THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Strategic Restraint:

Modelling the Role of Moral Weight in Modern Conflicts.

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the University of Hull

by

Jonathan Allen Flint BA (Hons) (Open), MA (Hull)

July 2017

Jonathan Allen Flint

Strategic Restraint: Modelling the Role of Moral Weight in Modern Conflicts

PhD Abstract

Strategic Restraint: Modelling the Role of Moral Weight in Modern Conflicts is a PhD thesis that seeks to make the argument that restraint has a strategic purpose. It begins with a discussion of an understanding of ethics as the negotiation of hierarchies of 'goods' and develops an idea of Primary and Contingent goods, how those goods are decided and the role of morality, ethics and the law in human affairs. Following that is a consideration of strategy, and the nature of war. These discussions begin to form the basis of the following chapters. It develops a model for understanding the nature of war, and using this model makes suggestions about the controlled application of force and the effects of overapplication of force. The construction of the model is supported by examination of military history, concentrating on conflicts in the latter part of the of the 20th century to more recent conflicts.

In considering the difficulties the model indicates in this overapplication, the work argues that there is need for the 'artificial' application of perceived mass, and suggests that it is here that the utility of ethical behaviour in warfare can be found for strategy. In using restraint, guided by higher ethical choices which necessarily reduce efficacy, it is argued that there is strategic advantage to be found. This is supported by analyses from modern Counter Insurgency campaigns, where such activity has been undertaken by commanders independently, while attempting to provide a theoretical explanation for the seeming success of these decisions. The work also considers outcomes from applying such strategic choices, from operational and policy concerns to the consequences in interstate relations before, during and after armed conflict.

Table of Contents

physically - in the closing phases of this thesis). Even when it was all getting too much she kept

faith in me even when I had a crisis of it – which was far more often than I had any right to ask or

expect. Reader, I married her.

There is a question that is inherent in the world of strategic theory, one that was posited by Carl von Clausewitz in *On War* as part of his initial thought experiment trying to account for the existence of war as a political phenomenon: can the escalation of conflict be controlled? He suggested that there is a tendency in warfare for the constant increase of effort on behalf of belligerents inevitably to end, certainly at least in the world of the thought experiment, in a condition of Total War. He argues, coherently, that such a condition is practically impossible in the real world, because of the conditions of chance, the fog of war, and friction (the accumulation of error). Nevertheless, we should endeavour to avoid even approaching such an end, in that it favours no one. However, doing so by accepting restraint – especially unilaterally – is unappealing insofar as it seems counter to driving powerfully towards our desired ends.

The argument that we should seek to control the escalation of conflict, mitigating the factors that might restrain us (although they will eventually win out), is compelling. It is natural to assume that we should seek to maximise our efficacy in the application of force, as wars are fought for serious matters between serious people. It matters – often desperately – who wins and who loses. The escalatory dynamic in warfare, for Clausewitz and others, is a primary feature of warfare, and thus we should devote all our efforts to dominating that escalation. As such, we must expend the effort of resources as efficaciously as possible in order to maximize their 'productive' (read destructive) power. These resources are valuable, and to use them at below capacity is to deny ourselves the opportunity of victory. However, this means that self-limiting behaviours can be regarded as being contrary to the goal of victory. The role of the military ethicist, one who concerns themselves with the moral condition of militaries, and their conduct in their dismal purpose, is one that might be considered unwelcome in some quarters, in that it is to advocate for restraint against every opposite instinct.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore whether the conclusions of military ethics, though seemingly at odds with a pure commitment to achieving military ends through sound strategy, are in fact not only compatible, but convergent with strategic theory. In other words, far from being in tension, we will examine whether ethics and strategy are an essential partnership in order to achieve lasting success through the accomplishment of military and political goals. Rather than having to choose between doing the right thing and acting strategically, commanders, we will argue, have overriding strategic reasons to act ethically. We will be presented a detailed model of conflict that demonstrates the inescapable role that factors related to the concerns of military Ethics, such as the acceptance of restraint, play in strategic success or failure.

In the first chapter of this thesis, we will consider a reasonably straightforward, but not at all simple question: What are Ethics? While we might simply run to a dictionary or a Philosophy textbook looking for a condensed explanation of the term "ethics", that will not serve our purpose. In order to be able to explore our central question, we must fix definitions that are defensible but make sense for the context of their use in this work on strategic theory. For example, many philosophers would assert that "'morals' and 'ethics' may be used interchangeably". This does not help us. We must define ethics as we mean to use it, and so we will stipulate our intention, for the sake of clarity in our model, to distinguish among ethics, morality, morals, and the role of law. Chapter One will then consider how these concepts that can be understood to have an independent value emerge through an open negotiation within and between societies, how these values sometimes produce competing demands, and how such potential conflicts are mediated. We do this to frame our later discussion, and to ensure that both the author and the reader understand each other, regardless of whether they necessarily agree with each other.

Having spent the first chapter discussing Philosophy, we turn in Chapter Two to the matter of warfare. Most importantly, this chapter deals with the concept of 'the nature of war'. Within

both wider society and occasionally within academia it is not uncommon to hear a discussion of the changing nature of war, usually owing to the arrival of new resources, weapons, and enemies. Chapter Two seeks to explore this idea of a dependent nature of war – that the war of the pikeman and archer is in some important or essential sense different from the war of the pilot and artilleryman, and differs again from that of the insurgent and cyberwarrior. The chapter approaches these ideas initially from the description of the dependent nature of war, choosing in particular the arguments of John Keegan as a means to engage with such a discussion, through the medium of cows. Later in the chapter, we construct the argument for the independent nature of war – that it does not rely on the platforms, systems, methods, and tactics used by the protagonists but that it depends rather on less contingent features of the phenomenon itself. It is in the second chapter that we begin to construct our own analytical model of war – the model that will serve as both conceptual framework and analytical tool as we begin to consider the dynamics of conflicts, and the ways in which we can both predict and alter those dynamics.

Chapter three opens the discussion to consider the dynamics of two forms of conflict that have different origins in policy, and very often different characters (as opposed to each having a transformed nature). Opening with a discussion of the causes of war, this chapter evolves concepts of wars of choice and necessity and the elemental difference of experience in both, as seen from both sides. This experience is then translated onto the model we began to construct in chapter two, assigning a notional numerical value (mass) to the importance of the purpose experienced by each side. This is to allow us to build our model out more fully, and begin to keep track of some of the more nuanced concepts we are attempting to include on our central discussion. Thus in chapter three we begin to apply the model, using it as an analytical tool as well as a framework for discussion. In this way, we can begin to apply our ideas, establishing new layers of complexity while demonstrating that it can tolerate the application of more complexity step by

step by building it slowly. The analysis of the Falklands War and the NATO intervention in Kosovo here leads us to consider the problems of mass.

Chapter four focuses on how to address the problems of mass raised in chapter three. We employ the model to help us consider the effects of public opinion of a conflict, and how it can blow a strategy off course, aid us, or indeed aid the enemy. In dealing with the difficulty of mass and opinion, we open the discussion of strategic decisions that can be taken that will modify the experience of mass. Adding more 'mass' to a given conflict might seem counterintuitive, but the case is made that mass is helpful, and as such artificially inducing an experience of mass by adding 'moral weight' to a conflict will pay the actors back strategically by making the application of greater than indicated (by the model) force more controllable. Applying 'moral weight', and thus limiting action, produces a limitation of force but allows for application of greater potential force, which has readily identifiable advantages. These ideas are explored through the model again, presented as model- based analysis of the US and Allied planning and execution of the conflict in Vietnam. It examines the potential outcomes had General Westmoreland been granted a 'surge' of troops when he requested one, instead of the much-reduced number of troops he actually received. We then return to Kosovo, in order to open consideration of the oblique use of force, an idea we have flirted with previously and can now make the case for, using the additional aspects of the model articulated in this chapter.

Chapter five has at its heart an attempt to unify, build on, and demonstrate all that has come before in our discussion of force and restraint, strategy and ethics. In this chapter, we consider the benefits for commanders of the principle of limitation and the necessary effects of choosing to act in this fashion. We make specific recommendations about how to plan and how to deploy for military operations, and examines how a change in strategic thinking – towards the acceptance of restraint – can be used to best effect. However, the necessary conclusions from the indications of the model mean that more will have to change in our understanding of the

relationship between military ethics and military strategy than the bald model might suggest. Here we offer specific recommendations and consideration of the advantages that may come from these additional changes. While it means that there must be a slight modification in the advice traditionally given by militaries to their civil masters, this argument also demands that those same civil masters must provide adequate resources to their commanders. To reinforce some of these ideas, the experience of one commander in Iraq is examined. His dissatisfaction over the progress made led to a decision that provided the basis for the Petreus 'surge'. Chapter five seeks to draw together everything we have discussed in this work, and provide the theoretical justification for why the decision to back the surge worked, and how this field learning experience can be explained – indeed predicted – by the model we have constructed.

The purpose of this work is to challenge the contention which has characterised some of strategic theory both in the modern and the ancient texts that the restraint advised by military ethics must be an unnecessary and unwelcome burden to strategic leaders. In the course of this work we will consider instead an approach that using military ethics as a helpful method for managing a hierarchy of demands. While still privileging victory, not only is it possible to accommodate ethical demands, this is what true efficacy demands. What can conceive of many potential benefits of accepting this view on the positive acceptance of restraint. In addressing the original question about the possibility of managing the escalation of conflict, we find that we are able to build a thought experiment of our own that can contain opinion, the Clausewitzian trinity of the forces of fear, reason and chance; friction, and achievement of the goal. In applying this model, we present an argument, founded in strategic thinking, that the limitation of forces might have strategic purpose. Bearing in mind the relationship between conflicts and broader political aims, we consider not only the conflicts themselves, but the conditions after a war, and whether our conduct during it will can affect those conditions. Most interestingly, we argue that in modifying our approach to efficacy, we provide the conditions of limitation to demonstrate a role

for the strategic use of ethical behaviour. In other words, this is, in effect, a purely strategic argument for embracing ethics. The contention, which we build in successive stages throughout this thesis, is that positive moral choices and the acceptance of restraint provide the opportunity for both an effective victory and the conditions for lasting peace. This restraint need not be reciprocal, nor is it founded among the contingent values we identify in chapter one. Rather it rests within our existing value sets, based on the primary values we identify. The good victory is possible partly from military élan, but also from actually being good. A basic contention of this work is that Clausewitzian thinking is entirely compatible with ethics and that ethics provide a dimension of control in the battlespace that, when suitably resourced, can win wars. This is where this work sits, unambiguously arguing that ethically based restraint is a strategic boon. Indeed, while not claiming any position of universality, and depending on which school of thought the strategist belongs to (acknowledging a certain fondness for Jomini among major militaries), ethics is a key dimension in strategy – however that strategy is formulated. Not, as Mattox seems to suggest as a mere contingent truth of the 'Information Age' but as a traceable feature of human conflict, and one that should be taken seriously by both policymakers and practitioners – as Clausewitz seems to (admittedly obliquely) acknowledge. This is where this work stands, apart from others by attempting to make the case that good strategy is contingent and dependent on ethical understanding and how to make that work.

Methodology

Any discussion of methodology for a piece of research must begin with the question under consideration. In this case, the central research question of this thesis is, 'Are there reasons to include ethics in strategic decision making in the context of war?' In other words, this thesis will address the question of whether there are compelling strategic reasons for military and political leaders directing military campaigns to consider the ethical aspects of possible policies and plans before they act. This provides us with the motive for the research; a problem has been identified (determining the proper role of ethics in military decision making) and a question posited. From the question we can then identify a number of avenues of enquiry. We will now identify how we plan to pursue those enquiries, where we will look for answers, and the approaches we will take. From the outset we can identify that this is a theoretical question requiring a theoretical approach, supported by use of secondary and primary source material. It is also important to remember that all theoretical conclusions must be compatible with the 'practical' nature of the subject of strategy.

It is also essential that the methodology reflect the context of the research, the atmosphere in which it is conducted, and the intellectual interests of the researcher. There are ontological concerns that must animate any discussion of research methodology. While the zenith of research is the generation of new knowledge and understanding, even the most novel endeavour must also acknowledge the existing perspectives of others in the field that relate to the proposed original contribution. Thus this thesis will include a literature review and references to the work of earlier scholars, including foundational figures in the field of strategy. Further, while the disentangling of

the researcher's biases from the work is the goal, we might suggest that the theoretical

exploration of the topic above might not make achieving this goal simple. As MacIntyre

observes, action and belief have a definite relationship, thus if research is considered 'action' it

will have a necessary relationship with belief.[1] It is incumbent on researchers to be aware of this

relationship and how it affects their perception. For example, a researcher in a settled liberal

democracy, benefitting from the rule of law and no current threats to his or her society's

existence might have a very different response to theoretical examinations of questions

such as the invocation of Michael Walzer's concept of 'supreme emergency' than would

the researcher who does not have those advantages. We are right to worry about

ontological concerns, as not only the 'atmospheric' context of the work needs to be

considered, but also the influences the researcher has absorbed up to the point of

conducting the research. Each individual is different, and comes from a combined set of

social and educational influences that will necessarily direct their thinking and patterns of

logic. The researcher from a background of Politics is more than likely to have different

conceptions of the world than one from mathematics or the physical sciences, simply

through having a different experience of the world.

These problems are accentuated by the nature of the enquiry, as the above

question invites the combination of two very different disciplines – Strategy and Ethics.

Strategy (or Strategic Studies) has, at its heart, the very practical concerns of '...using

military force against and intelligent foe(s) towards the attainment of policy objectives.'[2]

As such, the field of Strategy has a conceptual underpinning of pragmatism, while

---

[1] MacIntyre, A., "A Mistake about Causality in Social Science," in *Philosophy, Politics and Society (Second Series)*, ed. P. Laslett and W.G. Runciman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962).
[2] Lonsdale, D.J, "Strategy," in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, ed. D. Jordan, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge Universiay Press, 2008). p.23

wrestling with the seemingly abstract (intangible) issue of the nature of war. Ethics, by contrast, might be characterised as the restrictive effects of principles on pragmatism – that certain actions, though pragmatic, violate established ethical norms. Here, we might suggest, is one of the methodological traps that await us – each of the two subjects appears *prima facia* to embrace distinctly different normative definitions of 'good' which may be at odds with one other. In other words, how can we determine whether it is 'good strategy' to be 'ethically good', if the term 'good' means something different to the strategist and the ethicist? That the researcher might have tendency towards a particular definition only increases the danger of falling in to the trap we have laid for ourselves and allowing disciplinary bias to affect our conclusions.

So how, methodologically, can we pursue this enquiry? It seems the answer is that we must accept the ontological conditions that we have observed, but consciously seek to explore and challenge the normative impulses (such as our discipline-influenced definition of 'good'). This may aid the purpose of the research: answering the central question and perhaps providing an intellectual defence of including ethical thinking in strategic thinking. As this research has set itself the task of examining both Strategy and Ethics as subjects but attempting to reconcile them (in some fashion), then we must accept that the approach to research should be one of critical enquiry, rather than normative or interpretive approaches.[3] This approach means that, to an extent, we have to engage in a little avoidance of the question of matters of the 'good', at least initially. In the early stages of the research we are better served by simply seeking to make definitions that will

---

[3] Clough, P. and Nutbrown, C., *A Student's Guide to Methodology*, Second ed. (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2007). p.17

serve throughout the work. For example, 'Ethics' arrives as a concept that is, by turns, both defined and contested. While some might advance one meaning, others will advance another. It is thus necessarily a goal, and a need, to come to a reasoned understanding of the word at the onset of this thesis, as we will do. Similarly, in Strategy there are terms and concepts that require definition. We will therefore open this project by establishing key definitions. There is good reason for these definitional activities: Having established key definitions we will then be able to engage in a debate without the cloud of multiple understandings, and by having a common vocabulary will take away some possibility of misunderstanding. As Pierce notes, being 'conversant' in both fields can only be beneficial, but being conversant requires a vocabulary.[4] So sound methodology requires that this thesis starts with definitions, as the reader will find.

The above concerns also establish the necessary trajectory of the research that comes after these definitions are established. Although naturally we will look to historical and contemporary events to find examples of how these theories play out in the real world, the focus of this project is problems of theory - both Ethical and Strategic theory. As a theoretical enquiry, this research is reliant on the prior contributions of others in the field as well as critical reflection on how to reconcile divergent theories. Rather than conducting empirical research, we will present, clarify, engage with, and critically evaluate ideas concerning the relationship between ethics and strategy. This indicates that there will be fewer opportunities for, for example, primary source evidence – books by practitioners on the ethical dilemmas of actual command, for example, are relatively rare

---

[4] Pierce, A.C., "War, Strategy and Ethics," in *Ethics and the Future of Conflict - Lessons form the 1990s*, ed. A.F. Lang Jr, A.C. Pierce, and J.H. Rosenthal (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004). p.17

and often contain examples so similar in nature that including multiple sources merely duplicates conclusions, rather than expanding or enhancing them[5]. We will therefore favour single examples with greater detail and impact over mere repetition of themes that will not advance the enquiry. The ethical and strategic rationales at play in military decision making also rarely feature in newspaper or broadcast reporting of events. In short, much of the supporting material we need for this research has to be derived from secondary sources. This means that for some portion of the thinking to come we must rely on material that includes the analysis of others. This raises an epistemological challenge. Simply because the writer of a piece that incorporates theoretical analysis presents their work to be unbiased, accurate, well founded, and justified, we cannot simply take their word for it. So we will endeavour in every case to test the strength of other author's arguments in a methodologically sound manner, such as looking for logical fallacies, counterpoints, and thought experiments or analogies that challenge the author's intuitions, premises, and/or conclusions. In some cases, we will be able to confirm the theories presented by others through testing by the application of historical or contemporary examples. However, we recognize that, due to the nature of theoretical research, the best outcome we can achieve will be to determine that a given theory is internally coherent and highly plausible, as it will never be possible to run through every possible real-world application.

---

[5] Books such as *The Ethical Challenges of the Soldier: The French Experience* by General Benoit Royal might be argued to be a useful primary source. There are, also, numerous memoirs and autobiographies which deal with the ethical dilemmas of the soldier as part of the overall narrative, or where the ethical and strategic problems can be deduced from the context.

That said, logic alone is not sufficient to test these theories, as they are making claims about the world itself. So while we might not be able wholly confirm the explanations advanced, we must nevertheless test them against reality. Otherwise, there will be a natural impulse to confirm our biases, which must be resisted. To an extent this relates to the ontological discussion above, as we will at least need to have the presence of mind to recognise the pitfalls so that we can take precautions against them. Equally, for any theories advanced in the course of the work, pains will be taken to examine them within the contexts of decisions taken, and not simply asserted in the abstract. For example, a particular starting point and the consequential line of logic following from it might result in the unsound assertion that all fish can walk. While this could potentially be a valid logical outcome from a certain line of thought, it will lead to inevitable disappointment in the real world, and fatal consequences for any unfortunate fish required to walk to fulfil their theoretical potential by walking. If we follow a line of logic in the abstract without reference to the *actualité,* we will defeat our purpose. And this could lead to false conclusions (not to mention the tragic loss of aquatic life).

Thus, real world context is important. This context might be derived from a number of sources; however it must be remembered that, in respect of case studies, the majority of the sources considered for this work will of necessity be secondary, which means that there will be additional critical evaluation to be made. In much the same way that we must be cautious of any theories that are advanced, we should also be aware of any analysis undertaken by those endeavouring to provide real world context. Simply put, any analytical purpose of the author must be recognised and accounted for in all the sources used. Similarly, there may be occasions where the analysis is simply too

unquestioning – a failure to interrogate history, leaving the reader informed but unenlightened. Again, these possibilities show the advantages of the critical method of enquiry – fair minded, or at the very least self-aware, engagement with material in the course of research may prevent some of the pitfalls identified above, and so this will be the goal.

As this is primarily a theoretical thesis, it is tempting to explore all potential lines of reasoning that naturally suggest themselves. However, simply assembling a jumble of ideas about the interplay of strategy and ethics is not, being candid, going to advance our cause. It is imperative that some structure be enforced and only those lines of reasoning be pursued that hold real promise of working together to produce a cohesive whole that advances our understanding of the subject. Without imposing order and being somewhat selective, we risk leaving the reader confused by an unconnected (albeit interesting) heap of ideas. Happily, many of the issues raised can, with a little creativity, be brought into a more manageable form. To accomplish this, we will construct a model of conflict to help us fit the pieces together.

This use of a model to anchor our examination of the core question has a spiritual precedent in both philosophy and strategic theory. Philosophy is very conscious of the value of the thought experiment, and the model simply fulfils the same function. In strategic theory there was a period, in the 1950s and 1960s, where game theory and the construction of similar thought experiments were deemed hugely instrumental in strategic thinking. Thomas Schelling was one of the key influencing thinkers in this regard. The model is an *aide memoire*, a device to allow us to more easily comprehend the ideas we are discussing (and, again, ultimately tie them back to real-world applications). In

constructing a model, we create an analytical tool that can be used in greater or lesser complexity, and provides us with a framework upon which to attach and understand our ideas. In using this original theoretical model, we are no longer confronted with the 'heap of interesting ideas', but now have a method of holding them coherently together. A significant further advantage of developing such a model is that it can have application beyond this thesis and be useful in future work to expand on the work done here. A good model not only captures insights but also produces them. We embrace this methodology with the hope that the model at the heart of this thesis has at least the potential to produce some lasting utility.

There were naturally other methodological approaches that we considered when first formulating this project, but then chose to set aside for important reasons after due reflection. For example, we contemplated making use of available opportunities to speak to both former and serving soldiers, at varying levels of seniority, who may have valuable insight on the role of ethics in strategy. Such opportunities may simply occur, or may be arranged events and considered in a more structured manner in advance (e.g. formal interviews). While opportunities such as these fall well within the area of qualitative research, they lead to other methodological concerns. There are many ways to conduct interviews, such as preparing a set list of questions that should be asked, and not deviating from those questions. However, in creating such a structured format for interviews we may close off opportunities for valuable observations from practitioners. These are primary sources, and their experiences may have nuances and lessons that might only be found during a wider ranging conversation. To avoid missing what might be

valuable considerations, a semi-structured approach is often suggested.[6] There are core questions that might feature and contribute to the theoretical enquiry, or at the very least suggest lines of thought to explore, but we should not exclude possible questions that naturally emerge during a conversation that should be considered. This less formal approach could elicit spontaneous observations form the interviewee, allowing opportunity to examine their answers further. It may be that the answers of any interview do not make the final work in a uniformly reported fashion, but that the insights given might provide additional dimensions to the work. However, it is important of the temptation of relying on these observations, and beware of imposing 'themes' onto responses. We considered both formal interviews and informal conversations as potential sources.

We considered other structured activities that might provide valid insights, as well. Strategic Theory has a history of 'war gaming', to train the judgement (and examine the responses) of commanders. Such games also have a potential purpose in supporting research questions like that at the centre of this thesis, as well; for example, if the contention is made that 'good ethics' are placed further down the list of priorities by commanders according to the proximity of danger, then we might be able to test this. Such a test could be a properly controlled, repeatable 'war game', artificially creating some stresses in decision making based on a proximal danger, adds to understanding and provides avenues to explore. By providing a set of variables, a scenario and a policy objective we can observe the planning process. By changing the policy goal, and different variables (such as time) we can observe to changes in decision making. Our purpose is not

---

[6] Rubin, H. and Rubin, I., *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995).

to observe the outcome, but rather the process of coming to the outcome. We were tempted to pursue the war game option for our research and even designed an original game for this purpose. However, we ultimately abandoned this methodology, due to ethical concerns. In conducting such an exercise, we raise ethical questions about our own conduct. Is it justifiable to withhold certain information from the players? Will our judgments about the players choices within the game be evident to them? What are we implying to players about their ethical values, and what might that knowledge do to them? Can we allow for differences in response? Is it repeatable and how much should we rely on our observations? It may be that should we conduct the exercise on volunteers whose daily business is studying politics or law, we will get different results from strategists. Such an exercise can be valuable in opening avenues of enquiry, but is also open to confirmation bias on the part of the researcher. In the end, we decided that war gaming was not a methodology we could embrace for this project.

In reviewing the ethical concerns raised by the war gaming option, we recognized that similar concerns also suffuse the question of interviews when the subject is the ethical choices of strategic leaders. We have an interest in the ideas and information available to us from the interviewee, but we also have a duty of care to them, and to prevent harm coming to them through participation. A seasoned interviewer may be able to consistently honour the imperative that these conversations are held with sensitivity. While the best effort can be made to anonymise the speaker, to prevent any unhappy consequences, these attempts are not guaranteed to succeed, and the psychological and material consequences could be profound. When weighing up the ethical implications of this research, and the sources already available for the project, the conclusion seemed

clear that undertaking new interviews bore an unjustified degree of risk when balanced against the potential gain.

While the greatest imperative is preventing harm, we must also be mindful of the analysis conducted on data gathered from such methods of enquiry. Again, we come back to ontological and epistemological concerns. It is difficult to apply certain analyses to the personal reflections of those involved in questions, such as tough ethical choices. To an extent we must, again, be mindful of biases we bring to the subject as well as those of the speaker. Justifiable criticism, with sound methodological and theoretical bases, may nevertheless cause or intensify moral injury. Harm may emerge from the analysis as much as from the interview. While a theoretical work has few ethical implications in itself, we have learned that we must always be aware that the introduction of more qualitative methods to our research brings with it fresh ethical concerns that need to be addressed fully. Recognizing this, and aware that we had other sources available, we preferred to err on the side of caution and not employ the methodology of interviews.

This remains a theoretical enquiry at its core, with questions that concern themselves with examining the intellectual case for including ethics into strategic decision making. As such, it must range over the fields of politics, ethics, strategy, and history in order to fulfil the task set. The underlying methodology is that of a critical enquiry into whether there are sound intellectual, and strategic, reasons for including ethics into strategic decision making, with the framing assistance of an original model. To achieve this, primary and secondary source material will be used, together with application and analysis using the model. At the outset, definitional work will be undertaken and concepts identified that will be needed during the exploration of the research question. While this

remains a theoretical work, to answer a theoretical question, it must keep touch with the practical emphasis of strategy and the potential for real-world application. This methodology has sought to address the concerns that naturally surround such a challenge, with consideration of the nature of the question, and the difficulties surrounding adequately addressing it. Critical enquiry has a certain range of freedom that is denied, for example, comparative studies; however it places the onus on the author to be ontologically and epistemologically cautious. The approach also requires ethical reflection on certain areas of gathering information, and will require close consideration in both identifying justifiable conduct, and the use of any results produced. Theory is not free from such restraints, and it is this understanding that underpins the thinking in this methodology.

<u>Literature Review</u>

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the contention that restraint can be of strategic value in the conduct of warfare. In particular, the question before us is whether the application of restraint founded in concerns of military ethics, and consequential changes in the application of force, can be of value to the strategist. The strategist is interested in matters of efficacy - in bending the enemy to their will, and the enemy is likewise occupied. However, this aim appears at odds with the contention that restraint can be of strategic value. Restraint is, after all, an impingement on efficacy. The field of military ethics struggles with these questions as well. It is here that restraint is counselled as a matter of humanity, and the goal is to restrain military forces from the very worst excesses of human violence in war. Thus, ethical concerns, even ones that are as limited as those set out in the laws of war, act as a restraint on the use of force. From the position of strategy, these restraints might be viewed with hostility. We are interested as to whether this hostility is justified.

In beginning the literature review, it must be conceded that we need to approach it with a reasonable understanding of the language involved. One aspect of the literature, which is striking, is a lack of common vocabulary between the fields of strategy and ethics. This is by no means universal, it happens to greater or lesser extent, but can be seen in the introduction written by Bellamy in *Just Wars*: '...the nature of war is shaped by the politics that underpin it...'.[1] A Clausewitzian might challenge this assessment, arguing that the nature of war is something rather different from that suggested by Bellamy, who may be discussing the character of war. This matter is something to be addressed in later chapters of this thesis but, for now, it stands as an example of the need for a common lingual framework.

---

[1] Bellamy, A., *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq* (Cambridge, UK and Boston, MA: Polity Press, 2006). p.2

Thus, for the purposes of discussing the literature review, it is necessary to make some definitions to support both the reader and the writer in the analysis. If we know what the terms mean in this context, we can discuss them more meaningfully. As this work is about war, and thinking about war, it would be helpful to define it. We may look to Clausewitz, who gives a definition early on that '*War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will*'.[2] This may not help in the coming discussion, but gives an indication of what we are dealing with here. Later he further refined his definition, that 'War is merely the continuation of policy by other means'.[3] We are left with no illusions that, in Clausewitz's conception, war is an activity directed for political purpose. Hedley Bull fully endorses this when he defines war as '...organized violence carried on by political units against each other'.[4] For the purposes of brevity for the literature review, this definition serves our purpose. Within the variations of operations, or the contested definitions of certain conflicts,[5] all are typified by Bull's definition, after Clausewitz's observation. War is violence for political ends. Some might suggest that this will oversimplify the coming discussion, but 'simple language is not a trivialisation; it forces us to focus on the essentials'.[6]

As Reichberg, Syse and Begby highlight in the *The Ethics of War*, "There are…indications that Clausewitz intended *On War* to have an ethical dimension."[7] However, as they proceed to argue (and as the supporting excerpt they provide from *On War* seems to prove) the only aspect of ethics Clausewitz explicitly addresses is the necessity of "commanders to cultivate the military virtues – which can enable them to perform well on the battlefield."[8] However they do raise that

---

[2] Clausewitz, C. Von, *On War - Edited and Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976). p.75 [emphasis in original]

[3] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.87

[4] Bull, H., *The Anarchical Society - A Study of Order in World Politics*, 2002 ed. (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave 1977). p.178

[5] Such as Vietnam, as war was never declared, despite it fulfilling the definition given by Bull.

[6] Foster, D.J., "Air Operations and Air Logistics," in *Perspectives on Air Power*, ed. S. Peach (London: The Stationary Office, 1998). p.219

[7] Reichberg, G.M., Syse, H., and Begby, E., "Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) - Ethics and Military Strategy," in *The Ethics of War - Classic and Contermporary Readings*, ed. G.M. Reichberg, H. Syse, and E. Begby (Maldon, MA; Oxford, UK; Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2006). p.535

[8] Reichberg, Syse, and Begby, "The Ethics of War - Clausewitz." p.553

Clausewitz obliquely provides opportunity for both reflection and moral engagement and that there is a complimentary potential relationship between the thinking of Clausewitz, professional military ethics, and the just war tradition.[9]

This conclusion appears to run concurrent to the argument of Paul Cornish, who asserts in *"Clausewitz and the Ethics of Armed Force: Five Propositions"* that we can find "glimpses of the moral Clausewitz" in *On War* beyond the commentary on the desired character and virtues of commanders.[10] It is important, however, to acknowledge that Cornish is extraordinarily careful to hedge this suggestion and notes that his intention is "…emphatically not to revolutionise the scholarship on Clausewitz by 'outing' him as an ethicist…"[11] What Cornish contends is not that Clausewitz provides strategy guided by ethics, but rather that Clausewitz was well aware of Enlightenment thought and its influence on the policies that would, in his era, direct military operations. This is not that revolutionary, and nor is Cornish's claim that "Clausewitz's trinity is a device that creates a space for ethics."[12] If this were not the case, the work you see before you would not be possible. Creating space for ethics is not the same as ethical guidance, however, and the challenge remains to derive ethical restraint from strategic considerations. Cornish is correct that Clausewitzian theory is "in important and useful respects functionally compatible…" with just war theory.[13]

Similarly, in "The Clausewitzian Trinity in the Information Age: A Just War Approach", Mattox argues that increased transparency in the "information age" puts pressure on policy makers and commanders to appear to the public to be guided by ethical considerations (a topic

---

[9] Reichberg, Syse, and Begby, "The Ethics of War - Clausewitz." p.554
[10] Cornish, P., "Clausewitz and the Ethics of Armed Force: Five Propositions," *Journal of Military Ethics* 2, no. 3 (2003). p.215
[11] Cornish, "Clausewitz and the Ethics of Armed Force." p.216
[12] Cornish, "Clausewitz and the Ethics of Armed Force." p.219
[13] Cornish, "Clausewitz and the Ethics of Armed Force." p.221

we will revisit later in this work).[14] However, again this shows how ethics can interplay with strategy, not what ethics are strategically required. Neither Cornish nor Mattox nor any other authors writing in this vein give any evidence to shake the conclusion that this is potential fertile ground. The purpose of the work here, as we proceed along the next few chapters is to agree with those briefly mentioned by Reichberg et al, and to agree, rather more forcefully than they might wish, with Cornish and Mattox. A natural extension of this is to take it further than they might wish, in directions that they may be uncomfortable with.

Clausewitz alone will not take us fully to where we need to go. We will need some guidance from military ethics, while remembering we are going to attempt to make the strategic case for moral restraint, not the ethical case. To aid examination of the subject of military ethics, a concept which '...appears somewhat of an oxymoron...',[15] it is probably a promising idea to understand what is meant by 'ethics'. For the purposes of the initial enquiry, it is proposed that we use Whetham's definition, provided later in the same chapter, that ethics are an '...accepted system or collection of moral principles.'[16] This conception allows for a certain interchangeability of the terms 'moral' and 'ethical', a feature of the literature, and a convention that we will observed here, but necessarily addressed within the work.

So where can we begin in reviewing the literature on the subject of ethics and war? In addition, if we are discussing war, and the possibility of ethical consideration being of use to strategic decision making (and achieving policy ends by violence), must we consider works of strategy? The answer should probably be a resounding 'yes' to the latter and 'at the beginning' for the former. However, where do we look for a beginning of the Just War tradition? Moreover, what forms the literature of the subject?

---

[14] Mattox, J.M., "The Clausewitzian Trinity in the Information Age: A Just War Approach," *Journal of Military Ethics* 7, no. 3 (2008). pp.202-214

[15] Whetham, D., "Ethics, Law and Conflict," in *Ethics, Law and Military Operations*, ed. D. Whetham (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). p.10

[16] Whetham, "Ethics, Law and Conflict." p.11

Certainly, in the Western liberal tradition, although there are earlier texts, we see an important crystallising of Just War thinking in the writings of key philosopher-theologians from St Augustine to the later work of St Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas is of special interest in the tradition, as he addresses a fundamental problem of violating the 'Thou shalt not kill' [17] commandment – by asking when, for what purpose, and by whom war can be declared and conducted. In the *Summa Theologica*, he responds with what appear to be universal principles on the declaration of the Just War (sovereign authority, just cause and right intent),[18] founded in natural law, but informed by God's will.[19] However, while he addresses the almost universal concern of when to go to war, he also addresses a moral problem of strategy at the tactical level – the use of ambushes and their relationship to the sin of lying.[20] This is Aquinas seeking to settle, in a philosophical manner through addressing objections, the moral question of a tactic: whether its use is immoral, and how it might be justified. Aquinas' interest in examining these two problems is interesting, as it shows that there are two separate concerns animating him. The first is the problem of the Just War (*Jus ad Bellum*) and subsequently its conduct (*Jus in Bello*), or we might suggest, a universal test of justness, and the second is a specific test for a specific situation. This dualism of concern is a feature of later works by other authors and shows that the two problems coexist, but that there is opportunity for contextual (specific) moral examination as well as analysis addressing more universal concerns. This structure (universal and specific) is also mirrored in works of strategy, with authors addressing specific cases (or forms of war) and also addressing strategy in a 'universal' manner. Aquinas suggests that, under specific circumstances, violation of 'thou shalt

---

[17] Exodus 20:13

[18] Aquinas, St Thomas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas - Translated by The Fathers of the English Dominican Province.*, Kindle ed., vol. Part 2, Second Part (QQI - XLVII) (London: Burns, Oates and Washburn Ltd., 1916). p.501-502

[19] Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas - Translated by The Fathers of the English Dominican Province.*, Part 2, Second Part (QQI - XLVII). Q40 Art. 1, pp. 500-503

[20] Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas - Translated by The Fathers of the English Dominican Province.*, Part 2, Second Part (QQI - XLVII). Q40 Art. 3, pp. 506-508

not kill' may be acceptable (although we might suggest not wholly morally praiseworthy), and the ambush is not contrary to an injunction against lying. It is crucial that the business of making decisions that will aid victory, which might involve what seem to be violations of moral codes, is nevertheless morally defensible. Additionally, it is interesting to note that Aquinas uses strategic work by Vegetius and Frontinus to assist his analysis of the moral demands of war.[21]

In addressing contemporary literature, we see the same concerns and the same necessity for analysis arise. There are the problems of the specific case, and also universal concerns that need to be addressed. For example, if we are attempting to apply the influence of moral traditions onto analyses of the Just War, and the actions that are part of the modern war, there are challenges that await us. One such problem is the Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE).[22] This is a problem that was considered by Aquinas, and forms part of the moral concerns of *Jus in Bello*. According to this doctrine, providing that certain criteria are met, it can be morally permissible to perpetrate a wrong action as an unintended side effect of committing a necessary and good action. So, for example, the DDE may make causing collateral damage while stopping genocide permissible. However, this raises concerns for philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, who believe that all moral duties hold at all times and cannot be waived, even to achieve good ends. One approach, by Ficarotta, attempts to resolve the concerns of Kant and the deontological duty of the categorical imperative (that human beings, having an innate dignity, must be viewed as ends rather than means) with the DDE. Ficarotta's approach, he freely admits, results in a moral calculation that is more restrictive than the current DDE, but this stands as testament to the his strong contention that the DDE should not be used for moral calculation '...in *any* context.'[23] His is

---

[21] Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas - Translated by The Fathers of the English Dominican Province.*, Part 2, Second Part (QQI - XLVII). p.503 and 507

[22] Which can be summarized as the act being morally neutral or good, the consequences anticipated but not intentional, that the bad is a side effect of the good, and that the moral balance is tipped in favour of the good. Ficarotta, J. C., *Kantian Thinking About Military Ethics* (Fareham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010). p.88

[23] Ficarotta, *Kantian Thinking About Military Ethics*. p.106 [emphasis in original]

a more restrictive moral construct than many, in which he concludes by arguing for the criminalization of war,[24] while recognising the enormity of the task he suggests – and that it will take time.[25] Ficarotta emerges from the book as one concerned with the restriction, on both universal and specific moral problems, one rightly horrified by war and its consequences, and whose moral outlook provides little harbour for the strategist. That is not to say that, for the strategist, he is wholly unhelpful, as he identifies that '...moral judgement will be more of an art than a science...'[26] This may prove helpful later.

The application, and emergent moral problems, of existing aspects of the Just War tradition are also featured in other work. Carmola, for example, attempts to analyse the problem of proportionality – and its seemingly conditional nature.[27] In the piece, part of a wider consideration of the Just War and its conduct, he succinctly determines that there are 'ambiguities',[28] in considering proportionality, that have only been accented by more recent events (the author uses the "Global War on Terror" as an example).[29] In discussing the difficulties of proportionality, Carmola concludes with an acknowledgement of the integration of legal advice in the role of operational planning, and the difficulties of balancing the demands of law with the demands war, and the difficulties of determining proportionality in varying types of conflicts.[30] There is no guidance on moral judgement offered. Rather, he simply questions the reader as to whether their thinking should be guided by a multi-faceted consequentialism, or deontological duty – providing (some) sympathy for the strategist and their conception of a good, which may

---

[24] Ficarotta, *Kantian Thinking About Military Ethics*. p.116
[25] Ficarotta, *Kantian Thinking About Military Ethics*. p.118
[26] Ficarotta, *Kantian Thinking About Military Ethics*. p.59
[27] Carmola, K., "The Concept of Proportionality: Old Questions and New Ambiguities," in *Just War Theory - A Reappraisal*, ed. M. Evans (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005). pp.94-113
[28] Carmola, "The Concept of Proportionality: Old Questions and New Ambiguities." p. 94
[29] Carmola, "The Concept of Proportionality: Old Questions and New Ambiguities." p.95
[30] Carmola, "The Concept of Proportionality: Old Questions and New Ambiguities." p. 109

clash with that of the lawyer. Rather than coming to formal conclusions, Carmola suggests that the

difficulties of proportionality are not soon to be settled.

When discussing measures of proportionality, we must also seek to address the difficulties

of the 'innocent' in war. While the Just War tradition holds that the non-combatant must be

protected from hostilities, 'innocence' is a demanding thing to determine. Norman addresses this

problem in 'War, Ethics and Killing',[31] by examining just such a difficulty, and asking whether it is

possible to make a simple moral determination. He considers modern campaigns that are the

product of economic strength.[32] While militarily rational to use force against lines of supply that

support these platforms and systems, these lines are difficult to separate from surrounding civilian

populations.[33] In a criticism of the Just War tradition (particularly *Jus in Bello*), he argues that such

modern wars that are founded in economics as well as policy, are not fought against those

responsible for aggression. Rather they are fought against soldiers (and populations) who are only

indirectly responsible (if at all) for the source of the conflict - as opposed to being waged against

the real decision makers. Thus, Norman argues that the distinction made between the 'innocent

civilian and the combatants who can legitimately be killed' is illusory in the Just War tradition

when it is combined with the DDE. [34] Ultimately, Norman comes to identify that there is

'widespread moral acceptance of war is at odds with importance we elsewhere attach to respect

for human life'.[35] However, he does not seek to argue that all war is unjustified, but asserts that

the tension between duties leaves us with an 'irresolvable moral deadlock'.[36] He addresses this

problem as a one requiring rational consideration, but forwards a solution founded in 'pacifistic'

terms (inspired by pacifism, but not necessarily complying with the pacifist injunction to not use

---

[31] Norman, R., *Ethics, Killing and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
[32] The technology deployed only being achievable through good economic resources.
[33] Norman, *Ethics, Killing and War*. p.204
[34] Norman, *Ethics, Killing and War*. p.205
[35] Norman, *Ethics, Killing and War*. p.251
[36] Norman, *Ethics, Killing and War*. p.251

force).[37] While he agrees that there may be occasions when we must fight, we are strictly bound to terms of legitimacy in targeting, and he emphasises that to fight for anything beyond defence is rationally difficult to justify morally. By arguing such, he shares with others a moral demand that war should be avoided until all but the most significant economic costs have been endured, and even then, there are moral responsibilities in the conduct of fighting. It might be suggested that the moral limitations (deontological duties) he demands are such that victory can never be assured for the defender, whereas others are willing to entertain some moral excusability in the actions of a defender in the most urgent of situations.

However, the Just War tradition should not be regarded as being of limited use for fighting in modern campaigns, despite the concerns of Norman. Bellamy mounts a staunch defence of the Just War tradition as a reasonably universal set of moral standards. In doing so, he argues that there are three traditions that comprise the Just War – realism, positive law, and natural law.[38] All three of these may influence the thinking of actors, but they are not universally applicable to all conflicts.[39] These traditions can be regarded as interdependent, insofar as for the rules of the Just War to change (both *ad Bellum* and *in Bello*) there must be a convergence of opinion within the three traditions,[40] and changes (or lack thereof) in one tradition – such as positive law – do not alone reflect a wholesale change in what might, or might not, pass for legitimate action.[41] This seeming interdependency is one that strengthens the traditions, as it might be suggested that each acts on the other as a check, as the absence of consensus among the elements prevents the adoption of any change as truly canon. In arguing for this interdependency, Bellamy lays the groundwork for his conclusion that the positive law should not be regarded (or indeed made) an

---

[37] Norman, *Ethics, Killing and War*. p.252
[38] Positive law being defined as 'legal', whereas natural law is defined as 'ethical'. Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. pp.117-121
[39] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.126
[40] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.134
[41] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.134

entity separate from the other traditions.[42] This is primarily because he believes the remaining

traditions would be '...theologically oriented, ethnocentric and lacking in authority',[43] tracing as he

does the Just War tradition as seemingly a product of western philosophical traditions.[44]

Additionally, to divorce the positive law from the Just War Tradition would be to deny positive law

the insights and the mediation of Just War Theory. Bellamy does not take as stringent a line on the

morals of war as Norman, while still recognising the moral difficulties of war. The tradition,

Bellamy argues, has only prospered because of the diversity of thought that is included into the

Just War tradition, and it is not as restrictive as some would argue, or indeed call for, it to be.

Nevertheless, we must ask if Bellamy is correct in identifying that the sub traditions –

divorced from the positive law – are '...theologically oriented, ethnocentric and lacking in

authority'.[45] Is there a case to be made that Just War is dependent on the theological and cultural

norms of the European philosophical tradition? We might suggest that if there is, there may be

some dangers inherent in this. However, we might also look to other traditions to determine that

this may not be the case, and that, instead, the Just War tradition asserts criteria that are accepted

cross-culturally. Hensel is an example of a scholar who has collected works on conceptions of the

Just War from Islamic, Hindu and East Asian perspective, and has found that although each

perspective differs, they are coherent and compatible with one another in their essential views on

the Just War.[46] While there may remain a theological discussion on the finer points and the

sources of moral authority, it becomes apparent that the familiar principles of the Just War

Tradition – such as just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, last resort, likelihood of

success, proportionality, and discrimination – cannot be seen to be exclusively as of being

---

[42] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.230
[43] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.230
[44] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.15-114
[45] Bellamy, *Just Wars - From Cicero to Iraq*. p.230
[46] Hensel, H.M., ed. *The Prism of Just War - Asian and Western Perspectives on the Legitimate Use of Military Force.* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).

European Judeo-Christian in tenor. However, the presence of other viewpoints should interest us.

'Ethics and the Military Profession' is an extremely valuable book, not simply for the content, but

also for the audience and purpose for which it was written. It is resolutely a textbook, collecting

essential readings for the officer in training (the internal cover states that there are Naval

Academy and Reserve Officer Training Corps versions available).[47] This represents the military, the

tool of strategy, attempting to educate the officer in the ethics of his business.[48] While we might

simply dismiss this as a primer for the young officer, it contains useful insights, for example, in how

to address problems such as cultural relativism. Rachels, the author of the chapter on cultural

relativism, rightly cautions the reader of the dangers of confusing cultural differences (the fact

that cultures do have different practices) with proof of moral relativism (the idea that all morality

is culturally specific), pointing out that there appear to be certain moral demands that are

included in most moral value sets. One example he cites is Herodotus' story of the Greeks and the

Callatians and their mutual distaste for each other's funerary practices.[49] Each regarded the other

as barbaric for how they treated their dead: however, the issue was not the honouring of the

dead, rather the manner in which each chose to honour them (e.g. burning versus eating the

corpses). Honouring the dead in some way was a universal value, expressed differently by

divergent practices in different cultures. This reminds us that it may be possible to hold certain

moral imperatives in common, even if their observance may be different between our allies, our

enemies, and us. This point can also be used to further support the interdependence of traditions

conclusion we found in Bellamy: that the Just War tradition benefits from being an open and

---

[47] Lucas, G.R. and Rubel, W.R, eds., *Ethics and the Military Profession - The Moral Foundations of Leadership* (Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 2005).

[48] It is fully understood that the Officer is not a role that is exclusively male, the use of 'his' here, and in latter instances is intended only in the legal meaning, and is not intentionally used to exclude female officers from the discussion. Indeed, the actions of female commanders and soldiers have come under the same scrutiny, such as the incidents of abuse at Abu Ghraib Prison.

[49] Rachels, J., "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism," in *Ethics and the Military Profession - The Moral Foundations of Leadership*, ed. Lucas and Rubel (Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 2005).

evolving, rather than a narrowly prescriptive theory, taking into account changes in acceptable practices across time and cultures.

While the military has attempted to address the issues of the ethical in its own texts, there remains one book that dominates the discussion on such matters in all circles: *Just and Unjust Wars* by Michael Walzer. This book addresses the problems of conceptions of the just, as well as the means of prosecuting wars (*Jus ad Bellum*), and the moral costs associated with them. Walzer's motives may be problematic for the strategist, as he freely admits that this is an intellectual exploration provoked by his moral disquiet during the Vietnam War.[50] Within it he addresses the problems of war, rightly identifying that war has become criminalised (as aggression) in the post-World War II period.[51] At the same time he also accepts that there is a duality in the rules of Warfare, that the Just War (in declaration), or indeed the Unjust War, is still beholden to the rules of the conduct of war – the War Convention, and that these rules have emerged as part of the social interaction that is warfare.[52] Thus he examines the question of the moral equivalence of the soldier – that soldiers on both sides, who do not fight voluntarily (i.e. they are in some form coerced [53]), are freed from the moral responsibility for being in the war, but not from how they fight the war.[54] Walzer does not simply limit himself to the examination of these rules, and elucidating principles of non-combatant immunity, but also takes the opportunity to address contexts where the Just War tradition may not seem to be as readily informative. For example, he addresses humanitarian interventions, seemingly arguing that there is a moral responsibility of unilateral action when confronted with '...acts "that shock the moral conscience of mankind"'.[55] Equally, later in the book, he argues that there may be a sliding scale of moral

---

[50] Walzer, M., *Just and Unjust Wars - A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 4th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1977). p.xix
[51] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. p.41
[52] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. pp.43-44
[53] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. p.28
[54] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. p.37
[55] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. pp.86-108

action, that the circumstances (up to and including imminent threat of catastrophe – supreme

emergency) can affect moral requirements, albeit arguing that these decisions should be made

only when confronted with potential disaster, rather than to ensure 'speed of victory'.[56]

Walzer should not be regarded as a pacifist. He supports the use of force in defence of

self, or for protection of those forced to defend themselves – through either intervention or

simple rebalancing of force. However, he sets the moral bar at a level that strategy might find

uncomfortable or unachievable or, in the case of 'rebalancing', which may lead to a greater moral

tragedy, that of stalemate and attrition. He reluctantly concedes that the use of force may be

necessary, but that it can never been disassociated from a conception of 'criminality'. That soldiers

are morally equivalent may also sit uncomfortably, but this equivalence remains a necessity. While

contextually permissive, there are deontological demands within his work, and those duties should

be abandoned only when disaster would be assured if such actions were not taken. Even then,

once (or indeed if) the threat has retreated, the case for exceptionalism can no longer be made,

and those tasked with doing the worst are cast aside.

This is certainly a position taken by Orend. In *The Morality of War,* a response to Walzer,

Orend argues that there is a moral difference between soldiers in war. He argues that:

> 'Soldiers who fight for the aggressor do not have strict moral equality with those who fight
> for a victim or a defender.'[57]

It is easy to have sympathy with this distinction, particularly where belligerents have forces

composed of volunteers, rather than conscript armies. While the conscript may have no choice, on

pain of incarceration or death, the volunteer, in Orend's conception, has the opportunity to refuse

to fight, or simply surrender.[58] *The Morality of War* stands as a response to the ethical conclusions

---

[56] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. pp. 242-.268
[57] Orend, B., *The Morality of War* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2006). p.109
[58] However, we might aver that the refusing volunteer might face similar punishment, and in the case of a
popular War, face social opprobrium in the same way that conscientious objectors have faced throughout
the 20th century.

of Walzer, detailed in its analysis and different in its conclusions. We might suggest that this book (as with Bellamy's) demonstrates the influence that Walzer still holds, as it seeks to challenge Walzer twenty-nine years after the publication of *Just and Unjust Wars*. However, the status as response in no way devalues the contribution Orend's work makes – such as the determination that there is a moral difference of soldiers, depending on which side they are on. Thus, they are open to being regarded as responsible for violations of *Jus ad Bellum*.

There is also some succour for the strategist in the work of Orend, certainly in the way he addresses the problem of the intervention. He criticizes, for example, the '..."in-and-out rule" ...'[59] of Walzer in these situations, arguing instead that the '...side slaughtering the other needs to be defeated militarily.'[60] This engagement and defeat, however, must be conducted within carefully prepared rules, and with appropriate forces to do the job. Additionally, in the case of the supreme emergency, he argues that any choice of action will be taken within the context of it being moral tragedy. Rather than casting aside the actors chosen to do the unpleasant business of achieving the difficult by the unpalatable, Orend argues that, done within a framework of declaration and moral understanding, the action can be morally excused, rather than simply condemned.[61] He also argues that after the tragedy has passed, there should be open accounting, but no trials or 'symbolic hand wringing'.[62] Similarly, he is not opposed to anticipatory attack should the threat be credible, and if it can be conducted in either defence of life or defence of values.[63]

Orend is easily contrastable to Walzer; he approaches the subject from a distinct perspective, and with what appears to be some sympathy for the soldier and the policy maker who is charged with making complex decisions in the pursuit of defence. This is not to argue that he comes from a radically different school of thought, he addresses both pacifism and realism in

---

[59] Orend, *The Morality of War*. pp.94-95
[60] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.94
[61] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.157
[62] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.157
[63] Orend, *The Morality of War*. pp.76-77

the book, but finds them wanting by comparison to the Just War tradition. However, while he

might find realism wanting, that is not to say he regards it as unhelpful, as it provides:

> '...a healthy and needed antidote to those who...simply expect too much of flawed people behaving in an insecure environment.'[64]

He is more permissive than Walzer, more prepared to accept the moral judgements that come in

time of war, and to be supportive of acting. While he adheres to the principles of *Jus ad Bellum*

and *Jus in Bello*, he is able to examine, through responding to Walzer, the moral problems of war,

and attempt to provide answers. These answers are founded in conceptions of Human Rights as a

defining feature – as they provide a way of measuring political legitimacy. Orend accepts that

avoidance of war is almost impossible, and that the demands placed on soldiers and policy makers

by enthusiastic ethical commentators may hamper action that may be just. He also addresses the

problems of the post-war environment, while arguing consistently (certainly in the case of the

supreme emergency) that it must be remembered that war has an audience. He has deontological

concerns about violations of rights, but he is unconvinced (for example in his thinking about

intervention or emergency) that the use of force is necessarily the worst choice. However, the

sympathy he holds for those who must involve themselves in the business of fighting remains

clear. Compared with Walzer, he approaches the subject from a different perspective, one aware

of the consequences of action, but also arguing that there may be grounds for difficult actions to

be regarded as morally excusable, according to context, rather than the simply morally

condemnable.

However, what of realism? Orend argues that realism serves a valid purpose in the debate

as a counterweight to over-optimism on behalf of some Just War thinkers, while Bellamy argues

that it is integral to the internal negotiations of the tradition. David Lonsdale is a strategist, one

who addresses problems of achieving policy goals by threat or use of force. In 'Ethics, Law and

---

[64] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.241

Military Operations', he is provides a 'realist perspective on the role of ethics of war',[65] which sets

out the realist positions – that moral concerns cannot be applied to the actions of the state, or

that there are 'structural modifiers' founded in social norms.[66] Secondly, he identifies that strategy

is not an end in itself (i.e. it is a means), thus there is potential for real political and strategic cost if

these norms are too easily cast aside.[67] Thus, strategy is a very human exercise, and cannot be

easily divorced from the moral decision making of those who fight the war, and the moral choices

of the enemy.[68] Despite the need to pursue victory, and the admonishment of some of strategic

theory to avoid concerns of morality in the rational use of force, Lonsdale identifies the strategist's

dilemma – to fight without morals (either immorally or amorally) risks the loss of legitimacy.[69] He

advances one suggestion in resolving the dilemma – one of strategic necessity, an 'instrumentalist'

approach to moral judgements and their strategic consequences.[70] Thus the decision making of

the strategist is influenced by moral choices, by examining the potential consequences of a

decision on the support for the war, the resolve of the enemy and the reaction of allies and the

wider 'audience' of the war.[71] Nevertheless, he argues that these decisions are contextual to the

conflict, and that the moral influence will vary according to the circumstances (an idea somewhat

shared with Walzer and Orend), and might serve to further restrain the use of violence. Certainly,

he suggests that it may prove useful as the technological advances in platforms and systems may

encourage their more liberal use.[72] Lonsdale fails to be as permissive as we might expect, from the

tone of Walzer and others. Lonsdale is circumspect on the use of force and supportive of restraint

---

[65] Lonsdale, D.J., "A View from Realism," in *Ethics, Law and Military Operations* ed. D. Whetham
(Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). p.29
[66] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.30
[67] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.31
[68] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.34
[69] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p. 38
[70] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.39
[71] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.39
[72] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.40

used in its application. This may not stem from empathy with the causes of the ethicist, but rather an acknowledgement that there are other concerns of strategy that also demand restraint.

Lonsdale, (with Kane) returns to the idea of strategic necessity in a text on strategy, rather than one devoted to the consideration of ethics,[73] further arguing that the achieving of the goal should remain of prime concern.[74] However, Lonsdale and Kane do agree that obedience to the laws of war (*Jus in Bello*) in the most part equate to good strategy,[75] but that there '...are no easy answers to the dilemmas faced by strategists when dealing with ethics in strategy.'[76] However, strategy is more than simply the ethical considerations of the use of force – it must be considered as an activity that encompasses the use of force, the preparation of the use of force and the means, abilities and purposes of wars.

