

Introducing Just Competition Theory: Christian Realist Strategic Risk Management in Great
Power Competition

by Jason Alan Byrd

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APPROVED BY:

Robert Nalbandov, Ph.D., Committee Chair

Kahlib J. Fischer, Ph.D., Committee Member

Melissa M. Beaudoin, Ph.D., Committee Member

Abstract

How can a Christian Realist approach shape United States security policy to manage strategic risk during Great Power Competition? This work finds that Just War Theory, in particular *jus in bello* (behavior in war), is a common method used by Christian Realists to determine actions and manage consequences in war; however, it is not optimal for the challenges posed in Competition. A complementary structure uniquely applicable to actions below the threshold of armed conflict is needed. This argument is manifested through Just Competition Theory or *jus in contentione*. In a complex environment of Great Power Competition, principles of *jus in contentione* offer a better Christian Realist approach to strategic risk management than the principles of *jus in bello*.

This claim is analytically supported using grounded theory methodology, incorporating a review of literature, content analysis of documents and structured interviews, comparative hypotheses testing, case studies, and a compatibility assessment. The principles of *jus in contentione* offer a complimentary Christian Realist method of analysis for the modern strategic context. Comparative hypotheses testing assesses them against historical military deployment data, a strategic risk assessment, a theoretical application of forces and activities, and the professional input of interview respondents. Two case studies using *jus in contentione* principles as explanatory factors provide further empirical support. An assessment of Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism shows this novel theory is most compatible with Christian Realism. Comprehensively, the research assesses that *jus in contentione* is a viable addendum to Just War Theory and a useful analytical tool for Great Power Competition policy and strategy.

Key Terms: Christian Realism, Great Power Competition, Just War Theory, Strategic Risk, Just Competition Theory

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Dedication

Unto the Lord (*Colossians* 3:23).

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Chapter One: Introduction

Overview

General

Since shifting the primary security focus from counterterrorism to Great Power Competition (GPC) with peer states, the United States needs to revisit strategic risk management in policy formulation. This work argues that a Christian Realism can inform such efforts by offering an ethical approach to action that considers relevant conditions, capacity limitations, and constraining specifications. When just principles of action inform security policy and strategy, both physical and moral risk at the strategic level of engagement can be managed. This statement reveals two perplexing issues. First, how is risk to be measured to know if it is well managed? Second, do Just War Theory's principles of behavior (*jus in bello*) suffice as a guiding ethos for noncombative action? If America's historical use of military force as well as its current reorientation toward GPC focus on engagement below the threshold of conflict, why is there no promulgated theory to specifically address action under these conditions? This is puzzling. The first issue was resolved through content analysis and the second through comparative hypotheses testing.

This work followed grounded theory processes of theoretical sampling, inductive inquiry, and an iterative process of systematic discovery and refinement to synthesize content.¹ Also, a multi-staged hypotheses test was conducted to compare two theories, Just War Theory's principles of conduct in war and a new concept called Just Competition Theory. These were tested against four sets of data derived from content analysis. Just Competition Theory was

¹ Elizabeth E. Tolley, Priscilla R. Ulin, Natasha Mack, Elizabeth T. Robinson, and Stacey M. Succop, *Qualitative Methods in Public Health: A Field Guide for Research*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Wiley, 2016), 4-5.

further scrutinized by applying its principles to two case studies and assessed against the three major international relations theories.

This study opens in Chapter One with an introduction to the research problem to include initial operating definitions, a theoretical framework for the study, contextual aspects of the research topic, and the research methodology. Chapter Two is a literature review covering the key elements of the research question (Christian Realism, GPC, and risk) and the Just War Tradition and ethics. It identifies a gap in existing research. Chapter Three overviews the research methodology and competing hypotheses. Chapter Four introduces Just Competition Theory in detail. Chapter Five shows the data collection and analysis process derived from document analysis, automated text analysis, and structured interviews. It further includes a synthesis of the analyzed data, a multi-stage test of hypotheses, two case studies, and a compatibility assessment with Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism. Chapter Six recapitulates the findings, discusses the conclusions, implications, limitations, and offers recommendations for future studies.

Problem, Purpose, and Significance

The United States must consider implementing measurable security policies to manage strategic risk in GPC using a set of principles tailored for just action under those conditions. The purpose is to discover how a Christian Realist approach in GPC would manage strategic risk a set of responsible criteria to guide military activity. The body of government literature and academic writing on GPC grows almost daily; however, the requirement for in-depth qualitative research into the policy implications remains substantial, particularly regarding how international relations theories address and balance strategic risk in a just manner. Does an existing philosophical or political doctrine provide sufficient guidance? This research argues that

Christian Realism answers the question in the affirmative by offering a corollary to the Just War Ethic, tailored to GPC. It provides valuable security policy research by evaluating Christian Realism as an approach to manage Just Competition Theory or *jus in contentione* (behavior in competition or struggle).

Central Research Question and Testable Hypotheses

How does the United States better manage strategic risk in Great Power Competition using a Christian Realist approach, through *jus in bello* or *jus in contentione*?

H₀: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in bello*.

H₁: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in contentione*.

The independent variables are the principles of Just Competition Theory (*in contentione*): discernment, persuasion, persistence, consistency, collaboration, and integration. The dependent variable is the strategic risk outcome measured as either yes (successful application of principles) or no (unsuccessful).

Initial Operational Definitions

The research explored the three components of the Central Research Question and a modified concept of Just War Theory designed to regulate action in GPC. The terms below are relevant starting points for the research. Other significant terms (Just Competition Theory and Strategic Risk) are defined in Chapters Four and Five, respectively.

Christian Realism – A morally informed international relations approach that prizes political humility, emphasizing recognition of the limits of national power and exercising strategic patience. It is skeptical yet uncynical; aspirational but restrained. In an Augustinian sense,

Christian Realism is introspective and shrewd about conditions in the world, but it also promotes the feasible achievement of the good, domestically, and abroad.²

Great Power Competition – Also referred to as Strategic Competition, GPC encompasses actions taken by states and non-state actors to “seek to protect and advance their own interests” by constantly competing for diplomatic, economic, and strategic advantage below the threshold of armed conflict.³

Risk – Risk can be defined in the following ways: an unwanted event which may or may not occur; the cause of the unwanted event; the probability of the unwanted event occurring; the statistical expectation of an unwanted event occurring; and a decision made under conditions of known probabilities (decision under risk).⁴ Two primary aspects of risk examined are physical and moral risk at the strategic level of warfare. Risk at all three levels (tactical, operational, and strategic) are studied in the Literature Review.

Just War Theory – Just War Theory, or the Just War Ethic as it is also commonly known, is best described by the two fundamental questions it poses: Is the resort to war justifiable (*jus ad bellum*) and will the actions of the combatant in war be justifiable (*jus in bello*)?⁵ Just War Theory is often informed by biblical natural law. Natural law theory claims that fundamental

² Kevin Mattson, "Why We Should be Reading Reinhold Niebuhr Now More than Ever: Liberalism and the Future of American Political Thought," *The Good Society - PEGS (Organization)* 14, no. 3 (2005: 77-82), 78-80.

³ The Joint Staff, Joint Doctrine Note 1-19: Competition Continuum (2019), 1.

⁴ Sven Ove Hansson. "Risk," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed February 25, 2021, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/risk/>.

⁵ Seth Lazar, "Just War Theory: Revisionists Versus Traditionalists," *Annual Review of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2017: 37-54), 41.

understandings of good and evil are “inscribed in created human nature” and are accessible through reason.⁶

Background

Theoretical Context: Christian Realism

The research presupposed a restricted view of Just War Theory informed by Christian Realism. Consistent with Just War scholarship since the Cold War, it approached the Just War Ethic with deference to natural law and a presumption against war.⁷ Specifically for GPC, this supplicates a fundamental question: if Just War Theory governs decisions about and behavior in war (expounded in Chapter Two), is it a satisfactory theory if the goal is to manage risk in a manner that avoids war? Historical data shows most American military deployments occur under conditions not warranting a declared war or combat conditions. So, why is there a dearth of literature discussing just action under those circumstances? This is the puzzle confronted in the project. Under the rubric of Christian Realism, an interesting and sufficient constraining model inspired by Just War Theory was developed to do so, Just Competition Theory.

Situational Context: Competition

How will the United States organize and employ national power to defend her territory and interests and those of the nation’s allies and deter adversary aggression with minimal or manageable strategic risk? This question was significantly influenced by the strategic objectives found in the 2018 National Defense Strategy, in particular, the following: defending the homeland from attack; sustaining Joint Force military advantages, both globally and in key

⁶ J. Budziszewski, *The Line Through the Heart: Natural Law as Fact, Theory, and Sign of Contradiction* (Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2009), xi.

⁷ David L. Clough and Brian Stiltner, *Faith and Force: A Christian Debate about War* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2007), 9.

regions; deterring adversaries from aggression against our vital interests; enabling United States interagency counterparts to advance United States influence and interests; defending allies from aggression and coercion; dissuading, preventing or deterring the use of weapons of mass destruction; and, ensuring common domains remain open and free.⁸ The succeeding presidential administration issued interim guidance to maintain these, strengthen American security advantages, and to “prevail in strategic competition with China or any other nation.”⁹

Social Context: Risk

The research examined risk contextually using a specific set of activities and a particular type of military force, irregular warfare (IW) conducted by Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF). This study used IW as an operational method of action in GPC. The concept of IW has been updated to accommodate actions taken in engagements below the threshold of full-scale military conflict.¹⁰ The challenge is how employ military force in IW that to further United States strategic security objectives without escalating tensions to the point of armed conflict. Strategic level risk affects not only military forces involved but also non-combatants, state strategic interests, economic strength, and national credibility.

Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) historically have and most likely will continue to play a critical role. This is because they are “units trained to operate in small teams, behind enemy lines, utilizing a wide range of organizational resources and special capabilities

⁸ Department of Defense, Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military’s Competitive Edge (2018), 4.

⁹ The White House, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (2021), 20.

¹⁰ The terms “great power competition” and “strategic competition” are interchangeable terms to represent these engagements short of war.

that are employed to provide innovative solutions to problematic circumstances.”¹¹ American military history is replete with examples of special operations forces so structured and conducting complex tasks.¹² The current strategic landscape gives cause for continued engagement by these formations.

Mission risk for special operations in IW is a contemporary issue of high importance to members of ARSOF and policymakers who establish the parameters of their employment. This research has implications for members of the Army special operations community and the broader national security apparatus to include policy developers, analysts, and strategic decision-makers. A policy concept that promotes the limited and precise use of specialized military formations to avoid conflict while simultaneously advancing American security interests has understandable appeal. When it also recognizes that certain world complexities exceed the capacities of governments to understand (at least in short order) and resolve, it invites limitations on the use of power to those activities required for security.

Why does this study include only ARSOF? Why not consider all American special operations capabilities or even other military formations? There are four reasons. First, the Army sources roughly half of all special operations forces.¹³ Given ARSOF’s size, any policy analysis focused on its formations will most likely have application to the other services. Second, ARSOF

¹¹ Eitan Shamir and Eyal Ben-Ari, “The Rise of Special Operations Forces: Generalized Specialization, Boundary Spanning, and Military Autonomy,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 3 (335-371, 2018), 335-36.

¹² Robert Toguchi and Michael Krivdo, eds., *The Competitive Advantage: Special Operations Forces in Large – Scale Combat Operations* (Fort Leavenworth: Army University Press, 2019), 1 – 6.

¹³ Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson, and Rebecca Orrie, *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations: A Case History Analysis* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2018), 226.

have often failed to successfully make a case for their employment to policymakers.¹⁴ This assessment indicates the body of literature lacks robustness, and the forces would benefit from additional academic treatment. Third, a 2018 study by RAND Corporation posited that ARSOF “may constitute an effective and cost-sensitive capability” in an environment of complex and ambiguous strategic competition.¹⁵ The United States must prioritize and allocate its finite resources to succeed against its competitors. Finally, ARSOF are the principal American military forces trained and educated to conduct Special Warfare, a skill built on proficiency in foreign cultures and languages.¹⁶ Historically, these unique qualifications have enabled ARSOF to perform successfully in IW.¹⁷

Disclosure

Studying problems and solutions gaps using ARSOF and IW as test case holds both personal and professional interest. With over twenty-eight years of combined military and civilian service in the United States Army, much of which has been spent working with joint and Army special operations organizations, I have analyzed special operations in a variety of operational and training scenarios including unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, asymmetric warfare, and IW. Those analyses were primarily practical and intended to help resolve issues to improve effectiveness for ongoing and programmed activities. This research was an opportunity to evaluate risk through an ARSOF lens in an emerging

¹⁴ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵ Ibid., xv.

¹⁶ Edward C. Croot, “There is an Identity Crisis in Special Forces: Who are the Green Berets Supposed to Be?” Army War College Fellows Strategy Research Project (Carlisle: Army War College, 2020), 7.

¹⁷ Ibid., 2.

strategic context from a theoretical perspective. The objective was to offer a strategic level policy concept by drawing on international relations theories, philosophy, and the qualified sentiments of current senior and mid-level officials from the Army special operations community. This was not an ARSOF or IW specific project, but those topics did inspire the research and were key elements of comparative hypotheses testing and in the case studies.

Research Strategy

Theoretical Posture and Method of Inquiry

Grounded theory builds a concept by comparing data to reveal commonalities and distinctions, enabling the development of themes that either support or detract from a hypothesis.¹⁸ This data, gathered through the literature review, document analysis, automated text analysis, and structured interviews, was aggregated, organized, and evaluated inductively.¹⁹ The project built on a positivist-interpretivist paradigm as the framework. Positivist framing centers on the belief that reality and truth exist apart from human interpretation.²⁰ This implies a commitment to the realist ontological position, which posits that “external reality exists independent of beliefs or understanding.”²¹ Epistemologically, positivism aligns with the correspondence theory of truth, a corollary to ontological realism.²² Interpretivism promotes a

¹⁸ Sally Thorne, *Interpretive Description: Quantitative Research for Applied Practice*, 2d ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016), 168.

¹⁹ Tolley, et al., *Qualitative Methods in Public Health*, 27.

²⁰ Rachel Ormston, Liz Spencer, Matt Barnard, and Dawn Snape, “The Foundations of Qualitative Research,” in *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, eds. Jane Ritchie, Jane Lewis, Carol McNaughton Nicholls, and Rachel Ormston, 1-25 (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2013), 21.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

²² *Ibid.*, 7.

belief that human subjective perceptions, developed through interaction with and interpretation of information, provide meaning and understanding to reality.²³ Ontologically, interpretivism espouses a position that external reality does not exist independent of beliefs and understandings.²⁴ This paradigm's associated epistemology, the coherence theory of truth, claims truth is socially constructed, and something is only true if other accounts cohere with it.²⁵ The combined paradigm implies the research followed a critical realist approach, a recognition that reality objectively exists, but interpretations and perceptions shape how it is understood.²⁶

The research accumulated a large amount of data from published literature, official documents, and interview transcripts. The research strategy followed two primary modes of thinking, categorical and narrative. Categorical thinking enables the researcher to array data into thematic groups.²⁷ Narrative thinking aids in developing a comprehensive overarching theme.²⁸

Qualitative Methodology

The grounded theory methodology is a qualitative and inductive approach, which draws general narratives from specific documented positions, experiences, professional commentary, and expert opinions.²⁹ It incorporated a literature review with four research components: document analysis (to include automated text analysis), structured interview analysis,

²³ Tolley, et al., *Qualitative Methods in Public Health*, 21.

²⁴ Ormston, et al., "Qualitative Research," 5.

²⁵ Ibid., 7.

²⁶ Ibid., 21-22.

²⁷ Melissa Freeman, *Modes of Thinking for Qualitative Data Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 7-8.

²⁸ Ibid., 8.

²⁹ Charles Omoregie Osifo, "Public Management Research and a Three Qualitative Research Strategy," *Review of Public Administration Management* 3, no. 1 (2015: 1-8), 2.

comparative hypotheses testing, two historical case studies, and a compatibility assessment of the preferred hypothesis with three leading international relations theories. The research strategy focused on the most relevant publications, official documents, and subject matter experts. The organized and synthesized data sets were used to test competing hypotheses. The qualitative methodology's iterative flexibility allowed for the initial framing of the Central Research Question and hypotheses to evolve as more information was gathered and analyzed.³⁰

Interview topics included ARSOF in IW, the nature of GPC, and perceptions of strategic risk, both physical and moral. Documentation included current United States law governing security matters including United States Code Title X and the National Defense Authorization Act, United States national strategy documents from 2002 to the present, and relevant doctrine, directives, and concepts publications from the Department of Defense, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), the United States Army, and United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). The project risk plan, mainly concerning the ethical treatment of interviewees, was approved by Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix A).

Data Analysis and Results

Interview data were evaluated to determine prevalent subject matter expert opinions on strategic risk in GPC and the ARSOF IW role in that environment. Document and automated text analysis supported developing a strategic risk assessment for gauging physical and moral hazards under those conditions. Comparative testing of Just War and Just Competition determined a Just Competition variant is a useful planning and execution paradigm worthy of further study. Case study analysis added further credence to Just Competition Theory's viability. Finally, a

³⁰ Thorne, *Interpretive Description*, 51.

compatibility analysis with the three main international relations theories (Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism) indicated Just Competition Theory is most suitably categorized as a Christian Realist approach.

Summary

The rationale and significance for studying how to successfully balance risk and mission accomplishment in GPC seems apparent. The project resulted in the introduction and preliminary evaluation of a restrictive Christian Realist approach, Just Competition Theory. The research demonstrates it is likely a sufficient concept for managing military activity below the threshold of war. Though ARSOF and IW were profiled in this project, this modification of the Just War Ethic applies to other forces or agencies conducting other critical tasks in similar strategic environments.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Overview

Chapter One introduced a question of how Christian Realism informs a policy solution to manage strategic risk in Great Power Competition (GPC). Chapter Two surveys relevant literature on the theoretical and conditions-based components of the question (Christian Realism, GPC, and risk) and the Just War tradition and ethics. It identifies a literature gap for governing just action in GPC.

Is armed conflict necessary? Is it avoidable? Some in the pacifist tradition maintain that armed conflict never achieves lasting peace. It should and can be avoided without exception.³¹ This position rejects war as an uncontested immoral act.³² Lasting peace is seen as an attainable, commonsense goal. Adherents such as the United States Institute for Peace are “dedicated to the proposition that a world without violent conflict, is possible, practical, and essential for U.S. and global security.”³³ Others who hold an internationalist view aver there is an ethical obligation to achieve certain moral outcomes in the world, and conflict is sometimes needed to do so.³⁴ This camp includes the American Enterprise Institute, whose members “are dedicated to the principle

³¹ Richard Jackson, "Bringing Pacifism Back into International Relations," *Social Alternatives* 33, no. 4 (2014: 63-66), 63-64.

³² Seth Lazar, "War," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2020 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed October 27, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/war/>.

³³ United States Institute for Peace, *United States Institute for Peace: Making Peace Possible*, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://www.usip.org/>.

³⁴ Peter Lawler, "The Good State: In Praise of 'Classical' Internationalism," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 3 (2005: 427-449), 441.

that American global leadership is vital to a peaceful, prosperous, and free world.”³⁵ Is there a compromising position between pacifism and internationalism?

Broadly speaking, the concept of Realism fits within the spectrum bookended by these two views, accepting conflict as a phenomenon and fact of life but not eager to engage in it.³⁶ Among these three theories and numerous other international relations views one will find opinions for and against open conflict. Most theories accept to varying degrees that conflict will occur. If theorists across the spectrum of security and international relations studies concede that conflict is likely to occur in some form at some time, then questions about warfare’s necessity, though quite important, must be relegated in favor of other considerations such as the authority to declare war or take other actions against adversary states, the legitimacy of the cause, and what or who validates both authority and legitimacy. To answer these and other critical questions about the exercise of national security to include, if necessary, military force, this chapter explores Christian Realism in the strategic context of GPC and how to understand the risks such activities may encounter.

Christian Realism

Utopia, Interrupted: Unattainable Perfect Societies

In describing what he called the theoretical “best regime,” an allusion to Plato’s idealistic society, Strauss confessed something that undermines the entire precept: “Human nature is one thing, virtue is another. The definite character of the virtues, and, in particular, of justice cannot

³⁵ American Enterprise Institute, *AEI: Policy Areas*, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://www.aei.org/policy-areas/>.

³⁶ Lazar, “War.”

be deduced from human nature.”³⁷ Sowell surmised that the knowledge required to know and effectively mitigate all conditions leading to injustice was both “staggering and superhuman.”³⁸ These are symptoms of intellectualism resulting in “ideological politics.”³⁹ This is dangerous to freedom and effective policy. Political ideologies are developed “under the guise of disinterested humanitarianism” and assume “an apocalyptic faith in the perfectibility of human nature, and a hubristic sense of the power of reason.”⁴⁰ Ideological policies often fail because they deny the “inescapable role of history, contingency, and context” that characterizes life.⁴¹

Though none of these citations deals with realist international relations theory per se, they communicate a recurring and fundamental attribute of Realism, human limitations. Views on human agency and capacity influence approaches to solving complex social problems. Realism in its various forms attempts to account for the tension Strauss highlighted between human nature and virtue. It accepts that aspirational virtue is often hindered by human behavior and forces policy to account for that imperfect reality.

Realism and Its Variants

In studying Dominican philosophers, Skinner found they “incline strongly towards the realist conclusion that the law of nature is simply a dictate of right reason.”⁴² From this, one can

³⁷ Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1953), 144-145.

³⁸ Thomas Sowell, *The Quest for Cosmic Justice* (New York: Touchstone, 1999), 13.

³⁹ Richard Boyd and Conor Williams, “Intellectuals and Statesmanship? Tocqueville, Oakeshott, and the Distinction between Theoretical and Practical Knowledge,” in *Alexis de Tocqueville and the Art of Democratic Statesmanship*, eds. by Brian Danoff and L. Joseph Hebert, Jr., 117-136 (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 118.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 121.

⁴² Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought Volume Two: The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 149.

surmise that rational inquiry leads to an examination of and plan to address events as they unfold in real life. Craig and Gilbert identified the essence of strategy in terms of rational means. It is “not merely the art of preparing for...armed conflicts...It is also in a broader sense...the rational determination of a nation’s vital interests.”⁴³ They asserted this broader interpretation of strategy should guide the narrower task of military readiness and national posturing for conflict.⁴⁴ From this, one may conclude that rational inquiry applied to real states of affairs should lead a nation to prioritize its security and sovereignty. This is the core of Realist international relations theory.

Donnelly compared different lists of Realism’s attributes and identified commonalities among them to create a comprehensive definition: “Realism emphasizes the constraints on politics imposed by human nature and the absence of international government. Together, they make international relations largely a realm of power and interest.”⁴⁵ Though he admitted that some prominent realists such as Niebuhr and Morgenthau rejected the egoism that inspires the pursuit of power and interest, Donnelly concluded Realism emphasizes on selfish passions.⁴⁶

Korab-Karpowicz recorded that Realism harkens to the Fifth Century, B.C. when Thucydides wrote the *History of the Peloponnesian War*.⁴⁷ He adduced that power was of central importance to a state, and it was motivated by four factors: egoistic motives overcome

⁴³ Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, “Reflections on Strategy in the Present and Future,” in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret, 863-871 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 869.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 9.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁷ W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/realism-intl-relations>.

moral principles; anarchy influences political action and outcomes; security is the reigning principle in international relations; and, the tension between ethics and political action frequently results in jettisoning moral principles in favor of political expedience toward desired outcomes.⁴⁸ Around two-thousand years later, Nicolo Machiavelli was credited with somewhat modernizing Realism, according to Jackson and Moore.⁴⁹ In their appraisal, Machiavelli's Realism amounts to a rejection of utopianism due to its historical failures, a belief that political theory is borne of political practice, and a conclusion that politics produces societal morality instead of the converse.⁵⁰ While different in form from Thucydides, Machiavelli presented similar substance.

Since then, two additional factors have been considered among some Realism theorists: no nation can rely on another to aid in achieving its national interests, and nations will always seek another state to take the bulk of the military or political risk even when the desired outcome benefits both.⁵¹ Again, the form has changed (to become even more specific), but substantively Realism remains basically the same. A recurring quality in Realism is its anti-Utopianism. Though not always codified as such, this characteristic resides in all the formulations.

Galston conjectured that international order will just as likely regress as progress; consequently, he insisted realist policy must be constrained to the real state of global affairs, not as policymakers would like them.⁵² McQueen commented on the reality of global affairs, stating

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Michael Jackson and Thomas Moore, "Machiavelli's Walls: The Legacy of Realism in International Relations Theory," *International Politics (Hague, Netherlands)* 53, no. 4 (2016: 447-465), 453.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Stephen M. Walt, "US Grand Strategy after the Cold War: Can Realism Explain It? Should Realism Guide It?" *International Relations (London)* 32, no. 1 (2018: 3-22), 7.

⁵² William A. Galston, "Realism in Political Theory," *European Journal of Political Theory* 9, no. 4 (2010: 385-411), 394-95.

that aggression may be avoidable in particular instances, but is not eradicable generally; therefore, order must be prioritized over justice in attempts to reduce instability.⁵³ Conditions may require nations to act without warning and do what is necessary to protect themselves and restore order.⁵⁴ Realists attempt to avoid these surprises and their threats to stability by seeking a balance of power advantageous to their interests.⁵⁵

Morgenthau made two important observations. First, ambiguities in the realm of international politics are a result of unpredictable human nature manifested in social forces.⁵⁶ This uncertainty renders predicting outcomes of struggles among states impossible; consequently, the “best the scholar can do, then, is to trace the different tendencies which, as potentialities, are inherent in a certain international situation.”⁵⁷ Second, states seek greater power with respect to other states, making conflict more likely.⁵⁸ This leaves only two devices for maintaining peace: a “self-regulatory system of social forces” labeled the “balance of power” and “normative limitations...in the form of international law, international morality, and world public opinion.”⁵⁹ Despite supposed international norms signified in the latter, the former is

⁵³ Alison McQueen, "Political Realism and Moral Corruption," *European Journal of Political Theory* 19, no. 2 (2020: 141-161), 141-42.

⁵⁴ Alasdair Roberts, "'Whatever it Takes': Danger, Necessity, and Realism in American Public Policy," *Administration & Society* 52, no. 7 (2020: 1131-1144), 1141.

⁵⁵ James M. McCormick, *American Foreign Policy and Process*, 6th ed. (Boston: Cengage Advantage, 2014), 85.

⁵⁶ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

constantly in a state of flux. States pursue their power goals in one of three patterns, keeping power (status quo), increasing power (imperialism), or demonstrating power (prestige).⁶⁰

Regarding international mores, Niebuhr hypothesized that states “have established a rudimentary world community but have not integrated it organically, morally, or politically. They have created a community of mutual dependence, but not one of mutual trust or respect.”⁶¹ He believed international order is illusory. If so, Morgenthau’s second dictum is either inconsequential or, at most, of limited significance in international relations calculations.

Clausewitz focused on the fundamental issues of power and order in politics.⁶² Herberg-Rothe observed that in the opening chapter of *On War*, Clausewitz recognized the objective of politics is to achieve peace, but the political task is to accomplish that goal through the exercise of state power.⁶³ Huntington described the Realist theory as a political paradigm in which states are the only important actors in world affairs, the relationships among them are anarchic, and power calculations are designed to reinforce homeland security and international stability.⁶⁴ If a state either observes or merely suspects without conclusive evidence that a potential rival is increasing its power, then the state increases its own power or partners with other states to thwart the perceived threat to maintaining peaceful order.⁶⁵ Tetlock referred to this environment as the

⁶⁰ Ibid., 21-22.

⁶¹ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christian Realism and Political Problems* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1953), 15-16.

⁶² Andreas Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz’s Puzzle: The Political Theory of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 147-148.

⁶³ Ibid., 148.

⁶⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 33.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

“jungle” in which international affairs are pursued.⁶⁶ He observed that Realists are reticent to subordinate “national policy to international institutions...when money and power are at stake.”⁶⁷ Morgenthau addressed this as well, emphasizing that the only certainty in state relations is the uncertainty of an adversary’s power calculations, which has a direct effect on its own.⁶⁸

Complexity theorists and social scientists use a model called the Prisoner’s Dilemma to analyze the power paradox these post-Machiavellian Realists confront. Mitchell explained the Prisoner’s Dilemma as a situation where two suspects are questioned separately about a crime for which there is only circumstantial evidence.⁶⁹ The authorities offer each a deal to testify against the other. If Suspect One testifies against Suspect Two, Suspect One goes free while Suspect Two gets a maximum sentence or vice versa. If both suspects testify, they each get a lighter sentence. If neither testifies, they both go free. The optimal choice is for neither to testify, but one suspect cannot be sure what the other will do. The only sure way to avoid the maximum charge is to testify, so both do so to avoid maximum punishment.⁷⁰ Drawing from Axelrod’s study, Mitchell determined that self-interest leads to a poorer outcome for everyone.⁷¹

The Prisoner’s Dilemma identifies a common human thread woven in all Realist theories: human self-interest is an independent variable, often unknowable and unpredictable. Self-interest transposes onto societies and transmutes into national interest. This affirms the anti-utopian

⁶⁶ Philip E. Tetlock, *Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 71.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 152.

⁶⁹ Melanie Mitchell, *Complexity: A Guided Tour* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 213-214.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

view. Accepting the premises that national security is the key objective among states and uncertainty in determining another state's power calculations is an unfortunate fact, Glanville assigned self-preservation as the foremost national interest.⁷² This influences some states to refuse to engage in military conflict.⁷³ Conversely, states may plot interventionist courses, assuming they are the only way to preserve national interests.⁷⁴

Idealists tend to object to Realism's emphasis on state preservation because of its alleged immorality directed against other states. Charles grouped Realism into an extreme category with crusading nationalism and totalitarian militarism, accusing each of ignoring moral strictures inherent in military and international affairs.⁷⁵ In making this accusation, he separated Realism and pursuits of justice even in war when he wrote: "Thus, just war thinking distinguishes itself from...*Realpolitik* by its commitment to limit war."⁷⁶ Is the distance Charles placed between Realism and Just War Theory justified or artificial? What do nuanced Realist theories offer that may suggest otherwise? Is Realism immoral? Is it amoral as some Realists claim? Do human factors like self-interest supply moral justification? Those questions were addressed next.

Commenting on the political reality in fascist Germany during the 1930s, Jaspers observed that modern wars are no longer clashes among religions or cultures; rather, they are

⁷² Lucas Glanville, "Special Problems III: The Question of Using Military Force in the Frame of the Responsibility to Protect," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Military Ethics*, eds. James Turner Johnson and Eric D. Patterson, 89-99 (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2015), 96.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ J. Daryl Charles, "Framing the Issues in Moral Terms I: Applying Just War Tradition," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Military Ethics*, eds. James Turner Johnson and Eric D. Patterson, 119-130 (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2015), 127.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

conflicts among different state interests.⁷⁷ He cautioned that under these circumstances, even though states may wish to avoid war at all costs, “reality demands that...we shall be ready to reckon with the likelihood of war, and that we shall never forget what ‘at all costs’ really means.”⁷⁸ This skepticism about the community of nations fits the Realist position. Yet, it misses the mark in one significant aspect. Wars among states are clashes of cultures since states are political structures incorporating territories and laws for a population possessing a degree of civilization.⁷⁹ Lest anyone place too great a chasm between culture and civilization, Huntington described civilization as “culture writ large.”⁸⁰ If so, a state does reflect culture under the banner of civilization, rendering Jaspers’ commentary partially accurate in that states fight for their interests, but inaccurate in discounting the cultural aspects of states.

Popescu presented four pillars for a program of Offensive Realism (one of two approaches in Neorealism): states pursuing regional hegemony represent the greatest strategic challenge; preeminent military power best secures national interests; power politics are dominated by zero-sum conflicts among states, not international cooperation – world order is a by-product of foreign policy, not a goal; and, security interests take precedence over economics and ideological considerations.⁸¹ The offensive variety resembles traditional Realism in several respects, namely in the prominence of power and interest. Interestingly, it differs from the

⁷⁷ Karl Jaspers, *Man in the Modern Age*, trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1957), 101.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷⁹ John P. Grant and J. Craig Barker, *Parry & Grant Encyclopaedic Dictionary of International Law*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 574.

⁸⁰ Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, 41.

⁸¹ Ionut Popescu, “American Grand Strategy and the Rise of Offensive Realism,” *Political Science Quarterly* 134, no. 3 (2019: 375-405), 383-398.

Clausewitz view of order (or peace), registering it as an incidental benefit. If there is a moral aspect to this version, it deals with the ethical considerations of protecting one's society.

Mearsheimer claimed this method is less likely to lead to war than other international relations theories. First, nations adopting Realist principles will limit their risks of war to “only a limited number of regions” as they seek to “maximize their share of global power.”⁸² Second, Realists are reticent to use force or the threat of it “because they recognize that balance of power logic will compel other states to contain aggressors, even if they are liberal democracies.”⁸³ Third, Realists “understand that going to war takes a country into a realm of unintended consequences.”⁸⁴

Some, like McMahan, suggest Defensive Realism (the other Neorealist approach) as a method. He wrote about how Just War principles are applied to real threats. He concluded that protection and resistance are the most justifiable applications of violence: “The qualified principle holds that, if other things are equal, it is permissible to use defensive force against anyone who poses an unjust threat.”⁸⁵ His principle qualifying the use of force requires the defending society to be just in behavior and use force in a just manner (*jus in bello*) if required to guard against unwarranted and illegal aggression. The moral sentiment in this version appears more robust than in Offensive Realism (requiring just behavior even against an unjust aggressor), but is the theory too limiting in that it does not allow for any form of preemption?

⁸² John J. Mearsheimer, “Realism and Restraint,” *Horizons: Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, no. 14 (2019: 12–31), 17.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Jeff McMahan, “The Ethics of Killing in War,” *Ethics* 114. (2004: 693-733), 718.

Huntington summarized the attributes of what he termed Conservative Realism in relation to the military ethic: an emphasis on the irrationality, weakness, and evil in human nature; the importance of order and hierarchy in society; the nation-state as the highest form of political organization; the likelihood of continuing wars; national security depends on a strong military; and, the limitation of state action to direct security interests.⁸⁶ Elements of both Offensive and Defensive Realism are identifiable in this type. The common elements of human limitation, self-interest, order, and power are present.

Offensive, Defensive, and Conservative options of Realism recognize order in international. Order implies rules of behavior. Rules can be derivative of and deferential to several governing constructs including the Just War Ethic, natural law, and secular international law. For the third paradigm, Grotius serves as a preeminent authority. Recognizing the reality, inevitability, and, in some cases, the justifiability of conflict, he postulated that war is authorized not only by a legitimate state authority but also through the Law of Nations.⁸⁷ Writing in *The Rights of War and Peace*, Grotius explained the Law of War as, “the more extensive Right” that “derives its Authority from the Will of all, or at least many, Nations.”⁸⁸ How, though, is this Law of War binding among states?

Waltz offered a possible answer. In discussing the presence of anarchy in international politics he opined that the “close juxtaposition of states promotes their sameness through the

⁸⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1957), 79.

⁸⁷ Grotius, Hugo. *The Rights of War and Peace Book I*, ed. Richard Tuck (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2005), 162-163.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 189.

disadvantages that arise from a failure to conform to successful practices.”⁸⁹ The pressure for “sameness” effectively creates an ordered international system that “is so often attributed to the acceptance of so-called rules of state behavior.”⁹⁰ Without the presence of a binding international order, the struggle among state egoisms gives rise to a certain level of anarchy. Waltz ascribed virtue to this anarchy in that it compels states to strengthen themselves by organizing into hierarchies and partnerships to bolster security.⁹¹ In effect, Grotius’ Law of Nations materializes from a necessary organization among states to protect each other.

Waltz added fidelity to his system theory in later work, where he described it as a form of Neorealism called Structural Realism. His depiction of Neorealism in general is distinct from traditional Realism in that it does not see the acquisition of power as an end, but as a means to accomplish more important objectives such as security.⁹² Neorealism purports that competition and conflict occur because of two factors: states must emphasize security, and threats to security are always present.⁹³ The structural concept of Neorealism incorporates Waltz’s inferences about the possible virtue of anarchy. He claimed that structures such as superpowers and regional alliances modify with changing conditions; however, Structuralism remains and adapts to maintain or change the balance of power and ensure state security.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1979), 128.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 111-114.

⁹² Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Origins of Neorealist Theory,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (1988: 615-628), 616.

⁹³ Ibid., 619.

⁹⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War,” *International Security* 35, no. 1 (2000: 5-41), 38-39.

Later theorists, such as Gideon Rose, developed Neoclassical Realism. He described it as a theory that argues “the scope and ambition of a country’s foreign policy is driven first and foremost by the country’s relative material power.”⁹⁵ However, the translation of that power into security gains in the international system are affected by “unit-level variables” like the perceptions of decision-makers and the political and societal structure of the state.⁹⁶ Lobell, Ripsman, and Taliaferro claimed states’ reactions to perceived or assessed international threats and opportunities are subject to “domestic factors [that] impede states from pursuing the types of strategies predicted by balance of power and balance of threat theory.”⁹⁷

According to Ripsman, Neoclassical Realism seems to be inspired mainly by Waltz’s Defensive Neorealism, but, unlike Waltz, Neoclassical Realists emphasize the role domestic politics and “state-society relations” play.⁹⁸ Firoozabadi and Ashkezari allude to the Classical Realism of Morgenthau and Neorealism of Waltz, describing Neoclassical Realism as “a new look at classic realism and neo-realism” but with an emphasis “on different levels of analysis,” namely domestic factors and state societal and cultural characteristics and their complex interaction with the international structure.⁹⁹ Depending on the scholar, Neoclassical Realism has

⁹⁵ Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (1998: 144-172), 146.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, The State, and Foreign Policy,” in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, eds. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1.

⁹⁸ Norrin M. Ripsman, “Neoclassical Realism,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, accessed August 25, 2023, <https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-36>.

⁹⁹ Jalal Dehghani Firoozabadi and Mojtaba Zare Ashkezari, “Neo-Classical Realism in International Relations,” *Asian Social Science* 12, no. 6 (2016: 95-99), 95.

Classical or Neorealist inspirations, or both; consequently, commentators including Smith and Sterling-Folker illuminate the “disunity” of “a relatively unconsolidated framework” that is subject to disagreements over meaning.¹⁰⁰ The binding factor in the different interpretations appears to be its inclusion of domestic political and societal factors in its analysis.

Order, power, interests, and a skeptical view of human nature infuse all interpretations of Realism. In terms of general principles, it would appear not much has changed since Thucydides’ formulation. Notably, treatments offered by Clausewitz, McMahan, Waltz, Mearsheimer, and Rose place a priority on order and security. This indicates a moral component is present in Realism. Nations ascribe value to securing peace and preserving safety. Power may dominate discourse among Realists, but they assume the role of servant to the master, security.

According to Lucas, Realism projects amorality, rejecting the part ethical considerations play in affairs of state, including warfare.¹⁰¹ Ford even charged that Realism and Neorealism reflect scientific materialism in that they consider only measurable effects like the distribution of power.¹⁰² Realists “are more likely to rule out the possibility that cultural and ideational variables – such as moral values – can explain political behavior.”¹⁰³ The low view of humanity in Realism may affront the Idealist, leading to assertions like those of Lucas and Ford. The amoral view of Realism is inaccurate. Realist skepticism about humanity is a function of the view that

¹⁰⁰ Keith Smith, “Recollecting a Lost Dialogue: Structural Realism Meets Neoclassical Realism,” *International Relations* 33, no. 3 (2019: 494-513), 497.

¹⁰¹ George R. Lucas, Jr, *Military Ethics: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 65.

¹⁰² Shannon Brandt Ford, “Military Ethics and Strategy: Senior Commanders, Moral Values, and Cultural Perspectives,” in *Routledge Handbook of Military Ethics*, ed. George Lucas, 181-193 (New York: Routledge, 2015), 182.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

mankind has a propensity for evil, but Realists merely accept this as an attribute in politics. This in no way nullifies a moral component.

Regardless of the form, Realism accepts and addresses the limitations of humanity and the subsequent realities of world order and influences its adherents to focus on security as a primary objective. Can the skepticism about human nature espouse any sort of principle other than self-preservation? Michael Loriaux concluded Augustine's Realism does just that. Augustine evinced the belief that mankind's fall from grace and rejection of God resulted in humanity's state of confusion.¹⁰⁴ His skepticism of mankind after the Fall influenced him to believe that injustice, disorder, and inequality were unavoidable.¹⁰⁵ So far, it seems the only difference between Thucydides' Realism and Augustine's is the presence of God in the latter, but this is a monumental difference. In Augustine's view, a universal principle emerges. God's restorative grace could bring man back in communion with Him and move toward a more peaceful state.¹⁰⁶ This is a moral of hope, and it inspires another approach to Realist thinking.

Christian Realism

The final adaptation of Realism explored also accepts the premise of human frailty while further advocating a moral attribute. Christian Realism looks at imperfect and often evil humanity through a clearheaded yet restorative lens. Unlike Classical or Neo-Realism, Christian Realism is not a distinct political or international relations theory; rather, it is a tradition that

¹⁰⁴ Michael Loriaux, "The Realists and Saint Augustine: Skepticism, Psychology, and Moral Action in International Relations Thought," in *International Studies Quarterly* vol. 36, no. 4 (1992: 401-420), 403.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 406.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 403.

espouses “guiding principles that offer direction and limits.”¹⁰⁷ In Melton’s view, these principles include “sober hope, recognition of humans’ sinful nature and need for grace, humbleness, robust global affairs knowledge, and neighborly love,” all applied by Christian-inspired statesmen to “better seek peace and prosperity of their world and community.”¹⁰⁸ As a “community of discourse rather than a formal ideology or disciplined school of thought,” Christian Realism’s ontology varies depending on the theorist or ethicist.¹⁰⁹

Commenting on the expansion of Communism, Bennett surmised “the kind of aggression that leads to...totalitarian tyranny” is a “concrete horror” perhaps greater than the “concrete horror of war.”¹¹⁰ This is an admission that reticence to intervention and conflict may need to be overcome to honor a higher principle, containing Communism. Wary of the possibility of unjustifiable or unnecessary interventionism, Butterfield asserted that when a nation (such as the United States) achieves global predominance and the capability to extend its will with impunity, it must guard against overestimating its own righteousness.¹¹¹ This combination can influence its leaders to exercise aggression falsely masked as righteous intervention.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Mark Melton, “Five Impressions on Niebuhr and Co., 1945-47,” *Providence Magazine*, accessed August 4, 2023, <https://providencemag.com/2022/06/five-impressions-reinhold-niebuhr-co-1945-1947-christian-realism-cold-war/>.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Eric Patterson, “Eight Principles for Christian Realism,” *Providence Magazine*, accessed August 4, 2023, <https://providencemag.com/2020/09/eight-principles-christian-realism-reinhold-niebuhr>.

¹¹⁰ John C. Bennett, “American Christians and the War,” in *Power Politics and Moral Order: Three Generations of Christian Realism – A Reader*, eds. Eric D. Patterson and Robert J. Joustra (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2022), 36.

¹¹¹ Herbert Butterfield, “Human Nature and the Dominion of Fear,” in *Power Politics and Moral Order: Three Generations of Christian Realism – A Reader*, eds. Eric D. Patterson and Robert J. Joustra (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2022), 27.

¹¹² Ibid.

Kuyper's form of Christian Realism suggested three pillars in foreign affairs: international law, national sovereignty, and "the moral obligation to share the Christian gospel and its social and political fruit."¹¹³ Kuyper's attenuation of Christian Realism emphasized Christian moral obligations of nations regarding circumstances in the world. Ramsey linked Christian Realist moral obligation to Just War thinking. Discussing "the moral economy in the just use of political violence," he codified two specifications, the justification for sometimes killing other human beings and the severe "restrictions upon anyone who is under the hard necessity of doing so."¹¹⁴ Ramsey also ceded that war, though abhorrent, is sometimes an unavoidable option of responsibility, particularly for Christians: "Participation in regrettable conflict falls among the distasteful tasks which sometimes become imperative in Christian vocation."¹¹⁵ This is a juxtaposition of reality with moral sentiment and responsibility.

In his defense of Augustinian-inspired Christian Realism, Biggar surmised, "Our deepest problem is not that we do not know what is good or right or what are the facts, but that we love great goods too little and lesser goods too much."¹¹⁶ This observation on humanity, he argued, avoids total cynicism of human nature, recognizing the capability of mankind to perform good

¹¹³ Robert J. Joustra, "Abraham Kuyper among the Nations," *Politics and Religion* 11 (2018: 146-168), 149.

¹¹⁴ Paul Ramsey, "Justice in War," in *Power Politics and Moral Order: Three Generations of Christian Realism – A Reader*, eds. Eric D. Patterson and Robert J. Joustra (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2022), 146.

¹¹⁵ Paul Ramsey, "Christian Vocation and Resistance," in *Power Politics and Moral Order: Three Generations of Christian Realism – A Reader*, eds. Eric D. Patterson and Robert J. Joustra (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2022), 172.

¹¹⁶ Nigel Biggar, *In Defence of War* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2013), 328.

and noble deeds; yet, people, in their fallen nature, are given to “reckless lusts, ruthless ambitions, and irritable frustrations that harm neighbors and relationships.”¹¹⁷

Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau were heavily influenced by Augustine’s international relations view, and it shaped their respective commitments. Mattson recorded that Niebuhr gravitated to the Augustinian belief that man could be both destructive and creative and loving, a dichotomy that creates uncertainty and instability.¹¹⁸ Murray explained, Morgenthau’s Realism, accepted as fact the duality of the existence of Christian morality and the evil found in the world. He promoted a Realism that calls on Christians not to abandon their moral convictions, but also to recognize and function within a world plagued with abject evil and injustice.¹¹⁹ Mankind should remain principled, but must also recognize obstacles to creating lasting, positive change. What these Twentieth Century political philosophers fused were the realities of life on earth that affect the domain of international relations with the resistance to vacating moral principles to accommodate political action. Their Christian Realism in effect recognized the necessity of limitation and selectivity in a nation’s actions.

In Tsoncho’s valuation, Christian Realism accounts for two factors that make accurate prediction nearly impossible, free will and providence.¹²⁰ He attested that “free will makes human action uneven, while providence is beyond human control and imagination.”¹²¹ Jacob

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Mattson, "Reinhold Niebuhr," 78.

¹¹⁹ A. J. H. Murray, "The Moral Politics of Hans Morgenthau," *The Review of Politics* 58, no. 1 (1996,2016: 81-108), 89.

¹²⁰ Tsonchev Tsoncho, *The Political Theology of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Reinhold Niebuhr: Essays in Political Theology and Christian Realism* (Montreal: The Montreal Review E-Publishing, 2018), 21.

¹²¹ Ibid.

affirmed that individual agency, which empowers a person to choose a morally good or bad course of action, introduces uncertainty.¹²² The recognition of free will does not adequately distinguish a Christian variant of Realism from a secular one, but the second factor, providence, offers something unique and transcendent. The deference to providence infers a commitment to justice, both domestically and in international relations.¹²³ What is essential to understand is the balance between these two factors. Even though Christian Realists are committed to transcendent justice, they remain humans with the same proclivities and shortcomings as anyone else.

This is what, as Lovin captured, Niebuhr addressed in *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*. She summarized his concern about well-intended “children of light who remain steadfast in commitment to the greater good, but who cannot see the limits of their own theories.”¹²⁴ In another passage, she reiterated his belief: “The biblical ideal stands in judgment not only on the social reality but also on every attempt to formulate the ideal itself.”¹²⁵ In interpreting Niebuhr’s views on Christian Realism, Lovin concluded that the statesman’s biblical faith gives an ideal view of what is possible; however, “we are best able to challenge and channel our powers when we also understand what is really going on.”¹²⁶ This includes the mortal limitation in resolving complex issues. Though faith inspires Christian Realists to contemplate

¹²² Cecilia Jacob, “A Christian Response to Global Conflict: Realism and Reconciliation,” *International Journal of Public Theology* 14 (2020: 438-455), 441-442.

¹²³ Ibid., 445-446.

¹²⁴ Robin W. Lovin, “Reinhold Niebuhr’s Realistic Pluralism,” *Theology Today* 77, no. 3 (2020: 298-309), 301.

¹²⁵ Robin W. Lovin, *Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

what is possible, they do not discount the frailties and failures of human actors that hinder its attainment.

Niebuhr designated Christian Realism as an Augustinian biblical interpretation of human nature.¹²⁷ This construal bears both existential and eschatological dimensions. Existentially, the subjects involved in worldly affairs are men, not states. Classical philosophic rationalism posited order and justice among societies could be achieved and maintained with the application of reason. This seems to suggest that good or evil are products of collectives and can be encouraged or dissuaded through rational methods of governance. Augustine argued that man, or “the self,” is free to act, even in “its capacity to defy any rational or natural system into which someone may seek to coordinate it.”¹²⁸ ‘The self engages in self-love in this world, *civitas terrana*.’¹²⁹ The source of evil emanates from individual man and multiplies in society. Evil actions motivated by self-interest are often at odds with any rational notion of what is good for society. The eschatological aspect of Augustinian Christian Realism is evident in God’s *civitas dei*. Here the love of God supersedes the love of self and brings true justice and order. Inevitably, *civitas dei* will overcome *civitas terrana*, and mankind must be transformed by the love of God and eschew evil egotism.¹³⁰

This biblical conception disabuses Realism of nihilism and moral cynicism.¹³¹ It also preserves humility. Therein lies Idealism’s influence on Christian Realism. H. Richard Niebuhr

¹²⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christian Realism and Political Problems*, 123.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

accepted an essential element in Augustinian Christian Realism, a commitment to never over-estimating one's righteousness compared to someone else.¹³² In comparing Niebuhr's Christian views, Polke concluded that "both radical Pacifism and political Realism can be justified by the Christian condition and modern theological ethics."¹³³ Christian Realism and more idealistic theories hold some of the same virtues. Humility is one of them.

Baer expounded on Christian Realism by linking it to Neorealism, or Structural Realism, promulgated by Waltz.¹³⁴ Niebuhr's theological ethic, informed heavily by Augustinian Realism, asserted that human egoism drives the exercise of power leading to conflicts, which can only be moderated by a balance of power.¹³⁵ Neorealism and Christian Realism find agreement in that existential sense. They diverge on eschatological aims. Whereas Neorealism accepts international anarchy as optimal for maintaining a balance of power and order, Christian Realism's theological commitment to *civitas dei* drives its proponents to seek the most just configurations of power possible among states.¹³⁶ This distinction highlights Christian Realism's significant moral component.

Patterson concluded Christian Realism is represented by a "loose network of political observers, pundits, theologians, and practitioners discussing international affairs."¹³⁷ Though not

¹³² Christian Polke, "Is Pacifism a Democratic Virtue? Pragmatist Reflections on an Often Neglected Dimension of Contemporary Peace Ethics," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 3, no. 2 (2018: 214-228), 223.

¹³³ Ibid., 224.

¹³⁴ David H. Baer, *Recovering Christian Realism: Just War Theory as Political Ethic* (New York: Lexington Books, 2015), 98.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 96.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 96-98.

¹³⁷ Eric D. Patterson, "Eight Principles," accessed August 4, 2023.

a formal theory or established school of thought, it seems to have certain traits common across its adherents. This intellectual and moral position can be characterized as: accepting of many basic tenets in Classical Realism; espousing theologically Augustinian precepts to include an emphasis on order in an anarchic, fallen world; interested in power relations; critical of nationalism, idealism, and isolationist conservatism; focused on analyzing the individual, domestic politics, and international relations; and emphasizing limits and restraint in the application of power.¹³⁸ If this characterization is accurate, in addition to Classical Realism, Christian Realism shares some attributes with Neoclassical Realism, namely its lack of formal structure and commitment to three levels of analysis (individual, state, and international).

A Case for Christian Realism

Why is it important for morality to influence an international relations theory? Moral virtue informs how a person comports himself and how that person views and treats others. This extends to societies and states. It seems most responsible if the limiting principles of Realism are supported by values that encourage a pursuit just outcomes while remaining committed to promoting human dignity and curtailing harm. Christian Realism supplies transcendent values that hold statesmen accountable to their societies and their potential foes. It promotes an understanding of the realities of evil in the world and the finite talents of the people.

Given all this, the matter of conflict among states remains unredeemable. As literature reflects on the question of how to build a realistic and just theory of engagement, a peaceful, or at least non-warfare alternative, is preferable. Competition among states, though not ideal, is sought as a substitute for war.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

Great Power Competition

Strategic Landscape

In February 2018, Director of National Intelligence Coats delivered the United States Intelligence Community's global threat assessment before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. He highlighted two threat categories that would challenge American national security in the future. First, he detailed how competition among countries will increase and the possibility for conflict among great powers is rising to levels not seen since the end of the Cold War.¹³⁹ He further contended that violent Sunni extremism would evolve and resurge within vulnerable countries, further complicating the strategic security landscape.¹⁴⁰ The security approaches for these two threat categories have distinctions. Moreover, the same finite assortment of forces and capabilities must be judiciously apportioned to address both.

Though forms of violent extremism including terrorism will remain a significant security concern, the United States now faces the task of posturing to compete with comparable state actors in the global balance of power. Is this dual threat a new phenomenon? History provides a useful answer: "For many years, the world's greatest power paced two grave external threats: from irregular groups of non-state actors and from large, newly empowered, rising states that wanted to displace it."¹⁴¹ Auslin was describing ancient Rome.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Daniel R. Coats, "Statement for the Record: Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," (2018), accessed September 22, 2020. <https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Testimonies/2018-ATA---Unclassified-SSCI.pdf>, 4.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Michael Auslin, "Don't Do as the Romans Did," *American Enterprise Institute: Foreign and Defense Policy* (2014), 1, accessed May 28, 2021, <https://www.aei.org/articles/dont-do-as-the-romans-did/>.

