Joint Special Operations University
7701 Tampa Point Boulevard
MacDill AFB FL 33621

https://jsou.socom.mil

JSOU Report 11-1 Cross-Cultural Competence and Small Groups Turnley

JSOU

Cross-Cultural Competence and Small Groups: Why SOF are the way SOF are

Jessica Glicken Turnley
JSOU Report 11-1
March 2011

Joint Special Operations University and the Strategic Studies Department

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) provides its publications to contribute toward expanding the body of knowledge about joint special operations. JSOU publications advance the insights and recommendations of national security professionals and the Special Operations Forces (SOF) students and leaders for consideration by the SOF community and defense leadership.

JSOU is the educational component of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. The JSOU mission is to educate SOF executive, senior, and intermediate leaders and selected other national and international security decision makers, both military and civilian, through teaching, outreach, and research in the science and art of joint special operations. JSOU provides education to the men and women of SOF and to those who enable the SOF mission in a joint and interagency environment.

JSOU conducts research through its Strategic Studies Department where effort centers upon the USSOCOM and United States SOF missions:

> **USSOCOM mission.** USSOCOM provides fully capable and enabled SOF to defend the nation's interests in an environment characterized by irregular warfare.
>
> **USSOF mission.** USSOF conducts special operations to prepare the operational environment, prevent crisis, and respond with speed, aggression, and lethality to achieve tactical through strategic effect.

The Strategic Studies Department also provides teaching and curriculum support to Professional Military Education institutions—the staff colleges and war colleges. It advances SOF strategic influence by its interaction in academic, interagency, and United States military communities.

The JSOU public Web page is located at https://jsou.socom.mil.

Joint Special Operations University

Brian A. Maher, Ed.D., SES, *President*
Kenneth H. Poole, Ed.D., *Strategic Studies Department Director*

Jeffrey W. Nelson, Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.; Juan Alvarez, Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret.; William C. Jones, GS-15, CIA, Ret. — *Resident Senior Fellows*

Editorial Advisory Board

John B. Alexander
Ph.D., Education, *The Apollinaire Group and JSOU Senior Fellow*

Roby C. Barrett, Ph.D., Middle Eastern & South Asian History
Public Policy Center Middle East Institute and JSOU Senior Fellow

Joseph D. Celeski
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.
JSOU Senior Fellow

Chuck Cunningham
Lieutenant General, U.S. Air Force, Ret.
Professor of Strategy, Joint Advanced Warfighting School and JSOU Senior Fellow

Thomas H. Henriksen
Ph.D., History, *Hoover Institution Stanford University and JSOU Senior Fellow*

Russell D. Howard
Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Ret.
Adjunct Faculty, Defense Critical Language/ Culture Program, Mansfield Center, University of Montana and JSOU Senior Fellow

John D. Jogerst
Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret.
18th USAF Special Operations School Commandant

James Kiras
Ph.D., History, *School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Air University and JSOU Associate Fellow*

William W. Mendel,
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.
JSOU Senior Fellow

Alvaro de Souza Pinheiro
Major General, Brazilian Army, Ret.
JSOU Associate Fellow

James F. Powers, Jr.
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.
JSOU Senior Fellow

Richard H. Shultz, Jr.
Ph.D., Political Science
Director, International Security Studies Program, The Fletcher School, Tufts University and JSOU Senior Fellow

Stephen Sloan
Ph.D., Comparative Politics
University of Central Florida and JSOU Senior Fellow

Robert G. Spulak, Jr.
Ph.D., Physics/Nuclear Engineering
Sandia National Laboratories and JSOU Associate Fellow

Joseph S. Stringham
Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Ret.
Alutiiq, LLC and JSOU Associate Fellow

Graham H. Turbiville, Jr.
Ph.D., History, *Courage Services, Inc. and JSOU Associate Fellow*

Jessica Glicken Turnley
Ph.D., Cultural Anthropology/ Southeast Asian Studies
Galisteo Consulting Group and JSOU Senior Fellow

Rich Yarger
Ph.D., History, *Ministerial Reform Analyst; U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute and JSOU Senior Fellow*

On the cover.

Top, April 2010. A Special Forces medic assists a local villager with his paperwork from a hospital in Kandahar province during a medical and veterinarian engagement in the Gereshk Valley, Helmand province. U.S. Army photo.

Bottom, June 2009. Navy SEALs prepare to cross Phelan Creek during exercise Northern Edge 2009 at Fort Wainwright, Alaska. U.S. Air Force photo.

Cross-Cultural Competence and Small Groups: Why SOF are the way SOF are

Jessica Glicken Turnley

JSOU Report 11-1
The JSOU Press
MacDill Air Force Base, Florida
2011

This monograph and other JSOU publications can be found at https://jsou.socom.mil. Click on Publications. Comments about this publication are invited and should be forwarded to Director, Strategic Studies Department, Joint Special Operations University, 7701 Tampa Point Blvd., MacDill AFB FL 33621.

****

The JSOU Strategic Studies Department is currently accepting written works relevant to special operations for potential publication. For more information please contact the JSOU Research Director at jsou_research@socom.mil. Thank you for your interest in the JSOU Press.

****

This work was cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

ISBN 1-933749-52-0

The views expressed in this publication are entirely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views, policy or position of the United States Government, Department of Defense, United States Special Operations Command, or the Joint Special Operations University.

Recent Publications of the JSOU Press

Africa: Irregular Warfare on the Dark Continent, May 2009, John B. Alexander

USSOCOM Research Topics 2010

Report of Proceedings, 4th Annual Sovereign Challenge Conference (16–19 March 2009)

Information Warfare: Assuring Digital Intelligence Collection, July 2009, William G. Perry

Educating Special Forces Junior Leaders for a Complex Security Environment, July 2009, Russell D. Howard

Manhunting: Counter-Network Operations for Irregular Warfare, September 2009, George A. Crawford

Irregular Warfare: Brazil's Fight Against Criminal Urban Guerrillas, September 2009, Alvaro de Souza Pinheiro

Pakistan's Security Paradox: Countering and Fomenting Insurgencies, December 2009, Haider A.H. Mullick

Hunter-Killer Teams: Attacking Enemy Safe Havens, January 2010, Joseph D. Celeski

Report of Proceedings, Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Society Symposium, *Irregular Warfare and the OSS Model* (2–4 November 2009)

U.S. Military Engagement with Mexico: Uneasy Past and Challenging Future, March 2010, Graham H. Turbiville, Jr.

Afghanistan, Counterinsurgency, and the Indirect Approach, April 2010, Thomas H. Henriksen

2010 JSOU and NDIA SO/LIC Division Essays, May 2010

USSOCOM Research Topics 2011

Hezbollah: Social Services as a Source of Power, June 2010, James B. Love

Convergence: Special Operations Forces and Civilian Law Enforcement, July 2010, Joseph B. Alexander

Report of Proceedings, 5th Annual Sovereign Challenge Conference (8–11 March 2010)

Terrorist-Insurgent Thinking and Joint Special Operational Planning Doctrine and Procedures, September 2010, Laure Paquette

Innovate or Die: Innovation and Technology for Special Operations, December 2010, Robert G. Spulak, Jr.

Contents

Foreword ix

About the Author xi

Forward-Deployed Warrior Diplomats: SOF and Cross-Cultural Competence

1. Introduction 1
2. What is a Warrior Diplomat? 5
3. SOF and the Concept of Culture 13
4. Selecting and Assessing for Cross-Cultural Competence 27
5. SOF, General Purpose Forces, and Cultural Knowledge.....43
6. SOF as Forward-Deployed Warrior Diplomats.....45

Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece: Small Groups and SOF

1. Introduction 47
2. The Order of Battle and the Nature of Groups 51
3. Organizational Structure and Friction 55
4. Teams and Other Organizational Forms 59
5. Does Group Size Matter? 63
6. Summary and Conclusion 65

Endnotes 69

Foreword

Dr. Turnley has contributed two papers addressing the community's interest on who we are and why we are successful in our operations. The two papers are titled *Forward-Deployed Warrior Diplomats: SOF and Cross-Cultural Competence* and *Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece: Small Groups and Special Operations Forces*. These two papers are combined for this monograph to provoke the community's thinking of who we are and how we are organized.

The *Forward-Deployed* paper asserts that SOF effectiveness of "by, with, and through" depends on our skills as warrior diplomats. This focus includes our cultural understanding and language skills or cross-cultural competency. Her paper on *Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece* links the competency to SOF small units as a reason for special operation successes.

SOCOM is promoting the concept of the 3-D warrior. The Ds are diplomacy, defense, and development, which are consistent with by, with, and through. The execution of the 3-Ds vary by the SOF component due to organization, mission, and unit structure. She explains the size issue of the unit in her *Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece*.

Dr. Turnley makes several important points on cultural competency and its impact on mission. In addition to language skills, SOF warriors need to understand the culture of the supported nation. This understanding will afford the SOF warrior a higher probability of success in Dr. Turnley's model of force persuasion. She further develops her position by exploring the relationship between language, culture, and regional knowledge.

She makes a crucial point about Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) for SOF. The difference between IDAD and foreign internal defense (FID) is that IDAD requires more cross-cultural skills than FID does. Any unit can conduct FID, but IDAD needs specialists — SOF troops. Dr. Turnley emphasizes this point in *Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece* by pointing out the key points from William McRaven's book, *Spec Ops* on the essential principles of special operations. Two of those principles seen as critical in IDAD are purpose and simplicity. SOF regional orientation realizes purpose and simplicity. This contributes to a focus that can stimu-

late a feeling of collective purpose. Their combination allows SOF units to work the IDAD campaign.

Dr. Turnley's two papers cause us to reflect on who we are, what we should do, and how we are organized. Our understanding of cultural, language, and SOF core activities permit the collective conscience to become that 3-D warrior.

Kenneth H. Poole, Ed.D., GS-14
Director, JSOU Strategic Studies Department

About the Author

Dr. Jessica Turnley is president of Galisteo Consulting Group, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico and a senior fellow with the JSOU Strategic Studies Department. She provides services in the national security arena, in strategic business planning, organizational development, corporate culture change, policy analysis, and economic development to a wide variety of clients in the public and private sector. Dr. Turnley works directly with the intelligence community, including service on the Defense Intelligence Agency's Advisory Board and with other agencies in both programmatic/analytic and organizational development capacities. She has worked with various offices in the Department of Defense as well as with United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). She also works on a consulting basis with Sandia National Laboratories. Her technical work includes projects focusing on computational social simulations; technologies for smart, secure international borders; explorations of techniques to detect deception; and explorations of the ways in which organizational structures and management approaches affect the practice of warfare, national security, and science.

Dr. Turnley has helped the Environmental Protection Agency develop approaches to assess social, cultural, and economic impacts at Superfund sites; participated in regional economic development efforts; and engaged in organizational audits and development projects for local organizations. Prior to Galisteo, Dr. Turnley worked for ecological planning & toxicology, inc., focusing on risk communication and stakeholder involvement in public decision-making. In this capacity, she has given workshops in China and Poland on citizen involvement and participated in efforts to formalize public participation in environmental management in the U.S.

Dr. Turnley served as a technical manager at Sandia National Laboratories for programs ranging from the development of a GIS-based

information management tool on the safety of nuclear reactors around the world to methods for evaluating the success of government-funded research programs. Prior to Sandia, she started and ran a nonprofit business assistance center for women in New Mexico called WESST Corp; as one of its funders, the Small Business Administration praised the center as giving the best value for the dollar. Dr. Turnley has a B.A. in Anthropology and English Literature from University of California, Santa Cruz; an M.A. in Social Anthropology from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; and a Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology and Southeast Asian Studies from Cornell University. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Indonesia and has published as both Jessica Glicken and Jessica Turnley. Her prior JSOU publications are *Theoretical Perspectives of Terrorist Enemies as Networks* (October 2005), *Implications for Network-Centric Warfare* (March 2006), and *Retaining a Precarious Value as Special Operations Goes Mainstream* (February 2008).

Forward-Deployed Warrior Diplomats: SOF and Cross-Cultural Competence

> War and diplomacy, though in a sense alternative methods of adjusting to reality, are linked to such an extent and in so many ways that one cannot give a full account of the meaning of either without dwelling at length on its relations with … the other.
>
> — Adam Watson[1]

1. Introduction

The *Capstone Concept for Special Operations* characterized Special Operations Forces (SOF) personnel as "forward-deployed warrior diplomats focused on building long-term, positive relationships throughout the world."[2] Although this document has been discontinued (effective 20 January 2009), the concept is still very visible in the SOF universe. The recently issued United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Strategic Plan, *Focus Area 1: The Operator* claims that "The Operator needs to be prepared to excel across the myriad of defense, diplomacy, and development activities…. while maintaining an unparalleled capability to employ direct action when necessary."[3] Admiral Olson, commander of USSOCOM, spoke explicitly of the need for SOF to develop skills that enable nonkinetic as well as kinetic approaches in his 2009 posture statement in testimony before Congress:

> The complexity of today's and tomorrow's strategic environments requires that our SOF operators maintain not only the highest levels of warfighting expertise but also cultural knowledge and diplomacy skills. We are developing "3-D operators"— members of a multi-dimensional force prepared to lay the groundwork in the myriad diplomatic, development, and defense activities that contribute to our Government's pursuit of our vital national interests.[4]

These official statements all emphasize the importance of leveraging the well-known kinetic abilities of special operations with a nonkinetic approach. They couch it in the language of diplomacy and promote a military component that is equally well versed in kinetic and nonkinetic methods. This discussion will address the warrior-diplomat construct, asking if it provides an accurate description of SOF as a force skilled in more than one way to achieve strategic ends. It also will check the notion that this competency is part of what distinguishes SOF, as a force, from General Purpose Forces (GPF).

We have a good sense of what it means to be an excellent warrior. SOF's special warfighting skills are celebrated and have led to significant successes in yesterday's and today's conflicts. SOF's diplomatic or nonkinetic skills are more problematic, however. Doctrinal and other source materials do not directly address the definitional question — what does it mean to be a diplomat and how would we know if we saw one. They do suggest, however, that diplomatic skills are operationalized through the exercise of competencies in cross-cultural interaction and communication. This discussion will explore the ways in which SOF addresses these competencies by looking at how the various service components select and assess candidates. Given the recent (and still contested) interest in cultural competence among the GPF, this monograph addresses the ways in which SOF exercise this competency differently than the GPF.

The definition of a diplomat will set the initial parameters for this discussion. An effective diplomat is able to persuasively engage with populations who apply different sense-making strategies to the world than he does. He must be able to understand, engage, and convince populations with profoundly different frames of reference — populations that have different cultures.

An effective diplomat is able to persuasively engage with populations who apply different sense-making strategies to the world than he does.

The definition will be followed by an exploration of what it means to be cross-culturally competent. That will include a definition of culture, arguing that it is not a *thing* but an ever-evolving set of sense-making strategies or frames of reference. The argument will be toward a distinction between *cross-cultural competency*, which is defined as the ability to quickly learn to operate efficiently in any culture, and *culture-specific or regional knowledge*

that equips one to behave appropriately in a particular culture. The suggestion is that culture-general knowledge is a strategic skill that allows one to operate tactically. Culture-specific knowledge is tactical knowledge — time- and space-specific knowledge applicable to a particular operation. Ideally the operator will be proficient in both domains.

The monograph will include a discussion of the relationship between cultural competency and language. This section will close with a look at how cross-cultural competency is measured and assessed.

The ability to operate cross-culturally has long been touted as one of the hallmarks of SOF, particularly of Army Special Forces (SF). This monograph explores if and how the various service special operations components select and assess candidates for their ability to operate cross-culturally. Among other things, this will address the unequal distribution of this competency across the SOF service components. The information in this section is based on interviews conducted with personnel at the various service components and with active duty SOF operators.

The final part of this work will address current interest in developing and transmitting knowledge about the human terrain within the Department of Defense. The profile of culture and its importance as a component of successful warfighting has risen significantly within the defense community as a whole as that community has embraced the tenants of irregular warfare. This monograph addresses whether there is a difference between the ways in which the GPF and SOF develop and use cultural knowledge, if in fact there is a difference. Has an increased focus on irregular warfare simply forced the GPF to adopt a skill set long at work within SOF, or do SOF retain either a special type of knowledge (special within the military) or a special way to apply knowledge more broadly held?

2. What is a Warrior Diplomat?

The recent focus on the direct action mission of SOF in the Middle East has underscored the breadth and quality of the fighting skills of SOF operators. What, however, does it mean to be a diplomat, and how does this leverage SOF's warrior capabilities?

Definition of Diplomacy

A commonly accepted definition of diplomacy argues that its "chief purpose is to enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policies without resort to force, propaganda, or law."[5] The effective exercise of diplomacy is thus generally understood to depend heavily on the art of negotiation and persuasion and to avoid the use of force.

