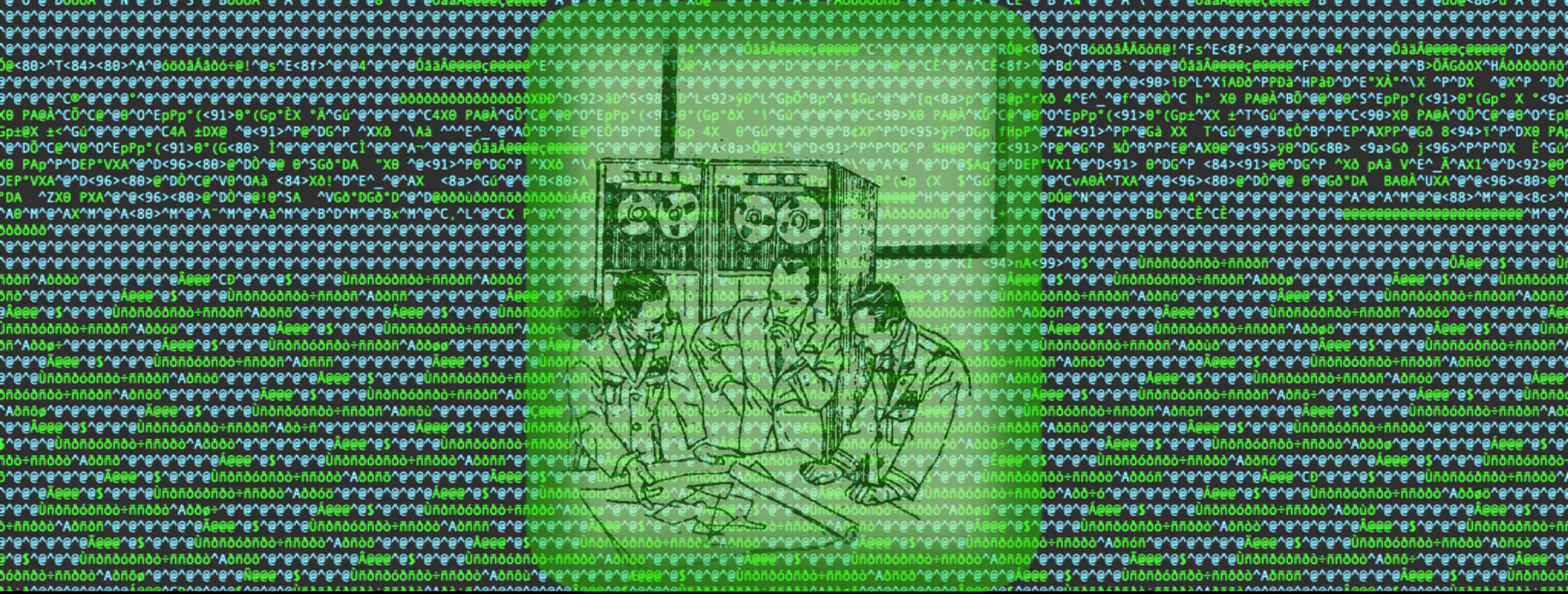
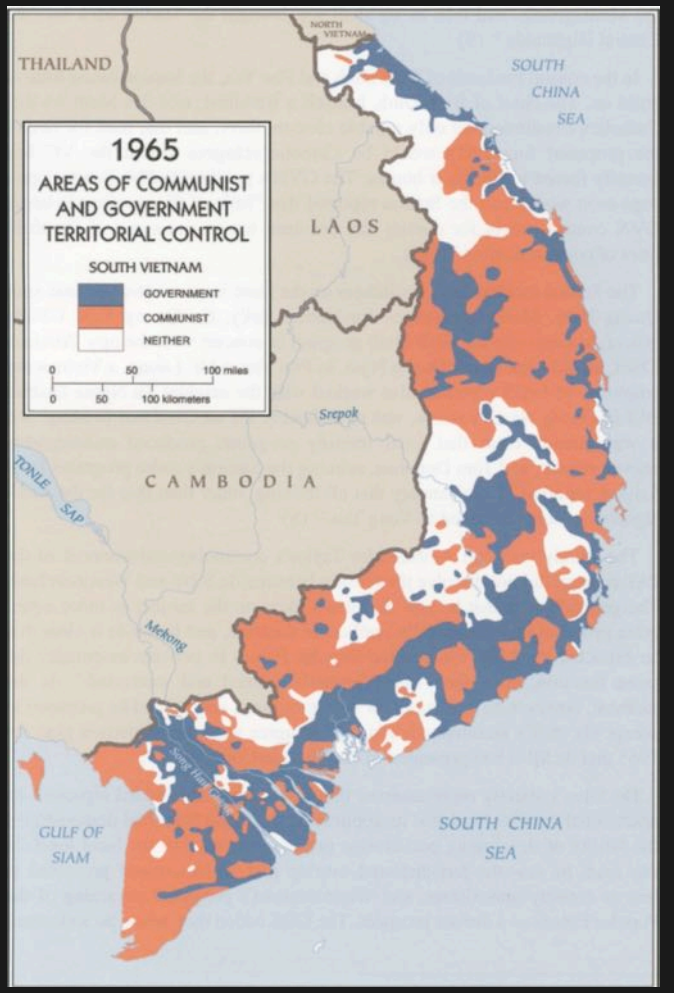


Databasing Jungle-War

How did culture, social practice and materiality of data-processing affect its results and usage during the Vietnam war?

