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Humanitarian Intervention at Mt. Sinjar, Iraq: A Complex Adaptive System Analysis

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Acronyms

APC Armored Personnel Carrier

AUMF Authorization for the Use of Military Force

BOG Boots on the Ground

C2 Command and Control

CAS Complex Adaptive System

CE Complex Emergency

DART Disaster Assistance Response Team

DOD Department of Defense

FAC Forward Air Controller

GOI Government of Iraq

IHL International Humanitarian Law

IOM International Organization for Migration

ISIS Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

ISR Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance

JPADS Joint Precision Air Drop System

KDP Kurdistan Democratic Party

KRG Kurdistan Regional Government

MSF Médecins Sans Frontières

NFI Non-Food Items

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

OFDA Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

PKK Kurdistan Workers Party

RAF Royal Air Force

UN United Nations

UNAMI United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNOCHA UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

USAID United States Agency for International Development

USG United States Government

WFP World Food Programme

WHO World Health Organization

YPG Kurdish People's Protection Units

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INTRODUCTION

On August 5th of 2014, the lone Member of Parliament representing the Yezidi

people in Iraq sobbed violently as she delivered a heartbreaking plea for help to her

colleagues. Still holding the tissue used to dry her reddened eyes, she screamed:

> I am standing here…in order to convey the bitter reality of the Yezidis currently
> on Mount Sinjar… 500 Yazidi boys and men have been slaughtered up to now...
> our women are being taken captive and sold on the slave-market... Please,
> brothers... Please, brothers... A genocide campaign is taking place right now
> against the Yezidis... I beg you, Mr. Speaker, my people are being slaughtered…
> Today, the Yezidis are being slaughtered… I speak in the name of humanity. Save
> us! Save us! For the past 48 hours, 30,000 families have been besieged on Mount
> Sinjar, without food or water. They are dying. Seventy children have died so far
> of thirst and suffocation. Fifty elderly people have died because of the
> deteriorating conditions. Our women are being taken captive and sold on the
> slave-market. We are being slaughtered, annihilated. An entire religion is being
> wiped off the face of the Earth. Brothers, I am calling out to you in the name of
> humanity! In the name of humanity, save us! Mr. Speaker, I want to...[1]

As the Speaker for the session cut her off, MP Vian Dakhil collapsed into the

arms of several ministers who had surrounded her to show solidarity. Several other MP's

simply bowed their heads, casting their gazes downward as the session proceeded. The

dramatic optics of the emergency, among other factors, motivated the Obama

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[1] http://www.memritv.org/clip_transcript/en/4406.htm

administration to act. The airstrikes that followed were part of a larger effort to protect US national security assets and personnel, not to mention gains resulting from blood and treasure expended during the decade prior in Iraq. But the international reaction to the crisis tells a broader story than the timely actions of the President indicate. International aid organizations, not US intelligence assets, were the most accurate in assessing the numbers of stranded on the mountainside. UN agencies coordinated with US military assets to deliver food and water to the Yezidi atop Mt. Sinjar. Finally and perhaps more importantly for future interventions, humanitarian groups in Geneva have strong opinions on how military assets should be used during crises like the one at Mt. Sinjar. Reconciling these opinions against realities on the ground is crucial for effective communication, toward the purpose of saving as many lives and reducing as much suffering as possible during crisis.

Taking an in-depth look at cases that at like Mt. Sinjar help illuminate how international first responders coordinate their actions. It can also aid in understanding the undeniable influence of the media and general public in driving humanitarian action. In light of sub-state actors who assume state-like functions before perpetrating war crimes, new typologies and methodologies should be considered. The intellectual seed that would grow to shape this paper was planted in Geneva, Switzerland. The community of humanitarians located there revolves around a commitment to saving lives and reducing suffering solely based on need, while at the same time abstaining from politics. Noting that abstention the author, a security studies student, observed distinct cultural and ideological differences between the humanitarians in Geneva and another group often tasked with responding to crisis abroad, the US military. This was the author's first

notion that a network of actors might be placed into taxonomy. It should be mentioned

early on that while humanitarianism, humanitarian intervention and peacekeeping are

separate phenomena; operating environments in conflict zones like Afghanistan and Iraq

have rendered the need for a new typology.[2]

Less than a month after leaving Geneva, the scenario that unfolded in Iraq proved

ripe for testing these ideas. As the world watched the violent rise of ISIS over the

summer of 2014, actors in the humanitarian community became anxious about the

corresponding population displacement. Ongoing crises in South Sudan, the Central

African Republic and Syria had already strained resources at the UN. When ISIS fighters

massacred religious minorities and began abducting women as sex slaves on August 3rd,

the optics of the emergency appeared grim. The world woke up to news on August 4th

that atrocities had occurred in a town called Sinjar in northern Iraq. Known previously for

a massive trove of insurgent planning materials captured in 2007, the city also served as

home for a religious minority called the Yezidi. Having fled from ISIS up a nearby

mountain, it was clear the Yezidi would perish or be sold into sex markets in the absence

of intervention by outside actors. By August 13th, most of the previously trapped Yezidi

had made their way to safety. Airdrops from the United States, the UK and Australia had

sustained the group, while Syrian Kurdish ground forces and US airstrikes cleared a

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[2] In the context of peacekeeping operations, this notion was explored by the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center using the language of Integrated Missions: "Integration is designed to streamline UN peace support processes and ensure that the objectives of all UN forces and agencies are channeled towards a common overarching goal. It is an approach that makes good organizational sense, but it is one that has raised significant objections from the humanitarian community, who have serious reservations about the placement of the UN humanitarian agencies under the same control structure as the political and military components of peace operations. "Conflict and Compromise: UN Integrated Missions and the Humanitarian Imperative." Text. *ReliefWeb*, June 1, 2006. http://reliefweb.int/report/world/conflict-and-compromise-un-integrated-missions-and-humanitarian-imperative.

corridor for a mass escape. The humanitarian community could hardly argue with the outcome, but remained silent in calling for specific intervention, instead using vague language to call on "those with influence" to pass the buck to western powers.[3] Nevertheless, the guidelines for the use of military assets in emergencies such as the one at Mt. Sinjar are much murkier than that for natural disasters, for example. Given this lack of hierarchy and structure, the seed for a new methodology had been planted.

Watching the gripping story, it was if much of what had been relayed in Geneva concerning the use of military assets during humanitarian disaster was being put to an immediate test on the ground. It was clear there was little the humanitarian community or Government of Iraq could do to help the Yezidi in real time, despite being acutely aware of their need. Humanitarian organizations quickly and accurately assessed the situation, leaving the US military to justify clumsy reporting about the number stranded.[4] Conversely, only the US military and its partners were able to materially respond to the crisis by dropping supplies to the Yezidi and munitions on the ISIS fighters trapping them. Those organizations with decades of aid experience were left sidelined due to the violence on the ground. Despite the asymmetry in response between actors, the vast majority of those trapped on the mountain succeeded in making their way to refugee camps, rather than starving or worse. That short-term success was the intellectual spark

[3] Section, United Nations News Service. "UN News - UN Condemns Mass Executions in Iraq, Urges Leaders to Prevent Sectarian Reprisal." *UN News Service Section*, June 4, 2014. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48056#.Vh2e17zWviA.

[4] "Sinjar Mountains." Accessed November 9, 2015. https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zRtBKZRnBeDY.kDbNdUwh61nc.

for this thesis.[5] Many lives were saved that would have otherwise been lost due to thirst, hunger, exposure or indiscriminate ISIS mortar-fire. Gulie Khalaf, head of Yezidis International, relayed to the author that those who considered returning back down the mountain to Sinjar town to retrieve food or a loved one would have been placed at particular risk. In light of an abundance of literature decrying intervention, this particular success appeared unequivocal. The author's primary research inquiry quickly became: what drove the (relatively) successful outcome at Mt. Sinjar?

This paper is an inductive study designed to apply new methods of analysis to humanitarian interventions in areas controlled by violent sub-state actors. A descriptive study of the Mount Sinjar case, no matter how detailed, would not prove sufficient for any meaningful analysis. For this reason, the language of Complex Adaptive Systems is used to better understand how large groups of actors choose certain actions and reject alternate strategies, in order to appear successful and perpetuate their existence and relevance. The method in this paper evolved while observing interactions in the Mt Sinjar case. Therefore, the case was not mapped onto an existing model; the model was conceived to improve analysis options for interventions. As such, there may be more appropriate cases to test CAS as a nascent methodology in international studies in the future. The author is the first to acknowledge that there is no substantive "system" which produced results at Mt. Sinjar. Rather, food and water dropped from airplanes to sustain the trapped Yezidi, plus Kurdish fighters and US strikes that killed would-be murderers

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[5] The massacre on August 3rd, 2014 in Sinjar Town itself was by no means a positive. Yezidi men were slaughtered and the women captured and sold into sex markets. When viewed from the perspective of atrocity prevention, the events in Iraq during the summer of 2014 were an absolute failure. However, those that were trapped were ultimately help, rendering the need to understand the conditions under which trapped populations with humanitarian needs can be protected in the short-term.

were the material items that affected reality on the ground. But future interventions in

situations with both genocidal provocateurs and widespread humanitarian needs may

exceed western will or capability to respond.[6] Understanding how different actors "get to

yes" during intervention, despite their various starting places, is crucial to preventing and

mitigating future genocides when many actors will have no choice but to share the same

operating space.

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[6] The reader will notice the terms "humanitarianism" and "humanitarian intervention" used concurrently.
The theory and practitioners making up these fields are very different, but due to their shared desire to
operate in the same space across sovereign borders during certain violent situations, the two groups are
considered under a similar context for the purposes of this paper.

HUMANITARIANISM AND HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

The question of whether to cross sovereign borders and save those in peril elicits a

strong response from many actors. Perhaps during no activity does Miles' Law, "where

you stand [on an issue] is where you sit", fit more applicably than humanitarian

intervention.[7] A wide scope of actors constitutes the theory and practice of humanitarian

intervention. Governments, humanitarian practitioners, lawyers, doctors, ethicists,

philosophers, militaries, the media, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and the UN

have all shaped the collective discourse. This conversation is typically made public

during a major crisis, but is constantly evolving in academic and policy domains. The

theory behind this discussion exists in legal documents, conventions and the minds and

attitudes of practitioners themselves. Understanding the actors and ideas that constitute

the humanitarian network is the first step in disaggregating how the community responds

to emergencies.

It is tempting, but risky, to conceive of intervention as recently constructed. Some

analysts mistakenly label a brief emphasis on intervention during the 90's as the birth of

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[7] *"*, Miles, Rufus E. 1978. The Origin and Meaning of Miles' Law. Public administration review 38, (5): 399- 403.

the phenomena.[8] In fact, the etymology of the word dates to the early 19th century and

the foundations of the concept, as we know it today, can be traced to the 16th.[9] Domestic

stability was valued in Europe and nations monitored gross violations in neighboring

states that in turn could produce unrest and threaten regional peace.[10]

Tellingly, the emergence of the word "humanitarian" was roughly concurrent with

the labeling and recognition of "total war". Although the concept of "total war" has

existed in practice since conflict groups emerged, the phrase came into use following

devastating European wars of the 19th century.[11] Total war requires that citizenry become

involved in war efforts and oftentimes participants in mass mobilization. As whole

societies became both involved in, and the target of war efforts, the visibility of warfare's

destruction rose. It was under these conditions that Swiss social entrepreneur Henri

Dunant observed the aftermath of a particularly brutal battle in Italy and returned to

Geneva with the idea that an organization with no allegiance to warring parties should be

on hand to treat the wounded.[12] His ideas were practical, not political, and relied on the

idea that local civilian populations would be able to mobilize in case of crisis. Because

these populations already resided near the battle area, the idea that first-responders would

cross sovereign borders was not yet at question. There was not yet a division in theory,

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[8] See APPENDIX E

[9] "Humanitarian | Dictionary.com." Accessed July 23, 2015.
http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/humanitarian.

[10] Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

[11] "Total War | Military." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed June 25, 2015.
http://type.britannica.com/topic/total-war.

[12] "Founding." Topic. *International Committee of the Red Cross*, May 21, 2015.
https://type.icrc.org/en/who-we-are/history/founding.

practice or rhetoric between "humanitarian intervention" and other types of life-saving

activities, only the broader label of "humanitarianism".

Nevertheless, "humanitarian interventions" dictate that local populations are

affected by crisis to the point where outside help is required and offending parties must

be destroyed by force.[13] Put simply, a population who requires protection in the first

place cannot come to its own rescue. The word "humanitarianism", as used by Geneva-

based actors, typically eschews the use of force as a violation of humanitarian principles.

This contradiction with regard to the word "humanitarian" is in no small part a reason

why interventions are poorly understood, and hotly contested by many actors. The fact

that those parties responsible for "humanitarianism" and "humanitarian intervention"

desire to operate in the same physical space during crisis, with vastly different ideologies,

further muddies the issues.

By the time the first Geneva Convention was signed in 1864, individuals from

diverse backgrounds congregated under a banner of treating the battlefield wounded.[14]

The Swiss Parliament was the catalyst for initial meetings. The committee that had been

assembled the year before included an army general, two doctors, a judge, and Dunant

himself.[15] A rift emerged between the idealistic Dunant, clinging to the idea of a neutrally

acting body, and the judge who deemed the proposition unrealistic. That nascent debate

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[13] Writing on humanitarian interventions, Michael Walzer in *Just and Unjust Wars* states that "Against the enslavement or massacre of political opponents, national minorities, and religions sects, there may well be no help unless help comes from outside." The passage is particularly applicable to the Sinjar Case. All three of the above listed minority groups were targeted for execution or enslavement by ISIS on the Nineveh Plain on August 3rd, 2014.

[14] "Founding." Topic. *International Committee of the Red Cross*, May 21, 2015. https://type.icrc.org/en/who-we-are/history/founding.

[15] ibid.

over whom should respond, entertained by actors from different legal, military and medical perspectives, is one that has persisted. And just like the initial five-member committee that founded the Red Cross, the debate has since coalesced around what is known as the humanitarian imperative. Diverse actors have varying strategies, but a common goal of reducing suffering and saving lives inside the humanitarian community. For this reason the actors in question can be placed into taxonomy inside their own larger communities. Inside one group of this taxonomy, the humanitarian imperative is codified into the relevant literature and widely adopted by the humanitarian public.[16] The stated requisite is that aid should be rendered wherever it is needed, to whoever requires it, bar none.[17] This requirement presents a serious challenge in the face of violent sub-state actors. Failure to provide aid is not to fail on some abstract rubric, but on real performance measures rated by humanitarian practitioners (in this case, on the principle known as the humanitarian imperative).

In the context of the wider international system, all are not unified around the above principle; militaries and states typically look out for their own interest, first. Moreover, the humanitarian imperative appears functionally different to different actors inside the Geneva community itself. Understanding these differences, among and between large groups of actors, is necessary to unpack success or failure in non-hierarchical operating environments on the ground. To see the system as unified in organization or effort is not only erroneous, it is confusing in times of actual crisis when

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[16] "Humanitarian Values and Response to Crisis," https://type.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/57jmlz.htm.

[17] "Fundamental Principles Presentation." Accessed June 25, 2015.

actor's efforts can be redundant or lacking efficacy.[18] The wider system, however, is not completely disparate. Actors observe the behaviors of others and modify their own strategies. On occasion they assist each other. For these reasons, the language of networks and Complex Adaptive Systems is useful. By noting the selection of successful strategies by humanitarian actors in a given case, it is possible to begin to unpack humanitarian outcomes.

Compounding the issue is the international legal framework regarding intervention. The language of the UN Charter is contra-indicatory. Although Article 2(7) of the Charter prohibits violating state sovereignty, interventions require that sovereignty become subservient to humanitarian outcomes.[19] Subsequent articles in the Charter provide measures for recourse during "threats", "breaches of the peace" or "acts of aggression". But the humanitarian effects of domestic security vacuums wrought by sub-state actors do not neatly conform to the prescribed recourse. Rather, it is the sum of action or inaction between many different actors in the humanitarian network that produce outcomes. This paper proposes a new method of disaggregating that summation. It is worth repeating that inaction by certain actors can, in reality, be a positive from their point of view, satisfying what will be labeled an intrinsic performance measure in the Method chapter.

Depending on the criterion used, the Mount Sinjar case may or may not count as a classical "humanitarian intervention". This may seem irrelevant to some, while theorists and particular authors may find the distinction quite useful. Whereas a humanitarian

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[18] For an example of redundant and inefficient humanitarian response, see the 2010 Haitian Earthquake.