Duties of a diplomat fall into three general categories:

a. The first is to serve as the formal representative of one government to another, a role that is often characterized as *ceremonial*. However, under this rubric lie many substantive activities, such as the management of ongoing relationships, the promotion of interests or agendas, and threat management — that is, "coping with adverse developments affecting key interests."[6]
b. The second category of duties is the explanation and defense of particular policies or positions. Negotiation of formal treaties and agreements would be included here.
c. The third is to serve an information-gathering function for the home government, providing timely warning of potentially adverse developments.[7]

All three of the diplomatic tasks involve negotiation between the diplomat and some member of the indigenous population. Negotiation is a discussion intended to produce a mutually acceptable outcome. In order for that to happen, the parties to the negotiation must be persuaded to change their initial positions. Persuasion refers to "any procedure with the potential to change someone's mind," ultimately resulting in a change in behavior.[8] It is distinguished from the use of force (coercion), which also can result in a change of behavior by inducing fear but without effecting a change in attitude.[9]

Persuasion involves a sender (i.e., a diplomat), a receiver, and a message. Efforts to persuade, to change someone's mind, engage both emotion and cognition on the part of the receiver.[10] The receiver subjects the source of the message (the diplomat) and the message itself to separate analytic processes, in what is called a dual process model.[11] The receiver processes and responds to the message cognitively and to the diplomat, the sender, emotionally. See Figure 1. The sender crafts a message (Step 1). The receiver separately perceives the sender and the message (Step 2). He then separately responds to each (Step 3).

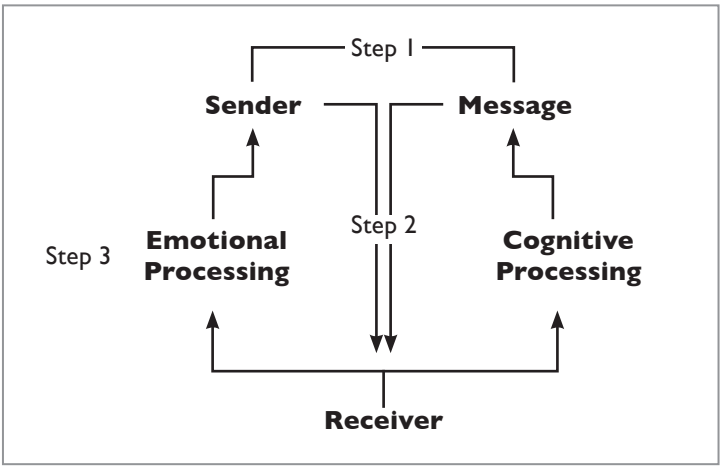


Figure 1. The Persuasion Pathway

All persuasive acts involve both modes of processing. At issue is their relative impact on any given interaction.

The relative impact of cognitive processing is dependent upon the motivation and capability of the receiver. If the receiver finds the message to be congruent with his existing knowledge base and value system, he will process it cognitively (think about it) and internalize it, resulting in long-term behavioral change. In this case, the diplomat must craft a message that achieves his purpose while engaging the value and knowledge systems of the receiver. The establishment of the legitimacy of a governmental regime will involve some high level of internalization, for example. Legitimacy is established when the subject population believes that the regime operates fairly over time. Note that perceptions of fairness are locally defined. "It

is the *population* that bestows legitimacy upon a regime: a regime cannot develop a set of features that would characterize it as legitimate, irrespective of the attitudes of the local population."[12] For example, Thomas Johnson and M. Chris Mason argue that governments in Afghanistan historically acquired and exercised power either through kinship structures or through religious legitimation. If this is true, they go on to say, a democratically elected government in Afghanistan is illegitimate *by definition* because it came to power in a manner that is not in accordance with local beliefs about how power is acquired.[13]

If the receiver focuses on the source of the message — the sender — for cues as to whether he should be persuaded (change his mind), he will look for characteristics of the sender that make him attractive to the receiver. These usually are characteristics based on some perceived similarity (also called *homophily*).[14] Most often this similarity is one of values or of other dimensions that are perceived as good, comforting, or reassuring in some way. It is an affective or emotional response, not a cognitive response. The resulting behavioral change comes from identification of the receiver with the sender. This kind of behavior change requires frequent reinforcement to maintain.[15, 16] If we continue our legitimacy example, a citizen (receiver) can be persuaded to submit to a governmental regime because of his identification with a particular individual who is a part of that regime (a sender) — for example, a charismatic leader. However, if we assume the response is an affective one to cues the sender provides, if that sender goes away or stops interacting with the receiver, the citizen will stop the desired behavior. There can be a point over time, however, where the sender can transfer the response from himself to the abstraction of the regime, if he crafts the appropriate message in terms congruent with local values and belief structures.

In both types of persuasive mechanisms, the sender must be cognizant of the drivers of local behaviors. Knowledge of local value systems that can elicit emotional or affective responses and of local belief systems, which can affect the cognitive acceptability of a message, all will contribute significantly to the effectiveness of the diplomat.

Diplomacy and War

In general, states have institutionally separated war and diplomacy. In the United States, the Department of Defense (DoD) and the military services

prosecute war. The Department of State and the diplomatic service conduct diplomacy.

Some analysts focus on the strategic ends of states rather than the specific means at their disposal to achieve them when discussing war and diplomacy. This focus on ends rather than means begins to blur the line between the two approaches to achieve them.

> War and diplomacy, though in a sense alternative methods of adjusting to reality, are linked to such an extent and in so many ways that one cannot give a full account of the meaning of either without dwelling at length on its relations with … the other. War and diplomacy are inseparably joined under the common heading of means by which states, in pursuit of their interests, bring their power to bear on one another.[17]

Coercive diplomacy offers an example where the line is blurred between force and persuasion. Coercive diplomacy "aims to compel changes in behavior using threats, sanctions, and withdrawal or denial of rewards."[18] It is a bridge between the classic diplomatic language of persuasion and compromise and the language of force of war. The Cuban missile crisis and the *derogueing* of Libya as it voluntarily gave up its weapons of mass destruction are examples of coercive diplomacy.[19] As R. P. Barston argues, "Coercive action moves diplomacy into a grey area … Diplomacy no longer is distinguished by … argument and persuasion in which the parties achieve degrees of mutual benefit, but rather compellence through force."[20]

The DoD also blurs the line between war and other means of international engagement when addressing questions of national strategy. The DoD definition of the strategic level of war makes no explicit mention of the use of force. The strategic level of war is "[t]he level of war at which a nation, often as a member of a group of nations, determines national or multinational (alliance or coalition) strategic security objectives and guidance, and develops and uses national resources to achieve these objectives."[21] The definition explicitly speaks of "the use of military *and other instruments of national power*" (emphasis added) in this definition of war.[22]

Clausewitz saw the distinction between war and other political tools as one of means, not of kind. He pointed out that war is, above all, a political act. It always must be waged with the political end in mind, or it becomes not war but merely violence.[23]

It is useful to think of the space between war and diplomacy as a continuum, rather than to think of the two as discrete approaches; see Figure 2. The choice of means can be somewhere between the pure use of force and a reliance solely on persuasion. As with most archetypes, we never find situations located at the ends of the spectrum. At one end, we would be in pure violence, not war, as war always has a political component. At the other, we would find ineffective persuasion, for it would lack any means of compellance.

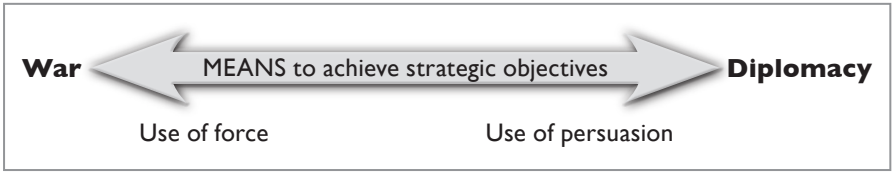


Figure 2. Force-Persuasion Continuum

Both war and diplomacy thus operate at the strategic level in the interactions among states. They both serve as means to "enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policies …"

In most cases, the strategic means at the end of the continuum in Figure 2 are the provenance of separate sets of people and operationalized through separate institutions, which then must be coordinated. One of the reasons SOF are so (theoretically) effective is that they offer the state the ability to exercise both these means through the same institution (the SOF) and the same men (the operators).

When Warriors Serve as Diplomats

Diplomatic communications about national strategies and objectives are conversations between states, not individuals. A diplomat, when speaking in his official capacity, is an officer or representative of the state, serving as "its agent of nonviolent interaction with other states and peoples."[24] He represents the interests of the state, not his own. He is formally accredited as the agent of the state and must be formally recognized as such by the other parties to the conversation. The means by which such recognition takes place are set out in international treaties such as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, a United Nations treaty entered into force in 1964.[25]

An irregular war, by definition, is fought among state and nonstate actors. According to the Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept (IW JOC),

an irregular war is "a violent struggle among state and nonstate actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations."[26] The ultimate objective is to change the local population's *perception* of a regime. This struggle will involve violence, but it is only won when the population changes its mind — is persuaded, not when it simply changes its behavior, which can happen through (coercion). Neither the government nor the military are the targets of the struggle, although both are engaged. As has been said often, in irregular warfare the *people are the center of gravity*. The now iconic graphic from the IW JOC version 1.0, shown here in Figure 3, shows the realignment of Clausewitz's trinity of government, population, and military.

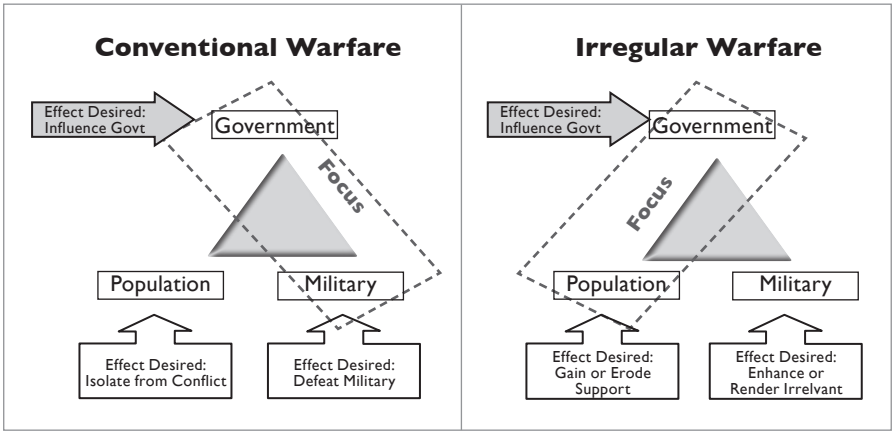


Figure 3. Contrasting Conventional and Irregular Warfare Source: IW JOC, version 1.0 (DoD)

We can achieve this influence over the population through coercion (which will change behavior but not minds), through tools more traditionally associated with diplomacy — that is, persuasion and negotiation (which will change minds and so behavior), or through both. In all cases, key interactions happen at the local level.

Traditional diplomats, individuals formally recognized by the country they serve and the country to which they are deployed, have a compromised role in irregular warfare. In a counterinsurgency operation, for example, by definition some critical portion of the population will not recognize the legitimacy of the current state regime (hence their status as insurgents). Therefore, they will not acknowledge or recognize any credentials that regime may bestow on representatives of a foreign government, nor

accept any agreements into which the current regime may enter with such representatives.

Players in irregular war may be nonstate actors. In these cases, we may find authority vested in local leaders such as tribal elders, or in the leaders of unincorporated, informal groups such as insurgent groups or religious communities. If this is so, the nature of diplomacy changes. The discourse does not take place among citizens of a globalized community who may be more like each other in many ways than they are like their local constituents. The language becomes one not of demarches and treaties and agreements between states, but a local language of security, food, and life and death negotiated among players on a local stage. Time frames are immediate. Negotiators are from the local population, and representatives of the foreign government are those personnel present in local venues, not in capital cities. Often these are military personnel, particularly if the situation is one which has already erupted in violence or has the potential to do so.

Players in irregular war may be nonstate actors.… the nature of diplomacy changes.

These kinds of scenarios have shaped the history of SOF. Engagement at the strategic level, which clearly places war in the national political arena, is not new to SOF. SOF have always been designated as the force of choice for actions that can have significant political impact. As codified in the mission of SOF in the most recent strategic plan, SOF are designed to "conduct special operations …. to achieve tactical through strategic effect." [27] The Army Special Forces recruiting Web page describes its SOF component as follows: "Special Forces (SF) … is an elite, multipurpose force for high priority operational targets of strategic importance." [28] FM 3-05, the doctrinal description of the Army Special Operations Force (ARSOF), which includes SF as its largest element, states that "ARSOF expands the options of the President, the SecDef [Secretary of Defense], and GCCs [geographical combatant commanders], particularly in crises and contingencies that fall between wholly diplomatic initiatives and the overt use of large conventional forces." [29] Every SOF operation theoretically is planned and executed with an eye to the geostrategic context. SOF thus operate tactically within a strategic context, recognizing that "the advancement of the political objective may take precedence over the military disadvantages." [30]

SOF have a long history of engagement with the local population. Some of the iconic images from Operation Enduring Freedom were of special

operators riding horseback side by side with Afghan fighters. Working by, through, and with indigenous populations has long been a characteristic of the unconventional warfare in which special operations engages.

In order to engage with a local population, the diplomat — who may be a SOF operator — must be able to speak their language, both literally and figuratively. He must be able to recognize and leverage local needs and desires if he is to manage the balance between nonkinetic means of persuasion (including the recruitment of the local population to act on their own behalf while furthering our objectives) and the direct application of force. This requires not only linguistic fluency but the ability to recognize and exploit local means of getting things done. In short, he must be cross-culturally competent.

3. SOF and the Concept of *Culture*

Admiral Olson also described efforts to beef up language and cultural knowledge across the special operations force in Congressional testimony:

> Last year [2008] we called attention to the importance of language and regional knowledge as essential to strengthening relations and facilitating more effective operations with foreign partners. … We have a long way to go in recognizing and incentivizing such expertise as an operational necessity before we can truly develop and sustain real experts in specific key regions around the world. I call this "Project Lawrence," after T. E. Lawrence of Arabia.

Among other efforts, Admiral Olson said SOF would be taking advantage of the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program, a DoD-wide pilot program to recruit aliens legally living in the U.S. but who are not citizens. The program — looking for "experts in language with associated cultural backgrounds" — will offer a path to citizenship through military service.[31] Through Project Lawrence, USSOCOM also will look at "historical models such as the Korean KATUSAs [Korean Augmentation Troops to the United States Army] and the Alamo Scouts who operated in the Philippines during World War II" to see if there are any relevant lessons that can be learned.[32]

These efforts focus on developing a cadre steeped in regional knowledge and proficient in the language of a particular area. The Army Special Forces, in particular, historically have been organized into regionally oriented groups that encourage and stimulate the development of regional knowledge and language skills. The 7th Group, for example, focuses on support to Latin America. It recruits heavily from the U.S. Latino population, many of whom speak a region-specific variant of Spanish as their first language and may have grown up in ethnic enclaves in the United States that are not much different culturally from the areas 7th Group serves.

Before USSOCOM, SOF, and the service special operations commands invest too heavily in the development of regional expertise, it is important that they clearly understand just what that development will yield. The strategic needs of USSOCOM, SOF, and the services may require a cadre

that has the capability to deploy anywhere and quickly pick up the skills and knowledge specific to a particular region. Immediate needs may require region-specific knowledge and languages. Are these mutually exclusive or supporting? The answers to these and other questions will influence resource allocation decisions, recruiting campaigns, and selection and assessment programs, among others.

The importance of this question is underscored by the demands the current conflict has put on SOF. In 2009, over 80 percent of forward-deployed SOF were in Iraq and Afghanistan.[33] As a consequence, USSOCOM reorganized the geographic assignments of the Special Forces groups. All groups would continue to provide operational support to the theater as the ops tempo required, whatever the regional proficiency of the operator. In addition, the geographic focus of some of the groups would be changed:[34]

a. Responsibility for leadership of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Forces (CJSOTFs) in the Middle East conflict area would be split between 5th Group in the south and west and 3rd Group in the north and east.
b. Sub-Saharan Africa, historically an area where 3rd Group had taken the lead, would be added to 10th Group's European responsibilities.
c. Latin America would continue as the focus of 7th Group, which would also support Northern Command (NORTHCOM) in North America.
d. The Asia-Pacific region would continue as the purview of 1st Group.

As the global ops tempo changes, the regional focus of elements of the force and of individual operators have shifted to different parts of the globe. We find SOF operators who are native Spanish speakers in Iraq. SOF knowledgeable about the Philippines are deployed to Afghanistan. How quickly can these men learn to function effectively in entirely new cultures and speaking different languages? Do they have an aptitude for this type of interaction that goes beyond a collection of behavioral facts or vocabulary sets? What is cross-cultural competence?

