Regional, Culture, and Language Familiarization

Officer Block 4 & Enlisted Block 5: USSOUTHCOM

Course Overview

The mission of the RCLF program is to ensure that Marine units are globally prepared and regionally focused so that they are effective in navigating and influencing the culturally complex 21st century operating environment in support of Marine Corps missions and requirements. The program is based on 17 regions of the world; however, Officer Block 4 and Enlisted Block 5 assigns and defines regions based on Combatant Command Area of responsibilities. The curriculum uses the regional construct to provide context for the cultural content of each RCLF block of instruction.

Learning Outcomes

A. Analyze the impact of cultural values on military operations (Regional and Cultural Studies)
B. Provide multiple explanations for the outcome of a successful or failed intercultural interaction (Communications and Cultural Studies)
C. Assess techniques for aligning culturally appropriate and mission effective behavior (Leadership and Warfighting)
D. Examine the effectiveness of communication strategies used to manage intercultural challenges (Communication and Cultural Studies).

Course Flow

This workbook serves as your instructional guide. It consists of six chapters. *Chapter 1* contains an overview of Geographic Combatant Commands, U.S. National Strategy, and the establishment and mission of your assigned Combatant Command (CCMD). *Chapter 2* includes an overview of the CCMD's Area of Responsibility (AOR) framed around key historical, government and politics, geographic, economic, people and society, and regional security issues. *Chapter 3* includes exposure to advanced operational culture general concepts, as well as considerations for culture general ethics. *Chapter 4* includes supplemental readings (available in the supplemental readings PDF) and applied scenarios, designed to illustrate specific cross-cultural concepts and skills. *Chapter 5* contains an overview of Marine Corps and Interagency Planning, with specific emphasis on culture as a variable in planning. Finally, *Chapter 6* contains a case study to illustrate the impact of cultural values and concepts on a specific military operations within the CCMDs AOR.

To successfully complete this block of instruction, Marines will need to download the materials zip file and read the workbook and supplemental readings. Marines must then complete an end-of-course evaluation and end-of-course survey.

Checklist:

☐ CCMD Workbook and Supplemental Readings (MarineNet)
  - CCMD Workbook PDF
  - Supplemental Readings PDF

☐ End-of-Course Evaluation (MarineNet)
☐ End-of-Course Survey (MarineNet)

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1 United States Southern Command Overview

"Everything we do at U.S. Southern Command begins and ends with human rights… a lot of people talk about human rights, but the U.S. military does human rights. We live it. We teach it. We enforce it."[1]

General John F. Kelly,
Commander of USSOUTHCOM, 2012-2016

1.1 Mission Statement

USSOUTHCOM is a geographic combatant command that "is a joint military command supporting U.S. national security objectives throughout the Western Hemisphere in cooperation with domestic and international partners, in order to foster security, ensure stability, and promote prosperity throughout Central and South America, the Caribbean and the global community."[2] *USSOUTHCOM has built regional and interagency partnerships in order to continue the forward defense of the U.S. homeland.*[3]

Figure 1-1: Commanders' Area of Responsibility. *Source: Department of Defense.*[4]

1.2 Geographic Combatant Commands and U.S. National Strategy

National strategic direction is governed by the U.S. Constitution, U.S. law, U.S. policy regarding internationally recognized law, and the national interest as represented by national security policy. This direction leads to unified action. National policy and planning documents generally provide national strategic direction. National strategic direction provides strategic context for the employment of the instruments of national power. Executive Branch and Department of Defense (DOD) documents such as the *National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy,* and *National Military Strategy* define the strategic purpose guiding employment of the military instrument of national power as part of a global strategy. One important strategic directive for employment of U.S. military forces is the *Unified Command Plan* (UCP).

The UCP is a classified executive branch document prepared by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), signed by the President, and reviewed at a minimum every two years. The President, through the UCP, establishes *Combatant Commands* (CCMDs). The current UCP establishes nine (9) CCMDs: six (6) *Geographic Combatant Commands* with a regional focus *(Figure 1-2*) and three (3) *Functional Combatant Commands* with worldwide missions *(Figure 1-3).*

United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) is responsible for military relations with African nations, the African Union and African regional security organizations. It protects and defends the interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African nations and, in cooperation with African governments, conducts military missions that increase security while deterring and defeating a variety of transnational threats.

United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) is responsible for operations in twenty countries that fall in the "central" area of the globe: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Yemen. United States Central Command utilizes national and international partnerships to build cooperation among nations, respond to crisis, deter and defeat threats and support development that ultimately increases stability in the region.

United States European Command (USEUCOM) works with NATO and other partner nations to address the security and defense needs of nations in Europe and parts of the Middle East and Eurasia. EUCOM coordinates with these nations to find cooperative solutions in peace and wartime alike, to plan training missions, provide humanitarian assistance and to develop strategies for promoting peace and stability in the region.

United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) operates in the area of responsibility encompassing the continental United States, Alaska, Mexico, Canada, portions of the Caribbean and surrounding waters. NORTHCOM is primarily responsible for civil support and homeland security and also oversees the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). It has few permanent forces and is instead assigned forces by the Secretary of Defense or the President whenever required for the execution of its missions.

United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) oversees an area of responsibility stretching from the waters of the United States west coast to the western border of India, and from Antarctica to the North Pole, encompassing 36 diverse nations. USPACOM and its partners work to promote the development of the region while cooperating to enhance security, deter aggression, respond with force when necessary and to provide humanitarian assistance.

United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) oversees an area of responsibility encompassing 31 nations in Latin America south of Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean Sea. USSOUTHCOM works to increase the security of the United States by engaging its partners to enhance the peacekeeping abilities of the region, to promote human rights, to deter illegal activities associated with illicit trafficking and to conduct multinational military exercises designed to strengthen partnerships while developing collective capabilities.

Figure 1-2: Geographic Combatant Commands. *Source: Department of Defense.*[5]

The ***United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)*** is responsible for planning for and conducting special operations. It offers direct action in the form of short duration strikes and small-scale offensives, special reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs operations, counterterrorism, psychological operations, information operations, counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, security force assistance, counterinsurgency operations and any specific activities directed by the President or the SecDef.

The ***United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM)*** is headquartered at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska. It conducts global operations in partnership with other Combatant Commands, services and U.S. government agencies to deter and detect strategic attacks against the United States. USSTRATCOM is responsible for command of U.S. nuclear capabilities, space operations, global surveillance and reconnaissance, intelligence, communications, computers, global missile defense and combatting weapons of mass destruction.

The ***United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)*** provides the Department of Defense with an aggregate of transportation capabilities and assets. Together with commercial partnerships, USTRANSCOM enables a diverse array of joint mobility missions.

Figure 1-3: Functional Combatant Commands. *Source: Department of Defense.*[6]

Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) exercise combatant command (command authority) (COCOM) over assigned forces and are responsible to the President and Secretary of Defense (SecDef) for command preparedness and performance of assigned missions. GCCs have responsibility for a geographic *area of responsibility* (AOR) assigned through the UCP. The UCP establishes CCMD missions and responsibilities, delineates the general geographical AOR for GCCs, and provides the framework used to assign forces for missions to the GCCs.

Another important policy document directing GCC missions and responsibilities is the *Guidance for Employment of the Force* (GEF). The President approves the contingency planning guidance contained in the GEF, which is developed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The GEF provides written policy guidance and priorities to the GCCs for reviewing and preparing operation plans (OPLANs) and theater campaign plans (TCPs).

GCCs are the vital link between those who determine national security policy and strategy, and the military forces that conduct military operations within their AORs. GCCs are responsible for a large geographical area and for effective coordination of operations within that area. Directives flow from the President and SecDef through CJCS to the GCCs, who plan and conduct the operations that achieve national or multinational strategic objectives. GCCs provide guidance and direction through strategic estimates, command strategies, and plans and orders for the employment of military force. As military force may not achieve national objectives, military operations must be coordinated, synchronized, and – if appropriate – integrated with other U.S. Government (USG) agencies, international governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational forces (MNFs), and the private sector. GCCs direct this coordination and integration of military power to achieve strategic ends. 3

Using their strategic estimates and strategic options, GCCs develop strategies that translate national and multinational direction into strategic concepts or courses of action (COAs) to meet strategic and joint operation planning requirements. The plans developed by GCCs provide strategic direction, assign missions, tasks, forces, and resources; designate objectives; provide authoritative direction; promulgate rules of engagement (ROE) and rules for the use of force; establish constraints and restraints (military limitations); and define policies and concepts of operations (CONOPS) to be integrated into subordinate

or supporting plans. GCCs also exercise directive authority for logistics over assigned forces, and authority for force protection over all DOD personnel (including their dependents) assigned, attached, transiting through, or training in the GCC's AOR.

GCCs develop their theater strategies by analyzing events in the operational environment and developing options to set conditions for achieving strategic end states. They translate these options into an integrated set of steady-state engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence activities described in theater and subordinate campaign plans. In some cases, a GCC may be required to develop a global campaign plan. These plans operationalize the GCC's theater strategy. Contingency plans developed to respond to specific contingencies are treated as branch plans to the campaign plan.

Figure 1-4: National Strategic Direction. *Source: JP 5-0.*[7]

In joint operations, the supported GCC often will have a role in achieving more than one national strategic objective. Some national strategic objectives will be the primary responsibility of the supported GCC, while others will require a more balanced use of all instruments of national power, with the CCDR in support of other agencies. Supporting CCDRs and their subordinates design their actions to be consistent with the supported commander's strategy. All CCDRs provide strategic direction, assign missions, tasks, forces, and resources; designate objectives; establish operational limitations such as rules of engagement (ROE), constraints, and restraints; and define policies and CONOPS to be integrated into OPLANs and operation orders (OPORDs). GCCs may also establish subordinate unified commands when so authorized by SecDef.

1.3 Establishment of USSOUTHCOM

The year 2013 marked USSOUTHCOM's official 50th anniversary.[8] The GCC has not always held that name nor been responsible for the areas it is today. Formerly called the "U.S. Caribbean Defense Command" (1941-1947), it was created by the Roosevelt administration to defend the Panama Canal and its surrounding area during WWII.[9] Through the Lend-Lease Act, the U.S. Caribbean Defense Command "distributed military equipment to regional partners… and opened U.S. service schools to Latin American soldiers, sailors, and airmen."[10]

Located in Panama, the U.S. Caribbean Defense Command created a system of regional defense focused on anti-submarine and counterespionage operations. By the end of the 1940s, however, a new national security plan changed the headquarters in Panama to the U.S. Caribbean Command, and broadened the focus of its mission to include inter-American security cooperation with Central and South America.[11]

In the 1950s, U.S. Atlantic Command assumed responsibility for security cooperation with countries in the Caribbean Basin.[12] In order to better denominate the geographic areas encompassed by the AOR, the Kennedy administration changed the name of the U.S. Caribbean Command to what we know today, USSOUTHCOM, in June 1963.[13]

USSOUTHCOM's mission focused on "defending the Panama Canal, contingency planning for Cold War activities, ...the administration of U.S. foreign military assistance program in Central and South America," and accelerating regional development.[14] After the Vietnam War there was a push to "trim" the U.S. military presence abroad; the Command survived these cutbacks, but with responsibilities and resources that were limited.[15]

In the 1980s, the Reagan administration re-strengthened USSOUTHCOM when it saw the rise of internal conflicts within many countries in the region, particularly in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and others.[16] In 1991, the end of the Cold War brought many changes: USSOUTHCOM focused on counter-drug operations, re-assumed responsibility for the Caribbean Basin, and increased many of its humanitarian missions.[17] In 1997, the headquarters for USSOUTHCOM was moved to Miami, Florida where it has remained ever since.[18] As of January 14, 2016, Admiral Kurt W. Tidd is currently the commander of USSOUTHCOM.

USSOUTHCOM has been through many changes since its creation. However, it has continuously focused on its mission of establishing, nurturing, and continuing partnerships with partner countries and agencies.

1.4 Area of Responsibility

USSOUTHCOM is vital in building partnerships with the Americas.[19] The area designated within this AOR was selected by U.S. authorities solely for the purpose of categorization, but actually includes many regions, countries, areas, peoples, languages, and cultures.

The AOR of USSOUTHCOM "encompasses 31 countries and 16 dependencies and areas of special sovereignty," and covers more than 16 million square miles.[20] USSOUTHCOM covers the expanse of land south of Mexico, the waters adjacent to Central and South America, and the Caribbean Sea.[21] This area is a very large, interconnected one that includes Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Costa Rica, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Although a part of Latin America, Mexico is located in North America and is therefore a part of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). However, USSOUTHCOM works closely with USNORTHCOM in monitoring the tri-border area between Mexico's Southern border, Belize, and Guatemala - a key region of the narcotics transit zone. Therefore, Mexico will be discussed in this block of the RCLF curriculum.[22]

Figure 1-5: USSOUTHCOM AOR. *Source: USSOUTHCOM.*[23]

1.5 Structure

USSOUTHCOM is in charge of using and integrating United States Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps forces within the USSOUTHCOM AOR to achieve U.S. national security objectives while protecting national interests. Commander, U.S. Southern Command is the senior U.S. military authority of USSOUTHCOM. The Commander reports to the President of the United States through the Secretary of Defense. USSOUTHCOM is headquartered in Doral, Florida, near Miami and has forces stationed and deployed throughout the region.

1.5.1 Headquarters.

Under the leadership of a four-star Commander, USSOUTHCOM's staff is organized into directorates, component commands and Security Cooperation Organizations that represent USSOUTHCOM in the region. USSOUTHCOM is a joint command comprised of more than 1,200 military and civilian personnel representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and several other federal agencies. Headquarters staff structure is depicted below.

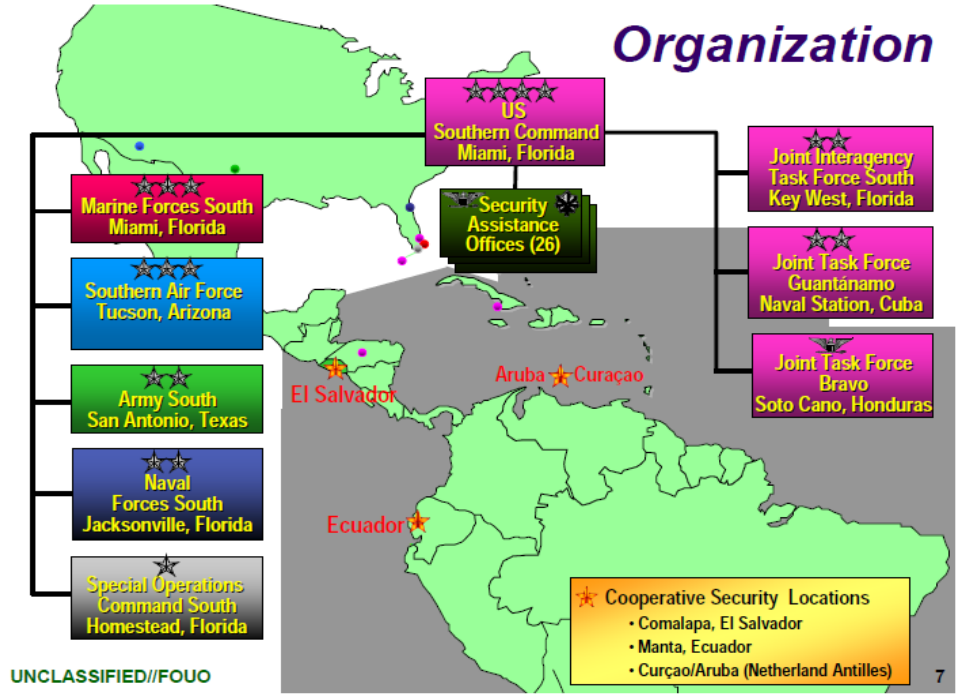

Figure 1-6: USSOUTHCOM Headquarters. *Source: USSOUTHCOM.*[24]

1.5.2 Subordinate Commands

USSOUTHCOM consists of the following subordinate commands:

1.5.2.1 *Service Component Commands:*

- U.S. Army South (ARSOUTH), Fort Sam Houston, Texas
- Air Forces Southern/12th Air Force (AFSOUTH), Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona
- U.S. Marine Forces, South (MARFORSOUTH), Miami, Florida
- U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/ 4th Fleet (USNAVSO/FOURTHFLT), Mayport Naval Station, Jacksonville, Florida

1.5.2.2 *Component Command for Special Operations:*

- Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH), Homestead Air Reserve Base near Miami, Florida

1.5.2.3 *Direct Reporting Units:*

- William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS)

1.5.2.4 *Standing Joint Task Force:*

Alongside the five component commands, USSOUTHCOM has three Joint Task Forces:

- Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF-Guantanamo), which serves as a detention and interrogation center for suspected terrorists in the Guantanamo Naval Station, Cuba[25]
- Joint Task Force Bravo (JTF-Bravo) in Soto Cano, Honduras
- Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) in Key West, Florida. JTF-Bravo and JIATF-S conduct "day-to-day" operations to counter illicit human, drug, money, and weapons trafficking, as well as counter extremist operations.[26]

1.5.3 U.S. Marine Corps Forces South (MARFORSOUTH)

The U.S. Marine Forces South commands all Marine forces assigned to USSOUTHCOM, advises the Commander of USSOUTHCOM on employment and support of forces, conducts deployment/redeployment planning and execution of Marine forces, and other operational missions as assigned.

MARFORSOUTH traces its roots to the U.S. Marine Corps Barracks, Panama, which was created in 1903 to assist the Isthmian Canal Zone. Since that time, Marines have helped to provide stability through garrison duties, nation building, and peacekeeping.[27] From 2013 to 2015, USSOUTHCOM priorities have been detention operations, countering transnational terrorism, building partner city capacity, human rights, and planning for contingencies. Today, MARFORSOUTH is engaged in planning, coordinating, and executing foreign humanitarian assistance/disaster relief, counter-transnational organized crime missions, and other operations in support of USSOUTHCOM objectives.[28]

MARFORSOUTH's security engagements include:

- Combined Operations Seminar Team to standardize planning efforts with partner nation militaries
- Mobile Training Team to establish and maintain effective relationships with partner nations security forces
- Landing Attack Subsequent Operations to improve partner nations infantry tactics
- Subject Matter Expert Exchange for the transfer of functional, technical, and professional information between USMC experts and counterparts in partner nations
- Traditional Commander Activity, which are military-to-military leadership engagements to enhance relations between U.S. military forces and their counterparts in partner nations.[29]

The stability and security of the U.S. and partner nations hinges upon their ability to work together to confront and defeat common security challenges. Focused regional security cooperation is key to building interoperability and other capabilities required to confront challenges before they mature into direct

threats. Coalitions and regional partnerships comprised of capable and willing nations build mutual security, deter aggression and extremism, and provide the underlying conditions for success if military action is required. MARFORSOUTH's role is to satisfy USSOUTHCOM's Theater Security Cooperation requirement through the efficient employment of U.S. Marine Corps Forces. MARFORSOUTH supports 28 partner nations and targets 16 Partner Nation Naval Infantries or Maritime Security Forces in Latin America and the Caribbean.[30]

1.6 Key Focus Areas

The key focus of USSOUTHCOM is to ensure stability and forward defense of the U.S. Toward that end, the priorities of USSOUTHCOM range from countering transnational organized crime, building partner capacity, detainee operations, and counterterrorism to contingency response. USSOUTHCOM also focuses on human rights, technology and experimentation, and public/private cooperation.

USSOUTHCOM and USNORTHCOM jointly strive to defeat the growing threat of Mexican transnational criminal organizations in Central America. Regional violence and corruption are increasing in the AORs for both commands.[31] USSOUTHCOM works directly with USNORTHCOM to synchronize Department of Defense operations in the Western Hemisphere, and to coordinate the employment of combined resources.[32]

According to Commander General John Kelly (2012-2016) in the USSOUTHCOM's posture statement, "We continue to underestimate the threat of transnational organized crime at significant and direct risk to our national security and that of our partner nations… our Nation's tendency is to take the security of the Western Hemisphere for granted. I believe this is a mistake." [33] Therefore, drug trafficking and the routes upon which illegal drugs are shipped have become areas of immediate concern.[34]

1.7 Contemporary Operations

USSOUTHCOM conducts military-to-military exercises and activities such as annual medical readiness training; it also conducts engineering training, disaster response, and relief assistance exercises in order to enhance interoperability, build coalition capabilities, and to share "best practices" with regional militaries and security forces.[35, 36]

Figure 1-7: UNITAS Amphibious 2015. *Source: Marines.mil.*[37]

Continuing civic exercises improve readiness and the ability to rapidly respond. In 2014, USSOUTHCOM sponsored a training exercise called Tradewinds that included participants from the U.S. military and U.S. law enforcement agencies; they were joined by counterparts from 16 nations in the Caribbean Basin.[38] In 2015, USSOUTHCOM formed the 250-Marine SPMAGTF-South – this was the first rapid-response task force to be based in Central America.[39]

Examples of Enduring Annual Exercises:

- *Tradewinds* is designed to improve responses to regional security threats and focuses on maritime law enforcement.
- *Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias* is a simulation of a natural disaster response that brings together 11 partner nations and regional humanitarian organizations to improve coordination on disaster response.[40]
- *Partnership of the Americas* is a naval circumnavigation of South America.
- *Fuerzas Comando* is a competition between the region's Special Forces.
- *UNITAS* and the *Southern Partnership Station* are a series of U.S. Navy deployments in Central and South America and the Caribbean Basin aimed to stimulate and increase partnerships with regional maritime activities; the exercises also train militaries and civilian security forces.
- *PANAMAX* is one of the largest multinational training exercises in the world, involving more than 30 vessels, a dozen aircraft and 4,500 personnel from 20 nations. PANAMAX focuses on the defense of the Panama Canal by a 17-nation, multinational force.

In 2014, humanitarian exercises included: Integrated Advance, which exercises responses to various regional contingencies; and Fused Response, which improves the ability of Caribbean nations to combat transnational organized crime (CTOC) and respond to natural disasters.

In a combined effort to fight and decrease regional drug trafficking, Colombia, Mexico, and the United States share expertise and lessons learned from their respective domestic contexts. U.S. military delegations support El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in their efforts to improve security and strengthen rule of law institutions.[41] The Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) was originally created in 2008 as part of the Mexico-focused counterdrug and anticrime assistance package known as the Mérida Initiative.[42] Operations such as Operation *Martillo* (Spanish language, for "hammer"), focus on combating transnational organized crime.[43]

Operation *Martillo* is an interagency regional security strategy in support of the White House "Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime" and the U.S. Department of State "Central America Regional Security Initiative" (CARSI). Operation *Martillo* boasts fourteen participating countries: Belize, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States.

[1] General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps Commander, "Posture Statement of General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps Commander United States Southern Command,"(speech, 113th Congress House Armed Services Committee, Washington, D.C., February 26, 2014), 2, http://www.USSOUTHCOM.mil/newsroom/Documents/2014_USSOUTHCOM_Posture_Statement_HASC_FINAL_PDF.pdf.

[2] USSOUTHCOM, "Missions Main," accessed January 3, 2016, http://www.USSOUTHCOM.mil/ourmissions/Pages/Our-Missions.aspx.

[3] Ibid.

[4] "Commanders' Area of Responsibility," National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, April 06, 2011, http://www.defense.gov/Sites/Unified-Combatant-Commands.

[5] "Unified Command Plan," U.S. Department of Defense, accessed July 14, 2016, http://www.defense.gov/Sites/Unified-Combatant-Commands.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Joint Chiefs of State, *Joint Operation Planning,* JP 5-0, (Washington D.C.: December 26, 2006), II-5.

[8] USSOUTHCOM, "About Us," accessed January 3, 2016, http://www.USSOUTHCOM.mil/aboutus/Pages/History.aspx.

[9] Andrew Feickert, *The Unified Command Plan and Combatant Commands: Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress R42077 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, January 3, 2013), 53, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42077.pdf.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 54.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] USSOUTHCOM, "History," accessed January 3, 2016, http://www.USSOUTHCOM.mil/aboutus/Pages/History.aspx.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps Commander, "Posture Statement of General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps Commander United States Southern Command," (speech, 114th Congress Senate Armed 2Services Committee, Washington, DC, March 12, 2015), 20, http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Documents/SOUTHCOM_POSTURE_STATEMENT_FINAL_2015.pdf.

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[21] Ibid.

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[24] Senior Army Reserve Commanders, "USSOUTHCOM Mission and RC Role," (Powerpoint presentation, USSOUTHCOM, San Antonio, TX, July 22, 2006), https://info.publicintelligence.net/ussouthcom_mission_rc.pdf.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South, "History," accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.marforsouth.marines.mil/About.aspx.

[28] Ibid.

[29] "Security Engagements," *U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South*, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.marforsouth.marines.mil/UnitHome/SecurityEngagements.aspx.

[30] USSOUTHCOM, "SOUTHCOM Component Commands & Units," accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.marforsouth.marines.mil/UnitHome/TheaterSecurityCooperation.aspx.

[31] "Countering Transnational Organized Crime," *USSOUTHCOM.*

[32] Ibid.

[33] Kelly, "2015 Posture Statement," 2.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Feickert, "The Unified Command Plan."

[36] Ibid.

[37] Velasquez, Isaac, Lance Cpl, "151120-M-WQ543-007.JPG," photograph, Iiha de Marambaia, Brazil: UNITAS 2015, MARFORSOUTH, November 20, 2015, http://www.marines.mil/Photos.aspx?igphoto=2001320841.

[38] USSOUTHCOM. "Tradewinds 2012," accessed December 10, 2015, http://www.USSOUTHCOM.mil/newsroom/Pages/Tradewinds-2012.aspx.

[39] Gina Harkins, "Marines set for new mission in troubled Central America," *Marine Corps Times*, April 13, 2015, http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2015/04/13/marines-central-america-spmagtf/25511993/.

[40] Kelly, "2015 Posture Statement," 20.

[41] U.S. Department of State, "High Level Security Dialogue with the Northern Triangle," press release, June 17, 2015, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/243946.htm.

[42] CAOCL United States Marine Corps, *OB2/EB3 Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (MCAC),* 2014.

[43] "Operation Martillo," *USSOUTHCOM*, last modified December 11, 2015, accessed January 27, 2016, http://www.USSOUTHCOM.mil/newsroom/Pages/Operation-Martillo.aspx.

2 Regional Overview

2.1 Historical Overview

History is a complex set of enduring collective expectations, beliefs, social memories, and institutionalized patterns of behavior that continue to operate and form a part of the complex course of social and political change in each nation and community.[44] The historical influence of customs, attitudes, values, and political culture, among other elements, shapes present civil-military relations.[45]

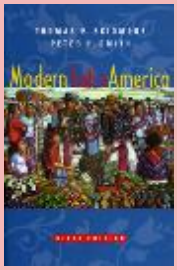
This is a general overview of the region(s) within the AOR. USSOUTHCOM's historic development can be thought of in three general stages: the pre-Colonial (before 1492), Colonial (1492-1850s), and post-Colonial (1850s-today). Because the AOR covers a very large and diverse area, these are general dates. For a more detailed overview of the history, review OB2/OB3 MCAC and South America.

2.1.1 The Pre-Colonial Period

During the pre-Columbian period, many of the regions were inhabited by Amerindian indigenous and native peoples. These are only a small handful of the indigenous populations that lived in the Americas. Three important civilizations were the Mayans, Aztecs, and Incans.

Recommended Reading:

For a complete systematic and regional description of these histories see Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America,* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005).



The Mayans' most famous achievements are in architecture, sculpture, painting, hieroglyphic writing, astronomy, mathematics, and chronology (the invention of the 365-day calendar). They lived in independent city-states with a total population of over 200,000 people, stretching from Southern Mexico to Guatemala. The Mayans fell to domination (700-1200) and absorption (1200-1540) by Toltec invaders. Today, direct descendants of the Mayans live in southern Mexico and Guatemala.[46] These descendants sometimes identify themselves as "Mayan."

The Aztec Empire was seated in Mexico's central valley, and constantly engaged in *guerras floridas* (tribute wars) with their neighbors in order to capture people needed for their human sacrifices. The Aztecs built the city of Tenochtitlán around 1325. Remnants of Tenochtitlán can be found beneath the Spanish-built Mexico City. Aztecs were known for their military organization and ability to construct impressive ceremonial buildings. Although the Spaniards arrived and imposed a hierarchical society, Aztec society was already a rigid and stratified society before the Spanish arrived. The top layer of their society was comprised of hereditary nobility; the bottom layer was comprised of slaves.[47]

The Incan Empire was one of the largest civilizations in the pre-Columbian era; it extended 3,000 miles along the Andes, through six present-day South American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.[48] Incas were master engineers: they built a vast road system, an irrigation system, and mastered terraced agriculture on the sides of mountain.[49] Incas were defeated during the Spanish Conquest of 1533. Today, Bolivian and Peruvian populations present the stronger Amerindian heritage.

Aside from these three groups, there were many other native cultures. In the Caribbean, there were three different groups: the Ciboney (or Guanahuatebey), the Taino Arawak, and the Carib (for whom the region is named).[50] Before the Spanish arrived, a plurality of groups lived untouched by European influence.

2.1.2 The Colonial Period

Many missionaries and clerics were also sent to the Americas to fulfill a mission to promote Catholicism. An important colonizing strategy was to convert key indigenous leaders to Christianity; it was expected that these leaders would then convert the rest of the people. Thus, many clerics were also conquistadors. Since that time, the Roman Catholic Church has historically exerted a strong influence on political and social behavior in Latin America.[51]

Figure 2-1: The Templo Mayor, main temple, of Tenochtitlan uncovered in the center of Mexico City. *Source: Wikipedia.*[52]

The Spaniard conquerors seized the most fertile land and established the *encomienda* system. These were semi-feudal institutions imposed on the native societies, where Indians worked in mines and fields under cruel and harsh labor conditions.[53]

The ***encomienda*** was an institution established by the Spanish government in the New World as a series of rights and obligations between the *encomendero* (grantee) and the people under his care:[54]

"The indigenous people were required to provide tribute and free labor to the *encomendero*, who was responsible for their welfare, their assimilation into Spanish culture, and their Christianization. In reality, the native population [of Mexico] was accustomed to a similar organization of tributary towns under the Aztec. In time, the *encomenderos* became the New World's version of Spanish feudal lords. This new source of political power came to worry the Spanish authorities because of the dangers of a local nobility capable of contending peninsular authority."[55]

During the colonial period, European migrants were not the only people coming to the Americas. In other non-Spanish colonies, African slaves were brought to the Americas to answer the increasing demand for sugar in Europe. The economic role of these African migrants would be fundamental as they worked the sugar plantations and mining camps, similar to their role in the United States plantations.

Sugar production in the Caribbean was controlled mostly by the Dutch, English, and French. Up until the eighteenth century, approximately 10-15 million people were sent to the New World; 2 million of these came from Africa and would work on sugar plantations in the Caribbean.[56] Thus, the Caribbean islands became largely populated by people of African descent and – with the exception of the Spanish islands of Puerto Rico and Cuba – people of African origin became the majority.[57]

A similar trend took place within Brazil's workforce. In Brazil, Portugal controlled the greatest source of sugar cane and used African slave labor to harvest and process this lucrative crop.[58] From 1540 to 1860, nearly four million of Africans were imported in Brazilian ports.[59]

During the same period of time, the Spanish brought smaller numbers of African people to Spanish America. By the mid-sixteenth century, indigenous populations were depleted. The Spanish cleric Bartolome de las Casas, considered the "Protector of the Indians," submitted a plea to the Spanish Crown asking for more regulations and protections for the indigenous people of New Spain. In response, the Spanish Crown agreed to regulate the treatment of the native peoples. As a result and as a labor alternative, De las Casas suggested that Spain import African slaves. This increased the amount of diversity in the Americas. By 1825, at the close of the colonial era, only 14 percent of the total population of approximately 7 million people was categorized as "white."[60]

The number of indigenous natives in the colonies was severely impacted by the incoming of European migrants. Because of miscegenation and the high death rates due to diseases brought by Europeans, warfare, and slavery, the percentage of native indigenous peoples declined. This colonial past is still very much a source of tension and pain and for countries such as Haiti and Mexico, is also the beginning of very anti-imperialistic discourses and trends.

2.1.3 The Post-Colonial Period

During the nineteenth century, these anti-imperialistic feelings increased and independence movements began to gain traction within many Latin American colonies. Many factors contributed to these movements: unhappiness with the governing viceroyalties, the concept of "nationhood," and the importation of "European ideals" of democratic self-rule that had recently fueled the French Revolution.

For most of Central America, by contrast, the transition to independence was largely peaceful.[61] However, many other efforts were divided which led to drawn out, fragmented independence efforts. There were conflicting views within the white ruling stratum in many of these colonies: in Spanish America, it was between the *peninsulares* (whites born in Spain) and *criollos* (whites born in the New World). In Portuguese America, the internal divisions were between Brazilian-born landowners and Portuguese-born merchants.[62] After long, bloody battles that cost thousands of lives, the fight for independence from both Spain and Portuguese was mostly over by the 1820s – with the exception of Cuba who achieved independence from Spain in 1898.

In the Caribbean, many islands achieved independence in different ways and at different times. In 1804, Haiti revolted against French colonial rule and enslavement to become the first independent Caribbean state and the world's first black-led republic.[63] Some British, Dutch, and French territories in the Caribbean would not achieve sovereignty until the 1960s and 1970s and some are still under colonial tutelage, considered overseas departments, or in commonwealth status.[64]

After the Spanish-American War, the U.S. became the predominant Caribbean power, taking control of Puerto Rico and assuming the right to control affairs in Cuba and the Dominican Republic.[65]

The Spanish-American War (1895-1898). The United States lent its support to Cuba's struggle for independence after the *U.S.S. Maine* was sunk in Havana; soon after, the U.S. declared war against Spain.[66] Spain lost the war and was forced to forfeit all remaining assets in the Western Hemisphere.[67] After Cuba gained independence in 1898, the U.S. had guardianship over Cuba's affairs. In 1901, the U.S. invoked the Platt Amendment, which stipulated the right of the United States to intervene in Cuba's internal affairs, and to lease Guantanamo Bay to the U.S., for naval operations.[68] Even though the United States ended its formal occupation of Cuba in 1902, the "sinking" of the *U.S.S. Maine* and

the Platt Amendment remained sources of tension between the U.S. and Cuban governments for many additional years.[69]

Independence did not bring stability and prosperity. Frequently, the post-Colonial period (1820s-1900s) in many of these newly independent states was marked by instability and autocratic rule by so-called "strong men." These leaders (known as *caudillos*), were usually charismatic and often had previously served as soldiers, military officers, or landowners. *Caudillos* have played crucial roles in creating the identity of these "nations." The sheer number of failed regimes that arose in Spanish America can be measured in the number of "new" constitutions that were drafted by countries before the turn of the twentieth century: over 100.[70]

Some caudillos, such as the dictator Juan Manuel Rosas in Argentina (1829-1832), now have posthumous reputations that verge on the mythic, and are targets of both fascination and outrage – in the 1980s, the Peronist party revived Rosas' image and honored him in banknotes and monuments. The public reacted with a mix of emotions and criticism.

2.1.4 Contemporary History

Economic growth continued up until the early twentieth century. By then many countries had the foundations of a democracy. After World War II, the institutionalization of democracy continued to progress but with the demographic transformation resulted in rapid population growth, rural to urban migration, the rise of mass political movements and fears of social unrest.[71]

2.1.4.1 *Central America*

The main events of the twentieth century in Central America and the Caribbean were: the construction of the Panama canal and Panamanian independence, the so-called "Banana Wars," Caribbean nation independence (as seen above), and the revolutions in Central America in the broader context of the Cold War.

2.1.4.1.1 The Panama Canal and Panamanian Independence

U.S. Marines have long provided stability in the Panama Canal and were responsible for ensuring its defense. However, the history of the Panama Canal exemplifies some of the complex relationships between the U.S. and many Latin American countries.

The construction of the Panama Canal began in the 1880s by French builders who eventually went bankrupt due to setbacks associated with workers coming down with malaria, yellow fever, and other tropical diseases.[72] In 1903, with the support of the U.S. military, Panama gained its independence from Colombia and signed a treaty with the U.S., then led by President Theodore Roosevelt. In exchange for a one-time payment to Panama of $10 million and an annuity of $250,000, the Treaty created a U.S. protectorate called the Panama Canal Zone.[73],[74] The Panama Canal was built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1904 and 1914.[75]

Figure 2-2: Comical satire about "Big Stick" policy published in 1904. *Source: Granger Collection.*[76]

The Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty facilitated construction of the canal, and granted the U.S. sovereignty over a 10-mile strip of land on either side. Although the Hay-Banau-Varilla Treaty eventually became a source of tension between the U.S. and Panama, it was hailed at the time as a major foreign policy success for both the U.S. and Panama. By 1914, "many Panamanians questioned the validity of the treaty," as Philippe-Jean Bunau-Varilla, the Panamanian representative, entered negotiations without the Panamanian government's formal consent.[77]

Until 1977, the U.S. used, occupied, and controlled the construction, operation, and protection of the Canal. During this time, tensions grew. In 1964, "grievances between native Panamanians and "Zonians," or Americans residing in the U.S.-controlled Canal Zone, boiled over into a series of anti-American riots which resulted in an evacuation of the U.S. embassy in Panama City, widespread looting, and dozens of deaths."[78] This uprising is now honored annually in Panama as "Martyr's Day" and is considered the beginning of the end of U.S. control of the Panama Canal Zone.[79]

In U.S. political circles, the control of the Panama Canal Zone was also a controversial issue: presidential candidates in 1976 had mixed views on whether to renegotiate continued U.S. control of the Canal; that same year, the Senate – which would in the years to come agree to a treaty that relinquished American jurisdiction over the Canal – was equally divided.

Despite this controversy, after his election in 1977, President Jimmy Carter negotiated two agreements with Panamanian President Omar Torrijos. These agreements gave the U.S. permission for joint operations and promised Panama sole control over the Canal by 1999. The Panamanian Government allowed the U.S. the right to defend the Canal against any threat to its neutrality, which allowed the U.S. perpetual use of the Canal until 1999. Between 1977 and 1999, the U.S. relinquished responsibility for key sections of the Zone and more responsibility for the Canal overall to Panama.[80] During this same time period, Panamanian President Torrijos died (1981), Manual Noriega took power (1983), and U.S. President George H.W. Bush ordered the invasion of Panama to remove him (1989). This instability resulted in renewed tensions between the two nations, though by 1999, relations had again improved: the United States transferred its last remaining U.S. military forces out of Panama, including the headquarters staff for USSOUTHCOM, which was relocated to Miami, Florida.

2.1.4.1.2 Banana Wars

After the turn of the century, coffee and bananas dominated the economy of many countries in Central America. In economic terms, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Panama were considered "banana republics"; Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua were "coffee countries."[81] Companies such as the United Fruit Company (UFCO) which owned massive plantations in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala had enormous political influence and counted on authoritarian regimes to maximize profits and stifle worker unrest.[82] From 1901 to 1934, U.S. Marines carried out more than 35 interventions, collectively known as the "Banana Wars," in Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. [83] Marines intervened so often in Central America that their after action reports capturing successful strategies and tactics were compiled by the Marine Corps into *The Small Wars Manual* (1940). [84]

2.1.4.2 *The Caribbean*

European colonies achieved independence at different times and through various means.[85] Nonetheless, independence was achieved by almost all European colonies in the Caribbean during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, "some have been struggling with the challenges of nationhood for nearly 200 years" while other nations have begun facing these challenges only in the past 40 years.[86]

Smallness, poverty, scant resources, and modest populations prevented many Caribbean island governments from becoming strong.[87] By the 1990s, small countries of the Caribbean faced many challenges of governance, including an inability to impose their authority through economic and social policy.[88] While many of these countries have shifted toward a more democratic rule, much work remains to ensure honest and fair elections. Nonetheless, corruption and fraud still remain high. In Haiti, for example, presidential elections – originally scheduled for November 2015 – were postponed three times (and were finally held in January 2016) due to allegations of voting fraud. Public outrage over the delays precipitated several violent protests.[89]

In the Caribbean, although independence was acquired, some have struggled with the difficulties of nationhood.[90] Because of their small size and geographic placement, many of these nations failed to develop functional military establishments.[91] With the exception of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, independent nations in the Caribbean did not have the military domination mainland Latin America had during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[92] In Haiti, the dictatorship of Francois Duvalier lasted from 1957 to 1971 - he was succeeded by his son, who took over from 1971 to 1986. Comparatively, the Dominican Republic was led by the dictator Rafael Trujillo from 1930 to 1961.[93]

2.1.4.3 *South America*

Key events in South America during the twentieth century are difficult to tie together with a single set of distinguishing characteristics, but might be best categorized as far-reaching, and long-lasting.

As mentioned in the above section, mainland Latin America was dominated by military and right-governments. Presidents such as Getúlio Vargas (Brazil, 1930-1934), Juan Perón (Argentina, 1946-1955; 1973-1974), Marcos Pérez Jiménez (1953-1958), and Alfredo Stroessner (Paraguay, 1954-1989), exemplified the far-right**,** fascist, and one party-rule trend fashionable in Europe during 1930s.[94]

Figure 2-3: Augusto Pinochet, 1995. *Source: Cámara fotográfica.* [95]

From the 1960s to the 1990s, military coups ushered in military dictatorships in Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, and Uruguay. (Paraguay's military dictatorship under the iron rule of Alfredo Strossner had begun in the early 1950s.)[96] Many of these authoritarian regimes terrorized their perceived enemies through kidnapping, torture, and murder.

In Argentina, *la guerra sucia* ("the Dirty War"; 1976-1983)*,* led by the Argentina military government, murdered and tortured an estimated 30,000 people. The Dirty War ended after Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands in 1982. Protesting grandmothers and mothers continue to march each week in the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina with white handkerchiefs and pictures of missing loved ones: they seek knowledge on their whereabouts, and demand the government's attention to other social justice issues.

From 1976 to 1984, General Augusto Pinochet's brutal regime in Chile tortured and disappeared approximately 40,000 people and killed more than 3,000.

The long-term effects of these brutal dictatorships are complex: while many South Americans who suffered under these regimes feel hurt and anger, many people remain loyal to the memory of these leaders. For example, visitors to Chile are often surprised to learn that General Pinochet still has many supporters who regard him as a hero who saved Chile from becoming "another Cuba." A survey conducted by a political think tank in 2013 revealed that more than a third of those interviewed had a "neutral" view of Pinochet or viewed the dictatorship as "a mixture of good and bad"; 55 percent regarded his regime as either "bad" or "very bad," and 9 percent believed his regime was "good" or "very good."[97]

2.1.4.4 *The Cold War Era*

During the Cold War, the conflict between Western-style democracy and the brand of Communism advocated by the Soviet Union was manifest in Central America and the Caribbean. This clash of political ideals created major challenges for U.S. defense and foreign policy.[98] Key events during this period were a U.S.-sponsored coup in Guatemala that overthrew the democratically-elected President Jacobo Arbenz, the Cuban Revolution, the Bay of Pigs Invasion, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. U.S. engagement, perceived as intervention in the region during the Cold War, sometimes fueled discontent and distrust among many Latin American nations.

In the Cold War era, Marxism was disseminated in Latin America and "liberation theology" was incorporated into guerrilla ideology throughout Latin America.[99] The Cuban Revolution inspired several regional guerrilla movements and precipitated three major civil wars in Central America: in Guatemala (1960-1996), El Salvador (1979-1992), and Nicaragua (1979-1990).[100] With the end of the Cold War, the United States began to take a longer-term, more economically focused view of Latin America.[101]

2.1.4.5 *U.S. Involvement in the AOR during the Twentieth Century*

At the beginning of the twentieth century, U.S. Marines were engaged almost continuously in the "Banana Wars" in Latin America and the Caribbean. Counter guerrilla operations were a prominent feature of these interventions. In Nicaragua (1912-1933), Marines fought against irregular forces led by Augusto César Sandino; in Haiti (1915-1934), Marines hunted down *Caco* rebels; and in the Dominican Republic (1916-1924), Marines suppressed antigovernment forces.[102]

Figure 2-4: A Marine patrol in Haiti being led by a native guide into bandit country. *Source: Marine Corps Legacy Museum.*[103]

This tumultuous history left a mark on U.S. relations with Latin America; as many people in the region garnered animosity towards the U.S. because of its foreign policy goals. Between 1900 and 1932, the United States intervened 14 times in Central America and the Caribbean under the auspices of the "Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine." The Corollary, in part, states: "Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society may… force the United States…. to the exercise of an international police power."[104]

Taking its cue from the Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, each time a partner of the U.S. government was in danger, American forces would temporarily occupy the country or assist the local government to put down a rebellion.[105] Under the Corollary, U.S. promoted Panama's independence from Colombia, assisted Panama's efforts for independence, and gained inter-oceanic access that Colombia would not grant. President Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy aimed to improve the sometimes-tense relations between the U.S. and Latin American nations. To this day, U.S. involvement in many of these countries is considered positive by some and negative by others.

In the field of world policy, I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others. No state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another. The definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention.

