Strategy and Doctrine: Confusion at a Level of War

A Monograph

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Strategy has been an important aspect of military operations since its conception. However, while strategy's importance has remained consistent, understanding of its utilization remains debated. Strategy originated as the cleverness of the general but the increasing scope and complexity of war necessitated its expanse beyond the battlefield and into the highest offices of national and military authority. Yet, rather than maintaining strategy as a conceptual tool, the theoretical discourse bifurcated strategy into its cognitive function and a characterization as a "level of war." To cope with this bifurcation doctrine synthesized these competing conceptions into the existing military hierarchy and bureaucratic structure, resulting in a confused and incomplete representation of strategy beyond guidance from national leadership. Consequently, by placing strategy at the highest levels of government, doctrine divorced military strategy from a guiding logic for operational art and removed strategic discourse from US Army doctrine. To better understand strategy and its relevance to the military practitioner, this monograph explores the theoretical evolution of strategy to distill continuities and determine strategy's nature. This paper also analyzes strategy's representation in doctrine with an emphasis on how strategy informs operational art. Finally, this monograph will present an alternate perspective of strategy and discuss potential changes for holistic representation in doctrine and broader utility across all echelons of the force.

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Abstract

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Strategy has been an important aspect of military operations since its conception. However, while strategy's importance has remained consistent, understanding of its utilization remains debated. Strategy originated as the cleverness of the general but the increasing scope and complexity of war necessitated its expanse beyond the battlefield and into the highest offices of national and military authority. Yet, rather than maintaining strategy as a conceptual tool, the theoretical discourse bifurcated strategy into its cognitive function and a characterization as a "level of war." To cope with this bifurcation doctrine synthesized these competing conceptions into the existing military hierarchy and bureaucratic structure, resulting in a confused and incomplete representation of strategy beyond guidance from national leadership. Consequently, by placing strategy at the highest levels of government, doctrine divorced military strategy from a guiding logic for operational art and removed strategic discourse from US Army doctrine. To better understand strategy and its relevance to the military practitioner, this monograph explores the theoretical evolution of strategy to distill continuities and determine strategy's nature. This paper also analyzes strategy's representation in doctrine with an emphasis on how strategy informs operational art. Finally, this monograph will present an alternate perspective of strategy and discuss potential changes for holistic representation in doctrine and broader utility across all echelons of the force.

Contents

Acronyms

ADP	Army Doctrinal Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrinal Reference Publication
CCDR	Combatant Commander
EWM	Ends, Ways, Means
FM	Field Manual
JDN	Joint Doctrinal Note
JP	Joint Publication
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy

Illustrations

Introduction

Strategy has existed within the human lexicon for thousands of years. Originating in ancient Greece, strategy is still discussed across myriad professions, disciplines, and even in everyday life. As Lawrence Freedman bemoans, "there is now no human activity so lowly, banal, or intimate that it can reasonably be deprived of a strategy."[1] An Amazon search for "books about strategy" reinforces this point by producing 50,000 titles ranging from child rearing to national grand strategy.[2] The word's proliferation has resulted in countless definitions and understandings of its nature. Nevertheless, while the usage and definition of strategy varies, its importance remains consistent. Pundits, politicians, and military experts frequently query and criticize US strategy in the middle east, military strategy in Afghanistan, and strategy to address China and Russia. Yet, these invocations are best described as confused and disjointed, primarily because of the word's prolific usage and myriad meanings. Within the military, doctrine allows more discipline in discourse, but debate and disagreement remain. This discourse centers on effective methods of creation and execution of strategy, with a focus on civilian-military relations and national projection of military power. However, more conceptual debate involves levels of war, EWMs, and the relationship of strategy to operational art.

To understand the debate on strategy one must first have a clear understanding of the assumptions and literature which drive it. The most important factor in this debate is the nature of strategy itself. Generally, strategy discourse is split between strategy as a function of authority and strategy as a function of thought. Ironically, theorists from both the authoritative and cognitive disciplines use many of the same theorists to explain their writings. Within the authoritative camp, strategy is the work of the highest levels of leadership to ensure that a wars conduct achieves the goals and aims of policy, or in Clausewitz words, "strategy is the use of the

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[1] Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2013), x.

