9/11 attacks. In a rapid and decisive manner, the U.S.-led Coalition joined forces with the Northern Alliance to defeat the Taliban and finally seized Kabul on 13 November 2001. This intervention was mandated by Article 51 of the UN Charter, recognizing the right to self-defense. Unlike the ISAF (which was established later), OEF had no bilateral SOFA or MTA with the Afghan government. Besides the American forces, the main troop contributors were the UK, Australia, France, Germany, Canada, Denmark and Italy. The coalition's presence on the ground grew steadily from 11,500 soldiers in early 2003 to 19,600 troops by late 2004.[305]

The new president was a Pashtun named Hamid Karzai. His position was authorized in 2002 by the first *Loya Jirga* in 20 years. By cleverly selecting candidates for the new government's key positions, he was able to expand the central government's authority at least nominally throughout the country. Although security was better than it had been since the post-Soviet period had begun, clashes between warlords continued especially in the North and in Herat area. Towards 2005, the Taliban regrouped once again from the strong Pashtun areas of East and South Afghanistan and from the Pakistani Waziristan. More recently, al Qaeda and Hekmatyar's *Hezb-I Islam* have returned and have allegedly been responsible for the increasing terrorism statistics in Afghanistan, while the Taliban has mainly used guerilla tactics. However, the so-called Neo-Talibans – who have alleged links to Iraq - have started using suicide attacks, IEDs, kidnappings and executions. Dostum in the North and Khan in Herat area have also contributed to crippling the authority of Karzai's government.[306] In 2009, the troop strength of ISAF (responsible for the whole country since the end of 2006) has climbed steadily, but violence is still spreading and the insurgent activity does not seem to be diminishing.

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[304] Jokinen – Kullberg (2006), p. 242-249 and Their, J. Alexander in Durch (ed.) (2006), p. 474-476.
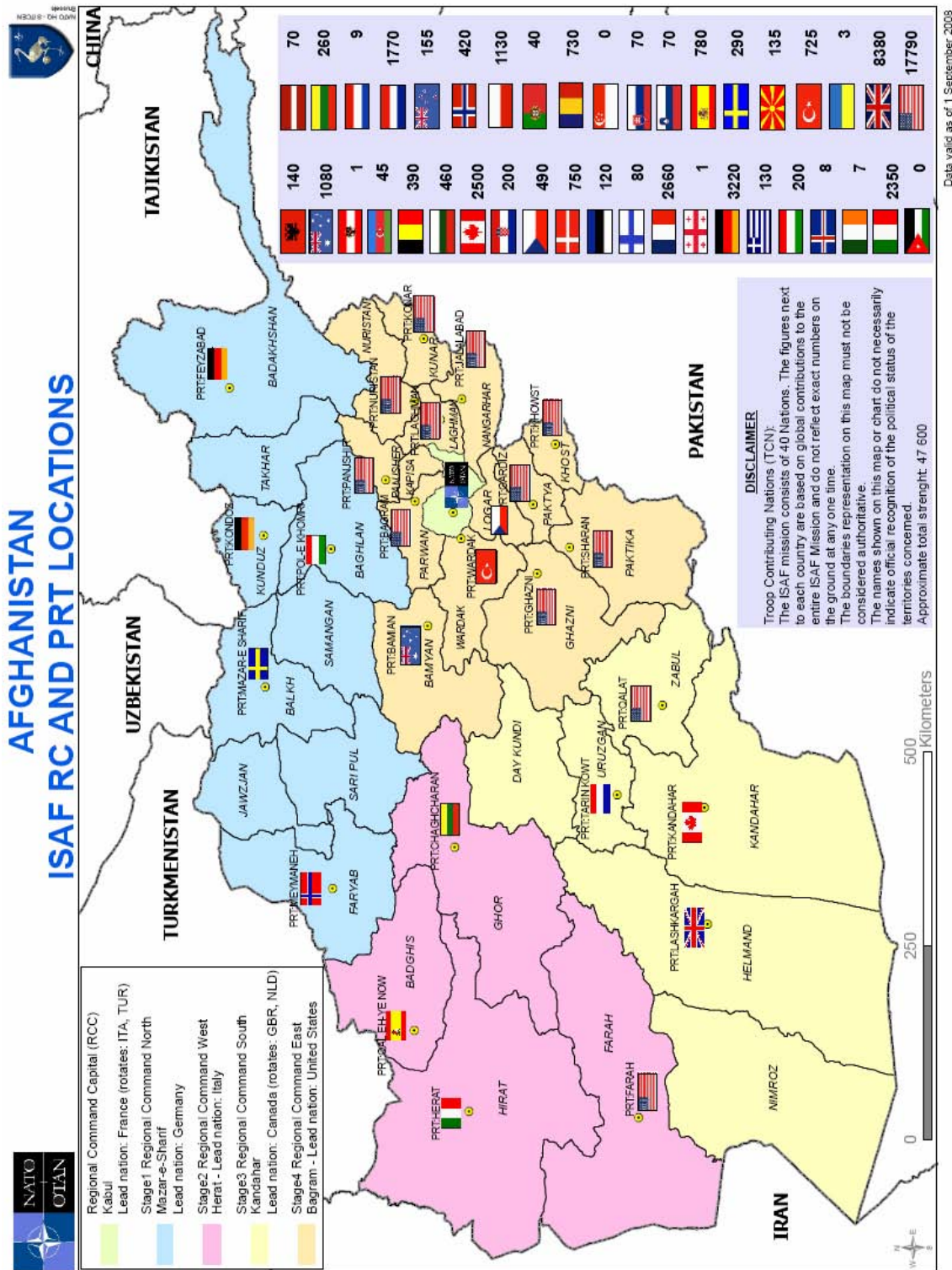[305] Their, J. Alexander in Durch (ed.) (2006), p. 474-493.
[306] Jokinen – Kullberg (2006), p. 249-261.

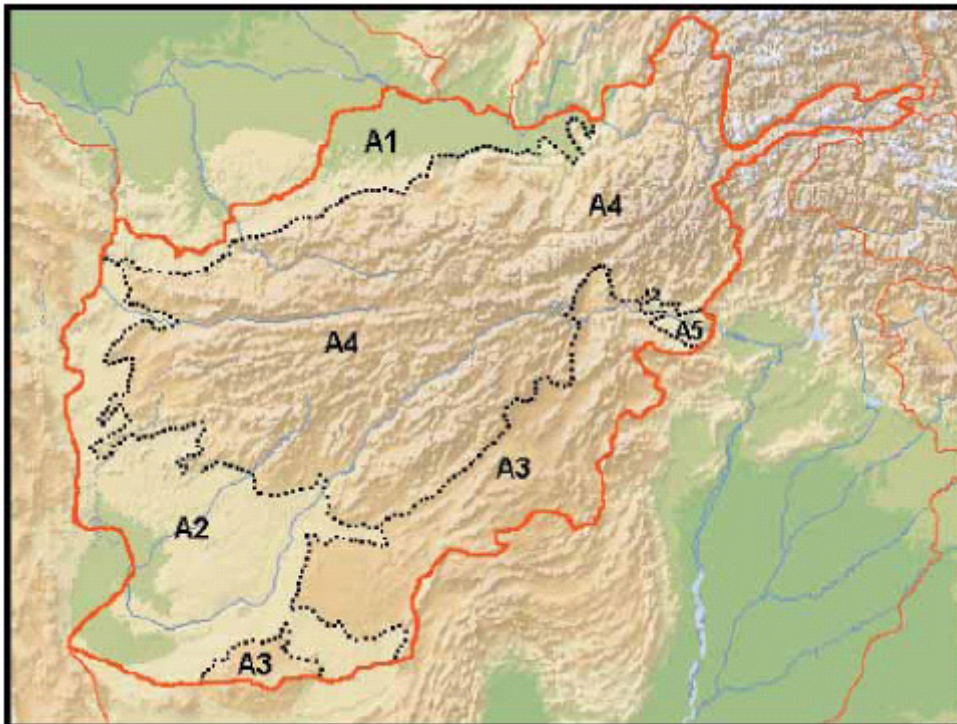Major Teemu Nurmela's GSO thesis   ANNEX 2   1 (6)

