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# The Human Domain and Influence Operations in the 21st Century

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Recent military engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan, the proliferation of violent nonstate actors, and the rise of ISIS have sparked a debate on the need to create a sixth domain of warfighting, the human domain. This article builds off of military doctrine and scholarly articles and books to offer (a) a definition of the human domain and (b) its military objective—building influence to affect behavior of a target population better than the adversary.

Keywords: human domain, influence operations, irregular warfare, population-centric warfare

In 2006, retired General Rupert Smith opened his book *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* by proclaiming that “war no longer exists,” surmising that state-on-state war is a thing of the past and present and future wars will be fought largely between nonstate actors (p. 3). In a similar vein, Mary Kaldor’s book *New Wars* (2007) argues that the post-Cold War security environment is defined by “wars among the people,” or wars where states will fight nonstate actors or nonstate actors will fight each other; these wars, while perhaps not new, will be the dominant form of warfare and eclipse military engagements between states. Military historian Martin Van Creveld (1991) makes a similar prediction, attributing the danger of nuclear war to the decline in war between states and the rise of nonstate actor conflicts. All three scholars purport that conventional warfare is a thing of the past and military engagements will be punctuated by irregular threats, such as terrorists, insurgents and violent transnational groups. These scholars agree that these ‘new wars’ require changes in how and why states engage in military action.

Recent military operations appear to affirm these new dynamics in warfare. The Global War on Terror, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the rise of ISIS have all involved armed conflict between state and nonstate actors. These violent engagements have compelled intervening forces to change not only tactics, techniques and procedures, but also to develop new strategies and objectives in warfare more broadly. In particular, U.S. and European countries have begun to debate the need to create a sixth domain of warfighting, the human domain, to be analytically distinct from the existing domains of warfare (land, sea, air, space, and cyber). In the United States, for example, a 2012 U.S. Army white paper argues, “the success of future strategic initiatives and the ability of the U.S. to shape a peaceful and prosperous global environment will rest more and more on our ability to understand, influence, or exercise control within the ‘human

domain” (TRADOC 525-3-0, p. 15). However, the call for a sixth domain of warfare has sparked considerable debate over its definition, purpose, connection to other domains, and training requirements for military forces.

This article builds off of doctrine, scholarly articles, books, and media reports, to offer a definition of the human domain and a defense for creating the human domain as the sixth realm of warfighting in an era dominated by population centric warfare. The article proposes a military objective in the human domain, which is influencing an individual or group to affect behavior better than the adversary. With this objective in mind, the article argues that four broad core competencies are necessary to understand and influence the human domain within the armed forces: language and cultural analytics, which is the ability of intervening forces to analyze culture within their area of operation; communications skills; intelligence capabilities; and skills that prepare the military for interagency, whole of government, and a “whole of nation” approach.

## DEFINING THE HUMAN DOMAIN

One of the challenges of establishing a human domain of warfighting is defining the term and its scope. Several publications offer definitions of the human domain, with little agreement on what it is, what it contains, and how it is distinct from the other domains. For example, a 2013 USSOCOM White Paper defines the human domain as follows: “the totality of the physical, cognitive, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior” (pp. 4–5). This definition, while offering a broad foundation upon which to investigate the human domain, poses a challenge, namely that it conflates what affects humans with the domain itself. The human domain first should be defined independent of the factors that shape it; then a discussion on what affects or influences it should be investigated. The 2015 USSOCOM report “Operating in the Human Domain” offers a more basic definition: “The Human Domain consists of the people (individuals, groups, and populations) in the environment, including their perceptions, decision-making, and behavior” (p. 4). This definition, while straightforward, confines the human domain only to what people think and do, which leaves out other important aspects of the human domain, such as the material objects and social groups that humans produce.