[2] Query conducted by author on October 29, 2018.

engagement for the purpose of the war."[3] Using this idea as an underpinning framework, it follows that if warfare, and by extension battle, is an instrument of policy to attain a political objective, then strategy formulation resides at the highest echelons and necessitates a strategic level of warfare. Following this logic, the operational level of war implements a set strategy and merely accomplishes the objectives set before it. The other side of the debate emphasizes strategy as a cognitive function. From the cognitive perspective strategy is not a specific level of authority or specific elements of national power, but a logic for action which seeks advantageous change over an adversary. Ironically, current military doctrine acknowledges both theories through definitions of key terms and explanations of concepts. Most glaringly, is strategy's definition as "a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives."[4] Through this definition doctrine recognizes strategy as a cognitive logic while simultaneously anchoring it to a specific level of authority and responsibility. To complicate matters further, *ADRP 3-0* dictates that operational art is a cognitive process to *develop strategies*, campaigns, and operations while *JP 3-0* places operational art as the linkage between strategic purpose and tactical action.[5] Thus, these seemingly contradictory statements and definitions drive more questions than answers, and it is these questions which this paper will explore.

First, it is important to recognize that the varying topics, definitions, and circumstances surrounding strategy's theorization are highly varied, making a fully "apples to apples" comparison difficult. As Colin Gray points out "it is in the nature of strategy for its historical,

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[3] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 129.

[4] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) 1-18, Strategy* (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 2018), GL-2.

[5] US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 2-1; US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Joint Planning* (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 2017), I-13.

specific, character to be ever changing."[6] To this point, the author attempts to accurately represent strategy as intended by original authors while simultaneously drawing on continuities and contingencies to clarify its nature. Furthermore, it is not the intent of this paper to provide a definitive answer on what strategy is, its proper representation in doctrine, nor discuss its implementation or formulation at the nation level of government. Rather, this paper seeks to enrich strategy discourse in relation to US military doctrine by highlighting discrepancies, confusions, and offering an alternate interpretation of its presentation.

To do so, several pre-requisites are essential. First, it is necessary to explore the evolution of strategy theory. This information provides the historic and theoretical context of current dialogue and provides insight to strategy's characterizations over time. Informed by the theoretical evolution, strategy's nature is determined by distilling theoretical continuities; presenting strategy as a logic for action to gain relative advantage over an adversary. Next, an examination of doctrine will identify strategy's doctrinal nature and its relationship to operational art. Finally, an analysis of strategy's doctrinal representation is conducted in context of its determined nature to identify inconsistencies and areas for potential revision. Ultimately, this paper argues that strategy is misrepresented in current doctrine through its artificial entrenchment in a level of war and to an EWMs methodology, and that this misrepresentation has created a gap in understanding of how the military cognitively informs action.

Strategy's Theoretical Evolution: From Ancient Greece to the Present

An examination of strategy's theoretical evolution is imperative to understand the current discourse. For clarity, the theoretical evolution is framed into the pre-Napoleonic, post Napoleonic, and contemporary eras. Each era includes a presentation of strategy discourse of the time as well social, political, or military undertones that may account for those interpretations.

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[6] Colin Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 15.

Furthermore, each section highlights themes of continuity produced within that era of strategic thought. However, the reader will ascertain two primary themes. First, that a conceptual tension of strategy in the cognitive versus the physical domain has always existed. Second, that as the size of armies grew, as technology expanded reach, and as social-political structures changed, ipso-facto as complexity increased, so too did strategy's conceptualization.[7]

Pre-Napoleonic Theory: Recognizing a Higher Aspect of War

Just as today, ancient thought and discourse on strategy was heterogenous at best, however, thematic continuity exists. Strategy originated with Ancient Greeks in the 4th Century BC as *strategema*, the use of deception or trickery to gain military or political advantage. Later, the term *strategika* emerged but deviated from *strategema* by emphasizing the art or cleverness of the general.[8] As with any language, *strategema* and *strategika* were used by different authors, orators, or translators interchangeably or with varying meaning. Exact definitions of strategy in the early Greek and Roman texts were not prolific, however, several were telling to its nature. The first comes from Frontinus, a 1st century Roman General, whom stated "all things, which are done by a general with foresight, expediency, fame, and tenacity, will be considered *strategika*; if they are in a category of these, *strategemata*. The particular nature of *strategemata*, lying in the art and cleverness, profits when the enemy must be warded off as well as attacked."[9] The second comes from the Byzantine *Suda,* in which *strategema* was defined as "trick, the leadership of an army, and success."[10] Further uses of the word and its contextual understandings gave it meaning as a "plan" or effort to "out maneuver", or "out general" an adversary.[11] Here, Wheeler believed

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[7] David Jablonsky, "Why Strategy is Difficult," in *US Army War College Guide to Strategy*, ed Joseph Cerami and James Holcomb (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2001), 143.

[8] Lawrence Freedman, "The Meaning of Strategy Part I: The Origin Story," *Texas National Security Review* 1, no. 1 (December 2017), 97; Everett Wheeler, *Stratagem and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery* (New York, NY: E.J. Brill, 1988), 2-5.

[9] Wheeler, *Stratagem*, 2.

[10] Ibid., 18.

