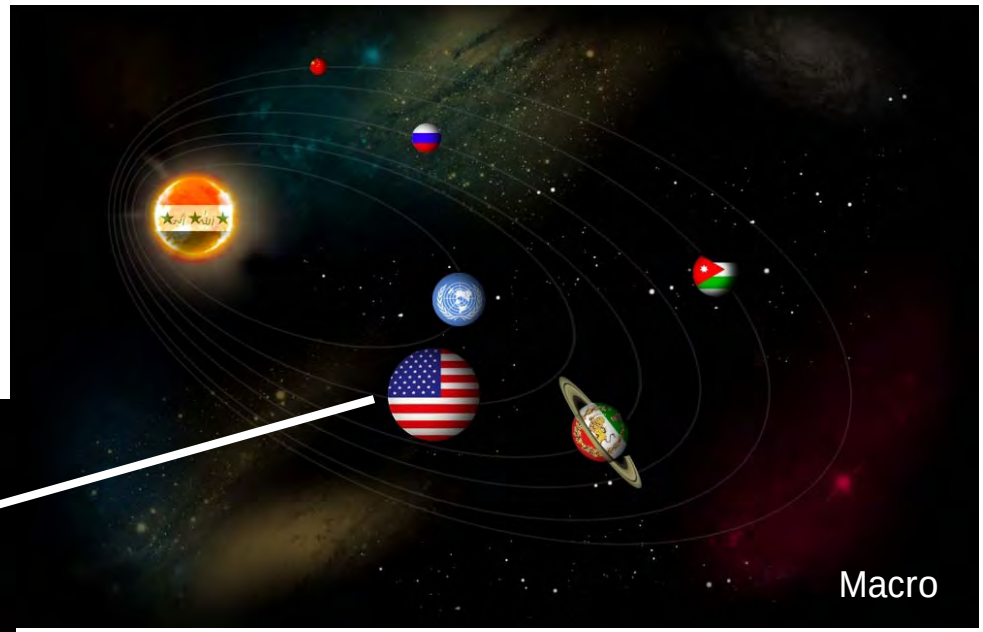
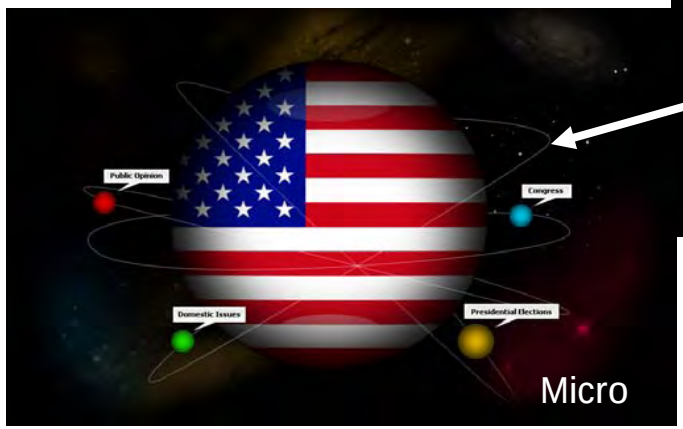
Inter-Bella: Understanding the Area of Operations Ecosystem

Developing a model to aid understanding in the complex contemporary operating environment