The above are all visible in the works of strategy, stretching from works written from before the Roman Empire, and throughout the past two millennia. Vegetius in particular concerns himself with the administration of armies and the use of those armies for the purposes of the state. We might also argue that Vegetius and Lonsdale share a view on the limited use of morality in war. For example, Vegetius argues that an avenue of retreat should be left available to opposing forces. This is not to allow the vanquished opponent a means of dignified escape, but rather stems from the conclusion that it is easier to kill 'unavenged' troops with their backs turned, rather than those fighting for survival.[77] However, it would leave us with too dim a view of Vegetius were we to take simply this insight alone. Vegetius also advises on the use of the Auxiliary,[78] bemoans the difficulty in attracting good recruits,[79] and reminds us that the soldier has the unique duty to

---

[73] Kane, T and Lonsdale, D.J, *Understanding Contemporary Strategy* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012). pp.44-66
[74] Kane and Lonsdale, *Understanding Contemporary Strategy*. p.64
[75] Kane and Lonsdale, *Understanding Contemporary Strategy*. p.63
[76] Kane and Lonsdale, *Understanding Contemporary Strategy*. p.65
[77] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science - Translated with notes and introduction by N.P.Miller* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993). p.101
[78] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*. p.30
[79] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*. p.6 and 8

'...fight for his own life and liberty for all.'[80] Vegetius reminds us that the challenges of strategy have remained reasonably constant in the intervening time, advocates training and maintenance of knowledge, but never lets us forget that the purpose of strategy is to pursue victory. However, that is not necessarily always achieved by violence. He unambiguously states, in his General Rules of War, that: 'It is preferable to subdue the enemy by famine raids and terror, than in battle where fortune tends to have more influence than bravery'.[81]

War, in realism, is a rational action, but it is not necessarily in the control of rational forces. Vegetius might be regarded as a specific thinker, answering questions of a specific time; however, it should be argued that his concerns echo those of today's strategist (in some small part). As such, we could generously regard him as a universalist thinker, however we might ask whether this wholly merited.

However, Vegetius is not the only Roman thinker to have an impact on the strategist today. We might also look to the works of Frontinus in considering the literature of strategy.[82] Frontinus departs from the style of Vegetius, who it must be agreed writes in the style of an instruction manual, by teaching in vignettes and allowing the reader to draw their own conclusions. These paragraphs are ordered according to their purpose, and they support deeper consideration. To draw on one example, Frontinus relates how, on Marcus Scaurus' orders, a fruit tree was left untouched despite it being within the camp boundary.[83] Why should we, as strategists, care about a fruit tree? The vignette shows the discipline of the army and the authority of the commander. We might also argue that the actions of the commander helped maintain his

---

[80] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*. p.58
[81] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*. p.108
[82] Frontinus, The Strategmata of Frontinus - Translated by Charles E. Bennett, (Kindle Edition: Charles River Editors, 2011).
A note on Kindle Edition books: Many Kindle books, while being valid translations or work, do not include 'real' page numbers equal to those of a printed book. Location of the appropriate passages will be stated as 'loc. xxx of xxx' to correspond with the edition used. Those with 'real' page numbers will be referenced in the usual format.
[83] Frontinus, *The Strategmata of Frontinus - Translated by Charles E. Bennett*. loc.2718 of 3181

legitimacy with the people (he did not allow his troops to steal fruit from farmers' trees), and showed the collective restraint of the troops in doing the correct, rather than the expedient, thing. We might suggest that this is a potential example of the 'strategic necessity' of Lonsdale. In a similar vein, he relates how Scipio responded to charges of a lack of aggression, saying, 'My mother bore me a general, not a warrior.'[84] Strategy has always had a concern of a restraint on action, and Frontinus and Vegetius clearly aim to ensure that the lessons of strategy – including those of restraint – are passed on to future commanders. Frontinus is, in the use of vignettes and the requirement of the reader to respond to them, much more universally applicable than Vegetius. While Vegetius suffers, perhaps, from too much attention to the administration of the Roman Legion, Frontinus allows us to apply his lessons more easily to contemporary problems.

While it is tempting to simply adhere to a view that the Romans can only teach us about strategy in antiquity, this would be to ignore the universalist influence of Sun Tzu. Sun Tzu remains influential today because, as with Frontinus, we can draw lessons from *The Art of War* that are still applicable. Unlike Frontinus, however, Sun Tzu does not teach in the vignette style, rather giving short passages of use to the general, without requiring too much further interrogation. However, partly due to his style, and partly due to (unlike Clausewitz) a lack of collective agreement on the 'best' translation of his work, the meaning of Sun Tzu's work can be obscured. For example, in the Griffith translation, victory is to be found in the use of 'extraordinary' forces,[85] while Sawyer translates this as 'unorthodox'.[86] While this difference in translation might not seem at first to present a problem, one reading may feed the temptation to regard Special Forces as the guarantors of victory, rather than using novel applications of conventional forces. Additionally, Sun

---

[84] Frontinus, *The Strategmata of Frontinus - Translated by Charles E. Bennett*. loc.2837 of 3181
[85] Tzu, Sun, *The Art of War - Translated and with an Introduction by Samuel B. Griffith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971). p.91
[86] Tzu, Sun, *The Art of War - Translated, and with a Historical Introduction by Ralph D. Sawyer* (New York: Basic Books, 1994). p.187

Tzu reminds the strategist that the 'unorthodox' will soon become the 'orthodox' and vice versa.[87]

Sun Tzu also reminds the reader that seeking the destruction of the enemy is not necessarily the

right course: '...Preserving the [enemy's] capital is best...Preserving their army is best...Subjugating

the enemy's army without fighting is the pinnacle of excellence.'[88]

Strategy, for Sun Tzu, is not simply about the bearing of force, but the intelligent

application of force or the avoidance of rolling the iron dice if possible. He advocates attacking the

'enemy's plans, next...their alliances, next...their army...'.[89] Thus, strategy becomes more than

conduct on the battlefield, but is incorporated into the grand strategy and the use of force

becomes potentially the lowest form of victory. However, this does not stop Sun Tzu from

teaching his vision of the appropriate means and conduct of war when the use of force is required.

Much in the vein of Orend and others above, Sun Tzu recognises that it is unpleasant to go to war,

but nevertheless says that if it must be done, this is how it should be done.

Because of the approachable and concise nature of Sun Tzu's work, we might reasonably

argue that, ahead of Vegetius and Frontinus, he is truly a universalist thinker, one who may be

equally of use to the strategist, the grand strategist, and those tasked with applying one element

in a conflict (e.g. naval, sea, or air). Similarly, he is of use to the practitioner at all levels, as his

approachability allows lessons to be found across all the levels of strategy.

This combination of accessibility and applicability is not something that can be found

across all the major works of strategy, however. Jomini, we might suggest, is open to accusations

of being 'outdated' rather more than any of the aforementioned thinkers, with the possible

exception of Vegetius. Certainly, if we are to concern ourselves with the use of troops in the field,

we might choose to look elsewhere. In *The Art of War*,[90] Jomini seeks to define a normative 'good

---

[87] Tzu, *The Art of War...Sawyer*. p.187
[88] Tzu, *The Art of War...Sawyer*. p.177
[89] Tzu, *The Art of War...Sawyer*. p.177
[90] Jomini, A.H. de, *The Art of War- Translated from the French by Capt. G.H. Mendell and Lieut. W.P. Craighill* (Marston Gate Bibliobazaar, 2007).

strategy' and the correct methods of manoeuvring on the battlefield. However, to focus on this is to lose much of the value of Jomini, who on close reading provides other insights to the strategist. While we might agree that his force positioning has somewhat been overtaken by developments in warfare, Jomini pays close attention to military administration and the demands placed on armies to ensure success.[91] However, it is his observations on grand strategy, and when and what types of war to fight, that are the most valuable. He outlines eight types of war, from defence of the state to 'mania for conquest'[92], and then continues to assess the merits of each of them.[93] Of particular interest are his observations of 'Wars of Opinion', when founded in either religious or political dogma. Jomini asserts that these wars 'enlist the worst passions, and become vindictive, cruel and terrible'.[94]

In his reflections on the causes of wars, Jomini neatly begins to examine the idea of wars of choice and wars of necessity. Intriguingly, for one interested in strategy, he also comes to moral conclusions about some of these wars – such as the opinion given about the 'War of Opinion' above. Therefore, while we might dismiss his views on the formations of troops, and the conduct of battle, we might look to Jomini for guidance about the causes of war and the differences between the causes of war. Additionally, while we reject much of his tactical and operational thinking, dismissing it as only fit for conducting Napoleonic warfare, Jomini does usefully remind us (within the context of thinking about developments in platforms and systems) that: '...the improvements in firearms will not introduce any important changes in the manner of taking troops into battle'.[95] War may not be about lines and diamonds, but the concerns of the general have changed little from Jomini, Vegetius, Frontinus, and Sun Tzu.

---

[91] Jomini, *The Art of War*. pp.255-266
[92] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p.17
[93] Jomini, *The Art of War*. pp.17-27
[94] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p.28
[95] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p. 275

This is not to argue that there have not been seismic shifts in the scope of military

operations, and the abilities of militaries to deliver violence when it is demanded by policy makers.

For example, the arrival of the aircraft as a weapon meant that the third dimension was available

to the strategist. As can be seen in the output of war colleges across the world, the response today

to new systems remains similar to that experienced upon the arrival of the aircraft. Douhet serves

here as an example of the challenges of the 'Revolution in Military Affairs' (RMA) debate. Douhet

addresses the new opportunities of the air, at a time when air power was only beginning to

demonstrate its utility. We might choose to be generous, and argue that the enthusiasm with

which Douhet writes is understandable, given that the new platform had just opened new

strategic possibilities. However, in addressing the potential capacities of the air, Douhet also

enters into discussions of how it should be used, and against what targets. For example, he argues

that there is a case for using 'explosive, incendiary and poison gas' to damage targets, burn them

and stop fire-fighters from attempting to douse the flames. [96] While this makes strategic sense, it

prevents absolutely the enemy from saving his factories or other strategic targets, we might wish

to interrogate the morality of such a decision. Similarly, he argues that civilian centres of

population should also be regarded as legitimate targets (a violation of the deontological demand

of Walzer on the protection of the civilian). Even accepting the DDE, the targeting strategy of

Douhet might be regarded as at best unethical, despite being defended as strategically rational.

Why would Douhet indulge in what appears, to the modern reader, to be an egregious

violation of the principles of *Jus in Bello*? We might suggest that this comes with the territory of

the RMA – that new platforms and systems predictably encourage officers and strategists to think

of ways to use them to the ultimate advantage. War is competitive and bloody, and as such, it is

natural to think that any technological advantage that can be gained should be pursued. However,

---

[96] Douhet, G., *The Command of the Air - Translated by Dino Ferrari* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1983). p.20

we must observe that the most extreme of Douhet's suggestions have been consigned to history, of interest but limited utility. For example, we have seen the use of incendiary against centres of population (Walzer examines it in the context of the supreme emergency), but morally it has been found too controversial, too bloody, and given to increase the moral tragedy of war.

That is not to argue aircraft have not changed the way we fight, as Douhet observes: 'Can anyone logically assert and in good faith that we would have any chance of winning the war on the surface if we were once beaten in the air?'[97] We cannot. Militaries speak of air superiority and the need to dominate the airspace, but only in the furtherance of combined arms operations. Indeed, the aircraft in many cases requires delivery by sea to be able to project the power that Douhet (perhaps overenthusiastically) suggested it could achieve. However, like land forces and maritime forces, the aircraft has come to be a tool in strategy's tool box, and subject to the same rules as all the other tools.

Douhet is not a universalist thinker, like Liddell-Hart and other writers who choose to address the uses of force components. They address the specific problems of the component they seek to use, and define the terms of use. Strategy, and strategic thinking, thus has a necessary duality, we must appreciate the problems and uses of a component, but in a holistic sense – application of the elements of strategy coherently is central to victory, but each element cannot be understood in a vacuum. There is an interdependency of elements, as predicted by Douhet above.

However, why would Douhet argue for the bombing (and subsequent burning and gassing) of the enemy's population centres as well as his 'strategic' targets? The answer is that his concern is with achieving victory swiftly, and he believes these actions could ensure that end. That he appears to wish to fight a total war from the air might be regarded coldly as a logical, rational act, on the part of the strategist. Clausewitz states much the same: that there are theoretical extremes

---

[97] Douhet, *The Command of the Air*. p.259

to which armed forces can go, that the enemy will resist, and due to the competitive nature of war, it will become acceptable for such actions to be taken.[98] However, Clausewitz argues that these extremes are only theoretical, achievable only if war were not based in the political but in the abstract.[99] He also suggests that wars among

> '...civilised nations are far less cruel and destructive than wars between savages, the reason lies in the social conditions of the state themselves and in their relationships to one another.'[100]

Clausewitz might be characterised as the universalist thinker of strategy. Unlike Sun Tzu, he examines the forces of war, and its nature. According to Clausewitz, war does not immediately extend to the total exertion of effort,[101] it is an act of political will,[102] and as such, 'policy will permeate all military operations'.[103] However, policy may be part of the problem for the strategist. As he is an instrument of the political will, the strategist must accept that he must be prepared to be in dialogue with policy, and that it will influence his preparations of strategic advice.[104] Additionally, any war's '...*probable character and general shape of any war should mainly be assessed in the light of political factors and conditions...*'[105]

However, this assessment by the strategist must be made in the full understanding that it is done in the absence of perfect information,[106] and despite the most careful of planning it is still subject to chance,[107] and the demand of maintaining the support of the three corners of the trinity: the military, policy, and the people.[108] As each war is the result of the unique policy circumstances that surround it (the differing belligerents, their purposes, the defence and the

---

[98] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.77
[99] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.78
[100] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.76
[101] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.87
[102] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.87
[103] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.87
[104] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.606
[105] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.607 [italics in text]
[106] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.84
[107] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.85
[108] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.89

attack), despite an identifiable independent nature of war, its character changes according to circumstance – it is '...more than a true chameleon'.[109]

War, for Clausewitz, is a means, not an end. While there are good reasons to fight without limitation, this cannot be achieved in practise, nor in Clausewitz's opinion is it desirable. He hints at this by arguing that the purpose of war is to 'disarm the enemy'[110] rather than destroy him. If war is a means, and must be assessed according to its typical characteristics (at which point we must ask of the relative importance of the policy pursued), then it is entirely appropriate to limit force. Additionally, war is transitory; there is never a constant state of war. War is conducted to an audience, and so strategic calculations must take into account the audience and its dispositions. There are rational reasons for limiting aims, and consequently force, particularly where superiority of forces cannot be guaranteed.[111] All of the above, including the support for the war at home, must be included in the strategist's plans.

War, then, is not simply about the application of force, it is about politics, both domestic and foreign. If the trinity is to be kept in balance, then the military, and policy, must be able to maintain the support of the people. To lose this is to lose any claim of legitimacy for the action, and given this the strategist must pay attention to the opinion of the population. Mahan argued as much when attempting to determine how a nation goes to war, and its predisposition for certain strategic choices. In the context of sea power, he insisted that the 'National Character'[112] and 'Character of Government'[113] both play key parts in the strategic preference of states. This can be viewed as instructive for the strategist, especially when confronted with the problematic subject of military ethics. Within British Army doctrines, this observation is made for the practitioner:

> 'Some of the most barbarous armies in history have had tremendous morale and will to fight and have been successful. This may suggest that victory is what counts, regardless of

---

[109] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.89
[110] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.77
[111] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.601
[112] Mahan, A.T., *The Influence of Sea Power on History 1660-1783* (New York: Dove Publications, 1987). p.50
[113] Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power*. p.58

the methods used to achieve it. But the British armed forces are, in their modern origins, rooted in the spirit of democracy. This has created a clear necessity to act within the bounds of popular understanding of what is thought to be right. Soldiers should use force from a position of moral strength, reflecting the contemporary customs and conventions of the Nation, adjusted to be realistic within the unusual exigencies of conflict and war.'[114]

The practitioner is left under no illusion that the 'National Characteristic' of a commonly understood 'right or wrong' imposes itself directly on the conduct of strategy. We might suggest that understanding this value set is imperative for the conduct of military operations in the current environment, and to misread it jeopardises the support of the trinity. Indeed, this problem may be more acute for the liberal democracy, as the policy maker is also dependent of the people for continued employment. However, this perhaps interferes with the operational freedom that may be desired, particularly against an enemy that does not share these values.

As Clausewitz reminds us, these factors must be included in the calculation of the general character of any war. It is uncomfortable for the strategist, but his role is one of a composer who can never escape the interests of his sponsor – to do so would render his efforts meaningless (and unwelcome and uncompensated). In addition, the need to fight from a position of moral strength is required when one bears in mind that wars have audiences, and that other policies may best be served by the limitation of action in war. War is not an isolated act.

War is about judgement, in conducting operations, in choosing to go to war, and assessing the character of those wars and the nature of the belligerents. Strategy, like ethics, is not bound in the 'language of justification'.[115] Justification might be regarded as reactive to events, while strategy is about being prepared and making reasoned judgements of what is to occur, while understanding the dimensions of strategy, as identified by Grey.[116] The ethical must be considered

---

[114]Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Army Doctrine Publication Operations - Prepared Under the Direction of the Chief of Staff, (Swindon: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, 2010), http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/41903E11-B6F4-4351-853B-2C1C2839FE1B/0/ADPOperationsDec10.pdf (Accessed 6th January 2012). p.26
[115] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. p.13
[116] Gray, C.S., *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). pp.23-47

within these calculations, as it will necessarily affect the support for the war, the conduct of the war, and the reactions of the both the enemy and the audience. Within the literature, it is thus easier, from a strategic point of view, to accept Orend than Walzer or Norman. That war is a moral tragedy is not in doubt; that situations emerge when it must be fought cannot be denied. Moral excusability of actions *in context* provides the strategist with some room to manoeuvre. However, he must make fine judgements on whether the context calls for the action. The deontological demands for the protection of the civilian may be too great a hurdle for the strategist. The DDE provides some succour, but it still requires strong judgement. However, in the pursuit of policy objectives, it may be that the only way for the interconnected liberal democracy to fight is to fight within ethical frameworks. These are only imperfectly illuminated through the positive international law that has emerged in the post-World War II world.

This does little to help the strategist, as he must struggle to weigh up the character of the war he is to fight. Within the literature, interesting side notes in military administration aside, the universalist, more specifically the Clausewitzian, tradition holds the most sway. Clausewitz addresses war and the difficulties of strategy as strategy, not the problems or opportunities afforded by novel means and methods, or their eventual establishment. For the practitioner, there remains much to be considered, and we must question whether he has the time to do so.

Pierce argues that the there are two languages – those of ethics and strategy,[117] and that we should hope to achieve '...statesmen and soldiers...who, if not fluent in the two languages ...are at least conversant with and minimally competent in both.'[118] This idea of considering the competing languages of action and restraint does not sit wholly comfortably, as this standard provides the practitioner with only sketchy guidance. Modern strategists may have no option but to become more fully aware of ethical and strategic theory than the suggestion of minimal

---

[117] Pierce, "War, Strategy and Ethics." p.18
[118] Pierce, "War, Strategy and Ethics." p.18

competence implies, it may be that we must integrate the ethical into the strategic decision-making process. However, to do this we must reflect on the independent nature of war and if it is truly independent. What of the characters of wars? What pressures have come to bear on both militaries and the other corners of the trinity? It may be that any such attempts to incorporate ethics into decision-making – in the vein of Lonsdale's 'strategic necessity' might be deemed inauthentic, simply a cynical exercise. On the other hand, we might suggest attempting this incorporation may yield positive results, and that policy goals may be achieved at tolerable moral cost, while being delivered at acceptable political cost. There may be some call for something approaching a 'good' strategy as well as good strategy.

Chapter One - What are Ethics?

       The above may seem like a relatively innocuous question. Indeed, for the literature review it was suggested that we simply use the definition that ethics are an '...accepted system or collection of moral principles.'[1] But we for the purposes of this project, to properly explore the relationship between strategy and ethics, we will need a more robust and fixed definition. It was also observed in the literature review that the use of 'moral' and 'ethical' are somewhat interchangeable within the literature relating to military ethics. However, again for the purposes of this thesis, we may need to separate these concepts in order to achieve the nuance we need for our analysis. If we leave any room for misunderstanding born of the imprecise language used, it can only lead to a failure to comprehend our overall model and its application to the real world. Therefore, for the purposes of this work, we find it necessary to step away from the broad definition of ethics given above and to distinguish among the concepts closely associated with 'ethics' to discuss as three different ideas 'ethics', 'morals', and 'morality'. We will stipulate and clarify the definitions we have in mind for these three concepts in order to anchor the rest of our discussion of military ethics and military strategy.

       Throughout this thesis, we will use 'morals' to refer to an individual's internal conception of values and right vs. wrong. We will then use 'morality' to refer to a community's collective conceptions of values and right vs. wrong. And we will use 'ethics' when concerning ourselves with the negotiation between competing prerogatives of morality and morals in a given situation, reflecting the dynamic nature of ethical decision-making while still attempting to come to the most morally defensible outcome. Since the purpose of the work is to be of some utility to the practitioner, as well as being an intellectually satisfying enquiry, we will aim to discuss these concepts in relatively plain terms, so that the definitions have genuine utility and provide clarity to

---

[1] Whetham, "Ethics, Law and Conflict." p.10

our thinking. We must also try to engage with the concepts of the moral, morality, and ethics in reasonably neutral terms before applying these considerations to military ethics. We also wish to emphasise that law, while influenced by morals, morality, and ethics, is yet distinct from all three. While there is positive law that dictates rules to the military that can be understood as the codification of the morality and ethics that they must observe, the law generally requires less than morality and ethics demand and there is no guarantee that observing the law will lead to the ethically correct decision. It might easily be that the argument advanced by Orwell on writing ('Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.') might equally apply to right actions – break any laws sooner than do something unethical or immoral.[2]

Having introduced ethics, morals, and morality into the discussion, and having identified them as concepts we should explore, how should we begin to define them more extensively for use in this project? As we are defining them, where do morals fit with morality and how do the two concepts fit with ethics? We might suggest that all three concepts pertains to questions of human good and evil, on different scales – the personal, the communal, and the universal (or at least across humanity). If we begin with the personal (morals) considering the good or evil in human behaviour might be usefully recast into terms of virtue and vice. However, then we must define again – what is virtue?

This is obviously not the first time that the question above has been posited. It is as old as philosophy itself. Plato recounts the following exchange between Socrates and Meno:

> "MENO: ...But is this true about yourself, Socrates, that you don't even know what virtue is? Is this the report we are to take home about you?
>
> SOCRATES: Not only that; you may say also that, to the best of my belief, I have never yet met anyone who did know.'[3]

---

[2] Orwell, G., "Politics and the English Language," in *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, ed. S. Orwell and I. Angus (London: Secker and Warburg, 1968). p.139

[3] Brown, M. (ed.), *Platos's Meno with Essays. Translated by W.K.C. Guthrie* (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1971). 70a-71a

Socrates was attempting to answer Meno's questions of what virtue is and whether it is learned or comes from practice or if '...neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else...'.[4] In attempting to define the moral and asking questions such as what is virtue and where does it come from, we are getting pulled into the weeds of a metaethical debate that has been going on for millennia. However, thankfully, we do not need to resolve these profound philosophical matters in order to proceed with our project. What is clear from the above exchanges is that the concept of virtue is considered by Meno and Socrates to be an internal condition. That Meno essentially asks 'What is virtue, and how we achieve it?' indicates that virtue is a matter for the individual to aspire to and struggle to understand. Thus, we feel reasonably secure in using the word to describe an internal condition, in which the individual holds a core (and hopefully coherent) set of internal principles (values) that encapsulate the individual's sense of right and wrong. This is fine as far as it goes and enough for our purposes, even though it does not answer the questions set by Meno concerning the ultimate source of these values. To endeavour to do so would be far beyond the scope of this thesis.

We will note only that the 'natural aptitude' to which Meno refers has some support in the thinking of other key figures who have addressed the subject virtue, and it certainly appears in the thinking of theologians who have turned their attention to question of the 'good'. St Thomas Aquinas is prepared to argue that man has a 'natural aptitude for virtue'[5], although he hastens to explain that this does not mean either that man is always virtuous, or that this predilection fulfils the requirements of man's achieving virtue. As he points out later in the same passage, '...the perfection of virtue must be acquired by man by means of some kind of training.'[6] This in some ways reflects an answer to Meno, that there is an innate tendency to virtue, but that it is

---

[4] Brown, *Plato's Meno*. 70a
[5] Aquinas, St Thomas, *The Summa Theologica Complete Edition - Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province*, Kindle ed. (New York: Catholic Way Publishing, 2014).Loc. 43755
[6] Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica Complete Edition*. Loc. 43755

unfinished and requires the influence of outside factors to ensure that virtue is actually achieved. This indicates that for man to be 'moral' he cannot be isolated – simply because he must have access to this kind of 'training'. Therefore, man must exist in something resembling a community to achieve an internal 'knowledge' of what is right and wrong, so that he might develop what Aquinas (and Meno) suggests is his 'natural aptitude'.

At this point in the discussion we can move smoothly from morals to morality by introducing consideration of the community in which man's moral development occurs. For this purpose we can again look to antiquity, and the work of the philosopher Aristotle (or as Aquinas called him, The Philosopher). However unconvinced we might be about Aristotle's narrative for the formation of communities and states, it is nonetheless instructive that he makes distinctions between the stages of community development and the causes of those developments. Aristotle argues that communities emerge through a natural process, beginning with households, which in turn cluster together in the pursuit of '...the satisfaction of something *more* than daily needs.'[7] The household is only able to maintain itself in the quest to fulfil the requirements of daily living. It requires the community of households to provide the collective capacity to provide the gains (or goods[8]) for satisfying ambitions beyond the daily struggle for survival. The development of the state (in this case the city-state) is a natural progression of the alliance of households. So, as the goods of association become known, other villages join and the state is created; its' creation the natural end of the process begun with the household, and one that can now turn its' attention to the '*good* life'.[9] Now, it is entirely possible to critique this conception of the creation of the state,

---

[7] Aristotle, *The Politics - Translated by T.A. Sinclair, Revised and Re-Presented by Trevor J. Saunders* (London: Penguin Books, 1992). 1252b15. Emphasis in Original.

[8] In this sense 'goods' might be ambiguous – for example collective production and specialisation might mean manufactures (wine, furniture and etcetera). Here 'goods' is used to mean the security and relative ease of existence provided by the community to allow for the pursuit of other interests beyond subsistence. No implication is made as to what those pursuits are, but the term 'goods' will be developed throughout this chapter.

[9] Aristotle, *The Politics*. 1252b7

for example we might offer the dim view of humanity offered by Hobbes, or the social contract theory of Rousseau as alternative narratives. However, Aristotle arguably gives us some insights into the social development of man. Even discounting the state formation process he outlines, he reminds us that the household, the immediate community, and the extended community all have their part to play in the development of man and his achievement of good ends. Additionally, later in *The Politics* he reminds us that man is not simply a 'gregarious animal'[10] having the singular advantage of being able to communicate and in having a sense of '...good and evil, just and unjust...'[11].

From this line of reasoning it is impossible to argue that man exists solely in an internally constructed moral universe. Rather, he must engage with others' conceptions of right and wrong, and the state, now having the capacity to provide the needs of daily life, can turn its attention to supporting the acquisition of the good life. However, in order to do this, the state has to come to an agreed position on what the good life is, and this is conducted through Politics. Politics in this sense is the negotiation of the good life – and must draw conclusions about which are the 'moral goods' (or virtues) that are to be praised and which are to be rejected. Thus, man has, via the state, the environment in which to develop his tendency to virtue. The form of training that he may engage in may not be one of extensive study at the feet of Socrates or Plato, but in the conduct of his everyday business. He might be unaware of the training he receives, but he is engaged in it through the interaction at all levels of the community identified by Aristotle – the family, the immediate community, and the state in which he lives. This is not to argue that each has the same importance in his development - it may be that, depending on the organisation of his state, one might take greater precedence than the other.[12]

---

[10] Aristotle, *The Politics*. 1253a7
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] For example, if his is taken away from his mother at birth and subjected to a regimented state upbringing, the family will have precious little to do with his moral development.

The acts of negotiation of the good life help define the concept of the good life for the state – thus our citizen of our theoretical state (as constructed here) may have an internal concept of the good, but so does his fellow citizen, and so they must negotiate their conceptions to find one that may be a compromise but adequately fulfils the needs of both. The outcome of these negotiations (as there are many points of good and evil that must be addressed within the community) for the sake of this argument and our overall project can be called 'morality'. The 'moral' is an individual's internal condition of concepts of right and wrong, but as man lives within communities he (unless he is in the fortunate position to be despot or king) must achieve a tolerable moral environment in which to flourish. This environment can be viewed as a scheme of morality or 'public morals', openly negotiated and agreed as being able to contain a plurality of viewpoints while still being viewed as authoritative (or at least having legitimacy). While we recognize that this definition of morality most likely would raise further debate in philosophical circles, it is again adequate for our needs and should serve to help us later in the discussion.

What exactly do these 'public morals' (morality) consist of? Again, to keep our answer as simple and straightforward as possible (and to very intentionally sidestep a metaethical morass that falls too far outside our sphere), we can look to political philosophy for language to help us describe how agreements about public goods can be agreed upon and achieve, to provide the conditions for human flourishing. These agreements include promoting and restraining certain activities in order to allow for the collective pursuit of the good life. Accepting this basic framework does not require us to take a stand on questions concerning whether there are absolute truths that dictate what the good life must be. We need only examine the way that humans seem to recognize the practical necessity of agreeing to certain standards of behaviour in order to manage life together.

We can see this line of argument in Hobbes' *Leviathan*, where the rough equality of men leads to an equality of ambition to secure security from other men's ambitions.[13] From this condition of unrestrained ambition comes the expectation of conflict between men - as equality of ambition inevitably leads to the need to pre-empt others to secure themselves.[14] Hobbes argues that in such a condition, where there is no ability to restrain men from using all their faculties to flourish individually, at the cost of other men, is one of war.[15] Admittedly, this condition might not be characterised as one where the physical conduct of fighting is constantly happening - but rather that this condition exists where there remains no restraint on others from pursuing the ends of security by any means.[16] Hobbes' solution for this sorry state of affairs is the establishment (by the common will)[17] of the Sovereign, who has the task of delivering what Hobbes calls the '...final cause, end or design of men...restraint upon themselves ...and a more contented life thereby...'.[18] We might suggest then that this is a negotiated moral good – that men, in seeking to secure the conditions where they do not have to struggle for daily existence, yield some of their freedom to act in return for all others similarly doing the same. In essence, Hobbes suggests, man donates part of his individual right of sovereign action (freedom) to a body (or individual) for the 'good' of liberty – freedom bounded by the laws of the sovereign to which *all his fellow men* have similarly yielded. Liberty is a negotiated good, and is characterised here as a public good. However, we might also suggest that it is a moral good, and falls within the bounds of morality, as it is a negotiated external condition from which other moral goods may be achieved. That said, there are going to be disagreements as to how far the Sovereign may go, and we might disagree with the extent of the powers suggest by Hobbes, but that is to be expected. Each negotiating party has

---

[13] Hobbes, T., *Leviathan - Edited with an Introduction by J.C.A Gaskin* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). pp 82-83
[14] Hobbes, *Leviathan*. p.83
[15] Hobbes, *Leviathan*. p.84
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Hobbes, *Leviathan*. p.115
[18] Hobbes, *Leviathan*.p.111

different conceptions of moral good; the Sovereign might be expected to have the power to enforce the minimally acceptable moral position acceptable to all, or at least to the majority.

However, at no point should we suggest that the negotiation will be the same wherever we look for it. Different communities, with different social conceptions of the good may come up with radically different answers to the extent of the Sovereign's power, or how it should be exercised. This is central to the discussion of morality. The Sovereign, despite the protestations of Hobbes, must have a certain sympathy for the population within which he lives. To guarantee morality in a stable and sustainable way for the community, he must share their morals, at least to a significant extent. The boundaries of liberty are essentially up for discussion, morality defines the boundaries of individual moral action. Indeed, that there is a public 'good' in restraining ambition might be a common thread in the organization of human affairs. How far we go with this restraint, or how we go about it, is still open for debate. Much the same can be seen in moral arguments. Herodotus, in *The Histories*, recounts just one such discussion: Darius (a Persian king) is interested in the attachment of peoples to their cultural practices. So, he asks a group of Greeks (who cremate their dead) how much money it would take to induce them to eat their dead, to which the Greeks recoil in horror. He then asks a group of Callatiae (who eat their dead) much the same question, but replaced with cremation – achieving much the same response.[19] As a moral prerogative the honouring of the dead was not in doubt in either of the two societies (i.e. it was part of their respective moralities) but the methods of obeying this prerogative were wildly different. Each found the others' routes to obeying the prerogative as being objectionable – despite each obeying the similar demands of a moral good.

The means of honouring the dead was thus influenced by the conditions of the civilisations concerned. That socially (culturally) different practices have emerged in accordance with

---

[19] Herodotus, *The Histories - A New Translation by Robin Waterfield* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). 3.38

seemingly common values of morality really should not surprise us. We might assume that the

Callatiae, having been a society removed from Greek philosophy and influence, developed

independent traditions based on the prerogatives of the conditions the society found itself.[20] The

society had its own set of prerogatives, independent from the Greeks and formulated by the

condition of their state. We might also suggest that the Greeks and Callatiae had developed a

condition of moral liberty in accordance with the values they held, and these were negotiated by

those capable of influencing the debate. However, this conduct of the society (in this case) is

contingent on the existence of the primary prerogative (honouring the dead). The injunction to

not murder might be seen as another example of agreement across cultures on a general principle

not yielding the same behaviours in practice. Murder is the illegitimate taking of human life, or

illegitimate killing. It is broadly agreed that murder is morally bad. However, we have come to this

conclusion, be it a religious injunction or a rational decision made from the need of protection to

encourage human flourishing, it appears to be a universal value. However, amongst different

societies, emerging under different influences, we can see disagreements as to when killing (the

taking of human life) becomes murder. This, we might suggest, is due to different moral

prerogatives emerging within societies. These different schemes of moral prerogatives (or

moralities) have emerged from the conditional negotiations between constitutive moral agents

(individuals) and the demands of the conditions in which they find themselves.

---

[20] The Callatiae were an 'Indian Tribe'. Herodotus, *The Histories*. 3.38.

At this point it would probably be helpful if we begin to fully identify the relationship between the moral and morality. We have, so far, argued that the moral is an *internal* condition, that it is one that the individual integrates into his or her view of the world, from a multitude of influences. Morality is an *external* condition that is formulated on a collective level. Both are schemes of values, some of which might be seen as universal, some specific to the society in question. The process of obeying and integrating primary moral prerogatives might be called contingent morality – that these are values that are contingent on the obeisance to primary prerogative. The relationship between moral and morality might be visualised like this:
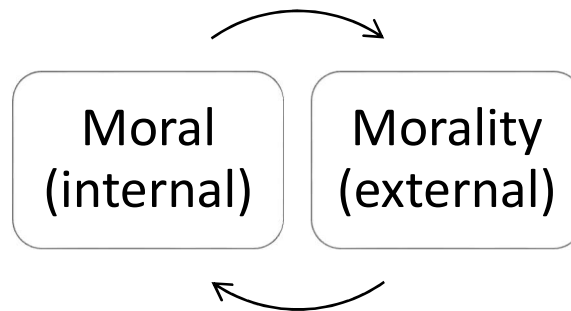
Fig. 1.1. A visual model of the relationship between 'moral' and 'morality'.

From the cyclical visualisation above, we can see the interdependent relationship between the internal and the external condition, between personal morals and public morality. As a social animal pursuing more than the minimal conditions of existence, the individual can never really divorce themselves from the influence of the society in which they live. However, we must sound a note of caution in this model. Above it has been suggested that there is a process of open negotiation between moral agents within an accepted community. However, to argue that each agent is entirely autonomous would be misleading - a simple extrapolation of the community/individual model would suggest as much. In essence we are approaching arguments of structure and agency, or perhaps chicken and egg. We cannot ignore power and influence within

societies that acts upon the development of an individual's morals. We should not discount the presence of other agents acting within the negotiation, for example influential institutions such as religious or educational institutions or print capitalism. It could be argued that if the influence of these institutions is overwhelming, the figure above is wrong, in that public morality will influence personal morals but not the other way around (because personal morals will have been fully internalised from public morality). However, these institutions may not have as decisive an influence as we might suspect. For example: in societies where religious institutions hold the highest authority on moral matters, or at the least are influential on the legislative process, we might suggest that the individual has little opportunity to join in negotiations over right and wrong or competing goods. At this juncture we might enter into a discussion of legitimacy, and question how the 'moral authority' gained this position of influence. It may be that it emerged as the favoured instrument of the holders of civil power (in a complex relationship akin to the established church), or that simply the message conveyed – of practical human goods like the protection of life and property, were key to understanding human flourishing. That they come with an injunction from a supreme being, capable of exacting a terrible price for non-compliance, simply adds to the attractiveness to the moral agents under the influence of the authority and to their likely being afraid to challenge that authority. In extreme cases, questioning such authority may not even occur to those under its thrall.

However, it's not clear that either fear of punishment or indoctrination is enough to completely undermine individual autonomy. Even most religion-based moralities take pains to present a rationale for their conclusions that goes beyond mere compulsion. Snare rightly advances the suggestion that '...God's threats may merely motivate people to do what is already right, for justifying reasons having nothing to do with the threat.'[21] In much the same vein, Gert observes that '...the moral virtues are praised because of the calamities everyone avoids if people

---

[21] Snare, F., *The Nature of Moral Thinking* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992). p.13

act morally.'[22] Societies may reinforce the threat of spiritual punishment while at the same time inspiring the Aristotelian 'tendency to virtue', to increase the chances of securing the goods of observed and practiced morality. In increasingly diverse societies, or societies where the interests of the community are no longer wholly addressable by a spiritual moral authority, perhaps typified by '...Render therefore onto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's,'[23] there remains a need to codify the tenets of morality, defined above as the minimal acceptable standard of behaviour, according to the primary and contingent moral prerogatives of the society. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to settle the question of whether *any* communities or societies, due to the more extreme nature of their institutions, truly go so far as to rob all individuals in them of any autonomy to develop, modify, or even reflect on their own personal morals. That is an argument for another place and time, and indeed, once again, one that has been going on for centuries, and our research question thankfully does not depend on its outcome. We will therefore consciously and discreetly close the door on that issue, and quietly move on to the issue of the relationship of morality and law, which is relevant to our project.

We might suggest that codifying and clarifying morality is the role of the positive law in societies, and particularly that this is true for those societies that actively engage in the negotiation of goods and the attempt to reconcile competing views of right and wrong. As societies become more aware of the goods they seek to achieve and as the sense of which common goods their citizens value becomes clearer within the negotiation, we might expect an increasing body of laws, beyond the simple injunctions against obviously harmful and disruptive acts such as murder. Thus, while protection of the individual and their property might be a founding good readily agreed upon within a developing community of people, later as the pursuit of the good life advances and ideas are exchanged, we see the emergence of a more complicated

---

[22] Gert, B., *Morality - Its Nature and Justification* Revised ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). p.9
[23] Matthew 22.21

society or state that will seek to regulate commerce or other social practises in order to assure the good life for its members or citizens. Of course, law and morality are not identical, and there will be both aspects of morality that societies choose not to capture in law (which they believe either cannot or should not be expressed by law) and aspects of law that do not concern themselves with issues that carry moral weight. Nevertheless, overall, positive law is an attempt to establish the necessary boundaries of liberty to permit individual pursuit of the good life, while allowing fellow society members to do the same.

By this definition we might suggest that the positive law is there to both exercise a social cohesion function by making people aware of the demands of the community, and also to provide the temporal shove to be good. If, in diverse communities, each individual has a different conception of God (or none at all), then the temporal is the only space available in which to punish those who violate the negotiated morality. It might be tempting here to argue that a violation of the law is inherently dangerous to the morality and preservation of society. Devlin's response to the Wolfenden Report[24] makes this argument, that '...a society might enforce a legally mandated 'morality' as a function of self-preservation.'[25] However, as argued above, this assertion does not fully hold water, as the 'legally mandated' goods Devlin cites are dependent on the negotiation and compliance of the wider moral community, rather than being merely the imposition of goods solely for the society's own self preservation. Simply put, the self preservation argument has already been won in the formation of the community. What is left up for the discussion is the moral 'shape' of the community. Positive laws form part (but certainly not all) of the negotiated moral landscape, and some aspects of that landscape will be more permanent than others, but all are concerned with the moral goods pursued by that society, and those who hold sway over the

---

[24] The Departmental Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution, otherwise known as the Wolfenden Committee, was tasked with determining whether homosexuality should remain a criminal offence. In doing so the Committee had to consider the question of public and private morality, and the role of the state in deciding such matters.
[25] George, R.P., *Making Men Moral - Civil Liberties and Public Morality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). p.51

negotiation. There are few laws, and fewer court systems, that can withstand the wholesale non-compliance by those subject to them. That laws form part of the moral framework cannot be avoided; that they fully define it is more open for debate. For example, while utilitarianism insists that any law must, in point of fact, either promote or fail to promote the greatest good for the greatest number, and so every law is in that sense an expression of morality, other theories of morality would place at least some aspects of law outside the moral sphere. Thankfully, neither position undermines our use of positive law as a partial (however imperfect) window into the morality of a society.

The presence of positive law is both inescapable and instructive. If we are to understand this presence as having a dual role – that of informing and enforcing identified common goods – the law at least provide us with a baseline of consideration of what matters to each society. In the consideration of the moral and morality, the very existence of established laws provides us with a handy frame of reference, giving us at least some idea of the behaviour acceptable to the societies that have enacted them. Societies have no difficulty with members who hold themselves to a 'higher' or 'different' moral standard within their internal life, inside or outside the sphere of codified actions. However, if an individual's internal moral life brings them into direct conflict with the standards demanded of morality for the purposes of the common good, society has both the tools and the will to enforce those common moral goods. Thus we have no difficulty, for example, with an individual who finds the toleration of abortion within a society as morally bad. However, if the individual – inspired by their moral convictions – begins to harm those he blames for this toleration, society is able to take action to protect the negotiated goods it has settled, and defend other moral prerogatives such as personal safety and security. Members of society are not compelled to agree with the prevailing morality, they are simply prevented (by threat of temporal punishment) from violating it. Should the threat of the temporal punishment not be enough to dissuade an individual from violating the agreed moral prerogatives, then at least there is a settled

system for dealing with the violation. As George suggests 'Laws can compel outward behaviour, not internal acts of the will; therefore they cannot compel people to realize moral goods.'[26] Perhaps not, but they help to assure the continuation of the negotiated morality (collected moral goods) of the society in question. Importantly, we should have no quarrel with the objectors joining in the negotiation, but simply ask that they respect, and be bound by, the outcome (as should all other parties).

Most human societies are not monolithic, and we acknowledge that when we use positive law to provide insight into the morality of a society, we run the risk of ignoring dissenting or non-conforming elements. For example, the majority or the prime power holders within a society may come to the decision that a moral good to be pursued is the expulsion of some members of that society due to their ethnic origin, and some subset of that society (perhaps only those of the targeted ethnic group, but perhaps also others who defend them) may object and refuse to follow related laws. How can we then describe the morality of that society, given such a significant fracture? And how can we capture and describe the judgment of the broader community of humans who discover and respond to the actions of that society? We must move beyond the sphere of morality to that of ethics, a more universalised negotiation of goods that permits the passage of a wider judgment. While a single society may deem a law or action acceptable, it can yet be analysed as to whether it violates a primary moral good, seemingly common to all, on which the collective flourishing of humanity depends. Singer gives a digested definition of the utilitarian who '...regards an action as right if it produces as much or more of an increase in happiness of all affected by it than any alternative action, and wrong if it does not.'[27] Note that the utilitarian formula cites "all affected" and is not bounded within a particular society. Actions within one society can affect those far beyond it, both directly and by putting in peril agreements that extend

---

[26] George, *Making Men Moral*. p.44
[27] Singer, P, *Practical Ethics*, Second ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). p.3

beyond a single society - such as those involving conceptions of human rights. Thus, an action like the one described above may be judged from an ethical perspective for appearing to violate a primary value of human flourishing – protection from the ambitions of others. Similarly, suggests that other primary values will also now be in peril, for when the society has run out of one set of internal enemies to its perceived happiness, who will be its next target?[28] It might also be noted that on occasions where such actions have been taken against one group within a society, there is an observable trend to 'dehumanising' the subject population to lessen the moral objection, which can also have far-reaching negative consequences.[29]

It is worth pausing to note at this point that conformity to public morality within any society is something of a double-edged sword. On the one side we expect a certain level of conformity within the negotiated moral liberties we define. However, on the other side, a slavish unquestioning observance of contingent moral goods (as opposed to primary moral goods) is at best unhelpful, at worst tyrannical. If nothing else, those that demur from the prevailing opinion encourage debate about both the primary, and contingent, moral goods. But conformity also has its place within morality. Without it, we are simply left roughly where we start, each fighting for the basic conditions of existence – because without it, it is very difficult to invoke the public good of encouraging human flourishing. It sits somewhere within a scale of values, and that it appears to be contingent on the agreement of the good of flourishing. Simply put, it competes with other goods. We must accept that with the moral life of the individual, and the collected morality of the community there is a hierarchical nature of values and their location within the wider scheme. We

---

[28] This is perhaps most succinctly summed up in the famous words of Martin Niemöller: 'First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me - and there was no one left to speak for me.' in Raz, J., *The Practice of Value* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003).
[29] "The Eight Stages of Genocide," Genocide Watch, Available at http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/8stagesofgenocide.html (Accessed: 10 August 2012)

must agree that there are some parts of morality that hold much greater importance than others. For example, the integrity of the person and their protection from harm is of greater moral concern than petty theft of property. While theft is a violation of morality, for many societies it pales in comparison to the violation inherent to crime of rape. We might suggest that there is a primary moral good of protection of the individual, and for capitalist (or indeed socialist) societies a primary moral good of protection of property (admittedly, for socialist societies, whose property is up for debate). However, we cannot claim that the primary good of property protection can equate to the primary good of human protection. Subsequently, we cannot suggest that the contingent goods (public goods that rely on the existence of a primary good) are of equal moral merit. One will always take precedence over the other.

To manage the competing demands of contingent moral goods (values), we might look to the location of the primary moral goods (values) and their relationship with one another, or if violations of multiple values have occurred, to help us determine the seriousness of the violation. But we can never quite shake off the idea that some things are simply more important than others. Were we to treat each violation equally, we have a recipe for unjust punishment (rather like the Queen of Hearts cry of 'Off with their heads!')[30] which while attractive to some, simply lacks credibility. By the same token we may end up treating the most serious violations without the seriousness they deserve. This necessarily means that we must exercise judgement in seeking to balance the demands of obeying the moral prerogatives of the primary goods, as well as the contingent goods. This is not straightforward. Again we must rely on the negotiated settlement of morality to define our judgement *and the punishment*.   Orend, speaking in the context of warfare, argues coherently that certain situations are so abhorrent that any response that appears to be outside the normally justifiable is probably excusable if the situation demands.[31] Now while we

---

[30] Carroll, L., *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through The looking Glass - Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Roger Lancelyn Green* (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford Uiversity Press, 1971). p.40
[31] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.157

might have some sympathy for this position, this does not help us outside these situations. By

making this observation, Orend accepts that moral judgements should be made within a context

of *moral understanding.* Any violation of primary and/or contingent goods must be viewed within

the context of where, and how, the violation occurred. We might suggest that this is a reasonable

definition for justice, for both the positive law or in the cases of simple moral judgements about

personal behaviour outside the interest of the positive law. Justice is the judgement of actions

within their context, but *at no point* should we be tempted to say that our judgement loses any of

its force (either as a society or individually) simply because we are forced to understand the

context. For example, one who kills in 'self-defence' and the context bears this out, may easily be

justified in their action. However, one who claims 'self-defence', but is found to have engaged in a

premeditated murder will have committed multiple violations (both in claiming justification and of

illegitimate killing) and the any condemnation relating to the latter may only be intensified by the

former.

But if we are to judge, against the standards set by the negotiated morality, it again

reminds us that we are engaging in a social process, that is inherently (small 'p') political, and one

that relies upon our conception of the good life. By accepting the prerogatives agreed upon, we

are ultimately conceding to the conception of the good life that is presented to us after the

negotiation has been filtered through the relevant social structures. We might easily criticise the

above for demanding too much of the citizen, that the citizen has little or no influence in these

discussions. Particularly for those subject to the tyrant, and to the member of a liberal democracy,

there is little they can do, surely? This may be a very valid criticism, particularly if the discussion of

the good life becomes embroiled in the wider Political process where, for example, leaders

present their vision of the future. Some may not engage (by abstaining to vote), or be unable to

engage with the political process – and that morality is simply Gert's imposition. However, not

engaging is different from being unable to engage – by abstaining from the negotiation the

individual is either expressing their content with the situation, or simply refusing to get involved in

this form of open negotiation. Those unable to engage are surely simply stuck, compelled to

observe a morality not of their choosing. However, this might not be the whole case. As has been

argued above, the formation of a morality is a social activity, born from many influences, and it

has to have something sustaining it. Equally, when certain prerogatives become less important, or

are simply cast aside, there has to be a reason for this – even if it is not an explicit rejection.

Because these values are so entrenched in the way we order our societies, it is difficult to untangle

them fully from the social practises (which develop around them, knowingly or unknowingly). At

this point we have to accept that the action of participation in a society, and observing these

practices, in some part perpetuates the negotiation. Raz comes to much the same conclusion

when he articulates that:

> "The special *social dependence thesis* claims that some values exist only if there are (or
> were) social practices sustaining them...The (general) *social dependence thesis* claims that,
> with some exceptions, all values depend on social practices by either being subject to the
> special thesis or through their dependence on values that are subject to the special
> thesis'[32]

He seems to agree that there are primary and contingent prerogatives in a system of morality, but

he makes the useful observation that these values are supported by social practices and are only

rendered relevant by those social practices. Positive laws, we might suggest, are the codification

(or the limitation) of certain social practices, but they can be superseded by others as they lose

relevance to the society as it continues the negotiation. The negotiation is not one built solely on

open declaration of position, but in the subtle changes of social practices of the societies that from

them. Justice is, perhaps, an excellent example of social practice supporting public goods, and it

has evolved. From Hobbes' sovereign capable of arbitrary rule and certainly for the liberal

democracy, the primary and contingent goods negotiated have modified this potential for

---

[32] Raz, *The Practice of Value*. p.19

arbitrary judgement into social practice that actively supports these goods, rather than having to be simply enforced.

So far it has been argued that morality is a scheme of negotiated public goods, that have at their heart an interest in the conditions of human flourishing – that they are intimately related to concepts of the good life and that they are always going to be contested. This contest leads to the development of these schemes, and a potential variability between societies about what these public goods are, as well as the role of contingent goods. This is all very well; we accept that there are moral prerogatives that compete for our attention within a broadly hierarchical system. It has also been observed that circumstance or context has a part to play when we try to decide which primary and contingent goods come to the fore, and when. Does this get us any closer to the question we initially set ourselves at the beginning of this chapter – what are ethics? If we go back to the beginning of the chapter we found an answer in '...accepted system or collection of moral principles.'[33] However, on reflection we now see that that this definition is one of morality, rather than ethics. So the core question remains, while we hope we have not merely muddied the argument further by establishing our definitions of morals and morality.

With everything above in mind, we must now focus down on defining ethics, before we even begin to address the question of military ethics. Remember that we are confronted with primary and contingent goods, founded in conceptions of the good life, negotiated amongst the interested parties (i.e. the citizenry and the institutions), of direct interest not only to the individual but also those around him. No matter what those goods are, there will be times when these goods conflict. So, there must be some way of balancing these goods, beyond a single society. This is ethics. Simply put, ethics is operable morality in conditions of competing moral prerogatives that pertain to humanity writ large. When making decisions that are directly related to the conceptions of the good life, the ethical decision is the one that is most justifiable in

---

[33] Whetham, "Ethics, Law and Conflict." p.10

balancing the moral prerogatives. This means that there are, in the main, potentially no individually right answers to many decisions, as each will respond to these questions from a different moral perspective. However, as each decision is tested against broader standards of morality, there will be some clear directives that emerge for all.

We have hints for this in the arrangement of certain human affairs – for example in the fields of research and medical treatment. In research it is important to balance the 'goods' that the research will bring against any 'harm' that will be committed during the conduct of the research. While inflicting a survey on the undergraduate population of a university is likely to be reasonably ethically uncomplicated, conducting human tissue research is not. The reason behind this difference, we can argue following the reasoning above, is that in the first case few (if any) primary or contingent goods are in any danger. However, in the case of human tissue research, depending on what the tissue could be used for, there are a great many questions to consider, leading all the way up to question what it is to be human and whether there are certain uses of us (or our tissue) that are always inappropriate by virtue of our humanity. We recognise the need to respect a doctrine of informed consent not only in a single society, but wherever humans are involved. We cannot escape the assertion Aristotle makes that man is a unique creature, even if we disagree with his reasoning. We might look to Kant, Hegel, Mill or God for the reasons as to why we are special, but we are certain that as a species there is something about humans that makes it more ethically complicated to experiment on them than, for example, on a fruit fly. It is not our purpose here to delve into the realm of bioethics, but this example, even roughly drawn, we hope has served the purpose of showing the intuitive appeal of the existence of ethical rules that are not limited to or by the morality of a particular society or the morals of any individual.

Although some philosophers, most notably Kant, have argued that raising our considerations to the level of the good for all humankind (e.g. applying his Categorical Imperative) will in itself guide us to the resolution of ethical questions, there are many others who disagree

and contend that moral harmony is elusive and conflicts will still arise as duties compete.[34] If this

is so, we will at times be left weighing moral prerogatives, testing them against our understanding

of the good life, attempting to see which decisions are justifiable (where, in some cases, none

seem to avoid all harm or produce only good). We might be forced to violate certain moral

prerogatives, but only in the pursuit of meeting other, more important, moral prerogatives, and

tensions will always arise among incompatible interests. For example, creating medicines to treat

disease can be argued to be a contingent good – the primary good being the alleviation of

suffering from disease. However, to create medicines they must be tested. How many deaths is it

ethical to allow from the testing procedure of a particular medicine? If the medicine in question is

a headache tablet, probably none, but what if it is an omnibus cure for cancer? The temptation to

allow a number of deaths may be much greater. Is this magnificent 'cure-all' enough to be willing

to violate other primary goods that a society has adopted, such as a protection of the individual?

This is an ethical question *par excellence*.

These tensions do not simply end with the big decisions, like the one above, but can also

arise for smaller choices with more immediate consequences. For the genuinely ethically

motivated, ethical concerns might compel them to not choose tuna for lunch, due to current

extreme pressures on certain fish stocks.[35] This might not seem like a fraught decision. However, if

we were to deny a starving individual within our sphere of immediate influence a tuna sandwich

based on the same objection, we might find ourselves (even with the best of intentions) in difficult

ethical circumstances. Why is this so? We certainly don't doubt the moral intent of the one who

dislikes the eating of tuna; they are clearly committed to a concept of public good that we can

understand. We may agree that the pressure on fish stocks will likely lead to an outcome that is

---

[34] Kant, I, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and What is Enlightenment.*, trans. L. W. Beck, 19th ed. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1959). p.39
[35] Makato, P.J et al., *Recent Developments in the Tuna Industry - Stocks, Fisheries, Management, Processing, Trade and Markets* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2010). p. xvi

contrary to the public good, whether that conception is based in concerns for the eaters of tuna being able to indulge their tastes, or a rooted understanding that this loss of biodiversity is a bad thing for the ecosystem, and ultimately, humans. The tuna may not be ecstatic about such a loss, either.

The problem comes from the immediacy of the dilemma with which we are presented. In the unlikely event we are confronted with a starving person, and all we have to hand is a tuna sandwich, the *immediacy* of violating a publicly agreed good (and by extension part of our scheme of morality) by refusing it to them, weighed against the extended threat of violating the public good (damaging fish stocks) clearly indicates, intuitively, that we should hand over the sandwich. The immediacy of the ethical problem at hand defines the terms in which the decision is to be taken by us, and how we feel we should react to the problem. In the above example, the priority of preserving the person's life is a good that probably outweighs the one-time violation of the good of fish stock preservation. This is the kind of reasoning we find in consequentialist ethical theories (including various formulations of utilitarianism) and most versions of natural law, from which are derived principles such as the Doctrine of Double Effect to help us navigate such direct conflicts of goods.[36]

Consequential ethical reasoning, however, introduces many contingencies into the equation. Specific details and context become extremely important. For example, from analysis of the tuna fish sandwich example above, we may be tempted to define a usual course of action to be taken whenever confronted with the starving. Surely, we now know that the virtuous act in all situations when confronted with starving people is to hand over what food is needed? Well, unfortunately the answer is no – it may in fact be entirely ethical to withhold food from the starving (in particular tuna sandwiches).

---

[36] The Doctrine of Double Effect was discussed during the Literature Review.