Historical Background

- Advisory Mission 1961-1964 failed
- 1965: US openly enter civil war in Vietnam
- Creation of Office for Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) in 1967
- Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara orders thorough investigation and application of System Analysis principles



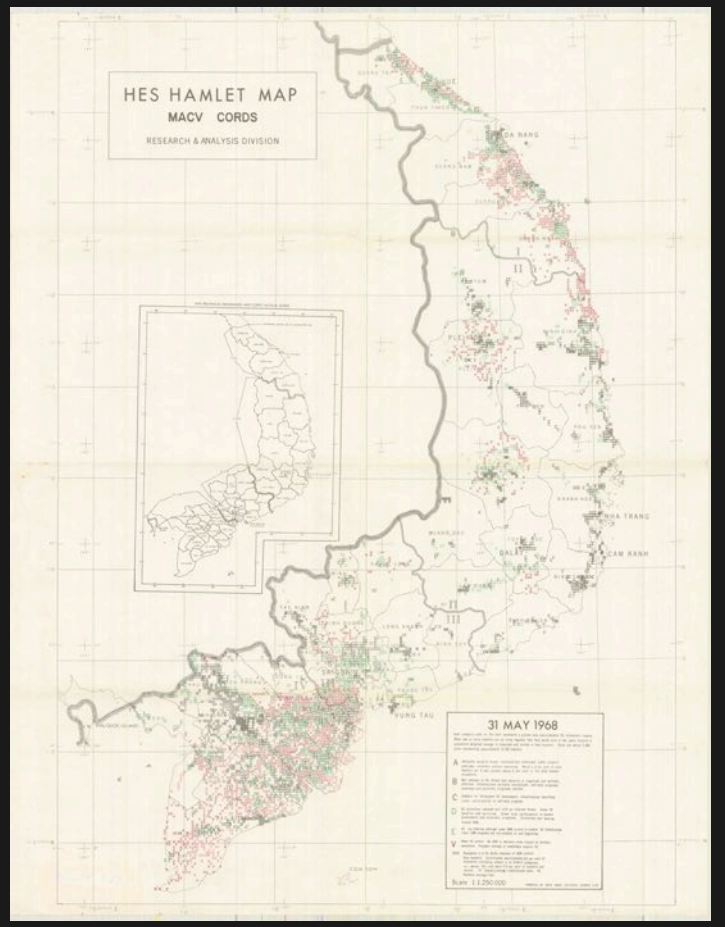
Pacification Database

- 67 different data-collections on various aspects of intelligence, security and development
- interconnectable via a hamlet gazetteer containing USID identifiers and geolocation:

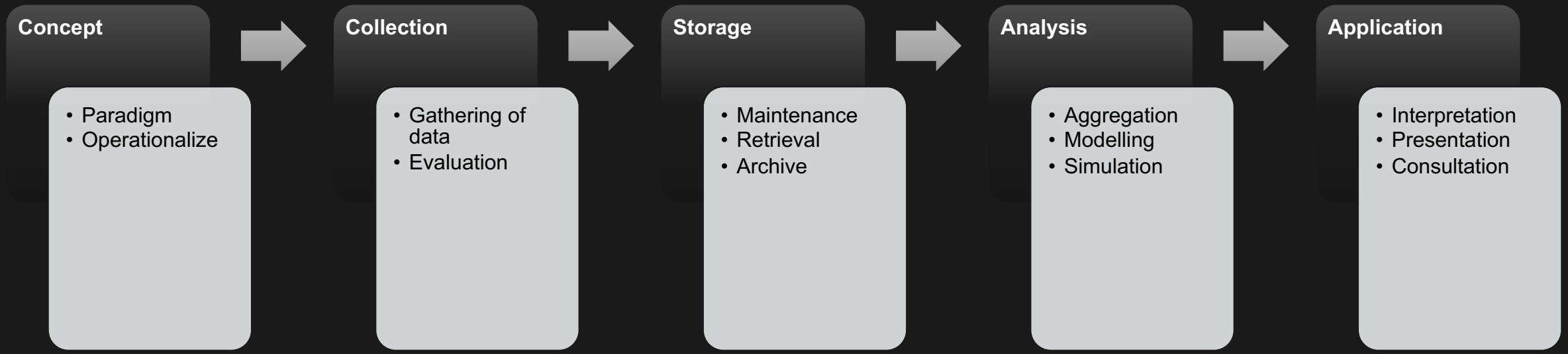
→ Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)

Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)

- 44 provinces, 272 districts, 2.680 villages, 11.800 hamlets, 11-17 mio. people
- geoinformation and demographic data updated quarterly
- matrix of 18 indicators and 5 rating-categories (A-E), updated monthly
- operational since January 1967, revised in 1970 and 1972

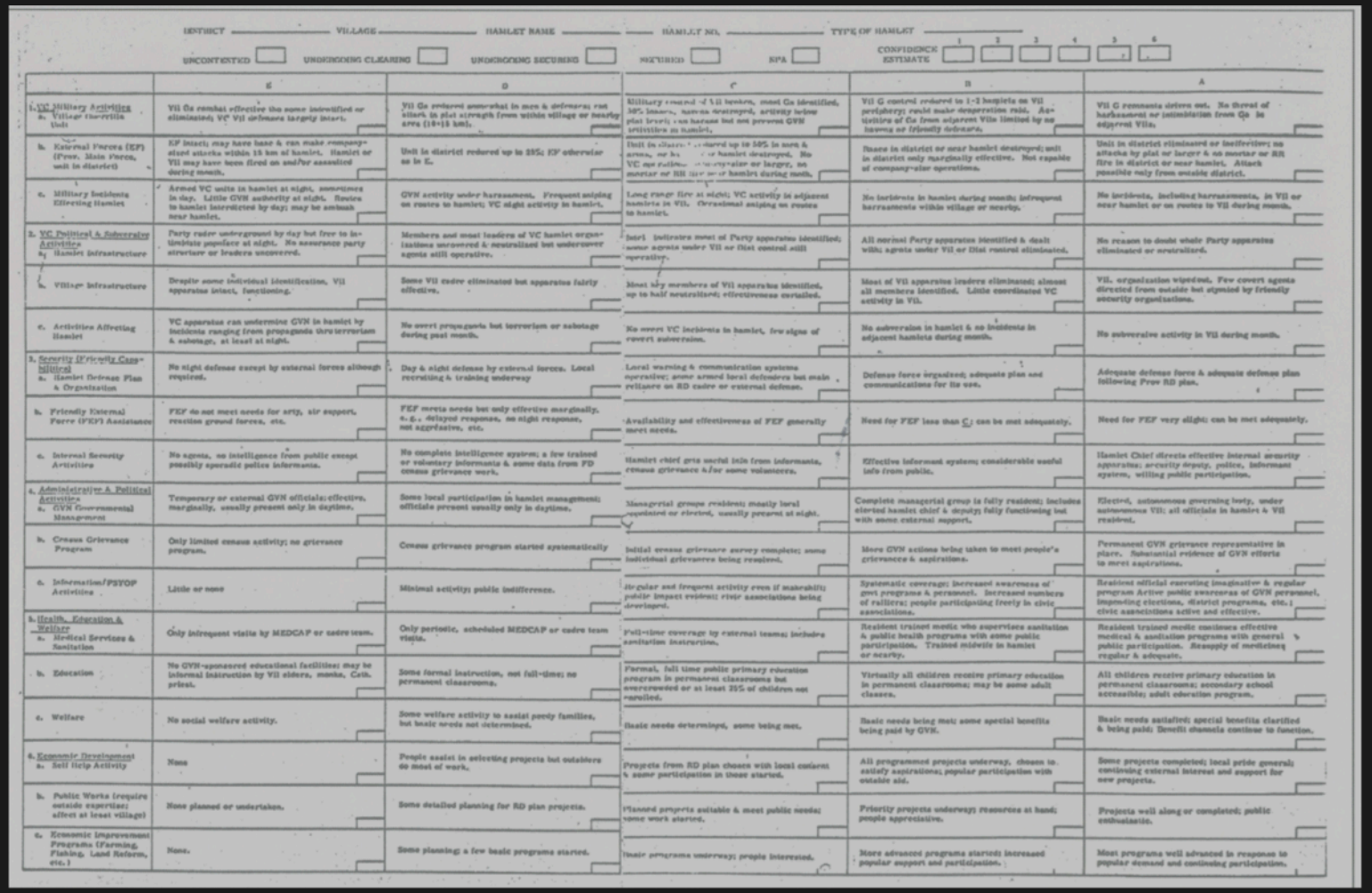


« Databasing »



Scheme inspired by: Peter Graeff and Nina Baur, «Digital Data, Administrative Data, and Survey Compared»