Presentation to US Army/USMC Counterinsurgency Centre

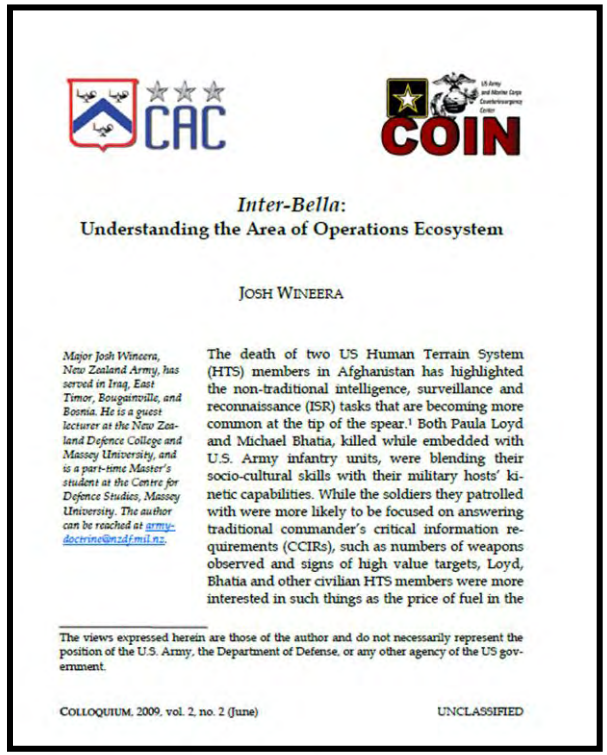
Major Josh Wineera
September 23, 2009





Scope of presentation

- Share thoughts and ideas of a developing model
- Explain the history, or rather the necessity of the idea
- The domains, the disciplines of inquiry
- To operationalize the model, blending in to the military appreciation process



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Inter-Bella:
Understanding the Area of Operations Ecosystem

JOSH WINEERA

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The death of two US Human Terrain System (HTS) members in Afghanistan has highlighted the non-traditional intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) tasks that are becoming more common at the tip of the spear.[1] Both Paula Loyd and Michael Bhatia, killed while embedded with U.S. Army infantry units, were blending their socio-cultural skills with their military hosts' kinetic capabilities. While the soldiers they patrolled with were more likely to be focused on answering traditional commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs), such as numbers of weapons observed and signs of high value targets, Loyd, Bhatia and other civilian HTS members were more interested in such things as the price of fuel in the