President Franklin Roosevelt's 1933 'Good Neighbor Policy'[106]

2.2 Government and Political Overview

Most people live in states governed by formal and informal institutions. Marines need to know how power and authority are distributed in the state by studying the formal and informal structures of governments and militaries in the AOR. In addition, Marines need to understand how people, groups, and institutions exercise power and authority, in other words, what comprises politics in the states.[107]

2.2.1 Types of Government

With the exception of Cuba, all of the South American, Central American, and Caribbean countries, as well as Mexico, are democracies with a popularly elected government and universal suffrage. Some countries, such as Belize, Jamaica, and the Bahamas, are constitutional parliamentary democracies.[110] As former British colonies, they are also members of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 53 independent countries, almost all of which were formerly under British rule. Other islands of the Caribbean are overseas territories of other European nations and of the United States, such as the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Cayman Islands, and the United States' Virgin Islands.[111]

Although most countries in the region are democracies, their political slant varies greatly. Therefore, the levels of political freedoms and civil liberties in the region vary significantly from country to country.[112]

Many countries' policies and governments tend to shift towards a far-left, left, or center agenda. Far-left governments tend to have a patriotic, military, or rebellious hero as their historic inspiration. For example, Venezuela's government is far-left leaning, influenced by socialism, and its symbolic leader is from the nineteenth century – the military, independence leader Simón Bolívar. Cuba stands out in the region as the only Communist state in the Western Hemisphere and holds as its national hero the revolutionary Che Guevara.[113]

Figure 2-5: Simón Bolívar.
Source: Wikipedia.[109]

The judicial branches of many countries in the South America, Central America, and Caribbean regions tend to be politically vulnerable and inefficient, lacking the ability to provide proper checks and balances on the executive branch.[114] In the cases of Colombia and Brazil, the challenges with the administration of justice are structural, thus affecting all spheres of judicial intervention.[115]

A Culture of 'Handpicking' and Favors

Many political structures are created through a culture of personal favors and "handpicked" job placements. What we might regard as "corruption" or "nepotism" is – in many Latin American countries – a thoroughly engrained political practice. Nonetheless, this practice is currently shifting, as anti-corruption regulations and popular feelings have continued to rise.

Often, "official" figures of authority may not wield the true power in a political and military situation. Therefore, there can be "non-official" people who wield the true power and step over the established boundaries of their non-official position. In countries such as Mexico, the "handpicked" appointments have caused public distrust and bitterness – the otherwise common culture of personal favors has become more rejected and openly criticized as a wheel of corruption.

This wheel of favors and impunity has led to an increased amount of violence and crime that goes unpunished. Societies that do not trust their institutions are often societies that have a high crime rate, like many within the AOR.[108]

2.2.2 Key International Organizations

There are key international organizations in USSOUTHCOM which focus on a range of issues from regional and international cooperation to human rights and disaster relief.

- The Organization of American States (OAS), with its 35 member partners from North, Central, South America, and the Caribbean, is an intercontinental organization focused on regional solidarity and cooperation.
- The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) is the oldest regional defense organization in the world; it provides the OAS – as mandated in the Organization's charter – with technical and educational advice on military and defense issues in the Hemisphere. [116]
- The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), composed of the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, focuses on advancing the integration and balance of the region.
- The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) is an inter-governmental regional organization with 12 South American members. UNASUR has its own, new, military coordinating body called the South American Defense Council (CSD) that aims to facilitate the exchange of information, promote collaboration for disaster relief, and promote civil-military engagement.[117]

Other non-governmental international organizations in the AOR include the United Nations and the International Red Cross.

2.2.3 Foundational Myths and Latin American Militaries

Nationalism has deep roots in Spanish America and its military institutions are intricately connected to this nationalism. In most of the countries of this region, national identity was tied with the "warrior-priest" tradition that Iberian conquistadors brought from Spain, where conquest, governance, and religious-cultural intolerance continued until the end of the eighteenth century.[118]

The defense of this kind of "national identity" can be seen from the 1950s into the late 1980s, when military governments justified the unconstitutional movements that brought them to power, and then – once they were securely in power – justified oppressive domestic policies by saying that they were necessary to "defend Western Christian Values" from "godless Communism." For example, in a letter explaining his dictatorial actions, August Pinochet, the ex-dictator of Chile, wrote that Comunism was "the materialistic, atheistic vision of man and society…. a universal evangelism of hatred and class conflict …marxism planted death and destruction."[119]

The wars of independence and the regional and transnational wars established the boundaries for the new nation-states. These boundaries became the foundations for Latin American military institutions whose armies claimed a "guardianship role" to oversee the destiny and values of *la patria.*[120]

Recommended Reading:

Brian Loveman. "Historical Foundations of Civil-Military Relations in Spanish America," *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives,* ed. David Pion-Berlin, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

Can be accessed here: http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc/bitstream/handle/10535/4350/Historical_foundations_of_civil_military_relations_in_spanish_america.pdf?sequence=1

La patria is a concept that has changed throughout history and can mean different things to different people.[121] At first, it was used to identify multiple and overlapping territories and identities such as a province, a geographical region, and an administrative center. Patria can also to refer to a culturally constructed notion of a 'nation' that is united by culture, language, or a common history.[122] In Mexico, this is the common shared meaning. However, in some countries, what patria may mean to one person may not mean the same to another person. Therefore, patria can have different meanings for different people and groups of people.[123]

Here, the almost universal claim is that the *national military institutions preceded the nation itself;* it remains a strong element of military discourse.[124] According to many official national histories, the national armies are "permanent guardians" who created their nations and defend against foreign intervention and internal strife.[125]

Similar language can be found on army, navy, and air force websites; military academic texts; and official national histories. Some specific examples of this language:[126]

… The Army is born with the Nation… its preamble in times of Conquest. –Venezuela

The National Army is born with the Patria. It is a foundational army… –Uruguay

2.2.4 A Civilian – Military History

By the end of the eighteenth century, civil and military authority often overlapped, military courts claimed jurisdiction over civilians, and military officers and enlisted personnel enjoyed a great number of privileges and immunities.[127] The cumulative effect of the colonial and eighteenth century political cultures – with some variations – resulted in deeply embedded authoritarian and militarist political institutions in the region.[128]

Military jurisdiction also stems from the tradition of the *fuero* – or, in the most simplistic terms, "immunity and privileges," – where military personnel and civilians are bound by military jurisdiction and tribunals.[129] In contrast to the procedures established by the U.S. Uniform Code of Military Justice, under this construct military personnel must obey *any* order they receive without question or discussion, and they have individual immunity for action carried out under such orders. This "*due obedience*" present in some military regulations since 1768 has guided operations against guerrillas and leftist political movements since 1959, and has often been used to defend criminal actions in courts of law.[130] Due obedience is blamed for many human rights violations committed in the region, and contributes to the "culture of impunity" that pervades many Latin American societies.[131]

A culture of impunity, or impunidad, is a term often used in relation to countries in Latin America and elsewhere, where human rights abuses remain unpunished, with observance of the rule of law; with structurally inefficient judicial systems, in which crime and corruption is perpetuated.[132]

Many misunderstandings between the United States and Latin America stem from differing interpretations of an "appropriate" civil-military relationship. This relationship is often reflected in provisions defined in national constitutions.[133] Latin American constitutions frequently include clauses that permit the suspension of civil liberties and other human rights in the event of national emergencies such as natural disasters or an insurgency.[134]

2.2.5 Regional Relationships

Relations between countries in this region can be historically, politically, geographically, and socially complex. In USSOUTHCOM, the key regional topics of dispute are over borders or territories, maritime matters, and energy. The economic crisis of the 1980s, the end of the Cold War, and growing multilateralism have eased military competition and bilateral tensions, but these events have also exacerbated the potential for confrontation, particularly between Venezuela and Colombia.[135] In Central America, there has been a trend towards demilitarization and redefining "national security"; with regional priorities and security cooperation showing improvement since peace processes began in the 1990s. One example is the creation of the South American Defense Council (CSD) in 2005 as an organization modeled on NATO.[136] However, not all tensions have disappeared. Below is a collection of some of the more significant ongoing disputes in South America.

2.2.6 Energy and Resource Nationalism

Energy can shape geopolitical relations and cause tensions in Latin America since the distribution of energy resources is unequal in different countries. Some countries in the region have a significant amount of energy resources and some do not.[137] For example, Brazil has oil reserves but meager natural gas reserves; it imports all of its natural gas from Bolivia and Argentina. As a result, "resource nationalism" – the desire to nationalize or have significant state control over energy sectors such as oil and gas – has grown in Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, and Ecuador.[138]

Energy policy and competition has therefore shaped current relations between countries, particularly in South America. In 2006, President Evo Morales of Bolivia signed a decree to nationalize its nation's oil and gas reserves and gave foreign investors, mainly Brazil and Argentina, six months to renegotiate longstanding supply contracts or face expulsion. This resulted in tensions with Brazil and Argentina.[139] An agreement was eventually reached – and the Bolivian government raised the export price of gas.

2.2.7 Long-Standing Border and Maritime Disputes

2.2.7.1 *The FARC, Colombia, and their Neighbors Venezuela and Ecuador*

Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador have sustained long-standing tensions because of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the largest left-wing rebel group based in Colombia. Several transnational issues—such as the spilling of the FARC into neighbor countries, Colombia accusing Venezuela of funding the guerrilla movement, and Colombia bombing a guerrilla camp within Ecuador—have exacerbated the challenges associated with international partner relations and stability.[140]

2.2.7.2 *Border Dispute between Peru and Ecuador*

A long-standing border dispute between Peru and Ecuador led to military clashes in 1995. The military clashes ended under pressure from the U.S. and the Rio Group, an international organization composed of eight Latin American countries.[142] Since then the two countries have attempted to move forward: in 2012, Ecuadorian and Peruvian Ministers of Defense agreed to jointly build several coast guard vessels to be used for search and rescue missions, provide disaster relief and support counter drug trafficking operations.[143]

2.2.7.3 *Border Disputes between Chile and Peru, and Bolivia and Chile*

Peru and Chile have had an ongoing dispute regarding a maritime border in the Pacific Ocean. The dispute dates back to the Pacific War (1879-1883), when Chile claimed large amounts of Peruvian and Bolivian territory as its own.[144] Since that time tensions have remained. In 2009, Peru arrested two Chilean military officers for allegedly spying and paying a Peruvian officer to reveal state secrets. In 2015, the International Court of Justice granted Peru over 50,000 km² of ocean that Chile had claimed as part of its own national waters. Chile has rejected the Court's ruling.

The Court is currently deciding on Bolivia's right to have access to the Pacific Ocean.[145] Bolivia's president Evo Morales is worried as the ruling for Peru could jeopardize Bolivia's chances of acquiring its own ocean access– an historical concern of Bolivia's. The Bolivians continue to have a small navy despite having no access to the ocean. To illustrate the importance of this matter to the Bolivians, in 2010 Peru and Bolivia signed a deal allowing Bolivia to build a port near Ilo, on Peru's Pacific coast.[146]

In December 2015, the Chilean Armed Forces mobilized over 5,500 troops on Chile's borders with Bolivia and Peru for its annual military exercise, "Hurricane 2015."[147] The Peruvian and Bolivian governments officially objected to the exercise – the largest "Hurricane" ever mounted –, calling it "menacing" and "an act of intimidation."[148]

2.3 Geographic Overview

As mentioned above, many of USSOUTHCOM's activities are centered on transnational issues, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. Geographic factors influence human and social characteristics such as beliefs, behaviors, social organization, and politics, to name a few. This is not to say that geography determines how people and societies behave, but rather that geography has varying effects on what they believe and do.[149]

Recommended Readings:

For a concise operational culture field guide that expands on Latin American geography:

CAOCL, *Working with Latin American Militaries,* 1st Ed (USMC).

For a complete systematic and regional geographic survey of Latin America:

Brian W. Blouet and Olwyn M. Blouet, *Latin America and the Caribbean*, 6th Ed. (John Wiley & Sons).

Latin America has an extensive and expansive amount of geography. Geography is extremely important in Latin America, due to a varied range of geographic factors. The region's diverse geography plays a significant – and, in many cases, determining – role in civil affairs, security, and conflict issues.

There are three commonly accepted divisions of the Americas: North America (including Mexico), Central America and the Caribbean, and South America. USSOUTHCOM is a construct of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean - with the exception of U.S. commonwealths, territories, and possessions.

2.3.1 South America

The continent of South America includes 12 independent countries and two foreign territories, which do not fall under USSOUTHCOM: the Falklands (Great Britain), or Malvinas; and French Guiana (France). The main topographic features in South America are the Andes Mountains, the Guiana Highlands, the Amazon basin, the Central lowlands, and the Atlantic coastal plains. South America can be divided into three sub-regions, based on geographic location: the Andean region, Brazil, and the Guianas.[150]

Figure 2-7: South America. *Source: Adapted from LANIC .*[151]

The circled area of the map delineates the Andean region *(Figure 2-7*). The Andean region can be thought of as Northern, Central, and southern Andean countries.[152]

The Northern countries are Colombia and Venezuela, whose main geographic characteristics are the Pacific coastlands, the Caribbean coastlands, the Andean Ridge, and the *Oriente* (tropical lowlands in the east).

The central Andean countries are Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. The main characteristics of these countries are the *costa* (with tropical coastal forests in Ecuador and a coastal desert in Peru), the *sierra* (or mountains), the *altiplano* (high plain), and the *Oriente selva* (the Eastern tropical rainforest lowlands).[153]

The southern Andean countries are Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Chile's main regions are the Atacama Desert, the Aconcagua River, and the Bio-Bio Valley. Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay's regions are high Andean lands in the northwest (cold, dry), lowlands between the Andes and the Atlantic (semi-arid Gran Chaco), and the Argentine plains, the *Pampas*.[154] In the southern end of Chile and Argentina is *La Patagonia,* a sparsely populated region composed of deserts, steppes, and grasslands.

Brazil's main geographic regions are the Guiana Highlands, the Amazon Basin, the Brazilian Plateau, and the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The Guiana Highlands are rich in minerals, but remain largely unexplored. The Amazon Basin has a larger volume of water than any other water system on Earth. The Brazilian Plateau is similar to the Guiana Highlands and is rich in minerals. The Atlantic Coastal Plain has been used for food production since pre-Columbian times, and plays an important role in today's agricultural production.[155]

The countries of Suriname and Guyana, plus France's overseas territory French Guiana, make up the Guianas region. The region is distinct from the rest of South America due to its thick forests.[156] Although these countries and territory are geographically situated in South America, they are more generally associated with the Caribbean for historic, economic, and cultural reasons.[157]

South America has extensive river networks that include the Amazon River, the Magdalena River (Colombia), River Orinoco (Venezuela), and the Plata River system (Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Argentina).[158] The Amazon River is a major commercial route into the heart of the Amazon, but the route has few developed centers for activity and transport. The Itaipu Dam, located on the border between Brazil and Paraguay on the Plata River, is the largest operating hydroelectric power plant in the world.[159]

Rivers are important in civilian and military life; they complement road networks and are often the only surface route to remote areas. Most militaries are focused on riverine operations, so they are commonly functionally organized as riverine units. The areas adjacent to rivers in this region are subject to flooding;

these flood zones are often the receivers of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) missions.[160] For example, in December of 2015, more than 150,000 people were displaced in Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay due to heavy summer rains that caused rivers to overflow across a vast area.[161]

South America experiences a wide range of climatic conditions. However, tropical conditions prevail over more than half the continent: most countries have only two seasons, one rainy (December to February – during the summer months) and one dry (July to August – during the winter months).[162] Temperatures are cooler near the southern end of the equator than the northern end. The Pacific-facing side of South America tends to be colder than the Atlantic side; this is due to the Peru Current, a cold ocean current.[163] Nonetheless, the Amazonian rainforests are warm and rainy year-round.[164]

With its seasonal heavy rains, South America is prone to flooding and mudslides. By contrast, there is often severe drought during the dry season. The Andean ridges are also prone to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes; almost every major city in this region has been severely impacted by at least one earthquake in the last 25 years.[165]

Figure 2-8: Population, Landscape, and Climate Estimates, v3: Climate Zones Observed Climate Data 2001-2025, South America. *Source: CIESIN.*[166]

2.3.2 Central America and the Caribbean

Central America consists of seven countries: Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. In the Caribbean, there are 16 independent island states and several foreign territories (those of Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and the United States). All together there are thousands of islands scattered around the Caribbean Sea *(Figure 2-9)*.[167]

Figure 2-9: Map of the Central America and the Caribbean. *Source: University of Texas.*[168]

The Sierra Madre Mountains stretch from Mexico through Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and northern Nicaragua. Approximately 80 percent of Honduras consists of interior highlands that are extremely rugged and mountainous, with intermountain valleys.[169] In the eastern region, the tropical rainforest and pine savannas of the Caribbean lowlands cover approximately half of Nicaragua, the largest country in Central America.[170] In Central America, the lands are divided by a extensive mountainous ridges, valleys, plains, and hydrographic networks.[171]

In the northern part of the Caribbean Sea, the larger islands are known as the Greater Antilles, which include Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Hispaniola. The island of Hispaniola contains the countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. In the eastern Caribbean there is a collection of smaller islands known as the Lesser Antilles (also referred to as the Leeward and Windward Islands).

Despite being geographically located outside the Caribbean Sea itself, some neighboring countries have strong historic, economic, and cultural ties to this region. For example, Belize and Puerto Rico are commonly identified as "Caribbean nations." Additionally, the Guianas – though physically located in South America – are closely connected to the Caribbean, largely because – like many island nations to the north – they were previously colonized by the British, Dutch, or French.[173]

Figure 2-10: Topographic Map of Northern Central America. *Source: CIA.*[172]

Within Central America and the Caribbean, the topography varies from flat plains in Barbados to the rugged coastlines of Martinique and Guadeloupe. A few Caribbean islands – notably Cuba and Jamaica – have rolling hills and mountain ranges.[174] There are three principal topographies that can be found separately or together. The first is high, rugged mountains of over 1,200 m (3,280 ft) covered in dense rainforest and cut off by rivers. A good example is the Blue Mountains in eastern Jamaica. The second is very hilly countryside, largely rugged, of about 600 m (1,968 ft), such as the high plateaus of St. Kitts, Antigua, and Barbados. The third type of topography is coastal plains that surround the hills and mountains.[175] This region has some active volcanoes and crater lakes. The convergence of the Caribbean tectonic plate with four other major tectonic plates makes this area prone to frequent earthquakes, occasional tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions.[176]

The climate in Central America and the Caribbean is tropical-rainy or tropical-dry, with abundant rainfall that can fluctuate greatly.[177] Nonetheless, individual climatic conditions depend on the elevation.[178] In Central America, the rainy season lasts from May to October, though the wet season in some areas can last over ten months. The period from January to April is usually dryer. In the Caribbean, it can rain from May to October or be tropical-dry during the winter in the northern hemisphere.[179] Mountain areas typically experience cooler climates due to altitude, while the Caribbean lowlands are generally hotter and more humid than interior areas.

This region is prone to natural disasters that sometimes cause significant physical damage and casualties. These destructive forces include hurricanes, tropical storms, volcanoes, earthquakes, and floods.[180] Hurricane season normally lasts from June to November.

2.3.2.1 *El Niño Effect*

El Niño is a periodic three- to eight-year phenomenon where a warm buildup current displaces the cold Peru Current from the west coast of South America. El Niño, accompanied by rain storms, alters the normally arid west coast. The El Niño phenomenon is even blamed for droughts, floods, and the decline of certain species of fish in Northeastern Brazil and Central America. In 2015, the Peruvian armed forces were mobilized in advance of an El Niño – one of the strongest in 65 years.[181]

Health Risks
The presence of mosquitoes increases after the hurricane season, when there is more standing water and floodwater available for mosquitoes to lay their eggs. The resultant surge in the mosquito population, in turn, increases cases of mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever, zika, and chikungunya.

2.4 Economic Overview

Generally, economies in this region are divided into three main sectors: the primary sector (farming, fishing, forestry, mining, and quarrying), secondary sector (manufacturing and construction), and tertiary sector (retailing, wholesaling, transportation, entertainment, tourism, education, and medical services, among others); with some recognition of a fourth sector (information technology and media sharing, among others).

As in many other world regions, economic categories are broadly delineated as either part of the formal economy and the informal economy. The formal economy is one that, in general, is regulated by institutionalized structures, is taxed, and operates legally. The informal economy is one that, in general, includes market- and nonmarket-based production of goods and services that escapes detection or is intentionally not included in the official GDP estimates.[182]

In Latin America, the national economic systems of many countries follow neoliberal, free trade policies, where high tariffs and protective measures have been reduced. This does not include Cuba however, where trade is regulated by a Communist regime.[183]

2.4.1 The Formal Economies

In the formal economy, the primary sector in Latin America consists of the exploitation and use of natural resources for mining, fishing, farming, and forestry. Latin America has vast reserves of mineral resources.[184] Although Latin America possesses many mineral deposits and oil resources, a lack of transportation often prevents them from being fully exploited.[185]

Latin America is the largest foreign supplier of oil to the U.S., and a strong partner in the development of alternative fuels.[186] Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Venezuela all mine minerals and exploit oil and gas.[187],[188] Brazil is the 12th largest oil producer in the world. By contrast, most countries in Central America have limited mineral resources.

There is a wide variety of climate zones and soils, which are utilized for agricultural production.[189] Argentina and Uruguay have extensive, fertile grasslands (the Pampas grasslands) that are used to support a prosperous farming industry.[190]

The natural vegetation of the Caribbean, much of Central America, the Andes, and tropical Brazil is forest.[191] Forestry is a large industry: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Paraguay are the top producers of lumber in Latin America.[192] Commercial fishing areas are abundant, but these areas are located unevenly throughout Latin America.[193] Mexico, a number of Caribbean islands, and several countries in Central America have fishing and aquaculture industries that contribute heavily to local diets. Seafood from this region is also shipped via air to markets throughout North America.[194]

As a whole, "Latin America is a major producer and exporter of commercial crops."[196] Coffee and bananas have long been imported from the Caribbean, Central, and South America.[197] Coffee is a very important crop in the Andes, especially in Colombia. In recent years, the cultivation of soy beans has expanded in Brazil because of the country's rich, tropical soil.[198] During the Southern Hemisphere's growing season, large-scale production of fruit and vegetables is facilitated by cheap, fast transportation, and by consumers in North America eager to have fresh produce during their winter months.[199] A shift in the recent decades has shown that agriculture has become more commercialized. The crops grown for export have expanded to include asparagus, grapes, pears, apples, cantaloupes, snap peas, tomatoes, and other fruits and vegetables.[200] Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil have benefitted from the increased demand for sugarcane to produce ethanol.[201]

Figure 2-11: Maquiladora in Mexico. *Source: Wikipedia.*[195]

Although much of the land in this region is arable, a lack of access to agricultural markets makes it necessary to use this land to raise livestock and crops solely for local consumption.[202] As a result, modernization and commercialization initiatives are limited and have failed to eliminate peasant farms and rural poverty. In this context, many small farmers in the Andean region have resorted to cultivating

coca leaves, the raw material for the production the illegal drug cocaine. The future for small commercial farms and the production of staples is considered "bleak."[203]

The secondary sector is composed of the manufacturing sector, specifically steel production. Brazil exports steel, railroad equipment, commuter and military aircraft, cars and trucks. Other countries, including Mexico and Venezuela, manufacture steel. The Mexican *maquiladoras*, or factories, have expanded the country's range of manufactured goods to include vehicles – Ford, Volkswagen, and other companies have Mexican plants.[204] Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina all produce a large number of motor vehicles; Brazil and Mexico rank among the world's top ten producers of vehicles.[205]

In the tertiary, or service sector, most services are present in urban societies, while in traditional rural societies, few services exist.[206] In a majority of Latin American countries, services account for over 50 percent of GDP.[207] There are retail chains, shopping malls, and a greater range of products readily available to most people who live or travel here. About 80 percent of the region's population lives in cities; this makes Latin America the world's most urbanized region.[208] An expanding middle class has increased the number of consumers with disposable income.[209]

The tourism industry is continuously growing. In 2015, 191 million international tourists arrived in the Americas, a 5 percent increase from the previous year.[210] Because of this influx of people and the scale and reach of the tourist industry, when natural disasters such as hurricanes strike tourist areas, the toll is both physical and financial.

There are important common economic markets and free trade agreements (FTA) within Latin America. In an economic market generally, members of the FTA allow free trade between themselves and there is a common tariff for non-members.[211] The economic market agreements within Latin America include: the South American Common Market, MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela); the Pacific Alliance (Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru); the Union of the South American Nations, UNASUR (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela); and the Andean Community, CAN (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia). UNASUR differs from the Pacific Alliance, which (along with eight other Pacific Rim countries) aims to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership. The member countries of UNASUR are mostly Socialist-inspired, and specifically exclude trading with the U.S.[212]

Members of cross-regional FTAs pay no tariffs on goods traded between themselves; there is no common external tariff, and no shared economic policies. FTAs currently active in this region are the North American FTA, NAFTA, (Mexico, U.S.A. and Canada); the Mexico-Northern Triangle FTA, MNT-FTA (Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras); and the Dominican Republic-Central American FTA, CAFTA-DR (U.S.A, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Honduras).[213]

Key Economic Tensions with the United States

NAFTA has caused certain tensions between Mexico and the U.S., and Mexico and Canada. Some believe that this FTA has created the "export" of U.S. blue-collar jobs as it allowed Mexico to attract manufacturers out of the U.S. However, the maquiladora industry had been migrating south for decades. These jobs also feed back into California and Texas which supporters of NAFTA believe is better than having production take place in, and jobs shipped to, Southeast Asia.[214] Mexico and Canada relations soured after Mexicans were required to obtain a visa to enter Canada. (Paying for a visa was a particularly

contentious issue for Mexico because trade between these two countries had grown almost sevenfold since the signing of NAFTA.)[215] Canada is now reconsidering its visa requirement for Mexicans.

Cuba and the United States have historically had a tense political and economic relationship. A Cold War-era trade embargo, created in 1960, banned almost all trade with this Communist-run country. This embargo is in the process of being lifted. According to the BBC, as of January 2015, American companies are being allowed to lend money to Cuban entrepreneurs and invest in infrastructure. The measure also further decreases restrictions on Americans who travel to Cuba.[216]

2.4.2 The Informal Economies

A total of 46.8 percent of jobs in Latin America are part of the informal economy.[217] The informal economy is one that, in general, includes market- and nonmarket-based production of goods and services, whether legal or illegal (such as the black market), that escape detection or are intentionally not included in the official GDP estimates.[218] The informal economy is usually composed of people who are unlicensed, do not report income, are excluded from social and labor protections, and pay no taxes.[219],[220]

Informal employment is what is called "off the books" and usually, but not always, means low-quality jobs without social security, and lay-offs without notice or overtime compensation.[221] This includes unlicensed vendors, domestic workers and repairmen, organized crime, the sale of drugs, and prostitution.[222] References to the informal economy as solely illegal are not necessarily accurate, since both legal and illegal activities make it up.[223]

In Latin America, "the informal sector has a key presence in the construction and housing sector."[224] For example, approximately half of the city of Lima, Peru has been developed completely outside of the law. Peruvians refer to these areas as *pueblos jóvenes*, or marginal urban neighborhoods.[225]

Although Latin America is slowly reducing its informal economy, 130 million Latin Americans have informal jobs; this limits the productivity and economic development of many countries.[226] Guatemala and Honduras have the highest rate of informal employment, with 73.6 percent and 72.8 percent, respectively.[227] Street children, as explained below, are an example of this informal economy.

Street children

The number of impoverished children who work in the streets in Latin America has grown. Due to the increase in crime, many middle- and higher-income Latin Americans regard street children as "irredeemable delinquents" and a moral threat.[228]

Street children are usually male and between the ages of 8 and 17. There are less female children on the streets because girls are usually kept at home to stay or work. Male children commonly establish themselves on the street early and work as street vendors, workers, and entertainers. Some of these children beg, steal, or join gangs.

In the Northern Triangle, many of these street children become members of gangs.[229] A Honduran social program found that half of street children had been arrested and 40 percent imprisoned.[230] In Latin America, Brazil has the most extreme treatment of their *meninos de rua* (street kids). In 2015, the UN denounced the Brazilian military police of killing children to clean the streets from 2014-15.[231]

Most Latin American societies think of children as 'innocent' and 'pure' who *need* the protection from adults. Street children do not fall within this model of innocence. Street kids are marginalized and often lose these "child-like" identifiers. They are increasingly considered pests to society or dangerous criminals. Therefore, they may not be treated with the kindness and care that people in the region would normally render a child younger than eight.

Harsh reactions toward the street teenagers are common; including among figures of authority. This behavior is not necessarily condoned in official military and police procedures, but it can be seen throughout Latin America.

2.5 People and Societies

Cultures are not necessarily bound by national boundaries. There may be multiple cultures in a single state, while people sharing a single culture may live in more than one state.[232] Regions and states do not have a single culture; but have multiple, diverse, and changing cultures.

Borders may appear to be fixed when viewed on a map, but they are actually quite porous. They do not necessarily "encompass" or "surround" the cultures within a country. The same can be said for the borders of an entire continent. For example, Mayan indigenous groups and cultures can be found in both Central America and North America (Mexico).

Figure 2-12: Tikal Temple, Mayan Ruins in Guatemala. *Source: Wikipedia.*[233]

The concepts of national identity, ethnicity, and race are socially, politically, and historically constructed. National identity is different to individual identity. Individual identity, in turn, is fluid and people have many identities; the one they choose to emphasize in interaction(s) will depend on the situation(s) in which they find themselves.

2.5.1 The Concept of National Identities

During the 1800s, Latin America underwent a period of "rediscovery," with movements that tried to unify territories and peoples under one national identity against imperial powers. This new concept of "nation" led to revolts, revolutions, and finally independence from colonizers.

Nonetheless, the concept of "nation" as a homogenous entity is misleading. National identities are not shared by all. For example, in Lima, Peru, traditional *limeños* (citizens of Lima) treasure their Hispanic past; while people living in the Andes have a lifestyle and speak languages more closely connected to their Incan roots.[234]

2.5.2 The Concepts of Ethnicity and Race

Latin America is a rich mixture of European, African, and indigenous or Amerindian cultures that have lived there for the past 500 years. *Ethnicity* can be defined as "the identification of an individual with a unique subgroup in a society, which is distinguished by specific behaviors, characteristics, and social symbols that can include a language specific to the group; symbols reflecting group membership; unique traditions, rituals and holidays; clothing unique to the group and/or a shared sense of history and

attachment to a place or region."[235] Racial identification is often based on social and cultural factors as much as physical characteristics or ancestry.[236]

In most Latin American countries, the majority of the populations are *mestizos*, people of mixed Amerindian and European ancestry. The dominant culture and political structure is primarily European but only three countries—Argentina, Uruguay, and Costa Rica—have predominantly European populations. The western part of South America had a large influx of people from Asia. Non-Andean eastern and central South America, with the exception of Brazil, is comprised of people primarily of Caucasian or European descent. Large influxes of immigrants from Western Europe caused the European population to increase during the twentieth century. [237] Belize's population is more varied, with the largest ethnic groups being mestizos and people of African descent.[238]

The Caribbean has a strong presence of African-descendants, a result of the slave trade during colonial times. In the Spanish-speaking Caribbean islands, a majority of people are *mulattos* descended from Indians, Spaniards, and Africans. In general, the Hispanic islands have a larger proportion of Euro-Caribbean descendants than Caribbean islands more closely connected to the French, British, and Dutch.[239]

2.5.2.1 *Indigenous Populations*

Indigenous groups play a central part in the history of Latin America. Indigenous groups pre-date the countries in which they live. Many of these people have upheld and rebuilt their identity, language, and culture, while maintaining traditional social, legal, and political systems.[240] It is important to remember that although people in this region are often grouped within a general identifier, such as "Mayan," it is possible for there to be multiple groups of many peoples and cultures who identify themselves by a single name. Therefore, a group of "Mayans" can be remarkably diverse in their traditions, belief systems, and forms of communication.

In Mexico there are approximately 11 million self-identified indigenous people.[241] Currently, concentrated indigenous communities can be found in Chiapas and the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, southwestern Guatemala, the highlands of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, Chile, and the Amazon and Orinoco basins.[242] In Guatemala, 39.5 percent, out of 11.2 million people, self-identify themselves as belonging to native populations.[243]

Along the Caribbean coasts in Central America, African influences are present. In the Lesser Antilles, populations are predominantly of African origin; however, in the Greater Antilles there are more contrasts.[244] In South America, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru have large indigenous populations living in the Andes. Argentina and Uruguay, however, are predominantly inhabited by people of European descent.[245]

Indigenous communities are not only found in rural areas. The rapid urbanization of Latin American countries has prompted many indigenous groups to migrate to cities and capitals. In Mexico and Central America, the numbers of native Americans have declined as people continue to abandon their ethnic identities.[247] However, large communities still live in impoverished areas, with little to no access to basic services such as electricity or running water. Therefore, urban and rural development has a huge impact on demographics in Latin America.

For this reason, many governments are making an effort to improve the situation for indigenous groups by including them in decision-making processes. About a dozen Latin American countries have carried out constitutional and legislative reforms that include life-enhancing provisions for indigenous people.[248]

The presence of indigenous people in the political scene has grown in the recent decades. One prominent example of this is Evo Morales, Bolivia's first president of indigenous descent.

The presence of indigenous cultures is not limited to rural areas. For example, due to a rise in globalization, you see handmade handicrafts (or cheaply made reproductions) in *mercados* and *tianguis* (markets) in cities such as Mexico City and Lima.

Figure 2-13: Tianguis in Sonora, Mexico.
Source: Wikipedia.[246]

Figure 2-14: Indigenous Peoples in Latin America. *Source: CEPAL.*[249]

2.5.3 Social Structures

2.5.3.1 *Class, Race, and Ethnicity*

In Latin America, social structures can be traced back to the colonial era. Spanish colonial social structures were built around three major ethnic groups: Europeans, Indians, and Africans. The resulting social structures were divided based on race and function, where social status was the major prize.[250] The result today is that social relations in Latin America are viewed through the lens of *class.*

This class system has evolved in the twentieth century, with modernization, industrialization, improvements in transportation, education, and rapid urban growth. However, in many ways the modern social structure still presents many traits of early rigid societies, one in which social class and status are important and govern daily social interactions.[251] Social classes are distinguished by occupation, lifestyle, income, family, background, education, accent, and access to power.[252] A World Bank Report from 2003 identifies race and ethnicity as enduring determinants to a person's ability to find opportunities and welfare in Latin America.[253] For example, the study found that indigenous men earn 35-65 percent less than 'white men' in Brazil, Guyana, Guatemala, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, and Peru.[254]

According to another World Bank report, poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean decreased by more than 16 percent within a single decade, from 41.6 percent in 2003 to 25.3 percent in 2012.[255] Due to growth and job creation, the middle class in Latin America grew 50 percent (70 million people successfully moved out of poverty), and now comprises 30 percent of the total population.[256] In spite of these advances, one in four Latin Americans continue to live in poverty, and many of these poor people are unlikely to break free from a life of poverty.[257] In Central America and the Caribbean for example, the poverty rate remained unchanged between 2001 and 2011.[258]

2.5.4 Religion(s)

As of 2010, 90 percent of people in the region identify themselves as Christians (Catholic or Evangelical), roughly 8 percent do not identify with any religion, 2 percent identify as followers of folk religions, and 1 percent identify as Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, and other religions. [259] The term "evangelical" is used in Latin America to describe various denominations such as Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal. The latter evangelical is the fastest growing religion in the region.[260]

During the colonial period, many indigenous peoples had no choice but to convert or to blend their native religious practices with Roman Catholicism. Currently, there are more than 425 million people who identify as Catholics in Latin America, which is almost 40 percent of the world's total Catholic population.[261] Catholicism is still the majority religion in Latin America, with Mexico being the most Catholic country in the region.[262],[263]

Lately, however, many Latin Americans have switched churches or completely rejected organized religion - even though 84 percent of Latin American adults report they were raised Roman Catholic. Reasons for this decrease in Catholicism and switching range from wanting a personal connection to God to marriages to non-Catholic partners.[264] There is also an important distinction between a person who claims to have a Catholic "identity" and a person who is a practicing Roman Catholic: many social structures, such as gender norms, stem from Catholicism. Many people have ceased attending Catholic church services, yet they continue to identify themselves Catholics.

If you are visiting sacred places or are witness to such traditions, *do not take pictures.* In certain places, such as Chiapas, this could lead to incarceration, beating, or lynching. San Juan Chamula is the only *autonomous* town in Mexico and has its own police force. No outside military or police are allowed to enter or exert force.

Figure 2-15: San Juan Chamula Church.
Source: Wikipedia.[265]

2.5.4.1 *Syncretism*

Today, some common religious practices can be a mixture of Amerindian or African traditions and beliefs, colonial influences, and globalization. The fusion of beliefs and practices is known as syncretism. The fusion of African faith with Catholicism is called Voodoo in Haiti, Santeria in Cuba, and Rastafarianism in Jamaica; but is also present in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and other countries in the region.[266]

In San Juan Chamula, Chiapas, Mexico, the Tzotzil Maya community serves as an example of syncretic religious practice. Their main worship building is a sacred Catholic Church, but four deities are painted on the ceiling. Instead of pews, there are leaves of palm strewn across the floor, with personal altars set up to worship and sacrifice animals. Today the church altars normally contain soft-drinks such as Coca-Cola, instead of local the homemade alcohol used in the past.

Although many Latin Americans consider themselves Catholics and Protestants, many of these people subscribe to beliefs and practices associated with Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Brazilian, or indigenous influences (such as the "evil eye") where people strongly believe in the casting of curses and spells. According to the Pew Research Center, "a majority of Mexicans (60 percent) and more than a third of Bolivians (39 percent) say they make offerings of food, drinks, candles, or flowers to spirits. Only one-in-ten Uruguayans (9 percent) engage in similar practices."[267] Witchcraft and reincarnation are beliefs held by approximately 20 percent of the people living in this region. Latin America also has a large number of folk saints who are separate from the Catholic Church.

2.5.4.2 *Marian Devotions*

In Latin America, 20 countries identify the Virgin Mary as a national patroness. Usually, these patronesses have a different given name because of where they have made a visitation or due to some other mystical manifestation.

2.5.4.3 *Religious Holidays*

Many national holidays are religious in nature and influenced by Catholicism; these include Good Friday, Christmas Eve, Feast of the Assumption, and All Saints Day.[268] For example, on December 12, millions of religious or non-religious people travel in pilgrimage to Mexico City to honor the Virgin of Guadalupe. In Haitian culture, people offer reverence to their ancestors on Ancestry Day, a folkloric, national holiday.[269]

On the local level, most towns have their own holidays, with annual *ferias* (fairs) such as the *Fiestas patronales* that celebrate their patron saints. The *ferias* have processions, dances, and other activities. In addition to *ferias*, there are many indigenous religious celebrations. U.S. Embassies usually list the main religious holidays of the host country on their websites.

Nuestra Señora de la Santa Muerte, or colloquially Santa Muerte (Saint Death), is a transnational folk saint with several million followers in Mexico, the United States, and Central America. La Santa Muerte personifies death and is the patron saint for love, prosperity, good health, fortune, revenge, and protection. She is condemned by the Catholic Church. Nonetheless, she can be traced to pre-colonial times.

Although Santa Muerte is usually identified as the "narco-saint," many of her followers come from diverse sectors of society (police officers, taxi drivers, among others). However, her main worshippers are people from marginalized sectors of society and people living in poverty. You can see altars devoted to her throughout Mexico, particularly the northern states, as well as in the United States.

Figure 2-16: La Santa Muerte.
Source: Wikipedia.[270]

2.5.5 Gender

In the colonial period, marriage and family customs generally favored males. As a result, men tended to dominate women, which gave rise to *machismo* in Latin American culture. Both *machismo* and *marianismo* have become patriarchal gender norms. *Machismo*, or the cult of masculine superiority,[271] is pervasive in Hispanic culture. It is the role of men to be strong, masculine caretakers. There is also a cult for delicate femininity called *marianismo,* where the behavior and attitude of women align with the ideals of purity, patience, and kindness exemplified by the Virgin Mary. Within some Latin American social classes, women and men who do not adhere to these social strictures can be viewed as unacceptable. Nonetheless, there are some Latin societies, such as the Bribri in Costa Rica and the women of Juchitán in Mexico, that are matriarchal: women inherit land and control much of the commerce within the community.

There is a diversity of attitudes – depending upon social class – about the concepts of childhood and adolescence. For example, it is commonplace and acceptable within Brazilian lower classes for a young girl (age 14 or 15) to be married and have several children. She would be considered a woman. However, if a 14- or 15-year-old Brazilian girl in the middle or upper class became pregnant, she would probably face a forced, but secret, abortion and/or arranged marriage. Young, single mothers in this social class would face exclusion or shunning.

In Latin America, indicators on gender inequality in primary school education, employment, and incomes have improved over the past decade; however, there are still significant gaps between the status of women and men in this region characterized by highly patriarchal systems.[272] Wherever educational opportunities are provided, women are more likely to enroll in higher education than men.[273] Today, there

are more women in executive positions and more women professionals than in the past.[274] Nonetheless, gender income inequality is still pervasive in the region.

Gender-based violence is one of the main human rights issues in Latin America.[275] Many academic studies link gender inequality and violence to the concepts of *marianismo* and *machismo,* where cultures of violence and "an irrational variation of machismo misogyny" can emerge during violent conflicts.[276] Countries that have histories of violence from long-running civil wars and a male-dominated culture – such as Bolivia, Guatemala, and Colombia – have a culture of violence against women. In South America, Bolivia has the highest rate of domestic violence.[277] In Colombia, acid attacks against women continue to grow in the region. In 2012, there were 150 reported acid attacks – a number that quadrupled since 2011.[278]

Natural disasters and poverty exacerbate violence against women. After the earthquake in Haiti, violence against women increased, particularly against homeless women.[279] In many Latin American countries, the lack of a strong police force and judicial system minimizes the consequences for perpetrating crimes such as rape, domestic violence, and human trafficking.

Drug-trafficking often contains elements of "ownership" of women by their boyfriends, pimps, husbands, or drug lords. Because of this and the rise in crime, Central America ranks among the most dangerous place for women.[280] Instances of feminicide in Ciudad Juarez in Mexico have risen since 1993. In Guatemala, two women are killed each day, a statistic that earns this country the distinction of the being among world's top three perpetrators of feminicide. Those most affected by threats of bodily harm are young girls and old women.[281]

2.6 Regional Security Issues

Below are summaries of key security issues within the USSOUTHCOM AOR. This summary is not intended to be all-encompassing.

Generally, regional threats most worrisome to USSOUTHCOM include Chinese "outreach" in Latin America, the increased presence of Russia, regional security challenges, and the possible impacts of Venezuelan instability in the region.

2.6.1 The Panama Canal

Panama is one of the most prosperous countries in the region. Panama's economic growth will likely rise with completion of the Panama Canal expansion program that began in 2007.[283] When the expansion program is completed, the revamped Panama Canal will more than double its capacity and will be able to accommodate large ships that now cannot pass. The most frequent users of the Canal are the U.S. and China.

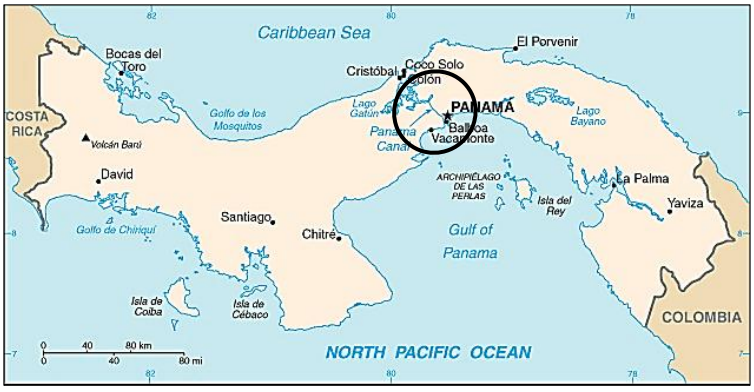


Figure 2-17: Map of Panama. *Source: CIA.*[282]

The Panama Canal has been an important yet controversial subject for more than a century. This is because the security of this transoceanic canal is fundamental to the security of the Western Hemisphere. Panama, like Costa Rica, has chosen to demilitarize: the Panamanian constitution forbids the existence of any military organization. Because Panama owns and administers the Canal, the lack of an indigenous defense force leaves the Canal and Panama at risk from regional and global threats. Because it links two oceans, the Panama Canal is a fundamental port at a micro and macro level. The Panama Canal, and the terrestrial borders Panama shares with Colombia and Costa Rica, make Panama a major transit point for U.S.-bound illicit narcotics and immigrants. These illegal activities also make this country the focal point of illegal money-laundering.[284] Panama is also a source, a point of transit, and destination for men, women, and children subjected to human trafficking.[285]

2.6.2 The Nicaragua Canal

In 2014, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega signed a 50-year concession that would allow a Chinese business man, Wan Jing, to build an interoceanic waterway in Nicaragua scheduled for completion by 2019. The Nicaraguan Canal would be 172 miles long and would connect the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean.[286] The planned design for the Nicaraguan Canal is wider, deeper, and 3.5 times the length of the Panama Canal. The goal is to turn Nicaragua (a country that, after Haiti, is the second poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere) into an "economic powerhouse" and create more than 200,000 jobs.[287]

In order for the Nicaraguan Canal to be completed, construction crews must move millions of tons of earth and pass through one of Central America's key freshwater reservoirs, Lake Nicaragua. This lake provides Nicaraguans with most of their drinking water, irrigates many of their farms, and is the source of water that generates of much of the country's electrical power.[288],[289] Because of its location in the hurricane belt, many experts predict that a strong storm would probably flood the Nicaraguan Canal; trigger mudslides; and swamp communities, homes, roads, and power lines.[290] Demographically, the 30,000 people living in the path of the new canal will need to be relocated.[291] Although crews broke ground on access roads for the Nicaraguan Canal in December 2015, the company in charge of construction, Hong Kong Nicaragua Development (HKND) Co, has delayed the start of construction until late 2016.[292]

2.6.3 Foreign Involvement in the Region

2.6.3.1 *China's Involvement in the Region*

The Nicaraguan Canal is expected to give China a strong presence in the Western Hemisphere and will enable it to control a large share of the trade between the Atlantic and the Pacific. China has also become Peru's principal trade partner and most important investor in the mining sector, a key part of the Peruvian economy.