[19] "Charter of the United Nations." Accessed July 23, 2015. http://type.un.org/en/documents/charter/.

intervention may require the usurping or limiting of "local" sovereignty, it can be

assumed that ISIS was the entity controlling all elements of sovereignty on the Nineveh

Plain in August of 2014. Whereas interventions have historically been regarded as

protecting populations from rights-abusing despots inside their own sovereign state, the

Mt. Sinjar case demonstrates how the a) lack of Government of Iraq (GOI) authority and

b) the assumption of ISIS control over sovereign functions like banking and border

control might render a newer typology of intervention.

This potentially new typology may overlap significantly with extant Right to

Protect (R2P) doctrine. Like most definitions of humanitarian intervention, R2P provides

for the fact that the Mt. Sinjar case was carried out in a foreign state and to prevent or

mitigate atrocity. Neither R2P, nor more traditional "right to intervene" doctrines provide

for the fact that GOI invited the foreign intervention to take place.[20] The increasing

prevalence of sub-state actors, who assume control over state-like functions may require

a new typology of intervention to be defined. More research is required in this area, but

the semantic and substantive issues at hand are certainly complex ones.[21]

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[20] Simms and Trim cite a multitude of authors as agreeing that interventions (1) are carried out in foreign states, (2) to prevent death, suffering or widespread rights abuses and, at issue in the Sinjar Case, (3) against the will of the host nation. Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2011. p. 4

[21] The R2P Doctrine has come under scrutiny for being too permissive. Robert Pape of Harvard University has described R2P as setting the "bar so low" that almost any act of domestic negligence could be considered cause for intervention. He calls for a new standard for intervention, one that is viable and sustainable. Crucially, however, the plan still defines interventions as those that are carried out against governments, not sub-state actors. While the Sinjar Case retained the texture of a humanitarian intervention, it simply may be the case that no concrete definition, concerning the use of force against sub-state actors toward humanitarian means, yet exists. Much more research should be carried out in this area.

Security and Humanitarianism

There are currently more refugees and IDP's (Internally Displaced Persons) walking the globe with no home since WWII.[22] The intensity of crises producing refugees has stressed the humanitarian system in recent years. The United Nations labels the most severe, large-scale humanitarian crises "Level 3", or "L3" emergencies. L3's are declared based on "the scale, urgency and complexity of the needs, as well as the lack of domestic capacity to respond and the reputational risk for the humanitarian system." The author of this paper was sitting in UNICEF headquarters in late July of 2014 when a senior level official commented, "one more L3 would stress the system as it has never been before". The comment was made just before Iraq was declared just that, the fourth L3 the UN would need to address. The L3 crisis in Iraq was declared on August 13th, 2014, the last day of the Mt. Sinjar case.[23]

The four L3 emergencies in the world today have severe humanitarian symptoms. However, they are not purely "humanitarian disasters", but oftentimes wars. To describe this in a humanitarian context, the Humanitarian Public uses the term Complex Emergency (CE) wherein a breakdown of authority is the cause of humanitarian concerns like mass displacement or starvation.[24] Security vacuums form the roots of crises in Iraq, Syria, South Sudan and Yemen. To assess these situations only in a humanitarian

[22] "Global Refugees 2015: More People Fleeing Home Than Any Other Time Since World War II." *International Business Times*. Accessed July 23, 2015. http://type.ibtimes.com/global-refugees-2015-more-people-fleeing-home-any-other-time-world-war-ii-1971066.

[23] Section, United Nations News Service. "UN News - UN Declares Iraq 'Level 3 Emergency' to Trigger More Resources, Speed up Aid Delivery." *UN News Service Section*, August 14, 2014. http://type.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48483#.VbFbZHjWubA.

[24] Security vacuums form the roots of crises in Iraq, Syria, South Sudan and Yemen.

capacity, absent the question of security, is to treat the symptom and not the disease. In *A Bed for the Night,* David Rieff asks whether the labeling of the Holocaust as "humanitarian crisis" would have done anything to save more lives.[25] Or as the President of Medicines Sans Frontiers put brusquely in 1994: "One cannot halt a massacre with medicines."[26] Unfortunately, the Humanitarian Public has propagated untenable principles designed for classical battlefield or natural disasters that simply do not apply to genocide caused by sub-state actors. The Mt. Sinjar situation is valuable because it involved dire humanitarian symptoms caused by a sub-state actor violently taking resources and territory by force in a security vacuum. The fact that the response was efficacious is by itself a unique factor. Even very short-term interventions, US activity in Somalia for example, tend to run the risk of failure. When longer-term, nation-building exercises are attempted by the military the success rate fails to nearly zero.

It is important to remember that videos of beheaded American journalists had not yet been released during the Mount Sinjar case. The General Public in America had yet to view the optics of that particular horror on August 19th, after the Mount Sinjar case concluded.[27] [28] Consequently, the domestic acceptability concerning the decision to return to Iraq with force was inseparable from a direct humanitarian outcome in the short term, desired by the Obama administration earlier in the month. This was not, by a long

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[25] Rieff, David. *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis*. Reprint edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003. p. 166.

[26] ibid. p. 167.

[27] "ISIS Beheading U.S. Journalist James Foley, Posts Video - CNN.com." *CNN*. Accessed July 23, 2015. http://type.cnn.com/2014/08/19/world/meast/isis-james-foley/index.html.

[28] Mount Sinjar was not fully liberated until December of 2014. See Appendix B for US General Public search interest graph.

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stretch, a unique justification for the use of force. In fact, from a liberal interventionist

perspective, it seems to warrant little extra attention. Despite this intuition, the

humanitarian and security spheres are also very separate. Militaries are by definition

non-neutral, politically motivated actors. By contrast, humanitarian principles including

the ability to operate independently (independence) and to remain politically neutral

(neutrality) have been prized since the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross

and Red Crescent Movement established the Fundamental Principles in Vienna in 1965.[29]

If humanitarian actors lose their neutrality or independence, their very function can

become compromised by virtue of the fact that access to prisons, battlefields or disaster

areas may become limited, as discussed above. These oftentimes-untenable notions are

stated in a number of non-binding documents, but what is left unsaid during an

intervention can often be telling. Consider the following:

> The Red Cross has long acknowledged its awareness of the treatment of Jews
> during World War II, maintaining that if it had disclosed what it knew, it would
> have lost its ability to inspect prisoner of war camps on both sides of the front.[30]

During Complex Emergencies (CE's) access to battlefields can prove untenable

due to violent actors that care little for International Humanitarian Law (IHL).[31] That

does not, however, mitigate or negate the community's desire to satisfy the humanitarian

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[29] https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf

[30] Molotsky, Irvin. "Red Cross Admits Knowing of the Holocaust During the War." *The New York Times*, December 19, 1996, sec. U.S. http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/19/us/red-cross-admits-knowing-of-the-holocaust-during-the-war.html.

[31] Neutrality is put to the test more often during CE's than natural disasters. Although leaders who build shoddy infrastructure can politicize natural disasters, it is during CE's where the politicization of response is most likely to take place. After all, whoever goes on to fill a vacuum in governance will likely have political supporters or detractors outside the state. Supporters will undoubtedly offer aid for political reasons, while detractors will decry this aid as tainted and in violation of neutrality, independence, or both.

imperative, wherever it exists. A tragic, but illustrative situation that occurred just before

the final submission of this paper came in the form of a US strike on a MSF hospital in

Kunduz, Afghanistan. After a period of relative stability following the departure of most

US forces the country, Taliban forces that had been held at bay attempted to take over the

city. MSF, following the principle of humanitarian neutrality, continued to operate in an

environment that disintegrated into side taking. Militaries and humanitarians are

asymmetrically interested in operating environments for their own particular reasons.

The US-led in Afghanistan war was a conflict during which this asymmetry

manifested. While the Afghan population had suffered drought and famine for years, the

sudden breakdown in political authority as the Taliban were removed greatly exacerbated

these problems. As aid agencies attempted to address these new needs, US soldiers

distributed Commander's Emergency Response Funds (CERF) to Afghan locals, much as

an aid agency might do.[32] It is not difficult to conceive of the negative effect that money

earmarked for humanitarian purposes, distributed by the DOD, had on NGO perception

of neutrality in the field. This is one small example, but illustrative of the point, writ

large. Different actors, interested in stability and health of civilian populations want to do

so according to their own performance measures. It may be helpful coincidence or

intractable conundrum, that both quality counterinsurgency and sound development

practices require reducing local grievances through the provision of basic services.

The rift also occurs within the language of "last resort". Militaries are equipped

and trained to quickly create solutions to kinetic problems. In the case of the US military,

this ability largely translates into a logistic and transport capability that is unrivaled by

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[32] http://type.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=27496

any actor, worldwide.[33] On the humanitarian side of the coin, the language of "last resort" states that all other options for airlift should instead be explored first. These notions are codified into theory for sound historical reasons. The politicization or manipulation of aid by militaries is an omnipresent and nefarious reality.[34] But what is necessary from the perspective of governments (and crucial for humanitarian beneficiaries) can violate humanitarian principles. This in turn decreases the will to cooperate between what will be labeled the Humanitarian Public and the (United States) Government. The perception that actors have taken sides restricts accessibility to prisons and hospitals to legitimate aid workers, crucial locations for their work. In this light, "last resort" seems axiomatic, but in truth can harm cooperation during interventions. "Last resort" sets up the notion that even in cases where a military is ready and willing to distribute aid, valuable time should be spent during crisis to explore other options instead of saving lives immediately. This notion is amplified during Complex Emergencies (CE) where a breakdown of authority and violence occur, militaries may be better suited to deliver aid and protect civilians efficaciously. This issue is a delicate one and undoubtedly case-specific in the ontological sense. But the humanitarian community is increasingly directionless when crafting proactive plans to respond to humanitarian needs in violent environments. In turn, this has not aided in mitigating mass refugee displacement, the primary humanitarian issue of our day. The Mount Sinjar case is representative of the most complicated humanitarian emergencies, life–threatening conditions wrought by fundamental security issues. During

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[33] Strategic airlift operations, for example, are more easily carried out by the US than by independent UN or NGO actors, who oftentimes must contract physical assets on a case-by-case basis. As the USG owns these assets beforehand, capacity and speed are augmented in time of crisis.

[34] "The Dangers of Politicizing Aid." *Chatham House*. Accessed July 24, 2015. http://type.chathamhouse.org//node/15761.

such cases a military may not only be a last resort, but the only option present at all. By their very definition interventions require killing or capturing those intent on starving or murdering innocent populations. If interventions existed in a political vacuum, the functional purity of theoretical ideals like could remain intact. When militaries are necessarily involved, they disintegrate. Moreover, militaries can conceive of themselves as a first, not last, resort to solve a given problem. Is it easy to see the challenges these opposing points of view present. Consider this passage from *What is Last Resort,* published by UNOCHA:

> …'last resort' is a temporary situation. When the specific requirement no longer exists or when comparable civilian assets become available to meet the requirement and, therefore, foreign military and civil defense assets no longer provide unique advantages, the situation of 'last resort' ceases to exist and these assets should be phased out and activities should be handed back over to civilian actors at an early opportunity. Even if a situation of 'last resort' is determined to exist, the use of foreign military and civil defense assets should under no circumstances undermine the actual or perceived neutrality, impartiality or operational independence of humanitarian actors, nor jeopardize current or future access to affected populations in need of humanitarian assistance.

The focus on the current CE in Iraq makes for a potent environment to test the conditions of the civil-military relationship. In an interconnected, globalized system, issues of a securitized nature are often passed on to the hegemon of the day. Known as "passing the buck" or the "free-rider" syndrome, countries that are otherwise capable look to the United States to intervene where the direst situations emerge. In that case, it is in the United States' best interest to interface with the humanitarian community in Geneva and elsewhere, to share the burden of an increasing level of CE's. Nevertheless,

the political will to save lives from murderous groups who seek to commit genocide abroad is a critical factor in mitigating the effects of the worst CE's.

Political Will and Humanitarian Intervention

The debate over whether to intervene oftentimes devolves into accusations by the humanitarian public of imperialism by the hegemonic powers of the day. Nothing in this paper will suggest that nations do not employ all manner of devious and adventuresome tactics under the banner of "humanitarianism". For example, Russia recently declared a shipment of goods by humanitarian convoys into Eastern Ukraine to be for aid purposes, while several sources describe the convoys as decoys for strategic force movements to defend newly acquired territory.[35] But the presence of devious tactics labeled "humanitarian" does not imply that these cases make up the majority of interventions, properly defined.

A far more common case involves that of mixed-motives, a spectrum of influences to include humanitarian, *realpolitik* and domestic forces. Indeed, as the Humanitarian Public, Government, General Public and Media each select various strategies, their interests are all present in some unknown ratio when action does

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[35] "Ukraine Conflict: Russian Aid or Trojan Horse?" *BBC News*. Accessed July 24, 2015. http://type.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28752878.

eventually take place. Michael Walzer provides a framework for understanding such

mixed motives:

> On the other hand… clear examples of what is called "humanitarian intervention" are very rare.[36] Indeed, I have not found any, but only mixed cases where the humanitarian motive is one among several. States don't send their soldiers into other states, it seems, only in order to save lives… So we will have to consider the moral significance of mixed motives. It is not necessarily an argument against humanitarian intervention that it is, at best, partially humanitarian, but it is a reason to be skeptical and to look closely at the other parts.[37]

Walzer does not concern himself with the presence of mixed motives, he is

convinced of them. Of interest is the "moral significance" of these motives. While

divining a human moral is tricky, that Walzer concludes interventions are empirically

"rare" is insightful. In fact, their scarcity may explain the relatively poor understanding of

the mechanisms behind intervention.

For the purpose of analysis it is helpful to build on what Walzer has done, and

also assume that nations hold a relatively constant desire to maximize their capability and

standing in the international system. Holding some notion of *realpolitik* as a controlled,

constant variable may help political scientists analyze moral questions. The Mt. Sinjar

case requires less conjecture. The official record lists the motives to once again use force

in Iraq for the first time since US troops withdrew in 2011. In addition to protecting

Americans and American assets, Obama's address to the nation on August 7th, lists the

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[37] Walzer, Michael. *Just And Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument With Historical Illustrations*. 4 edition. New York: Basic Books, 2006.

prevention of atrocity and its humanitarian symptoms as a co-constituted reason for the return of US airpower to Iraq.[38] In this case, the "mixed-motives" are documented.

Understanding the ratio of stated motives in a given intervention is difficult. A perpetual problem for political scientists studying the relations between nations is the metaphoric black box that surrounds leader's intentions. There is no way of empirically analyzing the degree to which humanitarian concerns mixed with national interest to drive the decision to begin airdrops and airstrikes in Iraq. However, the relatively prompt execution of humanitarian airdrops on August 7th, before any airstrikes took place near the mountain, suggests humanitarian concerns were not insignificant. At any rate, a public justification removes much of the guesswork in the form of a speech given by the President the following day.

Jus ad bellum aside, there is another manner of assessing success when humanitarian questions are at hand. This method deals less with justification and intent, and more with outcomes and ground realities. These are the "other parts" in Walzer's intervention equation. This method of describing success or failure takes into account humanitarian principles, those precepts that should guide intervention. But success, writ large, will be ascribed to the most basic imperative of all, saving lives and reducing suffering.

This paper will adopt a litmus test for success outlined by Nicholas Wheeler, that humanitarian outcomes matter:[39]

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[38] "President Obama makes a Statement on Iraq." *Whitehouse.gov*. Accessed July 24, 2015. https://type.whitehouse.gov/embeds/footer.

[39] Wheeler, Nicholas J. *Saving Strangers*. Oxford University Press, 2002. p. 39.

The primacy of humanitarian motives is not a threshold condition. But if it can be shown that the motives behind the intervention, or the reasons behind the selection of the means, are inconsistent with a positive human-itarian outcome, then it is disqualified as humanitarian. It follows that, even if an intervention is motivated by non-humanitarian reasons, it can still count as humanitarian provided that the motives, and the means employed, do not undermine a positive humanitarian outcome. In advancing this claim, I am not arguing that the society of states should praise those governments that are fortunate in achieving this happy coincidence of non-humanitarian motives, means, and outcomes. But I am arguing that, because they save lives, such interventions should be legitimated by states and not condemned or sanctioned.

Moral intentions can be debated to the point of breathlessness, but lives that are saved are not ambiguous. Even still, Wheeler's argument is a normative, not moralistic one. Short of "praised" or "legalized", positive outcomes should only be "legitimated". The Mount Sinjar case provides a reliable environment for testing whether lives would have been saved and suffering reduced in the absence of particular decisions made by all four nodes in the humanitarian network. Many will remain interested in whether the intervention at Mt. Sinjar was just or not. Those who are convinced the "humanitarian" banner is employed by nations for devious means will portend that any intervention, which is unilateral, is unjust, for it lacks the proven consensus of the international community.