SELECTED MAPS OF AFGHANISTAN
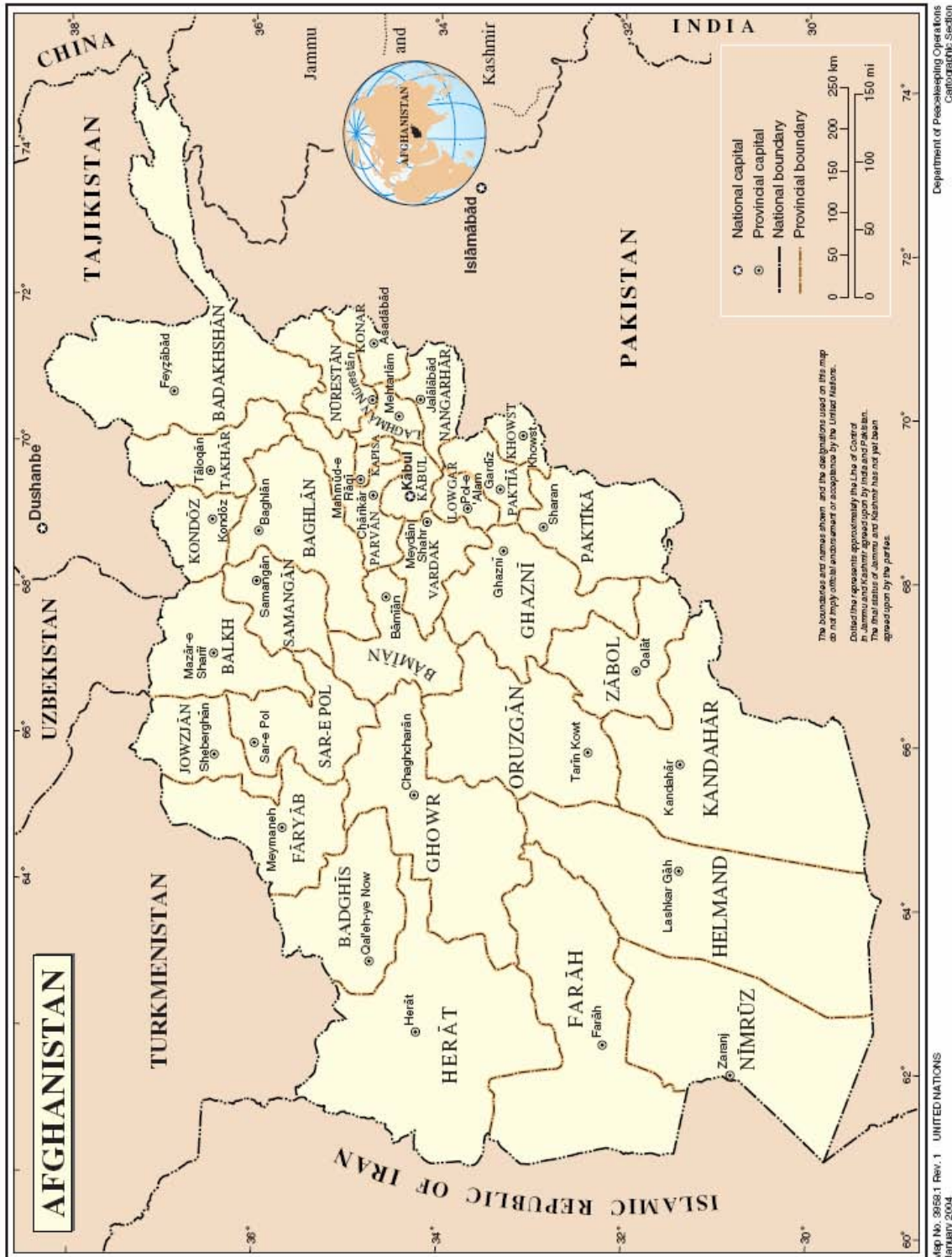
Map 1. Afghanistan provinces and provincial capitals.
(Source: http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/afghanis-reg.pdf)

Map 2. ISAF Regional commands, PRT locations and lead nations as of 01 Sept 2008.
(Source: http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/maps/graphics/afganistan_prt_rc.pdf)

Map 3. The geographical features of Afghanistan (Source: ISAF Rauhanturvaajan opas 2/2008, p. 10).