2.6.3.2 *Russia's Involvement in the Region*

Despite the end of the Cold War, Russian influence in the Western Hemisphere continues to be a concern for the United States. In 2013, Rafael Ramírez, president of Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PDVSA), announced that, by 2021, PDVSA and Russia would produce enough oil to be "the biggest

Recommended Reading:

Brenda Fiegel. "Growing Military Relations between Nicaragua and Russia," *Small Wars*, (December 2014).

Thomas W. O'Donnell. "Russia is Beating China to Venezuela's Oil Fields," *Americas Quarterly,* (January 2016).

Jordan Wilson. "China's Military Agreements with Argentina: A Potential New Phase in China-Latin America Defense Relations," *USCC,* (November 2015).

petroleum partner of our country." Russian companies are already producing more oil in joint projects with PDVSA than their Chinese counterparts.[293]

There is suspicion that this Russian economic activity is merely a "cover" for weapons deals and corruption. In 2008, Russian President Vladimir Putin sent a nuclear warship and bombers to Venezuela.[294] From 2012 to 2015, Russia sold $3.2 billion in arms to Venezuela. Later, in 2014, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro pledged another $480 million to purchase 12 Sukhoi-30 jetfighters and to upgrade existing Sukhois.[295]

2.6.4 Transnational Organized Crime

Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) affects the global social, economic, and security fabric of society. Because of this, USSOUTHCOM has focused on a strategy to combat TOC in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean as well as its distribution to the U.S. and partner nations. USSOUTHCOM continues to aid partners in the eradication and prevention of TOC. USSOUTHCOM efforts are focused on drug trafficking, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, money-laundering, corruption, and maritime crime taking place in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

Counter-trafficking efforts involve regional partners and also several U.S. Interagency offices, such as the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). This collaborative effort fights these illegal organizations and aims to reduce, eradicate, and regulate the source of these nefarious activities, eliminate money laundering, and intervene in illegal shipments. USSOUTHCOM is focused on the production and distribution of drugs from Colombia and Mexico to the United States in order to trace the trade routes through the Mexican Border, Central America, and the Caribbean Sea.

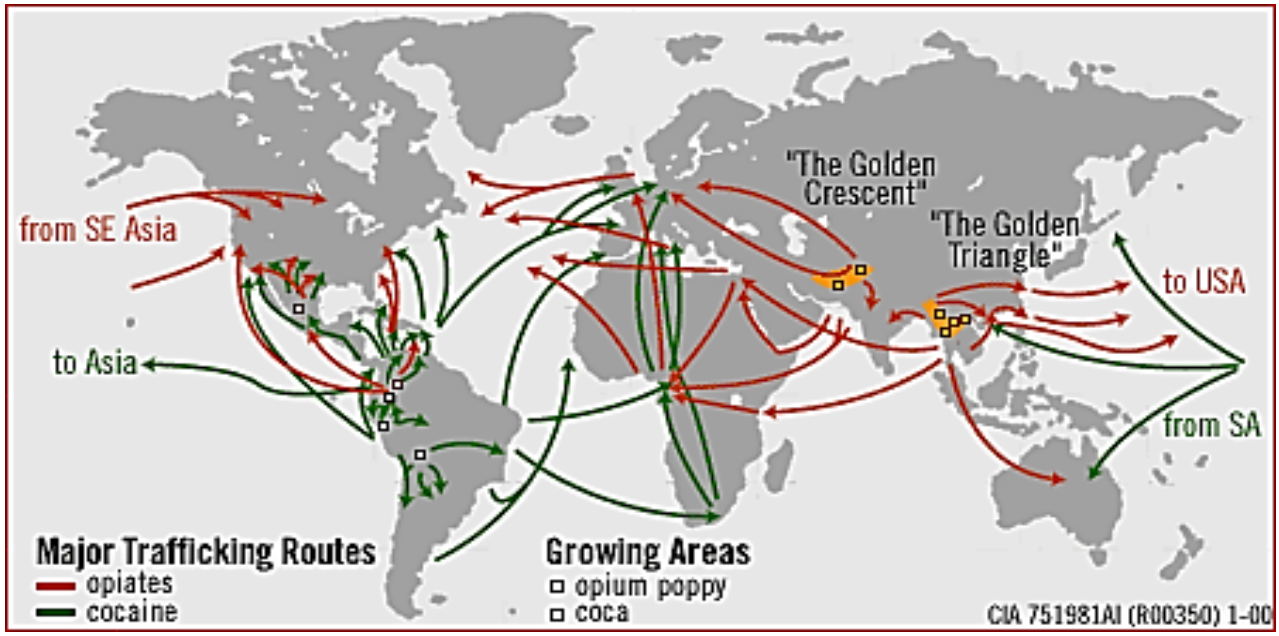


Figure 2-18: Major Trafficking Routes. *Source: CIA.*[296]

Therefore, it is important to think about these criminal activities as interconnected, continuously changing, and overlapping transnational networks. There are complex elements to the drug trade, such as the cultivation, the processing, and the transit of the drugs which interrupt or have become a part of daily life to many people, making them incredibly hard to eliminate. Another complexity is that the drug trade has produced its own sub-culture, called narcoculture.

2.6.4.1 *South America*

The effort to eradicate the coca leaf can be a source of tension and worry for many local residents, whose livelihoods depend on growing and transporting the leaves. In Andean communities in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and northern Argentina and Chile, coca leaves can be used economically (as a form of currency), socially (as a gift or contract), medicinally (as a stimulant, anesthetic, and appetite suppressant), and religiously (as a form of offering). Therefore, coca leaves can be of crucial cultural value in the daily life of Andean people. Bolivia, the third largest producer of cocaine after Peru and Colombia, protects the coca leaf as cultural patrimony and a factor of social cohesion in its new Constitution ratified in 2009. It gives the state partial or total restriction on the farming and cultivation of coca leaves.[297]

2.6.4.1.1 Colombia

Colombia is an example of how sustained U.S. support has helped gain control of its unstable security situation, strengthened government institutions, continued to eradicate corruption, and bolstered its economy.[298] In 1964, the left-wing rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), was founded with the goal of overthrowing the Colombian government. [299] Inspired by the Cuban Revolution, another Marxist rebel group, the National Liberation Army, or *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), was founded the same year as the FARC. By the 1990s, the FARC became involved in the drug trade as a means to fund their efforts. FARC's engagement in the illegal trade of drugs caused cities such as Medellin and Cartagena to be plagued with insecurity, kidnapping, and violence. ELN followed suit and became involved with the drug trade during the early 2000s, further exacerbating the country's already shaky security situation. Both the FARC and ELN are considered terrorist organizations by the United States.

Approximately 220,000 people have died in the Colombian war between the FARC insurgents, the right-wing paramilitaries, and the government. 80 percent of these casualties were civilians.[300] In 2012, in Havana, Cuba, peace talks began between the FARC and the Colombian government. The talks were initiated by Colombian President Alvaro Uribe (2002-2010) and continued by President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-present). By December 2015, an agreement on reparations and justice for victims of the civil war were reached. A final agreement was signed on March 23, 2016.[301] However, to go into effect, a referendum had to be voted on and passed by the Colombian people – on October 2, 2016 the people voted and the referendum did not pass. On November 30, 2016, Congress approved a revised peace accord – however, opponents have viewed this action as an attempt to replace popular mandate. Therefore, the peace accord(s) are a controversial issue in Colombia.

Recommended Reading:

For more about Colombia's progress, see Miguel Silva. "Path to Peace and Prosperity: The Colombian Miracle," *Atlantic Council Adrienne Arsht Latin American Center,* (Washington D.C., November 2015).

http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/reports/path-to-peace-and-prosperity-the-colombian-miracle

The U.S. has supported Colombia's efforts to restore its security by strengthening its armed forces through Plan Colombia, a bipartisan aid package offered during President Bill Clinton's administration that gave more $8 billion to fight the drug trade.[302]

USSOUTHCOM has been providing assistance and advice to Colombia's military, and is helping the country with its post-conflict transformation. Support for Colombia's transition to peace is made possible by the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation, a collaborative effort between training teams and subject matter experts, Central American personnel, Colombian law enforcement, and military

academies in order to sustain peace processes.[303] Other efforts, such as Plan Colombia signed in 2000, are U.S. military programs that target the elimination of coca plants through aerial fumigation. Although these initiatives have positively affected Colombia's economic and social conditions, their continued success remains fundamental to Colombia's upward progress.

2.6.4.1.2 Peru

Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia have been the largest cocaine producers since the 1980s. During the 1980s and 1990s, the world's top producers of cocaine were Peru and Bolivia. By the early 2000s, Colombia had surpassed them both. Nonetheless, Peru is still a top producer of cocaine – as of 2012, Peruvian coca growers use more land per each 2.5 acres than any other country in the world in coca leaf cultivation.[304]

Recommended Reading:

See Alma Keshavarz. "Iran and Hezbollah in the Tri-Border Areas of Latin America: A Look at the "Old TBA" and the "New TBA","*Small Wards Journal* (November 2015);

http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/iran-and-hezbollah-in-the-tri-border-areas-of-latin-america-a-look-at-the-%E2%80%9Cold-tba%E2%80%9D-and-the

The Valleys of Apurimac, Ene, and Mantaro Rivers (VRAEM) are the main locations of Peru's drug crops and are controlled by the Maoist guerrilla groups, the Shining Path. The VRAEM contain approximately 40 percent of Peru's drug crops and are where the largest portion of the Shining Path operates.[305] The Shining Path, a Peruvian based terrorist group active since 1980 known as *Sendero Luminoso*, has approximately 60,000 individuals and 12,000 families operating in the VRAEM. The Shining Path leverages the efforts of pilots, day laborers, drug couriers ("mules"), and farmers.[306]

Peru maintains economic, political, and military relationships with the United States, China, and Russia. Peru has a strong political and security relationship with the United States, and advocates a pro-trade, free market economic policy.[307] It uses and primarily purchases Russian military equipment and sends personnel to Russia for military training and education. In recent years China has become the most important investor in Peru's mining sector.[308]

Figure 2-19: Tri-Border Area and the 'Newer' Tri-Border Area.
Source: Adapted from CIA World Factbook.[309]

In 2013, USSOUTHCOM and the DEA sent six U.S. personnel to train medical instructors from Peru and El Salvador; this effort trained 2,000 indigenous military personnel.[310] Colombia and the U.S. Department of Defense continued their dialogue on the illegal drug issue during a meeting in Lima in 2015. Results can already be seen from these coordinated efforts. In 2015, Peru eradicated almost 36,000 hectares of coca through logistical and technological support provided by the U.S. Key to the success of this initiative was offering local farmers

the option of cultivating alternative crops.[311] Every year, security forces dismantle approximately 10,000 hectares of coca leaves in Peru.[312]

2.6.4.1.3 Tri-Border Area(s)

The Tri-border area (TBA) consists of the borders between Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina where the Iguazu and Parana rivers converge. The touching points are referred to as the *Ciudad del Este* (in Paraguay), *Puerto Iguazu* (in Argentina), and *Foz do Iguaçu* (in Brazil). This area is known for having a lack of security, which tacitly allows terrorist activities and illicit narcotic smuggling. A lack of antiterrorism laws in Paraguay has created a legal vacuum for smugglers. Smugglers can bike or drive between countries without being asked for a passport.[313] Another "newer" TBA is the Chilean, Bolivian, and Peruvian border.

USSOUTHCOM is concerned with the presence of non-American actors, such as Islamic extremist groups, that finance terrorist activities using funds derived from illegal drug sales and money-laundering activities in the tri-border area. Some of the illegal money flowing out of this region has been traced to the Iranian-backed group, Hezbollah. U.S. officials and law enforcement say Iranian-backed Hezbollah militia have been providing money and military training to Islamist radicals in this region.[314]

As of 2016, this is a security issue that Commander Admiral Kurt W. Tidd has addressed as an area of concern. However, the idea of Islamist radicals gaining foothold in this region is a controversial one. Some analysis and information points out that Catholic influence and prevalence would decrease the spread of Islam. Nonetheless, the Commander believes that the U.S. forces should be observant of this area and that the U.S. should not lose sight of the possible spread of Islamist radicals.[315]

2.6.4.2 *Central America*

2.6.4.2.1 The Northern Triangle

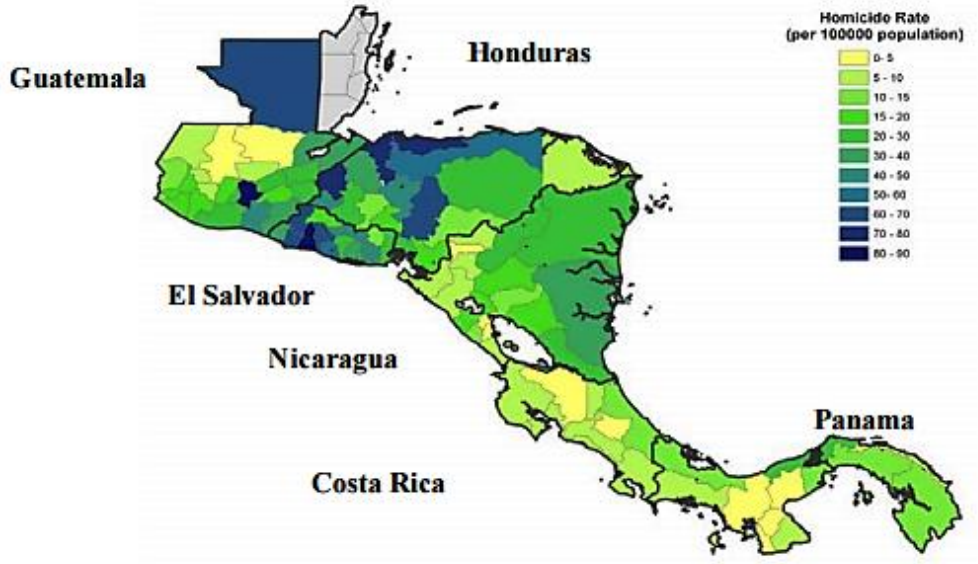


Figure 2-20: Homicide Rates by Subnational Areas. *Source: Cuevas and Demombynes, World Bank.*[316]

Central America's Northern Triangle is comprised of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala; it has lately been the focus of concern by USSOUTHCOM. El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras consistently rank

among the most violent countries not at war in the world.[317] The violence is caused mainly by organized crime at local and transnational interconnected levels. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, much of this violence is perpetrated by "transnational criminal organizations, many associated with Mexican drug-trafficking organizations (DTOs), domestic organized crime, transnational gangs, or *maras*, such as *Mara Salvatrucha* (MS-13) and the Eighteenth Street Gang (M-18); and *pandillas*; or street gangs."[318] MS-13 and MS-18 have approximately 85,000 members.[319] There are approximately 8,000 MS-13 members in the United States. Eighty percent of the illegal drugs flowing into the U.S. through Central America is handled by DTOs who partner with the *maras* to transport and distribute narcotics. Not surprisingly, there have been frequent and violent "turf wars" over this lucrative trade.[320]

Along with drug trade and extortion, many (but not all) groups operating in the Northern Triangle engage in kidnapping for ransom, human trafficking, and smuggling.[321] Weak institutions, lack of funding, and corruption, have undermined efforts to address gang violence. The large amounts of violence, forced gang recruitment, extortion, poverty, and lack of opportunity have led to a migration crisis and caused instability in the countries.[322] The Northern Triangle countries have some of the region's highest poverty rates. The percentage of populations living on less than $4 per day is 52 percent in Honduras, 53.5 percent in Guatemala, and 42.7 percent in El Salvador.[323]

2.6.4.2.2 The Northern Triangle Migration Crisis

The toxic sociopolitical climate in the Northern Triangle has caused many people to migrate to the United States, Mexico, Belize, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Between October 2013 and July 2015, approximately 80,000 unaccompanied minors from the Northern Triangle arrived in the U.S.[324] Since 2010, the United States and Mexico have apprehended more than one million Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Honduran migrants.[325]

2.6.4.2.3 El Salvador

Gang-related violence and extortion made El Salvador, a country of approximately 6.34 million people, the most violent country not at war in 2015, with a homicide rate of 90 people per 100,000.[326] By way of comparison, the homicide rate in the U.S. was 4.9 people per 100,000 in 2015.[327] The *mano dura* hard-line policies of the Salvadorian President Mauricio Funes eventually led to a truce between the MS-13 and M-18 gang in 2012; homicides promptly decreased by more than 40 percent. Two years later, the peace deal fell apart and homicides surged once more.[328]

2.6.4.2.4 Honduras

According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), Honduras suffers from "rampant crime and impunity for human rights abuses."[329] Key areas of concern for HRW are police abuses and corruption, the use of the military in public security operations, the lack of accountability for post-coup abuses, the lack of judicial independence, attacks on journalists and human rights defenders, rural violence, inadequate conditions in prisons, human trafficking, and violence against children.

Efforts to end to endemic corruption in Honduras have made little progress. A 2011 constitutional reform established a Council of the Judiciary with the authority to appoint and (if necessary) dismiss judges. However, the Council lacked a safeguard against political interference, and to date has only suspended 40 judges.[330] In December 2012, the Honduran Congress removed four of the five members in the Supreme Court after the legal body ruled that a law addressing police corruption was unconstitutional.

There is a history in Honduras of abuse of power by police and military forces against civilians.[331] The use of force by police is a chronic problem: "after the Honduran Congress passed a law creating a military police force with the power to take control of violent neighborhoods and conducts arrests, 149 civilians were killed by police in 2012 and – most likely – many more police killings were not reported.[332],[333] The Honduran government has yet to respond to national and international questions "to provide information on how many of those killings had been subject to investigations or resulted in criminal convictions.[334]

On June 28, in 2009, a military coup ousted President Manuel Zelaya; as a result, rule of law ceased to exist in many parts of the country. These lawless areas were quickly exploited by drug traffickers transshipping narcotics from the Andes to U.S. markets. The coup lasted until November, and ended with the controversial elections of President Porfirio Lobo (2010-2014). According to Lobo's official report, undue force against generally peaceful demonstrations caused 20 cases of excessive force and killings by security forces.[335] Journalists also suffered and continue suffering threats, attacks, and killings – since 2009, 30 journalists have been murdered in Honduras.[336]

Land distribution is highly unequal, stemming from colonial *latifundio* and *ejido* systems. The rightful ownership of land is a "grey area of the law" where there is ambiguity of ownership, lack of title, and the threat of land invasion.[337] Land rights are crucial as Honduras is one of the least urbanized countries in Central America; 52 percent of the total population lives in rural areas.[338] In the rural areas of Honduras, more than 90 people have been killed in land disputes since 2009. Many of these deaths occurred in the Bajo Aguán Valley during clashes between international agro-industrial firms and peasants.[339]

Honduras is a main source and transit space for men, women, and children who are forced into sex trafficking and forced labor. The Hondurans who become a part of these networks are also exploited in other countries, including Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and the United States. Children, women, and lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual (LGBT) Hondurans are particularly vulnerable.[340] The violence children face is largely perpetrated by gangs and organized criminals. Between 2010 and 2013, 458 children were murdered in Honduras; in the first months of 2014, 270 people under the age of 23 were killed.[341]

The United States and Honduras have maintained good relationships and are traditional allies. In 2002, 81 percent of Hondurans had a favorable view of the U.S.[342] The U.S. maintains a presence at Soto Cano, a Honduran military base, that supports a variety of bilateral and multilateral training exercises. From 2010 to 2014, the U.S. gave Honduras more than $50 million in security assistance; the U.S. continues to assist Honduras through the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI).[343] However, as of February, 2013, the U.S. Congress had withheld $30 million in aid, citing human rights concerns. Congress says that it will continue to withhold the money until the Honduran government meets several human rights requirements.[344]

2.6.4.2.5 Guatemala

Guatemala is the most populous country in Central America. Guatemala's GDP is roughly one-half of the average Latin American, and more than half of the population lives below the national poverty line; 13 percent of Guatemalans live in extreme poverty. [345] Guatemala endured a 36-year civil war from 1960 to 1996 that resulted in over 200,000 Guatemalans dying or forcibly "disappearing." According to the United Nations, 83 percent of these victims were indigenous people; 93 percent of these people suffered at the hands of government and military forces.[346]

Relationships between the United States and Guatemala are historically complex. In comparison to the U.S., Guatemala uses the military as a domestic law enforcement agency. During the presidency of Perez Molina (2012-15) military engagement in domestic affairs surged. By 2015, Molina had deployed more than 20,000 Guatemalan soldiers throughout the country.[347] The tumultuous political-military situation in Guatemala eventually prompted the American government to reconsider its support to the Molina regime. In 2015, the U.S. Congress set conditions on continued economic aid to Guatemala, and instructed the Guatemalan government to reduce the military's presence in the lives of law-abiding civilians.[348]

Relationships between indigenous groups and the government are highly significant: 40.3 percent of Guatemala's population identifies as indigenous, according to the CIA World Factbook.[349] The relationships between the government and indigenous population worsened due to new congressional reforms that were made without consulting indigenous populations as required by the International Labor Organizations Convention 169. In 2012, the military openly fired on indigenous protesters in the territorial division of Totonicapán, killing 8 and injuring more than 40 people.[350]

The U.S. has maintained a 30-year long ban on military assistance to Guatemala because of human rights violations committed by the military during the civil war. However, the U.S. has consistently provided training and support to help the Guatemalan military combat drug trafficking and to secure its border with Mexico.[351]

USSOUTHCOM has been actively engaged in Central America, providing critical infrastructure and operational support to the Guatemala Interagency Task Force (GITF); the GITF has helped disrupt illicit trafficking along the Guatemalan-Mexico Border.[352]

USSOUTHCOM is also focused on improving human rights. USSOUTHCOM founded the Human Rights Initiative (HRI), initiated in 1997, which promotes dialogue and cooperation between regional military forces, civilian government, and civil groups in order to develop human rights programs for military forces that foster proactive doctrine, education and training, internal control systems, and cooperation with civilian authorities.[353] Today, there are ten partner nations formally committed to HRI.

Guatemala has seen gains in the commitment to addressing human rights violations. In 2007, the UN created an independent body that investigates and prosecutes criminal groups that have infiltrated state institutions. In Guatemala, this body investigated a border customs corruption scheme – this effort led to ouster and arrest top member of government, including former President Otto Pérez Molina.[354]

2.6.4.3 *U.S. Marine Involvement in the Northern Triangle*

Marines are routinely sent to Guatemala. In 2012, Marines deployed to Guatemala in support of Counter-Transnational Organized Crime operations.[355] MARFORSOUTH trained partner personnel to establish persistent security teams in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras and SPMAGTF-South has security cooperation teams training security forces in El Salvador from these four countries.[356],[357]

2.6.4.4 *Mexico and the Caribbean*

2.6.4.4.1 Mexico's Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs)

Despite Mexico's geographic positioning in USNORTHCOM's AOR, Mexico has a prominent position on USSOUTHCOM's security agenda.

2.6.4.4.2 Terrorism in Mexico

Borders are areas of constant movement; an unsecure border is a threat to national and international security. The U.S.-Mexico border is an area of deep concern among American security professionals due to its porosity and its size. The CIA identifies the U.S-Mexico border as a possible crossing point for agents from Hezbollah. The CIA Counter Terrorism Center also stated in a 2004 threat paper that "many alien smuggling networks that facilitate the movement of non-Mexicans have established links to Muslim communities in Mexico" as they pay high-end smugglers to efficiently transport them.[358]

2.6.4.4.3 Drug Production and Trade in Mexico

Mexican TCOs have continued to establish their control over the Northeast market. Mexican TCOs "remain the greatest criminal drug threat to the United States, no other group can challenge them in the near term."[359]

- The main drugs are marijuana, heroin, methamphetamine, and cocaine.
- Through legalization and other efforts, U.S.-made marijuana has continued to displace the Mexican marijuana.
- Drug farmers are planting more opium poppies to produce black tar heroin to satisfy the growing demand in the U.S.[360]
- Opium from Southeast Asia is increasingly being imported and used to make synthetically enhanced drugs.
- Methamphetamine is still readily available in the U.S., but is mostly produced, in larger quantities, in Mexico. Mexican-made methamphetamine is high-purity, high-potency. It has replaced crudely produced domestic methamphetamine.[361]

In 2013, Mexico's justice department reported strengthening ties between Mexican criminal groups and Central American gangs – with as many as 70 Central American organized crime cells operating in Mexico.[362]

2.6.4.4.4 Drug Trade in the Caribbean

Drug transshipment routes to the U.S. and Europe frequently traverse the Caribbean. Over the past three years, Colombia has increased its U.S.-bound drug trafficking through the Caribbean in order to avoid cartel violence, law enforcement officials, and the southwest U.S.-Mexico border.[363] Mexican and Colombian drug trafficking organizations rely on Dominican traffickers to serve as transporters and retail distributors of cocaine and heroin to Europe and other parts of the world.[364]

Narcoculture is a subculture, with regional differences, that has grown from the presence of drug organizations in Mexico. Narcoculture has its own form of dress (such as Ralph Lauren "Polo" brand clothing), music (rap and ballads), literature, film, slang, and religious beliefs and practices. For example, many people actively engaged in the narcoculture worship La Santa Muerte. Narcoculture glorifies the male individual, his achievements, wealth, and masculinity.

[44] Brian Loveman, "Historical Foundations of Civil-Military Relations in Spanish America," in *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives,* ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 1, http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc/bitstream/handle/10535/4350/Historical_foundations_of_civil_military_relations_in_spanish_america.pdf?sequence=1..

[45] Ibid.

[46] Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America, (*New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992)*,* 13.

[47] Ibid., 13.

[48] Ibid., 14.

[49] Ibid., 14.

[50] Ibid., 283, 1992.

[51] CAOCL, *OB2/EB3 MCAC.*

[52]"EagleBuildingBldgATemploMayor," Leigh Thelmadatter, *Wikipedia,* last modified March 23, 2008, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EagleBuildingBldgATemploMayor.JPG.

[53] Skidmore and Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 19; 330.

[54] Tim Merrill and Ramón Mir, *Mexico – A Country Study* (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 1995), 10.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Skidmore and Smith, *Modern Latin America,* 285, 1992.

[57] Ibid., 286.

[58] Ibid., 23.

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3 Operational Culture and Cross-Cultural Competence

It has been said that the last one to notice the water is the fish who swims in it. How we use culture to shape our behavior and make sense of our observations often operates outside our awareness. By taking the time to read through RCLF culture general material, you are making a conscious effort to increase your understanding of variation in cultural values and the knowledge areas that will assist you in your attempts to make sense of culturally complex behavior. The necessity of this knowledge is captured by former US Ambassador to Japan, Edwin Reischauer's remarks as he reflected back on his career:

> *We had acquired the habit of looking at things two different ways – from the Japanese angle of vision as well as from our own national viewpoint. This proved to be the key to my career and, extended worldwide, it is the only hope I can see for world peace and human survival.*[365]

3.1 The Case For Culture General

Earlier in your career, you may have completed RCLF modules devoted to key culture general concepts and skills that were designed to help you think about and act in the culturally complex operating environments.[1] These concepts provide you tools for thinking about culture systematically (such as: change, variation, and holism) and understanding key cultural processes (such as: reciprocity, mobilization, conflict, and identity). You also may recall learning about the skills needed for cross-cultural operations that enable you to apply your knowledge during planning, analysis, and interaction (such as: observation, suspending judgment, maintaining tact and bearing, perspective taking, and reading the cultural landscape). You may want to refer back to the Operational Culture General Manual and the Reading the Cultural Landscape module from OB2/EB3 as you progress through this reading, since it is intended to build on that earlier learning. The intent of the culture general material in this block is to provide overviews of knowledge areas that will help you make connections among key cultural concepts and make sense of behavior in context.

The value of culture general knowledge lies in the fact that it is transferrable (in other words, applicable regardless of the specific culture) and can be elevated to higher levels of learning, as you will see in the pages to follow. Consider the potential consequences of *not* incorporating a culture general foundation into your mission preparation:

[1] CAVEAT: This document contains sections adapted from unclassified materials that also were used in the production of the Culture Generic Information Requirements Handbook (C-GIRH), DoD-GIRH-2634-001-08 and the Cultural Intelligence Indicators Guide (CIIG), DOD-GIRH-2634-001-10, which are available from Marine Corps Intelligence Activity's dissemination manager and in other products and publications.

You have been assigned to a humanitarian assistance survey team (HAST) as a part of the MEF G5 in order to advise on cultural issues that may impact the effectiveness of the mission. A cyclone devastated this small nation in which you are now deployed, causing flooding, wind damage and landslides in some areas. Prior to deployment you received a briefing on the local language, region, and culture. You know that the country was formed relatively recently as the result of a treaty between three nations in order to solve a long running border dispute.

Your arrival in country is a chaotic one. The foreign aid effort is being coordinated from the nation's only international airport on the outskirts of the capital. You step out of the C-130 and are immediately faced with various levels of disorganization and logistical distractions. The tarmac is littered with pallets of aid supplies from different nations, some broken open and scattered on the ground, others stacked on top one another. You count uniforms from at least seven militaries in the area, shouting in different languages. Looking over the area, you notice a small delegation headed in your direction.

The leader introduces himself as the local military liaison for your group. Accompanying him are representatives from the local police forces, health services and a few drivers/interpreters. Fortunately for you, they all seem to speak English fairly well. The Colonel in charge of your group asks about the logistical disarray around you. The liaison explains that they have been having issues with the Chinese assistance group that had arrived the week before. Other nations are pitching in with the relief effort, but the Chinese group has taken control of heavy moving equipment and refuses to let go of it until they are finished. Without the ability to move them, multiple refrigerated containers from other nations have sat out in the sun to spoil. They also have a tight grip on the transportation in the area, so securing transportation may prove to be difficult.

After a bit more discussion with the liaison, the Colonel calls you over and tasks you with the securing of the equipment from the Chinese. This places you in a difficult situation, because you were not briefed on the Chinese military element that is in country, and you know very little about Chinese people and their culture. You are going to have to rely on what culture general skills you have learned in the past to navigate this situation effectively…

When you think of the Marine Corps approach to understanding the impact of culture on military operations, you may recall the "Five Dimensions of Operational Culture" as a basis for organizing incoming information that could feed into planning frameworks such as ASCOPE or PMESII. The five dimensions framework (social, political, economic, physical, and belief systems) can help familiarize you with a new area on a basic level, but is unlikely to prepare you to navigate the more unpredictable events that may occur when boundaries are blurred and you are faced with unexpected intercultural interactions, such as the one you just read.

A culture-general foundation can help Marines identify and understand relevant information and, by employing these thinking concepts and skills, determine connections among different aspects of culture. For example, a general understanding of how people think about and use kinship relationships might help a Marine identify and understand the way kinship relationships are being used to move resources and information. Furthermore, it provides tools for taking full advantage of culture specific information using different lenses. For example, when you are provided a culture- specific pre-deployment briefing, you are not just receiving basic facts about that culture group. Culture specific information focuses on the patterns of behavior and meaning that are specific to a particular group or network at a particular time. This information is sometimes relevant to more than one knowledge area and, if you are tuned into potential connections, can help you understand better both the "what" and the "why" of what is going on around you. The fact that older men make most of the decisions in a group is a piece of information that can add to your knowledge about social roles (see "Organization and Interaction" below), who has authority to influence decisions (see "Influence and Control" below), and the values of the group (see "Belief and Knowledge" below). Understanding the multiple layers of meaning beneath the surface of your

observations can assist in mission planning and in your ability to anticipate second and third order effects of your decisions.

This section will review 10 knowledge areas. Why 10? There could just as easily be 25 or 8. Different aspects of culture are connected, and those connections are constantly being reworked through people's actions. Therefore, any set of knowledge areas, checklist, or taxonomy will be a limited tool. It will be apparent to Marines seasoned in learning about culture that the descriptions below are not comprehensive; however, they are a useful means for organizing facts and, *more importantly*, for understanding the connections among different parts of social life. The knowledge areas below help draw your attention to a greater level of detail so that you can identify additional considerations which may be relevant in different missions across the range of military operations. As you develop more knowledge about how people create and use culture to solve problems and make sense of behavior, it will become easier to select an approach that will be most useful for a particular interaction.

3.1.1 Belief and Knowledge

This knowledge area encompasses the beliefs, logics, values, learning, knowledge, and modes of questioning and investigation of a group (sometimes referred to as worldview). It includes, but is not limited to, topics such as religion and other beliefs, what people perceive to be logical and rational ways of thinking, what people believe is right and important, how the group thinks about and accomplishes learning and teaching, and the myths, history, and narratives that are important to the group. As with other aspects of culture, it is very common for multiple patterns of belief to co-exist, even when an outsider might see them as conflicting. People may be very devout in a monotheistic religion that instructs people to believe that a god controls all activities in the world. However, the same people may place great emphasis on scientific logic and also have shrines to ancestral spirits.

People use beliefs and knowledge to think about not only spiritual questions, but also more practical matters of how the world works, why things happen, and what is right or wrong. Beliefs need not be explicitly linked to religion to have significant impact. In the United States, many people place great value on individual rights and responsibilities. While this value is reinforced by some religious traditions in the country, it is shared by many non-religious people. Myths, historical stories, and other narratives also are important in how people interpret events and make decisions. For example, a group with many narratives or myths about past invasions may be more inclined to be wary of US military presence than a group without this sense of shared history.

Groups or sub-groups also form orientations toward developing knowledge through learning that are shaped by beliefs. Commonly, some kinds of learning are perceived to be the responsibility of the family or community, others expected to be covered in more formal educational systems, and others seen as things that will be handled during employment or apprenticeship. Access to learning is sometimes linked to social roles, status, or stratification, with some parts of the group encouraged or restricted in what kinds of learning opportunities they have. It is still common in many places for female children to be prevented from attending formal school. Instead, they are expected to learn from their family everything they need to know to fulfill the restricted set of social roles available to them. It is important to remember that people's beliefs are not always reflected in official policies. For example, even in places where people place a high social value on education, this value may not be reflected in government distribution of funds, and access to all or higher levels of education may be restricted to those who can pay.

People also use beliefs about knowledge to structure how questions get asked and by whom. For example,

Example: Venezuelan Particularists
Assumptions about what is logical and rational can vary dramatically across cultures. The following scenario and responses are drawn from the book Riding the Waves of Culture and illustrate a distinction between American and Venezuelan perspectives:

"You are riding in a car driven by a close friend when he hits a pedestrian. There are no other witnesses and the pedestrian is bruised but not badly hurt. The speed limit in this part of town is 20 miles an hour, but you happen to notice that your friend was driving 35. His lawyer tells you that if you will testify under oath that your friend was driving 20, he will suffer no serious consequences."[366]

Would you testify that your friend was driving 20 miles an hour?

Percentage of Americans who said they would not: 96%

Percentage of Venezuelans who said they would not: 34%

Although there are a variety of factors that could contribute to this significant difference (e.g.; loyalty to friends vs. trust in the legal system) one way to make sense of the difference is to view it through the lens "universalism" and "particularism". A universalist perspective (which tends to be preferred more heavily by Americans than Venezuelans) takes the stance that right is right and wrong is wrong no matter what the circumstance. Whereas a particularist perspective (often preferred more heavily by Venezuelans than Americans) takes the stance that particular circumstances (especially those involving family and friends) are the most important part of the equation. An understanding of these concepts can help you more accurately assign meaning to seemingly confusing behavior.

in a group where scientific ideas about causation are accepted, questions about the cause of a disease would be perceived as being best answered by medical or scientific professionals using a structured scientific method. Yet, in a group that sees cause and effect as driven by supernatural forces, people see it as more appropriate for a person connected to spiritual matters, such as a shaman or priest, to answer such questions.

The core considerations for this knowledge area are that ideas about what is logical and rational are not universally shared and that beliefs, values, and systems of logic are entangled in all aspects of life. It is important to learn as much as possible about these aspects of culture and to watch for their influence across all other aspects.

3.1.2 Narrative and Creative Expression

This knowledge area encompasses the different ways a group engages in expression of ideas and the use of different expressive forms to reinforce, challenge, or change aspects of culture. It includes history, myth, stories, oratory, the arts, and literature as well as their venues such as various kinds of media, public performance, museums, and archives.

The military relevance of this knowledge area may not be immediately apparent. However, the concepts and information included in this area can provide critical insights into every other aspect of culture – values, beliefs, rules, identity, etc. – as well as into how people in the group may interpret current events and how they think about their own history. Just as importantly, creative expression often is a means of challenging old ideas or trying out new ones, providing an opportunity to identify emerging changes.

Example: Chinese Footbinding

Consider the creative way in which "perspective-taking" was used by Kang Youwei to challenge the practice of foot-binding[367]. The practice involved binding young girls' feet tightly, deforming them in an attempt to create the impression of "golden lilies" that were 4 inches in length. After enduring for close to one hundred years, it is said that a turning point in ending this cruelty forced upon Chinese women was in a letter by the Confucian scholar asking the Emperor to consider how other nations perceived the way China treated its women. It is said that his letter convinced the Emperor that nothing caused others to ridicule and look down upon the Chinese more than footbinding. This effective and creative use of perspective-taking was used in the right way at the right time to bring about change for millions of women.

Every group constructs stories about its past and present that contribute to people's sense of shared identity and help them interpret new events. When narratives, whether about history or current events, are constructed, certain aspects are included and emphasized; others are not included or are de-emphasized. In some cases, this is deliberate, such as when a political party wants to emphasize particular values or de-emphasize the contributions of a sub-group. In extreme cases, a government or powerful sub-group may seek to insert deliberate distortions into narratives to shape public perceptions. However, in many cases, the selection of information is less deliberate, following patterns in people's expectations about what stories and histories should include. For example, in the past US history textbooks rarely included information on the roles of minorities or women and focused on major political figures and events rather than the daily lives of people. This was not so much a deliberate choice on the part of historical scholars as it was a reflection of the assumptions and values of the time.

Myths, parables, and folktales are no less important than efforts to report factual accounts of past events. These kinds of stories often provide important insights into the beliefs (such as ethical constructs) and social relations of a group. In some groups, telling such stories can be an important social event, which can be important for building rapport. Additionally, the use of proverbs in initial interactions has been shown to help build rapport and can also provide insight into cultural values. For example, the common proverb in Swahili "The person you are with is more important than the person you are not with" reveals the prioritization of people over a schedule. Or consider how the following proverb in Dari reveals the cultural value of hospitality: "If a pot is cooking, the friendship will stay warm." In many places, using local proverbs or telling a story can be used as a way of conveying information about a current event, observation or expected behavior if the speaker feels it could be inappropriate to speak more directly.

Likewise, fiction, poetry, movies, television, and other means of telling stories can be important for understanding values, changing or controversial ideas, and deep patterns in how people expect events to unfold. It is common in the United States for stories to have a fairly straightforward progression of characters and events, heroes and villains, clear resolutions, and happy endings, a particular kind of narrative optimism. Therefore, people from the United States may sometimes have difficulty with stories constructed in different patterns in following the storyline or identifying the intended message. As with many other aspects of culture, being able to understand these kinds of expressions can be difficult at first, but patterns will emerge over time.

Forms of creative expression such as art, music, literature, and performance are found in every group. These kinds of expressions can convey a great deal about both group identity and aspects of culture that are being contested, as can be seen when a painting or film creates controversy. Likewise, artistic forms sometimes enable people to convey feelings or ideas that have few other social outlets. For example, the fact that young Bedouin men in Egypt write poetry was surprising to many of the Americans who first

encountered it, but really is no more unusual than the fact that American male country music performers can sing about feelings that many American men would feel uncomfortable bringing up in normal conversation. Creative expression can be an important part of individual or family life. That said, military personnel are most likely to encounter it first in more public forms. Many groups expect that almost every individual will be involved in some form of public creative expression, even if only through participation in group events involving dance and music or by incorporating creativity and beauty into daily work. In such places, efforts to dismiss creativity as unimportant or impractical may be met with confusion or be rejected.

It is fairly common for more powerful parts of a group to try to impose restrictions on creative expression intended for the public, to control what "counts" as artistic, whether through overt political pressure or more subtle social pressures. Restriction of public creative expression also can happen more subtly as a few individuals become professional artists, writers, or performers through finding a patron or being able to exchange their work for goods and currency. These restrictions can have the effect of reinforcing social stratification or other social distinctions. It also is a very common part of overt political strategy to promote a particular ideology through the restriction or use of the arts, literature, and music. Under these circumstances, creative expression by people or in forms that challenge these controls can be an important part of protest and mobilization.

As open access to the internet has become more common across the globe, more individuals have the ability to contribute publicly to stories, historical narratives, and forms of creative expression as well as to use creative expression for political purposes. Involvement of many individuals is not necessarily new, but the medium of the internet does introduce some differences in terms of access, processes, and scope. The long-term implications of how people choose to use and/or restrict the internet are not yet known. Thus, it will continue to be important to pay attention to how people use various internet venues, including but not limited to social media, to construct and contest identities and narratives, support and challenge values, norms, and ideologies, and engage in various forms of creative expression.

3.1.3 Communication

This knowledge area focuses on very basic aspects of individual and group communication including anticipating intercultural communication mishaps, communication patterns, and different modes of sharing information. For this knowledge area, the most important thing to remember is that almost all human behavior involves communication of some sort. All humans communicate, and symbolic communication is one of the few human universals. To do so, humans use verbal, non-verbal and paralinguistic cues as well as objects, space, and various forms of behavior. We communicate non-verbally (via cues like body stance, gestures, and pace of speech) about such things as: our perceptions of the social roles and status of the people in the conversation, power dynamics, or willingness to compromise. By accepting or rejecting hospitality or a gift, we communicate something about the kind of relationship we have with the person making the offer. We build structures that communicate subtle cultural cues about the purpose of the structure and expected behavior, such as the use of high arches, pillars, and large open spaces associated with public and religious buildings in the United States. Even very large scale, complicated group behavior communicates a message, such as when the United States communicates the capacity for force by placing a carrier group off a coast.

The meanings associated with particular behaviors or symbolic objects and structures can vary a great deal, and misinterpretations of communication are some of the most common inter-cultural errors. Getting very close, making large gestures, and speaking loudly may be interpreted by an American as

rudeness or aggressiveness when the speaker is intending to convey sincerity and engagement. Having foreign military partners show up late for an exercise may be seen by Marines as lazy or disrespectful when the partners did not intend to communicate anything of the sort. Likewise, actions by Marines can be misinterpreted in intercultural contexts. For example, establishing a dumping area in a field used for grazing might have been a simple mistake, but be interpreted as the Marines communicating contempt for local farmers. In any intercultural interaction, the more stakeholders can learn about each other, the easier it is to avoid and recover from potential problems.

Learning about communication also involves understanding different communication patterns. It is a mistake to think about communication as purely transactional, a simple exchange of information. Communication involves behaviors (such as tone, style, physical stance, presence or absence of honorifics, inclusion or exclusion of personal information) that people use to signal things about social relationships, relative status of people involved, the stakes involved in a discussion, and so forth. Social roles, status, and situation can have a great deal of influence on who can communicate with whom and the way such discussions play out. The following example relayed by a Major from the Canadian Infantry illustrates this point:

Example: Question-asking in Afghanistan[368]

"In 2008, while employed in the Canadian Task Force Afghanistan, I and a small number of Canadian and Afghan soldiers deployed to Maywand District, Kandahar Province, in what was to be the first permanent Coalition presence in the area to date. After a couple months of operations, we wished to implement some MoE to give us an azimuth check regarding our strategy. We canvassed the local population, asking such questions as: "Do you feel secure? Are you happy with the government? Do you trust the coalition and the Afghan security forces?" Inevitably, the responses were overwhelmingly positive; one would think that we were hugely successful—undoubtedly unrealistically so.

What we did not understand was that there were social norms, part of the cultural dimension of belief systems, at play when the local population was answering our questions. It was eventually explained to us by our Afghan security force partners that, when locals are engaged in conversation with people in positions of authority, the most likely responses are generally very positive in nature. Essentially, they were saying that most Afghans simply tell you what they think you want to hear. They do this primarily because they want to give the impression of being a "good" citizen and, secondly, because they do not want to cause trouble for themselves by appearing to be critical of the authorities.

From a Western perspective, our questions were designed to elicit direct and honest responses, regardless of whether these responses may have been an indictment of our efforts. Our failure to understand this social norm (also, perhaps, the Afghans' inability to understand our true motives in asking the questions) led to an inaccurate evaluation of the population's true perception of their environment, something that eventually became clear to us through the actions of the population as well as the insurgents. Eventually, we learned that the problem was not the questions we were asking but rather the manner in which we asked them. By offering a list of issues and asking the local population to prioritize the most important concerns that the government should address, we were able to ascertain a more accurate picture of their perceptions. Instead of asking, "Do you feel secure?" or "Is the government doing a good job?" we said, "Please prioritize where the government should focus its efforts: security, building schools, the economy, or eliminating corruption." By changing the structure of the question, we were able to get the answers we were looking for, while still respecting the social norms of the population."

The more you learn about social organization and other aspects of culture, the easier it will be to anticipate common patterns of communication.