The 2010 British Joint Doctrine “Understanding” offers a more complex definition of the human domain, breaking it down into what it is, the environments that affect and are affected by it, and different types of actors. The doctrine defines the human domain as: “the interaction between human actors, their activity and their broader environment. It is defined as *the totality of the human sphere of activity or knowledge*” (pp. 3-5, emphasis theirs). “Understanding” further delineates the environments that affect and are affected by the human domain, breaking these down into cultural (ideological, psychological); institutions (political, military, economic, legal); technological (technology, cyberspace); and the physical environment, meaning terrain and weather (pp. 3-5 to 3-7). “Understanding” provides categories of actors, dividing the human domain into state (individual and group actors aligned with the state); nonstate (individuals and groups independent of the state); global (actors that have influence at the global level, including organizations such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and superpowered individuals); and local actors—those who have influence at the local level (pp. 3–8). The doctrine is quick to point out that these categories are not mutually exclusive; individuals and groups could belong to multiple categories, and affiliations and priorities can change over time.

A June 2013 *Small Wars Journal* article “Joint Force 2020 and the Human Domain” asserts that “human factors are the basis for all action within, and interaction between, the various actors in the physical domain of the battlespace” (Hoffman & Davies, p. 2). The article builds off of the concept of maneuver in warfighting to propose that humans are their own space of military maneuver. The goal of intervening militaries and governments is to influence and shape human behavior in targeted areas: “Our interest in this environment, which cuts across and drives our operational effectiveness in all other domains, is predicated upon the need to shape the attitudes and behaviors of decision-makers, individuals, and relevant populations to our desired political outcomes” (p. 4). The article asserts that the human domain is the foundation of all other domains:

Literally no action can take place in the other physical domains without this vital human element. It is humans who fly aircraft and apply precision power in the air domain. It is trained professionals who operate sophisticated surface and subsurface platforms in the sea domain. Cyber professionals operate and defend our computers, and seek to outwit hackers and intruders in the cyber domain (p. 5).

Building off of these debates, this article proposes the following definition of *human domain*:

The human domain is comprised of humans—including humans as physical beings, human thought, emotions, and human action—and what they create, such as groups, infrastructure, art and so on. In other words, the human domain is what humans are, what they think, how they act, and what they create.

This definition draws from descriptions of the traditional domains of warfighting—land, sea, air, and space—which include not only the terrain of each domain, but all that is in that terrain as well. Similarly, the human domain consists of more than just humans as physical beings, but also their thoughts and perceptions, and the things they make, such as groups, infrastructure, information, and so on. Furthermore, as will be described, this definition of the human domain allows for a separate discussion on the military objective of this realm, which is to influence the target audience to affect behavior better than the adversary.

Each subdivision of the human domain—the physical being, thought, action, and what humans create—can become a focus of warfare. For example, humans as physical beings have become the target of extermination campaigns, or genocide, as a wider military strategy. Examples of this strategy include Armenians during World War I; Jews, Slavs, Roma, homosexuals, and the mentally and physically challenged in Hitler’s Germany and its allies during World War II; and the Hutu’s slaughter of the Tutsis in the Rwandan civil war in 1994. In these cases the elimination of these groups of people—as opposed to targeting them for just psychological effect—was the goal. Rape as a weapon of war is another strategy that targets humans as physical beings, and aims to wipe out ethnic groups and destroy communities through mass rape and the offspring they produce (Diken & Lausten, 2005). On a tactical level, the use of people as a “human shield” to prevent adversaries from attack is another form of using humans as physical beings in war.

Human thought is also a critical target of warfare. Affecting leaders and their decision making processes has always been a goal of warfare. In conventional war, state leaders make the decision to go to war and to capitulate; therefore, ultimately war begins and ends in the minds of leaders. In more modern times, particularly after the creation of nation-states, populations and their thoughts have also played a critical role in warfare. The creation of the *levee en mass*, and the state’s need for its population’s willingness to participate in warfare to field sufficient troops, has become a critical calculation in warfare. With the advent of democracy, the ability of citizens to oust leaders through elections has also created new calculations for going to war and for the

duration of armed conflict. The greater inclusion of the press in warfare has informed populations' perceptions through what is commonly known as the "CNN effect," which has shaped popular support for going to war and ongoing military engagements. More recently, social media has become a powerful tool for mobilizing mass protest, as was evident in the 2010 and 2011 Arab Spring uprisings. All of these factors make shaping human thoughts, perceptions and emotions, a critical aspect of warfighting today.