The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the position of the U.S. Army, the Department of Defense, or any other agency of the US government.

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History and necessity

- Iraq service 2008, explanation on return to New Zealand

- Senior leadership support to explore, to inquire to seek evidence (action-research)

- Varied sources of information, collaboration, and assistance

US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center
COIN

Human Terrain System

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
ONR
Science & Technology

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- Relevance for the 'current' and next war?

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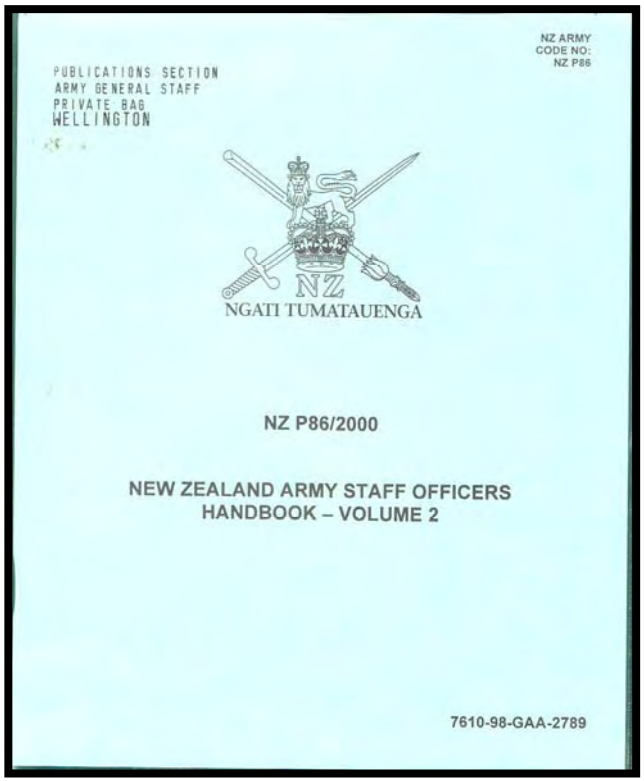
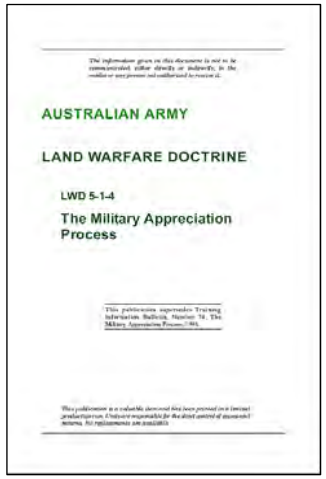
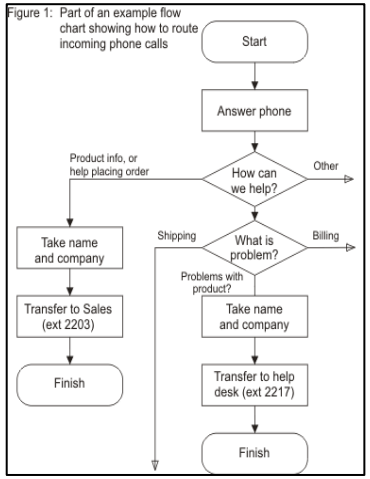
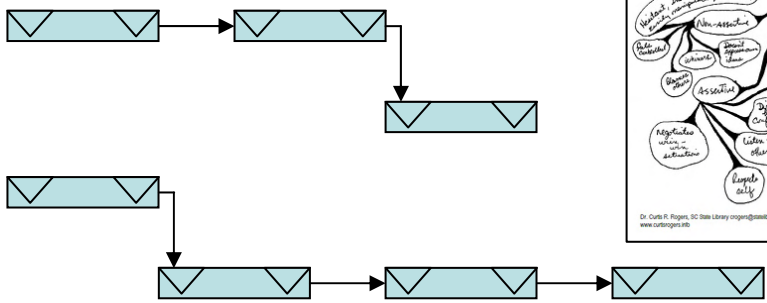
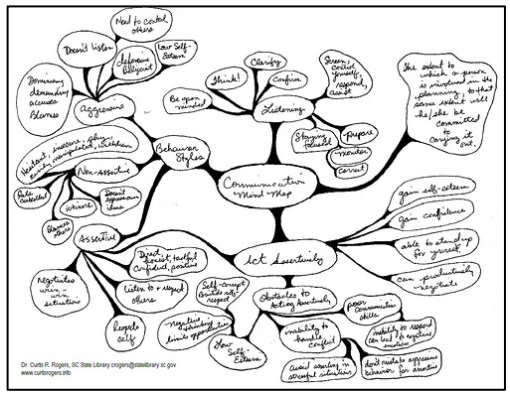
Linear thinking?