A final consideration about communication involves different modes of sharing information and how the legitimacy of information is determined. All groups have many different ways of sharing information. There are usually at least some structured channels such as official announcements, education, town halls, sermons, public lectures, organized protests, scholarly publication, and news media. There also are always less structured ways information is passed, such as gossip, individual media broadcasts or publications, street corner sermons and talks, and ad hoc gatherings. The availability of internet access has made some of these less structured venues available to far broader audiences than in the past. In the United States, it is still common for people to perceive information from structured venues as more legitimate and to place value on the perceived objectivity of a source. In many other places, especially populations with high inequality or segregation and in times of conflict or disaster, people may place more emphasis on the social position of the source. They may trust an account from a neighbor or local religious figure more than official pronouncements or news accounts from people whose motivations and allegiances are unclear. Little or no value may be placed on the idea of objectivity.

Also, keep in mind that people often place more legitimacy on information that fits with their existing ideas. For example, in places where Westerners are believed (sometimes with good reason) to have spread disease in the past, people may not immediately believe in the good intentions of personnel supporting response to a medical crisis. They may distrust official messages about the response and be more willing to believe a local leader or media personality spreading rumors about outsiders bringing disease to kill the people and take their land. It is rarely possible to shut down less structured information channels. People simply create new ones. It is more effective to pay attention to what those channels and the information being passed can tell you about the ideas and concerns of the population. It also may sometimes be possible to build relationships with influential voices, thereby making it possible to shift what is being communicated.

3.1.4 Interaction with the Environment

This knowledge area comprises the different ways in which people from different groups interact with and use their varying physical environments in order to live and the cultural landscapes that result. All groups have a unique and interdependent connection with their physical surroundings. The physical environment - to include resources such as land, water, food, and materials for shelter, terrain, climate, etc. - influences the people living in it by providing a range of possibilities within which they act. The physical environment may set certain limits on human actions. For example, in order to live, people need to build different types of shelter in hot versus cold climates. However, people have the ability to adjust to their physical environment and choose a course of action from many alternatives. These alternatives are cultural and vary from place to place. They are not pre-determined by the environment. Consider the threat of river flooding. In one location a group may choose to respond by building houses on stilts. In another location a different group may develop a park on the flood plain and build their houses farther away from the river. And in a third, the people may decide to ignore the threat of flooding completely and, for aesthetic and economic reasons, build low lying houses on the flood plain overlooking the river. All three groups live in similar environments and face a similar threat, but they choose to interact with their environment in different ways.

Marines need to understand the close relationship between a local community and its environment. Most importantly, Marines need to determine what features of the local physical environment are used by people and the particular ways in which these features are used and understood. This is because a Marine presence in any area of operation will affect locals' interaction with their environment and, without careful planning, could jeopardize the locals' ability to live and survive. For example, if Marine operations

divert or impede access to resources such as food or water, they may inadvertently cause real shortages or upset the local balance of power by allowing greater access to one group over another. This, in turn, may lead to unwanted conflict. Planners need to anticipate how their operations will impact local people's use of their environment and recognize that, since use of the environment is cultural, the impacts may significantly differ from what would be an expected outcome in the United States.

Hadrian's Wall

During the Roman invasion of what is now Scotland, a wall was constructed as a measure of defense against the northern clans. While a seemingly simple military solution, some of the long-term impacts to the physical and cultural environment were: isolating wildlife, leading to divergent evolutionary paths; deforestation leading to decreased animal populations and erosion issues; new population centers as towns appeared to support the various military garrisons; and finally, facilitating the growth of a distinct cultural group (the forebears of what are now Scottish) due to decreased interactions with people on either side of the wall.

People's interaction with the environment will also inform the range of options available to Marine forces entering an area. For example, understanding the culturally specific choices people have made around transportation within the constraints of available resources, climate, and terrain in a local area can help Marines make their own locally appropriate decisions with respect to the vehicles they use and the equipment they carry.

Through human environment interaction, the ways in which people change and shape their physical environment create cultural landscapes that reflect their social, economic, and political attitudes as well as their beliefs and values. As you learned in RCLF OB2/EB3, a careful reading, or interpretation, of a cultural landscape can provide useful information about the people who create it, use it, and live in it. Certain features of the cultural landscape may be imbued with a significance or symbolic value that goes far beyond their mere physicality or utility. These items of cultural property – to include archeological, historic, and sacred sites - are extremely important as they represent a group's identity and heritage. Damage or destruction by either US or enemy forces can create great distress among local populations and prompt mobilization in opposition to the mission. In contrast, protection by US forces can aid mission success. Unfortunately, items of cultural property are often not immediately obvious or easy to spot. However, careful reading of the cultural landscape using observation and interaction skills can help uncover what is important to which groups and why.

Finally, as Marines learn to read cultural landscapes, it is common for them to begin to notice material culture. At its most basic, the term material culture refers to things people make. It includes everything from symbolic objects, such as religious totems or ceremonial swords, to the more mundane items that surround us in everyday life, such as furniture, tools, computers, and clothes, to the things we throw away, such as plastic wrappers and broken dishes. The value of particular items depends heavily on cultural context and personal meaning. For example, what might appear to be a worn, dull knife to an outside observer may be a valued family heirloom to its owner and, because of the object's heirloom status and the importance placed on family history in his culture, he may be unwilling to sell it, even in dire financial straits. What a group takes time and resources to make, what they protect, and what they discard can provide insights that are useful in understanding interaction with the environment, but also other areas, such as exchange and beliefs. Also, as is the case with cultural property, the value of particular objects may not be obvious at first. The same observation and interaction skills can help Marines successfully interpret material culture.

3.1.5 Exchange and Subsistence

This knowledge area encompasses the concepts and information used to understand how people get, store, share, and exchange resources, commonly referred to as exchange systems (or economies) and subsistence patterns. Subsistence patterns refer to the primary ways a group gets the resources it needs and wants. A group rarely relies on only one mode of subsistence. For example, one group may engage in agriculture and herding to feed themselves, but also plant more of certain crops, mine gems, and fish specifically for the purposes of being able to trade with other groups. In the United States, most people engage in wage labor for subsistence, but it's also common for people to garden, hunt, and trade, sometimes as a means of supplementing monetary income and sometimes because they enjoy the other subsistence activities.

Exchange refers to all the ways a group stores, distributes, and exchanges resources. Exchange includes practices that are formally recognized as part of the economy as well as those that are not officially recognized, such as gift giving, charity, barter, reciprocity, and remittances. It also includes practices that are considered improper or illegal in the group, such as bribery or sale of prohibited items. With regard to this last category, it is important to remember that what is considered improper varies across and within culture groups. While some practices may be officially illegal, they still can considered normal and proper by most people, as is the case in areas where it is normal practice to tip or bribe government officials.

On Gift Giving

It is important to note the dilemma this can place a Marine in as regulations forbid gift giving or receiving past certain monetary and annual amounts. Being handed a gift with nothing to give in return may place the individual in an awkward and embarrassing position or, because of honor and/or pride, place the Marine in a feeling of unspoken "debt" to the other individual. Always be aware of the policies in place (and varying interpretations) associated with the giving of gifts.

Money, taxes, and market exchange systems are common parts of exchange, but rarely the only means by which resources are stored, distributed, and moved. Resources are also moved through the means described above, as well as through sharing resources and labor among family, friends, and social networks. While these other means of exchange may be less visible, they can still be critical parts of how resources are used and moved in a group or network.

Example: Baksheesh

Baksheesh is a practice in parts of Asia and the Middle East that involves the gifting of sums of money for a range of reasons. Baksheesh can come in the form of alms given for charity or a tip given to a powerful or important individual as a form of respect. While some in the west interpret this as corruption, it can also be viewed as part of an elaborate system of interpersonal power relations.

Subsistence and exchange are tied to other aspects of culture. A group's laws, beliefs, and values may limit how certain goods, such as family heirlooms, or kinds of labor, such as work by children, can be exchanged. People with certain social roles may have limited access to some aspects of exchange. Certain types of exchange, such as reciprocity, may be important in maintaining social relationships, as the giving and receiving of resources reinforces the bonds among individuals. While not every aspect of exchange will be critical to military operations, it is important to be aware that there are different kinds of exchange taking place and that people may interpret assistance from or to military personnel in terms of a kind of exchange other than a simple transaction or gift.

Special note on corruption: Across many types of missions and in all areas of the world, Marines report seeing exchanges that, according to United States norms and Marine Corps rules, constitute corruption.

However, in many places, exchanges that we categorize as corruption are perceived very differently. What we see as a bribe between villagers and the military may be perceived as a gift or normal payment by locals – the equivalent of bringing a bottle of wine to a dinner or tipping a waitress. Something that looks like nepotism to us may be seen by others as honorable attention to family needs. In short, some practices that seem illicit to us may be not only acceptable, but expected in other places. This does not mean Marines should ignore corruption. It means that, when time allows, it is best to apply cross-cultural skills, such as perspective taking, to determine how the action is understood by the people involved. That additional moment of data gathering and thought can help a Marine make a well-informed and effective decision about how to respond.

3.1.6 Organization and Interaction

This knowledge area encompasses the concepts and information needed to understand a group's patterns of roles, relationships, and social organization as well as how people use those patterns to shape interactions within the group and between the group and others. It includes topics such as social stratification, sub-groups or other divisions, kinship, status, and identity. This is a particularly complex knowledge area because many different patterns are likely to co-exist within one group, and there may be people both within and from outside the group trying to change the accepted patterns.

Every group has common social roles that involve expectations about behavior, status, and interaction, such as politician, brother, priest, wife, or community leader. Social roles often, but not exclusively, are linked to kinship or occupation. A person may take on a different social role depending on context or at different stages of life. There also is variation in the flexibility or inflexibility of social roles. For example, in some groups, there may be an absolute expectation that part of the social role of being an adult son or daughter is to provide for older relatives, but a different group may see that responsibility as being balanced against the individual desires and aspirations of the adult children.

There is a reciprocal relationship between identity patterns and social roles. Some social roles may be restricted based on identity factors, as was the case historically in the U.S. when married women were not allowed to be teachers and people identified as a race other than white were not allowed to serve in political roles. Likewise, when a person assumes a certain role, such as community leader, that role may become an important part of his personal identity. Some social roles and aspects of identity are ascribed, meaning they are determined by the group and cannot easily be changed by the individual. Other aspects are achieved or avowed, meaning the individual has some ability to choose them.

Social roles play an important part in the way people structure their relationships and interactions. For example, when interacting with an elected official, people often behave more formally and respectfully than they might if interacting with the same individual in a different role, such as a child's sporting event. In such cases, people are shaping their interaction around the social role, rather than the individual occupying it. Both social roles and identity are commonly linked to social status with some roles or identities being perceived as more or less valuable, important, or privileged. In turn, social status can affect how people interact. For example, a person who has a high social status may expect deferential behavior from people with lower status, and there may be serious consequences if this expectation is not met.

The concept of social organization refers to broad, enduring patterns of roles and relationships. One of the most basic forms of social organization is kinship, which takes many different forms and levels of importance across groups. It is common for groups to have sub-groups or sectors, based on things like ethnicity or race, occupation, religious beliefs, or socio-economic status. These sub-groups may not be

tightly organized and formally recognized, but they still have great influence over people's perceptions of how they can interact with one another.

Family Ties

You can learn a lot about a group of people by the way that they organize themselves. In the U.S. there is the traditional idea of the nuclear family: father, mother and children. That basic unit may interact with other related family units, but it generally moves along its own course, making financial and lifestyle choices that will be of most positive impact for that unit. For most of human history, this has not been the case. Other cultures past and present put different levels of importance on the idea of family and who is considered to be family.

It is important to remember that there is no one single function for kinship. Through the act of marriage, kinship becomes a tool of diplomacy. A less powerful family could marry a daughter to the son of a wealthier family, bringing the less powerful family prestige. A dowry would be given in order to make the marriage 'worth the while' of the wealthier family. Kinship can also play a part in the distribution of resources as families share resources in times of difficulty. Family tends to be a very important theme throughout all cultures, but the exact meaning of the idea does vary from place to place and people to people.

Most groups also have some form of social stratification, such as socioeconomic classes or a caste system. As is the case with individual social status, these broader stratification patterns can be closed, meaning the individual has no ability to change their position within the hierarchy. Others may be more flexible, giving individuals at least some possibility of changing position, as is the case in some socio-economic class systems.

Social organization also includes the institutions people create and use to organize their lives. These institutions may be structured and look familiar to people from the U.S., such as churches, educational or legal systems, governance, and social services. Other institutions may be less easy to recognize, such as a system of apprenticeships that is managed separately from the educational system. While these other institutions may appear to be "informal," that does not mean they are any less important or powerful.

One final aspect of social organization is social networks. While it is easy to think of social organization in terms of sub-groups and stratification levels, there also are social networks that cross these kinds of lines and give people a wider range of possible interactions. For example, social networks based on school ties, religion, or political affiliation may make it possible for somebody to have interactions that normally would be made difficult by the boundaries of social groups or stratification.

3.1.7 Power and Decision-Making

This knowledge area encompasses the officially recognized and unofficial ways that power and influence are gained, lost, and used by a group (sometimes referred to as formal and informal political systems). It also includes how different kinds of decisions are made and who gets to make them.

Broadly speaking, power and control are about getting people to do (or not do) something. Authority refers to the official or popular acknowledgement that a person has the right to exert power. These two things do not always come in the same package. It is possible for somebody to have power without authority, especially if he controls resources or has the means to use force, as is the case with drug cartels. It also is possible to have authority, but no real power, something that can be a significant challenge for officials in newly formed or unstable governments.

A further consideration is legitimacy, which is the degree to which authority and the use of power are perceived as being correct and are accepted. It is possible for an official, structured authority to be acknowledged as powerful, but perceived as illegitimate. This perception may undermine an individual or organization's ability to exercise power effectively and create problems for the people in the community, as they navigate different power processes. Legitimacy can be a particularly important concept for military personnel because there can be great differences in perception within a community or between a community and outsiders. What is seen as legitimate authority and use of power by US personnel may be understood very differently by people in the local area or region. When these kinds of differences arise, it is important to avoid focusing exclusively on trying to create the perception of legitimacy. It is just as important to understand why people are not accepting something and what alternatives they would propose.

Wasta

Wasta is an Arabic term best translated as 'clout, connections, influence, mediation, or pull.' It is a form of corruption especially if there is any form of payment involved. Wasta involves using one's connections and influence in places of power to get things done outside of the normal bureaucratic procedures.

In the United States it is common for people to think about power and control in terms of formal political processes, government institutions, and nation-states, all arrangements that have the sort of structured authority described above. These are important aspects of how people organize power in many places, but they are not the only aspects of this knowledge area that matter for military personnel. The ability to wield power may be very direct in cases where people have structured authority or control something, such as resources, the use of force, or the ability to give definitive interpretations of important guidelines, such as laws, religious doctrine, regulations, or history. However, people also wield power – and are perceived as legitimate - in more indirect ways, through influencing the beliefs and positions of others or by more subtle control over any of the things listed above. In many places, it is very common for high status community members, such as elders, religious leaders and scholars, highly educated individuals, the wealthy, or people from families with a long history in the area to have great influence and legitimacy (*see wasta*[369] example). Individuals without high status may gain legitimacy through advocacy for a sector of the population that feels the formal political structures are not acting in its interests. Even individuals whose social role or status prohibits them from formal participation in politics or decision-making can have a great deal of indirect influence. This can be seen in any place where women are not allowed a recognized political voice, but who – as individuals or collaboratively – wield power and affect decisions through male relatives. Keeping track of the social roles and individuals that have influence in particular aspects of culture can seem daunting, but over time, patterns will emerge that make this area easier to learn about and understand.

Power and authority intersect with decision-making for groups in complex ways. Official decision-making structures and processes are often layered on top of other expectations about how decisions should be made. For example, a government official may have the authority and power to make decisions about resource distribution for education. However, he may realize that his final decision will be seen as more legitimate, accepted, and acted on more readily if he consults with community leaders, important religious figures, and other influential organizations or individuals. In many cases, this kind of consultation is not officially required and may not be pointed out as a formal part of the decision-making process, but is still expected by all stakeholders. Also, sometimes the decision-making process can depend on context

and topic. For one topic, one or a handful of individuals with authority may be expected to deliberate and make decisions for the group. For another topic, a process such as voting can enable the group to make decisions based on the will of the majority of those allowed a voice in the matter being debated. These kinds of practices should be familiar to Marines who have observed military and civilian authorities socializing ideas and building consensus prior to making and announcing a decision. It is as important to observe and understand the activities and narratives leading up to a decision and the processes expected for particular kinds of decisions, as it is to know who makes the final call.

One final note on the intersection between power and decision-making involves implementation. Many Marines will have encountered situations, at home or abroad, where a decision is made, but not acted on in the expected way. People may creatively reinterpret a decision to suit their own purposes or simply find ways to ignore it. In some cases, this kind of disconnect between decision and action results from lack of authority or legitimacy, as described above. It also can result from corruption, lack of trained personnel to do necessary work, or other problems. However, in places where part of the population does not have access to the formal political system and other decision-making processes, not acting on a decision or deliberately undermining the decision in small ways may be a form of resistance and protest. People may believe, quite correctly, that this type of resistance is the only political action available to them, a situation that can have a significant effect on mission accomplishment.

As is always the case, this knowledge area is connected with all the others. Social roles, organizations, and status have a major impact on who can wield power and how. Religious convictions are often deeply entangled with political decision-making. Ideas about how knowledge is gained or what counts as a valid argument are very important in decision-making. Symbols and the built environment are often used to create or reinforce the legitimacy. Understanding these connections will make it easier for military personnel to understand and anticipate the use of power and decision-making.

3.1.8 Social Control and Managing Conflict

This knowledge area encompasses ideas and practices people have developed to regulate social relations, individual behavior, and the rules of a group as well as establish patterns in how rules are used and what happens when people violate them. It also includes accepted processes for disputing and for managing or resolving disputes and conflicts. As such, it includes things familiar to Marines like legal systems, structured law enforcement, and official punishment and sanctions, but also different concepts of justice and different ideas about how disputes should be handled.

All groups develop rules to govern behavior and interactions. The term “norm” is generally used to refer to rules that are commonly understood (although sometimes contested) but not codified in a group. The term “law” refers to rules that have been codified into a formal system, which generally includes concepts and processes for enforcement, dispute resolution, punishment, restitution, and reconciliation. The degree of emphasis placed on aspects of a legal system can vary. For example, in the United States, our concept of justice emphasizes punishment and sometimes restitution. In places with different concepts of justice, restitution and reconciliation may be seen as the more important outcomes. For a Marine learning about social control in a group, it is critical to recognize that, while laws may be easier to learn about, norms may have as much or more power in governing behavior.

It is common to talk about rules as functioning to maintain social order, and this is true in the basic sense. However, it also is important to recognize that rules, such as norms and laws, also frequently serve to reinforce social stratification and inequalities, providing advantages to some parts of the group and disadvantages for others. This latter purpose is sometimes overt and acknowledged, sometimes more

subtle. Likewise, rules do not always form a coherent system. It is fairly common for groups to have some rules that seem contradictory, especially during times of significant change. For example, long after women in the United States were legally allowed to vote, there was still a strong norm of women being expected to vote as directed by a husband, father, or brother.

When rules are broken, there are patterns in how the group responds. In the case of norms, all or part of the group is likely to respond to a rule breaker through social sanction. The social sanction can take many forms including but not limited to providing guidance, snubbing or shunning, gossip, shaming, or even violence. The reaction can depend on the individual as much as the offense. For example, if a child violates a norm of deference to a person of high social status, she might be gently corrected. An older person might be forgiven the offense without sanction, while a middle-aged offender might be shunned or beaten for the same behavior. As many Marines have experienced, most groups are willing to make allowances for outsiders not understanding norms. Offenses may be ignored or gently corrected. However, it is important to understand that in almost all situations the outsider is expected to learn "correct" behavior over time.

Saving Face

In many societies, personal status or prestige is a significant aspect of an individual's identity and classification within the social hierarchy. As such, public praise or condemnation can have significant consequences to an individual or even their entire family. Therefore, in these cultures it is imperative to avoid personal identification when assigning blame or poor decisions (especially for senior individuals) not only because of the insult to the individual, abut also the real possibility of loss of trust in you by the entire group over concern that they could also suffer loss of "face". For example, consider saying "Certain actions have led to unintended consequences that we need to work through" vice "Bill didn't listen to my advice and now we all have extra work to do to clean up his mess". Everyone will likely know that Bill is at fault, but more importantly, will recognize that you were honorable by avoiding shaming him and that you value the collective efforts over individual contributions.

When a law is broken, the situation is usually taken up by the formalized system of justice. This system may look like a familiar arrangement of police, courts, jails, and so forth, or the system may consist of a group of elders convening to hear about the situation and making a decision about what should be done. In many places, the system may be multi-faceted, with some matters being handled by local mediators or judges and others entering into a system of courts. No matter what the system looks like, underpinning it will be a set of assumptions about what should be considered in decision-making and what constitutes a desirable, just outcome. In the United States, our ideal is that individuals should be equal before the law, that a person's social status, race, sex, and other such factors should not be considered in the judgment. Also, while our judicial system is expected to consider some aspects of context, such as killing in self-defense, others aspects are not allowed, or their consideration may be contested. The ideal of "equal before the law" is not a cultural universal, and many groups consider it very appropriate to judge a person differently based on personal characteristics or the particular situation. Likewise, the kinds of evidence that can be considered are influenced by other aspects of culture. So, in a place where many people believe sorcery can cause loss or death, evidence of a person practicing magic might be seen as a legitimate consideration.

Cultural Variation: The case of Sharia Law

It has become increasingly common to hear the term "Sharia Law" in American news outlets due to the multitude of extremist groups advocating for its adoption. Unfortunately, there is very little discussion pertaining to what Sharia actually is...often leading to misconceptions about what it is and is not along with a wide range of interpretations. In its most generic sense, Sharia is the concept of state and religion operating in conjunction for the moral and spiritual benefit of the population, with legal judgments delivered in accordance with religious texts. The problem is that, much like the Catholic version of this principle that flourished throughout Europe and eventually led to the schism and creation of the various Protestant faiths, there is a lack of uniform acceptance and "righteous" behavior and the punishments for disobedience. This is evident in countries that currently practice Sharia, with rules and authorities widely differing from country to country, or even region to region. Instead, much like the Catholic Church example, the intertwining of nebulous and fluid state and religious principles are used as a method to help solidify control over all (physical, legal, moral, and spiritual) aspects of a population by a select group of elite individuals.

Perhaps more importantly, there also is a great deal of variation in what people see as the desired outcome of a judicial process. In the United States, it is common for people to expect that a judgment will include the declaration of guilt/blame or innocence and a prescription for some type of punishment for the offender if found guilty. Again, this expectation is not universal. In some places, the outcome of a judicial process is expected to be the restoration of social harmony through restitution and acts of reconciliation rather than blame and punishment. In fact, placing blame and imposing punishment may be seen as making things worse, as exacerbating tensions rather than reducing them.

The preceding paragraphs focused mainly on violations of rules by individuals or small groups. All groups also have ways of handling broader disputes and conflicts that occur within the group or between groups. All groups have tensions of one sort or another, and these are generally managed rather than fully resolved. It is far more common for tensions, even very difficult ones, to be managed rather than erupting into violence. When a tension reaches a point where one or both parties feel some action is required, there are culturally accepted ways of disputing. For example, many forms of public protest, strikes, mediation, seeking greater political power, and legal action are all considered acceptable in the United States. In many places, these disputing practices are not allowed, but there may be others, such as gaining an audience with a ruler or religious leader and persuading him to intervene.

Even when a conflict results in collective violence, there generally are forms of violence that are accepted and forms that are not. Historically, some groups have accepted raiding and feuding as legitimate means of addressing grievances. The international community continues to try to impose rules on large scale warfare, such as distinctions between combatants and non-combatants and treatment of prisoners of war.

Finally, all arrangements of social control, disputing, and conflict resolution rely on some mixture of perceived legitimacy and the threat of force (in the form of confinement, banishment, violence, or some other punishment). When some part of a population or an entire group does not have access to or does not accept the legitimacy of the social controls and patterns of dispute being imposed, the members of that group or population may try to pursue the conflict in ways that are perceived by other stakeholders as illegal or immoral. In the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2003 and 2014, each side accused the other of illegal and immoral acts in part because there were different concepts of what actions were acceptable within the conflict. Conflicts in which the rules of disputing are, themselves, part of what is

being disputed can be particularly complex to resolve to the point where they can be managed through non-violent means.

3.1.9 Leisure

This knowledge area encompasses activities that people in the United States would typically consider as distinct from work, undertaken for enjoyment or as personal pursuits. It includes things like sports, social gatherings, hobbies, sport hunting and fishing, using media (films, television, websites, etc.) or reading for pleasure, relaxing at home, and outings or vacations. It also includes the special rules and expectations that apply to these activities.

Talking about and participating in leisure activities are well-established ways of building rapport. Many Marines have reported that discussions of sports, hunting, or movies are the initial ice-breakers in discussions with partner forces or local populations. In order to participate, it is important to identify shared interests and to be open to the fact that there are cultural differences in what counts as fun. For example, local people may enjoy a goat roast and spend as much time discussing all the details of killing and preparing the goat as Marines might spend discussing the nuances of a football game. The global entertainment industry and increasing internet access mean that it is now sometimes very easy for Marines to encounter people who have seen the same films, websites, and television shows. Understanding the "leisure" knowledge area can be helpful for rapport building but should not be limited to what is familiar and comfortable. When beginning to participate in a leisure activity, it is import to observe and ask about any special expectations for behavior. For example, when an individual is invited to dinner party at a family home, some groups expect the guest to bring a small gift. However, in other places, such a gift may be perceived as rude because it suggests the host cannot provide for the guest. There is no universal pattern. It is necessary to observe and ask questions.

Leisure activities can give important insights into other aspects of culture. At the most basic level, things people choose to do with free time can show what they think is important or provide windows into other values. Some groups spend a lot of leisure time in sports or other activities that provide opportunities for individual or team competition. However, competition is not universally valued, and people from other groups may choose to spend their leisure time on activities that focus on artistic expression or more directly building social bonds. Most frequently, Marines will encounter groups where there is a broad range of available leisure activities.

The Banker and the Fisherman

An American investment banker was vacationing in Africa. While visiting a coastal fishing village, a lone man in a small fishing boat pulled up to the pier. The American walked over to the boat to see three large tuna inside. The American complimented fisherman on the quality of his catch, and asked how long it took. "Only a couple hours," the fisherman replied. The American pointed out the nice weather and how early it still was in the day. "Why don't you stay out and catch some more?" he asks. The fisherman said that he had enough for his family's current needs. "But what will you do with all the rest of your time?" the American asked again.

"Well, this morning I slept in a bit then walked with my kids to school. I'm about to take a nap, then will go get my kids from school. I'll play with them and the dog on the way home, where I'll meet my wife. We'll go to the market and see some of our friends, try some new wine that somebody's selling down there. After that we'll have a nice big dinner and relax, maybe play some guitar."

The American's eyes light up enthusiastically, "Aha!" He exclaims "I can help you out! What you need to do is start working longer days. Catch two, three, even four times as many fish! Sell the fish you don't need at the market and keep the money. Save up and buy a bigger boat, and hire a crew too! That way you can catch even more fish. Eventually, you'll have enough money to buy more boats! From there you can move into a bigger city and look into ways to process and distribute the fish as well! You'll own your own company!"

The fisherman raised an eyebrow at the American, a quizzical look on his face. "How long will that take?"

"Probably fifteen or twenty years, but you'll be rich! And then you can retire!" The American exclaimed.

"But what would I do then?" asked the fisherman.

The American replied: "You could move to a small fishing village, sleep in, walk your kids to and from school, take naps, spend time with your wife, drink wine, spend time with friends and play guitar!"

As illustrated by this tale, different groups of people conceive of leisure time in different ways. The basic western idea surrounding work and leisure is that you do your job first, work hard and eventually be rewarded. Other groups do not always draw such hard boundaries around what is or is not considered work, nor is there a universal emphasis placed upon 'a hard day's work.

Social stratification, roles, and status may be reflected in who chooses (or is allowed) to participate in certain activities. In the United States, attending the opera tends to be associated with the upper socio-economic classes, although the only formal barrier to other people attending is cost. Participation in sports is still segregated by sex and/or race in many places, and the rules about segregation can be very strict. There also is cross-cultural variation in assumptions about who should have leisure time and why. Americans often assume that children and the elderly should have more leisure time than young and middle-aged adults, in particular that they should not have to be involved in wage labor. In other groups, this may not be perceived as desirable or may be impractical. This does not necessarily mean that children and the elderly are unhappy. They may value the chance to be perceived as making a contribution to the family or community.

As is the case with artistic expression, leisure activities are sometimes a context in which broader issues are challenged. For example, watching sports matches and sport hunting were traditionally male-only activities in the United States until recently. Over time, more women have chosen to challenge traditional gender stereotypes by openly displaying their interest in these activities or trying to participate. In cases where one part of a group is disadvantaged in ways that are not openly acknowledged, it can sometimes be safer for people to highlight the issue in leisure activities rather than openly challenge the more powerful group. So, it might be easier for people to try out the idea of ethnic integration in a series of soccer games than in the political process. This is not to suggest that people perceive leisure activities as unimportant. After all, Jackie Robinson and Larry Doby received threats after breaking baseball's color barrier in 1945. However, as with the arts, sometimes people are more willing to allow challenges and exploration in these kinds of activities.

The idea of leisure and work as separate activities is not universally shared. Americans often compartmentalize the times and spaces where leisure activity is to take place. For example, for American adults, leisure activities are expected to take place at different times and in different places than work activities. These kinds of separations are not followed in many places Marines may operate. The concept of leisure itself, in the way it is commonly understood, seems to be a fairly recent development in human history. This is not because people in the past never had time to relax or pursue activities purely for

enjoyment. It is just that the perception of a need to make a distinction between work and leisure does not seem to have been widespread. Blurred lines between work activities and non-work activities, still very common in many places, have sometimes created friction for military personnel. A common example is when a meeting includes time spent socializing, gossiping, making and eating food, and other activities military personnel think of as not work-related. US personnel may become frustrated, wanting to "get down to business" and stop "wasting time." The other people at the meeting may see no reason that a business meeting should not also be enjoyable. They may see the maintenance of relationships and exchange of information and hospitality as important as the specific topic of the meeting. In fact, the lines between leisure and work are also blurred in the United States. Most Marines have had to participate in "mandatory fun" where something cast as leisure was really just an extension of work. Most Americans also have had experiences where an activity that we might normally characterize as work, like helping somebody move, took on some characteristics of a social gathering.

For this knowledge area, it is not important to determine what "counts" as leisure in the group being studied. For interaction, what matters is being able to identify opportunities for participation and the different assumptions that may cause friction if not addressed. In particular, it is critical to keep in mind that the separation between work and leisure activities is not universal. For more in-depth knowledge, what matters is being able to understand what leisure activities mean to partners or local people and what clues they provide to other aspects of culture.

3.1.10 Health and Wellbeing

This knowledge area encompasses the beliefs, social relationships, institutions, and other aspects of culture that intersect with the overall health and wellbeing of a group. It includes topics such as beliefs about the causes and treatments of disease, power dynamics that affect access to sufficient water and food, how beliefs and social relations affect how care is provided, and how people are expected to behave when sick or injured. It involves not only what we would think of as physical health and nutrition, but also cultural orientations toward mental health and whether health is an individual or social matter. It also includes the health and treatment of wild and domestic animals that may be important for subsistence, labor, exchange, or symbolic reasons.

Cultural ideas about health matter not only for medical missions, but also more broadly for military operations. Because health and other aspects of culture (beliefs, social relations, exchange, etc.) are frequently tied together, a disease event or some US action related to health may have a ripple effect. People may draw on unexpected aspects of culture to help them understand and deal with medical issues, such as the case of *empacho*.[370]

Empacho

Empacho is an illness within Latin American folk medicine that is associated with indigestion, diarrhea, loss of appetite and other minor symptoms. It is believed to be brought on by a mass of food becoming stuck within the digestive tract. During the 1980s there were recorded instances of young children being brought into emergency rooms exhibiting signs of heavy metal poisoning. Parents told medical care providers that their child was suffering from *empacho*. Upon investigation, doctors found orange or pink powder inside the stomachs of the children brought in for the condition. The powdery substance is known as *azarcon* or *greta,* and is prescribed by some Mexican folk healers as a treatment for *empacho*. Testing of the material revealed that *azarcon* and *greta* contain lead tetroxide and lead oxide respectively, and the materials were responsible for the deaths of many children throughout the region.

How could this have happened? Shouldn't it have been obvious to parents that you shouldn't feed your child lead? In this case, it is important to note that the families in these situations are dealing with two separate medical systems at once. On one hand, they are dealing with western biomedicine when they bring the child to the hospital. But going to a *curandero* or medicine man is a very different type of medical system, and sometimes medical systems don't interact in positive ways.

People rarely stick to one medical system, often seeking help from multiple sources. Even in America, a person who contracts a type of cancer will go to a special doctor and begin radiation treatments. That same person may also go into church and ask that their congregation pray for them to be healed. One course of action is physical and scientific, while the other is metaphysical and faith based.

As a Marine, it is important to understand the medical systems you may run into when deployed. The medical assistance offered by the United States is a very specific kind of medicine based on our understanding of science and the physical world. Locals may have other medical systems you have not heard of that play an important role in their lives. Taking time to understand how locals conceive of disease and illness as well as how they treat it will help reduce the possibility of unwanted surprises when it comes to treating the population in question.

Health issues may affect other aspects of culture in short term or long-term ways. For example, in many countries, epidemics of AIDS occurred at times when there were weak public health and medical infrastructures and aid from the international community was insufficient to provide the levels of care common in the West. The outbreaks killed many young and middle-aged adults, leaving large numbers of children and elderly people on their own. Over long periods of time, this has resulted in significant changes in economic patterns and family structure. It also altered social roles, with the elderly and children having to head households and support the family. As is often the case with lingering illnesses or debilitating injury, caring for the ill added an additional time and resource burden to families or communities already stretched. Disease burdens or health and nutrition insecurity can contribute to instability as well as affect the social, political, and economic contexts Marines will encounter when carrying out their missions.

When assessing the health situation of a group, the physical, psychological, environmental, veterinary, agricultural, and infrastructure aspects of health matter. It is important to remember to look at both individual medical issues and broader public health challenges, such as those arising from insufficient clean water or the presence of environmental toxins. It also is necessary to assess less visible aspects, such as beliefs about what causes disease and how it should be treated or how social divisions, roles, and status may affect people's ways of seeking care. In many places, Marines need to be aware of the involvement of different kinds of practitioners, such as midwives, religious figures, herbalists, and community leaders in parts of care that may seem unusual to Americans. Overall, the goal is to balance learning about the community's health from the standpoint of US ideas about health with learning how the community thinks about health and what is necessary to maintain it or solve problems.

The quality of intercultural interactions will be improved when Marines learn about the cultural patterns of the people they encounter and consider how their own cultural patterns can affect the situation. In the case of health and wellbeing, this is particularly true, as many common assumptions from the United States are decidedly uncommon elsewhere. Consider what aspects of US beliefs and norms about health may be considered unusual by the local population. Many Marines are familiar enough with other cultures to recognize that certain normal US practices, such as a male physician treating a female patient, may be seen as unacceptable among certain groups. However, in some places, even more basic assumptions may not be shared. For example, most Americans believe that many diseases are caused by tiny organisms, invisible to the naked eye, that travel in people's blood and other bodily fluids. To some people, this may seem stranger than believing disease is caused by witchcraft. The idea that teeth and eyes are not part of

routine medical care in the US system seems illogical to people in many other areas, as does the idea that mental illness is something separate from and more shameful than physical illness. Even the idea that a patient might be divided from his family or social network during his treatment, something we take for granted, could be perceived as strange or dangerous to other people. This last assumption caused problems in some past responses to Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) when locals became afraid, sometimes hostile, as relatives disappeared into isolation and treatment centers. In some areas, responders were able to use transparent sheeting in place of walls so that families could monitor how patients were treated and communicate with them, greatly reducing tension. Understanding such differences in fundamental beliefs and values can help Marines understand reactions and plan more effectively.

At the most basic level, having an understanding of the health situations and practices of a group will help Marines understand what the community is contending with that can affect the mission. For example, if Marines know their partners are coping with exhaustion from malarial parasites or worried about malnourished children, they can make more realistic plans for how much can be accomplished in a day. At a more complex level, understanding the cultural aspects of health can provide insights into many other aspects of culture as well as help anticipate the second and third order consequences of operations.

3.2 Culture General Ethics

As Marines, you have the opportunity to work with people from many different cultures. It goes without saying that you will be exposed to cultural situations and interactions that seem strange or seemingly make no sense at all. Often these events can be brushed off as simply the result of interacting with a culture that does things differently. These differences can be reconciled, and those involved can continue about their business. Things change, however, when the actions of another individual or group violate the ethical code of conduct under which you operate. It is at this point where the actions of another may move from being perceived as 'different' to being perceived as 'wrong,' for example, the sexual practices of Marines' Afghan partners with young boys. Witnessing the open violation of your own ethical code by others with whom you are working may incite frustration or anger within yourself and/or your Marines, potentially lead to friction or damaged relations with the other group in question, or worse, prompt an unethical response from your Marines. This section will offer an overview on the concept of ethics and alternative ethical constructs to help you navigate these culturally complex situations.

3.2.1 Defining Ethics

What does the Marine Corps mean by the term 'ethics?' At the Basic School's course on ethics, Marines learn that ethics is "a set of standards or a value system by which free, human actions are ultimately determined as right or wrong, good or evil."[371]

From these definitions, we can tell: a) 'Ethics' is not a single thing, but rather the idea that right and wrong are made up of a number of standards/values that dictate what is appropriate (or ethical) and b) as they involve value systems, they are not universal. The standards and values that a group holds are the criteria by which thoughts and actions are judged as being ethical or not.

3.2.2 Marine Ethics Review

Honor, courage, and commitment are concepts that are familiar to all Marines. These core values are the bedrock upon which ethical Marine behavior is built. In general, most Marines view these concepts in a similar fashion. For example, there is no confusion among Marines as to what is meant by "patriotism." Devotion to country is a key value when it comes to serving the United States as a warfighter. How might other groups outside of the U.S. think about patriotism? What if the country in which an individual lives

does not treat its citizens, or a select group within that citizenry, fairly? In order to be loyal to a cause, a person must generally agree with the standards and values of that cause. What happens when the goals of the organization to which a person is supposed to be loyal run counter to the needs of the individual or contradict other closely held values? Asking questions about how ethical ideas come to be perceived the way they are and how they interact with each other can help Marines to make sense of not only their own culture's ethics, but also those of others.

3.2.3 Exploring Alternate Ethical Constructs

Understanding how Marine Corps' values shape Marine behavior is very useful when it comes to exploring the ethical constructs of other cultures. While many groups have written down some aspects of their ethics in laws or other documents, such formal documents rarely capture the whole ethical system or the range of ways people are expected to follow it. In addition to observing behavior, there are a number of places where you can look for information about what others will consider right or wrong. As it is with Marines, you can observe any number of aspects within a culture group to find indicators of what is considered right and wrong. Art, history, religion, and general patterns of living all serve as good points of information. When you find familiar concepts such as honesty, courage, or honor, take time to consider how another culture might perceive them, keeping in mind that (as it is within your own culture group) you cannot make judgements based on any single observed aspect. If a certain film or story is popularly retold, for example, it is important to think deeply into why it is so popular. Is it because main characters display certain positive behaviors that are idealized? Is it perhaps a cautionary tale of how individuals should not behave? This can be seen throughout our own popular media, from the basic fairy tales and fables that Americans use to teach their children moral lessons to popular television series that tackle extremely complex moral situations. These stories often have multiple angles from which they can be interpreted. Not everyone within the culture group will necessarily have the same interpretation, so it is important to keep an open mind and constantly be on the lookout for opportunities to learn more and update your knowledge.

Ethics in American Popular Culture: The Anti-Hero

While there are many heroes and characters in American pop culture that do display American cultural ideals (Captain America, Spider-Man, Jack Ryan, etc.), there is also a movement that focusses on a different type of character: the anti-hero. People find these characters interesting because they do not conform to our notions of the classic virtuous 'hero.' These anti-heroes have come to dominate many films and television series (Mad Men, Breaking Bad, House of Cards, Deadpool). Sometimes these characters are more relatable to audiences because they embrace the flaws of the character and explore ethical gray zones in which audiences might find themselves. The next time you find yourself watching a film or television program, think about the following questions. Why do people find these characters compelling? What does the popularity or unpopularity of the characters say about the way audiences feel about the ethical virtues (or lack thereof) that are on display? The answers to these questions can be indicative of a group's ethical constructs.

The culture general skills that you have learned in previous RCLF blocks – observing, perspective taking, suspending judgment, avoiding mirror-imaging, and maintaining tact and bearing – can and should be applied when learning about the ethical constructs of other culture groups. Also, the culture general concepts of change and variation should be taken into consideration both in the application and perception of ethical constructs.

Change: Much as everything else involving culture, a group's sense of what constitutes ethical behavior changes over time. This change may occur incrementally over many generations, or it could occur very

quickly due to specific events or circumstances. It is also important to note that entire ethical constructs may not change evenly over time. Some aspects of what is considered right and wrong action may remain fairly static while other ideas evolve very quickly.

Variation: Not every member of a culture group interprets the groups' ethical standards in the same manner. Some may favor strict interpretations, while others favor more gray area in how right and wrong action is determined. This variation in 'gray area' also applies to individuals within a culture and can change depending on the situation in question.

3.2.4 Strategies for Ethical Sense Making

Because ethical constructs are not completely homogenous and are constantly in flux, it is sometimes difficult to immediately make sense of how right and wrong action is defined within a culture with which you are unfamiliar. In these times of uncertainty, you may find it useful to refer back to the culture general Rules of the Road.

Rule #1 The local people have not organized themselves, their beliefs, or their behavior patterns for your convenience. Figuring out what is going on can be complex. Accept it and move on.

Rule #2 Things you take for granted may not be true here. Basic concepts such as honesty, fairness, respect, winning, finished, ownership, and agreement may mean fundamentally different things to local people. Be prepared to cope with both your confusion and theirs.

Rule #3 You don't have to like it to understand it. Some things you learn about the local culture may anger or puzzle you. That's OK. View these differences as significant factors that shape the area of operations and affect a unit's ability to carry out missions. Figuring out what is going on may require temporarily holding in check your own beliefs, assumptions, and expectations so you don't blind yourself with emotion or assumptions. This takes mental discipline.

Rule #4 Local people are not just reacting to you. They are reacting to their entire perception of U.S. influence. Before the first Marines hit the ground, local people have a perception of the United States based on U.S. products, media (such as films and television), and perhaps U.S. companies, NGOs, or charities. These previous experiences shape the way people react to the Marine unit.

When operating in and around other culture groups these rules can act as a first line of defense against misunderstanding.

3.2.5 Ethics in Action

Ethical standards and values are negotiated, not fixed. While these standards and values are the guiding points by which individuals and groups inform their actions, those individual actions are negotiated within their own unique sets of circumstances and pressures. These pressures come from both within and without the individual or group, and are constantly in flux. This negotiation between the internal and external ethical pressures is not always obvious or pronounced during periods of calm; however, during times of conflict, it can cause strain on the individual. Individuals face ethical dilemmas daily. These dilemmas range from, for example, having to make individual choices between family and work to

prioritizing between the safety of the Marines under your command and mission accomplishment. While Marines have a solid ethical foundation upon which they base their own actions, interpreting the actions of others adds another layer of complexity.

When approaching ethically complex situations, it is helpful to ask the kinds of questions that explore the ways in which alternate ethical constructs may impact Marine operations. The following sections contain brief descriptions of current issues from across the globe along with some sample questions that can help explore the complexities of changing ethical constructs in times of crisis.

3.2.6 Marine Corps Concept: Honor

What constitutes Honor for the Marine Corps? For Marines, honor is "to live your life with integrity, responsibility, honesty, and respect."[372] This all makes perfect sense to Marines, but how does this concept change when considering other populations? The unique nature of the Marine Corps gives it a unique sense of honor, a fact that is important to keep in mind when considering other groups' ideas of the concept. During World War II, Japanese and American warfighters both fought hard for the defense of their respective countries, in order to protect their very way of living. Those ideal ways of living played out in the battlefield behaviors of the combatants. For example, even in the direst situations the very idea of surrender was offensive to the Japanese sense of honor. Their construction of honor was informed by propagandized versions of the Samurai bushido code, which idolized death in the purity of battle.[373] As a result, Japanese infantry would conduct banzai charges as a form of honorable suicide, preferring to die in battle than stain their honor in surrender. This behavior was puzzling to American infantry witnessing what they saw as senseless forward assaults by the Japanese forces. The American's idea of honor allowed for units to surrender and retain their honor.[374]

Differences in the interpretation of the cultural values that inform ethical behavior may have obvious consequences (as is the case with the Japanese infantry in WWII) or may be more subtle, depending on the situation. Here we will look at migrant crises across the world and suggest questions to explore how ethical constructs may be impacted by these situations.

Europe's Refugee Crisis[375]

Conflict across the Middle East has driven crisis migration to a new all-time high in recent years. The Syrian civil war, the advent of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and the civil war in Yemen have displaced hundreds of thousands. These join the already large numbers migrating to escape conflict and crises on the African continent. Many refugees flee via sea and land routes in hopes of finding sanctuary and opportunity in Europe. While some countries welcome refugees, there simply is not adequate infrastructure to deal with the population influx.