This sounds like truly monstrous statement. But if we examine the experience of the

British Army on the relief of Bergen-Belsen, we might come to understand why it may not be as

atrocious as first thought. On arrival at Bergen-Belsen, the British Army came across one of the

many egregious events in human affairs, the concentration of victims of the Nazi Government of

Germany in conditions that are difficult to imagine, and evidence of the systematic murder of

these victims. Those who had not yet died were in varying levels of physical debilitation, from very

near death to relative strength – disease was rife.[37] In the words of one British officer: 'There are

no words in the English language which can give a true impression of the ghastly horror of this

camp.'[38] Rightly it was determined that food and water were the immediate concerns for those

found in the camp, and supplies were secured. However, the consequences of supplying military

rations to those who are starved were not fully understood by the relieving forces. As Shepherd

observes: '...for most it was disastrous. Their weak and shrunken intestines were much too

sensitive to digest that kind of nourishment.'[39] The giving of food that was nutritionally

inappropriate caused vomiting and diarrhoea, further complicating the treatment of typhus and

the after-effects of malnutrition.[40] It was only when the feeding regimen was altered, after

experimentation with other methods, to tiered methods of feeding that were appropriate to the

condition of the patient, that some of the victims began slowly to revive.[41] However, despite the

best intentions of the relieving forces, approximately 2000 people died due to missteps taken in

feeding the hungry. [42]

---

[37]Shepherd, B., *After Daybreak - The Liberation of Belsen, 1945* (London: Pimlico Books, 2006). p.37 and Vella, Col. E.E., "Belsen: Medical Aspects of a World War II Concentration Camp," *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, no. 130 (1984). p.38
[38] Maj. Ben Barnett quoted in: Shepherd, *After Daybreak*. p.37
[39] Shepherd, *After Daybreak*. p.41
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] Shepherd, *After Daybreak*. p.95
[42] Walker, J.B., "The Feeding Problem," *London Hospital Gazette*, no. 48 (1945). Quoted in Shepherd, *After Daybreak*. p.42

In the above example, we should at no point condemn the relieving forces for being unethical. They rightly attempted to relieve the suffering of other human beings who were in dire need of assistance. That these troops attempted to feed and treat the hungry can only be applauded, obeying as they did the prerogatives of caring for their fellow human beings and attempting to alleviate a horrendous situation. That there were possibly deaths caused by their efforts is no grounds for condemnation – a position that Shepherd disagrees with, calling it a mistake.[43] Shepherd's is a harsh judgement, as it was a mistake made while attempting to provide basic needs from an entirely laudable standpoint. We cannot reasonably expect a military medical establishment, more ordinarily used to treating the wounds of warfare, to be immediately able to determine the nutritional requirements of the horribly starved, whose condition was made all the worse by the prevalence of disease. However, on the basis of this experience, should the situation (or something similar) be experienced again, we might now suggest that it is entirely ethical to not immediately provide food, as it may be deleterious to those we are attempting to save. We must make reasoned judgements as to how poor the condition of the victims is, what resources we have to hand and what, given those two limitations, is the best course of action to take. And these judgements may need to be quick. The ethical action, while potentially painful, should nevertheless be understandable from the moral perspective of decision making individuals who have had their perspectives moulded by morality. We might find ourselves morally uncomfortable (or at least sympathetic with the victims) at the outcome of these investigations, if the conclusion is that we must withhold food from the victims for a time, to increase their ultimate odds for survival, but we will understand why it must be done.

Ethical decision making is, to put it mildly, very difficult. Admittedly the example presented above, ranging as it does from the seemingly banal to the extreme may seem unrealistic. As a thought experiment it does, however, prove instructive. It reminds us that ethical

---

[43] Shepherd, *After Daybreak*. p. 42

actions must balance experience, judgement, knowledge, the moral and morality into a defensible

judgement that can be understood by those who observe as well as by ourselves. The individual, if

he or she has no advance experience or knowledge of a situation or how best to handle it, is left

balancing the internal and the external conditions to achieve a defensible position. Thus, ethical

decision making, building on fig. 1 above might look like this:
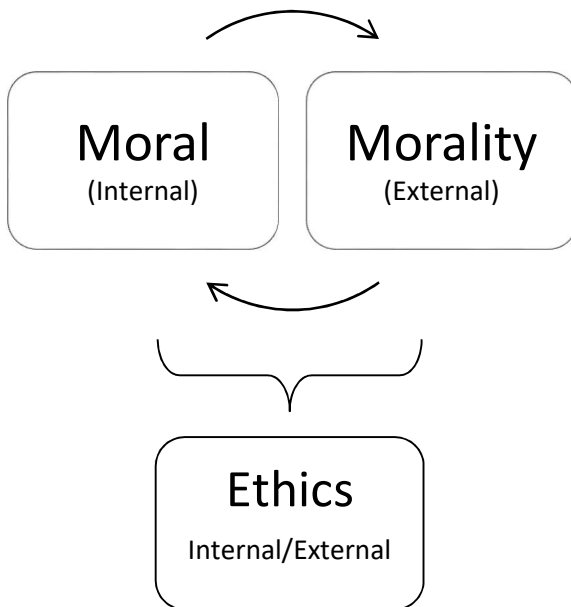
Fig. 1.2. A visual model of the relationship between 'moral', 'morality' and 'ethics'.

Some might question where the positive law fits into this scheme of decision making, as it

has gone unmentioned in relation to ethics. As advanced above, at least some aspects of positive

law are the codification of the public morality that is believed to deliver the good life. This law is

there to give the nudge of prospective punishment to those who might seek to violate the public

goods it seeks to preserve. While a certain knowledge of the law gives individuals a reasonably

clear idea of what is expected of them, within the land where the law has jurisdiction, we should

not assume that any particular law – let alone all law – is a guide to good ethics. It may be that a

situation will require the violation of one or more laws in the pursuit of the most ethically

justifiable outcome. Martin Luther King, Jr. made this point eloquently in his "Letter from a

Birmingham Jail". Blind adherence to the law may in fact lead to injustice, and so when judging the ethical decisions made, it is imperative that the context, consequence, and competing primary and contingent prerogatives be borne in mind. We are not advocating that laws be disregarded left and right, with every defendant claiming that the situation demanded it. The law has its role, but its application is a more delicate matter than possibly we had suspected previously.

Law and ethics are not synonymous, but neither one can be wilfully ignored without consequences. An amoral stance is sometimes presented as more efficient – to cast aside concerns of the ethical to simply 'get the job done'. Almost any difficult situation can be resolved by choosing the least morally complicated path, where the action taken is not the most ethical, but the most immediately effective (assuming those are not the same). However, it may be that the law, or more accurately justice, has something to say about this, and the temporal shove of punishment might be an effective deterrent from such thinking. In any circumstance, we must balance the injunctions of our better natures, the prerogatives of morality and the limits of lawfulness, all the while trying to avoid choosing the path that may look immediately effective but is the least defensible. This, ultimately, is not a complete recipe for staying out of prison, but it may help us into our version of heaven (or at least allow us to sleep at night). However, in discounting the law as the final definition of the morally acceptable, we are left in the unhappy situation that there may be no definite answers as to what is the correct decision to be made. Even worse, in certain cases we are left with the even more unhappy realisation that there are no correct answers – each potential decision may lead to the violation (to a greater or lesser extent) of a primary or contingent good (where every choice is at best a 'lesser evil'). It is left up to the individual to decide which goods to favour in such a lose-lose situation. When the time comes, will also be up to the individual to justify their actions to the interested audience – who may have a very different view on how the situation should have been handled.

We have spent much time discussing primary and contingent goods, and have so far studiously avoided making any claims as to what they are. Initially they were described as the conditions of human flourishing, openly negotiated within societies. It was also observed that there is little doubt that certain of these public goods appear to occur in the moral discourse of many unconnected societies and may be common goods across all humanity. This does not wholly help us at this stage of the discussion, and we must go looking for at least some of the prerogatives that comprise morality – the scheme behind these goods. It is a hard task, as we might be tempted compare moral systems across all political communities, and judge their baseline standards, which may be impractical and very open to bias. However, as it stands we leave ourselves open to the charge that what we have presented thus far simply comprises a 'Relativist's charter', in that our conceptions of morals, morality, and ethics could allows us to say of people in any other society 'well, they do things different there'. This would possibly be a reasonable charge, were it not for the observation that there appear to be underlying moral prerogatives that are independently derived, but are seemingly common (the Greeks and the Callatiae again) and even, in modern times, captured in international laws, conventions, declarations, and the like. Recognising this reality, at this point we must enter the realm of multiple moral communities, and the organisation of human affairs which is both Political (the matters of concern to Caesar) and political (the moral good life). We cannot, then, avoid consideration of the international order (or system) in concerning ourselves with these openly negotiated public goods. As political communities have developed, and come to establish themselves as states, states have acquired the role of chalices of the moralities that are negotiated within them.

By accepting this as part of the role of the state (that they speak, and act, according to the moral prerogatives, or morality, of their populations, (imposed or agreed upon) then we must accept that states are, to an extent, moral entities. By this we mean that they have their own

internal set of moral prerogatives, commanding their attention and defining their understanding

of right and wrong. We must also accept, however, that states themselves do not have a Sovereign

to administer justice across them – at least not since the establishment of the Westphalian peace,

with its assertion that for the common good states should be regarded as equals, and that this

peace must be guarded for this purpose.[44] Each state, under Westphalia, we might suggest,

became a moral agent at that time, no longer able to devolve, or be subject to, the moral demands

of a supranational power. This principle continues to the modern international system, with the

Charter of The United Nations reaffirming much the same principle – that the purposes of the

common good are served in the acceptance of '...the principle of the sovereign equality of all its

Members',[45] while remembering that it has limited interests in the domestic affairs of Members,

except in exceptional circumstances.[46] We might suggest that the international system is a system

comprised of states that each have their own '"...motives ... first and foremost, fear then prestige,

and ... own interests",[47] and also have their own moral prerogatives that shape each of these

Thucydidean motives. But then where might we look for a basis from which to draw judgements

on the conduct of states, which is, as we have earlier implied, the province of ethics? Earlier it was

suggested that there are multiple components in the development of moral understanding, as well

as private and public moral life. Morals are the internal condition of individuals, and within states

there is also a prevailing public morality. But where would we look for clues about accepted

international morality? We have hinted that we might look to charters, declarations, and treaties

for these answers. These are documents that are *openly negotiated* and observed through social

---

[44] Arts. I and II "Peace Treaty between the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of France and their respective Allies," The Avalon Project, Available at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/westphal.asp (Accessed: 24 July 2012)

[45] Article 2, "Peace Treaty between the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of France and their respective Allies". p.10

[46] Article 7, "Peace Treaty between the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of France and their respective Allies". p.11

[47] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War - A New Translation by Martin Hammond* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). Book 1.75

(inter-state) practice. Thus, for the underlying ideas of a common public good in the international system, we might look to the United Nations Charter, the treaties between states, and international declarations to define a concept of public goods. For example, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights might serve as an example of the moral prerogatives of the members of the international system on the rights of human beings.[48] There are even judicial processes, such as the International Court of Justice, to handle certain violations of treaty and international law.[49]

There are in fact many documents that seek to establish the permissible and encouraged actions of the members of the international system for purposes of seeking the collective flourishing of both humans (in their units of organization), and of those units themselves. Prohibitions against genocide are of special note. Genocide, having been determined as being so awful a crime – such a violation of the collective morality – is prohibited by specific convention.[50] Again, this was a collective definition of a moral prerogative – a fundamental human good openly negotiated for the benefit of human flourishing. The negotiation of such a definition indicates that, to an extent, states are capable of acting according to their constitutive ethical principles, in accordance with their civil morality.

This is not to say that states always agree on moral principles or conclusions, particularly contingent ones. Yet even though state-determined moralities will diverge, and certain sections of the codified inter-state morality may have different meanings or interpretations, the primary goods are seemingly not in doubt. Perhaps it is not surprising that certain alignments form within the international system. Be it through shared historical, lingual or cultural roots, or simple geographic proximity, we see patterns of allegiance or common understanding and contingent

---

[48] "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948," in *Blackstone's International Law Documents*, ed. M.D. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). pp. 42-45
[49] Article 36, "Statute of the International Court of Justice," in *Blackstone's International Law Documents*, ed. M.D. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). p. 35
[50] "Statute of the International Court of Justice." pp. 39-41

goods emerging, just as by virtue of our shared humanity, we find deeper agreement on primary goods. This, we might suggest is the very premise of Bull's international societies, that certain sympathies will emerge amongst members of the international system, leading to greater cooperation[51]. Now, by looking for the underlying primary and contingent goods from the international system, we can argue that there must be a conception of international ethics. States are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with international conceptions of the good of humanity, and be able to provide coherent justifications for their actions to this community of moral actors. This, in itself, does not seem too troublesome – there is limited cost for not doing so because there is no temporal shove of punishment from a sovereign. But there is the danger of retribution from the other members of the system. So, for example, it is judged perfectly acceptable in the Just War tradition to fight in defence of your state or others; self defence is protected in Article 51 of the UN Charter, and assistance may come to the attacked at the behest of the Security Council (Article 42).[52]

The above is all very well; we have determined that there are ethical considerations that apply to the actions of states. States are required, via the formal or informal structures of the international system, to justify their actions seemingly within a context of international morality, or at least the moral judgement of onlookers. Despite unsettled metaethical debates (such as those we have found ourselves forced to step away from in this chapter, for fear of being forever lost in them), ethical standards do exist and states are judged by them. What does this mean for the militaries that are asked to defend states and pursue their policies? Can militaries even be ethical? We must now, fully acknowledging the challenges inherent in ethical decision making, turn our attention to military ethics.

---

[51] Bull, *The Anarchical Society - A Study of Order in World Politics*. pp. 23-26
[52] "Charter of the United Nations (1945)," in *Blackstone's International Law Documents* ed. M.D. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). pp. 16-18

Militaries are social institutions, comprised in the main of citizens of their constituting

states. They are also the last possible tool of foreign policy and social order – their purpose, as

Williamson Murray reminds us in the context of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) debate it,

is to 'kill people and break things.'[53] While some might suggest that militaries are more Swiss Army

knife than hammer, we cannot escape this elemental purpose; that armed services exist to apply

force to others. As such they are perhaps unique within the societies they serve. To serve this

purpose they must necessarily compromise sections of their home state's morality to maintain the

ability to serve the society from which they are drawn, as they have necessarily divergent

understandings of certain primary prerogatives – their own primary prerogatives for the purpose

of their business which in turn lead to different contingent prerogatives.

For example, an army regards discipline as a primary prerogative (or good), i.e. those

commanding must be sure that orders will be carried out. Thus, contingent prerogatives include

reliability and conformity, which are of direct utility to obeying the primary good. These

contingent goods may far outweigh the demands of civil society, but for militaries they are non-

negotiable. Why should this be? The answer is reasonably straightforward: without discipline and

its contingent goods, militaries cannot function effectively. These ideas of specific military goods

(both primary and contingent) lead to interesting developments within a military value set, which

we might perceive as being more onerous than those we see in the societies they serve. One

example might be seen in the range of offences punishable under the United States Uniform Code

of Military Justice (UCMJ), particularly under Article 134. Article 134 of the UCMJ covers all

offences not specifically listed in other articles detailing offences, simply stating that:

> 'all disorders and neglects to the prejudice of good order and discipline in the armed
> forces, all conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the armed forces, and crimes and
> offenses not capital, of which persons subject to this chapter may be guilty, shall be taken

---

[53] Murray, W., "Thinking About Revolutions in Military Affairs," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 1997, no. Summer
(1997).

cognizance of by a general, special or summary court-martial, according to the nature and degree of the offense, and shall be punished at the discretion of that court.'[54]

This article in the UCMJ makes provision for the enforcement of contingent goods in pursuit of the primary good of discipline. As such, adultery is listed within the offences punishable by the military on its members, with a maximum penalty of dishonourable or bad conduct discharge, one year imprisonment and total loss of benefits.[55] Why should militaries care about the private lives of those who serve in them? It may be that if a soldier violates the societal moral good of marriage, their judgement may be compromised on other issues. Additionally, should he have committed this offence with the partner of one of his comrades, and is discovered, he has introduced a tension within his operational unit which may reduce unit cohesion and ultimately that unit's fighting efficiency. The actions of the soldier have thus violated a societal good (marriage), a contingent military good (cohesion) and challenged a primary military good (discipline). As these goods are required for the military to go about its business, it is entirely understandable that these prohibitions exist. Again, while not making the man moral, these regulations can nudge the soldier to the path of observing military morality. Indeed, the unity and institutional identity of such bodies might lead us to accept that they form an internal morality, which is derived from, but distinct from, the wider morality of the society in question. From this we might suggest that militaries are in themselves moral institutions. However, they can never fully escape the morality of the society they serve, and must pay attention to the demands of that morality. The British Army, as a matter of doctrine notes:

'...clear necessity to act within the bounds of popular understanding of what is thought to be right. Soldiers should use force from a position of moral strength, reflecting the

---

[54] Punitive Articles. "Manual for Courts Martial, United States," Joint Service Commitee on Military Justice, Available at http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/MCM-2012.pdf (Accessed: 21 June, 2012)
[55] ."Uniform Code of Military Justice," Air University, Available at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ucmj2.htm#SUBCHAPTER%20X.%20PUNITIVE%20ARTICLES (Accessed: 19 July 2012) p.A12-6

contemporary customs and conventions of the Nation, adjusted to be realistic within the unusual exigencies of conflict and war.'[56]

While we might agree that militaries have certain goods and moral prerogatives that they do not share with their parent societies, they are fully aware of the need to balance these with the negotiated good and moral prerogatives of the state. This, so far, is reasonably understandable. However, as Lonsdale rightly identifies, militaries have an additional prerogative to obey – that of victory.[57] If the negotiations between states on the mutual good life have so irretrievably failed that it is necessary to employ the military to achieve the public good (policy), then armies surely have to pursue this as the primary prerogative – for not to do so would be to wilfully fail to achieve the public good. If a disagreement between Political entities, comprising of communities of reasonably settled morality, has reached the point of the use of force then armies have little choice but to promote this moral prerogative (at the cost of all other prerogatives) to the head of the hierarchy. This hierarchical balance must be conducted, however, in the context of combat. In this context, we must balance the demands of societal morality, individual morals, and the institutional moral set along with the context and resource constraint of the conflict. While doing this we must also evaluate the morality of our enemy, and his commitment to achieving his prerogative, victory over us. And even while militaries fight, they must look beyond the battlefield to both the audience and the end of the war and how it (and the actions within it) will be ethically evaluated. As Clausewitz reminds us, war is never the final act.[58]

The international system of states will watch for violations of the baseline of internationally agreed moral prerogatives, such as might be seen in the Geneva Conventions. While an army might look to the laws of war for guidance as to how to behave, as we observed earlier, obeying the law might not be enough or lead to the justifiable ethical outcome, as there

---

[56] Development, *Army Doctrine Publication Operations - Prepared Under the Direction of the Chief of Staff*. p.26
[57] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.37
[58] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.78

are other prerogatives involved. Obeying these prerogatives might incur greater danger than declining to obey them. Again, before passing judgement on the combatants we must look to the context of the war, and perhaps question blind obedience to the law. Armies must do this while exposed to risk and very real danger, in compressed time, while watching comrades fall at the hands of others. The demands of war are such that ethics, attempting to achieve the most justifiable outcome for all concerned, is a supreme challenge. Armies must fight both their enemies and their hatred for them. In war, our better natures are locked in a tango with demons, and we must try to not be seduced. However, were armies to abandon ethics, turn their back on morality, ignore the moral voice within, and simply chase victory, they risk losing support at home and abroad and potential intervention by those who have judged the conduct of the war and found it unsupportable in morality and politics. War is a negotiation of goods, as much as it is an armed negotiation of policy demands – it is dealing with the good life in a way that societies have sought to avoid, and as such we must ensure that the good life does not turn sour. It may be that if it sours, we will be left with a much direr situation than the one that first triggered hostilities.

So, then, for the purposes of our project at least, what are ethics? We can broadly accept a modified idea of Whetham's proposal, that morality is a set of agreed-upon principles for determining right actions, as a starting point, while clarifying for our purposes that we will use ethics to refer to the dynamic determination of right actions that begins with principles but also takes into account competing prerogatives and the complex contexts and changing circumstances in which judgments are made, and the need to reconcile such judgments with personal morals and public morality. The internal condition of the moral individual plays an important role in determination ethical conduct, as does society or state-level morality, derived from the negotiation of goods. We are left with an impression that there are public goods, relating to human flourishing that go beyond the simple needs of existence – that there is an idea of a 'good life' established in political communities, and parts of the foundations of the good life are

supported through the temporal injunctions of law (while conceding that laws do not create either a individual moral impulse or cover all of morality, let alone ethics). This argument has essentially been conducted with reference to individual(s) and the societies in which they live. However, as observed with the story of the Greeks and the Callatiae, while societies might have different ways of negotiating, there are certain goods that appear to be 'universal' – that is to say that they appear to be common to many societies, whether or not they have been negotiated between them. As these ideas of the good coalesce, we have seen the emergence of negotiated public goods in the international system. In observing this we have even argued that there is a nascent inter-state morality forming and being codified in international law, albeit one that does not have a sanctioned sovereign to enforce such a body of laws. In all of the forgoing, we have accepted that this is dependent on the specialness of the human. What has not been attempted, quite consciously, is an establishment of the ultimate nature or value of those goods, or of the best single source of guiding principles, whether that be the categorical imperative of Kant, or utilitarian calculus, or rules rooted in the Divine – though these themes will occur throughout the coming work. There are other themes that have emerged, such as legitimacy, reasoning, justice, and judgment which will, inevitably, be discussed later. All will have bearing on our research question.

However, our attention must now be drawn to war, and to the necessities of war. While we might regard it as a social phenomenon predicated on Thucydides' 'fear, honour and interest', we cannot ignore the simple fact that war is conducted by men, moral agents operating within at least an understanding of morality, open to ethical evaluation. Yet this does not tell us the role or effect of ethical considerations or moral weight in war. The question must be asked as whether war is simply this social phenomenon, or whether in rolling the iron dice we are subject to other forces, that are perhaps beyond our full control. We must address whether these are specific to each conflict we fight, or whether there is an independent collection of forces unleashed when

militaries are sent to achieve policy goals by force that we can effectively model. Ultimately, we must address the context in which militaries make ethical decisions, and looming is the question of the nature of war.

<u>Chapter Two - The Nature of War</u>

'Members of the British Army Reserves are in Italy, learning how to adapt to the changing nature of conflict.'[1]

The above quotation comes from a United Kingdom Ministry of Defence (UKMOD) press release, focussing on Territorial Army soldiers training with allies in Italy. Initially, we might not see too much to question about this assertion that British troops are learning how to respond to the 'changing nature of conflict'. It seems perfectly sensible to engage in training with allies with whom we may face future wars. However, the quote actually makes a reasonably bold claim – that the nature of conflict is changing. We might ask the MOD to perhaps be a little less coy about their description. If, as intimated above, a conflict has got to a level where troops from the reserves have been deployed alongside our Italian allies, we might suggest that 'conflict' possibly undersells the seriousness of the situation. There might be a reasonable assumption that if fighting has not already occurred, then it is strong potential for it in the near future. We might easily be in a condition of war, rather than the milder sounding 'conflict'. So, if we change 'conflict' for 'war', we are left with an impression that the nature of war is changing, and to cope with these changes additional training must be done. This is interesting because it hints that the nature of war, touched on in the previous chapter, has characteristics that are subject to change – and that we are able to exert control over these changes and are not simply left to react to them. In other words, the claim is that the nature of war is dependent (on something), rather than independent. This chapter sets out to examine this claim; whether the nature of war is independent or dependent on circumstance and other characteristics. It must consider these two possibilities (that

---

[1] "Army Reserves Train in Italy," Ministry of Defence Press Release, Available at http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/TrainingAndAdventure/ArmyReservesTrainInItaly.htm (Accessed: 26 July 2012)

it is dependent or that it is independent) and, having decided which is the more compelling argument, attempt thereby to understand the fundamental nature of war. Having done this, we must then ask whether this provides us with an insight into the question of 'What is strategy?', and help us better define strategy with reference to the nature of war.

A Dependent Nature of War

In the previous chapter there was a discussion of how morals and morality, and consequentially the practical matter of ethical decision making, are formed within a framework of the pursuit of 'the good life', and it was noted that these considerations form part of the political (rather than 'Political'[2]) life of the community. We considered the moral as an internal condition, morality being an openly negotiated external system of morals, and how the role of law and the hierarchy of moral demands and their negotiation shape ethics. This was essential background to our analysis. However, it is possible to argue that in the context of war, some fundamental considerations have not been yet considered in our discussion, indeed we have shied away from them – these are questions concerning the universality of principles, the differentiation of wars because of their actors, and the ethical problems that attach themselves to such considerations. These questions attach directly to our purpose, and are directly related to the question of whether the moral or ethical considerations remain attached simply to the conflict at hand, or whether there are some universal features that can be identified. Firstly, we must note that the history of war, or rather warfare, has been with us far longer than a settled state system; and secondly, we acknowledge that there is more to say on the question of if and how culture affects the nature of war. We might suggest that these cut to the heart of the argument of the nature of war, in that

---

[2] Political as in the business of legislatures and executives creating policies, investing and doing the myriad of things expected of a government. Here 'political' is the open negotiation between the citizenry that influences the Political, whatever colour of government is in charge.

the nature of any armed interaction is dependent on the people doing the fighting and the means they employ.

We cannot ignore 'conflicts' that do not conform to the idea of armed interaction at the inter-state level, because they have happened before and continue to happen today. Such conflicts fit quite comfortably with the definition of war given earlier, of violence between 'Political units'[3], except for the fact we may not be dealing with political units as we are usually given to understand them, but rather some other form of organizing model may be in play. This is very much the position advanced by van Creveld in *The Transformation of War*. However, before beginning to discuss these ideas, we must briefly cover the idea of the Trinity, first advanced by Clausewitz.

Early in *On War*, Clausewitz discusses the purpose of war and the conditions required for success in war. In Book One, Chapter One he suggests the need (to achieve victory) for a 'paradoxical trinity'[4] to be present in a society – violence, hatred and enmity; chance and probability and the creative possibilities these provide; and the subordination of war to political ends by subjection to reason. These might be more readily understood (in the above order) as the forces of passion, chance, and reason.[5] These elements are, in turn, described by Clausewitz as the preserves of the people, the military, and the government.[6] Each of these elements is part of war, and during any war they must be present, to a greater or lesser extent. We will fully address these elements later in this chapter; however, it is helpful to bear these ideas in mind when discussing the idea of a dependant nature of war. Van Creveld suggests that this idea, that there is a unity of forces within any society that need to be present for war to succeed, is a suggestion made in error.

---

[3] See Page 20
[4] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.89
[5]Bassford, C., "Tip-Toe Through the Trinity or The Strange Persistence of Trinitarian Warfare," clausewitz.com, Available at http://clausewitz.com/readings/Bassford/Trinity/Trinity8.htm (Accessed: 13 December, 2012)
[6] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.89

While he admits that '...Clausewitz stands alone...'[7] as a military theorist, van Creveld argues that

this idea does not stand up to scrutiny in the case of modern wars. This is an interesting position,

as it argues that the nature of war has perhaps changed since the writing of *On War*, and that

perhaps On *War* no longer has the monopoly on defining this concept while being taught as near

gospel in both academic and practitioner settings).[8] If proven, van Creveld's challenge ultimately

undermines the claim of the universalism that is attached to Clausewitz and *On War.* If borne out

by examination, it means that the subject of strategic theory has laboured under the influence of

On War for too long, and so van Creveld is ultimately calling for a renaissance or possibly even a

new enlightenment in the field, freed from the yoke of the independent nature of war. If we look

at van Creveld further, then we can begin to see the line of reasoning that leads to an idea of a

dependent nature of war, or perhaps more accurately, a dependent nature of wars.

In the previous chapter, it was argued that states represent political communities, each

engaged in an internal and external discussion of the good life. By extension, we should consider

the institutions of the state as the instruments of delivering the good life (or at least creating the

conditions for the good life to be achievable). However, the modern political organisation of the

international system, in a nascent form, was only formalised by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.[9]

There had been international political organisation prior to this time, as men sought to order their

affairs, but the system as we understand it is relatively new. This is a key distinction, as wars

happened before formalised States,[10] and so we must challenge the idea of the trinity, simply

because we are not dealing with a society that divides neatly between the three components

identified in the trinity. If we concede that states are artificial constructions, then so are armies,

---

[7] van Creveld, M., *The Transformation of War*, Kindle ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1991). p.34
[8] It has enjoyed such influence and while not quite a monopoly, certainly it has dominance in strategic theory (see influential strategic theorists such as Colin Gray).
[9] Bull, *The Anarchical Society - A Study of Order in World Politics*. p.266
[10] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*. p.52

governments, and (to an extent) populations.[11] Accepting this argument indicates that trinities should be viewed with scepticism.

Here is a challenge to the trinitarian nature of war, and one advanced by van Creveld. If political units do not divide neatly between the three preserves above, for example where societies are mobilised to fight,[12] then the trinity will not help us understand the nature of the war in which such political units are engaged. There does not appear to be the distinct preserves of government, people, and armies. Rather, we must be dealing with something that is best understood as pre-Westphalian, or a situation where we should disregard a Westphalian explanation altogether. If we disregard the consideration of the trinity, we can get to the actual nature of the war being fought –we can then account for the actions of the sides, the means employed, and their differing motivations. By arguing for a non-trinitarian understanding of the nature of war we can take away the artificial barrier to understanding that the trinity imposes. We are, in some sense, released from the trinitarian orthodoxy. We no longer have to look for the divisions of labour among the participating sides, and most importantly we can define each war individually – the nature of each conflict is dependent on the sides participating.

This has additional benefits, because it helps us to understand wars not prosecuted within the state system, or for immediately recognisable state purposes. Other motivations can be found rather than the interests of the state, and other actors can be accommodated, whether they cross boundaries or exist as subsets within existing populations. War is no longer the preserve of Politics but rather a multiplicity of motivations, each distinct from those of the next, or last, war. How then do we determine the nature of a war being fought? If we agree with van Creveld, the nature of the war depends of the methods being used to fight it.[13] As such, sides with a discernible trinity as elements of their society will fight with professional soldiers – and hence we will be able to

---

[11] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*. p.49
[12] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*. p.56
[13] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*. p.57

describe such wars as being trinitarian. However, where the forces are members of a society

motivated to fight, with no army or discernible 'government', the nature of that war will be

different. If it is different, then we should not define it using the same terms as we would for a

clash between sides that do possess the trinity. For strategists, those who must think about wars,

this should be welcomed, as it removes some of the complexity from their analysis - they can

simply call the war as it presents itself, without having to force every one into the trinity mold.

This approach is arguably of great use when dealing with certain wars of recent experience which

might easily be described, as van Creveld does, as 'nontrinitarian'[14] – insurgencies comprised of

non-uniformed actors who are integrated into populations easily fit this definition.

This interpretation, we might suggest, opens up routes to understanding the role of other

actors in warfare. An example of these might be the expeditionary companies of the eighteenth

century.[15] We can now accommodate them into thinking about warfare much more easily; their

use of private armies can now be accounted for, as well. This has side benefits when considering

the future of warfare: for example, we can more readily accommodate the inclusion of Private

Military Companies (PMCs) into war planning and their conduct of certain armed functions that

would traditionally be the preserve of state institutions. Any consideration of these is simplified, as

they do not appear to be part of the trinitarian nature of war, but can be easily accounted for

within a dependent nature of war. They become independent variables rather than simply being

contained within one broad category; in fact, their presence helps define the nature of that war in

comparison to others that have been, or are being, fought. In thinking in this way, we can suggest

that there are multiple expressions of the nature of war, and that there could be an almost infinite

variability of these expressions. However, from this we can also look for differing causes of war,

rather than it being the simple '...continuation of policy by other means.'[16] We can perhaps eject

---

[14] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*. p.58
[15] For instance, the Honourable East India Company, or the Dutch East India Company.
[16] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.87

the 'Political' as motivation, and insert the 'political', as old enmities and grudges become part of our landscape of cause. We can now consider other motivating factors that lead to armed confrontation between societies, or subsets within those societies. We can account for differences in perceptions of the good life, and accommodate differing methods of the social ordering of the moral good and the use of force to advance or protect them. We may be on the cusp of 'Comparative War Studies', a subject much in the same vein as Comparative Politics.

This may possibly be the case, but to continue further we must look to motivation as well as means in our analysis. In the discussion on the formation of morals and morality in Chapter One, it was argued that that it is understandable that there are variations in conceptions of certain goods, both primary and contingent, across societies. However, to a certain extent we avoided the possible outcomes of the development of a pattern of these conceptions of primary and contingent goods, in that our discussion was narrowly focused on the concepts of these goods and not enough on other effects of the open negotiation. It can be suggested that one of these effects, possibly even a *necessary* outcome, might be recognisable as culture – which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as '...distinctive ideas, customs, social behaviour, products, or way of life of a particular nation, society, people, or period.'[17] This does sound like the negotiated idea of the good life. Taking the argument in the previous chapter, culture is an established pattern of social norms or goods which have been achieved through some form of negotiation, and behaviours that conform to these agreed moral goods. Therefore, we can account for the differences in the burial behaviours of the Greeks and Callatiae as forming part of their cultural pattern and note that they conform to both primary and respective contingent goods. (The primary is honouring of the dead, and the contingent is the specific means of honouring the dead.) Indeed, we see that the 'cultural

---

[17] culture, *n.*, "The Oxford English Dictionary," Oxford University Press, Available at http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/45746?isAdvanced=false&result=1&rskey=LfpbLx& (Accessed: 15 November, 2012)

differences' are formed through the negotiation of the contingent goods in pursuit of the primary ones.[18]

Culture may provide us with an insight into the nature of the belligerents, and thus the dependent nature of war. This argument is presented by John Keegan, who advocates a position that the nature of wars rests in the cultural values of a society, or in the values of societies that find themselves in conflict. Indeed, we need only look to the cultural demands of any given society to be able to determine the nature of the war being fought - again, by this view the nature of any war is dependent on the belligerents involved in it. It may be that wars (and their natures) are easily predictable if we understand the cultures of different societies – i.e. if we understand their primary and contingent goods, and the patterns these goods have created in societal norms. When combined with the thoughts of van Creveld, we may be able to conclude that there is indeed a dependent nature of war, and that we may be able to predict that nature through clever use of cultural intelligence, allowing us to bypass the trinity, or at least accommodate its absence. Again, should this idea withstand scrutiny, it may make the life of the strategist simpler, allowing more time to address the business of fighting the war effectively.

Keegan is unequivocal in his rejection of the Clausewitzian argument on the link between war and policy. He confidently states, in his opening paragraph that 'War is not the continuation of policy by other means.'[19] This is founded on the observation that fighting between populations has been conducted throughout history, before the Westphalian system and identifiable states and policy prerogatives. Because war seems to be, to an extent, a constant in the affairs of men means that we must look elsewhere for the reasons behind it, rather than the political motives of

---

[18] At this point we should exclude the arts in the definition of culture. They are valued aspects of the good life of a political community, made possible by the clustering of people in pursuit of human flourishing, and can be regarded as an outcome of the pursuit of goods, contributing to human flourishing. However, here they should be viewed as an expression of these patterns of valued societal 'good'.

[19] Keegan, J., *A History of War*, Kindle ed. (London: Pimlico, 1993). loc.165

Clausewitz. But where to look? We have discounted the 'Political'[20] simply because it seems to

pre-date the Political systems of societal organisation as we understand them, and that the actors

in wars often do not readily appear to have 'Political' or policy ends in mind. However, we cannot

escape the idea that cultures, with their patterns of goods and norms, appear only too ready to

exercise dominance over each other. Can these patterns of social goods inform the motivations

(and the means) of going to war?

In answering such a question, and bearing in mind the thoughts of van Creveld, we can

begin to see a dependent nature of war emerging. Keegan uses the example of the transformation

of Nguni society from one that '...did fight but did not wage war...'[21] to a 'warrior'[22] culture. This

change was predicated on the need to preserve other cultural values – in this case the value of

cows. A cultural necessity was thus the impetus to cultural change, which in turn led to the

development of a warrior culture. The same pattern can be examined elsewhere, where primary

goods have been identified as worth preserving, and those changes (shifting priorities) have lead

to the development of a martial culture within societies as a means of preserving the newly

prioritized goods. It is this idea of a martial culture that Keegan draws our attention to, noting that

it is all too easy for cultural imperatives to drive such developments. Therefore, we can now argue

that to simply use trinitarian ideas, where the trinity seems not to exist, is a logical fallacy. Indeed,

we appear to have firmly determined that we need circumstance to explain a conflict – seeming to

conclude that there is no fixed nature to war, and that the nature of each war is set by the

belligerents, their means, motivations, and expected outcomes. The cultural demands of the

societies fighting as belligerents are now to the fore, rather than political intent. Indeed, 'Politics'

is merely the servant of culture, and as such we should look to the society's culture for the nature

---

[20] As we described it in the First Chapter: state or formalized community action rather than the small 'p'
open informal negotiation of value sets.
[21] Keegan, *A History of War*. loc.713-715
[22] Keegan, *A History of War*. loc.776-780

of the war they are going to fight. This includes the means of war, as each society will have (for their own reasons) preferred and available ways of fighting, all of which fall from the cultural patterns they have adopted. Thus, any war in which a society will, inevitably, find themselves will have a nature directly influenced by them to the exclusion of all other factors. The nature of war is now categorically dependent on the participants and why they fight. We can through this understanding account for the bloodiness of wars as it is the defining characteristics of each culture that are at stake. Each war becomes one of cultural thriving; to lose is to be in danger of cultural decline, loss of independence, or cultural extinction. While some of these wars may be in defence of such values, it is only a small step to envisage an 'evangelical' war, where the benefits of one culture are brought to others, admittedly delivered at the end of a sword. These are not 'Political' wars, and their 'flavour' changes with each war fought according to the belligerents involved. The emergence of institutions to conduct violence can be predicted, and the forms of war are simply a cultural expression moulded by the time of the fight and the resources (and values) available.

It seems we are fully in the realm of the dependent nature of war. Or are we? Taking Keegan's example above, relating to the value of cows, we should probably apply a Clausewitzian 'policy' test to it, if only to disprove him. If we do, then we may forget about any notion of an independent nature of war and proceed further with our core analysis.

Cows are a good. Through them members of society can express wealth and status within their society – the more cows they have, the richer they are. If they have many animals, then society members can use them and the status they derive from them to negotiate better brides, husbands, or goods. However, cows also breed and consume grazing land. By breeding cows, society members become richer; but if everybody is breeding them, then everybody becomes richer – therefore people must have relatively more cows than their neighbour to demonstrate their wealth. Society has entered a period of hyperinflation of cows caused by oversupply. More

and more animals are now needed to obtain other things, like brides. However, this herd growth

demands more grazing. Thus, to secure the socially desirable goals of status and brides etc., the

rise in cow numbers must be sustained through the securing of more good grazing land. Therefore,

all things being equal, it makes sense to develop a warrior culture in order to secure contested

grazing from competitors, in order to secure the cows and thusly the goods of social status and

brides. Of course, there were other avenues that could have been explored in this process, and

there are other policy avenues we could imagine trying first. The society could revalue the cows,

tax them, or simply kill the animals (without compensation) to remove them from supply. This

might lead to some short-term hardship as the bovine related economy adjusts, but soon they

could get the number of animals back to sustainable levels. Another method would be to fix the

price of brides/husbands/goods so the inflationary pressures would be relieved and the relative

value of cows would drop, meaning fewer cows were needed to maintain status. When combined

with taxation this would take the heat from the market. However, suppose this was not done – a

political decision was made to expand access to grazing, rather than rein in cow numbers. The

policy was adopted to allow for continued growth of numbers of cows, rather than managing

them. This decision can be seen as political and Political;[23] it both preserved a cultural good

unchanged, and was a direct policy decision to enter wars to assure those cultural goods. The

policy imperative was to preserve wealth – any wars that emerged owing to this change were not

due to the formation of a warrior culture (means) but the interests of the society (ends). These

wars, and the formation of the warrior classes, were the result of political decisions. Thus Keegan's

example fails the policy test. It also fails the test of the trinity, as we have a leadership that

formulated the change and set the policy and subordinated the war for policy purpose (Shaka),[24] a

people whose interests were being forwarded and a military caste whose role was to fight – thus a

---

[23] In the senses given in Chapter One.
[24] Keegan, *A History of War*. loc.722

trinitarian analysis is achievable. That they fought with stabbing spears,[25] in organized regiments,[26] did not define the nature of the wars they fought. That the society ossified under the martial organisation imposed on it[27] is not an outcome of the war, but the fruition of a policy decision to organize the society in such a way. We can understand how it happened, but in coming to a conclusion we can only say that it was bad strategy, following bad policy.

Sadly, we can conduct the same examinations of Keegan's other examples, and still be able to isolate the policy motivation and the presence of a trinity. We cannot divorce culture from policy, but cultures do not make decisions about when to go to war – these are matters of policy, a positive action in pursuit of a Political (or political) goal. These tests achieve something else – they indicate that the Westphalian analysis of Clausewitz can, after all, be applied to non-Westphalian actors. This leaves a problem with van Creveld, as he argues that such an application does not hold. Yet we find that we can look at any belligerent in war and find that the Clausewitzian analysis does hold. There is good reason for this. Clausewitz introduces the trinity in terms of the concepts they represent. Only later in the chapter does he attribute them to the components of a state. Were we to analyse a conflict through the terms of these concepts, rather than an adherence to the actors, we would see time and again that the trinity still holds.

Earlier we set out to see if we could disprove Clausewitz, and thus make the business of the strategist more straightforward. Yet we seem to be unable to cast side his suggestions. Nonetheless, this effort was not in vain. While we might have argued that the dependent nature of war is at best questionable, we will revisit the related argument on means and culture later in the chapter as they may hold something in them to help us understand war, or at least its conduct. We now turn to a different idea about the nature of war: that it is independent of the actors.

---

[25] Keegan, *A History of War*. loc.742-46
[26] Keegan, *A History of War*. loc.722
[27] Keegan, *A History of War*. loc.776-80

The Independent Nature of War

Above we examined an idea of a dependent nature of war, one where we cannot remove the actors and their intent from the nature of the war being fought. This would, at one stroke, simplify our analysis – the other factors of war can be treated as encumbrances to the business of applying force for purpose. We would not need to delve for the policy intent, or attempt to analyse the war and its participants, as its nature alone would tell us what it is. However, despite its initial attractiveness, we found the theory of a dependent nature of war wanting, because it simply does not challenge the idea of the trinity or the idea that war is a continuation of political discourse. But, to discuss the idea of an independent nature of war, we must add to the discussion already held: that the 'independence' of the nature of war must be supported by other factors before we can hold it as a coherent concept, which we can apply across multiple wars and multiple forms of war.

Above, we have already introduced the Clausewitzian concept of the trinity – that there are forces within a society that must be marshalled in the event of any war. These forces are, however, controllable. We can encourage enmity, we can prepare the military, and we can subordinate the purposes of the war. However, militaries also have to deal with forces that are, to extent, outside their full control – such as friction, danger, effort, chance, and escalation. These features are part of the experience of going to war, but are not fully addressed by either of the two authors (van Creveld and Keegan) whose work we examined above. Indeed, the term *friction* does not appear anywhere in Keegan's *A History of War.* But friction, it can be argued, is inevitable in war, and as such can be treated as part of its nature.

What is friction? Van Creveld argues that friction is an 'obstacle to efficiency'.[28] Thus, it is simply part of the military experience. However, this does not fully explain the idea of friction, and

---

[28] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*. p.104

how it falls into the nature of war, and how it helps us differentiate between real and theoretical war.[29] Friction, simply stated, is the culmination of difficulties associated with the war. As such, a small error/omission at the beginning of the war can have its significance magnified exponentially by the end. This can be difficult to fully comprehend, as a small error in the beginning could easily slip through and be unnoticed and not be recognised for its full impact on the proceedings.

If we were to look at an example of Friction *in extremis*, it becomes more understandable. We can find an example in this childhood rhyme:

> For want of a nail the shoe was lost.
> For want of a shoe the horse was lost.
> For want of a horse the rider was lost.
> For want of a rider the message was lost.
> For want of a message the battle was lost.
> For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.
> And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.[30]

This is, although extreme, an example of friction of which many will be aware. Above, laid out in verse, is the accumulation of difficulties from the seemingly banal to the catastrophic. Certainly, not all instances of the phenomenon yield such disastrous results, however in military operations it is something to which attention must be paid. In the first chapter, we suggested that militaries prize reliability, and now we can see why. Reliability reduces the opportunity for friction to occur, and unreliability reduces efficiency by introducing friction. However, we have yet to be convinced that it is part of the nature of war.

To address this we could simply suggest that as friction is present in all uses of force, then it is an aspect of war we cannot escape. Or we might be tempted to argue that we can remove friction from operations simply by means of practice and preparation. However, this does not fully resolve the problem of friction, as we are relying on an institution comprised of people. We might

---

[29] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.119
[30] Opie, I. and Opie, P., *Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951). p.324

suggest that no matter how hard we try, we can never rehearse all outcomes and scenarios to isolate all decision-making processes from error. Friction is intrinsic to all complex efforts (especially those involving the movement of people); such efforts are always a part of war, and thus they are woven into the very fabric of war. We cannot remove friction from war, nor (here) war from friction. 'Friction…is the force that makes the apparently easy so difficult.'[31] We can attempt to proactively prepare for the effects of friction, mitigating for what we can foresee. However, this preparation can only go so far. The presence of an enemy introduces the unforeseeable forces of friction – he can introduce it into our system. Thus any side is forced to react to, as well as plan for, the forces of friction – it is an instability that we cannot wholly control. It is independent of our efforts; we can merely attempt to manage it. Additionally, friction may be exacerbated by the effects of chance, danger, and effort. Our preparation for overcoming friction, for example mobilizing forces seemingly greater than needed to account for inevitable loss of efficiency, may cause our enemy to escalate.

And we cannot avoid the forces of *chance* in war. While we might take every pain to ensure that the intelligence picture of the forthcoming engagements is as full as possible, with every variable planned for, it is in the nature of chance to elude our careful planning. These may be simple events of unpredictable chance, for example a misstep by the enemy. Others may be foreseeable as possibilities – such as a breakdown of vital equipment. But we must remember that each decision made may introduce a chance advantage to the enemy or to our side. The effects of friction also cause unforeseen complications for both sides. It is left to the commander to react to chance, in similar fashion to his reaction to friction – to assess the situation, and respond according to the objective. Chance, like friction, cannot be removed from the nature of war; it is integral to the experience of those commanding, and those fighting wars. Chance is as interconnected with war as danger.

---

[31] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.121

If we are at war, then we must assume that either there is preparation to use force, or that force is being used. Assuming that the enemy has agreed to fight,[32] then *danger* is present. That danger stems from the enemy's preparations and willingness to respond to our use of force (whether as defender or attacker). Both parties make *effort*, but that effort is not a constant – and thus neither is the level of danger. We might see this inconstancy of danger in the 'phony war' of the opening stages of World War II (WWII) where: '...In the west the enemies confronted each other without engaging in serious fighting.'[33] We cannot doubt that effort was being made on behalf of both sides – that danger was present, but we can also argue that while present it was not *imminent*. When fighting begins, this danger changes from threat (perceived danger) to real (or probable) and present danger. For militaries and populations, the experience of danger is modified by its imminence and this experience will necessarily increase effort (leading to greater friction), while the forces of chance are able to interfere on a wider scale due to increased activity. All of these forces, in addition to the trinity, are implicit in the nature of war, and each contributes to escalation, to a greater or lesser extent. But, equally, they may serve to limit escalation. While threat, the effort of the other side, and the need to increase effort to overcome friction serve to promote an escalatory dynamic, they also inhibit escalation by demanding increased effort eventually beyond our capabilities. We shall consider escalation more fully a little further on and in greater detail. However, herein lies the difference between the theoretical abstract nature of war and its true nature; as Clausewitz warns us – theoretical war, shorn of such limitations, can escalate to the extreme.[34] But here, where all the above are present, including the trinity and the policy goal pursued, is where we find the true nature of war.

---

[32] 'There can be no engagement unless both sides are willing.' Clausewitz, *On War*. p.245
[33] Gilbert, F. and Large, D.C., *The End of the European Era - 1890 to the Present*, Fifth ed. (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002). p.312
[34] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.77

In identifying the trinity, the political ends, friction, effort, danger, and escalation we find a multi-stranded concept of the nature of war – no one of the above aspects can be taken in isolation from the others. However, that does not mean that each will be present in equal quantities in all wars – there will be differing 'quantities' of each according to the war. We can also agree that any war will have different 'qualities' as a result of these differences. What is important to understand here is that each of these factors will be present in any war fought, they will be identifiable, and their presence remains a constant – but not to the extent that we can count on being able to identify a situation as a war by using them as a check list unless we have the proper perspective. Let us try and understand this in a different context: while most cats have four legs, two ears, a tail,[35] and an affinity for lolling about in trees, not all cats are the same. The jungle cat hunts and has no dependence on humans; the house cat hunts less and has a dependence on humans. Jungle cats may sleep in trees, house cats seek out duvets. The two differ wildly from each other; however these differences in no way alter the essential 'catness' of the two. The jungle explorer who meets his end as black furry doom plummets from the canopy above may not understand the 'catness' of his hunter, but those behind him will be able to attest to it, even if they had not seen the species before – simply because they have seen a house cat. Both cats are killers, both have similar characteristics but in different quantities, but these differences in no way deny the 'catness' that exists independently of each. In the same way, we can examine an insurgency and an inter-state war with the same conceptual building blocks – both are wars, their characteristics differ and the presence of a political end in dispute, friction, effort, danger, and escalation (and the role of the trinity) will be more apparent in some rather than others. However, each is identifiable as a war and the independent nature of war can be identified as being present in both – although rather like the explorer, we might not recognise this while being in its presence because we have other matters occupying our mind.

---

[35] Apart from the Manx cat, admittedly.

We have up to this point engaged with concepts relating to the dependence or independence of the nature of war. We have attempted to determine whether we should be discussing a nature of war that has a dependence on the actors involved or whether war's nature is independent of the actors. We examined whether the nature of a conflict is dependent on the culture of the actors and the means employed, and found this wanting as a comprehensive answer to the problem of how to define the nature of war. However, we observed that we should be wary of dismissing these concepts entirely, as they may prove fruitful in later discussion. In determining the independence of war's nature, we have looked at the importance of the political intent and the factors that are seemingly present in all wars. It has been suggested that the political purpose of wars, whether obvious or not, is always present – that war serves political ends, and that during war the trinity and the other forces of war come into effect. This reasoning forms the core of the independent nature of war argument: that it is one concept comprised of many strands. However, what is in doubt is the question of how these strands interact and how strategy, and therefore strategists, should understand them. What is required is a way of thinking about the nature of war so that we can imagine the relationships between the forces at play, and our responses to them, in particular relation to the idea of escalation as an inevitability.

Modelling the Nature of War

It is here that we alight upon the path of building a model to help us understand, analyse, and ultimately think of influencing, wars. It would be remiss if we did not, at the outset, explain what we are about to attempt. It is entirely possible to discuss these matters on the page in the usual fashion. We can continue at length discussing the ideas that are going to be introduced. However, in doing so we risk the reader, and the writer, becoming confused during the discussion – the fault of the writer not the reader. In building a model, we are essentially building an analogy.

This has several advantages; it can help simplify the discussion, we can add novel ideas and readily understand them, and we can introduce or decrease layers of complexity according to our needs. The model can be controlled in a way other illustrations cannot. The purpose of an analogy is to provide a tool for understanding. In building the model, we seek to advance an argument, but that argument must be comprehensible. In using this analogous model, we are looking to aid understanding, as well as provide a platform upon which we can build the argument that is to come.

We must fully turn our attention to escalation, which has already been briefly discussed above as one of the components of the nature of war. In discussing the use of force for political purpose, we cannot forget that this aspect of war – which is, at its heart, a competitive process – is one to which we should pay close attention. Clausewitz argues that escalation, in theory, is a process that will inevitably result from the initial application of force.[36] This is because in applying force, after assessing the '...enemy's power of resistance...', and tailoring the force we apply, we will cause the enemy to respond in kind, assuming he consents to fight.[37] This, should the political object in question be important enough, will cause us to increase our efforts to overcome his resistance.[38] This can be demonstrated in a simplified manner in graphical form, as we see in Figure 2.1 on the next page:

---

[36] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.77
[37] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.77
[38] And we must assume it is, as we have committed to securing it using force, rather than by other means of the state.
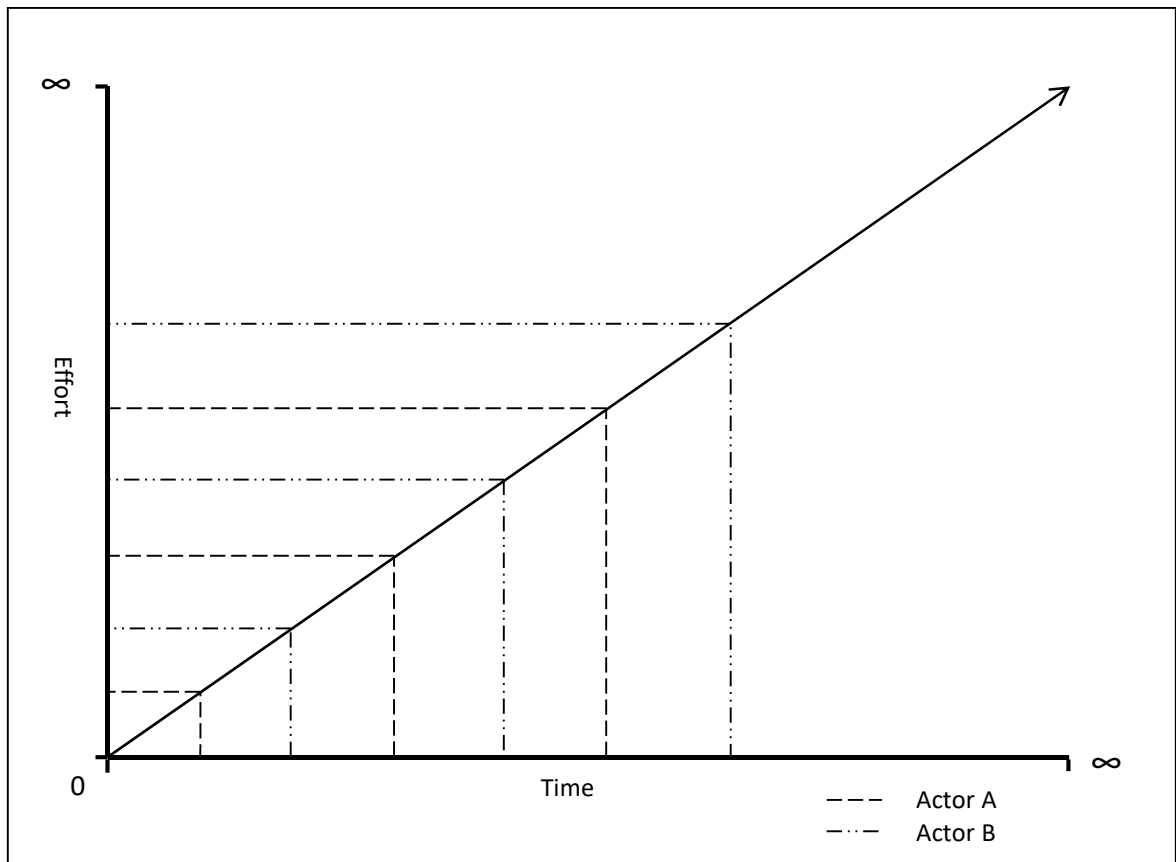
Fig.2.1 A Simplified Graphical Model of Escalation, excluding all other variables.

This diagram provides us with a simplified model of Clausewitz's theoretical escalation – it does not necessarily add massively to our understanding of this concept, but is nevertheless included here to acclimatise us to the idea of representing these concepts in this fashion. Actor A opens hostilities, Actor B responds to those hostilities and escalates the conflict at a time after Actor A's first action. Actor A then responds, and the logical outcome of this competition to dominate each other, assuming all other things being equal and without the intervention of chance and friction, is that the war can only proceed to the extreme. Through the competitive process, each actor will attempt to exert infinite force for an infinite period of time. This is the escalatory dynamic – we must assume that each side, if they have consented to fight, must be willing to seek to dominate escalation to the maximum degree and extent possible. As Echevarria notes:

'From a purely logical standpoint, then, this escalatory cycle, or reciprocal action (*Wechselwirkung*) must continue ad infinitum, because neither side would want to give the other an advantage, and because there are no logical (only material) limits as to how much violence either side could employ.'[39]

Echevarria is correct in identifying this – if sides choose to fight, this pattern of escalation should be expected. However, the material limitation on the use of force applies to any such interaction. These limitations logically stem from friction and resource. Friction, as discussed above, will ultimately prevent the 'Maximum Exertion of Strength' as it requires that some of that strength be exerted to counteract the effects of the friction. [40] Thus, we can never fully apply our strength to the enemy, leading to the prevention of unlimited, or infinite, escalation. Equally, our enemy cannot use unlimited resources in the application of force against us for the same reason: resources will always be finite. Forgetting all other potential causes of limitation of effort, we must accept that each side only has unlimited access to finite resources – men, tanks, factories, money, and so on - and neither has access to the materials for producing such resources infinitely. This is the second limitation, as infinite escalation would be predicated on infinite ability to escalate. Put simply, infinite escalation would require infinite effort requiring infinite resources. However, a mismatch in forces may tempt one side in seeking to exert dominance through presentation of greater threat (made through greater effort) to the enemy than he can respond to, given his limitations. However, this is again predicated on the more powerful side having made an accurate estimation of the enemy's material position. It would be logical, in seeking to dominate escalation, to attempt to dominate in this way. However, in doing so the side trying to dominate must be able to sustain such effort should the enemy be unwilling to be swayed – if, for example, the enemy is willing to make up for his material disadvantage with greater or more creative efforts.