Last, what humans make is an important part of the human domain. Humans are creative beings and constantly developing ways to be more efficient and organized. Humans create collectives—social, political, ethnic, religious, and occupational based groups—which, in turn, affect how humans think and behave. Human creations also include tangible objects such as roads, buildings and other infrastructure. Humans also develop stories, myths, symbols, art, and other systems of belief that help to explain and make sense of the world. All of these creations can be powerful tools of warfighting and peace building.

Because the human domain (similar to the other domains of warfare) is extremely broad, it is useful to break it down into analytical subcategories. Despite the rise of "war among the people," states are still the principal unit of political organization in international affairs and the polity most immediately responsible for working toward internal and transnational war termination; therefore, subcategories of the human domain should begin with, and relate to, the state. Here states are defined as physical territory, its government, and the population within it. States, however, are no longer (or perhaps never were) unitary actors; therefore it is essential to include the substate level, which contains everything within a state, such as tribes, ethnic groups, civic associations, religious groups, gangs, and so on. It is also necessary to consider trans-state actors, good and bad, such as international charities and nongovernmental organizations as well as criminal and terrorist networks that cross borders. Ethnic and religious groups can also cross state borders and form their own groups with interests and resources.

A second important consideration within the human domain is leaders and followers and the dynamic between them. Leaders are powerbrokers; they hold sway over others and therefore are extremely important to manage in times of potential or actual conflict as well as in efforts to maintain peace. However, those that follow are also an important consideration and require separate attention to manage and influence. For example, one of the effects of globalization is that it has dispersed information to all levels of society around the world, changing power dynamics (Fukuyama, 1999; Zakaria, 2003). Studying the effects of globalization on the dynamic between leaders and followers is an important consideration for influence in the human domain.

Building off of the discussion from the British "Understanding" and the USSOCOM White Paper on the human domain, it is important to further consider what affects the human domain. Several publications aid this discussion. First, *Operational Culture for the Warfighter* (Salmoni & Holmes-Eber, 2008) points out that humans affect and are affected by their environment; therefore humans' relationship to their surroundings is dynamic. *Operational Culture* proposes a three part dynamic model for understanding humans and their environment: an "ecological model," which considers humans' relationship to the physical environment; a "social structure model," which investigates the social and political systems that humans create and how they affect humans in turn; and a "symbolic model," which examines "the beliefs, symbols, and rituals of a group" (Salmoni & Holms-Eber, 2008, pp. 22–24). The authors further relate this three-part dynamic model to war, noting that the ecological model predicts conflicts over natural resources, such as water, land, and byways; the social structure includes wars over power in unequal societies; and the symbolic model includes

conflicts over “identity and ideology between competing social systems” (Salmoni & Holms-Eber, 2008, p. 24).

Two additional dynamic variables help round out what affects the human domain. First, the authors of *Operational Culture* include technology under the ecological model, but it is useful to consider it as its own variable. Technology has changed the way humans engage in warfare and opened up new domains of warfighting, most recently the space and cyber domains. Moreover, globalization, brought on by advances in information technologies, has connected people in new ways, including for conflict. The cyber domain, in particular, has become a new realm of warfighting that would not exist without innovations in information technologies. Therefore, technology and its relationship to people is an important consideration in the human domain.

Second, humans’ relationship to information is another important consideration for its dynamic impact on the human domain. Information, a product of humans, is particularly important for its ability to shape perceptions. Nineteenth-century scholar of democracy Alex de Tocqueville (1990) notes that “nothing but a newspaper can drop the same thought into a thousand minds at the same moment” (p. 111). While clearly technology has allowed for other means of communications to speak to the masses, the essence of de Tocqueville’s comment remains unchanged. Information is a valuable tool for shaping beliefs and behavior. More recent innovations in social media are a continuation of the influencing effects that information technology has on human thought and behavior. In addition to the spread of information created by advances in Information Technologies, it is also important to note that “low tech” means of spreading information is still important today. Rumors, “whisper campaigns,” gossip and word-of-mouth communications may be particularly important in villages and areas with limited technology, but is still a facet of modern societies as well (see Table 1).

Last, in this wider discussion of the human domain is the U.S. military’s 2007 creation of the Human Terrain System, which aimed to provide military commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq with a better understanding of the populations they were engaging. Defined as “the human population in the operational environment ... as defined and characterized by sociocultural, anthropologic and ethnographic data and other non-geographical information,” the U.S. military focused heavily on “mapping” and understanding the human terrain in critical areas of operation (Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, & Smith, 2006, p. 15).