A1: The Northern Plains   A2: Southwestern plains and desert
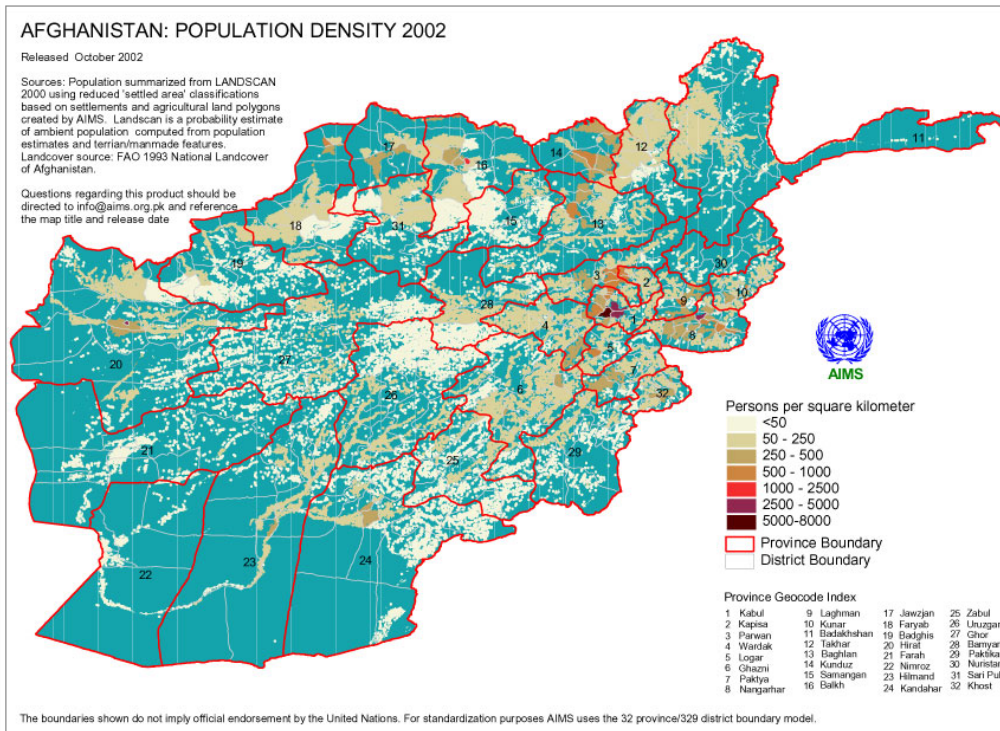A3: The Eastern Highland Ranges A4: The Central Highland Ranges
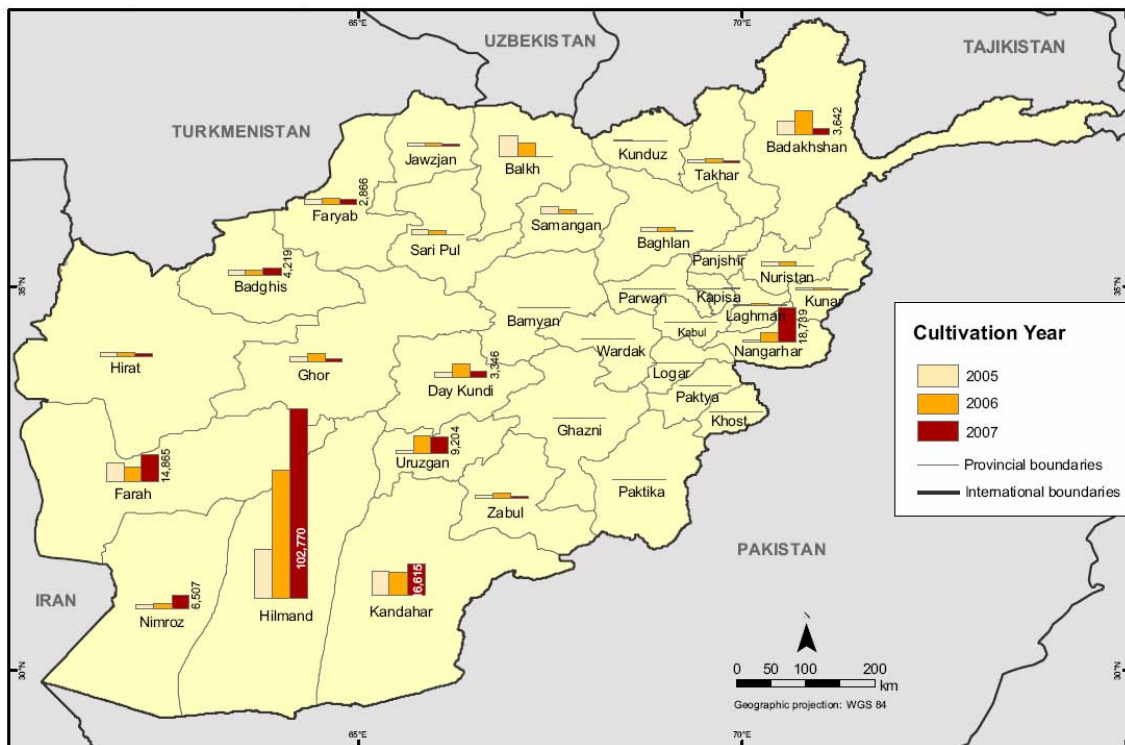A5: The Jalalabad Valley
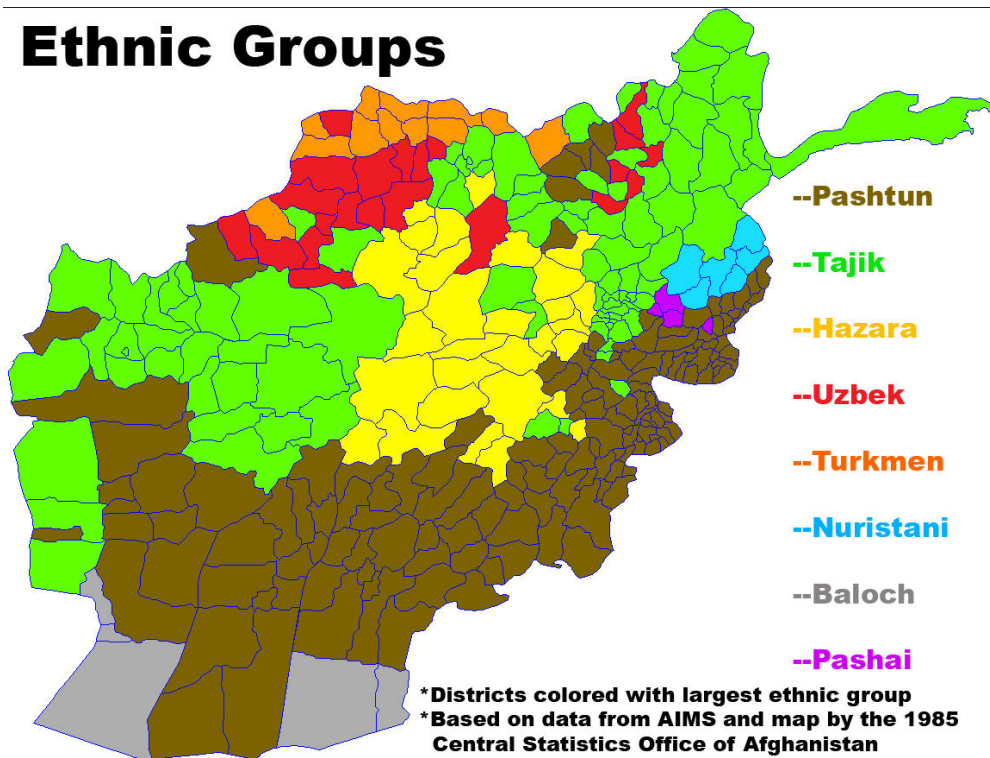
Map 4. Geographical distribution of ethnic groups in Afghanistan.
(Source: ISAF Rauhanturvaajan opas 2/2008, p. 12)

151

Map 5. Population density in 2002.
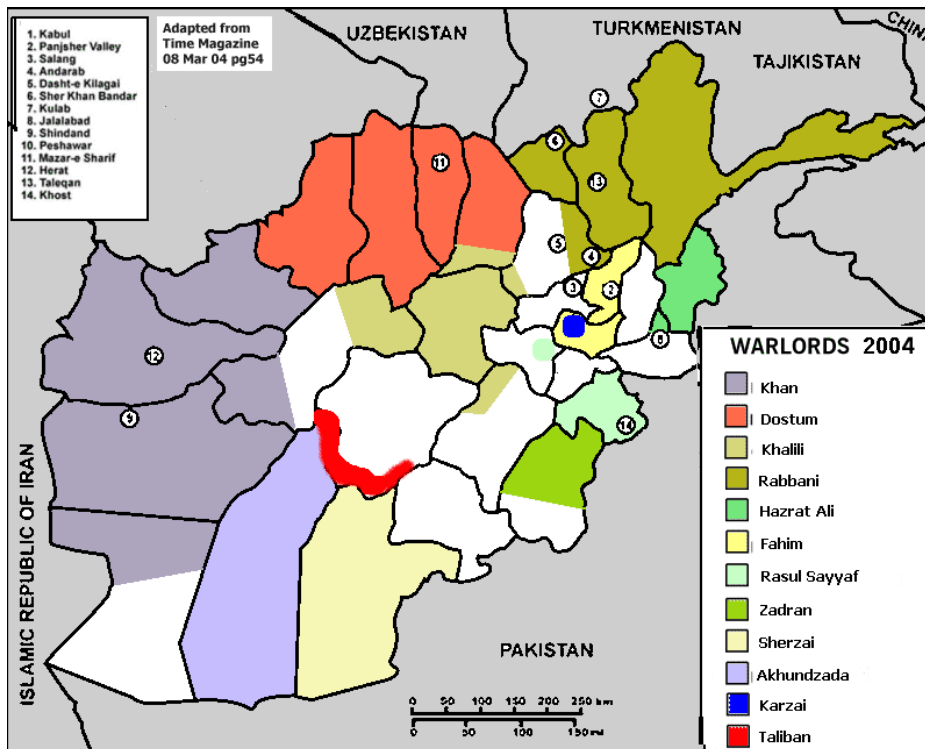(Source: http://geobase.org.af/maps/national/population/population_density_2002.pdf)

Map 6. Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, 2005-2007.
(Source: http://www.unodc.org/pdf/research/AFG07_ExSum_web.pdf)