---

[39] Echevarria, A.J., *Clausewitz and Comtemporary War* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 2007). p.65 (Emphasis in text)
[40] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.77

Extreme escalation may also complicate matters in other ways for the stronger side in the conflict, but that is a theme we will explore later.

We see above that theoretical escalation, in the absence of other factors, can only reach what Clausewitz calls the extreme and that the competitive nature of war will naturally tend towards such escalation. Like Clausewitz, we can reject the idea of unlimited escalation because, put simply, it is not credible, as there are material obstacles and barriers from within the nature of war itself which make such effort impossible. We are beginning to get some ideas of interaction between the forces on the nature of war. However, we must also account for danger and chance.

Danger is not in itself a limitation on escalation. We might be tempted to argue that danger is simply inherent in the situation in which we find ourselves, if we find ourselves in an escalatory conflict. If we are in an escalatory dynamic, then the other side must present a danger from the outset – either they must be a danger to ourselves or to the policy end, or they must be an actual physical danger to the forces we choose to employ to achieve our desired end. It may be that the danger is directly aimed at our society by our enemy or vice versa, in which case danger becomes part of the escalatory impulse, as either side seeks to secure itself from the threat presented to it. Danger may add greater urgency to the decision to increase our use of force, and influence how much we seek to escalate. The danger we present will equally influence the enemy in his decision making.

Chance, however, cannot be so readily accounted for in the escalatory dynamic. There may be occasions when chance magnifies our efforts, or the enemy's, or hinders them. It remains a variable that we cannot calculate, only react to as issues arise. How we react can be prepared for in some measure, but it remains an unquantifiable aspect of the nature of war, where even the most informed attempt at calculation will invariably be wrong. The presence of chance in the nature of war prevents the application of force from becoming a simple numerical calculation – where we can predict the outcome of an engagement merely using an algorithm or arithmetic

table. While we can prepare for friction, by estimating the actual rather than the theoretical maximum fighting capacity, we cannot fully prepare for chance. Nor can we prepare for the enemy's interaction with chance, or the fortunes or misfortunes that might befall either.

Thus, we must escape from the simplified theoretical model shown in Figure 2.1, as we have dismissed it for much the same reasons as Clausewitz rejects the idea of unlimited escalation – we must include some sense of the practicalities of war in our theoretical understanding. That is not to argue that the simplified model is unhelpful – at least it helps to clarify the competitive aspects of escalation. By drawing attention to it we can begin to understand the nature of war, rather than simply 'know' it from a theoretical perspective. War cannot be understood in the sense that we might understand laws of physics. But in order to fully develop our understanding of all the interactions above: to complicate the simple model in an understandable fashion, we can use some of the language of science to illustrate the relationships. More importantly, we must integrate an understanding of the trinity into our discussion.

Imagine the nature of war as a ball hanging in deep space, surrounded by vacuum and not subject to any other forces such as gravity. As such it has no weight (mass x gravity), and for our initial purposes let us assume that it has minimal mass. If we apply a force to this ball, we can expect it, assuming no other forces interacting with it, to accelerate (i.e. change its velocity over time) and gain speed (time x distance) in the direction that we direct the force. We also know that to move the ball we must apply effort. However, we know that because the ball has minimal mass and no weight, our effort made will initially be small. We must also assume that we know the direction we wish the ball to go, and thus direct our effort for the ball to follow our chosen path to our chosen destination. We can visualise this process in straightforward fashion on the next page.
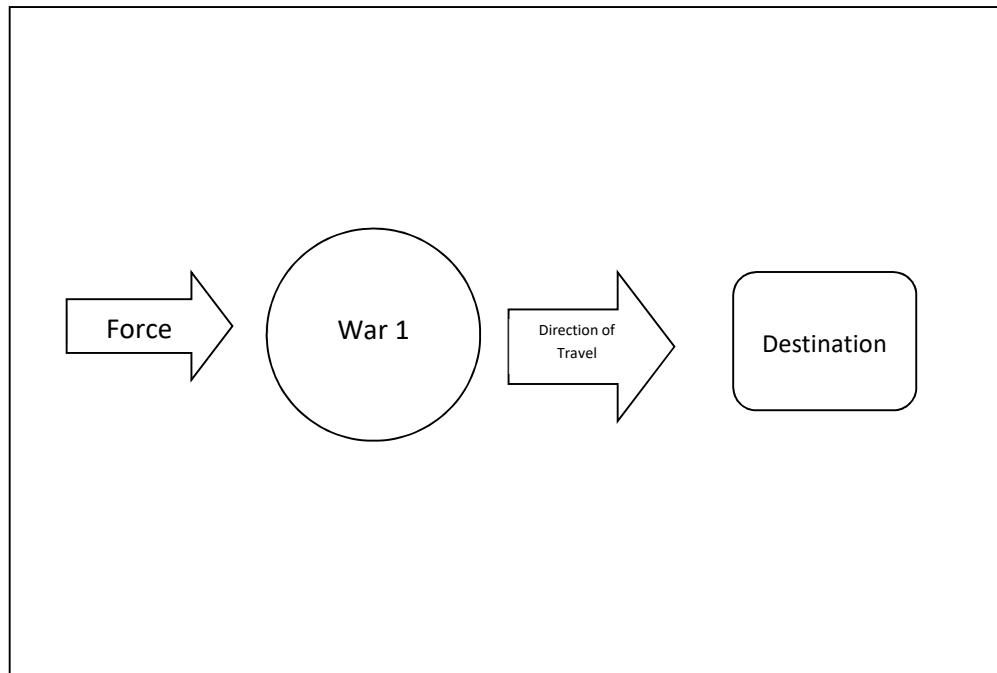
Fig. 2.2: A model of linear application of force/direction to the nature of war with no other variables.

The above figure demonstrates a reasonably understandable relationship of cause and effect.

Force applied in a direction causes a body at rest to move in the direction it is pushed and gain

velocity (speed) which will equal that of the input. This does not accurately describe the problems

of war, but provides a basis to start building a model that may do so. We apply force, and the

nature of war is directed according to our wishes until we stop pushing, at which point it will carry

on at constant speed. However, we have omitted the factor of our opponent, who will contest our

choice of destination and also seek to impose his will, employing the application of force to the

same body but towards different ends. Our next diagram, on the next page, captures this:
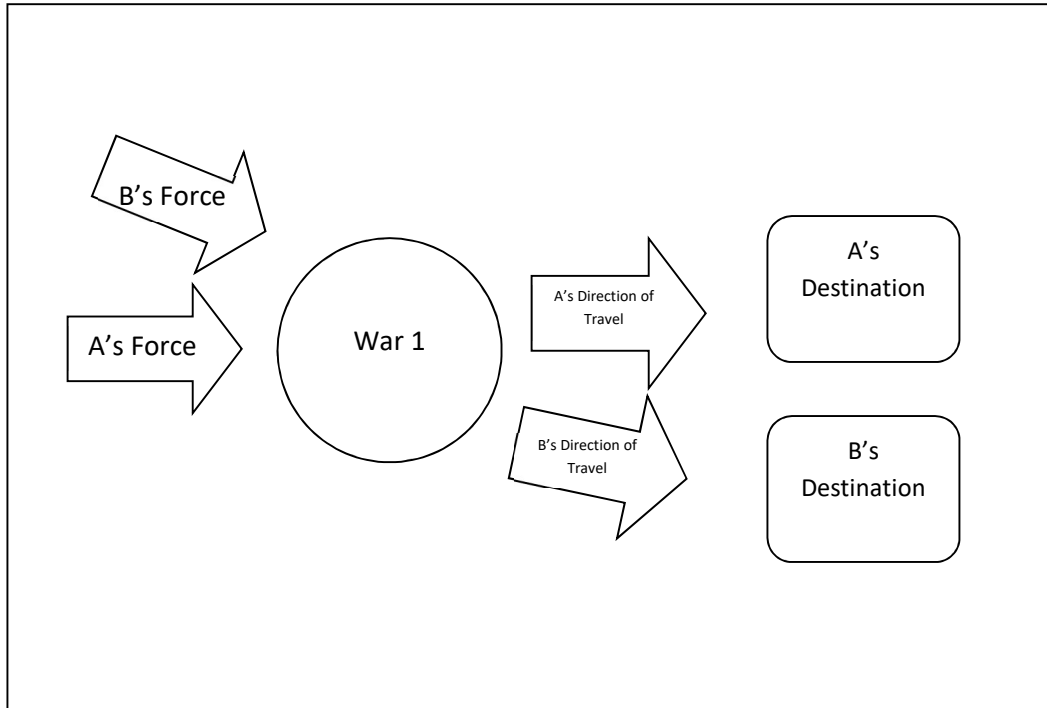
Fig.2.3: A model of linear application of force by two actors on the same body

From Figure 2.3 we can draw several conclusions. Firstly, we can now see that the presence of another belligerent complicates our use of force to reach the expected policy destination; our actions can no longer rely on the linearity of one cause and one effect. We must take into account that Actor B has a differing policy objective, and his interaction will necessarily require us to adjust the direction in which we apply force. Equally this condition will affect his efforts as well, and each side must make compensatory effort to deflect the other's efforts. To fail to do so means that our efforts may, under the right conditions, serve to assist him in his purpose (against our own). Thus, we have reached a condition of dynamism during the conflict that was not present in the single actor model. However, we can also see that B's interaction differs from the simple escalatory model of Figure Three. Actor B may no longer need to match and then escalate the effort of A to the same extent, depending on the angle of A's trajectory, and may be able to judge a response that requires marginally lower effort than might initially be expected, as they can leverage A's motion against him. Depending on B's purpose, he may not have to apply an

overwhelming escalation to direct the conflict in his favour. It may be enough to deflect A's actions.

We see that the model is beginning to gain relevance through increased complexity. However, this model still ignores too many of the variables that we have identified to be fully of use for our intended purposes. We begin to see some of the dynamism of the interaction, and the ways in which the two sides interact, but there are more aspects we must consider if the model is going to be an aid to understanding how the nature of war behaves – we must include friction, chance, danger, and Politics (rather than simple policy) to the model. While doing so, we must account for the trinity as well.

But how can we include chance in our model? The only predictable part of chance is that it is unpredictable, and as such it is difficult to include in the above model. The ball floating in a vacuum no longer serves our purpose, and we must introduce another interacting factor to help address this. Let us then change the model, and instead of our nature of war floating, let us subject it gravity and place it at the centre of a horizontal plane, stretching in all directions and with our policy destinations placed elsewhere on this plane. Now we have topology to contend with, and one that is essentially unmapped. We might be able to make informed guesses as to where obstacles may emerge, but we cannot be certain. We are seeking to influence something on the surface of our plane, but we cannot achieve enough altitude to stretch our view of the horizon. As such, we cannot meaningfully predict whether our goal is up or down hill, nor can we tell if the terrain is rough, paved, or boggy. All we are able to do is set off in the direction and compensate for the terrain as we go, taking our advantages where we find them, while remembering that these features may equally advantage or disadvantage our competitor. We must tune our efforts according to the situation, because now we have less control of the situation than we did in the free-floating condition. As each side has a different policy destination, we can

expect the topology to be experienced differently by each belligerent, as neither is pushing in precisely the same direction as the other.

By including the unmapped plane, we can begin to account for the difficulties encountered due to chance. Our ball will move over visible and invisible features on our field during our effort, and will be controllable to a greater or lesser extent over each. It may run smoothly, more efficiently converting our effort into motion on a paved area, or it may become stuck in a morass, making the effort required to move it greater. This is to be expected, and thus increases the requirement of both sides to be flexible, and creative, in their application of force. While it may be easier to make effort on the smooth, there is a danger that if our effort is too much, the nature of war will spin out of control and catastrophically depart from our desired path. Equally, if we put too little effort during 'boggy' stages, then our progress towards the policy goal may be slowed, or indeed stall completely. It must be remembered that all the while our enemy will be assessing our progress and making efforts in his chosen direction of travel.

It is this uncertainty, and our reaction to both it and the efforts of our competitor, that suffuse the situation with danger. There is danger in the nature of the interactions between the two sides, but there is also a definable theoretical danger – that of the loss of control. If either side makes a miscalculation in their application of force, then the ball may well leave their control. This may yield control to the other side, or may make both sides lose adequate control. Over application of force thus becomes a real challenge for either side – to apply too much is to risk losing control. Under-application of force may not be effective, but at least there is less danger of uncontrollable acceleration and the subsequent potential crash. We might try to argue that this lack of control is not a problem. If the loss of control is equally experienced, or at least is 'heading in the right direction', then it may not matter. This is a tempting line of argument, but a false one. If we willingly allow this to happen, then there is every possibility that we overshoot our goal, and collide with someone else's.

When we began, we confined our model to one of the nature of war being conducted in a vacuum. However, as we know from Clausewitz, 'War is not an isolated act'.[41] We might view this statement in several ways. Clausewitz argues that war is not a spontaneous act, and that actions precede and succeed it, and this is certainly the case, but we can draw other lessons from this observation, as well. Wars are not fought in a 'social vacuum'[42], they are fought between social entities, by social entities, and in the view of other social entities. We can conceptualise this as placing an atmosphere around our plane. This will inevitably bring with it more friction, as we apply air resistance to our moving ball, inhibiting its movement and bringing further instability into the interaction – as the winds of opinion may buffet us while we seek victory.

With the model as it stands, we can now begin to assess why escalation happens in war, as we simply seek to overcome and compensate for the efforts of the enemy. We know that he is pushing in a different direction to us, and that there is a differential of effort between the two sides. Thus, we must make effort to at least match his, so that there exists a condition of equality of effort. However this does not allow us to reach our goal. Therefore, we must escalate our effort to overcome his, and make meaningful progress towards our goal. However, in thinking this way we can also see the value in limiting our effort. Primarily it means that we can maintain enough reserve to overcome any further escalations on his part, but it also means that we must not over-escalate to the point of uncontrollability. Being able to maintain effort and control at a threshold above that of our enemy is the path to victory.

We have yet to account for the Trinity in this method of thinking about the nature of war. We have created a way of thinking about the nature of war that is firmly rooted in the language of the physical world, where a war cannot escape the interactions of forces that are inherent in any armed conflict. By envisioning the pushing of a ball across a surface, we can begin to understand

---

[41] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.78
[42] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. p.23

the problems associated with going to war – but we have yet to address the way in which we push

the ball, from where, and in which direction. If we take the characterisation of the trinity given by

Bassford – the forces of passion, chance, and reason – we can integrate them into our discussion

and our model. [43] If we are pushing the ball, we need somewhere to stand, a way of pushing it, and

a direction to push. We can envisage the trinity in these terms: reason is the setting the

destination, passion is the footing from which we push, and chance (or rather the forces of

creativity who seek to master chance) is what we actually push with to reach our goal. If we

consider these concepts in these terms, we can see their fundamental importance. Without firm

footing, we are unable to push, without reason setting our destination, then our actions serve no

purpose, and without available means, we can take neither advantage of our firm footing nor our

direction. Equally if we push too hard, we can erode our footing, and lose our direction. Each is

important in our understanding, but may not be totally in balance. As such, each must be

evaluated so that we maintain control.

Strategy and the Nature of War

We must question where this leaves strategy and strategists. Above we have posited the

idea of the nature of war as pushing a ball over an unknowable surface, while having a competitor

push the same ball in a different direction for a different aim. It is the strategist's job to know how

to maintain control of the situation while applying the required force. From the model above, we

can now see the value of some of the strategic truisms that have been forwarded in the subject

literature. Jomini, for example, argues:

> "...in general, that double wars should be avoided if possible, and if cause of war be given
> by two states, it is more prudent to dissimulate or neglect the wrongs suffered from one
> of them, until a proper opportunity for redressing them shall arrive."[44]

[43] Bassford, "Tip-Toe Through the Trinity or The Strange Persistence of Trinitarian Warfare".
[44] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p.40

The thrust of his argument is that opening a second front against a different enemy is undesirable. We might be able to simply assume that there are problems for any actor that opens hostilities on two fronts, against two different enemies. We can easily consider that there are resource constraints, difficulties of mobilization, etcetera – but we cannot easily visualize all the other issues that come into play when embarking on such a course of action. However, if we apply the above model to this situation, then we are left with no doubt as to why, and indeed why we should heed Jomini's advice:
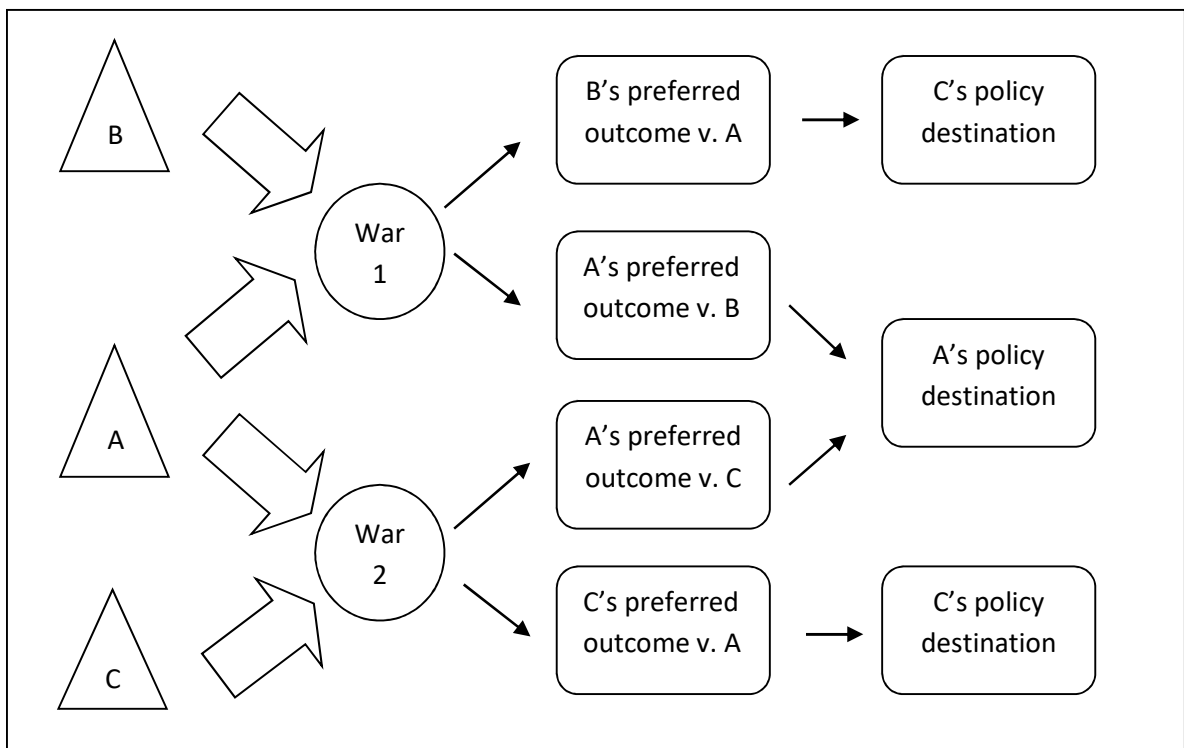
Fig.2.4: A model of a two-front war between Actor A and Actors B and C

From Figure 2.4 we can now analyse the difficulties Actor A has brought upon himself in opening a second front against Actor C, while continuing a campaign against Actor B. Actor A has a finite availability of forces to deploy against his competitors, which he now has to divide between two conflicts – whereas Actors B and C can devote the entirety of their forces to addressing the threat posed to them by Actor A. Equally, in having to address the two conflicts, A must now devote time and resources to determining the policy destinations of his enemies, and then to

adjusting his efforts according to his analysis to achieve his goals. While he is addressing this, A is now subject to the demands of two sets of interactions with chance, and is having to compensate for the effects of chance with weaker resources than if he were attempting to compensate for a single interaction with chance. In addition, he must now contend with the social atmosphere affecting two wars, not only one. Thus, we can see that the burden of opening a second front is not simply double the work – but that the difficulties seemingly multiply (due to reduction in available power, actions of the enemy, and incidence of chance and the effect of social factors) beyond a simple doubling. It might be helpful, in such circumstances, to think of the difficulties being multiplied by four or even six times greater than a single enemy, single front war. Thus, Jomini's advice should be heeded. Any other actor who gives us cause to roll the iron dice while we are engaged in conflict with another actor, should be roundly ignored until we are able to devote our full attention to him. However, we can also see the advantage of opening a second front against a competitor - for example with an ally – as it reduces the likelihood of our competitor achieving victory.

That said, acting with an ally is also potentially fraught with danger, as we must be assured that he can integrate smoothly both with our means of applying force and commitment to the destination that we seek. Vegetius reminds us of the problems of operating with the 'auxilia',[45] as their 'methods differ, the use of arms is different among them'.[46] These problems increase the inefficiencies we encounter when applying force to our ball. The use of any armed force, or the threat to to use armed force, inevitably relies on components of forces that will be employed, and it is unwise to see them as a homogeneous whole. Here we can again see the advantage of the above model, and we can see why efficiency is prized in military institutions – we are dealing with multiple variables and the smoother the transfer of force to the conflict, the better we can control

---

[45] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*. p.30
[46] Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*. p.30

the force applied. To introduce an ally inevitably complicates this transfer, for the very reasons that Vegetius gives us above. We can now see the advantage in sending reserves to train with allies,[47] in the context of the model: we essentially have two auxilia training together, with consequent gains in individual and cooperative fighting efficiency. But we are left challenging the idea that the nature of war has changed – we can see, from the above model, such training is an excellent idea precisely because of the unchanging nature of war.

However, while the model can be seen to justify the lessons of strategy, it can also lead us into discussion on the purpose of strategy, and how it can be defined. As we can see in the brief discussion of reserve and allied forces, we must further adapt the model. In the preceding discussion, there has been a consistent theme of control: in war each side seeks to control the war for his own ends, and will expend effort to wrest control from his enemy. Up until this point, we have argued that control emerges from the ability and efficiency of transferring force in war. This has been predicated on the understanding that we have a firm footing, a direction, and adequate means. However, this does not afford us all the control we would seek to apply. For example, to continue with the ball metaphor, a single point of contact with the forces of chance is an undesirable position to be in, as a minor single event can utterly upset our efforts. Therefore, it is up to the strategist to be able to modify the war plan so that this is no longer the case. For example, how should the strategist seek to ask the military to push the ball. In asking for a particular interaction, does he expose them to a higher aggregate potential exposure to chance, but it has become less likely that a single incidence will upset our overall direction.

Adding more points of contact with the ball may have additional effects, however. In increasing the points of contact, we may introduce stability, but at the cost of efficacy or direction. We may have multiple interactions with the forces of chance, which may make us work harder than under the conditions of a single point of contact. However, we have introduced this efficiency

---

[47] The situation presented in the opening quotation form the UK Ministry of Defence.

cost in the pursuit of greater stability. Therefore, we can argue that this is the business of strategy, to understand *useful cost* – that while we appear have introduced the unnecessary, we may have actually introduced greater stability into our war. As we must remember, chance is the material of the surface; it does not define the topology of the surface. In the same way, adding aerodynamic devices to automobiles introduces drag, reducing their performance in a straight line, yet adding them ensures that the automobile stays on the road or can turn corners at greater speeds than simple mechanical grip will allow. Again, it should be observed that this is a compromise of outright performance in pursuit of control; that the drag introduced to the automobile is of a useful nature.

This leads us to begin to understand the role of the strategist. We are aware that his direction is set by others (the policy maker) and he relies on the support of the people, but it is up to him to make the compromises and compensations during the war to achieve the policy destination. Lonsdale describes the business of strategy as 'The art of using force against an intelligent foe(s) towards the attainment of policy objectives',[48] and there is nothing fundamentally at odds with this description within our model. But we can now see that the strategist's business is equally one of maintaining control over the nature of the war, to serve his purposes – in other words *strategy is the adding of useful cost to the nature of war*.

None of the above, however, is to argue that every war is the same. There are fundamental underpinnings that are the same in any conflict, and can be viewed as constants (the nature of war), but the discussion does not end with their consideration. Each war is different and this is simply because each war has different belligerents, different incidences of chance, different policy destinations and 'atmospheres' in which they are fought. But these are accommodated within a theory of an independent nature of war. Each of these components has a differing influence in the conduct of the war, but each is still present in every war. Thus, we cannot fully

---

[48] Lonsdale, "Strategy." p.23

escape the arguments made by Keegan and van Creveld that were outlined earlier. While we might suggest that arguing a dependent nature of war is, at best, short sighted, their suggestions do lead to helpful differentiation between wars. From Keegan we can take differing cultural preferences, and from van Creveld differing technological positions and availability as useful criteria for differentiation. These do not change the nature of the war being fought, but they can influence wars in the way they are fought, and may affect the prevailing strategic choices and the ethical considerations within each war (points we will return to later). We might describe these as defining the *character* of wars, rather than arguing that they are part of the nature of war. We cannot escape their influence, but the variations experienced are such that they cannot be regarded defining the nature of wars. For example, in Chapter One we discussed the idea of there being an open negotiation of the prevailing morality of a society, and how this influences the culture of that society. It stands to reason that any society that goes to war will have cultural influences that affect its decision making – thus if we regard war as the armed negotiation of policy, which Clausewitz hints at when discussing war as 'continuation of policy' – then we can see that war becomes a negotiation of morality and ethics, because both the policy and the strategic choices are influenced in some way by the prevailing morality of the actors, predicated on their openly acknowledged primary and contingent moral goods, and the more broadly accepted ethical norms.

This is entirely predictable, and we should expect wars to have different characters, despite having an underlying nature. In much the same way as we discussed cats earlier in this chapter, we can tell a cat from the relevant features, but the character of the species (rather than the genus) is at issue. Equally, we now have the tools to understand that a war is a war, and that we should shy away from the temptation to give it a different name. As long as the features described above are present (force, friction, an enemy, direction, the trinity, chance, etc.), then we know we are in the presence of the nature of war, and that force is being used for purpose. But

this does not provide us with an understanding about the role of military ethics for the strategist.

Perhaps it would be better to proceed by disregarding ethics, simply seeing them as a limitation. It was suggested in Chapter One that the most ethical decision is the one that best balances competing moral imperatives. But this inevitably leads us to some awkward questions that the ethicist raises and addresses but does not definitively settle; such as how do we weigh these competing moral prerogatives, and how do we adjudicate what is justifiable when duties seem to conflict?

In this chapter we have sought to clarify the nature of war as a concept, to be able to understand it so that we can continue our discussion on the role of ethics in strategic thinking. We firstly attempted to construct a notion of a dependent nature of war - that each war has a distinct nature that cannot be repeated in another war. However, this was found wanting, simply because it cannot account for the similarities between wars. As an analytical tool the dependent nature idea has too many limitations to be of use, both to the theorist who can construct these ideas at his leisure, and the practitioner who faces rather more urgent calls on his time. Thereafter, we moved to a Clausewitzian 'independent' nature model, which asserts that the features of war are too similar to be ignored, but that they exist to greater of lesser extents between different wars. By formulating a way of understanding the nature of war in this fashion, we now have a tool of analysis that we can apply in understanding wars. We began to build our model. But we have yet to address the question of why we should pay attention to concerns about ethical behaviour in war. If we regard doing so as nothing but a limitation on our achieving policy goals, then we should ignore such demands and simply pursue victory. However, we defined strategy as the addition of useful cost to the nature of war, and we noted that strategy is interested in limitation of force for all manner of practical reasons. Ethics and morality are in fact influences on human action. Therefore, it is not practical to ignore them. As long as war involves humans and human societies, we cannot simply ignore positive ethical standards in strategy. By addressing the character of

wars, and keeping in mind the definition of strategy given above, we must recognise the role of ethics and consider that positive ethical choices in war might prove to be 'useful cost' in our efficiency in prosecuting them.

In order to discuss this possibility properly, we need to add to our model, as we have yet to consider the effects of mass, momentum, and inertia. However, we cannot fully address them in this chapter, as they pertain to other aspects of the model, and while they may be ever present, they are qualities that are subjectively applied to the nature of war. In having agreed to employ the model above, we can now examine these forces in relation to the nature of war, and see how they affect the war. From this theoretical approach, and by using the model, we may begin to see the role ethical judgement plays in the conduct of warfare. We have dealt briefly with the character of wars, but to fully understand them we need to further address their causes as well as who fights them.

<u>Chapter 3 - Wars of Choice and Necessity.</u>

'And indeed civil war did inflict great suffering on the cities of Greece. It happened than and will for ever continue to happen, as long as human nature remains the same, with more or less severity and taking different forms as dictated by each new permutation of circumstances.'[1]

In the previous chapter we introduced and discussed a model for understanding the nature of war. Through this model, the nature of war can be understood as analogous to moving an object across a surface towards a goal, in competition with another party. However, this model is, as yet, unfinished. While we have accounted for the 'trinity' and have noted that war is conducted before an audience, we have yet to account for the 'character' of war and how we might analyse particular wars in terms of the model – given our conclusion that each war has individual features that cannot be explained by the independent nature of war as we have described it. Like the cats of the previous chapter, *each war has a different character*. Equally, while we have been discussing war as the object in our model, we have yet to account for the mass of this object, and how such mass might effect the parties involved.

In this chapter, we must add these details to our model. By adding these details to our conceptual understanding of war, we hope to be able to account for the differing 'permutation of circumstances', or character, of wars, as captured in Thucydides' observation above; thus easing our analysis. From a practical perspective, if we can make our analysis more 'straightforward' with respect to how it applies to specific wars that exhibit one character or another, the practitioner trying to benefit from our model can spend more time focused on insights concerning how to maintain control of the war (likely his central concern), as he will know the character of the war he is fighting.

---

[1] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*. 3.82

To proceed, we must consider the source of the character of war. Does it emerge from the relative positions of the belligerents, their values, or their abilities and preferences on the battlefield? Or, perhaps more prosaically, does the character of the war emerge from the cause (*Casus Belli*) of the war – and, if so, does this lead us to any meaningful and predictable patterns that would allow us to define the character of a particular war? Throughout this discussion, we will need to refer and build upon the model set out in chapter two, as it provides a useful framework for discussion and, as noted above, requires some finishing before it can be of use in analysing a particular war. As we progress further into the chapter, we shall also return to some of the ideas stated in the first chapter on conceptions of goods, and the role that they play in the causes of war.

Causes of War

Thucydides, in the Peloponnesian War, gives an account of an Athenian delegation to Sparta, who, in seeking to rebut Spartan interest in the revolt of Corinth, stated that:

> 'So too we have done nothing surprising or contrary to human nature in accepting an empire when it was offered to us and refusing to give it up, under the domination of three most powerful motives – prestige, fear and self-interest.'[2]

Here Thucydides identifies three motives for war: fear, honour, and interest. We go to war because we fear others; we go to war because our honour is at stake; or, we go to war because our self interest dictates that there may be advantage in going to war. If we further tease the statement apart, we might suggest that the influence of interest might be found amongst all three of these motives, rather than simply in the final one of advantage. If a state is in fear, then it is in its interests to remove the source of the fear. If a state feels that its prestige has been harmed,

---

[2] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*. 1.76

and that this may affect its standing amongst states, then it may be in the interest of the state to

seek redress through war. However, as war is such a serious action, the slight must be worth going

to war.

We might argue that the determinations of Thucydides do not quite provide us with all the

motivations for war. While he gives us some powerful expressions of likely causes of war, there

are others that can be seen in certain conflicts, although we might still see aspects of the Athenian

motives as components of other causes. Jomini, in writing the *Art of War,* devotes time to

considering the causes of war, as well, and reflects on whether various possible causes adequately

fulfil the requirements of reasonable motivations for rolling the iron dice. At the outset of the *Art*

of War he attends to the statesman and his reasons for going to war:

> 'A government goes to war,--
>> To reclaim certain rights or defend them;
>> To protect and maintain the great interests of the state, as commerce,
>> manufactures, or agriculture;
>> To uphold neighbouring states whose existence is necessary either for the safety
>> of the government or the balance of power;
>> To fulfill *(sic)* the obligations of offensive and defensive alliances;
>> To propagate political or religious theories, to crush them out, or to defend them;
>> To increase the influence and power of the state by acquisitions of territory;
>> To defend the threatened independence of the state;
>> To avenge insulted honor; or,
>> From a mania for conquest.'[3]

We can already see that Jomini takes a more nuanced view of the causes of war; he is able

to articulate both the rational and irrational causes of war, as well as define that wars may start

due to tangible and intangible reasons. Let us look at the cause of 'propagation of political or

religious theories, to crush them out or to defend them.'[4] This is not a tangible case for war; there

is no immediate material advantage for the aggressor, he is not at immediate risk to claim

defence. He is fighting for an intangible 'good' as described in the first chapter – an aspect of

---

[3] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p.17
[4] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p.17

public life that he believes enables (or prevents) human flourishing. This, we might suggest, stands in comparison to a war of defence, as in defence he is both fighting for the right to continue to live according to his 'negotiated goods' as well as for his continued existence. These two examples neatly encapsulate the ideas of wars of choice and wars of necessity; however it is important that we explore further these ideas, their assistance in determining the character of a given war, and the effect that they have on our model of understanding the nature of war.

Wars of Necessity

A war of necessity can be argued to be reasonably straightforward in definition. In Jominian terms, it is a war of defence. This is agreed within the tradition of the Just War; it is perfectly permissible to fight in defence of yourself or others.[5] In response to aggression, the state may seek to repel that aggression. This hinges on the concept that the state has a right to exist – and that no state has the right to determine that another may not continue to exist. This falls well within the established pattern of inter-state relations – established and built upon since the treaties of Westphalia [6], and restated as the basis for membership of the international system in Article II of the Charter of the United Nations.[7] If this sovereignty of action within the internal borders of the state is illegitimately challenged – i.e. another state attacks and threatens this right of sovereignty – then the first state is politically entitled to defend itself. To put it another way, if the society, which has right of action and finds that its primary and contingent goods face restriction or replacement with another, alien, set of goods against the will of the society the state represents (loss of political independence), then that state has the right to defend both the territory and those goods (rights, way of life, etc.) from extinction.

---

[5] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.32
[6] Bull, *The Anarchical Society - A Study of Order in World Politics*. p.266
[7] "Charter of the United Nations." pp. 8-26

We might suggest that this is a rational act – there is an understood pay off for the defending state (continued existence), and an understandable deterrence to attack by other states. The attacking state may be able to make a rational case for the declaration of war, that there is a political point at stake that requires the use of arms. However, the international system, as it is currently composed, indicates that this unilateral act of force is a violation of the openly negotiated goods that allow the system to function. In reference to our observations in the opening chapter, it violates a 'law'[8] to which sovereign states both owe their existence and their continued wellbeing. Thus the attack is, potentially, an unethical act and the defending state is entitled to respond to such a use of force within the context of an openly negotiated inter-state conception of the primary good of sovereignty.

The aggressing state must, therefore, be able to articulate a compelling reason to override the sovereignty of the defender if their cause is to be found valid – they must be able to prove that attack is, in fact, defence of an agreed good in order to claim that their war is one of necessity for them (rather than merely an act of aggression). For example, they may assert that theirs is a pre-emptive defensive attack, protecting their own sovereignty. However, this may lead them into wider conflict over the tangibility of the threat posed and how leaving this threat unopposed will lead them to actual harm. To claim a right of pre-emptive action out of necessity is something of a challenge, but is not outside the realms of possibility. The Just War tradition allows for it, under certain conditions. However, it is left outside the preserve of statute or treaty (or codified good). Rather, the appeal to necessary pre-emption relies on the custom and precedent set out in the exchange of letters following the Caroline incident,[9] and still faces the inevitable challenges of adhering to the spirit of Article 39 (defining UN Security Council's role of determining threat to

---

[8] I.e. A minimally acceptable level of moral behaviour with reference to the negotiated norms of the international system.
[9] Calvert, P., *The Falklands Crisis: The Rights and Wrongs* (London: Francis Pinter (Publishers), 1982).

peace). [10] It may be that the aggressing (in the sense of firing first) state is unable to make such a case, or its motivation falls under Jomini's 'mania for conquest', at which point the case cannot be argued, and the defending state has no option but to defend. If the motivations of the aggressor do not provide adequate justification, the state must expect both resistance and opprobrium for its aggression, as it has violated the prevailing agreed values of the international community.

In thinking in this this way we can, legitimately argue that such a war, begun by illegitimate aggression, [11] leaves us with few choices other than moral sympathy for the defending state. We might choose to intervene in such a war, as the Just War tradition indicates that it is morally acceptable/praiseworthy to intervene in the defence of others. However, the state facing possible extinction has a more urgent situation to address. It faces heavy political (and Political) harm if it fails to respond, the aggressor already faces Political, and tangible, though perhaps not existential, harm if it is unable to convince the community of states of the justification for its purpose. Thus we might argue that there is a differential in the relative 'mass' of the conflict for both parties, if we measure the political importance of the relevant policies. The defending state has its continued existence, or at the least the right to order its own affairs, at stake – thus the mass of its policy is high. We can suggest this because this state has a tangible existential reason for defence, and to not defend is to allow itself to be harmed. The aggressing state, assuming it cannot make a case for pre-emptive self defence, has no such grounds for engaging in belligerence, and thus the policy goal has less 'mass' than that of the defending state. We shall come to discuss mass further later in this chapter, and its importance for the model derived in Chapter Two. For time being, however, it is sufficient to bear in mind this concept of mass being variable as we consider 'wars of choice.'

---

[10] "Charter of the United Nations." p.16
[11] In the sense of the motivation on the part of the aggressor does not serve any end other than advantage to itself, in the face of no other threat that can be adequately articulated to the audience of states.

In the preceding section we identified that in certain wars there is an element of choice on behalf of the aggressor – that he may not be compelled to fight for the political point, particularly if that policy does not adhere to the required behaviours of states. We also identified that there are tangible reasons for going to war, that there may be advantage in seeking to fight if it secures benefits for the state. Thus far, our analysis echoes that of Thucydides, that interest is a motivation for war. However, as Jomini observes, we might suggest that there are reasons for going to war that do not fall within the idea of direct interest – the war of political or religious idea, for example.[12]

At first glance the notion of identifying wars fought out of choice appears to be a strange distinction to draw. From one perspective, we might suggest that there is an element of choice in all wars. Clausewitz reminds us, in the context of the battle, that 'There can be no engagement unless both sides are willing.'[13] By extension, we might suggest that there would be no war unless both sides choose to engage in armed negotiation of the policy point at stake. One side could refuse to fight, although in doing so it risks the loss of its negotiated goods. By refusing to defend itself, it leaves itself open to invasion or subjugation and to having its values and goods replaced by others. However, should one side regard non-violence as a primary good, then it may choose to forgo a fight despite the possible consequences. Therefore, we might suggest that an element of choice exists in all wars – that the decision to fight is one made because the consequences of not fighting are even less tolerable than the act of war itself. A political community can always choose not to fight, but it may lose all that defines it as an independent community.[14] This leaves us with a

---

[12] See above.

[13] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.245

[14] However, while this might be stretching credibility, imagine a political community that is founded by Pacifists. They believe in pacifism, and that political violence is wrong. It may be that there is more spiritually to lose in betraying the value of Pascifism than being subsumed by another political community.

quandary, in that if all wars contain an element of choice (as ambiguous and irrational as it may seem to the outside observer), then we cannot make an easy demarcation between war of choice and wars of necessity. However, as we discussed above, the war of necessity is one based on tangible, existential criteria. To argue that a choice remains even to a defending party, and to demand that even wars of defence therefore be classified as wars of choice is perhaps unreasonable. Even if we do ascribe an element of choice to the move to defend, we might expect that most threatened communities will seek to defend themselves from aggression, assuming that they are not pacifist communities. If we expect that the non-pacifist political community faced with a community extinguishing event will defend itself against aggression then we must logically discount choice from such examples of existential threat. The 'necessary' in this case refers to 'necessary to continue its existence as an independent community.' If we accept war in response to an existential threat counts for us as a 'necessary' war, what do we then mean by wars of choice?

We can argue that states have gone to war for reasons other than articulated self-interest stemming from a direct threat. These wars are not of existential interest, but rather (as Jomini observes), 'wars of opinion'.[15] These are not necessarily spurred by events that provide a direct threat to the state (or states), but rather they occur because the state chooses to become involved in a conflict for other 'extended' reasons which cannot be articulated in the language of direct tangible interest, or self-preservation. Let us consider the act of intervening in an armed conflict between two parties. We must consider, by turns, an intervention between two warring states,[16] and intervening in a state which is, for all intents and purposes, at war with a component part of itself. Such interventions may not be part of a traditional interest driven reason for going to war,

---

[15] Jomini, *The Art of War*. p.28

[16] A distinction must be made here between treaty intervention on behalf of an ally, but rather an intervention between states with no pre-existing alliance obligations. We might suggest 'Peacekeeping' or indeed 'Peacemaking' operations fit into this category.

but are founded on some other motive. We must question what these motivations are, however, and refine our idea of choice if we are going to incorporate these ideas into our analytical model. For example, why should a state involve itself in the internal affairs of another state? If a state has right of sovereign action then other states have to accept that there is nothing they can legitimately do to intervene in its internal affairs. However herein lies a difficulty, because the failure to intervene may violate another primary good.

In Chapter One it was argued that there exist openly negotiated primary and contingent goods, and these discussions take place on the community and the inter-state level.[17] It was argued that the outcome of these 'negotiations' inside a political community leads to the minimally acceptable morality gaining the formal status of law. Much the same process, we noted, has occurred in the international community. The international community has come to agreements on certain acceptable and unacceptable actions and behaviours, and these agreements have achieved the semi-formal status of recognised international norms and, in some cases, the more formal status of international law. Captured within these agreements is idea that certain goods are so primary that ensuring their protection transcends the international 'primary good' of sovereignty. The international community, while not having a 'Sovereign'[18] to enforce the laws of the states, nevertheless holds a position of moral authority in that international law has been openly agreed to and adopted by (at least) the majority of states. Thus, we can argue that international law presents a limited guide to the morality of the international system. These laws (treaty or custom) provide some guidance on the primary goods of the community of states. Sovereignty remains one among the constellation of goods, but it can be superseded if actions committed in the name of sovereignty egregiously violate other essential negotiated goods, or put

---

[17] See Page 2 and later in Chapter One
[18] Hobbes, *Leviathan*. p.111

at risk the primary goods of other states – such as if mass enslavement were attempted within a state or if an internal conflict were to spill across borders.

It would be helpful at this point to consider how one such good can be seen to challenge the good of sovereignty. There are a number of treaties between states we could consider, but at this point it is beneficial to take one established example, a response to something we discussed earlier. Following the experiences of the Second World War, a subject we briefly considered in Chapter One, states agreed that a prohibition of genocide was necessary at it represented 'an odious scourge'. This resulted in The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.[19] The contracting parties resolved that, as it was antithetical to 'the civilized world',[20] special provision must be made in international law to respond to genocide. The adoption of such a Convention indicates that there is both an internationally recognised tangible cost (in lives) of genocide, but also that there is a perceived 'philosophical cost' that is of interest to us here. If the actions of State A, within its own borders, have no tangible cost to the interests of State B, then the principle of sovereignty indicates that there is no reason for State B (or indeed States C, D or E) to involve itself in State A's internal affairs. If State A engages in 'causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group'[21] at no tangible cost to State B, then it initially appears that State B has no grounds to involve itself. However, the presence of the Convention, including the responsibilities to report and punish State A, indicate that inaction by State B is both unsatisfactory and undesirable. We can suggest that there is more than simply the physical harm to the population of State A at stake here. Rather, that there is also at risk an extended philosophical primary good at the heart of the Convention.

This raises questions that are problematic for the idea of tangible interest – as the Convention indicates that despite a lack of tangible interest, there is still a responsibility to

---

[19] "Statute of the International Court of Justice." p.39
[20] "Statute of the International Court of Justice." p.39
[21] "Statute of the International Court of Justice." p.40

condemn, prevent, or punish such behaviours. This is what is expected of a 'civilised world'. States B, C , D, and E are all expected to act in order to preserve the negotiated primary good of civilization against the barbarism of genocide. However, these states might lack the tangible interest that would stir them to action. If they are not affected, for example if they lack of a direct border with state A, then any 'overspill' from the conflict in the form of refugee flows is not an immediate concern to their domestic goods. Therefore, we are asking these states to become involved because they agree that the actions of state A contravene an agreed philosophical good, in that the policy pursued is a violation of the *goods of humanity*. This raises some uncomfortable questions, as it places bystanders, no matter their interest (or indeed disinterest)[22] in the conflict, in a position where they may need to make war for no tangible (existential) reason. The claim being made is that the actions of state A are so heinous that the good of sovereignty may be rejected. However, this leaves the intervening powers with the task of explaining the reason for placing their armed forces at risk of harm, particularly in far off corners of the world.

This, we might suggest, is one of the core problems with the idea of the war of choice we have just described. In the example above, it might be that there is little to convince the people of our potentially intervening state – from their corner of the Clausewitzian 'trinity' and their place from which to push in our model - that there is a compelling reason to intervene. The people are not facing the extinguishing of their way of life. While they might empathise with the plight of the victims, they may not be convinced of the case for spending blood and treasure to save them. Equally, if a state were called to intervene between two warring parties some distance away, the absence of direct existential threat may mean that the enthusiasm for the fight is absent, or may quickly drain away. If intervening in a fight is suggested simply to maintain the good of peace

---

[22] Despite their perhaps general agreement that these human goods are a good thing, that a violation of these good things might be too far away, or are preoccupied with other domestic or international matters to care very much in this case.

between the states then a population might, quite reasonably, reject the idea of intervening if the states already involved do not contain them.

The Problem of Mass

With all that we have discussed above, how can we account for the war of choice and necessity within the model we have built? We have argued that there exist two 'types' of wars, each with distinctive causes. One we have described as the war of necessity: a war conducted in defence of the right of a political community to pursue its own 'Good Life'. In the context of states, this is the right to continue to exert sovereignty over its territory and continue the business of the state and people without illegitimate threat to these activities. In the direst of situations, it is a war conducted to eject the forces of another state or otherwise prevent them from forcing their vision 'Good Life' on unwilling citizens at the cost of territory, lives, and freedom or self-determination. As such, we might characterize such a war as having a heavy purpose, as it relates directly to the wellbeing of the state, its institutions and the people which it both serves and whose vision of the Good Life (at least partially) it represents. If we agree that it has heavy purpose, then we can openly agree that the war has a greater mass. This is useful in discussing the model we began to formulate in the second chapter. In that chapter we left the mass of the ball undefined. However, this is unsatisfactory both from a theoretical perspective, and in attempting to model an understanding of war. If we now apply mass (in the form of cause) to our ball, we can begin to understand some of the dynamics of war. At this point we should look again at the simple, two belligerent model of war we constructed in Chapter Two:
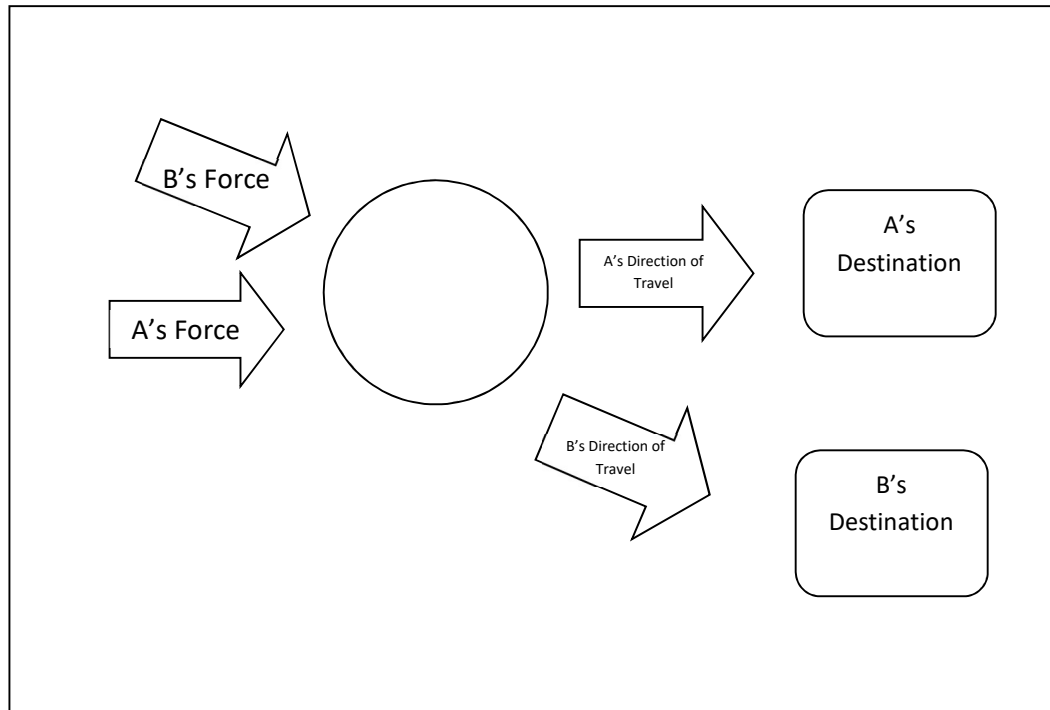
Fig. 3.1: The two-belligerent model first encountered in Chapter Two

We have explored this model earlier, along with some of the consequences from using it. It helps us to understand the ideas of force and direction, and on an extended basis, illuminates some of the problems of friction and direction when combined with other ideas from the previous chapter. However, the ball currently has no mass,[23] as we were unable to account for it in the earlier discussion. However, in discussing the cause of a war, we might now be able to attach mass to our ball, and see some of the consequences that this has for our war. We must approach this with some of the arguments and the tentative conclusions that we have already come to in mind, as we have agreed that there is a different weight in purpose that attaches to each side in a conflict, and that there exists an element of choice in all wars.

To continue in this vein of reasoning, we should first consider a condition of war where one side is fighting a war of necessity. We have argued that the war of necessity is a condition where the defender is fighting for the preservation of its integrity – to ensure that it can continue to pursue its vision of the good life within its own borders. Therefore, in a war of necessity the

---

[23] For the sake of clarity, mass is meant in terms of 'weight' rather than the Clausewitzian sense of numbers.

policy destination is clear, and as the defender is acting in defence of a tangible (direct interest) good the mass of the ball is necessarily great. The attacking side does not experience the mass of the conflict in the same way. The attacker *has chosen* to attack the territory and people of the defender over a matter of policy difference (policy difference being a large category which could include a dispute over territory/borders). The attacker has taken the initiative, but was under no compulsion to use arms to resolve the difference of opinion. This seems a strange way of conceptualising the role of the attacker, but if faced with such a situation, the attacker can always choose not to make war against its enemy. This may require loss of face, or other unpalatable Political consequences, but it remains an option. Therefore, because the *act of choice* rests with the attacker, no matter how important the policy at issue, the mass of the conflict is inevitably lighter for the attacker than the mass experienced by the defender. This is not to argue that the mass experienced by both is not (on occasion) immense, but rather that the defender will always, at least in the initial stages of the war, experience the greater mass of the war.

Conversely, the same difference in mass occurs when a state seeks to intervene, with authorisation or alone, in the affairs of other states. If an actor chooses to intervene by force in the actions of a state, or in a conflict between two states, not out of direct tangible interest but instead from philosophical motives of the extended goods of humanity (like human rights), the mass is logically lighter for the intervener than it would be in a war of necessity. Why should this be? The intervening state is not acting out of a direct interest which will dictate its continued existence. The philosophical motive, the idea of an extended agreed good, does not weigh as heavily as the fight for existence. Thus, we can argue that mass occurs according to the interest of the belligerent states, and that the tangible interest of self-defence, as observed by Hobbes, will always outweigh the mass of the extended interest.

We thus end up in a curious situation that produces a war where there exists *a duality of mass.* Each side will not experience the same mass as the other, but must be able to make a

reasonable calculation as to the other side's policy mass. That is to say that the importance of a war, despite being important enough for both sides to come to blows, will not be identical or symmetrical. While one state may attach an all-consuming importance, or mass, to the conflict, the other will attach a different mass. Thus we can have one war, two masses – a duality despite it being just one conflict. This is important as the mass of the conflict will indicate the effort to be made by each side. Indeed, the mass of the conflict will inform each side as to which actions are to be taken, and how much force is to be used in order to reach the policy goal.

Let us look at a conflict from a single perspective, imagining that we are a defending state fighting a necessary war. The mass of the war will great for us in such circumstances, therefore it indicates that to overcome inertia, and achieve a momentum to the war in our favour, we must apply as much force as we can muster to take control of the situation from our attacker. However, while we must counter the momentum of the other side, we still cannot ignore the mass of 'our' war. The force we apply must be consistent with that mass, and the intended direction of the policy. Above all, we must be able to control our attacker's momentum, while achieving our own momentum in the direction indicated by the policy goal. In addition, we made the point in the previous chapter that the support of the people is, in a sense, the point from which we push. If our foundation of support is unformed or loose, too much force applied may cause imbalance, too little applied will risk us being unable to control our direction (and the momentum of the war) at all.

Here we see how this idea of mass further helps us. We can now account for the advantage in attack, as the attacker has control of the initial momentum, as well as the initial direction of the ball. Let us consider the war of pure interest. The defender is left to muster his forces and rebut the attack, seeking to change the momentum in his favour. The consequences of thinking of mass in these terms help us to apply the peculiar logic of strategic theory. There are other advantages in looking at war with an idea of attached mass. Clausewitz points out that in

attack '...every advance reduces the attacker's strength.'[24] Indeed, later in *On War*, he sets out

that a variety of consequences of action that result in the force of attack lessening in the face of

defence.[25] But, if we attach the concept of mass to the nature of the war, we can also account for

the lessening of the force through the action of momentum. We should initially consider this with

an assumption of perfect military efficiency (i.e. perfect transfer of force) on both sides. As

momentum builds, our inputs have only a decreasingly incremental influence on the movement of

the war as an object. Equally, with the concept of attached mass we can now see the

Clausewitzian strength of defence.[26] The purpose of defence is to prevent the success of the

attack. Therefore, by taking advantage of the defenders 'heavier' mass, the defender can merely

seek to divert the path of the attacker away from the expected policy goal. There is, therefore, no

possibility of the disarming of the enemy (the victory) but there remains the possibility that the

attacker will eventually tire, run out of available forces, or will lose the support he requires at

home – 'the very lack of decision constitutes a success for the defence'. [27] By adopting such a

strategy, the defender is reliant on his attacker tiring, and that the attacker's policy goal does not

change. If we include the inevitable friction of the model's surface (noted in Chapter Two), and

assuming no other forms of stability, the ball is inclined to wobble from the chosen course. The

defence simply needs the ball to wobble away from the attacker's set course. That said, we cannot

expect the attacker to immediately lose interest in his purpose, and so the defence must be

prepared for a protracted war of defence, and to ensure final security, should be prepared to go

on the offensive, when the moment is right. Here we can see the Clausewitizian ideas of the

defence and attack being an interaction as 'the attack is not a homogenous whole: it is perpetually

combined with defence.'[28] And we might agree that the vice versa also applies, but that the

---

[24] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.381
[25] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.527
[26] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.357
[27] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.383
[28] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.524

defence will have the position of strength simply from the mass of the policy it moves – it has the momentum advantage, once it has overcome any initial inertia. Once the forces of chance intervene, and the inevitable friction of applying force in a war occurs, the attacker must work hard to overcome a well prepared, if seemingly immobile defence. The defence is, simply put, fighting its own war, and to an extent sets the terms for the attack, unless the attack is prepared in enough force (strength) to overcome the mass of the defence.

However, this leads us to some interesting problems when fighting a war of extended philosophical interest. This war, we might suggest, is problematic for the attacker as he moves against the defender in pursuit of a 'light' policy goal. There also remains the problem of interest in this kind of war, as a philosophical interest may not be enough to encourage those motivated to intervene to fully commit to the endeavour. Above we have essentially discussed wars of interest, but we must now return to the question of wars of choice, and the problems of mass in such a war.