Although the concept of the Human Terrain System makes sense in conflicts that are population centric, mapping the human terrain introduces some important problems. First, not everything in the human terrain can be mapped. Gender and age demographics can be mapped, but important considerations, such as worldviews, cannot. Thus the danger of mapping the human terrain is that it will include items that are easy to identify and map, and omit ones that are not, effectively giving greater importance to these easily measured or visualized factors. Second, humans are ever-adapting; they change and are changed by their environments. Mapping the human terrain runs the risk of creating static information that is collected at one point in time and not rechecked for changes. Even seemingly static factors, such as group identity or religious affiliation, could change with time.

Rather than map the human terrain, it is better to focus on the military objective in the human terrain—influence—which will be explored further in the following section.

TABLE 1  
The Human Domain

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Groups</i>	<i>Leaders/followers</i>	<i>Dynamic models</i>
Humans, including humans as physical beings, human thought, human action, and what they create.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substate (e.g., tribes, associations)</li> <li>• State (the territory, population, and the government)</li> <li>• Trans-state (international organizations and networks, certain ethnic, racial, tribal and religious groups)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substate (tribal leaders, warlords, governors, etc.)</li> <li>• State (heads of government, key state leaders)</li> <li>• Trans-state (super-powered individuals, leaders of international organizations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecological (humans’ relationship to terrain, weather)</li> <li>• Social systems (humans’ relationship to social and political organizations)</li> <li>• Symbolic (humans’ relationship to beliefs, rituals, symbols)</li> <li>• Technology (humans’ relationship with technology)</li> <li>• Information (humans’ relationships to ideas and information)</li> </ul>

### THE MILITARY OBJECTIVE OF THE HUMAN DOMAIN—INFLUENCE

The U.S. military defines the objective of the four physical domains of warfighting (land, sea, air and space) as “dominating” these realms. Dominating the traditional domains of warfare involves controlling physical space: securing and holding specific territory; controlling sea lanes of communication; and denying airspace. However, with the creation of the fifth domain of warfighting in U.S. doctrine, the cyber domain, dominance is no longer defined by controlling physical space. Unlike land, sea, air, and space, the cyber domain is not physical; despite having roots in the world, its battlespace is largely virtual and therefore cannot be bounded and controlled like sea lanes, air space, or specific terrain. Similar to the cyber domain, the human domain contains challenges for identifying and measuring military objectives.

The military objective in the human domain should be influence, and dominating the human domain is the ability to influence targeted individuals and groups better than the adversary. A useful definition of operationalized influence comes from a RAND report on strategic influence in the Global War on Terror. It builds off of the U.S. Psychological Operations (PSYOP) Field Manual to operationalize influence operations as:

...planned operations—convert and/or overt—to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences. Such campaigns attempt to influence perceptions, cognitions, and behaviors of foreign governments, organizations, groups and individuals (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 14).

Influence is critical in the human domain because it holds the potential to shape human thoughts, actions, and what humans create. If done properly, targeted individuals and groups will align their attitudes and behavior with U.S. interests. The critical question becomes: how do intervening militaries (and government more broadly) effectively build influence with target audiences?

Several scholars offer useful insights into creating influence with a targeted audience. Cialdini (2006) outlines six principles for building influence: reciprocity (treat others as you wish to be treated); commitment and consistency (get people involved early on and be persistent); social proof (create an atmosphere where others are doing same thing and there is safety in numbers); likability (which builds trust); authority (which also builds trust); and scarcity (things are more desirable when they are few in number).

The Yale attitudinal change model offers another useful tool for how to build influence in a target audience. The steps include the following: exposure (the message reaches the audience); attention (the message can be heard above competing messages and “static”); comprehension (the message is clear and makes sense culturally); acceptance (the audience understands *and* accepts the model); retention (the message is durable); and translation (the message changes thinking, which leads to changes in behavior). The model’s creators are quick to note that these steps are sequential and therefore must be performed in this order to successfully build influence (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, pp. 22–24; Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953).