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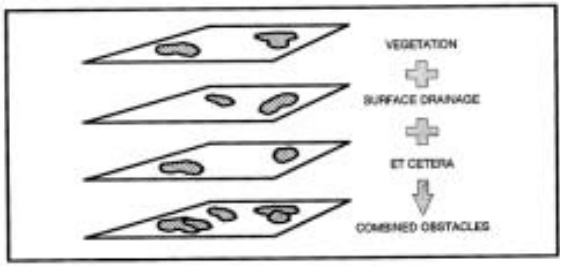
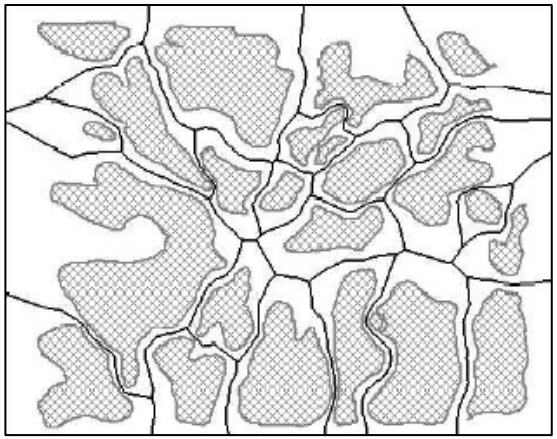
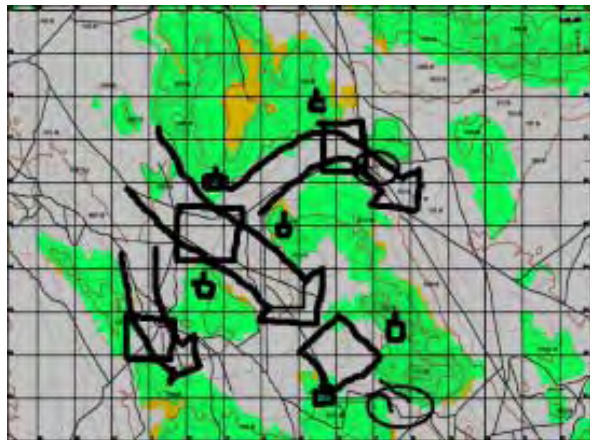
Conditioned for the *terrain*