The War of Choice and the Problem of Interest

Above we applied the concept of mass to the war of choice, and decided that it is inevitably lighter (or less important) than the mass of a war of necessity. However, this is not necessarily a disadvantage; rather it is something of which we must be consistently aware. Additionally, we might suggest that we can never be truly free of interest in the war of choice (although it may be far on the periphery of concerns), and that other factors may take hold to act as a proxy for interest in certain conflicts. The problem with the war embarked upon for ideas of an extended philosophical good is one we have explored briefly above: that in a wider population, the absence of direct danger may make it less imperative to fight. We might suggest that while we may feel sympathy for the victims of a conflict that does not directly involve us, it is difficult to

articulate the general importance of going to their defence, rather than the specific importance of defending against a tangible threat to us. Therefore, we have to accept that there is a variability of interest when choosing to fight wars of choice. For example, if an internal conflict broke out within a reasonable geographic proximity of a state, but presented no danger to it, that state may be likely to intervene, as the proximity of the conflict may have negative effects on the state. These negative effects may be as diverse as dealing with a refugee crisis or potential instability in other neighbours if the conflict overspills. Therefore, we can argue that the philosophical good that inspires action is supported by a *proximal interest* even if we cannot articulate a *direct interest*: the issue that motivates us might be nearby enough – for example a regional conflict (proximal). The outcome might not affect us directly, but we may end up dealing with consequences of a conflict that is essentially on our doorstep, or will eventually likely involve us. If we can state that the reason for going to war is satisfied both from an interest and *Jus ad Bellum* perspective, it may be easier to gather domestic support for the action. However, if the conflict which we are philosophically motivated to become involved in is further away, the proximal interest necessarily wains as the exposure of our neighbours or ourselves to any real costs resulting from the conflict is lessened by geography.

In this situation, we are faced with the problem of interest as we have no direct interest, and few indirect interests with which to carry forward our population. Nor can we adequately explain to other states why we should become involved. Additionally, if we were to become involved, we would need at least tacit permission from other states to intervene. So we have to find something that can act as a proxy in our model for the proximal interest we may be able to demonstrate closer to home, and to other states. Equally, we must remember that each of these calculations of interest vary according to the war being considered, as no one set of circumstances can be used as a 'check box' exercise for the declaration of war. Being mindful of all of this, we can

now account for the differences in approach to each distinct situation via the masses that then attached to our relative policies.

A genocide being conducted far away may not be immediately acted upon, but rather we must wait until there is enough moral horror accumulated on behalf of the community of states and their populations to override any lack of proximal interest. This *accumulation of horror* may serve the purpose missing from a lack from direct or indirect interest, as it may provide enough mass to our policy to allow meaningful control to be exerted from a firm enough standpoint to direct our efforts. The accumulation of horror suffices for the necessity of interest, but it will take time. As states watch with ongoing horror the violation of negotiated goods, or simply conduct in violation of the humane over a period of time, states can develop a sense of indirect interest in even a distant conflict. This idea of indirect interest is, for example, distinct from action to protect sea lanes from piracy or de facto *guerre de course*. There is a direct interest in this, even if it is an extended direct interest. The indirect interest is distinct in a lack of proximity, and having no stake in the fight other than the desire to stop the horror.

Mass and the Model

In all the foregoing discussion, we cannot ignore the fact that interest adds (or removes) mass from our notion of the nature of war. The concept of mass essentially completes our model for understanding the nature of war, and shows how the nature of war complicates not only the going to war, but also the fighting of it. In the discussion we have seen that the application of interest, and the type of interests being pursued, add a level of complexity to our analysis. These ideas of direct, proximal, and indirect interest, combined with ideas of both tangible and extended philosophical interest, might suggest that we can no longer approach a theoretical understanding of the nature of war in a simple, numerical fashion. Nonetheless, despite adding complexity to our

understanding, we can now use this complexity to our advantage, as other concepts can now be more easily understood.

If we now apply the concept of mass, we can now account for the action of momentum, how each side has a different relationship with momentum, and the unexpected advantage for one side over an enemy, despite seemingly matched capability. We can explore, within the theoretical framework, different approaches to the application of force, and the influence that creativity can play in its application. Additionally, we can now account for some of Clausewitz's observations of the phenomena of warfare that are not readily intuitive. Firstly, however, we should examine why the concept of mass is important in the business of strategy, particularly within the context of the model.

If we accept that mass is defined by policy purpose (the importance of the policy defines the mass of the conflict for both sides), then we can use concepts of this mass to add resistance to our model. By using the model, we can obtain some understanding of the balancing of forces and masses, and the potential theoretical outcomes from such balancing. Beginning with a war of necessity (as defined above), if we use the simplified model from chapter two (including our multiple points of contact) we are confronted with the model on the next page.
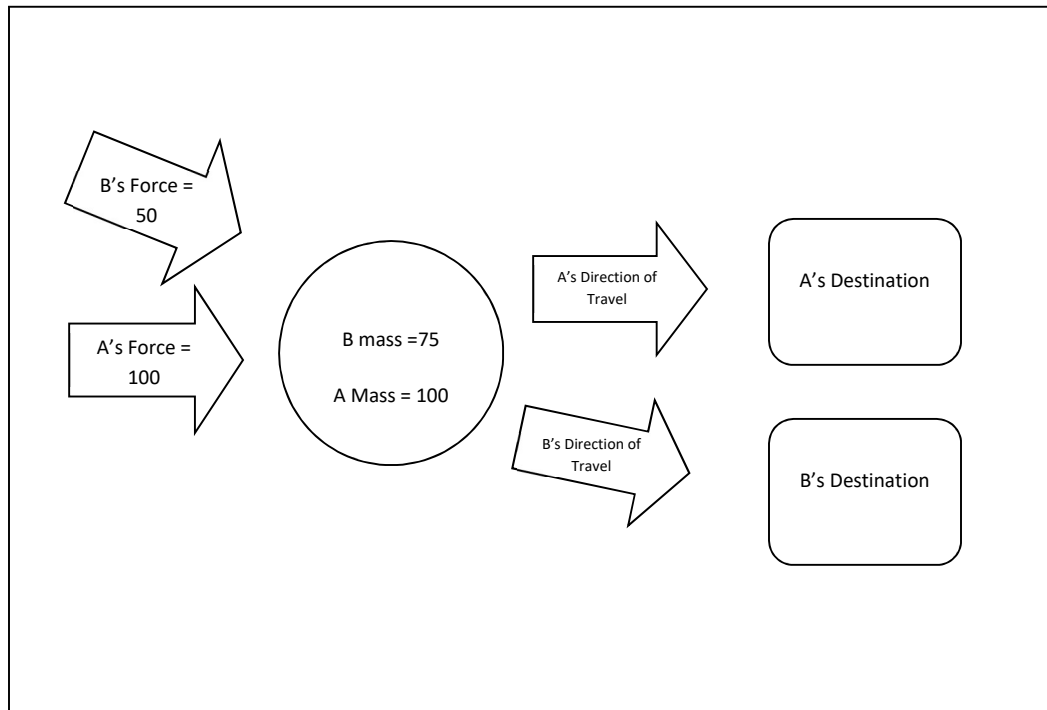
Fig. 3.2. The model of conflict with mass applied

Above we have depicted the mass of the conflict for state A as 100, meaning that it is of the weightiest purpose, an existential crisis that should it lose will see it falling to state B. State B, however, has a mass of 75 attached to its purpose, meaning that while its *Casus Belli* is of great importance to it, it lacks equality of mass in respect of state A.[29] State A must move this mass, and understandably chooses to mobilise all available force (100). If unopposed, the war achieves a velocity in the direction of State A's policy purpose, and achieves a momentum in that direction. State B must counter that momentum as well as direct the war in the direction of its policy purpose. However, if State B applies only a force of 50 then we can see that the combination of policy purpose and force commitment will be unlikely to overcome the efforts of State A. This indicates that the war will end with the defeat of State B efforts to overcome State A.

---

[29] For the purposes of modelling, Mass (M) is graduated on a scale of 0-100, Force (F) is similarly graduated on a scale of 0-100.

However, this does not mean that State B was destined to lose such an encounter. Had it chosen to more creatively use its available force, instead of a linear interaction with the war, the outcome may have been different. Let us reimagine the above model, but with B using force obliquely rather than in a linear fashion:
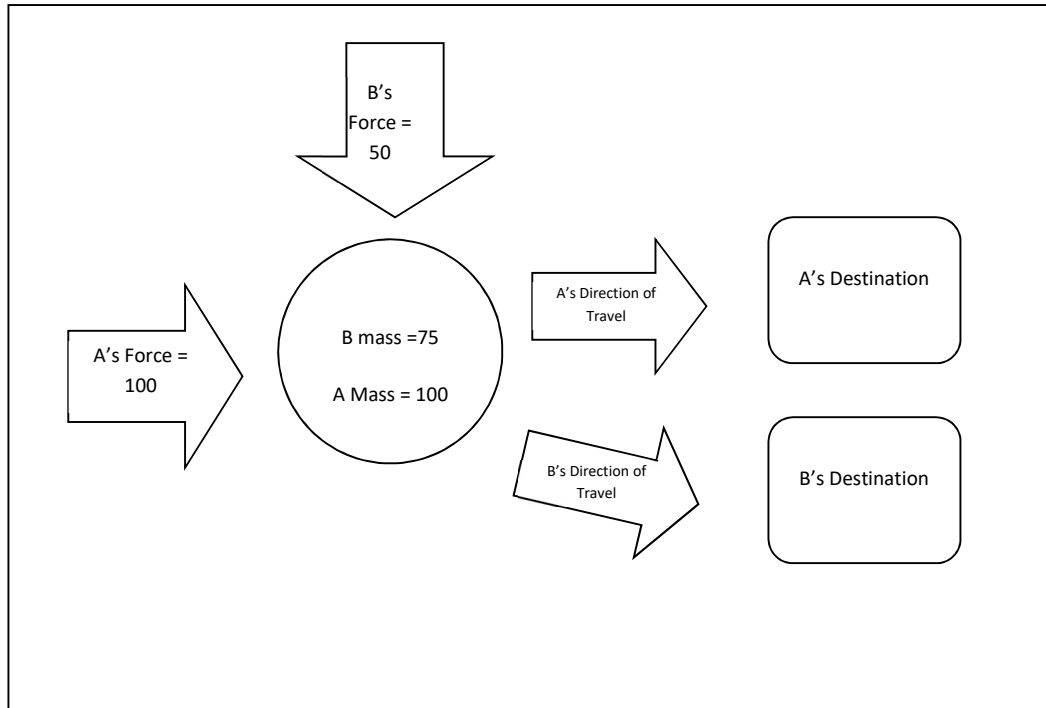
Fig. 3.3. Model of conflict showing oblique application of force.

In choosing to act this way, State B can deflect the war away from A's policy destination, possibly drawing the war out to the point beyond which A can make no further effort, or re-appropriating some of A's momentum for its own strategic purposes. There is no guarantee that this will mean success for B, but may be a better choice of action than attempting a linear application of force.

We could apply the same model if we were discussing an intervention in the internal affairs of State A by State B. However, to do so, we need to adjust the factors slightly before the model is of true use. If A is engaged in armed suppression of an internal group or groups, and state B seeks to intervene from a motivation of defending a wider philosophical good, then we might depict such a situation thus:

Fig. 3.4 Model showing oblique application of force with modified masses
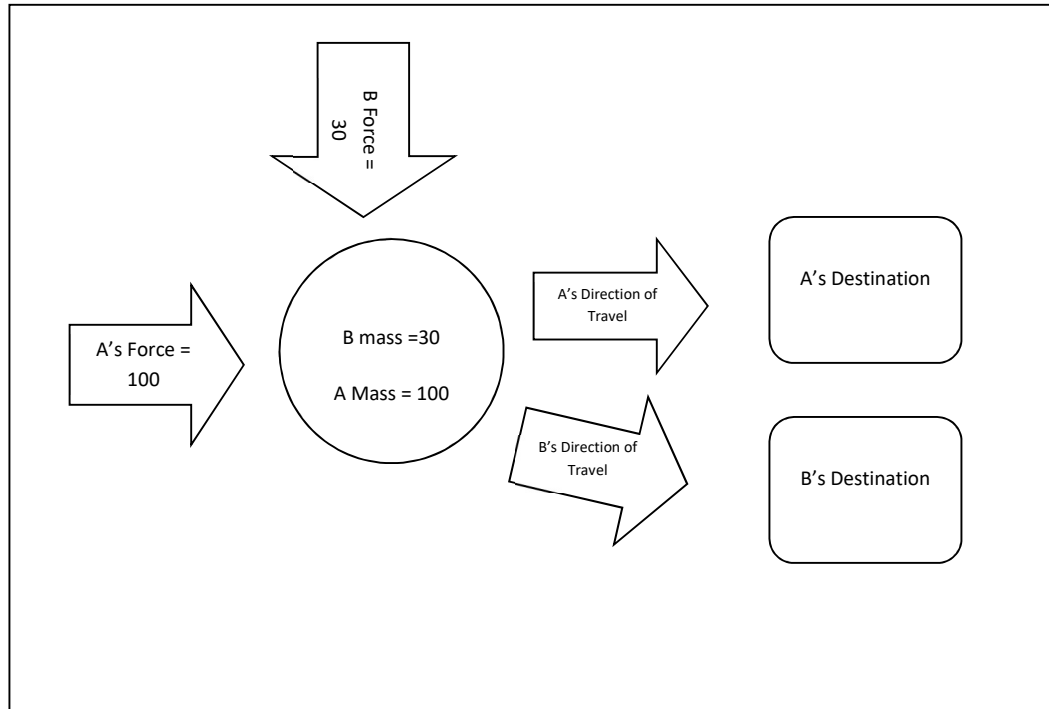
From the above depiction, we can see that B did not have the forces or the potential

momentum to achieve its policy destination through a linear application of available force.

However, by choosing to apply force obliquely it is able to unbalance the actions of A, using both

A's momentum to help achieve its goals, reducing A's control of the situation, and being able to

make most efficient use of the available forces. However, in doing so, B is also in danger of losing

control of the war if it uses too much force for the mass it has attached, and is reliant on A (or

indeed a third party) refraining from introducing a counter effort. This counter effort is not

necessarily to B's disadvantage, as it may further reduce the possibility of A achieving its policy

destination. Therefore, B can then enter into an attritional campaign, seeking to exhaust A as it

simply attempts to keep the status quo. Alternatively, B's oblique strategy may be too harmful to

A's interests, causing A to retreat, or indeed surrender. A is already at a disadvantage as it now

finds itself in action on two potential fronts, and having to divide its effort between both the

142

prosecution of the conflict at home as well as acting in its own defence. Thus the effort that B has to expend in order to achieve the limited policy destination is of an order lower than would be required in an 'ordinary' bipartisan conflict of tangible interest. However, B must be wary of either applying too much force, or misjudging the appropriate angle of engagement with the war, to provide the maximum returns to expended effort.

This is a point upon which we must briefly dwell: the problem of force and mass. Using the ball analogy raised in Chapter Two is helpful in our consideration of the problem. If we imagine a low mass political point, and apply a large amount of force to it, then we might expect the same results as using billiard cue in a short sharp fashion on a table tennis ball. The application of force is linear, and relatively lacking in *operational friction,*[30] thus we can transfer an immense amount of effort to the ball. However, because the ball is light (in comparison of a billiard ball) we will lose control of it relatively easily, and it will fail to reach our intended destination. Additionally, the lack of mass means that we cannot build momentum in our ball; therefore, it will be a relative simple exercise to either deflect or stop our ball. We are left with no options on maintain the momentum, and our 'short sharp shock' is unlikely to prove successful.

Equally, if we use our billiard cue on an nineteenth century cannonball we can expect no movement, as the mass of the ball is just too great. This analogy indicates to us that we have multiple choices to make in the application of force, that: a) that our effort must be proportionate in the immediate circumstances, and b) we must be willing to accept that the application of that force must be appropriate to the mass of the ball, while recognising that the ball is in play with another player (or players). Applying this to our full model, with the complications of the interaction with the enemy, the inevitable interaction on both sides with chance, operational friction, danger, and the lack of information beyond perhaps best estimations, indicates that

---

[30] The complications of using a an instrument of force comprised of multiple parts – Clausewitz, *On War*. p.179

Clausewitz was fundamentally correct when he states that: 'Everything in strategy is very simple, but that does not mean that everything is very easy.'[31] Strategy is thus the contemplation and the reaction to the dynamic movements and influences of the independent nature of war, attempting to influence them to achieve our policy goals.

These ideas reinforce the idea that the nature of war is an independent phenomenon, that we cannot escape the challenges of friction, mass, the application of force, chance, danger, and the interaction with the enemy. They also infer that strategy is a dynamic occupation, and while we may plan for the war, our plans become nothing more than advisory when the fighting begins. However, we can now begin to understand some of the confusion around the nature of war. Cause is, as we have observed above, a key part of the calculations made in war, as it defines the masses of the policy objectives our forces are required to achieve. We might suggest that cause defines the belligerents, as each war contains sides who are motivated at the time of the conflict for different reasons. Some actors may be more amenable/open/committed to acting on behalf of wider philosophical goods compared to a simple interest calculation being the cause for war. As such, the cause will necessarily define the combatants, their relative military strengths, the capabilities that they employ, and the choices that they make according to the policy objective. Equally the cause, in choosing the combatants, will define the audience of the conflict, and the atmosphere of opinion that surrounds the war. Therefore, we can argue that the cause in defining the masses, combatants, and audience necessarily defines the *character of the war*, as this is defined according to all these components while still being subject to the independent nature of war identified in Chapter Two. We can now argue that the character of war is individual to the war in question, rather than being a homogeneous phenomenon of all wars at a given time, and that any similarities of wars come perhaps from similarities of situation and combatant. While there

---

[31] Clausewitz, *On War*. p. 178

are similarities, no war is identical, due to alteration in the duality of mass of each given war. The

only constant is thus the nature of war.

Testing the Model

The above discussion, covering Chapters One, Two and Three, is a theoretical discussion of

the nature and the character of war. In it we have discussed the differences between wars, and

attempted to introduce a model to help us both understand the nature of war and to analyse wars

according to facets of war that are universally experienced. However, to test our model we must

use it to analyse specific conflicts to better understand them. Therefore, we must choose conflicts

that broadly conform to our ideas of choice and necessity in motivation as suggested above,

ideally between two belligerents (at least in the first instance), and where we can examine the

motivations of both parties. For the purposes of examining the model and its utility, the conflicts

in the Falkland Islands and Kosovo meet these requirements.

Beginning with the Falkland Islands, we must first define the motivations of the

belligerents and the subsequent choices by each before we begin to apply our conclusions to the

model. On April 2nd 1982, Argentine Forces invaded the Falkland Islands.[32] This was not a spur of

the moment decision on behalf of Argentina: there had been a formal Argentine territorial claim

on the islands since 1833 and the islands had been the subject of tension between Argentina and

the United Kingdom for the following 149 years.[33] In the period prior to the invasion, the

Argentine peso had been devalued twice, and the Argentine government was facing '...economic

conditions and a level of political disaffection which threatened to drive it from power'. [34] Invasion

---

[32] Eddy, P., Linklater, M., and Gillman, M., *The Falklands War* (London: Sphere Books Ltd, 1982). p.2
[33] Eddy, Linklater, and Gillman, *The Falklands War*. pp.39-40
[34] Calvert, *The Falklands Crisis*. p.53, Dillon, G.M., *The Falklands, Politics and War* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1989). p.96

of the Falkland Islands thus provided the Argentine government, and in particularly General

Galtieri, with an opportunity as:

> 'He saw them as a short-cut to popularity. The military, after five years in power, was almost completely discredited; the economy was in serious disarray; the beginnings of public unrest could be discerned; there was even dissent in the armed forces. The junta badly needed a success.'[35]

This consideration, combined with Admiral Anaya's[36] enthusiasm for a South Atlantic operating

base away from Chilean influence, provided a motivation for the invasion.[37] The decision to invade

was made the preceding December, and the invasion undertaken on April 2nd.[38]

From the above, we can reasonably judge that there was no existential threat to Argentina

from the Falkland Islands; they presented no challenge to Argentine independence or its freedom

to determine its future either internally or within the international system. The decision to invade

was one based in historical claims, but more usefully served the needs of the government in a time

where a success, particularly against an old 'enemy', was domestically politically useful. Argentina

went to war out of choice, rather than necessity. The expected outcome – that the presentation of

a *fait accompli* to the British government would dissuade a British military response – would leave

the Falkland Islands under Argentine control, and the Argentinian Government would face fewer

domestic pressures while riding a wave of public approval.[39]

The Argentine analysis of the situation, and their expected outcome, was not without

merit. The movement of forces across such a distance to recover them would be a huge military

effort and as Lawrence Freedman points out: 'Nothing could turn the Falklands into some great

---

[35] Eddy, Linklater, and Gillman, *The Falklands War*. pp.29-30
[36] Head of the Argentine Navy under Galtieri.
[37] Eddy, Linklater, and Gillman, *The Falklands War*. p.29
[38] Eddy, Linklater, and Gillman, *The Falklands War*. p.27
[39] Hastings, M. and Jenkins, S., *The Battle for the Falklands*, 3rd ed. (Basingstoke and Oxford: Pan Macmillan, 1997). p.60

strategic or economic asset...' [40] However, he goes on to state '...but circumstances of their loss turned their recapture into a popular cause.'[41]

This analysis is reinforced by observations of the mood inside parliament, and the British government of the time. On negotiations on the status of the Falkland Islands, 'members of parliament considered any concessions unacceptable'.[42] Given this, it was unlikely that there would be any acceptance of a *fait accompli* after an armed invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentina. Indeed, as the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher stated, '"We have to regain the Falklands for British sovereignty", she declared, "It is still British and the people wish to be British and owe their allegiance to the Crown."'[43] This leaves in little doubt that the British Government of the time regarded the recovery of the Falkland Islands to be a necessity, of primary importance to the state, and this view was supported in Parliament and across the population of the United Kingdom. This is true even though the Government was aware that the window of opportunity was limited: 'The government was determined to send the task force while the public and political will existed to launch it.'[44] The determination of the British can also be demonstrated anecdotally as Hastings relates the statement of one British officer on departure to the South Atlantic being quoted as saying: 'Now I know this is serious. You can't let the nation see us go off to war with bands playing and then bring us back without doing anything.'[45]

If nothing else, this succinct analysis recognises the seriousness of the situation. The British state had committed resources and prestige to regaining the Falklands, deploying over a very long distance against an enemy who had time to entrench his positions. If this were a war of choice, then these hurdles may have been enough to force reconsideration, or at the very least

---

[40] Freedman, L., *Britain and the Falklands War* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1988). p.39
[41] Freedman, *Britain and the Falklands War*. p.39
[42] Eddy, Linklater, and Gillman, *The Falklands War*. p.25
[43] Calvert, *The Falklands Crisis*. p.85
[44] Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*. p.117
[45] Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*. p.123

inspire an exploration of resolving the matter through other means. However, for the British, this was a war of necessity with all the mass and therefore determination which such an enterprise entails. Where Argentina had 'assumed Britain would not respond', in fact Britain did, with intensity. It was not experienced as a choice for Britain. The government of the time regarded the Argentine move against the islands as an attack on Britain – an attempt to take what was British by both right and by virtue of the will of the citizens there.

How does the model we have constructed up to this point help us in understanding the Falklands war, and does it provide us with any particular insight into how the war eventually ended? First, we must assign mass values to the relevant sides. Having determined that for Argentina this was a war of choice, we must review whether the mass assigned by their policy is definable. If, for example, we look at the resources deployed, it may help us determine the importance (mass) of the policy for both sides. According to information first published in *The Times* (and subsequently amended), the UK sent 9500 troops, 12 surface combatants (including two assault ships), two submarines, 40 combat aircraft, and one strategic bomber to the South Atlantic as of 21st May 1982.[46] This is a significant deployment of available forces, remembering that the United Kingdom still had a primary mission of NATO commitments and deployment of the Army in Northern Ireland. Argentina, by comparison, had 201 aircraft (of varying roles), 13 surface combatants, three submarines, and deployed forces of 10500 troops. The force match (excluding available airpower) is very similar, and so this may not be such a useful guide to intent. However, if we look at the relative distances of deployment (which we might call effort), then we can starkly see the British mass demonstrated. The UK had deployed a sizable contingent, across thousands of miles, at relatively short notice. This is in striking comparison to Argentina which was, for all intents and purposes, operating in its local area. The effort for Argentinian deployment was much lower, and despite having a 130,000 reserve contingent available, they seemed in no mood to

---

[46] The Times, 3 May 1982 (later amended) quoted in Calvert, *The Falklands Crisis*. p.109

reinforce the islands further.[47] We might also question the efficacy of the forces deployed, and this will feature later in our discussion.

We are left with the picture that the UK was in no doubt ready and willing to retake the Falkland Islands, as a matter of core policy. From the anecdote of the officer quoted above, and the bald military picture, we can infer that the relative masses of the two states in the conflict were disparate. Argentina was not preparing for a war of necessity; the UK appeared to treat it as one. If we use the above guidance (making judgements about effort and intent), we can begin to construct the model of this conflict. However, at this juncture we must sound a note of caution. We can only ascribe arbitrary numbers, based on judgement and expectation: to attempt to render the mass into a subjectively quantifiable number is something of a fool's errand. The numbers should merely be used for us to understand how the momentum flows, rather than fully to define and quantify force, effort, and intent. These must come from judgements drawn from the available information and can be seen on the following page.[48]

---

[47] Calvert, *The Falklands Crisis*. p.109

[48] This perhaps sharply differentiates the business of the strategist and the military historian, the strategist attempts to understand the dynamic of the war, the turning points and the decision making process; the military historian attempts to describe events and explain them according to his knowledge after the fact. Both rely on each other to some extent, though they may never wholly understand the each other's business.
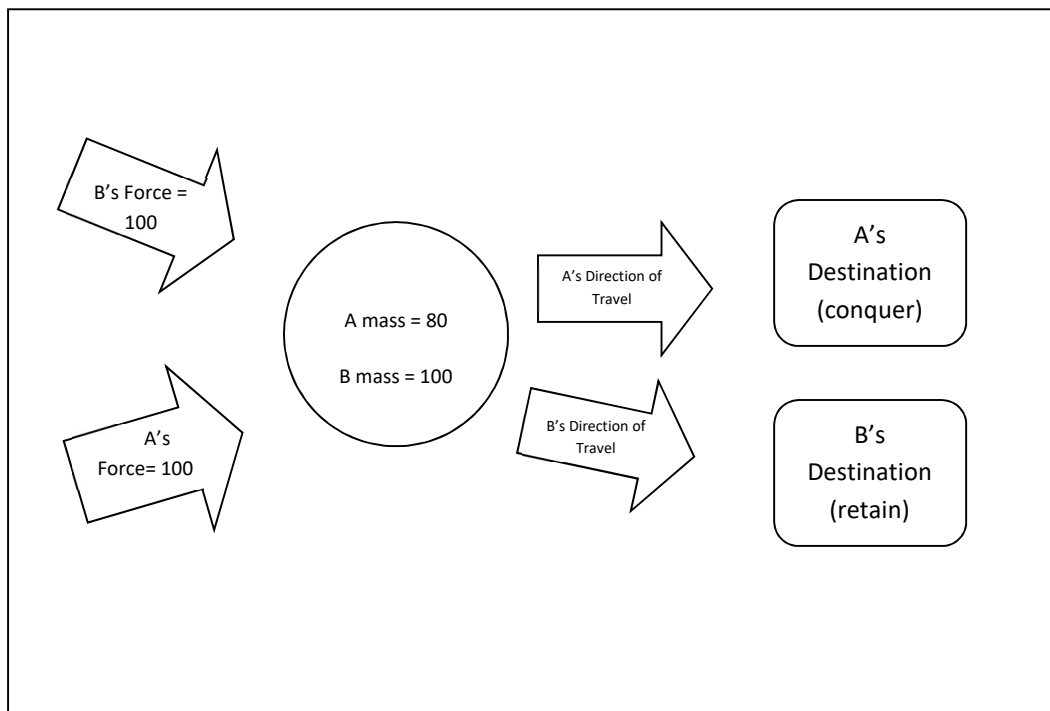
Fig. 3.5 A graphical model of the Falklands War actors where A is Argentina and B is the UK

From the above, we can see that the UK has a defined policy outcome, forces broadly

equivalent to its opponent (certainly in sea power and troop strength), but a greater mass. This

indicates a number of outcomes. Firstly, the war for the British was always going to start slowly,

while they prepared for deployment and applied the effort to fight. Even in the initial stages, gains

are not expected to be spectacular, but there will be gains nonetheless. However, as momentum

grows, the British (according to the model) will be able to take the initiative away from the

Argentinean forces and wrest the momentum of the war away from their control.

According to the model, the Argentineans had an initial advantage, as they set the

momentum. However, the British are able to edge the momentum way from Argentina, owing to

the different quality of the deployed forces and the effort that the UK is willing and able to deploy

to regain the territory. This is also related to the seeming unwillingness, or inability, to deploy

reinforcements to maintain momentum towards the stated policy goal: the securing of the

Falkland Islands for Argentina. Therefore, the model indicates that without the additional

commitment of force to the war, the eventual loss was theoretically understandable. Argentina

was either unwilling, or unable, to commit the required effort to secure the momentum of the conflict away from the British. This, we might suggest, is all well and good so far as using the model to help us understand the war of necessity (whether it *was* a war of necessity for the British is open to argument – that they perceived it as such seems clear). But does the model prove equally useful in assessing the war of choice?

Above, we posited that the war of choice is one where the territorial integrity, or the primary good of self-determination, is not at risk for an intervening belligerent. As with the case for Argentina, we have agreed that Argentina had difficulty in securing the momentum and was unable to satisfactorily address this challenge, particularly in an environment of *linear application of force.*[49] However, this does not necessarily predict that all wars of choice are going to end in the eventual defeat of the side with no 'skin in the game'. There are certainly instances where the side choosing to go to war can achieve defeat of its opponent, while still not committing to the same level of force it would do if it were fighting to defend itself. An excellent example of this is the NATO intervention in Kosovo. This is an interesting conflict for a number of reasons, in particular for the motivation of NATO governments in committing to fight. This was, above all things, a war that can be described as a 'Liberal War'[50] – one where the stated purpose of fighting is for the protection of others and the upholding of certain values above the agreed good of sovereignty.[,51] We are entering the realm of the ethical (as described in Chapter One), where judgements are made against competing primary goods to determine the most defensible position to take under the prevailing morality.[52]

This does, however, raise some interesting strategic and moral questions about how to conduct such a war. The moral and ethical questions (and the reasons why they are important) will

---

[49] I.e. where both sides are pushing our ball to their respective goals,
[50] Freedman, L., "Iraq, Liberal Wars and Illiberal Containment," *Survival* 48, no. 4 (2006). pp. 51-65
[51] Extended philosophical goods.
[52] See Page 38.

be addressed in later chapters, but the strategic questions can be analysed through the use of the

model we have been discussing. In doing so, we can see how the character of this war was defined

by the belligerents and their overall goals. As in our example above, we can look at the way the

force was applied by each side, and also the inevitable choices made by NATO to alter the

application of their force to modify the attainability of the Republic of Serbia's policy goals.

On the 24th March 1999, the NATO alliance began an air warfare campaign over the skies

of the Serbian territory of Kosovo, in an effort to prevent Serbian forces from continuing a process

of clearing Kosovo (by displacement or killing) of the ethnic Albanian population of the region.[53]

This was the end stage of a process that had included diplomacy on behalf of the international

community (including the Rambouillet process), leading eventually to a decision that the only

method of protection left was the use of force.[54] This was a response to 'the peculiar awfulness of

official Serb policy towards ethnic Albanians within Kosovo.'[55] To translate, the policy of the Serb

state towards this population was so far in violation of established international 'morality'[56] that is

was right to set aside the good of sovereignty to protect those targeted by Serbian policy, and by

extension Serbian forces. However, this was not planned as a long campaign by NATO, as the

expectation was that after a short (counted in weeks rather than months) period of aerial

intervention, the Serbian government would withdraw and comply with the will of the

international community.[57]

Indeed, we can begin to see the character of this conflict in the choices being made by

both sides. Serbia had embarked on a campaign of violence and intimidation against the Albanian

minority population, and NATO's planning process had begun with a set of targeting limitations

---

[53] Waller, M., Dresov, K, and Gökay, B. Eds., *The Politics of Delusion* (London: Frank Cass, 2001). P.115
[54] Perritt, H., *The Road to Independence: a chronicle of the Ahtisaari plan* (New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). P.47
[55] Waller, Dresov, and Gökay, *The Politics of Delusion*. P.104
[56] In the sense used in Chapter One
[57] Pettifer, J. , *The Kosova Liberation Army: underground war to Balkan insurgency 1948-2001* (London: Hurst, 2012). P. 204

that were directed at halting, or diminishing, the military ability of Serbia to conduct such a campaign.[58] We might suggest that due to political and other concerns, NATO governments found themselves deciding to direct NATO forces to the use of a linear strategy as we defined it above, that the application of force to this war was directed at the achievement of the goal in direct escalatory competition for control. However, this strategy was to fail to prevent Serbia from continuing the policy of removal it was pursuing. This, we might suggest, comes from two distinct sources. One source is the inherent character of using 'force from above'. Air power is impermanent; unlike the soldier on the ground, the missile or the aircraft has limitations that prevent its use being equivalent to 'the man on the scene with a gun.'[59] Therefore, it is almost impossible to exert formal permanent control of the battlespace from the air. Secondly, the use of airpower requires the ability of these forces to be able to find their targets, or indeed to have targets identified even before the sortie begins. In preparation of this, Serb forces had watched the air campaign in Iraq, and learnt the art of playing 'cat and mouse' with Allied Air Forces.[60] This leads us to the same conclusion as reached by Pettifer in *The KLA*, that '[t]his and other activity certainly indicated Allied seriousness but had little or no effect against...the VJ on the ground'.[61]

---

[58] Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: underground war to Balkan insurgency 1948-2001*. Pp 204-205
[59] "The ultimate determinant in war is a man on the scene with a gun. This man is the final power in war. He is control, he determines who wins." Adm. J. C. Wylie quoted in Gray, C.S., *National Security Dilemas: Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Press, 2009). p.82
[60] Kosovo, Independent International Commision on, *Kosovo Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). p. 86; Judah, T, *Kosovo - War and Revenge*, 2nd ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002). p.265
[61] VJ is a shortened form of Vojska Jugoslavije or Yugoslavian Forces;
Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: underground war to Balkan insurgency 1948-2001*.p.205

Thus the Serbian Army and the militarised police units could continue with less interference than might have been expected from a ground forces intervention.
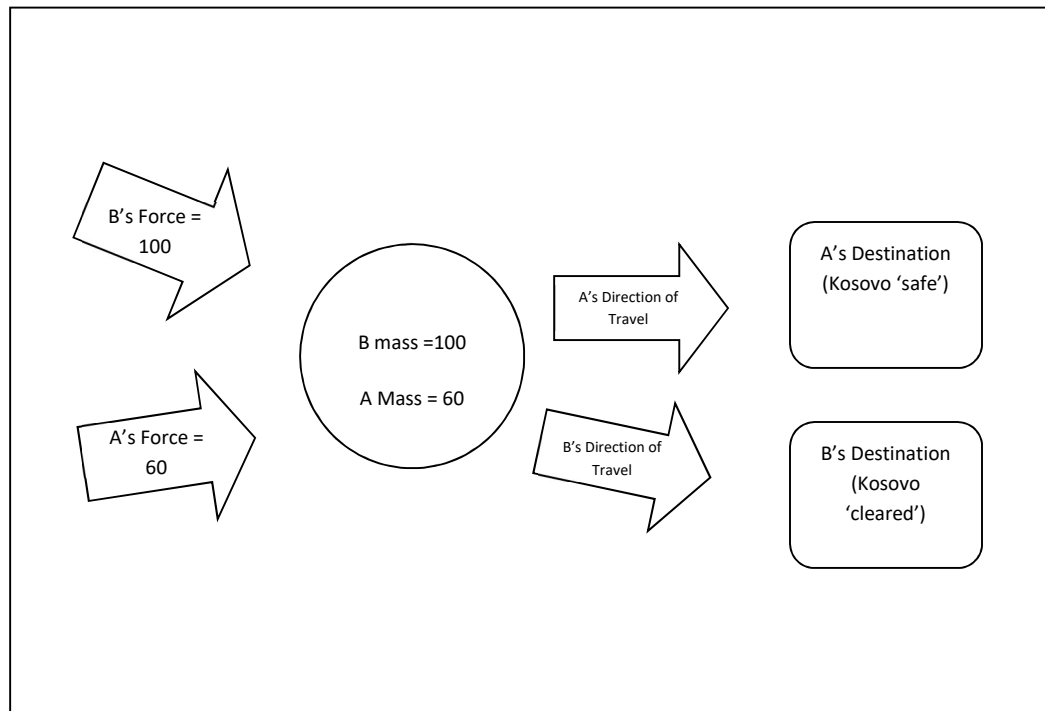

Fig. 3.6. Graphical analysis of the Kosovo Campaign with NATO as A and Serbia as B.

If we return to the graphical depiction of the model we have used in Chapter Two, seen in figure 7.1 earlier in this chapter, and develop it in Figure 7.6, we can examine the interactions of mass and the belligerents from a theoretical perspective. We can also use the graphical model to further examine other choices of strategy that do not immediately seem intuitive. First, we should look at the simplified model above, but with mass values attached. From this, we can determine that there was little to no possibility, with the targeting choices made by NATO (A), of NATO dissuading the Serb (B) leadership from seeking their eventual policy goal of removal of the Albanian population from Kosovo. As this was regarded as a policy necessity by Belgrade, we can determine that the mass they attached was extremely high. Additionally, the fact that the Serb forces were able to evade NATO air attack with reasonable efficiency reduced the ability of NATO to apply the force they sought to, to dissuade the enemy. This left NATO with a decision, as the linear application of force failed to work. There are (as indicated, although not explicitly stated, in

the model) three available choices to the failing actor. Such an actor can choose to simply yield and go home, to apply greater amount of force in the linear environment, or to apply available force in a different fashion (i.e. *obliquely*).

To take these choices in turn, we can agree that the likelihood of NATO simply 'going home' was extremely remote. We might suggest that the very act of going to war, for the stated aims of such a war, mean that surrender without defeat was not a Political option. Indeed, we might suggest more generally that to 'surrender' due to lack of success (distinct from defeat) only stores more trouble for the future, regardless of the particular war aims. Our next option requires the exercise of political will in applying additional force in the pursuit of 'non-tangible' war aims. If we concede that this war was fought for what is right – or an extended philosophical good – then we can see the dilemma of NATO planners and the civil leaders. To place troops in harm's way for such aims may cause discord within their own societies, and indeed within the Alliance's membership. It could be coherently argued that, while populations might agree that what is happening to the victims of Serb aggression is horrible, they may yet feel that it is not their state's role to police these values. As we have noted, the application of force has to be consistent with the ability to gather support for its application. Therefore, a lack in this area could potentially rule out any opportunity for the increase of force, or the use of ground forces within Kosovo as a method of safeguarding the population. Additionally, the 'audience' may take matters in to their own hands if they see a greater violation of Serb sovereignty, and their interests being harmed. These issues rule out the use of increased force. Therefore, there is only one option left for our 'failing' (or at least unsuccessful) belligerent: that they must choose to apply force in a different manner, to different targets, all while serving the policy goal and the wider concerns surrounding the war, in order to force the conflict towards the stated policy goal. We can see here the demonstration of the *oblique application of force.*

This is the option that was taken by NATO planners. On the 24th of March and 23rd of April 1999, the decisions were made to expand the legitimate target set, not only choosing targets within Kosovo but expanding operations into Serbia.[62] This target set included bridges, factories, power plants, and oil refineries as well as military infrastructure, media outlets and others.[63] As Judah observes 'That NATO increasingly aimed at demoralizing Serbia's population is, of course, correct'.[64] The target set was specifically designed to increase the cost of the war on Serbia, that the conduct of Serb forces in Kosovo now had penalties on the greater Serbian population and the leadership. What was, in some sense, a remote conflict which was unfelt in Belgrade, had now come home to the leadership in stark fashion. This was no longer about the linear application of force to the war, where the force was directed solely at the forces of the enemy. Rather, NATO was using their available means in an oblique fashion to impose their will (and that of its Political leaders) by subtly subverting the calculation of costs to the Serbians. Now the actions of Serb forces were met with force and resistance from the air, but the consequences of their actions were now also directed towards their leadership. By reducing popular support for the war within Serbia, and making the leadership under Milosevic begin to fear for its own safety, the war was turned.

We can see this turn play out in our model if we apply the same values but in a slightly different format on the next page:

[62] Judah, *Kosovo - War and Revenge*. p.256, Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: underground war to Balkan insurgency 1948-2001*. p. 93

[63] Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: underground war to Balkan insurgency 1948-2001*. p.93

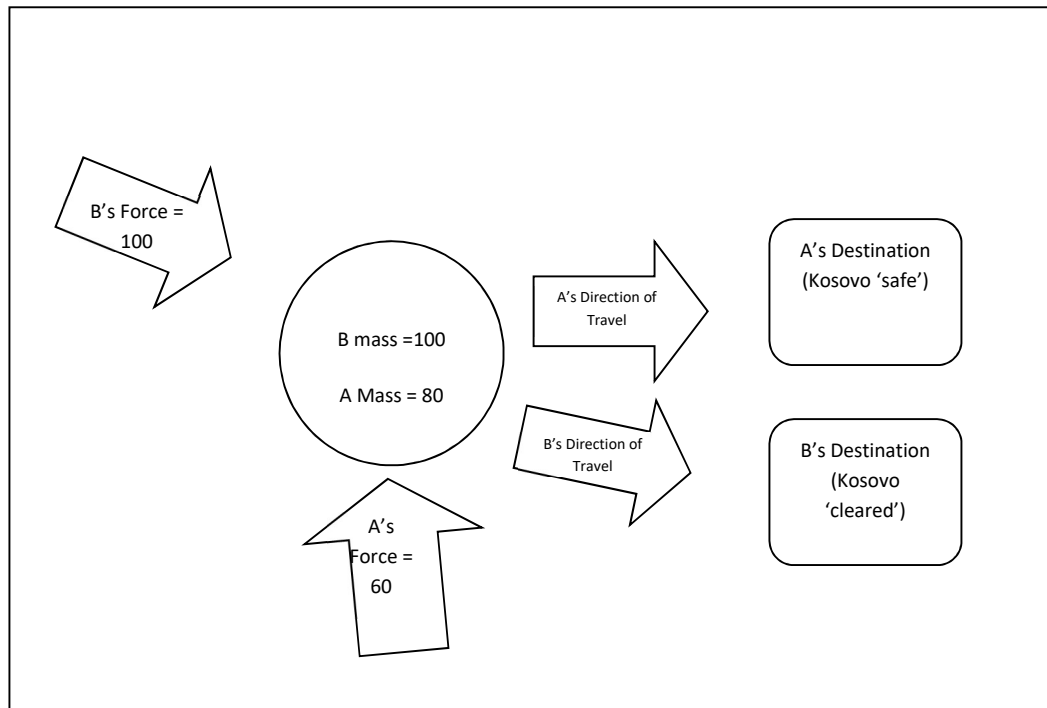[64] Judah, *Kosovo - War and Revenge*. p.256

Fig. 3.7 An analytical model of oblique application of force in the Kosovo conflict

We can now see that at the point captured in the model, NATO resolve has hardened (more mass has been applied to the NATO 'A' calculation), and the oblique application of the available force has the quality of applying a differential momentum while actively using the momentum of B to inversely pressurise the enemy. Rather than going home, or using greater force, NATO was able to use the existing available resources to create a condition where the control of the war was ceded by Serbia on NATO's terms. However, we might suggest that this control was not wholly 'controlled'. There are still other variables that we must account for in later chapters, particularly if we are going to discuss the business of controlling wars where oblique application is the business of the enemy, not ourselves.

In this chapter, we have attempted to account for mass in warfare, and the differentials in mass that may be experienced by both sides in the same conflict. In attaching these values, and in attaching putative force values, we have begun to account for the presence of momentum in warfare and how both sides must address the issues of momentum, force, and mass imbalance.

Additionally, we have been able to see that the oblique application of available force may be the better strategic choice, that rather than choosing a linear escalation. In other words, keeping the same level of effort but simply redirecting that effort may often be the preferred strategy. This is particularly important when other concerns such as potential allies, the domestic audience, the enemy's potential allies, and the very character of the war being fought are borne in mind. However, what cannot be ignored as running through the discussion is the concept of hierarchies in decision making priorities: whether to apply force, where to apply force, how to apply it all depend on these hierarchies. This is a key concept to remember as we proceed further. Warfare is about making decisions in a shifting hierarchy of priorities in order to maintain control of both our enemy and ourselves. In the model above, we could easily imagine the potential disaster of applying 100% of our force to a matter of little interest in such a circumstance. We would wildly overshoot our goal in a manner that would be as disastrous as losing, if not more so. We must, then, consider the problems of associating what is appropriate with what is effective. We saw from the Kosovo example above that NATO decided that the formula of achievable, appropriate, and effective force was resolved through the redirection of effort. This is not to say that such calculations are easy. Rather they are hard, and are only made more so by other factors at play, particularly if our enemy is the one acting obliquely. It is in examining these situations and the questions they raise that we might begin to see both a similarity in the challenges of positive ethical behaviour, and the difficulties in applying force for policy ends.

Chapter Four - The Atmosphere of War

Let us review the preceding chapters before we continue further with the exploration of the model laid out in Chapters Two and Three. In Chapter One, we presented a conception of ethics appropriate to the subject matter of this thesis, arguing that there exists a shifting hierarchy of moral prerogatives – some contingent and some primary – which need to be balanced within the context of the situation in which we find ourselves. Within this context, we argued that there exists a political process in deciding the law, but also in determining the contingent moralities which serve the primary prerogatives. Although the influence of ethics is obviously seen in the formation of the law; however, as we observed, following the law does not always lead us to the most 'ethical' of outcomes. Given this, we must be prepared to break legal injunctions should the need demand it. The goal is not merely 'staying out of jail', but rather 'sleeping at night'.

The Second and Third Chapters were concerned with the formation of a model through which we can understand wars, and specifically the nature of war. This model is analogous. As such, it is inherently reductionist. We are attempting to describe the complex social phenomenon of warfare by reducing it down the the imaginary movement of an imaginary ball across a field. In this, it is our concept of the nature of war that contains the graphical representations, rather like the box containing Schrödinger's cat. However, on this occasion we want the cat to be there, alive, and while we attempt to peak at the cat without it noticing and measure it. In this model, this analogy, we apply mathematical values so that we can gauge the effectiveness of certain strategies. The arrows change shape, and the numbers change according to our intuitions and judgement. We absolutely must concede that there are dangers here. War is a complex business, and the analogy of pushing the ball across a field might be deemed too simplistic. Criticisms of the analogy, of using any and all analogies, might be made. The method can appear too simple; it may seem that great swathes of concerns are assumed or cast aside. These are potentially valid

concerns, in that there are things that we may not account for in any model. However, we might suggest that that is the point of such analogous thinking – to strip away complexity to see certain fundamental points clearly, and then to add our own complexity. We do this to understand something we are interested in, in a new way. While the industrial production policy of the Union states in the American Civil War might be key to understanding a point in history, we may be more interested in how its products could be applied against the Confederacy. A model, using analogous thinking, could permit us to explore this. A model can have a specific role, without claiming to capture all aspects of subject. While we will return to possible criticisims later, our initial defense of the model is that we are using it as a tool of understanding, rather than the basis of a grand universal theory of everything. Our interest is in understanding the forces at play in certain circumstances, for which we contend that using the 'lightness' of our model is the best way forward.

Within this model, we sought to account for chance, friction, the linear application of force, and the occasional need for the oblique application of force – again according to the situation at hand and the contingent needs of that situation. In the model, we arrived at ideas of differential masses within any given conflict, and the consequent requirements when applying force to be able to overcome inertia and build useful momentum to achieve the desired end. This, we observed, could come from simply overwhelming the efforts of the enemy, or indeed subverting his momentum by using oblique force to achieve the goal. This has been, so far, relatively simple, as we have been considering our conflicts in the absence of an atmosphere. Our ball has been rolling across a field in the presence of gravity, friction, *et al*, but without any air. This we know from Clausewitz is an improbable situation, even theoretically, as he informs us that 'War is never an isolated act' and that '...the result is not always to be regarded as final.'[1] We must than account for the role of the atmosphere in war, how the atmosphere affects our war, and

---

[1] Clausewitz, *On War*. pp.78 -79

whether we can draw any advantage from the atmosphere. Here we may begin to see the convergence of the previous chapters in greater detail, despite the reader possibly noticing that there is a surprising commonality in the language used in our modelled nature of war and our discussion of ethics. This stands in contrast to the contention of Al Pierce as he argues that the language of strategy and ethics are exclusive from one another, but there is a requirement for these fields to be "at least conversant with and minimally competent…" in each other's language, if not sympathetic.[2] It may be that the coincidence between the ideas we have been discussing may indeed be complementary and not necessarily as exclusive from each other as Pierce might contend.

Problems of Mass and Control

In Chapter two, it was argued that the mass attached to the conflict is inherently bound in the necessity of the conflict for each belligerent. Therefore, we agreed that there was the potential (as demonstrated in the examples we examined) for two very different masses to be experienced by each party within the same conflict. This is interesting when we consider the application of force and the relevant amount of force (distinct from effort) to be applied to reach the desired end state of victory, or at the least, success. However, once we consider the effects of atmosphere in the model, mass comes to present us with a further complication in our understanding of the conduct of the war. We must, then, consider the 'origin' of the atmosphere: where it comes from and, more importantly, how it affects the conduct of the war. Thereafter we can replace our theoretical vacuum; the artificial conditions that we have created are unsustainable in reality and we must reconsider them. So where must we look for the atmosphere, and what are its effects?

---

[2] Pierce, "War, Strategy and Ethics." p.17

Clausewitz posits the idea that war is not an independent act; that there are conditions that come before and after it. This is not a difficult concept to understand. However, there is another logical inference that we might draw from his statement – that the two (or more) belligerents are not conducting themselves and their conflict in an environment somehow secluded from other actors. A notion of a war being a private affair with no onlookers is unsupportable outside of theory. If we accept Malinowski's definition of war as 'an armed contest between two independent political units, by means of organized military force, in pursuit of tribal politics' we might suggest that this leaves something unsaid. [3] While we have political units at war, there stands to reason that there are many other political units adjacent to the conflict, or at further remove. In short, we must accept that all wars, this most public of disagreements shorn of the niceties of statecraft and diplomacy, will have an audience.

Equally, we must agree that the front row of the audience is unlikely to remain wholly neutral towards the war being conducted at their feet. Those further away have a luxury of geographic remove that may reduce their interest – although again this may not always be the case, for reasons we shall explore later in the chapter. Therefore, we might suggest that it is the audience that provides the atmosphere for the conflict. It is straightforward to argue that there will be a prevailing attitude towards any war. For example, if a given war is triggered by the aggression of a state towards another (characterised as 'the crime of aggression' by Walzer), then there may be a prevailing approval for political units who seek to resist such aggression, or remedy it.[4] This approval might come in the form of explicit approval, tacit approval, or simply a refusal to condemn such resistance. The international system (I/S below) is well used to dealing with such explicit approvals – Article 51 of the UN Charter allows for resistance to armed attack in self-

[3] Malinowski, B. , "War - Past, Present, and Future," in *War as a Social Institution*, ed. J.D. Clarkson and T.C. Cochran (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941). p.22
[4] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. p.41

defence and Article 42 allows the Security Council to authorise use of force.[5] However, there are occasions where such explicit approvals are unavailable; we discussed one in the previous chapter with the NATO engagement in Kosovo. The structure, patterns of alliances among the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, and the parties directly engaged in the conflict prior to NATO action, mean that such approval was unlikely to occur - no matter the experience of the Kosovar Albanian population, or the other front row observers.

The question is what does this mean for our model, thus far explained? At the moment, we have ideas of duality of mass, force differential, means of application, and policy goals – how do we accommodate these ideas of the atmosphere (or the prevailing winds of opinion within that atmosphere)? Simply put, we should overlay an 'atmosphere' – or air with its winds and disturbances - onto our model. We are now no longer dealing with the vacuum of the previous chapters, but are dealing with a dynamic environment – windblown and unique to each conflict. This introduces hazards for our combatants, as they both face the imperative to act in a manner that compensates for the winds of opinion that prevail. However, neither combatant experiences them in quite the same way, as the prevailing winds may hinder or help them. Additionally, the masses at play make the situation much more unpredictable than we might immediately imagine. Looking at the model, we should apply notional winds and examine the effect. We can see this on the next page.

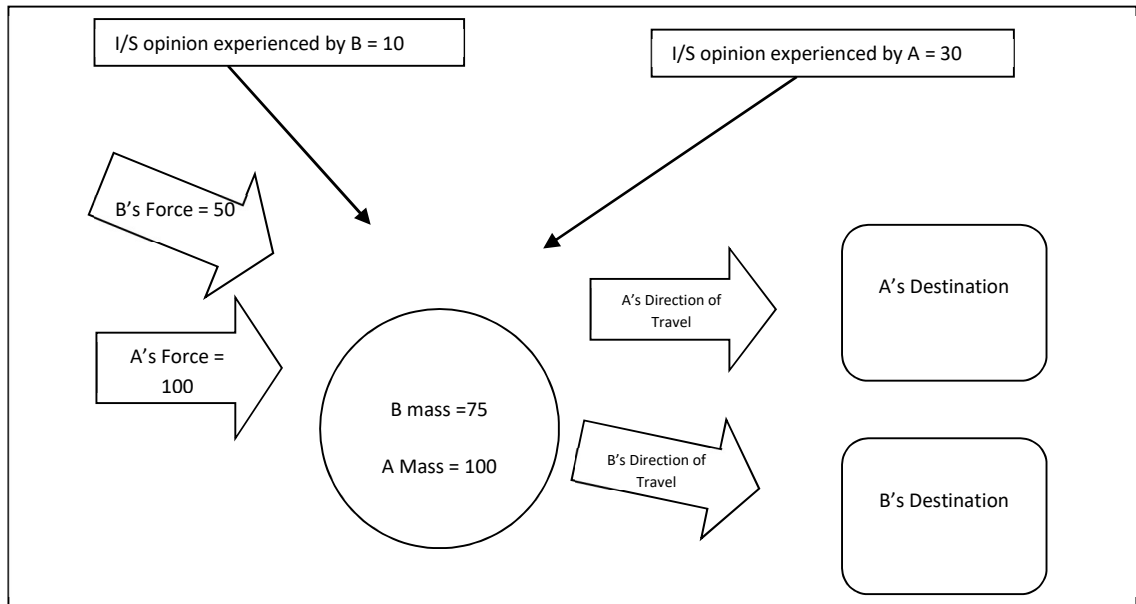[5] "Charter of the United Nations." pp.8-36

Fig. 4.1. Model from Chapter 3, showing masses and opinion applied

The previous visualisation has some arbitrary wind values applied, and it should be borne in mind

that this is simply for illustrative purposes only. The effects, however, are interesting to analyse.

We can see from above that there is a relatively strong alignment in the direction of travel

between opinion and B's application of force. While in political science terms we might argue that

this lends 'legitimacy' to B's actions, it also has a strategic effect in the model. It acts as a small

multiplier within the model, making up some of the disadvantage B has in fighting a war of choice

in force and mass terms. What is more interesting is that the experience of A is starkly different. A

finds itself facing a resistance, reducing the effectiveness of the effort made reducing the

momentum gained, rather than the gain made by B. Since A is already making a 100% effort in this

case, there is nothing it can do to counter this resistance except attempt to maintain that force

level and push through the resistance. However, the losses made may be enough to reduce the

momentum to such a point that B can make a meaningful change in direction of the conflict – if

not achieving the goal, at least preventing A from achieving theirs.

This is not to argue, however, that a prevailing wind of approval is an immediate bonus for

any side that happens to achieve approval from the international system. As we can see from

above, there is not a perfect alignment in the directions, and so B must compensate for this slight

divergence. There is a tendency in the above for B to be blown off course if it fails to react to the

winds it is experiencing. This may mean a simple realignment of effort, or indeed adjusting the

policy destination of the war. In other circumstances, however, perhaps less definitive than this,

they may find themselves with unhelpful crosswinds – maybe a general approval of the aim, but

divergent opinions on quite where the policy goal should be located. For A, the winds are

essentially another obstacle towards the goal, for B the winds can be something of a mixed

blessing (although not in the above case).

We encounter other problems within the model as soon as we apply opinion and

atmosphere. The issue falls around mass and force. In some cases, even with a tail wind, the wind

will make our ball unstable, if there is too little mass attached to the conflict. This means that if we

apply force incorrectly, or apply too much of it in our enthusiasm for victory, we may end up

wholly losing control. The conflict will spiral away from us much in the same way as occurs from

hitting a ping-pong ball too hard with a pool cue. This is the challenge that now confronts both

sides: how to maintain an adequate amount of control in a given situation while still achieving

victory. In the absence of an atmosphere, applying too much force would have lost control, but it

may have been regained if we could predict the direction of travel. With the winds blowing, we

may not to be able to predict that as we might wish. There are established concepts within

strategic theory for maintaining such control – such as 'economy of force' ensuring that we are

using all combat forces as effectively as possible and not diverting available effort.[6] By maintaining

such as position, we can ensure that we hold as much control as possible. But this assumes that

there are no other complicating factors within the war. By using such notions, we could easily over

apply force and end up losing control, if we assign too much force to too little mass. This becomes

increasingly dangerous if we apply any multiplier from opinion.