Rohingya Refugee Crisis[376]

The Rohingya people are a minority Muslim group in Burma's Rakhine State. Tensions with the local government, poor living conditions, and inter-communal violence have led many Rohingyans to flee the country, often by poorly maintained boats, to neighboring nations. This journey is perilous, as they have no guarantee of safety and no guarantee as to what type of response they will receive from destination countries. Strained relations between the Burmese government and the Rohingyans have made formulation of international policy toward this group difficult, at best.

Mexican Immigration to the U.S.[377]

Migration between Mexico and the United States has been going on far longer than either country has existed but has become an increasingly contentious topic within the past few decades. As a highly politicized topic within the U.S., it is easy to think of Mexican immigration as a single event; but in reality, there are three distinct types of immigration that occur: permanent legal admission, temporary legal admission, and unauthorized migration. How the migration occurs varies for each group, but the action is often driven by similar motivations, such as to seek economic or educational opportunities or to escape the violence of the Mexican drug wars.

Think About It:

Because concepts such as honor are informed by cultural values that are unique to an individual group as interpreted by the individual members, it is unlikely that each migrant population and the individuals in that group will conceive of the idea in the exact way. In the situations above:

What does honor look like when acted out by the individual, the various groups, or countries?

How might contact with new host populations and the experience of migration impact a migrant population's sense of honor?

In what ways might the local population react to exposure to this new idea of honor?

Are migrant populations obliged to conform to their host country's ideas regarding honor and honorable behavior? How might the idea of tradition tie into that?

For that matter, does it make sense to apply the sub-concepts that the Marine Corps uses (including integrity, responsibility, honesty, and tradition) to other groups? Might some of these be more important to some culture groups than others?

How can one account for future fluctuations of ethical constructs within a region during the operational planning process?

3.2.7 Marine Corps Concept: Courage

What constitutes courage? Marines who are courageous have "The mental, moral and physical strength to do what is right in the face of fear, uncertainty, or intimidation."[378] "Courage is the commitment to uphold your honor at all times," provides a Marine respondent in a 2007 survey to the question, What is courage?[379] In these statements, it becomes clear that risk taking and boldness in face of danger, in and of themselves, do not equate with courage. There is another component, steeped in cultural values. It is when those acts are coupled the concept of "right" – a moral component – that we can label action as courageous. But what is "right?" In his work on courage in the Marine Corps, Dr. Frank Tortorello noted that courage is "the selfless pursuit of *prized cultural values* in situations of moral and physical risk"[380] (italics added for emphasis). How a culture group determines if an action is courageous is dependent on what cultural values are at play and how these values are defined. Obviously, these are going to vary in both definition and appearance across and through culture groups, and at times, there will be competing or conflicting values. It is important to remember that while the process of ethical construction takes place external to the individual, it is still up to the individual to decide upon *how* those ethics manifest in action. Take the Japanese businessman who commits suicide because of company failure. What are the cultural

values at play? Is he acting courageously, or is he a coward seeking the easy way out? How we interpret another's actions largely is shaped by our own ethical framework, by what we consider to be "right." Let's look at the international security situation in Syria and Iraq involving ISIL and how the concept of courage and some of its associated concepts like loyalty and patriotism may manifest themselves and vary from the perspective of some of the players on the ground.

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)[381]

ISIL is seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate, anchored in the territory of Iraq and Syria with global aspirations. ISIL bases its legitimacy in a particular branch of Sunni Islam, has established political and military structures and governance programs, and has gained physical territory. It employs the tools of terror and brutality to intimidate opposition and local communities, eliminate apostates, agitate disaffected Muslims globally, and influence Western countries' treatment of their internal Muslim populations. ISIL believes it gains increasing political and religious authority through military victories and justifies its military action and violence as sanctioned by God. ISIL's goal is to unite Muslims worldwide under the Caliphate and seek world domination.

The Refugees Feeling the Crisis[382]

The challenges facing refugees fleeing the security crisis in Syria and Iraq in transit to and upon arrival in Europe are daunting - human smuggling and trafficking, cramped, squalid conditions in the camps and holding areas, bureaucratic wrangling and processing, lack of economic opportunity, and death by drowning, to list a few. An individual, when deciding to stay or to depart, must weigh these against his or her current reality on the ground. Many in this position are parents, which factors into their decision calculus.

International Anti-ISIL Coalition[383]

As of March 2016, 66 countries represent the international anti-ISIL coalition. Contributing countries provide both military and non-military (such as humanitarian aid and weaponry) support. Operation Inherent Resolve is the military component of the coalition's activities, in which 22 countries participate. The intent is for local forces to take the lead on the ground. U.S. and other coalition members work to support a three-pronged effort, involving training and equipping local forces, providing coordinated air strikes, and conducting limited targeted special operations. The level and type of support are adjusted as the situation on the ground evolves. With so many countries involved, there are inherent challenges with competing national priorities and strategic objectives and differences in levels of risk tolerance and rules of engagement and in the ways and means of carrying out missions.

Pro-ISIL Foreign Fighters[384]

Pro-ISIL foreign fighters come from around 85 countries in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Asia, and North America. They tend to be drawn from the youth of these countries. All figures relating to these fighters are estimates, and sources disagree sometimes on source countries and numbers; however, they agree on the large and increasing numbers of fighters joining ISIL. Despite the efforts of the international anti-ISIL coalition, their numbers nearly doubled in the latter half of 2015. Their motivations for joining are as diverse as they. Some come for the religious appeal; others for the sense of belonging missing from the current life experience; others for the adventure or the opportunity to be a part of something bigger; and others for their own personal reasons. Source countries are also experiencing returning fighters, whose motivations for leaving are just as diverse as for joining. For source countries, this, of course, elevates security concerns.

Think About It

What does courage look like for each of the above culture groups? Are they acting courageously? Says who?

Break it down: First, note the various culture groups in the above descriptions.

Think about what cultural values are at play. Remember there may be competing or conflicting values that the individual member of the culture group must consider before determining what is right and, thus, ethical.

> *For Marines, the cultural values of loyalty and patriotism are key components of courage. What does loyalty look like in each group? How about patriotism? Are they relevant?*

Consider the diversity of membership in each group. How may these concepts vary within the group? What becomes the prized cultural value? Are all members in agreement? How do you think those who have prioritized different values view each other?

What happens when the prioritization of cultural values changes? Consider, for instance, the fighters leaving the pro-ISIL coalition. What is considered "right" then? By whom? What does "courage" look like? To whom? Would ISIL leadership think about the situation in the same way the individual does?

Consider how the concept of courage is inherently both individual and collective and how perspective shapes your understanding. Why is this important for you as a Marine leader?

3.2.8 Marine Corps Concept: Commitment

What constitutes commitment? For Marines, commitment is the "unwavering, selfless dedication to mission accomplishment and personal and professional responsibilities."[385] Marines are to have unwavering, selfless dedication to their work and family and, while in the field, to mission accomplishment. Well, we all know that sometimes – many times – you cannot do it all. You have to decide. Marines and individuals all over the world face such ethical dilemmas daily when values they hold dear are in conflict with each other. What is the right thing to do? Which cultural value should you uphold and how? As discussed above in Ethics in Action, how culture groups and the individuals within them determine what is the right is shaped by a unique set of circumstances and pressures, and this is constantly evolving.

Let's look at one value: commitment to one's children. For Marines with children, this is one manifestation of how they live out their commitment, a core value in the Corps and a key component of the Marine Corps ethical construct. Many culture groups and individuals within would agree with this cultural value, and they uphold this value through such actions as providing food, shelter, community, educational opportunities, healthcare, and safety to their children. It is important to remember that how such concepts display in and across culture groups varies and, thus, the accompanying actions do as well. Do all Marines with children agree on what commitment to one's children looks like? Of course not. Cultural values inform how parents and communities enact their commitment. The behavior associated with commitment to one's children does not look the same everywhere. Consider when it involves ensuring acceptance into the community through female genital mutilation or prohibiting a morbidly sick child access to medical care to ensure eternal salvation.

While culture groups may have a certain shared idea of what "right" commitment looks like, that cohesiveness can breakdown in times of crisis. Changing realities of life within a culture group have far reaching consequences on how the ideal ethical behaviors of that group are carried out and may, over time, change the underlying standards and values themselves. In the case of commitment to one's children, when faced with crisis, parents and communities are often confronted with ethical dilemmas to determine what is the "right" way to carry out their commitment to their children. How parents and communities prioritize the different values shaping that commitment informs their decisions on what to do with their children. The following examples explore situations involving children in crisis situations. Let's take a look at how the concept of commitment to children displays in each.

Unaccompanied Children from Central America[386]

In 2012, the United States started to see a dramatic increase in the number of unaccompanied minors entering the United States illegally from the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. In 2014 (fiscal year), the numbers were near 52,000. This unprecedented volume shocked people in the United States and overwhelmed the U.S. immigration system. During this time, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras were experiencing high levels of violence, instability, and poverty and lack of opportunity. To reach the United States, children had to travel via dangerous, life threatening routes to face uncertain futures upon arrival to their destination.

Educating children in war-torn Ukraine[387]

Education for children is a right, guaranteed under Ukrainian law. Both Ukrainian and Russian-backed rebel forces have commandeered school infrastructure for their use and destroyed it during the course of military action. Some of these schools were orphanages. School administrators, teachers, and parents alike have gone to great lengths to ensure continuity of learning, oftentimes at great risk and sacrifice.

Children as suicide bombers in Nigeria[388]

Jama'a Ahl as-Sunna Li-da'wa wa-al Jihad, commonly referred to as Boko Haram (Western education is forbidden), has been operating in and around Nigeria since the early 2000s. Around 2009, they instigated an insurgency, and their tactics shifted to escalated violence. Boko Haram's 2014 kidnapping of more than 270 Chibok school girls garnered the attention of the international community. Since 2014, there has been a troubling trend of using women and children as suicide bombers. The source of the children is varied. According to the Fund for Peace's research on the ground in Northern Nigeria, research and data do not support that all the children used as bombers are victims of kidnapping; rather it is more complex than that. Interviewers found that yes, some may have been abducted or coerced, forced to carry out this act. Some are old enough to join in the act willingly, as adherents to Boko Haram's message. Other older girls are "returned girls," those rescued from Boko Haram who have been raped and impregnated, deemed untouchable and socially marginalized by the recipient community. And then there are those children who are given to Boko Haram by their parents, either because of ideological affinity or out of desperation, an exchange of one life for the means to sustain others. The complex drivers of this phenomenon demand attention in order to design effective counter-measures to defeat it.

Think About It

> *In these examples, what does commitment to children look like? At the parent-level? At the community-level? At the national level? At the international level? When thinking about this, did you consider the community and parental response to the "returned girls" in Nigeria?*

What cultural values are at play? How do you see them changing? Consider how the crisis shapes parental decision-making and the actions of the various groups in the examples.

What ethical dilemmas are facing parents and communities in these examples? Consider some of the internal dialogues these parents and communities may have had.

What is considered "right" action? Consider your response to the parental action in the Boko Haram case. What are you thinking?

How can an enemy exploit cultural values, say commitment to one's children, to further their cause? Think about two or three cultural values you hold dear. Consider how an enemy could use these cultural values and your commitment to them to his advantage.

As a Marine, how does gaining a deeper understanding of the ethical constructs involved in a situation make you a more effective Marine? Consider problem framing and how that determines courses of action.

3.3 Culture General Conclusion

The next section introduces a variety of applied scenarios that put several culture general concepts and intercultural communication skills into action. They allow you to explore the interconnectedness and variability of the knowledge areas you just read about in a specific intercultural interaction. The scenarios are designed to transition between culture general and culture specific content and illustrate how key concepts can be applied to Marine operations in your assigned CCMD.

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[388] Patricia Taft and Kendall Lawrence, *Confronting the Unthinkable: Suicide Bombers in Nigeria*, February 2016, accessed 18 May 2016, http://library.fundforpeace.org/library/303011602-nigeriasuicidebombers.pdf.

4 Cross-Cultural Competencies Applied Scenarios

Before reading the following applied scenarios, please complete the following required readings:

- Mackenzie, Lauren (2014). Strategic enablers: How intercultural communication skills advance micro-level international security. *The Journal of Culture, Language and International Security*, 1 (1): 85-96.[2]
- Rasmussen, Louise J. & Sieck, Winston, R. (2012). Strategies for developing and practicing cross-cultural expertise in the military. Military Review, Mar-Apr: 71-80.

These readings can be found in the supplemental readings PDF, which was downloaded from MarineNet with this workbook.

4.1 Language Competence and Communication Competence

Background:

A large-scale earthquake has hit Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The Haitian government has reported more than 200,000 fatalities, with hundreds of thousands of survivors currently displaced. USSOUTHCOM has initiated Operation Unified Response. The U.S. military has secured airports and seaports to receive a large amount of incoming aid. You are a logistics officer assigned to Joint Task Force Haiti (JTF-H), and have been directed to assist the coordinated arrival of food and other provisions to the major pier in Port-au-Prince. A failed electric power system, loss of communication lines, and the destruction of main supply routes are hampering distribution efforts. Several ships have already been unloaded, but the one-way traffic pier is congested due to bottlenecked transportation and poor communication. Much-needed aid has been diverted.

Figure 4-1: Earthquake in Haiti, 2010. *Source: Wikipedia.*[389]

Critical Incident:

You are meeting with four other people, the Marine Embarkation Specialist, Major Rossi from Argentina, Captain Lagos from Chile, and Captain González from Mexico. Captain Lagos and Captain González have ships that are next in the queue and have been waiting for several hours for instructions to dock or have a causeway attached. Their relief is going to be sent to the Argentine Air Force Mobile Field Hospital, which is coordinated by Major Rossi. However, you have to give them instructions about what to do next, but ask them to wait several more hours.

Because the three representatives come from Spanish-speaking countries and you speak Spanish very well, you decide to conduct the meeting in Spanish. You greet them all as whole by saying, “Buenos días,

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señores" ("Good morning, gentlemen"). Then, you greet them individually in order of rank by saying, "¿Cómo estás tú hoy?" ("How are you today?").

Captain González abruptly asks, "Why is it taking you so long to pass our provisions?" You respond and explain, "As everyone knows, this port is not ready for all of these ships. I am sorry, Captain González, but your ship will not be able to pass through for another couple of hours." The room becomes quiet and you believe that the matter has been cleared.
The Marine Embarkation Specialist gives the instructions to dock in two hours. You ask if everyone understands their instructions and the Captains nod. The meeting is adjourned.

Within 30 minutes, you see the Mexican ship leave. When your embarkation specialist radios the Mexican ship to inquire why the ship has departed, they say they are taking the aid to the Dominican Republic where the port is clear and they are not treated with disrespect. You are confused as to why this happened.

Keeping in mind the distinction between language and communication, how might the appropriate interpretation of the interaction help explain the situation and minimize the potential for future misunderstanding?

Context Considerations:

It is important to emphasize that cross-cultural competence is concerned less with knowing how to speak a language than knowing how to communicate appropriately. Whereas linguistic competence is concerned with the ability to speak a language, communication competence is concerned with the ability to use a language effectively and appropriately in context. Language and communication resonate differently for people across communities and all age groups.

Spanish is a language whose forms and structures can express lower/higher power distances and the "formality" of a word can be crucial to a successful cultural interaction. Although the literal translation of this exchange appears quite simple, understanding the communicative element of the use of the pronouns tú/usted, the informal "you" ("tú") and the formal "you" ("usted") is an appropriate illustration of the cultural values of *respeto* and *confianza.*

Alternate Viewpoints / Elaboration of Concepts:

1. Being aware that "*usted*" exemplifies the concept of *respeto* present in daily interactions and relationships can decrease the likelihood of tension arising from misunderstandings. The *Code of Respeto* is in place as soon as you meet someone: it can be respecting another person's rights; acknowledging a person based on their age, rank, social, and/or economic standing; protocol; obedience to authority; speaking in well-mannered ways; and the avoidance of insulting another person.[390] *Respeto* also implies a power distance element indicative of class maintenance, creates a status difference that is based on implicit worth, and reinforces a contextual boundary to a relationship by imposing an implicitly formal communication environment.[391]
2. The use of "*tú*" exemplifies the concept of *confianza* or, in general terms, trust.[392] In *confianza*, you can ask for favors, express frankness, joke, and speak confidentially.[393] In low power distance relationships, both individuals can potentially express themselves more directly. In higher power distance relationships, only the person with higher status

can express him/herself directly. In this scenario, in your greetings, you used "tú" in your explanation which triggers *confianza*. However, *confianza* had not yet been established and was taken as a form of disrespect to his authority. The use of "tú" enforced the *lack of confianza* and a *lack of respeto* in your response.

3. Furthermore, *publicly* singling out *only* Captain González's ships in front of the other Captains made the interaction even more disrespectful from his perspective. In many Latin American cultures, "saving face" is an important practice to maintaining one's authority. Therefore, the use of "usted" and avoiding singling out the Captain's ships publicly, could have improved the quality of the interaction.

For Further Consideration:

The ability to understand a language does not necessarily mean you will be able to use it effectively and appropriately in conversation. The complex cultural interpretations of words are often lost in translation. Even a Marine who has taken years of Spanish language classes may be unprepared for the kind of conversation the scenario above demonstrates.

Respeto (respect) and *confianza* (trust) are dynamic, complex cultural concepts that are based on a system of meanings similar to codes of conduct. With an interpreter, it is unlikely this tension would have occurred. Communication is then the tool to effectively convey the intention and the codes. Consequently, Marines should not underestimate the power of context and relationships to influence the interpretation of a message in an intercultural interaction.

There are also variants of formal/informal linguistic structures of the Spanish language in different areas of Latin America. In general terms, the use of "tú"/"usted" is common in most of Mexico and Peru, the Antilles, and the Atlantic Colombian coast. The same can be seen in Chile; however, "usted" can be formal or informal. Nonetheless, there is another informal linguistic structure, the "voseo," that is commonly used in South America and Central America. "Vos" can have popular or rural usage in Bolivia, northern and southern Peru, Ecuador, parts of the Venezuelan Andes, a large part of Colombia, Panamá, and in eastern Cuba.

4.2 Cultural Values Displayed in Communication Behavior

Background:

You currently are assigned to Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF)-South to carry out anti-drug operations in Peru. You have been assigned to make liaison and ask permission to cross land inhabited by *Runa-*, indigenous people who speak Quechua.

Figure 4-2: Drying coca leaves in Bolivia.
Sources: UNODC.[394]

Critical Incident:

You and a detachment of Marines arrive at a rural *Runa* community. You must ask permission to traverse their farming land. You speak Spanish but not Quechua and have an interpreter, Joaquin. You are meeting with the head of the group and he greets you in Spanish. Therefore, you take his lead and continue to conduct the meeting in Spanish. The conversation diverges to questions about your home, family, and children.

The group head invites you to sit down, takes out a cloth, and spreads his coca leaves on it. He passes you a handful of leaves and says *Hallpakuy.* "Please chew," Joaquin interprets. At this point, you decline this invitation and do not accept the coca leaves. Your host chews his leaves and quietly continues the conversation. To build rapport, you inquire about his family history and ask him where his family is from. Forty minutes pass, at which time you ask for permission to cross his lands. He finishes chewing and gently discards the coca leaves. He responds, "It seems you are doing a good job, thank you for asking me permission" and says his goodbye.

The next day, you arrive only to be told you do not have permission to cross the land. You are very frustrated as you had spent the previous day attempting to build rapport with him, and had the impression that you had been granted permission.

Context Considerations:

Cultural difference often becomes noticeable in communication behavior. The incident you just read is impacted by expectations surrounding *hallpay,* or the coca-chewing ritual, which is based on the *cultural concepts of community* and *reciprocity.*

In Peru, many *Runa* partake in *hallpay*, or the act of coca chewing, which is a highly symbolic ritual of interaction and communication. When two people sit down, they traditionally both have coca leaves and partake in a quiet *sharing* and *reciprocal* exchange. This sharing can be as simple as talking about each other's day or agreeing to a social contract.

Keeping in mind the ways in which cultural values influence communication behavior, what are some possible explanations for the Runa leader's decision to not let you cross the land?

Alternate Viewpoints / Elaboration of Concepts:

1. In the past, many *Runa* rural communities have had problems with Spanish-speaking figures of authority. You conducted the meeting in Spanish because the head began the meeting in Spanish. Keep in mind, however, that the Spanish language can elicit

historic, colonial, tensions between power and authority. Therefore, speaking Spanish could have exacerbated these power dynamics. Taking the time to learn a greeting or survival phrases in Quechua would likely have been received very positively and increased the likelihood of rapport-building.

2. Coca chewing, or *hallpay*, is a display of cultural values in many highland *Runa* communities. Its meaning goes beyond simply "chewing" and reflects the *Runa*'s cultural values of reciprocity and community. Although it is acceptable to excuse yourself from the coca chewing ritual, the "rejection" of this ritual must done in a respectful manner, with an apology. Because the *Runa* daily life is based on the concept of reciprocity, proposing some sort of trade (for example, a labor exchange) would work to your advantage.
3. In the U.S., it is very common to ask "Where are you from?" and "Where is your family from?" to build rapport. However, in Peruvian culture, inquiring about home, family, and children is very different than an inquiry into the origins and ancestry of a person. This is considered a taboo in some indigenous cultures and may be taken offensively.

For Further Consideration:

Communication behavior is often a reflection of cultural values. The rejection of the coca leaf portrays a rejection of the *Runa*'s key cultural values of reciprocity and community. The act of turning down the coca leaves *without apologizing* would likely be viewed as offensive because it disregards these values.

Even when a communication interaction seems to be a successful communication interaction, most Peruvian cultures speak using *indirect communication*. This is the case for many Latin American countries. For example, the use of "maybe," or in this instance "You are doing a good job," does not necessarily mean "Yes, you have my permission." It is a form of politely, yet indirectly, saying "No." Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that directly-worded responses such as "You have my permission" or "Yes, you may cross the lands" are the kinds of phrases that would convey permission.

This does not solely apply to coca leaf chewing but can be in common social rituals such as *yerbamatte*-drinking, a communally shared caffeinated drink, in Argentina, or even sharing tobacco in many Latin American countries. Coca leaf chewing does not only take place in Peru but in many traditional Andean cultures such as Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Northwestern Argentina. *Mate de coca, or* coca tea, is widely used even outside the Andean region – in Northern Argentina, and its use has spread among all social classes.

4.3 Identity in Intercultural Interaction

Background:

A Category 5 hurricane has hit the western coast of Central America, causing widespread devastation in several heavily populated areas in Guatemala, and impacting parts of Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Local authorities estimate the current death toll at 8,000, with several million more people displaced and homeless.

Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South (COMARFORSOUTH), in response to a request from the government of Honduras, and at the direction of U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), is leading efforts to assist the affected population. You have been chosen as the Officer in Charge (OIC) for an advanced Party (ADVON), to assess the needs of the affected population and to coordinate the delivery of relief aid prior to the arrival of SPMGTF-South for a HADR mission.

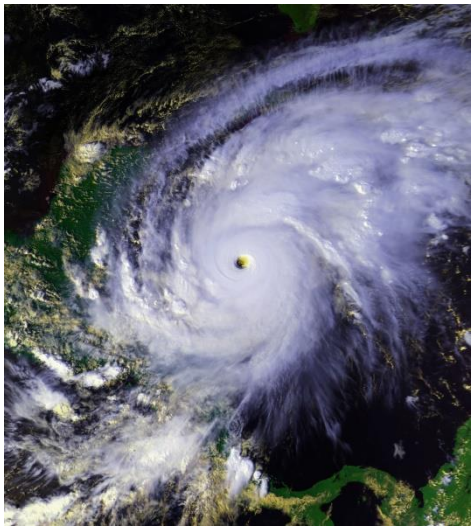

Figure 4-3: Hurricane Mitch, 1998.
Source: NOAA.[395]

Critical Incident:

You arrive at your meeting with Honduran military officials in Guatemala City, which is to be the distribution hub for relief supplies to the affected areas. Major Arellano and Captain Galván have been appointed by the Honduran Army as liaisons to you and your party for this mission. They arrive and express how grateful they are for the U.S. aid. They speak a standard Spanish that you can understand.

Major Arellano and Captain Galvan lead your party on a tour of one of the villages that was devastated by the hurricane in order to assess what supplies are needed most. You arrive at the makeshift camp that is being used to house families displaced by the storm. You see different groups of refugees and notice that one group – with distinctly different physical characteristics from the rest of the people in the area – has more provisions than everyone else. When they see your group approach, they come to you holding out their hands to you as if in need. They speak a language that sounds like Spanish, but you cannot understand them.

Major Arellano, whom you have gotten to know as a friendly and respectable man, begins scolding them in what you perceive to be a vicious tone, while also pushing them away. You are taken aback by his treatment of these people who already seem to be poverty-stricken and in need of aid. This sudden shift in behavior seemingly makes no sense. As Major Arellano is shooing them away, you discreetly ask Captain Galván, who is standing next to you, to explain what just happened. Captain Galván shrugs and says “Ah, esos son *indios*.” (“Oh, those are *Indians*”). You are surprised at this explanation, but follow the Captain into the camp.

Keeping in mind the ways in which identity can complicate intercultural interactions, what are some possible explanations for Major Arellano’s seemingly harsh behavior and Captain Galván’s tactless response?

Context Considerations:

Latin America is a rich mixture of European, African, and indigenous or Amerindian cultures that have lived there for 500 years. In most Spanish American countries, the majority of the populations are mestizos, people of mixed Amerindian and European ancestry. This mixture of nationalities and backgrounds impacts a person's sense of individual and community identity differently throughout Latin America. Nonetheless, an individual could identify more strongly with his or her indigenous background, while the prescribed or imposed "national identity" is aligned more closely with European identifiers.

Alternate Viewpoints / Elaboration of Concepts:

1. Although you observed Major Arellano to be a friendly and respectful individual, it is important to remember that people have many different forms of identities. The one they choose to emphasize in an interaction will depend on the situation in which they find themselves. Major Arellano's militaristic and "official" identity may lead him to behave in a certain way with a foreign military contingent. At the same time, as Major Arellano has a higher social status, he may behave differently towards someone from a lower class or a different ethnicity. You may consider such behavior to appear "uncharacteristic" of him, but the extreme circumstances of the context in which he found himself may have caused him to adjust his behavior to appropriately match what he believed was expected of him.
2. Identity contributes to the many roles we play in our lives and is always changing and evolving. Consider the possibility that in his interaction with the *indígenas*, Major Arellano could have been choosing to emphasize his role as an authority figure (as authority is perceived in the society of which he is a part). The term *indio(s)* is a derogatory slur towards *indígenas* that the Spanish used during colonialism. Discrimination is prevalent towards the *indígenas* by the middle and upper classes who regard many *indígenas* as "uneducated" or "unclean." The lighter skinned people – of more pronounced Spanish descent—are usually the elites of the upper class and in the higher ranks of the military.
3. Along with the various roles that stem from our identities come role expectations. Role expectations are sets of behavior and characteristics associated with particular situations. In Guatemala, there is a history of abuse of power by police and military forces against civilians. Thus, Major Arellano's behavior could stem from the role expectations of various identities. Some examples of these identities include: 1) Being a Major of the Guatemalan Army, or 2) Being a man of Spanish descent. In such a situation, softness could have possibly been perceived by Major Arellano's peers as damaging to his authority and masculinity, thus leading to him losing face, especially in front of a subordinate officer and international partner.

For Further Consideration:

Identity is commonly defined as a set of social expectations related to ourselves and others that is shaped by such factors as: profession, gender, race, social class, ethnicity, family, sexual orientation, religion, and language.

Language and linguistics can reflect class structures. Many of the people from the upper classes pronounce words more or less as in standard Spanish to reflect European descent or identification. Lower classes may speak in a Spanish that has few systematic modifications, may contain grammatical errors, and is greatly affected by very local accents.

It is also important to acknowledge that while various forms of identity may lead to specific role expectations and behaviors in one culture or society, they could manifest in a way that are similar or different in others. Although Major Arellano's behavior and Captain Galván's attitude may not be found in all of Latin America, it is most prevalent in countries that have had recent civil wars, guerrilla warfare, and dictatorships. This behavior could be witnessed in other Latin American countries where indigenous and military relationships are historically violent and tense. However, in Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Argentina, this encounter would be less likely to take place because of predominantly European demographics in those countries.

4.4 Power and Authority in Intercultural Interactions

Background:

You are sent on behalf of the SPMAGTF to conduct face-to-face partner nation coordination. First, you will be meeting with Major Marroquín of the Guatemalan's Army 2nd Brigade. The next day you will be meeting with Major Gillet of the Belize Defence Force. You are aware that the two countries have a historical territorial dispute and tensions are currently high.

However, to coordinate a successful exercise against drug trafficking and build partnerships, you must convince them to participate. The training is part of a multi-nation Central American exercise in Guatemala. The first phase will consist of AAV, HELO, MOUT, and Live-Fire Ranges. Other partner nations participating are Honduras and El Salvador.

Figure 4-4: UNITAS Amphibious 2015.
Source: SOUTHCOM.[396]

Critical Incident:

Upon arriving to Poptún, Guatemala, you are escorted into a holding facility at the Special Forces "Kaibiles" training center, and are introduced to Major Marroquín and a man in casual business attire who introduces himself as Mr. Posada. The Major initiates the discussion by asking how you are, how your day was, and about your travel. You respond in full and ask the Major about his day as you are aware that talking about your day, family, and activities is a key part to Latin American social interactions. The Major then switches to the exercise and planning: he asks that you explain the nature of the security exercises the U.S. will be conducting and what other partner nations will be taking part of the exercise.

You respond and explain that other nations include El Salvador, Honduras, and Belize. The conversation continues. At one point, the man leans in and says something in Spanish to the Major. The Major nods and says that unfortunately, they cannot include Belize in the exercise. You are taken aback as all documentation sent prior to the meeting stated all of this information and there was no issue mentioned beforehand.

You recognize that Mr. Posada, despite not being in the *official authority* position to decide what to do with the exercise, has the power to direct the Major. You politely ask the Major if you can try to reach an agreement to include Belize in the exercise. The Major looks at the representative and says "¿Usted está de acuerdo? ("Do you agree?"). The representative shakes his head.

What should you take into consideration in order to display your understanding of the power and authority structure(s) in Guatemala and try to include Belize in the exercise?

Considerations:

There are two concepts that will help make sense of this situation. The first is related to the distinction between power and authority, and the second is the concept of *respeto.*

The political culture in Guatemala has resulted in the power and authority structure not being readily transparent. While certain individuals may be in an "official'" position of authority, they may not actually

have the power to enforce any decision that they would like to take. Before implementing any decision, they must have permission from those with the actual power to complete the course of action or decision.

Respeto is a dynamic, complex cultural concept that is based on a system of meanings similar to a *code of conduct.* The *Code of Respeto* can be respecting another person's rights; acknowledging a person based on their age, rank, social, and/or economic standing; protocol; obedience to authority; speaking in well-mannered ways; and not injuring or insulting another person.[397] *Respeto* also implies a power distance element indicative of class maintenance, creates a status difference that is based on implicit worth, and reinforces a contextual boundary to a relationship by imposing an implicitly formal communication environment.[398] Therefore, the concept of *respeto* is present in daily interactions and relationships.

Keeping in mind the ways in which power and authority play out in Guatemalan political culture, what are some possible explanations for the behavior of the Guatemalan representatives?

Alternate Viewpoints / Elaboration of Concepts:

1. Authority does not always equal power. A person who holds authority does not always have the *means* to exercise power. Guatemala is a country that has deep, entrenched postcolonial feudal land distribution. As a result, the large landowners have a history of privilege in the country. Although a common stereotype, there *is* in fact a culture of favors and a history of corruption between private businesses and land-owners and government officials and military. Therefore, in this case, Mr. Posada's presence and involvement shows that he has influence in the "official" affairs.
2. Power is the ability to *control or influence* the behavior of individuals or groups of people. Authority is the legal or popularly granted *permission* to exercise power. Although you may not know it, Mr. Posada is a prominent land and business owner in east Guatemala. Therefore, in this interaction, he ultimately has the *power* to completely direct the Major, despite the fact that they are both in "official" positions of authority. It is important for Mr. Posada to remain respectful of the Major's official position of authority by allowing him to lead the discussion with the U.S. Major; however, it is likely that he will ultimately look to Mr. Posada. Through the use of *tú* (you in the informal personal pronoun) or *usted* (you in the formal personal pronoun) during a conversation, people are aware of their hierarchical position in a relationship where one person assumes the lower status position and the other assumes the higher status position.
3. If Mr. Posada were to blatantly call out orders or to take over the meeting, it could embarrass the Major in front of you and also disregard Guatemala's "formal" political structures. They are *aware* of this informal chain of command and recognize that it is out of *respeto* that this political dance takes place. This interaction emphasizes the "face-saving" efforts made by the Major: he does not necessarily want *you* to be aware of this power dynamic. To refuse or grant your request would admit their lack of authority and power – he would lose face in front of both you and the representative.

For Further Consideration:

Power and authority are displayed in intercultural interactions in a variety of ways across different cultures. While the political culture of Guatemala has resulted in a power structure where power rests with those who have the means and resources, others, such as government officials, are endowed with formal powers and are given official positions of authority.

In mapping the dynamics of power and authority in a society, it is important to distinguish between formal political structures—often created by an outside force, such as an occupying military—and local political organizations developed from within the cultural group. Likewise, in such situations, formal, or "modern" political structures can be animated by informal, "traditional" practices and norms reflecting existing social structures. For example, the presence of an unofficial authority is common to see in Latin America. Externally imposed power structures are often viewed as illegitimate by local peoples and can result in a "weak state" with little *effective* power or authority over local communities. External structures can be a perceived imposing foreign government or oppressor, but also non-governmental organizations such as the UN, USAID, or the Red Cross. Nonetheless, externally and internally imposed structures are not necessarily polarized as "good" or "bad."

Countries that experience protracted violent conflict, such as Mexico, have a power and authority structure that is fluid. The drug war in Mexico has resulted in a number of factions in positions of power and authority across different parts of the country. For example, south of the Texas border with Mexico, there are districts where the legitimate authority held by the Mexican police in no way translates into the power to control illegal movement of people and narcotics. At the same time, there are some civilian communities that are taking up arms to defend themselves; the government has recognized the self-defenders' vigilante forces, and is currently regularizing these to act as Rural Police. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that outright conflict can create power and authority structures that are continually evolving – thus requiring intercultural interactions that are flexible and sensitive to the fluid power dynamics.

4.5 Perspective Taking and Perception Checking

Background:

You have been tasked with the responsibility of organizing a multinational seminar where field-grade officers from Organization of American States (OAS) member countries will discuss lessons learned from the annual U.S.-South American Allied Exercise (UNITAS), for sea exercises and port training, and to plan the next UNITAS. You must coordinate with the countries and decide where the training will take place.

Figure 4-5: Territorial Loss of Bolivia 1867-1938.
Source: Library of Congress.[399]

Critical Incident:

During the opening remarks, you begin by announcing that Chile has offered to host the UNITAS exercise through the Port of Antofagasta. An officer from Bolivia rises from his chair and verbalizes a formal protest to you. The officer from Peru seconds Bolivia's protest. The Bolivian officer explains that Chile has no right to offer the port because it is currently being contested in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In response, the Chilean officer counter-protests the Bolivian officer and says that if they could not use this port then Bolivia should use its own port for the next UNITAS. You hear some murmurs ensue around the room. Both the Bolivian and Chilean officers appeared visibly angry during the exchange and remain so throughout the symposium.

How might perspective-taking allow you to diffuse the situation and avoid a potential conflict?

Context Considerations:

In the Pacific War (1879-1883), Chile grabbed large amounts of coastal Peruvian and Bolivian Territory. In 2008, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) granted Peru 21,000 km² out of the 38,000 km² disputed. In 2013, Bolivia filed to recover its only ocean access; in 2015, the ICJ ratified its jurisdiction to hear Bolivia's case. Both Chilean and Bolivian governments claim the land and thus, access to the Pacific Ocean. To illustrate the importance of this issue, Bolivia still actively maintains a navy, even though it has had no naval port since the Pacific War. The land disagreement between Chile and Bolivia has strained relations between the two countries. These tensions were exacerbated when Chilean Armed Forces mobilized over 5,500 troops to its border with Bolivia and Peru for an annual military exercise, "Hurricane 2015."

How could this piece of information inform your perspective on the situation and guide your response?

Alternate Viewpoints / Elaboration of Concepts:

1. Interacting with a foreign population requires taking into consideration different perspectives. Once you have resolved not to rush to judgment and you have your emotions and body language in check, try to put yourself in the other person's or group's shoes. How do you think they see the situation? What are their priorities and

constraints? While the way a country is officially introduced at a seminar may carry little significance to you, it may have a higher level of importance for others. What's at stake for the Chilean, Bolivian, and Peruvian officers is not just their official military careers and positions (after all, they are tasked with properly representing their countries), but personal pride and honor associated with their countries' past and present.

2. If you stop the Bolivian officer then and there, asking him not to interrupt the symposium but to take it with the Peruvian officer one on one afterwards, you may prevent the situation from escalating. However, doing so will undermine the legitimacy of the Bolivian officer's concern, putting him in an inferior, and probably humiliating, position in front of his peers. Alternatively, you could decide to let the officers voice their grievances. While doing so would give the officers a chance to vent, the situation could escalate out of control, and you could lose your standing as the person responsible for the symposium.
3. Another way to handle the situation professionally is to ask them politely and firmly to take their seats and focus on the symposium. At the end of the symposium, you could approach each officer individually, describe to them your understanding of their frustration, and ask them to clarify if what *you think* is going on is actually going on. Doing so would allow you to check your perception of the incident, revise your perception of it if need be, and acknowledge the legitimacy of the officers' concerns without losing control of the situation.

For Further Consideration:

While perspective-taking is an "internal" process that you can engage in any time you encounter uncertainty or misunderstanding, *perception-checking* calls for a greater level of caution as it requires *the solicitation of others' clarification* of what *you have observed*. Conventionally, perception-checking would work best in "low context" cultures that rely heavily on verbal, direct communication in order to make sense of a message. In contrast, "high context" communicators that value and rely on nonverbal cues and indirect messages may find perception-checking inappropriate because of the direct communication style that it involves. With that in mind, there is a spectrum of high/low context communication patterns. Individuals might adjust their preference of communication style depending on the context.

Most Latin American countries are found on the high-context end of the communication spectrum and, therefore, perception-checking could be considered rude. The process of perception-checking could also be perceived as both a form of weakness and/or a lack of authority since it requires soliciting clarification from others. Most Latin American officers come from a culture that places a great emphasis on masculinity, authority, and "*respeto*." Therefore, it may be better to practice "face-saving" by keeping a calm and composed exterior while perspective-taking. Venezuela, Colombia, and Mexico are on the higher-context end of the spectrum; for this reason, engaging in perception-checking with officers from these countries could be perceived as a form of weakness. This may be different for Cubans, who tend to prefer more low-context communication patterns; as such, these misunderstandings may be addressed through perception-checking, but in a more private context.

[389] Marco Domino, "Haiti Earthquake Building Damage," *Wikimedia Commons,* last accessed July 18, 2016, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Haiti_Earthquake_building_damage.jpg.

[390] Patricia Olivia Covarrubias, *Culture, Communication, and Cooperation: Interpersonal Relations and Pronomial Address in a Mexican Organization,* (Oxford, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 89.

[391] Ibid., 89.

[392] Ibid., 102.

[393] Ibid., 99.

[394] "Coca cultivation in Bolivia remains stable, UN report finds," *United Nations News Centre,* September 15, 2011, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39562#.V4kZ4hUrLIU.

[395] "Hurricane Mitch 1998," National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *Wikimedia Commons,* October 26, 1998, http://www.class.ngdc.noaa.gov/saa/products/welcome;jsessionid=5AE51CDB402FE1D887D5148D078148EBhttps://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hurricane_Mitch_1998_oct_26_2028Z.jpg.

[396] U.S. Marin Lance Cpl. Ricardo Davila, "An MV-22B Osprey from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 764, 4th Marin Air Wig, Marine Forces Reserve, conducts prepares to land during UNITAS Amphibious 2015 at Ilha do Governador, Brazil," in "US Marines train with partner nations in Brazil," *SOUTHCOM,* November 19, 2015, http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/US-Marines-train-with-partner-nations-in-Brazil.aspx.

[397] Patricia Olivia Covarrubias, *Culture, Communication, and Cooperation: Interpersonal Relations*," 89.

[398] Ibid.

[399] "Territorial Loss Map of Bolivia," *Library of Congress,* accessed July 18, 2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolivia#/media/File:Map_Bolivia_territorial_loss-en.svg.

5 Culture and Mission Planning

Good commanders know how to lead in combat. Great commanders possess the unique intuitive sense of how to transition very quickly from active, kinetic warfare distinguished by fire and maneuver to a more subtle kind of cultural warfare distinguished by the ability to win the war of will and perception. Rare are the leaders who can make the transition between these two disparate universes and lead and fight competently in both.[400]

Major General Robert H. Scales, USA (ret.))

Marines serve as America's forward-based and forward-deployed expeditionary force; we operate globally. Consequently, MAGTF planners consistently must plan operations, exercises, and engagements in countries across the world among myriad cultural groups. Through careful cultural analysis – *seeking cultural understanding prior to executing these global operations* – Marines can anticipate and plan for potential reactions of local populations and other cultural groups in foreign operating environments. The most important application of operational culture thus lies in its role in military planning.

Cultural factors should be assessed not only for the local population but also for all groups in the area of operations (AO) whose culture differs from our own. Insurgents, warring factions, and militias within an AO may have cultural beliefs and norms that differ from the local population. Host nation and multinational allied forces, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating within an AO will also undoubtedly hold their own varied cultural beliefs. Even the different services within a U.S. joint force bring their own institutional culture to operations. Understanding that different cultures exist and greatly impact mission accomplishment is essential to deliberate military planning.

Consequently, this section provides an overview of culture as an integral variable of MAGTF planning for operations among foreign cultural groups, whether allies, adversaries, or the civil component within an operating environment. The learning outcome is for the MAGTF operator to be able to better assess techniques for aligning culturally appropriate and mission-effective behavior across the following activities:

- when conducting deliberate planning and employing the *Green Cell*
- when planning and conducting interorganizational operations
- when establishing a command communication strategy

The MAGTF operator should recognize and understand the necessity to utilize a systematic cultural analysis as a critical input when conducting these military planning activities.

5.1 Culture and the Marine Corps Planning Process

Sources and Supplemental Readings for Section 4.1.

- *MCDP 5 Planning*
- *MCWP 3.33.5 Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*
- *MCWP 5-1 Marine Corps Planning Process*
- *MSTP Pamphlet 2-01.1 Red Cell / Green Cell*
- *Operational Culture for the Warfighter – Principles and Application*

Planning is the art and science of envisioning a desired future and laying out effective ways of bringing it about.[401]

5.1.1 Marine Corps Doctrinal Planning

The Marine Corps doctrinal approach to planning is described in *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 5, Planning* and *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 5-1, Marine Corps Planning Process*. This section will not cover service or joint planning activities, hierarchies, or processes in detail. Rather, the following outlines the importance of cultural understanding of the operational environment as a critical variable and essential input into successful planning by Marine Corps commanders and staffs. This section also contains a discussion of the *Green Cell* as a mechanism to ensure cultural understanding as a mission variable and civil considerations are integrated throughout the *Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP)*.

5.1.2 The Nature of Planning

The key to the Marine Corps' shared doctrinal understanding of planning is to view planning as "a learning process – thinking before doing."

We should think of planning as a learning process—as mental preparation which improves our understanding of a situation. In its simplest terms, planning is thinking before doing. Even if the plan is not executed precisely as envisioned—and few ever are—the process should result in a deeper situational awareness which improves future decision-making. We should thus think of planning as a learning activity that facilitates the exercise of judgment and not as merely a mechanical procedure.[402]

Part of the fundamental value of planning is that it can serve, at least in part, as a substitute for experience. Certainly, Marines lack firsthand, specific cultural experience when operating in unfamiliar environments among unfamiliar cultures. In situations in which Marines lack specific, firsthand experience, planning may be used to think through the problem systematically and devise a workable solution. Planning activities therefore:

- Result in deeper situational awareness which improves future decision-making

- Posture leaders to be ready to act when necessary or advantageous and not merely to react to developments
- Facilitate the exercise of judgment
- Generate tempo

Culture as a variable plays an important role in the Marine Corps planning approach for military operations in complex, foreign environments. A systematic examination of culture as an operational variable aids in developing this deeper situational awareness of an AO.

5.1.3 Marine Corps Planning Process

The *Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP)* is designed to promote understanding among the commander, staff, and subordinate commanders regarding the nature of a given problem and to generate potential solutions to this problem. The plans which result may be considered hypotheses that will be tested and refined as a result of execution and assessment.[403] The six steps of the MCPP are—

- ***Problem Framing*** enhances understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem and also identifies the purpose of the operation.
- ***COA Development*** produces options for accomplishing the mission in accordance with commander's intent.
- ***COA War Game*** examines and refines options in light of adversary capabilities and potential actions/reactions as well as operating environment characteristics such as weather, terrain, and culture.
- ***COA Comparison and Decision*** requires the commander review and decide how he will accomplish the mission.
- ***Orders Development*** translates the commander's decision into direction sufficient to guide implementation and initiative by subordinates.
- ***Transition*** may involve a wide range of briefs, drills, or rehearsals necessary to ensure a successful shift from planning to execution.

Figure 5-1: MCPP Process. *Source: MCWP 5-1.*[404]

The tenets of the MCPP—top-down planning, single-battle concept, and integrated planning— derive from the doctrine of maneuver warfare. These tenets guide the commander's use of his staff to plan and execute military operations.