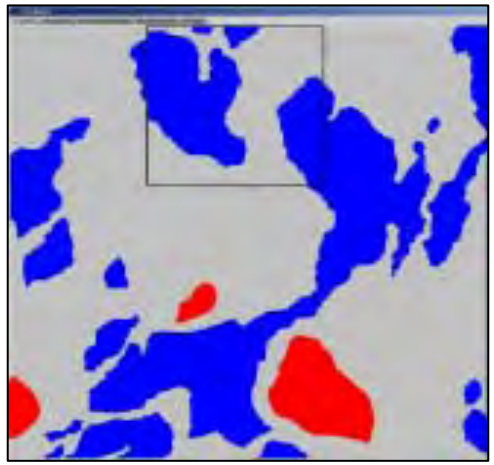


Terrain focussed – appropriate when **terrain is the focus**





Some useful GIS tools



Traditionally the population and urban areas 'discounted'
MCOO – SIT OVERLAY – COA – DSO – STAP - TGT MATRIX

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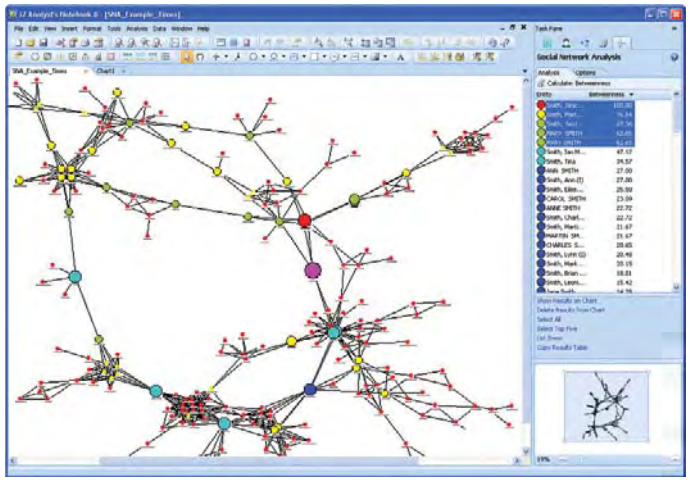
How to account for the socio-cultural, human terrain?



Population focussed – appropriate when the **population is the focus**

The current method of using 2-dimensional representations to map [human] terrain is proving difficult, especially when trying to account for the dynamic socio-cultural

USMC Cultural Operations (2008)

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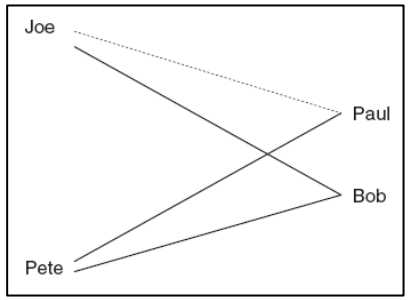
Traditional operational focuses

These we do

IPB
COG Construct



Named areas of interest *Association Charts* *Recon and Surveillance*

The new areas to appreciate

Multiple COG's
Multiple actors
Inter-relationships

alliances, building trust, managing perceptions, motivations, intents

Look for the patterns of change in inter-relationships and inter-dependencies, reading the influences and nuances