---

[6] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.213

We are, then, left in something of a quandary. We know that we need to apply force, that we need to overcome the momentum of the enemy, and that we may not have as much mass as the enemy and therefore will be required to tune our forces accordingly. However, in doing so, we risk strategic failure in either allowing our enemy to succeed or simply failing to achieve what we set out to do. This is the strategic question, which the model makes us think about – it is too easy to lose control over the situation – particularly in a war of choice. Even if we apply oblique force to the conflict, this may bring us into conflict with the pervading opinion of the audience of the conflict, further hampering our efforts. The question is inevitable raised: how can we make strategically smart decisions in these cases? What constitutes the 'Art of War' now that we have a fuller understanding of the conflict as depicted in the model?

The Difficulty with Mass

With the questions above, we have hit upon the fundamental problem with the concept of mass as it is experienced/applied to a given conflict. The dual nature of the mass of the conflict – that both sides have a different mass according to the importance of the conflict – is the problem.[7] This is not a problem with the model, but rather a difficulty with how we approach fighting in such a conflict. If too little mass is applied, we will not achieve a momentum. We will lose control to our enemy and be blown off course if there are competing winds of opinion, and we will ultimately fail to achieve our objective of victory. Therefore, we need to come to a position, indeed a recommendation, as to how we might address this mass deficit. This is problematic, as the importance we attach to any given conflict is not particularly changeable at will. While we might be endangered by proximity, or outraged at the conduct of one or other of the belligerents, fundamentally in a war of choice (in particular), it is difficult to summon the will to attach a greater

---

[7] Remembering, here, that our notion of mass is distinct from the one that Clausewitz advances. We are not considering, here, the concentration of forces – simply a measure of importance of a given cause.

than proportionate importance to the conflict. Herein lies the difficulty – because the mass is essentially either a) static, or b) subject to the actions of others for gain/loss, we cannot adequately change it in and of itself. Therefore, we constantly risk the loss of strategic control within any given conflict, and must rely on extremely fine judgement to achieve our goals. However, as the early campaign over Kosovo has previously illuminated, these judgements are precarious, easy to get wrong, and lead to victory being far from assured.

So the question then remains: within the scope of action available to the belligerent, bearing in mind the *casus belli*, what can be done? We need, within the model, and in actual conflict, to be able to change our experience of the mass. We cannot change the mass itself, so somehow we need to attach additional experienced mass against which to act. This is a knotty problem – how can we do this both in the theoretical environment and within the course of a conflict itself? In both the war of choice and the war of necessity we need to be able to add or remove 'mass' in some form or other to allow us the ability to maintain control, overcome any lack of momentum through application of increased force in such a fashion that there remains little question of losing control. Again, we revert to the language of control in strategy, the application of force, and the path to victory – the core concern of strategic theory from Frontinus and Vegetius to the work of the RAND Corporation and the Hudson Institute when considering nuclear weaponry. Admittedly, if nuclear weapons are being considered, we are far from a war of choice. These were suggested as examples of the concern for control within strategic theory. In the realm of conventional warfare (a term that is being used here to include asymmetric warfare), we absolutely need to be able to assert control. However, we might suggest that in doing so we should take a counterintuitive path – by voluntarily limiting our ability to fight that provides the equivalent of necessary resistance. This seems odd, that we should choose to act with restraint and limiting our fighting ability in order to make strategic gain. Yet it may be the way forward.

<u>Modelling 'Moral Weight'</u>

If we cannot naturally add mass to a conflict (because of the semi-fixed 'seriousness' we apply to a conflict), then finding a way to artificially add mass to it is the only path we can choose. Thus it is incumbent on the party experiencing the least mass to be able to creatively restrain themselves in such a fashion that it necessitates the application of greater force to close the potential gap between themselves and the enemy. This is certainly true in the case of the linear conflict; the oblique conflict throws up some interesting questions that we shall address later. Additionally, this way of thinking about the application of force opens interesting strategic options that, again, shall be explored further in this chapter. First, it is appropriate to add ideas of moral weight to the model above (with the opinion numbers still attached). Initially, we should look at contrasting diagrams both equal apart from weight values:

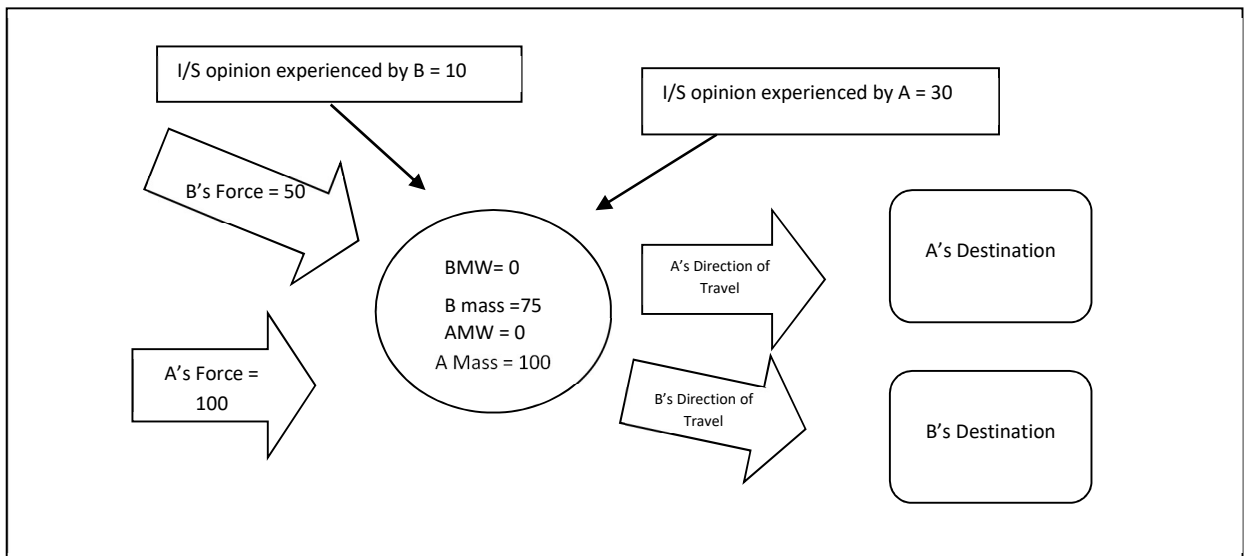Fig. 4.2. Model from Chapter 3, showing masses, opinion and moral weight at null value applied.

From the above we can see no change from the initial diagram. The state of play between the two sides has remained the same. While one side has an adverse wind, the other has a slight, although not overwhelming, opinion advantage. We now must repeat this model, but with a moral weight, value for B applied:
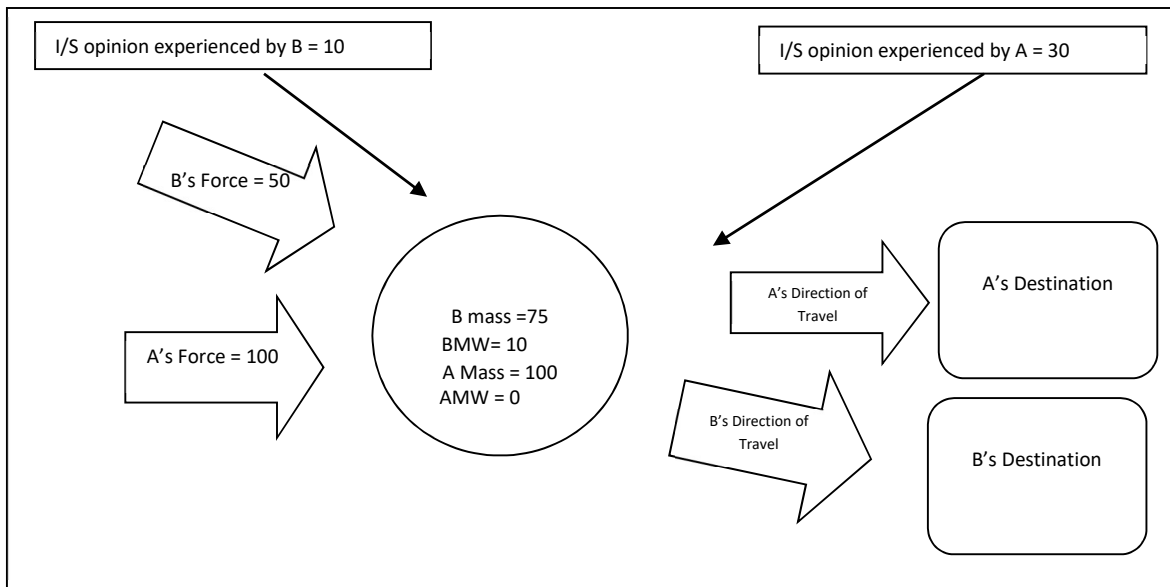
168

Fig. 4.3. Model from Chapter 3, showing masses, opinion and moral weight at 10 value applied to B

If we accept that the opinion values (dependent on overall direction of travel) act as a force gain while moral weight acts as a mass gain, then we can see the calculations beginning to change. State A is now experiencing a loss of force in the region of -30.[8] State A has no mass gain to make; it is fully committed at 100. At the same time, State B has gained available force (by =30) and gained 10 mass points. This means that it has made its forces less effective, but gained a boost in opinion and also momentum capacity. By doing a simple calculation – (IS + F) x (Mass +MW) - we can see the numbers changing. What was a reasonably untroubled victory for A is now looking a lot less certain:

For State A: (-30+100) x (100 + 0) = 70 x 100 = 7000
For State B: (50+30) x (75 + 10) = 80 x 85 = 6800

What was an initially huge potential gap has now reduced to a mere 200 of our notional units. Nevertheless, there is now considerable advantage available to B. By adding moral weight, it can voluntarily restrain and controlled fashion apply greater force to the object without fear of losing

---

[8] This may come from, for example, the application of sanctions, the refusal to trade and the general opprobrium that State A is now held.

control. This is because we can see a modification in how the force is applied if used in greater numbers, but with perhaps slightly less efficacy – we are no longer using the tip of the sword but rather the blade edge. Let us change the arrows of force above for A, adapting it to the application of greater, but more softly applied force. At no point should we think that this still not a bloody business, but only that it is one more concerned than it might be with ideas of proportionality and protection of civilians, for example as we see here, for example:
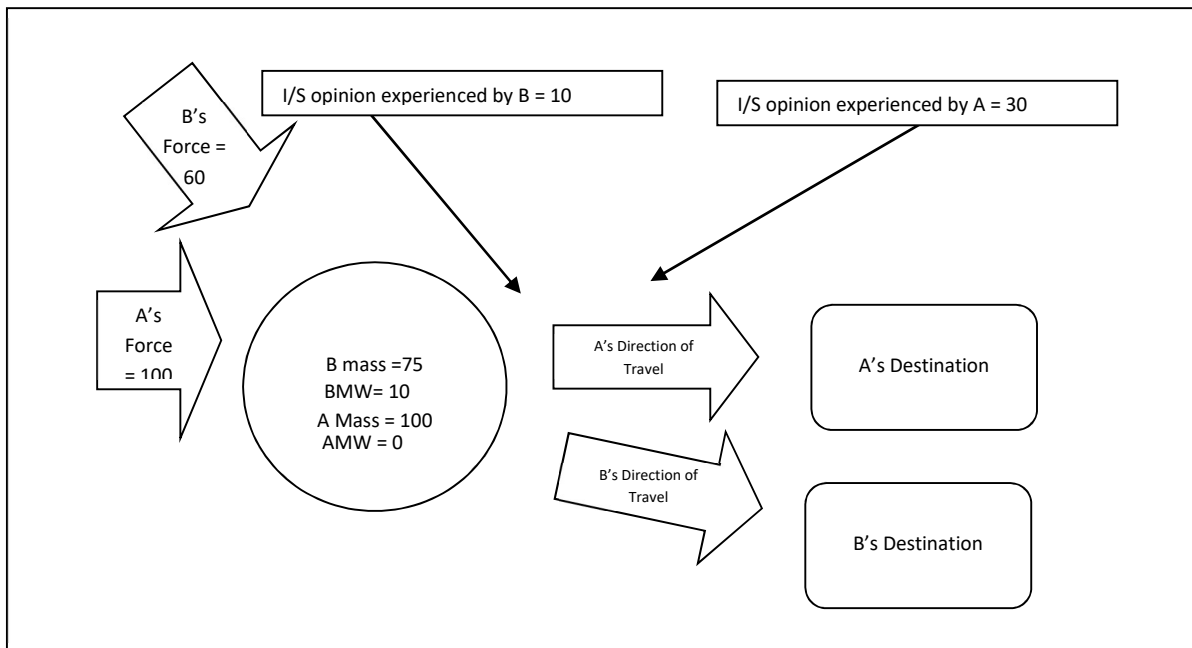
Fig. 4.4. Model Showing changes in State B's posture and force levels through limitation.

The effect seen above is a potentially interesting outcome. Rather than making the force of B less effective, the modification of posture has given B a much larger 'pushing surface' able to exert considerable force over a wider area than it previously was able to do. This has a direct effect on the ability of B to act. Firstly, it makes B much less able to control events, as it deals with a constant source of pressure to one side. It is now much less able to make mistakes that can be corrected without interference from the enemy. B is required to act both with greater precision and constant focus, with little or no room for error. Through increasing strength, but reducing

170

what we might call efficacy (rather that efficiency which has a different meaning in the context of

military operations), there is possible advantage that we previously might have discounted.

This all sounds extremely abstract, and we might agree that it is difficult to comprehend

the implications of the model in this instance. It would be useful to think in terms other than A or

B at this point. If we imagine a scenario, very much from within our definition of the war of choice,

then we might be able to get a better understanding of the theoretical position. Let us imagine

three states: Leftovia, Mittelwelt and Rightistan. A nationalist Leftovian government launches an

attack on Mittelwelt, seizing territory. There develops a refugee crisis on the Rightistan border and

Mittelwelt forces cannot adequately respond to Leftovian aggression. Rightistan decides to

intervene, in protection of the Mittelwelt state, but does not commit full resources. There are

remnants of Mittelwelt forces operating but they cannot respond adequately. Let's look at the

position of the three states. Firstly, prior to Rightistan intervention:
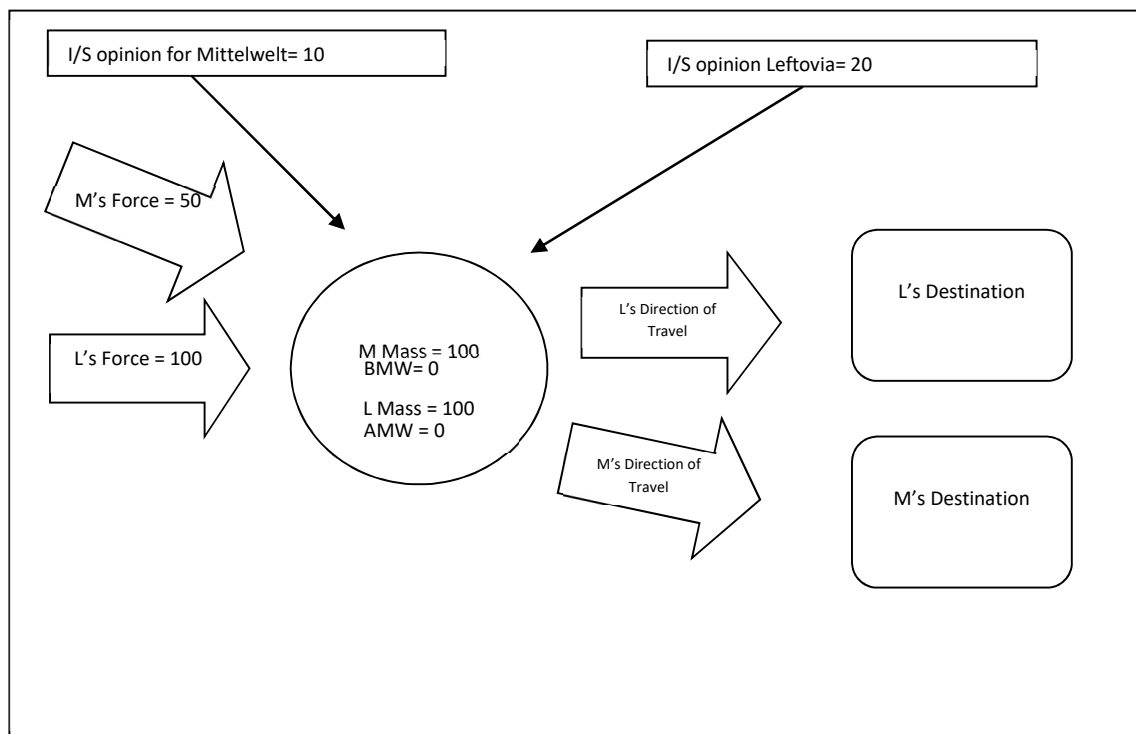
Fig. 4.5. Initial Analysis of Leftovia, Mittelwelt and Rightistan Conflict.

Now, we can assume that both sides have an attached mass of 100. We shall imagine that

Leftovia has embarked on national expansion, and has done so for clear national policy

prerogatives (differing from the Falkland example used previously). Mittelwelt is not fighting a war
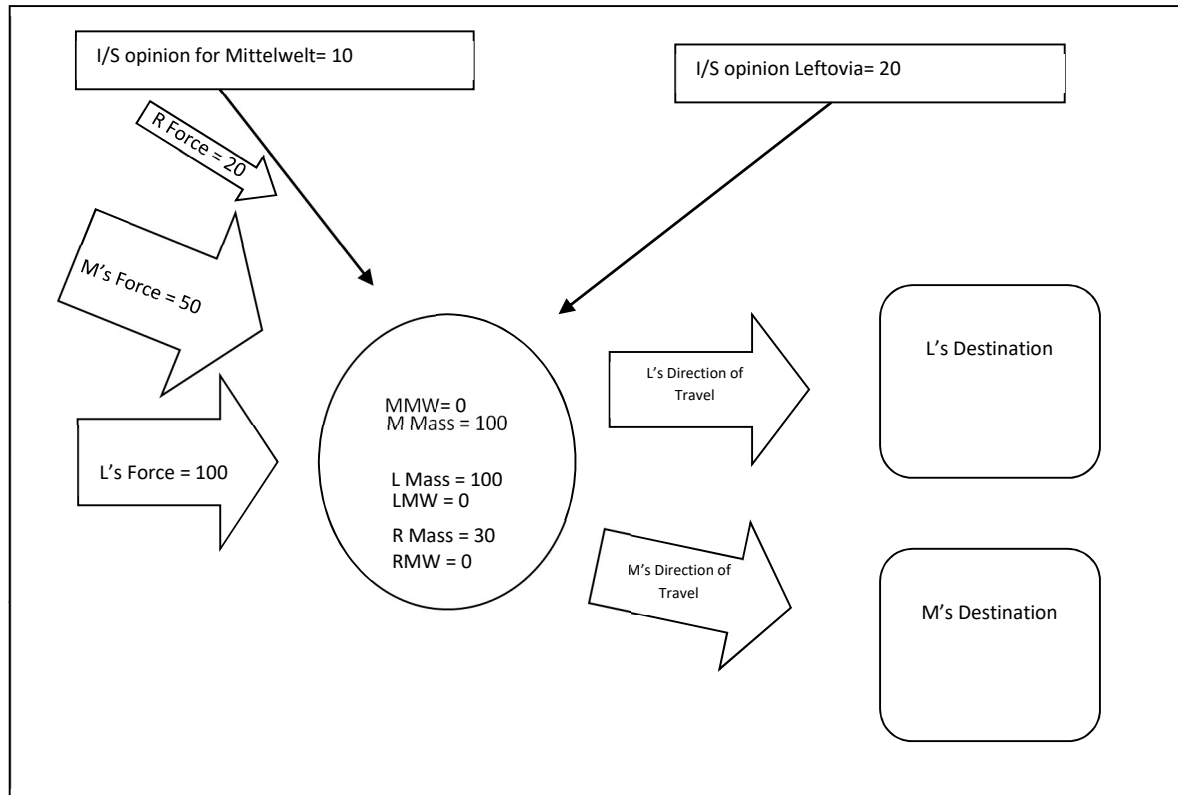
Fig. 4.6. Model Developed with application of Alliance Forces

R has joined the fight, but has not really committed itself to the victory. It has contributed (relative

to Leftovia) a force of 20, but the mass it has attached to the fight is only 30. If we use the same

calculations - (IS + F) x (Mass +MW) - as we did in the theoretical version above, we can no begin

to see a clearer force picture:

For Leftovia: (-20+100) x (100+0) = 80 x 100 = 8000,

For Mittelwelt: (10+50) x (100+0) = 60 x 100 = 6000,

And for Rightistan (10+20) x (30+0) = 30 x 30 = 900.

So, the combined force totals for Mittelwelt and Rightistan only equate to a total in theatre calculation 6900 against the total theatre capacity of 8000 for Leftovia. Victory is still assured for Leftovia, although admittedly it will not come as easily as it could have without Rightistan involvement. If Rightistan were to redouble its efforts and over-reinforce, it could stand to lose control of its part of the war. As the force application approaches the total mass of the importance, instability will set in, assuredly. While on paper increased effort might seem to be the appropriate response, it introduces a potential loss of control that is, to an intervener rather than a player of necessity, unacceptable. Therefore, Rightistan must find a way of being able to artificially generate mass against which it can apply force, so that can keep control and achieve the goal.

Here the concept of moral weight becomes useful. Let's assume that Rightistan adds an equivalent moral weight value of 30 mass points. In other words, suppose that it were to start treating the conflict as having a greater mass by inhibiting certain actions – glibly making it harder for itself. This would require greater reinforcement to overcome any gain loss, but would mean that Rightistan's effort would no longer be in danger of spinning out of control by applying more force than the mass can handle. So, let us assume that Rightistan now applies a moral weight equivalent to the mass, which leaves us with this calculation:

$$(10+20) \times (30+30) = 30 \times 60 = 1800$$

Added to Mittelwelt's effort, without reinforcement, there is still little chance of success. And any progress made can be regarded as slow going – the force applied is simply not enough to overcome the Leftovians. Indeed, the force applied is so little that we can confidently predict that the progress will be slow and painful on behalf of the Mittelwelt/Rightistan alliance, before their eventual defeat. So, Rightistan needs to reinforce. As it does so, its force posture changes according to the restraint. Changing to a broader sweep playing surface, we see the following on the next page:
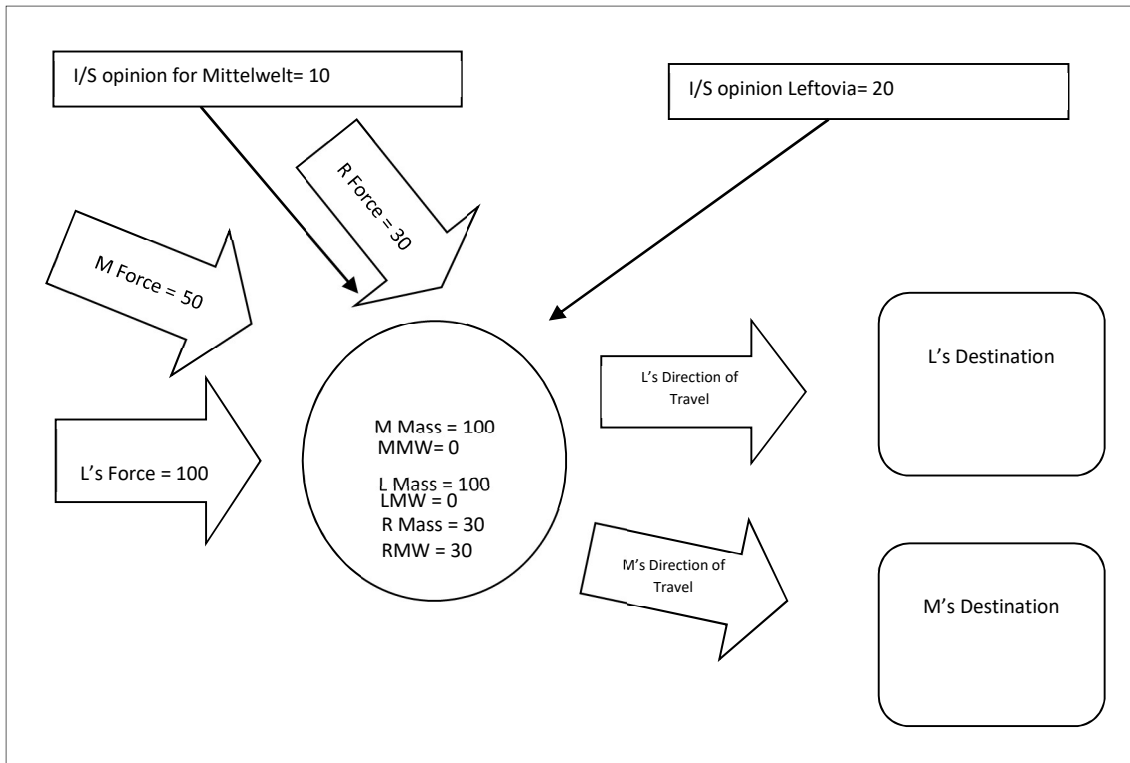
Fig. 4.7. The developing conflict with Rightistan reinforcement.

By introducing restraint, we have changed the shape of the force deployed. This has come about as a necessary change to build the moral weight into the mass of the object. The moral weight is a subjective value applied, rather than an innate value within the conflict. As we can see, this has had the predicted outcome from the dry model shown earlier. In addition, it has changed the potential gap between our allies (Rightistan and Mittlewelt) and the perfidious Leftovians to a point where the alliance now has the advantage, with a total of 8600 total Force/Mass (FM) units. But there have been other strategic effects. There is now room for correction in force application, a flexibility of application (restraints can be removed if the mass suddenly increases), and no potential loss of control at this effort level. The allies can even increase effort (for swifter victory) with room to spare.

This model of force and its application is helpful in analysing the components of a conflict, but there are drawbacks. It assumes a certain number of constants that leave its utility open to

question. The difficulty of models is that in order to keep them simple, we sometimes (if only temporarily) skirt over questions of friction and chance to maintain simplicity. However, there are advantages in this more stripped-down thinking when addressing certain concerns. This will be considered later. There is an enormous question that we have not yet considered that must take precedence – the one of how do we add this moral weight?

Adding Moral Weight

Earlier it was argued that the cause for which we fight is intrinsic to the success we might expect; such that, if we do not accept the seriousness of the cause (despite having applied enough thought to the subject that we have committed forces), then we may not win. The question is, then, how can we artificially produce the conditions of (for want of a better description) moral arduousness, that compel us to take the situation seriously? Having a moral mass limits our actions to those most likely to achieve success and restrains our forces in such a way that it compels control and thus leads to a strategic success. But this moral mass might be reduced, or indeed absent (for example in treaty obligated defence) in the conflicts in which we find ourselves.

We are now looking for something that can provide the resistance of mass when that mass is unavailable to us, in order to be able to replicate the control it gives us in applying our best efforts – to borrow from elsewhere, resistance is not futile. But, this change will necessarily mean that the conflict will play out differently, as we will be unable to take advantage of the effects of momentum previously observed. This, we could argue, is a strategic deficit, because we can no longer set a conflict bowling along, giving it the push in the right direction to our preferred outcome. Thus, we are making the lives of the forces we employ harder, as they will be unable to use that momentum and simply sustain it. Therefore, logically, we should argue that this course of action (adding resistance) is at best, ill-advised, at worst foolish to the point of ludicrous. There

cannot be advantage in artificially attaching the resistance of mass, can there? From all the forgoing discussion in this chapter, we have entered the world of the counterintuitive action and the subsequent complexity of strategic action. Initially, we would argue that mass is not particularly helpful as a concept, but instead we see that the importance we attach to a cause actually helps us to maintain the appropriate force, and encourages our enemies into making mistakes and losing control. The question is now, how do we avoid being lulled into making those same mistakes – over applying ourselves to the point where we lose control of the situation and hand the total advantage to our enemy. While this may not be much of an issue in the war of necessity, in the war of choice it is vital.

We inevitably come to an issue with which we have a little experience from another chapter: we are in an environment of competing prerogatives. We have the demand for victory, the demand for control, the ability to respond to an intelligent enemy, and the ability to usefully apply force to our conflict. These are competing demands, all jockeying for our attention and all making a greater or lesser demand on that attention according to the situation. While the primary prerogative might be victory, the contingent demands that depend on that demand are all predicated on its achievement. And so we must maintain control, but that might inhibit the speed of application of force. We are constructing what appears to be an argument that can be conducted in the language of ethics introduced in the first chapter. The strategist must be able to balance the competing demands of the battlefield in order to achieve his or her version of the good life: eventual victorious peace.

While we might argue that the application of overwhelming force is the way to win a conflict, a position that we might have sympathy with, the likelihood of that not going wrong appears very low within the realms of the model. At best we shall overshoot the goal, at worst the conflict will career out of control. We must, then, find a way to adopt the presence of force with a high notional value in application, but functionally reduce that capacity. In meeting a force of 100

in the model, we should be able to address it with a force that exceeds it, but is limited enough to guarantee control. We are in the realms of positive mass, where the largest mass is no longer one hundred, and where we can *modulate the efficacy of force* according to the strategic demand.

There are a variety of ways we can reduce efficacy. We can, for example, choose to use less well trained troops, whose notional force value would be reduced, but there are possible disasters with such a choice. Although such troops have a reduced military value (less well trained and thus less efficacious operationally) they still have a high enough force value for things to go wrong. A poorly trained, highly armed group of soldiers can do untold damage, as we must assume that their discipline would also have suffered from lack of training. We may find that the deployment of such units would actually hand a further mass advantage to the enemy. We, then, cannot choose to do this. The use of militias, for example, is full of potential downfalls for which we will have to carry the mass penalty. Machiavelli is similarly cautious about the use of mercenaries:

> "Moreover, they spared no endeavour to relieve themselves and their men from fatigue and danger, not killing one another in battle, but making prisoners who were afterwards released without ransom. They would attack no town by night; those in towns would make no sortie by night against a besieging army. Their camps were without rampart or trench. They had no winter campaigns. All which arrangements were sanctioned by their military rules, contrived by them, as I have said already, to escape fatigue and danger; but the result of which has been to bring Italy into servitude and contempt."[9]

These were not effective soldiers through their own choice. Their lack of efficacy was not in pursuit of the strategic goal, but rather simple laziness and a willingness to fight for anything beyond profit, and never to struggle beyond the point of discomfort it seems. Thus we are looking for a solution that does not demand laziness, but rather relies on the discipline of soldiers to

---

[9] Machiavelli, N., *The Prince* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc - Kindle Edition, 1992). P.33

adhere to professional standards, capable of limiting the most effectively trained to a point where

the resistance is such that the control of a conflict is assured, while leaving enough force margin to

achieve victory. We must add mass, but in a way that blunts efficacy while relying on discipline.

This is something of a challenge. All the while, we must be mindful of the need to maintain a

strategic capability to respond to the enemy should he develop additional resources, should an

ally enter on his behalf, or should efficacy be lost without our choosing to 'lose' it. We are, now, in

an area that seems extremely alien. We need to add moral weight to our experience of our

abstract conflict, particularly the conflict of choice.

It is here that we can begin to make the case for acting in a more morally positive fashion

than our initial impulse might be. In conflict, we must acknowledge that there can be a tendency

towards the brutal – Thomas Hobbes tells us that in conflict in pursuit of security from 'continual

fear, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.'[10] In

the environment of brutishness, we should expect brutishness. But this is not the case, however,

in every war and amongst the profession of arms. Shannon E. French, in 'The Code of the Warrior',

argues that professional militaries evolve and develop codes of moral conduct as a means of

establishing discipline, developing *esprit de corps,* and providing a moral foundation for the

business of warfare. [11] While she traces the independent development of such codes, they all

appear to have the contingent function to a primary purpose: that of distinguishing the

professional soldier from the poor, lonely, solitary man of Hobbes. These codes are guarantors of

conduct, there to make the seemingly unbearable more so. They distinguish warfare from simple

murder. To depart from them is a violation of the 'civilised' as these societies have come to

understand the word.

---

[10] Hobbes, *Leviathan*. P.56
[11] French, S., *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004).

We should, at this point, begin to see that there is an even stronger parallel from our discussion in the first chapter. We are, here, discussing a morality. This morality in turn informs the moral condition of the individual soldier. And the competing demands of the battlefield become more apparent for both the individual and the collective, when they are charged with the primary objective of victory while being challenged to obey the strictures of the demands made by the prevailing morality. We are in an ethical world, where the competition for the souls of soldiers and those commanding them is as present as the competition with the enemy. It is in these moral demands, that reflect both the demands of the institutions and their values, and the demands of the individual and their moral expectations of themselves, where we may find the ability to add the mass which we are seeking.

This seems an unusual position to take, that we are invoking the Good Life in matters where it has seemingly broken down. But French's observations show us that we are still dealing with matters of the Good Life, and that interaction between warriors can be regarded as an ethical negotiation of terms between value sets, at the same time as being an armed negotiation between other conceptions of the Good Life. Human thriving, or at the very least, the reduction of the tendency to the bestial, is what is at stake – beyond the simple (or indeed difficult) conditions of victory set for the forces themselves.

At this point, we should accept that the conception of these value sets can be regarded as very much a deontological exercise. We can look to the prescriptions within military law (such as the outlawing of adultery noted in US Military law)[12] to see the deontological tendency. We can also look to conventions such as the Geneva or Hague Conventions, to see the deontological legal demands for good behaviour. [13] But as we observed in the first chapter, the law is simply the minimum acceptable standard, the openly negotiated and agreed standard by which parties agree

[12] See Page 68
[13] See Page 70

to be bound. There is nothing preventing the individual, the institution, or the commanding authority from demanding a higher standard of behaviour than is required from minimum legal standards.

Let us return then to our model, with these reflections in mind. If we were to modulate the moral choices made by forces, we could alter the way they interact with our ball. We cannot objectively add mass to our war - it has an importance that is already assigned to it - and barring any escalations or increased threats to the 'choosing' side in a war of choice for example, that mass is static and unchanging. However, we can change how we *experience* that mass. By choosing to act in a more restrained fashion, by limiting our means of applying force not by numbers but rather by actions, we can modify our interaction with our 'ball', increasing the control and force we are able to exert to the cost of the enemy. To be clear, we are talking about reducing the overall efficacy of forces through encouraging greater restraint, relying more greatly on martial values and traditions such as those identified by French, and from the wider canon of military ethics. This is not because it is simply 'good' to choose to limit the activities of forces according to a higher standard than required by the codified morality of the law. There may be rewards in heaven for adopting such a posture, but we are concerned with a more low and base purpose – that of victory. This does not mean a limitation of numbers, rather it allows the controlled increase of force that will help frustrate the ambitions of our enemy. We can readily agree, and demonstrate, that this will be to the cost of efficiency, but it may be that in making such a sacrifice we leave ourselves with rather more options that we might initially expect from making such a choice.

<u>Limitation, Force and Control.</u>

We should, at this point, return to our simplified model of two actors in a state of conflict. Up to this point, we have seen both actors acting in linear fashion (with the exception of a brief excursion into the concept of oblique application of force). This was reasonably helpful, from a simple numerical perspective, to help us calculate the chances of success. But now we must attempt to modify the force on one side or the other to account for an increase in force, changing our experience of the mass through modulation of efficacy and effort. Initially we started with a notional conflict modelled like this:
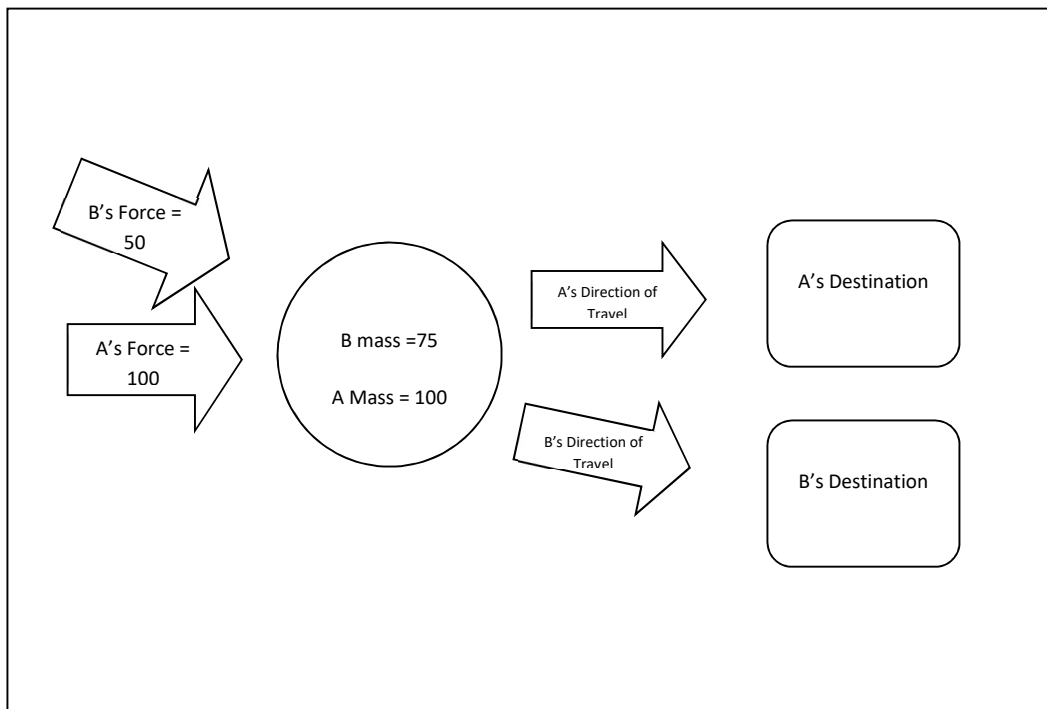
<u>Fig.4.8. The simplified model drawn from Chapter Three.</u>

This simplified model, taken from earlier in Chapter Three, was employed to introduce the analytical tool we have been using. Avoiding the complications we have introduced earlier in this chapter, it allows us to simply consider the effects of the suggested path above. From the model, we can see the difference in the potential gap – (BF x BM) compared to (AF x AM) – leading us to the conclusion that B cannot win. The question is how can B deploy enough force to overcome its

momentum disadvantage and still maintain enough control to achieve victory without the conflict

spiralling out of control?

Let's assume that B, wanting to achieve victory (as it should, because it has committed

troops to the fight), recognises that it has a has disadvantage compared to A. We know B does not

have as much mass in the fight, and has deployed forces that have a lower value in capacity to A.

We also know that to make up the potential gap, B would have to commit enough force which

might leave control of the conflict at risk. B must, then, be mindful of how it chooses to augment

its commitment. But B must respond if it seeks to win. Otherwise, this will simply be a bloody and

humiliating exercise in futility. Let us assume that B deploys more forces, equivalent to 35%

greater than A can muster. This leaves significant danger of loss of control, but let us assume that

B also increases the moral thresholds in action. This means, for example, showing a greater care to

avoid double effect, the greater protection of cultural goods, and the establishment of policing of

ground taken to prevent a vacuum in the civil space. We might envisage the deployment as

something like this:

B's Force = 135

A's Force = 100

B mass =75

A Mass = 100

A's Direction of Travel

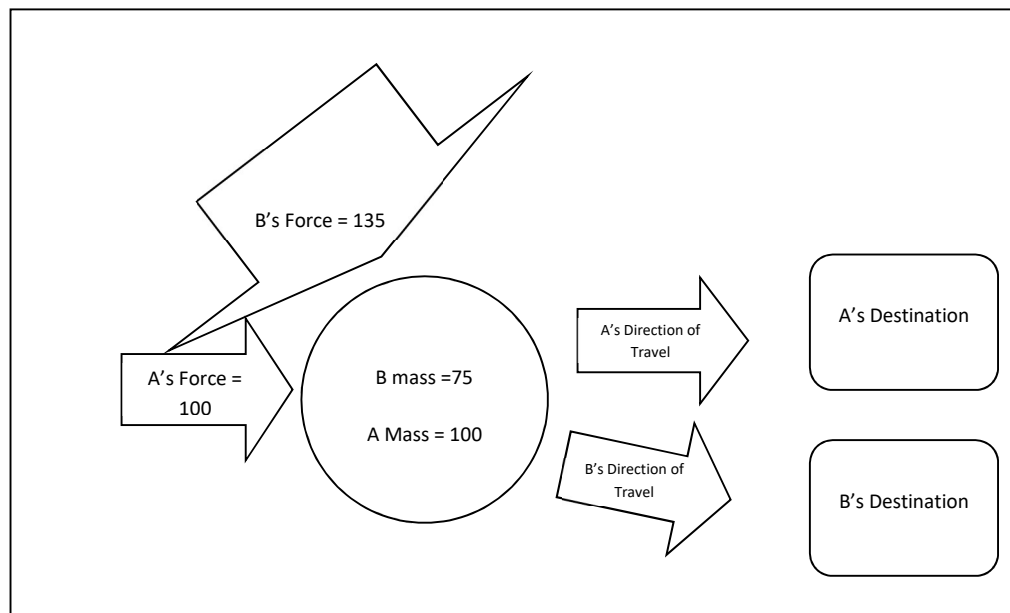A's Destination

B's Direction of Travel

B's Destination

Fig. 4.9. A graphical representation of the change in force application

Something interesting begins to emerge in the visualisation above. The reduction of

efficacy has broadened the tip of the arrow. We now have a much greater contact area available

to interact with the ball of our conflict. This gives us a much greater area to push with, and reduces the available room on the field for the enemy, A, to manoeuvre. While the simple numbers only indicate the barest minimum of advantage from the perspective of a potential gap (125), the advantage gained in reducing the access to the field of play has given B possibly a decisive victory. By manipulating the efficacy, and increasing troop strength but applying it more broadly and softly, we have created the conditions of victory for B that previously did not exist. The effect B has had is flooding the playing field with additional players, but making sure that they each work within a defined area of operation, to prevent them running into each other. Each actor is focussed on the objective, but limited in their range of actions to prevent loss of control. This is, in itself, interesting. If we were to imagine the deployment of the untrained players (or Machiavelli's mercenaries) in this fashion, we could foresee the problems that would arise. With undisciplined force, the risk of loss of control, or stumbling into one another is greatly increased. With the use of those solely interested in profit, we might foresee overrun or unreliability in maintaining control. This places a burden of training, and a burden of discipline, on B. They must instead use disciplined troops. But in keeping that discipline, advantages are to be found.

In blunting the efforts of a much greater force, B has managed to find a way of ensuring that it can maintain control of the conflict in a much more satisfactory fashion. It has provided itself with enough available resources so that it can react with only incremental movement to its arrow, rather than having to make large changes in direction of 'pushing' in response to A. All the while, it has a broader surface from which to play, and so this allows for a more sustainable effort against the enemy, consequently helping to expend the available effort from A. If we were conceive this as similar to a game of billiards or snooker, B is no longer using the tip of the cue, but rather the length of the cue to control the ball and guide it to the relevant pocket.

The question now is how we are able to create these limitations? Briefly we have explored the consequences of limiting efforts, and an interesting possible side effect of limiting them. This

does not answer the core question, which we entertained above, about how we go about limiting this effort. The simple answer is that in order to be able to increase adequately the available force in a manageable fashion, we should ensure that our forces are in moral condition to accept such limitation. This is not simply a deontological question, which might mean that we extend the list of proscribed actions and ensure that troops are observed through the application of compliance measures. The moral understanding of the soldier should not be founded on simply the fear of repercussions. Rather we should be able to articulate the strategic advantage of obeying a different, and perhaps more stringent, set of values in our approach to fighting than our enemy adopts. This is not merely because we want to look good in the eyes of the audience, thus heading off some of the complications from the winds of opinion, but rather because making such a choice is strategically valid. This is not about asking soldiers to bravely accept limitation to hand advantage to the enemy. Rather it means that we must allow soldiers the means to accept such a demand in the knowledge that they have the support of the depth of force behind their position. This does, however, raise some challenges for the commanders of such forces, up to and including those who send them to war.

Making the Argument

This is all, so far, extremely theoretical to the point of abstract. We have argued that there are advantages to applying greater force than the enemy can muster but in a more restrained fashion. In doing this we seek the advantage, but such a move demands both individual bravery and the moral courage of commanders to make the case for employing more troops than seems necessary to their civil masters. To see how this might play out in reality, we should now endeavour to apply this idea to a conflict which is well documented, where we might test whether such a policy would have been effective. We might also look at another conflict for comparison, to see to what

conclusions the analysis leads us. In order to test our position, we shall therefore return to the Kosovo conflict, used previously to test the example of oblique application of force, but first we will address the idea of applying greater force than we might initially expect by looking at the conflict in Vietnam. In the case of the Vietnam war, there is ample evidence of attempts by the US to deploy greater force than (the political will assigned) mass allowed, and we know the subsequent consequences.

These will not, however, be traditional case studies in the purest sense. Rather, we will analyse the conflicts according to the model we have created above, which will lead us to consider other possible options available to the relevant commanders (counterfactuals). In the two examples chosen, Kosovo and Vietnam, we must concede that both are wars of choice from the perspectives of, respectively, NATO and the USA. We must also note that these conflicts are geographically contained, which is convenient for our purposes. We must be aware that we are applying a simplified model of conflict onto them as an analytical tool – and thus some details and considerations must go by the wayside (at least initially). However, this will allow us to return to ideas we first mentioned in Chapter Two, such as ideas of the trinity and the effects of reason and passion, as well those of force. It is here that we unite the model in all its parts, in order to be able to see some consequential effect of some of our ideas. From this point, we can advance the discussion we began above, that limitation of greater available force is strategically preferable (for a number of reasons) to merely equalising or using a less behaviourally limited smaller force.

Vietnam did not begin as a war for the United States of America. Rather, it began as an advisory mission to the French Forces who were conducting a counterinsurgency campaign which was aided, in part, by President Truman.[14] Before considering a strategic analysis of this war for the USA, we should limit our terms of reference to the war in isolation from wider political events,

---

[14] Palmer Jr, Gen B., *The 25 Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam* (Lexington, KY: Da Capo Press, 1984). p. 5

particularly in the USA. As we have spent this chapter considering the 'atmosphere' around a war and its consequences, we can agree that we now have all the parts in place to make a strategic analysis. Additionally, we can now indulge in looking at other strategic choices within our framework of oblique, overwhelming, or mass added forces.[15] To begin with, we should look at the history of troop deployments to Vietnam by the USA, and (where relevant) its allies. From the establishment of the Military Assistance Advisory Group in December 1954 under Eisenhower, US involvement escalated continuously until the 'Vietnamization' policy under Nixon.[16] These troop number increases are relatively easy to track, with Kennedy increasing US military presence between 1961-63 from 900 to 17000 troops.[17] This was followed by an even more rapid build-up of forces from 1964, where there were 23000 troops stationed in December 1964, rising to 385000 during 1966 and ultimately 535000 US troops in Vietnam in 1968.[18] In addition, South Korea provided 60000 and Australia 8000 troops, along with other smaller contributions, leading to an overall non-US (and non-Vietnamese) contingent of 71000 in 1969.[19] We are left here with an impression of a reasonably rapid build-up of seemingly overwhelming force by the USA and allies during this period. However, this does not give us the whole picture. At the same time, between 1965 and 1967, Hall states that the Army of the North Vietnam was able to match escalation by the USA by recruitment and 'aggressive strategy.'[20] We should look, therefore at this period within the model, on the next page:

---

[15] 'Indulge' is a specific choice of wording here, as we are straying close to counterfactualism. The purpose here is to simply examine the other choices that may have been available in a different climate. At no point should we suggest that these choices were available to the USA at the time.
[16] Palmer Jr, *The 25 Year War*. p. 6
[17] Palmer Jr, *The 25 Year War*. p. 10
[18] Hall, M, *The Vietnam War* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2000). p. 30
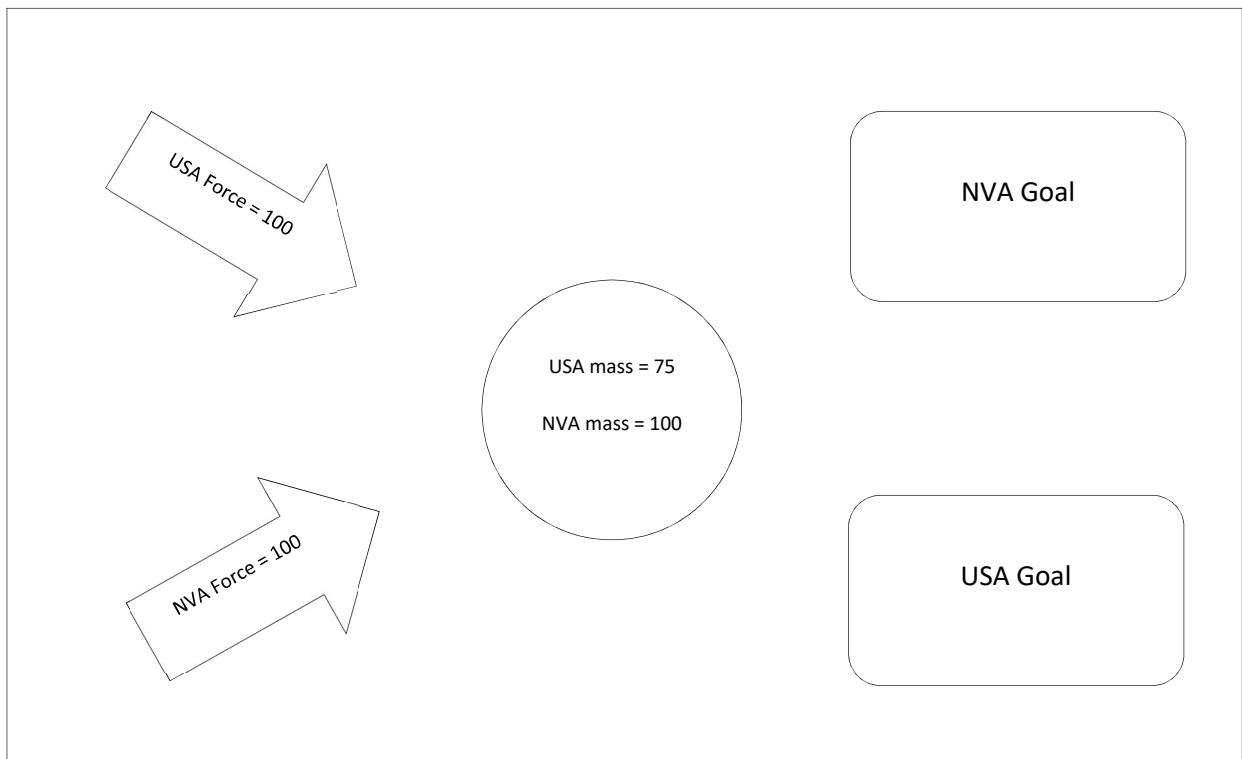[19] Hall, *The Vietnam War*. p. 69
[20] Hall, *The Vietnam War*. p. 33

Fig.4.10. A two actor model analysis of the Vietnam Conflict 1965-1967.

This seems a slighly odd method of analysing a period of 4 years of ground conflict, but the clue given to us by Hall is that the NVA was capable of matching the US increases in deployment of land forces. The conflict was, essentially for the period between 1965 - 67, a static strategic picture. We might argue that an apt description of this was one of strategic stagnation on the part of the USA. We might suggest that this is, in part, to a lack of creativity on the part of US forces. Authors such as Krepinovich argue that the USA was unable to adapt to '…light infantry formations, not heavy divisions…'[21] While we might agree that there are (and were at that time) a number of strategic culture concerns within the US forces (such as a legacy from WWII, and possible hostilities with the USSR in Europe), we cannot avoid the reality that there was little difference in the ability of deployed force on both sides to 'roll the ball'. However, the reader will notice that there has only been a value of 75 applied to the moral weight of the conflict for the USA. Surely we should argue that since the USA had gone to war, with an extremely large

[21] Krepinovich, A. F., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988). p. 5

deployment to secure South Vietnam, then it should have done so under conditions where a greater moral weight was applied.

There is reason for us to make the assumption that the moral weight applied, at least within the civilian command authority, was not as great as we might assume. Despite the introduction of the Selective Service Lottery (the Draft) in 1969, which acts an an indicator of intent, it still appears that there was a certain lack of focus and moral weight assigned to the conflict.[22] For this conclusion we need to look at the troops requested by commanders, rather than those actually deployed. While it is tempting to argue that the only measure we should look at is the number deployed – as this is a concrete example of intent, it may be useful to look at the number commanders actually felt were required. We are fortunate, in this instance, that the conflict in Vietnam has been so well documented. Again, Hall provides us with some numerical data. In 1965, General Westmoreland (the US commander in Vietnam) requested the deployment of 150000 additional troops, and was granted only a third (50000) that number by President Johnson.[23] This was after the approval of the deployment of 40000 troops early that year by Johnson, despite having been advised that 82000 was the required number.[24] Even McNamara, then Secretary of Defence, argued for the deployment of 100000, if only to '…stave off defeat in the short run, and offer a good chance of producing a favourable settlement in the long run.'[25] We can assume from this that McNamara regarded this commitment, fully 100 percent more than were actually committed, as being the minimum needed to avoid defeat.

There is posibly an argument to be made that the use of the 'Rolling Thunder' air campaign over North Vietnam, authorised by Johnson and kept under his tight control, was an

---

[22] "Selective Service System - The Vietnam Lotteries," Selective Service System, (10 January 2016) Available at https://www.sss.gov/About/History-And-Records/lotter1 (Accessed: 10 January, 2016)
[23] Hall, *The Vietnam War*. p. 28
[24] Hall, *The Vietnam War*. p.26
[25] Johnson, L.B. , *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Wilson, 1971). p. 145

expression of the intent we are looking for from the USA. However, its efficacy is doubtful, as it was regarded as having '…produced insignificant benefits'.[26] This means that as demonstration, it may serve a purpose, however it does not add to the moral weight assigned, and indeed may detract from it because the use of the air campaign can be regarded as an attempt to reduce the numbers of troops in harm's way. Simply put, the strategic decision to use airpower - through either being convinced of its utility or its seeming 'safety' – can undermine the weight assigned to the conflict, or certainly allow the analyst to infer the command priorities at the strategic and grand strategic level.

This leaves us in an analytical position, so that if we move from the period of attrition to the maximum deployment, we are looking at a situation rather like this:
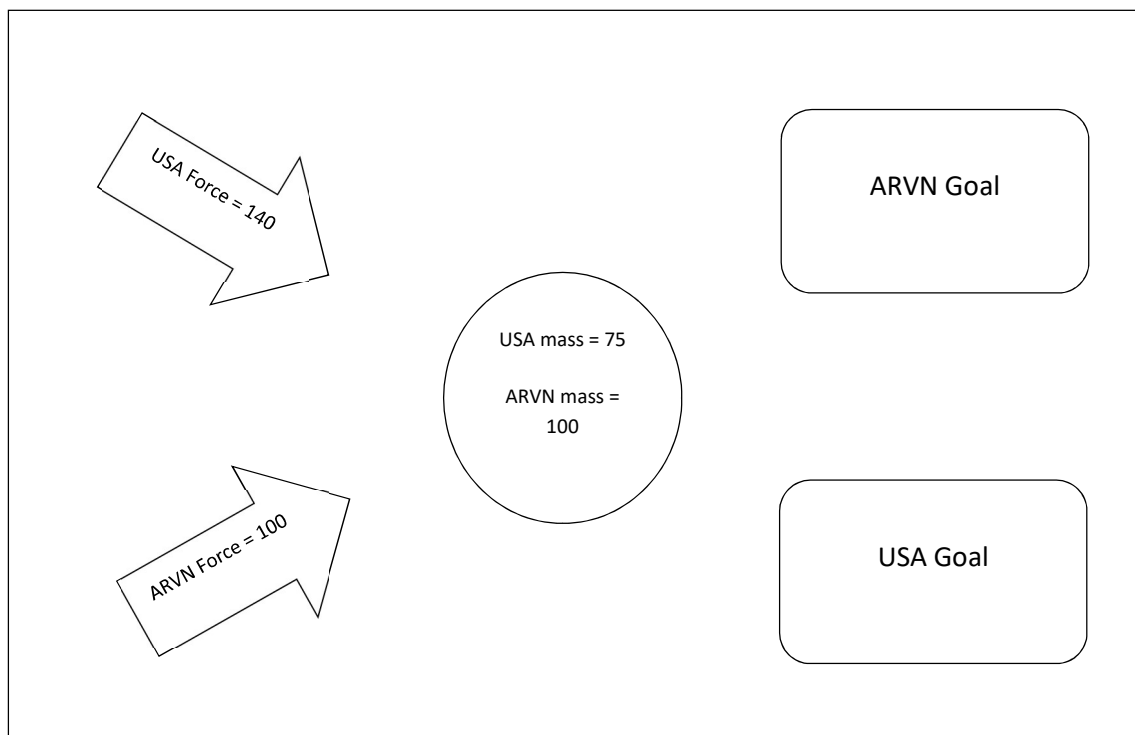

Fig. 4.11. Analytical diagram showing a US/Allied escalation of force deployment.