[11] Ibid., 8.

that *strategika* and *strategemata* were synonymous in the original Greek and cannot be separated into distinct categories, but were holistic as described in the *Suda*. This is important as it highlights the tension between strategy as a cognitive function versus strategy as authoritative action.

Written treatises on strategy were not the monopoly of Greco-Roman generals and philosophes. In Asia, Chinese generals and philosophers also theorized on strategy, the most notable being the 4th Century BC soldier-philosopher Sun Tzu. Sun Tzu wrote about warfare and not solely on strategy, however, his use of the word provides insight to its nature. Samuel Griffith's translation mentions strategy three times. First, that skillful generals attacked an enemy's strategy. The second usage implied that the highest art of strategy was to defeat an enemy without battle. The third emphasized maneuver to deceive the enemy for a position of advantage.[12] Similar to the Greeks, strategy acted as the art or cleverness of the general to gain an advantage over an adversary. Specifically, Sun Tzu stated that maneuver and deception accomplished this. However, Sun Tzu differed from the Greeks is his discussion on relative advantage. Using the amorphous nature of water as visualization, the sage-general magnified the importance of adaptability in a situation.[13] From this standpoint, strategy was not the plans and tricks of the general, but rather the general's flexibility and adaptability in relation to his enemy and circumstances. Worded differently, strategy was not adapting circumstances to oneself, but molding oneself to circumstances.[14]

The collapse of the Roman empire and onset of the Middle Ages resulted in a theoretical hiatus. Literature appeared sparsely in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but truly emerged as a

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[12] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War,* trans. Samuel Griffith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 41, 78, 102.

[13] "And as water shapes its flow in accordance with the ground, so an army manages its victory in accordance with the situation of the enemy." Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 101.

[14] Francois Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chines Thinking,* trans. Janet Lloyd (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004)*,* 177.

topic of study and debate during the seventeenth-century enlightenment.[15] A proliferation of terms and definitions for strategy and warfare emerged during this time. Terms such as higher and lesser war, grand tactics, elementary tactics, and grand strategy, entered the discourse. The scope, scale, and definition of these terms remained in flux depending on the author. However, authors generally communicated that war and military operations required a more diverse understanding, different skill sets, and varied considerations dependent on what aspect of the phenomena were addressed. Predominantly, two major ideas appeared to take hold within western military discourse.

First, that warfare contained aspects of both art and science, or the "sublime" and the mathematical/elementary.[16] Commonly, the elementary or lesser aspects of war concerned the "merely mechanical, which comprehends the composing and ordering of troops, with the manner of encamping, marching, maneuvering, and fighting…"[17] Guibert took this definition a step further when he described the elementary as the "detail of formation, instruction, and exercise of a battalion, squadron, or regiment."[18] Generally speaking, the lower aspects of war were anything that could be taught by rules or principles and were those things of standard practice. Conversely, the higher aspects of war, or the sublime, contended with those things "…which are never the same and which are entirely the realm of genius," "the knowledge of commanding armies," and the "art of forming the plans of a campaign, and directing its operations." [19] Thus, strategy was not a matter of drill or the selection of formations in the battle, but something else. However,

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[15] Freedman, "The Meaning of Strategy: Part I," 94-96.

[16] Ibid., 99.

[17] P. G. Joly de Maizeroy, *A System of Tactics* (London, 1781), i. 361. Quoted in Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 42.

[18] Jacques Antoine Hippolyte Comte de Guibert, *Essai General de Tactique* (1770). Quoted in Freedman, "Meaning of Strategy," 100.

[19] P.G. Joly de Maizeroy, *Traite de tactique* (Paris: J. Merlin, 1767). Quoted in Freedman, "Meaning of Strategy," 100.

while delineations of these aspects were created, they were not entirely separated. As Guibert posited, though the higher level is different, it could not be separated since it is "of itself everything, since it contains the art of conveying action to troops."[20]

The second idea to take hold was that strategy was best described and understood as a physical function rather than a cognitive function. One such theorist was Heinrich von Bulow.[21] Bulow posited that strategy was physical, and based in geographic considerations. Specifically, he defined strategy as "the science of the movements in war of two armies, out of the visual circle of each other, or, if better like, out of cannon reach."[22] In this understanding, strategy would remain subordinate to the mathematical principles which science demanded, and war would become a calculation.

To understand these views on strategy one must appreciate the paradigms of warfare which shaped these authors concepts. For the Greeks, armies were not quickly raised and casually dispensed with. The Hoplites which filled the ranks of the phalanx were citizens of the state and provided the skilled labor necessary for the city state's survival. As Wheeler and Freedman point out, battle was to be avoided whenever possible.[23] Sun Tzu echoed this sentiment, stating war was expensive and should be won with as little damage and few casualties as possible.[24] Finally, even as late as the 1700s, siege and maneuver warfare were preferred to that of annihilation. From this standpoint, the ability to win a battle or war through clever action, and with minimal or no casualties, could easily be considered the highest skill a military practitioner could demonstrate.