¹⁴² Ibid., 2.

The United States faces a similar quandary today. Auslin also wrote, “great-power competition has re-emerged with the disruptive actions of Russia in Europe and China in East Asia, and possibly a nuclear Iran in the Middle East.”¹⁴³ He asserted that with these challenges from state actors, the United States must accept the reality of decades of aggressive competition to come.¹⁴⁴ He believed Americans need to recognize this as a fact, not merely an undesirable and avoidable option.¹⁴⁵ Even though daily combat as experienced in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan may recede, America will not enjoy true peace.¹⁴⁶ Because competition is a reemerging strategic condition for America and terrorism and other forms of violent extremism will remain either constant or slightly abated, this section focuses on scholarship oriented toward nation-state tension. This category of struggle is commonly referred to as Great Power or Strategic Competition, depending on the source of scholarship.

What is Competition?

Great Power Competition (GPC) is elemental in contemporary international relations, comprising state and non-state actors who compete for strategic advantage to protect themselves and advance other national interests.¹⁴⁷ The Cold War was a prime example of the nature of competition where the United States and the Soviet Union competed for influence in international organizations, primacy and prestige in space exploration, and even over medal

¹⁴³ Ibid., 3.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 5-6.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 6.

¹⁴⁷ The Joint Staff, Competition Continuum, 1.

counts in the Olympics.¹⁴⁸ In GPC-like environments, rival nations also cooperate when it serves their strategic interests as the United States and Soviet Russia did on certain United Nations resolutions.¹⁴⁹ However, as the Twenty-First Century progresses, new conditions and circumstances are modifying the nature of competition.

Rapid technological advances, changing demographics, competition for natural resources (most critically, water), and growing economic disparities will further complicate the strategic landscape.¹⁵⁰ A combination of accelerated human progress and contested equality will be hallmarks of competition among great powers, emerging states, and super-empowered individuals.¹⁵¹ These factors not only portend changes GPC, but will introduce new attributes to both competition and conflict: the ascendancy of moral and cognitive dimensions and the decline of the physical; improved governmental integration of the elements of national power; the limited use of military force; the primacy of information; an expansion of competitive spaces and faces (reduced sanctuaries and more players); and, a shift in the ethics and law of warfare.¹⁵²

The complexity of the emerging strategic environment is such that some believe the usage of competition terminology is inadequate. Cohen argued against the concept of competition, alleging that it is so vaguely defined that it “inhibits hard but necessary choices

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, *The Operational Environment and the Changing Character of Warfare* (2019), 5-6.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 2-6.

¹⁵² Ibid., 21-23.

about where the Defense Department should dedicate its resources.”¹⁵³ Whether one supports or opposes the terminology or even the concept of GPC, what remains identifiable are its complexity and enduring nature. Writing about America’s competition with China, Beckley, Kirkpatrick, and Brands analogized it to a decades-long sprint, not a marathon.¹⁵⁴ Describing this as the “danger zone,” they suggested that the United States needs an immediate strategy to re-stabilize the balance of power with China in addition to long-term objectives to manage decades of competition.¹⁵⁵ This holds for America’s competitive relationship with other powers as well.

GPC occurs in temporal and spatial modes some describe as the gray zone. Defined by the Department of Defense and refined by RAND Corporation, the gray zone refers to “an operational space between peace and war” among competing nations who use coercive actions to change or maintain the status quo without escalating tensions to major conflict.¹⁵⁶ State activities in this space can be ambiguous, “often blurring the line between military and nonmilitary actions and the attribution of events.”¹⁵⁷ GPC implies several important matters the United States must address to remain competitive. There is utility in discussing needed American actions in the context of its prime challengers, China and Russia.

¹⁵³ Raphael S. Cohen, “It’s Time to Drop ‘Competition’ in the National Defense Strategy,” Blog, *The RAND Blog* (2021), accessed May 28, 2021, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2021/05/its-time-to-drop-competition-in-the-national-defense.html>.

¹⁵⁴ Michael Beckley, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and Hal Brands, “Into the Danger Zone: The Coming Crisis in US-China Relations,” American Enterprise Institute: Foreign and Defense Policy (2021), 1-2, accessed May 28, 2021. <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/into-the-danger-zone-the-coming-crisis-in-us-china-relations/>.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3-6.

¹⁵⁶ Lyle J. Morris, Michael J. Mazarr, Jeffrey W. Hornung, Stephanie Pezard, Anika Binnendijk, and Marta Kepe, “Gaining Competitive Advantage in the Gray Zone: Response Options for Coercive Aggression Below the Threshold of Major War” (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2019), 8.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Competing with China and Russia

Army strategists surmised that both China and Russia will “exploit conditions...to achieve their objectives without resorting to armed conflict by fracturing the U.S.’s alliances, partnerships, and resolve.”¹⁵⁸ They will do so by integrating diplomatic and economic actions, unconventional and information warfare, and the threat of armed force.¹⁵⁹ Not only do military planners view the threats this way, but other scholars also interpret America’s future strategic relationship in like manner. In a Congressional Research Service report, McInnis and Weiss observed many international security professionals “contend that the United States and its allies are entering an era of unprecedented – and dangerous - strategic complexity.”¹⁶⁰ They noted these experts generally conclude the primary antagonists are China and Russia.¹⁶¹ Huawei’s global expansion of 5G telecommunications networks, infrastructure investments through the “Belt and Road” initiative, and European economic dependency on China account for some of the threats it poses to America.¹⁶² Russian pro-Moscow propaganda targeting neighboring countries and North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies as well as attempted interference in United States and European elections are some of their contributions to the complexity and danger.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* (2018), vi.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ United States Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Strategic Competition and Foreign Policy: What is ‘Political Warfare’?* by Kathleen J. McInnis and Martin A. Weiss, CRS Report IF11127 (Washington, D.C.: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, March 8, 2019), 1.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

They argued that challenges to the United States must be countered through a strategy of political warfare (as described by Clausewitz and, later in 1948, by diplomat George Kennan) that synergizes a combination of political, economic, and military efforts.¹⁶⁴ Burkhart and Woody contended these challenges to America and the existing international order will require innovative strategies heretofore not contemplated or implemented.¹⁶⁵ America's current strategic posture is ill-equipped to face these state threats, nor is it prepared for similar yet less robust ones from Iran and North Korea because "these rival actors are evading U.S. strength by competing at a level below the threshold of a coercive U.S. or allied military response."¹⁶⁶

Following a similar line of thinking, Brands claimed the United States could benefit in competition with both China and Russia by reviving the style of political warfare exercised during the Cold War.¹⁶⁷ To explain what this entails, he drew on a 1948 Department of State definition, which lifts heavily from Clausewitz. Political warfare is both the covert and overt employment of all elements of national power, below the threshold of conflict, to achieve national objectives.¹⁶⁸ This requires a national mobilization coalesced around a unified strategic purpose. A component of a strategic purpose like this involves bolstering strategic partnerships. Commenting about China specifically, Schmitt argued that the United States must reinforce political and military power in the Asia-Pacific and establish new relationships with emerging

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 1-2.

¹⁶⁵ Daniel Burkhart and Alison Woody, "Strategic Competition: Beyond Peace and War," *Joint Force Quarterly* 86, no. 3 (2017: 20-27), 21.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Hal Brands, "The Dark Art of Political Warfare: A Primer," *American Enterprise Institute* (2020), 1, accessed May 28, 2021. <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/the-dark-art-of-political-warfare-a-primer>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 2.

democratic powers in the region.¹⁶⁹ Political warfare is a team effort among nations allied in purpose. The assumptions underlying political warfare would require added effort in integrating and equally applying elements of national power.

Traditionally, the United States employed four elements of national power: diplomacy, information, military force, and economics.¹⁷⁰ Today, strategic thinkers such as Rodriguez, Walton, and Chu lobby for three other elements, finance, intelligence, and law enforcement, to be just as prominently leveraged to meet the challenges of GPC with peer rivals.¹⁷¹ Though they are not new in national power calculations, the authors believe they do not share the level of emphasis as the primary four. They presented their concern in the context of both China and Russia expanding their national power tools, inclusive of “nonmilitary and above-military categories,” to dominate the United States in global, Strategic Competition.¹⁷² Russia’s expanded menu incorporates political, network, cultural, and propaganda elements.¹⁷³ Wuthnow reported that in its updated 2020 strategy textbook, China has added an emphasis on political work and a renewed focus on strategic level intelligence.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ Gary J. Schmitt, “When Will the Realists Get Real?” *American Enterprise Institute: Foreign and Defense Policy* (2011), 7, accessed May 28, 2021. <https://www.aei.org/articles/when-will-the-realists-get-real/>.

¹⁷⁰ Augusto Rodriguez, Timothy Charles Walton, and Hyong Chu, “Putting the ‘FIL’ into ‘DIME’: Growing Joint Understanding of the Instruments of Power.” *Joint Force Quarterly* 97, no. 2 (2020: 121-128), 122.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 126-127.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Joel Wuthnow, “What I Learned from the PLA’s Latest Strategy Textbook,” *Jamestown Foundation: Global Research and Analysis* (2021), 6-8, accessed May 28, 2021. <https://jamestown.org/program/what-i-learned-from-the-plas-latest-strategy-textbook/>.

Will competition with China, Russia, or other ascending powers affect the liberal international order and global stability? Brands pondered questions like this, and he answered that it already has to an extent. To begin, what is the liberal international order? Brands wrote that it is the international norms, rules, and generally accepted behaviors among most nations since World War II; and it includes commitments to relatively free trade and open markets, representative government, human rights, non-aggression, self-determination, and peaceful settlement of disputes.¹⁷⁵ This has been a favorable status quo for the United States since the mid-Twentieth Century; however, there are aspects of this global condition that have harmed America.¹⁷⁶

American international involvement (or interventionism), as noble and well-intentioned as it is, has led to tension with regional hegemonic powers including China and Russia who view it as destabilizing to their interests.¹⁷⁷ Brands concluded that the liberal international order has been good for the United States and offered two policy alternatives to maintain it: retaking the offensive to maintain and expand the liberal international order or selective engagement and selective retrenchment.¹⁷⁸ This second option implies prudent selection of strategic choices, tempered expansion of the liberal order, and more regional instead of international security concentrations.¹⁷⁹ Given the challenges and benefits of the liberal international order to the United States, this option may be the more appealing.

¹⁷⁵ Hal Brands, *American Grand Strategy and the Liberal International Order: Continuity, Change, and Options for the Future* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2016), 2.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 25.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 19.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 26.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 18, 26.

Approaches

Does this imply a greater emphasis on non-military and non-lethal forms of engagement for the United States to compete successfully? What role does strategic influence play, and how is it actuated? Nye's idea of soft power reflects a state's ability to co-opt or persuade other nations to desire and work toward an outcome favorable to the persuading state.¹⁸⁰ Schmitt asserted the changing strategic landscape in East Asia implies that American soft power will be a tool for competition with China to determine which will be the preeminent nation in the region.¹⁸¹ Is the United States postured and equipped to sway nations using soft power? Greenwalt commented that the United States needs to review the institutional architecture of the Defense Department, focusing on budgeting and acquisition, because those play "the central role in driving innovation, adaptability, and resilience."¹⁸² These processes determine the United States' competitive advantage against peer rivals.¹⁸³ Are the elements of American national power equipped with effective and efficient mechanisms to meet the challenges of GPC? These questions require prioritizing efforts and selecting appropriate response capabilities, which present significant challenges for policymakers. Some often-cited approaches to focus

¹⁸⁰ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Succeed in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 5.

¹⁸¹ Gary J. Schmitt, "A Hard Look at Soft Power in East Asia," *American Enterprise Institute: Foreign and Defense Policy* (2014), 37, accessed May 28, 2021. <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/a-hard-look-at-soft-power-in-east-asia/>.

¹⁸² William C. Greenwalt, "Competing in Time: Ensuring Capability Advantage and Mission Success Through Adaptable Resource Allocation," *Hudson Institute: Foreign and Defense Policy* (2021), Accessed May 28, 2021, <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/competing-in-time-ensur...dvantage-and-mission-success-through-adaptable-resource-allocation/>.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

responsible action are limited intervention and limited warfare. Do they appropriately fill the gap?

As human and fiscal costs grew in the conflicts waged in Afghanistan and Iraq, some American defense analysts and strategic decision-makers started promoting limited intervention to bring costs of operations “into alignment with strategic ends by changing the ways in which the United States intervened.”¹⁸⁴ Citing successful examples of limited intervention in the Philippines and Colombia where American forces worked through the partner nations to achieve security objectives, these planners began to advocate for similarly limited interventions when military force was determined necessary.¹⁸⁵ According to RAND Corporation researchers, limited intervention consists of limited stabilization, limited strike, and indirect operations.¹⁸⁶

Is this a sufficient approach? Stoker does not think so. He enumerated the common characteristics of limited engagement or limited war as “a limited purpose (or political objective); the level of force is limited (sometimes proportionally); the bulk of the nation’s political, social, and economic forces are not required; the geographical scope is restricted; and what is attacked is restricted.”¹⁸⁷ These attributes elevate the ways (posturing and planning) and the means (human, financial, and material resources) above the ends (objective and purpose). In

¹⁸⁴ Stephen Watts, Patrick B. Johnston, Jennifer Kavanagh, Sean M. Zeigler, Bryan Frederick, Trevor Johnston, Karl P. Mueller, Astrid Stuth Cevallos, Nathan Chandler, Meagan L. Smith, Alexander Stephenson, and Julia A. Thompson, *Limited Intervention: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Limited Stabilization, Limited Strike, and Containment Operations* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2017), 5-6.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., xi-xii.

¹⁸⁷ Donald Stoker, *Why America Loses Wars: Limited War and US Strategy from the Korean War to the Present*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 30-31.

Stoker's words, limited warfare or engagement is not conceptualized "by the objective sought, but by various factors that contribute to waging of the war and its nature."¹⁸⁸

In a later work, he and Whiteside claimed that limited war (sometimes labeled with other monikers like gray-zone wars or hybrid warfare) is a flawed idea that "feed[s] a dangerous tendency to confuse war and peace."¹⁸⁹ Limited war works from "a means- or methods-based foundation, one that is too subjective to provide a definable, firm, universally applicable basis for analysis—thus failing a key test for building theory."¹⁹⁰ To be successful, an approach, whether for a limited or ambitious political aim, must be active, deliberate, and robust in pursuit of a clear set of strategic objectives.¹⁹¹

Nalbandov touched on this sentiment by discussing a "battle of two logics," the logic of appropriateness and the logic of expected consequences.¹⁹² Researching the reasons why nations choose to intervene or refrain from intervention, he posited that success in an engagement is not measured in the durability of resultant peace after the fact, but rather in whether or not the objectives of the engagement were proper and satisfactorily achieved.¹⁹³ The two logics applied

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 30.

¹⁸⁹ Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines: Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War – Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020: 19-54), 20.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 36.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 30.

¹⁹² Robert Nalbandov, "Battle of Two Logics: Appropriateness and Consequentiality in Russian Interventions in Georgia," *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 3, no. 1 (2009: 20-35), 20.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 22-23.

in deliberating whether or not to intervene concern moral obligations (appropriateness) and the “positive cost-and-benefit calculations” (expected consequences).¹⁹⁴

Fundamental and articulated goals must be established before planning for and conducting any type of action. Given its complexity, it seems clear that security and foreign policy for GPC is not an exception to Stoker and Whitehead’s or Nalbandov’s respective positions. Deliberateness, clarity, morality, and commitment are essential elements to a justifiable and successful engagement in GPC as well as war. Moreover, in this environment, the strategic goals should be informed by a clear understanding of the risks involved (law of expected consequences) in their pursuit and how to manage them.

Risk

Acknowledging Risk

In this section, the review explores the types of risk inherent in that environment. Though the danger of violence and escalation of tensions does exist in competition, the focus of activity in this context is to protect state interests with all elements of national power without promulgating open conflict. Hazards are ever-present in national security and foreign affairs. Economic, political, technical, and infrastructural perils represent a few of them. This project emphasizes the physical and moral risks at the strategic level. This focus does not diminish other forms of hazard. They are important and warrant analysis; however, understanding physical risk assessed across the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of warfare and moral risk measured against national values propagated through strategic documents and laws specifically informs the research.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 23.

Understanding Risk at Echelon

The term ‘risk’ can be applied in numerous ways depending on the context in which it is used. According to Hansson, there are five general definitions: an unwanted event that may or may not occur; the cause of the unwanted event; the probability of the unwanted event occurring; the statistical expectation of an unwanted event occurring; and a decision made under conditions of known probabilities (decision under risk).¹⁹⁵ The fifth definition implies opportunities exploited or avoided, depending on the severity of the hazard present.

When formulating policy, the analysis of the final product should consider the types of risk present. Policy and strategy are implemented across the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The strategic level of warfare is where leaders develop concepts for applying the elements of national power to satisfy national objectives.¹⁹⁶ At the operational level, linkage planning and coordination assign resources against strategic requirements.¹⁹⁷ The tactical level comprises the organization and employment of those resources to accomplish the objectives.¹⁹⁸ These three levels help planners, military commanders, and policymakers “visualize a logical arrangement of forces in relation to each other” and are oriented toward fulfilling strategic goals.¹⁹⁹

United States joint military doctrine explains that strategy answers four basic questions: What are the desired ends? What are the ways to achieve them? What are the means and

¹⁹⁵ Hansson, "Risk."

¹⁹⁶ Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Publication 3-0: Operations (2019), 1-1.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

resources available? What are the risks of implementation?²⁰⁰ The responsibility for answering the first three questions is partitioned among the three levels. For instance, questions about ends are answered at the strategic level through documents like the National Security Strategy.²⁰¹ The ways and means represent how the ends will be achieved and with what resources; therefore, they are answered at the operational and tactical levels.²⁰² Questions of risk, though, are present at all three levels. Risks for military operations are described as probabilities and severities of loss linked to hazards.²⁰³ This general definition does not communicate with adequate specificity what risk analysts at each level of warfare contemplate. Fortunately, published instruction articulating planning echelon hazards is available to add clarity.

Defense risk analysis guidance dictates the following. Strategic risks are events that compromise national interests.²⁰⁴ Operational risks are assessed as the “probability and consequence of failure to achieve mission objectives while protecting the force from unacceptable losses.”²⁰⁵ The Defense Department’s risk analysis manual does not define tactical risk, but Benson suggested a satisfactory one: “opportunities arising from planned events, anticipated events, unforeseen events and chance, which, if taken, win a battle at hand.”²⁰⁶ He identified tactical level activities as those “planned and executed to achieve military objectives

²⁰⁰ The Joint Staff, Joint Doctrine Note 2-19: Strategy (2019), I-1.

²⁰¹ Ibid., I-2.

²⁰² Ibid., vi.

²⁰³ Kevin Benson, “Tactical Risk in Multi-Domain Operations,” *Modern Warfare Institute* (2019), accessed July 14, 2021, <https://mwi.usma.edu/tactical-risk-multi-domain-operations/>.

²⁰⁴ The Joint Staff, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3105.01: Joint Risk Analysis (2016), C-3.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., C-8.

²⁰⁶ Benson, “Tactical Risk.”

assigned to tactical units or task forces.”²⁰⁷ This is not a negative view of risk, but rather a realistic and perhaps optimistic one. Risk is present whenever military forces engage at any level of intensity. The issue, or as he described it, the opportunity, places a decision-maker at the tactical level in a position to exploit circumstances for gain or avoid them for physical protection.

To summarize these risk echelons, strategic risk encompasses threats to national goals, operational risk intimates the costs and benefits of planned undertakings, and tactical risk illuminates the prospects of success or failure once an action is underway. Both moral and physical categories of risk apply at each echelon. Physical risk, the human and material exposure to hazard, is self-explanatory; however, understanding how moral risk applies to this study requires analysis.

Moral Risk

Gert and Gert suggested morality has both descriptive and normative definitions. Descriptively, morality reflects “certain codes of conduct put forward by a society or group (such as a religion).”²⁰⁸ Normatively, morality refers to “a code of conduct that, given specified conditions, would be put forward by all rational people.”²⁰⁹ A combination of the descriptive and normative definitions yields the following: societal codes of conduct recognizable by all rational people. This hybrid definition incorporates the principles of biblical natural law.

Synthesizing risk and morality into a single definition for moral risk yields the following: the unwanted and unintended compromise of universally recognized values and established

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Bernard Gert and Joshua Gert, "The Definition of Morality," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed February 25, 2021, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/morality-definition/>.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

codes of behavior. To specify the definition for this study required a further adjustment: the unwanted and unintended compromise of national values and established codes of conduct resulting from the application of military force. Armed with a definition of moral risk, the challenge transitioned to ascertaining the moral precepts that apply.

The United States government publishes strategic documents that communicate moral principles in the form of stated national values. For example, the Biden Administration's 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance refers to values over two dozen times. It specifies commitments to democracy, a powerful military capability, alliances and partnerships, and global development to reduce international violence and ensure American national security.²¹⁰ A physical risk, the security of the nation, is apparent. How does one identify moral risk in strategic policy statements? A more thorough understanding of moral risk from theoretical and historical perspectives was required before that question could be answered.

Wall identified a method that appeals to political traditions, or "formed ways of acting" by society over time, both legally and intellectually.²¹¹ Tradition perhaps offers a qualified standard on which to base moral reasoning; however, as he admitted, though political traditions "bind societies to their past...the past, on any honest reading, is replete with injustice and unreasonableness."²¹² Consequently, any use of political tradition requires that it comports with a sense of justice and strives to overcome lapses in just standards.²¹³ A concept of justice exists in

²¹⁰ The White House, Interim Guidance, 6.

²¹¹ Steven Wall, "Political Morality and the Authority of Tradition," *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 24, no. 2 (2016: 137-161), 138-40.

²¹² Ibid., 156.

²¹³ Ibid.

Christian Realism, but where else in scholarly documentation is moral justice discussed, and are those treatments beneficial for this project?

A technique of moral discernment that ventures beyond abstract theories of justice is ethical casuistry. Paulo described this as the belief that morality is more practical than theoretical and relies less on universal moral authority and tradition than on instinct at the moment of crisis.²¹⁴ He explained that intuitions and conscience guide moral action in particular situations, altering moral obligation depending on the circumstances.²¹⁵ Since ethical casuistry emphasizes real situations over universal theories it seems, at least on the surface, to align with Realist anti-utopianism; however, this can prove problematic in applying a moral standard. Higgins warned that casuistry is often debased as “flimsy arguments designed to justify unprincipled conduct.”²¹⁶ Since casuistry can appear ethically situational, the debasement, though unfortunate, is unsurprising. Returning to Paulo, one learns a possible reason for casuistry’s poor favor among some: “The indirect effect of not having authoritative decision-makers is thus that casuistry does not have any settled normative content.”²¹⁷

Casuistry’s appeal derives from its practical response to particular situations that may create moral dilemmas. If one embraces elements of casuistry to account for the reality of moral dilemmas, he or she may consider incorporating Moreland and Craig’s prescription for graded absolutism. This is a view that moral risk is possible, perhaps even likely in certain

²¹⁴ Norbert Paulo, "Casuistry as Common Law Morality," *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 36, no. 6 (2015: 373-389), 374.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ James Higgins, "Casuistry Revisited," *Heythrop Journal* 53, no. 5 (2012: 806-836), 806.

²¹⁷ Paulo, "Casuistry as Common Law Morality," 378.

circumstances because decisions to act or refrain are both moral.²¹⁸ To the graded absolutist, the weightier moral principle (or action) is supported and justified.²¹⁹ LiVecche and Mallard personalized this concept when writing on individual moral injury in combat, claiming that certain dilemmas warfighters face appear to present no ethical solution; consequently, “they must break the moral impasse under the guidance of one principle or another.”²²⁰ This seems to satisfy a natural law philosophy of selecting a just action and outcome while acknowledging the Realist recognition of sometimes unavoidable moral risk. It still leaves the matter of establishing essential principles unresolved.

Allen conveyed a Washingtonian political morality established on four principles: God made America’s founding possible; survival of this nation is of paramount moral significance to the world; a republic requires vigilance to persevere and strengthen; and God may withdraw His providence if the nation’s character proved unworthy of maintaining a republic.²²¹ Washington was motivated by a “national morality capable of appreciating transcendent interests,” namely, a “permanent quest for justice.”²²² For Washington, justice had one primary object in both domestic and foreign policy, the protection of the religious and civil liberties of the citizenry.²²³ He believed that embroilments in foreign affairs, especially conflicts among other nations, must

²¹⁸ James P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations of a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2003), 420-21.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Marc LiVecche and Timothy S. Mallard, *The Good Kill: Just War and Moral Injury* (New York: Oxford University Press), 197.

²²¹ William B. Allen, "The Moral Foundations of Political Choices: George Washington, Foreign Policy, and National Character," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 9, no. 4 (2011: 3-12), 3.

²²² Ibid., 5.

²²³ Ibid., 8.

only proceed out of “absolute necessity.”²²⁴ Action must protect the nation to preserve American liberty. Washington’s principles appear transcendent, and they at least partially inspire modern conservative internationalism theory. Nau asserted this model values spreading freedom but constrains action by threat and priorities.²²⁵ It incorporates the balanced use of military force to achieve diplomatic objectives during political discourse in peacetime, not after it fails.²²⁶

Armed with knowledge about making moral choices consistent with natural law and justice under non-theoretical conditions and a historical example of limited essential principles from a great American statesman, one may take some license to add specificity to contemporary general statements about national values found in the 2021 Interim Strategic Guidance. Moral risk in security policy is the potential compromise of liberty and justice. The challenge that surfaces later in the project is how this type of risk is measured.

Assessing Risk at Echelon

National level policy and strategy documents provide some essential guidance to preserve American security. For example, the Trump Administration’s National Security Strategy, the most current fully developed strategy available during the literature research period, promoted a crucial objective: “The United States will seek areas of cooperation with competitors from a position of strength, foremost by ensuring our military power is second to none and fully integrated with our allies and all of our instruments of power.”²²⁷ The unclassified Summary of

²²⁴ Ibid., 5.

²²⁵ Henry R Nau, *Conservative Internationalism: Armed Diplomacy Under Jefferson, Polk, Truman, and Reagan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 2.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2017), 27.

the Nation Defense Strategy identified numerous lines of effort to accomplish the National Security Strategy's goals, seven of which apply to the topic explored in this research effort: defending the homeland from attack; sustaining Joint Force military advantages, both globally and in key regions; deterring adversaries from aggression against our vital interests; enabling U.S. interagency counterparts to advance U.S. influence and interests; defending allies from aggression and coercion; dissuading, preventing or deterring the use of weapons of mass destruction; and, ensuring common domains remain open and free.²²⁸

Both physical and moral risks are apparent in these objectives. Moderating them requires an approach that appropriately limits the use of physical force, respects the limitations America should exercise in the use of national power, and aligns with the nation's biblical founding principles as applied to national security and foreign policy. To mitigate physical risk, America must effectively orchestrate operational convergence, an art and science that organizes and applies capabilities, ever cognizant that perfect synchronization, and, by extension, perfect physical risk mitigation, are not possible.²²⁹

Similarly, moral risk cannot be completely eliminated. Any exercise of national power abroad creates some alarm and perhaps passive or aggressive responses from competitors and potential adversaries. In John Quincy Adams' 1825 inaugural address, he stated that America should be "the friend of all the liberties in the world, the guardian of only her own."²³⁰ Those sagacious words equally apply to the modern strategic security context as they did during the

²²⁸ Department of Defense, Summary of the National Defense Strategy, 4.

²²⁹ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, Multi-Domain Operations, C – 7.

²³⁰ Loch K. Johnson, *American Foreign Policy and the Challenges of World Leadership: Power, Principle, and the Constitution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 496.

Adams Administration. A general practice necessary to maintain national moral standards is to refrain from unnecessary involvement in the internal and, to an extent, external affairs of other sovereign nations.

The United States Army's current cornerstone doctrinal statement reinforced an obligation to conflict prevention. The Army assessed that conflict prevention is possible by preparing forces to conduct "all activities that deter adversary military actions which threaten allies or partners and deny them the ability to achieve objectives counter to U. S. interests."²³¹ Deterrence intends to reduce risk to allied forces and interests by increasing those risks to adversaries if they engage in belligerent behavior.²³² Will this mitigate risk? What should be the primary mitigating force and activity? The answer to the first question relies on an analysis of the answer to the second question, and it becomes evident later in the project. The answer to the second is a little more straightforward.

The Army's Concept for Special Operations referred to risk in considerable detail twenty-six times. Understanding and addressing the physical risk of loss and the moral risk of compromising national values is a prominent theme. The central idea of the document promotes Army Special Operations Forces' (ARSOF) role in competition and conflict (if necessary) as a preferred military option to "mitigate risk, deter, disrupt, or defeat hostile aggression, and gain time in order to set up strategic and military options."²³³ ARSOF will do this through capacity building operations with partners, bolstering and expanding allied relationships, and countering

²³¹ Department of the Army. Army Doctrinal Publication 1: The Army (2019), 2-5.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ United States Army Futures Command, Army Futures Command Concept for Special Operations 2028 (2020), 13.

adversarial influences.²³⁴ In theory, part of America's effort to limit risk employs ARSOF in specific competitive operational contexts. Though it is not the only option available, it is a prime capability in risk management. The difficulty will be to employ it justly and realistically. For this reason, a proven method of just action must be considered. Is it sufficient in GPC?

The Just War Tradition and Ethics in Statecraft

Just War Theory

Volumes of literature on Just War Theory have accumulated over the centuries. This body of knowledge is an amalgamation of fascinating thought by theologians, philosophers, and political leaders. Some of them favor the idea that a war can be just, while others abhor the notion, claiming no war can be justified at any juncture, in any form, or for any reason.²³⁵ In its modern treatment, Just War Theory seems to reflect elements of both pacifism and more overt internationalism. Though Just War theorists understand the justness and legitimacy of some conflicts (they cannot always agree on which conflicts), a popular scholarly view is that Just War Theory should open the analysis of a conflict with a "presumption against war" or violence in general.²³⁶ This is a negative or restrictive view.

To adequately comprehend what Just War Theory purports, it was essential to first understand what it is not. It is not an excuse to validate aggression without sufficient reason and contemplation. Sufficiency can be derived from a perceived moral obligation to achieve certain desirable outcomes through warfare, even though the progenitor does not relish the idea of

²³⁴ Ibid., v.

²³⁵ Jackson, "Bringing Pacifism Back," 63-64.

²³⁶ James Turner Johnson, *Sovereignty: Moral and Historical Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014), 8-9.

combat – it is rather deemed essential to achieve a noble purpose.²³⁷ Just War Theory may be explained as “not an abstract body of moral thought but instead a practically informed morality of war rooted in Christian thought and law, Roman law, and the practice of statecraft.”²³⁸

A potential combatant state must answer two moral questions to determine if a contemplated military conflict is just. Is the resort to war justifiable (*jus ad bellum*) and will the actions of combatants in war be justifiable (*jus in bello*)?²³⁹ In simpler terms, these are the right decision (*ad bellum*), and the right behavior (*in bello*) after the decision is made.²⁴⁰ Concerning the decision, the motive and goal of conflict are key.²⁴¹ This is the essence of *jus ad bellum*. Concerning the behavior, some argue it is an exclusive responsibility among combatants.²⁴² This responsibility is rooted in morality.²⁴³ *Jus in bello* signifies that if a just war is fought unjustly, the entire endeavor becomes unjust.²⁴⁴ Contrary to the contention that wartime behavior is the sole prerogative of a combatant, the fact that unjust action contaminates the entire endeavor (including the decision) suggests that the decision-maker shares in the responsibility since he

²³⁷ Lawler, "The Good State," 441.

²³⁸ James Turner Johnson, "A Practically Informed Morality of War: Just War, International Law, and a Changing World Order," *Ethics and International Affairs* 31, no. 4 (2017: 453-465), 465.

²³⁹ Lazar, "Just War Theory," 41.

²⁴⁰ Michael Walzer, *Arguing About War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), viii.

²⁴¹ Kahlib J. Fischer, "Biblical Principles of Government and Criminal Justice," *Liberty University Journal of Statesmanship & Public Policy* 1, no. 2, accessed October 22, 2020, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/jspp/vol1/iss1/3>.

²⁴² Biggar, *In Defence of War*, 192.

²⁴³ Thomas Hurka, "Proportionality and Necessity," in *War: Essays in Political Philosophy*, ed. Larry May (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 127.

²⁴⁴ Allen S. Weiner, "Just War Theory & the Conduct of Asymmetric Warfare," *Daedalus* 146, no. 1 (2017: 59-70), 59.

shares in the risk of injustice. These fundamentals of Just War Theory have commonly accepted supporting principles as identified by Lazar and captured in Tables 2.1 and 2.2.

The six principles guiding decisions to engage in conflict are: just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, reasonable prospect of success, proportionality, and last resort. Three principles guide waging a just war: discrimination between combatants and noncombatants; acceptable collateral damage governed by proportionality between the damage caused and the benefit gained; and limiting damage to the minimal necessity required to accomplish the just goal.

Table 2.1: Principles for the Decision to Go to War (*jus ad bellum*)²⁴⁵

Principle	Definition
Just Cause	An end state of conflict worth the cost in life, injury, and resources.
Legitimate Authority	A right and responsibility to engage in conflict.
Right Intention	A worthy and just purpose for conflict.
Reasonable Prospect of Success	A probability of achieving the wartime goal within the parameters of allowable loss.
Proportionality	An assessment of the moral good of a conflict outcome against the inevitable moral evils of warfare.
Last Resort	A determination of the necessity of conflict when peaceful means of resolution are exhausted.

²⁴⁵ Lazar, "War."

Table 2.2: Principles for Waging a Just War (*jus in bello*)²⁴⁶

Principle	Definition
Discrimination	A commitment to just behavior that prevents combatants from targeting non-combatants.
Proportionality	A permissibility of harming noncombatants, predictably yet unintentionally (collateral damage), if the harm does not outweigh the goal of the action.
Necessity	A further limitation on proportionality to the least harmful methods necessary to achieve wartime objectives.

Other recognized components of Just War Theory are *jus ex bello* (a decision) and *jus post bellum* (a behavior). *Jus ex bello* “concerns when it is appropriate to end a war” in a just and ethical manner.²⁴⁷ *Jus post bellum* “concerns how the war concludes and the transition back to a situation of peace,” and “deals with issues such as compensation, punishment, and reform.”²⁴⁸ *Jus post bellum* has also been described using two categories of post-conflict behavior, a healing mindset and just restoration.²⁴⁹ The healing mindset concerns conflict termination and posits “if the terms and circumstances are just, they may help a former enemy move beyond the devastation of the present to eventual healing and success *post bellum*.”²⁵⁰ After terms of termination are reached, just restoration commences in three sequential but overlapping phases.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Gillian Brock, “Global Justice,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed May 12, 2023, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-global/>.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Louis V. Iasiello, “Jus Post Bellum: The Moral Responsibilities of Victors in War,” *Naval War College Review* 57, no. 3 (2004: 33-52), 40.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

First, protectorship provides “immediate security for both occupying forces and the defeated society.”²⁵¹ Second, partnership imbues both victor and vanquished to work in concert to “rebuild the defeated society.”²⁵² Third, ownership returns the defeated nation “its sovereignty and reentry into the community of nations” with resumed control of the political, economic, and social dimensions of national life.²⁵³

The concept and just tenor of *jus post bellum* can be extended to scenarios resulting from a stalemate or a desire to settle international disagreements using the process of conciliation, a voluntary “method for the settlement of disputes of any nature” among all contesting parties that shares characteristics with mediation and arbitration.²⁵⁴ The parties cede responsibility for dispute management to an external commission, either established by them or recognized as an external authority, that investigates the source of tension and proposes a resolution.²⁵⁵ Such a process is often governed by international law.²⁵⁶ The fact that conciliation was developed as a just method of dispute resolution outside the parameters of war is an admission that the components of Just War Theory may not conceivably cover the wide spectrum of discord among states. Even so, *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, *jus ex bello*, and *jus post bellum* represent a comprehensive and just method of considering conflict. They are summarized in Table 2.3.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 42.

²⁵² Ibid., 43.

²⁵³ Ibid., 44.

²⁵⁴ Makane Moïse Mbengue and Apollin Koagne Zouapet, “Africa and International Conciliation,” in *Flexibility in International Dispute Settlement*, Christian Tomuschat and Marcelo Kohen eds. (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill & Nijhoff, 2020), 113.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 113-114.

²⁵⁶ Ian Brownlee, “The Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes,” *Chinese Journal of International Law* 8, no. 2 (2009: 267-283), 268.

Table 2.3: Sequence of Just War Decisions and Behaviors

Principle	Type	Definition
<i>jus ad bellum</i>	Decision	Going to war.
<i>jus in bello</i>	Behavior	Conducting war.
<i>jus ex bello</i>	Decision	Ending war.
<i>jus post bellum</i>	Behavior	Conducting post-war activities.

The Ethics of Justice, Natural Law, and Christian Realism

Do statesmen charged with making certain decisions such as the commitment of forces to armed conflict and conduct in battle deal with concrete, practical problems, not abstractions or theoretical questions as some like Regan argue?²⁵⁷ There are many practical considerations, but perhaps a commitment to the tangible may be selling theoretical considerations short. The statesman engaging problems inherent in warfare arguably must deal with some abstract elements. What is the moral justification for war? How can one nation be certain its cause is just while another nation's is not? Who is unequivocally responsible and legitimately authorized to direct military engagement and orchestrate the rules of conduct during hostilities?

How one answers these questions has practical ramifications, yet the inquiries are primarily intellectual and conceptual. Both a just decision for and just action in war imply and require moral justifications as do decisions to end war justly and the victors' actions after the fact. To responsibly confront the issues arising from *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, *jus ex bello*, and

²⁵⁷ Richard J. Regan, *Just War: Principles and Cases* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press, 1996), 20.

jus post bellum the statesman must consider immutable values to at least ensure the decision-making process for conflict is cogent and consistent. If this is so for decisions about conflict, it stands to reason that the same considerations apply to behaviors in competition. Furthermore, a strong argument exists that just decisions and behaviors are equally if not more important for military operations in an environment of GPC where the aim is to achieve national objectives without escalating tensions to a point of war with a rival state.

Where are such considerations to be found? Strategic documents such as the National Security Strategy are a source of identifying moral value propositions. As presented later in Chapter Five, justice and peace are the two moral risk concepts synthesized from six Security Strategies and generally affirmed through subject matter expert interviews. The synthesized physical risks, conflict and security, are equally important considerations in an environment of competition. Of the four, justice is the central concern of Just War Theory and Christian Realist ethics. Given the principles of *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, *jus ex bello*, and *jus post bellum*, justice is not an outcome but a process. There is a strong philosophical argument by Sowell that supports this conclusion.²⁵⁸ The recognition that justice is a process comports with biblical usage of the term, where justice is characterized as a moral approach to action.²⁵⁹ If justice has significant theological overtones and established roots in Scripture, then its foundation for moral action can be established through the theological concept of biblical natural law.

²⁵⁸ Sowell, *Cosmic Justice*, 5.

²⁵⁹ This claim is based on analysis conducted separately from this research, where six Scripture passages, three each from the Old and New Testaments were evaluated and synthesized to understand a biblical concept of justice: *Numbers* 2, *Proverbs* 21, *Isaiah* 1, *Matthew* 23, *Luke* 4, and *Romans* 13.

The theory of natural law posits, “The foundation of good and evil [is] inscribed in created human nature.”²⁶⁰ Despite minor variations of interpretation, all theories on natural law “share a conviction that the most basic truths of right and wrong...are not only right for everyone, but at some level known to everyone by the ordinary exercise of reason.”²⁶¹ It generally asserts, “The notion that there are true, universally binding moral principles knowable to all people.”²⁶² These are modern formations of the works of Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas. The latter believed “that we know immediately, by inclination, that there are a variety of things that count as good and thus to be pursued.”²⁶³ Augustine equated this inborn natural law (*lex naturalis*) to God’s eternal moral law (*lex aeterna*).²⁶⁴

Augustinian and Thomistic thought on natural law were presaged in non-Christian circles under the banner of justice.²⁶⁵ Plato articulated a universal concept of justice, which he described as a virtue of the soul that leads to happiness (or human flourishing).²⁶⁶ Aristotle postulated that justice bonds men in states, and the application of justice instills order.²⁶⁷ The Greek philosophers’ conclusions seemingly indicated that justice is both a state of being and an activity.

²⁶⁰ Budziszewski, *The Line Through the Heart*, xi.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 199.

²⁶² Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 410.

²⁶³ Mark Murphy, “The Natural Law Tradition in Ethics,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2011), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed March 29, 2019, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/natural-law-ethics/>.

²⁶⁴ Anton-Hermann Chroust, “The Philosophy of Law of St. Augustine,” *The Philosophical Review* 53, no. 2 (1944: 195-202), 197-98.

²⁶⁵ John Lawrence Hill, *After the Natural Law: How the Classical Worldview Supports Our Modern Moral and Political Values* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2016), 46.

²⁶⁶ Plato, *The Republic: The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 3, 3d. ed., Benjamin Jowett, M.A. transl, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), 186

²⁶⁷ Aristotle, *The Politics*, vol. 1, Benjamin Jowett, M.A. transl. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), 98.

Aristotle understood justice, or ethical action, to be “a practical pursuit that involves experience, judgment, and...a cultivated character.”²⁶⁸ Roman thinker Cicero later commented on justice, stating it reflects what is good, and it requires the protection of individual liberty, life, and property.²⁶⁹

The philosophical concept of natural law prefaced by these thinkers, particularly Aristotle, and developed through Augustine and Aquinas is teleologically instituted.²⁷⁰ Teleology establishes that a thing’s existence can best be explained by its purpose.²⁷¹ If ‘purpose’ is at the core of reality, then must there not be a source of it? How does one recognize that purpose? Both Augustine and Aquinas promoted the source of purpose in a teleologically ordered universe as God. Aquinas advanced the connection between God-given purpose and human existence, claiming that people as reasonable beings can understand their purpose through the process of reason since the Creator of both reason and humanity, God, is a reasonable Being Himself.²⁷²

Applying this realization to society, Augustine reasoned that God both created and sanctioned government to be just.²⁷³ Aquinas asserted that when humans employ reason they act virtuously as prescribed by God’s natural law and achieve contentment in the resultant just

²⁶⁸ Hill, *After the Natural Law*, 46.

²⁶⁹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On Moral Duties (De Officiis)*, Andrew P. Peabody transl. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1887), 15.

²⁷⁰ Hill, *After the Natural Law*, 79-80.

²⁷¹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 349.

²⁷² Hill, *After the Natural Law*, 75.

²⁷³ Saint Augustine. *The City of God*, New Advent, accessed March 31, 2019, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1201.htm>, Book V, Chapter 11.

society.^{274 275} He further stipulated that man's God-given ability to reason makes it possible to not only understand a purpose but to also secure life's provisions, enabling sustenance, security, and livelihood.²⁷⁶ These are hallmarks of rational humans functioning in a just society. A few centuries later, Reformation and Enlightenment-era thinkers reinforced these sentiments.

One of Martin Luther's signature contributions was his affirmation that all human knowledge of law and justice will not lead to a just society without the love of God and His natural law.²⁷⁷ He pronounced that good actions are planned by a free mind inspired and instructed by love and natural law.²⁷⁸ His writings on governing in accordance with natural law prized the duty that demanded just action over the happiness that resulted from it. Luther listed the duties a Christian ruler must perform in secular government to act concomitant to the natural law: pray to God confidently and sincerely; love the citizenry as a good Christian servant should; be open-minded to counsel yet exercise independent judgment; and exact justice firmly.²⁷⁹

John Calvin believed in the necessity of society and the application of natural law. To him, man was a social creature because God inscribed a common moral framework, the natural law, on his heart.²⁸⁰ He subscribed to the primacy of society just as Aristotle had: "Wherefore

²⁷⁴ Thomas Aquinas, "Treatise on Law, Question 94" *Summa Theologica*, accessed April 7, 2019, <https://dhsprory.org/thomas/english/summa/FS/FS094.html#FSQ94OUTP1>.

²⁷⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship to the King of Cyprus*, accessed April 7, 2019, <https://dhsprory.org/thomas/DeRegno.htm>, 62.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

²⁷⁷ Martin Luther, "Secular Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed" (1523), accessed April 9, 2019, ollc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Secular-Authority-To-What-Extent-It-Should-Be-Obeyed.pdf.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁸⁰ C. Scott Pryor, "God's Bridle: John Calvin's Application of Natural Law," *Journal of Law and Religion* 22, no. 1 (2006: 225-54), 249.

no man can doubt that civil authority is, in the sight of God, not only sacred and lawful, but the most sacred, and by far the most honorable, of all stations in mortal life.”²⁸¹ Calvin’s writings also clearly equated natural law with normative moral theory when he wrote, “it is evident that the law of God which we call moral, is nothing else than the testimony of natural law, and...it alone ought to be the aim, the rule, and the end of all laws.”²⁸² Calvin was adamant about man’s responsibility to know and obey God’s natural law. He opined that “the judgment of conscience distinguishing sufficiently between just and unjust, and by convicting men on their own testimony, depriving them of all pretexts for ignorance.”²⁸³

Another Reformation Era theologian, Heinrich Bullinger, affirmed Aquinas’ principles of law, justice, and the state, asserting that civil government alone has the authority to declare war, and it is the ultimate factor.²⁸⁴ All other considerations, including a judgment on the justness of the cause, were secondary. Bullinger specified that “the civil magistrate...kills at God’s commandment...when in defense of his people he does justly and necessarily arm himself for battle.”²⁸⁵ This allusion to the defense of those under authority aligns with the Augustinian political requirements as well.

Generally accepting the arc of thought on natural law and justice, more contemporary thinkers offered complimentary contributions that approach just decisions and behaviors in a

²⁸¹ John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1846), 1058.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 1066.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 210.

²⁸⁴ Timothy J. Demy, Mark J. Larson, and J. Daryl Charles, *The Reformers on War, Peace, and Justice* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2019), 55.

²⁸⁵ Heinrich Bullinger, *The Decades of Heinrich Bullinger* (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1968), 307.

Western, constitutional context. A commitment in a just war to institute limitations holds similarities with another theory in political science. The judicial concept of strict scrutiny is one of those associated ideas. This theory is a stringent test normally used to “examine constitutionally suspect issues,” yet its application can extend into other areas of constitutional governance.²⁸⁶ Nested under the rubric of moral leadership and administrative statesmanship, strict scrutiny is used when a fundamental individual right is jeopardized by a government decision.²⁸⁷ What fundamental individual right could be more precious than the right to life, the most basic property right and the one most severely jeopardized during conflict?

Strict scrutiny can augment Just War Theory in limiting the military goal, applying constraints on warfare decisions and actions, and instituting conflict termination criteria. Can these principles be used to justify endless restraint from war? Perhaps they can at times, but at other times such a decision may prove even more harmful to life on a large scale. Some scholars have contended that perpetual wartime delays in favor of other diplomatic actions such as economic sanctions may cause more harm to life through mass impoverishment, rendering a short, limited-objective war the most moral, or perhaps better described as the least evil, option.²⁸⁸

Carl von Clausewitz identified warfare as primarily an act of physical force, not a moral or ethical one.²⁸⁹ He stated that morality “has no existence save as expressed in the state and the

²⁸⁶ Chad B. Newswander, “Moral Leadership and Administrative Statesmanship: Safeguards of Democracy in a Constitutional Republic,” *Public Administration Review* 72, no. 6 (2012: 866-74), 869.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ James Pattison, “The Case for the Non-ideal Morality of War: Beyond Revisionism Versus Traditionalism in Just War Theory,” *Political Theory* 46, no. 2 (2018: 242-268), 250.

²⁸⁹ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, eds. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 75.

law.”²⁹⁰ These oft-cited claims from *On War* do not suggest that Clausewitz eschewed morality in security affairs. He just subordinated personal moral sentiments to the ethics of statecraft.

Elsewhere in *On War* he wrote, “it is the natural law of the moral world that a nation finds itself on the brink of an abyss will try to save itself by any means.”²⁹¹ It is a moral necessity for states to protect themselves. As Nielson concluded, these statements are part of the Realist view

Clausewitz held on the complex environment of international politics where nations vie for their survival but also have an “ethic of responsibility” that overrides personal moral convictions in determining how and when to use force.²⁹² She summarized by asserting that Clausewitz’s views “contain an...argument for the benefits of moderation” and would “more likely look on the use of force with the tragic acceptance of Max Weber” as a natural but unhealthy phenomenon.²⁹³

Moral considerations are thoroughly infused in Clausewitz’s political philosophy.

Weber claimed the statesman or politician “may serve national, humanitarian, social, ethical, cultural, worldly, or religious ends.”²⁹⁴ Specifically regarding ethics, which he referenced over eighty times in his seminal lecture, “Politics as a Vocation,” he used Christian references to assert that a state’s politicians must resist evil with force, “or else you are responsible for the evil winning out.”²⁹⁵ A state’s ethical response to evil is legitimized by the following logic: “a state

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 483.

²⁹² Suzanne C. Nielson, “The Tragedy of War: Clausewitz on Morality and the Use of Force.” *Defence Studies* 7, no. 2 (2007: 208-238), 233.

²⁹³ Ibid., 233.

²⁹⁴ Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills eds. and trans., 77-128 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 117.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 119.

is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory,” and “the state is considered the sole source of the ‘right’ to use violence.”²⁹⁶ Weber claimed the state holds the right to a monopoly on violence and the ethical responsibility to protect its citizenry and territory by leveraging it.²⁹⁷

Modern theology associates the Christian variant of Realism with natural law and Just War Theory. Scholars analyzing international politics through a Realist lens have observed conflicting proclivities in human nature. Man has the capacity to do what is good, but also is subject to “reckless lusts, ruthless ambitions, and irritable frustrations that harm neighbors and relationships.”²⁹⁸ The Bible acknowledges that condition. Jesus stated the following about man when He was called good in *Mark* 10:18: “And Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.’” The Apostle Paul also recognized this in *Romans* 3:12: “All have turned aside; together they have become worthless: no one does good, not even one.” Jesus’ brother exposed the spiritual nature of human strife in *James* 4:1-2: “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this – that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.”

A war within the soul extends to social interaction. Analysis of these verses shows that man engages in conflict to try to obtain some form of inner, spiritual satisfaction.²⁹⁹ Ostensibly, the Bible affirms the Realist understanding of the world humans inhabit. If this assertion is true,

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 78.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 95.

²⁹⁸ Biggar, *In Defence of War*, 328.

²⁹⁹ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 564.

then would the Bible take an approach to warfare that perhaps underwrites the concept of Just War Theory informed by biblical natural law, governed by Realism, and applied with strict scrutiny?

Theologians offer differing opinions on how the Bible authorizes, legitimizes, or just plainly recognizes war. Three lines of thought dominate discourse: activism, pacifism, and selectivism.³⁰⁰ Activists, citing *Romans* 13:1-2, argue that since God ordained government, when it decides to go to war for whatever reason the citizens should obey and support the action.³⁰¹ ³⁰² Pacifists use *Matthew* 5:39 from the Sermon on the Mount to validate their contention that war is never acceptable.³⁰³ ³⁰⁴ There is a middle position that claims both of these approaches hold partial truths, but they seem to conveniently decontextualize Scripture to support predetermined positions.³⁰⁵ Selectivism takes a more reasonable approach because it accounts for the realities of evil in the world, but it does not promote the unjust use of military force. This seems compatible with graded absolutism. There is biblical support for this balance. *Exodus* 22:2 and *Romans* 13:4 contend that evil must be punished, even by the sword if

³⁰⁰ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *What Does the Lord Require? A Guide for Preaching and Teaching Biblical Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 186.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² *Romans* 13:1-2. Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

³⁰³ Kaiser, Jr., *What Does the Lord Require?*, 186.

³⁰⁴ *Matthew* 5:39. But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

³⁰⁵ Norman L. Geisler, *Christian Ethics: Contemporary Issues and Options*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 229.

needed.^{306,307, 308} Scripture also calls in *Acts* 23 for due process before exacting any judgment, punishment, or retribution.^{309,310} Recognizing the efficacy of the verses cited by activists and pacifists when interpreted in proper context, selectivism is a moderated position between the two extremes, and it places greater emphasis on deliberation and a process of justice.³¹¹ This seems to fit the model of Just War Theory and countenances the sufficiency of Christian Realism to properly understand and ethically approach the world and mankind's imperfect behavior in it.

Contemporary scholarship on the ethics of Christian Realism and Just War Theory support are consistent with these findings. They connect the morality of the individual to the ethics of statecraft in international relations including decisions about and behaviors during and after war. Rengger asserted that "the central fact about the [Just War] tradition was that it was a tradition of moral and political reflection rooted in practice, and the practice concerned not merely the business of war and the use of force but its role in statecraft and, indeed, its involvement with people's everyday lives."³¹² He claimed that Just War Theory was developed out of an "appropriate and reasonable" framework for ethical decision-making and interaction

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 235.

³⁰⁷ *Exodus* 22:2. If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him.

³⁰⁸ *Romans* 13:4. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

³⁰⁹ Geisler, *Christian Ethics*, 236.

³¹⁰ *Acts* 23:28-29. And desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council. I found that he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment.

³¹¹ Geisler, *Christian Ethics*, 235-36.