Also useful for a discussion on influence in the human domain, the RAND study on strategic influence presents a spectrum of influence that ranges from compliance to conversion. Compliance is summarized as “believe what you want but do as we say” (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 15). For compliance to occur, the instructions need to “(1) have sufficient inducement; (2) few or no obstacles to obedience; and (3) a simple set of instructions to follow” (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 16). The report further notes that compliance campaigns are usually immediate in effect but they rarely result in changes in belief; therefore the effect requires constant reinforcement or is short lived. The threat or use of force is a useful tool in compliance campaigns (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 16).

In the middle of the spectrum is conformity, which can be summarized as peer pressure, or individuals measuring their behavior and beliefs to others around them and conforming to the group. Conformity campaigns can be built around normative influence, or building uniformity in peer beliefs and behavior. Another means of building a conformity campaign is through information, which can shape behavior and beliefs (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 17).

On the right end of the spectrum is conversion, which is “the complete restructuring of the audiences’ relevant beliefs, attitudes, emotions and opinions” (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 19). The goal in conversion is still to alter behavior, but to do so by changing the underlying beliefs that guide actions. Conversion campaigns require a strong degree of control over the environment, sufficient knowledge of the target audience, and time. The influencer is also trusted (Cragin & Gerweher, 2005, p. 19–20).

Cialdini’s six principles, the Yale Six Step sequence, and the RAND spectrum of compliance, conformity and conversion suggest a few important considerations for building influence in the human domain. First, it is important to know what desired effect the intervening power would like from its targeted individual or population. This is perhaps the most critical piece of information for influence in the human domain. If the intervening authority wants specific actions and is limited by time, then coercion to achieve compliance may be the best course of action. However, if the intervening power wants to create lasting influence with a group, state, region, or their leaders, the literature suggests that this will take time and building relationships and trust are paramount. The use of force under these circumstances, if not balanced within the wider objective of building lasting influence, may be counterproductive.

Second, these models suggest that the goal of influence is to change behavior, but the means through which to do that differ. Compliance campaigns change behaviors without changing beliefs, conformity changes behaviors subconsciously through environmental cues, and conversion changes behavior through changing beliefs. With conformity and especially conversion, changes in behavior should be long-lasting (if not permanent) because the social cues and beliefs that govern behavior have been changed; therefore change may take longer, but it lasts longer as well.

Third, changing behavior alone in the human domain is an attainable goal for an intervening military, especially through the threat or use of force. However, transforming underlying beliefs with the goal of lasting change in behavior will most likely require a whole of government approach. Incentives or “inducements” could come in the form of aid, trade agreements, military advising, or other forms of influence, which require different agencies in the government—not just the military—all working together toward the same goal. A “whole of nation” approach, which includes not just the instruments of government power but also a nation’s population, its private sector, and its independent associations, could also provide useful resources for long term efforts aimed at building relationships and credibility between states. For example, during the Cold War, the United States used academic exchanges, music tours, art, and literature to help promote U.S. and democratic values around the world and blunt communist ideology (Gregg, 2010). The wide array of government and national resources offer a much broader spectrum of resources for shaping beliefs and influencing the behavior of targeted audiences in the human domain.

Fourth, in most cases, influence campaigns aimed at doing more than temporary change take time and consistent effort. It is unrealistic for the intervening force to expect to build a credible and trusting relationship—requirements for lasting influence—without the investment of time and consistent interaction with the targeted individual or group. Furthermore, the use of force for near term influence may be counterproductive to a long term relationship of trust and influence. Therefore, the intervening government and military may need to make tradeoff calculations in short versus long term desires for changing behavior in the human domain (see Figure 1).

## MILITARY RESOURCES FOR BUILDING INFLUENCE

If building influence to change behavior is the objective in the human domain, what resources do intervening militaries have to create this change? Perhaps the principal role of any military in the modern era is to act as a deterrent against aggression toward its homeland and its interests. Deterrence is *prima facie* a form of influence; its goal is to shape adversarial behavior. A country’s deterrent capability is largely a tool of compliance; it creates a credible threat of the use of force for adversaries with the aim of changing behavior. As the RAND model suggests, compliance is usually quick, but constant pressure is needed to keep the adversary behaving in a specific way. However, as also noted by the RAND report, compliance could be counterproductive if a more lasting and trusting relationship is desired.