- ***Top-Down Planning.*** Planning is a fundamental responsibility of command. The commander must not merely participate in planning, he must drive the process. His personal involvement and guidance are keys to planning. The commander uses planning to increase understanding of the environment and the problem to support his decision-making.

- ***Single-Battle Concept.*** Operations or events in one part of the battlespace often have profound and consequent effects on other areas and events; therefore, a commander must always view the battlespace as an indivisible entity. Commanders prepare for a single battle effort during planning primarily through their intent, which provides the larger context for subordinate units so they can exercise judgment and initiative when the unforeseen occurs, while remaining consistent with larger aims.
- ***Integrated Planning.*** Integrated planning is conducted to coordinate action toward a common purpose by all elements of the force. Integrated planning is facilitated by the assignment of personnel with an appropriate level of knowledge of their respective organization or activity to the operational planning team (OPT). The key to integrated planning is to involve the right personnel from the right organizations in the planning process as early as possible to consider all relevant factors, reduce omissions, and share information as broadly as possible.

Important to the MCPP, MAGTF planners and operators must consider the beliefs, norms, and values of the people in their operating environment, while never assuming that these cultural characteristics mirror those of MAGTF forces. Therefore, the cultural understanding of the population within an AO is a critical input when planning for successful MAGTF operations among foreign populations.

5.1.4 Understanding Culture as an Input to Marine Corps Planning

Culture is of unique importance in understanding an operational environment.[405]

To understand culture as an input into the MCPP – and the effects upon the resulting operations – Marine planners may require a working definition of culture as an operational tool. The U.S. military uses many definitions of culture. Two useful definitions for Marine Corps commanders and planners can be found in two relevant publications. *MCWP 3.33.5 Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies* defines culture as a web of meaning shared by members of a particular society or group within a society.[406] *Operational Culture for the Warfighter* defines culture as the shared world view and social structures of a group of people that influence a person's and a group's actions and choices.[407]

Regardless of the exact definition used, research and experience has resulted in some basic fundamental aspects of culture Marines should consider to successfully plan and execute military operations in complex, unfamiliar environments:

- Culture influences how people view their world.
- Culture is holistic.
- Culture is learned and shared.
- Culture is created by people and can and does change.[408]

A brief description of these fundamental aspects follows:

5.1.4.1 *Worldview*

The way that a culture influences how people view their world is referred to as their worldview. Many people believe they view their world accurately, in a logical, rational, and unbiased way. However, people filter what they see and experience according to their beliefs and worldview. Information and experiences that do not match what they believe to be true about the world are frequently reflected or distorted to fit the way they believe the world should work. More than any other factor, culture informs and influences that worldview – perceptions, understandings, and interpretations of events. Marines should recognize

that their interpretation of events may be quite different from how these events are interpreted by other people within the operating area. If Marines assume that locals will perceive actions the same as they do, they are likely to misjudge their reactions. The pattern of assuming others see events in the same way the U.S. does is referred to as *mirror-imaging*. Mirror-imaging is dangerous as it leads Marines into thinking that their assumptions about a problem and its solution are shared by the population and multinational partners, rather than employing perspective taking and looking at the problem from the population's perspective.[409]

5.1.4.2 *Holism*

Holism is based on the principle that all socio-cultural aspects of human life are interconnected. While interacting with other cultures, Marines may be tempted to say their problems "are all about (fill in the blank: tribalism, corruption, lack of work ethic, et cetera.)." In truth, every aspect of culture affects every other aspect in some way, even if indirectly. By acknowledging these interconnections, Marines can better assess how the local population might react to their presence and actions.[410]

5.1.4.3 *Culture is Learned and Shared*

The process of learning a culture is called socialization. Children learn culture as they grow within a society, but culture can be learned at any age. For example, Marines learn their own service culture later in life through basic or officer training courses which teach Marine culture on ethics and core values. Understanding that culture is learned and shared can offer an important operational and tactical opportunity. A Marine can learn about the local culture simply through interaction with and observation of the local populace within an operating area.[411]

5.1.4.4 *Culture Changes*

Large military presence and operations within a culture are often impetus for rapidly changing cultural norms in conflict areas. Since the arrival of a large military, often accompanied by the destruction of physical property and erosion of the local economy and security, is undoubtedly an enormous change for the local population, planners need to plan for the impact their operations will have upon the people and cultures in an area of operations.[412]

5.1.5 Assessing Cultural Situations

Culturally savvy Marines are a threat to our enemies.

General James N. Mattis, USMC

Military planners use various frameworks and tools to assess and analyze cultural variables during operational planning. There is no formal, doctrinal process to systematically capture all cultural data and to analyze the civil component of an operating area during the MCPP. While no single "checklist" exists to capture the myriad cultural data of an AO, Marine planners can leverage established methodologies to provide the commander with a systematic analysis of the cultural aspects and the civil component of the operational environment. Examples include:

- Civil Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (CIPB)
- Five Operational Culture Dimensions
- District Stability Framework (DSF)
- ASCOPE Across PMESII

Supplemental readings on these frameworks are available for details and further study.

- Civil Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (CIPB) – *CMO Planners Handbook*
- Five Operational Culture Dimensions - *Operational Culture for the Warfighter – Principles and Application*
- District Stability Framework (DSF) – *MSTP Pamphlet Red Cell/Green Cell, Appendix C*
- ASCOPE Across PMESII - *MCWP 3.33.5 Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*

Regardless of the frameworks and tools used to capture and synthesize data for the commander and fellow OPT planners, *MCWP 3.33.5* outlines some fundamental aspects of cultures that planners should understand while assessing any cultural situation.

5.1.5.1 *Patterns*

All human groups interact with their world and each other in some basic, predictable patterns. The particular details of these patterns may vary, but the underlying patterns will not. By identifying these patterns in an AO, Marine planners may better assess the cultural situation and the influence of their operations upon the local population.

5.1.5.2 *Physical Environment*

All cultures have a unique and interdependent connection with their physical surroundings. The physical environment (including climate, terrain, and resources) influences the people living in it by providing a range of possibilities within which they act. People shape their environment by the choices they make, creating a cultural landscape reflecting their social, cultural, economic and political attitudes. A careful reading of the cultural environment can provide useful information about the people who create it, use it, and live in it. A military presence in an AO will affect a local population and its use of the physical environment. Marine planners need to anticipate how their operations will impact local population use of their environment. Since use of the environment is cultural, these impacts may be significantly different than in another culture such as the U.S.

5.1.5.3 *Economy*

All cultures have specific systems for obtaining, producing, and distributing items people need to survive (food, water, shelter) or luxury or material items. This system, which does not necessary require money or banking, is called the economy of a culture. Formal and informal economies vary greatly among cultures. Also, different exchange methods and expectations from this exchange (money vs. relationship, for instance) of goods and services vary widely. Marine planners who do not assess the economic exchange expectations may find it difficult to anticipate people's behavior in an AO.

5.1.5.4 *Social Structure*

In all cultures, people hold differing positions of status and power often closely related to their roles in a group. The way that a group distinguishes among its members according to their roles, status, and power is reflected in its social structure. Positions within a social structure may depend on many factors such as age, gender, class, family name, tribal membership, ethnicity, religion, and rank. In conflict environments, different groups (tribal, ethnic, religious, et cetera) may each vie for power – often looking to outside militaries to support them.

5.1.5.5 *Identity*

A concept central to one's place in society is that of identity. Identity is a broad term used to describe how people conceive of themselves and are perceived by others. Identity shapes how people view themselves and the world. Understanding identity is complex because people have multiple identities. In times of conflict, people may choose to emphasize certain group identities, such as nationality or religion. At other times, different identities – such as one's profession or gender – may matter more. Both identity and social structure are extremely important concepts for Marine planners to understand in assessing a cultural environment. Both concepts affect people's allegiances and influence how groups will interpret and respond to U.S. actions.

5.1.5.6 *System for Determining Leaders*

In all cultures, people have a system that determines who leads the group and who makes decisions about its welfare. Marine planners should understand that both formal and informal leadership and governments can exist within any culture. Whether locals view leaders as legitimate or illegitimate, or effective or ineffective, should also be part of any cultural assessment of an AO. In most AOs, Marines will find that communities or groups are influenced by a variety of leaders, many of whom are not part of the government. Marine planners and operators need to accurately identify the various community leaders and develop strategies to engender the support of local power brokers who can influence the support of local populations.

5.1.5.7 *Belief Systems*

Cultures are characterized by a shared set of beliefs, values, norms, and symbols that unite a group. These beliefs come from many sources such as a person's background, family, education, religion, or history. Understanding the beliefs and values of a local population is critical for effective information operations. Failure to respect or understand beliefs of a local population can result in serious hostility towards foreign military operations.

5.1.5.8 *Religion*

Religion can be a powerful force in shaping beliefs. In many cultures, religion and religious leaders have significant influence over the local populations. Because religion is often an integral part of the values set of a local culture, Marine planners should conduct detailed analysis of religion and religious leaders within an AO.

5.1.6 Organizing to Integrate Cultural Considerations into the MCPP

As Marines prepare to integrate cultural considerations into the plan, it is important for them to recall the tenets of the *MCPP*: *top down planning, single battle concept*, and *integrated planning*.

Integrated planning is facilitated by organizing OPTs with the correct mix of knowledge and experience. Planning teams must develop an understanding of civilian aspects of the AO and the will of the population. There are many techniques to achieve this capability and each unit may approach this differently based on resources and available qualified personnel. The Green Cell is one technique to systematically analyze, synthesize, and present cultural information to the commander and fellow staff planners. (*The Green Cell will be discussed in detail in paragraph 4.2.7.)*

However, a dedicated Green Cell is not always an option for commanders with limited staff resources and expertise in analyzing cultural aspects of an operational environment. The Cultural Advisor (CULAD) is a

concept developed and employed in recent operations in Afghanistan. CULADs are the principle SMEs on culture and planning within their geographic region of expertise, serve as the cultural and language advisors to the commander. The CULAD is a special staff officer for the commander and a member of the planning staff. This advisor can often help explain to the commander what the advisor sees on the ground in the AO. A foreign area officer (FAO) or civil affairs (CA) Marine may be a good selection for a CULAD. These Marines can provide an understanding of the host nation and its specific regional, religious, and ethnic differences, and they may have foreign language skills. As a result, the commander can adjust operations in response to a culturally challenging environment.[413]

Overall, there are many options to task-organize staffs to incorporate culture into planning. While a Green Cell creates expertise in one part of the staff, those concerns are also important for other staff sections. Consequently, commanders must create staffs that are well-integrated across the warfighting functions. One danger in creating a "cultural cell" within the staff is that it will relegate cultural concerns to one staff element and inhibit integrating cultural concerns throughout the staff and the planning process. Regardless of the particular planning configuration, commanders and planners must find and use whatever cultural resources are available to the unit.

5.1.7 The Green Cell

The **Green Cell** is an ad hoc working group consisting of individuals with a diversity of education and experience capable of identifying and considering the perspective of the population, the host nation government, and other stakeholders within the operating environment. The Green Cell helps to inform the commander, as well as his staff and the OPT, creating a better understanding of the operating environment throughout the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP).[414]

5.1.7.1 *Purpose*

The Green Cell is a working group which assists the commander, staff, and the OPT in understanding the effect of the civil environment on both friendly and threat forces. The cell articulates the actions and dynamics of selected individuals, groups, tangible assets, and cultural factors in the civil environment which may significantly impact friendly operations. Like the Red Cell, the Green Cell is used throughout the entire planning process. The Green Cell focuses on developing a "civil environment model" for testing, improving, and modifying friendly courses of action to enhance the desired friendly effects on the civil environment, and to mitigate potential negative effects.

While the purpose of a Green Cell is to consider the population in order to promote a better understanding of the civil environment through the entire MCPP process, at a minimum the Green Cell provides for the independent will of the population. The Green Cell may also provide consideration for non-DOD entities, such as IGOs or NGOs.

5.1.7.2 *Staff Cognizance*

Whenever practicable, the Green Cell should fall under staff cognizance of the senior CA staff member in the command. Usually, CA staff members are resident at the MARFOR/MEF/MEB G-9. Less common, CA staff expertise may be resident on the MAGTF MSC G-3/S-3, or the Battalion/Squadron S-3 staff at these command echelons. When this expertise is not resident on command staffs, staff cognizance of the Green Cell should fall to a staff member in the Intelligence section, or even under the OPT leader. In any case, the Green Cell should have a clearly designated staff cognizance relationship in order to ensure effective advocacy for resourcing, staffing, and other issues.

5.1.7.3 *Staff Composition*

The cognizant staff officer, in close coordination with the OPT leader, will direct standup of the Green Cell and designate the Green Cell officer-in-charge (OIC). The OIC will direct and oversee the detailed work of the Green Cell, coordinate Green Cell efforts with other command and external planning organizations (Intelligence section, Red Cell, higher and adjacent Green Cell equivalent organizations, et cetera), and serve as the primary "voice" and "face" of the Green Cell to the commander and the OPT. The OIC can be a Foreign Area Officer, Regional Affairs Officer, or expert in a civil-military operations (CMO) functional area relevant to the command's battlespace (such as public works or governance). Above all, the Green Cell OIC should be an experienced MAGTF professional who can effectively synthesize, apply, and articulate relevant Green Cell input to the command planning process.

Other factors influencing cell composition may include:

- the security classification level of the planning evolution
- "high-demand, low-density" SME availability (in some cases, the Green Cell may "share" a SME with another planning organization (intelligence section, red cell, combat engineer section, et cetera)
- in the case of non-DOD / U.S. interagency organizations – the willingness of those organizations to participate in a military planning evolution

By the very nature of the civil environment, the Green Cell will often require "non-traditional" cell membership – to include interorganizational, coalition / host nation civil officials, cultural / academic SMEs, and in some cases members of the civil population in the battlespace. This "non-traditional" membership requires creative ways to physically integrate members into the cell and to integrate their intellectual input and products into the process. Additionally, non-DOD personnel may only be available on a limited or part-time basis. Despite these challenges, the Green Cell OIC should make the necessary effort to integrate "non-traditional" member expertise and input. This input is often critical to understanding the civil environment and the character of the population with whom Marine forces must interact.

5.1.7.4 *Contributions to the MCPP*

During deliberate planning with the MCPP, the chief contribution of the Green Cell usually occurs during the COA Wargame step. However, Green Cell input plays a role in each step of the MCPP.

5.1.7.4.1 Receipt of Mission

The Commander forms the Green Cell upon receipt of mission and prior to the problem framing step of the MCPP. The Green Cell will add to the Commander's and OPT's cultural understanding of the operating environment. In order to support the OPT, the Green Cell understands the OPT mission and tasks and is constructed to translate cultural information that is relevant to the overall OPT mission.

5.1.7.4.2 Problem Framing

During problem framing, a critical function of the Green Cell will be the development and approval of the Civil Environment Model concept. As early as possible in this step, the Green Cell OIC should brief his staff cognizant officer and the OPT leader / selected OPT members on the key influences that the cell intends to portray in the planning process. The key influences the cell portrays will determine the direction and

scope of Green Cell activities for the remainder of the process, and drive the commander, staff, and OPT to understand the civil environment and its effects on friendly plans and operations.

Other activities during this step include cell members gaining situational awareness, and providing civil environment input to the commander and OPT design dialogue. Green Cell members also assist in ensuring that aspects of the Civil Environment Model[415] are applied to the center of gravity analysis, suggested commander's intent, proposed commander's critical information requirements, assumptions, task analysis, and the other staff actions performed during the problem framing step. The Green Cell will also coordinate with the OPT to provide relevant input for the OPT *Problem Framing Brief.* This input should include a summary of significant aspects of the civil environment (individuals, groups, infrastructure, and belief sets / intangibles) as well as associated potential friendly planning considerations.

Green Cell Actions – Problem Framing

- Gain and develop situational awareness
- Ensure OPT integrates civil and cultural considerations into its understanding of the operational environment
- Participate in design dialogue and contribute to IPB
- Complete sources of conflict/resiliency study

5.1.7.4.3 COA Development

During COA Development, the OPT develops one or more options for how the mission and commander's intent might be accomplished. As options are developed, the Green Cell ensures that the OPT considers the civil environment. The cell assesses how friendly actions might affect the civil environment, provides the OPT with feedback on these effects, and suggests possible enhancement or mitigation measures that can be built into COAs. In addition, the Green Cell begins COA wargame preparation, and continues to refine the Civil Environment Model.

The Civil Environment Model can be used to provide specific recommendations to COA development. Examples include:

- *Identification of key influences*. Key influences (individuals, groups, tangible assets, and societal-cultural factors) become potential engagement targets for friendly leadership, units, and organizations – in particular, the command effects and assessment cells may identify key influences for further information collection and nonlethal shaping. Key influence engagements will often translate into COA tasks for subordinate elements.
- *Identification of grievances*. By identifying grievances of specific groups or influential leaders, the OPT can generate tasks to subordinate elements, along with intermediate objectives, that address grievances that need to be mitigated for friendly success. Likewise, grievances associated with threat actions can be used to a friendly advantage in a COA.
- *Identification of "windows of opportunity" and "windows of vulnerability."* Key events (holidays, elections, et cetera) may create opportunity or vulnerability for friendly force COAs, and influence the timing, scope, and location of friendly actions. Likewise, civil events may be windows of opportunity or vulnerability for threat forces.

In addition to aiding friendly COA development, the Green Cell may support the CMO or CA OPT representative (if one assigned) in developing the CMO portion of the synchronization matrix and the CMO staff estimate / supporting concepts, while providing CMO input to the OPT course of action brief. Lastly, the Green Cell provides input from the civil environment perspective to assist the commander in

the development of his COA wargame guidance and evaluation criteria, which may be given to the OPT at the conclusion of the COA development step.

5.1.7.4.4 COA Wargame

The COA wargame is used to improve the plan by examining and refining options (COAs) in relation to adversary capabilities and actions, as well as in relation to the physical and civil environments. In this step, the Green Cell "brings the civil environment to life" in the form of key influence wargame actions that describe how friendly COAs, threat actions, and the civil environment will affect one another.

The importance of a well-developed Civil Environment Model and the proper selection of key influences will become readily apparent during the COA wargame. If the model does not have sufficient detail – and/or if too many, too few, or the "wrong" key influences have been selected – then the ability of the Green Cell to assist the OPT in assessing, refining, and modifying friendly COAs will be degraded.

COA wargame can take many forms, from a quick tabletop discussion at the small unit level to a complex multi-day event at higher echelons. In most cases, a normal wargame "turn" consists of a friendly action portion (friendly force representatives brief actions along warfighting function or lines of operation [LOO]) which are then followed by a threat reaction portion (Red Cell briefs reactions in response to friendly actions). Following the Red Cell reaction, the Green Cell should brief civil environment reactions by key influences - a significant point is that civil environment reactions are in response to both the friendly action AND the threat reaction within that turn.

The "reaction" portions of the turn are then followed by a "counteraction" portion - based on the outcome of "action / reaction," the friendly initial action may be "modified" based on the results of the turn. Note that this modification is an improvement / enhancement to the initial friendly COA action and not an additional friendly "turn" within the wargame turn. Note also that, while the Red Cell may have created its own undesired effects in the civil environment due to its "reaction" during that turn, the Red Cell will not normally modify (counteract) the threat COA - it is worth discussing in the OPT, but the purpose of the COA wargame is not to "improve" the threat COA.

From a civil environment perspective, the Green Cell helps improve the friendly COA by realistic and well-developed Green Cell reactions portraying key influences, as well as by providing feedback to the OPT on opportunities / risks in the friendly COA and identification of 2nd and 3rd order effects of friendly actions that may impact the mission.

The Green Cell continues to work with the CMO and/or CA OPT representative in developing the CMO staff estimate, supporting concept, et cetera. The cell also provides relevant input to the CMO OPT representative for the COA wargame brief, with emphasis on advantages / disadvantages of COAs from a civil environment perspective.

5.1.7.4.5 COA Comparison and Decision

The Green Cell should be prepared to provide input to this process by explaining how the wargamed COA(s) affected the civil environment and key influences. If COAs are compared, the Green Cell will offer input about which COA was most effective (and which was least effective) in achieving friendly objectives / end states in the civil environment.

5.1.7.4.6 Orders Development

During this step, the decision could be made to stand down the Green Cell. This should be a mutual decision involving the staff cognizant officer and OPT leader. However, the Green Cell OIC may still serve as a resource to other staff sections as they develop their portion of the orders.

5.1.7.4.7 Transition

This step is a wide range of activities conducted to ensure a successful shift by the force from planning to execution of the plan. Similar to the orders development step, having the Green Cell OIC available during transition can greatly facilitate translating the products and rationale of planning to the assets that will execute the plan.

5.1.8 Conclusion

An effective Green Cell integrates diverse perspectives and skill sets into the planning process and produces appropriate products or dialogue that strengthen the overall planning effort. Throughout the planning process, it is imperative the Green Cell be in close communication with the OPT and staff.[416]

5.2 Culture and Interorganizational Operations

Sources and Supplemental Readings for Section 4.2

- *MCRP 3-36B MAGTF Interorganizational Coordination*
- *JP 3-08 Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations*
- *Commander, U.S. Army Special Forces Command, Special Forces Advisor Reference Book, Research Planning Inc., October 2001.*

In this age, I don't care how tactically or operationally brilliant you are, if you cannot create harmony – even vicious harmony – on the battlefield based on trust across service lines, across coalition and national lines, and across civilian/military lines, you need to go home, because your leadership is obsolete. We have got to have officers who can create harmony across all those lines.

General James Mattis, USMC (May 2010)

5.2.1 Interorganizational Operations Overview

The DOD conducts interorganizational coordination across a range of operations with each type of operation involving different communities of interests and structures. Each interorganizational partner brings its own culture, philosophy, goals, practices, expertise, and skills to the task of coordination. Additionally, each USG agency has different authorities which govern operations and determine the use of its resources. These factors can make planning and operating in an interorganizational environment very different for Marines practiced in only USMC or joint service operations. Key terms in discussing interorganizational operations, planning, and coordination include:

Interorganizational Coordination — *the interaction that occurs among elements of the DOD; engaged USG agencies; state, territorial, local, and tribal agencies; foreign military forces and government agencies; intergovernmental organizations; nongovernmental organizations; and the private sector*

Interagency — *of or pertaining to USG agencies and departments, including the Department of Defense*

Intergovernmental Organization — *an organization created by a formal agreement (e.g., a treaty) between two or more governments. It may be established on a global, regional, or functional basis for wide-ranging or narrowly defined purposes. Formed to protect and promote national interests shared by member states. Examples include the United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the African Union*

Nongovernmental Organization — *a private, self-governing, not-for-profit organization dedicated to alleviating human suffering; and/or promoting education, health care, economic development, environmental protection, human rights, and conflict resolution; and/or encouraging the establishment of democratic institutions and civil society*

Private Sector — *an umbrella term that may be applied in the United States and in foreign countries to any or all of the nonpublic or commercial individuals and businesses, specified nonprofit organizations, most of academia and other scholastic institutions, and selected nongovernmental organizations*[417]

Interorganizational coordination aids in:

- *Facilitating Unity of Effort.* Achieving national strategic objectives requires the effective and efficient use of diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments of national power supported by interorganizational coordination.
- *Achieving Common Objectives.* Successful interorganizational coordination enables the USG to build international and domestic support, conserve resources, and conduct coherent operations that more effectively and efficiently achieve common objectives.
- *Providing Common Understanding.* Interorganizational coordination is critical to understanding the roles and relationships of participating military commands and relevant stakeholders as well as their interests, equities, and insight into the challenges faced. Such common understandings will be essential to enable stakeholders to operate effectively in the same space, identifying opportunities for cooperation and avoiding unnecessary conflict.

The role of the Marine Corps is to be responsive and scalable, teaming with other services, interagency partners, and allies. Forecasts of the future security environment include threats and challenges; the solutions for which require a sustainable, integrated, whole-of-government application of national power and influence. Collaboration with the Marine Corps' interagency partners, NGOs, IGOs, and multinational partners – all with their own distinct cultures – before and during a crisis is a critical component to reduce risk and help ensure the Nation's strategic success.[418]

5.2.1.1 *Interorganizational Coordination Challenges*

Why is it often so difficult for USG agencies and other organizations to work together? The U.S. Army Special Forces Command addresses these difficulties:

Part of the answer is found in the fact that organizations, like nations, can have cultures that are very different from one another. Even though all parties may agree to the ends, the ways and the means may differ from agency to agency. Distinct organizational cultures can inhibit cooperation among agencies. Commonly an agency employs resources in ways that run counter to other agencies' cultures. What one agency views as "by the book," another may see as "slow and bureaucratic;" "fast and loose" to one is "flexible and responsive" to another.

The UN, international organizations, and nongovernmental and private volunteer organizations often do not understand the military or military organization; likewise the military often does not understand them. They often have exaggerated impressions of military capabilities, and little or no understanding of limitations and restrictions. On the other hand, the U.S. military personnel do not realize that those organizations do not have a real chain of command as they are used to. In dealing with NGOs in particular it can be very hard to know who to listen to. They generally lack one voice that could speak for all subordinates, sometimes even within a single NGO.[419]

Some of the interorganizational planning and operations challenges for MAGTAF planners include:

- Interagency partners operate under disparate authorities and often have very different institutional cultures, norms, and agendas than the Marine Corps.
- Often interagency operational doctrine is very broad and lacks a concept of operations.
- There is a limited comprehensive interagency planning frameworks and authorities.
- Demand for interagency expertise in operations, training, education, experimentation, and engagement generally outpaces supply.
- Interagency organizations have different planning and assessment practices than those recognized by the Marine Corps.
- Stability operations are core missions that have a high requirement for interagency integration. Currently, there is no Marine Corps doctrine for stability operations.
- Currently, there are limited methods to identify and track interagency experience within the Marine Corps.
- Interagency partners manning and resourcing levels are significantly lower than those of the Department of Defense.

5.2.1.2 *Policy*

United States law, policy, and the requirements of ongoing operations dictate that Marines integrate interorganizational capabilities into both service-led operations and operations in support of another service, partner, or ally. Effective integration requires an understanding of the authorities available to a MAGTF and its partners, as well as their application in a complex operational environment. Marines must understand responsibilities beyond their traditional role, to include the capabilities and limitations of partnering organizations. MAGTF planners must coordinate with partners from the early planning phase through all phases of an operation.

In 2010, the Commandant of the Marine Corps directed improvement in Marine Corps interagency interoperability. It was an effort that yielded the *United States Marine Corps Interagency Integration Strategy* — which became *Annex V* to the *Marine Corps Service Campaign Plan* — and involved both policy and capability development products. It articulates the following mission:

> *The Marine Corps will strengthen integration with select interagency organizations in order to effectively plan and execute operations across the range of military operations, both for current operations and to posture Marine Corps forces to remain the Nation's premier expeditionary force in readiness.*

DOD conducts interorganizational coordination across the range of military operations. Depending on the operation (e.g. domestic and/or foreign) coordination will occur within the federal USG; with state and/or local governments; with tribal authorities; with intergovernmental organizations; with nongovernmental organizations, and with the private sector. Interorganizational coordination enables unity of effort, allows for common objectives, and provides common understanding. Marines are increasingly deployed into complex and volatile situations where the separation between the warfighting and peace support is unclear. The requirement for pre-conflict and post-conflict stabilization has become central, such as the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

5.2.1.3 *Unified Action and Unity of Effort*

> ***Unified Action*** *– the synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort*
>
> ***Unity of Effort*** *– coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization, which is the product of successful unified action*[420]

The concepts of unified action and unity of effort are critical to interorganizational mission success. Marines conducting complex operations in the future security environment will continue to pursue unity of effort to achieve unified action objectives. Achieving effective interorganizational command and control in the military sense is extremely challenging because of the number of interorganizational entities participating as partners in the operating environment. Command and control is further complicated because many of these partners are not under the military chain of command. Other constructs for managing and influencing military and interorganizational partnered operations are required to achieve unified action and unity of effort. Military forces organize to achieve unity of command, a central principal of joint operations. Achieving unity of command is possible as all military forces work in a hierarchy in which one person is in charge of the overall military operation. Unity of effort requires dedication to establish personal relationships among military commanders, subordinates, and interorganizational counterparts. Commanders must understand the differing perspectives of organizations outside the DOD.

Unified action begins with national strategic direction from the President, and includes a wide scope of actions such as interorganizational coordination techniques, information sharing, collaborative planning, and the synchronization of military operations with the activities of all the civilian stakeholders. Interorganizational coordination depends on a spirit of cooperation, while military efforts depend on command and control and doctrine. However, some of the techniques, procedures, and systems of military command and control can facilitate unified action when adjusted to the dynamics of

interorganizational coordination and different organizational cultures. Marine leaders should work with civilian stakeholders with skill, tact, and persistence. Unified action is promoted through close, continuous coordination and cooperation, which are necessary to overcome confusion over objectives, inadequate structure or procedures, and bureaucratic and personnel limitations.

Achieving unity of effort requires the application of a comprehensive approach that includes coordination, consensus building, cooperation, collaboration, compromise, consultation, and deconfliction among all the stakeholders toward an objective. An inclusive approach of working closely with stakeholders is often more appropriate than a military command and control (C2) focused approach. Taking an authoritative, military approach may be counterproductive to effective interorganizational relationships, impede unified action, and compromise mission accomplishment. Gaining unity of effort is never settled and permanent; it takes constant effort to sustain interorganizational relationships. Important to achieving unified action and unity of effort is a *whole-of-government approach* by USG agencies:

Whole-of-Government Approach

Integrates the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of the USG to achieve unity of effort. Under unified action, a whole-of-government approach identifies combinations of the full range of available USG capabilities and resources that reinforce progress and create synergies. This approach facilitates all USG capabilities and resources being shared, leveraged, synchronized, and applied toward the strategic end state. In order to do this, interagency members must, to the greatest degree possible, resist seeing their resources (e.g., financial, diplomatic, military, development, intelligence, economic, law enforcement, consular, commerce) as belonging to a single agency, but rather as tools of USG power.[421]

5.2.1.4 *Command and Control for Unified Action*

Regardless of whether the operation is domestic or foreign, the U.S. military conducts joint operations commanded by a Joint Force Commander (JFC). A JFC may be a combatant commander, subordinate unified commander, or joint task force (JTF) commander authorized to exercise combatant command (command authority) or operational control over a joint force. During Phase 0, which is to shape the environment, GCCs conduct operations through their Service components. In other situations requiring the use of military force, GCCs create JTFs, which provide air, ground, and naval forces to the JTF commander. Most JTF commanders organize by function with air, ground, and naval components.

The MAGTF commander and his staff have expanded responsibilities when their operations occur alongside other organizational actors, especially in the area of problem understanding and operational deconfliction. These expanded responsibilities place increased demands on commanders and staffs at all levels that hold rigidly to military principles of chain of command and doctrine. Working with interorganizational partners requires negotiation skills, compromise, and patience. Commanders and staff officers interact with a larger number of personnel who are not under the formal military chain of command. Marines must understand the roles and responsibilities of these new partners, and work with them to ensure a common approach to problem framing and problem solving is developed.

5.2.2 Interorganizational Coordination

5.2.2.1 *Domestic Interagency Operations*

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) leads the unified national effort to secure America by preventing and deterring terrorist attacks and protecting against and responding to threats and hazards to the Nation. The Homeland Security Council is made up of the President, Vice President, Secretary of Homeland Security, Attorney General, SecDef, and other individuals designated by the President. For the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the USG relating to homeland security, the Homeland Security Council:

- Assesses the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States in the interest of homeland security and makes resulting recommendations to the President
- Oversees and reviews homeland security policies of the USG and makes resulting recommendations to the President
- Performs such other functions as the President may direct

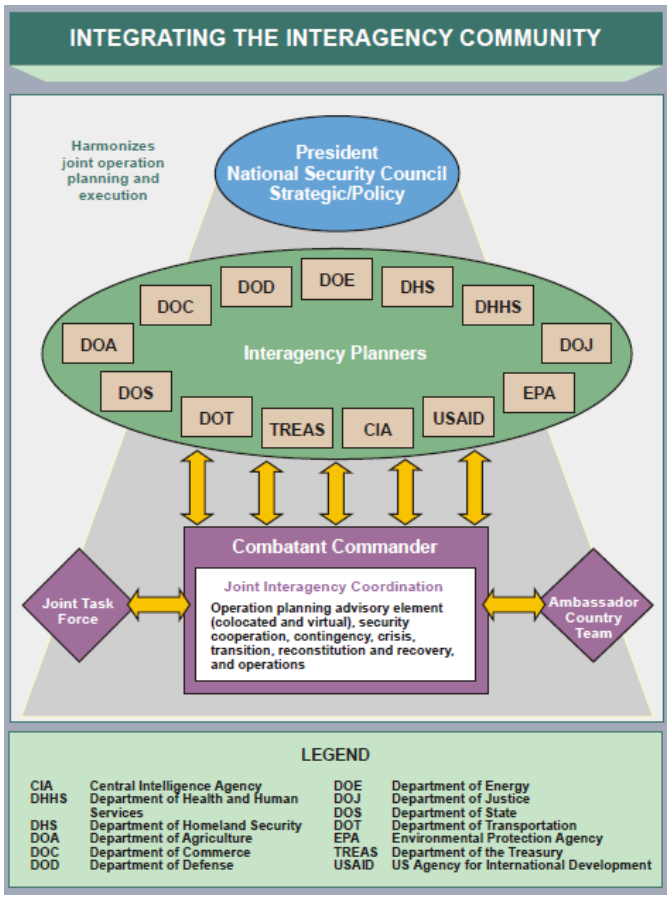

Figure 5-2: Integrating the Interagency Community.
Source: JP 3-08.[422]

Military operations inside the United States and its territories, though limited in some respects, fall into two mission areas—homeland defense and Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA). The two GCCs with major homeland defense and DSCA missions are USNORTHCOM and USPACOM as their AORs include the U.S. and its territories. The CJCS ensures that homeland defense and DSCA plans and operations are compatible with other military plans.

CJCS responsibilities relating to homeland defense and homeland security include:

- advising the President and SecDef on operational policies, responsibilities, and programs
- assisting the SecDef with implementing operational responses to threats or acts of terrorism
- translating SecDef guidance into operation orders to provide assistance to the primary agency

5.2.2.2 *Foreign Interagency Operations*

SecDef is a regular member of the National Security Council (NSC) and the NSC Principals Committee. The NSC System is the channel for the CJCS to discharge substantial statutory responsibilities as the principal military advisor to the President, SecDef, and the NSC. The CJCS acts as spokesperson for the combatant commanders, especially on their operational requirements. The CJCS also represents combatant command interests in the NSC System through direct communication with the combatant commanders

and their staffs. Combatant commanders and their staffs can coordinate most of their standing requirements with the Chief of Mission (COM) and their joint interagency coordination group (or equivalent organization).

5.2.2.2.1 The Country Team

The senior, U.S. bilateral coordinating and supervising representative body in the foreign country is known as the country team. The DOS provides the core staff of a country team and coordinates the participation of representatives of other USG agencies in the country. A country team is led by the COM, who is usually the ambassador or the *chargé d'affaires*. The bilateral COM has authority over all USG personnel in country except for those assigned to a combatant command, a USG multilateral mission, or an international governmental organization. The COM provides recommendations and considerations for crisis action planning directly to the GCC and JTF. While forces in the field under a GCC are exempt from the COM's statutory authority, the COM confers with the GCC regularly to coordinate U.S. military activities with the foreign policy direction being taken by the USG toward the host nation. The country team system provides the foundation for rapid interagency consultation and action on recommendations from the field and effective execution of U.S. programs and policies.

5.2.2.2.2 GCCs and the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG)

GCCs are augmented by representatives from other USG agencies to effectively bring all instruments of national power to theater, and to incorporate those instruments into regional strategies and into campaign and operation plans. GCCs use the joint interagency coordination group (JIACG) staff structure to facilitate interorganizational coordination. The JIACG is an interagency staff group that establishes regular, timely, and collaborative working relationships between civilian and military operational planners.

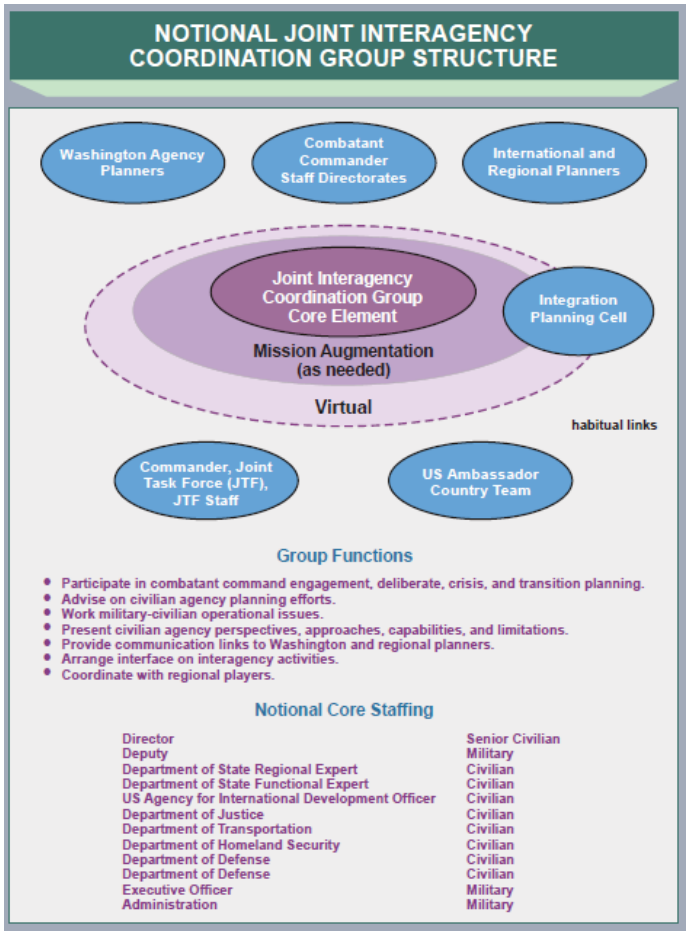

Figure 5-3: Notional Joint Interagency Coordination Group Structure. *Source: JP 3-08.*[423]

Composed of USG civilian and military experts tailored to meet the requirements of a supported GCC, the JIACG (or equivalent organizations) provides the capability to collaborate at the operational level with other USG civilian agencies and departments. JIACGs complement the interagency coordination that takes place at the strategic level through the DOD and the NSC and HSC systems. Members participate in deliberate planning and CAP, and provide links back to their parent civilian agencies to help synchronize JTF operations with the efforts of civilian USG agencies and departments.

JIACG is a common DOD term across combatant commands. The operational environment and differing missions for each combatant command

has resulted in unique organizations (e.g., interagency partnering directorate, interagency group), but with similar functions. If augmented with other partners such as IGOs, NGOs, and/or multinational representatives, the JIACG enhances the capability to collaborate and coordinate with those organizations and the private sector.

5.2.3 Interorganizational Planning

In the interorganizational operating environment, differences in organizational culture and priorities result in critical differences in planning. These organizational differences can pose challenges in ensuring the alignment of the various plans. One of the challenges associated with planning whole-of-government operations with other USG departments and agencies is ensuring consideration of a broader and somewhat unfamiliar set of planning approaches, organizational timelines, and different notions of mission success. For example, many nongovernmental and private volunteer organizations have limited budgets with long-term time horizons; they tend to see mission success in what is achievable and sustainable over the long term.

A lack of understanding by counterparts of how each of the participating organizations are structured – and how each organization approaches its responsibilities – can result in misunderstandings and communication failures. Organizations tend to have their own unique culture, which influences their decision-making processes and how they perceive and approach problems.

As discussed in Section 4.1, culture is a critical variable in planning operations among foreign populations in foreign operating environments. IGOs, NGOs, and multinational partners can bring important insight and expertise into the local culture not resident on MAGTF staffs. Critical to planning for and coordinating this insight is understanding information sharing challenges in interorganizational operations.

5.2.3.1 *Information Sharing*

All military operations are information intensive. Other USG agencies, IGOs, and NGOs on scene are an important source of information that may contribute to the success of the military operation or transition to a desired end state. However, the cultures of non-USG organizations, in particular, differ markedly from the military, and there may be a desire on their part to maintain a distance from military activities. By attempting to accommodate these concerns and sharing useful information and resources, Marine planners can help encourage active IGO and NGO cooperation in resolving the crisis.

Locally stationed IGO and NGO personnel are usually well-qualified individuals who understand the local culture and practices, and have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the people. Commanders at all levels should determine and provide guidance on what information needs to be shared with whom and when. DOD information should be appropriately secured, shared, and made available throughout the information life cycle to appropriate mission partners to the maximum extent allowed. Commanders and staffs need to recognize the criticality of the information-sharing function at the outset of complex operations, and not as an afterthought. The relief community is an important source of information regarding the following:

- historical perspective and insights into factors contributing to the situation at hand
- local cultural practices that will bear on the relationship of military forces with the populace
- local political structure, political aims of various parties, and the roles of key leaders
- security situation

- role and capabilities of the host nation government

This kind of information is frequently not available through military channels. Therefore, it is important to not compromise the position of the IGOs and impartiality of the NGOs, and to avoid the perception by their workers that their organizations are part of an intelligence-gathering mechanism. Handled improperly, the relief community can be alienated by a perception that, contrary to its philosophical ideals, it is considered no more than an intelligence source by the military.

Information sharing is critical to the efficient pursuit of unity of effort and a common purpose. A collaborative information environment (CIE) facilitates information sharing. Constructing a CIE is not primarily a technology issue—effective, low-cost network equipment and data management systems exist today, and more are being developed. Rather, the challenges are largely social, institutional, cultural, and organizational. These impediments can limit and shape the willingness of civilian and military personnel and organizations to openly cooperate and share information and capabilities.

The components of civil-military coordination consist of information and task sharing and collaborative planning — all of which depend on communications and management of data and information. The following issues, however, often complicate effective civilian-military coordination:

- a lack of understanding about the information culture of the affected nation
- suspicions regarding the balance between information sharing and intelligence gathering
- tensions between military needs for classification (secrecy) of data for operations security (OPSEC) and "need to know," versus the civilian need for transparency
- differences in the C2 style of military operations versus civilian activities
- the compatibility and interoperability of planning tools, processes, and civil-military organization cultures

The sharing of information is particularly critical because no single responding source — whether it is an NGO, IGO, assisting country government, or host government — can be the source of all of the required data and information. Making critical information widely available to multiple responding civilian and military elements not only reduces duplication of effort, but also enhances coordination and collaboration, and provides a common knowledge base so that critical information can be pooled, analyzed, compared, contrasted, validated, and reconciled. Civil-military collaboration networks need to be designed to dismantle traditional institutional stovepipes and facilitate the sharing of information among civilian and military organizations.

C2 structures should be equipped with the capability to access the Internet to ensure effective collaboration with the external mission participants (e.g., IGOs, NGOs). The JFC establishes interoperable and compatible communications by using available commercial telecommunications networks, military satellite channels, C2 radio and radar coverage, and conventional military communications systems to support the exchange of orders, directions, and information among all participants. Establishment of direct communications between commanders, interagency partners, NGOs, IGOs, indigenous populations and institutions (IPI), and the private sector facilitates effective coordination and decision-making. Information protection for non-secure communications must be implemented. Additionally, communications systems planning must consider the termination or transition of U.S. involvement and the transfer of responsibility to the UN, regional organizations, another military force, or civilian organizations.[424]

Terminology in information sharing during planning can also be a challenge in interorganizational operations. Among diplomacy, development, and defense communities, there are frequently important differences in the way that basic terms are used with regard to planning. For example, one agency's strategy is another agency's plan, or one agency's goal is another agency's intermediate objective. Marine planners should recognize and plan for misunderstandings in language and terminology during these operations.

5.2.4 Interorganizational Considerations for the MCPP

MAGTF commanders and staffs must continually consider how to involve relevant government agencies and other nonmilitary organizations in the planning process. They must also integrate and synchronize joint force actions with the operations of these agencies. In addition to real world planning events, interorganizational partners should be included in MAGTF planning through training and exercises.