Map 7. Warlord areas of influence as of 2004.
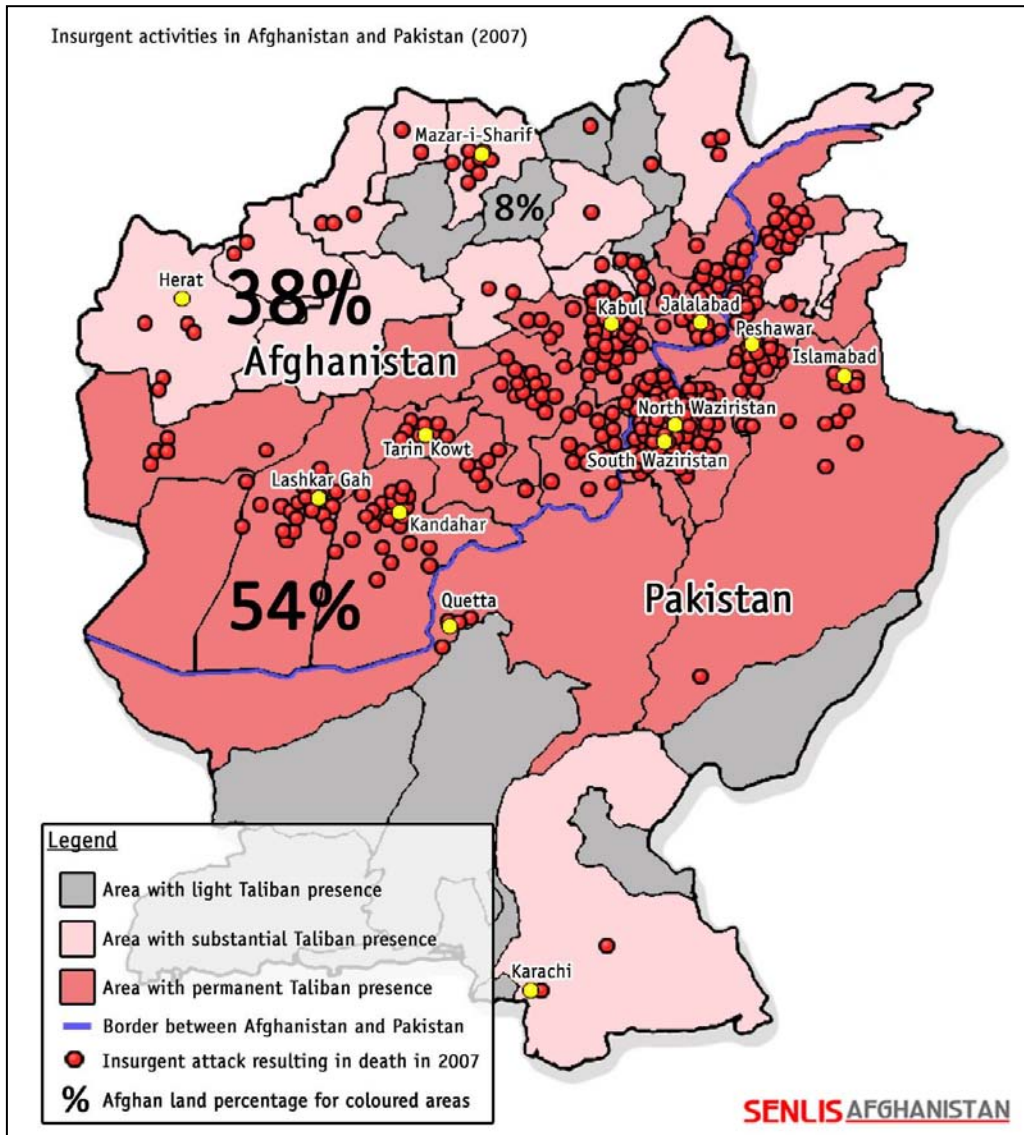(Source: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/afghanistan/maps.htm)

Map 8. A geographical estimate of Afghan government and Taliban controlled areas in 2006.
(source:
http://www.stratfor.com/files/mmf/c/b/cb1c4c04190d458bb98a31c80fb58dcceab4d333.jpg)

Map 9. Estimation of Taliban presence in Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2007.
(Source: SENLIS (2007B): *Afghanistan Decision Point 2008*, MF Publishing, London, p. 18).

Major Teemu Nurmela's GSO thesis ANNEX 3 1 (2)

MISSIONS AND TASKS OF ISAF

MISSIONS OF ISAF[307]

Security

- Conducting security and stability operations
- Supporting the Afghan National Army
- Supporting the Afghan National Police
- Disarming illegally armed groups
- Facilitating ammunition depots managements
- Providing post-operation assistance

Reconstruction and development

- Providing security to permit reconstruction
- Humanitarian assistance

Governance

Counter-narcotics

TASKS FOR PRTs[308]

The PRTs' objectives include:

- To support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRA) in the development of a more stable and secure environment;
- To assist in extending the authority of the GIRA;
- To support where appropriate the Security Sector Reform (SSR) initiatives;
- To facilitate the reconstruction effort and reinforce national development priorities;
- To enable unity of effort amongst civil actors; and
- To demonstrate the International Community's commitment to Afghanistan's future.

The PRTs' more specific tasks are:

- To improve the security environment for the Afghan people through dialogue with regional leaders and confidence building activities and mitigating likely areas of conflict;
- To monitor, assess, advise on and support SSR activities in close coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), SSR lead-nations and bilateral programmes;
- To assist the Government of Afghanistan (GOA) in the dissemination of its decisions and policies to the regional leaders;
- To provide a visible presence in assigned Area of Operations (AOO);
- To monitor and assess the military, political, and civil situations with the AOO;

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[307] http://nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html#missions Accessed 04 mars 2009.
[308] http://nato.int/isaf/topics/recon_dev/prts.html Accessed 04 mars 2009.

- To provide information and intelligence to the Commander of ISAF (COMISAF for the development of a common operational picture of the assigned AOO;
- To assist the International Community with the process of reform and strengthening of civil administration;
- To facilitate information sharing between the GOA and civil agencies;
- To organise and facilitate periodic principals' meetings to facilitate dialogue and liaison between the GOA / UNAMA / and regional leaders;
- To direct assistance to the civilian element of the PRT in terms of transport support, engineering etc and
- To be prepared to host and assist international observers assisting in the development of civil structures.

Major Teemu Nurmela's GSO thesis   ANNEX 4   1 (2)

ANALYSIS OF THE HUMAN DIMENSION IN AFGHANISTAN

	STATEMENTS (facts)	**CONCLUSIONS**
TIME	- long duration of the overall campaign - there are moments of very high intensity and violence - force rotations are usually only six months long	1) The temporal dimension favors the insurgents. 2) The deployed forces do not have enough time to learn to master their environment.
SPACE	- the AO is vast with very few avenues of approach and ways to maneuver on the ground - the terrain is mountainous and at some points totally inaccessible - the population is concentrated in villages and towns - the borders are contested and there is cross-border movement of forces and material (especially from Pakistan)	3) It is impossible to dominate the whole AO and to control the borders. 4) The forces have to be deployed primarily amongst the people, in urbanized zones.
FORCES	- Western forces are multinational and very diverse - national factors of the lead-nations have an influence on how the PRTs operate - national caveats limit the deployment and employment of forces - two parallel campaigns and missions (ISAF/OEF) - multiple sources of opposition: Taliban/AQ, warriors, warlords, criminals and "accidental guerillas" - ANA et ANP alone are ineffective - the "neo-Talibans" are growing in strength and numbers - private actors (PSC, PMC) and intelligence agencies add the overall confusion	5) There is no real unity of effort or command amongst the "western" forces. 6) A military response alone (increased troop strength, more firepower etc.) will not be enough to contain the adversaries. 7) ANA and ANP have to be reinforced and supported in order to transfer the responsibility for security to them.
ENVI-RON-MENT	- war is "the norm" in Afghan society since the 1970s - the society is tribal and multiethnic - the identities of different actors is not always known - the people are oriented to the local level and traditional ways instead of official procedures and authorities - illiteracy leads to a dependence on oral information - opium poppy eradication creates poverty, unemployment and hunger in most cases - Westerners face major cultural and linguistic barriers - the comprehensive approach is oriented towards Kabul - the use of firepower causes a risk of collateral damage and fratricide	8) The main effort of the comprehensive approach should be in the provinces instead of Kabul. 9) Direct approaches with short-term objectives (such as to offensive operations, heavy use of firepower in defense or destroying the opium poppy cultivations) are in fact easily exploited by the adversaries. 10) In addition to a fire support plan, there should be a plan to win people's support.

Table 1. Statements concerning the tactical land environment of ISAF and significant conclusions on operations amongst the people. To be read with Chapters 5 and 6.[309]

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[309] PIA-05.401 (2008), p. 30-37.

THE TACTICAL CENTER OF GRAVITY OF ISAF **The Afghan populations**	CRITICAL CAPABILITIES (of the CoG) - to support the local administrations - to support the central government - to offer legitimacy and support for the Afghan Security Forces (ANA, ANP) - to eliminate the sanctuaries and the support for the insurgents and criminal networks
CRITICAL VULNERABILITES (ISAF) - different operating methods of different units and forces - public opinion and the support of the international community - interior politics of the troop contributing nations - to confuse local adversaries with al-Qaeda and the Taliban - collateral damage and fratricide in combat - differences of "*lifeworlds*", cultural and linguistic barriers on the ground	CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS (ISAF) - unity of effort and command - to profoundly understand the society and the "*lifeworlds*" of the Afghans - to secure urban zones and their people to facilitate employment - to win the battle of perception - to contain the adversaries and to force them to negotiate - to use force with great restraint and precision

TACTICAL EFFECTS TO ACHIEVE

- To ensure effective intelligence (especially HUMINT) and exchange of information with other actors
- To analyze the human terrain and social networks in order to target kinetic and non-kinetic operations
- To assure continuity and mutual knowledge at the small-unit level despite unit rotations
- To minimize the cultural and linguistic barriers with the help of interpreters and cultural mediators
- To assure that the comprehensive approach on the local level has the means to replace or compensate the population for inconveniences before taking action (e.g. opium poppy eradication)
- To conduct "*storytelling operations*" amongst the people with general narratives and specially targeted messages and audiences according to the situation and events
- To negotiate with local armed factions to make them participate in political action instead of armed action
- To reinforce the status and legitimacy of ANA and ANP as well as their attraction as an employer at the local level
- To shift the responsibility of kinetic operations to ANA and ANP in order to lessen the Western footprint

Table 2. Analysis of the tactical Center of Gravity of ISAF. To be read with Chapters 5 and 6.[310]

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[310] PIA-05.401 (2008), p. 30-37.