The Mount Sinjar response involved a small coalition, which included British and Australian aircraft, hardly a broad international effort with respect to the Governments node.[40] The issue of Government of Iraq (GOI), Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and local NGO involvement will be addressed. These entities fall outside the scope of the

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[40] The coalition to counter ISIS would grow to include a broad group of nations by the end of the 2014. "Who Is Part of the Coalition to Battle ISIS? - CNN.com." *CNN.* Accessed July 8, 2015. http://type.cnn.com/2014/10/06/world/meast/isis-coalition-nations/index.html.

humanitarian network and will be treated independently. Walzer addresses this issue of

unilateral action as well, stating that unilateral-ness does not preclude mixed-motives, to

include humanitarian ones. The Mount Sinjar case is analyzed under the assumption that

strategies are selected on to adapt to a crowded humanitarian landscape. A discussion of

Complex Adaptive Systems with regard to humanitarianism follows in the Method

chapter.

METHOD

Civil-Military Relations: Two Nodes in a Network

Analysts currently draw a non-networked, two-node dichotomy between civilian actors and military actors engaging in humanitarian response. The range of interactions follows a linear schema, from "co-existence" on one end, to "cooperation" at the opposite end of a spectrum.[41] This framework accounts for interactions in the field, where differences between the communities are most pronounced. No feedback between nodes is accounted for, a necessary characteristic of a network. This paper proposes that the ontology of actions in humanitarianism is never this clear-cut, although the above dichotomy is useful for analyzing ground events. [42] Indeed, aid agencies and militaries coexist, coordinate and occasionally cooperate to produce outcomes in the field. But the

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[41]https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/ENGLISH%20VERSION%20Guidelines%20for%20Complex%20Emergencies.pdf

[42] *"In sum, to confine 'debates about humanitarian intervention to its military dimension' will be to be too often to separate 'arbitrarily…issues that in practice overlap."* Paul Williams review of Jennifer Welsh Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations as quoted in Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

drivers behind those outcomes are largely hidden. The US military explicitly outlines

humanitarian functions, but views the activity as a matter of countering extremism, not

necessarily satisfying the humanitarian imperative.[43] Even so, these interactions are put

under the umbrella of "civil-military relations" by most observers, demonstrating the

perceived dichotomy at hand. Events during the US-led war in Afghanistan blurred the

lines between the two groups when an environment hovering between coexistence and

cooperation developed. Nevertheless, distinct and opposing cultures and attitudes

regarding humanitarian intervention can be observed in the military and NGO

communities.

A short anecdote helps demonstrate the divide perfectly. While attending a civil-

military relations conference at West Point, the United States Military Academy, a young

cadet expressed his frustration at the lack of Command and Control (C2) on the ground

during humanitarian crises.[44] [45] Pointing to his own experience with a domestic fire

department, he happened to not fathom why a similar method of delegating in the field

couldn't work. The facilitator for the day pointed to the fact that no coordinating body

exists in the field to delegate every actor, especially during rapid onset (like the one at

Mt. Sinjar). Finally, an individual representing the NGO community stood up and said

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[43] "Thus counter-VEO campaigns demand that our military, in close coordination with other U.S. agencies and international organizations, assist local governments in addressing the root causes of conflict. As part of that effort, the U.S. military regularly contributes to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief endeavors aimed at alleviating suffering and restoring hope." Taken from The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2015.

[44] 2015 Civil Military Conference "About ALLIES." Accessed July 6, 2015. http://type.alliescivmil.org/about/.

[45] A term used by the military to denote the line of communication and decision-making in a given area of operations.

that, in fact, standards and rules do exist and should be followed to the letter. While the

SPHERE standards, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and

UN Cluster System are widely accepted and used, militaries will oftentimes abide by

their own standards in the field. In the case of a complex emergency, where a breakdown

in authority occurs, it is those who project force that dictate de facto C2 in the field.[46] Put

succinctly, "those who hold the guns" will make the decisions.[47] It needs to be reinforced

that the wider humanitarian community does not accept this de facto hierarchy.

The humanitarian community is occasionally comfortable with the C2 structure

the military brings to natural disasters, for example during Typhoon Haiyan.[48] The deluge

of NGO's arriving in the aftermath of disaster creates logistic confusion that can be

cleared by strong C2.   However, military assets and personnel on the ground during

Complex Emergencies violate humanitarian principles held dear by the UN and NGO's,

making the environment far less hierarchical, and therefore more appropriate for CAS.

This paper seeks to explore how interactions between actors produced outcomes,

in light of these very different points of view and in the absence of overarching hierarchy

in the field. Lives saved, and suffering reduced will serve as the basic rubric for success.

Differences in culture and belief-systems can be used to create a civil-military

dichotomy, but do not account for a complete ontology during humanitarian

interventions. States and their militaries are not motivated by purely humanitarian

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[46] See: Typhoon Haiyan

[47] Rieff, David. *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis*. Reprint edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003.

[48] Bollettino, Vincenzo. "Civil-Military Engagement: An Empirical Account of Humanitarian Perceptions of Civil-Military Coordination During the Response to Typhoon Haiyan." *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, July 10, 2015, 1–4. doi:10.1017/dmp.2015.85.

concerns, but are certainly capable of wrapping humanitarian activities into larger geopolitical goals. Governments can be motivated by the collective will of the general public, the attentive public or elites inside a state. That motivation does not exist in a vacuum, either. The gripping optics of disaster, presented by traditional and social media, can provoke the will to act. While militaries and/or humanitarians may be the ones to act, the decision to do so must take into account the general public and the media, two additional groups of actors in the humanitarian network.

Complex Adaptive Systems: Four Nodes in the Humanitarian Network

D.J.B. Trim identifies a complex interaction between four aggregates of actors:

> In sum, the interrelationships between *governments, the media, the humanitarian public and the general public* have been complex. Yet its history has rarely been a subject of explicit consideration... it needs to be explored further. This is another area in need of more research.[49]

Governments, the Media, the Humanitarian Public and the General Public serve as four networked nodes. Their strategic choices produce humanitarian outcomes in foreign sovereign states. A node is a collection of actors or agents, called sub-nodes. On the following page are examples of sub-nodes inside each of the four nodes:

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[49] Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Figure 1. - Nodes in the Humanitarian Network and Sub-Node Examples

Nodes	Humanitarian Public	Government	Media	General Public
Sub node example 1	UNOCHA	DOD	CNN	Gen. Public Opinion
Sub node example 2	ICRC	USAID/OFDA	Fox News	Attentive Public
Sub node example 3	MSF	US State Department	Washington Post	Political Elites

"Sub-nodes" in this case, are the individual actors or agents whose repetitive selection of strategies forms the sum strategy of the node. This methodology is labeled Complex Adaptive Systems analysis and employs the terminology in Axelrod and Cohen's *Harnessing Complexity.*[50] CAS works much like evolutionary biology. Sub-nodes will attempt random strategies, known as Variation. Sub-node agents interact with each other inside the larger node, known as Interaction. Finally, sub-nodes replicate successful strategies pioneered during Variation, called Selection. When Selection and replication produce noticeable trends, a Type emerges. A Type can be thought of as a strategy that is adopted by many actors to maintain relevance in the community. This process is akin to successful mate-choice strategies replicating across populations in biology. CAS is applicable in any situation where networked feedback occurs between

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[50] Axelrod, Robert, and Michael D. Cohen. *Harnessing Complexity*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 2001.

nodes in a system. Consider a sporting analogy. A Type developed in 2008 when many teams in the National Football League adopted similar offensive formations. The Miami Dolphins first pioneered the "Wildcat" offense. This was the initial Variation seen in a network, the league, among actors with a common goal, winning. The Wildcat strategy was successful, and soon enough teams around the league replicated the strategy that a noticeable trend, a Type, emerged. Winning satisfies fans, an extrinsic performance measure, and the team's management, an intrinsic performance measure.

For actors in the Humanitarian Public, the common goal is to save lives and reduce suffering. But there are other goals. Actors in the network want to remain relevant and funded. In a perfect world, humanitarians could do their job without worrying about monetary funding or job security. In reality, to continue pursuing the humanitarian imperative, agencies need the material and tacit approval of their funding sources and fellow actors, respectively. These are examples of performance measures that any newspaper, NGO, government agency or military branch must ultimately live up to. The General Public node is not beholden to this rubric, but can exert large systemic pressure on governments to act, and therefore are included in network analysis.

During a crisis, it is important to note that actors can also select on a strategy of inaction. Actors are aware of disaster and are able to choose paths of plausible deniability through inaction. Therefore it should be rejected that interventions fail to occur because of an absence of information, particularly on behalf of governments. This is consistent when considering the abundance of real-time information and communication technology available today. Documents have emerged showing the highest levels of the Clinton

administration were aware of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.[51] Certainly, all nodes and sub-nodes are privy to various information sets, but claims by governments that a lack of accurate information exists should be treated dubiously.

For the case in this paper, trapped Yezidi with access to cellphones were able to report the atrocity in real time and document the experience with the embedded cameras in these same smartphones. A quick Internet search reveals an abundance of information about the plight of the Yezidi, beginning in real time on August 3rd. As the number of smartphone subscriptions increase exponentially around the world, information about atrocities can be recorded and related with higher precision, in real time.[52] Diffusion of action or responsibility, then, must necessarily be a Type emanating from one or more node's selection of inaction as a strategy.[53] The refusal of the ICRC to acknowledge the treatment of Jews in Europe during WWII, for example, is the archetypal example of inaction perceived as success.

The interaction between each node is different, but the process that emerges follows a typical narrative during disaster. When the crisis Onset Phase begins in a foreign sovereign state, the host government and Humanitarian Public are the first to hear of and begin assessing humanitarian need. The initial information is passed to the Media

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[51] Longman, Timothy. "What Did the Clinton Administration Know about Rwanda?" *The Washington Post*, April 6, 2015. http://type.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/04/06/what-did-the-clinton-administration-know-about-rwanda/.

[52] "Mobile Phone Users Worldwide 2012-2018 | Statistic." *Statista*. Accessed July 23, 2015. http://type.statista.com/statistics/274774/forecast-of-mobile-phone-users-worldwide/.

[53] Deniability is not the only driver of inaction, either. Should humanitarians find neutrality untenable, as they did in Rwandan refugee camps, the node may select a strategy of inaction. Injured ISIS fighters near Mt. Sinjar would have required a similar choice to be made, for neutrality requires the treatment of all, no matter the group's propensity for genocide and sexual slavery.

and foreign Governments. The Government is the executive entity in one of these foreign nations that receives pressure from the Humanitarian Public and the General Public to act.[54] The Media compels the General Public to act by presenting the optics of suffering abroad. During the Response Phase it is largely the Humanitarian Public and Governments that are capable of addressing life-threatening issues abroad. This thesis is only interested in the Onset and Response Phases of Complex Emergencies. This paper does not address overall Mitigation, Resiliency or Recovery, important processes carried out by development and aid groups outside of this scope. While the Humanitarian Public is a transnational community, bound by the humanitarian imperative, Governments are not. Therefore, performance measures are assigned to the node that receives them, not the system, writ large. This is important, lest the reader think militaries are being held to irrelevant humanitarian principles, or the humanitarians beholden to *realpolitik* force.s

This paper is a qualitative study designed to disaggregate the humanitarian outcome at Mount Sinjar through Complex Adaptive System analysis. The reader will have already noticed an emphasis on the multitude of actors and opinions regarding intervention. The literature of Complex Adaptive Systems will be used to make claims about the dense chorus of voices making up the humanitarian network. CAS has been explored with regard to international systems, but in the development and military fields, rather than humanitarian sector.[55] [56] While causal claims will always be challenging, the

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[54] Michael Walzer states that "It is not the conscience of political leaders that one refers to...they have other things to worry about and may well be required to repress…indignation and outrage. The reference is to the moral conviction of ordinary men and women, acquired in the course of their everyday activities.

[55] Cydney, Gumann. "Complex Adaptive Systems for Development Programme." Text. *USAID Learning Lab*, August 8, 2014. https://usaidlearninglab.org/events/complex-adaptive-systems-development-programme.

outcomes of strategy selection can be captured. Attempting to uncover mechanisms that drive a reduction in human suffering needs little justification in a broad sense, but several methodical caveats need to be made for the purpose of scientific integrity.

First, the sample size for this case is one. CAS is not a deductive pursuit with variables that can be controlled for. Furthermore, the Mount Sinjar case may have implications for studying past interventions, planning future policy or creating further research ideas based on interagency or nodal interaction. These notions should be treated with a high level of care due to the inductive nature of this study. Interventions, per se, are difficult and rare. When goals of nation building or democracy-spreading are involved, the success rate drops asymptotically to zero. Second, this case was selected for on the dependent variable, simply success or failure with regard to the humanitarian imperative. The purpose of this paper is not only to discern whether the Mount Sinjar case was a success, but why and how through network analysis. The framework that resulted might be used to induce questions for separate cases. This presents a way forward in reconciling legal, state-based and normative explanations of why actors choose to intervene or refrain. "Success" means many things to many actors. The following chapters are designed to help clear the ontological fog concerning this particular "humanitarian intervention". Broadly speaking, the majority of lives that might

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[56]https://type.ida.org/~/media/Corporate/Files/Publications/IDA_Documents/JAWD/ida-document-d-4313.pdf

have been lost on the mountainside were saved.[57] This can be unequivocally described as a success, but is insufficient for meaningful analysis. Therefore a networked analysis is useful to see where interests align and where they differ.

The issue of whether the humanitarian principles themselves were upheld will be addressed as a performance measures that humanitarians, not militaries value. Success is analyzed from the systemic level because humanitarian groups must necessarily work with governments, if not stand back while they enter non-permissive violent environments to produce positive humanitarian outcomes. From the viewpoint of western governments, success will be analyzed on a tactical level by quantifying the amount of aid delivered to humanitarian clients and the number of air strikes carried out.

Finally, success will be analyzed from the point of view of the most important actor, the humanitarian client. Primary source quotations from two Yezidi activists in Germany and Iraq who reached out to the author via Twitter direct messages are presented. While the Yezidi were "very grateful" for airstrikes, they also express frustration at the speed with which the West moved on and paid little attention to an "on-going genocide" after the initial "CNN effect faded". The broader story of the Yezidi cannot be considered a success in terms of atrocity-prevention, per se. But the short-term events outlined in the case concern mitigating further death and human suffering, and the destruction of a culture and religion with relatively few worldwide adherents.

Qualitative descriptions yield narratives concerning who did what, when. These actions, carried out by the actors, the nodes of the network, will serve to create a picture

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[57] This paper separates the outcomes of events on the mountain, and in Sinjar Town itself, where great tragedy occurred. The Yezidi community has petitioned the international community to recognize the Sinjar Massacre in Sinjar town itself as a war crime.

of the Complex Adaptive System (CAS) that produced the humanitarian outcome at Mt.

Sinjar in a non-hierarchical environment. CAS was not initially developed for social

science research, but rather for natural sciences to understand macro-level behavior in

complex systems. The framework has since expanded in many different fields, from

environmental studies to economics. This particular type of systems and networking

model has been used in foreign policy contexts, as well.[58] Complex Adaptive Systems are

"adaptive" in nature because nodes are largely free to select on processes and change the

frequency of behaviors to obtain positive performance ratings. Put plainly in the context

of the humanitarian network, organizations will select strategies, which satisfy

performance measures, to improve their position or maintain status quo within the

network.[59] These measurements are constantly being rated both intrinsically and

extrinsically. This goes a long way toward explaining why Governments intervene only

when the chance of success is high (and losing troops is low) or why aid agencies refrain

from acting when the integrity of humanitarian principles is at risk. These activities lead

to performance ratings on success measures (in lives saved, dollars raised, etc.). CAS

explains why the Media, a group of businesses, distributes images of heart-wrenching

humanitarian situations to garner viewership, a positive performance measure. CAS

explains why Governments and their militaries are completely capable, and yet thought

of as last resorts by the humanitarian community: over-intervening leads to poor

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[58] "Foreign Policy and Complex Adaptive Systems: Exploring New Paradigms for Analysis and Action | Santa Fe Institute." Accessed June 30, 2015. http://type.santafe.edu/research/working-papers/abstract/bfbf3d4292d89e3097ea10c3d5b99170/.

[59] Axelrod, Robert, and Michael D. Cohen. *Harnessing Complexity*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 2001.

performance ratings by the Humanitarian Public node (an extrinsic, but potentially weak rating). Conversely Government nodes can rate humanitarian nodes negatively. Note that one of five conditions for an L3 emergency to be declared is the "reputational risk" to humanitarian institutions.[60] This is a performance measure, laid bare. The constant doctrinal refinement that takes place in both militaries (a Government sub-node) and humanitarian groups (Humanitarian Public sub-nodes) makes the notion of feedback in CAS analysis particularly apt in humanitarian intervention where operational space is assessed or shared.