³¹² Nicholas Rengger, "On the Just War Tradition in the Twenty-First Century," *International Affairs* 78, no. 2 (2002: 353-363), 360.

among individuals, societies, and, ultimately, states.³¹³ The tradition “emphasizes that choices are made in the contexts of obligations and freedoms that are given to us and not always chosen *ex nihilo*.”³¹⁴ These choices are based on what is known to be good, right, and ethical from *a priori* knowledge supplied by natural law.

Applying this recognition of the good and ethical specifically to a state’s domestic and international role, LiVecche claimed, “the primary good for which government exercises responsibility is the provision of basic security characterized by order, justice, and peace without which no degree of human flourishing, including life, can long persevere.”³¹⁵ Elsewhere, LiVecche specified a state’s inescapable ethical role in international relations under a Christian Realist rubric. He concluded that a state’s relationship with its citizens and the world is “grounded in the basic assumption that a Christian political ethic is necessarily an ethic of responsibility.”³¹⁶ The state does not have the privilege of dismissing its responsibility.

This responsibility was echoed by the Ethics Centre’s publication on the Just War Tradition, which poignantly summarized that Just War Theory “provides the basis for exercising ethical constraint,” without which “there is no way to tell the difference between a warrior and a barbarian.”³¹⁷ The state has a responsibility to act ethically and justly in domestic and world

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 363.

³¹⁵ Marc LiVecche, “The Just War as Christian Tradition,” *Providence Magazine*, accessed May 12, 2023, <https://providencemag.com/2016/02/the-just-war-as-christian-tradition>.

³¹⁶ Marc LiVecche, “On Responsibility & Limits: A Christian Conversation About American Power,” *Providence Magazine*, accessed May 12, 2023, <https://providencemag.com/2016/09/responsibility-limits-christian-view-government-american-exceptionalism-government/>.

³¹⁷ “Ethics Explainer: Just War Theory,” *The Ethics Centre*, accessed May 12, 2023, <https://ethics.org.au/ethics-explainer-just-war>.

affairs, even though all states may not always honor that responsibility. Just War Theory, as an ethical framework in a Christian Realist approach to international relations, is a guide for morally good action.

Hoover agreed with the ethical necessity more broadly in international relations by stating the following: “International relations, however, is concerned with political events and social forces that impact the lives of individuals, communities, and the human species as a whole, making ethical considerations inescapable.”³¹⁸ This means that Just War Theory’s principles, guiding ethical decisions and behaviors before, during, and after war, fill an essential role in international relations ethics.³¹⁹ If moral considerations are inescapable, the need for a method for making them is likewise so. As such, Christian Realism’s commitment to justice informed by natural law applies Just War Theory to make ethical international relations decisions.

Table 2.4 summarizes the contributions that support this supposition. Justice is a concept created by God and a product of natural law. The state is the prime vessel for pursuing justice. It has an ethical responsibility to do so, but, like individual persons, government is fallible. As a result, just action should be deliberate and limited. The case appears plausible that natural law and justice are inextricably linked. It is also evident that they are compatible with the Christian Realist ethical approach to international relations. It is also clear that Just War Theory is an appropriate and reasonable ethical formulation to make just decisions and behave justly in matters concerning conflict among states.

³¹⁸ Joseph Hoover, "Ethics and Morality in International Relations," in *International Relations*, accessed May 12, 2023, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199743292/obo-9780199743292-0119.xml>.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 42-44.

Table 2.4: The Ethics of Justice, Natural Law, and Christian Realism

Source	Contribution
Plato	Justice is a soul virtue, leading to happiness.
Aristotle	Justice bonds communities and leads to order.
Cicero	Justice demands protection of life, liberty, and property.
Augustine	God created and sanctioned government to be just.
Aquinas	Human reason leads to virtuous living and justice in accordance with God's natural law.
Luther	The love of God and His natural law leads to justice.
Calvin	The state is sanctioned by God and is to pursue God's just moral law.
Bullinger	The state is sanctioned by God to wage just war.
Clausewitz	The state has the authority and ethical responsibility for warfare.
Weber	A state monopoly on legitimate violence is an ethical right and responsibility to protect the citizenry and its territory.
Regan	Security problems are concrete (physical), not abstract (ethical/moral).
Newswander	Strict scrutiny limits the state's actions.
Sowell	Justice is a process, not an outcome.
Craig and Moreland	Moral principles are knowable to all people.
Budziszewski	Right and wrong are known through reason.
Hill	Natural law is a product of God's design.
Erickson	Man entertains conflict to achieve spiritual satisfaction.
Biggar	Human nature is in conflict between good and bad behavior.
Kaiser	Pacifism, activism, or selectivism inform decisions and behaviors.
Geisler	Selectivism emphasizes just action. It moderates activism and pacifism.
Rengger	The Just War Tradition is appropriate, reasonable, and ethical.
Ethics Centre	The Just War Tradition provides a basis for ethical constraint.
LiVecche	Government provides security characterized by order, justice, and peace. Its role is a Christian political ethic of responsibility.
Hoover	Ethical considerations are inescapable.

What bearing does this analysis have on just action in an environment short of war? *Jus ad bellum* is useful for guiding decisions about engaging in war that drives decision-makers away from conflict if avoidable. If the desire is to avoid conflict, then the decision about war has been made. This also obviates any need for decisions to terminate war (*jus ex bello*) or behaviors

after its conclusion (*jus post bellum*). The concern is to guide behaviors that avoid escalation to conflict while still achieving desired strategic objectives. This raises the question of whether the wartime behavior principles of *jus in bello* are applicable to and sufficient for activity in GPC.

Assessment of Literature

In 2016, a group of Christian theologians and security policy advocates issued a joint statement recommending a God-honoring American foreign and security policy posture. The following statement summarizes their affirmation:

In some hands, government is a tool of immense and satanic power. But exercised rightly according to God's creation design, the same power is a tool of blessing, justice, and order. Government can err by oppressing others; but it can also err by failing to uphold order or pursue justice. Policymakers must avoid both the sins of omission and commission.³²⁰

The reviewed literature indicates this is possible by designing policy and strategy informed by history, philosophy, theology, political science, and military strategy. Through inductive analysis of the literature, five themes emerged that support a successful solution.

First, a comprehensive and responsible Realist approach should incorporate Christian Realism. Second, Christian Realists (particularly contemporary scholars) invoke the Just War Tradition, indicating a strong connection.³²¹ Third, instances of military activity in GPC are becoming more prominent and the focus of nations. Fourth, assessing and managing risk should focus on the strategic level of engagement, which has both physical and moral categories, since it is the level at which national security objectives are formulated and implemented. Fifth, in its

³²⁰ *Providence Magazine*, "A Christian Declaration on American Foreign Policy," accessed July 16, 2021. <https://providencemag.com/2016/09/christian-declaration-american-foreign-policy/>.

³²¹ Eric D. Patterson and Robert J. Joustra, "Contemporary Christian Realists: An Introduction," in *Power Politics and Moral Order: Three Generations of Christian Realism – A Reader*, eds. Eric D. Patterson and Robert J. Joustra (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2022), 204.

existing construct for behavior in conflict (*jus in bello*), Just War Theory does not address activity in GPC. Together, these themes reveal a gap in the literature, demonstrate the presence of an empirical puzzle, and illuminate the deficiencies and lack of focus in the original Central Research Question.

The original question inquired how Realism could shape policy to manage risk in GPC. The first theme specifies a Christian Realist approach. The second theme indicates the Just War Tradition would be part of the solution. The fourth theme refines the type of risk to be researched, physical and moral strategic risk. The third and fifth themes reveal a puzzling phenomenon and a gap in the literature.

The third theme, reframed as a puzzle, asks that if a significant portion of military deployments occur in GPC and nations are increasingly focused on that strategic environment, what rational and just guidelines exist to regulate action in those conditions? The fifth theme reveals there is no well-established and widely accepted set of just principles for governing activity below the threshold of conflict, particularly for GPC. Filling this gap in literature became the research focus.

Further analysis of these themes led to establishing three additional research requirements. First, since the Just War Tradition has been propagated for hundreds of years it would be evaluated as the baseline theory (null hypothesis). Second, in the absence of specific just theory of engagement for GPC, a new concept needed to be developed to determine if it better informs action (alternate hypothesis). Third, a method of assessing (measuring) strategic risk must be formulated.

The findings from the inductive analysis of the literature and further thematic analysis were synthesized, influencing the following research modifications. The Central Research

Question was revised: How does the United States better manage strategic risk in Great Power Competition using a Christian Realist approach, through *jus in bello* or *jus in contentione*? The two research options, the existing *jus in bello* and the newly-developed *jus in contentione* (Just Competition Theory introduced in Chapter Four) were formulated into hypotheses for evaluation and comparative testing. Also, the empirical puzzle was refined: Why is Just War Theory's *jus in bello* the dominant Christian Realist approach to military engagement despite historical records revealing that most (United States) military deployments occur below the threshold of declared war and non-declared conflict engagements? Additionally, a plan to analyze data to develop a strategic risk assessment was conceived. Next, the Methods chapter explains how the modifications are implemented in the research.

Chapter Three: Methods

Research Design

The research employed the inductive “family of methods” called grounded theory methodology to collect, analyze, and compare data content, then develop and evaluate competing hypotheses that meet the Criterion of Adequacy and, ultimately, answer the Central Research Question in the form of a thesis statement.^{322, 323} The research employed a concept development process that was built from data description, interpretation, and theoretical coding.³²⁴ Data were analyzed using a three-pronged process of data emergence and collection, data comparison, and theoretical sampling.³²⁵ This was augmented using the Ünlü – Qureshi Instrument, a grounded theory analytical tool that consists of four steps: code, concept, category, and theme.³²⁶ Using the analyzed data, two hypotheses were tested against each other using the analyzed data. The superior hypothesis was then assessed in two case studies. Finally, the superior hypothesis was evaluated for compatibility with the primary international relations theories.

³²² James Hawthorne, "Inductive Logic," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2021 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed September 1, 2021, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/logic-inductive/>. A good inductive argument satisfies the Criterion of Adequacy, which postulates that as more evidence is gathered, the probability of a truthful hypothesis becomes more likely. Induction moves from datum evaluation toward a general theory.

³²³ Antony Bryant, "The Grounded Theory Method: An Overview," in *Grounded Theory and Grounded Theorizing: Pragmatism in Research Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. Oxford Scholarship Online, 2017), Accessed September 1, 2021, doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199922604.003.0004.

³²⁴ Cathy Urquhart, Hans Lehmann, and Michael D. Myers, "Putting the 'Theory' Back into Grounded Theory: Guidelines for Grounded Theory Studies in Information Systems," *Information Systems Journal (Oxford, England)* 20, no. 4 (2010): 357-381), 367.

³²⁵ Krzysztof T. Konecki, "Classic Grounded Theory—The Latest Version: Interpretation of Classic Grounded Theory as a Meta-Theory for Research," *Symbolic Interaction* 41, no. 4 (2018: 547-564), 550.

³²⁶ Henna A. Qureshi and Züleyha Ünlü, "Beyond the Paradigm Conflicts: A Four-Step Coding Instrument for Grounded Theory" *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19 (2020: 1-10), 1.

An Empirical Puzzle

The entire research process (topic conception, research question formulation and refinement, review of literature, data collection and analysis, and comparative hypotheses testing and evaluation) was centered on trying to solve a puzzling issue using empirical methods. An empirical research puzzle evaluates the counter-intuitiveness of a phenomenon despite real-world conditions; it is formulated as “Why x despite y?”³²⁷ In this case, why is Just War Theory’s *jus in bello* the dominant Christian Realist approach to military engagement despite historical records revealing that most (United States) military deployments occurred below the threshold of declared war and non-declared conflict engagements? To address the puzzle, two hypotheses were compared, and the most suitable was selected to answer the Central Research Question and serve as the project thesis after it was further scrutinized in the case study and compatibility analyses.

Central Question and Competing Hypotheses

How does the United States better manage strategic risk in Great Power Competition using a Christian Realist approach, through *jus in bello* or *jus in contentione*?

H₀: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in bello*.

H₁: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in contentione*.

³²⁷ Karl Gustafsson and Linus Hagstrom, “What is the Point? Teaching Graduate Students How to Construct Political Science Research Puzzles,” *European Political Science* 17 (2018: 634-648), 639.

Content Analysis

Document Analysis

Document analysis considered official United States law, strategy, policy, doctrine, conceptual research, and reporting on the historical use of military force, strategic risk, and Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) conducting irregular warfare (IW) in Great Power Competition (GPC). Congressional Research Service reporting provided historical background on the use of military force. United States strategic security documents were analyzed, resulting in the development of an assessment for strategic risk. Law and defense policy, doctrine, and concepts were evaluated to understand the nature of IW and ARSOF's suitability for conducting those activities in GPC.

Assessed documents included the published National Security Strategies of the George W. Bush Administration (2002 and 2006), the Barack H. Obama Administration (2010 and 2015), the Donald J. Trump Administration (2017), and the current Interim Strategic Guidance published by the Joseph R. Biden Administration (2021).³²⁸ These documents were chosen for three reasons. First, they account for the strategic security posture of each Twenty-First Century American presidential administration (two Republican and two Democrat). As the document and automated text analysis show in Chapter Five, despite differing political and ideological predilections, both use consistent language regarding strategic risk. Second, these Strategies represent a United States security posture that elevates terrorism to a global and, at least in the first two, potentially existential threat. A constant focus on global terrorism added a layer of security complexity still relevant today. Third, the timeframe of these publications overlays a

³²⁸ Though published after document research concluded, the full Biden Administration National Security Strategy released in October 2022 was reviewed during research manuscript development and found to be consistent in themes and content with the Interim Strategic Guidance.

significant upsurge in United States military commitments detailed in Chapter Five. A propensity to expand the usage of military force in the last two decades has a positive (increasing) effect on strategic risk.

The two most recent National Defense Strategy summaries (2018 and 2022) were also consulted. Other analyzed documents included the following: United States Code Title X Section 167; 2020 Irregular Warfare Annex Summary to the 2018 National Defense Strategy; Department of Defense Directive 3000.07; Joint Publication 1; Joint Staff J7 Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3210.06A; Joint Publication 3-05: Special Operations; Army Doctrinal Publication 3-05: Army Special Operations; The Army in Multi-Domain Operations, 2028; and the Army Futures Command Concept for Special Operations 2028. The DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms was referenced for proper definitions of capabilities and tasks derived from the other military documents. Documentation used for historical data were products of Congressional Research Service reporting: Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications and Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798-2022.

Text Analysis

The six National Security Strategies used in building the strategic risk assessment were further evaluated through automated text analysis using Wheaton College's web based Lexos qualitative analysis platform to verify the findings were not only present in the National Security

Strategies but also prevalent.^{329,330} Two simulations were conducted: concept frequency and cosine similarity. Concept frequency results showed the prevalence of key and associated terms across the documents. The cosine similarity simulation measured the thematic similarity and consistency of those documents.³³¹ It demonstrated the strategic risk assessment concepts were normally distributed across the presidential administration strategies.

Structured Interview Analysis

During the human subject research phase, subject matter experts were asked to anonymously respond to ten questions. Subject matter included strategic physical and moral risk, the nature of GPC, and the efficacy of ARSOF participating in that operational environment by conducting IW. Answers were compared and summaries of the leading findings were recorded for each question.

Professional and expert feedback was a critical part of this effort. Fifty-one special operations and security policy experts meeting research qualifications were solicited for participation, of which thirty-four consented in writing to interviews from February 24 through April 24, 2022 (see the stamped consent form in Appendix C). Thirty-three of the participating subjects are current or former uniformed service members in ARSOF. The sole career civilian interviewed is a policy and intelligence expert with deep knowledge in IW and GPC as proven by that respondent's publication history and position in government. Of the thirty-three with uniformed military experience, eighteen were serving on active duty during the research period.

³²⁹ "Lexos Software," *Wheaton College*, accessed July 14, 2022, <https://wheatoncollege.edu/academics/special-projects-initiatives/lexomics/lexos-installers/>.

³³⁰ The application site is <http://lexos.wheatoncollege.edu/upload>.

³³¹ "Cosine Similarity - Understanding the Math and How It Works (With Python Codes)," *Machine Learning+*, accessed July 14, 2022, <https://www.machinelearningplus.com/nlp/cosine-similarity/>.

Of the fifteen retired respondents, fourteen continued their service as Department of Defense employees. The one retiree not employed within the Department of Defense had only recently left government service (late 2021) and still had relevant expertise on contemporary ARSOF, GPC, and IW issues.

Thirty-one of the respondents had uniformed experience in one of the three regiments that make up ARSOF: Special Forces (twenty), Psychological Operations (six), and Civil Affairs (five). This is proportionally representative of ARSOF's composition (two-thirds Special Forces and one-third Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs). Of the three without uniformed experience in one of the three regiments, each had expertise in the research topics: the career intelligence and policy civilian; an active officer with recognized expertise in IW, GPC, and ARSOF law and policy; and a retired military officer who has served as an ARSOF concept and capabilities developer for nearly a decade.

Of note, no solicitations were made to general officers or Senior Executive Service civilians. Research inquiries focused on the insights of practitioners and planners. The most senior and junior level civilian employees were a Principal Staff Director for an Assistant Secretary of Defense (GS-15) and a Global Force Management administrator (GS-12), respectively. The officer population ranged from a Director of Operations for a United States Army Major Command (Colonel) to a staff operations officer (Chief Warrant Officer - Three). Non-commissioned officer participants ranged from a Senior Enlisted Advisor to an Army Major Command Operations Directorate (Sergeant Major) to a Global Force Management operator (Sergeant First Class). The interview population's ARSOF experiences included peacetime operations such as training of foreign national forces, low-intensity conflict, major war, and

institutional training in every major operational theater (Europe, Middle East, South America, North America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia).

In addition to their respective regimental affiliations and geographic experiences at various intensity degrees of military operations, each subject offered keen insights and nuanced answers based on additional professional specialties including policy development, strategic planning, technical operations, sensitive activities, force modernization, global force management, concept development, and experimentation. By soliciting involvement across diverse functional duties, backgrounds, and experiences, the research benefited significantly.

Twenty-one interviews occurred in person, three telephonically, and ten submitted responses through electronic mail due to their time constraints during the research window. The email interviews were supplemented by follow-on phone conversations in all cases except one. A consolidated transcript of all responses is found in Appendix D. It is important to reiterate that the interview population consisted almost exclusively of current planners, strategists, and practitioners active in the Department of Defense. World events dictated their availability. Though electronic mail interview correspondence was not preferred, it at least offered the opportunity for some subject matter experts to give valuable input to the research.

Research Synthesis, Testing, and Application

Methodology

After data analysis, the results were synthesized, which led to framing an initial praxis model for visualizing how a Christian Realist approach contributes to strategic risk management in GPC. The praxis model included both hypotheses as options for governing military action. To determine the best option, and thereby provide some clarity to the empirical research puzzle, the hypotheses were compared for superiority through four tests. These tests mirrored the four data

analysis outputs: historical trends, the strategic risk assessment, ARSOF's IW role, and subject matter expert insight. The principles of Just Competition Theory were applied to two historical case studies to analyze and explain their outcomes, providing further empirical support for its value. Finally, Just Competition Theory was qualitatively compared to Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism to determine either its universal applicability to international relations theories or its uniqueness as a Christian Realist method of analysis.

Variables

The independent variables are the principles of jus in contentione: discernment, persuasion, persistence, consistency, collaboration, and integration. The dependent variable is the strategic risk outcome of each historical scenario analyzed in the case studies. It is a binary measurement: yes (application of the principles was successful and major conflict was avoided) or no (application was unsuccessful and major conflict occurred).

Research Context

Setting

The setting for much of this research was the Operations Directorate (G-3) of the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The Directorate's mission is to advise and assist the USASOC Commanding General (CG) and his staff on all aspects of operations, command and control procedures for assigned forces, training, exercises, plans, policy, force protection, and mobilization of assigned Reserve Component forces.³³² To fulfill this mission, the Directorate provides staff oversight and direction for the deployment of forces, validation of force requirements, individual training methods and

³³² "Deputy Chief of Staff, G3: Headquarters, United States Army Special Operations Command," *United States Army Special Operations Command*, accessed August 9, 2021, <https://usasoc.sof.socom.mil/sites/usasoc-hq-g3/default.aspx>.

standards, unit training events, force readiness reporting, air operations, ammunition forecasting for training and operations, and other internal and external tasks as determined and directed.³³³

The Researcher's Role

My role and relationship within the research setting and among those observed and interviewed necessitate further disclosure. The interest in choosing and researching the topic of this study was borne of past personal experience in ARSOF as a uniformed service member and my current role as a Civil Service employee. Both my former and current professional statuses have kept me within the operational planning, training, force modernization, and concept development communities in ARSOF for most of my nearly thirty years of uniformed and civilian service with the United States Army. That experience and the professional and personal relationships developed over that time influence my perspective and perceptions on the future of ARSOF in GPC.

Accounting for that bias, I diligently strove to develop an objective research strategy that produced fair and verifiable results. As is the nature of qualitative research, subjectivity is certainly present; however, my opinions and conclusions were subjected to the informed views of other ARSOF veterans and experts in their respective fields within the broader community. The ARSOF community encourages a culture of debate, rigorous study, and open dialogue to arrive at the best solution for a given problem. This organizational value aided in pursuing an objective thesis that was challenged through debate with ARSOF professionals and through limited testing. Neither my reputation nor my relationships with members of the ARSOF community shielded the research from scrutiny.

³³³ Ibid.

Ethical Considerations and Risk Mitigation

The 1979 Belmont Report provides three basic ethical principles and three applications to ensure research involving humans maintains the highest standards of integrity and protection for those subjects.³³⁴ The principles include respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.³³⁵ The applications to ensure adherence to those principles included informed consent of the subject, assessment of risks and benefits in research, and guidance on the selection of human research subjects.³³⁶ These principles guided this research's human interaction and study.

The ethical and risk factors mainly concerned interviewee attribution and compromise of written and verbalized material not available to the public due to information security classification. Overall, project risk was deemed minimal and approved for commencement by Liberty University's Institutional Review Board. The approval letter is found in Appendix A. Written material risk mitigation efforts are explained in Appendix B. To protect the interviewees from compromising their professional standings by offering opinions that may counter those of their superiors and to encourage candid discussion and expression, each interview was non-attributable. The answers and opinions were coded and anonymized. This is explained in detail in Appendix C, the approved Interview Subject Consent Form.

The written source material was gathered from document sources available to the public as much as possible; however, access to protected material repositories was necessary. The use of security classification guides and reviews by security officers (Appendix E) as well as careful

³³⁴ Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research* (1979), 1.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4-6.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 7-10.

attention to only using non-classified content found in protected documents and deliberations ensured the risk of disclosing protected information was mitigated. A final set of reviews by public affairs, information security, and operations security officials at the USASOC headquarters (Appendix F), where much of the research was conducted, ensured the manuscript adhered to standards of professionalism, respect for the studied institution, and free of sensitive or other protected material.

Research Value

Validity

Approaching this research from a grounded theory method, the vast amount of data collected, organized, and analyzed using the indicated tools and methods supported the credibility of this study. In the interest of academic transparency, the evidence-based qualitative and subjective nature was explained in the Introduction (Chapter One) and further amplified in this Methods chapter. The research was designed to ascertain the most sufficient position by analyzing two hypotheses.

Reliability

The validity of the project informs its reliability, especially because of the subject matter expert insights that considered and, in some cases, challenged the research assumptions during interview sessions. The setting and human engagement show dependability and conformability. The setting was the headquarters of ARSOF. In this environment, career professional planners, strategists, technicians, and operators work daily to answer similar questions pondered in this research. These personnel rely upon and reference many of the same official documents analyzed as part of the research. They form a professional cadre who hold the responsibility of shaping and in many cases crafting the doctrine, policy, law, and conceptualizations for the employment

of ARSOF in the strategic environment of GPC. Though the conclusions of this study may not share unanimous consent among those professionals, the process whereby the research arrived at those conclusions met their expectations for robust and deliberate analysis.

Transferability

The capability and activity selection, ARSOF and IW, were used to demonstrate the efficacy of the selected hypothesis. As identified in Chapter One, ARSOF comprises roughly half of the United States military's special operations forces and capabilities, and analyses of these formations can be replicated on similar forces of the other two military departments (Navy and Air Force). This is the clearest sense of the transferability of the research. Perhaps less obvious but no less important is the potential to export the research finding to other elements of national power within the national security enterprise. For example, the design applies to studying America's diplomatic power led by the Department of State. Using the same research tools to gather and assess information on the nation's Foreign Service Corps would help it also address the changing dynamics of strategic engagement inherent in GPC since State is bound to similar legal and strategic policy guidelines as military forces. The applications of other national power elements have different tactical processes and effects, but the conditions, political considerations, statutory limitations, and strategic risks are quite similar.

Chapter Four: Just Competition Theory Introduction

Revisiting the Theory Gap

To recall from Chapter Two, natural law and justice are necessarily linked, are compatible with the Christian Realist understanding of human nature and fallibility, and inform the Just War Ethic; however, what bearing does this have on just action in an environment short of war? *Jus ad bellum* is useful for guiding decisions about engaging in war, imbued with an inherent presumption against violence that drives decision-makers away from conflict if avoidable. If successful, *jus ex bello* and *jus post bellum* become unnecessary. Yet, what principles inform non-conflictual engagement? A focus on behavior presumptive against violence raises the question of whether principles of *jus in bello* apply to and are sufficient for activity in Great Power Competition (GPC). Again, the puzzle surfaces. Figure 4.1, an original graphic, depicts the relationships between GPC and conflict and reveals there is no set of principles to inform action below the threshold of armed conflict.

A diagonal line ascending to conflict represents *jus ad bellum*. The green-shaded bell curve covers competition activities that do not necessarily provoke an escalatory response. The Christian Realist may argue that, given human nature and the uncertainty of events, the Tension Scale oversimplifies how an activity is understood. Tension factors can change based on changes in circumstances including how an activity is perceived by a potential adversary or competitor, thereby creating a situation that escalates or deescalates strategic risk.

Risk and intensity are driven by six tension factors: who acts; what action is taken; when action is taken; where the action occurs; why certain actions were taken; and, how an action was executed. The combination of these factors can move engagement toward or away from the threshold of armed conflict. As belligerents' interactions escalate in risk and intensity, the

principles and process of *jus ad bellum* are applied. Once efforts to avoid conflict (the presumption against violence) are exhausted and armed conflict commences, the behavioral principles of waging a Just War are engaged. To demonstrate the effects of the six tension factors in combination, Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provide recent examples of military engagement.

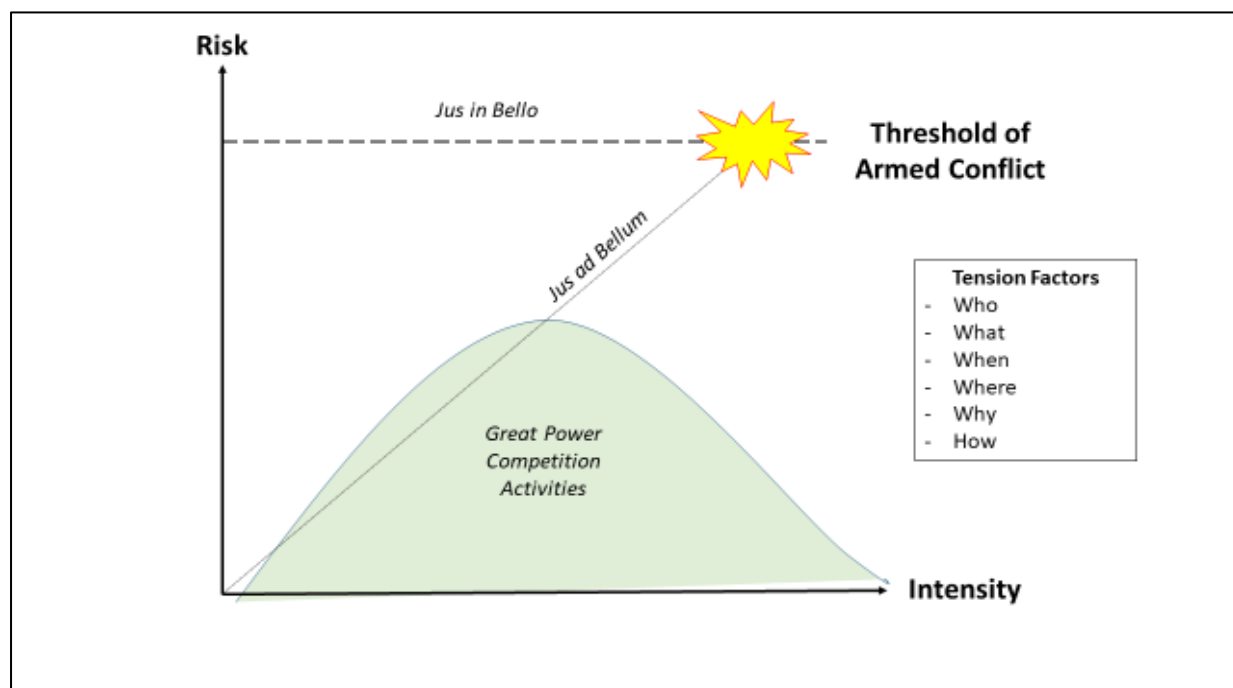


Figure 4.1. Tension Scale: Just War or Just Competition

Table 4.1. Actions That Escalate Tension

Tension Factors	
Who	82nd Airborne Division, United States Army
What	Conducts training exercises with Polish military counterparts
When	In close succession to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022
Where	Poland
Why	To demonstrate United States resolve to the NATO alliance
How	Executed overt short-notice strategic air deployment to Poland with significant press coverage

Table 4.2. Actions That Avoid Escalating Tension

Tension Factors	
Who	25th Infantry Division, United States Army
What	Participates in Hunaman Guardian 2022 Bilateral Training Exercise
When	Early 2022, as annually scheduled
Where	Thailand
Why	To advance United States Indo-Pacific Command Theater Security Cooperation objectives and maintain a partnership with the Royal Thai Army
How	Executed overt, routine deployment to Thailand to conduct the eleventh iteration of an annual exercise

In the first example, 82nd Airborne Division activities, though promoted as a bilateral training event with a North Atlantic Treaty Organization partner, are seen as highly provocative by Russia. As reported on February 3, 2022, in the *Guardian Online*, Russia criticized the addition of United States military forces in Eastern Europe as a “destructive step.”³³⁷ A combination of the timing (when), the proximity to Russian operations (where), the purpose of demonstrating NATO resolve (why), and the proactive statements and press coverage of the activity (how) elevated tension between the West and Russia.

The second example highlights a 25th Infantry Division interoperability exercise with the United States’ long-standing partner, the Kingdom of Thailand. A keyword internet search through news articles referencing Exercise Hunaman Guardian did not yield results critical of the exercise. The top results merely provided information on the event and its purpose, to bolster

³³⁷ Andrew Roth, Julian Borger, and Philip Oltermann, “Ukraine Crisis: Russia Criticizes US Military Moves as ‘Destructive Step:’ Moscow Says US Deployments in Eastern Europe Increase Tensions, as NATO Says Russia Has Moved 30,000 Troops to Belarus,” in *The Guardian*, February 3, 2022, accessed March 10, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/03/ukraine-crisis-russia-criticises-us-military-moves-as-destructive-step>.

American-Thai military relations and interoperability.³³⁸ The partnership maintenance and the specific training activity mirror the prior example, but the circumstances (when, where, and how) are completely different. As the aspiring hegemon in the Indo-Pacific region, China could have more overtly objected if it felt threatened by the exercise; however, no responses were noted in open-source material written in English. It seems that conditions were less openly volatile. Here a similar activity (training) caused a dissimilar response (effectively, no response at all).

Applying these to the Tension Scale, the example in Table 4.1 sits somewhere on that slope, perhaps within the bell curve or perhaps not. The activity captured in Table 4.2 seems to fit well within the curve. The linear model depicted in Figure 4.1 is useful for introducing just action in GPC, but do the examples rigidly or statically fit on that model? Instead of a linear scale, a continuum paradigm may better provide (though not perfectly) a graphic illustration of an activity's effect. Figure 4.2 offers a more realistic operational view of action, tension, intensity, and risk. This representation includes similar components to the Tension Scale, but it arranges them to account for a dynamic strategic environment that changes over time as conditions change.

This original graphic encompasses actions and resulting tension of both friendly (blue) and adversary (red) military forces over time. As an action increases in risk, intensity, or both based on other tension factors, the potential for armed conflict increases. The activities described in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 are positioned on the figure to demonstrate how this continuum paradigm represents the risk of escalation. If risk reduction and de-intensification are required to promote national objectives, then the 25th Infantry Division's activity is more desirable. Conversely, if

³³⁸ Danielle O'Donnell, "Tropic Lightning Joins Hanuman Guardian in Thailand," *Killeen Daily Herald*, March 2, 2022, accessed March 10, 2022, https://kdhnnews.com/military/tropic-lightning-joins-hanuman-guardian-in-thailand/article_7a0ae9f8-99b6-11ec-b126-5fef0544a5f6.html.

higher risk and intensity are necessary to achieve an objective, even if it moves tensions toward open conflict, then the 82nd Airborne Division's deployment to Poland is preferable. These examples show how the Strategic Risk Continuum can be used to visualize the results of past or ongoing activities. Or it can be used as a planning tool for visually depicting risk for contemplated activities.

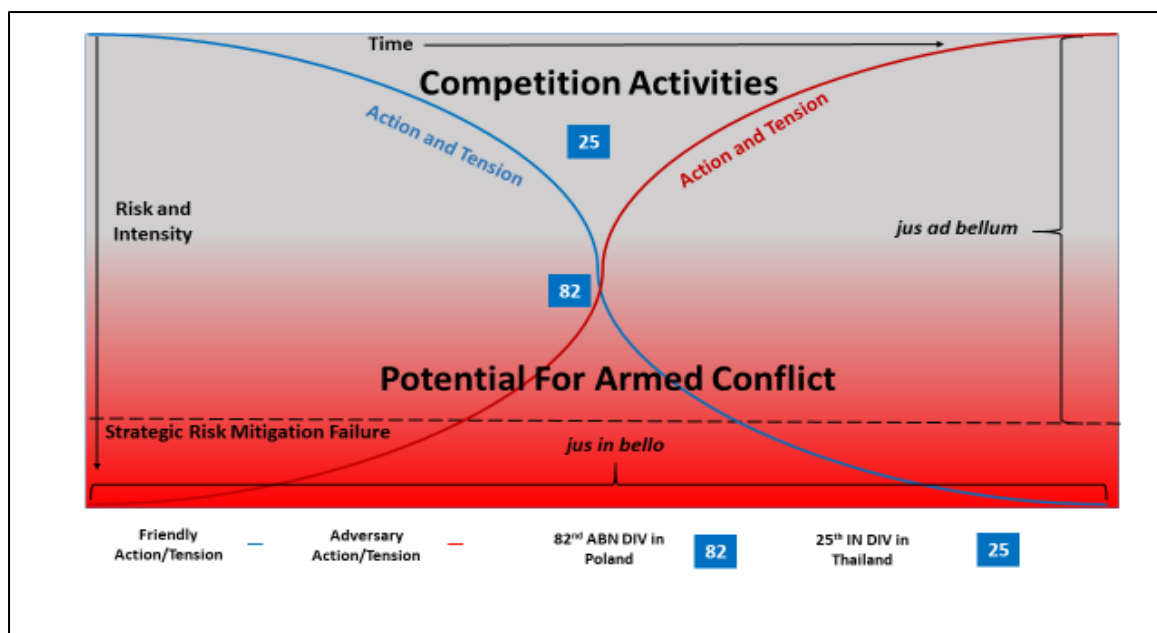


Figure 4.2. Strategic Risk Continuum

Since the sample missions have not resulted in armed conflict, they are both in effect GPC activities. This again calls into question what governing principles should dictate the initiation of similar missions. If there is a collection of activities or an approach to operations that maintain a probability of escalation below armed conflict, could and should their effectuation be governed by the principles of *jus in bello*, or is another construct warranted?

Waging Just Struggle

Jus ad bellum is the Latin term for justifying engagement in Just War. *Jus in bello* is the term for waging it. *Jus ex bello* is the decision to end a war in a just manner. *Jus post bellum* guides the behaviors of the victor, post-conflict. Is there a suitable descriptor for activity in GPC already developed and in use?

Walzer coined the term *jus ad vim* (the justification for the use of force) in 2006 as a substitute for *jus ad bellum* in non-wartime scenarios.³³⁹ He conceptualized it to represent the governance of limited force outside the bounds of a traditional major combat.³⁴⁰ It applies to a space between peace and warfare, where tensions “will not begin and end; instead, they will hibernate and smolder. Occasionally, they will explode.”³⁴¹ This concept seems to support the idea that strategic risk should be viewed on a continuum as in Figure 4.2. *Jus ad vim* corresponds to *jus ad bellum* (decision), and *jus in vi* corresponds to *jus in bello* (behavior).³⁴² Recently, Brunstetter provided a description of *jus post vim* (behavior), an adaptation of *jus post bellum*.³⁴³

³³⁹ Daniel R. Brunstetter and Megan Braun, “From *Jus ad Bellum* to *Jus ad Vim*: Recalibrating Our Understanding of the Moral Use of Force,” *Ethics and International Affairs* 27, no. 1 (2013: 87-106), 87.

³⁴⁰ C. Anthony Pfaff, “Military Ethics Below the Threshold of War,” *Parameters* 50, no. 2 (2019: 69-76), 70.

³⁴¹ Sean, McFate, *The New Rules of War: How American Can Win Against Russia* (New York: William Morrow, 2019), 246.

³⁴² Pfaff, “Military Ethics Below the Threshold of War,” 69.

³⁴³ Daniel R. Brunstetter, *Just and Unjust Uses of Limited Force* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 89.

Jus ad vim redefines the existing principles of *jus ad bellum* and adds a seventh, the probability of escalation.³⁴⁴ *Jus in vi* retains and recalibrates proportionality and necessity from *jus in bello* and replaces discrimination with distinction.³⁴⁵ *Jus post vim* introduces order, justice, and conciliation as its principles.³⁴⁶ Though now a developed theory, *jus ad vim* is still covered very sparsely in the literature.

It is encouraging that scholars have considered the necessity for an updated method to analyze and apply force outside of traditional war; however, *jus ad vim* is admittedly a kinetic or lethal application of force, just not used in declared war.³⁴⁷ It does not seem to account for non-lethal options to mitigate risk, thereby rendering it unnecessarily restrictive. Furthermore, in the view of other Just War scholars, it seems *jus ad vim* principles for the application of force are redundancies to *jus ad bellum*.³⁴⁸ In Frowe's analysis, "the traditional principles of *jus ad bellum* do the necessary work in restricting and permitting force."³⁴⁹ Regardless of the debate over definitions and principles between *jus ad bellum/in bello* and *jus ad vim/in vi*, neither seem appropriate (*bellum/bello*) or expansive (*vim/vi*) enough for GPC. If GPC exists on a continuum, then any application of '*jus post*' seems implausible for that strategic context.

³⁴⁴ Brunstetter and Braun, "From *Jus ad Bellum* to *Jus ad Vim*," 101.

³⁴⁵ Brunstetter, *Limited Force*, 89-129.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 98-128.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 155.

³⁴⁸ Helen Frowe, "On the Redundancy of *Jus Ad Vim*: A Response to Daniel Brunstetter and Megan Braun," *Ethics & International Affairs* 30, no. 1 (2016: 117-129), 117.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 98-128.

Jus In Contentione

The Latin for competition or struggle (both seem to fit) is “contentio.”³⁵⁰ Applying the same Latin declension rules as *jus in bello*, the resulting phrase for waging just struggle in GPC is *jus in contentione*.³⁵¹ Six principles are presented to responsibly govern this idea of Just Competition Theory or *jus in contentione*. They are designed to shape and scope military operations by managing strategic risk while supporting the achievement of national security objectives.

Table 4.3. details the principles of *jus in contentione*. Discernment is a modification of *jus in bello*’s discrimination (Table 2.2), adapted to encounter environments and populations during competition. Proportionality and necessity have been replaced with five other factors: a focus on narrative (persuasion); consistent application (persistence); maintaining the same level of effort (consistency); promoting allied partnerships (collaboration); and fusing with other agents of governance to holistically advance strategic goals (integration). The principles imply that *jus in contentione* is not solely a martial model. Other security disciplines may be incorporated. Moreover, the model could frame initiatives that involve no military activity at all, affirming it as a broad-based security action theory. The concept is defined as:

³⁵⁰ “Contentio,” *Latin Dictionary*, accessed March 10, 2022, <https://www.online-latin-dictionary.com/latin-dictionary-flexion.php?lemma=CONTENTIO100>.

³⁵¹ “Latin Case,” *Department of Classics, Ohio State University*, Accessed March 10, 2022, <https://classics.osu.edu/Undergraduate-Studies/Latin-Program/Grammar/Cases/latin-case>. Mirroring the structure of *jus in bello*, Waging Just Struggle requires modifying the Latin word for struggle, contentio, to the ablative case, *contentione*. The Ohio State University Department of Classics explains the ablative case as follows: “The **ablative case** is the most complex of the cases in Latin. It may be used by itself or as the object of prepositions and it is commonly used to express (with or without the aid of a preposition) ideas translated into English by the prepositions “from” (that is, an idea of separation and origin), “with” and “by” (that is, an idea of instrumentality or association), and “in” (that is, an idea of place where or time when).”

Just Competition Theory - A modification of Just War Theory tailored for military action in GPC and consisting of six principles: discernment, persuasion, persistence, consistency, collaboration, and integration.

Table 4.3. Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*)

Principle	Definition
Discernment	The deliberate employment of specific forces to achieve limited objectives that promote justice and peace, while avoiding unnecessary or unintentional escalation of tension with rival powers.
Persuasion	The alignment of actions and statements to influence populations and states to support national goals.
Persistence	The constant application of appropriate force to achieve peacetime strategic objectives.
Consistency	The maintenance of objectives, efforts, intensity, and messaging to promote national interests and partnerships.
Collaboration	The commitment to nurturing international partnerships and credibility with populations to achieve compatible goals.
Integration	The reliance on cooperative interagency and interdisciplinary partnerships.

Inspired by the Just War Ethic

The principles of justice in both initiating and engaging in conflict reflect restraint and wisdom and echo the sentiments of Augustine of Hippo, who believed the wise only plaintively participate in conflicts that must occur to achieve a limited and pronounced moral end.³⁵² In *The Just War*, Ramsey offered a particular scrutiny of *jus ad bellum*: not every just cause is worth committing forces to conflict.³⁵³ Ramsey's ruminations on just cause for resorting to war were

³⁵² Saint Augustine, *The City of God*.

³⁵³ James Turner Johnson, "Paul Ramsey and the Recovery of the Just War Idea," *Journal of Military Ethics* 1, no. 2 (2002: 136-144), 142.

considerably more narrow and restrictive than the normative Just War tradition.³⁵⁴ Some battles, however noble, just are not worth the material, human, and moral cost. These guidelines establish limits on military action and bespeak the recognition in Just War Theory that war is bad even though it does from time to time necessarily occur. This attests to the linkage between Just War and Christian Realist theories: moral choice and reality do not always coincide.

Just War Theory in its current construct may not address all situations, but it “presents in broad form a paradigm which...is inescapable once we commit ourselves to the normative [moral] evaluation of war.”³⁵⁵ It is in that spirit, a morally informed approach to action in GPC, that *jus in contentione* is presented as a new part of the ethical framework for international relations. This research supposes that Just War Theory must maintain that spirit but in a revised form to support accomplishing national objectives while preventing tension from escalating to active combat. The six principles of *jus in contentione* seem more suitable behavioral guidance for action in GPC than the principles of *jus in bello*. Yet, they internalize the Just War ethic of a presumption against violence.

Situating Just Competition Theory in International Relations Ethics

On November 14, 2001, and in response to post-9/11 military action against terrorist networks, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published a message reaffirming the ethics inherent in the Just War tradition, stating “every military response must be in accord with

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Mark Evans, “In Defence of Just War Theory,” In *Just War Theory: A Reappraisal*, ed/ Mark Evans, 203-222 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 203.

sound moral principles.”³⁵⁶ The Conference also acknowledged the “probability of success is particularly difficult to measure in dealing with an amorphous, global terrorist network.”³⁵⁷ The challenge of measuring success admitted in the statement was a tacit recognition that “traditional Just War Theory, which was first elaborated systematically...in the late Middle Ages, presupposes that the units of its moral calculus are nation-states, not transnational terrorist networks like Al Qaeda.”³⁵⁸ Applying Just War Theory to such an ambiguous operational environment “prompted many...to ask whether Just War Theory is still relevant or even necessary in the Twenty-First Century.”³⁵⁹

More recently, scholars and lawmakers have also recognized Just War Theory’s limits if considered only as an established set of principles. McNerney opined, “the modern landscape bestows great challenges such as weapons of mass destruction, cyber warfare, and proxy wars. These new challenges will likely require new thinking for what constitutes a just war, and I hope this discussion inspires scholars around the world to continue reflecting on what should constitute a morally justified application of these military tools.”³⁶⁰ If scholars consider Just War Theory and the Just War Tradition as an ethical paradigmatic approach to international relations dilemmas as Johnson, Ramsay, Evans, LiVecche, Rengger, Hoover, and others, then the

³⁵⁶ United States Catholic Bishops Conference, “Living With Faith and Hope After September 11,” accessed May 12, 2023, <https://www.usccb.org/resources/pastoral-message-living-faith-and-hope-after-september-11>.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ *America: The Jesuit Review*, “Is Just War Theory Relevant to Today’s World Conflicts?” accessed May 12, 2023, <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2021/08/20/afghanistan-taliban-september-11-24256>.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Jerry McNerney, “Bringing Just War Theory to Congress with H.R. 1009,” *Providence Magazine*, accessed May 12, 2023, <https://providencemag.com/2023/01/bringing-just-war-theory-to-congress-with-h-r-1009/>.

challenge becomes manageable. The introduction of elementary conceptualizations like *jus ad vim* and *jus in vi* reveal that some international relations thinkers are already pursuing an expansion or recalibration of Just War Theory to address the contemporary strategic landscape.

Just Competition Theory is introduced for this reason. It is a comprehensive approach to ethical decision-making in environments in which Just War Theory does not currently have a clear applicability, but it remains informed by moral and rationale foundations that underpin the Just War Tradition. This indicates Just Competition Theory is an addendum to Just War Theory and an alternate approach to address ethical issues and inform moral decisions in international relations. As such, Just Competition Theory is situated in international relations ethics as a Christian Realist option for planning and assessing security actions that concurrently manage strategic risk below the threshold of war and accomplish strategic national security objectives. In effect, Just Competition Theory extends the reach of the Just War Tradition to provide ethical guidance for international relations issues of contemporary import. To validate this claim, Chapter Five presents the data analysis, comparative hypotheses testing, case study analysis, and compatibility assessment with the primary schools of thought in international relations.

Chapter Five: Data and Analysis

Overview

Content analysis incorporates document and automated text analysis of government publications and interview analysis of responses from thirty-four subject matter experts on the topics of risk and the application of irregular warfare (IW) conducted by Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF), all in the context of Great Power Competition (GPC). Analysis of Congressional Research Service reporting on the use of military force reveals the historical predominance of non-conflict military engagements. Analysis of six National Security Strategies helps establish a strategic risk assessment for gauging risk management under those prevailing conditions. Analysis of relevant law, doctrine, policy, and research documentation on ARSOF and IW exposes their applicability to GPC. Analysis of interviews provides human subject matter expert insights on strategic risk in GPC and how ARSOF conducting IW is a suitable way to operate successfully in that environment.

Since the Central Research Question seeks a Christian Realist approach to managing strategic risk through principles of just action, the prevalent theory on just martial behavior, *jus in bello*, is considered. Yet, this theory's applicability begs a question. Why is a Christian Realist model prescribing wartime decisions and actions prevalent despite most United States military engagements occurring below the threshold of war? The data analysis that follows is developed with that puzzling juxtaposition in mind. It is illustrated in a preliminary praxis model. The analytical findings are subsequently used in testing *jus in bello* (H_0) and *jus in contentione* (H_1) to determine which has the preferable set of principles to address this puzzle. That is succeeded by an applicability assessment of the preferred hypothesis in two case study analyses of historical military engagements. Next, the preferred hypothesis is qualitatively compared to

Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism to ascertain suitability in other international relations schools of thought. The preferred hypothesis is then incorporated in a modified praxis model and fashioned into a thesis statement. To review, *jus in bello* (H₀) guides just behavior in wartime, employing three principles (discrimination, proportionality, necessity). To better inform behavior in action during GPC, *jus in contentione* (H₁) is introduced as an alternative to *jus in bello* and an addendum to the broader Just War Theory. The principles of both were presented in Chapter Two and Chapter Four, respectively, included in the Glossary and recaptured here in a combined table (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Principles of Just Behavior in War and Competition

H ₀ : Principles for Proper Conduct in War (<i>jus in bello</i>)	
Discrimination	A commitment to just behavior that prevents combatants from targeting non-combatants.
Proportionality	The permissibility of harming noncombatants, predictably yet unintentionally (collateral damage), if the harm does not outweigh the goal of the action.
Necessity	A further limitation on proportionality to the least harmful methods necessary to achieve wartime objectives.
H ₁ : Principles for Proper Conduct in Competition (<i>jus in contentione</i>)	
Discernment	The deliberate employment of specific forces to achieve limited objectives that promote justice and peace, while avoiding unnecessary or unintentional escalation of tension with rival powers.
Persuasion	The alignment of actions and statements to influence populations and states to support national goals.
Persistence	The constant application of appropriate force to achieve peacetime strategic objectives.
Consistency	The maintenance of objectives, efforts, intensity, and messaging to promote national interests and partnerships.
Collaboration	The commitment to nurturing international partnerships and credibility with populations to achieve compatible goals.
Integration	The reliance on cooperative interagency and interdisciplinary partnerships.

Content Analysis

Document Analysis: Congressional Research Service Reports

According to Congressional Research Service reporting, despite myriad military engagements of various scale, the United States has formally declared war only eleven times in the nation's history, and these declarations addressed only five different wars (The War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II).³⁶¹ Congressional authorizations for military interventions with all the attributes of traditional war except a formal declaration have been more common (except for the 1950-1953 Korean War, which, interestingly, was characteristic of war but never authorized by Congress).³⁶² The Naval Wars with France (1798-1800), the Barbary Wars (1801-1805, 1815), the Vietnam War (1964-1973), the Persian Gulf War (1991), the Global War of Terrorism (since 2001), and the Iraq invasion (2003) were principle authorizations for the use of military force (AUMF) without a wartime declaration by Congress.³⁶³ Similar combat-oriented employments of considerably shorter duration involved Grenada (1983) and Panama (1989).³⁶⁴

Other historical authorizations include the following: the protection of American citizens; the protection of maritime and land-based commerce; defense against piracy; providing security for vulnerable nations; and promoting peace and stability in volatile regions unilaterally or as

³⁶¹ United States Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Declarations of War and Authorizations for Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications*, by Jennifer K. Elsea and Matthew C. Weed, CRS Report RL31133 (Washington, D.C.: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, April 18, 2014), 1-4.

³⁶² United States Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798-2022*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Sofia Plagakis, CRS Report R42738 (Washington, D.C.: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, March 8, 2022), i.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 13.

part of a coalition.³⁶⁵ These authorizations lacked the tenor of traditional war, occurring below the threshold of armed conflict. This type accounted for most American instances of military use identified by the Congressional Research Service. Most recognized deployments (discounting covert, clandestine, and intelligence operations, permanent basing of forces abroad, and routine training or military assistance missions) were of a non- or pre-conflict nature; conjointly, the frequency of military employment has precipitously increased, especially in the Twenty-First Century as Figure 5.1 illustrates.³⁶⁶

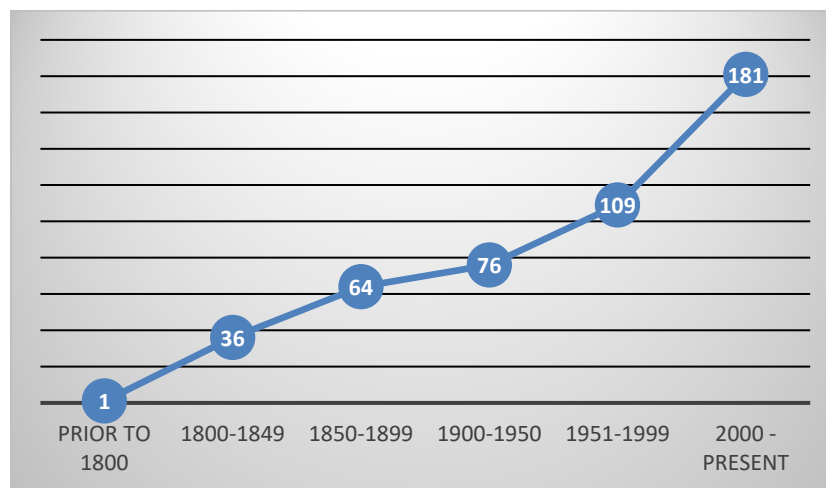


Figure 5.1. Instances of Military Force Deployment (Official Announcements)

From 1798 through March 2022, 467 total announced uses of military force have been recorded. These instances were initiated either by Presidential authority as Commander-in-Chief, Congressional authorization, or, in some cases, unauthorized decisions by military commanders.³⁶⁷ Mission attributes, strategic significance, and force composition varied from a few dozen Marines and Sailors disembarking ships to protect American citizens and property to

³⁶⁵ Congressional Research Service, *Declarations of War*, 83-100.

³⁶⁶ Congressional Research Service, *Instances of Use*, 1.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

several million troops conducting combat operations in World War II.³⁶⁸ Wartime and warlike engagements have been much less frequent. With formal declarations of war rare (non-existent in the United States for over eighty years) and traditional warfare engagements waning, military forces more commonly engaged in activities below the threshold of armed conflict.