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[20] Jacques Antoine Hippolyte Comte de Guibert, *Essai General de Tactique* (1770). Quoted in Freedman, "Meaning of Strategy," 100.

[21] According to Freedman, the Prussian military officer Heinrich von Bulow was instrumental in establishing the term strategy as an area of analysis. Freedman, "Meaning of Strategy," 101.

[22] Dietrich Heinrich von Bulow, *The Spirit of the Modern System of War*, trans Malorti de Martemont (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Quoted in Freedman, "Meaning of Strategy," 102.

[23] Freedman, "The Meaning of Strategy: Part I," 97-98; Wheeler, *Stratagem*, 5.

[24] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 71-74, 77-79.

Another aspect for consideration is strategy's responsible authority. Most writings are clear that strategy was the art of the general. However, arguably, this imposition was artificiality imposed by the time period's character of war. From ancient to Napoleonic times, armies moved as singular units, only breaking off small detachments to garrison lines of communication. Generally, a battle was fought by the totality of military forces available and done so on terrain which the commander could direct his forces. Subordinate units acted in pre-determined formations which were dictated to them, and did not utilize mission orders as today. In many respects, the general was the chess master and his subordinates merely pieces. Thus, strategy belonging to a single individual in the hierarchy was easy to understand. This is further understood in consideration of a hierarchical and aristocratic society. From this frame, it follows that genius wrestled with the complexity of the "sublime" while the trivial was left to the commons.

Post Napoleonic Theory: Strategy Beyond the Battlefield

The conquests of Napoleon marked a shift in the character of European conflict which continued through the end of World War I. The French Revolution, mass conscription, and industrialization necessitated a holistic understanding of warfare and the expanded battlefield. Wars would no longer be fought by small professional armies led by an aristocratic elite, but instead by mass conscript armies managed by professional staffs and supported by industrialized societies. This necessity sparked the writings of the Baron Antione Jomini, General Carl von Clausewitz, and General Helmuth von Moltke whom expanded on strategy and its role within this new paradigm.[25]

For Jomini, strategy existed as one of five "principled parts" of the art of war, and was defined as "the art of making war on the map" with the purpose of massing forces at the decisive

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[25] Peter Paret, "Napoleon and the Revolution in War," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 123-142.

point of a campaign.[26] Much like Bulow, Jominian strategy focused on "where" something happened versus why something happened. To Jomini, strategy was constant, while tactics were ever changing, stating that, "strategy alone will remain unaltered as its principles…are independent of the nature of arms and the organization of the troops."[27] Like his predecessors, Jomini ascribed the responsibility of strategy to the commander, however, was clear that anyone could learn strategy so long as they contained the mental capacity.[28] Overall, these thoughts on strategy were resonate of enlightenment thinking, and bear similarities to the geographic focus of the disgraced Bulow.

Clausewitz took a different perspective on strategy. Rather than strategy's relegation to "actions on the map," Clausewitz offered strategy as a deeper cognition. Clausewitz defined strategy as the "use of engagements for the object of the war," a very simple definition.[29] However, this definition does not provide Clausewitz's thoughts in totality. Later in the same chapter, Clausewitz states:

> The art of war in the narrower sense must now in its turn be broken down into tactics and strategy. The first is concerned with the form of the individual engagement, the second with its use. Both affect the conduct of the marches, camps, and billets, only through the engagement; they become tactical or strategic questions insofar as they concern either the engagement's form or its significance.[30]

This codification of tactics and strategy was salient. It was not the action that defined something as tactical or strategic, but rather the action's consequence. Thus, an action could be tactical *and* strategic rather than tactical *or* strategic. Clausewitz also diverged from his contemporaries on where responsibility for strategy resided. While conceding that strategy was primarily the realm

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[26] Antione-Henri de Jomini, *The Art of War*, trans. G.H. Mendell and W.P. Craighill (West Point, NY: US Military Academy, 1862), 66 , 69, 71, accessed March 28, 2019, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13549/13549-h/13549-h.htm.

[27] Ibid., 48.

[28] In addressing the audience of *The Art of War,* Jomini states that "students" unable to comprehend his concepts will never understand strategy. Jomini, *The Art of War*, 71.

[29] Clausewitz, *On War*, 129.

[30] Ibid., 134.

of princes and generals, there was a theoretical acknowledgement that strategy exists beyond a set authority and instead within the context of situational complexity.[31] This idea was best codified in his statement that "the highest level that routine may reach in military action is of course determined not by rank but by the nature of the situation."[32] Clausewitz had already established that routine was associated with the tactical, and by extension, simplistic problems, whereas strategy dealt with the complex.[33] When placing these ideas together, it follows that strategy and tactics are unbounded by rank.