The next section will delve into the question of culture. It will address the attribute of cross-cultural competence, asking how it is assessed and measured. It will look at the relationship between linguistic capability and cross-cultural competence and ask if either or both are aptitudes with which an individual is born or skills he can learn. The discussion will revolve around what is important to learn in this domain and where might the

different types of knowledge be useful. It will address the difference (and balance) between learning particular behaviors and specific languages and developing the general ability to recognize which behaviors might be important in a particular community and how the use of any language can affect relationships. This rather academic discussion will lay the groundwork for the data section that follows. The data were gathered from interviews with various SOF personnel to determine how the different service components select and assess candidates for their ability to leverage the cultural dimension to accomplish a wide variety of SOF missions.

What is *Culture*?

Culture is not an objective *thing*, something we can pick up and examine and then put back unchanged where we found it. Nor is it something through or over that we navigate (the *human terrain*), using it when we can but remaining distinct and separate from it.[35] A specific culture (Iranian culture or the culture of Silicon Valley or of the Marine Corps) is not something we can learn about without engaging with it — and, in the act of engaging with it, changing it. In short, culture exists only as it is produced.

A *culture* is a set of dynamic, ever-changing frames of reference. It is a set of perspectives and assumptions created, maintained, and changed by a group of people about the way the world works. These assumptions allow people in this group to create shared expectations about the behavior of others. They tell us what is relevant. These assumptions also color the way in which group members interpret and value what they see. These perspectives apply moral weight to behavior. They tell us what is *good* and *bad*, *right* and *wrong*. In the United States, for example, we expect to see women engaging visibly in public life. Not only do we expect women to visibly engage in public life, we believe it is *right* for them to do so because of the way in which we define and assign importance to the rights and dignity of the individual. (Although we also need to keep in mind that this perspective only gained wide currency in our country less than a century ago. The women's suffrage amendment, which gave women the vote, was passed in 1919.) These definitions and the level of importance of the individual differ dramatically in other parts of the world (in other cultures). For example, women's participation in public life is neither expected nor valued in many communities. In short, these frames of reference help make sense of the world for us.[36]

Culture thus is a set of perspectives, frames of reference, or sense-making strategies that:

a. Help us define what is relevant to us
b. Tell us how to value those things we have defined as relevant
c. And in so doing, create assumptions which guide our behavior.

Figure 4 shows this selection of relevant, and then valued, elements.

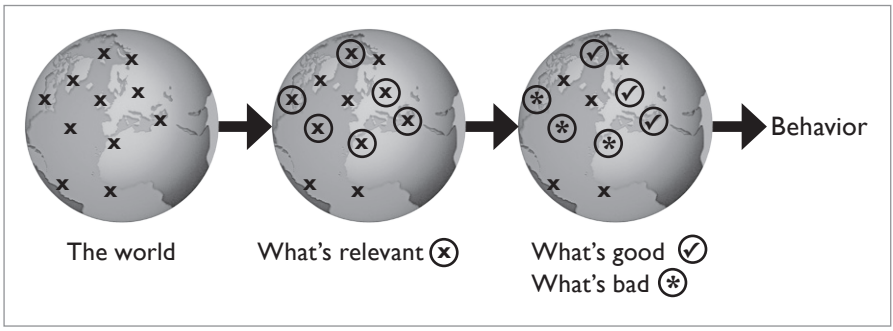


Figure 4. Culture as a Normative Selection from the Possible

These assumptions define what is natural in our social environment, thus are usually implicit. Most people cannot articulate them and generally are not aware that they are at play. The assumptions also are not evenly distributed across what we may define as a group. Take an American whose parents immigrated to the United States from Britain and who now lives in Washington D.C. and works at the Pentagon. Does he define himself in the same way as an American whose great-grandparents emigrated here from Mexico and who now lives in El Paso and does day labor? How would these two Americans react to questions of immigration reform or the establishment of English as a required national language? Members of even what are perceived as homogenous groups such as a military service or function differ in their individual interpretations of, for example "what it means to be a member of SOF."

And these assumptions are not static. They change over time. A few generations ago, the dominant perspective was that to be an American meant to speak English and to blend in, what we called the melting pot. Today, we print ballots in multiple languages and vigorously defend our rights to retain ethnic holidays and modes of dress. The relevant metaphor is a salad

bowl — distinct pieces of different kinds of stuff. We do not all agree that this is appropriate, but the prominence of this perspective and its impact on behavior and on policy is far different than it was a few generations ago.

Identity — the ways in which people define who they are — is key to accessing these assumptions and frames of reference. For example, what does it mean to be an Afghan? Some have argued that there is fundamentally no such thing as an indigenous Afghan identity, that it has been manufactured by Western interests.[37] However, an Afghan identity certainly has relevance to us. How do we think of someone who belongs to no state, who has no citizenship? But notions of statehood and citizenship may have no relevance to someone living along the Durand Line. He may think of himself as a Durani Pashtun, defining himself in terms of tribe and ethnic group — concepts which, in turn, have virtually no relevance to us. Although we may be able to answer questions about our own ethnicity, questions about tribal or familial affiliation are not even in our lexicon. We are not even able to frame the question in a meaningful way. In short, one's culture — those frames of reference that tell us what is relevant and good in the world — constrain our reaction to these and other issues. It is no different in Afghanistan or Iraq or India or Indonesia.

Although culture is located in the strategies we use to guide our own actions and understand that of others (i.e., in our heads), we learn about it through observable behavior. The rules that prohibit the use of your left hand in certain parts of the world, and require the use of honorifics when speaking to someone older than you in other parts of the world are themselves not culture. They represent various ways in which one can show respect. Knowing that groups of people are differentiated by status — that low status people behaviorally defer to high status people (i.e., show respect) and that the ways in which such status is demonstrated vary from group to group — is the beginning of cross-cultural knowledge in this example. Learning to whom and how one must show respect demonstrates an understanding of how that strategy is played out in a particular time and place. We can learn it by watching behaviors and listening to what people say. But unless and until the observer understands that status and respect are important (relevant), he will not be looking for behaviors which demonstrate them.

We can also learn about culture through artifacts or things. A car in the United States is far more than simply a mode of transportation. It is a statement about a lifestyle. In the same way, in certain parts of the Muslim

world individuals who have made the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) have earned the right to wear a particular type of hat. The observer must first know that clothes (including headgear) can tell us something about status in a community. He must then understand the particulars of differences among headgear in his area of interest and subsequently understand what it means to be a hajji in that community. The headgear becomes a visual cue for status in the community and all its attendant rights and responsibilities. Sometimes these cues are as subtle to the uninitiated as variants in accent, manner of winding a turban, or the like. But again, we are not interested in the turban. We are interested in what the wearing of that turban wound in that particular way tells us about the role of the wearer in the community and the consequent behavior we can expect from him towards others (including us) and vice versa. We are interested in what wearing a turban in that particular way *means*.

The iceberg metaphor (see Figure 5) is one often used to help understand the culture concept. Just as 90 percent of an iceberg is invisible below the waterline, and just as that 90 percent is critical for the stability and longevity of the iceberg, so is 90 percent of *culture* invisible to us directly, yet critical to understanding and engaging with that part we do see.

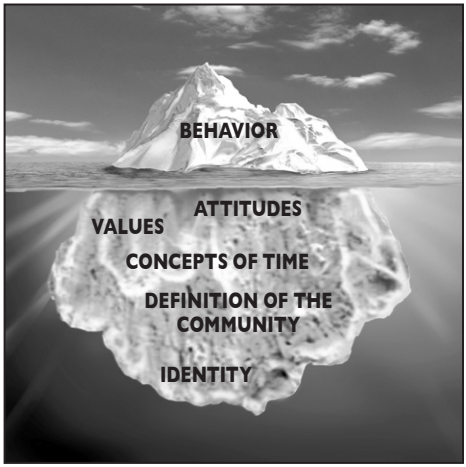


Figure 5. Iceberg Metaphor

The top 10 percent of the iceberg can be described, as Brian Selmeski did, as "procedural and declarative knowledge."[38] *Procedural* knowledge is knowledge of how to do things, which hat to wear or how to wind a turban. *Declarative* knowledge is knowledge about facts (if I wear a certain type of hat, it means I have made the hajj). The bottom 90 percent of the iceberg, the implicit or hidden parts of culture, is what we might call *analytic* knowledge. This tells us how individuals position themselves in the world, how they choose and identify relevant constructs for behavior — What respect is due me because I have made the hajj? How does that journey

change the relationship between us? This analytic knowledge is what leads to different problem-solving strategies and outcomes.

General Characteristics of Culture

Despite the wide variety of definitions of culture among professionals and academic communities, there are a set of generally agreed-upon characteristics. This list would include what follows.

Culture is learned. Culture — that set of strategies or frames of reference we use to make sense out of behavior — is *learned*. It is transmitted vertically across generations and horizontally across communities. Although we are born with a capacity for learning and using these types of strategies, we are not born knowing any particular set of them. The set we do learn is an accident of time and space. Operationally, the implication is that as we acquire values and beliefs through contact with others, thus they can be influenced and changed in the same way. It is critical to understand the sense-making strategies of communities, groups, social networks, and other forms of social collectivities if we are serious about influencing attitudes and changing perceptions.

Culture is both implicit and explicit. This set of sense-making strategies is *both implicit and explicit*. As suggested with the iceberg metaphor, some of the most enduring and influential cultural dimensions are not visible. Almost by definition, practitioners of a particular culture are generally unaware of the deeper dimensions, for they are the taken-for-granted descriptions of how the world is and how we are supposed to operate within it. Operationally, this means that the operator must be able to go beyond what he sees, beyond the behavioral observations to the implications of such behavior.

Culture varies by time. These sense-making strategies will *vary by time*. Generally, the explicit forms (what is above the water in our iceberg metaphor) will change faster than implicit forms. Slang and vocabulary change relatively quickly, for example, while syntactical or grammatical structures will change much more slowly. A subject matter expert who has in-country experience a decade old may be a valuable source for information on values such as the respect shown to the elderly. However, if an operator relies on him for information on how that respect is expressed in language or behavior, he runs the risk of being out of date, the equivalent of speaking in 2010

the slang of the American beatniks in a room full of 20-something college students. While the principles behind social network structures will remain reasonably constant over time, the individuals populating those networks may change rapidly. The implications for operations are obvious here.

Culture varies over space. As we all know, behavior and the assumptions that drive it *varies across space*. What one does in Indonesia is different than what one does in Saudi Arabia. SOF historically formally recognized this variation with the geographic variation in the orientation of its forces. Each group focused on a different geographic part of the world. Each group then oriented its training and education (including language learning) to a particular region. Ideally, as was often the case for operators in Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH), operators were raised in some variant of the target culture and spoke the target language since birth, significantly reducing the time needed to learn to operate effectively with indigenous peoples, thus reducing the risk of various operations.

The wars in the Middle East have put significant pressures on this model of operational assignment. A shortage of personnel has sent SOF from all theaters to the Middle East where they have operated with distinction, despite a lack of in-depth language and cultural variation. So how important is knowledge of a particular culture for effective action in it? Are there general principles that can be learned that can be translated into local knowledge anywhere in the world?

Culture-general or culture-specific knowledge? There are two general ways to talk about this set of strategies or frames of reference we call culture:

a. A culture-*general* approach suggests a familiarity with concepts and analytic approaches that can be applied anywhere in the world.
b. A culture-*specific* or regional approach entails the acquisition of information about a specific culture at a particular time.

Culture-general knowledge consists of "core attitudes, skill sets, and knowledge basis that facilitate adaptation to multiple culturally diverse contexts over time."[39] It should teach one *how* to think. Culture-specific (or regional) knowledge consists (rather self-evidently) of "the necessary attitudes, skills, and knowledge sets that enable effective mission performance in a given task or operation characterized by significant cultural diversity."[40] It will teach one *what* to think.

This monograph suggests that culture-general knowledge is a strategic skill that allows one to operate tactically. Culture-specific knowledge is tactical knowledge — time- and space-specific knowledge applicable to a particular operation.

Language and culture. A question often arises about the relationship of language to culture. Language is both above and below the waterline in the iceberg metaphor. Arguably one can quickly learn the relatively small vocabulary set and few grammatical structures needed to get around. At the other end of the spectrum, the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale (also known as the Foreign Service Institute scale) used by the DoD to rate language proficiency, says that level 5, "native or bilingual proficiency," requires "speech on all levels [that is] … fully accepted by educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references." [41]

There is a very large body of thought and literature on the relationship of language to culture. It is worth some exploration of the different perspectives here, for the perspective adopted will guide the development of language-learning policy in the DoD and its relationship to requirements for cultural training.

The relationship of language to culture can be thought of in two general ways. In the first, language and culture exist as two separate systems, each with its own logic and structure. They can be separately mastered and analytically treated. The second posits some intimate relationship between language and culture.

This relationship can take two forms. One, known as sociolinguistics, deals with the relationship between language and society. It focuses on ways in which language use and structure can provide insight into organizational structure and social characteristics. How does language choice or dialect use influence both speakers' and listeners' notions of identity? What clues do honorifics or language levels provide us to important dimensions of status, role, and other social dimensions? How important are national language issues in our area of interest and what, if any, emotional baggage do they carry (back to issues of identity)?

The other approach, known as cultural linguistics, looks at language for clues to fundamental attitudes and values. How does the English (Western) linguistic focus on linear time (e.g., every verb must be marked as to past,

present, or future) play into other areas such as our ideas about progress and development? How does this contrast with an Austronesian language and culture such as Bahasa Indonesia, which does not mark verb tense explicitly and which is used in a part of the world that traditionally used cyclical calendars and places a heavy emphasis on the importance of coincidence?

Clearly these two approaches drive different policy regimes in terms of language and culture training. Suppose we think of this as a matrix, as shown in Figure 6. Analytically, one can have linguistic competence, cultural competence, or some mixture of both.

Linguistic competence Cultural competence	None	High
None	1	2
High	3	4

Figure 6. Linguistic and Cultural Competence

If one is in the cell marked 1, with neither linguistic nor cultural competence, we assume communication is nonexistent for all practical purposes, and meaningful engagement is not possible. (Very few people fall into this category, by the way.) Conversely, if one is in the cell marked 4 with high cultural and linguistic competence, we assume that one is approaching *native* status, engagement is rich, and gross misunderstandings are low.

It is in cells 2 and 3 that questions arise. If one is in the cell marked 2, one has high linguistic competence, but low cultural competence. At its extreme, this could take us back to the approach that one can learn a *pure* language — a language completely separated from its use environment. Here one clearly runs the risk of being grammatically or syntactically correct but culturally offensive. (As some would say, "I know people who can be extremely rude in any language.") On the other hand, there are those who would vigorously contend that *by SIL definition*, to be linguistically competent makes one simultaneously culturally competent thus cell 2 is meaningless. To learn the language *is* to learn the culture. As for cell 3, we all know those who, with just a few words of a local language, are able to make fast friends, make themselves understood, and generally create good will no matter where they are.

A particular language is a culture-specific piece of knowledge. It is knowledge that increases effectiveness in one particular culture, but not another. It can be combined with other bits of regional information and strengthened and supported by culture-general structures of knowledge. Many (but not all) subject matter experts and many individuals who have lived abroad for a long period of time will have excellent regional knowledge and be proficient in one or more local languages. However, this knowledge is no guarantee they have the culture-general competence that will allow them to quickly and effectively operate in a different regional environment. It is the *ability* to learn another language or culture, not the knowledge of a particular language or culture *per se* that is the basis of cross-cultural or culture-general competence.

Linguistic, culture-general, and regional knowledge. Abbe et al. conducted an excellent review for the Army of the literature on cross-cultural competence. Rather than duplicate their work, this monograph shall draw on it for discussion of the intersection of culture-specific, culture-general, and linguistic knowledge.

Abbe et al. concluded, "Evidence shows that culture-general competencies contribute more to intercultural effectiveness than do more specific skills and knowledge, including language proficiency, culture/region-specific knowledge, and prior international experience."[42] That said, the most effective operator would be at the intersecting center of the Venn diagram illustrated in Figure 7.

This figure is a rather roundabout way of bringing us to the next area of discussion. Exactly what does it mean to be *culturally competent*? This query will take us to our target questions: Are SOF culturally competent? Are they more culturally competent than GPF? Do they need to be? If they are, how did they get there?

Aptitude or skill? Are you born with an aptitude for cultural competence, like some people are born with an aptitude for languages? Or is it something for which you can be educated or trained? The answers to these questions have significant implications for selection and assessment screenings and programs as well as for subsequent training and professional military education (PME).