Complex Adaptive System analysis not only provides options for alternative explanations, but also is invaluable in that it can prescribe conditions for cooperation that might make the humanitarian network more efficacious. If complex crises are best addressed through an integrated response of many actors, and redundancy or duplication is inefficient, successful and unique selections by agents in the system are key to reducing death and suffering.

Rather than attempt to uncover detailed mechanisms at work behind intervention, this paper attempts a broad scope, with respect to a singular case. The interaction between four nodes in the humanitarian network is a Complex Adaptive System, which assimilates elements of multi-agent systems and assumes that actors select and reproduce strategies inside each node. This reproduction of different strategies can provide partial explanations for actor behavior. For example, instead of assessing the needs of children through superior data methods, UNICEF could try and enter a combat zone to attempt to

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[60] The decision to designate an L3 emergency is based on five criteria: the scale, urgency and complexity of the needs, as well as the lack of domestic capacity to respond and the reputational risk for the humanitarian system. http://educationcluster.net/country-coordination/high-priority-countries/

provide protection for vulnerable populations. UNICEF is excellent at assessing and

advocacy, but lacks the functional capability to intervene, and so selects on specialized

strategies that maximize the chances of satisfying the humanitarian imperative, a primary

performance measure. Other aid agencies might follow suit and a Type would develop.

CAS is more useful than simply stating, "Firms do what they are good at". It is more akin

to "firms actively search for and replicate successful strategies to achieve approval by

peers." The following diagrams are taken from InnovationLabs LLC and visualize how

agents (sub-nodes) use selection of high performing strategies to adapt:

Figure 2 - Complex Adaptive Analysis – Innovation Labs LLC
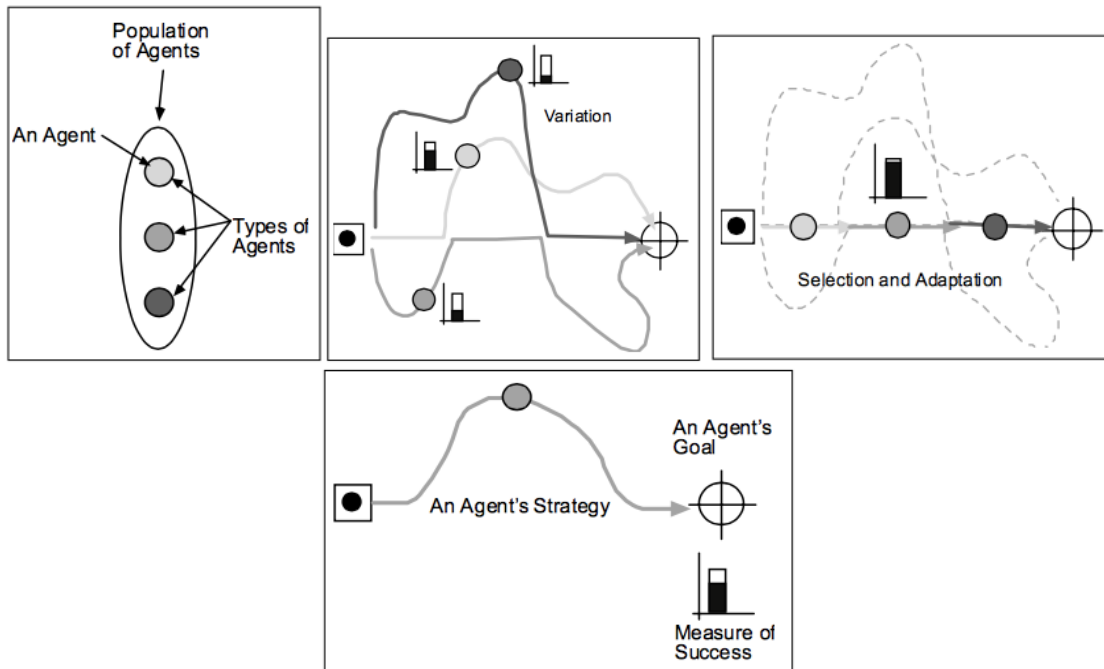
CAS and the Humanitarian System

The humanitarian imperative requires that aid be given wherever it is needed, bar none. Actors also want to deliver aid in a way that will maximize visibility to future donors to ensure efficacy. This is not the cold-calculus of a free market, for example. It does suggest that selected strategies will include both satisfaction of the humanitarian imperative and provide for high-visibility success. In this way, performance measures are both intrinsic and extrinsic to a sub-node and operate much like a two-level game.[61] A sub-node will select on strategies that both satisfy extrinsic demands of its fellow sub-nodes, and intrinsic demands inside the agency or organization. The number of humanitarian situations in the world is always higher than any node or sub-node's capability to address them. Therefore, sub-nodes make selections to be effective where they can, and the aggregate of these strategies produces a Type of node.

One counter to CAS is that pre-existing hierarchies exist in each node, rendering the system neither complex nor adaptive. If hierarchies exist, then performance measures are irrelevant because demands are already distributed, from the top down. The lack of broad hierarchical structures in humanitarian response has already been discussed. But in systems thinking the idea was probed by Paul Cillier in *Boundaries, Hierarchies and Networks in Complex Systems:*

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[61] Putnam, Robert D. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization* 42, no. 03 (June 1988): 427–60. doi:10.1017/S0020818300027697.

A somewhat contrary position is taken in some contemporary discussions of complex systems. A lot of emphasis is placed on self-organization and the "distributed" nature of the structure in a system. According to these arguments, complex systems do not have central control systems. They have to be dynamic and adaptable, not rigid or invariable. Consequently the notion of hierarchy is resisted. In terms of the structure of organizations, it is often argued that to the extent that there should be hierarchies at all, they should be shallow and loose. There must be enough space for innovation. [62]

Cillier's work predates *Harnessing Complexity* but the "innovation" he references would go on to be the variation that sparks eventual type replication in Axelrod and Cohen's work. Cillier also cites the idea that systems can "maintain" their own boundaries. Humanitarian principles can be seen as a self-imposed boundary, a performance measure to be satisfied in the presence of fellow sub-nodes, even if it requires remaining vague about desired intervention by "capable actors".

In summary, CAS is a method of looking past hierarchy and distribution in a system, to something that is more apt for analyzing humanitarian response. Because there is no hierarchy between international actors on the humanitarian stage, they are free to vary their strategies. CAS attempts to give meaning to these choices. This paper uses CAS in the broadest scope possible, to analyze events during a very limited time frame. For the 10 days spanning Aug. 3-13th, 2014, analysis will be provided on the ground realities around Mt. Sinjar. CAS-based observations of the strategy-types selected on by the four nodes of the humanitarian network will be evaluated in terms of outcomes. While humanitarian outcomes are the litmus for success in this case, comment will be

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[62] Cilliers, Paul. "Boundaries, Hierarchies and Networks in Complex Systems." *International Journal of Innovation Management* 05, no. 02 (2011). doi:10.1142/S1363919601000312.

provided on what "success" means with regard to the interaction between sub-nodes and whole nodes. The results could be useful for developing further CAS studies or developing policy that maximizes cooperation of humanitarian actors. Practically, the information found in this paper could be used to challenge assumptions about past interventions.

CASE STUDY: COMPLEX EMERGENCY AT MT. SINJAR

Case Background

Beginning on August 3rd, the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS or *Daesh* in Arabic) violently drove Yezidi residents from their homes and villages surrounding Sinjar town.[63] Reports of previous ISIS atrocities and the onset of violence itself in Sinjar caused hundreds of thousands to flee. The remaining group of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) took refuge on the barren slopes of Mount Sinjar in extreme heat with little food and no water.[64] Below is described the circumstance under which the Yezidi population was persecuted, the humanitarian need once the group reached Mt. Sinjar, the response by a multitude of actors and the humanitarian outcome after the Response Phase ended. In the end, the Yezidi population was largely able to sustain itself in the face of dehydration and exposure to the elements to eventually flee persecution by

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[63] Baghdad, Martin Chulov in. "Iraqi City of Tal Afar Falls to Isis Insurgents." *The Guardian*. Accessed March 12, 2015. http://type.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/16/iraq-tal-afar-falls-isis.

[64] Rubin, Alissa J. "For Refugees on Mountain, 'No Water, Nothing.'" *The New York Times*, August 9, 2014. http://type.nytimes.com/2014/08/10/world/middleeast/chased-onto-iraqi-mountain-there-is-no-water-nothing.html.

ISIS fighters.[65] To understand the Mount Sinjar case, it is necessary to understand the political current in Iraq leading up to late 2014.

The full withdrawal of US troops in 2011, polarizing leadership of Nouri al-Maliki and weakness of the Iraqi Army created a vacuum enabling the rise of violent extremism. Maximum US troop levels exceeded some 160,000 soldiers in 2007.[66] Support staff and non-combat operations remained in Iraq until 2011.[67] These soldiers guarded banks, jails and weapons, among other sites. These internal security responsibilities were handed to Iraqi forces upon US withdrawal. Given a rough ratio of one US solider per 200 Iraqi civilians at the war's height, it is hard to overestimate the suppression effects the military presence had on sub-state level violence after The Surge. Removing this lid allowed violent sub-state actors to begin executing their plans for future conquest.[68]

The imbalanced leadership of Nouri al-Maliki, a Shia who alienated Sunni groups through neglect and provocation, fueled this instability.[69] While the average Iraqi may or may not accept violence as a viable political tool, the average Sunni-resident was tacitly forced to stand unopposed to ISIS takeover in 2014, given the infractions committed by

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[65] Siddique, Haroon, and agencies. "20,000 Iraqis Besieged by Isis Escape from Mountain after US Air Strikes." *The Guardian*. Accessed January 10, 2015. http://type.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/10/iraq-Yezidi-isis-jihadists-islamic-state-kurds.

[66] "Chart: U.S. Troop Levels in Iraq - CNN.com." *CNN*. Accessed May 19, 2015. http://type.cnn.com/2011/10/21/world/meast/chart-us-troops-iraq/index.html.
[67] https://type.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R40682.pdf

[68] There is strong evidence that strategic level planning and even training occurred in prisons during the height of the Iraq War. Ironically, it was the capture, concentration and treatment of militants that may have proved the initial cauldron of idea for Daesh.

[69] "The Rise of ISIS." *FRONTLINE*. Accessed July 26, 2015. http://type.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/rise-of-isis/.

al-Maliki. A Sunni group providing basic services like banking may have appeared preferable to institutionalized discrimination emanating from Baghdad.

Sadly, this was not a political or logical choice to be made by most residents in Tikrit, Mosul or eventually, Sinjar. ISIS moved in by sheer force in August, unopposed by existing security forces. The Iraqi Army, responsible for the country's nascent post-war security environment, staged one of the most spectacular retreats of a modern equipped fighting group.[70] In addition to leaving behind millions of dollars of US-supplied vehicles, they abandoned the same banks, jails and weapon-caches that ISIS would use to fund, man and equip its basic operational capacity.

The next step for ISIS included controlling the Nineveh Plain. Highway 47, which connects the ISIS capital Raqqa with Mosul, runs through Sinjar. Control of this stretch of road functionally accomplishes the declared caliphate's goal of erasing the Syria-Iraq border, established by the Sykes-Picot agreement. Wrapped inside this goal was the desire to cleanse the area of Yezidi men, while entering Yezidi women and girls into sex-slave markets to reward and recruit fighters. It was this goal that formed the strategic basis of what would manifest as genocide in August. Achieving this goal would better allow ISIS to consolidate territory, maintain access to infrastructure and broaden the front against Kurdish forces. However, the institutionalized nature of rape in ISIS strategy may have been a primary driver.[71] Whatever the primary strategic goal for purging the

[70] Fahim, Kareem, and Suadad Al-salhy. "Exhausted and Bereft, Iraqi Soldiers Quit Fight." *The New York Times*, June 10, 2014. http://type.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/world/middleeast/exhausted-and-bereft-iraqi-soldiers-quit-fight.html.

[71]Callimachi, Rukmini. "ISIS Enshrines a Theology of Rape." *The New York Times*, August 13, 2015. http://type.nytimes.com/2015/08/14/world/middleeast/isis-enshrines-a-theology-of-rape.html.

Nineveh Plain of Yezidi may have been, the humanitarian needs stemming from the group's conquest were immediate and dire.

On June 12[th,] the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned systemized executions in northern Iraq.[72] On June 16th, the last government outpost on the Nineveh Plain, Tal Afar, fell to militants. By early August of 2014 only sporadic Kurdish outposts stood between ISIS militants and the capture of the entire province, save the largely unarmed residents living there. The group calling itself ISIL had previously demonstrated a willingness to intimidate opponents through public executions and a unique ability to create mass movements of refugees. In the early days of August, ISIS would go on to pursue a more heinous strategy of ethnic cleansing by means of genocide and sexual slavery. The resulting humanitarian emergency was not only immediate, but also inaccessible to any capable GOI forces in country.

Phase 1 – Crisis Onset - August 3rd, 2014

The onset of the CE in Nineveh Province in northern Iraq can be demarcated by the clearing of Sinjar (*Shingal*) village at approximately 4am, AST, August 3rd, 2014.[73] The few security forces that had existed in Sinjar, reportedly several hundred Iraqi

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[72] Section, United Nations News Service. "UN News - UN Condemns Mass Executions in Iraq, Urges Leaders to Prevent Sectarian Reprisal." *UN News Service Section*, June 4, 2014. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48056#.Vh2e17zWviA.

[73] Arabia Standard Time

Kurdish fighters, had retreated from their posts during the night, leaving the town's inhabitants completely unprotected. One Yezidi activist, who requested anonymity, relayed to the author:

> The Ezidis in Shingal and surroundings have quite a few months predicted the Kurdish and Iraqi government that their villages are in danger. This was in June / July. However, both governments have taken seriously these notes. The danger was immediately visible because ISIL early June had taken the city of Mosul and the local Christians banished from their homeland.
> In the night of 2 to 3 August 2014, the news spread that ISIL comes in Shingal. There were numerous references such as calls between ISIL trailers and Kurdish villagers who have joined ISIL. The Ezidis have the basis of which held in their villages every night, because they did not know exactly when the attack follows . About two clock at night then begins the storm of terror militia. The IS- terrorist attack with dozens of fighters, heavy weapons, mortars, armored and armed vehicles to reports an eyewitness. Several minions of IS back the towns Siba Sheikh Khidir, Qataniya and Gir Izer. The first mortar shell hits in Siba another in Gir Izer. The Ezidi armed men and adolescents go in position and believe that the attack was over soon. However, it comes to heavy fighting, the IS- terrorists pushing ever further and approach the communities in which tens of thousands of Ezidis live. The first wave of attacks the Ezidis despite light weapons to fight back and kill dozens of extremists. "The first attack we were able to fend off we killed them" - says a Ezidi man. But they have mobilized again and attacked us again. Again it came to fights. Ezidis from Siba and Gir Izer had already reported on phones what was going on in the South and warned the surrounding villages. So that the Ezidis were able to flee from the north and east, this was the morning of August 3.[74]

Residents of Sinjar were aware of ISIS violence at Tal Afar and elsewhere, but told not to worry by members of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP). The KDP earned loyalty and votes in Sinjar with promises of money and protection, important for a an oft-persecuted group:

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[74] The name and Twitter handle of the activist has been withheld out of respect for the Yezidi community and safety of the source. The message is reprinted exactly as received, most likely after the source used a translating program, from German to English. Is it thought that the majority of the Yezidi diaspora from Sinjar are now living in Germany, among other locations. SEE APPENDIX C

For years, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), one of the two ruling parties in the Kurdistan region, has poured money into the pockets of Yezidis in Sinjar who were willing to join the party. They also offered protection. The Yezidis' arcane religion, which mingles Zoroastrianism and belief in fallen-and-resurrected angels, is incorrectly but commonly called "devil worship" by outsiders and is precisely the kind of "idolatrous" faith Muslims have sought to extirpate since the days of the Prophet Mohammad. In areas outside of Kurdish control, like Mosul, jihadists targeted Yezidis even before the recent offensive by IS. But in Sinjar, nestled at the southern foot of a large isolated mountain that rises like a vision from the surrounding plain, the KDP assured the residents — including Yezidis and a smaller Christian population — that they were safe.[75]

It is not completely clear why KDP/KRG forces abandoned the Yezidi in Sinjar. It is not unreasonable to assume that long-running social discrimination faced by the Yezidi, combined with the inertia of ISIS's bloody, unchecked advance across Iraq led Kurdish commanders to retreat and regroup in Kurdistan proper.[76] This was the strategic reasoning given by Kurdish commanders. Compounding this may have been a delay in ammunition delivery by Baghdad due to ongoing disputes with the central government there.[77] This has also produced a level of resentment toward the Iraqi Kurds amongst the Yazidi with an activist telling the author, in no uncertain terms:

It was Syrian Kurds with their defense unit YPG that paved a way to escape from the Sinjar Mountains to go to Syria. The Iraqi Kurds have left the Ezidis in the lurch and left without weapons in their villages. They are responsible for this genocide.