Another often cited strategist is General Helmond von Moltke. Although influenced by Clausewitz, Moltke was an accomplished officer who developed his own theories on war. Moltke defined strategy less by a definition and more by function. He writes:

> Strategy is a system of expedients. It is more than a discipline; it is the transfer of knowledge to practical life, the continued development of the original leading thought in accordance with the constantly changing circumstances. It is the art of acting under the pressure of the most difficult situation.[34]

In isolation, this paragraph recognizes strategy in the abstract, and as a logic for action. However, Moltke also postulated that tasks within strategy include "assembly (*Bereitstellung*) of the fighting forces…combat employment of the assembled units, thus operations," and that strategy "affords tactics the means for fighting and the probability of winning by the direction of armies and their meeting at the place of combat."[35] On the surface, Moltke diverged from strategy in the abstract, making these statements appear contradictory. Yet, from a holistic perspective, they are not. If strategy was a logic for action and encompassed all things on the battlefield, or all things

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[31] Clausewitz, *On War*, 147, 177.

[32] Ibid., 153.

[33] "the theory of [strategy]…will unquestionably encounter the greater problems since [tactics] is virtually limited to material factors, whereas for strategic theory…the range of possibilities is unlimited." Clausewitz, *On War*, 147.

[34] Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War: Selected Writings*, ed. Daniel Hughes, trans. Daniel Hughes and Harry Bell (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), 47.

[35] Ibid., 46-47.

associated with the war, then strategy included troop mobilization and initial war plans. Prussia's strategic situation, and Moltke's conduct of the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian wars reinforced this.

Certainly, the character of war changed with the introduction of mass conscription, the telegraph, and the railroad, and likewise shaped theorists understanding of war. In this sense, strategy's character also adapted to account for expansion of the battlefield. Strategy could no longer be considered in context of single battle affairs, but instead had to be considered in terms of a larger operational context, and by extension account for social, economic, and political considerations. However, strategy remained a discipline within the preview of the military and continued to associate with success on the battlefield.

Contemporary Theory: Strategy Goes to Washington

Theorists continued to expand on strategy throughout the 20th century as World War I, World War II, and the Cold War all brought new conceptualizations of warfare. It is within this contemporary writing that strategy theory demonstrates greater divergence. Through classical and post-Napoleonic periods, strategy was discussed and understood as a military matter. Jomini, Clausewitz, and Moltke all addressed strategy as something separate and apart from policy or politics, while still acknowledging a subservience to the same.[36] However, as the scope and scale of warfare expanded, theorization of strategy expanded with it. Like the 18th century theorists, new language was necessary, and terms such as grand strategy and military strategy entered the lexicon, increasing the complexity of divining strategies nature.

One prominent strategy theorist of the 20th century is the British soldier-scholar B.H. Liddell Hart. Liddell Hart posited that because warfare is governed by policy, strategy must account for policy in its formulation and implementation. However, he maintained that strategy

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[36] Jomini, *The Art of War*, 38, 66; Clausewitz, *On War*, 177-178; Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, 45.

was the responsibility of the military commander or 'the art of the general.'[37] To make sense of the dichotomy, 'grand strategy' entered the discourse. Liddell Hart theorized that the government of a nation must maintain a grand strategy to fix the objectives of the war and ensure that the means were commiserate with the ends.[38] Grand strategy would provide a basis in which a military commander could operate. Following this logic, Liddell Hart defined strategy as "the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy."[39] This concept was not new as Moltke and Clausewitz wrote on the same.[40] However, this was the first time a theorist integrated policy into strategy's definition and associated it to strategy's nature. Though this definition changed the course of strategic theory, it was Liddell Hart's discussion of the "indirect approach" that provided the greatest insight of strategy's nature.

Hart reasoned that since the purpose of grand strategy was to guide the war for the fulfillment of a better peace, and strategy was the execution of grand strategy, then strategy must seek to accomplish policy through as minimal effort possible. This was his primary argument against Clausewitz, whom he said took too narrow a view by emphasizing strategy as the use of the engagement, when, strategy is an attempt to forego the engagement.[41] To Liddell Hart, strategic mastery balanced surprise and maneuver to assert physical and psychological shock to eliminate an enemy's ability to resist.[42] Though effective strategy could not always prevent battle, it placed an army in the best possible circumstance for success.[43] Thus, while strategy is linked to the aims of policy, it is primarily concerned with action to gain advantage over the adversary

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[37] B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: New American Library, 1974), 321-322.

[38] Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 321.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Moltke refers to strategy as providing and arraying the forces. Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, 45; Clausewitz posits that the most important act of the statesman and the military commander is to establish the kind of war to be fought. Clausewitz, *On War*, 88.

[41] Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 319.