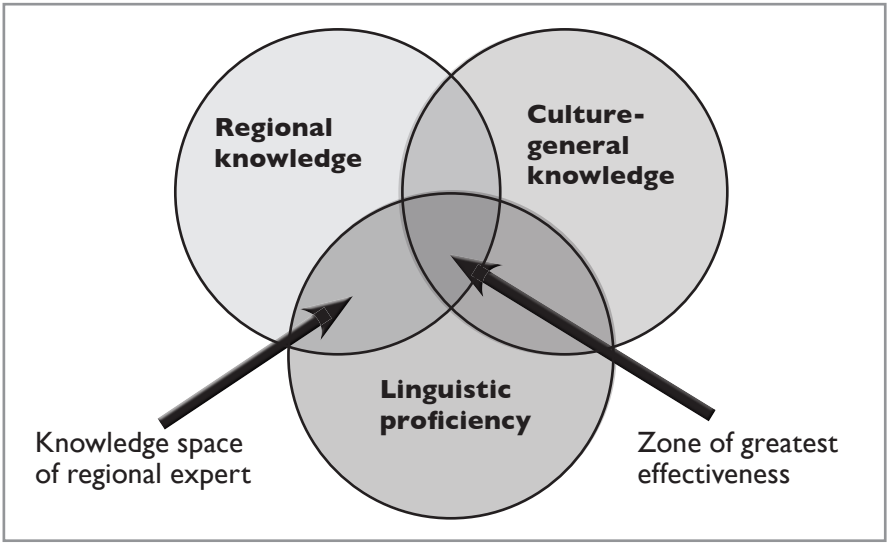


Figure 7. Dimensions of Cultural Competence

A lot of recent work addresses this question, although most has targeted the health care and the international business communities. Again, this monograph draws heavily on the Abbe et al. survey of this work. They were looking specifically for "empirical research on predictors of intercultural effectiveness and describ[ing] existing measures of cross-cultural competence and related constructs" with a particular eye toward application in a military environment.[43] Their model of cross-cultural competence, shown here in Figure 8, depicts what they assessed from the literature to be the primary input variables: dispositional or personality characteristics; biographical characteristics including prior experience, gender, and age; and notions of self and identity. Note that the dispositional or personality characteristics, age, and gender all may be variables which contribute to aptitude and are difficult to influence or modify through education or training. Self and identity may be modifiable although with difficulty. Experience would be the most mutable of the variables. Note also that the measures of effectiveness (MOEs) are not applied directly to cross-cultural competence but to various behavioral domains that purportedly utilize the competency. Cross-cultural competence thus is positioned as an enabling competency, not an end in itself. It is measured through surrogates — how well the subject performs tasks defined as requiring cross-cultural competence.

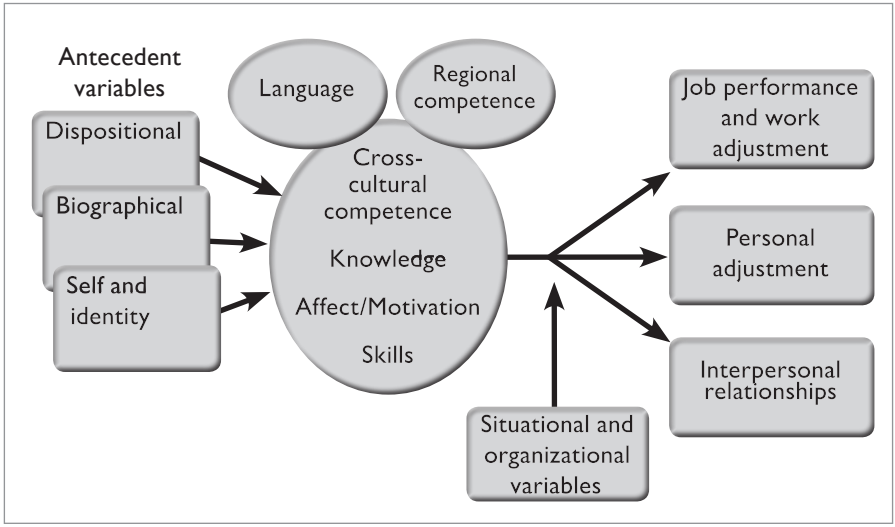


Figure 8. Framework for Cross-Cultural Competence
Source: Abbe et al. (U.S. Army, see endnote 43)

The impact of cross-cultural competence on the quality of performance of these tasks in the Abbe et al. model is mediated and impacted by situational and organizational variables. These could include training and/or education specifically directed at enhancing cross-cultural competence or, alternatively, other activities related to mission execution or general life experience. These mediating variables could include experiences that could potentially reinforce negative stereotypes or simplistic thinking about others — that is, which could negatively impact the ability to accomplish the tasks. The problem, as with any surrogate MOE, is that the significant confounding variables (labeled here as situational and organizational variables) could mask, enhance, or degrade the impact of cross-cultural competency on the behaviors that are measured.[44]

Summary

Culture is not a thing, an artifact. It is more useful to think of it as a prism, something that distorts the vision but in knowable (nonrandom) ways. It is a set of ever-changing sense-making strategies that differ from place to place. These strategies can be learned. Some (a minority) of them are explicit. Those who use them are aware of them and can and generally will talk about them. Most of them are implicit and need to be learned through observation and

participation. Linguistic knowledge thus is important, but neither necessary nor sufficient to learn about these strategies — and knowledge of a language in isolation from behavior will not tell you much about a culture.

Learning how to recognize these strategies, the questions to ask to elicit them, or the behaviors to observe to recognize them we have called culture-general knowledge. This type of knowledge can be exercised anywhere in the world at any time. Culture-specific or regional knowledge is declarative or *factual* knowledge about a time- and space-specific set of strategies and includes knowledge of a language.

There is evidence that culture-general knowledge alone is more valuable for effective cross-cultural interaction (i.e., movement among cultures) than regional (culture-specific) knowledge alone or linguistic knowledge alone (assuming that the regional or linguistic knowledge is not of the target area). That said, the zone of greatest effectiveness is clearly at the intersection of the three where the operator has culture-general knowledge, information about a particular region, and linguistic proficiency in the target language.

We do not yet definitely know how much of cross-cultural competency is an aptitude (i.e., inherent) and how much a skill or learned. However, we do know that both are at play and thus both (inherent characteristics or aptitude as well as teachability) must be considered when selecting and assessing candidates for jobs that will require cross-cultural competency.

4. Selecting and Assessing for Cross-Cultural Competence, a Manifestation of the Culture of SOF

As described in the opening sections of this discussion, the long engagement of SOF in irregular and unconventional warfare has always emphasized the need for the force as a whole to compliment its kinetic capabilities with a nonkinetic approach that depended upon effective engagement with a local population. This requires the exercise of cross-cultural competence by at least some portion of SOF. Admiral Olson's recent comments on the importance of the warrior diplomat have underscored the need for this competency in the force. The explanation of the concept of culture in the previous section was an effort to demonstrate in just what the force is expected to be competent.

This section takes us one step further in the application of cross-cultural competencies, demonstrating that it works both ways. SOF "have culture" just as any organization, group, or society does whether it be American or foreign, large or small, formal or informal. One can and should use cultural skills to understand oneself better. In fact, self-awareness is an important step toward the same type of awareness of an "other."

Approach

This section discusses one particular aspect of SOF's culture — a part of it that communicates to its members the value of acquiring cross-cultural competencies. The culture of each of the SOF service components reflects the importance that the component attaches to missions, which require a high level of engagement with a local population. This importance is usually expressed as the relative importance placed on each of a set of competencies required from its members. These competencies range from those which come into play when the level of engagement with a local population is high (e.g., cross-cultural competencies) to those which focus on kinetic engagements or other types of activities that allow a distance between the SOF operator and members of the local population. The relative importance of these different types of activities in turn conditions the type of individual the components seek to identify through selection and assessment activities. The relative importance assigned to associated capabilities is formalized in the selection

and assessment process — a codification of capabilities deemed important by the services. The culture of the entire SOF is a function (not simply the sum) of these component cultures, presenting to the national security community a collection of kinetic and nonkinetic capabilities designed to accomplish certain missions. These capabilities may be exercised in varying strengths through the different components as the exigencies of the mission require.

This section presents an attempt to gain insight into each component's attitudes towards the importance of cross-cultural competency for its operators. Selection and assessment was chosen as an activity on which to focus for it can provide insight into the kinds of operators the service components were seeking and how they evaluated them. The descriptions of selection and assessment programs will be used to illustrate the divergence in attitudes and values among the components (the components' cultures) toward the relative importance of cross-cultural competency for operators.

The research will describe the initial screen through which candidates must pass to join each of the SOF components. The shape of the holes in each component's screen (the nature of its selection and assessment process) constrain what emerges on the other side (successful candidates). Subsequent training and education must work with the raw material (the successful candidate) provided by the selection and assessment process. *It is important to emphasize that, by design, this research did not include any training the operators receive after they pass from candidate to full member status.*

The selection and assessment programs described here were compiled from research done in late 2008 to mid-2009. By the time this research was submitted to JSOU Press as a draft in mid-February 2010 and the planned release in December, the selection and assessment programs could have changed significantly. As noted in the earlier discussion of the characteristics of culture, the explicit or behavioral dimensions of culture often change rapidly in response to immediate conditions and pressures. The organization's values and attitudes, the part of the culture iceberg that is below the water and not visible, change much more slowly. The enduring values and attitudes are *accessed* through behavior (which includes language), but are not the same as that which we see. Think, for example, of a change effort implemented in any organization. The *behavior* of organizational members may change very quickly in immediate response to the new requirements, but unintended consequences often emerge as enduring values and attitudes

drive organization members to act in ways that subvert the stated changes. Research such as this is designed to look through the behavior to the underlying values and attitudes. The comments made by respondents and their reactions to new programs and directions provide insight into the more deeply held values and attitudes.

Deliberately changing organizational cultures is possible but nontrivial and takes a long time. (Cultures are actually changing all the time as new people join the organization, the external environment changes, and the like. But we are not speaking here of "cultural drift" but rather of deliberately focused change efforts.) By their nature, cultures are very conservative constructs and resistant to change. Effective deliberate changes in organizational culture usually take anywhere from 5 to 10 years, with some taking even longer. Based on empirical studies of several large organizations that underwent culture change efforts and other work, John Kotter developed eight steps he felt were critical for implementation of fundamental cultural changes in any organization.[45] These steps are as follows:

a. Establishing a sense of urgency by relating external environmental realities to real and potential crises and opportunities facing an organization
b. Forming a powerful coalition of individuals who embrace the need for change and who can rally others to support the effort
c. Creating a vision to accomplish the desired end result
d. Communicating the vision through numerous communication channels
e. Empowering others to act on the vision by changing structures, systems, policies, and procedures in ways that will facilitate implementation
f. Planning for and creating short-term wins by publicizing success, thereby building momentum for continued change
g. Consolidating improvements and changing other structures, systems, procedures, and policies that are not consistent with the vision
h. Institutionalizing the new approaches by publicizing the connection between the change effort and organizational success.[46]

Note that an effective culture change effort goes far beyond simply adding new training programs or changing vocabularies or policies and procedures. That is only one step in the middle of this process (step e). Lasting change in organizational culture takes time, investment by leadership, and the

engagement of the entire organization. The values, attitudes, conceptions of identity and self-description within an organizational framework are deeply embedded and change very slowly.

As discussed earlier, the selection and assessment processes of the SOF components were chosen as the target for this research as they represent formal and explicit statements by the component of the type of individual it wants. Data collected was qualitative. Data on the processes at each of the components was gathered primarily through semi-structured and unstructured interviews with personnel connected with the selection and assessment programs of the various services. The interviews were conducted from October 2008 to September 2009. Active duty SOF from all the service components were also involved. This field data collection was supplemented by perusal of doctrinal material and other relevant documents. This secondary research was also conducted in 2009.

Information solicitation from active duty personnel in addition to those responsible for programs is an important part of this type of study. In research on culture, the *perception* of activities, icons, people, programs, and the like is as important in shaping behavior as are the formal requirements for behavior. Personnel responsible for the programs will provide (quite appropriately) the formal rules and requirements. Personnel engaged with but not responsible for the programs will provide a different perspective. This perspective may reflect rather faithfully the formal rules and requirements, or it may not. As described in Section 3, cultural constructs are both models *for* behavior (i.e., prescriptions or rules or suggestions) and models *of* behavior (reflections of the values held by the participants). If a particular type of training or program is available but personnel believe it is not, that perception will shape the response to a question about the character of the program and will drive the behavior of the individual who uttered it. Since culture is a frame of reference, data on perception is as important as "objective" information.

The sample of those interviewed was a purposive or judgment sample, extended by a snowball sample. Prior to the contact with each component, interviews were set up for the researcher by personnel associated with the specific SOF component. These personnel were identified through the researcher's professional contacts who were either on site themselves, engaged with the selection and assessment process at the time of the research or previously, or otherwise knowledgeable of the process at that particular

component. Once on site, this purposive sample was supplemented by a snowball sample. As respondents became more knowledgeable about the project through engagement with the researcher, they suggested and often made available additional individuals to contact.

Data collected through qualitative means is subjected to the same search for patterns as one might conduct on quantitative data. The researcher continues to collect data until she begins to hear from each new informant the same responses, descriptions, phrases, references, and other key indicators she heard before. Qualitative research is not predictive as samples are not randomly selected from the full population and does not have the same level of precision as does quantitative research. Qualitative research can be highly indicative, however, and is often informative enough to serve certain management or knowledge-seeking needs. Furthermore, any rigorously conducted quantitative study should begin with qualitative work to ensure that the survey or other quantitative data collection instrument is not constructed based on what the researcher believes are issues for the target population: qualitative research methods allow the target population to surface issues the researcher might not have considered. In addition, many of the questions raised by cultural research (questions of believe, self-identity, and the like) generate data that themselves are not quantitative and which can be manipulated quantitatively only through surrogates. Finally, qualitative studies must be as methodologically rigorous as quantitative ones. Definition of a sample population, information elicitation instruments and procedures, and the like must be considered and controlled. An interview is not the same thing as a hallway conversation, although a hallway conversation can yield interesting data if it is appropriately contextualized.

Visits for this study were to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, home of the Army Special Operations Command (USASOC); Coronado, California, where the Naval Special Warfare Command (NAVSPECWARCOM) is based; and Hurlburt Field, Florida, home of the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). The data collected at these sites included direct conversations with personnel and briefings on the programs. Data on the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) program was collected primarily through telephone interviews. For all the components, these primary data were supplemented by perusal of doctrinal material, material put out by Public Affairs offices, and other material.

Results, the Selection and Assessment Programs of SOF Components
The components do, indeed, give different emphasis to cross-cultural competencies. By way of introduction to this diversity among the components, in 2009 only the Army's Special Forces (SF) addressed the cultural dimension in its online recruiting material. The front page of the SF recruiting Web site said "[SF] are experts in unilateral direct action operations and unconventional warfare, as well as having thorough knowledge of foreign languages, customs, and cultures."[47] The Marines noted in an embedded page of their Web site on individual training that "All MARSOC Marines are required to undergo continual language training" during the individual training course, which is part of the selection and assessment process.[48] They make no mention of any kind of cultural training. The Navy SEALs did not address it at all in their online material nor did AFSOC.

The Army.[49] In 2009, USASOC was composed of two component subordinate commands and four component subordinate units. USASOC's two component subordinate commands were U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) and the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. The component subordinate units included the Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne), 75th Ranger Regiment, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne), and 4th Psychological Operations Group (Airborne). USASOC also provided oversight of the Army National Guard.[50] For those not familiar with SOF, it is important for this study to note that the SF Command does *not* include the Ranger Regiment.

Of all these elements, the U.S. Special Operations Command Fact Book (2009) described only the SF Command as conducting unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense, mission areas of SOF. The other component and component subordinate units, including Psychological Operations[51] and Civil Affairs, all provided some kind of *support* to this area, but only SF are described as conducting unconventional warfare. Thus SF have the direct charter to combine elements of both the warrior and the diplomat in discharging their mission. The Rangers are certainly warriors, skilled in the kinetic competencies required for direct action, and Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations are certainly diplomats; however, none of these elements must formally combine both the warrior *and* the diplomat. (Certainly any military operator in an irregular or unconventional warfare

battlespace may find himself or herself discharging both the warrior and the diplomat function at some time. The discussion here is focusing on those military operators whose charter specifically requires both.)

The SF Operational Detachment A, a 12-man operational team better known as the ODA, was described as the "heart and soul of SF operations."[52] Therefore, this discussion will focus on the selection of the SF operator, the essential element of the ODA team. The ODA team is the operational element of SF and in turn the central way the Army provides warrior diplomats to contribute to the discharge of the SOF mission.