Hamlet Worksheet

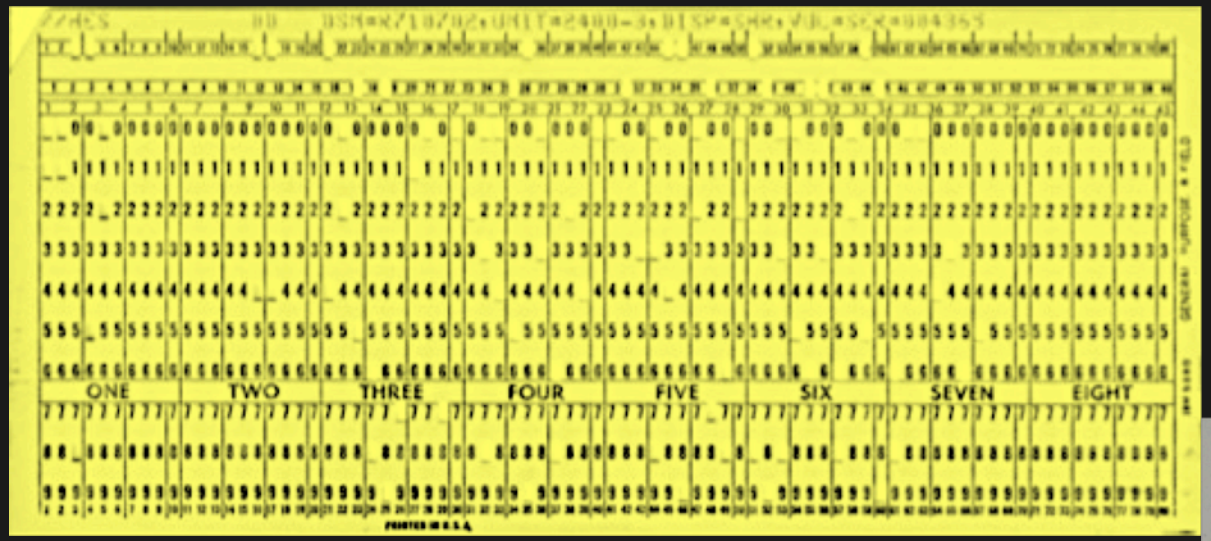


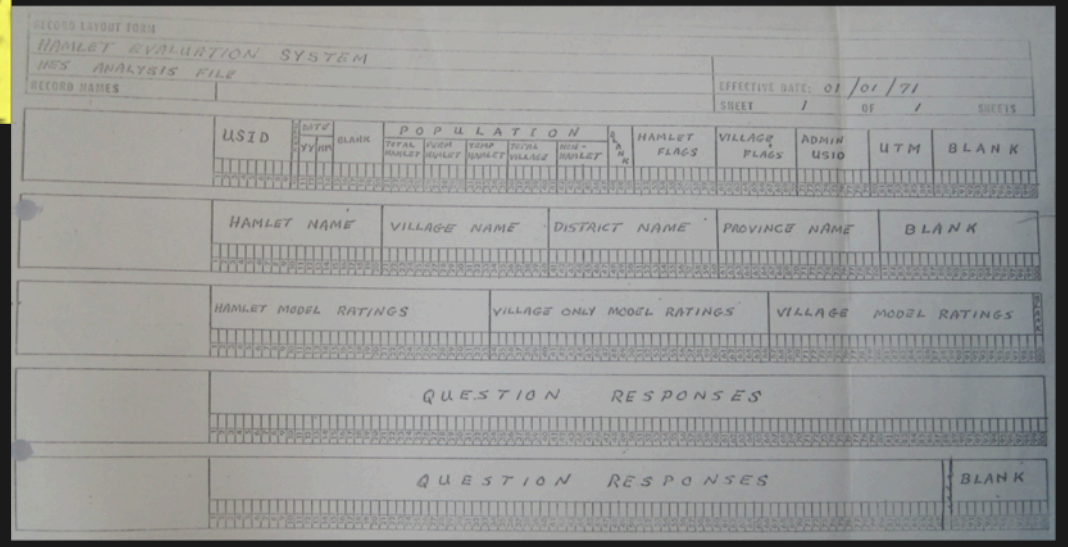
DISTRICT ____ VILLAGE ____ HAMLET NAME ____ HAMLET NO. ____ TYPE OF HAMLET ____

UNCONTESTED ☐ UNDERGOING CLEARING ☐ UNDERGOING SECURING ☐ SECURED ☐ RPA ☐ CONFIDENCE ESTIMATE 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐

	E	D	C	B	A
1. VC Military Activities a. Village Guerrilla Unit	VII Co combat effective (no some intensified or eliminated; VC VII defenses largely intact.	VII Co reduced somewhat in men & defenses; can attack in plat strength from within village or nearby area (1/2-1 km).	Military command of VII broken, most Co identified, 50% leaders, hamlet destroyed, activity below plat level; can harass but not prevent GVN activities in hamlet.	VII G control reduced to 1-2 hamlets on VII periphery; could make desperation raid. Activities of Co from adjacent Vills limited by no haven or friendly defenses.	VII G remnants driven out. No threat of harassment or intimidation from Co in adjacent Vills.
b. External Forces (EF) (Prov. Main Forces, unit in district)	EF intact; may have base & can make company-sized attacks within 15 km of hamlet. Hamlet or VII may have been fired on and/or assaulted during month.	Unit in district reduced up to 25%; EF otherwise as in E.	Unit in district reduced up to 50% in men & arms, or base or hamlet destroyed. No VC operations company-size or larger, no mortar or RR fire on hamlet during month.	Base in district or near hamlet destroyed; unit in district only marginally effective. Not capable of company-size operations.	Unit in district eliminated or ineffective; no attacks by plat or larger & no mortar or RR fire in district or near hamlet. Attack possible only from outside district.
c. Military Incidents Effecting Hamlet	Armed VC units in hamlet at night, sometimes in day. Little GVN authority at night. Routes to hamlet interdicted by day; may be ambush near hamlet.	GVN activity under harassment. Frequent sniping on routes to hamlet; VC night activity in hamlet.	Long range fire at night; VC activity in adjacent hamlets in VII. Occasional sniping on routes to hamlet.	No incidents in hamlet during month; infrequent harrassments within village or nearby.	No incidents, including harrassments, in VII or near hamlet or on routes to VII during month.
2. VC Political & Subversive Activities a. Hamlet Infrastructure	Party cadre underground by day but free to intimidate populace at night. No assurance party structure or leaders uncovered.	Members and most leaders of VC hamlet organization uncovered & neutralized but undercover agents still operative.	Most infiltrators most of Party apparatus identified; some agents under VII or Dist control still operative.	All normal Party apparatus identified & dealt with; agents under VII or Dist control eliminated.	No reason to doubt whole Party apparatus eliminated or neutralized.
b. Village Infrastructure	Despite some individual identification, VII apparatus intact, functioning.	Some VII cadre eliminated but apparatus fairly effective.	Most key members of VII apparatus identified, up to half neutralized; effectiveness curtailed.	Most of VII apparatus leaders eliminated; almost all members identified. Little coordinated VC activity in VII.	VII organization wiped out. Few covert agents directed from outside but stymied by friendly security organizations.
c. Activities Affecting Hamlet	VC apparatus can undermine GVN in hamlet by incidents ranging from propaganda thru terrorism & sabotage, at least at night.	No overt propaganda but terrorism or sabotage during past month.	No overt VC incidents in hamlet, few signs of covert subversion.	No subversion in hamlet & no incidents in adjacent hamlets during month.	No subversive activity in VII during month.
3. Security (Friendly Capabilities) a. Hamlet Defense Plan & Organization	No night defense except by external forces although required.	Day & night defense by external forces. Local recruiting & training underway	Local warning & communication systems operative; some armed local defenders but main reliance on RD cadre or external defense.	Defense force organized; adequate plan and communications for its use.	Adequate defense force & adequate defense plan following Prov RD plan.
b. Friendly External Force (FEF) Assistance	FEF do not meet needs for arty, air support, reaction ground forces, etc.	FEF meets needs but only effective marginally, e.g., delayed response, no night response, not aggressive, etc.	Availability and effectiveness of FEF generally meet needs.	Need for FEF less than C; can be met adequately.	Need for FEF very slight; can be met adequately.
c. Internal Security Activities	No agents, no intelligence from public except possibly sporadic police informants.	No complete intelligence system; a few trained or voluntary informants & some data from PD census grievance work.	Hamlet chief gets useful info from informants, census grievance &/or some volunteers.	Effective informant system; considerable useful info from public.	Hamlet Chief directs effective internal security apparatus: security deputy, police, informant system, willing public participation.
4. Administrative & Political Activities a. GVN Governmental Management	Temporary or external GVN officials; effective, marginally, usually present only in daytime.	Some local participation in hamlet management; officials present usually only in daytime.	Managerial groups resident; mostly local appointed or elected, usually present at night.	Complete managerial group is fully resident; includes elected hamlet chief & deputy fully functioning but with some external support.	Elected, autonomous governing body, under autonomous VII; all officials in hamlet & VII resident.
b. Census Grievance Program	Only limited census activity; no grievance program.	Census grievance program started systematically	Initial census grievance survey complete; some individual grievances being resolved.	More GVN actions being taken to meet people's grievances & aspirations.	Permanent GVN grievance representative in place. Substantial evidence of GVN efforts to meet aspirations.
c. Information/PSYOP Activities	Little or none	Minimal activity; public indifference.	Irregular and frequent activity even if makeshift; public impact evident; civic associations being developed.	Systematic coverage; increased awareness of govt programs & personnel. Increased numbers of rallies; people participating freely in civic associations.	Resident official executing imaginative & regular program Active public awareness of GVN personnel, impending elections, district programs, etc.; civic associations active and effective.
5. Health, Education & Welfare a. Medical Services & Sanitation	Only infrequent visits by MEDCAP or cadre team.	Only periodic, scheduled MEDCAP or cadre team visits.	Full-time coverage by external teams; includes sanitation instruction.	Resident trained medic who supervises sanitation & public health programs with some public participation. Trained midwife in hamlet or nearby.	Resident trained medic encourages effective medical & sanitation programs with general public participation. Resupply of medicines regular & adequate.
b. Education	No GVN-sponsored educational facilities; may be informal instruction by VII elders, monks, Cath. priest.	Some formal instruction, not full-time; no permanent classrooms.	Formal, full time public primary education program in permanent classrooms but overcrowded or at least 25% of children not enrolled.	Virtually all children receive primary education in permanent classrooms; may be some adult classes.	All children receive primary education in permanent classrooms; secondary school accessible; adult education program.
c. Welfare	No social welfare activity.	Some welfare activity to assist needy families, but basic needs not determined.	Basic needs determined, some being met.	Basic needs being met; some special benefits being paid by GVN.	Basic needs satisfied; special benefits clarified & being paid; Benefit channels continue to function.
6. Economic Development a. Self Help Activity	None	People assist in selecting projects but outsiders do most of work.	Projects from RD plan chosen with local consent & some participation in those started.	All programmed projects underway, chosen to satisfy aspirations; popular participation with outside aid.	Some projects completed; local pride general; continuing external interest and support for new projects.
b. Public Works (require outside expertise; affect at least village)	None planned or undertaken.	Some detailed planning for RD plan projects.	Planned projects suitable & meet public needs; some work started.	Priority projects underway; resources at hand; people appreciative.	Projects well along or completed; public enthusiastic.
c. Economic Improvement Programs (Farming, Fishing, Land Reform, etc.)	None.	Some planning & few basic programs started.	Basic programs underway; people interested.	More advanced programs started; increased popular support and participation.	Most programs well advanced in response to popular demand and continuing participation.