[42] Ibid., 323.

[43] Ibid., 324.

contesting those aims. Arguably, Liddell Hart's definition of strategy was more about what strategy does and less about what it is, otherwise, his theory on the indirect approach was meaningless, as strategy would be nothing more than the use of military power for policy gains. However, his introduction of grand strategy and emphasis on strategy's link to political objectives shaped strategy discourse through the contemporary period.

In 1980 Edward Luttwak built on Liddell Hart's levels of strategy and created levels of war. Luttwak posited that rather than two levels of strategy and a separate sphere of tactics, it was more prodigious that five levels exist under the umbrella of strategy. Consisting of the Technical, Tactical, Operational, Theatre Strategic, and Grand Strategic, these levels were not exclusive but rather interconnected. Luttwak stated that while definitions are arbitrary, the natural delineation point of these levels lay in the scale of action and variety of means.[44] Thus, strategy was characterized through a physical framework. However, rather than define strategy as the application of military means, he conceptualized strategy in the abstract, as a "paradoxical logic…including the coming together and reversal of opposites."[45] Essentially, Luttwak argued that strategy seeks advantage over an adversary through action which is least expected, and allows one to effect surprise. Thus, the ideal strategy aligns the five levels to counter an enemy's capabilities and desires at the corresponding echelon. Still, as one can never know the future and its outcomes, strategy must be flexible and continually search for the appropriate counter to the enemy which allows an army or nation to gain the advantage.[46]

During this period of Luttwak's writings the term operational art came into vogue within the military. Though Luttwak did not coin this term, he was one of the first western theorists to

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[44] Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 113.

[45] Ibid., 2.

[46] Ibid., 16-31.

discuss it and call for its integration into military doctrine.[47] The introduction of operational art, or the operational level of war, directly influenced discourse on strategy. Traditionally, strategy was the realm of the military and policy that of the government, however, the introduction of operational art changed these realms of responsibility and what they encompassed. Now, the military concerned itself with the operational level of war after senior leadership figured out the strategy.[48] Furthermore, the ends and means discourse, begun by Clausewitz and emphasized by Liddell Hart, gained traction in the strategic dialogue with the work of Arthur Lykke.[49] However, though mainstream strategic theory latched on to these elements, alternate conceptions of strategy were maintained.

The first thread of discussion for modern theorists' concerns strategy and its relationship to policy. For Hew Strachan and Colin Gray this linkage was the basis of strategy and its nature. For Strachan, strategy was "about doing things, about applying means to ends," but more importantly strategy acted as the "interface between operational capabilities and political objectives: it is the glue which binds each to the other and gives both sense."[50] Thus, as Liddell Hart defined, strategy is the use of military force to accomplish political aims. Gray provided a more neutral definition by presenting strategy as the "direction and use made of means by chosen ways in order to achieve desired ends," but concluded that "strategy is the bridge that should purposefully connect means with ends, most especially military force with the political purposes for which it is applied."[51] Thus, strategy was formed at the top of an organization and then

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[47] Luttwak, 112; Wilson Blythe, "A History of Operational Art," *Military Review* (November-December 2018): 45, accessed March 28, 2019, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/ND-18/Blythe-Operational-Art.pdf.

[48] Freedman, *Strategy*, 206.

[49] Colonel (ret.) Arthur Lykke was a professor of strategy at the US Army War College and is well known for his Military Review Article, "Defining Military Strategy: S*=E+W+M."

[50] Hew Strachan, *The Direction of War: Contemporary Strategy in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12.

[51] Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 43.

dictated to lower levels for action. This was the most telling for Strachan, who stated that strategy resided at the civil-military interface.[52]

To fully appreciate these ideas, one must understand the author's perspectives on the operational level of war or operational art. Strachan viewed operational art as an attempt by the military to create a "policy-free environment," separating political implications from military action.[53] Gray took a more moderate stance when he recognized that a campaign required a strategy, however, he then relegated strategy to a plan, and offered that "an operational level of war…may function as a barrier rather than a two-way transmission belt" between policy and action.[54] Conclusively then, for these theorists, strategy was no longer the purview of the field commander, with whom that responsibility historically rested.

The second conceptual thread of modern strategy theory was that of EWMs. Liddell Hart, Gray, and Strachan all theorized that strategy was born through the proper use of means to accomplish ends. One of the most cited authors on this topic is Arthur Lykke and his article "Defining Military Strategy: $S^* = E+W+M$." Lykke defined strategy in accordance with the joint doctrine of the time, which stated "the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by the application of force or the threat of force."[55] He posited that this definition can be simplified to the equation "ends + ways + means = strategy." Primarily, Lykke's article focused on military strategy, which he separated into "operational" and "force development." To Lykke, operational strategy was synonymous with operational art and dealt directly with plans of action while force development resided in civilian-military discourse and ensured that the military was resourced commiserate with expectations.[56] However, the

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[52] Strachan, *The Direction of War*, 218.