Major Teemu Nurmela's GSO thesis   ANNEX 5   1 (5)

PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE CASE STUDY

This provincial overview provides key facts on the Afghan provinces concerned:
- Finnish troops: Kabul, Balkh, Faryab, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pol and Samangan
- French troops: Kabul and Kapisa
- British troops: Helmand (and Kabul)

The practical evidence collection included the following sources:
- The Finnish ISAF handbooks 2/06, 2/07, 2/08 and 2/09
- Websites of Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian Armed forces
- Finnish government reports concerning operations in Afghanistan
- The French Ministry of Defense website and its articles on operations in Afghanistan (in French and in English)
- The UK Ministry of Defence website on operations in Afghanistan
- Province and overall data provided by the USAID website
- Province overviews provided by the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA), available for Kabul, Kapisa, Helmand, Balkh, Faryab and Samangan provinces
- U.S. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Program for Culture and Conflict Studies website offering provincial overviews for Kabul, Kapisa and Helmand

Faryab Province

- frontiers with Turkmenistan
- 20 293 km^2, 884 000 inhabitants
- capital Meymaneh (80 000 inhabitants)
- poor road network
- the majority of the population are Uzbeks, others Tajiks, Pashtuns, Turkmens
- support area of General Dostum (Uzbek, Jombesh party)
- insurgent activity has increased since 2006
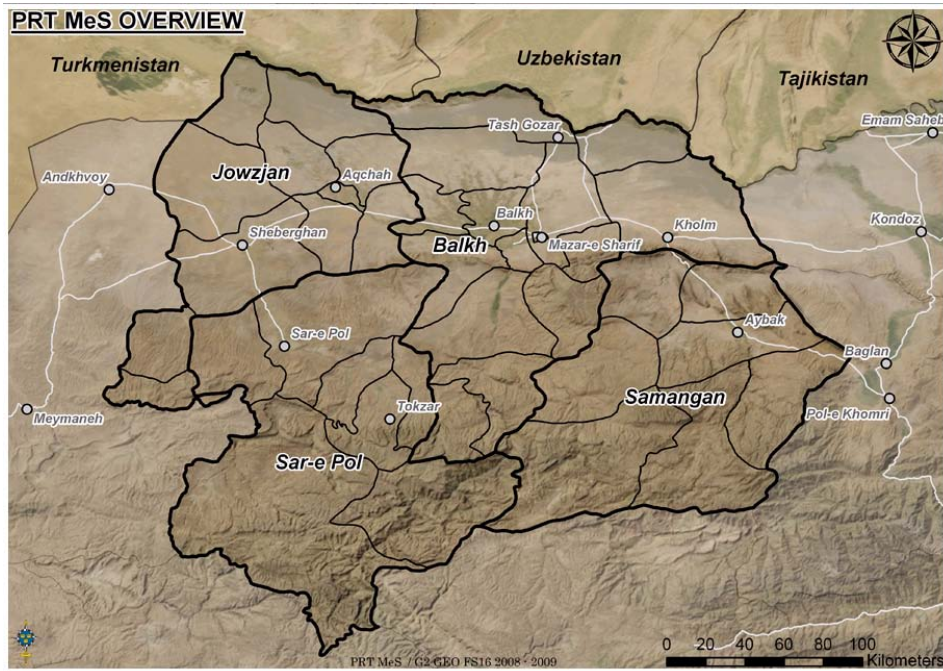
Map 10. The four provinces of PRT Mazar-e-Sharif AO. The Faryab Province is located just west of Jowzjan and Sar-e-Pol.
(Source: http://www.mil.se/sv/Internationella-insatser/Pagaende-insatser/Afghanistan/?print=1)

Balkh Province

- frontiers with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan
- 17 249 km^2, 1 145 000 inhabitants
- capital Mazar-e-Sharif (300 000 inhabitants)
- the majority of the population are Tajiks, others include Uzbeks, Hazaras, Pashtuns, Turkmens
- relatively secure, one of the most developed provinces in Afghanistan
- Pashtuns live in the south and west; these are more dangerous areas because part of their population is supporting insurgents
- Mohammed Atta as governor (a Tajik, former Northern Alliance commander, Jamiat party)

Jowzjan Province

- frontier with Turkmenistan
- 11,798 km^2, 477 000 inhabitants
- capital Sheberghan (250 000 inhabitants)
- Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tajiks, Pashtuns, Nomads, some Arabs
- support area of General Dostum (Uzbek, Jumbesh party)
- relatively secure

Samangan Province

- no national frontiers
- 11,262 km^2, 344000 inhabitants
- capital Aybak (80-90 000 inhabitants)
- Uzbeks, Tajiks, Pashtuns, Hazaras

-   relatively secure

Sar-e-Pol Province

-   no national frontiers
-   15 999 km^2, 497 000 inhabitants
-   capital Sar-e-Pol
-   Uzbeks, Pashtuns, Hazaras, Tajiks
-   restless, insurgent activity increasing

Kabul Province

-   no national frontiers
-   4 462 km^2, 3 450 000 inhabitants
-   capital Kabul (3 000 000 inhabitants)
-   the population is mainly Hazara, Tajik, Pashtun, Kuchi, and Qizilbash (Kabul city mixed, Surobi Pashtun dominant)
-   the French Battalion (BATFRA) is located near Kabul
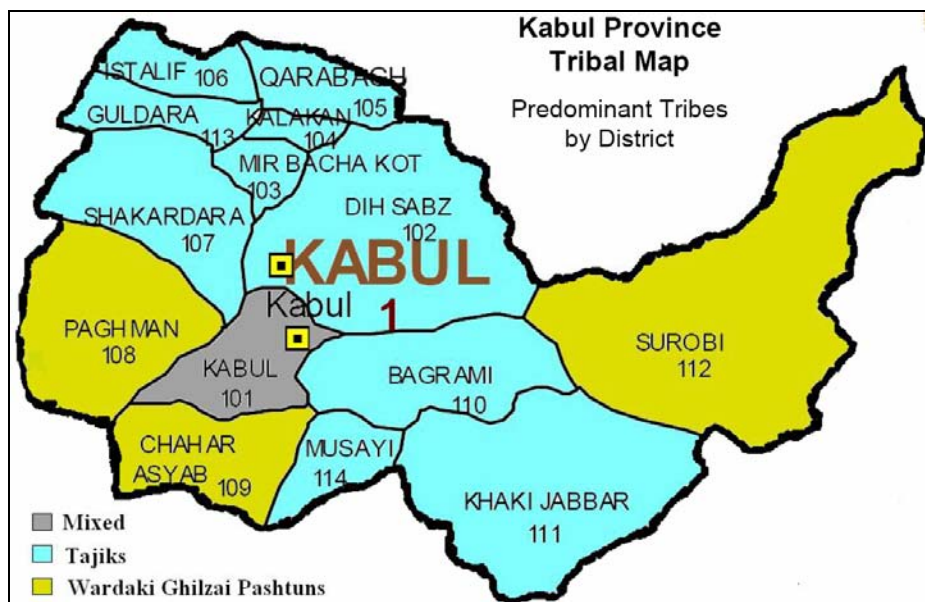
Map 11. The Kabul Province tribal map in 2007 (Source: http://www.nps.edu) . The Surobi District can be seen in the eastern part of the province. Kapisa Province is its eastern neighbor.