Since January 2000, 181 instances were recorded.³⁶⁹ Nearly thirty-nine percent of documented overt military engagement announcements have occurred in only nine percent of the nation's history. The announcements were issued to Congress either by the President or by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, a requirement of the War Powers Resolution since 1980.³⁷⁰ It was unclear what specific factors have driven the elevated frequency. Some speculative possibilities are increased global threats, increased political and societal comfort in employing military force, or increased willingness to leverage the use of military force when strategic, operational, and tactical risks are presumably lower for non-conflict employment. Notably, IW has become the dominant type of engagement confronting the United States since September 11, 2001, according to United States Army analysis.³⁷¹ This correlates with the escalating employment frequency detailed in Figure 5.1.

Though the reasons behind the increased frequency of American military use were not decipherable from the analyzed data, the fact that such an increase exists at all warrants attention to that period, at least to understand what types of deployments occurred. In the past twenty-two

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 2-50.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 1.

³⁷¹ United States Army Special Operations Command, "Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies: Practice of IW Guided Lesson," PowerPoint Presentation (2014), Slide 11.

years, instances of use included no wartime declarations and merely two major authorizations for major combat operations short of declared war, or AUMF (the Global War on Terrorism in 2001 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003). Thirty-four percent of instances were conducted under existing AUMF authority, but non-conflict instances were double in portion. Figure 5.2 provides a visualization of this interesting statistic.

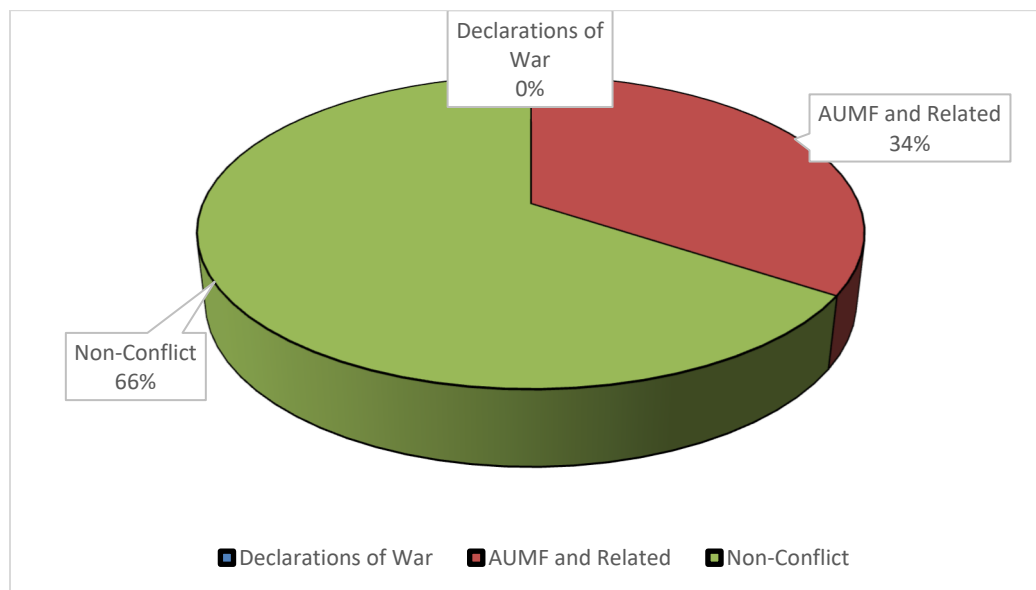


Figure 5.2. Military Use Stratification Since 2000

Document Analysis: National Security Strategies

Six National Security Strategies are evaluated through document analysis to determine how American policymakers understand and codify physical and moral risk at the strategic engagement level (Tables 5.2 through 5.5). The principal threats accounted for physical risk while the strategic goals formed a set of value propositions (moral risk) promoted since early 2002. This analysis shows that different presidential administrations led by different political parties have common views on risk, opportunity, and threat at the strategic level of engagement. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 consolidate data from the Bush and Obama administrations, respectively. Both Bush and Obama issued two Strategies, one for each of their respective four-year terms.

Trump's single strategy is in Table 5.4, and Biden's Interim Strategic Guidance populates Table 5.5 (a full strategy was issued consistent with the Interim Guidance after the research period concluded).

Table 5.2. 2002 & 2006 George W. Bush Administration National Security Strategies ^{372 373}

Years	Principal Threat	Strategic Goals	National Security Priorities
2002 & 2006	Failing States; Pandemic Disease Threats; Weapons of Mass Destruction; Terrorism; Human Trafficking; Natural Disasters.	Peace, Prosperity, and Liberty; Freedom, Justice, and Human Dignity; Confront Global Challenges by Leading a Community of Democracies.	Champion aspirations for human dignity.
			Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism.
			Work with partners to diffuse regional conflicts.
			Prevent weapons of mass destruction threats.
			Ignite global economic growth.
			Expand development, open societies, and democracy.
			Cooperate with other centers of global power.
			Transform national security to meet 21st Century challenges.
			Engage opportunities and Control Challenges of Globalization.

³⁷² The White House, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2002), 1-2.

³⁷³ The White House, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2006), ii-iii.

Table 5.3. 2010 & 2015 Barack H. Obama Administration National Security Strategies ^{374 375}

Years	Principal Threats	Strategic Goals	National Security Priorities
2010 & 2015	Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; Weapons of Mass Destruction; Terrorism; Space and Cyberspace Vulnerabilities; Pandemic Diseases; Climate Change and Environmental Pollution. Failing States. Global Criminal Networks; Catastrophic Attack on the U.S. Homeland or Critical Infrastructure; Attacks on U.S. citizens abroad and allies; Global Economic Crisis; Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation; Global Infectious Disease Outbreaks; Climate Change; Energy Disruptions; Consequences of Failing States.	Security: The security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners.	Strengthen national defense. Reinforce homeland security. Combat the persistent terrorism threat. Build U.S. and international capacity to prevent conflict. Prevent weapons of mass destruction proliferation. Confront climate change. Assure access to shared spaces (cyber, space, air, and oceans).
			Put our economy to work. Advance our energy security. Lead in science, technology, and innovation. Shape the global economic order. End extreme poverty.
		Prosperity: A strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity.	Live our values. Advance equality. Support emerging democracies. Empower civil society and young leaders.
		Values: Respect for universal values at home and around the world.	

³⁷⁴ The White House, National Security Strategy (2010), 17-50.³⁷⁵ The White House, National Security Strategy (2015), 2-28.

International Order: An international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges.

Prevent mass atrocities.

Advance our rebalance to Asia and the Pacific.

Strengthen our enduring alliance with Europe.

Seek stability and peace in the Middle East and North Africa.

Deepen economic and security cooperation in the Americas.

Table 5.4. 2017 Donald J. Trump Administration National Security Strategy³⁷⁶

Year	Principal Threats	Strategic Goals	National Security Priorities
2017	Terrorism; Transnational Criminal Organizations; Russia; China; Iran; Regional Balance of Power Changes; North Korea; Corrupt or Failing States; Natural Disasters; Porous U.S. Borders; Biothreats; Pandemics.	Protect the American people, the homeland, and the American way of life.	Secure U.S. borders and territory. Pursue threats to their source. Keep America safe in the cyber era. Promote American resilience.
		Promote American prosperity.	Rejuvenate the domestic economy. Promote free, fair, and reciprocal relationships. Lead in research, technology, invention, and innovation. Promote and protect the U.S. national security innovation base. Embrace energy dominance.
		Preserve peace through strength.	Renew America's competitive advantages. Renew capabilities (defense, space, cyberspace, intelligence). Diplomacy and statecraft (competitive, economic, information).
		Advance American influence.	Encourage aspiring partners. Achieve better outcomes in multilateral forums. Champion American values (human dignity, religious freedom, anti-terrorism, women and youth empowerment, reduce suffering).

³⁷⁶ The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2017), 7-53.

Table 5.5. 2021 Joseph R. Biden Administration National Security Strategic Guidance³⁷⁷

Year	Principal Threats	Strategic Goals	National Security Priorities
2021	China; Russia; Technology; Nationalism; Global Pandemic; Economic Downturn; Racial Injustice; Receding Democracy.	Ensure diversity, economy, dynamic society, technological base, democratic values, partnerships, and military advantage endures. Renew commitment to global development and international cooperation.	Modernize Military Capabilities Lead with Diplomacy Revitalize Alliances and Partnerships

A comparison of Principal Threats and Strategic Goals drawn from the six Strategies reveals concepts that are organized into two categories, physical and moral strategic risk. The principal threats form the basis for the strategic physical risks identified in Table 5.6: conflict, security, crime, and human suffering. By evaluating each goal in the context of its associated strategic priorities, it is possible to bin them through phenomenological grouping. Strategic physical risk management requires, as best as possible, an understanding of persistent, trending, and emerging threats to the nation. This type of risk is outward-looking, meaning planners and strategists identify threats normally, though not always, external to the United States (geographically or ideologically) that pose risk to American life, property, and interests.

³⁷⁷ The White House, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (2021), 1-6.

Table 5.6. Strategic Physical Risk Synthesis

Codes (Threats)				Concepts (Hazards)	Category
Bush 2002/06	Obama 2010/15	Trump 2017	Biden 2021		
Failing States	Failing States	Failing States	Russia	Global/ Regional Conflict	Strategic Physical Risk
Terrorism	Terrorism	Terrorism	China		
WMD	WMD	Bio-Threats	Nationalism		
Human			Receding		
Trafficking	Iraq/Afghanistan	Russia	Democracy	Security	
Pandemic	Citizen Security	China	Technology		
Natural	Homeland			International Crime	
Disasters	Security	North Korea	Economy		
	Energy	Iran	Racial Injustice		
	Space/Cyberspace	Border Security	Pandemic		
	Economy	Balance of Power		Human Suffering	
	Global Crime	Transnational Crime			
	Pandemic	Pandemic			
	Climate	Natural Disasters			
	Environment				

Strategic moral risk mitigation implies either action or restraint to maintain national standards, proclamations, and mores. This type of risk is both inward and outward looking. Inwardly, activity or deliberate inaction is judged against postulated national ethics and beliefs. Outwardly, the community of nations renders judgment on reputation, reliability, and credibility. This risk category codified in Table 5.7 has four hazard concepts America must understand and address internally: peace, prosperity, liberty, and justice.

Table 5.7. Strategic Moral Risk Synthesis

Codes (Strategic Goals)				Concepts (Values)	Category
Bush 2002/06	Obama 2010/15	Trump 2017	Biden 2021		
Peace	Order Security	Peace Protection	Military Advantage Cooperation	Peace and Stability	
Prosperity	Prosperity	Prosperity	Economy	Prosperity	Strategic Moral Risk
Liberty	Values	American Influence	Democratic Values		
Freedom Justice			Diversity Global Development	Liberty	
Human Dignity			Dynamic Society	Justice	
Democracy			Partnerships		

Two decades of national security and strategic intelligence estimates informed the principal threats each National Security Strategy highlights. The comparative analysis in Table 5.6 shows trends for conflict threats (e.g., terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, failing states), homeland and economic security, crime, and disaster and mass illness. Also, an emerging trend in the conflict concept is the return of state powers as potential threats. Counterpropositions may be offered on the specific wording of the strategic physical risk concepts, but any changes would only alter the semantics. It did not seem likely that another qualitative and comparative analysis of the six strategic documents would yield remarkably different conclusions on how the American national security enterprise looks outward to identify and understand physical threats to the nation and national interests. Physical risks are intuitive. It is reasonable to assume that

they are generally agreed upon by analysts, strategists, and policymakers using a common set of resource materials like intelligence estimates and strategic appreciation documents.

The strategic goals are synthesized into the four value propositions in Table 5.7: managing the global balance of power to maintain peace and order; promoting prosperity and economic development through capitalism; maintaining liberty at home and promoting it abroad; and advocating concepts of justice including human dignity and democratic governance. These resemble the concepts of liberty, religious freedom, and justice derived from academic literature. The four value propositions form the category of Strategic Moral Risk since failure to uphold those value propositions would compromise the nation's moral vision.

The specific application of military force in GPC, ARSOF conducting IW, originally inspired this project. Consequently, it seems appropriate to view the derived elements of strategic risk in a military context. Though military forces actively participate in managing all four physical risk concepts, they have primary roles in conflict and security risk management. Accordingly, these two Strategic Physical Risk concepts appear paramount. A second but no less important reason for truncating the physical risk categories is because conflict and security can subsume crime and suffering. Human suffering is often an effect of conflict, and crime is a prime consideration in security calculations.

Applying a similar deductive process, moral risk is also truncated. Generally, prosperity is contingent on peace; therefore, peace is a first-order property while prosperity, as a derivative, is a second-order property. Liberty is an individual condition replicated across a society. It implies effort and maintenance on the part of the individual, but the community, in the form of government, as the societal arm of justice, is tasked as guarantor and preserver of liberty. It

appears a similar first and second-order dependency relationship exists between liberty and justice. The prior relies on the presence and efficacy of the former.

Resulting from these deductions, the physical and moral risks are each grouped into two first-order concepts (conditions) that enable or ensure the achievement of the second-order concepts (contingents): conflict encompasses suffering; security encompasses crime; peace precedes prosperity; and justice precedes liberty. These results and accompanying definitions are captured in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8. Strategic Risk Assessment

Concept	Category	Description
Conflict	Physical	Socially sanctioned violence to achieve a political purpose.
Security	Physical	A condition that results from the establishment and maintenance of protective measures that ensure a state of inviolability from hostile acts or influences.
Peace	Moral	Health, prosperity, well-being, and avoidance of war. Free from internal or external strife.
Justice	Moral	A moral approach to action that values human life, is imbued with a sense of right or wrong behavior and aspires to punish or reward groups or individuals based on their adherence to those norms. ³⁷⁸

³⁷⁸ Leroy H. Pelton, "Biblical Justice," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* vol. 71, no. 4 (2003, 737-765), 749. This description is an amalgamation of Pelton's three frames of biblical justice drawn from Scripture: group justice, individual just desert, and life affirmation. It is a theological description. Describing justice, not to mention developing a finite definition, could follow several different intellectual methodologies including philosophy (What is the ontological makeup of justice?), sociology (What is just in a specific social context?), and law (What does a nation's laws or international agreement say about justice?). To maintain consistency with the biblical analysis of moral risk, the description developed through a synthesis of Pelton's three frames followed a systematic political theology approach.

Text Analysis: National Security Strategies

Automated text analysis provides an additional objective assessment for the document analysis on the suitability of the four primary physical and moral risk concepts in the strategic risk assessment. Using Wheaton College's web-based text analysis suite, Lexos, two automated analyses are conducted on the six strategy documents. Lexos performs various text analysis functions.³⁷⁹ The two functions selected were thematic comparison and concept frequency, the results of which are included in Tables 5.9 and 5.10, respectively.

The first test compares all security strategies against two sets of data. The first set includes only the four risk concepts, and the second adds synonymous terms that one could plausibly expect to be in each document in lieu of the key terms. The two lists are displayed in Table 5.9. The second test assesses commonalities among the Strategies based on cosine similarity. Cosine similarity is a measurement of the thematic likeness among numerous documents regardless of their variations in size or organization.³⁸⁰ This mathematical assessment produces similarity scores on a scale of zero to one – the closer to one, the higher the similarity. As Table 5.10 shows, when the six Strategies are assessed against the four risk concepts, they all score above ninety-four percent in similarity. When compared against the concepts and associated terms the calculation shows all Strategies in nearly ninety-six percent agreement. Based on the cosine similarity test, all six Strategies internalize the risk concepts derived from document analysis. This demonstrates those risk concepts are statistically valid inferences for strategic risk.

³⁷⁹ "Lexos Software."

³⁸⁰ "Cosine Similarity."

Table 5.9. Concepts and Associated Terms Frequency Test

Phrase	Count	
	Concepts	Plus, Associated Terms
justice	59	59
equality		10
fairness		3
just		50
justness		1
lawful		6
rights		123
peace	242	242
prosperity		137
stability		76
security	943	943
secure	60	60
safety		22
safe		53
power		145
conflict	157	157
war		124
combat		31
competition		28
engagement		49
fight		45
Total	1461	2364

The most frequent concept referent is security (well over nine hundred mentions), which is nearly four times greater than the second referent, peace. Conflict and justice occur third and fourth most, respectively. There are two substantive conclusions to draw from the frequency test. First, a National Security Strategy will obviously discuss security more than any other concept. Second, though the other three concepts are referenced significantly less than security, the number of references, especially when adding the associated terms, indicates these are relevant

concepts for building a strategic risk assessment. The cosine similarity test confirms that the concepts are normally distributed across all six Strategies.

The relevance and priority of the risk concepts and associated terms are also readily discernable in word clouds and bubble charts such as those depicted in Figures 5.3 and 5.4. Developed using Lexos display functions, these two graphics provide a quick glance at the standing of various concepts within the National Security Strategies. They are visual models of the numerical data presented in Table 5.9.

Table 5.10. Security Strategies Cosine Similarity Test³⁸¹

Documents	Cosine Similarity	
	Four Risk Concepts	Risk Concepts and Associated Words
Bush 2002	0.961	0.964
Bush 2006	0.952	0.962
Obama 2010	0.942	0.950
Obama 2015	0.951	0.959
Trump 2017	0.959	0.962
Biden 2021	0.953	0.959

³⁸¹ After the research period closed, the Biden Administration issued a complete *National Security Strategy* in October 2022. While this manuscript underwent final review and editing, the Cosine Similarity Test was re-run for the 2022 Biden National Security Strategy. The similarity to other Strategies and the concept list was 95.9% for both the concept list and the concept list plus additional terms.

Document Analysis: IW and ARSOF

As early as 2006, the Department of Defense, through its Quadrennial Defense Review, began describing “the operational environment as one dominated by IW, requiring extended unconventional warfare; foreign internal defense; counterinsurgency; counterterrorism; and security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations.”³⁸² Emphasis and attention directed toward IW have continued and increased. The 2020 Summary of the IW Annex to the National Defense Strategy stipulated that IW “favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”³⁸³ Defense policy clarifies its nature and distinguishes this type of warfare from traditional operations, first by explaining what is *irregular* about it. The Department of Defense’s IW policy directive explains that *irregular* signifies a “deviation from the traditional form of warfare” to control relevant populations.³⁸⁴ It could include “any relevant DoD activity and operation” that involves “establishing or reestablishing order in a fragile state or territory.”³⁸⁵

In military doctrine, the philosophical underpinning for how operations are conceived, planned, and executed, IW is “characterized as a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations.”³⁸⁶ It is stratified across the

³⁸² United States Army Special Operations Command, *Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies: IW Annotated Bibliography* (2011), 1.

³⁸³ Department of Defense, *Summary of the IW Annex to the National Defense Strategy* (2020), 2.

³⁸⁴ Department of Defense, *Directive 3000.07: IW (IW), Incorporating Change 1* (2017), 14.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1-2. The Directive lists specific activities: counterterrorism, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency, and stability operations. It precedes this finite list with the qualifier “such as.” That qualifier is commonly interpreted as an in lieu of phrase akin to “for example,” therefore, this research does not limit the menu of appropriate IW tasks to those five.

³⁸⁶ Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1: Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, Incorporating Draft 1* (2017), I-6.

three levels of war. At the strategic level, IW focuses on influencing a population; at the operational level, on campaigning through an indirect approach (such as surrogate operations); and at the tactical level, on the asymmetric application of military force.³⁸⁷ There are credible indicators that this definition will be reframed. In various planning and strategy venues, authorities describe it as a “struggle...to influence populations and affect legitimacy.”³⁸⁸ Notably, the adjectives ‘relevant’ and ‘violent’ have been omitted in the draft language, expanding the operational context to global competition as well as regional conflict. This shows that IW now includes actions to influence populations in both peacetime and war, and it applies to friend and foe alike.

Current Department of Defense analysis on future IW avoids defining the term. Rather, it identifies some attributes that would presumably be incorporated into an updated and expanded definition in future strategy, policy, and doctrine: Joint Force activity; persistent across the competition-conflict continuum to include countering violent extremist organizations; occurring in all domains (air, land, sea, space, and cyber), the information environment, and the electromagnetic spectrum; integrating all elements of national power; based on outcomes; and, using different functions and parameters than traditional warfare.³⁸⁹ Table 5.11 consolidates the legal, strategy, policy, doctrinal, and conceptual framing.

³⁸⁷ The Joint Staff. *IW Joint Operating Concept Version 1.0* (2007), 6.

³⁸⁸ Representatives from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict attest that this definition will be finalized in the next approved versions of DoD Directive 3000.07 and Joint Publication 1.

³⁸⁹ Office of IW and Competition, Joint Staff Joint Force Development and Design Directorate (J-7), *IW Mission Analysis* (2021), 2.

Table 5.11. Summary of IW Attributes and Descriptions

Source (Type)	Description
2018 NDAA Section 1202 (Law)	Activities in support of predetermined United States policy and military objectives conducted by, with, and through regular forces, irregular forces, groups, and individuals participating in competition between state and non-state actors short of traditional armed conflict.
2020 IW Annex Summary (Strategy)	A struggle among state and non-state actors to influence populations and affect legitimacy. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will.
DoDD 3000.07 (Policy)	A deviation from the traditional form of warfare where actors may use non-traditional methods such as guerrilla warfare, terrorism, sabotage, subversion, criminal activities, and insurgency for control of relevant populations.
JP 1 (Doctrine)	A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). In IW, a less powerful adversary seeks to disrupt or negate the military capabilities and advantages of a more powerful military force, which usually serves that nation's established government. It is distinct from traditional warfare.
Joint Staff J7 Mission Analysis (Conceptual Redesign)	Joint Force activity. Persistent across the competition-conflict continuum. Occurs in all domains. Integrates all elements of national power. Based on outcomes. Has different functions and parameters than traditional warfare.

Table 5.12. Core IW Activities

Task	Description
Counterinsurgency (COIN)	Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes.
Counterterrorism (CT)	Activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals.
Unconventional Warfare (UW)	Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.
Foreign Internal Defense (FID)	Participation by civilian agencies and military forces of a government or international organizations in any of the programs and activities undertaken by a host nation government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security.
Stability Operations (SO)	Various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment and provide essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.

Joint doctrine and policy codify five core IW activities and six secondary activities. They are presented in Tables 5.12 and 5.13, respectively.^{390, 391} Three additional features of IW are also identified in doctrine. First, it is often conducted by a less powerful adversary seeking to disrupt a more powerful one. Second, IW conflicts are rarely resolved with only a military

³⁹⁰ Source of definitions. Department of Defense, DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 2021.

³⁹¹ Source of core and secondary tasks. United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028 (2018), 29.

option. Third, irregular methods will typically be designed to protract low-intensity conflict or competition to weaken the resolve of an adversary over a considerable amount of time.³⁹²

Table 5.13. Secondary IW Activities

Task	Description
Military Information Support Operations (MISO)	Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to influence foreign audiences to favor the originator's objectives.
Cyber Operations (CYBER)	The employment of cyberspace capabilities to achieve objectives. These include cyberspace attack, exploitation, defense, and security.
Countering Threat Networks (CTN)	All government actions that identify, neutralize, degrade, disrupt, or defeat designated threat networks.
Counter Threat Finance (CTF)	Activities conducted to deny, disrupt, destroy, or defeat the generation, storage, movement, and use of adversary assets.
Civil-Military Operations (CMO)	Activities that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces and indigenous populations and institutions.
Security Cooperation (SC)	Interactions with foreign security establishments to build security relationships that promote security interests and capabilities.

³⁹² Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1 Incorporating Change 1 (2017), I-6 – I-7.

Table 5.14. Joint Staff Directed Skills and Experiences to Track for IW³⁹³

American Embassy Assignment	Civil Affairs	Counter Threat Finance	Customs/Immigration Officials	Defense Personnel Exchange Program
Engineer or Tradesman	Explosive Ordnance Disposal	Foreign/Nonstandard Vessel Personnel	Hazardous Material Response	Socio-cultural Analyst
Interagency Liaison Officer Assignments	Linguist	Negotiator	Maritime Drug Interdiction	Maritime Platform Damage Control
Maritime Search and Rescue	Maritime Security Operations	Maritime Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure	Maritime Interception Operations	Mediator
Multi-Purpose Canine Handler	Network Analysis Specialist	Port Operations, Security, and Defense	Personnel Recovery Specialist	Provincial Reconstruction Team
Maritime Platform/ Vessel Rescue	Riverine Operations	International Exchange Liaison Program	Security Assistance Training	Special Operations Command Training Programs
Military Deception	Special Technical Operations	Defense Support to Public Diplomacy	MISO	Public Affairs and Combat Camera
Joint Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations	Legal System and Public Administration Specialist	IW/Security Force Assistance/Counter Threat Finance Planner	Indigenous Guerrilla Force Advisor	Aviation Enterprise
Cultural Relations	First and Second-Generation Citizens	Train/Advise/Assist Host Nation Security	Military, Police, and Border Engagement Teams	Intelligence

³⁹³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3210.06A: IW* (2015), C-3 – C-5.

The Joint Staff developed an expanded scope of requisite skills to meet capability requirements for IW. Those are organized into thirty-six distinct skill categories in Table 5.14. As seen, the skills and experiences necessary for IW include interaction with diplomatic missions, law enforcement, homeland security, professional technical skills, maritime expertise, the social sciences, guerrilla warfare, aviation, international law, regional, linguistic and cultural expertise, and various disciplines within the field of military and national security intelligence among numerous other tasks. The Joint Staff has tasked the military services and National Guard Bureau to train, maintain, track, and report these skill categories to ensure a capable cadre is available to conduct IW. A cursory viewing of Tables 5.12 through 5.14 reveals that IW's currently prescribed missions, required skills, and future focus lend themselves to non-conflict scenarios. GPC appears to be a strategic condition well suited for those activities. The next pair of tables document a specific military force's applicability to IW.

Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) are designated by the Secretary of Defense to organize, train, and equip to conduct special operations.³⁹⁴ As established in United States Code Title 10, Section 167, their primary statutory functions include missions reflected in Table 5.15.³⁹⁵ Consistent with law and policy, Joint and Army doctrine as well as the future-focused Army concept refine this list as shown in the same table. The boldface type indicates that ARSOF conduct primary missions that are either codified IW tasks or directly in support of IW. The only two identified IW activities not primarily conducted by ARSOF are Cyber Operations (CO) and Counter Threat Finance (CTF). Several tasks in Table 5.15 support Counter Threat

³⁹⁴ Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Publication 3-05: Army Special Operations (2019), G-2.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 1-7.

Networks (CTN). Table 5.16 provides definitions of four missions from the Joint and Army documentation that correlate to IW requirements based on their similar definitions and the input from subject matter experts captured later in the analysis.

Table 5.15. Directed Army Special Operations Missions

Source	Type	Directed Activities
10 USC Sec. 167	Law	Direct Action, Strategic Reconnaissance, Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, Civil Affairs, Military Information Support Operations, Counterterrorism, Humanitarian Assistance , Theater Search and Rescue, Other Activities as Directed .
Joint Publication 3-05: Special Operations	Doctrine	Direct Action, Special Reconnaissance , Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, Counterterrorism, Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, Security Force Assistance , Hostage Rescue and Recovery, Counterinsurgency, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance, Military Information Support Operations, Civil Affairs Operations .
Army Doctrinal Publication 3-05: Army Special Operations	Doctrine	Civil Affairs Operations , Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, Counterinsurgency, Counterterrorism , Direct Action, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance, Foreign Internal Defense, Military Information Support Operations, Preparation of the Environment, Security Force Assistance, Special Reconnaissance, Unconventional Warfare , Hostage Rescue and Recovery (select ARSOF only).
Army Futures Command Concept for Special Operations 2028	Operational Concept	Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, Counterinsurgency, Counterterrorism , Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, Security Force Assistance , Direct Action, Special Reconnaissance, Military Information Support Operations, Civil Affairs Operations, Preparation of the Environment , Hostage Rescue and Recovery, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance .

Table 5.16. Army Special Operations Missions in Support of IW

Preparation of the Environment (PE) ³⁹⁶	An umbrella term for operations and activities conducted by selectively trained special operations forces to develop an environment for potential future special operations. A key component of PE is operational preparation of the environment.
Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE) ³⁹⁷	The conduct of activities in likely or potential areas of operations to prepare and shape the operational environment, including to develop knowledge of the operational environment, to establish human and physical infrastructure, and to develop potential targets. Methods include passive observation, area familiarization, site surveys, mapping the information environment, and other specialized tasks.
Security Force Assistance (SFA) ³⁹⁸	Activities that support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions.
Special Reconnaissance (SR) ³⁹⁹	Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted in hostile, denied, or diplomatically and/or politically sensitive environments to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces.
Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA) ⁴⁰⁰	Department of Defense activities conducted outside the United States and its territories to directly relieve or reduce human suffering, disease, hunger, or privation.

To perform these duties, ARSOF employ Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, Special Operations Aviation, and Army Rangers, all supported with organic logistics

³⁹⁶ Army Futures Command, Special Operations, 70.

³⁹⁷ Department of the Army, Army Special Operations, 2-8.

³⁹⁸ Army Futures Command, Special Operations, 71.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 69.

and intelligence capabilities.⁴⁰¹ The primary ARSOF forces are Special Forces, Psychological Operations, and Civil Affairs, which are specifically recruited, trained, equipped, and managed by United States Army Special Operations Command.⁴⁰² They are defined in Army doctrine as: Special Forces (SF) – Forces organized, trained, and equipped to conduct special operations with an emphasis on unconventional warfare.⁴⁰³

Psychological Operations (PSYOP) – Forces specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct military information support operations.⁴⁰⁴

Civil Affairs (CA) – Forces and units organized, trained, and equipped specifically to conduct civil affairs operations and to support civil-military operations.⁴⁰⁵

The 2019 ARSOF Strategy published by USASOC, the most current one available during the research period, details the ARSOF mission as “to prepare for any conflict and arm the joint force with the world’s premier Army Special Operations Forces,” which bring the following unique capabilities, “advancing partnerships, influencing adversarial behavior, executing special operations, and responding to crisis.”⁴⁰⁶ In GPC, ARSOF seek to manage activities below the

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 3-10.

⁴⁰² United States Army, *U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School: The Special Operations Center of Excellence*, Accessed May 26, 2022, <https://www.army.mil/swcs#org-about>. The public-facing web page for the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, states its mission includes selecting, training, and educating Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces personnel to provide “our nation with a highly educated, innovative and adaptive force.”

⁴⁰³ Department of the Army, Army Special Operations, G-3.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 2-7 – 2-8.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., G-2.

⁴⁰⁶ “Army Special Operations Forces Strategy,” *United States Army Special Operations Command*, accessed August 10, 2021, <https://usasoc.sof.socom.mil/sites/usasoc-hq/g5/SPD/Shared%20Documents/ARSOF%20Strategy%20v13%20-%202007%20Oct%202019.pdf>.

threshold of armed conflict by strengthening alliances and attracting new partnerships, countering coercion and subversion, raising the cost of adversary behavior, and setting conditions to rapidly transition to armed conflict if required.⁴⁰⁷

These objectives are intended to manage risk. Identified strategic risks to avoid include compromising reputation, bureaucratic inflexibility, and hubris based on preconceptions of operational and moral superiority.⁴⁰⁸ Risks to take include devoting significant investment in human capital development, boldly experimenting with revolutionary concepts and technology, and divesting of materiel and missions no longer relevant to the strategic security environment.⁴⁰⁹ These goals and actions produce what USASOC describes as ARSOF's strategic value: the "ability to expand the options necessary for decision-makers to wield influence and manage escalation in the competition space, and enable decisive operations by the joint force in war."⁴¹⁰ Interview responses on ARSOF's potential role as an IW force in GPC and the risks associated with that endeavor are very similar to these statements.

Interview Analysis

Overview of Respondents and Responses

The respondents provided exceptional input on three topics: strategic risk, IW, and ARSOF capabilities and adaptability to a GPC operational environment. The content below each question is an aggregation of the answers, reflecting trends of consensus and thematic divergences of thought drawn from the entire interview population. Questions focused on IW and

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

ARSOF are insightful and were inspired by the original interest that led to this research; however, their efficacy came into question as the project proceeded to uncover a new theory of just behavior for strategic security action, Just Competition Theory.

Assessment of Responses

Interview Question 1: The definition of IW seems to be under scrutiny. Is that because the definition is insufficient? How would you redefine IW?

All thirty-four respondents contributed a wide array of answers. Twenty-two respondents claimed the definition was fine as is or at least adequate with some adjustments. Eleven suggested similar adjustments but concluded that a definition without those adjustments meant the standing definition was inadequate. Attempting to determine if the definition was adequate with or without modification was inconclusive. What can be assessed are the suggested modifications. The most common suggestion (twenty-eight) was that IW, regardless of the definition, needs to be understood as an attitudinal approach to conditions present in GPC. The second most common suggestion (twenty-two respondents), directly stated or alluded to in the context of an answer, was to remove the term “violent” or at least account for non-violent aspects of IW since the activities associated with IW are not always violent, nor do they always have an effect that leads to violence.

Interview Question 2: Under your definition, would it be applicable to competition as well as conflict?

All thirty-four respondents answered in the affirmative. This is one of two questions that had unanimous consent. IW, in the assessments of the field’s professionals, is certainly applicable to GPC. In retrospect, the inclusion of this question was not helpful in the research.

Soliciting opinions on IW in GPC should have been infused in Question 1 where the definition and characteristics of the term were treated.

Interview Question 3: Which ARSOF entities would participate IW and in what capacities?

All thirty-four respondents answered that all three ARSOF branches must synchronize their efforts to collectively execute IW missions in GPC. Most of the respondents further asserted that the three ARSOF branches do not require internal reorganization or major modifications to training. Each is generally equipped with the type of personnel and skills necessary to succeed in this mission set. This supports the document analysis above that ARSOF are suitable to conduct IW in GPC. Though not exclusively the domain of ARSOF, as attested by all respondents, these forces have an essential role, particularly during competition below the threshold of conflict. Respondent 5 offered a simple way to understand each branch's integrated role. Special Forces focus on resistance, Psychological Operations conduct population influence, and Civil Affairs actuate stable governance.

Interview Question 4: Current doctrine and operational concepts identify five tasks that comprise IW: counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, and stability operations. These are also traditional ARSOF activities. Do you think this list is sufficient, incomplete, or too broad? Please explain.

Thirty-three respondents answered. One asserted the list was too large, and should only include counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and foreign internal defense. Eight contended the list of five tasks is sufficient. Twenty-four interviewees believed the list needs to be expanded. In evaluating the substance of the individual responses, the second and third groupings are quite similar.

All eight respondents claiming the core five tasks are sufficient for conducting IW also believe that other tasks must also be performed. Their answers were nuanced in the sense that any capability can be incorporated into IW, but each additive task would be binned under one of the core five. This means thirty-two of thirty-three respondents agreed that IW should not be limited to just five core (and six supporting) tasks. The consensus indicated that IW is an approach to conditions in GPC, where operational circumstances must be clearly understood, and plans of employment would incorporate all available capabilities necessary to accomplish objectives. This comports well with the majority position that all available capabilities should be leveraged in an IW approach in GPC.

Interview Question 5: Do you believe IW applied during GPC should have information advantage, influence, civil engagement, and intelligence component? Please elaborate on what you think needs to be added and why.

Thirty-three respondents answered, however, the interview data was insufficient to establish a distinct and useful research finding. By posing a similar inquiry in Question 4, the answers to this question were either redundant or limited to the suggestions articulated in the question. The responses in Question 4 adequately address the topic of IW options and capabilities.

Interview Question 6: How would you define strategic risk, especially regarding irregular warfare?

Thirty-two respondents answered. Being a somewhat open-ended question, the responses were wide-ranging. Figure 5.5 shows the breadth and frequency of the most common inputs. In numerous cases, respondents offered more than one characteristic. This chart aggregates the four most dominant characteristics.

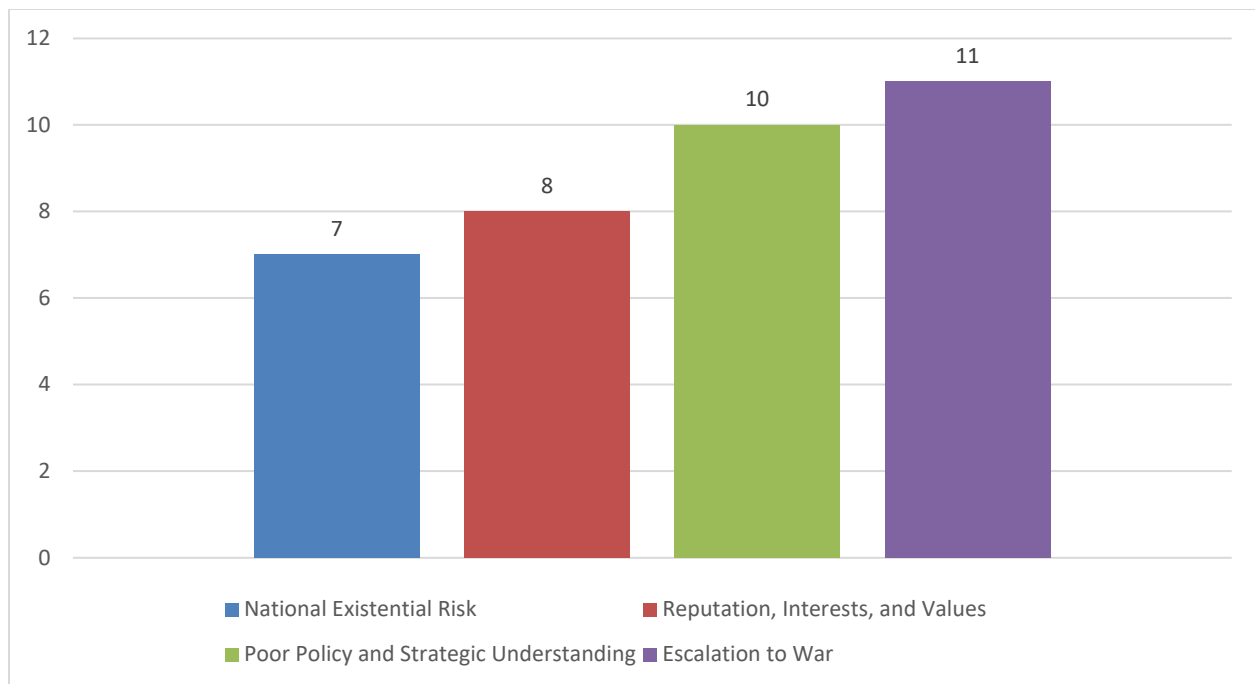


Figure 5.5. Dominant Characteristics of Strategic Risk

Interview Question 7: Please list and describe the types of strategic level risk you believe we should anticipate when ARSOF competes against peer adversaries?

Thirty-one respondents answered. Figure 5.6 shows the breadth and frequency of the most common inputs instead of individual responses. As with the previous question, respondents offered more than one type of strategic risk. By far, the most common answers were strategic decision-making influenced by internal politics, a misunderstanding of the threat or intentions of a potential adversary, and the underappreciation of emerging threats. Though mentioned less than half as much, compromising national values and credibility were identified as major concerns for numerous respondents. The other three risk types listed could be consolidated under strategic decision-making since resourcing challenges, operational exposure, and tension escalation are all products of decisions made to fund, equip, and execute security activities. The

main conclusion drawn from this question is that strategic risk, whether compromising values or endangering resources, is often directly caused by plans and policy.

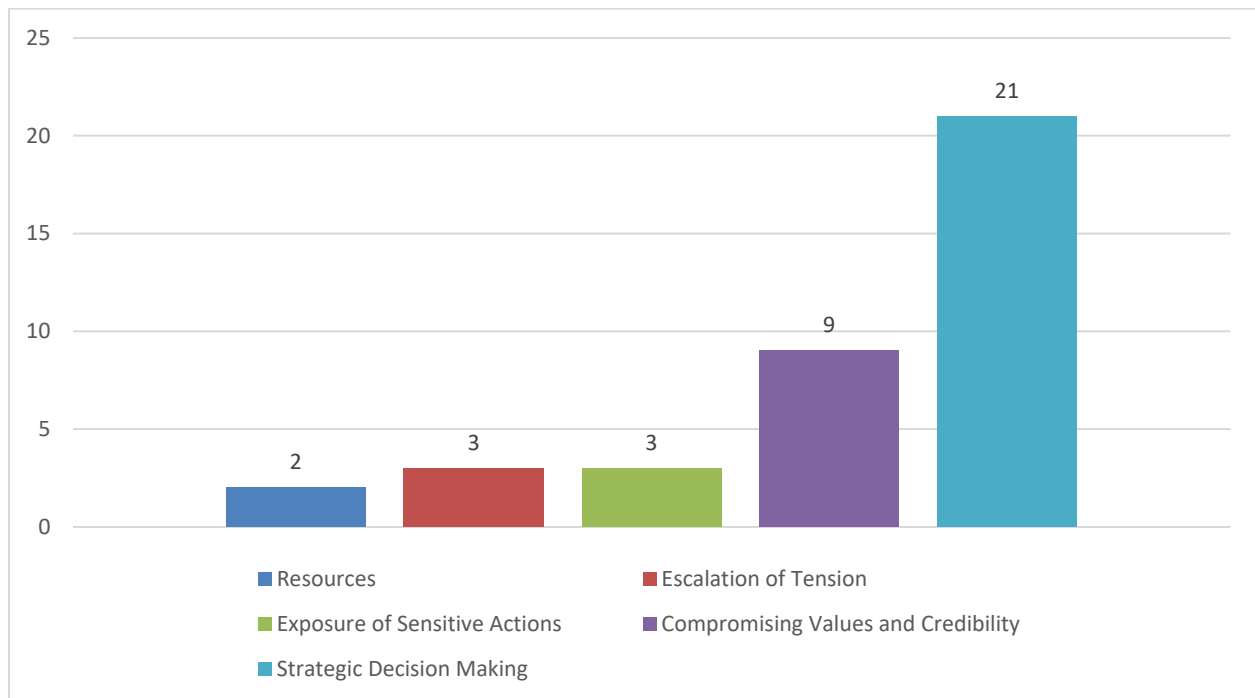


Figure 5.6. Types of Risk Cited Multiple Times

Interview Question 8: Categorically, do you consider these physical, moral, both, or are they best characterized using a different term?

Thirty respondents answered. All replies accepted physical risk as a strategic hazard category. Figure 5.7 shows that there was some deviation in classifying risk associated with value propositions, but nearly four in five agreed that moral risk is an acceptable category for understanding threats to national values and reputation among partners and allies. Other suggestions were political, power, and ethical risk. Of note, one respondent suggested strategic risk is not an appropriate metric for the application of IW in the answer to Question 6. That was this subject's reason for not offering input to Question 8.⁴¹¹

⁴¹¹ See Appendix D, Question 6, Respondent 14 for the rationale.

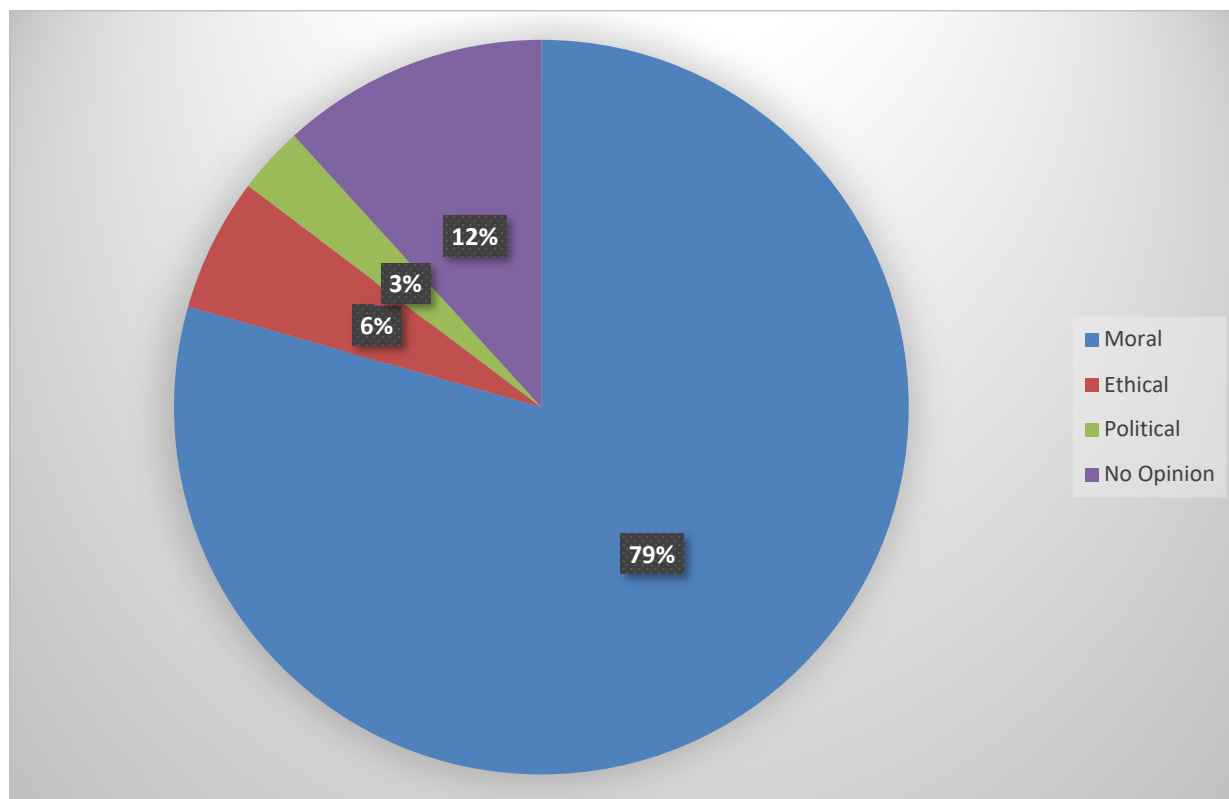


Figure 5.7. Perspectives on Strategic Moral Risk

Interview Question 9: What are your thoughts on ARSOF's role in mitigating strategic risk during competition and conflict?

Thirty respondents answered. The consensus was that ARSOF conduct early and persistent engagement globally to maintain placement and access in regions important to national security and interests. The principal benefits of this constant footprint include generating and reporting an understanding of operational environments, providing indicators and warnings of potential risk escalation, promoting national values through positive, truthful influence activities, developing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with partner nations and forces, and taking transparent action that espouses a national commitment to security and stability.

Interview Question 10: If the United States prioritizes military effort to focus primarily on GPC, does this preclude or limit ARSOF's capacity to conduct other tasks such as countering violent extremism or homeland defense support? If there is a shortfall, how would ARSOF mitigate it?

Thirty-three respondents answered. The dominant theme from the interview data is prioritization. To avoid the internal risk of over-extending ARSOF, policy and strategy must prioritize mission focus based on assessed external strategic risks, a sentiment captured in the ARSOF Strategy's statement on divestiture. Policy-driven prioritization influences resourcing, training, and deployment strategies. A secondary theme is ARSOF's flexibility and agility in transitioning from one mission set (countering violent extremism) to another (IW in GPC). A reason cited by several respondents for this ability to shift operational emphasis is that ARSOF have been performing all their primary missions during the two decades of the Global War on Terrorism. For example, Respondent 13 stated all missions in which he participated in Afghanistan and Iraq are applicable to GPC. Likewise, Respondent 24 intimated that the same tactics apply in GPC even though the techniques (technology, force size, rules of engagement) may vary.

Though most respondents admitted there is some risk associated with this transition, all generally agreed it is acceptable. Respondents did not appear to believe threats from non-state or even state-sponsored terrorism represent an existential threat to the United States; therefore, a balanced approach to strategic threats must prioritize engagement during GPC while maintaining a carefully measured and limited focus on counterterrorism. This theme in the responses is consistent with the ARSOF Strategy's risks worthy of taking.

Analytical Synthesis

Three topics are evaluated through content analysis: historical military usage trends, strategic risk, and ARSOF conducting IW. Document analysis reveals that most United States military actions occurred below the threshold of armed conflict. They are also increasing at a significant rate over time. As the frequency of employment escalates, so can tension and risk with other nations. Document analysis also provides a strategic risk assessment synthesized from six National Security Strategies and validated through automated text analysis. Conflict, security, peace, and justice emerge as reasonable concepts for phenomenologically grouping various hazards a nation may face in GPC. Finally, document analysis shows IW as a suitable mission category for prosecuting campaigns in GPC; furthermore, ARSOF is an appropriate force, designated by law, doctrine, policy, and future conceptual theories, to conduct IW in GPC.

Interview analysis yields interesting findings as well, and they generally correlate and support the findings from the documentation. Questions 1 through 5 address ARSOF in IW, and they benefit the research by affirming that ARSOF are forces of choice for conducting IW in GPC. A primary finding is that even though the IW tasks identified in doctrine and policy are legitimate, IW in GPC should be an umbrella approach, incorporating all tasks necessary to accomplish a mission in a specific situational context. This finding affirms the document analysis that shows a vastly wider array of required skills necessary to execute IW. Despite these positive findings, two of the questions (2 and 5) provide very little benefit. They should have been grouped with Questions 1 and 4, respectively, since the answers to them are thematically indistinguishable.

Questions 6 through 10 address strategic risk. All questions and the aggregated responses are valuable and distinct. The interviews occurred after the document analysis on strategic risk

and the development of the strategic risk assessment, which offered these subject matter experts the opportunity to comment on the framework's efficacy and its physical and moral risk categorizations. All respondents agree with the physical risk category and nearly four in five find moral risk as an acceptable category. Like the first five, these questions were framed in the context of ARSOF conducting IW in GPC. Key risk concerns include escalation to war through misunderstanding or miscalculation, compromising societal values from unethical activity, and harming national reputation because of poor integration and collaboration.

A synthesis of all content analysis provides an output that directly addresses the Central Research Question. This adds clarity to the need for measuring strategic risk in GPC. It also informs the definition of strategic risk.

Strategic Risk – The physical or moral hazard posed to a nation's safety, its interests, or its stated value propositions. The strategic physical risk category is measured through two concepts, conflict and security. The strategic moral risk category is also measured using two concepts, peace and justice.

Analysis further results in framing a praxis model, depicted in Figure 5.8, that describes a Christian Realist approach to strategic risk management through governing principles of action.

The figure shows two options, which are the competing hypotheses in this project:

H₀: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in bello*.

H₁: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in contentione*.

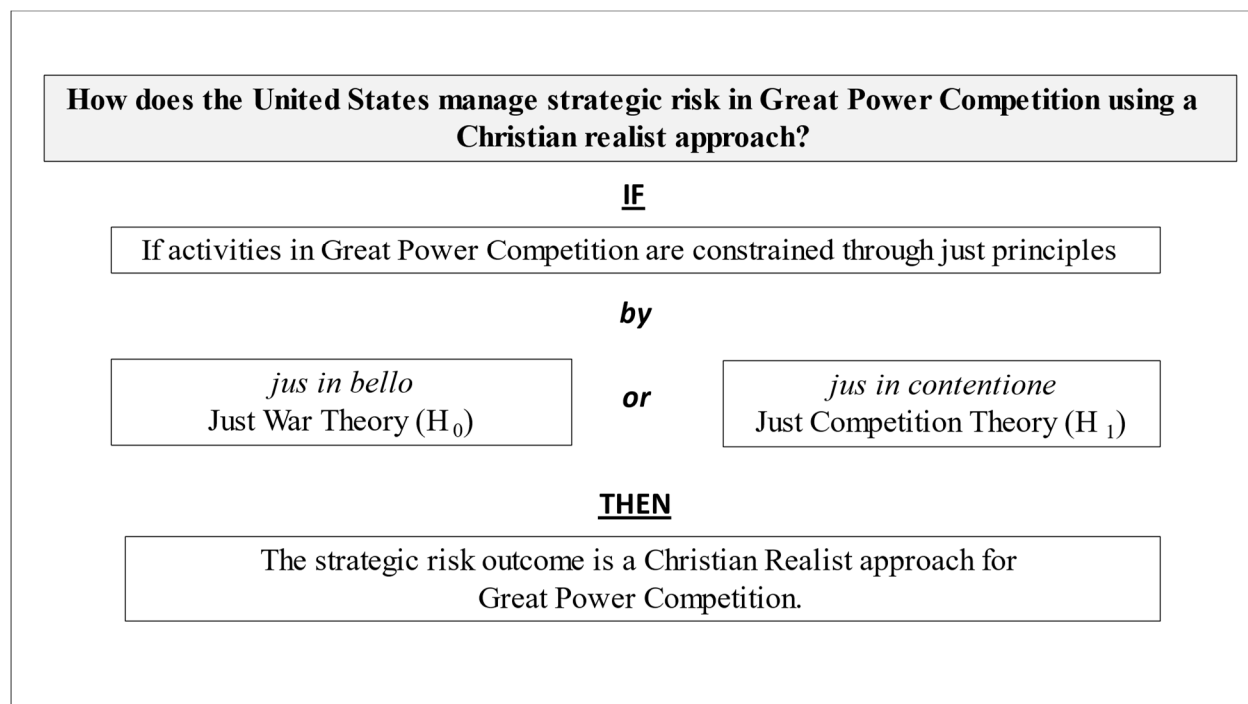


Figure 5.8. Christian Realist Competition Risk Management Praxis Model

To determine which hypothesis best fits the model for GPC they are now tested against the analyzed data. Analysis of IW and ARSOF actually provides little value in building the initial praxis model, but those findings are very useful in testing the hypotheses and refining the model. Also, since the research was mainly conducted among ARSOF planners and practitioners who routinely focus on IW and risk management in the context of GPC (the social context detailed in Chapter One) analyzing them benefits future research exclusively focused on ARSOF in GPC.