[53] Ibid., 18.

[54] Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 21.

[55] Arthur Lykke, "Defining Military Strategy: $S^*=E+W+M$," *Military Review* (May 1989): 3.

[56] Ibid., 4.

article's theme was consistent; that goals, the ways to accomplish these goals, and the means available to do so must be complementary, otherwise the concept is not feasible. Arguably, this discussion on theory was a return to the mathematical, and its ease of utility as a model of feasibility gained significant traction in strategy theory dialogue. However, alternate views on strategy and its nature were maintained.

Primarily, these alternate views are more holistic conceptions. One such theorist was Everett Dolman. In *Pure Strategy*, Dolman presented strategy as a product of the imagination and potential of the future. Defined as a "plan for attaining continuing advantage" strategy goes beyond the linearity of imposing ones will, and embraces the relativity and complexity involved in competition.[57] Antonio Echevarria explained strategy as the practice of reducing an adversary's will and highlighted strategy as a function of complexity.[58] Finally, Francis Osinga, in analysis of John Boyd's theories, posited that strategy was a "conceptual link between action and effect and between instrument and objective."[59] From these perspectives, strategy was more than the prudent use of military force, but instead, provided the purpose and reason for why action was purposeful. In many ways, these theories are not contrary to others, but provided a level of abstraction which expanded the relevance and importance of strategy beyond the dictates of a higher authority.

Strategy theory has consistently and constantly adapted to the changing characters of the times and circumstances in which it was written. Originating with the ancient Greeks and Chinese, strategy has always been associated with the martial arts and consistently involved outwitting an adversary. After a hiatus during the middle ages, the enlightenment rekindled

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[57] Everett Dolman, *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 6.

[58] Antulio Echevarria, *Military Strategy: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 5-6.

[59] Frans P.B. Osinga, *Science, Strategy, and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 9.

desires to explore and explain the world. As such, war theory began identifying concepts beyond actual combat and expanded to the sublime and higher aspects cognition. As the theory of war expanded so did the strategy discourse. Jomini and Clausewitz specified its place in conflict while Moltke expanded its context into preparation and planning. Following the world wars, the importance of political, economic, and social aspects of warfare necessitated that strategy account for these aspects; effectively pushing strategy further into the political sphere. However, strategy, while continually tied to a level of authority or physical action, continued to maintain cognitive aspects. This bifurcation maintained itself throughout contemporary strategy theory. Regardless, while myriad disparities existed throughout the strategy theory, the number of continuities is even more striking, and it is through these continuities that strategy's nature can be identified.

Strategy's Nature: A Logic for Action

Understanding strategy's theoretical evolution allows its nature to be determined. This section distills and synthesizes continuities from the strategy theory discourse into a working definition. Both Dolman and Gray point out in their own treatise on strategy, determining a new definition within a field so saturated can be a dangerous task.[60] However, Echevarria posits that each new definition is not "…necessarily unhelpful or contradictory," but rather captures continuities and enriches understanding.[61] Distilling these continuities requires analysis of previous working definitions and the explanations and descriptions which accompany them. Furthermore, some definitions require abstraction beyond the specific contexts of their creation. Particularly, this abstraction seeks to transcend specific terminology which links strategy to a specific characterization.[62] In addition to analyzing what strategy is, it is necessary to analyze what strategy is not. Following this construct, this section argues that strategy is a logic for

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[60] Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 18; Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 19.

[61] Echevarria, *Military Strategy*, 3.

[62] Ibid., 2-3.

action, future focused, informed, flexible, seeks a position of relative advantage, and adversarial by nature. Additionally, that strategy is more than an EWM construct, a plan, or tied to a level of authority.

As the historic discourse demonstrates, strategy functions within the cognitive and the physical. Primarily, this physicality relates to the creation of a plan or level of authority. More on the physicality is discussed later. As noted, theorists from the ancient Greeks, Sun Tzu, and de Sax all acknowledged strategy as dealing with cleverness, art, and the sublime. However, being an idea or cognitive function is only half of the equation. The question remains of what makes strategy a logic for action? The Oxford-English dictionary defines logic as "the course of action suggested by or following the necessary consequence of" or in other terms, the reasoning behind why something happens.[63] When comparing this definition to those of most theorists, the connection between strategy and a logic is clear. Clausewitz defined strategy as the "use of the engagement for the object of the war," however, the key phrase is "the use of the engagement."[64] By highlighting this point, Clausewitz acknowledged that strategy is tied to the logic of the action and not the action itself. This concept also resides in Jomini's description of strategy as "the art of making war upon the map."[65] As Dolman posits, this statement is a "recognition of strategy as a *plan in the abstract*," or in other terms a reasoning behind future action.[66] Moltke maintained this thread in describing strategy as "…the transfer of knowledge to practical life, the continued development of the original leading thought in accordance with the constantly changing circumstances."[67] Contemporary theorists continued this conceptualization. Dolman described strategy as "a method of transmutation from idea into action," describing the linkage between the

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[63] *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed March 31, 2019, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/logic.