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[75] Toorn, Christine van den. "How the U.S.-Favored Kurds Abandoned the Yezidis When ISIS Attacked." *The Daily Beast*, August 17, 2014. http://type.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/08/17/how-the-u-s-favored-kurds-abandoned-the-Yezidis-when-isis-attacked.html.

[76] Kurdish forces regained control of the town in December 2014.

[77] Morris, Loveday. "Islamic State Seizes Town of Sinjar, Pushing out Kurds and Sending Yezidis Fleeing." *The Washington Post*, August 3, 2014. https://type.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-seize-town-of-sinjar-pushing-out-kurds-and-sending-Yezidis-fleeing/2014/08/03/52ab53f1-48de-4ae1-9e1d-e241a15f580e_story.html.

A different activist wrote:

> I'm from south Shingal. Town of Tel Ezier. Yes, they made me leave my home.
> You have to know that what happened in Shingal was a treason. Yes, Peshmerga
> of PDK abandoned us. But Kurdish of Syria (YPG, YPJ) saved many Yezidis
> from the mountain of Shingal.

These short messages, received via Twitter, show a sense of betrayal and treason by the

Iraqi Kurds. Violence replaced KDP protection and the few Yezidi men who chose to

stay and engage ISIS on the southern edge of Sinjar were outmatched. Mortar fire, and

the rapid advance of fighters and vehicles quickly dispersed these lightly armed fighters.

A report from Human Rights Watch on August 9th provides direct interviews with Yezidi

inhabitants of Sinjar concerning the early hours of August 3rd:

> On Sunday, August 3 at about 4 a.m. they heard gunfire. Three or four hours later
> the Kurdish Peshmerga forces that had been their protection withdrew without
> explanation. One of the Yezidi Peshmerga asked the local commander why. "We
> have no orders to fight" was the response.[78]

As fighters entered Sinjar, it became apparent to the Yezidi that ISIS goals

included the eradication of the male population itself. Men were questioned, rounded up

and summarily executed before being placed in mass graves.[79] Remaining family

members were put in trucks to be taken away. Women who were taken that day are still

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[78] "The Nightmare in Iraq." *Human Rights Watch*. Accessed July 7, 2015.
https://type.hrw.org/news/2014/08/09/nightmare-iraq.

[79] ibid

being sold on sex markets and as brides for ISIS fighters.[80] The number of Yezidi women

and girls remaining in captivity in August of 2015 was estimated at over 3,000.[81] As a

Yezidi activist wrote to the author:

> The world must know what happened, the world needs to know that a genocide
> took place at the Ezidis and nobody intervened. everyone must know what ISIS
> has made with our Women. I thank you again that you write down this genocide
> in the 21st century.

Reports of ISIS takeovers before the Sinjar Massacre included a latency threshold

during which residents were told they could convert and accept, or suffer the

consequences. The Sinjar tragedy provided no such threshold. *Daesh* considers the

Yezidi to be nothing more than a sect, and sought largely to destroy the men and boys in

the population, while selling women and girls into sexual slavery.[82] The particular

ideology that ISIS maintains towards Yezidi populations may have led to the lack of

latency in carrying out executions, in comparison to attacks non-Sunni Arabs or

Assyrians who were living in Sinjar at the time. There is anecdotal evidence that Yezidis

are not only angry with the Kurds for abandoning them, but also with their former

neighbors who may have been spared horrific fates because of their religion.

Faced with eradication or flight, the Yezidis in Sinjar escaped to the north. Many

Yezidis had already been on the run, having fled the very same plight in Tal Afar town

during previous weeks. Mt. Sinjar represented a last resort, a refuge that ISIS would have

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[80]Callimachi, Rukmini. "ISIS Enshrines a Theology of Rape." *The New York Times*, August 13, 2015. http://type.nytimes.com/2015/08/14/world/middleeast/isis-enshrines-a-theology-of-rape.html.

[81] ibid

[82] Noack, Rick. "When Obama Talks about Iraq, His Use of the Word 'genocide' is Vital." *The Washington Post*, August 8, 2014. http://type.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/08/08/when-obama-talks-about-iraq-his-use-of-the-word-genocide-is-vital/.nbgb

trouble reaching with its heavy vehicles and weapons. Those Yezidi who had access to

vehicles drove to the Dohuk Governorate in the east. Those who could not escape as

rapidly, including the elderly and sick, numbering 130,000-150,000 fled up the south side

of the mountain.[83] From a Yezidi activist: "…the Ezidis from the north and east managed

to escape. Some who had a car are taken refuge in the nearest large town. However, most

Ezidis have fled on foot, because they live in very modest circumstances."

Sadly, as many as 7,000 men were summarily executed in what has come to be

known as the Sinjar Massacre.[84] Accurate figures concerning the number executed will

not be available under the threat of ISIS has passed, and the graves surround Sinjar town

are analyzed by war crimes experts. This process began in October of 2015.[85] Social

media is filled with pictures of partially exposed bodies, which have been in the ground

for many months.

Climbing up the steep southern face was only the beginning of difficulties for the

Yezidi IDP's who eventually took refuge on the north face. Mount Sinjar is barren and

devoid of rivers or lakes. The temperature regularly exceeds 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Lack of food, shelter and primarily, water, made up the humanitarian need almost

immediately after the population began summiting the mountain. These needs would

persist, until mitigated first by Syrian Kurdish Forces (PKK), and later airdrops and

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[83]http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/REACH_IRQ_InternalDisplacement_Report_August2014.pdf While the number of IDP's who fled from Sinjar to Mt. Sinjar is not precise, it can be assumed that the population had swollen due to previous Yezidi refugees coming from Tal Afar and elsewhere.

[84] "One Year on From the Sinjar Massacre, Yezidis Blast Lack of Action Over Hostages." *Newsweek*, August 5, 2015. http://europe.newsweek.com/one-year-sinjar-massacre-Yezidis-blast-lack-action-over-hostages-331216.

[85] "Nazi Researchers' Probe IS over Yazidi 'Genocide.'" *Kuwait Times*. Accessed October 22, 2015. http://news.kuwaittimes.net/website/nazi-researchers-probe-is-over-yazidi-genocide/.

airstrikes beginning on August 7th. Several actors in the Humanitarian Public and the

GOI monitored the situation developing on Mt. Sinjar between August 3rd-6th. Between

August 7th and 11th, airdrops and air strikes were executed by the United States, Britain

and Australia. The selection of assessment strategies by the Humanitarian Public and

response strategies by Government (what would soon be called 'coalition forces') during

Complex Emergencies is noted.

Phase 2 – Crisis Response - August 4th–13th, 2014

The Response Phase involved actors from a wide scope falling under the four

nodes of the humanitarian network and perhaps most importantly, Syrian Kurdish fighters

willing to open a humanitarian corridor on the ground.[86] The Kurdish fighters were a

major variable that removed enough pressure from the international system such that

effective coordination could take place.[87] On August 13th, the President Obama was still

considering a ground landing of Marines to physically evacuate Yezidis who were left.[88]

This plan proved unnecessary as Kurdish forces from Syria had already protected the

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[86] The UNOCHA Cluster system defines the stages of humanitarian disaster as Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Disaster, Response, Recovery and Reconstruction. This paper deals with the Disaster (onset) and Response phases.

[87] *http://type.reuters.com/article/2014/12/20/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-sinjar-idUSKBN0JY0ML20141220* Note that Kurdish forces are outside the scope of CAS analysis. While they most likely provide enough feedback to be considered part of the Government node, they do not interact sufficiently with sub-nodes outside the Government node to be considered as such.

[88] "Marines Had Prepared for Major Rescue on Mount Sinjar." *Military Times*. Accessed February 28, 2015. http://archive.militarytimes.com/article/20141008/NEWS/310080037/Marines-had-prepared-major-rescue-Mount-Sinjar.

fleeing IDP's long enough that they made it to various refugee camps and other safe locations. One US Marine based in Jordan at the time told the author that a plan was in place and ready to execute in "less than six hours notice".

Initial estimates of the number of IDP's fleeing Sinjar vary, but many estimates center around the number 130,000 individuals. Portions of these IDP's were able to make it down the north face of the mountain before ISIS could surround them with vehicles and heavy guns. This window of opportunity closed very quickly, leaving the 40,000 individuals, cited in separate reports, trapped on the mountain. On August 4th, ISIS clashed with Kurdish forces at the Rabia'a border crossing with Syria, preventing the movement of IDP's from Mt. Sinjar to Dohuk. Thus, from the 5th-13th of August, ISIS fighters attempted to completely confine the Yezidi population to the mountainside by firing mortars at the group and rounding up any fleeing groups.

A new escape corridor, leading through Syria, was then created and managed by Syrian PKK forces, which were in turn protected by US airstrikes. The Syrian Kurds assumed C2 on the ground while establishing this corridor from the 5th-7th, when US airstrikes were authorized. After these airstrikes fortified the escape corridor, most Yezidis escaped from the 9th-13th. It is safe to assume that in the absence of US airstrikes, the Kurds would have taken several more days, if not weeks or month, to secure the escape corridor, and many more Yezidi would have died of dehydration in the interim. Indeed, Kurdish forces did not achieve total liberation of area north of Sinjar town until December. Conversely and perhaps more importantly, without Kurdish mitigating ISIS ground movements US airstrikes may have been largely ineffective.

While the airstrikes and local Kurdish forces were able to secure a humanitarian corridor for the Yezidi, this in no way diminished the immediate humanitarian needs of food, water and non-food items (NFI) that were dropped from Government aircraft.[89] Airdrops in mountainous environments are exceedingly difficult due to rapid altitude changes in the terrain.[90] While there is evidence that at least one food parcel made it into the hands of ISIS fighters, most packages were found empty later in the week.

The ability to rapidly drop large amounts of food and water in non –permissive air environments is a unique humanitarian capacity of western militaries. ISIS demonstrated its ability to shoot down military aircraft earlier in 2014.[91] Providing the air defense cover and planning for a humanitarian airdrop in this particular CE could have been accomplished by few other actors. It is important to remember that the assessment dictating need for these drops came not from the intelligence community sub-node (part of the Government node). Accurate, timely information came from the Humanitarian Public's rapid assessment of ground realities. These ground realities are unpacked by node in the following pages.

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[89] Taken from the BBC:
"The US said it conducted its seventh airdrop of food and water on Wednesday, and had delivered more than 114,000 meals and 35,000 gallons (160,000 liters) of drinking water to those trapped."

[90] Farley, Robert. "Why It's so Hard to Help the Yezidi Dying of Thirst on the Iraqi Mountaintop." *The Washington Post*, August 7, 2014. http://type.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/08/07/why-its-so-hard-to-help-the-Yezidi-dying-of-thirst-on-the-iraqi-mountaintop/.

[91] "For First Time, ISIS Captures Coalition Pilot - CNN.com." *CNN*. Accessed July 28, 2015. http://type.cnn.com/2014/12/24/world/meast/syria-isis-shoots-down-warplane/index.html.

Government

For the purpose of CAS, the Government node includes foreign states that

respond to humanitarian issues. Unlike most technical interventions, the government that

played host to the crisis in the Mt. Sinjar case requested the help of foreign actors. The

Government of Iraq (GOI) requested formal assistance from the United States

Government (USG) (the "Government" node) in Northern Iraq as soon as it became

aware that an emergency was unfolding in July. According to US policy, a nation must

ask for, or at least be willing to accept assistance before aid can be provided on behalf of

the United States. The request to help the Yezidi was separate from the general appeal

from the Iraqi government, issued earlier in July, to assist in defending itself against ISIS.

This second appeal demonstrated the urgency of the situation on the mountain. Having

received this request from the GOI, the Obama administration decided to issue aid based

on at least two other factors.

First, the capacity of GOI to aid its own people was virtually non-existent. GOI at

the time was in a period of reconstruction, experiencing turnover at the highest levels of

government. Iraq didn't have a stable Prime Minister, much less aid program in

July/August of 2014. In addition, the Iraqi military had staged one of the most spectacular

retreats in military history earlier that year, leaving vacant territorial swathes. No

domestic actor in Iraq was able to affect change on the ground. The exception proving the

rule was a singular helicopter, containing the Yezidi MP, Vian Dakhil, which almost

crashed while attempting to deliver aid.[92] It was her impassioned plea, discussed, under the Media heading, which partially stirred international action. Several other regional or international actors might have intervened, but did not for various reasons. Turkey has one of the largest air forces in the world (and adequate airstrike capability), but remained politically neutral in the conflict with ISIS until July 2015 (when they began bombing the PKK, as well).

Larger international bodies, like the UN, carry the organizational capability for airdrops, but lack a standing force to quickly enforce a humanitarian corridor or protect cargo aircraft from ground-based assaults. While various UN agencies and NGO's were already present in the region, particularly due to the Syrian refugee crisis, their lack of access due to ISIS violence rendered them particularly unfit to provide humanitarian aid. While the UN and several NGO's were crucial in documenting conditions in Nineveh, they could do little to affect change.

Second, aiding the Yezidi population fit squarely into wider US national security interests in the region. The President is not naïve to the optics of war and humanitarian intervention. In fact, Obama's speech, justifying the bombing of ISIS, wrapped humanitarian considerations (the plight of the Yezidis in particular) into the argument.[93] Although petitions for help from the GOI were distinctly separate with regard to security and humanitarian requests, the US response was not.

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[92] Mackey, Robert. "Iraqi Who Made Emotional Plea to Help Yezidis Is Injured in Crash of Relief Flight." *The New York Times*, August 12, 2014. http://type.nytimes.com/2014/08/13/world/middleeast/iraqi-who-made-emotional-plea-to-help-Yezidis-is-injured-in-crash-of-relief-flight.html.

[93] "Obama Orders Air Strikes on Iraq - Rediff.com India News." Accessed January 10, 2015. http://type.rediff.com/news/report/obama-orders-air-strikes-on-iraq/20140808.htm.

In June of 2014, U.S. Ambassador Robert Stephen Beecroft "declared a disaster due to the humanitarian consequences of insecurity in Iraq".[94] Having recognized a unique capacity for the United States and the request for the help from the GOI, the USG initiated the process of providing humanitarian assistance to the Yezidi on Mt. Sinjar. The United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) dispatched a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and USAID/OFDA petitioned the DoD for airdrop assistance, most likely through an internal document known as an ExecSec memorandum. The DoD was tasked with assisting the Kurdish forces on the ground to clear a safe humanitarian corridor for the Yezidi to escape through to Syria, once ISIS blocked the Rabia'a crossing and the direct route to Dohuk.[95] The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) oversaw food, water and NFI distribution in conjunction with OFDA to meet IDP needs. For example, from USAID's website:

> On August 4, USAID authorized the UN World Food Program (WFP) to utilize for the Iraq Emergency Operation approximately 15 metric tons of USAID A-29 meal replacement bars already in country, which can meet the daily caloric requirements of 31,000 people.[96]

The above passage is notable for the cooperative feedback environment it suggests across nodes. Such cross-nodal interaction can serve as external performance measure satisfaction. In this case the approval was financial. Much as USAID authorized

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[94]http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/REACH_IRQ_InternalDisplacement_Report_

[95] Interestingly, in July of 2015, rumors abounded of a similar plan to create a safe haven along the Turkish border with Syria. Gordon, Anne Barnard, Michael R., and Eric Schmitt. "Turkey and U.S. Plan to Create Syria 'Safe Zone' Free of ISIS." *The New York Times*, July 27, 2015. http://type.nytimes.com/2015/07/28/world/middleeast/turkey-and-us-agree-on-plan-to-clear-isis-from-strip-of-northern-syria.html.

[96] http://type.usaid.gov/crisis/iraq

assets at WFP, OFDA helped fund UNICEF in the early stages of the Iraq conflict. Cross-node cooperation suggests its own set of tacit performance measures between nodes. Put plainly, when a Government sub-node funds a sub-node in the Humanitarian Public, it is a signal that a selected humanitarian strategy is satisfactory for the system, writ large. Although humanitarian funding coming from Governments is approved quickly, especially through OFDA, the money nevertheless carries stipulations concerning its use by aid agencies.