Comparative Hypotheses Testing

Four simple, empirical hypotheses tests compare H₀ and H₁ against the research findings: historical instances of use, ARSOF conducting IW, the strategic risk assessment, and subject matter expert responses. The first test determines whether a theory of just action in competition is needed. The second validates H₁ as a viable theory, applicable to real-world mission sets. The

third evaluates the principles of each hypothesis against risk concepts derived from content analysis. The fourth test assesses H_0 and H_1 against subject matter expert interview data.

Historical Data Test: 2000 to the Present

The hypotheses are compared in this timeframe for two reasons. First, over one-third of military uses occurred in this period. Second, it matches the selected window for analyzing published American National Security Strategies. The test distributes instances of use across three categories: declarations of war, authorized use of military force with no declaration, and non-conflict.

Table 5.17. Modern Historical Usage Test

Announcements	Instances	Distribution
Declarations of War	0	0%
AUMF and Related	62	34%
Non-Conflict	119	66%
Total	181	100%

As Table 5.17 shows of the 181 announced instances of military use, no force deployments result from a declaration of war. Sixty-two results from a congressionally approved AUMF. That leaves 119 instances of non-conflict engagements. These can be reasonably correlated as GPC deployments. For the first hypothesis test, H_0 does remain applicable considering roughly one-third of the recorded announcements are conflict-related; however, non-conflict instances are double that quantity so the need to consider rules and principles for conduct in non-conflict military action has merit.

Based on this analysis, both H_0 and H_1 remain valid for consideration in security policy and strategy development. In the context of GPC though, H_1 arguably warrants preferential

consideration since sixty-six percent of historical engagements are non-conflictual according to the data presented in Table 5.17. It seems the Just Competition Theory hypothesis is the more applicable in most cases (two-thirds); therefore, in a competition context, H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected. This test confers the need to consider a competition-focused engagement theory.

Irregular Warfare and Army Special Operations Forces Test

This test evaluates ARSOF's IW missions against the possible hypotheses. The test assesses a given ARSOF IW task's correlation to either H_0 , H_1 , or both using an 'x' marker. Tasks are oriented vertically, and hypotheses are listed horizontally. The tasks are drawn from Army Doctrinal Publication 3-05: Special Operations. The research value of ARSOF and IW reduced in prominence as this project developed. Though these topics and their application to GPC originally inspired the work, they were not elements essential to developing Just Competition Theory or in producing the original praxis model. However, they prove very useful for hypothesis testing by supplying forces and realistic military tasks to evaluate the competing hypotheses.

Table 5.18 shows the test did not favor one hypothesis. Both hypotheses apply to six ARSOF IW tasks, rendering a determination of the superior theory inconclusive. As with the previous tests, if ARSOF is directed to conduct IW in the context of GPC, then H_1 is the preferred hypothesis. The real value of this test is its validation that *jus in contentione* is a viable theory for governing military planning and action in GPC. It can be used to assess real mission tasks under those operational conditions. This bridges theory to reality, a fundamental attribute of grounded theory methodology in qualitative analysis. In summary, both H_0 and H_1 are acceptable for this test, but, as a new theory, H_1 is very promising since it addresses conditions H_0 does not and is demonstrably suitable for analyzing real plans and events in GPC.

Table 5.18. ARSOF in IW Test

ARSOF IW Task	Applicable Standard		Rationale
	<i>jus in bello</i>	<i>jus in contentione</i>	
Civil Affairs Operations	x	x	Governance and civil engagement in peacetime and war.
Counterinsurgency	x		Support government forces and services against an active, combative insurgency.
Counterterrorism	x		Combat action against non-state actors.
Foreign Internal Defense		x	Enable partner nations' militaries to prevent or mitigate threats.
Military Information Support Operations	x	x	Influence operations in peacetime and war.
Preparation of the Environment*		x	Gain understanding and set conditions for future peacetime or wartime operations.
Security Force Assistance*		x	Build capacity of foreign partner forces during peacetime.
Special Reconnaissance*	x	x	Develop situational awareness in peacetime or war.
Unconventional Warfare	x		Support active resistance movements against oppressive regimes.

* - Based on their doctrinal descriptions (Table 5.16) and the prevailing sentiment from subject matter expert interviews, these tasks are not doctrinally defined as IW activities but are integral to IW in both competition and conflict.

Strategic Risk Assessment Test

This test assesses the principles of *jus in bello* and *jus in contentione* against the physical and moral strategic risk categories developed from the risk data findings. Table 5.19 orients the principles vertically and risk concepts horizontally. An ‘x’ marker indicates applicability.

Table 5.19. Strategic Risk Assessment Test

Hypothesis	Strategic Risk Concept			
	Conflict	Security	Peace	Justice
<i>Jus in Bello</i>				
Discrimination	x			x
Proportionality	x			x
Necessity	x			x
<i>Jus in Contentione</i>				
Discernment		x	x	x
Persuasion		x	x	x
Persistence		x	x	x
Consistency		x	x	x
Collaboration		x	x	x
Integration		x	x	x

As a wartime concept, *jus in bello* applies to conflict whereas *jus in contentione* does not. For that risk concept alone, H₀ is preferable to H₁. Regarding security (as a conflict prevention concept) and peace (the successful result of a presumption against violence), only the principles of H₁ seem relevant since they are specifically constructed for pre-conflict and are optimal for conflict avoidance. For justice, a moral approach to action as defined in the strategic risk analysis, all principles for H₀ and H₁ are relevant. In the aggregate, H₁ is preferable (in terms of likelihood of use) since its principles fully apply to three risk concepts whereas H₀ principles only apply to two. Since this research centers specifically on GPC and both possible hypotheses attest as much, H₁, which is fully aligned with the two specific non-conflict risk concepts and the

ubiquitous concept of justice, is accepted. H_0 , which aligns with neither of the non-conflict risk concepts, is rejected.

Subject Matter Expert Interview Response Test

The aggregate interview responses in Table 5.20 are used in the final comparative hypotheses test. The columns contain, from left to right, the topics of each of the ten questions, a consensus answer for each, and H_0 and H_1 evaluations. This is the most difficult and detailed test since it requires identifying themes from thirty-four respondents and then applying them to the competing theories. While conducting the test a couple of inadequacies are identified. Questions 2 and 5 provide no value. They are essentially subsets of Questions 1 and 4, respectively. Of the remaining eight relevant questions, H_1 scores nearly twice as high as H_0 .

Question 1/2: Respondents affirm that IW applies to conflict but emphasized that it should primarily be an approach to GPC. Both H_0 and H_1 are accepted for these questions.

Question 3: Respondents attest that ARSOF, particularly SF, PSYOP, and CA forces, have an essential role in IW during GPC and conflict. This comports with ARSOF and IW results in the second hypothesis test. Both H_0 and H_1 are accepted for this question.

Question 4/5: Nearly all respondents indicate that in a GPC context, any capability available should be incorporated. H_1 is the only relevant hypothesis for these questions; therefore, it is accepted.

Question 6: Respondents acknowledge the primary types of strategic risk in Table 5.20 as present in both conflict and competition. Both H_0 and H_1 are accepted for this question.

Question 7: Respondents acknowledge the specific strategic risks that ARSOF face in Table 5.20 as present both in conflict and competition. Both H_0 and H_1 are accepted for this question.

Question 8: Respondents accept the physical and moral strategic risk categories in both conflict and competition. Both H_0 and H_1 are accepted for this question.

Question 9: Respondents consider ARSOF's most effective contribution to strategic risk management occurring in GPC. H_1 is the accepted hypothesis for this question.

Question 10: Recognizing that the United States' defense capability is reorienting its focus to GPC, respondents provide insight on the importance of understanding the risk associated with this shift in strategic focus. While maintaining the capability and capacity to conduct war, the main risks this force faces involve proper prioritization of tasks and training to conduct IW in GPC and prevent escalation to conflict. H_1 is the accepted hypothesis for this question.

Table 5.20. Interview Response Test

Ques.	Topic	Consensus Answers	<i>jus in bello</i>	<i>jus in contentione</i>
1	Defining IW	An approach to conditions in GPC	x	x
2	IW in Competition	Yes	No testing value. Not discernable from Question 1.	
3	ARSOF in IW	Resistance, influence, and governance	x	x
4	Appropriate Menu of IW Tasks	List should include requirements for specific competition conditions		x
5	Additional IW Skills	Information Advantage, Intelligence Operations	No testing value. Not discernable from Question 4.	
6	Types of Strategic Risk	Existential risk, reputation, poor strategic understanding, escalation to war	x	x

7	Strategic Risk Faced by ARSOF	Strategic decision-making, compromising values, escalation of tension, exposure, resources	x	x
8	Physical and Moral Risk	These are appropriate categories	x	x
9	ARSOF Strategic Risk Management	Persistent global placement and access; generate strategic understanding; indicators and warning of increased risk; truthful influence; espouse national commitment to security and stability		x
10	Risk ARSOF Incurs by Re-focusing on GPC	If competition is prioritized in policy and strategy, organizational and mission risks are limited.		x

Analysis of Test Results

Four significant discoveries emerge from comparative hypotheses testing. First, Just War Theory, specifically just action in conflict (*jus in bello*), does not need to be replaced. Just War Theory continues to provide a highly useful framework for military action in conflict. Rather, it should be augmented by a new concept that directly addresses just action to manage risk in operational environments short of war. The historical data prove that roughly two-thirds of announced military engagements in the Twenty-First Century were non-combat oriented. Why has no concept been proffered and proliferated to address ethical and just planning and action short of war given this ratio? That is the confounding puzzle at the heart of the research. This

supports the contention that a concept such as Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*) is a legitimate idea to pursue.

Second, when evaluated against real mission sets conducted by existing military formations, in this case, IW and ARSOF, Just Competition Theory earns legitimacy as a construct for just action to manage strategic risk short of war. Again, *jus in bello* is not dismissed. It retains value in regulating action in conflict. However, *jus in contentione* begins to show promise as a theory applicable to justly guiding plausible missions in the contemporary operational environment.

Third, *jus in contentione* gains more legitimacy through testing its six principles against risk concepts derived from six consecutive Twenty-First Century National Security Strategies: conflict, security, peace, and justice. The principles of Just Competition Theory are realistically more appropriate to a contemporary competition environment. Apart from conflict, these principles are fully applicable to managing strategic risks drawn from the Strategies. Furthermore, of the two hypotheses, Just Competition Theory is the only one to address risks to peace security and peace. Overall, it would be the better method of analysis to govern planning and activities in most historical cases, and it covers more strategic risk areas than does *jus in bello*.

Fourth, subject matter expert insights on the nature of ethical action in GPC also support a theory of just action below the threshold of armed conflict. During interview sessions, respondents used terms such as prioritization, ethics, understanding, influence, and partnerships to describe appropriate roles and responsibilities of military action in GPC. These are generally synonymous with the principles of *jus in contentione*. Though Just Competition Theory was not fully developed during the interview sessions, it is plausible to assume that many respondents

would reply favorably to the construct. Accordingly, this theory and its principles of responsible action in conditions below the threshold of armed conflict are worthy of being introduced and warrant more detailed exploration in subsequent research.

Conclusions from Analysis and Comparative Hypotheses Testing

Content analysis survey and evaluate the historical prevalence of military action short of war, the recognized strategic physical and moral risks the United States faces in the contemporary operational environment, the utility in presenting a just theory of action under non-conflict conditions, and the insights of professionals with expansive knowledge on components of the research. Two theories on just military action, *jus in bello* (H₀) and *jus in contentione* (H₁), have now been subjected to comparative hypotheses testing. The results determine that both hypotheses are valid depending on the strategic context, war or GPC, but the principles of Just Competition Theory from H₁ best answer the Central Research Question.

Case Studies

Based on research, analysis, and multi-stage testing, (H₁) is the preferred hypothesis to guide just action in GPC. This hypothesis is now used to analyze two case studies, applying the six principles of *jus in contentione* to two military engagements to explain their outcomes. The advantage of using case studies to further evaluate H₁ rests in the contention that “case studies provide evidence for causal claims that is not available through statistical and formal research methods.”⁴¹² As a novel theory introduced in this work, Just Competition Theory has no data-based evidence supporting its sufficiency beyond the four comparative hypotheses tests. The following evaluations use causal-process observations of the historical records to ascertain if the

⁴¹² Sharon Crasnow, “The Role of Case Study Research in Political Science: Evidence for Causal Claims,” *Philosophy of Science* 79, no. 5 (2012: 655-666), 655.

principles of *jus in contentione* are suitable as explanatory factors (or causal inferences) for the empirical strategic risk outcomes.⁴¹³ The case study methodology follows the “plausibility probe” model to determine those outcomes.⁴¹⁴

The principles of *jus in contentione* are the independent variables. The strategic risk outcome in each case is the dependent variable. The dependent variable is a binary measurement: yes (application of the principles were successful and major conflict was avoided) or no (principles were unsuccessful and major conflict occurred). The results are recorded in strategic risk terminology (Table 5.8).

The first case study concerns the activities of Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines (JSOTF-P), which was active from 2002 through 2015 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines. The second case study profiles Cold War activities in Berlin, East Germany. These are both necessary conditions evaluations, meaning the presence of the six principles is essential and identifiable in the observed or predicted outcome.⁴¹⁵

These studies were selected for five reasons. First, both involve military activity below the threshold of conflict. The JSOTF-P scenario profiles United States military activity conducted in an operational environment where American forces, though exposed to some risk, were not engaged in combat. Similarly, NATO forces conducted operations in a peacetime environment in Berlin but were also exposed to the risk of escalation to conflict. Second, both

⁴¹³ Ibid., 659.

⁴¹⁴ Juliet Kaarbo and Ryan K. Beasley, “A Practical Guide to the Comparative Case Study Method in Political Psychology,” *Political Psychology* 20, no. 2 (1999: 369-391), 375.

⁴¹⁵ Gary Goertz and Jack S. Levy, “Causal Explanation, Necessary Conditions, and Case Studies,” in *Explaining War and Peace: Case Studies and Necessary Condition Counterfactuals*, eds. Gary Goertz and Jack S. Levy (London: Routledge, 2007), 24-26.

include military forces conducting IW activities to achieve specific strategic and operational objectives while simultaneously managing risk. For example, in the Philippines, JSOTF-P efforts centered on the IW task of FID while in Berlin American forces also conducted FID as well as UW, CMO, and influence activities. Third, the cases originate from two regions of the world that are the current focus of national security strategy, Europe and Asia. Fourth, when evaluated together, the JSOTF-P and Cold War Berlin scenarios offer a wide spectrum (from tactical to strategic levels of engagement) for assessing Just Competition Theory principles. The JSOTF-P scenario focuses on tactical actions with strategic implications while the Berlin scenario profiles strategic initiatives that informed tactical activity. The paring demonstrates *jus in contentione*'s applicability across different geo-political contexts. They affirm not only the theory's viability but its broad applicability. Fifth, the aggregate of missions conducted in the two case studies reflect the major human threats covered in the six Twenty-First Century National Security Strategies analyzed in this chapter including nuclear threats, terrorism, and GPC among powerful states.

Scenario I: Joint Special Operations Task Force - Philippines

The application is based on the historical relationship between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines from 1898 through approximately 2014, and it specifically focuses on United States activities in support of Philippine security forces as they contended with separatist and terrorist organizations in the Mindanao and Sulu Archipelago regions (Southern Philippines). The application of IW in a semi-permissive, non-combat environment (for United States forces) is emphasized in this case. America's tactical operating agent for these efforts was a small task force established to advise and assist Filipino forces in their counterinsurgency

efforts against radical Islamic groups in the region.⁴¹⁶ Though the mission was nested under the Global War on Terrorism umbrella, the IW actions and activities of the United States in this operational environment mirrored those taken to assist partner nations in GPC.⁴¹⁷ This case study application demonstrates how the six principles of Just Competition Theory would have applied to or how they can be used to explain the outcomes of specific JSOTF-P operations.

Strategic Context

The complex security relationship between the United States and the Philippines has spanned over a century. Beginning with America's colonial rule in 1898, which lasted until the Philippines was granted independence in 1946, through the present era's focus on radical separatist and terrorist groups.⁴¹⁸ The legal framework for United States security assistance was codified in 1952 under the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP)-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty.⁴¹⁹ The GRP Congress voted to close the two American military bases, Clark Air Base and United States Naval Base Subic Bay, in 1992, but later authorized a security assistance partnership in 1999 under the Visiting Forces Agreement.⁴²⁰ This agreement authorized United States military presence and activities that later occurred between 2001 and 2014.⁴²¹ Those activities were precipitated by several developments during the preceding decade.

⁴¹⁶ Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/jsotf-p.htm>.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Linda Robinson, Patrick B. Johnston, and Gillian S. Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines, 2001 – 2014* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2016), 9.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 10-11.

In the early 1990s, the GRP faced significant insurgent activities from several groups including the New People's Army (communist), the Moro-Islamic Liberation Front (Islamist-separatist), and the Abu Sayyaf Group (Islamist-terrorist).⁴²² By late 2000, the United States increased its partnership efforts to mitigate separatist and terrorist activity. Kidnappings of American citizens by the Abu Sayyaf Group heavily influenced greater interoperability. That change in security posture led to the activation of JSOTF-P in 2002.⁴²³ Throughout its existence, JSOTF-P maintained "continuous engagement with joint and unified HQ's [headquarters] counterparts" to sustain the capacity and capability of Philippine security forces and support their efforts at peace and development.⁴²⁴ This was an example of the United States model of serving as a "primary outside force supporting a partner nation's security forces that were leading actors in a long-term counterinsurgency and counterterrorism campaign."⁴²⁵

Regional Situation

By 2006, the GRP still contended with terrorist factions in the Southern Philippines. That same year, JSOTF-P modified its mission statement as follows: JSOTF-P, in coordination with the Country Team [American Embassy], builds capacity and strengthens the Republic of the Philippines security forces to defeat selected terrorist organizations in order to protect Philippine

⁴²² Ibid., 13-16.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Richard Comer, "Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines," *Defense Media Network*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://www.defensemedianetwork.com/stories/winning-operation-enduring-freedom-philippines/5/>.

⁴²⁵ "SOF in the Philippines," *SOF News*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://sof.news/sof/oef-p>.

and United States citizens and interests, while preserving Philippine sovereignty.⁴²⁶ In conjunction with the GRP, the United States pursued this strategic objective, increasing Philippine security force capacity, in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, a predominantly Muslim area in the Southern Philippines consisting of the western portion of the Island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago to its south.⁴²⁷ The operating environment was “broadly characterized as low-threat and semi-permissive.”⁴²⁸

The mission was guided by four lines of effort: 1) advise and assist Philippine security forces to develop a secure and stable environment; 2) conduct civil-military and civil affairs operations to undermine insurgency support; 3) provide intelligence support to Philippine security forces to better target threat networks; 4) conduct influence (military information support) operations to sow dissent in insurgent groups, undermine their popular support, and bolster GRP credibility.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁶ David S. Maxwell, “Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines: Lessons in Special Warfare,” in *Routledge Handbook of U.S. Counterterrorism and Irregular Warfare Operations*, eds. Michael A. Sheehan, Erich Marquardt, and Liam Collins (New York: Routledge, 2022), 285.

⁴²⁷ Molly Unigan, Dick Hoffman, Peter Chalk, Brian Nichiporuk, and Paul Deluca, “The Case of Operation Enduring Freedom—Philippines,” in *Characterizing and Exploring the Implications of Maritime Irregular Warfare* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2012), 22.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴²⁹ Maxwell, “Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines,” 286.

Analysis of IW: Activities in OEF-P⁴³⁰

Irregular warfare has become the dominant type of engagement confronting the United States since September 11, 2001.⁴³¹ Historically, irregular warfare pitted a weaker adversary against a dominant one, often a national government. In this context, irregular forces sought to disrupt the power advantage of the more powerful entity.⁴³² This characterization remains true, in part. Irregular warfare may still be a contest between weaker and stronger vessels; however, external actors who have power parity with the stronger force, may be conducting irregular activities against them through the weaker force who serves as a benefactor of and surrogate for the external force. Conversely, an external actor may act through a government. In cases like this, the recognized government benefits from and acts in the interest of the outside force against an insurgent. These two situations share a commonality, the main oppositional force is acting through a weaker one, a proxy. Figure 5.9 illustrates this arrangement.⁴³³

⁴³⁰ Disclosure Statement: This author was a member of JSOTF-P during both 2005 and 2006, working directly for David Maxwell, one of the cited authors in this case study, in 2006 when Maxwell was the task force commander.

⁴³¹ United States Army Special Operations Command, “Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies: Practice of Irregular Warfare Guided Lesson,” PowerPoint Presentation (2014), Slide11.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ This original graphic was inspired by a conversation with a USASOC staff member on the nature of resistance movements.

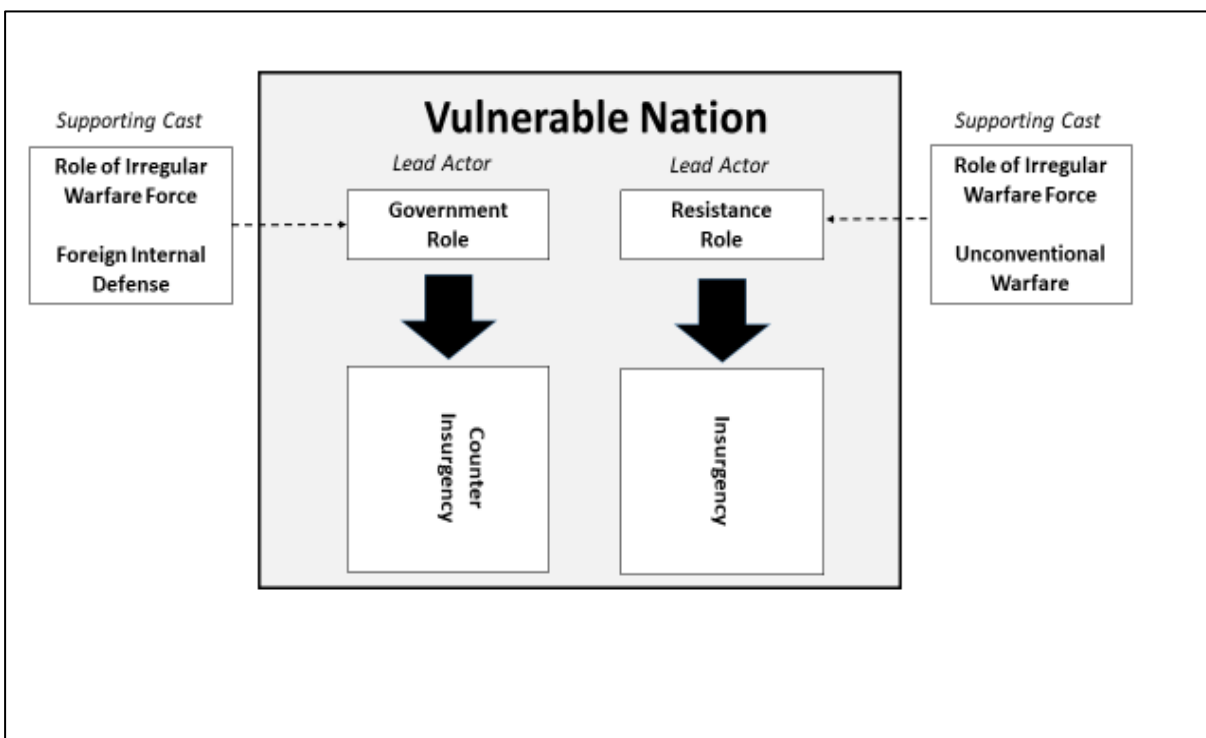


Figure 5.9. Sample Irregular Warfare Roles

The prosecution of the JSOTF-P mission along the four lines of effort was classic, doctrinal foreign internal defense (FID), a core activity in irregular warfare (Table 5.12) and is consistent with this model.⁴³⁴ The mission of JSOTF-P followed the flow on the left side of the figure. The United States, through JSOTF-P, conducted FID in support of the lead actor, the GRP, in their efforts to counter insurgent activities in the Southern Philippines. Explained below and captured in Figure 5.10 are specific actions taken to support the FID mission along the four lines of effort. As depicted, the actions vary in duration and risk level, but all efforts worked to reduce the effectiveness of insurgent activity (explained below in Empirical Assessment).

⁴³⁴ Maxwell, "Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines," 288.

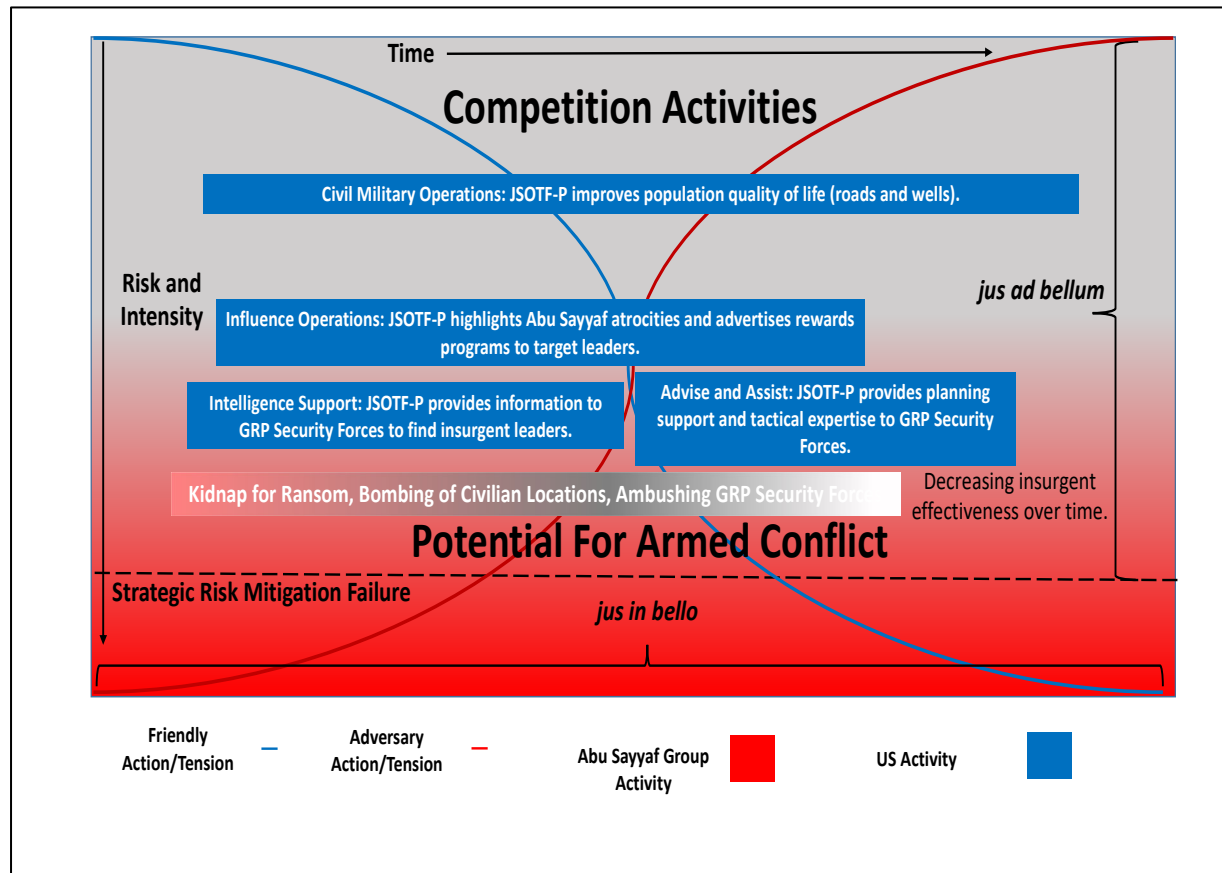


Figure 5.10. Irregular Warfare in the Philippines

Advisory and Assistance Operations. JSOTF-P personnel provided operational advice and planning support to Philippine security forces to aid them in conducting waterborne infiltration operations and an amphibious assault against the Abu Sayyaf Group, which resulted in the death of Khadaffy Janjalani, the group's leader.⁴³⁵ This mission was conducted under a broader operational effort called OPERATION ULTIMATUM, a six-month offensive that combined maritime mobility and ground maneuver operations to apprehend Abu Sayyaf personnel.⁴³⁶ ARSOF augmented by other services assigned to JSOTF-P contributed expertise in assault

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 289-291.

⁴³⁶ Unigan, et. al., "The Case of Operation Enduring Freedom—Philippines," 27.

operations, amphibious and maritime planning, and counterinsurgency.⁴³⁷ In an advisory and assistance capacity, JSOTF-P members contributed to successful operations against an internal Philippine threat without committing forces to combat operations.

Civil-Military Operations. Special Forces (SF) and Civil Affairs (CA) units, both ARSOF capabilities, coordinated with Philippine security forces, other American conventional military forces, and elements from other United States government departments to obtain humanitarian assistance funding, engineering and construction support, and needed materiel to improve potable water access and provide serviceable road networks in remote areas of the Southern Philippines.⁴³⁸ As with all operations JSOTF-P conducted, these were led by Philippine security forces.⁴³⁹ Though these operations were moderately successful, the challenge in procuring humanitarian assistance funding demonstrated a lack of unity and synchronization among various United States government agencies.

Intelligence Support. During routine operations, JSOTF-P personnel collected information on Abu Sayyaf members' locations and activities. Intelligence personnel assigned to the task force analyzed this information and provided it to Philippine security forces. This analyzed targeting information enabled Philippine forces to locate Abu Sayyaf's leadership, resulting in the neutralization of two of the group's successive leaders, Janjalani (mentioned above) and Abu Sulaiman six months later.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁷ Maxwell, "Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines," 291.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

Influence Operations. JSOTF-P PSYOP personnel worked in concert with other ARSOF capabilities (SF and CA) to help Philippine security forces develop and disseminate information that highlighted the atrocities of the Abu Sayyaf Group and promoted the credibility of the GRP.⁴⁴¹ Influence themes included amplifying the damage done to the local population of Jolo Island after Abu Sayyaf bombed a food market and advertising rewards leading to the apprehension of Abu Sayyaf leaders. These sustained efforts enabled JSOTF-P and Philippine security force personnel to collect information from local civilian populations that was used to build intelligence reports that led to the neutralization of two successive Abu Sayyaf leaders.

Explanatory Factors: Applied *Jus In Contentione* Principles (Independent Variables)

Discernment

All four lines of effort seem to meet the criterion of Discernment. Operations were planned in support of a host nation's military force, reducing the probability of risk escalation for American forces. Though the risk for the Philippine forces was high since they were engaged in combat with insurgent groups, JSOTF-P's role in helping plan and prepare for selective operations only targeting small numbers of insurgents helped avoid elevating the risk for local populations.

Though this operation occurred under the rubric of the Global War on Terrorism and the umbrella effort of Operation Enduring Freedom, activities in the Southern Philippines authorized by OEF-P were a characteristic employment of IW in a non-combat scenario for Americans and can be understood through the principle of Discernment, defined as the deliberate employment of specified force to achieve limited objectives to advance justice and peace (strategic moral risk)

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

without escalating tensions to open conflict with a rival power. Since this principle is designed with great powers in mind, how is it genuinely applicable in this scenario?

First, the forces were task-organized to perform specific missions to accomplish established objectives. These were not limited engagements. Forces assigned to JSOTF-P were allowed to exercise all non-kinetic capabilities to assist Philippine Security Forces. Second, the overarching goal of the mission was to restore regional peace in the Southern Philippines. This seems, at least for a while, to have succeeded. Third, there was no escalation to open conflict. The Abu Sayyaf Group could hardly be labeled a rival power to the United States, but if open conflict between the United States and Philippine insurgents materialized then the cooperative strategic relationship between America and the GRP could have been compromised. This may have resulted in a premature withdrawal of JSOTF-P, leaving Philippine security forces embroiled in an insurgency without needed assistance.

Persuasion

The effect of influence operations including the amplification of insurgent atrocities and advertising rewards for information appears to have met the criterion of persuasion. They highlighted the danger of supporting Abu Sayyaf Group, which seemed to positively influence the population of Jolo Island to reduce active and passive support to the group. The population also provided Philippine and American representatives with information leading to the neutralization of two successive leaders.

This principle emphasizes the alignment of actions and statements to influence populations and states to support national goals. That emphasis was incorporated in influence operations, civil-military engagements, and advisory and assistance operations. By ensuring Philippine security forces were always seen as the leading force with Americans serving in a

supporting role, the promotion of GRP credibility was not only expressed in words but was also matched in deeds. Showing Philippine security forces as willing and capable of restoring peaceful conditions, continuously promoting that theme through influence operations, and incessantly highlighting the atrocities and dangers of Abu Sayyaf Group achieved a measure of success. It demonstrated the alignment of actions and statements to support the goal of ameliorating active insurgency and achieving a stable, if tentative, peace.

Persistence

The entirety of Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines indicates a commitment to persistence by both the United States and the GRP. The roughly fourteen years of JSOTF-P's existence as an advisory and assistance force, intelligence provider, civil support organization, and information disseminator demonstrates a sustained comprehensive effort to achieve security objectives for both countries. The persistent pressure against groups like Abu Sayyaf and constant support to Philippine security forces for the duration of the mission are hallmarks of this criterion.

Persistence is the constant application of appropriate force to achieve peacetime strategic objectives. All four lines of effort JSOTF-P employed exemplified this principle for three reasons. First, since they were longitudinal, each line of effort represented activities that were constantly directed in support of the GRP and against its insurgent adversaries over time. That signifies constant application. Second, as in the Discernment criterion, it seems JSOTF-P was properly structured with appropriate forces to carry out those four lines of effort. Their ranks included trainers, advisors, intelligence analysts, civil-military operations experts, and influence practitioners. These all supported the IW FID mission of training, enabling, and promoting Philippine security forces as the lead agent in combating insurgency and unrest. Third, the

diligence of constant pressure directed at insurgents ultimately led to conditions stable enough for JSOTF-P to retrograde and terminate its mission.

Consistency

A persistent effort is rather worthless if the desired effects and activities conducted to achieve them are arbitrary or frequently modified. The purpose of JSOTF-P as articulated in the mission statement was to strengthen Philippine security forces in their capacity to combat insurgent groups while not undermining GRP sovereignty or credibility. This remained the steady aim of JSOTF-P throughout its existence, and it informed the integrated lines of effort. The criterion of Consistency was met by JSOTF-P operations.

As the principle of maintaining objectives, efforts, intensity, and messaging to promote security interests and partnerships, Consistency is most evident in the mission statement. From 2006 to the culmination of the operation, the JSOTF-P mission remained the same. This enabled a constant focus for American supporting personnel and served as an assurance to Philippine security forces and the GRP that the United States was resolute in supporting their counterinsurgency efforts, not taking over, nor changing priorities to suit parochial rather than mutual security interests. Additionally, Consistency is evident in JSOTF-P's force composition and activities. First highlighted under the Persistence principle, the United States populated the task force with a roster of experts to carry out four lines of effort and generally maintained that force disposition for the duration of JSOTF-P's existence.

Collaboration

By its nature, the Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines mission was collaborative. JSOTF-P did not engage in unilateral or American-led operations in the Southern Philippines. The mission statement and the four integrated lines of effort were designed to maintain GRP

primacy in all operations. As a FID force, JSOTF-P fostered a relationship with Philippine security forces that satisfied the criterion of Collaboration. It was a hallmark integrated non-combat IW application.

This principle espouses a commitment to nurturing partnerships and credibility with populations to achieve compatible goals. Influence activities that bolstered the credibility of the GRP and its security forces honored this principle. Advisory and assistance efforts that improved Philippine security force planning and execution of counterinsurgency missions also attributed to Collaboration. Civil-military operations executed to provide humanitarian assistance to the civilian population were always a collaborative effort between JSOTF-P and Philippine security forces. Finally, intelligence collection and analysis tasks were singularly focused on providing the JSOTF-P and its GRP counterparts with accurate and timely information for collaborative operational planning.

Integration

This seems to be the only Just Competition criterion not fully realized in the case study. The challenge in procuring humanitarian funding for projects that directly contributed to mission accomplishment could have reduced the effectiveness of JSOTF-P as a partner force to the GRP. A proper commitment to Integration would have required better coordination among several United States government agencies before Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines began to ensure civil-military operations and humanitarian assistance opportunities were not jeopardized by bureaucratic friction.

Integration is the principle of reliance on cooperative interagency and interdisciplinary partnerships. Whereas Collaboration reflects partnerships among nations, Integration represents interoperability and multi-functionality within a single nation. If this principle is not sufficiently

instituted, it could easily undermine the other principles. In the case of OEF-P, uncoordinated humanitarian assistance could have put pressure on the collaborative relationship between JSOTF-P and Philippine security forces since the Philippines was reliant on the United States to provide this support as part of the broader security cooperation effort. Additionally, it could have weakened efforts at Persuasion by undercutting the credibility of the GRP for not delivering on humanitarian assistance promises. Fortunately, in this case, those dire outcomes did not materialize. However, had this principle of Just Competition been fully applied during strategic planning, the obstacles JSOTF-P did face could likely have been avoided.

Strategic Risk Outcomes (Dependent Variable)

In a comprehensive study of Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines, RAND Corporation concluded that operations in the Philippines reduced the threat of terrorism and insurgency and increased the capability of Philippine security forces to manage security unassisted.⁴⁴² This was the objective of the JSOTF-P mission. Other reviews are mixed. Another RAND study characterized the mission as a “modest strategic success” in that the “United States recognized the nature of its partner and deployed a joint task force that complimented the AFP [Philippine security forces]...in a constructive manner.”⁴⁴³ It also had “relative success in achieving the US objectives of reducing terrorist operations and improving local governance.”⁴⁴⁴ By another assessment, the overall operation was “a mixed success at best” because even though

⁴⁴² Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xvii.

⁴⁴³ Unigan, et. al., “The Case of Operation Enduring Freedom—Philippines,” 29.

⁴⁴⁴ David S. Maxwell, “Lessons from the Philippines: Irregular Warfare in Action,” *Modern Warfare Institute*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://mwi.usma.edu/lessons-from-the-philippines-irregular-warfare-in-action/>.

Abu Sayyaf was neutralized, social and economic issues that fueled the insurgency remained unimproved.⁴⁴⁵

Four main conclusions can be drawn from this case. First, assessments of JSOTF-P's success in Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines are more subjective than they are scientific. Different surveys and assessments look at the same results and draw different conclusions on the success of the mission. All tend to agree the mission was relatively successful while United States forces were actively supporting GRP efforts; however, opinions vary on the durability of that success over time.

Second, it does seem clear that GRP security operations supported by the United States did successfully prevent increased popular support for groups like Abu Sayyaf. This is due in part to a general absence of collateral damage from counterinsurgency operations. Numerous case studies by United States Army Special Operations Command determined that “empirical evidence supports the proposition that a government crackdown may promote mobilization in support of a violent resistance movement” which sways the population to support insurgent and anti-government resistance movements.⁴⁴⁶ This increases intensity toward the threshold of armed conflict and civil unrest. By adhering to strict standards of planning and operational behavior, American-influenced GRP security operations avoided that.

⁴⁴⁵ Munson, Mark. “Has Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines Been a Success?” *Small Wars Journal*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/has-operation-enduring-freedom-philippines-been-a-success>.

⁴⁴⁶ United States Army Special Operations Command, *Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies: Threshold of Violence* (2011), 34.

Third, there were several lessons strategists and security policy analysts learned from the JSOTF-P mission that should inform security operations conducted in non-combat operational environments:

- 1) A long-term commitment is required to produce results.
- 2) Integration between the American Embassy and JSOTF-P was critical.
- 3) FID must be conducted in support of a host nation's defense and development plan.
- 4) Building partner capacity is a cornerstone of this type of mission.
- 5) CA and PSYOP forces should always be included in advisory operations as well as conducting combined initiatives with the partner force.
- 6) The smallest footprint of personnel necessary to accomplish assigned tasks should be embraced.⁴⁴⁷

These observations are quite consistent with *jus in contentione*. The first observation requires Consistency and Persistence. The second clearly employs Integration. The third and fourth necessitate Discernment, Consistency, and Collaboration. The fifth satisfies the criterion of Persuasion. The sixth again alludes to Discernment.

Fourth, though planners for operations in the Philippines in the early 2000s did not apply the principles of *jus in contentione*, the lines of effort, the operational results, and the management of strategic risk were consistent with them. Had Just Competition Theory principles been applied, the mission would possibly have benefited from better Integration among government agencies, thereby reducing obstacles to humanitarian project funding. Though civil projects ultimately were completed, precious time and human resources were

⁴⁴⁷ Linda Robinson, "The SOF Experience in the Philippines and the Implications for Future Defense Strategy," in *Prism* vol. 6, no. 3 (2016: 151-167), 163-165.

wasted in solving problems that could have been avoided through more deliberate coordination. Analysis of the Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines case indicates that had the principles of *jus in contentione* been available and applied to this foreign internal defense mission, the outcomes could have been even more successful than they were.

Overall Strategic Risk Assessment

Physical (Conflict and Security)

The physical risk to American forces was nominal to moderate, and the strategic risk of escalating tension to active combat was not significant. As illustrated in Figure 5.12, the most hazardous missions to military forces and civilian populations were targeted raids against the Abu Sayyaf Group. JSOTF-P personnel mitigated physical risks at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels by providing subject matter expert planning support and remaining in an advisory instead of a leading role in those operations. None of the missions profiled in the case study had the effect of escalating domestic counterinsurgency operations to open combat involving United States forces. Though JSOTF-P supporting plans and activities did not benefit from the use of *jus in contentione* principles, the overall mission was structured to achieve the same result – accomplish strategic security objectives without escalating tension to the threshold of armed conflict.

Moral (Peace and Justice)

The management of strategic moral risk is more difficult to gauge in JSOTF-P operations. Seemingly, the insurgent situation in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago trended moderately to a more peaceful state, at least temporarily, with the demoralization and defeat of the Abu Sayyaf Group. Regarding justice, the shared security objectives of the United States and the GRP were pursued through just means. The involvement of American forces, even limited to an advisory

role, required a commitment by Philippine security forces to conduct operations responsibly and avoid unnecessary damage or death. Even a cursory comparative study of Philippine security operations with and without United States involvement shows the positive moral impact American involvement had on this mission. Table 5.21 depicts variable relationships.

Table 5.21. JSOTF-P Variable Relationships

Lines of Effort: 1) Advise/Assist Ops 2) Civil-Mil Ops 3) Intel Spt. 4) Influence Ops	
Principle (Independent)	Strategic Risk Outcomes (Dependent)
Discernment: Operational design to achieve objectives and limit risk (All LOEs)	P (Security): Safety/Security of US forces maintained
Persuasion: Influence Operations (LOE 1,2, & 4)	M (Peace) Focused effort.
Persistence: GRP Support (All LOEs)	M (Peace): Increased popular support for GRP
Consistency: Planned Operations (LOE 1 & 3)	P (Conflict): Maintained for 14+ years
Collaboration: Direct planning/operational support ICW GRP (LOE 1 & 3)	M (Justice): Constant effort and pressure maintained
Integration: Insufficient Coordination with DoS and USAID (LOE 2)	M (Justice): Mission and directed tasks fully partnered/ subordinated US Forces
Overall Strategic Risk Assessment	
Physical: Yes. Risk at echelon nominal to moderate for US Forces.	
Moral: Yes. Peace temporarily improved. GRP conducted just and responsible operations.	

Scenario II: Cold War Operations in Berlin

This case study surveys a strategic level, long-term struggle in Central Europe during the Cold War. It emphasizes strategic initiative and subordinate operational posturing and activity in an environment that resembles contemporary GPC. Focusing on Allied actions in Berlin, East Germany, the principles of *jus in contentione* (H₁) are applied to explain the strategic outcomes of this case, a culmination of the Cold War with no escalation to global armed conflict among the

world's two nuclear-armed superpowers. This scenario assesses a negative, something that did not happen. Since on both a global strategic scale and a local tactical and operational scale war did not erupt in Berlin, strategic risk management led to no intensification to major combat. The case study evaluates strategic initiatives instead of tactical actions with strategic implications as in the previous scenario. Just Competition Theory can be leveraged to help explain why risk did not escalate to open conflict.

Strategic Context

Post-World War II Europe was politically demarcated between the United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) Eastern Bloc countries (USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, and East Germany), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members (France, West Germany, Great Britain, Portugal, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Iceland, and Greece), and neutral nations (Switzerland, Sweden, Ireland, and Spain) ideologically though not militarily aligned with NATO and the West.⁴⁴⁸ Yugoslavia and Finland embraced communism and Western liberalism, respectively, but were also neutral due to exigent circumstances.⁴⁴⁹

This was the confrontational situation on the continent during the Cold War, a “global, ideological rivalry” between USSR-led Eastern Bloc countries (to become the Warsaw Pact in 1955) and the “American-dominated Free World” under the auspices of NATO (beginning in 1949).⁴⁵⁰ Strategically, the Cold War was not an overtly violent period, but rather a struggle for

⁴⁴⁸ United States Army Special Operations Command, *Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies: Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare Volume I – 1933-1962* (2012), 625.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ “A Visual Guide to the Cold War,” *Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://coldwar.unc.edu/>.

dominance in the “political, economic, military, cultural, ideological [realms], and in the Space Race.”⁴⁵¹ This does not discount the risk and violence that spawned from the contest between powers during that era. In addition to localized political violence, the Cold War also included proxy wars in Korea (1950-1953), Vietnam (1955-1975), and Afghanistan (1979-1989).⁴⁵²

Given the threat posed by the Eastern Bloc, George F. Kennan formulated a policy of containment, which underwrote America’s strategy for the duration of the Cold War (roughly 1947-1989).⁴⁵³ In what has been termed the “Long Telegram,” Kennan responded to a State Department request for an analysis of the Soviet threat. In the reply, Kennan asserted that Soviet expansionism and hostility toward the West were inevitable and would only be deterred by “forceful opposition, be it political or military.”⁴⁵⁴ Kennan recommended the United States institute a policy of “long-term patient but firm and vigilant containment.”⁴⁵⁵ Germany was a key focus area of the containment strategy. Another proxy war, outlasting each of the three violent wars mentioned above and more resembling a risk-laden strategic struggle, unfolded in Berlin.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ “Kennan and Containment, 1947,” *U.S. Department of State Archive*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/cwr/17601.htm>.

⁴⁵⁴ “Origins of the Cold War: Declarations of Cold War,” *National Park Service Minuteman Missile National Historic Site*, accessed January 27, 2023. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/cworigins-declarationsofcw.htm>.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ William Stivers and Donald A. Carter, *The City Becomes A Symbol: The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Berlin, 1945-1949* (Washington, D.C.: United States Army Center of Military History, 2017), xvi.

Regional Situation

In the years immediately following World War II (1945-1947), it became evident that Germany, and by extension Berlin would not be reunified as both NATO and the Warsaw Pact remained politically, militarily, and ideologically opposed.⁴⁵⁷ Immovable entrenchment escalated risk, and by mid-1947 NATO had consolidated capabilities and agencies in Germany into a unified structure in Frankfurt, West Germany.⁴⁵⁸ The Soviet Berlin Blockade and the responding Berlin Airlift in 1948 and 1949 were the catalysts for total fissure.⁴⁵⁹ Ultimately, East and West Germany separated into two nations and Berlin into two main sections in 1949.⁴⁶⁰

From 1949 through the end of the Cold War, Germany was divided into East and West as depicted in Figure 5.11. The United States, Great Britain, and France oversaw the West, while the USSR controlled the East.⁴⁶¹ In the East, the USSR “installed a rigidly controlled communist state;” conversely, the United States, Great Britain, and France “shared the occupation of West Germany and helped rebuild the country as a capitalist democracy.”⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 207-211.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 207-208.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 226-244.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 259.

⁴⁶¹ “The Cold War in Berlin,” *John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum*, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/jfk-in-history/the-cold-war-in-berlin>.

⁴⁶² Ibid.



Figure 5.11. A Divided Germany after World War II.

This map depicts the Allied Occupation Zones at the end of World War II. The city of Berlin was also divided between the four Allied powers.⁴⁶³ (Image credit: USASOC History Office. See Appendix G for image usage permission.)

Berlin had become a “global focal point of the Cold War.”⁴⁶⁴ By 1958, Soviet Premier Khrushchev indicated that the USSR would relinquish control of East Berlin to the communist East German government and demanded NATO powers militarily withdraw from the city.⁴⁶⁵ Khrushchev’s motivation for the demand was Soviet concerns over “the steady stream of East Germans fleeing the country for West Berlin. The outpouring of refugees was seriously

⁴⁶³ Eugene G. Piasecki, “Reminiscences of Detachment A, Berlin 1982-1984,” *United States Army Special Operations Command History Office*. Accessed January 29, 2023. https://www.arsof-history.org/articles/pdf/v2n3_detachment_a.pdf.

⁴⁶⁴ Stephanie Eisenhuth, Scott H. Krause, and Konrad H. Jarausch, “Introducing Cold War Berlin,” in *Cold War Berlin Confrontations, Cultures and Identities*, eds. Stefanie Eisenhuth, Scott H. Krause, and Konrad Hugo Jarausch, 1-12 (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021), 2.

⁴⁶⁵ James Stejskal, *Special Forces Berlin Clandestine Cold War Operations of the US Army’s Elite, 1956-1990* (Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers, 2017), 30.

debilitating to the GDR's [East Germany] economy as manpower shortages were affecting everything from manufacturing and agriculture to medical care."⁴⁶⁶

By 1961, roughly four million East Germans fled communism; using Berlin as a portal, crossing from East to West.⁴⁶⁷ This prompted the USSR and East Germany to erect a wall between the East and West Sectors of the city.⁴⁶⁸ Figure 5.12 depicts the controlled zones in the city. It is in this environment American and Allied military and diplomatic personnel stationed in Berlin struggled with the Eastern Bloc for the duration of the Cold War.

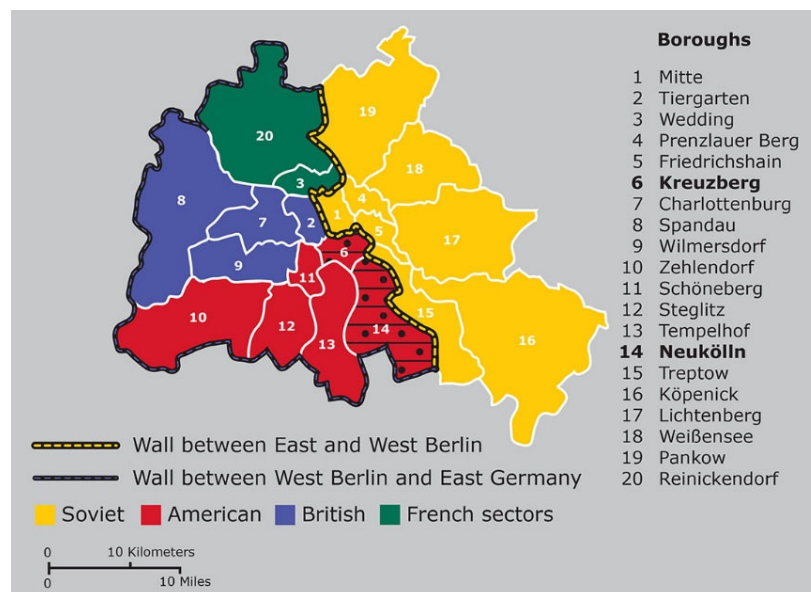


Figure 5.12. Berlin: A Microcosm of Post-World War II Germany.

This map shows the occupation zones within the city of Berlin and the boundaries of the various boroughs within the city. The Berlin Wall is shown as the prominent yellow line.⁴⁶⁹ (Image credit: USASOC History Office. See Appendix G for image usage permission.)

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 30.

⁴⁶⁷ "The Cold War in Berlin," *Kennedy Library*, accessed January 27, 2023.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Piasecki, "Reminiscences of Detachment A," accessed January 29, 2023.

Analysis of GPC: NATO Strategic Efforts in Berlin

Many security initiatives transpired over four decades of contestation in Cold War Berlin. They seem to fall into three strategic design categories: Demonstration, Interoperability, and Preparation. Demonstration denotes activities and attitudes that showed long-term resolve and commitment to preserving democratic West Germany, West Berlin, and the free West. Interoperability reflects the integrated and cooperative methods NATO allies employed in support of West Germany and its security forces. Preparation highlights the agility, deliberateness, and responsiveness of NATO elements as security conditions changed throughout the Cold War.

Demonstration

NATO's commitment to maintaining a free, capitalist, Western-friendly West Berlin was evident in several ways. One involved force commitment. For example, even as tensions and proxy wars around the globe increased in the 1960s and 1970s, America's military assurances remained strong in Germany, maintaining 180,000 personnel at minimum.⁴⁷⁰ This was no small feat considering the personnel and materiel demands of operations elsewhere in the world. Another demonstrated sign was the United States' activation and orientation of military forces in the city.

The American Berlin Brigade, "the core of the United States military presence in Berlin," was formed in late 1961 in response to the Eastern Bloc's erection of the Berlin Wall.⁴⁷¹ The

⁴⁷⁰ Igno Wolfgang Trauschweizer, "Learning with an Ally: The U.S. Army and the *Bundeswehr* in the Cold War," *The Journal of Military History* 72, no. 2 (477-508: 2008), 477.