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The Conflict Ecosystem

Dr David Kilcullen, Counterinsurgency Expert

Theater of Operations

Coalition Forces

National government

Open / Porous system boundaries

Coalition agencies

Foreign Recruits

National Army

International Media

Armed Private Contractors

Propaganda

NGOs

Local media

Terrorist Cells

Equipment, Weapons & ammo

Ethnic militia

National Police

International Organizations

ained / radicalized fighters

Smugglers

Businesses

Funds

Insurgent Group A

Insurgent Group B

Refugees

Frontier infiltrators

Mafia

Ethnic group

Sympathy & support

Tribe

Clan

Tribe

Tribal fighters

Refugees / DPs

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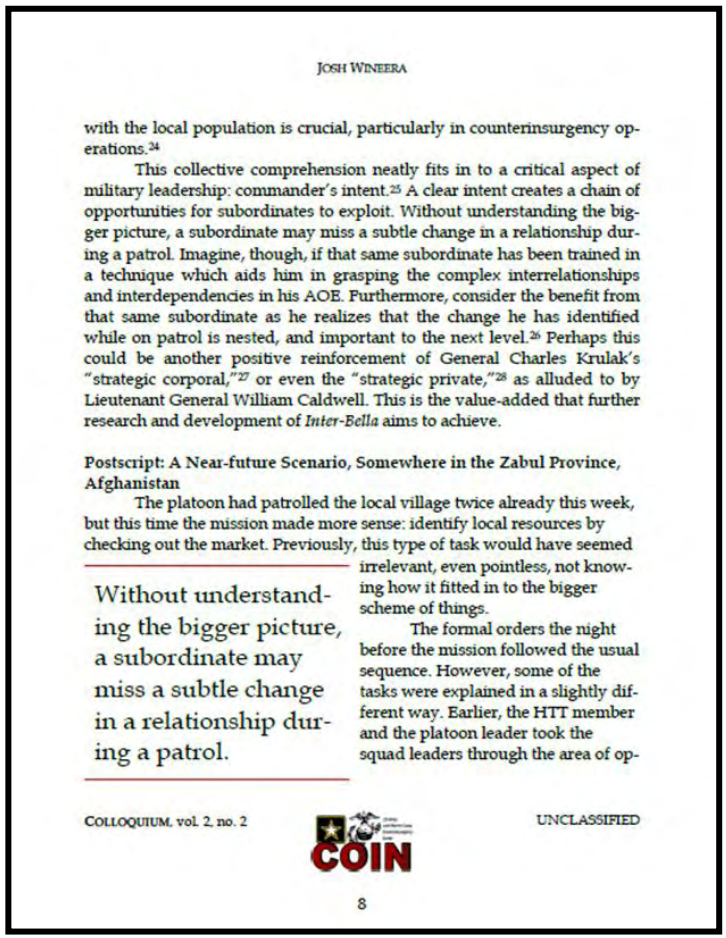
Inter-Bella: Understanding the Area of Operations Ecosystem



JOSH WINEERA

with the local population is crucial, particularly in counterinsurgency operations.[24]

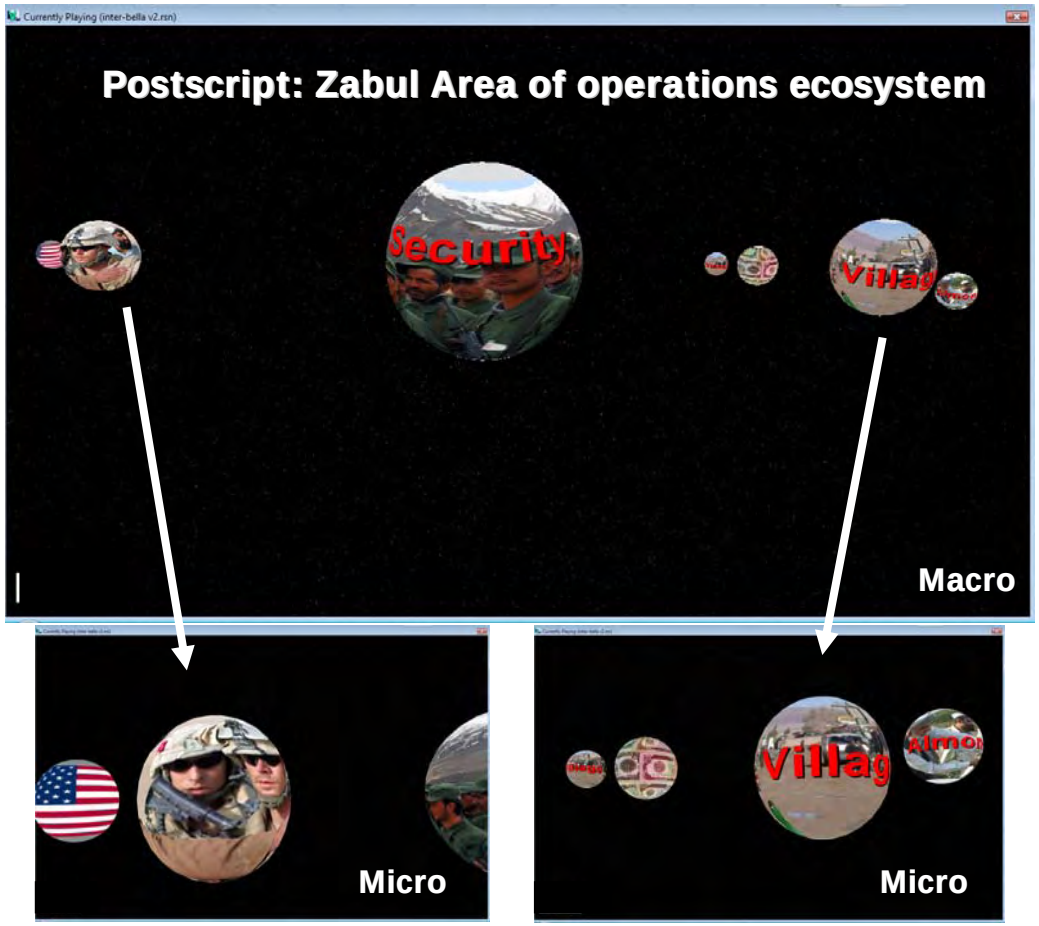
This collective comprehension neatly fits in to a critical aspect of military leadership: commander's intent.[25] A clear intent creates a chain of opportunities for subordinates to exploit. Without understanding the bigger picture, a subordinate may miss a subtle change in a relationship during a patrol. Imagine, though, if that same subordinate has been trained in a technique which aids him in grasping the complex interrelationships and interdependencies in his AOE. Furthermore, consider the benefit from that same subordinate as he realizes that the change he has identified while on patrol is nested, and important to the next level.[26] Perhaps this could be another positive reinforcement of General Charles Krulak's "strategic corporal,"[27] or even the "strategic private,"[28] as alluded to by Lieutenant General William Caldwell. This is the value-added that further research and development of *Inter-Bella* aims to achieve.