The following subparagraphs provide important planning considerations for MAGTF commanders across the first three steps of the MCPP —*Problem Framing, COA Development*, and *COA War Game*. Failure to include partners early in planning prevents effective development of interorganizational teams and inhibits collaborative planning. Failures in collaboration often result in an "us-versus-them" mentality that could negatively impact interorganizational coordination

5.2.4.1 *Problem Framing*

During the Problem Framing step of the planning process, planners should consider the following:

Problem Framing – Interorganizational Considerations

- establish contact with the JTF commander and other component commanders
- establish preliminary contact with the country team
- identify all agencies and organizational partners and invite them to MAGTF planning sessions
- understand the role each agency and organizational partner plays in the operation
- identify the resources of each participant to increase collective effort and reduce duplication of effort
- identify the legal and fiscal authorities for the operation
- determine whether there is a status of forces agreement in effect. If not, should a status of forces agreement or some other type of international agreement be negotiated or implemented?
- determine whether interpreters are available
- identify constraints imposed by the host nation
- define the types of information that can and cannot be exchanged
- identify potential obstacles to the collective effort arising from conflicting departmental or agency priorities
- begin to identify range of funding sources available
- examine applicable national and international maritime laws
- conduct initial assessment
- form an inclusive planning team with wide representation to ensure linkage among agencies and with the host nation
- establish transition criteria with measures of effectiveness and measures of performance
- support the development of the strategic narrative
- ensure the analysis carefully considers the complex set of actors (public, private, military, and civilian personnel and organizations) with a range of motivations
- ensure the analysis includes the identification of transnational entities, such as the European Union for example[425]

5.2.4.2 *Course of Action Development*

During the COA Development step of the planning process, planners should consider the following:

COA Development – Interorganizational Considerations

- include interorganizational partners
- compromise as necessary with key partners to achieve unity of effort
- identify short-term actions to help build momentum within the framework of strategic goals
- plan solutions that are implementable by host nation organizations and sustainable over the long term
- consider battlespace options that preserve maritime freedom of action
- provide for displaced civilian and detainee management
- provide a platform for special operations forces afloat forward staging base, as required[426]

5.2.4.3 *Course of Action War Game*

During the COA War Game step of the planning process, planners should consider the following:

COA War Game – Interorganizational Considerations

- include White, Green, and Red cells during the War Game
- use existing NGO/IGO assessments and open source analysis tools
- ensure lethal effects do not create unmanageable consequences in subsequent phases
- ensure COAs include consideration for human rights traditionally guaranteed by the state or by international organizations empowered to do so
- ensure communications plan supports unity of effort
- examine plan for intelligence and information sharing with all partners
- Identify the logistical requirements (e.g. food and water, shelter, medical, transport, engineering) that must be provided to the host nation and to other partners
- assess COA against strategic narrative
- modify COA as needed in order to link to the strategic narrative[427]

During interorganizational planning, MAGTF partners may also be included in the *Orders Development* and *Transition* steps of the MCPP. If not however, these partner organizations should certainly be informed of MAGTF actions during these steps, as necessary, to facilitate *unified action* and *unity of effort* during interorganizational operations.

5.2.5 Interorganizational Coordination Resources and Enablers

5.2.5.1 *Assessment Models*

Various assessment frameworks/models have been developed by elements of the interorganizational community to assist in assessing status, evaluating progress, and measuring effectiveness of interorganizational activities in support of a range of domestic and international support activities. A few of these assessment frameworks / models have gained broad acceptance and are discussed in the following subparagraphs.

5.2.5.1.1 Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework

The purpose of the ICAF is to develop a commonly held understanding across relevant USG departments and agencies of the dynamics that drive and mitigate conflict within a country that informs U.S. policy and planning decisions. This framework may also include steps to establish a strategic baseline against which USG engagement can be evaluated. The ICAF is a process and a tool available for use by any USG agency to supplement interagency planning.

The ICAF draws on existing methodologies for assessing conflict that are currently in use by various USG agencies as well as international organizations and NGOs. The ICAF is not intended to duplicate existing independent analytical processes, such as those conducted within the intelligence community. Rather, it builds upon those and other analytical efforts to provide a common framework through which USG agencies can leverage and share the knowledge from their own assessments to establish a common interagency perspective.

The ICAF is distinct from early warning and other forecasting tools that identify countries at risk of instability or collapse and describe conditions that lead to outbreaks of instability or violent conflict. The ICAF builds upon this forecasting by assisting an interagency team in understanding why such conditions may exist and how to best engage to transform them. To do so, the ICAF draws on social science expertise to lay out a process by which an interagency team will identify societal and situational dynamics that are shown to increase or decrease the likelihood of violent conflict. In addition, an ICAF analysis provides a shared, strategic snapshot of the conflict against which future progress can be measured.

The ICAF can be used by the full range of USG agencies at any planning level. Conducting an ICAF might be an iterative process with initial results built upon as the USG engagement expands. For example, an ICAF done in Washington at the start of a crisis might be enhanced later by a more in-depth examination in-country. The level of detail into which the ICAF goes will depend upon the conflict and type of USG engagement. The two major components of the ICAF are the *conflict diagnosis* and the *segue into planning.*

1. *Conflict Diagnosis* - Using the conceptual framework for diagnosing a conflict (*Figure 5-3*), the interagency team will deliver a product that describes the context, core grievances and social/institutional resilience, conflict-drivers/mitigators, and opportunities for increasing or decreasing conflict.

For detailed information on when and how to use the ICAF see *JP-3.08 Appendix H*.

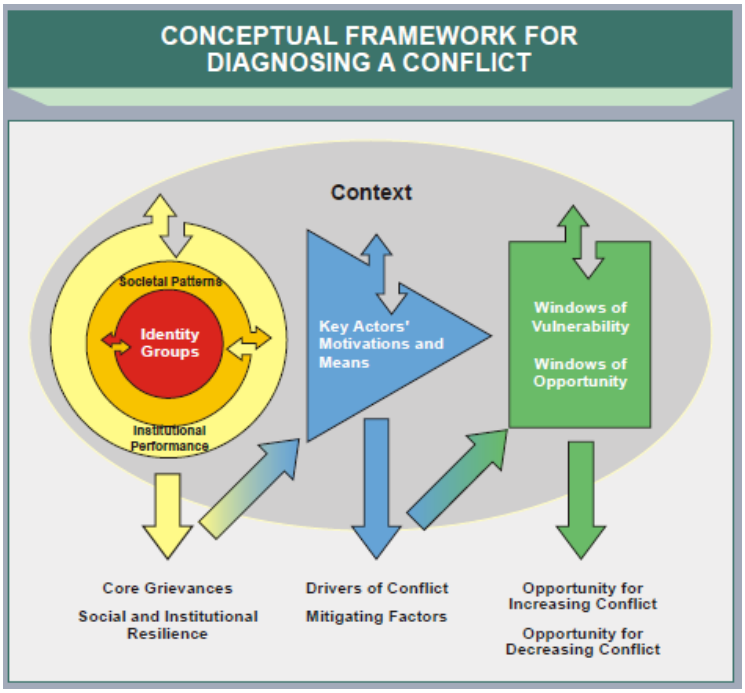

Figure 5-4:Conceptual Framework for Diagnosing a Conflict.
Source: JP3-08.[428]

2. *Segue into Planning* – An ICAF analysis should be part of the first step in the process of planning for conflict. It should inform the establishment of USG goals, design or reshaping of activities, implementation or revision of programs, or allocation of resources. The interagency planning process within which an ICAF analysis is performed determines who initiates and participates in an ICAF analysis, the time and place for conducting it, the type of product needed and how the product will be used, and the level of classification required.

When an ICAF is undertaken to support crisis response planning or contingency planning, the findings of the conflict diagnosis feed into situation analysis and policy formulation steps of the planning process. Specifically, the findings are inputs to the Principles of the USG Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation.

When an ICAF is undertaken to support interagency engagement or conflict prevention planning, after completing the diagnosis, the Interagency Conflict Assessment Teach (CAT) begins preplanning activities. During the segue into these types of planning, the ICAT maps existing diplomatic and programmatic activities against the prioritized lists of drivers of conflict and mitigating factors to identify gaps in current efforts as they relate to conflict dynamics, it is not intended as an evaluation of the overall impact or value of any program or initiative. The ICAT uses these findings as a basis for making recommendations to planners on potential entry points for USG activities.[429]

5.2.5.1.2 Stability Assessment Framework

The Stability Assessment Framework (SAF) methodology is an analytical, planning, and programming tool designed to support the civil affairs methodology and nonlethal targeting approaches during MAGTF operations. The SAF methodology helps Marine and civilian practitioners identify sources of instability and stability, design programs or activities that address those sources, and measure the effect of those programs or activities in fostering stability.

The SAF methodology is a holistic analytical, programming, and assessment tool that reflects lessons learned and best practices by focusing on understanding and integrating multiple perspectives into

planning and assessment. The SAF methodology has four basic components, nested within both the civil affairs methodology and the Marine Corps Planning Process. These components (civil preparation of the battlespace, analysis, design and monitoring, and evaluation) complement and enhance existing planning and execution processes used during civil affairs operations. To the maximum extent possible, all relevant actors and organizations in the battlespace should be encouraged to participate in the SAF process to create comprehensive efforts while conducting stability operations.[430]

5.2.5.1.3 Interagency Security Sector Assessment Framework

Published by USAID but recognized as guidance for the USG, the Interagency Security Sector Assessment Framework (ISSAF) provides a 10-step framework for security sector analysis. Because detailed assessments of a host nation's security, rule of law, and justice sectors are critical to understand and strengthen partner security sector capacity, the ISSAF is increasingly in use.[431]

5.2.5.1.4 Other Models

Other assessment models have been developed and used by various organizations: some based in systems design and others based in civil engineering or conflict simulation study.

Additional assessment models include:

- ASCOPE: area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events (characteristics of civil considerations during a military campaign)
- DIME: diplomatic, informational, military, and/or economic elements of national power
- PMESII: political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, and information are elements in system of systems thinking. The PMESII model describes the foundation and features of an enemy (or ally) state, can help determine the state's strengths and weaknesses, and help estimate the effects various actions will have on states across these areas.

5.2.6 Conclusion

MAGTF commanders and staffs have expanded responsibilities when their operations occur alongside other organizational actors with different organizational cultures, especially in problem framing and operational integration and deconfliction. These expanded responsibilities place increased demands on commanders and staffs at all levels that hold rigidly to military principles of chain of command and doctrine. Working with interorganizational partners requires negotiation skills, compromise, and patience. Some summary thoughts on operating in interagency and interorganizational environments are offered below:

Operating with other USG Agencies

Develop an Understanding of Other Agencies, Departments, and Organizations. Other Federal agencies and NGOs can see the ends, ways, and means differently than DOD. Interagency participants should understand that agencies are often guided by their unique cultures.

Establish Unifying Goals. Successful interagency operations require a consensus on a unifying goal. Reaching consensus on a unifying goal is the most important prerequisite for successful interagency operations. Consensus is frail and must be constantly nurtured; consensus is much more difficult if the goals are not clear or change over time. The objective is to ensure that everyone has a stake in the outcome.

Determine Mutual Needs. After developing an understanding of other agencies, determine the mutual needs between your unit and each of the other agencies. What things are important to both your unit and to other organizations?

Establish Functional Interdependence. Functional interdependence means that one organization relies upon another to attain the objective. This interdependence is the strongest and the most lasting potential bond between agencies, departments, and organizations. Resource interdependence is based on one organization providing certain capabilities that another organization lacks. This support includes such resources as manpower, logistics, training augmentation, communication, and money and establishes a framework for cooperation.

Consider Long-Term and Short-Term Objectives. Long- and short-term objectives should be considered separately. Participants should not lose sight of establishing a continuing relationship in deference to the issue at hand. Dominating on a short time issue can poison future relationships.

Operating with IGOs and NGOs

Remember that the members of IGOs and NGOs:

- are just as committed to their cause as you are to yours
- are extremely unlikely to accept subordinate or junior partner status with military
- have on-ground and in-country experience that may vastly exceed yours
- are essential in the transition to peace
- vary widely in willingness to work with the military
- usually stress impartiality, neutrality, and independence above all else
- are sometimes suspicious of the purpose of your activities
- may choose to work near you but not with you
- have no central command. There is no "CINCNGO." They only work for their organization, but will work out cooperative efforts on ground
- may perceive info gathering as an interrogation[432]

Ultimately, successful integration during interorganizational operations comes down to the commander and the staff, and the personal relationships they form with their counterparts in the AO. As *MCWP 3.33.5* notes:

The importance of the commander's personal involvement in building interorganizational trust, understanding, mutual respect, and friendships cannot be overstated. If organizational leaders do not set the appropriate tone and establish the necessary climate, the best whole-of-government plan will fail.[433]

5.3 Culture and Command Communication Strategy

Sources and Supplemental Readings for Section 4.3

- *MCWP 3.33.5 Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*
- *Commander's Handbook for Strategic Communication and Communication Strategy, Joint Warfighting Center, June 2010*
- *Joint Doctrine Note 2-13: Commander's Communication Synchronization, 16 April 2013*
- *FM 3-14 Inform and Influence Activities*

It's impossible to not communicate. Everything one does – even an attempt to do nothing – communicates something to somebody somewhere.[434]

5.3.1 Introduction

Communication is not merely a matter of what is said, but is also, perhaps primarily, a matter of what is done. For this reason, communication cannot be treated as a discrete function within military planning and operations. Rather, communication strategies must be fully integrated into planning and operations to ensure consistent alignment between the military's words and deeds. Simply put, the U.S. military must prove both more trustworthy and more credible than its enemies.[435] Marines' actions in their AO are the most powerful influence on credibility of their commander's message. All audiences (including local, regional, and threat) compare the friendly force's message with its actions. Consistency contributes to the success of friendly operations by building trust and credibility. Conversely, if actions and messages are inconsistent, friendly forces lose credibility. Loss of credibility makes Marine forces vulnerable to threat counter propaganda, and places our forces at a disadvantage.

In this age of interconnected global communication networks and social media platforms, everything a military force does sends a message. Strategies, policies, plans, and actual military operations communicate intent in ways that confirm or conflict with what we want the audience to believe. MAGTF actions in foreign operating environments send clear messages to many different groups. In our messaging among varied cultural groups, what's meant isn't always what's perceived, adding further complexity to the communication process. Regardless of actions taken or not taken, words spoken/written or left unsaid, and images disseminated or withheld, Marine forces on the ground are always communicating something. Whether or not the consequences or effects communicate what the MAGTF or JFC intended. Not synchronizing communication activities and operations results in conflicting messages, reduces credibility, directly impacts communication effectiveness, and allows the adversary to undermine our credibility and narrative.

Cultural awareness and analysis are important tools to assist MAGTF planners in culturally vetting and synchronizing operational words and images with actions when developing communication strategies to

support operations among unfamiliar cultures. Cultural analysis of all target audiences in an operating environment will increase the likelihood that "message sent is message received" in words and actions by these target audiences of different cultures.

5.3.2 Communication Strategy Terminology

Though the term "strategic" communication may connote developing communication strategies at the national strategic level, communication strategies apply at all levels of command across the range of military operations. A rifle platoon commander may have a communication strategy for engaging local audiences in his AO, just as the *National Security Strategy* may provide key strategic communications to global audiences at the national levels. Joint publications recognize the problem with the term "strategic" and explain thusly:

Using the term "strategic" communication naturally brings a mistaken intuition that it resides only at the strategic level. However, every level of command needs a strategy for coordinating and synchronizing themes, messages, images, and actions in support of SC-related objectives and ensuring the integrity and consistency of themes and messages to the lowest tactical level. This strategy must be coordinated with those above, below and adjacent in order to deliver a mutually supporting communication to the intended audiences. In order to eliminate the confusion caused by the currently broad SC definition, and intellectual baggage that comes with the term "strategic," we may want to consider using the term "Communication Strategy" for the overall construct, leaving specific terms intact that describe efforts at the different levels of war. For example, the U.S. Army uses the term "information engagement" at the tactical level, "commander's communication strategy" at the operational level, and "strategic communication" at the strategic level.

Commander's Handbook for SC and Communication Strategy,
Joint Warfighting Center 2010

Some doctrinal terminology and the concept of "nesting" communication strategies for consistency, credibility, and unity of effort within any operating environment are important to the concept of strategic communication.

Some key terms relevant to developing a command communication strategy include:

- *Strategic communication* — Focused USG efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power
- *Communication strategy* – A commander's strategy for coordinating and synchronizing themes, messages, images, and actions to support national level strategic communication-related objectives, and ensure the integrity and consistency of themes and messages to the lowest tactical level

- *Commander's communication synchronization* – A joint force commander's process for coordinating and synchronizing themes, messages, images, operations, and actions to support strategic communication-related objectives, and ensure the integrity and consistency of themes and messages to the lowest tactical level through the integration and synchronization of all relevant communication activities
- *Narrative* - enduring strategic communication with context, reason/motive, and goal/end state
- *Theme* – an overarching concept or intention, designed for broad application to achieve specific objectives
- *Message* – a narrowly focused communication directed at a specific audience to create a specific effect while supporting a theme
- *Target audience*– an individual or group selected for influence (JP 3-13)
- *Information environment* – the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information (JP 3-13)
- *Information operations* – the integrated employment, during military operations, of information-related capabilities in concert with other lines of operations to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision-making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own (JP 3-13)

5.3.2.1 *Nesting*

Themes provided from the strategic level will necessarily be very broad and typically do not change for the duration of the operation. Commanders must create their own themes that are appropriate for their level of command, are slow to change, achieve specific objectives, and support higher-level themes. To provide a consistent effect, the themes at each level must be nested underneath the themes of the next higher level, and all levels support the strategic themes. Messages are subordinate to themes and deliver precise information to a specific audience to create desired effects while supporting one or a number of themes. Messages are necessarily more dynamic, but must always support the themes. This construct is widely accepted and used throughout the force.

In sum, messages should support the themes at that level, the themes should support (or be nested under) the next higher-level themes, and themes at all levels should support strategic themes and the enduring national narrative. This ensures consistent communications to global audiences over time.

5.3.2.2 *Battle of the Narrative*

> *Commanders, staffs, and unified action partners construct a narrative to help understand and explain an operational environment, its problem, and solutions. Narratives are tied to actions in an operational environment. A narrative is a brief description of a commander's story used to visualize the effects the commander wants to achieve in an information environment to support and shape an operational environment.*[436]

For enduring conflicts, such as the previously named "Global War on Terrorism," there can be a continuing clash between the competing narratives of the protagonists – often referred to as the *Battle of the Narratives*. Succeeding in this battle is critical to both long-term strategy and operational success,

particularly in irregular warfare where gaining the support of the local populace is, by definition, a center of gravity.

The *Battle of the Narrative* is often thought of as a battle for the local audience to "buy" our "story" and push out the enemy's "story," such as "we are the good guys, we are here to help you and bring you a better quality of life." This perspective on the *Battle of the Narrative* is incorrect. The battle is not merely to push aside, defeat or gain superiority over the enemy's narrative; it is to completely supplant it. In fact, upon our winning the battle of the narrative, the enemy narrative doesn't just diminish in appeal or followership, it becomes irrelevant. The entire struggle is completely redefined in a different setting and purpose.

The *Battle of the Narrative* is a full-blown battle in the cognitive dimension of the information environment, just as traditional warfare is fought in the physical domains (air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace). One of the foundational struggles, in warfare in the physical domains, is to shape the environment such that the contest of arms will be fought on terms that are to your advantage. Likewise, a key component of the *Battle of the Narrative* is to succeed in establishing the reasons for and potential outcomes of the conflict, on terms favorable to your efforts. Theses "reasons" and "outcomes" must be well-grounded in the realities of the situation, including cultural, political, and social perspectives of the intended audiences.[437] Consequently, cultural awareness and analysis of target audiences is critical to constructing effective narratives and success in the *Battle of the Narrative*.

5.3.2.3 *Information Environment*

The *Battle of the Narrative* is fought in the *information environment.* This information environment is the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information. Understanding these communications systems is important because they influence international, national, regional, and local audiences. Adversaries within an operating environment often use information and disinformation to gain credibility and legitimacy with the population, while simultaneously undermining their opponents. Understanding how people communicate and who influences them on a daily basis is essential at all levels. For example, identifying local gathering places is important to understand or influence the spread of information, rumors, and gossip.

The information environment is made up of three dimensions: *physical, informational*, and *cognitive*. The cognitive dimension encompasses the mind of the decision-maker or specific audience, and is the dimension where people think, perceive, visualize, and decide. The informational dimension is the place where information is collected, processed, stored, disseminated, displayed, and protected with key components of the content and flow of information. The physical dimension is composed of systems, human beings (including decision-makers, leaders, and military forces), and supporting infrastructure that enable individuals and organizations to create effects and conduct operations across multiple domains.[438]

The information environment is a very active and competitive venue, especially when trying to create effects in the cognitive dimension. Adversaries are normally very motivated and aggressive in selling their agenda. Likewise, local cultural and social communication has quite a powerful influence on local populations. Therefore, if the joint force is to compete favorably in this environment, there must be synchronization of all communication efforts with operations.[439]

Dimension	*Description*
Cognitive dimension	• exists in the minds of human beings • consists of individual and collective consciousness • where information is used to develop perceptions and make decisions • significant characteristics include values, beliefs, perceptions, awareness, and decision-making
Informational dimension	• created by the interaction of the physical and cognitive dimensions • where information is collected, processed, and disseminated • significant characteristics are information content and flow
Physical dimension	• the tangible, real world • where the information environment overlaps with the physical world • consists of targetable individuals, organizations, information systems, and the physical networks that connect them • significant characteristics include terrain, weather, civilian information infrastructure, media, populace, and third party organizations

Cultural awareness, expertise, and analysis are critical to effectively operating in the modern information environment among foreign cultures.

5.3.3 Communication Strategy Principles

The following are some principles for developing a communication strategies across the range of military operations. The MAGTF planner should consider these principles when planning and supporting a command communication strategy.

5.3.3.1 *Leadership-Driven*

Leaders must decisively engage and drive the communication strategy process. To ensure integration of communication efforts, leaders should place communication at the core of everything they do. Successful Strategic Communication – integrating actions, words, and images – begins with clear leadership intent and guidance. Desired objectives and outcomes are then closely tied to major lines of operation outlined in the organization, command or joint campaign plan. The results are actions and words linked to the plan. Leaders also need to properly resource strategic communication at a priority comparable to other important areas such as logistics and intelligence.

5.3.3.2 *Credible*

Perception of truthfulness and respect between all parties. Credibility and consistency are the foundation of effective communication; they build and rely on perceptions of accuracy, truthfulness, and respect. Actions, images, and words must be integrated and coordinated internally and externally with no perceived inconsistencies between words and deeds or between policy and deeds. Strategic Communication also requires a professional force of properly trained, educated, and attentive communicators. Credibility also often entails communicating through others who may be viewed as more credible.

5.3.3.3 *Understanding*

Deep comprehension of attitudes, cultures, identities, behavior, history, perspectives and social systems. What we say, do, or show, may not be what others hear or see. An individual's experience, culture, and

knowledge provide the context shaping their perceptions and therefore their judgment of actions. We must understand that concepts of moral values are not absolute, but are relative to the individual's societal and cultural narrative. Audiences determine meaning by interpretation of our communication with them; thus what we say, do, or show, may not be what they hear or see. Acting without understanding our audiences can lead to critical misunderstandings with serious consequences.

5.3.3.4 *Dialogue*

Multi-faceted exchange of ideas to promote understanding and build relationships. Effective communication requires a multi-faceted dialogue among parties. It involves active listening, engagement, and the pursuit of mutual understanding, which leads to trust. Success depends upon building and leveraging relationships. Leaders should take advantage of these relationships to place U.S. policies and actions in context prior to operations or events. Successful development and implementation of communication strategy will seldom happen overnight; relationships take time to develop and require listening, respect for culture, and trust-building.

5.3.3.5 *Pervasive*

Every action, image, and word sends a message. Communication no longer has boundaries, in time or space. All players are communicators, wittingly or not. Everything the Joint Force says, does, or fails to do and say, has intended and unintended consequences. Every action, word, and image sends a message, and every team member is a messenger, from the 18-year-old rifleman to the commander. All communication can have strategic impact, and unintended audiences are unavoidable in the global information environment; therefore, leaders must think about possible "Nth" order communication results of their actions.

5.3.3.6 *Unity of Effort*

Integrated and coordinated, vertically and horizontally. Strategic Communication is a consistent, collaborative process that must be integrated vertically from strategic through tactical levels, and horizontally across stakeholders. Leaders coordinate and synchronize capabilities and instruments of power within their area of responsibility, areas of influence, and areas of interest to achieve desired outcomes. Recognizing that your agency/organization will not act alone, ideally, all those who may have an impact should be part of communication integration.

5.3.3.7 *Results-Based*

Actions to achieve specific outcomes in pursuit of a well-articulated end state. Strategic communication should be focused on achieving specific desired results in pursuit of a clearly defined end state. Communication processes, themes, targets, and engagement modes are derived from policy, strategic vision, campaign planning, and operational design. Strategic communication is not simply "another tool in the leader's toolbox," but must guide all an organization does and says; encompassing and harmonized with other functions for desired results.

5.3.3.8 *Responsive*

Right audience, right message, right time, and right place. Strategic Communication should focus on long-term end states or desired outcomes. Rapid and timely response to evolving conditions and crises is important as these may have strategic effects. Communication strategy must reach intended audiences through a customized message that is relevant to those audiences. Strategic Communication involves the broader discussion of aligning actions, images, and words to support policy, overarching strategic

objectives and the longer term big picture. Acting within adversaries' decision cycles is also key because tempo and adaptability count. Frequently there will be a limited window of opportunity for specific messages to achieve a desired result.

5.3.3.9 *Continuous*

Diligent ongoing research, analysis, planning, execution, and assessment that feeds planning and action. Strategic Communication is a continuous process of research and analysis, planning, execution, and assessment. Success in this process requires diligent and continual analysis and assessment feeding back into planning and action. Strategic Communication supports the organization's objectives by adapting as needed and as plans change. The Strategic Communication process should ideally operate at a faster tempo or rhythm than our adversaries.[440]

5.3.4 Synchronizing Communications

An effective command communication strategy requires synchronization of crucial themes, messages, and images with military operations to inform and influence selected audiences in support of operational goals. Conflict is a battle of wills, for those waging it, for those supporting the effort, and even for those who are undecided. The main effort for winning the battle of wills, particularly in operations characteristic of irregular warfare, will likely occur in and through the information environment. Because strategic communication may involve activities outside a MAGTF or JFC's control, coordination and *synchronization* of a nested communication strategy can be inherently complex.

Synchronized communication focuses on the behavior of publics that can have an impact on mission success. The commander's approach to synchronizing communication emphasizes early planning, training, and guidance that enables decentralized, yet responsive action that reflect strategic guidance. In developing a communication strategy planners must consider a public's awareness, motivation level, and ability and likeliness to act. The approach can create both positive and negative influences on publics' behavior. However, positive influence creates desired long-term effects, contributes to success across the lines of effort, and engenders lasting support. Therefore, research should be prioritized up front to support behavioral change in audiences intended for influence activities.

Research considerations should include, but are not limited to:

- local U.S. Embassy perspectives
- what information publics may have
- social norms
- how and when to intervene to effect genuine behavioral change
- how much change is actually possible
- how change will support force operations and\or activities

Likewise, communication activities should focus on important decision points of key publics to achieve the commander's objectives. The integration of operations, actions, words, and images is vital in this endeavor. Cultural awareness, expertise, and analysis of the local AO are critical to this research.[441]

An important first step is conducting sufficient research to understand the culture, language, dialect, means of communication, historical, social, religious, economic storylines, group dynamics, issues, grievances, world view, and other factors that resonate and affect how various publics get information, influence others, and are influenced.

Some resources for planners and staffs include:

- intelligence products,
- special operations forces area studies
- Red Team products
- USG sources such as the DOS country books
- other open-source material
- anthropological and sociological studies
- U.S. academic blogs and local in-country academic blogs
- U.S. and international think tanks

These resources can provide profiles of the salient features of a country or its people; analysis of the influences that lead different social, occupational, and ethnic groups of that country to act as they do; issues that elicit strong responses from the indigenous population; assessment of attitudes; identified vulnerabilities; and suggested ways and means to influence people. Careful consideration of what we say and do, and what that communicates to key publics, is fundamental. Academic sources of information such as existing field work from anthropology, linguistics, archeology, sociology, political science, history, and social psychology can help protect against bias, misperceptions, or misrepresentation.[442]

Adding to the staff or utilizing reachback to SMEs that understand these factors can significantly help planners in developing a synchronized communication strategy focused on the particular cultures within an AO.

Examples of such expertise include the following:

- anthropology or sociology (understanding the local culture)
- local marketing expertise (understanding points of individual influence/ interest in the local population and venues for communication)
- linguistics expertise (understanding linguistics nuances of local communication processes and products, translation of specific messages, and themes/messages to avoid)
- local and regional communication expertise (understanding the means, methods, relative impact of local and regional communication)
- diplomacy expertise (understanding intricacies of diplomatic efforts)
- U.S. embassy/DOS/USAID expertise (understanding local coordination requirements and methods between DOD and DOS ongoing foreign diplomacy)
- religious affairs expertise (may advise on various religious dynamics within the AO; or on occasion, may also be tasked with accomplishing certain liaison functions, particularly with indigenous religious leaders and faith-based NGOs operating in the AO)[443]

5.3.5 Information Operations and Information Related Capabilities

When conducting operations such as COIN, FHA, and HA/DR, the culture of the populations within an AO impact the mission more so than during “traditional” kinetic warfare between two adversaries. During such operations, information and expectations are related; skillful military forces in foreign AOs manage both. To limit discontent and build support, the affected government – and any U.S. forces assisting it – create and maintain a realistic set of expectations among the population, friendly military forces, and the international community. The key tools to accomplish this are information operations through the effective coordination and synchronization of information-related capabilities.

Information Operations — the integration, coordination, and synchronization of all actions taken in the information environment to affect a target audience's behavior in order to create an operational advantage for the commander.[444]

Information operations seek to generate effects against the decision making of individuals, a group, or perhaps elements of a population. In general, the integration of information-related capabilities is most effective when employed against precisely selected targets to achieve clearly defined objectives. Information-related capabilities generate effects that support achievement of the commander's objectives. There are many military capabilities that contribute to operations, and commanders and staffs should consider them during the planning process.

Some of these capabilities are:

- marine and key leader engagement
- civil-military operations
- cyberspace operations
- military deception
- electronic warfare
- operations security
- military information support operations
- physical attack
- physical security
- counterintelligence
- public affairs
- combat camera
- defense support to public diplomacy
- space operations
- special technical operations
- intelligence
- joint electromagnetic spectrum operations
- information assurance[445]

Marines execute information operations as an integral element of all MAGTF operations to enable and enhance the ability to conduct successful military actions. In their information operations, Marine forces must ensure that their deeds match their words and both are consistent with the broader narrative. They should also understand that any action has an information reaction. U.S forces should carefully consider that information reaction's impact on the many audiences involved in the conflict and on the sidelines. They should work actively to shape responses that further their ends. In particular, messages to different audiences must be consistent. In the global information environment, people in the AO can access the internet and satellite television to determine the messages U.S. forces are sending to the international community. Any perceived inconsistency reduces credibility and undermines operational efforts.[446]

The key to successful information operations is the commander's intent. The commander's intent provides a focus for the coordination and synchronization of information-related capabilities. Staffs and information operations planners must balance the use of different information-related capabilities, such as civil affairs operations, physical attack, and cyberspace operations; in order to communicate the intended message to the target audience with an understanding of possible 2nd and 3rd order effects on the rest of the global population.

When commanders and staffs use the various types of information capabilities, there is a tension between a broad message and engaging the population to achieve a two-way understanding. For example, in COIN operations, the U.S. is generally involved to aid host nations. As such, commanders and staffs integrate information capabilities with the host nation's message to tell the population the reason for U.S.

involvement. Commanders and staffs have to establish relationships, seek two-way understanding, and listen to what others think. Effective counterinsurgency normally requires an effective broad message and engaging the population in a dialogue. Commanders and staffs must find the right balance between using information capabilities to give a broad message versus creating a dialogue.

Commanders and staffs balance between controlling the message and allowing for complete freedom of messaging. Having a perfectly controlled message does not allow for real, timely communication with a population. Leaders must have some ability to actually engage a population and create a shared understanding. However, if representatives of a command have total freedom of message, the population is bombarded with contradictions and inconsistencies. Commanders and staffs must find the right balance to allow real communication, but also to ensure that the command has a coherent message.

5.3.5.1 *Public Affairs*

Public affairs and information operations are separate but related functions. Public affairs are *those public information, command information, and community engagement activities directed toward both the external and internal publics with interest in the Department of Defense (JP 3-61)*. External publics include allies, neutrals, and threats. When addressing external publics, opportunities for information overlap exist between public affairs and information operations. Information operations and public affairs personnel must maintain a common awareness of each other's support to operations to preclude the potential for information conflict. The information operations cell provides an excellent place to coordinate and deconflict information operations and public affairs activities that could result in information fratricide. Information fratricide is the result of employing information-related capabilities in a way that causes effects in the information environment that impede the conduct of friendly operations or adversely affect friendly forces (FM 3-13). Final coordination of public affairs and information operations must occur within the operations process.[447]

5.3.6 Engagement of the Population and Key Leaders

Engagements – whether by the individual Marine or commander with the population or with key leaders – are critical to any command's communication strategy. While critical to a comprehensive communication strategy, these engagements are difficult to synchronize and control. U.S. Army *FM 3-13* gives planners an idea of both the risks and rewards of engagements of local populations within an AO.

Communicating is difficult to predict and control. Pragmatic Soldier (Marine) and leader engagement accepts the unpredictable, often opaque, nature of communications and operates with realistic expectations of message control. Leaders guide what their units say and do. However, they cannot control how others interpret friendly force messages and actions. Soldiers and leaders understand that the cultures, biases, religions, education, and experiences of the individuals and groups observing them shape perceptions or interpretations. Given the prevalence of technology, Soldiers (Marines) and leaders cannot control who eventually receives communications beyond the intended receiver.

FM 3-13 continues with the concept of *pragmatism* in applying engagements within a communication strategy: Pragmatism reflects an expectation and acceptance of prudent risk. Effective leaders expect small setbacks. Nurturing relationships and building trusted networks sometimes entails interacting with

untrustworthy individuals. Leaders may even reveal those maligned actors who previously went undetected. Engagements with the local population and key leaders is a long-term, building effort assessed in terms of months or years, rather than in hours or days. Pragmatism acknowledges that the effects of Marine and leader engagement may not be immediately achievable or recognizable. Influencing audiences in an area of operations requires credibility. Building credibility, or trust, requires repeated and meaningful interaction. Recognizing any resulting change from these interactions requires familiarity or experience with the culture in which the engagement occurs.

As U.S. forces conduct engagements, they use discipline and professionalism in day-to-day interactions. Such interaction amplifies positive actions, counters enemy propaganda, and increases good will and support for the friendly mission. These engagements provide the most convincing venue for conveying positive information, assuaging fears, and refuting rumors, lies, and misinformation. Conducted with detailed preparation and planning, interactions often prove crucial in garnering local support for operations, providing an opportunity for persuasion, and reducing friction and mistrust.

5.3.6.1 *Cultural Awareness in Engagements*

*C*ultural awareness of engagement participants facilitates effective interactions that contribute to mission success. U.S. forces conduct engagements in the context of local customs, beliefs, and ways of communicating. Doing so builds understanding and cooperation while mitigating insensitivities and mistrust. Beyond familiarization with cultural practices, interacting with cultural awareness requires that Marines understand each population's communication style (direct versus indirect), their value of relationship over task, and their attitude toward time. A cultural support team facilitating an engagement illustrates how cultural awareness enhances engagements. Cultural support teams often consist of female Marines so teams can interact with indigenous women in regions where contact between an unrelated male and female is culturally unacceptable. Specially configured teams, such as cultural support teams, enable friendly forces to interact with a key demographic group while respecting cultural norms.

Indigenous communicators and leaders are sometimes the most effective at framing messages for populations in the AOs. In the past, commanders and staffs have developed messages unilaterally from their own cultural perspective and simply translated or interpreted them into the local languages or dialects. Invariably, the intended message got lost in translation or the message conflicted with local views or norms. Leveraging key leaders or actors from target audiences allows units to draw on their familiarity and credibility with those same selected audiences. It increases the likelihood that an interaction will inform or influence audiences as desired. Understandably, units balance the use of such individuals against security concerns. Units employ trained influence specialists (such as military information support and noncommissioned officers) and resident cultural experts (such as FAOs or political advisors at higher-level headquarters) to carefully craft messages for delivery through culturally and linguistically familiar means.[448]

5.3.6.2 *Commander Involvement*

Commanders are the key engagers because their position and authority often invest them with the greatest degree of credibility and access to undertake engagements. They do more than simply model appropriate actions. During stability operations in particular, commanders maximize interactions with the local populace through frequent Marine and leader engagement. Doing so enables commanders to:

- assess attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors first-hand
- sense shifts in perceptions, both positive and negative, and take appropriate action

- engender the trust and confidence of the local populace
- sense and map the social networks active in the area of operations
- confirm who the key leaders are, as well as trusted, credible voices, both formal and informal
- bolster confidence in and consensus behind effective and mission-supportive local leaders
- deliver messages
- assess how effectively units synchronize words, images, and actions and make needed refinements
- quickly address adversary information
- ensure Marines and subordinate leaders effectively engage the populace in their areas

Commanders foster a culture to achieve both their vision and their unit's mission. As commanders seek to shape a culture that exhibits and upholds the values of the U.S. military (among many other shared beliefs and practices), they shape a culture of engagement. This culture buoys Marines' confidence to engage many audiences, especially the populace in which they operate.

Commanders may foster a culture of engagement in multiple ways:

- guidance in the development of a robust communication strategy
- reporting and critical information requirements
- organization of the staff
- employment of public affairs and MISO for advice and assistance
- leading by example (such as actively conducting engagements)
- training requirements (cultural, language, and negotiation training)
- ensuring resources are provided to staff (manning, funds, and time)
- building partner capacity with unified action partners

Critical to fostering a culture of engagement is the commander's supplying subordinates with proper training and guidance. The commander's themes and messages and unit cultural and language training requirements provide subordinates with critical tools for engagements. Still, Marines and leaders will likely make mistakes as they navigate the values and norms of an unfamiliar culture. Commanders balance their response to cultural and linguistic missteps with the task to actively seek engagement with target audiences.[449]

5.3.7 Conclusion

Developing a command communication strategy is a critical capability for winning the *War of Ideas* at all levels of war across the range of military operations. A command's communication strategy should be integrated into all operations processes at the outset and synchronized throughout planning, execution, and assessment to ensure the greatest effect in the information environment. Synchronizing words and actions can help the JFC close the "say-do gap" and significantly increase the potential to influence intended audiences. Effectively employed communication strategies can potentially achieve national, theater-strategic, operational-level, and tactical objectives in a manner that lessens the requirement for combat in many situations.[450] Operational culture principles and cultural analysis of the information environment are critical factors in development of effective communication strategies for military operations in foreign AOs.

[400] U.S. Senate, *Army Transformation: Implications for the Future: Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee*, 8 (Washington D.C.: July 15, 2004) (Major General Robert H. Scales, USA (ret.)).

[401] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, *Planning*, MCDP 5 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Marine Corps, July 21,1997), 3.

[402] Ibid., 4.

[403] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Planning Process,* MCWP 5-1 (Washington, D.C.: August 24, 2010),1-6.

[404] Ibid.

[405] Headquarters Department of the Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies,* FM 3-24/ MCWP 3.33.5 (Washington, D.C.: Dec 15, 2014), vii.

[406] Ibid.,3.1.

[407] Paula Holmes-Ebber and Barak A. Salmoni, *Operational Culture for the Warfighter,* OCFW (Quantico, Virginia: Marine Corps University, 2008), 36.

[408] Ibid.

[409] Ibid., 13.

[410] Ibid., 42.

[411] Ibid., 104.

[412] Ibid., 213.

[413] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, MCWP 3.33.5, 3.5.

[414] U.S. Marine Corps, *MAGTAF Staff Training Program,* MSTP Pamphlet 2-0.1 (Quantico, Virginia: October 2011), Green-1.

[415] U.S. Marine Corps, *MAGTAF Civil-Military Operations,* MCTP 3-03A, (Quantico, VA: May 2, 2016), Appendix C.

[416] U.S. Marine Corps, MSTP Pamphlet 2-0.1., Green-3.

[417] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations,* JP 3-08 (Washington D.C.: June 24, 2011), II-26.

[418] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, *MAGTAF Interorganizational Coordination,* MCRP 3-36B (Washington D.C.: April 15, 2015), 1-1.

[419][419] U.S. Army Special Forces Command, *Special Forces Advisor Reference Book,* (October 2001), Ch. 3. https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2007/02/marine-advisors-can-marine-corps-better-prepare-them#sthash.1Xgdows7.dpuf.

[420] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States,* JP-1 (Washington D.C.: March 25, 2013),GL-12, GL-13.

[421] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-08, II-2**.**

[422] Ibid., D-2.

[423] Ibid., D-10.

[424] Ibid., II-26.

[425] U.S. Chiefs of Staff, MCRP 3-36B,2-10.

[426] Ibid., 2-10.

[427] Ibid., 2-10, 2-11.

[428] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP3-08, H-4.

[429] Ibid., Appendix H.

[430] MCRP 3.36B, 3-2.

[431] Ibid.

[432] U.S. Army Special, *Special Forces Advisor Reference,* Ch. 3.

[433] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, MCWP 3-33.5, 1-12.

[434] U.S. Joint Warfighting Center, *Commander's Handbook for Strategic Communication and Communication Strategy*, (Suffolk, VA: June 24, 2010), Appendix P.

[435] Ibid.
[436] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, MCWP 3-33.5, 7.
[437] U.S. Joint Warfighting Center, *Commander's Handbook*, II-13.
[438] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, MCWP 3-33.5, 2-8.
[439] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Commander's Communication Synchronization,* JDN2-13 (Washington D.C.: April 16, 2013), I-2.
[440] U.S. Joint Warfighting Center, *Commander's Handbook,* A-3.
[441] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Commander's Communication*),I-8.
[442] Ibid., III-14.
[443] Ibid., III-15.
[444] U.S. Marine Corps, *MAGTF Information Operations,*MCWP 3-40.4, (Washington D.C.: July 1, 2013), 1-1.
[445] Headquarters Department of the Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *Inform and Influence Activities,* FM 3-13 (Washington D.C.: January 25, 2013), 1-1.
[446] Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, MCWP 3.33.5, 1-21.
[447] Ibid., Ch. 7.
[448] Headquarters Department of the Army, FM 3-13, 8-2.
[449] Ibid., 8-4.
[450] U.S. Joint Warfighting Center, *Commander's Handbook,* V-8.

6 Impact of Culture on Military Operations: Operation Blast Furnace

This Case Study will use the five dimensions of culture to frame operational culture and its impacts on Operation Blast Furnace in Bolivia. The study explores Operation Blast Furnace's operational environment through the lenses of physical environment, economy, social structure, political structure, and belief systems in Bolivia at the time of the operation.

6.1 Operation Blast Furnace

In 1986, Paz Estenssoro, the president of Bolivia, requested the operation to help eradicate the growing amount of coca leaf and production of cocaine.[452] U.S. Commander in Chief, Southern Command, General John R. Galvin tasked the commander of the 193d Infantry Brigade, Major General James R. Taylor. His Colonel "Steve" Stephens of Task Force *Bayonet* was the chief planner and ground commander for most of the operation.[453] The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was the lead U.S. agency. [454]

Figure 6-1: Map of the Departments of Bolivia. *Source: University of Texas, arrows added by author.*[451]

In July 1986, the Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs authorized U.S. troops to provide temporary logistical support for National Police Corps find-and-destroy operations against coca-processing facilities.[455] These drug facilities were located in the Chapare province of the Cochabamba department, and the Beni and Santa Cruz departments (see Figure 6-1).[456]

Operation Blast Furnace planning began in the early summer of 1986. Operation Blast Furnace was a 60-day, joint U.S.-Bolivian counter-narcotics operation that involved six U.S. Black Hawk helicopters and 160 U.S. support personnel to

provide mobility to Bolivian police anti-drug forces.[457] The operation was originally planned to last from July to September; however, it was extended for an additional 60 days and ended in November of 1986.

The targets were mainly isolated labs that were processing the legal coca leaf into illegal cocaine products. Although the operation was focused on destroying the isolated, rural labs, the operation's strategy expanded to include villages. In one raid, the "DEA asserted its authority and targeted a peasant village that was known to have a concentration of traffickers."[458]The raid was on a populated local village, not an isolated lab, and the raiders were met by a "thoroughly aroused and angry village."[459]

6.2 Background on Coca

The use of the coca leaf was, and is, generally accepted in Bolivia and can be traced to pre-Inca times.[460] Coca chewing is as common in some parts of Bolivian society as tea or coffee breaks in other cultures.[461] Coca leaves are usually chewed or made into a hot drink.[462]

Figure 6-2: Coca plant. *Source: Wikipedia.*[463]

Because of the high-altitude environment of the Andes and the physiological stress of its cold temperature, scarce oxygen, and light, coca is heavily consumed by Andean communities. The leaf provides feelings of energy and clarity, and reduces hunger, thirst and fatigue.[464] In lower altitude communities, coca is chewed less for the physiological effects, but holds the same cultural importance as a 'medium of social interaction,' as it does in the highlands. [465]

The processing of coca leaf into cocaine has been a major security issue for the past three decades. The U.S. has continuously focused on decreasing the amount of cocaine coming into the U.S. by eliminating the supply of the drug. Combating narcotrafficking and its ripple-effects has been an important security focus of the United States since the 1980s. However, it has been a turbulent relationship: from 1980 to 1981, Bolivian-U.S. relations were suspended because of President General Garcia Meza's relationship with the drug trade.[466]

The history of U.S. involvement with counterdrug efforts in Bolivia began in August 1983 when President Hernán Siles Zuazo's (1982-1985) signed an agreement that committed his country to eliminate roughly one thousand acres of coca leaf within three years.[467] The agreement provided a basis for U.S. monetary support for Bolivian counterdrug efforts.[468] President Siles Zuazo also promised to pass legislation to fight the drug industry, but those efforts were unsuccessful and met with peasant resistance. Thereafter, the U.S. government threatened several times to cut off aid due to the lack of results of by President Zuazo. The failure of his counterdrug effort was attributed to weak laws intended to control markets, ineffectual eradication measures, and an inability to calm local growers.