⁴⁷¹ "The Story of the Berlin Brigade," *Army Heritage Center Foundation*, accessed January 31, 2023, <https://www.armyheritage.org/soldier-stories-information/the-story-of-the-berlin-brigade/>.

organization was “a living symbol of America’s protection for the people of free Berlin.”⁴⁷² Its mission and purpose were to demonstrate resolve through a robust and constant presence.⁴⁷³ As with the rest of the NATO effort, American forces served as a purveyor of free culture in addition to serving as a protective power.⁴⁷⁴ NATO’s commitment in Berlin throughout the Cold War, partially symbolized by the American Berlin Brigade, affirmed sustained assurance and resolve, proving it “can help win a war without ever firing a shot.”⁴⁷⁵

Interoperability

With the USSR leading a hostile front against free societies and their capitalist economies, Western powers had to consolidate their capabilities in Europe under the NATO banner to meet the strategic challenge. They also had to increase the competence of weaker members. To establish a sufficient security posture, NATO forces improved West German capability and then integrated with their forces. To achieve this NATO instituted training and equipping programs for their West German counterparts.⁴⁷⁶ Also, NATO members adapted themselves to facilitate Interoperability. For example, American Army division structures were modified to integrate with their German counterparts more effectively.⁴⁷⁷ These adjustments precipitated changes in existing operational doctrine and the development of new tactics,

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ David E. Barclay, “Division of the Spoils: Berlin as Symbol and Prize,” in *Cold War Berlin Confrontations, Cultures and Identities*, eds. Stefanie Eisenhuth, Scott H. Krause, and Konrad Hugo Jarausch, 31-44 (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021), 35.

⁴⁷⁵ “Berlin Brigade,” *Army Heritage Center*, accessed January 31, 2023.

⁴⁷⁶ Trauschweizer, “Learning with an Ally,” 477, 507-508.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 507-508.

techniques, and procedures that better enabled the integration of forces to conduct security operations.⁴⁷⁸

Preparation

In GPC, preparations for conflict with a hostile rival are an unfortunate reality. This fact is the reason *jus in contentione* is presented as an addendum to Just War Theory and not a replacement for any of its existing elements like *jus in bello* (behavior in war). Ever mindful of the reality that strategic risk could escalate to open conflict with the USSR, the Supreme Allied Commander – Europe tasked his ARSOF element, SF Berlin, to buy him time, “any time at all,” to ensure NATO forces were poised to win if war became unavoidable.⁴⁷⁹ Beginning in 1956, SF Berlin started preparing to execute unconventional warfare inside the Easter Bloc against the Soviet Union if war began.⁴⁸⁰ Throughout the thirty-four-year mission, SF Berlin developed plans and procedures to disrupt transportation and communications systems and conducted surveillance for strategic intelligence using non-technical communications methods as well as other clandestine activities to build understanding in the event of conflict escalation.⁴⁸¹

By the mid-1970s, SF Berlin had to balance a counterterrorism role with its UW mission, a trade-off dilemma common to units functioning in GPC now (see interview summary to Question 10 in the Subject Matter Expert Interview Response Test and individual responses in

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ Stejskal, *Special Forces Berlin*, x.

⁴⁸⁰ James Stejskal, “If the Cold War Goes Hot: Special Forces Berlin and Planning for Operations in East Germany, 1956-1990.” In *The Competitive Advantage: Special Operations Forces in Large-Scale Combat*, eds. Robert Toguchi and Michael Krivdo, 211-232 (Fort Leavenworth: Army University Press, 2019), 211.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., 211.

Appendix D).⁴⁸² In the words of one former member of SF Berlin, “real-world terrorism kept interfering with preparations for the theoretical wartime mission.”⁴⁸³ Part of the Preparation initiative was to maintain the agility to respond to changing conditions and requirements in the strategic environment. It also served as a deterrent to Eastern Bloc aggression, buying the time the Supreme Allied Commander – Europe sought.

Explanatory Factors: Applied *Jus In Contentione* Principles (Independent Variables)

Discernment

This is a challenging criterion to assess in the study. Since strategic success is determined by global war not occurring (assessing a negative), Western efforts did exercise some Discernment in retrospect. Building a strategy on Kennan’s long-term containment concept with forceful political and military options does not necessarily imply peace-seeking but it was realistic, and it worked. Discernment may be the most difficult principle to plan and implement. Therefore, a policy or strategy, while aggressive, must limit itself to the capabilities and durable resolve of the state and its population. If the three strategic categories identified in this case study accurately reflect the approach America and its NATO allies followed, then Western capabilities and resolve were sufficient in Cold War Berlin. Resultingly, the criterion of Discernment was met.

For the first strategic design category, Demonstration, it seems Discernment was evident in the organization of forces under the Berlin Brigade. This adroit orientation of a GPC-type force coupled with a strong message that the force was a symbol of protection deftly applied and

⁴⁸² David P. Oakley, "Special Forces Berlin: Clandestine Cold War Operations of the US Army's Elite, 1956–1990," *Parameters* 51, no. 3 (Fall, 2021: 147-148), 148.

⁴⁸³ Stejskal, *Special Forces Berlin*, 234.

amplified a resolute commitment to managing a stalemate instead of escalating to conflict. It also appears discerning that by exercising Interoperability, NATO ensured West German forces received the equipment and training necessary to be a capable combat force. This showed a commitment to employ a specified collection of forces with ample tactical capability to protect West Berlin and West Germany more broadly.

Most prominently, the West exercised Discernment in the Preparation category. Always mindful that tensions could escalate to open conflict, The Supreme Allied Commander – Europe directed SF Berlin to prepare for combat themselves and buy all NATO forces as much time as possible if war eventually came. This was a very shrewd calculation that bespoke a Realist understanding that even though a peaceful resolution was sought, war was an unfortunate possibility.

Persuasion

Certain actions in the Demonstration category show this criterion was met. The robust force level the West, in particular the United States, committed to and sustained throughout the Cold War was a strategic statement of resolve. Moreover, NATO's continuous promotion of free systems of government in its role as cultural purveyors communicated the advantages of freedom over communist tyranny. A verifiable commitment to the West German partner force under the Interoperability category was persuasive as well. By integrating and adapting force structure and doctrine to meet a potential Soviet-led advance, NATO assured both sides that it was committed to containing communist expansion in Europe. Allied activities aligned under Preparation also were persuasive in deterring escalation.

Continuous preparation for a war no one wished would come indirectly informed and most likely influenced Eastern Bloc powers that the West would be ready if escalation ensued. In

this sense, Persuasion managed strategic risk, which this work defines as the physical or moral hazard posed to a nation's safety, its interests, or its stated value propositions. All three were vulnerable during the Cold War in Berlin and beyond. So, NATO forces in Berlin carefully acted and communicated in a manner that conveyed determination, freedom, and peace. Persuasion initiatives were shaped by a discerned strategic vision of containing communism, which highlights an overlap of the first and second principles.

Persistence

All three strategic categories are profiles in Persistence. A four-decade commitment to maintaining security is a clear example of satisfying this criterion. By keeping a baseline force threshold of 180,000 service members, the United States persisted in its goal of preserving security and containing communism on the continent. This was a strategic effort under Demonstration. Continued training, equipping, and exercising with West German forces for the duration of the Cold War was an initiative under Interoperability. The sustained mission of preparing for war by SF Berlin highlights persistent efforts of Preparation.

Persistence is a matter of resolute commitment often over an unknown timeframe. While perhaps easier to identify in historical cases than Discernment, it seems more unstable over long periods of time. Persistence requires sustained political and moral will from nations that apply the principle. This determination was evident during the Cold War in Berlin in all three strategic design categories. By necessity, Persistence requires discerning guidance to shape a possible long-term effort to achieve strategic objectives. Also, persistent efforts at Persuasion are necessary to sustain a constant level of actions and statements informed by discerned strategic goals.

Consistency

NATO Demonstration, Interoperability, and Preparation all reveal a commitment to this criterion. Western allies consistently promoted Western values. They consistently maintained an organized force presence intent on containing communism. Furthermore, NATO consistently prepared for conflict even when required to adjust their tactical approaches as conditions changed. A good example of this is how SF Berlin forces maintained their focus and preparation for UW while also adding CT to their portfolio.

This case study reveals an overlap among the first four principles at the strategic level of engagement and risk analysis. The persistent application of force and the constant pursuit of objectives and intensity seem codependent. Constant application of force absent the maintenance of objectives over time could dilute strategic effects. This means that effort must be associated with a discernable objective that is constantly and persuasively amplified and pursued. Even when SF Berlin added the task of CT to its operational menu, it was still able to maintain its focus on Preparation, albeit with more difficulty, because its force remained rather constant, as did its objectives and tasks (preparation for conflict).

Collaboration

Collaboration was present as a matter of Demonstration. The very existence of NATO, emerging shortly after World War II, signified a treaty-bound pact of collaborative resistance to the spread of communism and the USSR's attempts at expansion and greater control. The principle was also apparent in NATO efforts to train, equip, and integrate with West German forces in Berlin and West Germany. Interoperability efforts intend to collaborate with partner forces, both the powerful and those ascending in capability. NATO powers collaborated in managing security in West Germany and the Western sector of Berlin.

Collaboration overlaps with the four previous principles discussed in this case. A discerning commitment to stalling communist advances informed the development of actions and themes to persuade in favor of freedom. This persuasion would not have been possible, much less successful, had those efforts not been persistent over the course of the Cold War. The strategic purpose also remained the same, which required NATO to maintain a consistent level of resources and actions. Without a spirit of collaborative effort, any program meeting the previous criteria would have likely failed.

Integration

Though not explicitly uncovered in this case study, it can be implied that this criterion was met. Kennan's recommendation in the Long Telegram called for a sustained effort at containment. In mentioning both diplomatic and military options, Kennan signaled that more than one element of national power was needed in the strategy. By necessity, those elements integrated to contain the USSR. Admittedly, interagency coordination and integrated action is very challenging. There were undoubtedly instances where diplomatic, defense, and intelligence communities did not cooperate fully; however, they all adhered to a single strategic vision, the containment of communism. As such, this criterion was met regarding grand strategy and policy. This principle is also informed by Discernment, and it is essential if a nation wants to successfully commit to the other four *jus in contentione* principles.

Strategic Risk Outcomes (Dependent Variable)

The Berlin Wall stood for over 28 years as the most visible icon of the Cold War. This 14-foot high, 105-mile-long barrier surrounded West Berlin. It was erected by communist controlled East Germany to keep its citizens from escaping to the West. On

November 9, 1989, the world witnessed the sudden and unexpected collapse of the Berlin Wall.⁴⁸⁴

This statement summarizes the beginning of the end of Cold War struggles in Berlin. The outcome in Berlin was a harbinger of the end of the Cold War and the fate of the USSR-led Eastern Bloc. In 1991, the USSR dissolved, and fifteen independent states emerged from it.⁴⁸⁵ The Eastern Bloc ceased to exist. The case study on operations in Berlin during the Cold War reveals that *jus in contentione* principles can be used to explain NATO activities and the strategic outcomes. There are five lessons to be drawn from this analysis using Just Competition principles as explanatory factors.

First, inserting the principles, in this case, provides a structured theoretical framework for understanding strategy in a “what happened” assessment as opposed to a “what if” exercise. Just as in the first case, overlaying *jus in contentione* on Cold War Berlin assists in categorizing, organizing, and interpreting an important historical event in a manner useful for current and future strategy and policy development. Furthermore, as explanatory factors, the six Just Competition principles offer a way to assess outcomes phenomenologically. By binning assessments in the six principles, it may be easier to compare the results of numerous case studies categorically, drawing even more relevant and useful lessons.

For example, in the two cases analyzed, it was observed that effective use of the principle of Discernment should lead to developing specific and achievable objectives and the assignment of appropriate force structures to accomplish them. If this similar lesson can be drawn from two

⁴⁸⁴ “The Day the Wall Came Down,” *George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum*, accessed February 17, 2023, <https://www.bush41.org/visit/grounds>.

⁴⁸⁵ “End of the Cold War,” *Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, accessed February 17, 2023, <https://coldwar.unc.edu/theme/end-of-the-cold-war/>.

vastly different operations conducted in different strategic contexts it is likely that the same analytical exercise can be applied to numerous other case studies regardless of their strategic circumstances to confirm or even challenge the lessons learned in these two cases.

Second, in addition to serving as explanatory factors for Cold War Berlin, analysis using the six principles clarifies some commonalities between the Cold War and GPC in contemporary engagements. Like in the Cold War, GPC's primary strategic actors are nuclear-armed regional or global powers. Also, both scenarios require a security posture that balances containing aggression on the part of a state actor with less intense (but no less important) operational requirements. Both during the Cold War and today in GPC, terrorism must be addressed while concurrently engaging adversary states below the threshold of armed conflict.

Third, *jus in contentione* seems to be effective in helping manage strategic risk. A discerning strategy calls for deliberate and effusive influence, consistency, sustainability, cooperation, and effective interagency relationships. These were demonstrated in this case. The Strategic Risk Assessment further established the application of those principles successfully managed strategic risk.

Fourth, since *jus in contentione* appears to be an effective tool in understanding outcomes from historical non-combat case studies it should also be a valuable method of analysis to develop and validate new security plans, policies, and strategies. Above, the analysis of comparative hypotheses testing shows that Just Competition principles are theoretically appropriate for current and future planning and policy development. This case study shows they are applicable for explaining outcomes of historical events. This adds credence to the testing results.

Fifth, these principles tend to overlap, not in a redundant way but in a mutually reinforcing one. Though that phenomenon is not observed in the first case study, it does seem evident, at least at the strategic level, that *jus in contentione* is a cohesive grouping of interrelated elements that provides a workable theory of Just Competition. This lesson issues confidence in the viability of *jus in contentione* and calls for further empirical research and testing in subsequent works.

Overall Strategic Risk Assessment

Physical (Conflict and Security)

Ultimately, the case in Berlin and beyond during the Cold War was successful in managing strategic physical risk. Even though proxy wars (hot and cold) were fought during the period, the contest between the Eastern Bloc and NATO never escalated to a global war. Some may argue that localized conflict and the massive amount of violence that occurred in those wars would render strategic physical risk management a failure. There is some legitimacy in that position. Conflict and security were unsuccessfully managed in certain regions. Yet, the USSR never consolidated Berlin under a communist East German government. Ultimately, it failed to proliferate its political and economic ideology globally and to even sustain itself. The results were due at least in part to a strategic effort by the West that can be described using the six principles of *jus in contentione*.

Moral (Peace and Justice)

Strategic moral risk in Cold War Berlin was successfully managed based on the outcomes of the three strategic design categories. Actions and statements within the Demonstration category constantly promoted containment and the maintenance of peace while amplifying the more just governance and economic ideologies of democracy and capitalism. Regarding the

Interoperability category, NATO forces organized and oriented their collective will and capacity to contain Soviet-inspired aggression against the West. After Germany was split, East Germans recognized the moral superiority of the West and many fled communism, using Berlin as a portal of escape. Ultimately, the Preparation category resulted in ensuring a Cold War instead of an active, hot one. By preparing for war, aggression was deterred, and peace became possible after forty years of ideological, political, and military tension. Table 5.22 depicts variable relationships.

Table 5.22. Cold War Berlin Variable Relationships

Strategic Design: 1) Demonstration 2) Interoperability 3) Preparation	
Principle (Independent)	Strategic Risk Outcomes (Dependent)
Discernment: Organization of Forces (SD 1 & 2), Combat Preparation (SD 3)	P (Conflict): Strategic objectives pursued without escalation to WWII.
Persuasion: Communicated Commitment (SD 1 & 2), Indirect Influence Through Preparation (SD 3)	P (Conflict/Security): No escalation.
Persistence: Four-Decade Effort (SD 1, 2, & 3)	M (Justice): Projected commitment to Western Values
Consistency: Consistent Western Values Messaging (SD 1&2). Constant training (SD 2 &3)	M (Justice/Peace): Dissolution of USSR/Eastern Bloc.
Collaboration: NATO establishment and operationalization (SD 1, 2, &3)	P: (Security/Conflict): USSR capacity reduced.
Integration: Long Telegram (SD 1, 2, & 3)	M (Justice): East Germans flee.
Overall Strategic Risk Assessment	
Physical: Globally, yes. Major conflict did not occur. Security maintained. Regionally, no. Risk threshold exceeded in hot proxy wars.	
Moral: Yes. Global containment ultimately worked. Unjust Communism suppressed; USSR dissolved. Peace maintained.	

Compatibility Analysis: Classical Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist Theories

Four comparative hypotheses tests and two case study analyses indicate the viability of *jus in contentione* as a companion to *jus in bello*. This assessment offers an initial indicator of how compatible Just Competition Theory is with Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism.

Classical Realism Qualitative Compatibility Assessment

As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, Realism is concerned with power, the primacy of the state in international relations, and the rational study of security issues and key actors to determine the most objective policies in pursuit of security interests.⁴⁸⁶ It aims to fully account for security circumstances as they are and places a check on ambitious policies and over-estimations of friendly and adversary intentions and abilities.⁴⁸⁷ This view “instills a pragmatic appreciation of the role of power but also warns that states will suffer if they overreach.”⁴⁸⁸ It relies principally on military power and diplomacy in pursuit of security.⁴⁸⁹ Realism seeks to objectively understand the conditions under which policy and action will be implemented, applying the intellectual elements of force, balance of power, national interest, and ethical standards.⁴⁹⁰ Realists emphasize ethics in statesmanship “because it leads to proper prudence” in

⁴⁸⁶ J. Samuel Barkin, “Realist Constructivism,” *International Studies Review* 5, no. 3 (2003: 325-342), 327-328.

⁴⁸⁷ Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories,” *Foreign Policy* 145, no. 145 (2004: 53-62), 54.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 59.

⁴⁹⁰ Gad Elashkar Ayman, “Realism between Theory and Reality in International Relations,” *Acta Universitatis Danubius.Relationes Internationales* 13, no. 1 (2020: 78-90), 81.

balancing national interests with available power and the risk of unwanted conflict.⁴⁹¹ Realist ethical judgments are made for practical reasons of interest, not moral probity.⁴⁹²

Practicality leads Realists to apply measured force to achieve specific objectives in support of national security.⁴⁹³ The state, exercising all elements of national power, is the sole guarantor of security.⁴⁹⁴ The realist fixation on power to achieve security emphasizes avoiding or limiting conflict (strategic physical risk).⁴⁹⁵ Though security is the prime motivation for Realists, they also leverage power to accomplish other national interests as determined by the state and its citizenry.⁴⁹⁶ Realism's emphasis on state self-interest does not prioritize partnerships that endure beyond the achievement of national interests.⁴⁹⁷ Realists acknowledge the extreme difficulty in understanding the motives and behaviors of outside actors, rendering mutual trust (particularly with competitor nations) unlikely.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹¹ Sten Rynning, "Realism and the Common Security and Defence Policy," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, no. 1 (2011: 23-42), 35-36.

⁴⁹² Michael Jackson and Thomas Moore, "Machiavelli's Walls: The Legacy of Realism in International Relations Theory," *International Politics, Supplemental Special Issue: Machiavelli and International Relations*: 53, no. 4 (07, 2016: 447-65), 447.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ Inanna Hamati-Ataya, "Knowing and Judging in International Relations Theory: Realism and the Reflexive Challenge," *Review of International Studies* 36, no. 4 (2010: 1079-1101), 1085-1086.

⁴⁹⁵ Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, 9.

⁴⁹⁶ Ayman, "Realism," 88-89.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., 81.

⁴⁹⁸ Sebastian Rosato, "The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers," *International Security* 39, no. 3 (2014: 48-88), 48.

Discernment

Realism partially applies the criterion of Discernment. It fails to equally account for all strategic risk calculations established in Table 5.8 (physical: conflict and security; moral: justice and peace). Realists consider security and conflict (physical risk) of paramount importance. Moral risk, the pursuit of justice and peace, is secondary. Discernment requires the management of moral risk equally vital to physical risk.

Persuasion

Realism fully applies the principle of Persuasion. Realist policy and strategy are persuasive in that they act in accordance with stated goals of security. Realist approaches limit initiatives within the capabilities a state can realistically maintain over time; therefore, it reduces the risk of overpromising action or issuing unenforceable warnings.

Persistence

Realism fully applies the criterion of Persistence because of its emphasis on organizing efforts and projecting power to maintain security. By objectively assessing international security situations and developing rational responses to them, policymakers and strategists commit to the constant application of security initiatives to overcome strategic challenges and mitigate strategic physical risk.

Consistency

Realism partially applies the criterion of Consistency. Realist policy and strategy will be consistent if the capability to enforce them remains sufficient. Leveraging international partners and institutions to collectively apply soft power is a method to maintain initiatives consistently, but the Realists' distrust of institutions and partnerships has great potential to hinder assistance.

If a nation does not enlist the assistance of partners and institutions due to mistrust it risks the ability to be consistent as its capacity and resources become strained.

Collaboration

Realism partially applies the criterion of Collaboration. This principle requires a state actor to commit to fostering international partnerships and improving credibility with external populations to achieve mutually beneficial security goals. Realists do not discount partnerships but are reticent to maintain them if they deviate from national interests. Realists do not consider external popular support an overriding concern, but, as with partnerships, a Realist approach will cultivate goodwill as part of a strategy if it supports a national interest.

Integration

Realism fully applies the principle of Integration. The combination of diplomacy, economic power, and military force demonstrates a strong commitment to integrated security policy and operations. In Chapter Two, the elements of national power are identified as diplomacy, information, military power, economics, finance, intelligence, and legal affairs. A Realist approach will integrate all available capabilities categorized under these elements of power to achieve national interests.

Liberalism Qualitative Compatibility Assessment

Liberalism emphasizes “the cooperative potential of mature democracies” working in concert in a “crusade against tyrannies,” preferentially through peaceful means.⁴⁹⁹ It emphasizes the use of soft power to spread democracy.⁵⁰⁰ Strong economic and diplomatic international

⁴⁹⁹ Snyder, “Rival Theories,” 55.

⁵⁰⁰ Erickson, “Grand Theory,” 99.

partnerships among democratic nations are essential for the advancement of democracy and for securing global peace.⁵⁰¹ These partnerships can be bilateral or multilateral.⁵⁰² In the Liberal view, the strength of partnerships derives from “the most fundamental influence on international cooperation..., the level of convergence of national preferences,” which emanates from the domestic and foreign interests partnering states have in common.⁵⁰³

Liberals pursue a liberal world order that is established through internationalism, imperialism, and humanitarianism.⁵⁰⁴ Internationalism is a commitment to “the body of legal rules needed to promote peace and prosperity” in addition to “free trade and self-determination.”⁵⁰⁵ Imperialism, often “misrepresented as antithetical to liberalism,” has historically been “a means by which liberal ideas of markets, individualism and scientific rationality have been socialized” beyond their Western origins.⁵⁰⁶ Humanitarianism is concerned with human rights and the “Responsibility to Protect (RoP)” vulnerable persons for ethical purposes often beyond national interests.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰¹ Charles A. Kupchan and Peter L. Trubowitz, “Dead Center: The Demise of Liberal Internationalism in the United States,” *International Security* 32, no. 2 (2007: 7-44), 15-16.

⁵⁰² David A. Lake, Lisa L. Martin, and Thomas Risse, “Challenges to the Liberal Order: Reflections on International Organization,” *International Organization* 75, no. 2 (2021: 225-257), 227-229.

⁵⁰³ Andrew Moravcsik, “Explaining International Human Rights Regimes,” *European Journal of International Relations* 1, no. 2 (1995: 157-189), 158.

⁵⁰⁴ Constance Duncombe and Tim Dunne, “After Liberal World Order,” *International Affairs (London)* 94, no. 1 (2018: 25-42), 25.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

This liberal order is challenged by rising states such as China that are less reticent to leverage hard (military) power to change the status quo.⁵⁰⁸ Though Liberalism does not eliminate hard power from consideration, the aspiration to spread democracy and achieve lasting peace through means of soft power (diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and economic expansion) risks not incorporating all available hard and soft power capabilities and resources appropriately to face potential adversaries.⁵⁰⁹ Liberal policy advocates tend to “imagine a global order that promotes peace, security, empathy and opportunity through genuinely collaborative and consensual practices by states, NGOs and international institutions” rather than through hard power.⁵¹⁰

Discernment

Liberalism partially applies to the criterion of Discernment. Liberalism seeks peace, justice, and security without conflict, but is insufficient in discerning how to address some real challenges. While laudable, favoring the application of cooperative soft power (diplomacy, humanitarianism, and economic expansion) over military force imbalances the Liberal approach and fails to address material threats from competitor states. Nations such as China fully employ all elements of national power with equal favor to advance state interests. This will militarily overmatch a Liberal approach of “imagining a global order that promotes peace” instead of countering real, existential threats to order.

⁵⁰⁸ Pak K. Lee, Anisa Heritage, and Zhouchen Mao, "Contesting Liberal Internationalism: China's Renegotiation of World Order," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 1 (2020: 52-60), 52-53.

⁵⁰⁹ Giulio M. Gallarotti, "The Changing? Face of Power in International Relations, 1979-2019," *Journal of Political Power* 14, no. 1 (2021: 209-234), 212.

⁵¹⁰ Rodger A. Payne, "Cooperative Security: Grand Strategy Meets Critical Theory?" *Millennium* 40, no. 3 (2012: 605-624), 624.

Persuasion

Liberalism partially applies the criterion of Persuasion. Liberalism attempts to organize capabilities with partners to achieve stated goals of peace and security; however, a Liberal approach will suffer from not fully matching actions and statements if it cannot underwrite its goals with sufficient power to achieve and enforce them. If a strategic security goal is to advance democracy in Country X to improve security in Region Y, attempts at persuasive dialogue will be overbalanced. A commitment of necessary force from all elements of national power (if it has it) is required to establish and guarantee democracy; otherwise, the initiative is only aspirational, not achievable or enforceable.

Persistence

Liberalism partially applies the principle of Persistence. This principle calls for the constant application of appropriate power (or force) for specific situations. Liberalism constantly emphasizes the value of globally integrated economic relationships and the efficacy of international institutions, but that arrangement is not appropriate for all circumstances and risks. Liberalism's overvaluation of cooperative soft power undermines a commitment to Persistence. Liberalism does not refuse to accept military engagement, intelligence, or other coercive forms of "hard" national power, but they are not equally weighted considerations.

Consistency

Liberalism partially applies the criterion of Consistency. It promotes aspirational strategies and policies that rely on the potential for nations to work together in pursuit of global peace. It commits to goals that are unachievable based on capacity limitations. Liberal policy objectives that are too grand (e.g., establishing global democracy) exceed the resource capacity

of one nation and rely heavily on commitments from partners, which are often unpredictable. If a strategy or policy is only partially discernable, persuasive, and persistent, Consistency suffers.

Collaboration

Liberalism fully applies the criterion of Collaboration. Liberals are committed to an internationalist approach in pursuit of peace and prosperity through free markets and trade. Its emphasis on self-determination through humanitarianism, internationalism, and imperialist advancement of individualism indicates Liberal initiatives create goodwill and credibility with populations that benefit from them.

Integration

Liberalism fully applies the criterion of Integration. Liberals are mainly interested in integrating elements of national power to advance democracy and build stronger international institutions. A preference for soft power may not necessarily translate into an unwillingness to apply hard power. This preference may affect Discernment because a Liberal policy will not incorporate hard power sufficiently at the outset, but this does not suggest a Liberal strategy will not use hard power when it deems it essential to achieving global security and stability goals.

Constructivism Qualitative Compatibility Assessment

Constructivism, a form of Idealism, “stresses that a consensus on values must underpin any stable political order, yet it also recognizes that forging such a consensus often requires ideological struggle with the potential for conflict.”⁵¹¹ At its core, Constructivism portends that ideas, collective values, culture, and social identities shape international politics.⁵¹²

⁵¹¹ Snyder, “Rival Theories,” 55.

⁵¹² Ibid., 59.

Constructivists are more interested in the social meanings and constructions informing typical international relations variables like military power, trade, international institutions, and domestic politics.⁵¹³ They view these factors as by-products of history, ideas, norms, and beliefs that influence a state's outlook and behavior.⁵¹⁴

Less structured than either Realism or Liberalism, Constructivism is an epistemological approach that views international relations problems and solutions as social constructions influenced by ideology, identity, and communal interests.⁵¹⁵ Additionally, Constructivists tend to focus on what ought to be rather than what actually is.⁵¹⁶ As a result, they prioritize identity and ideology over rational analysis to understand the motivations of international actors.⁵¹⁷ Constructivist analysis values “the social power of practices and habits – how states automatically perceive, feel, and act without conscious reflection on either costs or benefits.”⁵¹⁸ Systemically, Constructivism is interested in a state's identity in the context of its interaction with other states.⁵¹⁹ Socially, it focuses on the role of the masses in internal state affairs and world politics.⁵²⁰

⁵¹³ Anne-Marie Slaughter, “International Relations, Principal Theories,” in *Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law*, ed. R. Wolfrum, 1-7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Barkin, “Realist Constructivism,” 324-326.

⁵¹⁶ Martin Weber, “Between ‘isses’ and ‘oughts’: IR Constructivism, Critical Theory, and the Challenge of Political Philosophy,” *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 2 (2014: 516-543), 525.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., 517.

⁵¹⁸ Ted Hopf, “Common-Sense Constructivism and Hegemony in World Politics,” *International Organization* 67, no. 2 (2013: 317-354), 318.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ Ibid.

Discernment

Constructivism partially applies the criterion of Discernment. Its focus on group identity and shared beliefs indicates a Constructivist approach would base policy and strategy on protecting and advancing them, a clear and tangible goal. This would apply to any threat, and the use of force most likely would be a consideration. Problems arise in analyzing a possible adversary's motives and intentions though. If Constructivists assess a potential threat based on its ideology and identity and not its economic or political aspirations, the probability of misjudging motives and intentions will increase.

Persuasion

Constructivism fully applies the criterion of Persuasion. A group of people committed to an ideology and each other will communicate, perhaps indirectly through collective behavior, a form of solidarity that would-be friends and foes can recognize. The security policy objective in the Constructivist view is the protection of the group; therefore, rhetoric and action would both be used to achieve that goal.

Persistence

Constructivism partially applies the criterion of Persistence. There is no reason to believe security policy shaped by Constructivism would not seek to apply power to achieve peacetime objectives such as the protection of an ideological or ethnic group. However, since consensus is elemental in Constructivism, it probably suffers from the inability to maintain collective will.

Consistency

Constructivism partially applies the criterion of consistency. It is consistent in attempting to maintain its objectives of security for an ideologically aligned or ethnic group. Constructivism falters in the reticence to partner with groups that do not share ideology or other forms of

sameness. This undermines the ability to muster additional power from other nations. Without sufficient power, Consistency cannot be guaranteed. Assessments of Realism and Liberalism show that Consistency will not exceed Discernment. This holds for Constructivism as well.

Collaboration

Constructivism partially applies the criterion of Collaboration. Partnerships are fostered through identity and ideology and security is understood through that prism. Collaborative efforts will prioritize like-mindedness, ethnicity, and religious affiliations over rational security analysis. For Collaboration to be successful, trust must be present. Trust emanates from forms of sameness and may not properly evaluate other rational interests. This may preclude a nation from collaborating with another who has a non-ideological shared security interest that could assist in achieving it with additional power.

Integration

Constructivism fully applies the criterion of Collaboration. As an identity-based collectivist ideology, it emphasizes cooperation, especially within the boundaries of a group. This cooperative approach is committed to survival and protection. It accepts that conflict may arise. Constructivist policies and strategies will integrate all elements of power necessary to secure the group.

Initial Conclusions on Compatibility

The qualitative assessment of international relations grand theories shows that Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism all incorporate principles of Just Competition Theory in varying degrees. Table 5.21 details the distributed applicability of the principles to the schools of thought. Values of zero to two are used to indicate non-application, partial, or full application.

Table 5.23. Qualitative Comparison of International Relations Theories

Principles of <i>jus in contentione</i>	International Relations Theories			
	Christian Realism	Realism	Liberalism	Constructivism
Discernment	2	1	1	1
Persuasion	2	2	1	2
Persistence	2	2	1	1
Consistency	2	1	1	1
Collaboration	2	1	2	1
Integration	2	2	2	2
Value	12	9	8	8

Value Ratings: 0 - Does not apply. 1 - Partially applies. 2 - Fully applies.

Christian Realism is the only international relations theory that fully applies all six principles. However, this does not suggest the other theories are not useful or that they are disconnected from each other. Each theory has valuable attributes for analyzing international political phenomena.⁵²¹ For example, both Liberalism and Constructivism share a belief that the world can achieve lasting peace by spreading the same ideas and institutions that ultimately led to the relatively peaceful end of the Cold War.⁵²² Realism and Liberalism are often found to conjointly shape United States foreign policy, emphasizing the need for economic and military “hard power” balanced by promoting democracy abroad, encouraging multilateralism, and strengthening international institutions.⁵²³ Realism and Constructivism share an understanding that rational inquiry of objective phenomena is the basis of analysis (Realism) but history,

⁵²¹ Slaughter, “Principal Theories,” 6-7.

⁵²² Miller and Saltzman, “Beyond the Three ‘Isms’”, 394.

⁵²³ Ericksson, “Grand Theory,” 99.

ideology, and other unobservable ideations like morality must be considered as well (Constructivism).⁵²⁴

A reason why *jus in contentione* is uniquely compatible with Christian Realism may be because the nature of Christian Realism is more comprehensive than the leading schools of thought. This is because it incorporates elements of each. Reason and aspiration balance each other in Christian Realism. The assessment data consolidated in Table 5.21 seems accurate, but further analysis of *jus in contentione* applied to the other theories in later studies may lead to refined conclusions. The results of comparative hypotheses testing and the case study analyses are again validated in this qualitative compatibility assessment. Just Competition Theory is a viable method to develop and analyze Christian Realist security policy and strategy.

Research Summary and Findings

Content analysis evaluated the historical prevalence of military action short of war, the strategic physical and moral risks the United States faces in the contemporary operational environment, the utility in presenting a just theory of action under non-conflict conditions, and the insights of professionals with expansive knowledge on components of the research. Two theories on just military action, traditional Just War Theory's *jus in bello* (H₀) and Just Competition Theory, or *jus in contentione* (H₁), were subjected to comparative hypotheses testing. The results determined that both hypotheses are valid depending on the strategic context, war or GPC, but the principles of Just Competition Theory from H₁ best answer the Central Research Question.

⁵²⁴ Barkin, "Realist Constructivism," 332.

Content analysis of documents affirms that most historical United States military deployments (rough two-thirds) are non-combat-oriented. This further amplifies the need to seek or develop a theory to govern just action in GPC, which would be a companion approach to existing Just War Theory principles. Additional document analysis provides a conceptual force (ARSOF) and activities (irregular warfare) to test and model a theory of Just Competition. Analysis of subject matter expert interview data supports the research contention that strategic risk management is a vital aspect of military operations in GPC and the forces and activities chosen for analysis and testing in this project are appropriate for introducing Just Competition Theory.

The four stages of comparative hypotheses testing and the two case studies with accompanying strategic risk tests validate Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*) as a companion to Just War Theory's *jus in bello* for managing strategic physical and moral risk through responsible action in GPC. The qualitative assessment of Just Competition principles applied to Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism distinguish *jus in contentione* as a uniquely Christian Realist method of analysis. These determinations require a modification of the praxis model (Figure 5.13) to provide the best solution for the Central Question and to offer an adequate response to the puzzle of why there was no proliferated theory of Just Competition despite most historical military actions falling into a non-conflictual category. Selecting the preferable hypothesis in the context of this research also informs the project's thesis statement. Specific to this research H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

To further empirically evaluate H_1 , two historical case studies apply the six principles of *jus in contentione* as explanatory factors for the empirical strategic risk outcomes. The first case study surveys JSOTF-P's mission in Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines. Analysis of this

case finds that *jus in contentione* principles (independent variables) resulted in managing strategic risk outcomes (dependent variable) without escalating the operation to open conflict. Though one principle (integration) was not fully implemented, risk still did not rise to that threshold. This case assesses the strategic implications of tactical activity in the Southern Philippines. The second case study applies the six principles to policy and strategy design in Berlin during the Cold War. This study finds that principles of *jus in contentione* (independent variables) were effectively implemented to manage strategic risk outcomes (dependent variable) in a manner that avoided global war between two nuclear superpowers while still achieving the strategic goal of containing the global spread of Communism. Long-term containment was aggressive and successful. The six principles help organize outcomes in a logical framework for analysis.

If *jus in contentione* can explain historical cases and if the theory can help identify and then transpose successful lessons to current strategic problems, then it follows that these principles can aid in formulating future policy and strategy. Beyond policy and strategy development, *jus in contentione* could also be useful in framing rules of engagement (ROE). These are normally defined as “directives issued by competent military authority that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered.”⁵²⁵ Adapted to GPC, ROE informed by Just Competition principles would regulate competitive military action for specific situations, limiting engagement and exposure to the achievement of specified objectives. The assessment of

⁵²⁵ Department of Defense, *Dictionary*, 188.

jus in contentione against competing international relations theories distinguishes this method as a uniquely Christian Realist approach.

The comprehensive research, analysis, comparative hypotheses testing, causal analysis of historical case studies, and compatibility assessment with the three primary international relations theories offer good evidence that Just Competition Theory should be considered as a Christian Realist method of designing and influencing policy and strategy in GPC to manage strategic risk. This introductory work is only the initial step. By offering a complimentary concept as an addendum to Just War Theory, this effort requires further scholarly examination to confirm, modify, and challenge its efficacy. As the preliminary stage of theory development, this project finds that Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*) is worthy of further scrutiny and discourse. The modified praxis model in Figure 5.13 signifies the current disposition of the theory.

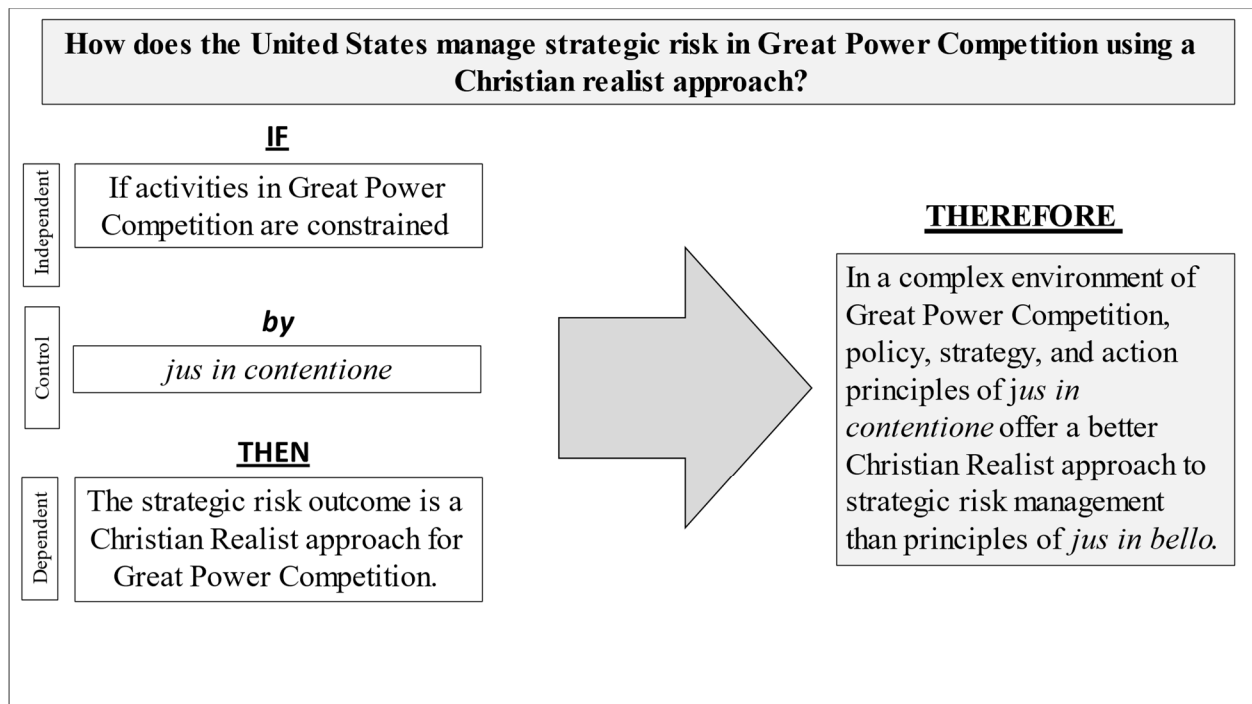


Figure 5.13. Modified Christian Realist Competition Risk Management Praxis Model

Thesis

As shown, the activities informed and constrained by *jus in contentione* principles (independent variables) yield an empirical strategic risk outcome (dependent variable). The risk categories for assessing the risk outcome were developed in the strategic risk assessment. This is a Christian Realist approach to strategic risk management in GPC. The thesis is: In a complex environment of Great Power Competition, principles of *jus in contentione* offer a better Christian Realist approach to strategic risk management than the principles of *jus in bello*.

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Chapter Six: Conclusion

Recapitulation

The Central Research Question asks: How does the United States better manage strategic risk in Great Power Competition using a Christian Realist approach, through *jus in bello* or *jus in contentione*? Informed by inductive analysis of existing literature, this is a revised version of the original, broadly focused question: how can Realism manage risk in GPC? The two options, formulated into competing hypotheses, the emphasis on Christian Realism, and the specification of strategic risk were incorporated into the question based on some observations in the literature: Christian Realism is a more responsible and just approach; there is a strong connection between Christian Realism and the Just War Tradition; GPC is the increasing focus and method of employment for nations, particularly the United States; risk should be evaluated at the strategic level; and, Just War Theory's principles of just action (*jus in bello*) do not address military action in GPC. Following grounded theory methodology, the research inductively determined the third observation represented a gap in existing literature. There seems to be a need for a theory to specifically guide just action in GPC. The six principles of Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*) were formulated and introduced because of this gap.

During content analysis, Congressional Research Service reporting was evaluated to determine United States military deployment frequency and type, with emphasis on Twenty-First Century employment. The six most recent National Security Strategies were analyzed to determine strategic risk values, both physical and moral, codified in a strategic risk assessment. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) and Irregular Warfare (IW) doctrine, law, and policy were studied to determine force and activity suitability for GPC. Finally, interview transcripts

from thirty-four subject matter experts were synthesized, validating both the risk values and ARSOF and IW suitability for GPC derived from document analysis.

Next, four hypothesis tests were conducted to compare and select either *jus in bello* or *jus in contentione* as the best guide for action in GPC. The four content analysis components provided the data sets for structuring the tests. *Jus in contentione* was selected in all four tests. Both *jus in contentione* and *jus in bello* were selected in the third test.

Two case studies were then analyzed by applying *jus in contentione* principles. The principles were the independent variables. The strategic risk outcome in each case was the dependent variable. It is a binary measurement: yes (application of principles was successful and war did not occur) or no (application was unsuccessful and war did occur). In both case studies, strategic risk was maintained below the threshold of major conflict or war. After establishing that *jus in contentione* is a valid theory, a compatibility assessment with the three main international relations schools of thought (Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism) was conducted. It indicated that *jus in contentione* is a Christian Realist approach that incorporates some attributes of the three main theories.

Data analysis, hypotheses testing, case study analysis, and a compatibility assessment with the three primary international relations schools of thought yield the following: *jus in contentione* is measurable; it is more suitable for GPC than the existing *jus in bello* formulation, but it is not a replacement for it; it shapes the planning and conduct of security activity to maintain strategic risk below the threshold of war while still accomplishing security objectives; and, it is a Christian Realist theory that incorporates most tenets of Classical Realism and some moral attributes of both Liberalism and Constructivism. This theory seems not only viable but also preferable since it is designed to specifically address conditions in GPC with just policy,

strategy, and action. It is a unique and necessary corollary to the Just War Tradition, applicable to the predominant strategic environmental condition the United States face today. For that reason, it should be considered for implementation by United States security strategists and policy-makers.

Findings

After reviewing and thematically synthesizing hundreds of academic and government publications, a puzzling phenomenon emerged. Historically, most United States publicly announced military deployments are non-conflict engagements. Yet, ostensibly, when considering Christian approaches to moral military action, only principles of *jus in bello* (discrimination, proportionality, necessity) are available as a frame of assessment and reference. It seemed a different approach under the rubric of Christian Realism needed to be formulated and evaluated for efficacy. Thus, the project introduces a novel concept, Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*), as a possible addendum for guiding just action below the threshold of armed conflict.

Just Competition Theory is conceived as six equally weighted principles of just action in GPC: discernment, persuasion, persistence, consistency, collaboration, and integration. Discernment is the deliberate employment of specific forces to achieve limited objectives that promote justice and peace while avoiding unnecessary or unintentional escalation of tension with rival powers. Persuasion is the alignment of actions and statements to influence populations and states to support national goals. Persistence is the constant application of appropriate force to achieve strategic objectives. Consistency is the maintenance of objectives, efforts, intensity, and messaging to promote national interests and partnerships. Collaboration is the commitment to nurturing international partnerships and credibility with populations to achieve compatible goals.

Integration is the reliance on cooperative interagency and interdisciplinary partnerships within a country's national security enterprise.

These principles help orient action toward specific objectives while engaging peer and near-peer adversaries without escalating tension (a product of risk and intensity) to armed conflict. Just War Theory assumes conflict (even though it holds a presumption against violence) and thereby applies principles of just decisions (*jus ad bellum*) leading to war and just behavior during war. Just Competition Theory is formulated to guide planning and actions to manage strategic risk in a way that avoids war. The prospect of *jus in contentione* applies to many United States military engagements, especially in the Twenty-First Century, better than *jus in bello*. It was decided early on that *jus ad bellum* should not be evaluated since the purpose of the project is to manage strategic risk to avoid conflict, not justly determine when to engage in it.

The puzzling matter of why no theory of just action in GPC is prevalent despite most military action occurring under those conditions shapes the research strategy. To address the puzzle, data was collected, analyzed, and tested on the two hypotheses:

H₀: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in bello*.

H₁: Christian Realism can best guide strategic risk management in GPC by employing principles of *jus in contentione*.

The two hypotheses are presented as possible answers. The first (H₀) asserts that principles of *jus in bello* (behavior in war) is the best Christian Realist guide to strategic management in GPC. The second (H₁) claims principles of *jus in contentione* (actions in competition or struggle) offer the better approach. As the findings show, H₁ is the most suitable answer to the question and a solution to the empirical puzzle. This is determined using grounded

theory inductive methodology including content analysis, data synthesis, comparative testing of the hypotheses, case study analyses using the principles of H_1 as causal factors, and a compatibility assessment of H_1 to the major schools of thought in international relations. A summary overview of these findings follows.

Content Analysis of Documents

A study of Congressional Research Service reports identifies nearly four-hundred seventy announced military deployments over the course of the Nation's history, almost thirty-nine percent of which occurred in the Twenty-First Century. Of deployments in the last two decades, two-thirds are identified as non-conflict oriented. The findings on military engagements, captured in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, provide concrete data supporting the empirical puzzle's claim that a significant majority of United States military engagements occur below the threshold of armed conflict. A total of 181 of 467 announced military engagements happened since 2000. Only sixty-two of them were combat deployments. These facts are fundamental in presenting the empirical puzzle.

Next, content analysis focused on strategic risk. The six most recent National Security Strategies were analyzed to understand how presidential administrations in the Twenty-First Century understood and sought to manage it.⁵²⁶ Interestingly, a chronological procession through the documents reveals an increasing emphasis on competition with great powers. The first documents (Bush's 2002 and 2005 Strategies in Table 5.3) have a greater emphasis on

⁵²⁶ This refers to the six strategic documents used during the research period. The manuscript was compiled and edited before the Biden Administration issued its full *National Security Strategy* in October 2022. Cosine Similarity testing was conducted for that Strategy during the thesis editing phase, finding it nearly ninety-six percent consistent with the other Strategies. The new Strategy does not counter the findings or determination of strategic risk concepts.

international terrorism and failing states. The last, Biden's 2021 Interim Strategic Guidance (Table 5.6), highlights specific powerful nations as principal threats.

Two categories of strategic risk, physical and moral, are first introduced in the literature review. Through content analysis of the six strategic documents, those categories for identifying and organizing strategic risk were validated. Tables 5.7 and 5.8 contain coded data extracted from all six Strategies that support the physical and moral categories. Those categories are synthesized in Table 5.9 to form a strategic risk assessment as a gauge for assessing risk, specifically in GPC. The resultant concepts derived from the strategy documents are conflict (physical), security (physical), peace (moral), and justice (moral). These findings are further supported through automated text analysis, which reveals the frequency of those concepts occurring over 1400 times in the Strategies. Also, the four risk concepts register at least ninety-five percent relevancy in each document. Those discoveries are captured in Tables 5.10 and 5.11, respectively.

United States law, military doctrine, policy, and defense concepts covering Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) and irregular warfare (IW) were then analyzed. Originally, ARSOF's role as an IW practitioner was central to the research. As the development of Just Competition Theory progressed, it became the main concern of the project; however, ARSOF and IW contribute significantly, especially during comparative hypotheses testing.

Summarizing the findings from Tables 5.13 through 5.17, ARSOF's structure and mission sets established in law, national strategy, Department of Defense policy, military doctrine, and future concepts align with various descriptions of IW and its associated tasks. Of the eleven IW tasks identified by the Department of Defense, ARSOF conduct or directly support nine of them. Those nine IW tasks are conducted in both wartime and GPC. Therefore,

ARSOF conducting IW appear well suited for GPC. These elements are very useful for demonstrating the viability of Just Competition Theory as an approach to GPC.

Content Analysis of Interviews

Thirty-four ARSOF and IW subject matter experts provided valuable insights on those two topics as well as strategic risk management in GPC. Key findings include validation of ARSOF as a desirable force structure and IW as a suitable approach to the contemporary operational environment. An overwhelming consensus, thirty-two respondents, indicated this in interview Question 4. Unanimously, the respondents affirmed that IW, and ARSOF's conduct of it, is applicable, usually preferred, in GPC to avoid conflict or to better prepare for it (Question 1).

Regarding risk, seventy-nine percent of respondents accept the physical and moral categories (Figure 5.7) Other suggestions include ethical and political risk. These responses support the strategic risk assessment developed during document analysis. Key characteristics of strategic risk they identify (Figure 5.5) include national existential risk, national reputational risk, risk to national values, and risk of escalation to war. Those align with both physical and moral strategic risk. The overall analysis of the responses indicates a commitment among ARSOF professionals to effectively execute operations in GPC to avoid escalation to open conflict.

Testing of Hypotheses

The first test evaluates the findings on historical military use (Table 5.18). As shown in the table, two-thirds of military deployments in the Twenty-First Century were not under a wartime declaration or a congressional Authorized Use of Military Force (AUMF). Yet, a perusal of relevant Just War Ethic literature an absence of a theory of just action for GPC. As

described in this study (Chapter Four) the concept of *jus ad vim* has been recently developed, but it is not specifically designed for GPC. Consequently, it seems reasonable and perhaps necessary to develop a concept of just action tailored for GPC. For this test, H_0 is rejected, and H_1 is accepted.

The second test compares the hypotheses against ARSOF IW missions that are directly applicable to GPC and conflict (Table 5.19). This test shows that both H_0 and H_1 are acceptable theories for regulating just military action. Both *jus in bello* and *jus in contentione* apply to six of nine ARSOF IW mission tasks. Together, both theories cover all nine. This demonstrates that H_0 and H_1 are equally important theories that should be used in the appropriate military engagement context. Both hypotheses are accepted for this test because, in combination, they apply across the spectrum of competition (peace) and conflict (war). Importantly, this test indicates that *jus in contentione* can be useful as a companion to *jus in bello*, not as a replacement.

The third test assesses the three principles of *jus in bello* and the six principles of *jus in contentione* against the strategic risk assessment concepts (Table 5.20). Of the four strategic risk concepts, *jus in bello* principles apply to conflict and justice, a physical and a moral concept, respectively. The alternate theory, *jus in contentione*, applies to all concepts but conflict. In terms of simple mathematics, it seems H_0 should be rejected and H_1 accepted; however, to make a more compelling case, the results of this comparison are assessed against the results of the first test. Considering historical data in the Twenty-First Century (covering the period of the National Security Strategies used to formulate the strategic risk assessment). One can reasonably presume that in two-thirds of military deployments H_1 is the appropriate hypothesis to plan and assess tension and escalation management. Both the quantifiable applicability of *jus in contentione*

principles to the strategic risk assessment and the greater likelihood that it should be paired with the framework render it the better hypothesis. For the third test, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

The final test compares the hypotheses against aggregated responses to ten interview questions from thirty-four respondents (Table 5.21). At the outset, the number of questions is reduced to eight; two questions are merged into other questions because of their similarities and overlapping subject matter. Of the eight remaining topics, *jus in bello* applies to five while *jus in contentione* applies to all eight. As with the third test, it seems that H_1 is better based on raw quantity scores, but to conclude that would fail to consider how the questions were framed and answered.

As mentioned previously, this project was originally conceived as an inquiry into ARSOF conducting IW during GPC. The interview questions were developed and formally approved while that conception was still in effect. Such circumstances might then lead one to conclude that the test was too biased to authentically choose a better hypothesis. Fortunately, the insights and expertise of the respondents introduced balance and objectivity into the interview sessions. Though questions are oriented toward GPC, preparation for and lessons learned from war are repeatedly mentioned. Among these experts, a keen understanding of both the current nature of military engagement (GPC) and the possibility of rapid intensification toward conflict is evident. Though they do not dismiss or diminish the possibility or the seriousness of conflict, these professionals' commentaries indicate a need to focus more extensively on GPC. Considering this, it is easier to conclude that for the fourth test H_1 is the theory most likely suitable in most cases. Specifically, in the context of GPC, H_0 is rejected, and H_1 is accepted for this test.