USASOC put high value on cross-cultural competency. Doctrine characterizing the entire Army SOF component (which referred to it as Army Special Operations Forces or ARSOF) called out the products of the application of cross-cultural competence. "Language skills, cross-cultural training, regional orientation, and understanding of the political context of the operational environment make ARSOF unparalleled when working in complex environments."[53] (Note that descriptions of ARSOF include *all* of Army SOF, from the Rangers to Civil Affairs.)

This competence in language, culture, regional knowledge, and political understanding was a function both of what the soldier brought to the selection process as well as subsequent training. "The unique capabilities of ARSOF are a function of the quality of ARSOF Soldiers, the training and education of those Soldiers, and the mission profiles the Soldiers must execute … The competitive ARSOF selection process, coupled with technological training and education, produces an ARSOF Soldier who is adaptable, mature, innovative, *culturally aware*, self-assured, and self-reliant" (emphasis added).[54] These qualities, which allow the troops to engage local populations in mission achievement (to operate *by*, *through*, and *with* …) and take advantage of local resources, allow ARSOF to be "effective in … generating military and diplomatic advantages disproportionate to the resources they represent" in conflict situations.[55]

The doctrinal descriptions of ARSOF (the entire component) are operationalized in the selection and assessment processes for SF, one of the two subordinate commands. The other subordinate command is the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, often known as SWCS, the command schoolhouse. SWCS is responsible for special operations training, leader development, doctrine, and personnel propensity for SF, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations (as of December 2010, called Military

Information Support Operations) — that is, for those ARSOF elements that have engagement with a local population as an integral part of their mission.[56]

Selection into and participation in the SF qualification or *Q* course came with a battery of psychological and experiential tests and exercises that addressed social as well as physical abilities. The tests and the exercises evaluated characteristics such as flexibility, intelligence, the ability to deal well with others in conditions of moderately high stress, to process novel information, and to operate in ethically or morally ambiguous situations as well as the candidate's ability to endure physical stress and high levels of mission ambiguity.

The individuals who were interviewed emphasized the importance of the recruits' ability to deal with social and situational ambiguity. SF mission orders often are vague. "Managed chaos is the norm," said one interviewee. "You don't know what you will be doing an hour from now." The ability to rapidly assess and respond to the physical and social requirements of any possible situation was a key SF competency.

Evaluation of the candidates' ability to deal with managed chaos and the moral and ethical dilemmas that arise in cross-cultural situations were primarily handled through experiential exercises. One of the individuals interviewed pointed out that humans tend to default to what he called stereotypes or automatic responses when under stress. In order to evaluate the likelihood of a candidate defaulting to this type of response (which will not serve the soldiers of SF well), the training and evaluation must be conducted experientially. As one interviewee put it, "the training environment is the same environment for which you are being trained — a mess." The stress that might prompt such a reversion to stereotypes and automatic responses cannot be mimicked in a classroom environment. When classroom instruction was provided for the candidates, it was enriched by what might be called surrogate or proxy experience — stories and anecdotes from the instructors of their own field experiences used to emphasize the cognitive explanations of success and failure strategies provided through formal classroom instruction. Thus in addition to teaching the candidates direct cross-cultural skills through cognitive and abstract instruction, the instructors also taught through experience even in the classroom.

The post-action deconstruction of an exercise and the self-, peer, and instructor evaluations that candidates receive during and after experiential

exercises served as evaluative as well as learning tools. A respondent said that the schoolhouse had not yet found a measuring instrument that was reliable enough and consistent enough to beat the cadre's assessment of a candidate. The cadre, all former operators themselves, evaluated candidates based on their own experience of what worked and what did not in the stressful, ambiguous, and ever-changing situations of the theater.

SF followed the model developed by Abbe et al. presented earlier in this discussion in which cross-cultural competency is not an end in itself or a competency on which one might be evaluated. As one respondent said, "The cultural part of the problem is part of the process. It's part of what you need to do to get through it. It isn't the solution." For example, the candidate might have been presented with an ethically ambiguous situation at a point in the training regime when he was physically fatigued. The evaluators assessed if the candidate recognized the moral dilemma and how he handled it in the context of mission achievement. The candidate's management of the situation was not a pass or fail gate, but rather an evaluation of competencies. In general, the purpose was not to *select in*, to measure the candidates against some model of perfection as that model was unknown. The purpose rather was to select out individuals with undesirable characteristics.

SF assessment and selection focused on culture-general skills. Culture-specific (i.e., regional) skills are addressed through training, education, and experience *after* acceptance into SF and so are not part of this research.

The Navy.[57] In 2009, NAVSPECWARCOM major organizational elements were the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) groups. These were "major commands that train, equip, and deploy components of NSW squadrons …"[58] There were two logistical support teams and two detachments responsible for training. NSW Combat Service Support Teams provided support to SEAL teams, Special Boat Teams, and NSW Task Groups/Task Units. The NSW Center provided instruction and training, and the NSW Development Group managed the test evaluation and development of applicable technologies.[59]

The Navy defined its SEAL teams as "the heart of the NSW force."[60] SEAL is an acronym for Sea, Air, and Land — a reminder of the integrated mission and skill set of the service component. "SEALs conduct clandestine missions infiltrating their objective areas by fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, Navy surface ships, combatant craft, submarines and ground mobility vehicles."[61]

SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams are specially trained SEAL teams, while Special Boat Teams provide support for exfiltration and other activities.

The clandestine nature of most SEAL missions meant that the mission challenge was to infiltrate, execute the mission, and leave without indigenous personnel knowing that the operators ever were there. In such a scenario, exercising cross-cultural competency (i.e., engaging with the local population) meant that the team had failed to meet that challenge of invisibility and the clandestine nature of the mission was violated. If the mission did call for such engagement, the SEALs called on Army Civil Affairs or Military Information Support Operations teams as necessary to provide the competencies.[62] Although this engagement with Army elements did contribute to effective operation in a joint environment, it also relieved pressure on the SEALs to provide that capability themselves.

Recent conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere have called upon many SEALs to serve in land-based missions, maintaining a persistent presence. (Although many SEALs have served in land-based missions in past conflicts, the "Naval Special Warfare Command is the *maritime* component of U.S. Special Operations Command" (emphasis added) and "SEALs" certainly evokes a water-based focus.)[63] The recent USSOCOM restructuring of SOF assignments to theater commands even raised the possibility of a SEAL commanding the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) in Afghanistan — hardly a maritime mission. It will be interesting to track the effect of this change in emphasis on the type of man the SEALs recruit.

Until recently, SEAL recruiters looked only for physical fitness in potential recruits. The Physical Screening Test (PST) was the only pass or fail gate in the recruitment process, although candidates also did need to achieve certain minimum scores on selected portions of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test to ensure their readiness for certain tasks. (The portions include general science, mechanical comprehension, and electronics information, mechanical knowledge, coding speed, and verbal expression.[64] With the possible exception of verbal expression, none of these sections would contribute much to cross-cultural competency.) However, by 2008, pressure from the Quadrennial Defense Review and other sources to significantly and quickly increase overall numbers of special operators led the SEALs to search for a way to push more candidates through Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training, the SEALs qualification course, by reducing attrition.

In February 2008, the SEALs added the Computerized Special Operations Resilience Test (C-SORT) to the PST as a gate that must be passed for admission to BUD/S.[65] C-SORT is a psychological test that screens for characteristics such as a candidate's ability to function as a team player, to be motivated to withstand pain, and his ability to focus on an end product while dealing with the immediate term. In effect, the test assesses the psychological characteristics whose presence will increase the likelihood of the candidate's passing BUD/S.[66] A candidate could enter the selection program if he passed the PST and had one of the following: a high PST (above a designated threshold) or a high C-SORT (having already met the minimum PST requirements). If his C-SORT is low, then he must meet the high or very high PST designations. Note that the first gate is the minimum PST, and a very high PST could obviate the need for a C-SORT score — a signal that physical qualifications are the common denominator of the force. High physical performance will trump poor performance in other areas.[67]

It is important to emphasize that the addition of the C-SORT as a requirement for admission as a candidate did not change the assessment criteria for becoming a SEAL. The C-SORT was intended only to increase the likelihood of the candidate passing the physical test of BUD/S and Hell Week. As of late 2009, a Navy directive said that the program was cancelled in November 2008 — a bare 10 months after implementation. The justification for the cancellation was that the program had "served its purpose."[68] The SEALs were back to the PST as a screening tool.

At the time of this research, the SEALs were exploring diversity recruiting programs in an effort to introduce some cultural diversity into what was historically a rather homogeneous force. Respondents brought up suggestions about attaching such individuals to platoons as interpreters or in some other non-SEAL role, in the event that there would not be enough who could survive the rigors of BUD/S. "They could do the diplomat part of the warrior diplomat. The other guys could be the warriors." That conversations like these were taking place suggest a very different conception of the *warrior diplomat* than that found in SF. Conceptually it was accepted that the two functions could be exercised by two different persons, giving the unit the capability but not the individual. Criteria related to the *diplomat* function were not considered for addition to either the SEALs selection or assessment process. At that time, the need for force diversity was not seen as a reason to alter section and assessment standards. The essential nature of the SEAL

remained the same — one defined around physical capabilities and the ability to exercise those in difficult, chaotic, stressful, and dangerous situations.

Although there were language and some region-specific resources available to SEAL candidates at the time of this research, they were not required of the candidate cohort. Area-specific courses on the Middle East were offered, along with regional languages. No culture-general courses were available at that time to candidates. The courses were accessed by the candidates on an individual request basis, rather than assigned as part of an institutional structure of selection during candidacy.[69] Several anecdotes heard during the data collection period in 2009 suggested there was peer pressure to focus on kinetic, not nonkinetic, training even though the cultural familiarization program was fairly well subscribed. "That culture stuff? That's just not what we do."

The Air Force.[70] In 2009, AFSOC was organized into two special operations wings — reserve and National Guard wings, overseas groups, a special tactics group and several operations and support units.[71] AFSOC's mission was one that generally kept personnel either on a base (particularly maintenance personnel) or in the sky. There was little need to contact or interact with indigenous populations.

There are exceptions. The 720th Special Tactics Group, made up of special tactics personnel also referred to as Battlefield Airmen, was an exception to this distance between the force and any indigenous populations. This group, which contains the combat controllers, pararescuemen (PJs), special operations weather, and tactical air control party personnel, has been called AFSOC's "air/ground interface."[72] It often interfaces with SEALs, SF, MARSOC Marines, and other ground forces in kinetic activities. The other exception was the Combat Aviation Advisors (CAA) of the 6th Special Operations Squadron (6 SOS), the element of AFSOC primarily responsible for foreign internal defense (FID). As Hoffman said, "These Air Commandos [the CAA] are culturally savvy, linguistically trained, and politically astute Airmen, hand selected for their skill, maturity, and professionalism to advise foreign forces."[73]

With the exception of the CAA and certain elements of the special tactics group — specifically combat controllers and PJs — there was no selection and assessment for Air Force special operations personnel comparable to the SF Q course and the Navy SEALs BUD/S training.[74] AFSOC billets other

than CAA, combat controllers, and PJs were assigned through the normal Air Force assignment process.

As mentioned earlier, the 6 SOS, which handled FID for the Air Force, is the primary exception to the distance between the force and indigenous personnel in AFSOC.

The CAA did go through a selection and assessment process. Candidates were all volunteers. They were assessed in areas such as flying and tactical skills, physical fitness, language ability, and motivation. Once accepted into candidacy, they were put through a series of courses and exercises before final selection. "Through a combination of lecture and practical operation, the 6 SOS ensures that its members are versed in cross-cultural communications and integration techniques, regional studies, instructor and advisor techniques, security-assistance management, and interpreter and translator operations."[75] Candidates were also taught language skills and, of course, a full suite of aviation and ground tactical/operation skills. The CAA selection process also included a practical exercise called Raven Claw, similar to the SF's Robin Sage, in which the candidates are expected to exercise appropriately the skills learned in the classroom and are assessed by their peers and the cadre.

The 6 SOS members do exhibit the characteristics of warrior diplomats. However, although the squadron had increased significantly in size in recent years as the FID mission had taken on a different role within SOCOM's mission space, at the time of this research the 6 SOS still counted its personnel in the hundreds out of the total AFSOC complement of well over 10,000. Thus the part of AFSOC with an interest in and focus on engagement with an indigenous population is proportionally very small and not representative of the component as a whole. The preponderance of AFSOC exercises another important function, serving as the SOF aviation wing. This function, in general, requires little or no engagement with a local population.

The Marines.[76] MARSOC was too new at the time of this research to speak of definitively in this context. MARSOC was activated in 2006. Its earliest members were the personnel of both 1st and 2d Force Reconnaissance Company who transferred to MARSOC to form 1st and 2d Marine Special Operations Battalions. The first selection specifically for the MARSOC component was in 2007. The first MARSOC group to go through the entire

selection, assessment, and training program deployed in 2009, just about the time this research was completed.

The MARSOC selection and assessment and training programs were deliberately patterned after the SF program, while retaining the Marine emphasis on direct action and special reconnaissance. Their selection and training did use "culture-neutral scenarios," testing the candidate's ability to interact in ambiguous and unfamiliar environments. He was evaluated on how he established rapport, turned needs into wants, and how he handled ethical/moral dilemmas. As with SF, these scenarios were exercised and evaluated experientially, not in the classroom, and run when the candidate was under physical stress. And, as with SF, they were not designed as hard pass or fail gates but rather to evaluate whether or not the candidate was trainable. "You can screw up badly on this but you won't get dropped immediately."

At the time of this research, MARSOC operators came from Marine infantry battalion and combat arms units. They thus came into the program with a strong emphasis on direct action and special reconnaissance skills. As one respondent said, "They're not used to sitting down and drinking tea." It will be useful to follow the MARSOC program as it evolves, particularly in light of the USSOCOM emphasis on the warrior diplomat.

Summary

Selection and assessment is a screen or filter by which the different components can tailor their search for men who meet the requirements peculiar to that component. As such, it is a differentiator among the components. If all the components were looking for a man with similar capabilities, the selection and assessment processes would be much more similar than they are.

By looking at the general nature of the components' selection and assessment processes, this research endeavored to identify the different importance the components assigned to high levels of cross-cultural competency in their recruits/candidates. This research was not intended to make a value judgment about or to critique those selection and assessment processes, simply to ascertain the differences among them on this one dimension.

Army SF was the only special operations component that put a heavy emphasis on selecting candidates who have an aptitude for the diplomat component of the warrior-diplomat construct. In addition to testing for physical fitness, SF also looked for candidates who could handle situational

and moral ambiguity, had strong interpersonal skills, and other attributes the component believed contributed to effective cross-cultural interaction. SF identified these candidates primarily through experiential evaluations. The service also tested not for the presence of the competency itself but for the way in which the candidate used the competency to achieve an end or accomplish a task. During selection and assessment, the focus was on culture-general competencies, as the service was looking for individuals who could perform effectively anywhere in the world. Culture-specific or regional skills and knowledge were learned after the candidate had been accepted into the component.

The Navy SEALs historically have not seen their mission as one which required cross-cultural competency, as it asked for little or no contact with indigenous populations. As such, they selected and assessed primarily on physical fitness and on psychological qualities that would help candidates get through BUD/S (teamwork and the ability to complete tasks under stress). What culture-related activities were provided to the candidate in 2008 through early 2009 were primarily region-specific, and were accessed at the candidate's initiative. That type of knowledge was not assessed during BUD/S. Changing missions for the SEALs are requiring more linguistic and cultural capabilities, but as of the time of this research, these requirements had not yet driven changes in selection and assessment. Though there is a growing set of post-selection, region-specific courses on languages and cultures, the SEALs culture seems to be one that emphasizes the warrior portion of the equation.

The Air Force provided no special selection and assessment regime for most of its special operations component, with the exception of special tactics personnel and the 6 SOS CAA, the squadron specifically dedicated to FID. Of those AFSOC elements with a selection and assessment process, only the 6 SOS selected and assessed for cross-cultural competencies. And though this element was and still is growing in size, it comprised but a very small fraction of the AFSOC component.

MARSOC, the Marines special operations component was only a few years old at the time of this research and was still developing its selection and assessment regime. Initial recruits for MARSOC came from Marine units with a heavy direct action and special reconnaissance mission. Although MARSOC selection and assessment was modeled loosely after the Army SF program, including a couple of short exercises focused on assessing a

candidate's ability to interact cross-culturally, the program was too new to form any conclusions about its character at this point. However, the emphasis on kinetics introduced by the early recruits may establish an organizational culture that will be difficult to change.