The next president, Víctor Paz Estenssoro (1985-1989) had a stronger, strategic engagement with counterdrug efforts and actively pursued the U.S.-Bolivian agreement of 1983.[469] The eradication efforts directly affected thousands of indigenous coca growers and the labor unions. These groups exerted considerable influence. Therefore, Paz Estenssoro's administration negotiated, planned, and coordinated the counterdrug efforts with the Bolivian Workers Center (COB) and the peasant union federations. At first, Paz Estenssoro's efforts were successful. In time, however, the labor unions suspended the

eradication program, saying that there was a "lack of state compliance with the terms… for adequate development investment and individual farmer compensation."[470] Soon, relations were strained between the Bolivian government, the peasants, and their representative unions.

Paz Estenssoro's program, although underfinanced and unenthusiastically implemented, "set an important precedent in state-peasant relations in that it was the first demonstrated commitment by the Bolivian democratic government to implement solutions geared to reduce the raw material production for cocaine."[471]

6.3 Operational Environment – July-November 1986

This section summarizes the five dimensions of Operational Culture. Operational Environment contains a summary of the physical environment, economy, social structure, political structure, and the belief systems in Bolivia at the time of Operation Blast Furnace. This section, along with the required readings, contains information essential in analyzing the impact of culture on military operations.

6.3.1 Physical Environment

The physical environment can help you think about the different cultural behaviors in relation to the coca leaf in Bolivia. For example, Andean people living at higher and drier altitudes, consider coca leaf a crucial cultural element to their society. The higher and drier the land is, the less coca leaf will be grown there as it grows better in humid and wet conditions. The lower and wetter the terrain, the more coca leaf will be grown.

Bolivia is organized into nine departments: Pandro, La Paz, Beni, Oruro, Potosí, Tarija, Santa Cruz, Chuquisaca, and Cochabamba.[472] Operation Blast Furnace targeted cocaine labs in the Chapare province of the Cochabamba department, and the Beni and Santa Cruz departments.[473]

Figure 6-3: Coca Leaf Cultivation in the Chapare and Yungas. *Source: Wikipedia.*[474]

The Andes cover the eastern half of Bolivia and separate the country into three geographic zones. In the west there are the mountains and Altiplano, the semitropical Yungas and valleys of the eastern mountain slopes, and the tropical plains in the eastern lowland. Bolivia has three mountain ranges: the Cordillera Occidental is the western range with volcanoes and volcanic vents that run along the Peruvian and Chilean borders. The Cordillera Central is in the middle. The Cordillera Oriental is the eastern range and runs from Peru to Argentina. The Altiplano is the plateau in between both mountains.[475] The northern part of the Cordillera Oriental is a part of the Cordillera Real, which has snow-capped granite mountains that exceed more than 19,685 ft. The Cordillera Oriental has steep, almost inaccessible slopes with heavy rainfall and lush vegetation.[476]

Coca production took place, and still takes place, in two main areas: in the high-mountain terrain of the Yungas, and in the central lowland Chapare.[477] In 1986, there were 35,000 – 40,000 coca leaf producers just in the Yungas and Chapare.[478]

The Yungas forest region is in the northeastern side of the Cordillera Real. Yungas means "warm valleys" in Aymara. The Chapare is a rural province the size of New Jersey[479] in the Cochabamba department, and consists of valley rainforests that surround the Chapare River, a tributary to the Amazon River. The Chapare can be divided into three portions: the upper (piedmont and low hills), middle (alluvial plain), and the lower portion (floodplain).[480] The floodplains alongside the major rivers in the middle portion, such as the Chapare River area, have the best soil for agricultural production. Additionally, seasonal flooding is common and drainage is good.[481] Coca is more likely to grow at lower altitudes. Therefore, there is more harvest at lower altitudes.[482]

6.3.1.1 *Climate*

Bolivia is within the tropics, but has a variety of climatic conditions, from tropical (lowlands) to polar (in the high Andes).[484] Temperatures have little seasonal variation but depend on elevation.[485] In most places rainfall is heaviest in summer from November to March. Yearly rainfall tends to decrease from north to south. The dry period, or winter, takes place from April to September. Northern lowland areas, where the Chapare province is located, have a year-round tropical wet climate, high temperatures, high humidity, and heavy rainfall. The lowlands in the north have a dry winter that lasts from April to September.[486]

Figure 6-4: Chapare River. *Source: Daniela Zubieta, Wikipedia.*[483]

Depending on climate, coca leaf can be harvested two to six times per year. The most abundant harvest takes place after the March rains; it accounts for about half of the yearly harvest.[487] June, July, and November are the other harvesting periods; these occur during the South American winter and, later, when things are driest.[488] The wet and dry periods determine the growing and harvesting activities of coca growers.

6.3.2 Economy

Coca production has a complex economic history in Bolivia. The growing of coca leaves was legal in Bolivia. The processing of the coca leaves to cocaine paste and/or cocaine was, and is still, illicit.[489] Coca leaves were grown by indigenous peasants for traditional use and commerce.

Growing coca leaf for local use was legal and was a part of the formal economy. Coca leaf was heavily taxed, but producers or distributers evaded these taxes by simply steering clear of transportation checkpoints.[490] Therefore, the reliability of data on coca leaf harvests and how much was rendered into cocaine was low. Local officials maintain that actual production was much higher than published data.[491]

Bolivia faced economic hardships and political chaos during the 1980s. The country had a mix of civilian and military governments, and a long period of economic instability. In 1985, President Zuazo—facing an annual rate of hyperinflation of 60,000 percent—resigned before the end of his term.[492]

In the 1960s and 1970s, tin and natural gas were Bolivia's main exports. When inflation dropped, President Zuazo's succeeding President, Paz Estenssoro proposed a neoliberal New Economic Plan – President Estenssoro then moved to dismantle the state mining agency.[493] But the mining industry's privatization and shutdowns in the 1980s caused many miners to lose their jobs, move to agricultural areas, and become small-scale coca growers.[494] By the late 1980s, coca totaled more than 90 percent of agricultural

output in the Chapare province, mainly for export abroad. At this time, coca accounted for more than six percent of GDP.[495] By 1988, there were approximately 80,000 Bolivian coca leaf producers.[496] An additional 500,000 Bolivians earned money from drug production, trade, and trafficking.[497] The coca leaf and coca paste industry had a significant role in the national economy: coca revenues represented 75 percent of Bolivia's legal exports.[498] In comparison, in Peru and Colombia coca leaf and paste accounted for just 14 and 13 percent, respectively.[499]

The increase in coca cultivation was in part due to the fact that coca was an 'ideal' and appealing cash crop for the farmers. There were a variety of reasons why Bolivian farmers found coca leaf production appealing:[500]

- high rate of return in investment
- high-value per unit weight
- multiple harvests offered a continual income
- each crop required very little labor or capital investment
- product did not perish during transport.[501]

By the late 1980s, the cocaine industry began to boom. About this time it also became an international concern. In response to international pressure, President Paz Estenssoro put into effect two coca leaf eradication efforts, one in 1985 and the other at the end of 1987. The eradication efforts eliminated approximately 5,000 acres of coca leaf. The majority of the eradication took place in 1987; farmers were compensated $2,000 dollars for every 2.5 acres the government destroyed.[502] These eradication efforts, however, failed to reduce or decrease the amount of coca leaf and paste production in Bolivia. By 1988, Bolivia was producing 25-30 percent of the world's coca leaf and coca paste.[503]

Specific to the Yungas region, coca accounted for 35 percent of the country's agricultural production by the 1980s and was used mainly for local use in the Yungas. In the Chapare region, coca totaled more than 90 percent of agricultural output and was mainly for export abroad.[504] By 1988, 90 percent of the region's 300,000 farmers were involved in the growing, processing, or marketing of coca and coca paste.[505] As Kevin Healy states in 1986, "[c]ontrol over coca leaf production in Bolivia lies in the indigenous peasant producers who represent part of the Andean agrarian civilization dating back thousands of years."[506]As a result, indigenous peasant farmers were crucial to the coca leaf eradication efforts in Bolivia.

6.3.3 Social Structure

Bolivia's income inequality has consistently been the highest in Latin America and one of the highest in the world.[507] More than half of the total population is poor.[508]

6.3.3.1 *Class*

As it is elsewhere in Latin America, social structure is defined through the colonial social structure of class based on race and ethnicity. In this structure, the indigenous people were in the lower classes. The upper classes were mostly of Spanish descent. These upper classes were often responsible for denying the working classes the right to vote and be educated.[509]

Despite these colonial social structures, Bolivia stands out as a unique example of a Spanish colony that actually reversed and deconstructed the established class system and the *status quo*. After the Bolivian Revolution (1952), the Bolivian peasantry was relatively well-organized and combative: peasant communities and regions formed rural unions that gave people a political voice on the national stage.[510]

Issues associated with the "rightful" title to land (once managed by colonial haciendas) would remain a problem for the Bolivian state: the issue of land rights incited several peasant rebellions in the 1940s and 1950s.[511] This history of rural discontent fueled many years of distrust between the central government and the peasant farmers.

Just as society in Latin America can be seen through the structure of class, coca is also associated with class. The act of coca chewing is more common with indigenous people; it is less common among *mestizos*, people of mixed Spanish and Amerindian descent. Europeans seldom chew coca. Coca use is also more common in the working class and poorer areas of the population.[512] Coca chewing is more common in rural areas and small towns, particularly among middle-aged and older men.[513] Middle- and upper-class women refrain from chewing because they regard coca-chewing as having a "definite social stigma."[514]

6.3.3.2 *Ethnicity*

As is the case for much of Latin America, indigenous communities faced systematic repression and legislative hardships for centuries after the "Conquista" (the initial conquest by Europeans). The population during colonial times (and for many decades afterward) was comprised of small cadres of white Europeans, a larger, more diverse group of *mestizos* (people of mixed Amerindian and European descent); and a majority of Quechua or Aymara Indians.[515]

Traditionally, indigenous populations in Latin America live in more rural areas, where 72 percent of the population speak indigenous languages (compared to the 36 percent who live in urban areas and mostly speak Spanish).[516] Information regarding the distribution of Bolivia's indigenous population in the Chapare region is limited: Bolivia only conducted the first survey of living standards for its indigenous communities in 1994.[517]

Bolivia is the most "Andean" of the Andean countries.[518] Its Andean communities and roots have had a greater continuity compared to Peru and Colombia because of a lack of modernization and diversified economy.[519] The Quechua and Aymara predominantly reside in the highlands (67 percent) and valleys (60 percent).[520] Increasing demand in national and overseas markets for ritual and social coca consumption led to a rise in coca growing by newly migrated indigenous communities during the 1980s.[521] Most of the coca growers in the Chapare are Andean Quechua and Aymara whose families migrated from Oruro and Potosí after the mining industry was privatized in the 1980s.[522]

Andean culture can define and influence economic and social life of these coca growers. For example, there are set patterns of migration in Cochabamba and the Chapare that follow an ancient Andean strategy. The pattern of migration is based on an agricultural strategy that is widespread in the Andes where highlanders can access more foodstuffs for their family such as the warm weather crops (chili peppers, beans, and coca among others).[523] The ethnic groups use "verticality" to maintain access to resources from different altitudinal climatic zones.[524] Because of this, there is seasonal migration for wage laborers between the lowlands and highlands where the agricultural production cycles complement each other.[525]

Ethnicity remained the focus of much of national life in the 1980s. It was a continuing force in the social relations of individuals and communities. Ethnic identity – always somewhat fluid—became considerably more so following the changes of the 1952 Revolution. The ethnic hierarchy with whites at the pinnacle and the mass of Indians at the bottom continued, although the possibilities for those at the lower level to rise improved.[526]

The "identity" of coca growers is a frequent subject of debate; it has created divisions within Bolivian society.[527] Due to the more "recent" nature of the indigenous migration, conservative political forces in the region believe that their rights have been diminished as a result of government-sanctioned preferences shown to the Yurakare, Tsimane' and others who lived there before the coca boom.[528] Many non-indigenous elites perceive the indigenous growers as "militant peasants, even criminals, with no claim to 'true' indigenous identity."[529] The coca growers are often called in the urban press, *indios* (Indians), a racially derogatory term.[530]

These threats and perceptions of the coca growers, along with the more than 500 years of "traditional," class-related resentment and anger, have only strengthened their communities. Due to their history of belonging to a highly organized miners' union (a group comprising one of the most resilient political sectors of Bolivia), migrant, indigenous farmers have been able to mount a unified front against the central government: "(T)he coca growers identify themselves as brothers and sisters of a wider indigenous struggle."[531] Coca growers also affirm their identity through language; many "are Aymara and Quechua in their ethno-linguistic identity and heritage."[532] The coca growers even have Quechua-language radio stations, which can be used to facilitate a mobilization in the Chapare.[533]

6.3.4 Political Structure

6.3.4.1 *Political Organization*

After many years of military coups, Bolivia became a constitutionally democratic republic in 1982. Internally the main political structures that impacted the U.S. counternarcotics efforts were the relationships between the central government, the military, and the farmers.

In 1983, Bolivia created Rural Area Police Patrol Unit *(Unidad Móvil Policial para Areas Rurales, UMOPAR),* the first antinarcotics military unit, to confront the drug problem that police could no longer control. [534] However, the Bolivian military and police have never been completely separated. The national police have often called on the military for help controlling riots and civil protests. This has strained the relationship between the military and civilians, particularly indigenous groups, farmers, and workers who have led many protests.

6.3.4.2 *Power*

In the midst of a worsening economy (and following a string of revolts against the army and government), labor unions and left-wing political forces strengthened. When Paz Estenssoro of the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) was elected to the presidency, the military refused to let the MNR take office.[535] The MNR seized weapons and distributed them to workers, peasants, and middle class who enabled this rightfully elected president to assume power.[536]

In Bolivia, *sindicatos,* or unions, were (and are) important pressure institutions and have had an incredibly strong presence and impact on local, regional, and national politics since 1982.[537] Throughout the rural areas of Bolivia, the peasant union "is an organ of legitimate community self-government and vehicle of community development."[538] Since the early 1980s, left-leaning politics have been deeply rooted in Bolivian society – particularly within farm communities. Farmers and labor unions have a strong and organized presence on the political stage. The left-opposition criticized the government for making the peasantry receive the brunt of the blame for the cocaine production. The opposition also criticized the blatant hypocrisy pf the government when the media reported that a high-ranking leader of the MRN's ally party, the ADN, met with Roberto Suárez, Bolivia's best-known drug trafficker.[539] The union's position also defended the coca leaf's historical and traditional value: the social, Andean rituals revolving around the coca leaf have been in place since pre-colonial times.

The indigenous farmers organized the *Asociación Nacional de Productores de Coca* (ANAPCOCA) with representatives from the regions of La Paz, Santa Cruz, and Cochabamba. The organized farmers "stage(d) sit-ins in government facilities, hunger strikes, mass rallies, marches, and road blockades."[540] The road blockades sealed access points for weeks at a time.[541] The Bolivian coca growers had (and have) a high public profile and were (and are) very politically active.[542] In the 1950s, the coca growers were recognized as legitimate farm laborers and, in the 1980s, they joined a peasant-labor alliance under the national labor syndicate.[543]

During the 1980s, Bolivia coca leaf producers exerted non-violent pressure tactics within the legal bounds of the political system. This was different from what happened in Peru and Colombia, where coca leaf and coca paste producers sometimes formed alliances with armed guerrilla organizations[544] – such as the Maoist Shining Path (SP) in Peru and the Marxist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in Colombia.

6.3.5 Belief Systems

6.3.5.1 *Symbols and Communication*

Coca is an "integral part of the lives of Quechua- and Aymara-speaking people in Peru and Bolivia, where it serves as a powerful symbol of *indigenous* cultural identity."[545] Coca leaf is used as a stimulant, but also plays a role in religious and social rituals performed by millions of people in the Andes and Amazonia.[546] *Hallpay*, or coca chewing, is an essential pastime enjoyed by adults: "an invitation to chew is an invitation to convivial social intercourse."[547]

This social interaction can be between friends who meet to chat, by parties sealing an important long-term contract (such as a marriage or communal responsibility), by laborers taking a break from working the field, or – if a coca chewer is alone – a chance to meditate.[548] Adults chew coca approximately five times a day. Social rituals, and etiquette, associated with chewing coca vary by region.[549] The coca chewers carry bundles of coca leaves, or *k'intus*, which are offered based on social ranking, starting with the person who has the highest social status.[550]

6.3.5.2 *Religious Beliefs*

In order to understand the symbolic importance of coca, it is important to grasp the basics of religious ideology within Andean communities. In Andean ideology, the Earth is alive and has a female identity: usually referred to as *Pacha Mama (*or *Santa Tira).*[551]

Andean people have "emotional, cognitive, and moral bonds" with Pacha Mama, sacred places, and the *ayllu*, or the community and/or old grandfathers.[552] During the *hallpay* ritual, the individual blows over the *k'intu* and invokes these three elements. The *ayllu* "is the basic unit of Andean social organization, [and] occurs in many different forms throughout the Andes."[553] An *ayllu* is when a *runa*, or Quechua for '"human being," builds a house on sacred places. An *ayllu* can only exist when there is a union of the Earth, the people, and the place. Therefore, coca leaves are a symbol of the social and religious identity of the Andean people.

6.4 Supplemental Readings

Before continuing the case study in the workbook, please complete the following readings:

- Catherine J. Allen, "Coca and Cultural Identity in Andean Communities," in *Report 23Coca and Cocaine: Effects on People and Policy in Latin America*. Cultural Survival, Inc. and Cornell University, 1985: 35-48. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABI435.pdf**.**
- John T. Fishel, Lieutenant Colonel, USAR, "Developing A Drug War Strategy, Lessons Learned from OPERATION BLAST FURNACE," *Military Review,* June 1991, 61-69. http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p124201coll1/id/489.
- Kevin Healy, "The Boom within the Crisis: Some Recent Effects of Foreign Cocaine Markets on Bolivian Rural Society and Economy," in *Report 23 Coca and Cocaine: Effects on People and Policy in Latin America*. Cultural Survival, Inc. and Cornell University, 1985: 101-125. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABI435.pdf.
- William W. Mendel, "Counterdrug Strategy - Illusive Victory: From Blast Furnace to Green Sweep", U.S. Army's Combined Arms Center, December 1992. http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/ilusive.htm.

These readings can also be found in the supplemental reading PDF, which was downloaded with the workbook from MarineNet.

6.5 The Case – Operation Blast Furnace

6.5.1 Situation

Operation Blast Furnace was the first ever combined interagency U.S.-host nation drug interdiction operation. It involved the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), specifically the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the Bolivian Rural Area Police Patrol Unit (UMOPAR, Spanish acronym). Operation Blast Furnace was centered on U.S. assistance in aviation and helicopter transportation to the UMOPAR and personnel to find and destroy coca laboratories. The mission of the DOD forces was to provide the helicopter lift and communications support to Bolivian and DEA forces.[554] The U.S. military controlled the lift assets and, therefore "it controlled the missions."[555]

Although the U.S. and Bolivia had previously focused on the eradication of the coca crop itself or the elimination of the narco-traffickers, the intelligence analysis identified the coca base/cocaine hydrochloric acid (HCl) laboratories as the critical point of attack. However, the DEA realized that the narco-traffickers had shut down their labs and chosen to produce more coca in other countries such as Peru. Further into the operation, Operation Blast Furnace shifted from dismantling isolated labs to raiding rural villages. The shift was a catalyst to the uprising of the peasant villagers who violently opposed the raiders.[556]

6.5.1.1 *Friendly*

A key ally for U.S. forces operating on ground was UMOPAR, the specialized Bolivian drug enforcement unit. In 1983, a U.S.-funded program centered on eradicating the cocaine trade enabled the creation of an elite, 300-man force within UMOPAR known as the Leopards. The primary task of the Leopards was to eliminate the cocaine trade in the departments of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.[557] Support provided by the U.S. to Bolivia's drug eradication efforts included DOD helicopter lifts and communications support; DEA personnel accompanied Bolivian forces on antinarcotics operations.[558]

6.5.1.2 *Adversary Groups*

In Operation Blast Furnace, the mission's adversary groups were the narco-traffickers and cocaine producers who ran the cocaine base/cocaine hydrochloric acid (HCl) laboratories. The purpose of the mission was to eliminate the isolated laboratories as they connected different interests of cocaine-production: the chemicals, coca products, and transportation of the cocaine.[559]

In the production of coca to cocaine, the coca leaves are harvested from the fields, they are dried and then transported to the laboratories. In the laboratories, the drug producers convert the coca leaf to cocaine.[560] Therefore, the sellers of the coca leaf transport the harvests to the cocaine laboratories to process it. These labs were located in the Chapare province of the Cochabamba department and the Beni and Santa Cruz departments. The Bolivian drug trafficking' industry, threatened by the Operation Blast Furnace mission, leveraged its power and influence to convince coca leaf farmers to fight the DEA and Bolivian forces.

6.5.1.3 *Civil Components*

Raids conducted by Operation Blast Furnace villages and towns angered the local people. Due to the shift in the mission, many farmers who grew and harvested the coca turned violent because of the mission's negative impact on their cultural identity and personal economy.

USAID was also present on ground. Peasants from five of the coca-growing villages requested help from USAID for alternative crops after they were raided.[561]

6.5.2 Mission

The goal of Operation Blast Furnace was to continue to eliminate and control the *supply* of cocaine in Bolivia. The supply side was the production of the coca leaf into cocaine at the laboratories. The U.S. intended to allocate temporary logistical support for the National Police Corps' find-destroy operations against coca-processing facilities in the Chapare Region in the Cochabamba department and the Beni and Santa Cruz departments.[562]

The mission of DOD forces in Blast Furnace was to provide helicopter lift and communications support to Bolivian and DEA forces in antidrug operations.[563]

6.5.3 Results

Operation Blast Furnace is overall considered to have been a failure, despite having results that were both positive and negative.[564]

On the positive side, all of the labs attacked were put out of business, including 22 major cocaine processing labs.[565] Additionally, the operation prevented many labs from becoming established in Bolivia.[566] According to a statement from the DEA, Operation Blast Furnace "resulted in a virtual shutdown of narcotics production" and 90 percent of the coca from Bolivia was interdicted.[567]Coca prices dropped from $150 to $25 per hundredweight.[568] The demand for coca product from peasant growers "dried up," prompting many growers "to inquire about alternative crops."[569] Operation Blast Furnace was a significant "step forward" in the South American fight against drugs.[570]

On the negative side, the eradication of cocaine manufacturing was only temporary: the drug producers resumed operations as soon U.S. forces were no longer present.[571] The operation yielded virtually no arrests or drug seizures.

Nonetheless, the local negative reaction was evident: shortly before Operation Blast Furnace concluded, the residents of the town of Santa Ana angrily expelled 150 U.S. soldiers and UMOPAR members.[572]

6.5.4 Operational Culture Impacts on the Mission

6.5.4.1 *Physical Environment*

Coca leaf was mainly grown for local use in the Yungas, but cocaine was produced in remote laboratories in the Chapare and the Yungas.[573] With the switch in strategy from remote laboratories to villages, the DEA targeted populated villages along the Chapare River. The fertile soil of the land along the Chapare River – coupled with the rainy seasons and dry seasons – provided growers with perfect conditions for the cultivation of coca. Therefore, during the peak harvest months of June, July, and November, there was more movement from the fields to the labs that the DEA and UMOPAR could track.

With the shift of mission to rural villages, Operation Blast Furnace planners did not take certain cultural factors into consideration while estimating how farmers in these villages would react. The initial laboratories that Operation Blast Furnace targeted were in the subtropical and tropical jungles isolated from local populations. A village, in comparison to a lab, has a settled community and may be deeply entrenched in the coca production. The villages in the Chapare had populations of farmers who depended solely on the growing of coca and harvesting of coca during the dry period of the summer.

Taking into consideration that after the collapse of the mining industry many workers moved to villages to grow coca leaves, *could there have been strategic benefits to conducting Operation Blast Furnace during the dry period?*

6.5.4.2 *Economy*

The villagers were not cooperative with the U.S. forces and UMOPAR because they were not the source of power and influence in the village. Local drug traffickers warned and incited the famers in advance. To ignore the orders of the drug trafficker, whether he is a local elite or an international buyer, would risk losing, or defying, the narco-traffickers and have dire economic consequences. Without the narco-trafficker, the farmer would face economic exclusion and not be able to move or find a buyer to sell to as consistently and numerously. It is important to understand the economic power that the drug traffickers had on these villages. This was not taken into consideration during the planning process for Operation Blast Furnace.

Many local farmers counted on the sale of coca as a means of income; the local economy was also dependent on coca production. The most militant opposition to Operation Blast Furnace came from the

workers, farmers, and residents of areas where the local economy (and their personal livelihoods) depended on coca cultivation.[574] Therefore, locals wanted to prevent U.S. disruption of cocaine production, particularly during the important harvesting time frame.

Operation Blast Furnace had an especially negative impact on the city of Trinidad in the Beni department. U.S. and UMOPAR troops operated from a U.S. air base located on the outskirts of the city of Trinidad.[575] The troops did not use the services nor the diversions of the city, but their presence decreased the amount of business local drug dealers conducted with locals. There was no civic action or service to mediate the economic impact. This interruption in commerce increased local resentment towards the troops: "Blast Furnace was blamed for the recession it partly caused."[576]

How did the location of the U.S. base affect relationships between the U.S. forces and civilians? As a result, how could the impact on the economy form local perceptions of U.S. forces?

6.5.4.3 *Social Structure*

The rural areas in Bolivia, although legislatively governed by the central government, are politically removed from the central government due to the large distance between them. Therefore, towns and villages usually have their own power structures. These structures frequently have more influence on the people of the village that the central government. For example, there are rural elites such as cattle ranchers and merchants, who also directly control the production of coca paste.[577]

A history of class conflict was a factor in the uprising of the peasants. Elite rural groups (owners of large cattle ranches, agro-business owners, and merchants in the eastern part of the Beni Department) had almost exclusive control of the coca paste production and cocaine trafficking. Therefore, the illegal processing of the coca leaf, which was grown by the peasants, was controlled by the rural elite. Since coca leaf was legal, the peasants were not breaking the law. Therefore, the peasant villagers felt attacked unjustly and targeted, while the elites in charge of the coca paste production were not targeted and were protected by their social status and power.

The "brunt of state repression [fell] upon the peasants… constant clashes between state authorities and peasants raise[d] the level of class conflict."[578] In the department of Cochabamba, where Operation Blast Furnace took place, thousands of peasants were pulled into the underground economy and those who were caught were severely sanctioned.[579] People who were arrested and jailed were disproportionately from the peasant class.[580] This, alongside historical trends of protecting the elite because of their power, influence, and money, added to the uprising of the peasants against the UMOPAR and U.S. forces.

To further exacerbate the singling-out perceived by the peasant class, the UMOPAR forces, funded and trained by the U.S., had a tense "history" with peasants. The prior presence of the UMOPAR in the Chapare added to the tensions during Operation Blast Furnace. In the summer of 1984, the UMOPAR and 1,500 Bolivian soldiers entered the Chapare on a drug eradication operation. The operation was extremely unpopular. Peasant demonstrations eventually prompted UMOPAR to withdraw.[581]

The UMOPAR and the DEA did not take into consideration this recent history; they were unprepared for a similar outcome. As a result, because U.S. forces came in with the UMOPAR, the peasant villagers viewed U.S. forces negatively, as outsiders that aligned with their enemies, the UMOPAR and the central government. When the U.S. troops provided support for the already-disliked UMOPAR, Operation Blast Furnace was viewed as an attack on the peasant communities and they rebelled.

This outcome is an example of how a coalition can be problematic in a mission; the relationship between the civilian groups and the local military forces was not considered in the planning process. For example, Operation Blast Furnace did not provide mitigating social action, such as rudimentary engineering projects, or medical support to poorer areas in order to build rapport with the peasants or establish a positive perception of U.S. forces.[582]

What could Operation Blast Furnace planners have done differently to separate the U.S. forces from the UMOPAR's relationships, and establish more positive perceptions of the U.S. forces?

6.5.4.4 *Political Structure*

Who were the "narco-traffickers"? The stereotypical image of the Colombian cartel leaders with their private jets and lavish lifestyle comes to mind. But this was far from the truth in Bolivia. The drug traffickers, or narco-traffickers, were the rural elites. During the 14 years of the military's regime, from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, a sector of the Bolivian military was the third major drug trafficking power structure alongside the economic elite (the cattle ranches and merchants) and agro-business elite (sugar cane, cotton, soybeans, etc.).[583]

Operation Blast Furnace took place after the shift to democracy and the military was no longer officially involved in the drug trade. But the rural elites still controlled the public offices, such as the *prefectura* – elected officials equivalent to state governors in the U.S.[584] Although this was prior to Operation Blast Furnace, the fact that the military was a large participant in the drug trade caused anger and tension once the military, the UMOPAR, became the key Bolivian body leading the antidrug efforts. The irony was not lost on the people, and only fueled tensions between the central government, the UMOPAR, and the coca growers. As noted above, the elites who were the actual drug-traffickers, exerted considerable influence and power in the villages – through legitimate power structures (the central government) and illegitimate (the illegal drug business).

Although the U.S. forces and the UMOPAR were the "official" figures of authority, they did not have power or influence over the villagers. The drug traffickers did. The planning process did not consider the power relationships at play in the villages. In Santa Ana, the power source was the narco-traffickers as well as the labor unions in the region that sought to protect the rural peasant farmer. The coca growers viewed the counterdrug task force as an ally of the disliked military organization UMOPAR; the growers were incited to demonstrations against the UMOPAR and the U.S. forces by both narco-traffickers and peasant union federations.[585]

When the DEA "asserted its authority and targeted a peasant village that was known to have a concentration of traffickers,"[586] DEA Human Intelligence (HUMINT) identified the target, but lacked sociopolitical HUMINT, a workable civic action operations plan, and a workable psychological operations (PSYOP) plan. As a result, the UMOPAR and U.S. forces did not anticipate the popular uprising of the people. PSYOP used by the narco-traffickers effectively turned the villagers into insurgents.[587]

Because of the power and influence of the narco-traffickers, the locals perceived Operation Blast Furnace as a violation and intrusion of their rights. When the operation shifted to raids on villages, drug traffickers warned the villagers of the incoming UMOPAR and the DEA forces, and urged them to fight. The narco-traffickers mobilized peasants to "violently oppose the raiders."[588]

When the Bolivian police, DEA agents, and pilots took over the village of Santa Ana in October 1986 looking for traffickers, almost the entire town of 5,000 joined in forcing them to leave under threat of death. Townspeople knew in advance about their arrival, although officials say the planning was handled with utmost secrecy.[589]

Take into consideration the power, influence, and control narco-traffickers had in Santa Ana. *Who are the narcos, and what influence did they have in rural areas in Bolivia?*

6.5.4.5 *Belief Systems*

Although Operation Blast Furnace did not deal directly with the spiritual importance of coca, the plant holds important cultural values for many Bolivians. An attack on the coca leaf can be seen as a personal and cultural attack: it is a symbol of the Andean communities themselves.

The indigenous majority that lives in Bolivia's rural areas – such as the villages in Cochabamba, Beni, and Santa Cruz where Operation Blast Furnace took place – defend and protect the coca leaf "because of its multiple, central, and continues role in Andean society."[590] Andean communities were historically marginalized and attacked by a Bolivian central government that had a history of limiting and marginalizing indigenous communities and – finally – was rejected by them as a legitimate source of power. As a result, a threat to the coca leaf by the central government and the U.S. (another force whose legitimacy is questioned by Andean society) threatened the cultural core of these communities.

How could the local perceptions of the coca leaf have impacted the mission? Think about the coca leaf in terms of the legal and national discourse, as well as Andean identity.

6.6 Conclusion: Enduring Lessons on Culture from Operation Blast Furnace

Operation Blast Furnace had immediate *cultural* impacts in Bolivia:

- The troops were stationed in the airport on the outskirts of Trinidad and led to a decrease in commerce. This economic impact caused resentment among the locals which led to a negative perception of the DEA and the Army forces.
- Operation Blast Furnace "reinforced 'anti-imperialists,' pro-labor political alignment patterns and sentiments in the coca-cocaine [local and] national debates."[591]
- In raided villages, eradication measures alone (without the offer of helping to establish substitute crops) alienated peasant farmers or turned them into insurgents.

Taking into account the negative impacts of the operation on the local population and the escalation of the anti-U.S. attitudes in the 1980s to 2000s, there are several overarching, cultural considerations that could benefit planning in the future:

- Language: There was lack of intelligence and interagency miscommunication due to the fact that the senior officer and his staff did not speak Spanish and did not consider human intelligence (HUMINT).[592] Language could also add to strengthening relationships with the locals and gathering more intelligence.
- Unified Interagency Intelligence: "Unified intelligence" among agencies and partner forces would have decreased the amount of dispersed DEA and military planning and

strategy.[593] The UMOPAR and the DEA shared the HUMIT leads. However, the DEA had its own version of HUMINT leads, which resulted in "usually futile efforts to make arrests."[594] There were only few, low-level arrests due to "inadequate security (OPSEC) at all levels."[595]

- Human Intelligence: There was also a lack of human intelligence that could have identified the cultural and socioeconomic importance of coca as well as the peasantry's perception.[596]
- Rapport building: Socializing and creating social connections are a central part of Latin American life; the lack of social interaction is detrimental to helping positive perceptions among the local population. Local Bolivian-U.S. relationships were non-existent. U.S. troops were housed at the airport and the dozen or so DEA personnel stayed at a luxurious hotel in town.[597] The personnel were completely separated from the locals.[598]

As presented in this Case Study, an attack on the coca leaf can be (and was) perceived as an economic, personal, cultural, and political attack. These are cultural factors that impact the success or failure of a military operation; in this case, Operation Blast Furnace.

U.S. military involvement in counterdrug operations in Bolivia received international and national support, but also criticism and anger.[599] The presence of U.S. military forces in 1986 was extremely controversial at local and national levels. Although the formal legislative structures, including the ruling party, and Congress, approved the exercises in the Chapare lowlands, several left-of-center parties, labor unions, and regional organizations "opposed them as a violation of national sovereignty."[600]

The U.S. DEA had an "unfortunate negative perception" by the Bolivian press regarding cocaine issues.[601] The Bolivian press sensationalized incidents involving the DEA, particularly the DEA protection of the largest Bolivian cocaine factory (known as the "Huanchaca Case") in 1986. Over time, the DEA became more unpopular than the CIA,[602] and was viewed as a tool of U.S. imperialism and meddling in Bolivian sovereign affairs.

In the Chapare, where more than a dozen campesinos [farmers] were reported killed by the UMOPAR in 1986-1988 period, charges of human rights abuses by the antidrug forces helped drug traffickers to incite Chapare coca growers… the drug traffickers, better-armed than the UMOPAR, methodically employed terrorist methods against Chapare residents who refused to cooperate…[603]

As a direct, positive result from Operation Blast Furnace (and the economic impact the operation had), peasants from five coca-growing villages along the Chapare River sought help from USAID to switch to alternative crops.[604] USAID soon expanded its efforts to surrounding high valleys and supported the Bolivian Government's agricultural research, extension, and credit programs in the Chapare region.

The immediate positive effects of Operation Blast Furnace did not last long due to few sustaining resources and the short time frame of the original operation. The four-month operation lowered coca prices temporarily, but things returned to normal shortly after it ended.[605] Following Operation Blast Furnace, American drug eradication efforts in Latin American continued to focus on local producers and not international drug traffickers, according to critics.[606]

One positive, long-lasting outcome was that Operation Blast Furnace forged a basis for joint combined interagency cooperation and was an effective training exercise for Bolivian and American forces.[607] Operation Blast Furnace was among the first coalition operations in Latin America, and evolved into the multifaceted campaign, Operation Snowcap. Operation Snowcap's goal was to reduce the supply of illicit cocaine reaching the U.S. from Latin America.[608] Operation Snowcap lasted from 1987 to 1993, and took place in nine Latin American countries.

Some critics say Operation Blast Furnace nearly toppled the Estenssoro government, aroused intense nationalistic reactions, and reinforced pro-labor patterns and sentiments and anti-imperialistic views against the U.S. Some say it was just a raid.[609]

Nonetheless, the operation caused the relationship between the U.S. and Bolivia to deteriorate:

In the late 1980s, the Bolivian press charged that DEA agents had killed a number of demonstrating peasants…. In July 1987, campesinos [farmers] laid siege to a DEA camp… in May 1988, thousands of campesinos demonstrated for two days in downtown Cochabamba, demanding the expulsion of twenty DEA agents from Bolivia and governmental respect for their coca-growing livelihood… the government pledged to seek only voluntary reduction of coca fields, to decriminalize coca growing, and to see more fund to develop other crops…[610]

In Bolivia, legislation was enacted to impose change and limitations on the production of coca. In 1987-1988, the Bolivian national congress passed a new law, the *"Ley de Régimen de la Coca y Sustáncias Controladas"* (Law for the Regulation of Coca and Controlled Substances), that established *all* coca cultivation as illegal, except 12,000 hectares of coca growing in the Yungas Department for domestic consumption.[611] The law acknowledged only societal uses of coca as legal:

Article 2º.- The cultivation of coca is an agri-cultural activity traditionally oriented licitly towards the consumption, its use in medicine and Andean peoples' rituals.

Article 4º.- Consumption and licit use of the coca leaf are understood to be social and cultural practices of the Bolivian population under traditional forms, such as the "acullicu" and the chewing, medicinal uses and ritual uses.[612]

In reaction to the law, approximately 12,000 peasants from various farmers federations blocked streets of Cochabamba. President Estenssoro Paz ordered the army and police to break up the resistance, resulting in six deaths and many injuries.[613] This incident was only one of many face-offs between the government – particularly between the UMOPAR and the peasants – which further heightened tensions between peasants and the central government.[614]

After a strengthening of leftist politics and anti-U.S. feelings, U.S.–Bolivia relationships worsened. In 1989, Bolivian officials and political leaders felt that antidrug enforcement through repression caused too much

social and economic damage.[615] Paz Estenssoro began advocating voluntary crop substitution and eradication; he also announced that U.S. troops would never return to Bolivia.[616]

In 2008, President Evo Morales expelled the U.S. ambassador and the DEA from the country.[617] In 2013, President Morales also expelled USAID personnel, accusing them of trying to conspire against the Bolivian people and government.[618] Nonetheless, Bolivia continues its efforts to eradicate the excess coca leaf production in Bolivia.

Bolivia Today…

More than 60 percent of its population identifies as indigenous,[620] which accounts for about 3.9 million people out of a total population of 10 million.[621] Almost three-quarters of the indigenous population is poor.[622]

During the twentieth century, the situation of the indigenous people in Bolivia took center stage in the political and social scene. In the 1990s, the various indigenous cultures in Bolivia were officially recognized: Bolivia was declared a pluri-cultural state by President Sanchez de Lozada.[623] In 2005, Evo Morales, who represents himself as a full-blooded indigenous man, was elected President.[624] During his presidency, Evo Morales dedicated himself to overturning the social hierarchy: in 2009, 61 percent of voters approved the constitution that acknowledged Bolivia as a unitary, pluri-national, secular state. Voters also decided that Bolivia's natural resources were the patrimony of the Bolivian people and, as such, must be administered by the central government.[625] Bolivia's 2009 Constitution designates Spanish and all indigenous languages as official.[626]

President Evo Morales (1998-2016)

Figure 6-5: Evo Morales. *Source: Roberto Stuckert Filho/PR, Wikipedia.*[619]

6.7 For Further Consideration…

Drug production rates vary throughout Latin America, as does the U.S.'s classification of different drug organizations. For example, the U.S. can classify some drug organizations as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTOs), but not all drug organizations are FTOs. The U.S. considered the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, Spanish acronym) and the National Liberation Army (ELN, Spanish acronym) as Colombian guerrilla movements. In 1997, the U.S. classified them as terrorist organizations. The same year, the U.S. designated the radical political communist group, Shining Path (SP), in Peru, as a terrorist group. Both groups have ties to cocaine trafficking. However, not all transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) are guerrilla groups. Some TCOs play a large or small part in the cocaine trade in Mexico, Central America, and the United States.

There are some countries whose main role is to facilitate the transshipment of cocaine El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (the so-called "Northern Triangle") do not produce coca leaf or cocaine, but connect cocaine transport from South America into the United States. Other countries are directly involved in the growing of coca and cocaine production. After Peru and Colombia, Bolivia is the world's third largest grower of coca; it is the third largest producer of cocaine. Bolivia is also a transshipment

country for Peruvian and Colombian cocaine destined to Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay.[627]Among many other differences, the industry of drugs differs in every nation – for example, in Mexico the drug trade is controlled by a complex, ever-shifting network of cartels who have become both feared and admired. Mexican *narcos*, or drug dealers, are popularized and commercialized in "narco-music," art, and clothing. In the Northern Triangle and the U.S., the *maras* play a large role in the trade.

The phrase 'drug wars' oversimplifies and blankets the differences associated with the growing of the coca leaf, the production of cocaine, and the transportation of coca products. The countries of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru are key growers and producers of cocaine, but there are internal differences on how leaders in these countries view coca. Colombia differs from Bolivia in both the classification and cultural importance of the coca leaf: the coca leaf is not as culturally relevant to the drug debate as it is in Bolivia. In Colombia, the cocaine trade is controlled by guerrillas (FARC, ELN) and criminal organizations, such as the gangs *Clan Úsaga* (or *Los Urabeños*), *Los Pelusos*, and *Los Puntilleros*. In Peru, cocaine production is controlled in part by the Maoist SP, but Peru is similar to Bolivia in the sense that there are Andean communities culturally attached to coca.

In Bolivia, the coca's cultural relevance has become a catalyst for worsening international relationships: there is a tenuous balance between combating cocaine production and respecting an indigenous and national identity. Therefore, taking into consideration the five dimensions of culture (social structure, physical environment, belief systems, economic structures, and political structures) covered here in the planning process is fundamental to the success of your task at hand.

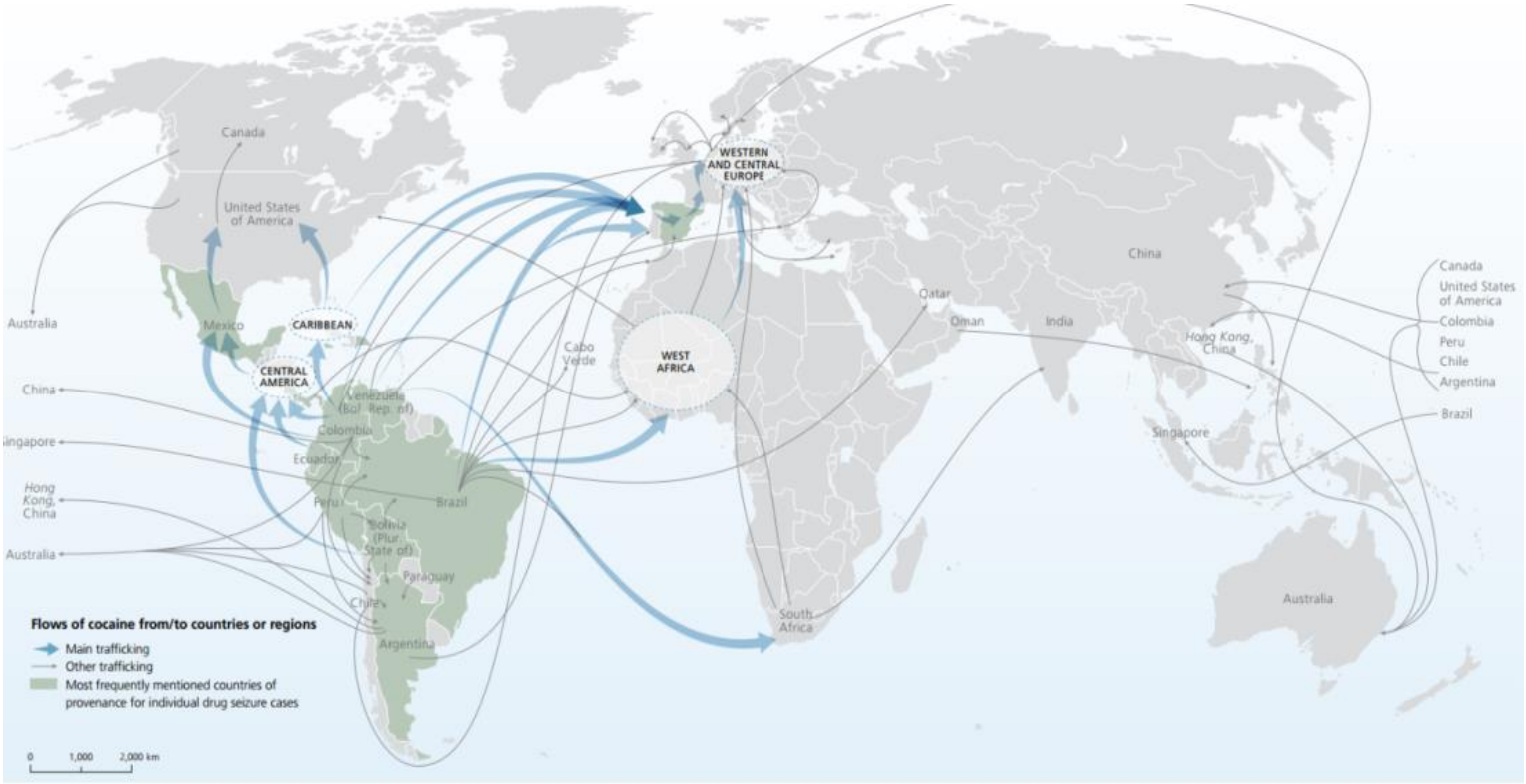

Figure 6-6: Main World Trafficking Flows of Cocaine. *Source: United Nations World Drug Report 2015*.[628]

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