Case Studies

Hypothesis testing demonstrates *jus in contentione* (H₁) as viable, superior to *jus in bello* in GPC, and worthy of further empirical evaluation; therefore, two case study analyses were conducted next to empirically assess the theory. The first application surveys the outcomes of the Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines (JSOTF-P) mission. Applying the six principles find that even though Just Competition Theory was not in existence for that mission, the principles can be used to explain the successes JSOTF-P experienced as well as an articulation of how that mission would have benefited had the principles been available and applied. For the second scenario, the principles are applied to American and NATO activity in Berlin, East Germany during the Cold War. Both applications find that *jus in contentione* has merit as a planning tool and operational conduct guide. The principles seem to be valuable in managing strategic risk in environments below the threshold of armed conflict based on historical analysis.

Qualitative Compatibility Assessment

To determine whether *jus in contentione* is compatible with theories other than Christian Realism, a qualitative assessment scrutinizes the six Just Competition principles applied to the three predominant grand theories in international relations: Classical Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism. Table 5.22 captures the results of that analysis. *Jus in contentione* is a uniquely Christian Realist method of analysis for strategy and policy development. While the three prevailing theories all leverage a few of the six principles partially or fully, Just Competition Theory is only fully integrated into Christian Realism. Liberalism partially incorporates four principles (Discernment, Persuasion, Persistence and Consistency) and fully integrates two (Collaboration and Integration). Classical Realism partially incorporates three (Discernment,

Consistency and Collaboration) and fully integrates three (Persuasion, Persistence and Integration). Constructivism partially incorporates four (Discernment, Persistence, Consistency, and Integration) and fully integrates two (Persuasion and Integration). The most notable outcome of this assessment is a recognition of the more comprehensive quality of Christian Realism. It seems to draw from each of the three major schools of thought to more fully account for security matters and a need to pursue justice and peace in concert with partner states and organizations.

Discussion

Research Conclusions

Four overarching conclusions can be drawn from data analysis, the four stages of comparative hypotheses testing, case studies, and the qualitative compatibility assessment. First, United States military activity is increasing at a higher rate over time, and it is mostly non-conflictual. American security policy must account for these factors by training and orienting enough force structure to meet the demands of GPC. Second, since strategic risk must be a primary consideration for policymakers and strategists, a standard for assessing potential risk during planning and a tool for managing risk decisions during military activities is useful. This research demonstrates that a strategic risk assessment can be developed based on an analysis of existing strategy and threat statements. Third, understanding the nature of GPC and its inherent strategic risks is an important endeavor, but without forces allocated and activities planned the knowledge holds limited practical value. This is another benefit of analyzing ARSOF roles and IW functions. Though those topics did not remain the focus of research, their inclusion enables more granular thought experimentation to evaluate the efficacy and viability of the final and most significant research conclusion.

Fourth, the introduction of Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*) as an alternative approach to Just War Theory's regulating principles of action (*jus in bello*) during GPC has the potential to better guide appropriate and limited military action short of conflict. Its possible utility in strategic risk management is worth further study and scrutiny beyond the introductory analysis contained in this research. The four-stage comparative hypotheses testing shows that both theories are valuable depending on the operational context. In a wartime scenario, *jus in bello* is the preferable theory, but in GPC scenarios, *jus in contentione* is the more appropriate choice. This assertion is supported in all four stages of testing and justifies the modified Christian Realist Competition Praxis Model (Figures 5.8 and 5.13).

During GPC, *jus in contentione* offers a viable response to the empirical puzzle presented earlier in the work. Why is no theory of just action below the threshold of conflict discussed when most historical deployments (and likely most future engagements) occur below that threshold? As the frequency of United States military engagement increases over time, the importance of such a theory becomes more pronounced. By offering a set of principles to guide limited and appropriate action in competition, *jus in contentione* fills this void. It also answers the Central Research Question and serves as the project thesis.

Thesis

In a complex environment of Great Power Competition, principles of *jus in contentione* offer a better Christian Realist approach to strategic risk management than the principles of *jus in bello*.

Qualifications

The result of this project is *an* answer to the Central Research Question, not *the only* answer. Arguably, other assumptions could have been applied to reorient the work toward

answering the question diplomatically or economically as opposed to militarily. Strategic risk is not limited to military concerns. All organizations within the United States national security enterprise use the National Security Strategy and other strategic policy and intelligence resources to inform their risk analysis and management. Furthermore, the military force and activity analysis could be different. It is likely that a valid solution could have excluded both ARSOF and IW. Their inclusion is a matter of research interest and discretion made early in the research process to ascertain if these elements contribute to a viable solution. The findings indicate they do but do not eliminate other force and activity possibilities.

Main Policy Implications

Two major implications for national security policy emerge from this effort. The most prominent is the introduction of Just Competition Theory. The principles of *jus in contentione* are inspired by an in-depth evaluation of the two accepted sets of principles in Just War Theory. The first set, the decision to commit to war (*jus ad bellum*), seems counterintuitive to the aim of the project. The goal is to manage risk below the commitment to war, not proceed justly on a march toward it. The second set, behavior in war (*jus in bello*), seems more appropriate to the task on the surface; however, research and testing demonstrate that it lacks sufficient prescriptions in terms of the quantity of principles and contextual specificity for the complexities of GPC. As such, the six principles of Just Competition are constructed to better apply rules of behavior in peacetime situations, whether tense or innocuous. These principles can be used to develop different types of security engagement policies such as diplomatic or economic initiatives. What does this mean for security policy developers, defense strategists, military planners, and tactical practitioners?

Just Competition Theory offers a set of principles that can be used to explicitly address conditions and threats in GPC. Other theories do not seem to provide that kind of specificity (tailored for Competition). Also, the six principles of *jus in contentione* are designed to be incorporative of all elements of the national security enterprise. For instance, if followed precisely, the principle of Integration influences the deliberate consideration of other agencies who have equities at stake in a given location or with a specific adversary.

Finally, strategic risk management is inherent in this theory. Though not a risk-averse approach to engagement, Just Competition Theory holds the same presumption against violence as does traditional Just War Theory. Seeking to secure strategic objectives while ever cognizant of risks of escalation in tension is one of its attractive attributes. Though not unique to Just Competition Theory, the commitment to balancing risk and mission accomplishment indicates it is a responsible approach to effective engagement in GPC.

The second (and secondary) policy implication is the strategic risk assessment. Risk assessments existed well before this research began. What is unique about the structure presented here is its foundation in the six most recent National Security Strategies, which include emphases on state competition, major war, terrorism, and naturally recurring phenomena. Building the risk assessment in this effort marries theory to contemporary, real-world problems. By synthesizing the chosen strategies, the strategic challenges and complexities in the Twenty-First Century are integrated into a risk analysis and management tool. As demonstrated, parallel ideas (codes) exist in all six Strategies, and concepts and categories emerge during the comparison. This results in constructing the assessment and a modified definition of strategic risk. Policymakers, strategists, planners, or analysts could choose to use this assessment and definition for strategic policy

development and assessment or just adopt the analytical process and develop their own model. Both the product and the process have wide-ranging utility.

Limitations

If applied to the contemporary strategic context, any policy prescription based on Just Competition principles and the new strategic risk assessment must proceed in concert with other initiatives as part of a holistic strategy and policy. To introduce Just Competition Theory and indicate probable viability it is not necessary to incorporate additional elements of the national security enterprise. As a standalone effort, this project does not sufficiently address how *jus in contentione* would benefit other military forces or activities. It also does not apply to other national security disciplines in this project. This is both a limitation and an opportunity to apply the theory to other contexts as previously indicated in the Implications section.

The second limitation is strategic context. The modified praxis model and thesis only apply to GPC. They are not designed for assessing policy or after-action effectiveness in major war. Other tools exist for those purposes. The third limitation concerns the level of resources committed to developing and testing the thesis proposal. This effort is the product of one researcher and is limited by his time, skills, experiences, access to data, and ability to test the results. A team, especially a wargaming and concept testing team using advanced computer simulation and modeling, could probably refine this product with even more specificity and variety in testing. Arguably, tests at a higher classification level built on specific scenarios and responses would be able to test Just Competition Theory's utility more thoroughly and quantitatively.

Recommendations for Future Research

Of the several outcomes of a large research project, the most prominent include unforeseen discoveries, often in the form of modified theories, frameworks, or models. This project had one, Just Competition Theory. Of equal importance, though, is the identification of future research possibilities. Here are a few that occurred during the development of this study.

Mixed Methods Analysis of Strategic Risk in GPC

Though the insights gained from subject matter experts immeasurably benefit this research, there are only thirty-four respondents. While their collective commentary on GPC, ARSOF, IW, and strategic risk is enough to meet the objectives and purpose of the project, a much broader mixed-methods analysis would benefit practitioners, planners, strategists, and policy developers. Short surveys categorized into more distinct target populations would provide valuable knowledge on how the force understands the nature of GPC and its roles in managing risk. Category distinctions could include branch (SF, PSYOP, CA), experience level (e.g., 5-10 years, 11-15 years), and regional area of emphasis (e.g., Southwest Asia, Africa's Trans-Sahel, or Eastern Europe). Digital surveying could potentially result in hundreds or thousands of responses that would refine senior leader knowledge on the force's awareness levels on this important topic.

Comparative Analysis of *Jus Ad Vim*, *Jus In Vi*, and *Jus Post Vim* with *Jus In Contentione*

Jus ad vim and its components *jus in vi* and *jus post vim* were recognized in the theory introduction (Chapter Four). A more detailed analysis comparing them to *jus in contentione* would benefit Just War and international relations ethics scholarship. As already established, *jus in contentione* does not seek to replace traditional Just War Theory on the lower margins of war or kinetic (lethal) action. Nor does it recognize a culmination (no *jus post* component). These

two characteristics distinguish Just Competition Theory from the Just Use of Limited Force. Yet, a side-by-side comparison of principles as conducted in comparative hypotheses testing could illuminate further distinctions or identify areas of overlap and mutual support. Though sparse, the scholarship on *jus ad vim* is impressive and merits detailed comparative analysis with other theories. Just Competition Theory is a suitable candidate for that project.

Christian Realist Strategic Risk Applications to Other Capabilities

As previously discussed, the exportability of the strategic risk assessment could benefit policy analysis for other special operations and conventional military forces and in other disciplines such as foreign service and international economics. This study could be replicated in those other organizations to test their specific policy concepts, roles, and approaches to GPC.

Mixed-Methods Analysis and Testing of Just Competition Theory

As a new concept, this theory needs to be rigorously challenged and tested. Surveys, interviews, experimentation, and counterproposals from the academic community would improve Just Competition Theory's structure. A way to introduce and gain support for such a study is by submitting an explanatory paper on the concept, its background, and the theories that inspired it for peer review and professional journal publication.

Expanded Compatibility Analysis

The rudimentary treatment of Just Competition Theory's suitability for Classical Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist international relations theories initially indicates *jus in contentione* is a unique Christian Realist application. Developed and presented as a Christian Realist-aligned method of analysis, *jus in contentione* should be subjected to robust empirical research to ascertain its adequacy more convincingly across multiple international relations theories. Since Christian Realism incorporates some idealistic (Constructivist) and Liberal attributes, it is

apparent that there is overlap in these seemingly contrasting approaches. Further exhaustive testing is warranted.

Regional Applications

The four-stage comparative hypotheses testing evaluated *jus in contentione* and *jus in bello* against the data analysis. This could be continued, applying *jus in contentione* against real threats. This may involve wargaming, computer modeling, and tabletop exercises conducted by teams of security analysts. Using the tools developed in this project, testing could be replicated in any region using ARSOF and IW or other proposed forces and activities to evaluate policy and strategy measures against specific strategic competitors. The format for a regional application could follow the method used in the case studies. As an example, a theoretical application to evaluate Chinese activity in Central America and a possible United States response using *jus in contentione* principles could further develop the theory and provide relevant research to a contemporary security challenge.

Final Commentary: A Viable Theory Worthy of Further Consideration

One question remains. Do the findings and conclusions support a theory that is reasonable and worthy of additional research? Security theories of engagement often consider wartime scenarios and offer “plausible set[s] of principles for overcoming an enemy.”⁵²⁷ This offering extends that consideration to strategic competitors in conditions short of full-scale war with a fully developed set of principles. Through detailed analysis and testing, the principles of

⁵²⁷ Brad Roberts, “On Theories of Victory, Red and Blue,” in *Livermore Papers on Global Security*, no. 7, 2020.

Just Competition Theory applied to GPC activities are specific and limiting. They provide a clear guiding ethos for engagement in a complex environment below the threshold of armed conflict.

Just Competition Theory fits within the spectrum of Realist international relations thought, specifically as a Christian Realist approach, in its ontological and epistemological underpinnings. Ontologically, *jus in contentione* principles account for the realities of security challenges and the finite capacity to address them. Epistemologically, the theory predisposes its practitioners to seek the most just outcome possible using the most just actions given strategic conditions and resource limitations. Though Realist in its structure, Just Competition Theory also incorporates some attributes of both Liberalism and Constructivism in an acknowledged value of partnerships, a peaceful pursuit of security objectives, and an infusion of ideologically informed ethics, morals, and virtue.

The historical data reveal a compelling case for introducing such a theory. The strategic risk assessment provides a sensible set of metrics for determining moral and physical risk dynamics. It is a framework that can enable security professionals to develop plans, strategies, and policies within acceptable risk tolerance using the principles of *jus in contentione*. Applying a specific force (ARSOF) conducting specified activities (IW) using its principles shows the theory can inform strategy and policy by leveraging existing force capabilities. Subject matter expert insights affirm it is a valuable tool for managing strategic risk. Robust evaluation of case studies using its principles to understand causal factors amplifies its usefulness as a method of analysis. Assessing it against other international relations theories affirms it is uniquely Christian Realist. Just Competition Theory is coherent, plausible, and worthy of further testing and analysis. Though not the only possible solution, this Christian Realist approach to managing strategic risk in GPC is worthy of further consideration.

Acronyms

ARSOF	Army Special Operations Forces
AUMF	Authorization for the Use of Military Force
CA	Civil Affairs
CMO	Civil-Military Operations
CO	Cyber Operations
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CT	Counterterrorism
CTF	Counter Threat Finance
CTN	Countering Threat Networks
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
GPC	Great Power Competition
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
IW	Irregular Warfare
JSOTF-P	Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines
MISO	Military Information Support Operations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
OPE	Operational Preparation of the Environment
PE	Preparation of the Environment
PRC	People’s Republic of China
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
ROE	Rules of Engagement

SF	Special Forces
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SC	Security Cooperation
SO	Stability Operations
SR	Special Reconnaissance.
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UW	Unconventional Warfare

Glossary

Army Special Operations Forces – Military formations designated by the Secretary of Defense to organize, train, and equip to conduct special operations activities as established in *United States Code Title 10, Section 167*, and specific Department of Defense directives. They operate globally in both zones of conflict and areas of relative peace. They often employ organic cultural expertise to augment diplomatic and intelligence initiatives designed to understand and influence populations to support values of liberty and peace. Their specialized formations align with general purpose forces to support larger missions or initiatives if required, but they can, and routinely do, operate independently in low-level activities while prosecuting irregular warfare.

Casuistry - The belief that morality is more practical than theoretical and relies less on universal moral authority and tradition than on instinct at the moment of crisis.

Classical Realism - Concerned with power, the primacy of the state in international relations, and the rational study of security issues and key actors to determine the most object policies in pursuit of security interests. It aims to fully account for security circumstances as they are and places a check on ambitious policies and over estimations of friendly and adversary intentions and abilities. This view “instills a pragmatic appreciation of the role of power but also warns that states will suffer if they overreach.” It relies principally on military power and diplomacy to compete for power and security.

Christian Realism – A morally informed international relations approach that prizes political humility, emphasizing a recognition of the limits of national power and exercising strategic patience. It is skeptical yet uncynical; aspirational but restrained. In an Augustinian sense, Christian Realism is introspective and shrewd about conditions in the world, but it also promotes the feasible achievement of the good, domestically and abroad.

Civil Affairs – Forces and units organized, trained, and equipped specifically to conduct civil affairs operations and to support civil-military operations.

Civil-Military Operations – Activities that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces and indigenous populations and institutions.

Collaboration – The fifth principle of *jus in contentione*; commitment to nurturing international partnerships and credibility with populations to achieve compatible goals.

Conflict – A strategic physical risk that is socially sanctioned violence to achieve a political purpose.

Consistency – The fourth principle of *jus in contentione*; maintenance of objectives, efforts, intensity, and messaging to promote national interests and partnerships.

Constructivism – A form of Idealism that “stresses that a consensus on values must underpin any stable political order, yet it also recognizes that forging such a consensus often requires ideological struggle with the potential for conflict.” Constructivists are more interested in the social meanings and constructions informing typical international relations variables like military

power, trade, international institutions, and domestic politics. They view these factors as by-products of history, ideas, norms, and beliefs that influence a state's outlook and behavior. It is less structured as a grand theory than either Realism or Liberalism. Instead, it is an epistemological approach that views international relations problems and solutions as social constructions influenced by ideology, identity, and communal interests. At its core, Constructivism portends that ideas, collective values, culture, and social identities shape international politics.

Counter Threat Finance – Activities conducted to deny, disrupt, destroy, or defeat the generation, storage, movement, and use of adversary assets.

Countering Threat Networks – All government actions that identify, neutralize, degrade, disrupt, or defeat designated threat networks.

Counterinsurgency – Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes.

Counterterrorism – Activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals.

Cyber Operations – The employment of cyberspace capabilities to achieve objectives. These include cyberspace attack, exploitation, defense, and security.

Discernment – The first principle of *jus in contentione*; The deliberate employment of specific forces to achieve limited objectives that promote justice and peace, while avoiding unnecessary or unintentional escalation of tension with rival powers

Discrimination – The first principle of *jus in bello*; a commitment of just behavior that prevents combatants from targeting non-combatants.

Foreign Internal Defense – Participation by civilian agencies and military forces of a government or international organizations in any of the programs and activities undertaken by a host nation government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security.

Great Power Competition – Also referred to as strategic competition; encompasses actions taken by states and non-state actors to seek to protect and advance their own interests by constantly competing for diplomatic, economic, and strategic advantage below the threshold of armed conflict.

Integration – The sixth principle of *jus in contentione*; reliance on cooperative interagency and interdisciplinary partnerships.

Irregular Warfare – A scaled approach to great power competition that advances justice, enables peace, maintains security, and minimizes conflict. Irregular warfare incorporates appropriate

elements of national power and proceeds along comprehensive and overlapping lines of effort such as resilience, resistance, and recovery.

jus ad bellum – In Just War Theory, a just and right commitment to engage in combat informed by six decision principles: just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, reasonable prospect of success, proportionality, and last resort.

jus ad vim – A theoretical modification to Just War Theory's *jus ad bellum* that represents the justification of the use of force. This concept has not been developed into a full theory with associated principles.

jus in bello – In Just War Theory, just and right behavior during combat informed by three conduct principles: discrimination, proportionality, and necessity.

jus in vi – The behavioral component of *jus ad vim*, which represents justifiable action by a military force below the threshold of major war. Like *jus ad vim*, this conceptualization does not have distinctive supporting principles.

Just Cause – The first principle of *jus ad bellum*; an end state of conflict worth the cost in life, injury, and resources.

Just Competition Theory (*jus in contentione*) – A modification of Just War Theory tailored for military action in Great Power Competition and consisting of six principles: discernment, persuasion, persistence, consistency, collaboration, and integration.

Just War Theory – A theory of conflict that concerns just decisions to go to war (*jus ad bellum*) and just behavior during war (*jus in bello*). It is often informed by natural law and functions with a presumption against violence.

Justice – A strategic moral risk that is a moral approach to action that values human life, is imbued with a sense of right or wrong behavior and aspires to punish or reward groups or individuals based on their adherence to those norms.

Last Resort – The sixth principle of *jus ad bellum*; a determination of the necessity of conflict when peaceful means of resolution are exhausted.

Liberalism – Emphasizes “the cooperative potential of mature democracies” working in concert but acknowledges a democracy’s proclivity to “crusade against tyrannies” or even “collapse into violent ethnic turmoil.” This theory relies heavily on international institutions and commerce leveraged to spread democracy, but sometimes undervalues military power and security. Thereby, it does not always appreciate “that transitions to democracy are sometimes violent.” Its emphasis on soft power and multilateralism to spread democracy are key characteristics. In the Liberal view, advancing democracy, improving global economic ties, and empowering international organizations will ultimately achieve global peace.

Legitimate Authority – The second principle of *jus ad bellum*; a right and responsibility to engage in conflict.

Military Information Support Operations – Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to influence foreign audiences to favor the originator's objectives.

Moral Risk - The unwanted and unintended compromise of universally recognized values and established codes of behavior. Specific to this study, it is the unwanted and unintended compromise of national values and established codes of conduct resulting from the application of military force.

Natural Law – A theory often invoked by Christian theology or philosophy positing the knowledge of objective good and evil are known or knowable by all rational persons.

Necessity – The third principle of *jus in bello*; a further limitation on proportionality to the least harmful methods necessary to achieve wartime objectives.

Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE) - The conduct of activities in likely or potential areas of operations to prepare and shape the operational environment, including to develop knowledge of the operational environment, to establish human and physical infrastructure, and to develop potential targets. Methods include passive observation, area familiarization, site surveys, mapping the information environment, and other specialized tasks.

Operational Risk – The probability and consequence of failure to achieve mission objectives while protecting the force from unacceptable losses.

Peace – A strategic moral risk that espouses health, prosperity, well-being, avoidance of war, and freedom from internal and external strife.

Persistence – The third principle of *jus in contentione*; constant application of appropriate force to achieve peacetime strategic objectives.

Persuasion – The second principle of *jus in contentione*; alignment of actions and statements to influence populations and states to support national goals.

Physical Risk – The human and materiel exposure to hazard.

Preparation of the Environment (PE) – An umbrella term for operations and activities conducted by selectively trained special operations forces to develop an environment for potential future special operations. A key component of PE is operational preparation of the environment.

Proportionality (1) – The fifth principle of *jus ad bellum*; an assessment of the moral good of a conflict outcome against the inevitable moral evils of warfare.

Proportionality (2) – The second principle of *jus in bello*; a permissibility of harming noncombatants, predictably yet unintentionally (collateral damage) if the harm does not outweigh the goal of the action.

Psychological Operations – Forces specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct military information support operations.

Reasonable Prospect of Success – The fourth principle of *jus ad bellum*; a probability of achieving the wartime goal within the parameters of allowable loss.

Right Intention – The third principle of *jus ad bellum*; a worthy and just purpose for conflict.

Risk – Can be defined in the following ways: an unwanted event which may or may not occur; the cause of the unwanted event; the probability of the unwanted event occurring; the statistical expectation of an unwanted event occurring; and a decision made under conditions of known probabilities (decision under risk). In military activity, risk is evaluated at three levels of engagement: tactical, operational, and strategic.

Rules of Engagement (ROE) - Directives issued by competent military authority that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered.

Security – A strategic physical risk, which is a condition that results from the establishment and maintenance of protective measures that ensure a state of inviolability from hostile acts or influences.

Security Cooperation – Interactions with foreign security establishments to build security relationships that promote security interests and capabilities.

Security Force Assistance – Activities that support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions.

Special Forces – Forces organized, trained, and equipped to conduct special operations with an emphasis on unconventional warfare.

Special Reconnaissance – Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted in hostile, denied, or diplomatically and/or politically sensitive environments to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces.

Stability Operations – Various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment and provide essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.

Strategic Risk – The physical or moral hazard posed to a nation's safety, its interests, or its stated value propositions. The strategic physical risk category is measured through two concepts, conflict and security. The strategic moral risk category is also measured using two concepts, peace and justice.

Tactical Risk – Opportunities arising from planned events, anticipated events, unforeseen events, and chance, which, if taken, win a battle at hand. This is not a negative view of risk, but rather a realistic and optimistic one.

Theory of Victory - A plausible set of principles for overcoming and enemy.

Unconventional Warfare – Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.

Appendices

Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval

[External] IRB-FY21-22-175 - Initial: Initial - Exempt

[REDACTED]

Wed 1/26/2022 10:37 AM

To: Byrd, Jason <[REDACTED]>; Nalbandov, Robert (Helms School of Government)
<[REDACTED]>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

January 26, 2022

Jason Byrd Robert Nalbandov

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-175 Managing Risk in Great Power Competition with Army Special Operations Forces: A Christian Realist Approach

Dear Jason Byrd, Robert Nalbandov,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(ii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).
Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place

the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation.

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: Archival Data Use Approval



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
2929 DESERT STORM DRIVE
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA 28310-9110

AOOP

November 3, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Use of Non-Classified Archival Data from United States Army Special Operations Command for Academic Research

1. This memorandum serves a written record to affirm Jason A. Byrd, Civil Service Employee at United States Army Special Operations Command and PhD Candidate at the Helms School of Government, Liberty University, has authorization to access, read, and use some categories of archival data owned and maintained by United States Army Special Operations Command.
2. In keeping with his professional duties, Mr. Byrd already maintains access to the information to be used in his doctoral research. He will notify the undersigned of all non-classified, organization-internal information used. This information may include emails, notes from meetings and professional conversations, organizational memoranda, organizational policies, and organizational briefing slides.
3. Mr. Byrd will annotate each occurrence on a separate spreadsheet that is also attached to his Institutional Review Board application. Each annotation will include the document name, type of medium, date of publication, brief purpose for use, affirmation that no sensitive or classified information was used, and the date of access and incorporation in his research. The undersigned will review this log before Mr. Byrd submits archival data research findings to his dissertation committee.
4. Mr. Byrd will also, ensure that no personal identifying information listed in internal documentation will be transferred to his research.
5. The point of contact for this memorandum is the undersigned at email:
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
DAVID A. TROUTMAN
DAC/GS-14
Deputy Chief, Operations Division

Appendix C: Interview Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: Managing Risk in Great Power Competition with Army Special Operations Forces: A Christian Realist Approach

Principal Investigator: Jason A. Byrd, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University Helms School of Government

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must meet the following inclusion criteria:

- 1) MUST BE 21 years of age or older.
- 2) MUST BE active military, retired military, or a civilian member of the Department of Defense with experience in planning, supporting, or conducting special operations activities by the Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) community.
- 3) MUST have received an honorable discharge if former military.
- 4) MUST NOT BE and facing administrative or disciplinary action by the Department of Defense or a civilian agency.
- 5) MUST NOT BE working as an ARSOF subject matter expert from a private business performing contracted services with any ARSOF entity (this exclusion exists to ensure no violation of contracting laws or regulations occurs due to asking a contracted employee to provide input outside their legal scope of work).

Additionally, you must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 1) five years of experience working in an ARSOF specialty (Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations).
- 2) three years of experience working as a civilian planner, strategist, concept developer, policy developer, or operations specialist for ARSOF or joint special operations forces.
- 3) Experience in planning, support, or participating in an at least three ARSOF deployments.

Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this study is to discover how a Christian realist approach informs security policy in managing strategic risk management during great power competition among peer adversaries.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

- Participate in an approximately thirty-minute interview to discuss irregular warfare. The interview will be conducted either in person or over the telephone.

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Approved on 1-26-2022

- Review your interview transcript after the session is completed. You will be given the opportunity to review my notes on your interview sheet at the conclusion of the interview session, and I will provide you with a typed transcript for review approximately 48 hours after our session either by hard copy or by email.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include a contribution to policy formulation that helps manage and mitigate risk in the selection and conduct of some military operations.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of codenames. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be scanned and stored on a password-locked external hard drive and may be used in future presentations. Hard copies will be destroyed immediately after scanning.
- Interview sessions will not be recorded.

Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?

The researcher serves as a Civil Service employee at U.S. Army Special Operations Command with no professional or personal influence over interviewees. He has no financial or other material interest in the outcome of this research. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate or not participate in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or the Department of Defense. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Jason A. Byrd. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Robert Nalbandov, at [REDACTED].

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the [REDACTED] or email at [REDACTED].

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

Liberty University
IRB-FY21-22-175
Approved on 1-26-2022

Appendix D. Consolidated Interview Responses

Question 1. The definition of irregular warfare seems to be under scrutiny. Is that because the definition is insufficient? How would you redefine irregular warfare?

Respondent 1: The definition is not bad. Policymakers use the term to distinguish between SOF and GPF. Other terms are considered: integrated deterrence, grey zone campaigning.

Respondent 2: Is fine in its current construct. The definition is precise enough for mission planning. The distinction outlined in JP 1 between traditional warfare (force on force) and IW (everything else).

Respondent 3: Adequate but could do a better job of emphasizing the influence of populations and the human domain.

Respondent 4: Yes. The current IW Annex to the NDS defines it properly. Removes "violence" and "among relevant populations." "IW should focus on populations and COGs. TW should focus on governments and militaries."

Respondent 5: "To define is to restrict." No def. is perfect. Def doesn't need changing, just how we understand it. It is narrative. TW is about physics. Different sciences. Pop. Mgmt. vs. influence. Terrain is irrelevant. A struggle for power. Problem: TW trying to redefine IW to account for its existing tactics. "IW using TW science is a losing strategy."

Respondent 6: The definition is fine. We just need to be comfortable with long term payoff. TW mindset is challenged by IW. Ambiguity makes us uncomfortable. Need to use our TW tools in the diplomatic, information, and economic elements of national power.

Respondent 7: Army and Joint definitions are different. Ensure the term "population is in it."

Respondent 8: "Should address resistance, resilience, and recovery."

Respondent 9: No, the definition isn't insufficient, it is over complicated as everyone has forgotten the KISS principle. Joint doctrine definition is ambiguous as it states IW is "A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations". That is very ambiguous, so everyone tries to define it as how they need it to fit what they are trying to do. IW uses the five core activities of counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, FID, Stability Operations and Unconventional Warfare to either gain help or undermine the help of the people either for or against their government or group.

Respondent 10: Should be redefined to account for tech advances, stand-off remote capabilities. Should include a defined IW end state.

Respondent 11: IW is an approach. There are not 2 types of warfare - there is warfare. Remove the word violent.

Respondent 12: Remove violent. IW is binned across DIMEFIL. It is an approach. It is all things short of TW. The definition plus the list of tasks is "overly reductionist."

Respondent 13: Remove violent. IW is an approach. Every lever we pull across the cooperation-competition-conflict continuum to achieve U.S. objectives is IW.

Respondent 14: The term Irregular Warfare (IW) seems to be an effort to lump together a group of activities (MISO, UW, SA, etc..) utilized outside the normal construct of conventional campaigning during, or leading up to, conflict operations. Unfortunately, the individual activities (MISO, UW, SA, etc..) conducted as IW are where the authorities' requirements, restrictions, and resources originate from and not IW itself. As such GCC's do not execute IW under a comprehensive IW plan or strategy. Instead, the individual activities are conducted by their component commands (supporting plans) under the CCMD Campaign plans. Sitting at the SOCOM level, IW is almost never brought up in relation to operations, authorities, or policy issues between the combatant Commands, OSD, and the interagency. If IW is to have any value or consequence, there needs to be a SECDEF level EXORD directing the ability to conduct IW and its scope (all its inherent tasks and authorized targets/competitors/enemies). I do not see the need for the term IW outside of using it to collect the potential grouping of tasks within doctrine.

Respondent 15: I believe the definition is sufficient for the purposes of special operations but may be insufficient as a term when taken in the context of the larger American military paradigms for war and the application of force. From the perspective of a conventional military mindset, no aspect of the definition of irregular warfare indicates that the military should be the main effort, and the use of the words "legitimacy" and "influence" has connotations that would indicate it is much focused on diplomatic efforts. Not to oversimplify, but the driving philosophy for conventional military leaders, as well as many political leaders, is that when diplomacy fails the military element of national power takes over and closes with and destroys the enemy to enable diplomatic efforts to resume. The space that SOF operates in is simply not viewed as a main effort in a conflict, and participation in these activities is somehow "ungentlemanly" and indicative of a less refined form of warfare. I believe the definition is sufficient, but the frame in which we view the application of force, and the conventional/unconventional force distinction is counterproductive.

Respondent 16: No issue, but in our time, UW was the 'bread and butter.' it morphed into IW to encompass more mission sets. Was it necessary? I don't know. But there is a lot of sensitivity to anything with 'warfare' in it.

Respondent 17: UW gave us a broader base. We figured out our requirements for the specific mission under that banner. IW defines us to a limited set of tasks.

Respondent 18: Sufficient. SR, DA, UW, FID

Respondent 19: Sufficient. Too many updated bumper sticker labels. Scrutiny comes from creating a new term and definition for something we already do. This is an approach.

Respondent 20: An approach. Less tied to what we call it. Maybe add surrogates to the definition. IW is pretty easy to wrap your head around.

Respondent 21: According to the Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept (Version 1.0 - 2007) - the definition is - "A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations." I believe the definition is sufficient but would remove the 'violent' in order to reflect the IW Annex to the NDS of 2020. IW can be violent, but today more than ever, with both GPC's and VEO's, the struggle is more often than not - non-kinetic. Therefore, I would rewrite it to read, "A predominantly non-violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over relevant populations."

Respondent 22: This is a broad definition. Violent is not indicative to the phases of IW; however, there is violence at levels across the spectrum. There is a lot of ambiguity in interpretation - slows down means/methods. It should be redefined to include a couple of lines to "draw out the complexities and totality of the problem set."

Respondent 23: The definition is okay, but everything that is not regular is IW. If not LSCO, then IW such as in AFG and IZ. Gray area in competition. All on the periphery.

Respondent 24: The definition is fine if our leaders would be more willing to accept risk. Since we are more risk averse now, IW needs to be defined better - current leadership doesn't like a loose definition.

Respondent 25: The definition is not insufficient—defining IW as the space between peace and war is perfectly suited for strategic competition. IW is the American term for conducting activities in the adversaries' gray zone. The doctrinal split of IW between the Combined Arms Center's Center of Excellence for Security Cooperation and Security Force Assistance with USJFKSWCS Special Operations Center of Excellence responsible for UW, FID, COIN, and stability operations (MISO, CA) is appropriate, but it has the potential for conflict and misunderstanding absent effective integration between general purpose conventional forces and SOF. I'm personally interested in how SOF persistent engagement in theater is fully integrated with the theater army's mission to 'set the theater'. IW does and should play a critical role in the Army's set the theater mission.

Respondent 26: I define (conceptualize) irregular warfare as an operation short of large scale, overt warfare; or, in those operations outside the first standard deviation a standard distribution. Note, I did not say activities, but rather operations. Activities should never be viewed by themselves; it is all activities in aggregate from which a characterization is derived. Irregular, by definition, is that outside the norm.

Respondent 27: Drop violent. Sun Tzu: win without fighting. Our pacing threat has defined it for us. Violence does occur and it may be a result of seemingly peaceful action. "The Chinese are teaching us how to fight again."

Respondent 28: An approach. "A battle of narratives." No longer a violent struggle because we are expanding IW into competition.

Respondent 29: Legal perspective. The way we fight now, blurring the lines is incredibly important. When you give lawyers a definition, they can find places to hide and avoid action. The more we think about these tasks in distinct boxes, the less we understand how they fit together. I want to define ARSOF's value propositions in IW.

Respondent 30: The IW definition remains contentious because doctrine places IW within a post-9/11 CVEO framework, while most of the IW community is forward leaning applying IW towards strategic competition. The IW Annex to the 2018 NDS removes “violent” from the existing joint definition – “Irregular warfare is a struggle among state and non-state actors to influence populations and affect legitimacy.” I agree with removing “violent” because it opens the conceptual aperture for broader application of military capabilities (beyond lethal) to influence individuals and target audiences to achieve tactical and strategic effects – specifically through MISO and UW via cyber/internet-enabled messaging and support to nonviolent resistance. Consistent with the IW JOC 2.0, I agree that IW should emphasize the population–government legs of the Clausewitzian trinity in that “IW focuses on the control or influence of populations, not on the control of an adversary’s (military) forces or territory.” However, I think the IW definition should incorporate more of the older, classic unconventional warfare (UW) definition that emphasizes subversion and sabotage – predominantly conducted through, with, or by host-nation or surrogate forces that are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source – but refined to stress cyber and virtual-enabled vectors of employment and assistance.

Respondent 31: I don’t think that the definition is insufficient but do acknowledge that there are currently different definitions of what Irregular Warfare is something that is being deliberately being addressed following updated strategic guidance and direction. I think that the majority of leaders within the Department of Defense believe that IW is uniquely a special operations activity, and not the role/responsibility of conventional forces and supported by conventional service forces in support of joint force commanders. IW is not solely a special operations activity or the responsibility of SOF commanders. I do not think that refinement is necessary, but I do think that service and joint professional education needs to emphasize that IW is a core component of DoD capabilities that can be leveraged in support of the nation.

Respondent 32: I guess I don’t think it should change. My first thought after the definition is about how technology plays a role in present irregular warfare. Technology has advanced so rapidly, changing the way a person can attack other people, groups, and nations in violent and non-violent ways (financially, economically, socially, etc.). Maybe this doesn’t change the basic definition of irregular warfare but will always be a precursor or contribute to all phases of irregular warfare into the future. I could be way off and the two aren’t connected, just a thought.

Respondent 33: Insufficient. Remove violent. It doesn't have to be violent. It's a competition for influence over all society - GOV-POL-POP (Clausewitz's Trinity). This is mostly non-kinetic and non-military.

Respondent 34: "Irregular warfare (IW) is defined as a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of

military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will. It is inherently a protracted struggle that will test the resolve of our Nation and our strategic partners." The inclusion of the "violent struggle" seems to escalate the activity from competition to warfare. If we are to make a distinction (for our own peace of mind) that keeps us OUT of a state a perpetual warfare and IN a state of perpetual competition at, or below, the threshold of armed conflict then the definition is adequate. It has been my experience that we (the United States) are the only ones that have repeatedly NOT been fighting a war throughout the last several decades. Both of our major competitors in the Great Powers Competition (another term that is re-definable in different circles) are unequivocally conducting a form of warfare, whether this be economic or otherwise, and have woven this into the very fabric of their national policies. The answer to the question (is it sufficient?) lies directly in our ability to find war by any other mean palatable. If the United States needs to be in competition in order to sleep at night the definition might appear to be adequate.

If I were to redefine Irregular Warfare, I would take a more simplistic approach and consider it to be war by any other means. Having said that, the definition would look something like this; "Irregular Warfare (IW) is defined by the struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and/or influence over the relevant populations and resources. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, support, and will. It is inherently a protracted struggle that exists within, and not separately from, the Competition Continuum to provide options that can prevent, delay or set favorable conditions for armed conflict."

Question 2. Under your definition, would it be applicable to competition as well as conflict?

Respondent 1: Yes

Respondent 2: Yes

Respondent 3: Yes.

Respondent 4: Yes. It's actually more important in competition.

Respondent 5: Yes. Just like the Cold War. This is not really different. IW is on a continuum. It becomes warfare when violence occurs.

Respondent 6: Yes. This is centuries old, most recently done in the Cold War.

Respondent 7: Yes.

Respondent 8: Yes

Respondent 9: Yes. Yes, as the core IW elements work from pre conflict (competition) through all phases of armed conflict ending with post conflict activities (rebuilding).

Respondent 10: Yes. But it is not necessarily overt. "IW should be forecasted. We should fight the wars 10 years down the road instead of the one immediately before us."

Respondent 11: Yes

Respondent 12: Yes

Respondent 13: Yes.

Respondent 14: Calling it “warfare” makes it difficult to apply to competition. However, the activities which IW encapsulates are applicable to “grey zone” activities or competition. Competition, in and of itself, is a loosely defined concept in Joint Doctrine that often cedes primacy of authorities to other departments and agencies of the U.S. government. The DoD often has difficulty gaining approval of activities that are not directly tied to being prepared for the conduct of operations during conflict. This significantly limits the scope of what IW could be conducted in competition.

Respondent 15: I believe irregular warfare is applicable to both, however, its use in conflict is predicated upon its extensive use in competition in order to build up capabilities and capacity in a region. Because of the essential human aspects of irregular warfare, it can’t be turned on and off like a light switch and human relationships and networks must be curated over years or decades to maximize their effectiveness in a conflict.

Respondent 16: Yes

Respondent 17: Yes

Respondent 18: Yes

Respondent 19: Yes

Respondent 20: Yes

Respondent 21: It would absolutely be applicable, and never more so than after a disaster in Vietnam and dim outlook in the global war on terror. Utilizing Special Forces to train others to fight, as we did in Ukraine is a course of action the American people can tolerate in perpetuity. American blood is not tolerable. MISO is another course of action that can be utilized in both competition and conflict.

Respondent 22: 100% yes. Competition = Deterrence. Crisis as well as competition and conflict.

Respondent 23: Yes.

Respondent 24: Yes.

Respondent 25: As currently defined, IW is critical and arguably a primary tool for competition and transitions to conflict through UW and MISO and CA stability operations. IW in competition

should be the basis for the Army in setting the theater, while the UW component of IW provides for resistance operations that may prove crucial in future conflicts.

Respondent 26: Irregular warfare is an operational characterization, not an activity by itself. Activities typically associated with irregular warfare are applicable across all operations. While the activities may be the same, in my definition, irregular warfare is that which occurs outside major combat operations. That's what makes it irregular, or outside the norm, which is outside the first standard deviation

Respondent 27: Absolutely. Competition is the most critical aspect of warfare. The goal is to achieve/maintain peace under favorable conditions. Direct action thinking perpetuates the fight. "Practicing successful tenets of IW in competition should never be suspended. They help hasten achieving peace under favorable conditions."

Respondent 28: Yes. 9/10 of this battle is non-violent. "Competition is everywhere, all the time."

Respondent 29: Yes.

Respondent 30: Absolutely – it would apply to competition more-so than conflict, tailor-made especially in the “gray zone” just below the threshold of provoking a conventional or nuclear response.

Respondent 31: The current definition is applicable in support of steady state activities below the threshold of armed conflict. States compete with one another, and IW is an Inter-Agency contribution to what is inherently an economic use of talent, capability, and capacity to augment existing foreign policy and economic security activities. It is effective – perhaps needed – to compete against adversaries and geopolitical opponents in specific regions of the world and globally against current and emerging state powers. In order to deter foreign states from challenging US interests and investments around the world, IW needs to be leveraged as an instrument of state power. There is an argument to me be made that diplomatic, informational, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIME[FIL]) campaigns should be irregular campaign, with the Departments of State, Treasury, and Defense as co-leads in developing regional strategic plans.

Respondent 32: Yes, I think different competition and levels of conflict changes the definition of irregular warfare. The U.S. versus a first world superpower, compared to the U.S. versus competition of a 3rd world sandbox is going to be carried out in different phases and tasks of irregular warfare.

Respondent 33: IW is most applicable in competition. All major adversaries operate this way: Chinese 3 Warfares; Russian Active Measures; nK and Iran all have an approach.

Respondent 34: Without a doubt. To separate Irregular Warfare from the competition space effectively removes it as our single most valuable (military) tool short of active armed conflict. If applied effectively during the competition space, irregular warfare provides options to policy-makers, diplomats, and military leaders in their support of national command authority goals.

Question 3. Which ARSOF entities would participate irregular warfare and in what capacities?

Respondent 1: All three in an integrated construct

Respondent 2: All three in an integrated construct

Respondent 3: All three in an integrated construct. Priority of contribution are SF and PO. CA requires additional infrastructure and HQ oversight in place to do their job.

Respondent 4: All three.

Respondent 5: All three. PO: Influence; CA: Governance; SF: Should be about resistance.

Respondent 6: All three. More important than ever to integrate. We have to think about "positional advantage vs. defeat."

Respondent 7: All three.

Respondent 8: All three.

Respondent 9: All ARSOF entities participate in IW at all stages. As example: all USASOC formations work pre conflict (competition) conducting KLE, JCET, SME etc.... In the Conflict stage all formations have wartime rolls. In post conflict all formations have activities they can conduct for humanitarian (CA / PSYOP) through security (SFODA).

Respondent 10: All three.

Respondent 11: All three.

Respondent 12: All three plus enabling inventory.

Respondent 13: All three plus enabling inventory.

Respondent 14: All ARSOF entities can support IW. However, ARSOF is not a concept or term that has any meaning within the Joint Force. SOCOM provides Joint SOF capabilities to the DoD. While at the lower tactical levels, these capabilities may be service specific, their application at the operational level is a Joint Function, overseen by a Joint SOF C2 structure. If IW were managed with an IW Campaign plan or strategy, it would be the TSOCs that manage the comprehensive IW and its intended effects, while ARSOF units of action execute the CA, MISO, or SF specific activities (SR, DA, UW).

Respondent 15: Army SOF Psychological Operations and Special Forces are ideal to participate in irregular warfare. Civil Affairs is essentially a conventional military capability that just

happens to be within Army Special Operations Command. These (PSYOP and SF) forces are one of the only tools in the Department of Defense capable of enabling irregular warfare and doing so over sustained periods of time. Key to this capability is their close and enduring contact with both military and political partners in foreign states and their persistent forward presence.

Respondent 16: All three. Better integration under the consolidated structure of 1SFC.

Respondent 17: All three. Better integration under the consolidated structure of 1SFC.

Respondent 18: All three. Better integration under the consolidated structure of 1SFC.

Respondent 19: All three. Integrated. Different force will take lead based on conditions, sensitivities, and access. Integrated in FORCEGEN.

Respondent 20: All three. A unified effort. Integrate early through training, FORCEGEN, planning, and execution.

Respondent 21: Special Forces would train foreign partner militaries. Civil Affairs, through programs like GWOT CERP, would influence the local populace. PSYOP would utilize information operations to influence physical behavior.

Respondent 22: All three conducting their core competencies. SF: FID; CA: Stability; PO: information space is priority #1. They are mutually supporting and critical.

Respondent 23: All three. SF works with indigenous forces. PO works hearts and minds. CA helps with population governance. Where we struggle is winning the influence war because of slow approvals.

Respondent 24: All three, but we haven't demonstrated that we can integrate the well. It's all conceptual.

Respondent 25: SF in UW, COIN, FID, and SFA; MISO in UW, COIN, FID, SFA and stability operations; and CA in UW, COIN, FID, SFA, and stability operations

Respondent 26: All. The farther down the bell curve, the more niche these capabilities are. SA, PSYOP and CATs, STO, with JCETs to build relationships with host nation militaries. c. One area I see a lack of employment is PSYOP at CYBER Command. In my limited observation, CYBER Command provides a venue for micro targeted messaging or actions/ opportunities that we are not fully exploiting. Yes, the JMWC and IWC are related; and our national objectives would be best served if there were more permanent PSYOP personnel at CYBER to perform actions in competition. A company or two perhaps?

Respondent 27: All 3. We were built this way for a reason.

Respondent 28: All three.

Respondent 29: All three.

Respondent 30: The entire ARSOF enterprise is what the IW Annex to the 2018 NDS categorizes as “IW-focused” – specifically developed to provide IW solutions to complex problems. While individual ARSOF elements provide specialized IW skillsets (SF = UW; PO = MISO; CA = CAO), ARSOF cross-functional teams (CFTs) at echelon combining SF, CA, PO, intel, and sustainment offer integrated IW solutions outweighing the sum of their parts.

Respondent 31: All ARSOF formations – units of actions to task force-capable headquarters at the LTC-LTG levels can be employed to conduct IW. Special Forces, Psychological Operations, and Civil Affairs units of action can be deployed at the section, team, and detachment levels to support core activities as part of IW operations, activities, and investments (OAI). Company and Battalion level HQs can be employed to plan, synchronize, and coordinate activities, supporting or supported by DoS and other USG inter-agency partners. Battalion-Group/Brigade HQs can be employed or deployed to execute campaigns in support of Army or Joint Force Commanders or integrated as part of an inter-agency task force, providing military capabilities and supporting external (non-military) activities. Writing campaigns needs to be done prior to the deployment and/or employment of ARSOF – the role of Combatant Commands, Joint Task Forces, and (possibly) Service and Special Operations Component Commands. ARSOF can persistently support the development and refinement of those plans, but not responsible for campaign accomplishment; that should remain the responsibility of and task to the supported command.

Respondent 32: I think that all current ARSOF should play a role in irregular warfare. For SF, I don't believe they should be leading UW activities. I think we have grown too large, and that sensitive operation has been delegated long ago to more elite people. We, Special Forces, just continue to pat each other on the backs about how multi-purpose we are in all of our SOF mission sets but really, we lost that one decades ago. It is a complete joke when leaders in SF “remind” SF Soldiers that UW is our “bread and butter”. When in reality we go through a 5th grade version of it in the Q course, go to Group, deploy multiple times and train host nations how to shoot on a flat range and teach small unit tactics (FID). With saying that, I don't think we should all be trained for 700 mission sets. I think UW could be carried out with a new formation of ARSOF teams (CA, PSYOPS, SF) and other talented, intelligent folks. For example, back when Special Forces formed the CRF/ CIF to combat terrorism, it shouldn't have formed another direct action unit but instead an UW unit. Now we are even that much further, decades removed from having a trained UW unit. All of ARSOF can adapt to the other tasks of irregular warfare, and have adapted over the last 20 years, because of many lessons learned. Again, I circle back to technology, we have to remain at the competitive forefront in leading technology to have the edge over first world adversaries to go toe to toe in irregular warfare.

Respondent 33: All three have a role. Look at Deterrent Theory - must have a capability, the adversary must know about it, and the adversary must believe you are willing to use it.

Respondent 34: ARSOF is a complex and multi-faceted entity that is uniquely postured to conduct irregular warfare activities. However, the lion's share of the work to be done is firmly rooted in the use of indigenous populations to achieve our goals and therefore would go to the

portions of ARSOF that routinely engage with those populations. The caveat to this would be the deliberate (and constant) integration of the "tribes" of ARSOF from the very beginnings of their respective pipelines. Only then could we achieve the generational shift needed to truly eliminate the stovepipes of excellence that we have created. The inclusion of Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations is paramount. We would also be woefully narcissistic if we did not seek out other SOF and conventional entities to ensure a much more (and I hate this word) holistic approach to the problem. for instance, could you picture doing this without levying the power of Cyber Command or the malleability and reach of MARSOC?

Question 4. Current doctrine and operational concepts identify five tasks that comprise irregular warfare: counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, and stability operations. These are also traditional ARSOF activities. Do you think this list is sufficient, incomplete, or too broad? Please explain.

Respondent 1: All domain integration. Sensitive activities. Virtual ISR. SR. Scalable and non-permanent action.

Respondent 2: Resistance is at the heart of IW. Tech is pushing us more into an IW environment. IW is everything not considered traditional warfare. "IW is about people."

Respondent 3: All should be incorporated and integrated. Intel should address structures and hierarchies and their vulnerabilities. Identify competition opportunities. The integration of space and cyber to conduct multi-domain tasks is essential.

Respondent 4: SF back to basics, UW mindset. Resistance, population focused. Building capacity. PO should be a "payload for influence." MIL approach to information is tragically broken. CA provide indicators and warnings of malign activities because of their integration in foreign governing structures. SOFT POWER

Respondent 5: An approach. Not limited to the five. This is about RESISTANCE.

Respondent 6: No problem with the core 5 and everything else in support. These are like "lines of operation in the competition/crisis/conflict continuum." If defined properly, these five are the basis of a taxonomy of deterrence/delay, disruption. Resilience and resistance lead to a deterrent effect.

Respondent 7: Lists are too limiting. Why isn't CTF a core task? Approach as opposed to a menu.

Respondent 8: It's much broader than these five tasks. Joint Staff limits the number to make the definition and description easier to understand by the public. Perhaps UW should be used because it covers ALL activities.

Respondent 9: These are enough.

Respondent 10: Cyber, CFT, tech stand-off, influence. "PE MUST BE DONE FIRST."

Respondent 11: Everything. 5th SOF Truth: SOF requires non-SOF support. IW is regular warfare.

Respondent 12: Every lever across DIMEFIL.

Respondent 13: Every lever across DIMEFIL.

Respondent 14: CT, UW, and FID are traditional SOF activities, but all of the IW activities can be conventional force activities as well. 10 USC 167 direct Special operations activities (not ARSOF) The most commonly overlook part of the sentence is: "insofar as it relates to special operations". Meaning any force can conduct these activities as directed by the authority holder (GCCs in most cases).

10 USC 167:

(k) Special Operations Activities. —For purposes of this section, special operations activities include each of the following insofar as it relates to special operations:

- (1) Direct action.
- (2) Strategic reconnaissance.
- (3) Unconventional warfare.
- (4) Foreign internal defense.
- (5) Civil affairs.
- (6) Military information support operations.
- (7) Counterterrorism.
- (8) Humanitarian assistance.
- (9) Theater search and rescue.
- (10) Such other activities as may be specified by the President or the Secretary of Defense.

The activities listed under IW are far too restricting to apply to competition as needed to compete with peer and near peer threats.

Respondent 15: I think the addition of information warfare or political warfare is warranted. Stability operations and counterinsurgency are not exclusively SOF, and in most cases, SOF alone would be insufficient to provide support for large scale operations. If anything, the core of Army irregular warfare should be refined to unconventional warfare, FID, and political warfare.

Respondent 16: Stability Ops = FID for ARSOF. SR, DA, UW, FID

Respondent 17: No menu. Figure it out.

Respondent 18: It's mainly about building a HN force and enabling them.

Respondent 19: We can bin everything we need to do in these five. They simplify force management and authorities identification. We want our doctrine "squishy" to maximize flexibility. Avoid rigid menu.

Respondent 20: We can bin everything we need to do in these five. They simplify force management and authorities identification. We want our doctrine "squishy" to maximize flexibility. Avoid rigid menu. "A bigger list is just a bigger list."

Respondent 21: I believe this list is incomplete. Many of these tasks overlap, but all of them retain a kinetic aspect. Although not SOF, cyber, EW, PSYOP and other IRCs are irregular warfare which dominate the gray zone of IW. If I were rewriting, I would add "Information Related Capabilities" or "non-kinetic" or "OOTW."