5. SOF, General Purpose Forces and Cultural Knowledge

The U.S. military has shifted its emphasis in conflict characterization in recent years. It has moved from a focus on force to one that is structured by irregular warfare. The appointment of USSOCOM as the supported or lead command for the current conflict in 2005 is a significant marker of this shift. One of the ways in which USSOCOM and the SOF have put their brand on this conflict is through a change in the appreciation of the leveraging power cultural competency can bring to the fight.

The GPF are recognizing this power. They have responded through a variety of vehicles. Doctrinally, for example, FM 3-24 — jointly issued in 2007 by the Army and the Marines — uses chapter 3 on intelligence to stress the importance of recognizing, understanding, and leveraging local cultures.[77] The PME institutions are offering courses and programs in culture. Air University (the lead university of the Air Force), for example, has set up a Language and Culture Center that focuses on developing cross-cultural competency in airmen as well as regional knowledge. The Army established the Human Terrain System, designed to "provide deployed commanders with the relevant socio-cultural understanding necessary to meet their operational requirements" through the deployment of social scientists and the development of reachback capabilities.[78]

The increase in attention and resources for the training of foreign forces by the GPF has often been used as an argument for mission overlap between GPF and SOF in an area where cross-cultural competency is key. However, others have argued that training foreign forces is qualitatively different than conducting FID as an element of supporting a host nation's internal defense and development (IDAD). Under IDAD, the trainers must be able to work across the governmental spectrum, engaging local structures for administering justice and legal punishment, working with reconciliation and reintegration programs, and the like. In this approach, where FID is but one element of a larger program, a high degree of competency in working with the local population is required. The program may even require some limited negotiation with local power structures.[79] This scope and related activities are qualitatively different than a narrower (but important) focus only on the training of troops. (Note that although the Air Force's 6 SOS material

talks about FID, it describes the activities in IDAD terms: "Squadron advisors help friendly and allied forces employ and sustain their own airpower operations resources and, when necessary, integrate those resources into joint and combined (multi-national) operations."[80])

Clearly there are individuals within the GPF who are culturally competent. As personnel move up through the officer ranks, they have access to (and often are required to take advantage of) educational and training resources that help them think of warfare in its strategic context, which includes its impact upon local populations. However, SOF are working to inculcate this capability in all ranks, including the enlisted operator. SF in particular select for individuals who demonstrate the capability, ensuring that its representation in the entire SOF is much stronger than it is in the GPF. This practice follows Robert Spulak's thesis that the "smaller and tighter distribution of personnel with greater average attributes is the source of the nature and capabilities of SOF."[81] A greater proportion of men who demonstrate relatively high levels of cross-cultural competency distinguish SOF from GPF in this arena.

6. SOF as Forward-Deployed Warrior Diplomats

SOF have long been renowned as accomplished warriors. The importance to battlefield success of the diplomatic portion of the warrior-diplomat construct has recently received increased attention as the U.S. planning focus has shifted to irregular warfare. SOF, and SF in particular, were described as exercising diplomatic skills as they worked *by, with, and through* indigenous populations.

This discussion used cross-cultural competency as the lens through which to view diplomatic engagement. Such competency is necessary to execute the persuasion that underlies successful diplomatic negotiations.

The research focused on the selection and assessment processes of the SOF components as a guide to understanding the capabilities of importance to each component. The research assumption was that the component would devise a process that only allowed through men who demonstrated high levels of ability in those designated capability areas.

A review of SOF selection and assessment approaches revealed a highly unequal distribution of cross-cultural competency across the special operations community. Army SF strongly selected and assessed for high levels of cross-cultural competency in its candidates. Navy SEALs used tests of physical competencies as a screen. AFSOC's CAA of the 6 SOS required high levels of ability in cross-cultural competency. However, the squadron comprises only a fraction of AFSOC's full force, most of which requires no selection and assessment at all. The portion that does require it does not include cross-cultural competence in the menu of desired competencies. At the time of this research, the MARSOC fledgling selection and assessment program was too new to provide any insight. However, it is worth noting that MARSOC had loosely modeled its program on the SF program with its strong cross-cultural component, although early recruits into MARSOC came from Marine units with a very strong kinetic focus. All components provided at least regional, and in most cases culture-general education and training to their members once they had moved out of candidate status.

Culture is no longer the exclusive province of SOF. However, because SF, in particular, selects for certain characteristics arguably related to the demonstration of cross-cultural competence and the GPF does not, *as a force* SOF is more culturally competent than GPF. (The 6 SOS also selects

for cross-cultural competency, but its influence in this domain on the SOF is small as its numbers are so low.) Given the low level of attention paid by SOF components other than the Army through SF in selecting personnel with attributes related to cross-cultural competency, one could argue that by the numbers SOF deploy as warrior diplomats; but by service component, currently only the Army (USASOC through SF) fully embraces the title. (The 6 SOS exception is noted, with the caveat that its absolute small numbers and its consequent very small proportion of the full force do not change this statement.)

That only SF and AFSOC CAA are invested fully in both elements of the warrior diplomat construct is not necessarily a bad thing. However, as MARSOC and its ground-based mission develop, and if SEALs continue to emphasize the land component of their compound mission, they may find a need to recruit, select, and assess for a very different type of individual than they target now. The increasing need for IDAD-competent forces may drive even faster growth for CAA than it has seen recently.

This research was not designed to judge SOF selection and assessment but to train an analytic eye upon it. Much of SOF action remains in the kinetic domain. Becoming a warrior diplomat is a nontrivial process involving far more than just learning a language and a few behavioral do's and don'ts. Clearly, the description of a force required to best manage the balance between the kinetic and nonkinetic activities in unconventional warfare is a decision that must be made at the top levels of command at USSOCOM. The components then need to ensure that they acquire the raw material (the members who successfully pass through candidacy) that will allow them collectively to discharge the SOF mission.

Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece: Small Groups and Special Operations Forces

> By the substitution of a sure job for a possible masterpiece, military science made a deliberate sacrifice of capacity in order to reduce the uncertain element, the bionomic factor, in enlisted humanity.
>
> — T. E. Lawrence[82]

1. Introduction

The U.S. has determined it is strategically important to have Special Operations Forces (SOF). SOF are organized and act in small groups because their homogenous, highly capable personnel allow small relatively interchangeable teams to accomplish objectives through the exercise of flexibility and creativity. In contrast, the wide range of capabilities of the personnel of General Purpose Forces (GPF) requires them to deliver force through large, functionally differentiated groups that use discipline to ensure integration and relative certainty of behavior.

The creation of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC) by Congress in 1987 established visibility, legitimacy, and influence for SOF. USSOCOM gave SOF legitimacy in the world of the military services and the theater commands, and ASD SO/LIC gave SOF a voice at the policy table in the Department of Defense (DoD). With the promotion of USSOCOM to the *supported* or lead command in the current, post-9/11 fight, SOF have achieved even greater prominence.

The importance of a small group of special men to execute special operations stemmed from their history of unorthodox operations requiring small footprints. The special operations conducted during World War II, including such operations as Jedburgh,[83] required clandestine infiltration and exfiltration, and an invisible presence behind enemy lines. David Stirling, who organized the Special Air Service (SAS) for the British during World War II — the prototype for many present-day SOF around the world — argued for 16-man teams that could be modularized into two 8-man patrols, four 4-man patrols, or eight 2-man patrols.[84] The American Office of Special Services (OSS), U.S. counterpart to SAS, made use of the 3-man Jedburgh teams and 30-man operational groups. Aaron Bank, considered the father of the American Green Berets (Army Special Forces), which evolved out of the OSS when it was disbanded, considered both the SAS and the OSS models. He proposed small teams as the basic unit of organization, initially of 15 men.[85] These evolved into today's 12-man A-teams. This organizational approach now is codified in American doctrine:

> The successful conduct of SO (special operations) relies on individual and small unit proficiency in a multitude of specialized, often nonconventional combat skills applied with adaptability, improvisation, innovation, and self-reliance. The small size, unique capabilities, and self-sufficiency (for short periods of time) of SOF operational units provide the United States with feasible and appropriate military responses.[86]

In fact, Special Forces A-teams and SEAL platoons have become iconic actors in the special operations world. But why have these small teams taken on such importance, when the focus in the Army as a whole, for example, is on the brigade or division with personnel levels in the thousands or tens of thousands? Is it something peculiar about the task (the mission), the way in which SOF are used strategically, or about the men who comprise the group? This discussion will explore whether changing the size of the operational unit is key to changing its effect, or whether there is something about the way the unit and the force are structured that makes a difference. In the course of this exploration, the discussion will address

… why have these small teams taken on such importance, when the focus in the Army as a whole, for example, is on the brigade or division …

the relationship of the operational unit to the whole force and explore differences in the ways in which bureaucratic and other organizational structures exploit human resources. This will take us into the realm of Clausewitzian friction and the implications different organizational structures have for the military's encounter with friction. The conclusion is that, given what little we know about the effect of group size on the functioning of the group, the *nature* of the organization — the type of men recruited for the operational unit, the relationship of the operational unit to the whole, and the implication of these two factors for unit functioning — are more important variables than size in understanding the effectiveness of SOF.

If "war is merely the continuation of politics by other means"[87] as Clausewitz famously said, then militaries are the tool for "the implementation of state policy by armed force."[88] The men in the militaries thus are the ultimate delivery vehicle for the use of force.[89] This discussion will explore some of the dimensions of difference organizational structure can make on the delivery of that force.

2. The Order of Battle and the Nature of Groups

Retaining a Precarious Value as Special Operations Go Mainstream remarks on the surprising absence of work on the social structural dimensions of the military.[90] Military sociology has generally addressed three areas:

a. Relationship of the individual to the institution (in numerous works on the professionalization of the military)
b. Relationship of small subgroups such as women, racial minorities, and others to the larger military community
c. Relationship of the military itself to other social actors such as a diplomatic corps (often captured under the rubric of civil-military relations).

There appears to be relatively little research on the role of small groups in the military.

The question of the relative importance of the small group in SOF is an intriguing one. Is this importance an accident of history, growing out of the organization of the British SAS and American OSS during World War II? Is it no more interesting than the need to have a small footprint? Or is there something about small groups that contributes to the special nature and function of SOF?

The military is more than a random collection of individuals who are executing force in the name of the state. As it has "shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their appropriate activities or relationships,"[91] it can be called an institution. It is this institutional nature that this monograph explores, for it is the institutional definition of actors that highlights the importance of the team or small group in SOF. Again, our primary interest is in exploring the special function of the small team as an actor in SOF.

The particular arrangement of categories of social actors and their relationships in a specific institution is known as that institution's organizational structure. Organizational structure in a military context is usually described as part of the order of battle. And it is, indeed, generally descriptive, not prescriptive. The DoD Dictionary, taking its guidance from Joint Publication 2-01.3, defines the order of battle as "The identification, strength, command

structure, and disposition of the personnel, units, and equipment of any military force."[92, 93] This definition is purely descriptive because it contains no guidance on determining the relationship of any of these variables to force effectiveness.

Clausewitz's 180-page Book V, "Military Forces," in *On War* devotes less than 5 pages to the description of force structure.[94] (The remainder of the book is devoted to the disposition or deployment of the force on the battlefield.) In this book, Clausewitz posited three principles of what he called the "distribution and composition of arms as individual parts of the whole":

a. The whole will be unwieldy if it has too few subdivisions.
b. If the subdivisions are too large, the commander's personal authority will be diminished.
c. Every additional link in the chain of command reduces the effect of an order in two ways — by the process of being transferred and by the additional time needed to pass it on.[95]

These principles and the accompanying description focus primarily on span of control. He gave little guidance on group size or nature.

The modern, professional military — whose rise is often credited to Napoleon and which Clausewitz described — emerged at the beginning of the industrial age, a time that set the stage for the emergence of bureaucratic institutions. Militaries have often been touted as the quintessential bureaucracy.[96] (The military is one of the case studies that threads through James Q. Wilson's treatment of bureaucracy, for example.[97])

On the surface, the military does, indeed, appear to be a classic bureaucratic organization. The primary elements of a bureaucracy are a rule-defined structure that endures over time (i.e., a stable structure) and the actors who populate that structure. Bureaucracies operate according to "… the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules — that is, by laws or administrative regulations."[98] Actors move in and out of these jurisdictional areas (jobs or functions) and have existence separate from their functions. This aspect provides a mechanism by which organizations can replace individuals who leave (or, in the case of deployed forces, become casualties) without compromising the functioning of the organization.

Bureaucracies have several defining characteristics:

a. They exhibit a strong division of labor that is codified in rules defining a structure specialized by function.
b. Each function has standardized procedures that govern behavior, no matter which individual occupies the position.
c. An individual's movement through the organization is governed by demonstrated competency that is often codified as rules of a profession.

Talcott Parsons succinctly sets out the key characteristics of bureaucracies:

> … an organization devoted to what is from the point of view of the participants an impersonal end. It is based on a type of division of labor which involves specialization in terms of clearly differentiated functions, divided according to technical criteria, with a corresponding division of authority hierarchically organized, heading up to a central organ, and specialized technical qualifications on the part of the participants. The role of each participant is conceived as an "office" where he acts by virtue of the authority vested in the office and not of his personal influence. This involves a clear-cut distinction in many different respects between his acts and relationships in his official and his personal capacity. It in general involves separation of office and home, of business funds and property from personal property, above all of authority in official matters from personal influence outside the official sphere.[99, 100]

An often neglected aspect of bureaucratic theory is the legitimacy it accords to the individual. In a bureaucracy, the individual exists separate from his function. The individual moves in and out of offices and carries his identity with him from place to place. That identity is subsumed by the role or function as the individual moves into the office. He becomes "Mr. President," "General" or "Sergeant." The democratic principle is based on the same notion. As I move into the *role* of citizen, the individuating characteristics of color, gender, or religion drop away. The function takes precedence and continues to contribute to the life of the whole as different individuals move in and out of office.

Bureaucracies are highly rational organizations. Weber goes so far as to say that in a military even supposedly irrational factors (such as morale and inspiration) need to be calculated as rationally as "one calculates the yields of coal and iron deposits."[101] Employment of large numbers of personnel

and the movement of large amounts of materiel require certainty, efficiency, and calculability — the outcomes of a rational (i.e., bureaucratic) structure.

Achievement of these outcomes is (partially) the result of the application of discipline. Bureaucracies use discipline to inculcate conformity, which leads to what the military calls *certainty of command* — the assurance that an order will be followed in a prescribed fashion every time:

> The content of discipline is nothing but the consistently rationalized, methodically trained and exact execution of the received order, in which all personal criticism is unconditionally suspended and the actor is unswervingly and exclusively set for carrying out the command … this conduct under orders is uniform.[102]

There is a cost associated with the application of discipline. T. E. Lawrence suggested that the cost of certainty of performance was the lowering of the standard of individual achievement. However, he also does acknowledge the increased certainty of performance it provides:

> … discipline in the sense in which it was restrictive, submergent of individuality, the Lowest Common Denominator of men … discipline meant the hunt, not of an average but of an absolute; the hundred percent standard in which the ninety-nine were played down to the level of the weakest man on parade. The aim was to render the unit a unit, the man a type; in order that their effort might be calculable, and the collective output even in grain and bulk. The deeper the discipline, the lower was the individual excellence; also the more sure the performance …[103]

3. Organizational Structure and Friction

Arguably, the application of discipline and the development of bureaucratic structures is one way in which militaries try to counter friction. Friction, one of Clausewitz's best known yet still highly ambiguous contributions to the theory of war, is "the force that makes the apparently easy so difficult" in war.[104] Barry Watts, in one of the more complete treatments of friction, identifies three ultimate causes of friction: 1) constraints imposed by human limitations, both cognitive and physical, 2) informational uncertainties and the difference between perceived and *actual* reality, and 3) the structural nonlinearity of combat itself.[105] In fact, Watts asserts that friction is *the* central fact of war and could be used to derive a general theory of war itself.[106]

The military is engaged in a constant attempt to overcome friction on the battlefield in order to achieve its objectives. Initiatives such as the DoD's Revolution in Military Affairs, defined as "… a major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the innovative application of new technologies which, combined with dramatic changes in military doctrine and operational and organizational concepts, fundamentally alters the character and conduct of military operations" assumed that new types of technology would reduce friction by significantly increasing our information awareness and reducing what Watts called *informational uncertainty*. Use patterns for these new technologies would drive changes in military organization and structure. In that effort, the driving factor was technology. Changes in force structure were driven by the nature of available technologies. Here the discussion explores whether the organizational structure of the force itself can be the driver in the attempt to overcome friction, not derivative of other efforts. Can direct manipulation of force structure and organization within the context of available tools and technologies have an important impact on military effectiveness?