Kapisa Province

- no national frontiers
- 1 842 km^2, 393 000 inhabitants
- capital Mahmud Raqi
- Tajiks, Pashtuns, Nuristanis
- French maneuver unit, GTIA Kapisa
- U.S.-led PRT
- many U.S. troops, ISAF and OEF
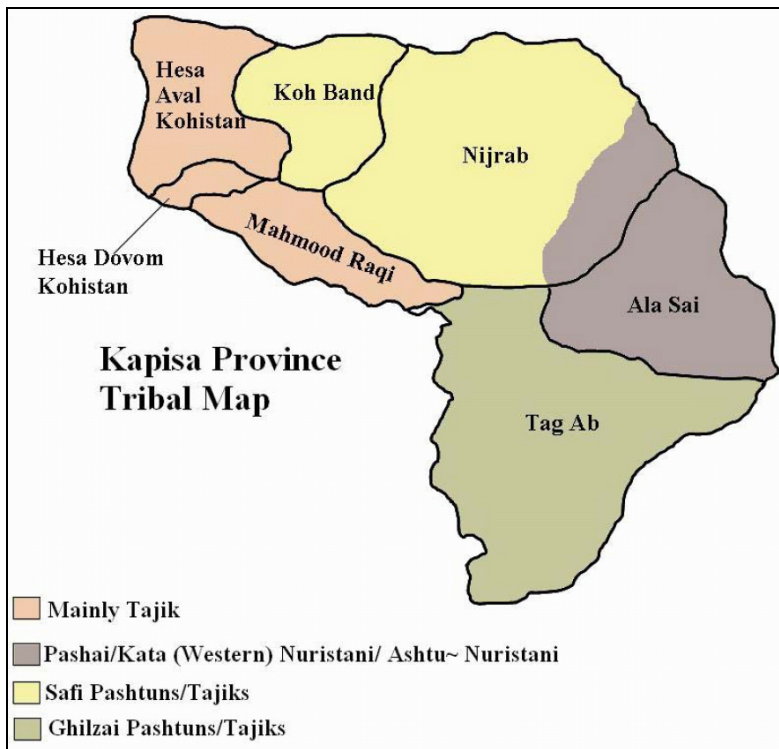
Map 12. Kapisa Province tribal map (Source: http://www.nps.edu)

Helmand Province

- frontier with Pakistan
- 58 584 km^2, 822 000 inhabitants
- capital Lashkar Gah
- primarily Pashtun with a Baluchi minority
- UK maneuver unit, Helmand TF (a brigade-sized unit)
- UK-led PRT
- reinforced by a brigade of U.S. Marines in the summer of 2009
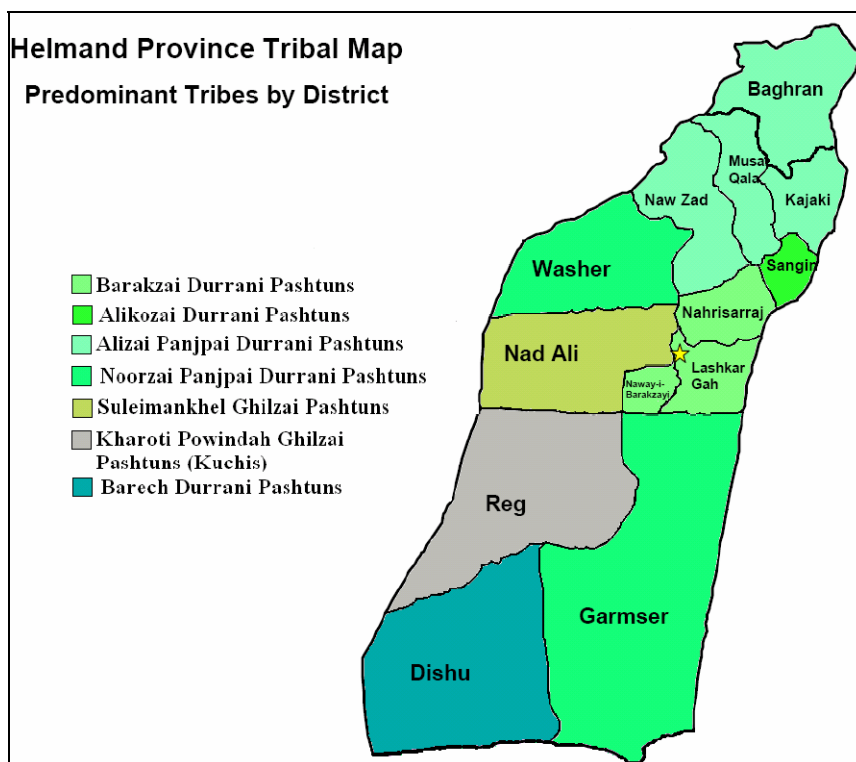
Map 13. The tribal map of the Helmand Province (Source: http://www.nps.edu)

EXECUTION OF THE INTERVIEWS

A semi-structured interview was selected as an additional method to improve the quality of practical evidence. The use of military officers as experts can also be seen as an important step in improving the validity and the reliability of the research results. A thematic semi-structured interview seemed to be the best approach, as the research questions were easy to divide into two separate units of analysis. An open interview would not have produced comparable or measurable information. On the other hand, a structured interview would have limited the respondents and would have damaged the qualitative approach.[311] The main groups of interest were the student officers in the Finnish General Staff Officers' Course and in the French Joint Staff College. The respondents were selected based on participation in operations in Afghanistan. Experience from Battlegroup, PRT or Regional Command level was prioritized. For practical reasons, the interviews were conducted via e-mail with a specially designed questionnaire form (see Annex 7). This type of evidence collection suits qualitative research as it imitates the structures of a semi-structured interview.[312]

Finding the best and the most willing mix of respondents required some e-mail traffic and telephone calls. From Finland, the group of respondents included two officers on the GSO course level, two other senior officers and two captains not yet at the GSO level. Three of the respondents had previously contributed to the author's earlier research work. To provide further knowledge on the Regional Command (North) and Kabul area of operations, two Swedish and one Norwegian respondent were added. One of these was found from the CID and two others through Finnish colleagues studying in the Swedish and Norwegian Staff Colleges. The French and British respondents were more difficult to find despite the fact that the author studies in France. From a relatively large group of officers with operational experience in Afghanistan, only five volunteered to participate and only three finally responded despite several reminders sent via e-mails. One response had to be ignored, as it was not fully completed. One French respondent with experience from Kapisa was found with the help of a fellow student at the CID. On the British side, one officer was available in the French Joint Staff College and two others were located with his help and with the help of a Finnish student at the UK Joint Services Command and Staff College.

The questionnaire form was designed according to the two units of analysis: the actors of the human terrain and the interaction between ISAF and the other actors. These were split into two main question groups. The format was tested with a single respondent at the CID, which resulted only in minor changes and reformulations of some questions.[313] The final forms were sent to respondents by e-mail with a letter of presentation. This included an introduction and a summary of the author's earlier research on the concept of battlespace. This stage of the research process was launched in early November 2008 and the last questionnaire form was received in June 2009. The target number of respondents - six Finnish and three other Nordic officers, three French and three British officers - was reached. The respondents had an opportunity to view, comment and correct the final draft of this thesis in August 2009.

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[311] Hirsjärvi – Hurme, (1993), pp. 24–38.
[312] Hirsjärvi – Remes – Sajavaara (2005), pp. 182–193; Flick (2006), pp. 257-259.
[313] Hirsjärvi – Hurme, (1993), pp. 40–45.

The questionnaire data was analyzed using theoretical coding as the selected content analysis method.[314] Each question was analyzed using "open coding", i.e. finding individual key words or phrases from the responses. This was done with the help of individual Excel tables used for each question, where key words were listed as rows and the respondents were listed as columns. Analysis was done one question at a time, and the questionnaire forms were always read in the same order. Every new finding produced a new line, and every time an exact wording was found, this added another "hit" on the same line. As the work progressed, the lines were grouped according to similar findings. This resulted in tables with thematic groups of rows, each of which had a single or several "hits" according to the number of respondents referring to the same thing. The final step was to summarize the key content by question as can be seen from Annex 7.