Militaries also have useful resources for a conformity campaign, although this form of influence requires a better understanding of the target audience and a subtler hand than with compliance. Perhaps one of the most useful tools of a country’s military is resources aimed at shaping and spreading information. Information Operations and PSYOP, if properly employed, could help create instructions that shape behavior. As previously noted, conformity campaigns require several ingredients. As with all influence campaigns, intervening forces need to know the

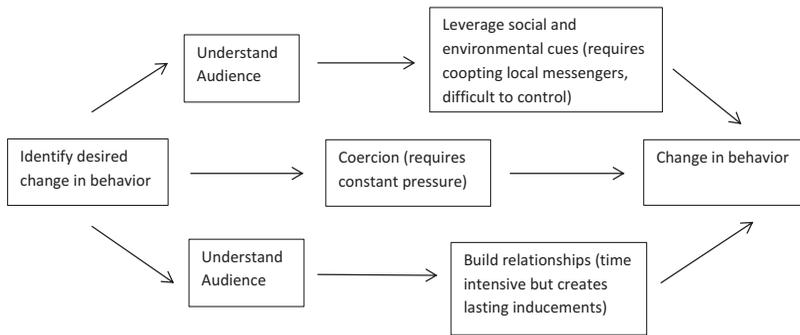


FIGURE 1 Three paths of influence to change behavior.

type of behavior it wants from its target audience to create an effective program. Second, all forms of messaging from various agencies in the government need to be sending the same message to prevent confusion and reduce “static.” The message must also make sense culturally. Furthermore, the messenger needs to be trusted. In countries where intervening powers are not trusted, it may be preferable and even necessary to work through messengers on the ground to shape behavior. The threat of force may play a role in conformity campaigns, but its role would be significantly subtler than with compliance campaigns.

Conversion campaigns require the most work and time, but also promise to have the most lasting effect; as with conformity campaigns, a whole of government and maybe even a whole of nation approach is needed to sustain a consistent message and offer a range of inducements to build relationships and trust between states. Furthermore, conversion campaigns are more likely to be effective if begun before a crisis emerges as part of “shaping operations”, or what is also called “Phase Zero,” “Left of Phase Zero,” or “Grey Zone” operations. Influence campaigns that are begun before crises allow for influence and trust to build without the added urgency of immediate military action.

Perhaps one of the most useful resources in a conversion campaign available to the military is military-to-military engagements with target countries. Joint military exercises communicate an ongoing relationship and commitment with the target country on several levels: it trains the target nation’s military in tactics and other useful military skills; it provides personal contact between the partnering power and target nation troops; it builds persistent relationships between both nations’ senior officers, who jointly conduct planning and execution of the exercise; and, from a messaging standpoint, coverage of the exercise informs the target nation’s population of the partnering nation’s commitment to those countries.

Another resource for building lasting influence is military training and advising; both conventional and Special Operations Forces have an important role to play in developing influence and shaping behavior through this form of military contact. Training and advising provide the opportunity to build relationships through sharing information, tactics and experience. The ultimate goal with military advising, however, should be to build trust between participating forces and to work toward partnership. Drawing from Cialdini, the Yale Six Step Model and the RAND spectrum of influence, in order for this form of influence to be effective, the interaction

should be consistent and long lasting—preferably the same troops returning to the same areas—which shows commitment and helps build trust. If the target audience trusts the messenger, then the message is more likely to be embraced and the desired behavior adopted.

In addition to training and advising, Special Operations Forces have other valuable resources for influencing the human domain. In the U.S. military, for example, Army Civil Affairs could shape operations and provide influence within local governments and society through projects aimed at addressing these groups' needs and vulnerabilities. Similarly, U.S. PSYOP is a potentially valuable source of influence through messaging to target audiences. Taken together, U.S. Civil Affairs, with its focus on local governments and civil society, and U.S. PSYOP with its messaging resources should work in concert with other Special Operations Forces to provide a holistic approach to influencing a target group and its leaders.

Other sources of influence include exchanges to military schools, as well as officer exchanges with partner nations' schools. Academic exchanges allow for prolonged, concentrated time of interaction between officers. These exchanges also allow for officers to experience their host nation's culture over the period of a year or more.