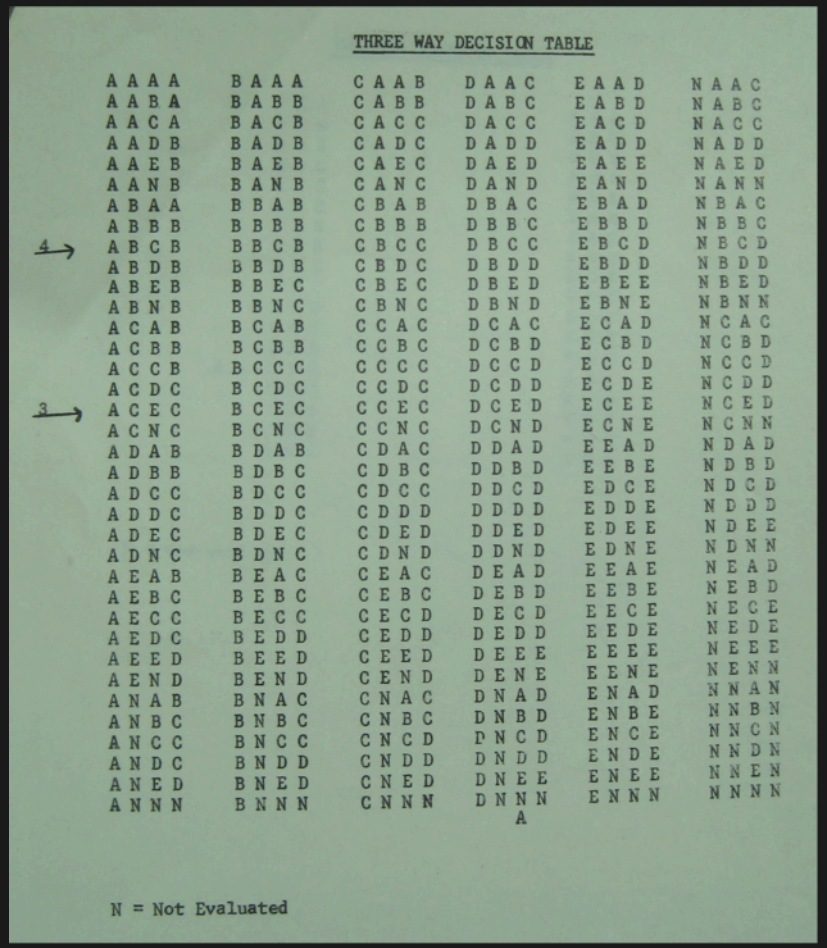
From Punchcard to Tape





Storing

Aggregation



THREE WAY DECISION TABLE

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	A A C A	B A C B	C A C C	D A C C	E A C D	N A C C
	A A D B	B A D B	C A D C	D A D D	E A D D	N A D D
	A A E B	B A E B	C A E C	D A E D	E A E E	N A E D
	A A N B	B A N B	C A N C	D A N D	E A N D	N A N N
	A B A A	B B A B	C B A B	D B A C	E B A D	N B A C
	A B B B	B B B B	C B B B	D B B C	E B B D	N B B C
4 →	A B C B	B B C B	C B C C	D B C C	E B C D	N B C D