[26] Herring, G.C. , *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, Third ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979). pp. 141 – 144, Krepinovich, *The Army and Vietnam*. p. 184

We can see that the ARVN position is broadly unchanged. The US has now overapplied force accoding to our force to mass ratio concept. The USA is unable to control the conflict according to its own requirements. This position has come about from a period of stagnance, followed by overcommitment, without adding some form of resistance. However, at this point, to be able to limit force and deploy enough limited force to sieze back the momentum from the AVRN would be inconceivable – i.e. there is no way the USA can pour in enough resources to have them overcome the enemy if they fight in a restricted fashion. This is partly because the US was already extremely committed in numerical terms, from the numbers we have already reviewed. It instituted Selective Service in 1969, and conscription is an excellent signifier of ability to commit force. By this point in the conflict, the USA was unable to adequately react to the AVRN. The policy persued by Nixon was the only rational policy available, with the subsequent effect on the Republic of South Vietnam.

In all the foregoing we have avoided mentioning South Vietnam. We should not discount the forces of South Vietnam, but in this instance we were interested in the interaction of forces in a war of choice. This is simply an expanatory model, looking at certain distinct actors. While we have shown multi actor versions models, in this instance we are interested in the two actors in isolation. However, we can add other aspects of our thinking Into this model. Earlier in this work we discussed the trinity, the forces of direction, power, and the firm place to stand. Above, we have already made references to the forces of direction, in the person of the presidency seemingly unwilling to provide the directive power (or resources), and the escalation of forces, as being inadequate and ultimately uncontrollable to the point of defeat. However, we might also note that by the peak deployment, and beyond, the firm place to stand had significantly eroded. The protests against American involvement in South East Asia (of which the civilian deaths at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, at a protest in response to the Nixon expansion of hostilities to

Cambodia are the most remembered), indicate that the popular support for the war had ebbed.[27]

At this point, even if the application of such power as was already available, limited or not, would

not have been achievable as the 'firm place from which to push' was no longer there. The wind of

opinion does not simply blow us off course, it erodes our ability to make war.
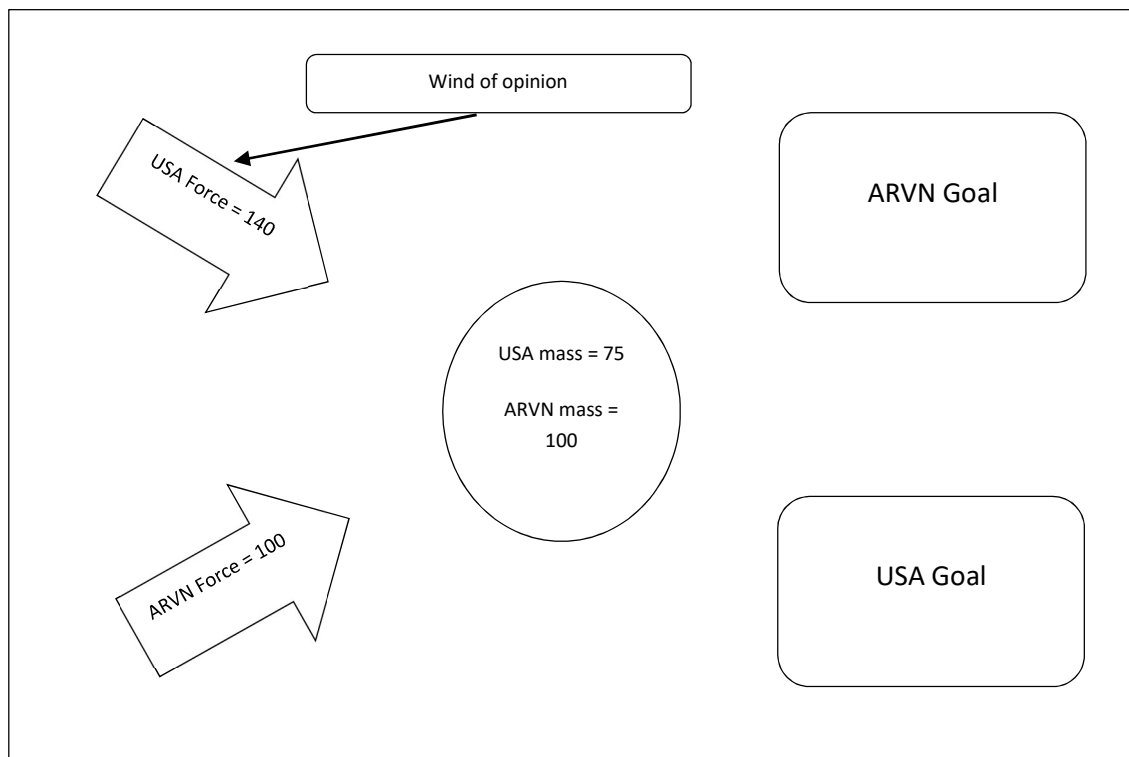
Fig 4.12. Diagram 4.10 with the effects of opinion applied.

Here is the model of the the total strategic picture, within the model between the two

combatants. We have, ultimately, an image of an overpowered US force, with insufficient 'moral

resistance' to maintain control, and an eroding basis from which to fight. All the AVRN had to do in

this situation was hold the line and prevent the US from making any progress towards the goal –

pursuing a strategy of frustration. By being wholly committed to the fight, the AVRN held the

advantage, and in being able to match escalation, they froced the US into the least optimal

strategy. We might conclude that this frustration was inevitable, made so in the opening stages of

---

[27] Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. p. 262

escalation. Certainly, McNamara seems to have been prescient in trying to achieve a strategic

equilibrium to achieve a better negotiated settlement.

The question raised by the discussion above is, could the intervention have turned in the

United States' favour – could the AVRN have been beaten? Above we have some indication of the

escalation that Westmoreland wished to pursue. Let us make the, admittedly very large,

counterfactual assumption that in addition to Rolling Thunder, Johnson had approved the

deployment of the advised 82000 troops and the 150000 sought by Westmoreland, under certain

restraints. This would mean an increase of forces from 40000 to 272000 troops in theatre during

1965. While the AVRN was able to match escalation during the much longer deployment of an

admittedly larger force, a much shorter period of escalation may have delivered advantages.
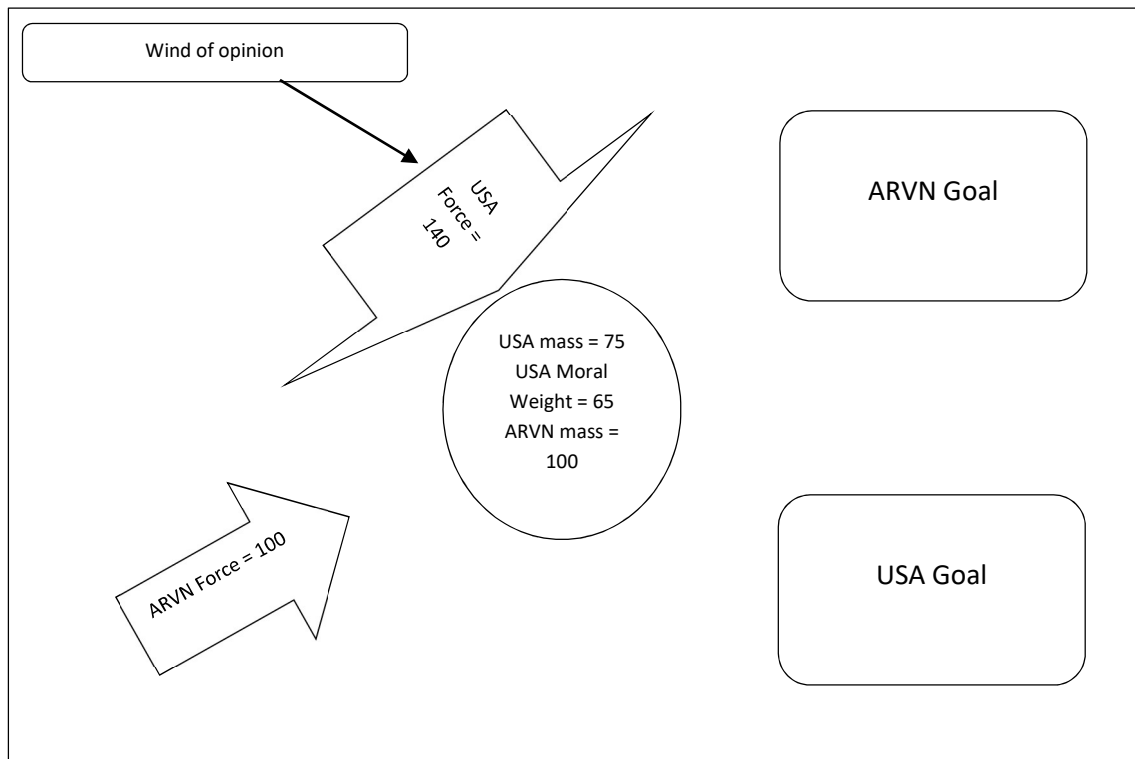
Looking at the model we see an outcome like this:

Fig. 4.13. Speculative analysis derived from Fig. 4.11 set in 1965, with Moral Weight applied.

The US is still relatively untroubled by mass protest at this point, thus it would have been

able to deploy troops and deny the AVRN room to move on the field. Rather than having troops

staying in barracks, had the US distributed its forces and denied easy access to the basis of support

for an insurgency (the people) by guaranteeing security rather than simply engaging in combat

operations, there would have been an opportunity for victory. If we change the earlier

deployment numbers, the character of the game on the field has changed, and the advantage is

with the USA. Paired with allied forces, and South Vietnam, the US is suddenly in a potentially

winning position. In reducing efficacy, but increasing available force, the US could be in a position

to provide a reasonably efficient victory. However, this may also *not* be the case. We cannot

predict the peace, nor the terms of the peace, and it is outside the terms and scope of the model

to predict either these, or the eventual prosecution of victory. Clausewitz tells us to "disarm the

enemy",[28] but assuring he stays disarmed is a matter for those writing the settlement or

surrender. We should not speculate on it here.

What, however, is interesting, is that the advantage remains with the US forces even

should the AVRN find it possible to escalate through recruitment, or via the employment of allied

forces. All the US has to do is reduce some of the inhibition on the forces it is employing. Since we

are limiting immediate tactical efficacy in return for strategic gain, should there be an increase in

hostilities, the moral weight can be relaxed as the mass increases. Thus the broad blade can be

turned in the field, with the required resources already to hand, to its tip, again able to force the

ball further towards the goal with *no consequent loss of control.* The use of action-limited forces

does not prevent the use of those same forces in a less limited fashion, should the need arise. The

hope would be, in many circumstances, to not use delimited forces, but should the need arise,

then those forces are available and able to deploy within the theatre should the situation require

it. [29] There is an innate inefficiency in using force in this way, until the situation demands that the

innate *capability reserve* is needed. Rather than going through the difficulty of long term

---

[28] Clausewitz, *On War*. p. 77
[29] Which is distinct from *unlimited* force.

deployment to doubtful end, larger than indicated deployment has the advantage of being able to be both *proactive* and *reactive*.

We have already considered a basic analysis of the NATO intervention in Kosovo earlier in this work. We can agreed that to restate this analysis might seem something of a waste of effort on the part of the reader. However, the example still stands as a one where we can easily find useful numbers. We can make a further assesment of the example, focusing on how the force was applied, why we might suggest it was applied, and what may have happened had different choices been made. We must remember that we are in the world of the model. While it is tempting to be intellectually 'taken' with the options opened, the model is not a guarantor of strategic success. We are also fortunate that the conflict, formally named by coalition forces as 'Operation Allied Force' was well documented by NATO and fully reported to, for example, the Congress of the United States of America. This gives us access to numerical data in great detail, which can serve as a useful guide for the force numbers we have been using.

In Chapter Three, we modelled the Kosovo conflict in two ways, one accounting for the linear application of force, and one accounting for the oblique application of force.[30] While we did account for mass in the conflict, we did not account for any moral weight applied, or how the moral weight changed within the conflict. In truth, the conflict as modelled did not give us a full 'strategic' picture of the conflict. However, if we return to the conflict with what we have established above – that moral weight can be applied, and can be useful, we can now hopefully fully account for the actions in the two phases of the conflict, as well as considering what other choices were available to NATO during the conflict. Initially we modelled the Kosovo conflict like this (on the following page):

---

[30] See Page 127.
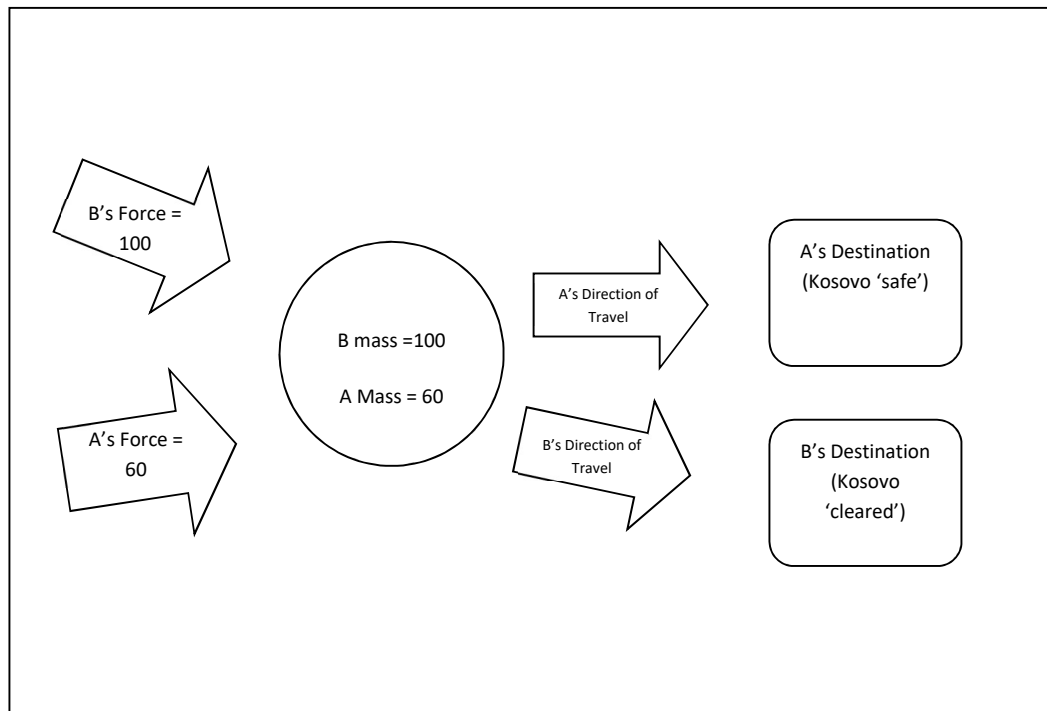
Fig. 4.14. Simplified analysis of Kosovo Conflict, with NATO as A and Serbia as B.

This was, in the assessment in Chapter Three, the linear phase of the conflict – with NATO being identified as A, and Serbia being identified as B. It was argued that the simple Force x Mass calculation indicated that NATO could not win. But we did not yet have a full picture to make the assessment. In using the after action report, we can distinguish that while NATO was using a force of the assessed 60 to Serbia's 100, that did not mean that NATO's full 60 was being deployed. If we look to the after action report, we can see there were multiple challenges in applying that force. These range from difficulties in intelligence gathering, logistics, refueling, joint decision making, targeting, and the enemy daring to use camoflage.[31] These were all impediments to efficacy, more readily understandbale as 'friction', as previously discussed. However, there is also another restraint that was applied, although it is less obviously stated. The air campaign was (understandably) initially limited to the skies over Kosovo. We have already commented on air

---

[31] These are all detailed in the After-Action report and form the basis for the recommendations in improvements in that report. See "Report to Congress : Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report," (Washington DC: Department of Defence, 2001). pp. 126-138.

power's impermanence, but the limitation of the targeting (and targets) leaves us in a situation which looks like an issue concerning moral weight. If we were to consider these limitations as adding missing mass, even if only marginally, then we can see that momentum was never going to be achieved. Let us consider it in this fashion:
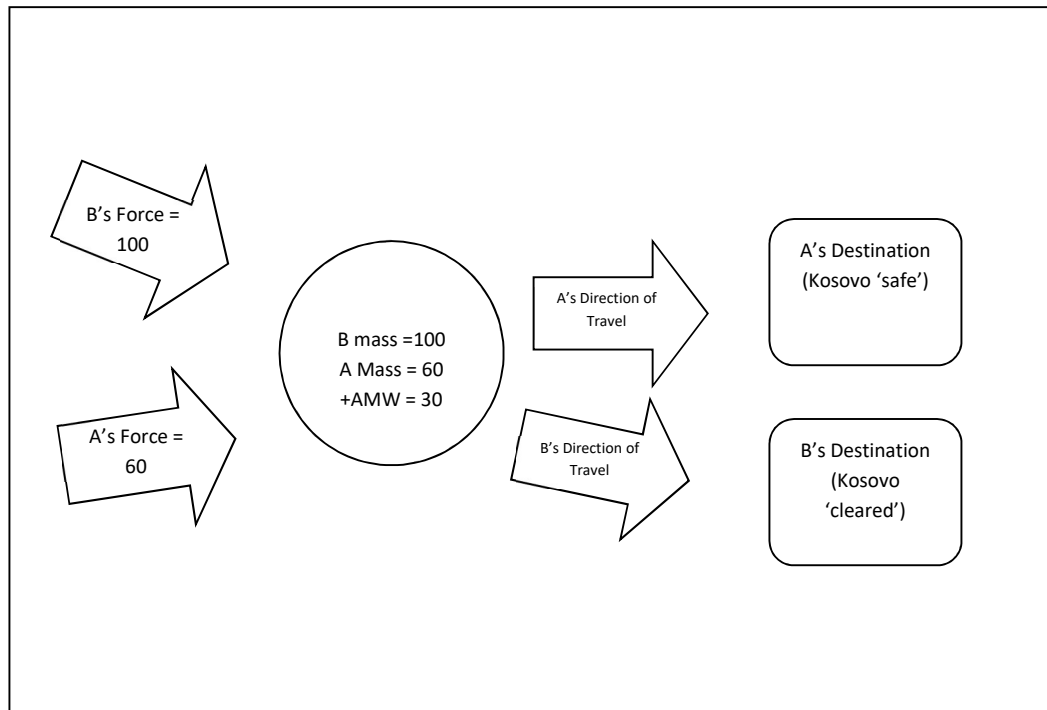
Fig. 4.15. The Kosovo Conflict with moral weight applied for A (NATO)

We have added a weight number for A, or NATO. The calculation we have used previously, even if we do not actually calculate it fully, indicates that momentum is impossible to achieve. There was another reason for limitation of effort – the reaction from the international community (most importantly Russia's reaction, but also indications of stresses within the alliance itself).[32] So, adding in the potentially adverse opinion reactions, we have a modified model that now looks like the analysis on the following page.

---

[32] "After-Action Report."pp 2-6
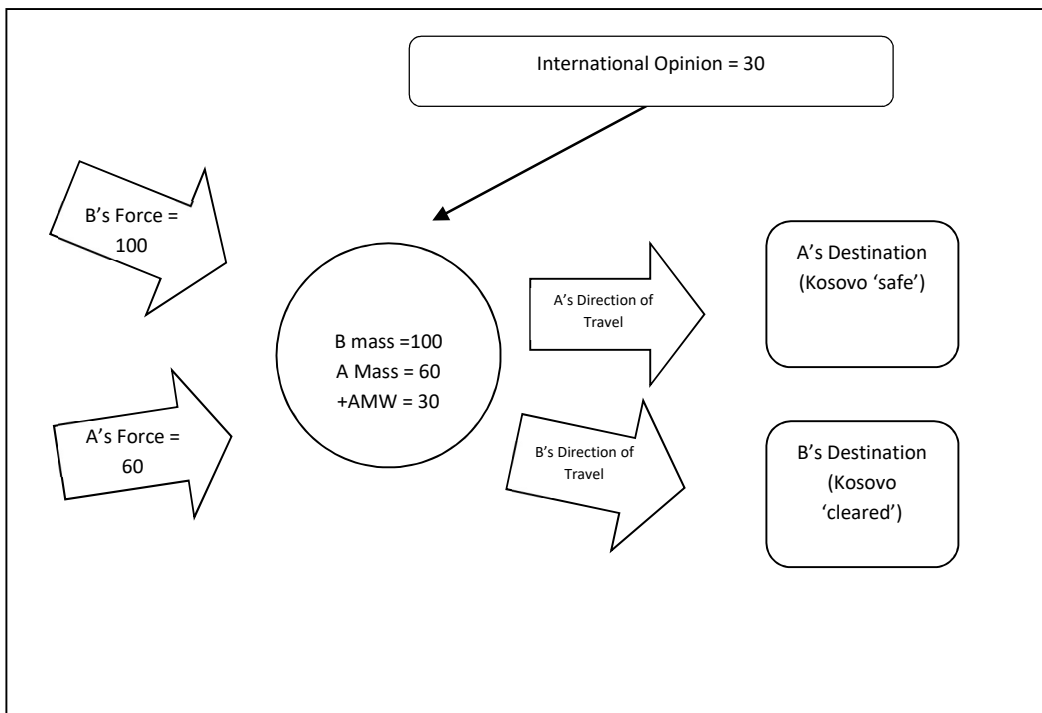
Fig. 4.16 The Kosovo Conflict with moral weight applied for A (NATO) and the effect of opinion.

The picture above is one of an effective enemy, capable of achieving his goal, facing an opposing

force that is subdued by international and internal opinion, without enough force to achieve

victory or seize momentum from the enemy. The task was too great for the available force to

effectively pursue the objective. Add in force protection considerations and we have an enterprise

that, according to the model, was in danger of ending in a withdrawal at the human cost of the

Kosovar Albanian population, and a refugee crisis in the wider Balkans and Europe.

So we turn to the second phase of the NATO Kosovo conflict that we identified earlier: the

expansion of targets to include those inside Greater Serbia, an increase in sorties, and the

loosening of targeting requirements to include civil (or at least dual use) infrastructure. We argued

earlier that this was an oblique use of force. That argument still holds, in that when NATO stopped

directly challenging the armed enemy, the linearity of the conflict changed. However, the NATO

decision to remove the prior targeting inhibitions indicates that there was an increase in the mass

experienced by NATO at the same time as there was a reduction in the moral weight, with a

consequent momentum gain. Also at this time, the conflict begins to affect the population of

197

Serbia directly, and so the mass of the Serb forces begins to change, too, as its firm place to push

from is affected. The threat to the Serb homeland cannot be considered existential – there is

neither the will nor the ability for NATO to invade Serbia, but the change in NATO's approach does

force Serb commanders and others to consider whether the Kosovo campaign is strictly worth the

losses. In addition, as the population comes under greater pressure, the firm place to push from is

lost. Thus the trinity is in play for the Serbs. We are therefore left with the model looking like this:
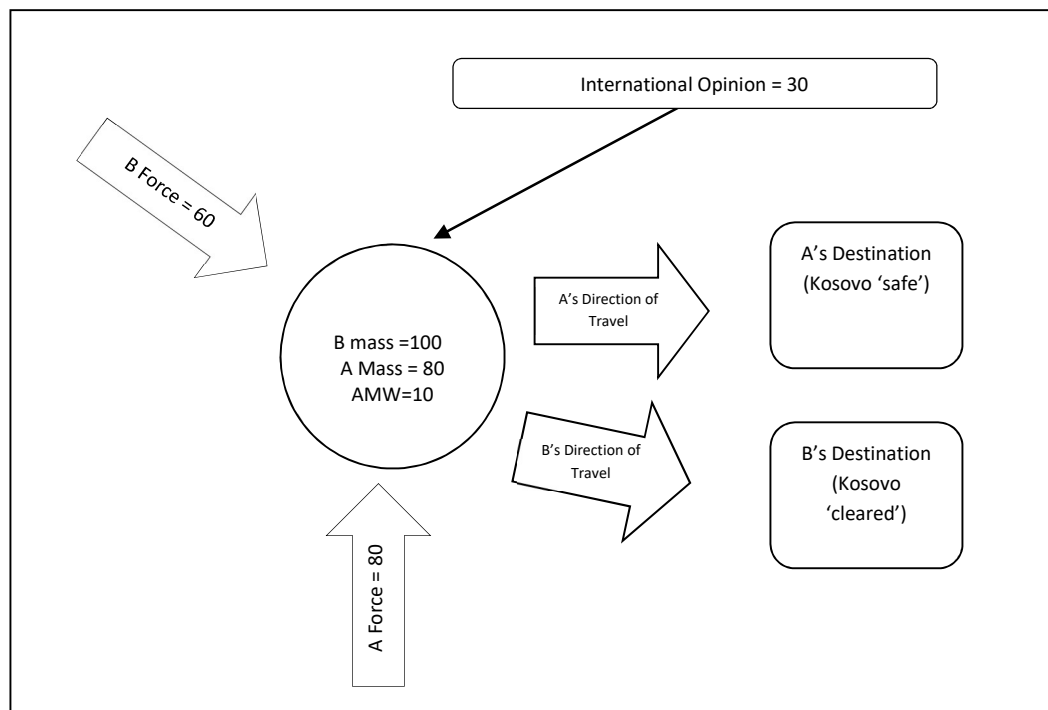
Fig. 4.17. The analysis of 4.14. with the oblique application of available force.

The above leads us to very different observable outcome. There is no guarantee of success, but

there is now considerable uncertainty for the Serbs, with a likelihood of greater degradation of

Greater Serbia. This compels the Serb withdrawal and the eventual entrance of NATO land forces

into the contested area. This occurs despite the adverse opinion against NATO's new approach, as

the balance of forces is now reasonably in check, and it has been demonstrated to the initial

aggressor (Serbia) that victory will be achieved at too high cost.

In addition to the above, there is another interesting outcome observable at this point. The forces of NATO were able to reduce their moral weight as well as increase the amount of power used. This indicates the viability of the idea of being able to change the posture of the force, adapting it from one restricted or limited to one less limited, while increasing the tempo of operations to tangibly increase available fighting power – despite the forces of friction. In Kosovo, real experience appears to be supported by the model. There were of course other options NATO could have pursued; for example, the introduction of ground forces into the environment at a much earlier juncture. This might have changed the dynamic earlier. But the argument still stands. Going equipped for a bigger engagement might mean that those forces will not have to exert themselves as greatly to produce the desired consequences.

This chapter has sought to explore, within the model, the impact of the blowing wind of public opinion, and the effect that this has on the ability for societies to make war. It has looked at the destabilising effects of such opinion for the players on our imagainary field of play. It has nesessarily been a chapter devoted to further exploring the theoretical explanation of warfare. This has been at some cost, as our model has grown in complexity, but it has also allowed further ventures into the theoretical that we hope are of value.

In placing conflicts within our model, we have seen some of its shortcomings. The criticism could readily be made that it is too simple – that warfare does not readily let itself be kept in a box. It is hard to not have sympathy with this criticism, and we acknowledge that the model is an extreme simplification. However, the analyses and possibilities it puts forward are much less simple. It allows for the pursuit of victory in different ways, according to the abilities of the forces involved. We could, for example, imagine a linear conflict so well directed in intelligence that immense force may be applied to devatating effect – and we will consider such an interaction in the next chapter. The model allows us to see the effects of attrition and stagnation, and the possible outcome. It also allows us to consider the effect of creativity, in the oblique application of

force. The most startling outcome, however, revealed by the model, is the possibility that more numerical force, less rigorously applied, may be an optimal strategy. The model helps us see how this approach allows for adaptation, while denying the enemy the room (in theoretical and practical terms) that they might wish to have. A note of caution must be sounded – the model serves as an analytical tool, and help us explain things – but it important that we retain *judgement* rather than simply reducing conflicts to a numerical predictor. This model is a tool of judgement, not of numbers – it is founded on our judgements of those involved's intent, importance, and ability.

This has become an argument, possibly, of efficacy. More importantly, we have suggested that desirable effects can be produced by applying more stringent ethical standards on the forces deployed. This is not simply because such standards are 'good' but because they allow us to control how force is applied, to achieve established ends. We saw with the Kosovo case, however, that such restraint was something of a double edged sword. There are pitfalls. If we require our forces to be too 'good', we risk losing the ability to win. A balancing point must be found. But, and this is possibly the most interesting effect seen in the model, when the mass of the conflict changes, then we have a certain moral leeway. The ethical standards can possibly drop if the primary moral good – victory – is seen slipping from grasp. This is interesting, because even in that extreme situation, where perhaps certain moral compromises must be made, we are still equipped (if we use the model's advice) to not compromise too much. And so ethics and strategy can converge again.

There are possible other consequential effects of aligning strategy and ethics, all of which may be of strategic utility, which we will consider in the next chapter. These range, potentially, from the ability to sustain and field forces, maintaining the war winning capability we need, to allowing us to create a peace that serves our longer-term goals. The one thing we cannot escape, however, in suggesting that a larger but more restrained force may at times be optimal, is the

potential charge of questioning military ability – of doubting the 'can do' spirit of the small

deployment to settle a matter quickly and efficiently. This may be a valid criticism, since above we

have argued for something that looks *inefficient.* However, as has been observed: 'War is an

inefficient business.'[33]

---

[33] Capt. B. Sisko in Chalmers, C., "Take Me Out to the Holosuite," in *Deep Space Nine*, ed. R. Berman and I. Behr (Los Angeles, CA: Paramount Studios, 1998).

Chapter Five -The Utility of Restraint.

We have spent our time, up to this point, attempting to build a model which we can use to

understand warfare and strategic purpose. We have reduced the business of 'killing people and

breaking things' to an abstract model of pushing a ball around a field, to help us account for the

observations of Clausewitz.[1] We have done this while attempting to navigate the idea of adding

weight to our war - in the abstract sense, as 'moral weight' - to (counterintuitively) make the

prospect of success more certain than it might be under other circumstances.[2] While we have

considered this idea within the realm of the thought experiment, and with application to brief

examinations of recent wars, these ideas should not be reduced to an analytical tool with no real

world application for advising on sound strategy. It is the purpose of strategic theory not only to

learn from military history but to inform its making. By this we mean that the role of the strategic

theorist is, in part, to provide tools for addressing the conflicts yet to come. This takes a rather dim

view of humanity, by assuming that there will be conflicts to come. However, in providing the right

kind of tools, it is possible that we can reduce the trauma of such conflicts, not so that they

become painless, but rather so that the harm done is reasonable and proportional to the

objective, and so that the post conflict environment (which is dovetailed with and inseparable

from success or failure) is one for which we are better prepared. This is the purpose of what

follows. Theory, and theorist, benefit nobody if they refuse self-criticism. Thus, as the potential

outcomes from applying the model and the foregoing thinking will be explored, weaknesses as

well as possible benefits will be identified.

To begin this, we must narrow down the necessary implications for this line of thinking –

and we should maintain one eye on the preceding chapters. We are discussing a hierarchy of

---

[1] Murray, "Thinking About Revolutions in Military Affairs." p.71

[2] 'Abstract' In the sense that we have added experienced mass through operational choice, rather than from
impulse to fight for survival.

necessities in both the case of ethical conduct (the hierarchy of moral considerations per the

demands they place on us and the situation at the time) and our strategic decisions (the hierarchy

of military considerations, their demands of success and our situation at time). This harkens back

to Chapter One. The framework for our model, which we discussed in subsequent Chapters Two

through Four involves mass, weight, direction, and oblique application of force. All of these factors

have consequences for both ethical and strategic considerations, and the argument thus far plainly

is that ethics and strategy benefit one another. This is a bold claim – we are suggesting that it is

'good to be good' – that the strategic payoff for behaving in a manner more morally praiseworthy

than might be expected is worth the 'penalty' that might be perceived as resulting from inhibiting

our actions. There is a straightforward way to conceive this, as formulated by Dr Thomas Kane in

conversation with this writer using a simple scenario concerning this writer and an imagined

opponent in a fight. In a tactical standoff, the opponent has an absolute tactical advantage in

stabbing the writer if they refuse to stab him, but strategically stabbing me could be a misstep.[3]

Unless killing the writer is the opponent's sole objective (a noble one from some perspectives),

there is little chance that that act in isolation, no matter how completely achieved, will fulfil his

definition of success. Pressing every possible advantage is not always the path to the specific form

of victory (or the post-victory state of peace) that we desire. We have to accept that warfare –

despite the imperative of victory - is laden with other concerns. How the war is won does in fact

matter. Lonsdale admits this by arguing that '…the realist must at least pay lip service to ethical

concerns, and thus deal with them in an instrumental way.'[4] This approach however, is now

unsustainable. As Mattox argues in the current context:

> "…the continual availability of news reports effectively places the people in a position,
>
> along with the government and military, to opine upon the moral propriety of war thus

---

[3] Dr Thomas Kane, formerly of the University of Hull, is an authority on all matters Strategic Studies, with interests ranging from Chinese Legalism to Military Logistics.
[4] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." p.31

justified – even if the information provided by the mass media is incorrect. Similarly, if morally outrageous behaviour is manifest on or near the battlefield…modern telecommunications will ensure that that behaviour is impossible to hide."[5]

What we are arguing for here is in the letter, if not the spirit of Lonsdale's argument while fully agreeing with Mattox. We are discussing an instrumental approach in that we are arguing that positive ethical behaviour is useful. But, rather than simply paying 'lip service' to ethics, we are suggesting that there are wide ranging benefits, during and after conflicts, to acting ethically, and that it is an approach that has direct strategic benefits both domestically and in the theatre of warfare.

In the previous chapters, we tried to analyse war; now we need to explore the operational and strategic advantages that such an approach might grant us - the benefits that might come for the forces we send, and for the ones whom we eventually welcome home. War is not conducted in a vacuum, it is not an isolated event, and many variables must align for us to succeed both during and after it. We have to address what genuine advantages are available for us to seize, and how we may come by them. So, we must begin by discussing the consequential effect of what we are proposing – the intentional acceptance of ethical restraint. There are practical consequences from making life 'harder' for ourselves with a more ethical approach to war, which we must explore.

The Transformational Application of Force

We have to accept that there are a number of logical outcomes that follow from increasing the moral weight of any fight that we have joined or started. By increasing the moral weight of the conflict (or adding to the mass of the 'ball', in our model), we are effectively reducing the efficacy

---

[5] Mattox, "The Clausewitzian Trinity in the Information Age: A Just War Approach." p.212

of the force that we are applying. Yet this is done for a purpose. We are restraining force in such a

fashion that the experienced mass remains controllable, even when we encounter the differential

mass we have assessed in our conflicts (as was discussed in Chapter Three). Previously, we

discussed the 'predictive' possibilities of the mode; now we have its consequences. For any linear

application of force, we must now be prepared to deploy a much larger force than we might have

initially expected to field - we must sacrifice efficacy of application in pursuit of control of the

strategic situation. This is interesting, as previously we have entertained the idea of applying force

in the form of an arrow. If we look at the diagram we have used in the preceding chapters, we can

see (on the next page):
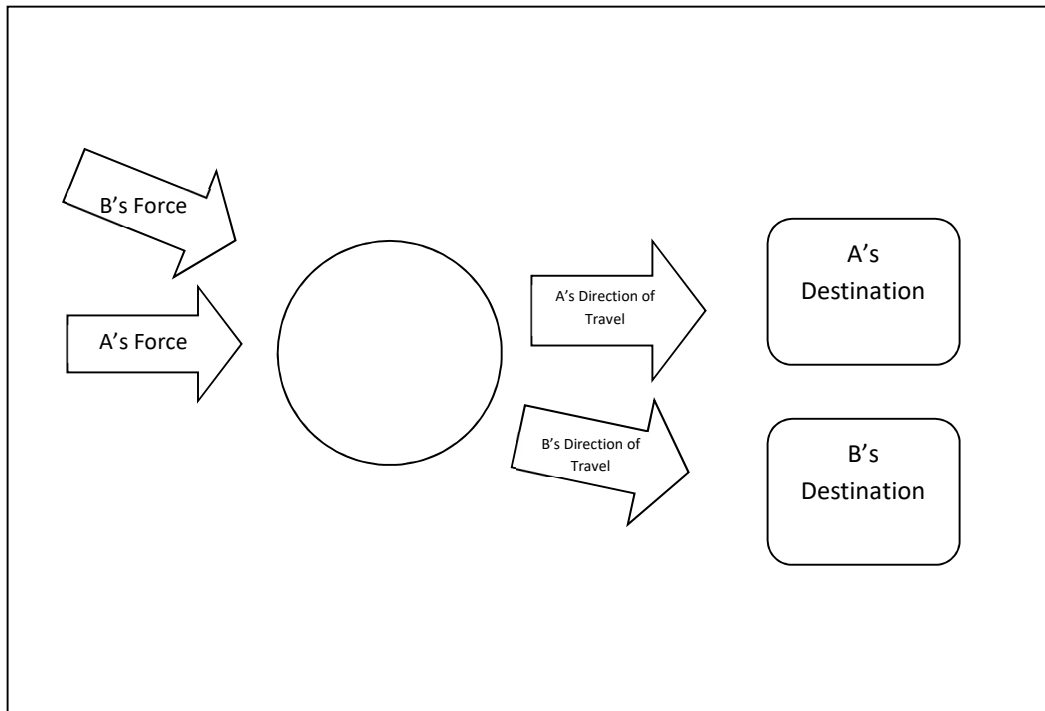
Fig 5.1. The basic conflict model from Chapter 2.

Our two belligerents are, in the basic model, simple arrows. We have in later chapters varied the

size of the arrows, representing changes in the force applied to the mass:
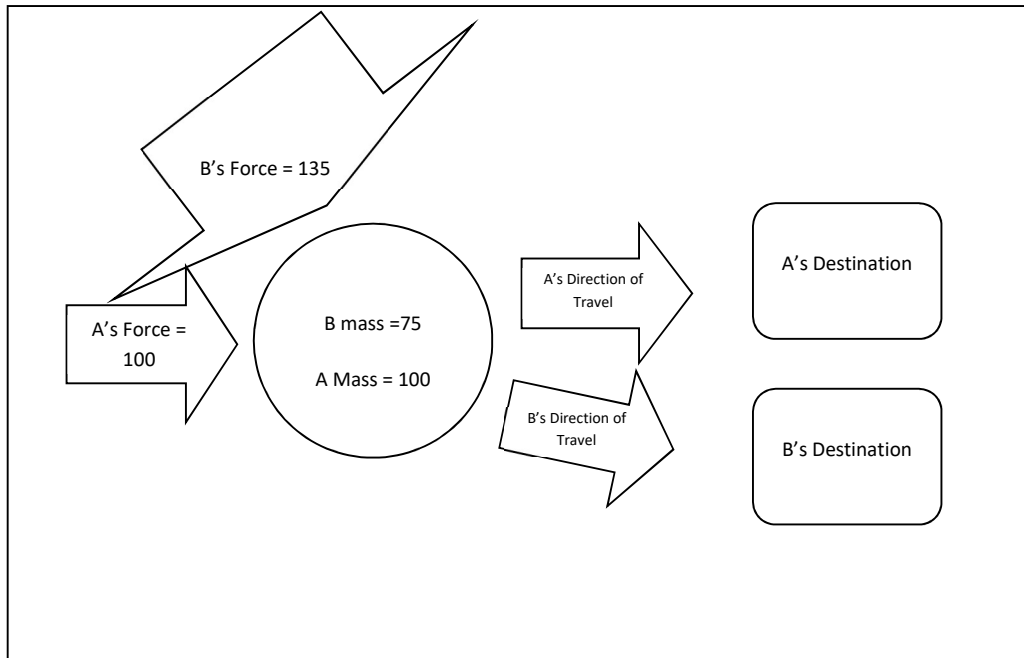
Fig 5.2. The broad arrow from attaching weight from Chapter 4

In Chapter Four, we discussed changing of our model's representation of force by broadening or narrowing our arrows. But this did not address all of the possible variables. We conjured the idea of a broad headed arrow versus a narrow-headed arrow, and we are able to imagine these in more martial terms as being like the tips of two very different types of blades: the rapier and the broadsword. But this metaphor does not suit us perfectly, since the strength of a broadsword is in its blade, not the tip. In addition, if we remember Chapter Four, we were struck with the idea of taking the advantage of limiting the room of our opponent to manoeuvre, by adjusting our own force and how we apply it. Thus we further recognise that broad or narrow arrows are not the end of the possibilities, if we were to consider all the different possible adjustments to the application of force with analogies to bladed weapons. To slightly labour the metaphor, for example, we can re-forge our sword on the battlefield, and from one create two lighter, nimbler weapons, or turn our broadsword into a pike.

To engage with reality, the numbers in the diagram do not represent a homogeneous mass of force, but rather comprise individual elements of any fighting force. We have allocated

206

each of them a number for convenience's sake, but within them we might conceive a variety of air, land, and sea components; troops and their equipment concerned with stopping their enemy from success.   Thus, this grouping can be used in different ways (the metaphorical 're-forging of the blade'). We are not limited simply to applying them straight to the fight in the linear manner, although that might be the best solution, depending on circumstance.

Let us consider the options for B in the above diagram. The Commander of B can choose to subdivide his forces, for example, in this manner:
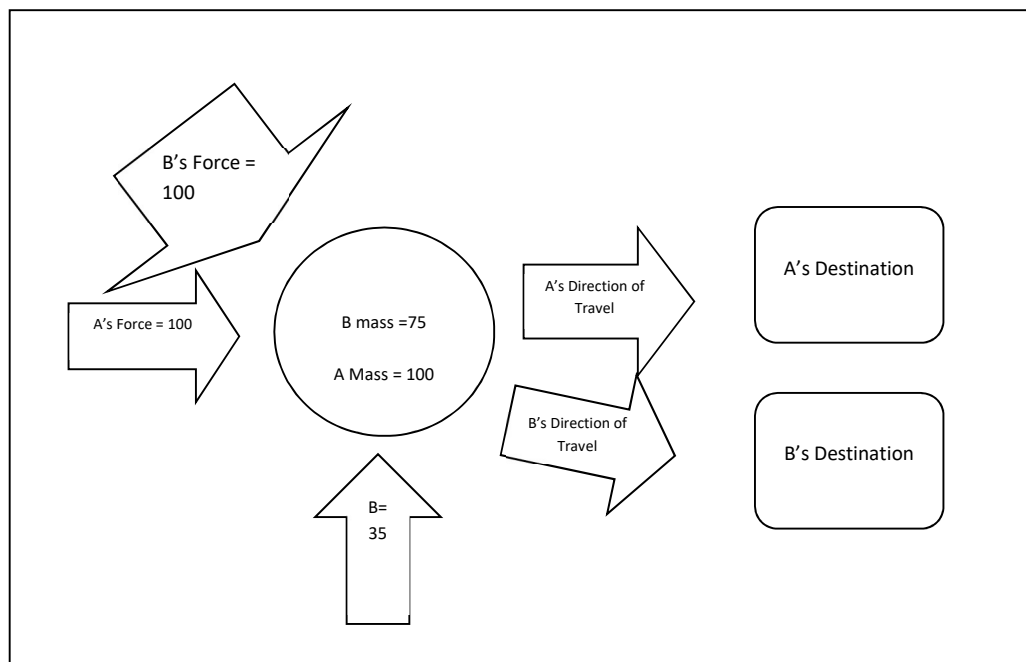
Fig. 5.3. Splitting the effort from figure 5.2

Here we have the possibility of a hammer and anvil strategy, besetting A's strategy from two sides. We have not included any calculations of moral weight into the above, and without it, the model predicts that A's effort will potentially spiral out of control. But with an appropriately attached weight, or limitation through positive moral decision-making (the willing acceptance of restraint), B is able to further reduce A's avenues of success. We are now not simply making war against the object (our ball), but also attacking the opponent's strategy for pushing towards his

goal. B can frustrate A with one set of decision making (purely strategic), and win the linear battle through overwhelming his forces from one direction, or can overwhelm his opponent's strategy with another set of decision making (combining strategic and ethical moves). The opportunity created by the presence of greater forces means that we now have the chance to act creatively, with the resources needed to make the chances of success – lasting success – much higher.

There is a necessary consequence of the ideas we have been discussing – additional resources will be required. In the reduction of efficacy, we are demanding that the increase in resources be in proportion to the weight of the war chosen. As we observed with the discussion of Vietnam, we need to accept that the idea of lean warfighting is one that should not be considered in a conflict of choice, where the moral weight must be applied. This of course raises questions of proportionality. However, proportionality does not relate to the availability of force, but rather its application. There is nothing in having available disproportionate forces that violates concepts of proportionality. To use those forces to their full effect *would* violate any injunction to proportional response. However, simply having extensive forces available, and using them, if at all, only in a restrained manner, according to moral weight concerns, does not violate any such injunction. Indeed, it might provide B with a further destabilising effect to undermine A. It certainly creates an opportunity for B to focus on additional possibilities, should they choose to escalate any further. Indeed, the possibility of additional escalation cannot be discounted – for example, through the entry (on behalf of A) of an ally or allies. This, however, can be adjusted for with simplicity and with the appropriate speed. In this situation, we must agree that the notional 100 has changed, and that invariably the '135' force level of B has been reduced. However, in order to respond to the change, and with the obvious uptick in warfighting that will occur, the moral weight of the conflict applied by B (the restriction of its actions) can be lifted.

This is not to argue that B should suddenly start behaving in a morally unsupportable manner. Rather, we are suggesting that the additional restrictions that it voluntarily placed upon

itself, from a 'moral' perspective, can be lifted while staying within the established norms of

behaviour – and still well within, for example, the laws of armed conflict. We are not simply

discussing minimal compliance here. If we remember back to our discussion of ethical behaviour

and the openly negotiated minimum standards that are embodied in the law in Chapter One, there

is no rational objection to behaving above those standards. Indeed, that is the core of the

discussion in which we are presently engaged. By choosing to accommodate demands above those

minimum standards with the appropriate resources to support such a choice, we are granting

ourselves a number of strategic advantages; the strength in depth to limit enemy options, the

opportunity to exert less 'effort' for military gains, and operational flexibility to allow for novel

deployment in pursuit of success, while having available resources in place to respond to any

escalatory dynamic. We are imposing our will on the enemy, and if he chooses to reject that will

forcefully, we are able to slough some of the weight and continue to impose our will on the

enemy, all without violating international law.

We can see how this would be useful in conflicts against uniformed enemies, but we can

further suggest that this approach would also be useful in the type of conflicts most recently

experienced by NATO states. Both the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan (although latterly

with a civilian government in place) and the invasion and occupation of Iraq were characterised by

the insurgencies experienced against the invading or occupying forces. It would be inappropriate

to make direct comparisons between the two conflicts, as they are geographically and politically

distinct regions. Although it is tempting to make a sweeping allusion to political Islam, the conflicts

in fact have only superficial comparisons. However, we can suggest that an approach such as the

one described above might have been more appropriate for both than what was attempted.

Rather than operating at a level that was simply militarily justified, had the coalition forces created

a much tighter security space for any insurgency to try to operate in, then it is possible to see that

the situation for coalition troops (and the common security of the wider population) would have

been greatly improved, despite (or, if we are correct, rather due to) more restrictive (restrained)

standards on engagement. It is possible, in this context, to see the parallels with the ideas behind

Westmorland's request for greater force numbers than were eventually granted to him in the

conflict in Vietnam. Westmoreland was working, we can suggest, with the same concept – large

force to permit the denial of terrain (both physical and conceptual) to restrict the enemy.

What does it mean to deny both physical and conceptual terrain to the enemy? So far, we

have dealt with conceptual terrain in the sense of the playing field, but in this instance we mean

something much different – we are talking about the wider perception of 'security' in the minds of

any, shall we say, disputed population. Rajiv Chandrasekaran gives us the following vignette from

the conflict in Iraq launched in 2003:

> "…'I need help' a middle-aged man in front of me told a soldier one morning. 'My son, he
> was kidnapped five days ago.'
> 'You need to go to the police,' the soldier said. 'We cannot help you.'
> 'I have gone to the police, but they don't want to help. They wanted a bribe.'
> 'This is an Iraqi-on-Iraqi issue. There's nothing we can do for you.'
> 'I thought you came here to help us. If you won't help us who will?'"[6]

Here a member of the Iraqi population is directly affected by the security terrain not being

controlled adequately by the invading/occupying force. The soldier's response is understandable,

and comes from the various rules of engagement and policy level decisions – he is ultimately only

able to act according to decisions made 'above his pay grade'. However, in light of the arguments

made in Chapter One, we can come to the agreement that those decisions in this case were

wrong, and by extension so was the soldier's response. We can argue that this course of action

was unethical. We could also argue that refusing to help the Iraqi man find his kidnapped son was

---

[6] Chandrasekaran, R., *Imperial Life in the Emerald City; Inside Baghdad's Green Zone* (London, New York and Berlin: Bloomsbury, 2007).p.20

in violation of the spirit of Article 64 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.[7] Leaving aside the

relatively blameless soldier, we can argue here that this was a strategically short-sighted policy

that runs counter to any strategic goals that the counterinsurgency was seeking to attain. If we

consider this from our model, we are asserting that it absolutely should have been the coalition's

business to provide a baseline of actual and conceptual security (including a policing function),

using a greater than indicated but restrained force (the policing function being an action limited by

ethical choice). By doing do, the coalition would have dominated both the physical and conceptual

terrain, not allowing other conceptions of security (group, ethnic, or Hobbesian individual, for

example) to gain a foothold as a passage to individual thriving. This would have been an enormous

strategic gain.

We are again locked in the discourse of the ethical and the strategic, identified by Pierce

at the outset of our discussion.[8] But this discussion is no longer one of their separation, but rather

that there is a potential unity between them. We see that by acting in a morally positive way, by

accepting moral responsibilities beyond those either prescribed or 'efficient', we can gain strategic

goals. There is a logic to this course of action, even if the actions it prescribes are difficult and carry

some costs. There is an intellectually and strategically simple line we can follow from analysing

conflicts in the way that we have in previous chapters. That said, as Clausewitz argued, the simple

is not necessarily the easy.[9] There is often a gap between recognising what must be done and

providing appropriate resource and ample motivation to get it done.

The difficulty arises from a number of directions, from the problem of ingrained

institutional or cultural expectations of performance (we are asking for troops to accept a

voluntary 'degradation' from soldiers to ersatz peace keepers or community police) to the

---

[7] Cross, International Committee of the Red, *The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949,* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1949). p.190
[8] Pierce, "War, Strategy and Ethics." p.259
[9] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.119

difficulty of mobilising extra forces. Difficulties may arise from logistical challenges (not enough

ships, aircraft, trains, etcetera) to the lack of political will. For the latter, this means that within the

dialogue between those who set the goal and those who do the pushing of our ball, intentional

steps must be taken to ensure that the logic of this approach is appreciated and conveyed to the

people who establish, vote on, or fund such policies. Simply selling these methods on the

straightforward strategic logic we have outlined is unlikely to be rewarded. There must be greater

advantages cited beyond the basic success of the plan, since critics could accurately assert that

success in isolation (not the deeper success we are seeking) may be more easily achievable with

the application of a less inhibited, but 'pointier' arrow of force. Proponents could argue the

adaptability and the endurance of such a deployment, and its ability to respond to strategic

changes. However, to argue without the providing all of the broader context within which any

deciding authority finds itself is to fail to provide that authority with the necessary details to make

an informed decision. We should not confuse this with trying to teach command authorities their

business, but rather make the case that the appeal of greater advantage is considerable. And in

the case of the war of choice, it causes no consequential loss of prestige or standing, but rather

may enhance these considerably.

Making this case in terms that policy makers and the public can accept is a difficult

proposition. However, the necessity of taking the time to do so is again inherent in the statement

made by Lonsdale with which we began this reflection. We already broadly accept that the

strategist must pay 'lip service' to ethics. Lonsdale argues in the same chapter – indeed in

justifying that statement – that 'there may be political and strategic costs associated with ignoring

prevailing norms and values'.[10] We are now taking the argument to the next step. Beyond paying

mere 'lip service' to ethics, the strategist must fully integrate ethical considerations into any

realistic model in order to point the way to achieving the type of strategic success (such as lasting

---

[10] Lonsdale, "A View from Realism." P.31

stability in a conquered region) that is the actual goal of the leaders requesting strategic guidance

and the people they serve. To be blunt, leaders do not want to 'win at any cost', if the 'win' that

results from that policy feels in the end, in every important respect, like a loss to their

constituents. In practical terms, an ethical win 'sells' better, not for trivial reasons, but because it

is likely to be more secure and require fewer compromises in the future.

Candour and Creativity

By using the analytical model we have constructed, we can provide a coherent strategic

case for using greater, but more restricted, forces. Therefore, we might suggest that there is a

'win' available for all sides. Those charged with realising the policy objective have the resources to

achieve it, while the decision maker has the possibility of achieving a greater gain (in the wider

geopolitical context) than might be expected from becoming entangled in the war of choice.

However, it requires a certain honesty from both sides of the uneven discussion. Frank

assessments are necessary from needs and outcome expectations of the military, to an

understanding of context and the necessity to avoid 'mission creep'. Thus, the policy goal must be

clear-eyed and openly articulated, and set within realistic expectations. Deciding that a population

you are saving will simply organise themselves peacefully and within prevailing norms and

standards, while placing palm fronds beneath the tracks of our advancing tanks, is at best

unrealistic. We must accept that there will almost always be a longer-term commitment than

might be at first envisaged. Again, a certain candour in the discussions between the interested

parties must be allowed.

This candour should also extend to the other element of the trinity when the decision is

made. We have discussed the trinity earlier: the three elements represented by policymaker,

military and the people. In order for us to maintain a balanced centre of gravity, and to give us the

best possible chance of unbalancing our enemy's efforts, we must ensure that we have a secure

place from which to push our imagined 'ball' (or to launch and sustain our conflict). This requires

being honest with the polity, and clearly articulating the goals, and avoiding changing the goals or

failing to anticipate any post conflict challenges. There are risks involved with such an approach:

failing to articulate the necessity of engagement, for example, can erode political will. There are

also challenges of distance to overcome – certainly in the war of choice. There is an inherent

problem in matters of interest, one of which is the difficulty of proximity. If there is a conflict 'next

door' there is a proximal interest that can be readily addressed. The further away from an

immediate threat or interest, and the more we base the idea of going to fight on values, the more

difficult it might be to motivate such a mobilisation. We are potentially condemned, by the

strategic choice we have outlined, to inaction. We might, if there is coverage and care, rely on the

accumulation of horror – that eventually conditions will reach such a deplorable state that there

becomes a general sympathy within the trinity, and most importantly the polity, to action.

However, this cannot be guaranteed: it may be that there is not the sympathy to act, despite

moral condemnation.

How can we respond to such a seemingly impotent impulse to, for example, intervene on

behalf of a distant targeted population? We are horrified, but have not the interest to act in a

manner indicated by our strategy. What can be done? Again, we might suggest that there is

opportunity suggested by the strategy outlined above. We have discussed above the use of a

widespread, supported, and deep force to act to remove the room for the opponent to fight.

However, if we can add moral weight, we can remove it. Instead of broadening our arrow, we can

tighten it. If allies in the region are already engaged, but lack the fighting capacity, then it may be

that a relatively unrestricted force - targeted tightly to disrupt or defeat the enemy – can be

effective. We can see the effectiveness of such an approach, for example, with the French

engagement in Mali.