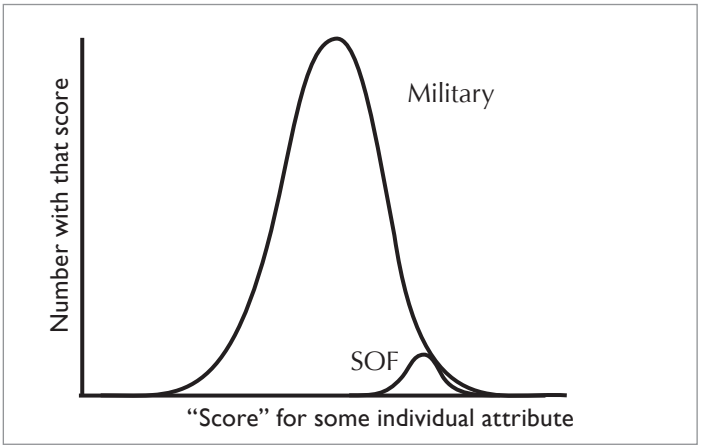
The application of large amounts of manpower in an effort to overcome friction pushes the military toward a bureaucratic ideal through the imposition of rationality and the search for behavioral certainty, as exemplified in the GPF. The use of creativity and flexibility to address friction moves the military institution to the development of a SOF based on small teams.

Clausewitz points out the importance of having a larger force than the enemy. He speaks of the "decisive importance of relative strength" on the

battlefield and notes that "In tactics, as in strategy, superiority of numbers is the most common element in victory."[107, 108] The principles of war as codified in U.S. doctrine modify this premise somewhat. The principle of mass speaks of the deliverance of overwhelming effects, which generally (although not always) requires large numbers of personnel.[109] Robert Spulak points out that since conventional forces cannot change the game the way SOF can, they are left only with the option of doing more of what they are doing to overcome friction.[110]

Those who discuss theories of special operations argue that special operations are a way to address friction without the application of large amounts of personnel and attendant organizational structure. William McRaven and Spulak both address friction in their theoretical treatments.[111, 112] McRaven addresses it indirectly through what he calls special operations' relative superiority, while Spulak talks about it at length.

Spulak characterizes Watts' three ultimate sources of friction as follows: war is hell, we can't know what's out there, and we can't predict what will happen. He argues that SOF address the first through the creation of *elite warriors* who can overcome the physical and cognitive limits experienced by most men. This objective is achieved through selective recruiting. He argues that the "smaller and tighter distribution of personnel with greater average attributes is the source of the nature and capabilities of SOF."[113] It is worth reproducing his schematic of this distribution, because the small number of men who are more like each other than not in critical attributes is central to our argument about the primacy and usefulness of small groups in SOF.



Schematic distribution of the values of a typical individual attribute for SOF and the entire military.

(The figure is reproduced from *A Theory of Special Operations: The Origin, Qualities, and Use of SOF*, page 11, and used with Dr. Spulak's permission.)

Spulak suggests that SOF address the second source of friction (we can't know what's out there) through what he calls *flexibility*. Small SOF units can have a much larger range of capabilities than even a large conventional unit as a result of the smaller range of (more capable) personnel. Finally, SOF mitigate the consequences of the inability to predict what will happen by using creativity. SOF immediately change the combat process to one that presents fewer risks but still allows them to achieve the military objective.[114] Their ability to change the process is made possible by greater attributes, training, and technology.[115]

Note that particularly the second and third of these characteristics of SOF (flexibility and creativity) are directly counter to the bureaucratic model. Rather than attempt to create certainty by overcoming the risks through brute force, the application of flexibility and creativity allow SOF to recognize and address existing uncertainty to change the game. In order to accomplish this application, SOF require men who have certain capabilities, rather than men who are only trained in certain skill sets targeting particular functions. Furthermore, they require organization into a set of small teams, relatively homogenous in their base capabilities, rather than fragmentation into functionally differentiated groups.

McRaven speaks specifically to the question of how a small force can defeat a larger and suggests six essential principles of special operations' success: simplicity, security, repetition, surprise, speed, and purpose. He argues that although large forces may be able to apply one or more of the principles, the success of small forces depends on the "proper integration of all six principles." McRaven argues that the "inherent advantages" of SOF allow it to reduce friction to a "manageable level."[116] He defines these advantages as "technology, training, intelligence, etc."— which is actually a mixture of different logical categories, as technology and training can be provided to any man, while intelligence inheres in the recruit. But all this discussion still begs the question of why small teams are the organizational structure of choice.

4. Teams and Other Organizational Forms

A review for the Army of 10 years of research on team and small group performance (1989 through 1999) concludes that there is no common accepted definition of a team, despite a plethora of research on the subject.[117] The reviewers craft their own definition, which is "two or more people, who, despite having *separate, distinct tasks*, work *concurrently* and *interdependently* to achieve a common goal" (emphasis added). They emphasize the importance of a common purpose or task. Most importantly for our purposes, they focus on "the efforts of a few people who must work together to achieve a goal that would otherwise be unobtainable by the summed efforts of the members working individually."[118]

This definition reflects Émile Durkheim's notion of *collective conscience*—the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society [that] forms a determinate system which has its own life."[119] In more modern parlance, this phenomenon is called *emergence*—"how successive … interactions among autonomous individuals result in the emergence of collective phenomena … argue[ing] for the nonreducibility of higher levels of analysis."[120] This description provides a language by which we can speak of the team (a social group) as an actor, distinct from the sum of the actions of its members.

Durkheim's notion of collective conscience formed the basis for what he called mechanical solidarity through likeness.[121] "A social solidarity exists which arises because a certain number of states of consciousness are common to all members of the same society."[122] In a group characterized by social solidarity, all members of the group are identified by something they have in common. If the end game is a group of men brought together *because* of their sameness (in the case of SOF, 'sameness' in terms of some basic level of ability), it would be important to have that *sameness* variable set at a high level. This focus is not the same in a structural sense as pushing all towards Lawrence's lowest common denominator, which the GPF must do because of broad-based recruiting. SOF use conscious selection and practice to leverage similarity. Spulak's smaller, tighter distributions of variation of many variables become critically important.

SOF explicitly recognize their distinction from GPF through the *special* moniker. As some minority groups do, they take pride in that difference,

tout it as a virtue, and use it as a source of solidarity. Understandably, this behavior arouses resentment among GPF which, in turn (paradoxically), underscores the apartness of SOF by making that distinctiveness an explicit topic of discussion.

The emphasis on something similar and shared that is the basis of mechanical solidarity is sharply characterized with organic solidarity, which is found in groups with a strong division of labor. "They are constituted, not by a repetition of similar, homogeneous segments, but by a system of different organs each of which has a special role, and which are themselves formed of differentiated parts."[123] In this system (clearly tied to bureaucratic structures), the appropriate functioning of each functional part is critical for the life of the larger organization. Lawrence recognized this characteristic of the bureaucratic structure — functional differentiation or division of labor. "[T]he fighting man," he said, "was the product of the multiplied exertions of a long hierarchy, from workshop to supply unit, which kept him active in the field."[124]

Every group has two general sets of activities it must perform. One is around task performance, the other around the development and maintenance of social ties (often described as the development/maintenance of cohesion). While there appears to be a significant albeit small correlation between task performance and social cohesion (i.e., teams that perform effectively at tasks also demonstrate high levels of cohesion), LaJoie and Sterling were unable to determine from the literature they reviewed if there was any causality between these two variables, and if so, its directionality.[125] This monograph suggests that the nature of the task and the ways in which cohesion develops in operational groups are different in important ways in SOF and GPF. These differences in development lead to differences in performance and ultimately differences in the ways in which the two forces counter friction.

GPF, because of their size and because of the composition of their forces resulting from broad-based recruiting efforts, are organized bureaucratically. Discipline is used to establish conformity, which generates certainty of command. Because they have a high division of labor, sub-organizations are functionally defined. An operating actor in the GPF, to be functionally complete, must be composed of a large number of sub-organizations; hence the GPF focus on the brigade or division as the primary actor.

Organic solidarity, derived from the division of labor, means that each sub-organization must focus on performance of its function to the minimum acceptable standard, given the push of personnel toward the lowest common denominator and the bureaucratic proclivity to clarify what it means to fail and leave ambiguous the definition of success.[126] This situation is particularly true in the American military where staff rotate in and out of functional units. Task identity is high. Social identity of the group is not naturally developed. In fact, some have argued that any social identity or cohesion that is developed is located in individual-focused social networks that cross military units.[127]

The iconic SOF actor — the A-team — is quite different. Operational SOF teams are designed to be relatively self-sufficient. This design clearly distinguishes them from forward-operating units of the GPF, where phrases like the *long logistics tail* required to support such units evoke Lawrence's "long hierarchy, from workshop to supply unit." An A-team, on the other hand, is one of a set of such teams in a SF group, all of which are more or less the same. In fact, every A-team has the same functional composition (medic, communications, engineer, weapons) and is relatively flat from a command point of view. And although each team is internally functionally differentiated, Stirling's notion that the team could be broken down into ever-smaller modules argues that every man is at the base sufficiently capable, and cross-trained sufficiently so he is enough like all the other men on the team to adequately assume their role.[128]

Historically, the major differentiation among A-teams was through geocultural orientation, manifest in language and cultural skills specific to a particular part of the world. (Each SF group, and therefore the teams of which it is composed, has a geographical focus.) That said, any A-team can and will deploy to any part of the world. (A-teams oriented to South America are currently serving in the Middle East, for example). This feature is distinctly different than unit differentiation within the GPF, where a logistics unit, for example, cannot fulfill an artillery unit's function. The lack of flexibility at the unit or group level points toward a difference in task definition for the A-team from operational units in the GPF. Rather than be given a task defined at the behavioral or functional level, SOF operators are given an objective. The small teams in SOF have greater latitude in planning their own missions than do operational

The small teams in SOF have greater latitude in planning…

units in the conventional forces, and their mission space tends to be much broader than the rather narrow slice given to GPF operational units. The operational team develops its own operational plan, rehearses together, and executes as a team. McRaven emphasized the need for tight integration of the planning, preparation, and execution phase.[129] In this way, because the entire team is involved in creating the mental model of the operation, it operates in a common universe. Team research has shown that the high level of interpositional knowledge this intense interaction engenders leads to highly effective interaction on task. Team members are able to anticipate each others' information needs and *push* each other information without an explicit request for it. Actions of others can be better anticipated, and behaviors of team members more effectively integrated and synchronized.[130]

Since A-teams spend intense amounts of time in each other's presence, beginning with the planning of a mission through its execution, they develop strong social ties. In fact, several of the selection criteria for SF are focused around a *plays well with others* criterion. The men who will develop a plan for the necessary behaviors, prepare together and execute. In so doing, they develop a shared understanding of and commitment to a common purpose, one of McRaven's criteria for success and one of the distinguishing characteristics of mechanical solidarity.

In SOF, the task is received at the level of context, as an objective. This approach requires that each team be similarly and broadly capable, as the behaviors it may be required to execute can vary widely. There must be a broad range of functional capabilities *internal to the team* for the team to be able to demonstrate the creativity Spulak argued was critical to overcoming the unpredictability generated by friction. The team also must be flexible in order to be able to deal with informational uncertainties.

5. Does Group Size Matter?

Intuitively, it seems that these teams should be small. Interestingly, most of the literature addressed the question of team performance; size was treated as an independent (not a dependent) variable and simply asserted. The most important conclusion from the literature suggests that there is a great deal more research to be done in this area.

The *social brain hypothesis* suggests that the ability of the brain to process social knowledge (as distinct from memory size) sets limits on the number of individuals with whom one can have face-to-face contact. That number has generally been accepted to be around 150.[131] The core social grouping appears to be about 3 to 5 individuals, while the next commonly found group size is about 12 to 20 individuals. Using data from a variety of different societies (small- and large-scale) and from different contexts (e.g., social networks, task-oriented groups), Wei-Xing Zhou et al.[132] found that as group sizes get bigger, scaling seems to be in factors of three. Each level is about 3 times the level beneath it. Interestingly, the authors claim that "the military probably provides the best examples" of this scaling. For example, the smallest groups are composed of 10 to 15 men, platoons of about 35, and companies around 120 to 150.

What is perhaps of greatest interest to us here is the statement from Zhou et al., "we have little real understanding of what mechanisms might limit the nucleation point to a particular value,"[133] — that is, why the progression starts with 3 to 5 individuals. Clearly, there is a great deal more research that needs to be done here. Also found was literature that demonstrated the relationship between group size and other structural components such as the amount of division of labor, hierarchical differentiation, and spatial dispersion is inconsistent. The same absence of correlation much less causation also holds for size and level of formalization.[134]

Despite the absence of support from research, McRaven asserts that "it is difficult for large forces to develop a simple plan, keep their movements concealed, conduct detailed full-dress rehearsals (down to the individual soldier's level), gain tactical surprise and speed on target, and motivate all the soldiers in the unit to a single goal."[135] Although large group size does not necessarily correlate with complexity,[136] certainly concealment is more difficult for a large force, full-dress rehearsals are expensive and time-consuming, and speed of the whole is hard to achieve when one is moving

lots of parts. The covert nature of many (although not all) special operations, the need for speed, and the degradation of communication as the number of participants increases — that Clausewitz highlighted in his brief discussion of force composition — may be functional limiters on size for SOF.

6. Summary and Conclusion

This discussion focused on the implications of different types of organizational structure for the execution of force in the military. It was stimulated by curiosity about the difference in size between the iconic actor in SOF (a small team of about 10 to 15 people) and the focus in the GPF on organizations with thousands or tens of thousands of personnel.

The military is often cited as the archetypical bureaucratic organization. Bureaucracies manage large numbers of people through functional differentiation and the application of discipline. This organizational structure allows the military to engage in broad-based recruiting and, through the application of discipline, develop organizational control at the behavioral level. Division of labor within the military is high with organizations defined by task. Mission accomplishment thus requires participation of and coordination among many organizations, hence the brigade with thousands of men or the division with tens of thousands. Discipline and other bureaucratic tools move personnel in the direction of the predictable (certain) behavior required for such high levels of coordination to be effective. This mechanism allows the force to address Clausewitzian friction by reducing the uncertainty that is one of its key components.

If the force is trying to mitigate friction through flexibility and creativity, it needs to be organized around groups of broadly capable men. In this case, the division of labor within each team is low, and solidarity or cohesion is attained by the investment of all members in the team's purpose. Each team is relatively self-sufficient. This feature allows the organization to begin with context (mission and environment) and collectively develop behaviors appropriate to that context, rather than beginning with a function and developing behaviors appropriate to that function. The collective engagement in mission planning, rehearsal, and execution found in SOF teams because of this focus on context generates high social and task cohesion.

The size of SOF teams may be limited by factors dictated by the mission. Speed and concealment are much more difficult with large numbers of men than they are with small. However, the other factors characteristic of team performance (vice the functional units in a bureaucratic structure) are equally important for SOF success.

Changing the size of the operational unit is not key to changing its effect. Simply chopping the GPF into smaller pieces will not turn it into SOF because

it will not be possible to infuse those pieces with the qualities of SOF. A full transformation would require the men in those units to have the necessary attributes or capabilities, which would enable them to learn to engage in a functionally undifferentiated social environment and to exercise the flexibility and creativity that also characterize SOF. The rigorous SF psychological and operational selection and assessment process, for example, with its high attrition rates (sometimes as high as 60 percent per cohort) illustrate the scarcity of these capabilities in the general military population. SOF and GPF units differ fundamentally in the nature of their tasks, the nature of the men who compose the units, and the consequent ways in which solidarity or cohesion develops in operational groups. These differences in development lead to differences in performance and ultimately differences in the ways in which the two forces counter friction.

But why a unit size of around 15 men? While there does not appear to be much research on the effective size for SOF-like interaction (groups characterized by mechanical solidarity, aka *high-performing teams*), intuitively it appears that small groups are more effective. McRaven asserts that large groups cannot develop simple plans, one of the criteria for success for special operations. Informal communication (a hallmark of these types of groups and critical for developing relationships) degrades quickly as pathways gain in length. Developing unit or social cohesion at the brigade or division level is, on the face of it, a daunting task.

Although organizational structure in SOF may have originated as an accident of history (perhaps guided by intuition), the effectiveness of its small, undifferentiated teams to overcome battlefield friction has been demonstrated over time. SOF are organized and act in small groups because their comparatively homogenous, highly capable personnel allow small teams relatively undifferentiated in basic capabilities to exercise flexibility and creativity. This organizational form mitigates friction in a fundamentally different way than the relative certainty of behavior exhibited by GPF, whose large manpower base with a wide range of distribution of critical attributes and capabilities requires large, functionally differentiated groups to be effective.