	A B D B	B B D B	C B D C	D B D D	E B D D	N B D D
	A B E B	B B E C	C B E C	D B E D	E B E E	N B E D
	A B N B	B B N C	C B N C	D B N D	E B N E	N B N N
	A C A B	B C A B	C C A C	D C A C	E C A D	N C A C
	A C B B	B C B B	C C B C	D C B D	E C B D	N C B D
	A C C B	B C C C	C C C C	D C C D	E C C D	N C C D
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3 →	A C E C	B C E C	C C E C	D C E D	E C E E	N C E D
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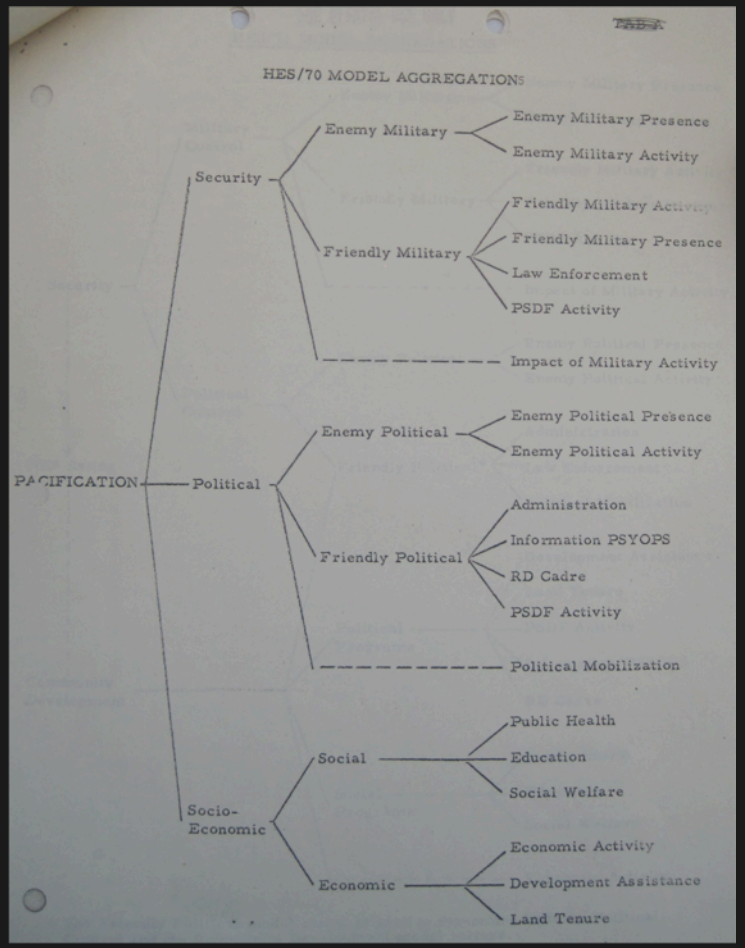
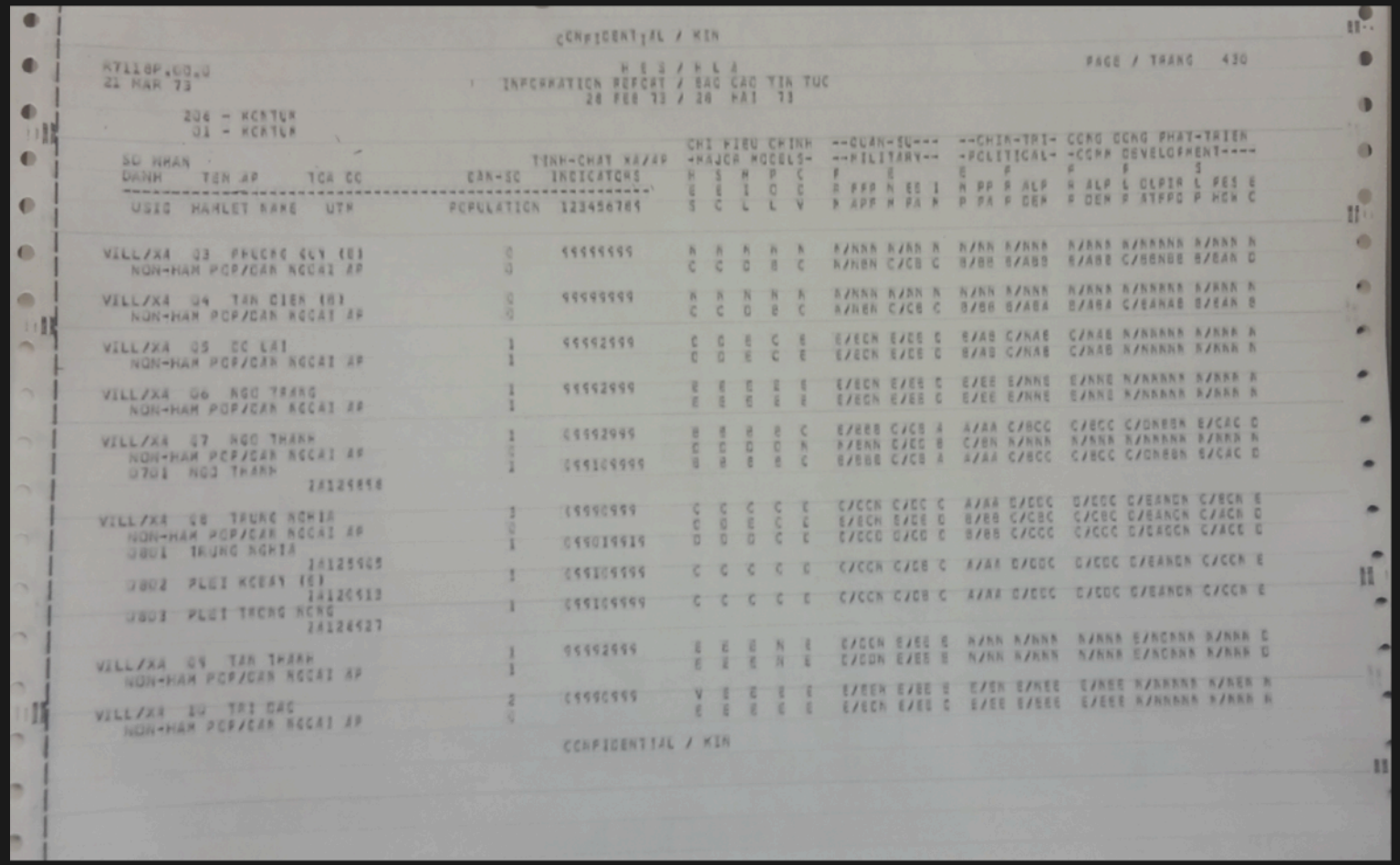
				A		