In response to UN Security Council Resolution 2085 (2012), the Republic of France deployed forces to Mali to assist it with an encroaching Al Qaeda affiliated insurgency.[11] The components sent included ground and air forces operating from Malian territory and supported by the French Navy from the coast of Senegal and naval air support in the intelligence role.[12] This was a rapid deployment, and it was not conducted in the way we have advocated above – rather the opposite. However, the French operation, deploying Special Forces and other components, and successful integration of local forces into the stabilisation role, can yet be argued to be an example of the strategic choices we suggested above. The difficulty, we might argue, is the ability of France to deploy enough force rapidly enough to deny the enemy room to move. By making the choice to use an integrated air and ground forces, and using forces more used to the application of the tip of the spear, the French contingent was able to begin pushing our 'ball' towards the stated goal of defeating the insurgency. However, in order to deny the insurgents the room and ability to move, other elements were deployed to advise, assist, and train local military assets. This is the creativity that we were discussing previously. At no point should it be suggested that the strategy above needs to be conceived of as a single actor/single alliance model. It lends itself to the formation of rapid coalitions, where one partner is able to deploy forces both to fight and support other partners in the stabilisation role. The art of the strategy is to deny territory, both physical and conceptual, to the enemy. The Mali operation was brought to a successful conclusion, and troop drawdown occurred by May 2013, with only 4000 troops deployed at the peak of the operation.[13]

[11] UNSC, "Resolution 2085 (2012) - S/RES/2085 (2012)," United Nations Security Council, Available at http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2085(2012) (Accessed: 12 December, 2016)16 December 2016)

[12] Defense, Ministere de la, "Operation Serval - Point de Situation du 24 Janvier 2013," Ministere de la Defense, Available at http://www.defense.gouv.fr/operations/mali/actualite/operation-serval-point-de-situation-du-24-janvier-2013 (Accessed: 15 December, 2016)16 December 2016)

[13] News, BBC, "France Army in Key Mali Withdrawal," BBC Available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22664484 (Accessed: 15 December, 2016)15 December 2016)

In a RAND analysis of French strategy, Michael Shurkin makes three interesting observations in identifying the operational concerns, the thinking of General (rtd) Vincent Desportes, and the approach to be taken by French troops. The operational concerns are familiar to us from our discussions in previous chapters:

> "1. *Seize terrain*.
> 2. *Search and destroy the enemy*.
> 3. *Stabilization*—ideally in concert with Malian and other allied forces (UN, ECOWAS)."[14]

While this is in relation to the physical operation, we have been discussing broadly a similar strategy in the previous chapters. *Take ground* to prevent our enemy from having room to move or room to push the ball. *Search and destroy the enemy* – degrades his ability to apply force to the ball to destabilise his position while denying him territory to regroup. *Stabilize with partners*: Prevent our enemy from further having access to room to manoeuvre but also deny him the psychological terrain in which to operate. In doing this with Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) troops, France was able to go about the business of fighting, while having the required forces to deny territory. This dovetails with the thinking of Gen Desportes, whose approach is characterised by Shurkin as:

> "Setting aside high-intensity conflicts against peer states, in which, according to Desportes, high technology and firepower are essential, Desportes believes that in most conflicts today and in the foreseeable future, neither raw destructive power nor high technology is of much value compared with having a ground presence."[15]

There are additional advantages to such an approach, particularly in partnership. One of the difficulties that could be experienced in a longer duration campaign, with greater levels of French deployment, is the challenge of culturally appropriate responses to the matter of security provision. While community security and safety are a constant requirement across the human

---

[14] Shurkin, M., *France's War in Mali: Lessons for an Expeditionary Army* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014). p.12
[15] Shurkin, *France's War in Mali*. p.12

experience (we discussed Hobbes's view on this, for example, in Chapter One), as with the Greeks

and the Callatians there are different routes to the same demand. With the relatively short time to

deploy, and the relatively light available forces, the opportunity for security training was limited.

Therefore, to reinforce our requirement of denying terrain (in all senses we have used it)

effectively, partnering with local forces was a strategically intelligent choice. It did mean that there

were other choices for the French forces to make, as well as decisions to be at the national

command authority level.

France was not in the position of being able to use the approach we detailed earlier.

Rather than a creeping denial of territory, it was able to use its forces in an effective hammer

move against the insurgency. In using a mobile and aggressive ground offensive, closely targeted

on insurgents, it obeyed the requirements of the Just War tradition, while also using a hybrid of

the ideas we have outlined using our model. In limiting themselves in one aspect, and then

delimiting in another, while maintaining international norms of discrimination, French forces were

able to deliver victory. Thus we see that our ideas articulated above in no way take away the

opportunities for creativity, and indeed military audacity, as these are provided by the other

choices we make. A similar strategy, without the backstop of effective stabilisation, would have

been less successful. The application of force with the endurance to maintain control is simply an

opportunity wasted.

The term audacity is used here with a purpose. Indeed, this term is used in the Rand

report and features in the explanation of French actions in their own analyses.[16] Audacity, or doing

the difficult and the unexpected, is still a perfectly acceptable choice within the strategic

environment we have described. We agree that there are advantages to limitation of force, but

---

[16] Such an opinion can be found in interviews with the French Commanding General, here: Merchet, Jean-Dominique, "Général Barrera: 'Mes ordres étaient clairs: détruisez les djihadistes," L'Opinion, Available at http://www.lopinion.fr/11-juillet-2013/general-barrera-mes-ordres-etaient-clairs-detruisez-djihadistes-1942 (Accessed: 15 December, 2016)15 December 2016

there are circumstances where a delimitation can also be of use. However, in the conflict environment, if we are to sharpen our spear, then we must be assured of its target. In the Mali situation– despite being an insurgency – this was possible, due to an intense intelligence effort (the naval component) and the professionalism of the forces. And there is nothing in the ideas of limitation above that prevent the 'audacious' use of force. Using the unorthodox is recognised within theory as a key approach in the application of force – 'one engages with the orthodox and gains victory through the unorthodox'.[17] Here we are discussing the dual use of the unorthodox, the orthodox use of force is the application with only the scantest limitation required by the norms of war. We suggest in this case the unorthodox use of force, limited means compared to capacity, while allowing the room for creativity to act.

Returning to our core point, this creativity, however, cannot be viewed as being unrestrained. We must not confuse creativity with barbarism. Creative use of force can be aggressive and rigorous but it can only come with a commitment, in the vast majority of circumstances, to precision and discrimination. There are only the most limited of circumstances that will allow for a lesser commitment to the virtues of civilisation. In dealing with the thorny nature of creativity in war, and the derestriction of effort, we cannot ignore the circumstances of the war where the idea of increasing moral weight is no longer applicable – the war of self-defence of the state or the political community where the contingent values of Chapter One are challenged to the extent that the primary values are also existentially threatened. Walzer call this situation, 'The Supreme Emergency'.[18] This is not a case of audacity, of ability to dominate the field in depth, but one where we threaten to be overwhelmed at cost of all our values. Can we then abandon these very values (even temporarily) and, to paraphrase Walzer and borrow from Orend, use bad men to do bad things and shame them after the war, even if we do not try them?[19]

---

[17] Tzu, *The Art of War...Sawyer*. p.187
[18] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*. pp. 251-274
[19] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.154

We must assume that if we are talking in terms of supreme emergency, then the time for voluntary restraint is passed. Indeed, Walzer's argument focuses on the need for most restraints to be cast aside in the face of such a danger, although he addresses the conduct afterward. Orend takes a slightly different tack, accepting that it is necessary to respond to such a danger but, in contrast to Walzer, suggesting that we - having made honest declaration of our intent – do what we need to, and in the aftermath refuse 'symbolic hand wringing'.[20] In this instance, it is Orend's approach before the use of such force that is interesting – his honest declaration of intent. He characterises this telegraphing as imploring help from other interested parties – something that Walzer does not discuss.[21] This is indeed an interesting development, as it applies to some of the discussion we have been having. Not only in our restraint have we been attempting to collect consent. We have also been discussing the addition of moral weight to counter the crosswinds of opinion, and in some cases help control a tailwind. By observing restraint as best we can, or attempting to contain the escalatory dynamic, we seek approval from friends or the continuous disinterest of the uninvolved (that is, not to draw any more foes into the conflict). If we begin to remove the restraints we apply to ourselves, or escalate the robustness of our response to counter a profound and urgent threat, we may lose consent and good opinion. Applying great effort to counter an act of aggression is expected, but the level of restraint in that effort is difficult to maintain when that threat grows more dire. At least some restraint may need to be released. How can we negotiate this while agreeing that it is 'good to be good'?

To ask this question, we might suggest, is to misunderstand the argument a little. We have argued that it is good to be good – that it is good strategy to exert restraint. However, if we remember the themes of Chapter One – that ethics is the negotiation between competing goods – then we can argue that between the hierarchy of competing goods, situationally it may be that a

---

[20] Orend, *The Morality of War*. pp.156-157
[21] Orend, *The Morality of War*. p.156

good of self-determination rises to the fore. Privileging one good over another is not abandoning the good or the ethical. Thus, it might be entirely ethical in cases of supreme emergency to reduce the standards of behaviour to those that merely comply with the law (which we also discussed), and indeed in rare cases even to violate the law. However, this is a difficult answer to make, and we should be extremely cautious about making it. We must agree that as we have been dancing to the tune of judgement, we must ensure that clear-eyed judgement remains calling the steps. Therefore, if we have to agree that if the situation is objectively dire, then such a course of action is needed, we must also agree that there is a fleeting moment where such conduct is acceptable. Should we suspend the good conduct of forces in an effort to multiply the effectiveness of our available force, we must accept that the situation will soon end and if successful, then we must return to restraint.

However, this leaves us with a quandary – we have discussed the idea of using force in a morally virtuous fashion: that restraint is a primary value. Yet in certain circumstances we must ask those who, as a result of this idea, are institutionally inclined to restraint (who have adopted restraint as their code) to place it down the hierarchy of moral demands – albeit briefly. The response, then, is a reflection of Walzer; we are not only talking about asking bad men to act badly on our behalf, we must potentially ask good men to do 'bad things', as well. It is a troubling outcome, and the harm to those 'good men' must be taken into consideration in our calculations. Recognising this, we can find common feeling with the position of Orend, agreeing that *if* we have made both explicit and implicit indications of our distress and the actions it may lead us to take (warnings we hope will provoke further assistance from our friends, making the issue moot), and *if* we then allow ourselves a spasm of violence beyond those tolerated by our usual norms, we should perhaps do it unapologetically (showing, in a sense, solidarity with those who have acted on our behalf). However, this is unsatisfying and doesn't naturally follow from the position taken thus far.

We have tried to argue for sustainability on effort and outlook. Yet, asking the good

people to do bad things, beyond the openly negotiated least acceptable standard, is

unsustainable, both in the near and long term. If at our direction our forces wound the values we

hold most dear to achieve our ends, then we undermine their claim as ethical warriors and just

combatants (with the various protections that provides). We undermine our position overall, as

well, as men and women of thoughtfulness and conscience. Yes, we can reduce our restraint from

the lofty heights previously argued for and revert to the normal laws of war, but there must still be

some limits we never violate. We have to argue that it is a case of 'this far and no further'. This is

true not only because after the war, come success or failure, we will have to account for our

actions. Even if we go untried, we will carry with us our reputation and our relationships with once

friends and allies, as well as with enemies. And should we decide that violating the values of our

'civilisation' is a worthy price for victory, then we might find that our enemies are far more

numerous than our friends. We must remember that we are discussing the strategy of a political

community that must continue coexisting with other political communities. Strategically, then, we

must say this far and no further – for if we do not, someone might say it for us. Walzer and Orend,

while beguiling, are only interested in the short-term consequences, whereas we must remember

that strategy must encompass our future wellbeing, as well.

That we were imperilled is an indictment on our friends, that we were tempted to go

beyond what we may legitimately do is understandable, but to allow ourselves the luxury of

indulging that temptation will not only affect us in the short term, but also in the long term. The

scars and wounds that we were to gain in such a process do not heal easily, and possibly will never

heal. They will remain a constant reminder not only to us, but to others of our weakness. To hold

firm the values we espouse is a clear and open announcement of strength – and in war such

declarations are as important as denying our enemy territory and military success. This is not an

exhortation to fight well and lose well. It is an exhortation to fight well, and make sure that we still

have friends the day after the war, and that our enemy does not. Equally, we should not seek to make any more enemies than we should absolutely have to. Let us consider this statement:

> "   …This bombardment began and many were killed and injured and others were terrorised and displaced.
>   I couldn't forget those moving scenes, blood and severed limbs, women and children sprawled everywhere. Houses destroyed along with their occupants and high rises demolished over their residents, rockets raining down on homes without mercy.
>   The situation was like a crocodile meeting a helpless child, powerless except for his screams. Does the crocodile understand a conversation that doesn't include a weapon? And the whole world saw and heard but it didn't respond."[22]

The incident described above is from the perspective of one man, Osama bin Laden, and describes his reaction to the 1982 conflict between Israel and Lebanon, with the involvement of the US Sixth Fleet. While we might reasonably doubt some of his testimony, his reaction is important. Our actions carry repercussions. While we might not reasonably expect this to have been the sole influence in bin Laden's journey towards the events of 2001, it does help us to focus on the point we just observed. The failure to honour certain moral standards, or perhaps more importantly, to fail to be seen to be adhering to observing certain standards and failing to adequately account for ourselves before, during or after, such actions, will lead to a reputational cost. That reputational cost may be simply that, one of reputation – however, there is a possibility that an accumulation of such costs, or a single significant instance of cost, will end up costing far more in blood and treasure than the simple short term expediency saved. Being able to predict such extended costs is difficult, granted. Perhaps it is better to seek to insure against them first. This is not to say that the later invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq would never have occurred had such strategic care been taken. Indulging in counterfactual analysis is often an error, and pulling one thread does not necessarily unravel all. However, a healthy self-examination of decisions can lead us to the

---

[22] bin Laden, O., "Full Transcript of bin Laden's speech," Aljazeera (1 November, 2004) Available at www.aljazeera.com/archive/2004/11/200849163336457223.html (Accessed: 10 December, 2016)

identification in areas where different choices may have produced subtly different outcomes, and potential gains.

We can argue that in the above statement, bin Laden appears to make a justification for the use of indiscriminate force (as we might call the attacks of 2001 on New York and Washington DC) in terms similar to 'an eye for an eye'. This is an indication that we should perhaps observe standards beyond the expected, particularly in wars of choice (although we have made the case that we should exercise restraint in all conflicts, limited at least by the minimum standards set in law), but it also presents a second opportunity of analysis. The choice of means of Al Qaeda and its affiliates (such as in the insurgency in Mali), including the relative indiscriminate nature of their choices of targets, is interesting. We can assume from our analyses in the preceding chapters that such targeting choices were designed to achieve a goal, and that given the run of the field they can be effective, but they are also born of numerical, tactical, and logistical weakness. The singular success of Al Qaeda was remarkable, because (in the case of 2001) it was oblique and used the force multiplier of mass media and novel methods. However, these were effectively one-time methods, and difficult to repeat. The correct response was one of restrained strength. However, the experience of Afghanistan shows us (particularly after the subsequent invasion of Iraq) that failing to provide enough force to deny terrain and guarantee security will lead to an unacceptable outcome in the end. It might be relatively easy, with modern platforms, systems and training, to remove a government and 'defeat' our enemy. It takes rather more to maintain his defeat, and by extension our victory. To deny ourselves the necessities of a just peace, with a stable security situation and an army at relative ease, is to deny ourselves the opportunity of creating the space for the primary values, and by extension to deny the civilian population the opportunity to flourish. Fundamentally, it comes to the willingness and the ability to exert control over the situation and ourselves.

But this reflection does not wholly fill the gaps in our thinking when we look back to Orend and his open declaration of intent, particularly in the war of necessity. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine the need for such an open declaration in a war of choice. The war of necessity is a different creature to the one we saw prosecuted by the French in Mali. We must assume that the defined force level in our model for the side defending in the war of necessity is 100. The other side must attempt to overcome that level. Now, the assigned values can be tweaked. For the side that is fighting for its existence, we must assume that it has devoted its maximum resource. The military that has decided to use moral values as a means of achieving advantage elsewhere may decide in a particular case that such restraint may not be effective – that the complaint of having hands tied behind backs must been earnestly heard. There remains, for many states, the capacity to use a platform or system that can cause the watching world to recoil in moral horror. Is this necessarily an abandonment of restraint? It is if it is used without warning – if it is deployed without telling anyone of the oncoming calamity. However, it is perfectly possible to maintain restraint and still achieve ones objective. The state or political community can telegraph its intent to allies, via means of diplomacy. Equally it can, if unheeded, make an open declaration of intent – "We shall do this, because we have no other choice left." This is not to say that the consideration of such use is unethical, or that it violates the principle of restraint, just that restraint has natural boundaries when it comes to the existential threat, and we should approach those boundaries with caution, openly, and with full disclosure to warn both our allies and our enemies. In such a move, we demonstrate a willingness to exert self-restraint, as well as our sincerity not to be extinguished. In doing so, we also indicate to our allies that their inaction may leave them judged doubly by history, as both inconstant friend and impotent bystander – that the values to which they claim fellow feeling are both barbaric and unworthy of defending, as demonstrated by their lack of willingness to come to our aid in our most desperate hour. In this we can see an extension: that our allies will be directly harmed by our actions, that their reputations, and possibly their

long-term wellbeing, will suffer by our actions. This is something that we can and have seen – not only in the actions of Bin Laden, but also the self-inflicted injuries of Abu Ghraib (which we have yet to discuss), that affected not only the parties to the conflict, but their friends and allies.

In this we can see shades of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on the subject of deterrence – that in order to achieve the most morally satisfactory outcome, there may be a need to tolerate the threat of the immoral.[23] If we allow the escalatory dynamic to prevail, then it is incumbent on us to be as clear about the outcome. However, we must also realise that should the situation shift, should chance and good judgement change the situation, then we must step back from the brink much more smartly than we approached it. Should the threat of such an action encourage others to join our side, or should the other side step back from orchestrating our impending doom, then we must withdraw the threat. And even before we were to make good such a threat, a clear demonstration of preparedness and ability, while done to avoid direct damage to the innocent (or indeed the opposition forces so as not to rile their desire for revenge), may be enough to alter the situation in our favour. This is all a potential testament to the utility of restraint, rather than the opposite.

This is an argument to act from a position of strength, and to demonstrate that strength through both a clear declaration of intent and in numbers. However, it is important that we do not misunderstand the idea of strength. Strength, to some, might be the ability to conduct oneself in any manner of one's choosing. This is to misunderstand strength. For example, the abuse of prisoners because one can is not a declaration of strength. Rather it is an expression of weakness – a statement that one feels only in control enough to demand the extraction of information or vengeance on a protected person by force. To compound this declaration of weakness, we can suggest that it will only make us weaker. Let us consider the case of the Abu Ghraib prison during

---

[23] Bishops, National Conference of Catholic, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* (Washington DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishop, 1983).

the occupation/administration of Iraq by a US led coalition of forces. Abu Ghraib was subject to an

investigation into treatment of prisoners and the interrogation methods used to gather

information.[24] The subsequent investigation by Major General Taguba, of the Coalition Land

Forces Component Command, into the detention practices of the Military Police Battalion charged

with the operation of the prison found multiple violations of the standards expected. These

conclusions were laid out in uncompromising terms in the report:

> "1. (U) Several US Army Soldiers have committed egregious acts and grave breaches of
> international law at Abu Ghraib/BCCF and Camp Bucca, Iraq. Furthermore, key senior
> leaders in both the 800th MP Brigade and the 205th MI Brigade failed to comply with
> established regulations, policies, and command directives in preventing detainee abuses
> at Abu Ghraib (BCCF) and at Camp Bucca during the period August 2003 to February
> 2004."[25]

Other reports of the allegations surrounding other detention facilities were published by the

Associated Press, predating the completion of the Taguba report by months.[26] In an AP report,

former prisoners make allegations of mistreatment, including the use of immobilising prisoners in

the sun, and conditions where healthcare for the chronically ill and other basic needs were not

met. The AP report makes mention of other reports (not just the Taguba report) being prepared or

already being circulated. We may not be moved by this, as those imprisoned were supposed to be

there having committed violations of the law, or being reasonably suspected of doing so – or

because they presented an active danger. Equally, these were people under the charge of the

military, and the military is not a police or a civil prison service. So we may say that as long as basic

standards were met, then there were no reasons for concern. However, the Taguba report found

---

[24] Taguba, MG Antonio, "ARTICLE 15-6 INVESTIGATION OF THE 800th MILITARY POLICE BRIGADE," (US Army, 2004). p.6
[25] Taguba, "ARTICLE 15-6 INVESTIGATION OF THE 800th MILITARY POLICE BRIGADE." p. 50
MP here means Military Police, MI means Military Intelligence. These are both military units, not civil components of the Coalition Government.
[26] Hanley, C.J., "AP Enterprise: Former Iraqi detainees tell of riots, punishment in the sun, good Americans and pitiless ones," *San Diego Tribune*, 1 November 2003.

clear violations of such standards – not the simple oversight or missing detail, but intentional actions taken to violate rights of the detained and behaviour that would meet the definition of torture.

Some might suggest that this was to be expected, and that it was both understandable and unworthy of too much attention. However, we suggest otherwise. We have been concerning ourselves with the idea that it is strategically good to hold ourselves to a higher moral standard. Not only does it mean that we can control the application of force, but it makes our lives easier by not inspiring unnecessary animosity. We should be concerned with the conditions in the prison. It was strategically negative to treat these prisoners in this fashion. By demonstrating a complete disregard to the cultural sensitivities of those detained, while showing a callous disregard for them as human beings through the use of torture and failure to meet even basic needs (such as healthcare), the coalition forces were collectively tainted with a negative reputation. Rather like what we saw in the earlier quote concerning denial of assistance to an Iraqi man with the missing son, making and applying such harmful or neglectful policies, or exhibiting such attitudes, will only diminish our ability to ensure the just peace. The foundations of that peace will necessarily come from how we conduct the war. therefore, while we hold the decision to go to war as being one of the most morally 'checked' decisions of politics (the Just War tradition has this at its heart), we must also check ourselves morally during and after the war. This is not simply because we should, and we wish to sleep at night, but because it is the *strategically sensible thing to do.* This is not simply the judgement of the lonely theorist, but also the reflection of a senior US Commander who went on to a (short-lived) period as US Commander in Afghanistan:

> '…Gen. Stanley McChrystal said, "In my experience, we found that nearly every first-time jihadist claimed Abu Ghraib had first jolted him to action." Our moral reputation had started killing American soldiers.'[27]

---

[27] Klay, P., "What We're Fighting For: Our acts of moral courage defend America as surely as any act of violence," *The New York Times*, 10 February 2017.

This is an important statement. We have a senior commander stating that there is a direct correlation between a moral failure and an inhibition to delivering the policy goal. Let us be clear – this is a case *where a moral failing was a direct strategic negative*. Conversely, we can infer from McChrystal that in this instance, there was a direct strategic benefit to be had from behaving in a manner that is more morally praiseworthy. In doing so there is a possibility, in his view, that there would have been fewer individuals inspired to join the insurgency, and fewer lives lost by coalition forces. We might suggest this is, while not necessarily proof, at minimum a strong argument for the adoption of higher standards. It is a ringing endorsement of the idea of reordering the competing demands of strategy to take into account the ontology of a conflict, allowing moral and ethical concerns to change how we fight in order to directly affect what we are fighting. Not only does there appear, through the model we have discussed, a reasonable case to be made in those direct strategic terms, but also in terms of not inspiring our enemy against us (another strategic goal).

Equally, we should shy away from admitting that the temptation to allow ourselves to reciprocate if our enemy appears to be fighting 'dirty' does exist and can be hard to resist. There is, we can suggest, a temptation to meet an enemy's moral choices by means of reciprocation. This view has even been articulated, albeit in modified form, by a candidate for the role of Commander in Chief in the USA:

> 'I'm in total support of water boarding. It going to be within the law but I have to expand the law because a lot of people think it's not within the law now because of this administration. So they are allow to chop off heads and we aren't allowed to water board. Somehow we're at a big disadvantage. I will tell you that right now.'[28]

---

[28] Trump, D, "Interview with Donald Trump," in *Anderson Cooper 360*, ed. Anderson Cooper (Atlanta and New York: CNN, 2016).

Here we have this view plainly articulated. We might sum it up in the manner of 'they have an advantage, so we must lower ourselves to approaching their standard'. This is simple reciprocity: they have violated standards and we must respond in kind. While this is perhaps an understandable impulse, it is also wrong. From the model, we could argue that if there were the forces in place suggested, then we would lose control of the situation reasonably quickly if we followed such a path. If we were to do so, particularly if we were perceived to so have an advantage in materiel and capability, as well as having previously claimed a position of moral 'high ground', then we risk exactly the kind of failure McChrystal observed. There is also another immediate worry beyond unintentionally inspiring some to take up arms against us or inviting the attentions of potential allies for our enemy. In agreeing to change our standards in response to the enemy, we yield him control of the battlespace.

By allowing our response to be dictated by his actions, and allowing ourselves to be compromised by his actions, we not only risk the invitation of others into the conflict. We have openly agreed in the armed negotiation of warfare that we no longer control the space. We have allowed ourselves to be compromised. We have allowed the other side to dictate the terms of the fight, our conduct, and the strategic decisions we make. At this point we place ourselves purely in the reactive role. We no longer control the battlespace, and we have agreed that we can no longer control ourselves. This is a key consideration – if we are strategically dominant, or at the very least competitive, then we have an advantage to press, even if we reduce our restraint to maintain our effectiveness in the face of an increase of applied force by our enemy. However, to act in a manner that is beneath even the openly negotiated minimum standard, or to descend into torture and mistreatment, is to admit that we no longer are able to use an act of force '…to compel our enemy to do our will.'[29] Instead he is able to compel *us* to change our will. The war, at this point, may be lost - the crosswinds of opinion may be enough to erode our firm place from which to

---

[29] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.75

push. Even if it is not quite lost, the conclusion may be far from satisfactory, and the long-term grand strategic damage may be too high a cost. We may never be in a position to join the field adequately, or at least for a generation, and much hard work on the part of civil society, the military, and the diplomats will be required. A reputation for good should not be so easily discarded for something that is both morally doubtful and strategically foolish.

This is all very well, to argue against reciprocal violations of norms from the warmth and comfort of an office, but does this mean that these ideas can be discounted within the realm of operational necessity – when the enemy is on the doorstep? We have already argued that the ideas of Westmoreland in Vietnam were actually correct, but they were not acted upon when he first requested a greater force presence than he was initially granted. So we have there only a counterfactual, imagining how it could have been different. However, we can look to Iraq and Afghanistan to show how these ideas may work in practice. In an attempt to calm the situation in his area of responsibility, Col H.R. McMaster decided to unilaterally change the operating procedure of the forces under his command. When assigned to Tal Afar, he distributed the available force widely and permanently into the community from 29 patrol bases instead of a single operating base.[30] In doing so, he reduced the impermanence experienced by all sides (the civilian population, the insurgency, and his own forces), reduced accessibility of both the psychological and physical terrain to the enemy, and found that the sense of security engendered both increased the conditions for the exercise of restraint and produced a willingness of the local population to share information (once their own security had been better established).[31] We can argue here that the establishment and guarantee of a primary good (freedom from fear) meant that contingent goods, as well as other primary goods, became available again. The idea of engaging in force protection through centralisation and mobile patrolling *did not work.* In creating

---

[30] Harford, T., "Lesson's from war's factory floor," *Financial Times*, 23 May 2011.
[31] Harford, "Lesson's from war's factory floor."

an operational strategy that favoured force protection (or an uneven establishment of goods –

rather like our sergeant earlier), US Forces created a strategic environment which was both

negative for the subject population, and negative to the US strategy. McMaster, in changing the

emphasis and creating the conditions of managed risk in the pursuit of a universal application of

goods, created a strategically positive position. To be clear, his moral courage to engage in a 'risky'

strategy reduced the risk to forces and to the overall strategy. We might suggest it appears to be

counterintuitive at first to regard a 'risk' strategy as being less beset by risk, but the model we

created shows that using force in a restrained but widespread manner (broadening our arrow) had

corollary benefits.

From McMaster's actions, we can see reflected the thinking of General McChrystal and his

policy of courageous restraint (which was criticised early in its implementation by troops in the

field).[32] McChrystal is interesting in his implementation of the policy of restraint, as he considered

an idea of '"insurgent math," as he calls it – for every innocent person you kill, you create 10 new

enemies.'[33] Here is an innovation of tactics, created by an operational commander with strategic

responsibility, not born of theory, but neatly encapsulating the theoretical arguments we have

been making – that restraint is a positive in the counter insurgency environment. When we couple

this with the work of McMaster in Iraq, denying terrain and guaranteeing security (again in the

counterinsurgency environment), we can see the lessons learned that informed the surge directed

by General Petraeus, which involved an increase of troops by some 30000, and the reversal of the

centralised basing policy that had been used previously.[34] These decisions were made from the

perspective of initial need, rather than from a basis in the sort of theory we have been advancing –

---

[32] Bowman, Tom, *Troops Surprised About Gen. McChrystal's Ouster*, *All Things Considered* (Washington DC: National Public Radio, 23 June 2010).
[33] Hastings, M., "The Runaway General: The Rolling Stone profile of Stanley McChrystal that changed history.," Wenner Media LLC, Available at http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-runaway-general-20100622 (Accessed: 10 September 2016)
[34] Petreus, D.H, "How We Won in Iraq," The FP Group, Available at http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/10/29/how-we-won-in-iraq/ (Accessed: 20 October, 2016)

while denial of terrain is cannon, the idea of restraint being strategic good is not often found. From the perspective of our theory, however, we can now argue how such decisions lead to the payoffs experienced. Their sound ethical reasoning behind the policy (certainly in the case of McMaster), while not necessarily being at the forefront the commander's mind, was a part of their success. The commanders were able to deploy force beyond what might be expected to be numerically reasonable, and derived diverse benefits from the new approach. The lesson from these experiences in a similar, although not identical, theatre of operations must absolve Westmoreland of any blame that might attach to him for the failure of the earlier strategy in Vietnam, and place that blame squarely with the civil command who rejected his request for greater manpower. By the time the US and its allies increased their effort, the momentum was already lost to the North Vietnamese.

In the whole of the discussion thus far, we have been attempting to describe a method for leaders to conserve momentum, to gain opportunity, and to have something left in the tank should escalation occur – all while seeking to contain the opportunities for such escalation. However, these ideas do come at a cost. In matters of warfare we often speak of 'blood and treasure'. We might suggest that there is a relationship between the two. Too little treasure spent, and we will see more blood spilled as a result. In the whole argument, there is a necessary tension between the 'can do' spirit of the military – its willingness and ability to go to faraway places and do things that will guarantee the state, at its own cost. This is a noble attitude, and one that creates a proud tradition of arms. However, we can make the case that this willingness to expend effort to overcome flawed strategy is counter to a strategically positive outcome. Efficiency is brittle, but by increasing our available effort, while restraining it, we allow ourselves some capacity to make adjustments. The French experience in Mali shows us that success is not simply a case of having to arrive en-masse. Being able to coordinate with allies and support them can be

equally efficacious. Even if we need to provide the impetus to roll the 'ball,' in our model, having colleagues to stop it rolling back is always a boon.

The ideas laid out in these chapters in no way mean that creativity and operational art are dead, and that we now make decisions according to the dry calculations of our model. The model exists as a tool: an explanatory device to assist our understanding. It is not a replacement for the military genius. Indeed, we might suggest that many great leaders have intuitively understood the ideas encapsulated in our model, before their summation into theory.

But we cannot simply articulate these ideas in this manner and assume that it is enough to move the policy dial. There will always be pressure on the military to do the job at minimal material (or effort) cost, unless there is a counterargument that can be made which sways the decision maker. It can be difficult to make the case of future advantage in the face of greater expenditure of effort against immediate pressures – be they budgetary or political. We must also accept that we are here discussing the lives of daughters and sons. The soldier is the one who will suffer the consequence of the decisions made and the approaches we are contemplating. Inevitably, in any conflict, we are separating troops from their families and placing them into harm's way. This is the job of the soldier, and in the modern professional military this should be understood. Soldiers should be aware of the risks when they choose to put on the uniform, as should their loved ones. The danger is real, and it may be that they will not come home. However, this does not give the commander carte blanche to do as he will. Those who serve remain members of our societies, they take part in the open negotiation of good described in Chapter One – they are both formed by it and help form it. To ask them to violate their moral norms (for example by asking them to use disproportionate force) is again an error. This is not true simply because of the charges of crimes that may come against them, or the condemnation of both ally and foe – although these are reason enough. Such acts also make us weaker, should those violations begin to materially or morally affect the soldier in question (as they almost inevitably

will). In damaging the soldier, we damage our fighting capacity, not simply through the loss to physical injury, but the loss to mental and moral injury. The injured soldier reduces his or her effectiveness, can reduce the effectiveness of his or her unit, and ultimately – if these injuries aggregate – effect our total fighting capacity. In returning our damaged soldier home, we lose public sympathy, and lose the support upon which we rely.

In suggesting operational actions in line with our model, we provide decision makers some room to 'ventilate'. It allows some capacity to rotate forces from more hostile areas to the rear, to allow some time to decompress. In providing more resource for commanders, the suppression of an enemy is made easier, as many hands make light work. While it will take commanders of ability to negotiate the riches of force with which he is presented, the benefits could be revolutionary – not simply in the war of choice, but also in the war of necessity. And we must also remember our commitment to those who come home. This is not only about the care the injured receive on returning, but mitigating the harm that is caused while they are there. In doing this, we maintain the available effort now, and for any near-term future wars. In our hierarchy of goods, being able to maintain our effort is high on our list, as it will help us achieve the primary good of victory. However, we can also argue that there are contingent goods to be achieved: we maintain the public support, our vital place from which to push, which allows us to push the ball across the field. In doing so, we maintain the confidence of the policy maker, who can direct us knowing that the ground is firm and his or her forces are strong – not just physically but mentally and morally. The iron dice can be rolled with confidence that the conduct of the war will not undermine the justness of it.

This is the business of strategy: the ability to apply force for policy ends, to artfully manipulate force. It is not simply the business of applying force for the policy ends at hand. We do not concern ourselves with the business of grand strategy – the pulling of the all the levers of state to achieve the state's goals – that is for others to consider. We must remember that the general

and his forces are the ones who maintain the watch, standing guard to go where is needed and do what is to be done. This transcends the needs of today's conflict, or the one that came before. While fighting this war, the next should never be far from the mind. This need is better served by a proactive than a reactive posture. The time to adjust attitudes and policies is now. Cultivating an ethically positive strategic culture allows for the soldier to do his or her job, with a mitigated cost to him or herself, while maintaining the readiness and ability to respond proportionally, should it be required. What is suggested here is a way to prevent ourselves being seduced in the tango with the lesser angels of our nature, and to lead rather than follow.

In restraint, there is strength. In fact, restraint can only be achieved from a position of strength – weakness does not allow for restraint beyond the openly negotiated boundaries. To sink any lower than basic norms invites disaster. There are no guarantees in predicting the next war. It may be asymmetric, or it may be symmetric. Undoubtedly, the battlefield will not simply be the one on which soldiers meet. We have argued that the war, all wars, by their nature, will include the home front, our forces, and the interaction of those forces with others. It will take place across multiple domains, with a newly emergent domain being one where the harms are potentially difficult to predict – the digital. We must be mindful, despite these future challenges, of advice that comes from the past. The nature of war is constant, though the way they are fought changes, and they conform to the spirit of the age.[35] We speak of the need for resources, of calculations, and restraint. We respect discipline and the coup d'oeil of the General. In advancing a model, we are engaging in seeking to understand that, as Brodie suggests: 'The critic must use his theoretical concepts as the soldier should use them—as aids to judgment and not as laws.'[36]

Above all, we are not suggesting a retreat from the bloody business of war as is necessary. We are suggesting that there is strategic advantage to restraint within war. That advantage comes

---

[35] Clausewitz, *On War*. p.35

[36] Brodie, B., "A Guide to the Reading of On War," in *On War*, ed. M Howard and P. Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976). p.653

with the cost of increased effort but decreased efficacy, but this may be offset by our greater

preparedness to deal with chance, uncertainty, and the opportunity to press the advantage. It is

control that we seek, control of the battlefield, control of the air, or control of the sea (not to

mention space or the new digital fronts). In achieving this we must not be tyrants, but must be as

magnanimous in victory as we are intolerant of defeat. In suggesting that we consider the harms

we can forestall, it is possible that this care taken will be repaid in any peace we might administer.

The job of the soldier, since 1945, has not been to leave his conquered foe, but to remain with

him. There is little evidence to presume that this will change. So, in order to assure victory, and a

tolerable peace, we should heed old advice:

> 'If, then, civilized nations do not put their prisoners to death or devastate cities and
> countries, it is because intelligence plays a larger part in their methods of warfare and has
> taught them more effective ways of using force than the crude expression of instinct.'[37]

---

[37] Clausewitz, *On War*. p. 76

<u>Conclusion</u>

Our enquiry is at an end. We have spent the previous five chapters engaged in an analysis triggered by a question that was posed by Dr Al Pierce which we highlighted in the literature review and have recalled in various point of the work since. To paraphrase, this question was, can the best we can expect from the worlds of ethics and strategy be that they are conversant in each other's languages? In seeking to answer this central question, we have wrestled with many additional questions and have attempted to answer them, have looked at past conflicts and analysed decisions taken in them, and have spoken of cows, brides, cats, tuna sandwiches, accumulated horror, proximal and extended interests, and ideas of efficacy.

To remind ourselves of how we came to be here, it is helpful to review that path we have taken. In Chapter One, following the methodology and literature review, we asked, what are ethics? This seems to be a settled question, judging from the literature. However, it was necessary to explore the subject afresh in the context of the question we were asking. Thus, for the purposes of our project, in the chapter we constructed a very specific definition of ethics, indicating the interplay of the moral as an internal condition, morality as a collective assessment of the good, and ethics as the negotiation of the hierarchy of goods in the most morally acceptable way. During the chapter, we considered ideas of primary and contingent goods and the notion that different societies can alight upon primary goods that are remarkably similar, even though the contingent goods that depend on them may differ. In other words, even where societies agree on values, their practices may differ. The definition of ethics we alighted upon differed from that achieved by other ethicists, but the discussion was useful – we began to see ideas of hierarchy and dependence. We were, both in concept and ideas, laying the foundations of what was to follow.

Chapter Two saw the beginning of the discussion of strategic theory. One of the consistent debates within the subject is whether the 'nature of war' is a static concept, or a dynamic one that changes over time with changes in societies, platforms, and systems. We considered the idea of

237

the nature of war being a concept rooted in societal changes, choosing the ideas of John Keegan as our basis for a discussion of this possibility. In thinking about one of his examples, involving cows, brides, grazing, and warrior classes, we made the case for the nature of war inevitably changing. But then there was a terribly unfair bait and switch as the case was made against Keegan (and others) and their position of the dependent nature of war. We found ourselves returning to our Clausewitzian roots and agreeing on war's independent nature. It was here we began building our own model of a conflict in the most basic of terms, starting with a simple line graph and then introducing our ball and players trying to control its course.

Having agreed on the independent nature of war, at the expense of theorists such as van Crevald and the military historian Keegan who advance a dependant nature of war argument, we went on to consider wars themselves in Chapter Three. We discussed the concepts of the wars of choice and wars of necessity. We discussed the differences between them, and the consequent effects on the model we began to build in the previous chapter. It was here we introduced the idea of mass, and the differential and 'duality' of the mass in a given conflict. We added these ideas into our thinking, assigning them as a numerical value in our model. We did this to keep track of our ideas, as we used the initial ball in space framework and slowly added to the model's complexity to serve our purposes. This complexity was added to the model with discussion and thought; we were not seeking to add complexity for complexity's sake – each addition was made to help deepen our understanding, adding rationale while constructing a relatively wieldy analytical tool. To begin to expand our understanding of how the model works, we applied it to the British/Argentinian conflict following the Argentine Invasion of Falklands, and to the much later NATO intervention in Kosovo. While taking no position on the legality or ethical case for these actions (although we might suggest that both observed the ethical requirements of *Jus ad Bellum*), we analysed the conflicts within the model. From this analysis, we drew judgements about the strategies chosen in each conflict and their chances of success. This was the first

demonstration of the model, and the analytical opportunities afforded by the model, both from a

retrospective and possibly a predictive perspective.

From this initial trial of the model we entered Chapter Four. Here we added yet more

complexity to the model by introducing the role of opinion in a conflict, and the concept of adding

additional 'mass' to our thinking. We had considered the role of mass, and the assistance it

provides in our ability to control a conflict and our application of force within a conflict. So, we

now considered the argument of artificially applying more mass in the form of 'moral weight'.

Through application of this moral weight, which we characterised as restraint of force but with

greater numbers, we found that we could apply more force in a controllable fashion. To examine

this idea, we looked towards the example of the war in Vietnam and the approach actually taken

compared against the one requested by General Westmoreland. Through analysis, we argued that

Westmoreland was prescient in his request for more troops, and that the position taken by

McNamara and the Presidency (not to give Westmoreland what he wanted) was a delay that did

not reduce the final overall deployment and indeed provided the opportunity for the NVA to gain

momentum and control of the conflict. In many conflicts, a decisive point can be located, a point

of win or loss. In Vietnam, it could be argued that the decision to deny the Westmoreland request

was one such point, and the unfolding events were set in motion at that point, with it thereafter

ever increasingly difficult to change the course of events. When the iron dice are rolled, it is

difficult to change where they will fall when they are already in flight.

Chapter Five was the chapter that, we hope, provided the unity to all that went before in

the prior chapters. Taking into account the various considerations laid out in Chapters One to Four,

Chapter Five sought to unify the ideas of force, restraint, strategy, and ethics – and to argue that

to require only that strategy and ethics be merely 'conversant' in each other's language is to do

both sides (or fields) a disservice. We considered further the benefits of restraint, seen as

limitation of force, but coupled with a greater potential presence of it. Specific recommendations

were made, including a critique of the of the occasionally overconfident 'can-do' attitude found in

military leadership (where they try to do more with less). We found ourselves asking in part for a

cultural change on behalf of those who are tasked with the application of force. However, such a

change must be coupled with a greater understanding of what is done by troops among those who

send them, and the societies on whose behalf they fight. To illuminate this point, we examined the

decisions of then Col. McMaster in Iraq, his conscious choice to turn away from established

practice to embrace a policy of restraint, and the benefits the area he was sent to protect reaped

by this change. We also considered the actions of France in Mali, and the different ways an

intentionally restrained approach could be used – using the tip of the sword to best effect, but

recognising that a blade is only as good as its hilt.

At this ending point, however, we still have business to conduct. We have introduced and

acknowledged criticisms of the use of an analogy (as our model is analogy), and the danger of the

abstract. In seeking to analogise conflict, if we remove too many variables, we may strip our model

of too many details for it to be of use. We absolutely must concede that our model, especially in

its initial form, does strip conflict of many elements. We do this to allow ourselves to consider the

essential qualities of conflict in a sequential and understandable fashion. We do it to allow us to

gradually snowball the complexity of the model, to introduce new considerations and concepts

when we are comfortable with the foundations upon which they will sit. Accessibility and

applicability are important to us. It is hoped that the ideas contained within this work will be of

use to more than the strategic theorist. The model is as much a tool of communication as it is a

device for constructing our theories.

Equally, the danger of the analogy is that it may be misapplied to other areas of social life.

Anyone who has spent time inside a business school or management programme has heard the

ideas from strategic theory enter the business world. The works of Sun-Tzu, for example, appear

on the shelves of bookstores reinterpreted for the manager and MBA. We should be clear,

therefore, that what is presented here concerns solely the business of war – achieving policy ends by the application of force. War is transitory, an anomaly from the social norm. No society is in a constant state of war, away from the pages of George Orwell. While many societies live under the constant shadow of threat, often very real threat, major conflicts such as Vietnam, Kosovo, Korea, and the World Wars were transitory – they were won or lost (regardless of what their conclusions were called). Of all these conflicts, the World Wars were whole society efforts on behalf of the belligerents and as such were mercifully rare by comparison to the experience of the majority of 20th century conflicts. We hope not to see their like again. Yet there will be wars, and so war must continue to be studied. Rather like the theories of economy, the theory presented here is for a specific aspect of the social life of humanity. As economists might be urged to write for 'homo economicus', the economic man, these theories and models are presented to reflect on 'homo militaria', the military man. The abstraction in our model therefore exists in part to separate these theories, to keep them in their appropriate place, to remove them from claims of universality, and to act as warning against appropriation. The life of 'homo militaria' is but one aspect of the human existence, and it is as distinct from the others as is his or her economic life.

The ideas contained here are not iron rules, despite using the language of physics and the occasional equation. As such, this work veers away from those who, in part, inspired the approach. The game theorists, now unfashionable, attempted to think through the problems of strategy in a time of new weapons and platforms, their zenith being the 1950s and 1960s. Herman Kahn, Thomas Schelling, and many others contributed to this lively discussion, and their spirit hopefully lives on here. However, we must concede again that while they were inspiration we are still at a remove from them. Our work is based on judgement, not bald mathematical facts or the nuances of the mathematical game which helped determine such policies as Mutually Assured Destruction. This work was written as a contribution, hopefully an original contribution, to the state of the art of understanding an aspect of strategic decision making – to strategic theory. We are grateful that

it has already achieved interest, including within those institutions which teach the next generation of practitioners. So to those who inherit the profession of arms we say be good and show restraint because, counterintuitively, there are advantages that come from doing the right thing in the right way.

Bibliography

Aquinas, St Thomas. *The Summa Theologica Complete Edition - Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province*. Kindle ed. New York: Catholic Way Publishing, 2014.

———. *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas - Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province.* Kindle ed. Vol. Part 2, Second Part (QQI - XLVII), London: Burns, Oates and Washburn Ltd., 1916.

Aristotle. *The Politics - Translated by T.A. Sinclair, Revised and Re-Presented by Trevor J. Saunders*. London: Penguin Books, 1992.

"Army Reserves Train in Italy." Ministry of Defence Press Release, http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/TrainingAndAdventure/ArmyReservesTrainInItaly.htm.

Bassford, C. "Tip-Toe through the Trinity or the Strange Persistence of Trinitarian Warfare." clausewitz.com, http://clausewitz.com/readings/Bassford/Trinity/Trinity8.htm.

Bellamy, A. *Just Wars - from Cicero to Iraq*. Cambridge, UK and Boston, MA: Polity Press, 2006.

bin Laden, O. "Full Transcript of Bin Laden's Speech." Aljazeera www.aljazeera.com/archive/2004/11/200849163336457223.html.

Bishops, National Conference of Catholic. *The Challenge of Peace:*

God's Promise and Our Response Washington DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishop, 1983.

Bowman, Tom. *Troops Surprised About Gen. Mcchrystal's Ouster*, *All Things Considered*. Washington DC: National Public Radio, 23 June 2010.

Brodie, B. "A Guide to the Reading of on War." In *On War*, edited by M Howard and P. Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Brown, M. (ed.). *Platos's Meno with Essays. Translated by W.K.C. Guthrie*. Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1971.

Bull, H. *The Anarchical Society - a Study of Order in World Politics*. 2002 ed. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave 1977.

Calvert, P. *The Falklands Crisis: The Rights and Wrongs*. London: Francis Pinter (Publishers), 1982.

Carmola, K. "The Concept of Proportionality: Old Questions and New Ambiguities." In *Just War Theory - a Reappraisal*, edited by M. Evans. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

Carroll, L. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and through the Looking Glass - Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Roger Lancelyn Green*. London, New York and Toronto: Oxford Uiversity Press, 1971.

Chalmers, C. "Take Me out to the Holosuite." In *Deep Space Nine*, edited by R. Berman and I. Behr. Los Angeles, CA: Paramount Studios, 1998.

Chandrasekaran, R. *Imperial Life in the Emerald City; inside Baghdad's Green Zone*. London, New York and Berlin: Bloomsbury, 2007.

"Charter of the United Nations (1945)." In *Blackstone's International Law Documents* edited by M.D. Evans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Clausewitz, C. Von. *On War - Edited and Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Clough, P., and C. Nutbrown. *A Student's Guide to Methodology*. Second ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2007.

"Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948." In *Blackstone's International Law Documents*, edited by M.D. Evans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Cornish, P. "Clausewitz and the Ethics of Armed Force: Five Propositions." *Journal of Military Ethics* 2, no. 3 (November 2003): 213-26.

Cross, International Committee of the Red. *The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949,* . Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1949.

culture, *n.* "The Oxford English Dictionary." Oxford University Press, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/45746?isAdvanced=false&result=1&rskey=LfpbLx&.

Defense, Ministere de la. "Operation Serval - Point De Situation Du 24 Janvier 2013." Ministere de la Defense, http://www.defense.gouv.fr/operations/mali/actualite/operation-serval-point-de-situation-du-24-janvier-2013.

Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre. *Army Doctrine Publication Operations - Prepared under the Direction of the Chief of Staff*. Swindon: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, 2010. http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/41903E11-B6F4-4351-853B-2C1C2839FE1B/0/ADPOperationsDec10.pdf (Accessed 6th January 2012).

Dillon, G.M. *The Falklands, Politics and War*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1989.

Douhet, G. *The Command of the Air - Translated by Dino Ferrari*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1983.

Echevarria, A.J. *Clausewitz and Comtemporary War*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 2007.

Eddy, P., M. Linklater, and M. Gillman. *The Falklands War*. London: Sphere Books Ltd, 1982.

"The Eight Stages of Genocide." Genocide Watch, http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/8stagesofgenocide.html.

Ficarotta, J. C. *Kantian Thinking About Military Ethics*. Fareham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010.

Foster, D.J. "Air Operations and Air Logistics." In *Perspectives on Air Power*, edited by S. Peach. London: The Stationary Office, 1998.

Freedman, L. *Britain and the Falklands War*. Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1988.

———. "Iraq, Liberal Wars and Illiberal Containment." *Survival* 48, no. 4 (Winter 2006-2007 2006): 51-65.

French, S. *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004.

Frontinus. *The Strategmata of Frontinus - Translated by Charles E. Bennett*. Kindle Edition: Charles River Editors, 2011.

George, R.P. *Making Men Moral - Civil Liberties and Public Morality*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Gert, B. *Morality - Its Nature and Justification* Revised ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Gilbert, F., and D.C. Large. *The End of the European Era - 1890 to the Present*. Fifth ed. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002.

Gray, C.S. *Modern Strategy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

———. *National Security Dilemas: Challenges and Opportunities*. Washington D.C.: Potomac Press, 2009.

Hall, M. *The Vietnam War*. Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2000.

Hanley, C.J. "Ap Enterprise: Former Iraqi Detainees Tell of Riots, Punishment in the Sun, Good Americans and Pitiless Ones." *San Diego Tribune*, 1 November 2003.

Harford, T. "Lesson's from War's Factory Floor." *Financial Times*, 23 May 2011.

Hastings, M. "The Runaway General: The Rolling Stone Profile of Stanley Mcchrystal That Changed History." Wenner Media LLC, http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-runaway-general-20100622.

Hastings, M., and S. Jenkins. *The Battle for the Falklands*. 3rd ed. Basingstoke and Oxford: Pan Macmillan, 1997.

Hensel, H.M., ed. *The Prism of Just War - Asian and Western Perspectives on the Legitimate Use of Military Force.* Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009.

Herodotus. *The Histories - a New Translation by Robin Waterfield*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Herring, G.C. . *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. Third ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979.

Hobbes, T. *Leviathan - Edited with an Introduction by J.C.A Gaskin*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Holy Bible - King James Version. Collins, Letters Patent granted 13 April 1991.

Johnson, L.B. . *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Wilson, 1971.

Jomini, A.H. de. *The Art of War- Translated from the French by Capt. G.H. Mendell and Lieut. W.P. Craighill*. Marston Gate Bibliobazaar, 2007.

Judah, T. *Kosovo - War and Revenge*. 2nd ed. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002.

Kane, T , and D.J Lonsdale. *Understanding Contemporary Strategy*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012.

Kant, I. *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and What Is Enlightenment.* Translated by L. W. Beck. 19th ed. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1959.

Keegan, J. *A History of War*. Kindle ed. London: Pimlico, 1993.

Klay, P. "What We're Fighting For: Our Acts of Moral Courage Defend America as Surely as Any Act of Violence." *The New York Times*, 10 February 2017.

Kosovo, Independent International Commision on. *Kosovo Report*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Krepinovich, A. F. *The Army and Vietnam*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

Lonsdale, D.J. "Strategy." In *Understanding Modern Warfare*, edited by D. Jordan, J.D. Kiras, D.J Lonsdale, I. Speller, C. Tuck and C.D. Walton. Cambridge: Cambridge Universiay Press, 2008.

Lonsdale, D.J. "A View from Realism." In *Ethics, Law and Military Operations* edited by D. Whetham. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Lucas, G.R., and W.R Rubel, eds. *Ethics and the Military Profession - the Moral Foundations of Leadership*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 2005.

Machiavelli, N. *The Prince*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc - Kindle Edition, 1992.

MacIntyre, A. "A Mistake About Causality in Social Science." In *Philosophy, Politics and Society (Second Series)*, edited by P. Laslett and W.G. Runciman. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962.

Mahan, A.T. *The Influence of Sea Power on History 1660-1783*. New York: Dove Publications, 1987.

Makato, P.J, P. Guillotreau, C-H. Sun, and G Ishimura. *Recent Developments in the Tuna Industry - Stocks, Fisheries, Management, Processing, Trade and Markets*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2010.

Malinowski, B. . "War - Past, Present, and Future." In *War as a Social Institution*, edited by J.D. Clarkson and T.C. Cochran. 21-31. New York: Columbia University Press, 1941.

"Manual for Courts Martial, United States." Joint Service Commitee on Military Justice, http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/MCM-2012.pdf.

Mattox, J.M. "The Clausewitzian Trinity in the Information Age: A Just War Approach." *Journal of Military Ethics* 7, no. 3 (August 2008): 202-14.

Merchet, Jean-Dominique. "Général Barrera: 'Mes Ordres Étaient Clairs: Détruisez Les Djihadistes." L'Opinion, http://www.lopinion.fr/11-juillet-2013/general-barrera-mes-ordres-etaient-clairs-detruisez-djihadistes-1942.

Murray, W. "Thinking About Revolutions in Military Affairs." *Joint Forces Quarterly* 1997, no. Summer (1997): 69-76.

News, BBC. "France Army in Key Mali Withdrawal." BBC http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22664484.

Norman, R. *Ethics, Killing and War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Opie, I., and P. Opie. *Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951.

Orend, B. *The Morality of War*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2006.

Orwell, G. "Politics and the English Language." In *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, edited by S. Orwell and I. Angus. 127-40. London: Secker and Warburg, 1968.

Palmer Jr, Gen B. *The 25 Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam*. Lexington, KY: Da Capo Press, 1984.

"Peace Treaty between the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of France and Their Respective Allies." The Avalon Project, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/westphal.asp.

Perritt, H. *The Road to Independence: A Chronicle of the Ahtisaari Plan*. New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Petreus, D.H. "How We Won in Iraq." The FP Group, http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/10/29/how-we-won-in-iraq/.

Pettifer, J. . *The Kosova Liberation Army: Underground War to Balkan Insurgency 1948-2001*. London: Hurst, 2012.

Pierce, A.C. "War, Strategy and Ethics." In *Ethics and the Future of Conflict - Lessons Form the 1990s*, edited by A.F. Lang Jr, A.C. Pierce and J.H. Rosenthal. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004.

Rachels, J. "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism." In *Ethics and the Military Profession - the Moral Foundations of Leadership*, edited by Lucas and Rubel. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 2005.

Raz, J. *The Practice of Value*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003.

Reichberg, G.M., H. Syse, and E. Begby. "Carl Von Clausewitz (1780-1831) - Ethics and Military Strategy." In *The Ethics of War - Classic and Contermporary Readings*, edited by G.M. Reichberg, H. Syse and E. Begby. Maldon, MA; Oxford, UK; Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

"Report to Congress : Kosovo/Operation Allied Force after-Action Report." Washington DC: Department of Defence, 2001.

Rubin, H., and I. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995.

"Selective Service System - the Vietnam Lotteries." Selective Service System, https://www.sss.gov/About/History-And-Records/lotter1.

Shepherd, B. *After Daybreak - the Liberation of Belsen, 1945*. London: Pimlico Books, 2006.

Shurkin, M. *France's War in Mali: Lessons for an Expeditionary Army*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014.

Singer, P. *Practical Ethics*. Second ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Snare, F. *The Nature of Moral Thinking* London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

"Statute of the International Court of Justice." In *Blackstone's International Law Documents*, edited by M.D. Evans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Taguba, MG Antonio. "Article 15-6 Investigation of the 800th Military Police Brigade." US Army, 2004.

Thucydides. *The Peloponnesian War - a New Translation by Martin Hammond*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Trump, D. "Interview with Donald Trump." In *Anderson Cooper 360*, edited by Anderson Cooper. Atlanta and New York: CNN, 2016.

Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War - Translated and with an Introduction by Samuel B. Griffith*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.

———. *The Art of War - Translated, and with a Historical Introduction by Ralph D. Sawyer*. New York: Basic Books, 1994.

"Uniform Code of Military Justice." Air University,
http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ucmj2.htm#SUBCHAPTER%20X.%20PUNITIVE%20
ARTICLES.

UNSC. "Resolution 2085 (2012) - S/Res/2085 (2012)." United Nations Security Council,
http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2085(2012).

van Creveld, M. *The Transformation of War*. Kindle ed. New York: The Free Press, 1991.

Vegetius. *Epitome of Military Science - Translated with Notes and Introduction by N.P.Miller*.
Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993.

Vella, Col. E.E. "Belsen: Medical Aspects of a World War Ii Concentration Camp." *Journal of the
Royal Army Medical Corps*, no. 130 (1984): 34-59.

Walker, J.B. "The Feeding Problem." *London Hospital Gazette*, no. 48 (1945): 150-1.

Waller, M., K Dresov, and B. Eds. Gökay. *The Politics of Delusion*. London: Frank Cass, 2001.

Walzer, M. *Just and Unjust Wars - a Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. 4th ed. New
York: Basic Books, 1977.

Whetham, D. "Ethics, Law and Conflict." In *Ethics, Law and Military Operations*, edited by D.
Whetham. 10 - 28. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.