Postscript: A Near-future Scenario, Somewhere in the Zabul Province, Afghanistan

The platoon had patrolled the local village twice already this week, but this time the mission made more sense: identify local resources by checking out the market. Previously, this type of task would have seemed irrelevant, even pointless, not knowing how it fitted in to the bigger scheme of things.

Without understanding the bigger picture, a subordinate may miss a subtle change in a relationship during a patrol.

The formal orders the night before the mission followed the usual sequence. However, some of the tasks were explained in a slightly different way. Earlier, the HTT member and the platoon leader took the squad leaders through the area of op-



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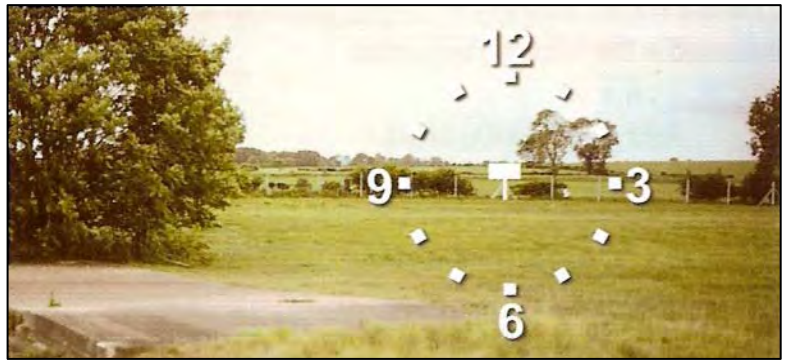
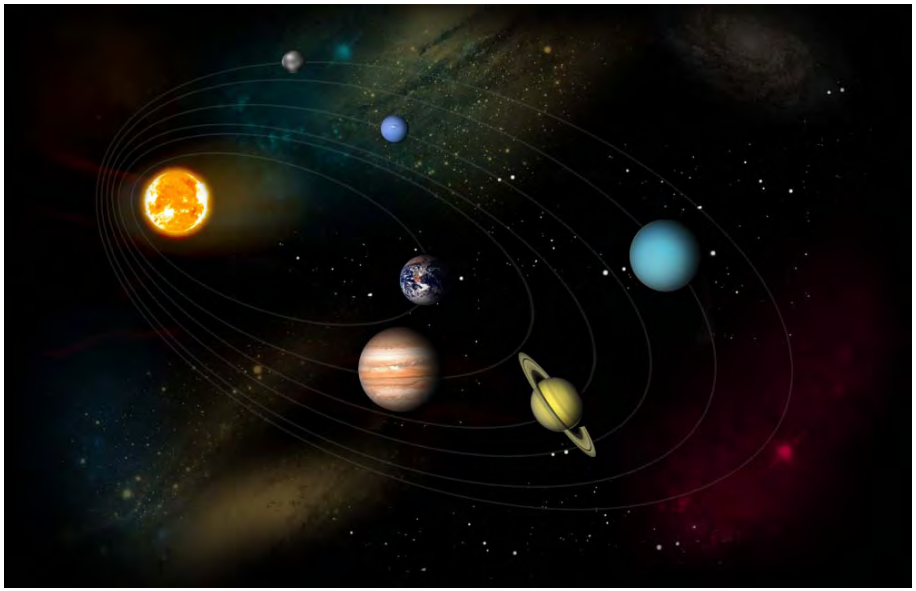
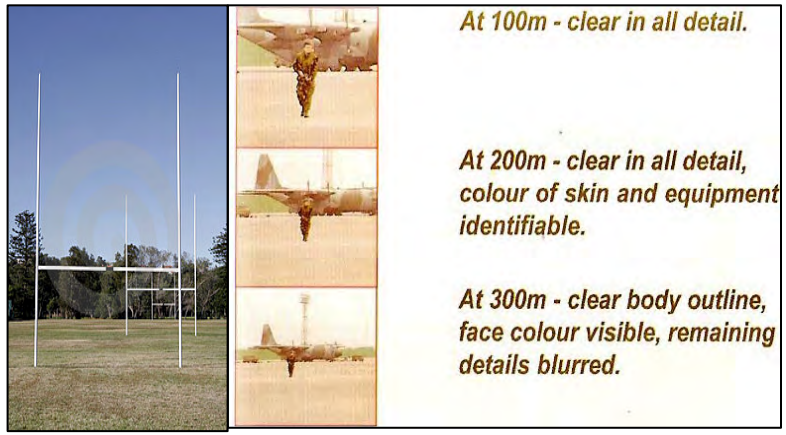
Inter-Bella:
The domains, the disciplines of inquiry

- Cognition, analogy, representation

- A systems thinking approach, but avoiding ‘mechanistic’ systems approach







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Inter-Bella: Blended approaches