N = Not Evaluated



Application



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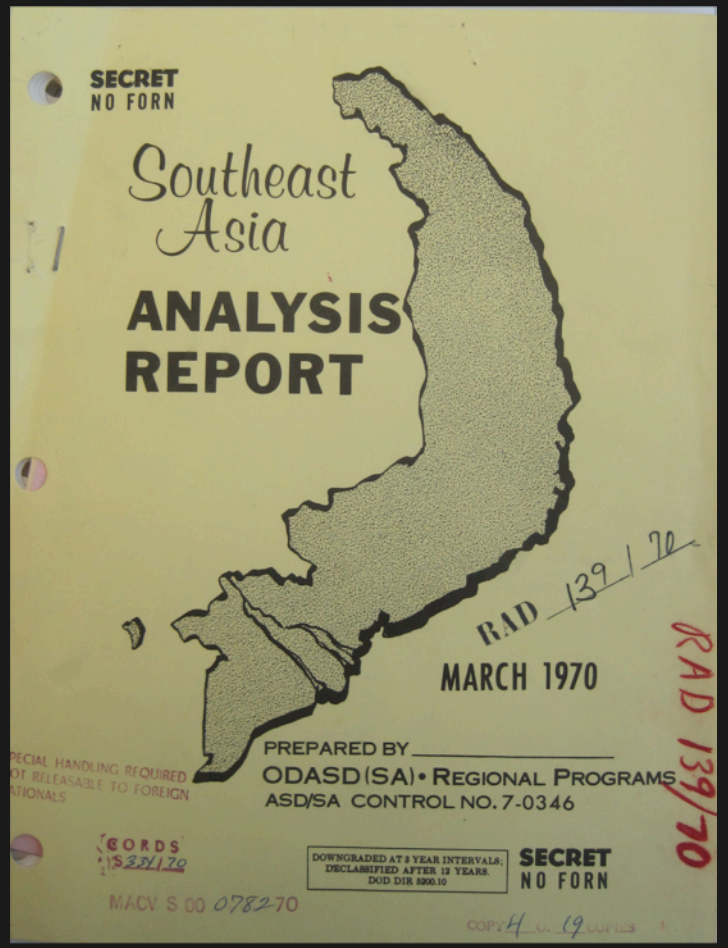

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Thank You!

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