## CORE CAPABILITIES FOR INFLUENCING THE HUMAN DOMAIN

The article concludes by proposing four core capabilities militaries need to better understand and influence the human domain and shape conventional and irregular threats: language and cultural skills, communications capabilities, intelligence that focuses both on populations and the adversary, and preparing the military for a whole of government and nation approach.

### Language and Cultural Skills

Considerable attention has been paid to the need for language and cultural skills in order to influence target groups, leaders, and regions. In 2005, the Department of Defense released the "Defense Language Transformation Roadmap," which aims to identify language and cultural skills necessary for addressing threats in the post-September 11 security environment. The report identifies four goals for language and cultural training:

Create foundational language and cultural expertise in the officer, civilian, and enlisted ranks for both Active and Reserve Components; Create the capacity to surge language and cultural resources beyond these foundational and in-house capabilities; Establish a cadre of language specialists possessing a level 3/3/3 ability (reading/listening/speaking ability); Establish a process to track the accession, separation and promotion rates of language professionals and Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) (U.S. Department of Defense, 2005, p. 1).

These goals clearly prioritize language training as necessary for influencing and shaping behavior in the human domain. The report further names a desired outcome "the total force understands and values the tactical, operational, and strategic asset inherent in regional expertise and language" (U.S. Department of Defense, 2005, p. 4).

Cultural and regional competency appears to be less emphasized than language skills. There is reason to suggest that basic skills in analyzing culture and society, what could be called "cultural analytics", may be more attainable and also highly useful for influencing and shaping

behavior than language proficiency. Cultural analytics differs from teaching troops about a specific group's culture, such as its history, religion, famous leaders and so on, which is often dated, static and relies more on what others say about a group's culture than what it says about itself. Instead, cultural analytics teaches skills that allow troops to analyze for themselves their target audience's social, political, economic, and belief systems, and how these aspects of culture could be leveraged for influence operations. Moreover, this approach also equips troops to analyze changes in beliefs and behavior introduced by their operations and whether or not they are having the desired effect.

The concept of cultural analytics is echoed in both the Cialdini principles and the Yale Six Step model, which stress the importance of understanding one's target audience in order to effectively influence it. *Operational Culture for the Warfighter* also emphasizes this approach, particularly the importance of being able to analyze culture as a social phenomenon, and the dynamics between people and their environment, their social groups, and their symbols in order to effectively engage and influence people in an area of operation (Salmoni & Holmes-Eber, 2008, pp. 15–27). Cultural analytics, in other words, gives troops skills that allow them to assess their surroundings and better understand the values, beliefs, needs and vulnerabilities of the groups that they are engaging. This point is further elucidated in the 2013 U.S. report "Operational Relevance of Behavioral and Social Sciences to DoD Missions," in which the authors consider the wide range of military operations and missions, spanning from deterrence to stability operations, that require knowledge in social and behavioral sciences, and the need to train troops in the ability to assess culture and a dynamic and changing factor (Flynn et al., 2013).

Another core competency required for influencing the human domain is developing tools that engage all aspects of society, including men, women, and even children. The U.S. Army, Marine Corps, and Special Operations Forces have experimented with creating teams of female troops aimed at engaging women in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom across a range of missions. One key finding from the deployment of these teams is that female troops were often regarded as "a third gender" that could engage both local men and women in Afghanistan (U.S. Marine Corps I Marine Expeditionary Force, 2010, p. 8). Ultimately, influencing the human domain will be a difficult endeavor if only half the population is accessible to intervening forces.

## Communications Skills

A separate, but perhaps equally important, core competency for forces attempting to exercise influence the human domain is communications skills. Whereas cultural competency and analytics include knowledge and tools for assessing groups—including their values, social organization, needs, and vulnerabilities—communications skills involve applying cultural knowledge to effectively interact with target populations. Two broad communications core competencies are highlighted here: listening and negotiating.

Listening is a critical capability for influence operations. Cultural awareness and analytics are of little value if intervening forces cannot receive the messages that target groups are sending. In other words, intervening forces need adequate listening skills to comprehend the people they are attempting to influence. Listening skills go beyond hearing what people are saying to include nonverbal cues and other signals.