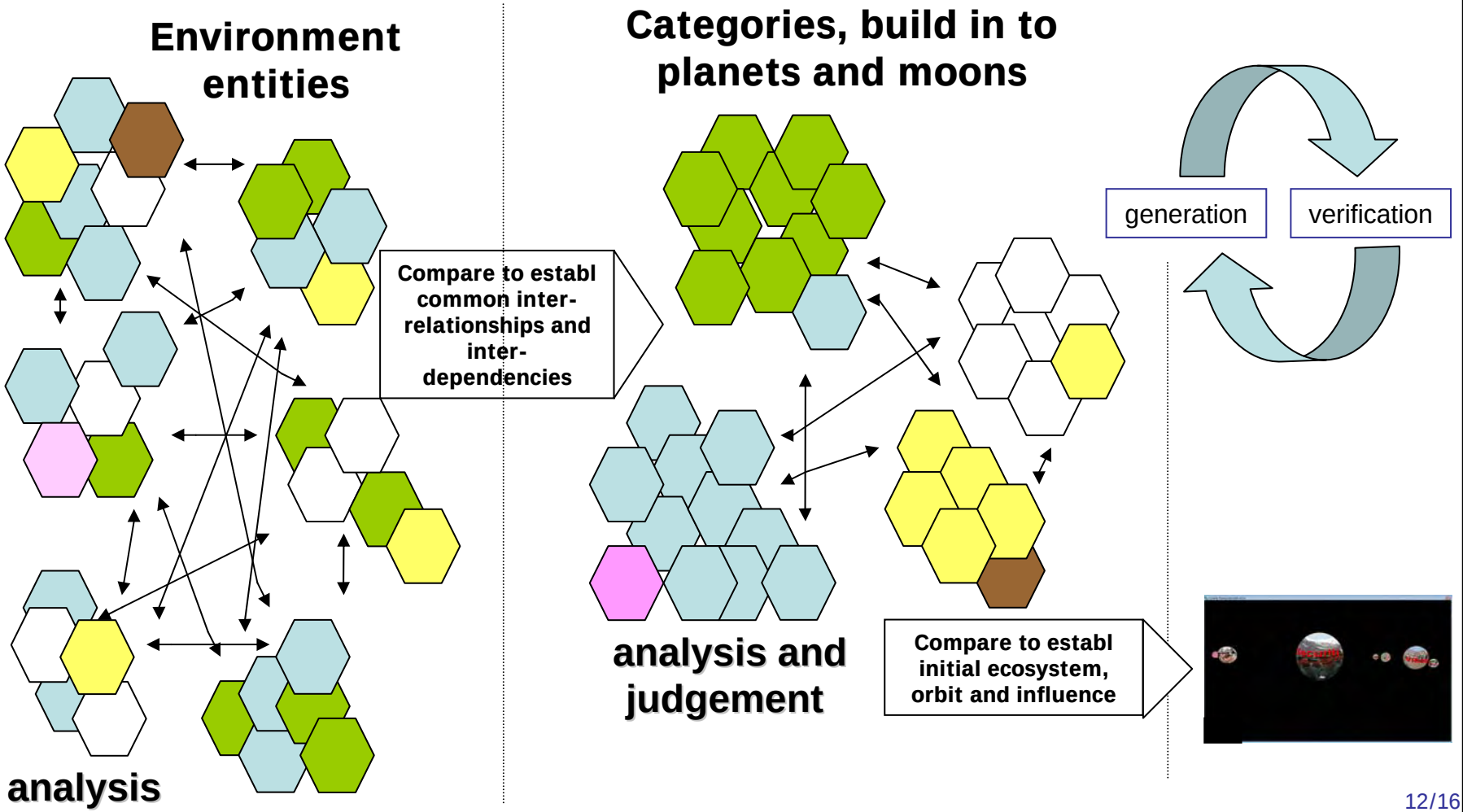
sequential or simultaneous

- Sometimes enemy-centric leading, then population-centric
- Sometimes population-centric leading, then enemy-centric
- Sometimes population-centric and enemy-centric

Keep both, one may enable the other

Building the Area of Operations Ecosystem (The thinking)

Theory (or ecosystem) generation...followed by Theory (or ecosystem) verification...followed by



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Inter-Bella: How and where to embed in the staff process? (The process)

J/S/G2	4. Initial intelligence estimate: a. Brief on MCOO (terrain, weather, and other factors). (See Appx 1.) b. Brief on Situation Overlay (Threat strengths, decisive points, critical vulnerabilities, and COAs). c. Recommend most likely and dangerous threat COAs. (See Appx 2.)

Inputs	Steps and Activities	Outputs
Intelligence Update: **Situation Overlay** **Battlefield Intelligence**	**1. Review the Situation:** a. Environment and threat update. b. Own Troops analysis: (1) Own strengths and vulnerabilities. (2) State of manoeuvre, CS, and CSS assets. (3) State of morale. c. Time analysis (1/3 plan, 2/3 preparation).	Most likely threat COA. Most dangerous threat COA. Own force capability. Initial time plan.
Commander's Guidance **IPB Update**	**1. Create COA Concepts:** a. Conduct core estimate. b. Integrate BOS estimates. c. Visualise action	Initial range of own COAs (at least two).

J/S/G2	3. Updated intelligence estimate: a. Changes to threat situation. b. Event Overlay if available (each developed threat COA).
J/S/G2	4. Threat situation update: a. Modified Event Overlay (after war game) . b. Recommended CCIRs.

Extracts from NZP 86. Staff Officer Handbook, Military Appreciation Process, similar to the Military Decision Making Process

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Inter-Bella: How and where to embed in small unit orders? (The orders)

generation

verification

?

Ground

?

Situation

Mission

?

Execution

Administration

Command and Control

Feedback

generation

verification

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Inter-Bella: Summary

- Work in progress, testing for early feedback underway
- All the ‘ologies’ have a view
- Area of Operations Ecosystem – identify characteristics, learn entities and learn relationships (theory generation-verification cycle)
- Not a replacement, an additional technique, complimentary to other approaches

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Inter-Bella: Understanding the Area of Operations Ecosystem