Respondent 22: IW is creating a crisis that could lead to conflict. You need a list, but the list must be updated in doctrine and policy to account for the operational environment. Need a common operating picture across the whole of government. "ARSOF hyper-enables a holistic government approach." This needs to be an approach with a base plan to identify and pursue operational investments. "Building relationships is a core task."

Respondent 23: This is an approach, not a fixed list. It's based on the situation. Identify the problem then plan the resources required. Develop a plan to get from the current environment to the desired one.

Respondent 24: The list is too big. FID, COIN, CT. Stability doesn't work unless we continue to occupy (AFG, IZ, SY).

Respondent 25: No, the list does not address SFA. SFA is providing the host nation force with the capability to deter and defend its homeland. ARSOF episodic engagement is a critical component of the conventional force SFA mission.

Respondent 26: Sufficient. Though they are so broad as to call their relevance into question.

Respondent 27: We can bin any tool we need under these 5. Also, this needs to be preceded by PE. 1) Gather information 2) shaping activities to include network development and infrastructure development. 3) Population interaction for cultural and situational awareness.

Respondent 28: Enabling activities are just as important as core activities because they incur lower risk and have greater economy of force. This is a "people hardware" approach. Focused on relationships.

Respondent 29: All things. An approach, not a list. Execute based on skills and our understanding of the environment and requirements - the situation.

Respondent 30: The 19 October 2021 Joint Staff J-7 IW Mission Analysis recommends: "Eliminate the distinction between "core" and "enabling" activities and replace them with the following "IW focused operations and activities": UW, FID, CT, COIN, stability operations, countering threat networks (CTN) (which includes Counter Threat Finance (CTF) and Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC)), military information support operations (MISO), civil affairs operations (CAO), and those military engagement activities (which include aspects of security cooperation, civil-military operations (CMO), and interorganizational cooperation) that

support IW.” I agree with the JS IW Mission Analysis. The five aforementioned IW tasks or “pillars” are antiquated and insufficient, especially in conjunction with eliminating “violent” from the IW definition. MISO, CAO, and CTF must be elevated to greater importance to address how China and Russia indirectly pursue their interests via subversion and coercion – legally, economically, and across the information environment.

Respondent 31: I do not see a conflict between current ARSOF core activities and the five types of operations – tasks – inherent in irregular warfare. I do think that IW is commonly understood to be an activity conducted by the US unilaterally, or with alienated allies and partners, during times of escalation – crisis development – and conflict, but not during competition. That disconnect in how defense professionals and military leaders/ planners is part of the hurdle being addressed in the DoD’s current re-look at how IW is explained and how it is taught. One gap in the USG’s approach to IW is leveraging it to support strategic or regional de-escalation, as several ARSOF/Joint SOF core activities are potentially escalatory, strategically risky, or both. Indirectly, IW’s shaping, influence, and deterring actives – including core DoD activities – can indirectly support de-escalation, but only if regularly tested and available as part of immediate, coordinated USG activities.

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: IW is a philosophy and an approach. It is a way to approach competition with state and non-state actors to include businesses. Those complexities are why we wrestle with IW.

Respondent 34: The list is exquisitely complete in that it defines five activities that provide ARSOF the permission to conduct a full spectrum campaign in support of national goals. It is both broad (allowing commanders to define their operational and strategic goals) while pointed enough to allow subordinate commanders to define their tactical goals.

One sidenote to this entire conversation is enduring need to have a further conversation about ARSOF (and SOF in general) beginning to realize the difference between simple, complex, and wicked problems. The world of Irregular Warfare, by its very nature, is a world of wicked and virtually unsolvable problems with characteristics so undefined that there can never be a true “end-state” which drives the classic military mind virtually insane. Rather this world of wicked (and unsolvable problems) leaves us with two options; 1) throw our hands up in the air and say it is too tough, or 2) strive for outcomes vice end states and realize that we must look for palatable outcomes that may never be exactly what we want.

Question 5. Do you believe irregular warfare applied during great power competition should have information advantage, influence, civil engagement, and intelligence component? Please elaborate on what you think need to be added and why.

Respondent 1: Yes

Respondent 2: Yes

Respondent 3: Yes, for all. Intel needs a mechanism to translate intel into IW effects in competition.

Respondent 4: Yes. Be careful with intel. Needs a firewall. Can be used to provide human mapping detail at the tactical level.

Respondent 5: Intel and Ops are inextricable in SOF. SOF does tasks that look at the whole environment, not just enemy. This is intel-like. Intel does tasks to satisfy and IIR for another customer. IC gives picture of what exists, doesn't change picture like SOF. OPE changes or shapes the picture. Intel is inherent in SOF activities. All others, yes. Means/method vs. intent/purpose.

Respondent 6: IW in competition is an operational art. It is conducted to buy time and space with the goal of deterring and delaying and preparing to degrade or disrupt. This involves ARSOF OPE.

Respondent 7: Intel is needed for OODA loop of malign influence. For influence, at the end of the Cold War we eliminated USIA and USIS. No coordinated entity for information campaigning to communicate strategic values. We've ceded strategic communication to Hollywood.

Respondent 8: Intel is an important part, but it is sensitive. Clear lines drawn to avoid congressional scrutiny and violations of law.

Respondent 9: Yes, IW should and does have those mentioned components. The issue is generally how they are applied. The US Government / Military is a bureaucracy and change to plans is slow in happening. The US Military must follow strict laws governing How, When, Where and to what effect IW can be used. In order to be more effective against other great powers, either Bureaucracy needs to be removed or new less restrictive laws written to allow actions to take place. Russian and China do not have restrictions on their IW activities the way the US does.

Respondent 10: A tech order of battle. Cyber, CFT, Influence, Intel.

Respondent 11: Intel is a by-product of ops. Cyber, deception. Economics. In SOF- ops drive intel. This should be PE (AFO+OPE). We prepare with basic intel before deployment, then deploy to improve intel picture through OPE. Cognitive maneuver to contact. No info advantage.

Respondent 12: Intel is a by-product of ops. Cyber, deception. Economics. In SOF- ops drive intel. This should be PE (AFO+OPE). We prepare with basic intel before deployment, then deploy to improve intel picture through OPE. Cognitive maneuver to contact. No info advantage.

Respondent 13: We require intel to understand who/what/how to influence AND we create/generate intel.

Respondent 14: For IW to be of value it should describe an operational approach under a SECDEF EXORD with authorities. Limiting IW to a set of loosely related activities does not nest IW with the NSS, NDS, or NMS. IW should allow all required activities to compete or defeat a competitor or enemy. Information Advantage and Influence are loose concepts at this

point and should be included for future concepts. However, for near term operations, intel, MISO, Civil affairs are absolutely THE critical capability during competition.

Respondent 15: I agree that irregular warfare during great power competition should have an information advantage, influence, and intelligence component. I disagree with the need for a civil engagement component because the capacity for ARSOF Civil Affairs to “move the needle” on civil resistance, resiliency, and underground networks is extremely limited and are duplicative of some competencies that Special Forces provides. Information advantage and influence elements are especially important in great power competition, as there is a need to link nascent indigenous capabilities, partner national level soft power and messaging capabilities, and TSOC/GCC/USG messaging efforts together in competition and exploit opportunities and increase perception of deterrent capabilities.

Respondent 16: All support. Intel is very important. SOF received passive info collection requirements and debriefs based on their normal missions.

Respondent 17: All support. Intel is very important. SOF received passive info collection requirements and debriefs based on their normal missions.

Respondent 18: All support. Intel is very important. SOF received passive info collection requirements and debriefs based on their normal missions.

Respondent 19: All. Intelligence is critical. We have a duty to provide information we collect on mission. We analyze it as well as a measure of our effectiveness and what we need to do next.

Respondent 20: All. Intelligence is critical. We have a duty to provide information we collect on mission. We analyze it as well as a measure of our effectiveness and what we need to do next.

Respondent 21: Yes. In the modern battlefield, more than ever before, it matters less who is winning, and more who the populace thinks are winning. Information advantage may not even go far enough, I would present information dominance. Influence is ideal holistically, but especially in the internet environment. Civil engagement is essential, because the local populace is the vital requirement to the cessation of any conflict or adversarial relationship. Intel is key.

Respondent 22: IA is critical in passing intel to avoid losing opportunities. CE is essential for reducing suffering and maintaining stability. Influence is essential for global and national security. Intel feeds IA. We have to work hard to get authorities and permissions to enable flexibility.

Respondent 23: Political, economic. Cyber, but it's tricky - "what is the threshold and the proportional retaliation?" Need cyber enablers. Intel is essential. ARSOF are "the global sensors" so we provide input to intel, but we are also consumers. We're the first forces in theater so we need good intel for our mission planning, then we provide information on the ground that the IC needs but doesn't have.

Respondent 24: All these aspects are important and can be binned under FID, COIN, and CT. All contingent on the receptivity of the populations we are engaging.

Respondent 25: No, intelligence driving operations is a central component of all traditional military activities, while IA, influence, and civil engagement are encompassed in what is currently defined as stability operations and primarily executed by PSYOP and CA forces.

Respondent 26: a. Absolutely. Short of armed conflict, these are the most viable activities as others include a higher degree of violence associated with open conflict and imply or encourage escalation. b. These options are always more acceptable to an Embassy staff, while the others will generally be met with skepticism, if not outright disdain. c. A note on intelligence. GPC activities require much more of it, and the PSYOP and CA units have a dearth of it. PSYOP Groups have 50 each, SFGs 306, not counting 18Fs. This means PSYOP actions are being done with no intel support, which increases risk to mission and strategic risk should an operation have significant negative effect.

Respondent 27: Elements of each of these are applicable. Need to ensure PE is part of this to generate understanding. Everything we do feeds the intelligence picture. Kinetic and non-kinetic targeting. Shaping. Network disruption. Need much lead time to accomplish this. Public Affairs is very important as well.

Respondent 28: Whatever is at our disposal. We have access to provide unique information. That is intelligence. We have to be comfortable feeding Intel in the competition space. Everyone thinks we are already doing it anyway.

Respondent 29: All aspects. The issue is to determine what ARSOF does in competition.

Respondent 30- "Influence" is already the central component of IW. It should remain but must be re-emphasized within the context of the human and information environments for IW application.

- "Information advantage" is a new idea the Army is creating that is poorly defined and understood. I think it has definite overlap with IW – especially in the latter portions dedicated to MISO, cyber, and EW (MISO being content-focused information warfare; cyber and EW being conduit-focused information warfare).

- Civil engagement is a critical aspect of influence within the human environment (ref: Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations / JC-HAMO) – a key foundation that baseline SOF LREC skills enable, and SOF CA competencies specifically expand for the GCCs.

- Intel is a joint/warfighting function – critical across the entire Joint Force. However, for SOF and IW especially as related to influence, civil engagement, and information advantage – intel must focus on rapidly making sense of people-focused data to enable MISO, public affairs, and broader influence campaigns to effectively shape partner and adversary behavior (deter, compel, induce, assure). This requires exquisite human capital that the private sector is paying top-dollar for – skills in structured query language (SQL) to manage data bases; web/social media scraping to parse PAI for sentiment analysis; and advanced analytics to enable faster decision-making and deeper insight on target audience preferences and trends.

Respondent 31: Operational and Informational Advantage over the adversary or threat actors should always be achieved. That advantage is a condition, not a type of activity, and IW can be wielded IOT achieve and sustain that advantage during competition, in support of deterrence,

during de-escalation and posturing through an emerging crisis, and traditional conflict including large scale combat operations. Influence activities need to be sustained, not cut-away following major conflict and re-constituted after needed during crisis and conflict. Influence is not limited to special operations activities, MISO, and public affairs, but in leveraging all influencing activities and capitalizing on the deployment and employment of forces to persistently shape, influence, and inform. The intelligence component is key; we fundamentally lack the ability to see, understand, assess, and analyze people and the information space in conflict and during competition. DoD lacks talent, training and capacity to leverage the intel community to support achieving informational advantage – as do other USG agencies and partners in joint and inter-agency settings.

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: Even though IW is an approach that incorporates whatever capabilities we need to bring to bear in a given situation, a menu is still needed. Mission planners live on lists. The core five tasks may or may not be the right tasks, but we need primary tasks to bin all our activities. The six secondary activities are just as important the five core activities. This is how we educate and train our forces. We need BIG BUCKETS. Information is the coin of the realm. Read Promised Land Crusader State by McDougall. Remember IW is not SOF-specific.

Respondent 34: Absolutely! To remove any of these is to effectively hobble ourselves. Not only should it have those components, but a cyber component must be integrated as well. Even with these components added on as billets in a Joint Planning Group, they must repeatedly plan, red-team, and refine their operational, strategic, and even tactical goals on a regular basis. If allowed to retreat to their own areas after a weekly sync meeting, they will never realize their true capacity and capability.

Question 6. How would you define strategic risk, especially regarding irregular warfare?

Respondent 1: Moral and physical are fine categories, but moral should be viewed as both inward and outward looking. The outward looking nature of moral risk assesses our reputation and credibility. Existential risk.

Respondent 2: Existential risk in IW (moderate to low). Operational risk (mission and force) (variable). Reputational risk (mod to high at all times).

Respondent 3: In terms of national command authority. Existential threats and decision-making at the POTUS level.

Respondent 4: Two metrics. 1) buying time and space 2) assessing risk to inaction.

Respondent 5: Strat. Risk in IW campaign strategy: what is our role: UW/Insurgency or FID/COIN. Changing our role changes our risk calculus.

Respondent 6: A risk of escalation. Miscalculations of adversary intent and actions. Can be mitigated with clear policy objectives across the DIME applied through IW.

Respondent 7: No input.

Respondent 8: Whole books have been written on this. Strat. Risk is defined based on your community (business, etc.): force, mission, institution, values, lawfare, investments, and escalation. Definition must be tailored specifically for military in irregular warfare.

Respondent 9: the probability of failure in achieving a strategic objective at an acceptable cost.

Respondent 10: Our freedom makes us vulnerable to tech IW. "Why are we worried about leveraging authorities, especially to influence, during competition." "What is our moral counter to an immoral attack."

Respondent 11: The threshold to violence. Risk to mission/force.

Respondent 12: A realist view. Generally synonymous with geopolitical risk: security, survival, prosperity.

Respondent 13: Initiation of open conflict. Prevention of conflict. Anything that causes a declared military action.

Respondent 14: As GCC campaign plans do not direct execution of IW, strategic risk has no relation to IW. The NDS generally refers to irregular warfare "capabilities" not activities. However, the NDS does not further define what encompasses IW.

Respondent 15: The strategic risk of using irregular warfare is significantly lower than the overt use of conventional military force and is often preferred for bilateral partnerships with states in politically sensitive regions. In competition, this would be the ideal approach. There is higher strategic risk in conflict to the use of irregular warfare because of the possible public impression that the USG effort is half-hearted, or that it is being conducted "on the cheap." Irregular warfare efforts in conflict may also erode confidence from partners that the USG is serious about support, likely stemming from the relatively minute footprint and combat capabilities of SOF forces when employed.

Respondent 16: Actions taken that have impacts on policy and could affect the national interests.

Respondent 17: Actions taken that have impacts on policy and could affect the national interests.

Respondent 18: Actions taken that have impacts on policy and could affect the national interests.

Respondent 19: Not being able to maintain our footing/global standing - 'pax Americana.' Violating our values upsets the status quo.

Respondent 20: Consistency in our policies and honoring our commitments

Respondent 21: A common definition is "...events that make it difficult...to achieve objectives." That's a fair definition, but when applied to great power competition, I would copy China's approach to the gray zone. Any and all operations are pursued which do not lead to a kinetic war. Cyber, MISO, EW, island building, A2AD, etc. I believe the US should arm ARSOF with these permissions to execute.

Respondent 22: A nation's ability to maintain security and economic stability. It has to be consistent and thought out for the second and third order effects of IW actions, across all domains.

Respondent 23: Anything that would but the nation/homeland at risk. White House decision-making.

Respondent 24: Strategic risk is what defines our nation to the rest of the world. "Do we live up to our bumper sticker." Impatience also is a risk. IW takes time to develop.

Respondent 25: Strategic risk and IW is primarily a discussion of avoidance of kinetic conflict while accomplishing national objectives (competing) below the level of armed conflict.

Respondent 26: Detrimental externalities resulting from an operation that have an effect outside the operational area. b. In example, from the Russian perspective before the invasion of 2022, sanctions that reduced their access to dual use technologies. This is likely a contributing factor to their current shortage of precision guided munitions, which in turn forces a high-risk method of employment for their ground attack aircraft. This is a rare circumstance where a cause and effect can be identified. c. Put another way: Operational SOF Employment in the Donbas (beginning 2014) » Strategic Sanctions employed by the West » reduced access to PGM components » forced change in aircraft (CAS) employment » increased battle losses in their "special military operation".

Respondent 27: BLOW BACK: lack of self-awareness and poor understanding leads to actions that compromise our credibility, create new enemies, and enable or create opportunities for our adversaries to compete more effectively.

Respondent 28: The opportunity to fail on a large scale. The place here our value proposition as ARSOF is the greatest - near crisis. This is also where the greatest risk to agility, transparency, and comparative advantage occurs.

Respondent 29: Hard one. Political risk. For ARSOF - taking action that constrain options over time.

Respondent 30: I like Jon Schroden's SOF risk-centric theory: "if policy-makers have a difficult policy problem and they are unsatisfied with the level of risk presented by orthodox solutions or inaction, then they will choose special operations." (CNA, "Why Special Operations? A Risk-Based Theory"). More specifically, I think strategic risk for IW involves lowering the political threshold for intervention early enough to make a difference before adversaries can crowd out the political space (by shaping narratives against the United States; coopting potential proxies;

etc.). This is the “paradox of strategic irregular warfare”: On the one hand, if you don’t get in early enough, IW options become less effective over time as other actors crowd out the political space available to manipulate. On the other hand, the optimal point of entry is also when politicians are most hesitant to intervene due to the twin dangers of escalation and unintended consequences.” (<https://warontherocks.com/2016/08/want-to-build-a-better-proxy-in-syria-lessons-from-tibet/>)

Respondent 31: Strategic Risk is lacking the ability to leverage access, placement, capabilities, and allies immediately to deter conflict and escalation regionally or globally, in support of (and not in conflict with) coordinated efforts to influence and de-escalate through deliberate flexible response/deferent options (FROs/FDOs conducted by the Regional Combatant Command or sub-unified command.

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: Existential threats. We need to believe in ourselves with a shared sense of our history - a unity of effort.

Respondent 34: Strategic risk, as applied to IW would reside in a few different places.

The risk of doing nothing - We are already losing global influence, access, and placement to economic warfare being conducted against us. Think of the recent changes to the Indo-Pacific Theater that have proven this. As we lose these strategic relationships, they will be hard pressed to reform them later.

The risk of losing our strategic advantage - recent world events (Ukraine) have shown us that we can prepare for war while praying for peace. We have (this is all open source) been actively participating, in one form or fashion (conventional or otherwise), in bolstering the Ukrainian people's ability to withstand Russian aggression. It has been remarkably successful and has allowed the rest of the world to debate, react, support, or otherwise take action in their own time and fashion. If we can conduct these activities on a recurrent and global basis; we can stay firmly rooted in the aforementioned Competition Continuum both as a nation and as a world leader. Fundamentally, the Strategic Risk to any irregular warfare campaign is found in the last line of its current definition, "will test the resolve of our nation....". It has been my own experience that the only ones who are surprised when our national will takes a turn and we no longer support a foreign people are the Americans that convinced the indigenous people to support American goals in their country. An Irregular Warfare campaign should be looked at as a forever investment on the part of our nation and only when we have lost the active support of the indigenous people (go back to the very definition of IW) will the campaign be considered lost and subsequently abandoned in whole or in part. Having said that; the inevitable shift in our country's priorities should stop coming as a surprise and actually be planned for. We should never turn tail and run out of a country in the middle of the night unless we are being hopelessly overran. You begin planning for an operation to end/terminate at the same time that you begin planning for an operation to commence.

Question 7. Please list and describe the types of strategic level risk you believe we should anticipate when ARSOF compete against peer adversaries?

Respondent 1: Finite resources. Mission creep. Myopic focus could cause us to neglect other threats.

Respondent 2: Cultural miscues and misreading or misinterpreting signals, mores, and norms can create significant risk.

Respondent 3: Items requiring POTUS decision-making. The President owns this risk.

Respondent 4: Authoritarianism vs. democracy.

Respondent 5: Risk to who I am. Do my actions in IW undermine my narrative? Threaten who I am and what I value? Mis-messaging.

Respondent 6: Miscalculation. Misunderstanding. "A risk of failure to seize opportunities for positional advantage."

Respondent 7: No input.

Respondent 8: Escalation.

Respondent 9: I see strategic risk for the military as Political, Social, Economic and Operational. Each one of the types are affected by the actions of or lack of actions by ARSOF forces around the world on a daily basis whether in conflict or prior to hostilities.

Respondent 10: A lack in clarity of purpose, action, and effects as well as knowledge of what others in IA and partners are doing. Internal communications gaps. The gap between tactical execution and strategic vision and planning needs to reduce - these should be substantively similar.

Respondent 11: Mission. Values. Force. Political gatekeepers.

Respondent 12: Internal political risk. Geopolitical risk. A risk of action/inaction. Decisions about actions being worth the risk.

Respondent 13: Providing overt aid. A threshold of enemy losses causing a violent reaction to the IW enabling force.

Respondent 14: ARSOF doesn't compete against peer adversaries. GCCs and TSOCs do that utilizing conventional forces and Joint SOF. ARSOF generally execute low level or tactical activities that do not amount to IW on their own but when executing as part of a larger effort, may amount to IW.

Respondent 15: Risk of “Joe.” This is the risk of strategic embarrassment of SOF forces operating in a strategically important area against peer adversaries conducting unprofessional or unethical activities that are exploited for political gain by the adversary or damage relationships with partner states. This could be drug trafficking, violence against the local population, a lavish lifestyle, cultural or racial chauvinism, or embarrassing disclosure of correspondence, loss of weapons, etc. This could also have the risk of being “set up” by peer adversaries to embarrass US SOF and the USG through fabricated accusations or provocations. A second type of risk would be the risk of strategic neglect. SOF is not a cure all for competition. The deterrent effect of an Armored Brigade is dramatically different than the effect of an SF Battalion or Group and a PSYOP Company in a country. In many cases, a less appropriate tool (like a Stryker brigade) may have a lower risk even if its actual effectiveness is purely psychological.

Respondent 16: Getting re-missioned on the fly without proper coordination with AMEMB, HN, and other units.

Respondent 17: Supplying surrogates with weapons and equipment. Training them in their home country. Word getting out that we are giving forces more firepower.

Respondent 18: Supplying surrogates with weapons and equipment. Training them in US and then they go back to MEX and join the cartel.

Respondent 19: Not standing behind partners - not keeping our word (AFG, Kurds in IZ/SY), partners in VN.

Respondent 20: Not standing behind partners - not keeping our word (AFG, Kurds in IZ/SY), partners in VN.

Respondent 21: The US is so often in fear of our own risks, that we often fail to think critically and view the risk through the eyes of the adversary. In a conventional war, no one can defeat the US. Therefore, it behooves us to push the adversary as hard as we can into that realm. There should be no such thing as pushing too hard in the gray zone just because we "might trigger a war." China and Russia will do ANYTHING to avoid a war with us. Instead of using that fear to our advantage, we live in fear of our own greatest strength.

Respondent 22: Maintaining relationships. Leadership. Exposing ourselves to OAA that may trigger a response from state or non-state actors (escalation). Reputation. What do we stand for?

Respondent 23: Operations in the WHEM are very important but neglected. "We focus so much on the rest of the world, but not at our own back door." Information/influence war is a strategic risk. Risk of exposure or compromise by an adversary nation (e.g., CHI) while building capacity with a partner force in another nation (e.g., HON). "A benign mission could have strategic effects." Another risk is understanding our mission and role, and what the consequences are for failure.

Respondent 24: Overestimating our pacing threats - CHI and RUS. Are we creating risk by developing too much focus on those adversaries? With RUS "We're building a 10 sec. car to

compete against a 13 sec. car." "Are we doing this to justify our existence the money spent on FORCEMOD at a sacrifice to investments in people?"

Respondent 25: Strategic risk largely equates to building host nation capability and interoperability with the U.S. as the partner of choice, while avoiding the potential to be viewed as a serious threat by our adversaries. ARSOF lives in the 'contact zone' during persistent engagement and are at risk continually.

Respondent 26: a. Nasty question.

b. The largest strategic risk when discussing the PRC is how our Partners will be affected by the PRCs reaction to our SOF activities. As such, actions done in a unilateral vacuum are the most dangerous.

c. When a PSYOP action affects a target audience in an unanticipated, negative manner. In example, putting a Koranic verse on a soccer ball.

d. When ARSOF gets caught doing morally repugnant activities; drug dealing, utilizing prostitutes (with the Secret Service), or killing detainees. This will and has restricted our operational space.

e. Russia and the PRC will always kvetch about our activities. And, as long as we don't threaten their access to food or fuel, they will not go to war, remaining in competition.

Respondent 27: Lack of understanding. Perception management. Knowing where you are likely to make mistakes. Lack of self-awareness and willingness to address problems. Managing relationships. Losing the moral high ground. Exposing areas of societal weakness. Eroding pillars of society.

Respondent 28: Strategic risk is greatest in competition. We have to be agile, fast, and transparent in the information space. Blunders from missing an off ramp during escalation. Misreading the situation. See, think, and speak too slowly or incorrectly. Tripping up close to crisis. This is the risk of failure of human hardware.

Respondent 29: Risk of inaction. Risk of over-defining parameters and capabilities. Risk of non-innovation and evolving over time to address dynamic situations. Lack of foresight. Missed opportunities. Compromising principles for access and mission accomplishment.

Respondent 30: No input.

Respondent 31: Adversaries exposing placement, mission, and partners of ARSOF deployed in support of an ally or partner. Partner nations becoming uncomfortable with ARSOF presence and collaborative activities that potentially pose risk to other national interest (their lens).

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: Existential threats are internal and external. Things that would destroy the United States including not living by our espoused values: 1) free market 2) individual freedom 3) democracy. These are risks that challenge civilizational confidence. Reputational harm by not living up to our values.

Respondent 34: ARSOF should always consider their actions on foreign soil as statements of our nation's political will. This should be drilled into every ARSOF Soldier from the very beginning due to their importance and visibility. ARSOF should anticipate foreign powers competing against them by offering the same (or better) training and equipment, conducting intelligence operations against them, using their presence for psychological operations campaigns, and to be the subject of provocation attempts (both on and off the training areas). Due to this, every SOF operator should be held to very high standards of conduct, morality, and discipline.

Question 8. Categorically, do you consider these physical, moral, both, or are they best characterized using a different term?

Respondent 1: Both

Respondent 2: Both, and they are mutually reinforcing

Respondent 3: Physical Risk, Existential Risk, Moral Risk (Values), Economic and Resource Risk, Power Risk (power applied to one set of problems is not available for other threats), Commo Risk (signal intercepts and targeting based on comms shots - SIG REDUX)

Respondent 4: Both are fine. Risk to inaction straddles both.

Respondent 5: Physical, yes. Broader than moral. Risk of changing who I am, ontological risk.

Respondent 6: Physical and moral are fine. The moral component is significant. Reputational risk is significant and could put US at a moral disadvantage.

Respondent 7: These are fine.

Respondent 8: These are fine just to keep it simple.

Respondent 9: For the Strategic risks listed above I believe they are both physical and Moral as they have to do with the impact on individuals and businesses as well as Governments as a whole

Respondent 10: Both. Physical has the potential to touch us. Moral - we don't violate our values to retaliate or preempt.

Respondent 11: No issue with physical. Moral is a sliding scale. Ethical is the fixed position.

Respondent 12: Physical. Yes. Existential risk. No problem with moral as a category.

Respondent 13: Physical is good. Political spectrum risk is more representative because morality changes.

Respondent 14: No response.

Respondent 15: ARSOF doesn't compete against peer adversaries. GCCs and TSOCs do that utilizing conventional forces and Joint SOF. ARSOF generally execute low level or tactical activities that do not amount to IW on their own but when executing as part of a larger effort, may amount to IW.

Respondent 16: These are fine.

Respondent 17: These are fine

Respondent 18: These are fine

Respondent 19: These are fine. In the military, we are always assessing the bad risk. Need to assess risk of something going better than expected. (Concept from business and management.)

Respondent 20: These are fine. Risk to mission and force can be subsets of physical and moral risk.

Respondent 21: I would categorize them as both physical and moral.

Respondent 22: These are fine. I like it. You can shape the argument with these. Moral drives the physical characteristics of decision-making.

Respondent 23: Both are fine - moral or ethical. Of note, ARSOF is so committed to getting the job done, that the moral risk/values could be blurred or compromised in its pursuit. That's why understanding mission and role are essential.

Respondent 24: These are fine. Moral face value and trust are very important, both internally and externally.

Respondent 25: I favor physical seeing moral considerations largely left to civilian leadership from OSD. Moral is just as important academically and for public scrutiny, but it's a civil-military relations demand that those in uniform think about the how, not the why. Best Military Advice is about achieving physical objectives.

Respondent 26: a. These are mostly physical, with a minority of moral.

b. Last year I would say the moral is not important. Even in Russia's campaign for Ukraine, the goals are primarily for physical control of the hydrocarbons in the Black Sea. However, populations in Europe are going to drive policy as their racial memory is very sharp. That morals based, visceral reaction to Russian warfare is going to push EU governments farther than they are willing to go. So, in this case, the moral is indeed relevant.

Respondent 27: Physical. Somewhat moral, but social/societal risk better identifies the risk.

Respondent 28: Moral and physical are fine. Also consider risk to force, mission, and policy.

Respondent 29: Physical okay. Lawyers distinguish between moral (internal personal values) and ethical (external communal and societal). Some ethical risk can be bought/assumed (CDE, etc.),

moral risk cannot. There is a moral risk assessment that is a separate individual calculation that falls within the burden of command. There is a spectrum for this. SJA on one side issuing moral recommendation and SF on the other end rendering moral insight based on the situation on the ground - what is the actual impact of a decision and can you live with it.

Respondent 30: No input.

Respondent 31: I think that they are risks to policy, partnerships (bi-lateral, regional, etc.), forces, missions, and campaign accomplishment. There may be moral and physical aspects to them – risk to people (US, partners, allies, and the populace) – that are planning and assessment criteria at the policy, strategic, operational, and tactical levels of steady-state and combat operations.

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: Moral and physical are acceptable to way the interviewer describes them. There can be debate over which specific threats fit into which category.

Respondent 34: The ARSOF operator, support personnel, or otherwise are subjected to immense physical and moral risks during their time. They are given enormous amounts of freedom and authority to act on behalf of our nation and, due to that, are subjected to all of the associated temptations that these opportunities afford. The operator willingly assumes the physical risks, but our nation must assume the moral risk for the irregular warfare campaigns it embarks upon. Unfortunately, too often the operator bears the weight of both.

Question 9. What are your thoughts on ARSOF's role in mitigating strategic risk during competition and conflict?

Respondent 1: ARSOF takes action in Competition to forestall conflict. Avoid escalation but recognize not everything can be peacefully resolved.

Respondent 2: Active and early persistent operations. Coordinating and integrating with the IA, which does most of the IW. ARSOF is the reactive agent that synergizes the various capabilities.

Respondent 3: "ARSOF occupies a lot of this space if political will exists to use them." Strategic off-ramps and flexible deterrent options that alter risk calculations. SA, Resistance, PE, direct overt activities, UW, FID.

Respondent 4: Be careful not to oversell ARSOF due to "easy button" thinking and lazy policymaking. ARSOF cannot be the answer to every problem. Don't prescribe strategies that run ARSOF into the ground. Be deliberate.

Respondent 5: When ARSOF performs IW correctly, we transpose our values on partners. They act like us. Value life, etc. like us. This eliminates strategic risk by squeezing out uncertainty.

Respondent 6: We are patient and make investments over time. We are perceived as a good partner, even when we sometimes mess things up. We're nicer than our adversaries and people know that.

Respondent 7: Best strategy is to illuminate malign deeds through intel and influence to mitigate risk. Requires on the ground as well as other INTs. Communicate truthful info vs. volume. Example of illumination: declassing intel on RUS intentions for UKR. This limited RUS options.

Respondent 8: Illuminate malign activity can mitigate escalation. Putting out truthful information. "BLUF: Get in early to prevent crisis."

Respondent 9: I believe that ARSOF has the ability through training and policies to be able to have a large role in mitigating strategic risk if Current and future Administrations implement / allow policy that provides ARSOF with the authorities and ability to operate in clandestine environments where SOF is expected to operate.

Respondent 10: Understanding the environment. Influence. Our core SOF tasks.

Respondent 11: ARSOF maintains the tension to keep conditions stable.

Respondent 12: ARSOF's goal is to increase understanding and help maintain the status quo.

Respondent 13: Agree. ARSOF's goal is to increase understanding and help maintain the status quo.

Respondent 14: ARSOF does not and cannot mitigate strategic risk. Strategic risk is held above the CCMD level at the department and National Security Council level. ARSOF is most regularly associated with tactical to low operational level risk. TSOCs are associated with tactical to operational level risk.

Respondent 15: No response.

Respondent 16: vetting, legal briefs, maintain ROE, understand and promote US values.

Respondent 17: Promoting values through the ROE.

Respondent 18: HRV, ROE

Respondent 19: Forward atmospheric, indicators and warnings, relationships.

Respondent 20: Maintaining partnerships and personal relationships. Provide information that goes "beyond the party line. Increased fidelity. Indicators and warnings.

Respondent 21: During competition, utilizing Information Operations, I believe ARSOF should influence foreign populations of the futility of engaging in a war with the US, while simultaneously aggressively competing in the gray zone. During conflict, IO should do the same, but kinetic operations would play a much larger, precision strike role.

Respondent 22: ARSOF is critical because of placement and access in competition or crisis. Relationships. Enhance stability and strategic advantage by executing core competencies. If leveraged correctly through strategy and policy. We're currently not capitalizing enough on Question 4 to meet requirements in Question 9.

Respondent 23: 1. Understand the risks and develop a plan. 2. Make sure everyone understands the risks and implications. 3. We mitigate risk by being force multipliers. Working with indigenous forces limits US exposure and physical risk. PO conducting influence to encourage populations to fight their own battles also mitigates risk.

Respondent 24: We have an advantage over our pacing threats. They have executed through surrogates. We have fought and are "tried, tested, and proven." Flexible. Agile. Dangerous. Resilient.

Respondent 25: Unsure? But ARSOF arguably is in a position to better describe the operating environment through opportunities and risk considering our persistent presence and engagement in theaters.

Respondent 26: a. Sensors and Indicators: SOF has a physical presence (and relationships) unmatched in its dispersion; this is our strength. This strength yields better characterization of the environments we have access to. Where we have this, there is less uncertainty. Reduced uncertainty equates to a reduction in risk. The Advisor Brigades also figure into this and are of equal import.

b. In Lebanon, I saw the Saudis attempt to influence the country thru monetary donations that far exceeded our contributions (2013/14 timeframe). However, our influence was greater because we were physically there, in their experience with them. The French follow this model, to an even greater degree, and their access to the LAF and Beirut's government is shown in this.

Respondent 27: PE by all three tribes. We generate understanding, identify issues and solve problems because of access and placement. Because of our skill sets, we can generate effects and understanding from third countries when a targeted area is denied politically or militarily.

Respondent 28: 1. Agility. 2. Bringing to bear ARSOF exclusive capabilities (CA, PSYOP) for comparative advantage. 3. Transparency is an ARSOF strength. Advertise the good we are doing through FID/SO/CMO. Best used in competition at the edge of crisis. In a deescalate or escalate to de-escalate role.

Respondent 29: Access and placement. Moral risk assessment.

Respondent 30: Strategic risk is a function of doing nothing as much as it is doing something escalatory. ARSOF and IW offer human-focused deterrence to close the gray-zone gap that adversaries exploit below the threshold of provoking a conventional military response – "salami-slicing" incrementally over time – that ensures the United States does nothing to challenge their expansion. ARSOF are specifically capable of supporting cognitive access denial; physical denial through support to resistance; and financial access denial, as well as two forms of irregular

deterrence by punishment: unconventional warfare, and subversion – as part of a DoD “irregular–conventional–strategic/nuclear triad.”

(<https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2021/12/08/integrating-deterrence-across-the-gray-making-it-more-than-words/>)

Respondent 31: ARSOF are critical in setting and sustaining conditions that rapidly translate to options for US policymakers and senior commanders to address threats to the nation, threats to allies, increasing crisis, and emerging conflict. Leveraging the full capabilities of the USG and the nation, ARSOF can be integrators that provide avenues to achieve political objectives via several traditional and non-traditional means.

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: ARSOF is a values-based organization that is educated on the cultures it engages. ARSOF is present to provide access and placement for the other components. It should be the most educated force in the military. Generates understanding.

Respondent 34: ARSOF is unique within the Army structure in many ways but is uniquely poised due to its access and placement within indigenous populations (not just their militaries) to provide risk mitigating opportunities that transcend any one engagement. If you consider the long-range aspect of the state of perpetual global competition, the SOF engagements of today have the ability to interact with future CHoDs and heads of state at the higher level but also with the future fathers and soldiers of our nations allies at a much lower (and potentially personal) level. Every positive engagement that ARSOF has reduces the risk if even at a minute level.

Question 10. If the United States prioritizes military effort to focus primarily on great power competition, does this preclude or limit ARSOF’s capacity to conduct other tasks such as countering violent extremism or homeland defense support? If there is a shortfall, how would ARSOF mitigate it?

Respondent 1: Not really. There is a lot of overlap in IW/CT/Crisis Response. SOF is fungible and agile enough to adjust to other requirements. Balance and synergy will keep risk of focusing on IW in GPC.

Respondent 2: Not a problem if you avoid mission creep and keep forces focused on the missions they were developed and designed to do. Proper integration is required. If ARSOF is doing FID, it can adjust to other IW requirements without major problems. Extended Reality (XR) and the Synthetic Training Environment (STE) can help expand training opportunities in multiple mission areas without exhausting finite resources.

Respondent 3: No. All these are interoperable and interrelated. All could be main or supporting efforts depending on the situation in the operational environment. USASOC is becoming Army proponent for IW so this research could help drive how USASOC prioritizes training and resources.

Respondent 4: The entire enterprise must do more with less on CVEO. The most sustainable model to accomplish ARSOF IW tasks and other items is to reorient the national force (JSOC) back to DA and CT, leaving ARSOF to focus on IW. Maintain ARSOF skills in CT, though.

Respondent 5: No. The opposite is true. CT was the cost to preparing for and executing resistance. Terrorism is a tactic of resistance. We focused on combating a tactic instead of a strategic narrative. Means and method vs. intent and purpose. Focused on employing our skills. Like TW trying to redefine IW to meet our existing skill sets. Prioritization will fix this.

Respondent 6: "If we are careful, smart, and disciplined we can manage the risk." The challenge is prioritization. We need to be experts in holistic management of the CT enterprise through partners (HN, IC, IA) - a CT Nexus. This will reduce stress and risk. We ignored the China/Russia risk for 20 years because of CT.

Respondent 7: No risk if prioritized.

Respondent 8: We can't be good at everything." You have to choose prioritization and standards. Requires resources (time, money, personnel, equipment). Broader focus lowers performance - Swiss Army knife. Exquisite performance requires narrower focus, higher standards, and prioritization.

Respondent 9: I do believe that a focus on great power competition would limit ARSOF capacity to engage in other tasks. In order to mitigate that hindrance ARSOF would need to prioritize UoA to specific AOR's and supplement from other AOR, ex. 7th SFG would supplement 1ST SFG etc.

Respondent 10: "No. They are all intertwined. As long as ARSOF stays away from stability operations. They are the most resource intensive. Stability and occupation don't translate into influence and 'breaking the cycle.' "All the ground I've ever taken has been taken back."

Respondent 11: No risk. We were doing all this prior to GWOT. We had organizations designed to do CT. We can do both if not limited by policy, funding, etc. Why not be able to transition from a JCET to CT or AFO with an authorities switch. Ex. transitions from 127e to 1202. Policy is the LIMFAC.

Respondent 12: No unacceptable risk by shifting focus. Prioritization and flexibility. Our national no-fail mission is to defeat existential risk so risk of VEO is acceptable in that context Competition is the day-to-day mission of ARSOF.

Respondent 13: "The fact that we are a superpower is a result of 70 years of Great Power Competition - the Cold War." Not really a risk to transition. "Everything I did in Iraq and AFG is applicable to great power competition."

Respondent 14: By definition, strategy would direct ARSOF to limit capacity in order to increase the ability to compete with the NDS threats. It is much easier to transition forces to CT/CVEO efforts than to have forces prepared for high end conflict.

Respondent 15: In some cases, countering violent extremism is a supporting effort to great power competition (ex. Hamas / Hezbollah and IRGC), however, very little of the current capacity of USASOC is committed to homeland defense support and CVE. Most of the focus and command emphasis has already transitioned to GPC, even if a lot of the steady-state activities have remained unchanged. There is a shortfall in how forces are utilized, not necessarily in capacity. The force generation model within SOCOM is not suited for Great Power Competition and is primarily the product of high OPTEMPO rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan and are designed to preserve the force in a prolonged conflict environment. Having 75% of your force non-deployable for a potentially decades long competition campaign is an artificial handicap that sets SOF and the USG at a disadvantage. Leveraging different methods of employment from the continental US or for longer duration rotations of up to 9 months would help to leverage of the SOF community to support competition without contributing to operator burn out.

Respondent 16: Still have to maintain CT awareness in anything we do. Balance. Train for the environment. Situation dependent. We have the flexibility to adjust.

Respondent 17: We have flexibility to adjust as required.

Respondent 18: We have flexibility to adjust as required.

Respondent 19: No major risk. Focus and prioritization. Fundamentals of mission planning and tactics don't change. We do all of it already, focused on building relationships. We have the capacity to do all of it. Just a reorientation of target sets.

Respondent 20: We have sacrificed our touchpoint engagements for partnership development and maintenance. This would allow us to better gather I & W. So, our capabilities are sufficient to transition FROM IW TO CT easier. Greater risk is transition FROM CT TO IW.

Respondent 21: I believe this would limit ARSOF, because there is only a finite amount of capacity. To mitigate ARSOF must: 1) obtain clear and concise priority guidance. If over-tasked? 2) Grow the force. 3) In the interim, lean on the Reserve Force.

Respondent 22: "ARSOF answers the call because we expect better" in terms of leadership, flexibility, and meeting the physical and moral risk challenges. Policy, doctrine, approvals, and authorities must be in place to establish priorities and manage requirements. It is critical that we do all through a balanced approach. These are all interrelated so they must all be done. "There are many examples of ARSOF influencing government decisions through relationships and by executing core competencies." Professional Military Education and training are essential to create the type of flexible leadership necessary to meet the challenges of mitigating risk.

Respondent 23: No major risk. CVEO/CT/extremis threats are always present. We have units created and designated for that purpose. We need to focus on GPC by partnering with Allies and other partner nations.

Respondent 24: We need to focus on the fight in front of us (GPC), but not forget the flexibility we learned in CVEO. It was asymmetric. The tactics are no different, but the techniques may be.

Respondent 25: ARSOF is challenged to ‘walk and chew and gum at the same time’. VEOs and the terrorist threat aren’t going away, and a surgical SOF capability is always required to remove bad actors from the battlefield and prevent potential acts on the homeland. The training required to maintain a strong counterterrorism capability competes with time and resources to build a strong, competent IW capability. ARSOF must posture across the DOTMLPF construct to accomplish both CT and IW missions in competition. ARSOF capability to conduct IW is a critical part of strategic competition.

Respondent 26: a. ARSOF, thru USSOCOM, must continue to address the CT threat. If not, our adversaries will utilize them as a tool in competition against Western interests.
 b. Russia has done this since the founding of Moskva (Moscow) in the 12th century CE and will continue to do so well into this millennium. It is cheaper than operating a fleet of aircraft carriers, and they will always be at a comparative economic disadvantage.
 c. The PRC may not, however. They are more concerned with their image as a re-ascending great power, reasserting their righteous place on the world stage after a century of humiliation (their characterization, with some truth to it).
 d. Additionally, the CT threat will never dissolve just because we are not present. It will resurge, and doing a cold start is strategically expensive and less likely to succeed.

Respondent 27: We will assume some risk, but it is worth it. Do we have a mood to fight or a mood to win? Wise decisions cause victory over defeat, peace over war. Prioritize. Change our mindset. Focus on the team. Character. Critical thinking. Focus on IW tenets - winning over fighting. These are attributes required to successfully prioritize.

Respondent 28: Prioritization reduces risk. We're doing the same things we've been doing in CVEO, but against a different set of threats. Authorities, techniques, and procedures may change but the tactics are similar.

Respondent 29: Can we effectively transition back to what we used to do in the Cold War? Avoid the either/or thinking. All these tasks are essential. We require a good reputation, skill, and professionalism.

Respondent 30: Inevitably there will be unavoidable tradeoffs in resource prioritization across missions and geographic AORS. However, CVEO in many cases provides opportunity for access to compete with China and Russia while simultaneously assuring allies and partners against their legitimate internal security threats. The message from Ukraine today is clear: Russian and Chinese equipment and advisory is garbage and will fail immediately in real combat. While U.S. military acquisition processes may be slow, the product it delivers is worth the wait. We must think in terms of “concurrent effects” that open the door for resource-sustainable ways to conduct counterterrorism with an eye toward using security assistance as a way to compete for influence and increase America’s legitimacy. Security cooperation and capacity-building activities promote the United States as the partner of choice, bringing professionalism and credibility that adversaries struggle to match. Viewed through the lens of concurrent effects, a

single mission can serve multiple purposes, thereby providing a higher return on investment by efficiently integrating efforts toward counterterrorism, competition, and assisting partners. They are not mutually exclusive, and investments in one can provide returns in another. Moreover, a single mission can generate multiple effects within or among the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. For example, an advise-and-assist mission in the Philippines becomes a “two-fer” by countering Chinese influence, while simultaneously countering the Islamic State, Russia, and Iran in Syria may even be a “three-fer.” (<https://warontherocks.com/2021/03/an-irregular-upgrade-to-operational-design/>)

Respondent 31: ARSOF cannot be rapidly produced; individuals, organizations, or capabilities. Task prioritization has to be provided in order to maximize the services’ and joint force’s ability to leverage the right capabilities in the right places at the right times to achieve the desired, intended effects – direct or indirect – in support of US strategy and policy objectives. ARSOF need to be capable of deploying to conduct a wide(r) variety of missions, but increased capacity in one mission potentially requires a decrease in others. As an example, leveraging ARSOF to conduct counterterrorism or counter-violent extremism missions may enable broad deterrence activities, but risks more successful CT/CVT missions. The demand for ARSOF and Joint SOF capabilities will always be larger than what the nation can provide, but deliberate, calculated employment, tasking, and employment of those forces increases the return on investment for the nation whether leveraged towards a specific mission or broader regional/global deterrence efforts, as part of a broader Government effort.

Respondent 32: No input.

Respondent 33: Yes, there is risk, but AQ (VEOs) are not the existential threat. There are some risks any time you shift focus, BUT we need to maintain a more appropriate level of CVEO. We were overinvested in it. Had we done broader competition-based IW we would be more successful now. Irregular threats need our attention - not just military. Media, entertainment, culture, economics, etc.

Respondent 34: ARSOF will never (and shouldn’t be) large enough to fulfill every role that it is capable of. ARSOF, along with SOCOM, need to redefine their roles and responsibilities as the global dynamic shifts to competition among great powers and proxy events becoming the norm. To answer your question succinctly; yes, it will limit ARSOFs capacity, but it should. ARSOFs defense of the homeland should be done abroad. ARSOFs countering of violent extremism should be a part of the overall campaign of irregular warfare. CVE should also better integrate root cause analysis instead of trying to treat it after the fact and, with such analysis might find it better suited to less military and more state department activities.

Yes, ARSOF will not have enough people and assets to do everything that is asked of it so maybe ARSOF shouldn’t be doing all of that.

Appendix E: Security Review



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
2929 DESERT STORM DRIVE
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA 28310-9110

AOOP

July 27, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Security Review of Mr. Jason Byrd's Doctoral Dissertation

1. This memorandum serves a written record to affirm Jason A. Byrd, PhD Candidate at the Helms School of Government, Liberty University, submitted his draft doctoral dissertation to the Command's Security Manager, Mr. Vance Noland, and the Directorate Security Chief, Ms. Michelle Miller, for review and compliance.
2. The purpose of this review was to ensure no cited information or aggregation of data resulted in elevating the dissertation to a security classification above UNCLASSIFIED.
3. On July 26, 2022, Ms. Miller completed the review and informed Mr. Byrd that his dissertation required two content adjustments. Mr. Byrd complied with the guidance and resubmitted the manuscript to Ms. Miller for verification. These adjustments do not affect the research objectives. As of 26, July 2022, the dissertation is cleared by both Ms. Miller and Mr. Noland.
5. The points of contact for this memorandum are Ms. Miller at [REDACTED], Mr. Noland at [REDACTED] or the undersigned at [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]
DAVID A. TROUTMAN
DAC/GS-14
Deputy Chief, Operations Division

Appendix F: Public Affairs and Operations Security Reviews



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
2929 DESERT STORM DRIVE
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA 28310-9110

AOOP

August 3, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: United States Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs, Operations Security Reviews of Mr. Jason Byrd's Doctoral Dissertation

1. This memorandum serves a written record to affirm Jason A. Byrd, a PhD Candidate at the Helms School of Government, Liberty University, submitted his draft doctoral dissertation to the Public Affairs (PAO) and Operations Security (OPSEC) offices for final Command reviews. It was preceded by an information security (INFOSEC) review to ensure no classified material was disclosed in the manuscript.
2. The purpose of this review was to ensure that USASOC, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), United States Army or Department of Defense policies, procedures, regulations, and applicable laws were followed during research and manuscript composition.
3. On August 1, 2022, the PAO and OPSEC offices determined the dissertation was compliant with those authorities. Dissertation production did not violate public affairs or operations security policy, procedure, regulations, or law. Nor does it bring disrepute on this Command. The undersigned confirms that USASOC concurs with Mr. Byrd's dissertation as written.
4. This review is not an endorsement by United States Army Special Operations Command, United States Special Operations Command, the United States Army, or the Department of Defense of views expressed in Mr. Byrd's dissertation.
5. The point of contact for this memorandum is the undersigned at [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

DAVID A. TROUTMAN
DAC/GS-14
Deputy Chief, Operations Division

Appendix G: Image Usage Permission

From: Sacquety, Troy J. CIV USSOCOM USASOC (USA) [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 9:19 AM
To: Byrd, Jason A CIV USSOCOM USASOC (USA) [REDACTED]
Cc: Tracy, Jared M CIV USSOCOM USASOC (USA) [REDACTED]; Telles, Daniel
 CIV USSOCOM USASOC (USA) [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Image Usage for Original Research

Jason,
 They were created in the office, so you are free to use. Please credit the USASOC History Office.
 Please tell me the particulars of your dissertation.
 Thanks!
 Troy

Dr. Troy J. Sacquety
 Command Historian
 United States Army Special Operations Command

<https://arsof-history.org/>

From: Byrd, Jason A CIV USSOCOM USASOC (USA) [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 11:56 AM
To: Sacquety, Troy J. CIV USSOCOM USASOC (USA) [REDACTED]
Subject: Image Usage for Original Research

Dr. Sacquety,
 As part of a dissertation I am preparing to defend I included a couple of graphics from an article I cited from the USASOC History page. Are these copyrighted images that require written permission to use? Are citing the article from which they were used and the acknowledgement of image credit to the Army sufficient? Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Biographical Information:
 Piasecki, Eugene G. "Reminiscences of Detachment A, Berlin 1982-1984." United States Army Special Operations Command History Office. Accessed January 29, 2023. https://www.arsof-history.org/articles/pdf/v2n3_detachment_a.pdf

Citations and Images:



Figure 5.11. A Divided Germany after World War II.

This map depicts the Allied Occupation Zones at the end of World War II. The city of Berlin was also divided between the four Allied powers.^[1] (Image credit: United States Army).

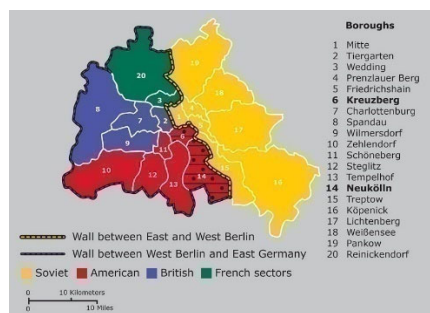


Figure 5.12. Berlin: A Microcosm of Post-World War II Germany.

This map shows the occupation zones within the city of Berlin and the boundaries of the various boroughs within the city. The Berlin Wall is shown as the prominent yellow line.^[2] (Image credit: United States Army)

v/r

Jason Byrd
USASOC G33/35

^[1] Eugene G. Piasecki, "Reminiscences of Detachment A, Berlin 1982-1984," *United States Army Special Operations Command History Office*. Accessed January 29, 2023. https://www.arsof-history.org/articles/pdf/v2n3_detachment_a.pdf.

^[2] Piasecki, "Reminiscences of Detachment A," accessed January 29, 2023.

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Vita

Jason Alan Byrd is a doctoral candidate at Liberty University, pursuing a Ph.D. in Public Policy – National Security Policy. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology from the University of Southern Mississippi and a Master of Divinity from Liberty University. Byrd is retired from the United States Army and now works for the Army in the Civil Service.