The validity and reliability of this method is to be considered in relation to the overall method of the case study. These questionnaire-based semi-structured e-mail interviews were only complimentary contributions to the overall cross-case analysis. The quantitative analysis of "this and this element mentioned by so many respondents" is unimportant. Forming a comprehensive idea of the experiences of the respondents was far more important. As the units of analysis are rather generic, the system of open coding method applies well. It is important to remember that all the responses are subjective views based on the time and place of service. All the questionnaire forms and tables used in their analysis are held by the author. All the respondents were treated anonymously, though only some of them wished to remain anonymous in this report.

Rank	Country	Regions	Time	Task
LTC	FIN	RC(N), Mazar-e-Sharif	2005	Deputy commander, PRT HQ
CPT	FIN	RC(N), Meymaneh	2005-2006	MOT commander
CPT	FIN	Kabul RC(N), Mazar-e-Sharif	2004-2005 2008	Intelligence officer, KMNB MOT commander
LCDR	FIN	RC(N), Mazar-e-Sharif	2007-2008	Operations Officer, PRT HQ
LTC	FIN	Kabul RC(N), Mazar-e-Sharif	2003-2004 2008	CIMIC unit commander Operations Officer, PRT HQ
CPT	FIN	Kabul	2003	Intelligence officer, KMNB
MAJ	SWE	Kabul, ISAF AOR	2002	Reconnaissance unit commander
MAJ	SWE	RC(N), Mazar-e-Sharif	2007	Intelligence officer, RC(N) HQ
MAJ	NOR	RC(N), Meymaneh	2007-2008	COS, PRT HQ

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[314] Flick (2006), p. 296-307. Flick describes the process of theoretical coding, a process which was customized to suit this particular research.

MAJ	UK	RC(S), Helmand	2006-2007	Staff officer & Company commander, 42 CMDO RM
MAJ	UK	RC(S), Helmand	2006	CIMIC officer, 3 PARA
MAJ	UK	RC(S), Helmand	2006-2007	Staff officer & Company commander, 3 CMDO BDE RM
MAJ	FRA	RC(C), Kabul	2007	Intelligence officer, RC(C) HQ
MAJ	FRA	RC(C), Kabul	2004	Staff officer, BATFRA
COL	FRA	RC(E), Kapisa	2008	Chief of Staff, 8RPIMa

Table 3. The respondents of the questionnaire.

Major Teemu Nurmela's GSO thesis   ANNEX 7   1 (7)

ANALYSIS AND A SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I / THE STRUCTURES OF HUMAN TERRAIN
(HUMAN TERRAIN = "The aggregate of people present at a specific temporal, geo-spatial point.")

Respond from the viewpoint of your battalion – regiment scale unit and its area of operations, such as a PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team), a Battalion, a Battlegroup or a GTIA (French). If you served in a Regional Command HQ or a Brigade HQ, then describe the subunits of your region in general or with examples.

The questions may first seem long and complicated. <u>**The underlined part is always the focus.**</u> **The other parts of the question are additional guidance to help you find an angle of view. Do not consider them as limiting factors, but as conversational remarks of an interview.**

What <u>**international security forces**</u> **(police, military or private contractors) did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) interact with in Afghanistan? Did you operate with units from other countries? What was the lowest level of force mixture (battalion / company / platoon)? What practical effects did this multinationality have on operations?**

Actors:
- command posts/headquarters of different levels
- ISAF troops from different countries
- a variety of ISAF static and maneuver units
- OEF units operating in the same AO
- special forces and national intelligence services
- private security companies
- international police, police trainers

Interaction:
- force mixture sometimes down to the squad level
- co-patrolling and information sharing between units

Problems in interaction:
- different language (English) skills and some doctrinal issues
- national caveats, different levels of cultural awareness
- OEF/ISAF mixture in the same AO

What <u>**other international actors**</u> **(international organizations, non-governmental organizations, national agencies etc.) did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) interact with in Afghanistan? Did the sub-units have regular interaction with these actors? Describe the practical "daily business" of this civil-military relationship.**

Actors:
- UNAMA and affiliated international bodies
- national organizations (such as USAID and UK FCO)
- a wide range of NGOs
- private contractors and specialized advisors

Interaction:
- participating in and sharing development and reconstruction projects
- information sharing, regular meetings, HUMINT contacts
- maneuver units had less interaction than the PRTs (British and French respondents)

Problems in interaction:
- NGOs sometimes unwilling to operate with ISAF
- one-way information sharing (ISAF information classified)
- volatile security situation in some parts of the country
- need to de-conflict projects and actions

What <u>local, regional or Afghan national authorities</u> did your PRT (or Battalion / Battle-group / GTIA) interact with in Afghanistan? Did the sub-units have regular interaction with these actors? Describe the practical "daily business" as well as the cultural and language barriers that were discovered.

Actors:
- official central government, province and district level authorities
- other public sphere contacts (political, media, education, business etc.)
- local, tribal and religious leaders (*maliks*, *mullahs*, landowners, elders)

Interaction:
- information sharing, regular meetings, participation in *shuras*, HUMINT contacts
- CIMIC projects, humanitarian assistance, local acquisitions when possible
- horizontal contact arrangements (example: PRT – Province governor, MOTs – District governor)

Problems in interaction:
- interpreters limiting the quality of interaction (delays and inaccurate translations)
- locals having high expectations

What <u>local legitimate armed forces or local security forces</u> did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) interact with in Afghanistan? What was the lowest level of force mixture (battalion / company / platoon)? Describe the practical "daily business" as well as the cultural and language barriers that were discovered.

Actors:
- ANA
- ANP with its special and local branches

Interaction:
- information sharing, regular meetings
- co-location of units
- joint/mixed patrolling and operations, training activities, monitoring and mentoring
- focus in populated areas, trying to promote the status of the ANA/ANP
- medical training and support (casualty evacuation), material support (fuel, food, water), EOD support and training, prisoner handling coordination
- OMLTs (ISAF) and ETTs (OEF) in an important role in practical liaison

Problems in interaction
- local people's distrust of ANP
- police corruption, possible "dicking" (watching and reporting ISAF movement)
- language and cultural barriers (e.g. ANA/ANP homosexual activities)
- ANA/ANP poor level of competence

What <u>other armed groups</u> (guerillas, insurgents, terrorists, criminals etc.) did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) interact with in Afghanistan? Did your unit or its subunits negotiate or conduct liaison with them? Did the groups communicate with your unit or its subunits before an attack / engagement or after such an event?

Actors:
- criminal networks
- "hardliners" (Taliban, al Qaeda, insurgents, terrorists)
- warlords and armed factions
- "accidental guerillas" (locals)

Interaction:
- some HUMINT contacts
- mainly split opinions (some claimed to have had interaction with these groups, some insisted not having any direct dialogue, some said it was impossible to know who were who)
- information operations executed by both sides
- ISAF targeted by armed action (rocket attacks, IEDs, suicide bombers, riots etc.)
- ISAF engaging these groups through kinetic operations (British and French respondents only)

Problems in interaction:
- same people may have dual roles (officials with criminal activities, villager becomes an insurgent by night etc.)
- blurring of roles between political parties and armed groups, warlords and politicians
- unarmed insurgents present in *shuras*, impossible to identify
- suffering casualties

What kind of <u>media</u> (international, national, regional and local) did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) interact with in Afghanistan? Did the sub-units have regular interaction with these actors? Describe the practical "daily business" as well as the cultural and language barriers that were discovered.

Actors:
- commercial media (local, regional, international)
- commercial and armed forces media of the troop-contributing countries
- ISAF media operations (media teams, ISAF and NATO journalists)
- embedded journalists (especially with the British forces)

Interaction:
- meetings with mullahs, elders and in *shuras* => information operations
- using info ops tools (leaflets, loudspeakers, radio and TV broadcasts)
- supporting and financing local media
- PR campaigns, interviewing soldiers and publishing stories on operations
- local media people as HUMINT contacts

Problems in interaction:
- international media interest only at the operational level
- local and regional authorities as well as the insurgents use information ops

Describe the problematic of <u>identifying non-combatants and combatants</u> in your operational area(s). What practical lessons were learned in daily operations?