A US Special Forces team of Green Berets came to the conclusion on August 13th that Kurdish forces had succeeded in clearing an escape corridor.[97] This assessment saved the USG the cost and political capital of a potential Marine landing on the mountain.[98] While that satisfies an intra-nodal performance measure for Government (correctly assessing ground conditions), cross-nodal cooperation in assessment could produce efficiency and reduce cost (as it did during the Response Phase). Nevertheless, Special Forces satisfy preferable cross-nodal performance measures desired by humanitarians, that intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) assets that are not visible to humanitarian clients are used to preserve the notions of neutrality in the field.[99]

The absence of the debate concerning US boots on the ground (BOG's) saved lives. The latency required to establish proper lines of communication and the

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[97] Press,The Associated. "Green Berets Fly to Mount Sinjar in Iraq | RealClearDefense." http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2014/08/13/green_berets_fly_to_mount_sinjar_in_iraq_107367.

[98] "Pentagon: Mass Evacuation of Yezidis in Iraq Unlikely - CNN.com." *CNN*. Accessed January 12, 2015. http://type.cnn.com/2014/08/13/world/meast/iraq-crisis/index.html.

[99] This was moot because airdropped aid was clearly labeled and air strikes would have also been easily attributable to the US. In fact, US Special Forces excel at providing ISR without detection, making them ideal covert humanitarian assets.

"consultative civil-military dialogue at the onset" which OCHA recommends would have taken days or weeks, too long contribute to efforts to save those on Mount Sinjar. As Syrian Kurdish forces cleared a humanitarian corridor, that debate did not have to be entertained by the humanitarian network. As a result, the Government node had more freedom to select on successful adaptive behaviors. Placing western BOG's in Iraq during August of 2014 surely would not have been one of them.[100]

Government selections did not include successful assessment strategies. In contrast to the response phase, the USG was relatively slow in assessing crisis onset. While the Humanitarian Public and Media had commented on the emergency almost immediately after its onset, the USG took several more days before releasing a statement (except the State Department's initial mention on Aug. 3rd). Although some criticism of assessment inaccuracies were overblown, Pentagon spokesman Rear Adm. John Kirby noted difficulties in ascertaining what happened in real time at Sinjar:

> To that end, Kirby blamed shortfalls in U.S. intelligence and surveillance flights, carried out prior to the airstrikes, for the initially high civilian count on Mt. Sinjar. Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations are 'an imperfect science,' Kirby said, claiming it was extremely difficult to gain a 'nose count' on the number of Yezidi civilians with any kind of fidelity. Once American assessment teams were on the ground in Sinjar, only then did the actual number of civilians in danger became clear, according to Kirby. "We made the best estimates we could . . . [but] there is no substitute to getting eyes on" the situation, he added.[101]

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[100] Of course, this requires a willing local actor, like the Syrian Kurds, to absorb pressures emanating from ground events.

[101] http://news.usni.org/2014/08/14/pentagon-defends-early-sinjar-threat-picture-blames-initial-surveillance

The "eyes" Kirby refers to had already been there, thanks to NGO and REACH key informant interviews in Dohuk and other IDP camps in Iraq and refugee camps in Syria. By the time the combined USAID/OFDA and Pentagon teams were on the ground, highly detailed assessment information was already available, via Humanitarian Public sub-nodes like REACH. Individuals inside the Government node confirmed to the author that satellite-imaging requests did not arrive until Aug. 12, the lateness of which produced a need for the Green Beret assessment on the ground.

While the Humanitarian Public node was able to select on successful actions in terms of assessment, the non-permissive operating environment near the Rabia'a border crossing and on the north face of Mt. Sinjar itself caused the response imperative to shift back to the Government node. In the international system of states security issues are often assigned to the hegemon of the day, because locally capable actors pass the buck. Because of prior USG involvement in Iraq and support of Nouri Al-Maliki, in addition to a desire to protect assets in the area, the USG was already watching the situation develop. As ISIS mobilized, it became quickly apparent that no nation, not even Turkey (who has long-running conflict with the Kurds) had the political will to help mitigate the security and humanitarian effects of the group's takeover.

It was because of pre-existing ISR assets already in Iraq that the US was able to assess the onset of the Mt. Sinjar crisis at all. These assessments, however, were latent and too late in some cases, compared with rapid assessment strategies selected on by the Humanitarian Public node. It may therefore be advisable for Governments to select on Response Phase strategies, rather than redundantly double-checking information sets

coming from the Humanitarian Public node. Governments, writ large, were able to employ various assets ('artifacts' in CAS) to impact both the security and humanitarian effects of the Response Phase. The selection of artifacts and strategies by the US was replicated by the UK, and Australia, and produced a type. Tactical details of these selected strategies by the Government node included:

- On August 5th the US began directly arming Kurdish forces battling ISIS in Northern Iraq who had previously received the same US made heavy weapons from the GOI in Baghdad.[102]

- USG airdrops on August 7th, using one C-17 and two C-130 aircraft to drop 72 pallets (5,300 gallons of water and 8,000 prepackaged meals), of which 63 were delivered on-target using the Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS). [103]

- Airstrikes around Mt. Sinjar began on August 9th. A combination of manned and unmanned US aircraft monitored and destroyed four ISIS Armed Personnel Carriers (APC's) carrying fighters who fired indiscriminately on the trapped Yezidi non-combatants.

- On August 10th the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force (RAF) began participating in airdrops.

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[102] Forgione, Mary. "U.S., Allies Rush Heavy Weapons to Kurds to Fight Militants in Iraq." *Los Angeles Times*. Accessed August 4, 2015. http://type.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-us-iraq-weapons-20140811-story.html#page=1.

[103] Lamothe, Dan. "U.S. Airdrops in Iraq Hit Their Target 63 of 72 Times, Pentagon Says." *The Washington Post*, August 8, 2014. https://type.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2014/08/08/u-s-airdrops-in-iraq-hit-their-target-4-out-of-5-times-defense-secretary-says/.

- On August 11th between 8pm and 11:30pm local time, US airstrikes destroyed four ISIL checkpoints designed to prevent the trapped Yezidi population from escaping to the north.

- On August 12th the USG explicitly provided air support to Kurdish forces, destroying an ISIS mortar position shelling a group helping the Yezidi escaping to the north of Mount Sinjar.

- The operation at Mt. Sinjar most likely included Forward Air Controllers (FAC) who directed strikes against ISIS targets. Anecdotal evidence points to U.S Air Force Joint Terminal Air Controllers, Marine Corps. FAC's, CIA Field Operatives or Turkish Special Forces as candidates.

- On August 13th, Australian C-130 aircraft delivered 10 pallets of critical supplies including 150 boxes of high-energy biscuits and 340 boxes of bottled water – enough to sustain 3,700 people for 24 hours. This roughly corresponded with the number of people left on Mount Sinjar at this point.

- A final US airstrike occurred on the 13th against an ISIS truck near a checkpoint, west of the town of Sinjar.

- In sum, manned, and unmanned MQ-4 US aircraft struck ISIS vehicles, mortar positions and checkpoints on four days, striking over 10 times.

- The USG conducted "about 50-60 ISR flights, daily.[104]

- Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States flew 16 humanitarian airdrop missions.

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[104] http://type.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122899

- A host of European nations, the EU itself and New Zealand all promised aid, but became involved in the recovery, rather than the direct response phase.[105]

- The USG selected on a strategy of delivering humanitarian aid using military aircraft. The governments of the United Kingdom and Australia replicated this selection. France and Germany replicated this strategy, after the 13th.

- The USG selected on a strategy of aiding the Syrian Kurds who created a safe corridor with airstrikes against ISIS targets. This clear challenge to neutrality during CE was not challenged by the Humanitarian Public, a tacit approval rating.

- The USG State Department was the only Government sub-node to publicly report the Sinjar situation on August 3rd.[106]

- A strategy of using pre-existing ISR artifacts to assess crisis onset was selected on, but could not be replicated by other sub-nodes and was not rated as effective by other sub-nodes, especially by the Media node.

- Government sub-nodes relied heavily on assessment and reporting from the Humanitarian Public. A quick reading of a USAID Fact Sheet

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[105] CAS could be applied to the General Public, Media and Government nodes inside these organizations or states to determine how consensus was built, or more importantly, why consensus was not gathered in time to effectively participate in a response.

[106] Department Of State. The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs. "ISIL Attacks in Ninewa Province." Press Release|Press Statement. *U.S. Department of State*, August 3, 2014. http://type.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/230163.htm.

demonstrates that the majority of information is generated by NGO's and UN entities. Assessment strategies carried out by Government sub-nodes were not successful.

- Government sub-nodes financially supported actors in the Humanitarian Public such as the WFP, UNICEF and IOM. This suggests successful cross-nodal cooperative strategies.

The Government node was relatively slow to collect, assess and disseminate information about crisis onset, and instead selected on strategies fulfilling humanitarian need, which were rated as successful (intra- and cross-nodes). Media approval regarding airdrops was explicit in headlines. Humanitarian Public approval was implied through WFP and other humanitarian sub-node cooperation. The United States also demonstrated the political will to act with force, which will be seen as theoretically separate from airstrikes (for the Humanitarian Public) or part and parcel of preventing genocide for Government sub-nodes. Using the language of CAS, US airstrikes were an initial variation that notably was not replicated (by RAF sub-nodes, for example). Acting with unitary force when genocide is impending creates an even higher need to communicate with proximate actors who may be attending to concurrent humanitarian needs.

Humanitarian Public

The Humanitarian Public is defined using CAS as those entities, charged with the humanitarian imperative, which reside outside the Government node and respond to emergencies on an international scale. Of the four nodes, the Humanitarian Public carries the most sub-nodes. Thousands of NGO's, from large institutions to 2-person teams, select on behaviors that help them adapt and survive in a crowded system. The United Nations, another collection of sub-nodes, uses a Cluster System to ensure efficient response along a continuum from prevention and mitigation, through disaster and finally, reconstruction.

This paper has already discussed some of the problems with the delivery of humanitarian aid in non-permissive security environments. Attacks on aid workers have increased dramatically when compared to previous decades.[107] This is does not imply the Humanitarian Public is paralyzed during emergencies like that at Mt. Sinjar. Rather, it is the specialization in the activities that the community excels at, which provides immediate value. Although NGO's and UN do not have standing armies to counter violent actors like ISIS, the array of response options concerning humanitarian assessment and IDP and refugee protection surpass that of any Government at a given time.

During the Mount Sinjar case, the Humanitarian Public began assessing need immediately. Reports of the ISIS onslaught emerged on August 3rd from various UN agencies. The United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) reported the takeover

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[107] https://aidworkersecurity.org/incidents/report/summary

of Sinjar and nearby towns. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon condemned the attack

on August 3rd, called for humanitarian access, and petitioned the help of the international

community and importantly, the Kurdistan Regional Government.[108] A close reading of

UN documents show that UNAMI and the UNAMI Special Representative of the

Secretary-General for Iraq, Nickolay Mladenov, were well positioned to assess the risk of

humanitarian disaster on the Ninevah Plane. Without his quick advocacy it is clear the

situation would not have been accurately assessed. It was his deputies who impressed

upon Iraqi President Fuad Ma'soum that minorities were in danger. This meeting was

potentially one catalyst for the GOI's specific appeal to the international community to

help the Yezidi. Several other UN and NGO sub-nodes produced timely and reliable

information concerning August 3rd. UNOCHA provided several updates throughout the

episode.

A particularly noteworthy source for up-to-date humanitarian analysis, Project

REACH aggregates information from a large number of aid organizations to help inform

responders to crises. REACH is involved in the UN cluster-system, Inter-Agency

Standing Committee and is partnered with USAID, OCHA, development organizations,

UN clusters and NGO's. According to "primary data collected between 13-18 August by

REACH enumerators through 136 Key Informant interviews… and triangulated by

secondary data", REACH provided the following details on August 20th:

- Armed groups caused as many as 200,000 individuals to leave Sinjar.

- Yezidis in Nineveh make up vast majority of Yezidi, worldwide.

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[108] Section, United Nations News Service. "UN News - UN Warns of 'Humanitarian Tragedy' as Militants Seize Town in Northern Iraq." *UN News Service Section*, August 3, 2014. http://type.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48397#.VaALeM7WubA.

- Those who could escape by vehicle fled for Dohuk Governorate.

- 130,000 individuals were stranded on Mt. Sinjar initially, coming under attack by ISIS, with "little access to food, water and shelter".

- Most individuals were trapped until airstrikes cleared a safety corridor to Syria. Travel by IDP's to Northern Syria and back to Dohuk in Iraq was facilitated by Syrian Kurds.

- 37% of IDP's sought shelter in schools, 23% in refugee camps, 22% in parks and public places and 17% in other buildings like churches.

- Local Kurdish groups, not the international community, provided the vast majority of food and water aid in Dohuk, Khanke and Zhako in Iraq and Nawroz Camp in Syria, but these activities are outside the scope of this analysis.

- Approximately 5,000 elderly Yezidi and goat-herders remained on Mt. Sinjar.

REACH's model is an excellent aggregator of sub-node information. The diffusion and availability of information coming from each independent agency suggest cooperation. And just like in the Government node, this cooperation serves as the interaction that produces replicated types. Clearly a type has emerged amongst NGO's and UN agencies that promote a strategy of information sharing. The aggregate reproduction of this strategy has led the Humanitarian Public node to excel at analysis and assessment, where the Government node has not.

In terms of material response, the Humanitarian Public sub-nodes were unable to respond to the crisis at Mt. Sinjar itself because of a non-permissive security environment. A glaring exception, which unfortunately proved the rule, was Doctors Without Borders (MSF), who was able to use a local organization to distribute food and water to Yezidi that had managed to escape, as well as those still on the mountain.[109]

As previously mentioned, the Humanitarian Public was most effective during the assessment of the onset of the emergency, but also during the Response Phase, which continues to this day until Yezidi can return to their homes to begin building resiliency. The array of sub-nodes participating in the Recovery Phase included UNICEF, WHO, OCHA, UNHCR, IOM, MSF and many more smaller actors. An OXFAM "note to editors" demonstrates the how humanitarian imperative is passed on to more capable nodes:

> Thousands of families, many of them women, children and the elderly, are now trapped on Jebel Sinjar (Sinjar Mountain) in above 40C degree temperatures. The UN with the Government and other members of the international community are better resourced to reach them and respond to their needs.[110]

Or this, from MSF:

> With the situation increasingly critical throughout the country, access to people who are trapped in conflict areas is impossible.' Due to the deteriorating security

[109] "Iraq/Syria: MSF Responding To Flood of Displaced From Sinjar." *MSF USA*. Accessed July 19, 2015. http://type.doctorswithoutborders.org/news-stories/field-news/iraqsyria-msf-responding-flood-displaced-sinjar.

[110] Oxfam. "Oxfam Gears up Its Aid Effort to Help People Affected by Fighting in Iraq." Text. *Oxfam Canada*, August 12, 2014. http://www.oxfam.ca/news/oxfam-gears-up-aid-effort-in-iraq-2014-08-12.

situation, MSF was recently forced to suspend its medical activities in Tikrit in the northeast of Iraq and put on standby its mobile clinics in areas between Erbil and Mosul.[111]

Nevertheless, the assessment capability and participation in the response phase by Humanitarian Public actors were crucial elements to the relative success of the events following August 3rd. Without quick assessment and an infrastructure to receive IDP's, those who fled ISIS would have faced a much more difficult challenge. The Humanitarian Public was quick to assess and advocate for the dire situation at Mt. Sinjar. Assessments during the Onset Phase by the UN, various NGO's, and data aggregators like Project REACH, provided up to date info to policy makers in the Government node, as well as the Media node. While GOI appeals were undoubtedly part of the arousal of political will in the West, detailed accounts of the Yezidi's plight factored into the decision to intervene by Governments. The aggregate replication by both UN and NGO sub-nodes of assessment types, indicate that quick and detailed information of IDP and humanitarian need satisfies performance measures by Government nodes and the other sub-nodes in the Humanitarian Public itself.

However, UN and NGO participation in the response phase was limited due to the unstable security environment at the time of the Mount Sinjar case. While the UN "called" on those who had the capacity to help to do something, they made no explicit mention of the actors in the Government node should or could act. It will be shown that

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[111] "Médecins Sans Frontières Responds to Dramatic Influx of Displaced People from Sinjar - International Medical Humanitarian Aid." Accessed October 3, 2015. https://type.msf.org.au/media-room/press-releases/press-release/article/medecins-sans-frontieres-responds-to-dramatic-influx-of-displaced-people-from-sinjar.html.

humanitarian groups do not specifically actively advocate for intervention with the use of force, a strategy that is replicated across sub-nodes in the community

A small amount of NGO aid was received on the mountain via Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).[112] This represents MSF's particularly assertive strategy in delivering aid. Because crossing sovereign lines is built into the very name of the organization, the sub-node is considered a prime example of Variation, a pre-condition to Selection. Other NGO sub-nodes have not adopted this type and therefore we cannot say the Humanitarian Public developed any nodal strategy of intervention. Put plainly, although many NGO's are aware of MSF's selections, they are unwilling to replicate them.