One approach to teaching listening skills to intervening forces is Brownell's H.U.R.I.E.R. model: Hearing, focusing on and attending to the message; Understanding, obtaining the literal message's meaning; Remembering, recalling the message for future action; Interpreting, expressing sensitivity to contextual and nonverbal message aspects; Evaluating, logic applied to the assessment of the message value; Responding, choosing an appropriate response to what is heard (Brownell, 2005). Regardless of the model employed, listening skills are a necessary competency for intervening troops to understand their operating environment in the human domain.

Another useful capability for influence operations in the human domain is negotiation skills. Negotiation skills combine listening, comprehension, communication, patience, and iterative interaction aimed at conflict resolution, knowledge transfer and compromise. Numerous models exist for different types of negotiation for different purposes, derived largely from business management and law (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1992; Nadler, Thompson, & Van Boven, 2003). Negotiation skills would be particularly useful for engaging leadership in the human domain, both friendly and adversarial.

## Intelligence

A third major core competency for influencing the human domain is intelligence. The 2006 U.S. Counterinsurgency Manual FM 3-24 devotes an entire chapter to intelligence gathering in counterinsurgency; it begins by stating: "Counterinsurgency (COIN) is an intelligence-driven endeavor." The chapter goes on to assert that "the function of intelligence in COIN is to facilitate understanding of the operational environment, with emphasis on the populous, host nation, and insurgents" (p. 3-1). The importance of intelligence is reiterated in the 2014 updated manual (FM 3-24, MCWP 3-33.5, 2014, p. 8-1).

Military intelligence collection from the United States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the International Security Assistance Force underwent considerable scrutiny during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, the controversial 2010 U.S. report "Fixing Intel," which focused specifically on intelligence gathering in Afghanistan, argues the following:

... because the United States has focused the overwhelming majority of collection efforts and analytical brainpower on insurgent groups, our intelligence apparatus still finds itself unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which we operate and the people we are trying to protect and persuade (Flynn, Pottinger, & Batchelor, 2010, p. 4).

"Fixing Intel" offers a comprehensive approach to gathering intelligence for influence operations in the human domain. However, this approach to intelligence collection, data management, and analysis is significantly different from the way intelligence has historically been structured and its purpose in traditional warfare, including a stronger focus on the population (as opposed to enemy forces), the relation between nonstate actors and the population, and possible points of influence with the population, as opposed to a country's enemy forces. In other words, this approach to intelligence gathering would require significant changes in selecting, training, structuring, managing and reporting of intelligence. It is unclear whether this new approach to gathering and analyzing intelligence would work for traditional state-on-state warfare as well.

Although "Fixing Intel" stresses the importance of better understanding the populous in Irregular Warfare, comprehending the adversary is still a critical function of intelligence.

Leadership targeting, in particular, is important in the human domain. The U.S. Government and military have made kinetic leadership targeting one of its priorities in the Global War on Terror and, more recently, in the fight against ISIS. Intelligence gathering and analysis should also focus on nonkinetic means of influencing leadership, both with friendly and adversarial leaders. Leadership profiling was done during the Cold War and remains invaluable for understanding specific leaders and how to influence them (Mitrovich, 2000). Intelligence topics for nonkinetic leadership targeting could include which leaders to include in negotiations and which to isolate and why.

### Preparing the Military for a Whole of Government and Nation Approach

The human domain of warfighting requires a whole of government and even a whole of nation approach. As the 2010 U.S. *Joint Operating Concept: Irregular Warfare* points out, to maximize the likelihood of success, joint forces must adopt collaborative frameworks and work closely with government, international, host nation governments, and indigenous organizations to understand and account for the population and operating environment. This understanding requires better knowledge of, and collaboration with, various stake holders within a country, and between countries' agencies more broadly. Moreover, greater emphasis should be placed on better understanding and coordination with international organizations, such as the United Nations, and regional organizations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Domestic and international nongovernmental organizations are also key stakeholders in population centric conflict and warfare, and can no longer be dismissed as insignificant or subordinate. This myriad of actors undoubtedly complicates operations and coordination; however, they are part of the landscape of "new wars"; therefore efforts to better coordinate with these various actors to influence targeted individuals, groups and society with the human domain is time well spent for any country and its military forces.

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