Usually they are impossible to identify on sight. Possible indicators include:
- possession of weapons (although not a definitive identifying factor) or IED parts
- posture and attitude, so-called "combat indicators" (e.g. firing towards ISAF troops, children running away etc.)
- age, clothing, physical condition and capabilities (fighting age)
- situation/context/environment of the encounter

- social network analysis, who inhabitants associate with, official and unofficial status
- biometric devices and measures (photographs, eye iris and fingerprint identification) improve force protection and help in long-term in a country without proper ID papers

Observations:
- Calm areas may be safe havens for combatants. Cities are more problematic than villages, as even local inhabitants have difficulties identifying the strangers.
- Insurgents are well-aware of the ROEs and know how to exploit them. "Dicking" is common - there is a need to alternate patterns and operating methods. Leaving the base is the most vulnerable point, as exits are limited.
- Same people and areas usually connected with all sorts of trouble.
- Checkpoints are necessary to limit the freedom of movement of the insurgents.
- Insurgents use local weapons caches to be able to travel unarmed.

Describe the public environment of your PRT's (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) area of operations. This should include <u>where the people met and discussed</u>; how and where they got their daily and other information; with what means did they communicate with each other?

Official sphere:
- provincial and district offices
- police and military bases and headquarters

Public sphere:
- marketplaces, bazaars, village squares
- *shuras*
- mosques, religious meetings
- streets, alleyways, yards
- checkpoints

Private sphere – homes.

Observations:
- Word of mouth information is crucial for the locals. This includes rumors, meetings, news given at prayers, the use of mobile phones etc. This information exchange should not be underestimated, as word spreads very fast indeed.
- Radio is more important than written information, as illiteracy is very high.

Describe <u>the effects of news, rumors and hearsay,</u> of local or outside origin, on the local population. How did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) learn to know this information? How did your unit try to tell the "ISAF version" of the story? Were you able to win the "storytelling contest" and to be "first with the truth"?

Observations:
- This is everyday business. Afghans like stories and rumors are often considered as truth by the locals.
- The need for official approval slows down ISAF "master messages", whereas other parties are not required to stick to the truth. ISAF also invests a lot of effort in correcting false information.
- Constant Taliban presence, the superiority of religious networks as information providers and mistrust for anything foreign creates disadvantage for ISAF.
- Storytelling can be won by building confidence in the long run. This only works with the people you know and work with. You can only lose face once in Afghanistan.
- In rural areas, information ops are not possible through the media. It has to be done in meetings and by patrols.

PART II / INTERACTION OF A TACTICAL UNIT AND OTHER ACTORS

What permanent static deployment options were used? Was your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) deployed centrally on a big secure base or were the subunits living in their own areas of operation? Were the subunits rotated in these smaller bases? If yes, how long did these rotations usually last?

Deployment options:
- static bases (RC, PRT or TF main bases, national support bases)
- forward operating bases (FOBs), provincial offices and safe houses
- permanent observation posts and checkpoints

Observations:
- many countries use six-month troop rotations in general
- sub-units were either rotated in FOBs (British 2-month rotations) from the main bases or they were deployed there permanently (French and Finnish systems)
- R&R policies vary from nation to nation

What maneuver options were used? Describe the patrolling or other measures to provide a safe and secure environment. Did the subunits deploy in temporary short-term patrol bases, observation posts or checkpoints? What was the usual duration of operations (outside the base)?

Non-kinetic stability operations (referred to by all respondents):
- patrolling (observation, liaison, presence patrolling, urban patrolling)
- some patrols last several days – patrols build temporary LUPs at night
- co-patrolling and training exercises with ANA/ANP
- other framework security operations (temporary OPs and CPs)
- CIMIC operations

Defensive operations:
- base security
- fire support plans and air support
- close patrolling around bases
- SIGINT/ELINT measures

Offensive operations (only British and French Kapisa Province respondents):
- ambushes
- offensive reconnaissance
- targeting and striking enemy concentrations and areas of threat

How did these deployment and maneuver options affect your interaction with the local people or the other actors within the PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA)? Did you feel accepted and welcome? If not, describe the situations, when the actions of your unit or its subunits were not accepted by other actors.

On the personal level, most respondents felt that ISAF was accepted and welcomed by locals. Some areas were considered more easygoing, some more difficult. The British respondents were not this positive. They emphasized problems and limitations to interaction (Taliban pressure on locals, ISAF-Taliban fighting, poppy farming etc.).

Coming in undetected or staying too long was mentioned as making people nervous. Children's reactions were a good initial indicator of the general feeling. Own action (such as dress code, display of weapons, playing with children, being on foot rather than in vehicles, combining CIMIC and medical action with other functions) may also have a strong influence.

Money flow and ongoing aid projects normally provide a better atmosphere locally. "Black operations" or operations of "outside units" cause more friction.

How well did your troops learn to know the local population and other actors, Afghan or international? Were they able to establish regular personal contacts for information gathering? What were the <u>major cultural difficulties or limiting factors</u> when establishing these contacts?

> The Nordic respondents were very positive about this. Combat unit commanders from the UK described their contacts as very limited, and *shuras* and intelligence sources seemed to be important for them.
>
> National procedures, training, cultural awareness, rotation length and other differences were mentioned as factors influencing networking locally.
>
> The motivation of contacts and their carefulness about future consequences were mentioned as limiting factors. Contact handover due to rotations is tricky. Not being able to speak with women is another culture related limitation.

Did your PRT (or Battalion / Battlegroup / GTIA) <u>actively search for the enemy to engage it?</u> In what kind of combat engagements was your unit involved? What was the usual level of actual firefights (battalion / company / platoon)? Was your unit attacked or ambushed by armed groups? In your opinion, why did these attacks happen?

> Purely offensive action was only mentioned by the British and by the French (Kapisa Province). Active intelligence/info gathering and search operations were more commonly known. All units, whether mobile or static, prepare for defensive action.
>
> Commonly shared experiences included rocket and mortar attacks, small arms and RPG fire against mobile call signs, IED incidents and riots. Only the Nordic respondents speculated reasons for these. The most typical view was that ISAF was targeted when deploying in a wrong area or interfering in someone's business.

Describe the effects on your troops when <u>changing from social action into combat action and back</u>. How quickly did they have to adjust to these changes? Were some missions purely combat missions? Were your bases secure enough for rest and recovery from operations?
(Social action = peaceful, non-violent interaction and communication)
(Combat action = participating in combat / being under fire or a direct threat of attack).

> The key thing seems to be - regardless of the current task - being prepared for combat. Cumulating stress and after-action procedures were mentioned. Opinions on base security levels were largely divided. Welfare, R&R and rotation lengths are issues to consider.
>
> ISAF maneuver units, such as 42 Commando Group, 3 Para Battlegroup and 8RPIMa, were more oriented in kinetic operations than the PRTs, who were more stability oriented.

PART III / OTHER INFORMATION

How "culturally aware" was your national unit in general? What kind of theater rotation system was used (changes of personnel, tour lengths etc.)? How long was the mission specific training before deploying to Afghanistan? Was the preparatory training educative enough? What were the major shortcomings and strengths in terms of cultural awareness?

Although some of the opinions were divided, most of the respondents – in hindsight - felt that the cultural awareness level was good. Some very critical individual opinions were expressed.

Finnish respondents had received the shortest mission specific training, lasting only from two-six weeks. Other countries, including Norway and Sweden, had used three-six months of pre-deployment training. The outcome again divided opinions, except for the French and the British, who were unilaterally happy with their training.

Six-seven month long rotations were most commonly mentioned. The Finns had the possibility to extend their tour for another six months.

Previous experience is a booster for cultural awareness, as the individuals or the whole unit has become used to dealing with different cultures.

Describe the use and skills of your interpreters or language assistants. Were they locally employed or organic to your national unit (deployed with the unit as specialists)? Did you use local security or military forces as scouts, translators or cultural advisors?

All respondents had experience with locally hired interpreters. Most also mentioned military language specialists. Although the locals were often high quality (young people with high education and good English skills), they also faced criticism ("dicking", security risks, homosexuality). These locals were also considered the best sources of cultural awareness; they served as indicators for danger or tensions and also as "door openers" at meetings.

The French reported more difficulties than others with interpreters, as their sub-unit leaders had poor levels of English, and most of the locally hired interpreters did not speak French.