Finally, NGO's and the UN were able to accommodate thousands of refugees, after they had left the country. The above section on the response phase describes the distribution of those who made it to Dohuk and other camps. While UNHCR was able to advocate for IDP's, this type was not widely adopted during the crises itself. In addition to replication of humanitarian assessment strategy types, it appears that processing IDP's is another selection strategy of the Humanitarian Public node. However this activity can be considered part of both the response and recovery phase, and therefore outside the scope of consideration for this paper. The Humanitarian Public was able to use superior collection methods to select on a strategy of accurate and timely crisis assessment. This is replicated across the node to produce a wealth of information concerning humanitarian need. The Humanitarian Public received financial support from the Government node,

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[112] "Médecins Sans Frontières Responds to Dramatic Influx of Displaced People from Sinjar - International Medical Humanitarian Aid." Accessed October 3, 2015. https://type.msf.org.au/media-room/press-releases/press-release/article/medecins-sans-frontieres-responds-to-dramatic-influx-of-displaced-people-from-sinjar.html.

but was able to put it to use only during the Recovery Phase, outside the scope of this paper. The node was not able to participate, and therefore selected on inaction during the response phase, immediately following the crisis. This inaction is not only promoted by ground realities, but also principles restricting side taking, a necessary component of intervention. Critical analysis inside the humanitarian community should take place moving forward, to determine the applicability of these principles in light of genocidal acts by sub-state actors.

The Humanitarian Public node produced accurate and timely information as sub-nodes replicated strategies that involved ground interviews with primary sources. However, the Humanitarian Public was unable to directly participate in the response phase of the Mount Sinjar case due to the extremely violent nature of events on the ground. Despite successful assessment strategies during crisis onset, positive intrinsic ratings on performance measures during response become increasingly difficult because intervention necessarily violates neutrality, independence and last resort to eliminate the offending party by force. Not responding to the crisis with force would in turn cost lives, violating the humanitarian imperative itself. The practical result is vague rhetoric calling nebulously on "those with the capability" to act, when in reality it is western governments who are clearly being invoked. The principles that have carried over from portions of IHL and guidelines for the use of military assets during disaster should not apply to CE's where genocide looms. The idea that they can is an error on behalf of the Humanitarian Public. This challenge to humanitarian principles results in tacit silence

from official statements coming out of Geneva, a challenge the community is unfortunately not alien to.

Media

The media began reporting on the crisis developing on the Nineveh Plain on August 3rd, 2014. The Washington Post article that was published on that date outlined details concerning humanitarian conditions at Sinjar, but did not yet take on the dire tone that subsequent Media artifacts did (an artifact is a material used by an actor/sub-node). The tenor and tone of media reporting on the catastrophe at Sinjar and subsequent events on the mountain ranged from pragmatic to apocryphal. Although the ground realities certainly represented something in between, one thing remains certain: acquiring fast and more importantly, accurate information would have been very difficult without the assessment activities in the Humanitarian Public, listed above. The presentation of the optics of MP Vian Dakhil's plea to the Iraqi parliament also factored heavily into pressure placed on political elites and the attentive public inside the larger General Public node.

The Media node is a collection of sub-nodes, most easily defined as different news outlets, that rely on viewership and readership to generate revenue. Therefore, the node as a whole will select on strategies, which result in positive revenue performance measures. This was seen as different outlets over-reported the number of stranded IDP's

as 200,000 or even 500,000. Performance measures in the Media node have little to do with accuracy. A distinct type of Media artifact has replicated since the first Gulf War, the so-called "CNN effect". Propagated by a short news cycle and the brutal optics of war and conflict, the CNN effect was able to motivate the attentive public and political elites in and around the Obama administration. While there were no camera crews able to film the Yezidi escape from Sinjar town, cell phone camera footage of the suffering on the mountain and an attempted helicopter rescue by MP Dakhil are available. On August 11th, The Telegraph released a video showing Yezidi families, injured and dehydrated, walking away from the mountain. The video notes that footage was collected beginning on August 9th.[113] By the time the security situation permitted media sub-nodes to begin cultivating the severe optics of the Yezidi's struggle for General Public consumption, the humanitarian conditions on Mt. Sinjar had begun to abide. More research must be carried out into the efficacy of motivating publics concerning genocide, because their political opinion can affect the international response level. It may be that some threshold condition for number of endangered individuals exists before widespread concern grows salient. In this case, however, it would seem that the active pressure on the Obama administration only came from political elites and some members of the "attentive public", as sub-set of the wider population. Finally, the administration itself was well aware of General Public access to Media reporting. Inaction to prevent genocide is a negative performance measure for Governments in the West. While the timing of this

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[113] "Video Shows Scale of Yezidi Suffering on Iraq's Mount Sinjar," August 11, 2014, sec. World. http://type.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/11027065/Video-shows-scale-of-Yezidi-suffering-on-Iraqs-Mount-Sinjar.html.

realization is not known, it is likely safe to assume Government sub-nodes in the United

States considered the issue heavily during the first week of August. Salient selected

strategies include:

- Sub-nodes across the Media node largely replicated The Washington Post's

  initial reporting in the early days of the crisis. Along with The Post, the New

  York Times and The Global Post were the only major English-speaking

  outlets to publish the story on the 3rd. This produced a reporting type.

- A genuine humanitarian CNN effect was able to stir the attentive public and

  political elites in the United States, enough to produce action. The Media did

  not successfully stir the General Public node to apply a mass pressure on the

  Government node. Decisions to act in the UK and Australia were similarly

  made by the Government node, not driven by the General Public, writ large.

  This is not a performance measure, per se, but important regarding outcome

  nonetheless and most likely related to the political climate in the West in the

  post-Iraq war years.

- While not technically a Media sub-node, social media provided

  documentation and dissemination of information. More research should be

  conducted to determine whether social media should taxonomically fall under

  the Media heading.

The Media selected on a strategy that successfully motivated the Government by

motivating political elites and the attentive public. Overall public interest in the conflict

did not peak until after the Sinjar crisis was over). One area ripe for more research

involves the Media's direct effect on Government decision-making. Presumably the

Media was able to satisfy internal performance measures, by garnering viewership or

readership. Primary source research indicates that the beneficiaries of intervention can be

displeased with the CNN effect's brevity and the corresponding shift in General Public

attention away from the many thousands of refugees and IDP's who remained displaced.

General Public

The General Public was largely exposed to the Mount Sinjar on August 8th,

following an August 7th address by President Obama stating:

> In recent days, Yezidi women, men and children from the area of Sinjar have fled
> for their lives. And thousands -- perhaps tens of thousands -- are now hiding high
> up on the mountain, with little but the clothes on their backs. They're without
> food; they're without water. People are starving. And children are dying of
> thirst. Meanwhile, ISIL forces below have called for the systematic destruction of
> the entire Yezidi people, which would constitute genocide. So these innocent
> families are faced with a horrible choice: descend the mountain and be
> slaughtered, or stay and slowly die of thirst and hunger.

By the time most Yezidi had made it off the mountainside, the General Public in

the United States began searching for and reading about the crisis. The latency between

crisis response and the General Public becoming fully aware of the situation is indicative.

Although the General Public largely motivates or regulates the action of elected officials in Governments, the use of force abroad by the executive branch is less restricted, for a time. President Obama would have notified Congress about military activity in Iraq, but not necessarily consulted them or their constituents. At any rate, existing an existing Authorization of the Use of Military Force (AUMF) was already in place from the previous Iraq War, largely nullifying the point from the viewpoint of those approaching intervention from a legal standpoint. More importantly and discussed above, is the impact political elites surrounding a President's administration have on decision-making abroad. The fact that the President of the United States has temporal leverage when it comes to military activity is a positive for short-term humanitarian activity. As the rapid progression of events at Mt. Sinjar show, delaying airdrops or airstrikes may have had dire consequences.

In light of the above, it was most likely the GOI appeal and reports and assessment from the Media and Humanitarian Public nodes which most likely affected Government decision making in this case. It has already been discussed that buck-passing is a phenomena in security, as well as humanitarian issues on the Government level. As far as the General Public, however, it may be that mixed motives require a permissible justification for the use of American force. While hard to quantify, attention spans are short and information saturation is high in the General Public. The Media "news-cycle" is short and relies on sound bites, not long-winded justifications for intervention in foreign lands. Disgruntled and distrustful from long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the General Public wouldn't really begin to change its collective opinion on the use of force in Iraq

until James Foley was brutally murdered by beheading on August 20th. The sub-nodes inside the collective General Public node were unaware, unable, or uncaring to the point of inaction. While the moral implications of such outlooks are questionable, this paper only makes claims about the node's effect on separate nodes the humanitarian network. In that light, the attentive public or political elites in America may be more sensitive to impending genocide than they are often given credit for in popular Media sub-nodes.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The persecution of Yezidi in Sinjar and on the mountain occurred in a security

vacuum. This vacuum existed because of a breakdown in political authority across large

parts of Iraq. A Complex Emergency involves the breakdown of political authority in the

area where humanitarian needs are taking place. In the case of Mt. Sinjar, ISIS sought

first to create that breakdown and in turn generated a crisis with humanitarian

requirements. Compounding these conditions was a desire on behalf of the group to

annihilate and enslave the Yezidi people. The retreat of the Iraqi army in the face of ISIS

onslaught earlier in the year created the physical security vacuum outside of Kurdistan.[114]

Considered by analysts to be one of the weakest demonstrations of force in recent

military history, the newly formed Iraqi army fell apart. The absence of any GOI military

presence left conditions ripe for ISIS to expand as far as they pleased in the newly

declared caliphate. The confluence of a desire for control of territory and a sub-human

opinion of the Yezidi people led to a fast moving, violent persecution of the group

coupled with severe humanitarian considerations. In this way, it is extremely hard to

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[114] http://type.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/world/middleeast/exhausted-and-bereft-iraqi-soldiers-quit-fight.html

disaggregate the humanitarian and security strands of thought concerning situations such as the one on Mt. Sinjar. Even in a lengthy academic paper, distinct categories of mutually exclusive phenomena continue to overlap.

Overall success is measured by the mitigation of danger to human life and reduction of human suffering. By the above criteria the operation on Mt. Sinjar was a success. Without the initial airdrops of food, water and NFI, countless Yezidi could have perished and without military assistance from the air the creation of a safety corridor could have taken weeks or months, increasing the death toll on the mountainside. A Yezidi activist told the author, via Twitter:

> On August 8, USA has the first flights flown with relief supplies. The British followed thereafter. So 5 days after the Ezidis were trapped on the mountain at 45 degrees. The relief supplies mainly the water bottles are all gone when launched to break, so eyewitnesses…the airstrikes have helped the units on the ground to save the Ezidis from the mountains. However, many report that there were a number of air strikes that have gone into space.[115]

There is significant complexity involved in determining whether the US mission complied (or could have complied) with all basic humanitarian principles in such a non-permissive, Complex Emergency, as the Humanitarian Public would like.[116] Consider the following from the UN's Interagency Standing Committee's guidelines for CE's:

> The guiding principles of impartiality, neutrality, humanity and independence from political considerations are the same as those governing humanitarian action in general…Decisions to accept military assets must be made by humanitarian organizations, not political authorities, and based solely on humanitarian criteria… Military assets should be requested only where there is no comparable civilian alternative and only the use of military assets can meet a critical humanitarian need.

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[115] There is anecdotal evidence of ineffective airstrikes or broken water containers on Mt. Sinjar. However, the general consensus among humanitarian clients is that air strikes were helpful and airdrops, crucial.

The military asset must therefore be unique in nature or timeliness of deployment, and its use should be a last resort… A humanitarian operation using military assets must retain its civilian nature and character. The operation must remain under the overall authority and control of the humanitarian organization responsible for that operation, whatever the special command arrangements for the military asset itself. To the extent possible, the military asset should operate unarmed and be civilian in appearance.

Independence seems a moot point, as no actor, save the USG or YPG, was compelled to take sides in a conflict. Although 5% of the IDP population was not Yezidi, the Government airdrops provided assistance to all, upholding impartiality. Neutrality represents the most difficult of the four principles to uphold, as the persecution of Yezidi by ISIS stems from the political breakdown of authority across Iraq. When this breakdown is specifically attributable to one actor, like ISIS, neutrality becomes extremely difficult to uphold. Crucially, however, the principle of humanity itself was upheld. Governments, writ large, acted to save lives and mitigate suffering in a timely manner without creating extra harm to humanitarian beneficiaries.

Complex Adaptive System analysis can help demonstrate why action or inaction occurred in networked systems. Governments, the Humanitarian Public, the Media and the General Public are the main nodes, constituted by sub-nodes. These aggregates of sub-nodes display behaviors that once replicated produce overall strategies (variously called behaviors or types). The following is a list of displayed strategies in the four nodes.

Any discussion of humanitarian outcomes at Mt. Sinjar should be coupled by recognition of the great tragedy that occurred in Sinjar town. Thousands of Yezidi men and women who could not escape the ISIS onslaught on the morning of August 3rd were

either murdered or sexually trafficked. Recounting their story through careful primary source research and ground excavation of human remains is necessary to uncover the depth of the tragedy. In this way, the events that transpired in early August cannot be celebrated as an absolute success. Atrocity was not prevented, only mitigated. It is not always effortless to remain purely scientific when researching cases such as these. The human toll and suffering seems too great to simply quantify. The author of this paper would be remiss if he didn't mention the emotional effect that this research occasionally produced. Personal messages from refugees or grainy pictures of bodies in the dirt, decomposing after what will soon be two winters in unmarked ground have been particularly moving. To deny these horrors would be wrong.

However, delineating between the genocide in Sinjar and the group that escaped to the mountain is important. Understanding why those who managed to flee were not slaughtered when trapped by those bent on their destruction is important for several reasons. The tactical tenability of "humanitarian corridors" is poorly understood and most likely relies on the high level of cross-nodal communication advocated for by this paper. Second, interventions against sub-state actors who've assumed state-like functions are a somewhat new phenomena. Third, successful interventions are difficult and understanding factors leading to success could aid in the creation of policy recommendations for short-term operations like the one at Mt. Sinjar. Finally and most importantly for this paper, the humanitarian system was able respond to the Mount Sinjar case in a way that allowed for efficacy. Complex Emergencies like the one at Mount Sinjar will unfortunately increase in frequency in coming years. An increasingly

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globalized economy will produce both winners and along with rising inequality, losers who are more susceptible to the false hope of extremism. Sub-state actors that use extremist justifications for their pursuit of territory will continue to compete with more legitimate political actors. That same territory will become ever more sparse, as climate change and population growth cause resources to dwindle. The need to address Complex Emergencies will grow.

Despite the painful optics of interventions from Somalia to Serbia, it is necessary to seek out that which does succeed, in order to further probe the factors driving success and replicate life-saving strategies in the future. This notion is one felt across the humanitarian network and, tautologically, this paper. Complex Adaptive Systems thinking allows the analyst to understand strategies, which are replicated by many actors, all driven to one extent or the next by a motivation to alter conditions for the better in foreign lands.

As the above analysis shows, it is the General Public node alone that is free from fully definable performance measures with regard to humanitarian intervention. Governments, the Humanitarian Public and to a lesser extent the Media are rated both endogenously and exogenously by performance measures. For example, the Clinton administration is still being criticized for failing to stop genocide in Rwanda in the early 90's. Conversely, the average citizen in the US feels no remorse for not speaking up. Both apathy and anti-interventionism today are compounded by weariness from the perceived ineffectiveness of war in the Middle East since 2001.

Regardless of wider public involvement in interventions, information about onset

was effectively and accurately disseminated by the Humanitarian Public, but no UN

entity and few NGO actors were willing to risk the lives of aid workers to intervene on

the ground. The Humanitarian Public is undoubtedly aware of the spectrum of the

conundrum. A speech in May of 2015 by Peter Mauer, President of the ICRC, notes:

> It is an undeniable reality that we are exposed to the rapidly deteriorating safety
> and security patterns in today's conflicts. We see more, longer, more protracted
> and deeper conflicts, often exacerbated by natural disasters …We see a growing
> number of regionalized conflict…increasing difficulties to navigate de-structured
> conflicts with an ever growing number of arms bearers and authorities and which
> can be an obstacle to access civilian populations… We see broad disregard for
> IHL and Human Rights Law by both States and non-State actors. And finally, we
> see all this translated in record numbers of population displacements, the highest
> amount of refugees and internally displaced people since World War II.[117]

After the Onset Phase, it was the Government node that was left with the burden

of helping at Mt. Sinjar. It is not a hidden fact that the USG wrapped events at Sinjar into

the wider justification to return to Iraq with air power. The fact that intervention was not

the only justification in returning to Iraq is significant, according to Wheeler. Should this

have been the only justification used, motives would have been suspect. But given the

wider context of the national security of the United States vis-à-vis ISIS, it can be

assumed strikes to protect US assets near Erbil would have occurred anyway.