It also is important to recognize the primary contribution that the development of certainty on the battlefield can make to the management of friction. SOF exist because they can perform strategically important missions that GPF cannot without unacceptable risks. In fact, as Clausewitz and the

principles of war insist, mass is often the deciding factor on a battlefield. Therefore, bureaucratic structures have their very important place. The challenge to those engaged in force structure planning is to recognize the costs and benefits of both and to make the appropriate tradeoffs in terms of manpower and treasure. Truly, as Lawrence said:

> By the substitution of a sure job for a possible masterpiece, military science made a deliberate sacrifice of capacity in order to reduce the uncertain element, the bionomic factor, in enlisted humanity.[137]

Endnotes

Forward-Deployed Warrior Diplomats: SOF and Cross-Cultural Competence

1. Adam Watson, *Diplomacy: The Dialogue Between States* (New York: Routledge, 30 September 1984).
2. Department of Defense (DoD), United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), *Capstone Concept for Special Operations* (2006), p. 7.
3. DoD, USSOCOM, *Strategic Plan* (18 December 2009), p. 8.
4. Admiral Eric T. Olson, *USSOCOM Posture Statement* (4 June 2009), p. 3; available from www.socom.mil/SOCOMHome/Documents/2009%20Posture%20Statement%20(3).pdf , accessed October 2010.
5. G. R. Berridge, *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 1.
6. R. P. Barston, *Modern Diplomacy* (London, U.K.: Pearson Education, Ltd., 2006 [1988]), p. 3.
7. Barston, *Modern Diplomacy*, pp. 2-3.
8. R. E. Petty, *Persuasion: From Single to Multiple to Meta-Cognitive Processes Perspectives on Psychological Science* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), p. 3.
9. Tom. R. Tyler, "Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation," *Annual Review of Psychology* Vol. 57 (2006): pp. 375-400, p. 376.
10. W. D. Crano and R. Prislin, "Attitudes and Persuasion," *Annual Review of Psychology* Vol. 57 (2006): pp. 345-374, p. 347.
11. Crano and Prislin, "Attitudes and Persuasion," p. 348.
12. Jessica Turnley, "Legitimacy and Power: An Exploration of Doctrine as it Relates to PSOM," manuscript prepared for DoD Joint Staff Warfare Analysis Division (J8), November 2008.
13. Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "Saigon 2009: Afghanistan is today's Vietnam," *Foreign Policy*, 20 August 2009; available from www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/08/20/saigon_2009, accessed October 2010.
14. Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton, "Friendship as a Social Process: A Substantive and Methodological Analysis," in *Freedom and Control in Modern Society*, ed. Morroe Berger et al. (New York: Van Nostrand, 1954), pp.18-66. The concept of homophily has gained recent visibility in the current literature on social networks.
15. H. C. Kelman, "Compliance, identification, and internalization: Three processes of attitude change," Journal of Conflict Resolution Vol.2, No.1 (1958): pp. 51-60, p. 53.
16. R. E. Petty, J. T. Cacioppo, and R. Goldman, "Personal involvement as a determinant of argument-based persuasion," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol. 4 (1981): pp. 847-855.

17. Adam Watson, *Diplomacy: The Dialogue Between States* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 59.
18. Barston, *Modern Diplomacy*, p. 45.
19. Bruce Jentleson, "Coercive Diplomacy: Scope and Limits in the Contemporary World," *The Stanley Foundation Policy Analysis Brief* (December 2006); available from www.stanleyfdn.org/publications/pab/pab06CoerDip.pdf , accessed October 2010.
20. Barston, *Modern Diplomacy*, p. 45.
21. DoD Dictionary of Military Terms "strategic level of war"; available from www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/data/s/7287.html, accessed October 2010.
22. Ibid.
23. Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), Book One, Chapter 1.
24. Charles W. Freeman, Jr., *Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997), p. 137.
25. See http://untreaty.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf; accessed October 2010.
26. DoD, *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC)*, 11 September 2007, p. 6.
27. United States Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats*, Joint Operating Concept Version 2.0, IW JOC, 17 May 2010, p. 9..
28. U.S. Army Special Forces Recruiting page, www.bragg.army.mil/sorb/SF.htm; accessed October 2010.
29. DoD, Department of the Army, *Army Special Operations Forces*, FM 3-05 (September 2006), pp. 1-58.
30. Ibid., pp. 1-65.
31. See www.defense.gov/news/MAVNI-Fact-Sheet.pdf, accessed October 2010.
32. Olson, *USSOCOM Posture Statement*, pp. 11-12.
33. Robert Martinage (Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments), *Special Operations Forces: Challenges and Opportunities*, Testimony Before the U.S. House of Representatives, House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, 3 March 2009.
34. Sean D. Naylor, "SOCom directive announces major changes," *Army Times*, 30 August 2009; available at www.armytimes.com/news/2009/08/army_spec_ops_shakeup_082709w/; accessed December 2010.
35. Although in some ways, the metaphor of *human terrain* is a helpful one because it invokes a useful complex of learning and operational behaviors, we have to be careful not to take the metaphor too far.
36. Karl Weick, *Sensemaking in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995).

37. Amalendu Misra, *Afghanistan: The Labyrinth of Violence* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 2004).
38. Brian R. Selmeski, "Military Cross-Cultural Competence: Core Concepts and Individual Development" (Royal Military College of Canada Center for Security, Armed Forces, and Society, Occasional Paper Series, No. 1, May 2007), p. 1.
39. Remi M. Hajjar, "A New Angle on the U.S. Military's Emphasis on Developing Cross-Cultural Competence: Connecting In-Ranks' Cultural Diversity to Cross-Cultural Competence," *Armed Forces & Society* Vol.36, No. 2 (2010): pp. 247-263, p. 249. For one of the seminal presentations of this concept, see Selmeski, "Military Cross-Cultural Competence."
40. Ibid.
41. SIL International, 1999. The ILR (FSI) proficiency scale is available from www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/mangngyrlngglrnngprgrm/TheILRFSIProficiencyScale.htm; accessed October 2010.
42. Allison Abbe, Lisa M. V. Gullick, and Jeffrey L. Herman, *Cross-cultural Competence in Army Leaders: A Conceptual and Empirical Foundation* (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences), Study Report 2008-01 (October 2007) p. vii.
43. Ibid., p. vii. Also, Figure 8 is in this publication as Figure 1, which is on page 2.
44. With some exceptions, efforts to teach and train the military in cross-cultural competence are fairly recent. While there is evidence from business, health care, and other venues that selection, training, and education specifically directed at developing cross-cultural competence can improve performance in this area, at this date there is no direct evidence from a military environment.
45. John P. Kotter and James L. Heskett, *Corporate Culture and Performance* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).
46. Achilles A. Armenakis and Arthur G. Bedeian, "Organizational Change: A Review of Theory and Research in the 1990s," *Journal of Management* Vol. 25 (June 1999), pp. 293-315 and p. 301.
47. U.S. Army Special Forces Recruiting page, www.bragg.army.mil/sorb/SF.htm; accessed October 2010.
48. U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command Web site, MARSOC Individual Training Course (ITC) page, www.marsoc.usmc.mil/itc.html; accessed October 2010.
49. The information in this section came from interviews with selected instructors and staff at SWCS and active duty SF, as well as textual material as noted. The author extends thanks to all who agreed to be interviewed.

    Any material in this and the following section in quotation marks that are not sourced with an endnote represents actual statements made by individuals interviewed. All other material is the author's paraphrasing or summary of their remarks.

50. United States Special Operations Command Fact Book, produced by USSOCOM Public Affairs (2009), p.10; available at www.socom.mil/SOCOMHome/newspub/pubs/Documents/FactBook.pdf, accessed February 2011.
51. The name was changed to Military Information Support Operations (MISO) per Secretary of Defense 3 December 2010 memorandum, "Changing the Term Psychological Operations (PSYOP) to Military Information Support Operations (MISO)." The prior unit name—Psychological Operations—is used here as this research describes the force as of 2009.
52. United States Special Operations Command Fact Book.
53. DoD, Department of the Army, *Army Special Operations Forces*, FM 3-05, paragraph 1-59.
54. Ibid., paragraph 1-54.
55. Ibid., paragraph 1-57.
56. United States Special Operations Command Fact Book, p. 13.
57. The information in this section came from interviews with selected personnel at NAVSPECWARCOM, NSW Group 1, including recruiters, senior leadership, program developers, and active duty SEALs, as well as textual material as noted. The author extends thanks to all who agreed to be interviewed.
58. United States Special Operations Command Fact Book, p. 18.
59. Ibid., pp.18-19.
60. Ibid., p. 20.
61. Ibid.
62. It is important to keep in mind that whether or not this information is "true" in terms of observed activities or programs in place, the researcher heard it from several respondents in various positions within NSW and with different perspectives. This means that this perception of the SEALs activities existed within the force and among people in positions to influence the selection and assessment process at the time of this research.
63. Ibid., p.18.
64. See www.sealswcc.com/navy-seals-general-requirements.aspx, accessed February 2011.
65. See www.cnrc.navy.mil/publications/NOTICES/1130CSORT.pdf, accessed October 2010.
66. DoD, Department of the Navy, Navy Recruiting Command, implementation of "Computerized Special Operations Resilience Test—(CSORT)" in Delayed Entry Program, COMNAVCRUITCOMNOTE 1130, p. 25 (February 2008).
67. See *C-SORT Users Guide*; available at www.cnrc.navy.mil/publications/Directives/C-SORT%20USERS%20GUIDE.pdf, accessed February 2011.
68. See *Command Naval Recruiting Command Cancelled Directives for Calendar Year 2008*; available at www.cnrc.navy.mil/Publications/cancelled.htm, accessed February 2011. Since late 2009, the C-SORT program is different — i.e., was later reinstated.

69. Although language and regional studies courses are required of the cohorts after they had passed the selection process, this study is focusing on the selection and assessment processes only.
70. The information in this section came from interviews with active duty AFSOC personnel, as well as textual material as noted. The author extends thanks to all who agreed to be interviewed.
71. United States Special Operations Command Fact Book, p. 26-27.
72. Justin Hoffman, *To Hell with the Paperwork: Deciphering the Culture of the Air Commandos* (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, December 2008), master's thesis; p. 28.
73. Ibid., p. 30.
74. Jessica Turnley, *Retaining a Precarious Value as Special Operations Go Mainstream* (Hurlburt Field, FL: JSOU Press, February 2008), Report 08-2, p. 25.
75. David E. Johnson, Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Roger Cliff, M. Wade Markel, Laurence Smallman, and Michael Spirtas, *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges: Insights from the Experiences of China, France, the United Kingdom, India, and Israel*, pp.12-13 (RAND Corporation, 2009).
76. The information in this section came from interviews with personnel associated with developing the MARSOC assessment program, as well as textual material as noted. The author extends thanks to all who agreed to be interviewed.
77. DoD, Department of the Army, *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, with forewords by General David H. Petraeus, Lieutenant General James F. Amos, and Lieutenant Colonel John A. Nagel and a new introduction by Sarah Sewall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); original text of U.S. Army FM 3-24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5, first issued on 15 December 2006.
78. See http://hts.army.mil/Default.aspx. The Human Terrain System has received a lot of criticism for the manner in which it is executing this mission. Our job here is neither to support nor defend it, but simply to put it forth as an example of an institutional effort to provide cultural information on the battlefield.
79. John Mulberry, "ARSOF, General Purpose Forces and FID: Who Does What, Where, and When?" *Special Warfare* Vol. 21, No. 1 (January/February 2008): Military Module, pp. 17-21.
80. See 6th Special Operations Squadron fact sheet; available at www2.hurlburt.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=3496, accessed February 2011.
81. Robert Spulak, A Theory of Special Operations: the Origin, Qualities, and Use of SOF (Hurlburt Field, FL: JSOU Press, October 2007), Report 07-7, p. 12.

Creating the Conditions for a Possible Masterpiece: Small Groups and SOF

82. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* is the autobiographical account of the experience of British soldier T. E. Lawrence.
83. The Jedburgh Operation consisted of 3-man international teams composed of a British member, an American member, and a member from the targeted country. The teams parachuted into Nazi-occupied France, Holland, or Belgium to conduct sabotage and guerilla warfare and to lead the local resistance forces against the Germans.
84. Charlie A. Beckwith (Col, U.S. Army, Ret.) and Donald Knox, *Delta Force* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1983), p. 102.
85. Aaron Bank (Col, U.S. Army, Ret.), *From OSS to Green Berets* (New York: Pocket Book, Simon and Shuster, 1987), p. 176.
86. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, Joint Publication 3-05 (17 December 2003), p. I-2.
87. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 87.
88. Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*: *The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Carbridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001 [1957], p. 71.
89. Since this discussion focuses on operational units of SOF (i.e., units that engage in combat) and is interested primarily in the American force, this monograph will speak of *men* rather than men *and women*. Women are precluded joining these units by the DoD 1994 ground combat exclusion policy (Memorandum from Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force et al., Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule [13 January 1994]). Although American women have seen combat in recent years in various roles in the GPF, the Special Forces A-teams and SEAL platoons are still male-only organizations.
90. Turnley, *Retaining a Precarious Value as Special Operations Go Mainstream*.
91. Stephen R. Barley and Pamela S. Tolbert, "Institutionalization and Structuration: Studying the Links between Action and Institution," *Organization Studies* Vol. 18, No. 1 (1997): pp. 93-117, p. 97.
92. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment*, Joint Publication 2-01.3 (16 June 2009).
93. DoD Dictionary of Military Terms, www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/, as amended through April 2010; accessed October 2010.
94. Clausewitz, *On War*, pp. 292-297.
95. Ibid., p. 295.
96. See, for example, General Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).
97. James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 2000 [1989]), New Edition.

98. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (translators and editors), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 196.
99. Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (Glencoe, NJ: The Free Press, 1949 [1937]), 2nd Edition, p. 506.
100. See also Gifford and Elizabeth Pinchot, *The End of Bureaucracy and the Rise of the Intelligent Organization* (San Franciso, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1993).
101. Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*, p. 254.
102. Ibid., p. 253.
103. T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: a Triumph* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1936), p. 339.
104. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 121.
105. Barry D. Watts, *Clauswitzian Friction and Future War* Revised Edition (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 2004), McNair Paper 68.
106. Ibid., p. 53.
107. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 282.
108. Ibid., p. 194.
109. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication 3-0 (17 December 2006, incorporating Change 1, 13 February 2008), p. A-2.
110. Spulak, *A Theory of Special Operations*, p. 17.
111. William H. McRaven, *Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare Theory and Practice* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1995).
112. Spulak, , *A Theory of Special Operations*.
113. Ibid., p. 12.
114. "Risks include not only physical risk to the personnel executing the mission but also risk of failure to achieve the objectives and risk of negative strategic or political consequences," Ibid., p. 21.
115. Ibid., pp. 20-21.
116. McRaven, *Spec Ops*, p. 8.
117. Andrew S. LaJoie and Bruce S. Sterling, *A Review and Annotated Bibliography of the Literature Pertaining to Team and Small Group Performance (1989 to 1999)*, (Alexandria, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, December 1999), Research Product 2000-01.
118. Ibid., p. 1, emphasis in the original.
119. Émile Durkehim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, George Simpson, trans. (New York: The Free Press, 1933 [1893]), p. 79.
120. R. Keith Sawyer, *Social Emergence: Societies as Complex Systems* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 22.
121. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, Chapter Two.
122. Ibid., p. 105.

123. Ibid., p. 181.
124. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: a Triumph*, p. 339.
125. LaJoie and Sterling, *A Review and Annotated Bibliography of the Literature Pertaining to Team and Small Group Performance (1989 to 1999)*, p. 12.
126. See Wilson, *Bureaucracy*.
127. David R. Segal and Mady Wechsler Segal, "Change in Military Organization," *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 9: pp. 151-170, p. 156.
128. Beckwith and Knox, *Delta Force*, p. 102.
129. McRaven, *Spec Ops*, pp. 8-11.
130. LaJoie and Sterling, *A Review and Annotated Bibliography*, p. 9.
131. R. I. M. Dunbar, "Coevolution of neocortex size, group size, and language in humans," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* Vol. 16 (1993): pp. 681-694.
132. W.-X Zhou, D. Sornette, R. A. Hill, and R. I. M. Dunbar, "Discrete hierarchical organization of social group sizes," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Britain* Vol. 272 (February 2005), pp. 439-444.
133. Ibid., p. 443.
134. Richard H. J. Hall, Eugene Haas, and Norman J. Johnson, "Organizational size, complexity, and formalization," *American Sociological Review* Vol. 32, No. 6 (1967), pp. 903-912.
135. McRaven, *Spec Ops*, p. 8. Notable exceptions such as D-day do not disprove this general rule.
136. Hall, Haas, and Johnson, "Organizational size, complexity, and formalization."
137. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: a Triumph*, p. 339.