It would earn a negative performance in the Humanitarian Public mark from

donors and idealistic hard-liners to illuminate this positive coincidence. Even when "last-

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[117] *"Humanitarian Perspectives on International Security in Times of Mutating Conflicts Geneva Centre for Peace and Security."* Statement. International Committee of the Red Cross, May 29, 2015. https://type.icrc.org/en/document/gcsp-20-years-constructive-change-peace-and-security-world-humanitarian-perspectives.

resort" is clear, the humanitarian community is loathe to select a strategy that specifically

calls for Government action. Nevertheless, Governments were only able to operate from

the air. If the General Public had a potential effect on Governments at all, it was to

portend outrage should boots on the ground be deployed. And given the necessity of

"eyes" on the ground to effectively respond to CE's, that specific tactical necessity was

left to the Syrian Kurds who managed the humanitarian corridor and physical assets like

trucks to move IDP's out of Iraq, into Syria, and then back into Iraq or refugee camps in

Syria itself. Despite the initial KDP withdrawal from Sinjar, it can be safely assumed that

without Kurdish assistance in the area, many more Yezidi would have died of hunger,

thirst or further ISIS violence.

What is clear is that the Yezidi community is "very grateful" for US bombs that

removed ISIS fighters from the area. That was the sentiment expressed to the author in

private messages on Twitter by Yezidi activists in Dohuk and Germany, and the exact

words used by Gulie Khalaf, leader of Yezidis International. Gulie runs the organization

from Lincoln, NE. While she expressed gratitude at western actions, she is deeply

frustrated at the speed with which the international community moved on to the next

issue with no commitment to solving an ongoing genocide. When I pressed the activist in

Dohuk about his preferences concerning help by the UN and others, he noted in a

revelatory passage:

> They are helping but slowly…. I don't think that UN want to do that. I think
> Russia is fighting seriously and I don't know if Russia is interested in helping. I
> think America would be better. Maybe the west want to help, but I think they
> don't know the real truth of what happened. I think they shouldn't come back to
> middle east to fighting for Arabs or kurdish peshmerga. In last war in Iraq many
> American soldiers dead for nothing and without reason. I don't think that [the

Iraqi army can defeat ISIS]. I think any country of the west can help us. Maybe.

In summary, the use of Complex Adaptive Systems with regard to the humanitarian system is nascent and needs more input from the actors in each node, to ensure assumptions about selection strategies are correct. However, several policy implications and future research questions can be developed from this study. First, actors in the Humanitarian Public should continue to specialize in assessment and reporting techniques during the rapid onset of emergencies. The accurate and timely information used by Governments used in this case was invaluable to evaluation response options. Conversely, Governments should look to the Mount Sinjar case as a potential example of how force can be used in conjunction with willful ground actors to produce positive humanitarian outcomes. Finally, actors on all sides of the debate will do well to internalize that Complex Emergencies require coordination and pragmatism during assessment and response. Moving past rigid territorialism and idealism will aid in selecting effective strategies, which in turn will save lives.

The Mt. Sinjar case offers clues about the future of Complex Emergencies when violent sub-state actors create dire humanitarian concerns. In a world where NGO's are inhibited by access constraints and the UN by its own lack of capacity, the unfortunate reality is that the responsibility to carry out the humanitarian imperative falls to the most capable nation-state who is willing to act on their own in order to save lives. In a globalized society, the responsibility often falls to the largest powers of the day. Considering this trend, the US should research and develop methods to affect change in the humanitarian sphere, while ensuring that it continues to work with and support

international actors like the UN and NGO's. The UN and NGO's should use specific

language to call on and coordinate with those nation-states who will act. The Mt. Sinjar

case can be looked to as an example, but not a standard. Where NGO access and UN

capability can help, they should do so first. Doing so creates a more collaborative

humanitarian environment with many nations involved. Diffusing this responsibility will

be primary to both the sustainability of the humanitarian community and sustained will of

nations to intervene.

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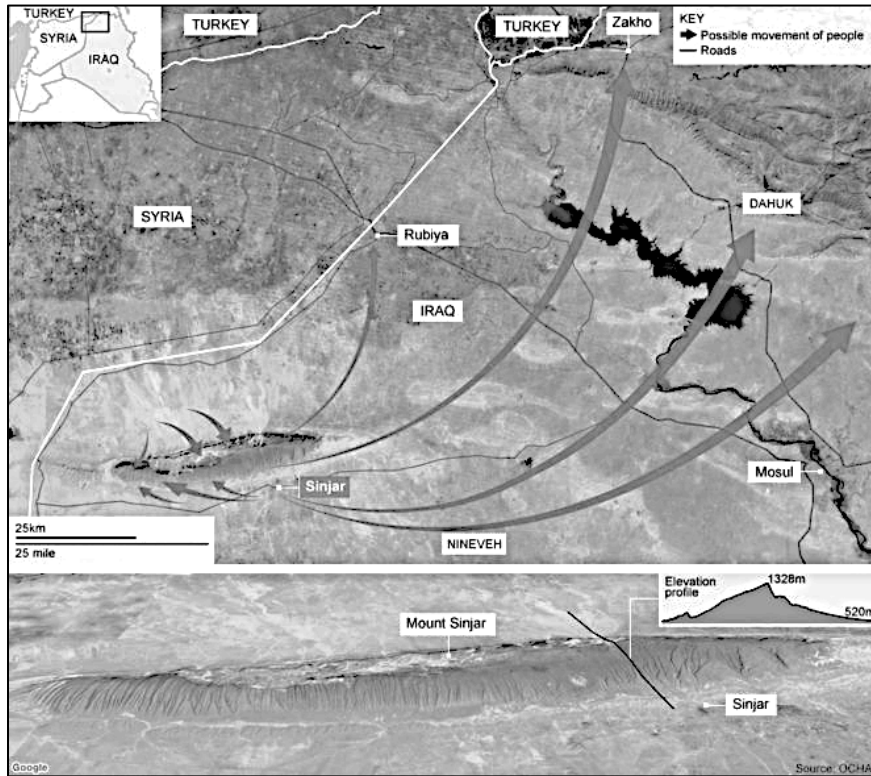
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APPENDIX A - MAP

IDP and Refugee Movement

APPENDIX B – SEARCH TRENDS BY TOPIC (IRAQ, ISIS, YAZIDI, JAMES FOLEY) BY AMERICANS DURING AUGUST 2014
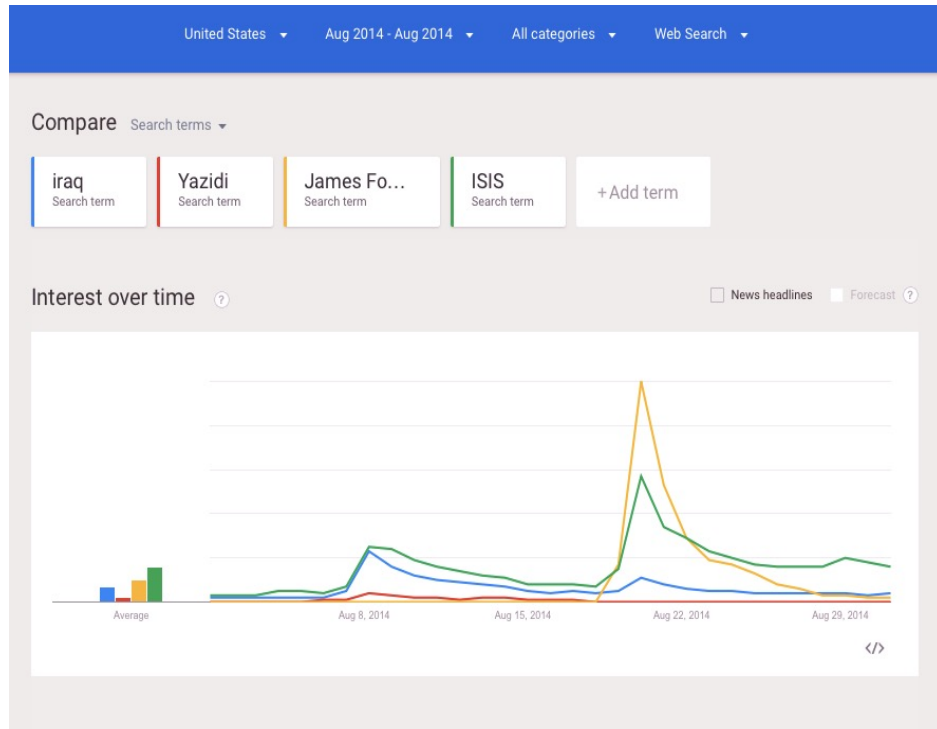
APPENDIX C – COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEM

To determine how the humanitarian network was able to respond to the Mount Sinjar case efficaciously, CAS analysis is used to identify the selection or rejection of different strategies, or types. Because a type is a strategy that multiple actors in a populations share, their aggregate behavior produces a node.

Complex Adaptive System Analysis Terms[118]

- **Strategy**, a conditional action pattern that indicates what to do in which circumstances; selecting on successful humanitarian response strategies, which produce positive performance measurements.
- **Artifact**, a material resource that has definite location and can respond to the action of agents. This could be a tent, needs report or C-5 Super Galaxy aircraft.
- **Agent**, in this case can be used interchangeably with "actor" or "sub-node".
- **Population**, the collection of humanitarian sub-nodes producing nodes.
- **System**, a larger collection, including one or more populations of agents and possibly also artifacts. In this case the entire humanitarian system (or network).
- **type**, all the agents or actors in a population that have some characteristic in common. In this case, selection characteristics within a given node.
- **Variety**, the diversity of types within a population or system.

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[118] "Complex Adaptive System." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, May 20, 2015. https://en.wikipedia.org/type/index.php?title=Complex_adaptive_system&oldid=663216713.

- **Interaction pattern**, the recurring regularities of contact among types within the humanitarian system.

- **Space (physical)**, location in geographical space & time of agents and artifacts. Oftentimes referred to as "humanitarian space", "contested space".

- **Space (conceptual)**, "location" in a set of categories structured so that "nearby" agents will tend to interact. This Space has largely opened up due to technology and the availability of open-source information like Project REACH.

- **Selection**, processes that lead to an increase or decrease in the frequency of various types of agent or strategies. In this case, selection strategies which produce types.

- **Success criteria** or **performance measures**, a "score" used by an agent or designer in attributing credit in the selection of relatively successful (or unsuccessful) strategies or agents

APPENDIX D – PRIMARY SOURCE RESEARCH

Throughout the research process, the author maintained an active social media presence on Twitter, which yielded unanticipated primary sources. The names of these individuals are not given, to protect their privacy. In some cases this was requested by the source, in other cases it was not. Some were willing to publish their Twitter account names, but in the interest of discretion toward the Yezidi community, these are not provided, either.

In every case, the Yezidi individual messaged the author first, unsolicited. The desire among the Yezidi community for the world to understand what happened is extremely high and has resulted in documentaries, songs and works of art detailing the massacre and flight up the mountain. The author has put forth the upmost effort in trying to remain scientifically neutral concerning facts, especially with regard to numbers of displaced. Generally speaking, these sources wrote to the author from Germany, Austria and Dohuk in Iraqi, Kurdistan. Gulie Khalaf of Yezidis International was very helpful in speaking to the author over the phone.

APPENDIX E – RECENT HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION LITERATURE

Just as the practice of intervention has proponents and detractors, so too does the

literature that shapes and molds the opinions of would-be actors and abstainers. The

relevant literature ranges from popular descriptions of interventions past to academic

tomes, picking apart sovereignty, law or ethics. The study of international politics and its

phenomena are not exact science, but convoluted narratives of interest and political will.

Put best by James Rosenau:

> So many diverse activities, motives, and consequences are considered to
> constitute intervention that the key terms of most definitions are ambiguous and
> fail to discriminate empirical phenomena.[119]

The above passage describes how the ontology of humanitarian intervention is not

clear, but overlaps and fails to "discriminate". This leaves political scientists at a loss

because discriminate categories are necessary for accurate measurement. The semantics

chosen to represent the ontology are confusing, too. Despite the overlap between relative

neologisms like "human rights", "humanitarianism" or even more specific terms like

"atrocity prevention", literature dealing with intervention can be divided into four distinct

groups. Each of these groups is progressively more aware of the historical humanitarian

lineage than the preceding group.[120]

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[119] James N. Rosenau, 'Intervention as a Scientific Concept', *Journal of Conflict Resolutions 13 (1969),* 154-55.

[120] This idea is attributable to: Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History.* Cambridge University Press, 2011. p. 8.

The first group includes those who conceive of modern intervention as a product

of events during the 1990's. To include authors like Samantha Power, Michael Ignatieff

and Noam Chomsky, these authors treat intervention as both substantively and

semantically originating from the 1990's. They have a generally unfavorable view of

intervention, ranging from that which laments inaction (Power) to that which largely

condemns intervention itself (Chomsky).[121] Chomsky has publically admitted that the

idea of intervention is old, but maintains all interventions have been a for hegemonic

crusading. Michael Ignatieff has developed a more nuanced view that, too often, "civilian

The second group of analysts falls into a group who are responsible for creating

and defending the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine. One justification for the

existence of R2P is our shared human history, culminating in an agreement to prevent

genocide halfway through last century. This set includes authors of the Independent

Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The issue is still probed by

modern think tanks:

> The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect… replies to the question 'Is R2P
> really new?' with the statement, 'No, the underlying core idea that states have an
> obligation to protect men and women is well established. It then goes on to cite the UN
> Convention on Genocide of 1948, and the body of international human law governing the
> treatment of civilians during armed conflict.[122]

Third, legal practitioners have debated the legal implications of intervention after

the UN Charter forbade foreign meddling under article 2(7), while simultaneously

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[121] ibid. p. 9

[122] Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2011. p. 9.

allowing for recourse with regard to domestic rights abuses under Article 39.[123] Simon

Chesterman's seminal book about intervention arrives at the same conclusion Rosenau

does, from a legal perspective, that humanitarian actors and voices are cacophonous.

Forcible self-help during governance vacuums is clearly articulated, even though

Chesterman remained wary of the 2011 Libyan intervention. [124] [125] These works tend to

include an even longer view of history than the R2P author set.

Fourth, social scientists like Nicholas J. Wheeler, J.L. Holzgrefe and Robert O.

Keohane, and Jennifer Welsh have comprehensively summed up the origins of

intervention in their respective works.[126] [127] [128] Jennifer Welsh's *Humanitarian*

Intervention and International Relations is particularly expansive in scope, treating

norms, sovereignty and historical examples in one text. The notions in that tome

influenced the thought process behind the notes on humanitarianism and international

relations theory, below.

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[123] "Charter of the United Nations: Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression." Accessed July 7, 2015. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml.

[124] *Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law*. Accessed July 8, 2015. http://www.academia.edu/1469674/Just_War_or_Just_Peace_Humanitarian_Intervention_and_International_Law.

[125] Chesterman, Simon. "'Leading from Behind': The Responsibility to Protect, the Obama Doctrine, and Humanitarian Intervention After Libya." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, May 31, 2011. http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1855843.

[126] Wheeler, Nicholas J. *Saving Strangers*. Oxford University Press, 2002. http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0199253102.001.0001/acprof-9780199253104.

[127] Holzgrefe, J.L., Keohane, Robert O. "Humanitarian Intervention." *Cambridge University Press*. Accessed July 26, 2015. http://www.cambridge.org/US/academic/subjects/law/human-rights/humanitarian-intervention-ethical-legal-and-political-dilemmas.

[128] Welsh, Jennifer M., ed. *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*. Oxford University Press, 2003. http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0199267219.001.0001/acprof-9780

Finally, purely historical accounts from Gary Bass and David Rodogno make up the most historiographical set of authors.[129] [130] These works are academic in scope but historical in substance, providing vivid accounts of dire domestic conditions in Greece, Syria and Bulgaria. Simms and Trim's *Humanitarian Intervention: A History* is a particularly utilitarian tome. The book influenced both the epistemological conception of the humanitarian network in this paper, as well as this literature review itself.[131]

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[129] Bass, Gary J. *Freedom's Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008.

[130] Rodogno, Davide. *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

[131] Simms, Brendan, and D. J. B. Trim, eds. *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.