[64] Clausewitz, *On War*, 129.

[65] Jomini, *The Art of War*, 69.

[66] Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 19.

[67] Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, 47.

cognitive and the physical. Finally, as Colin Gray stated, "Neither strategy nor tactics has integrity one without the other. Strategy bereft of tactics literally cannot be done, while tactics innocent of strategy has to be nonsensically aimless."[68]

Second, strategy is adversarial. Strategy's initial theorization within politics and war is salient to this fact. Both affairs involve competition or conflict with another party, and thus required an idea or logic for victory or advantage.[69] This point is particularly relevant for the student of Clausewitz since "war, therefore, is an act of policy."[70] Strategy remained entrenched within the warrior's dialogue throughout the post Napoleonic period and into contemporary writing. While many theorists defined strategy in terms of its ability to use military means for political ends, the inference to the adversary is no less relevant than with the ancients. Furthermore, many theorists are adamant that a strategy without a reactive adversary is nothing more than a plan. One explanation of this comes from Edward Luttwak who theorized that because strategy is about advantage, surprise being one of the preferred advantages, then this surprise creates a non-reacting and unready enemy, and "against a nonreacting enemy or, more realistically, within the limits of time and space of the surprises actually achieved, the conduct of war becomes mere administration...[71] Gray took this measure a step further with his tongue and cheek statement that strategy must be adversarial because "operational plans (action) cannot be addressed simply 'to whom they may concern'."[72] Finally, if strategy seeks an advantage, then advantage must be relative to some other entity.

Strategy's third characteristic, seeking a position of relative advantage, is foundational to its nature and discussion of strategy as more than a plan. For the ancients, strategy was associated

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[68] Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 20.

[69] "Politics are inherently adversarial, and in this respect at least are like war." Strachan, *The Direction of War*, 13.

[70] Clausewitz, *On War*, 87.

[71] Luttwak, *Strategy*, 4.

[72] Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 43.

to winning, which implicitly involved gaining advantage from where one was at the onset of the contest.[73] However, strategy must be more than "winning" or "victory." Dolman described winning and victory as conceptually tactical, since they imply finality and form, whereas strategy is the realm of the formless and open-ended.[74] In fact, Dolman defined strategy as "a plan for continuing advantage."[75] Strategy's inherent quality of seeking relative advantage is promoted in its representation as surprise, trickery, and paradox. Though strategy is not surprise or trickery, the conceptual link remains that an adversary out of position or unaware is disadvantaged. Furthermore, relative advantage lies at the heart of Gray, Liddell Hart, and Luttwak's descriptions of strategy as paradoxical.[76] Within these writings, paradox is explained as an army taking actions which would not normally make sense, for the purpose of creating dissonance in the adversary and gaining advantage for oneself. Even Moltke's explanation that strategy "affords tactics the means for fighting and the probability of winning…," acknowledged that strategy is about the meeting the enemy at an advantage.[77] Finally, Echevarria pointed out that regardless of strategy's definition, the "…task of the strategist has remained virtually the same…countering the strengths and exploiting the weaknesses of an opponent in ways that make accomplishing one's purpose ever more likely…This is true whether the struggle is global or local in scope and whether it involves the highest or least of stakes."[78]

The fourth characteristic of strategy is that it is informed. Strategy is a logic of action to gain a position of relative advantage against an adversary. Logically, this implies that strategy maintain an understanding from which to be developed and operationalized. This element of

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[73] Wheeler, *Stratagem*, 18.

[74] Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 5-17.

[75] Ibid., 18.

[76] Luttwak, *Strategy*, 3-15; Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 34; Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 329.

[77] Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, 47.

[78] Echevarria, *Strategy*, 1.

strategy's nature has been prevalent within the discussion of strategy as EWM and the

explanations of strategy as flexible. To begin, for strategy to have an adversary, a necessary point

of conflict or competition must exist. The environment informs the logic of how one precedes, or

as Freedman stated, "strategy therefore starts with an existing state of affairs and only gains

meaning by *an awareness* of how, for better or worse, it could be different.[79] Some examples of

environmental factors may be the composition and disposition of forces, directives from higher

authorities, geography, budget, moral considerations, or opponents intentions. As Gray opined,

"the meaning and character of strategies are driven, though not dictated and wholly determined,

by their contexts, all of which are constantly in play."[80] Figure 1 represents these concepts.
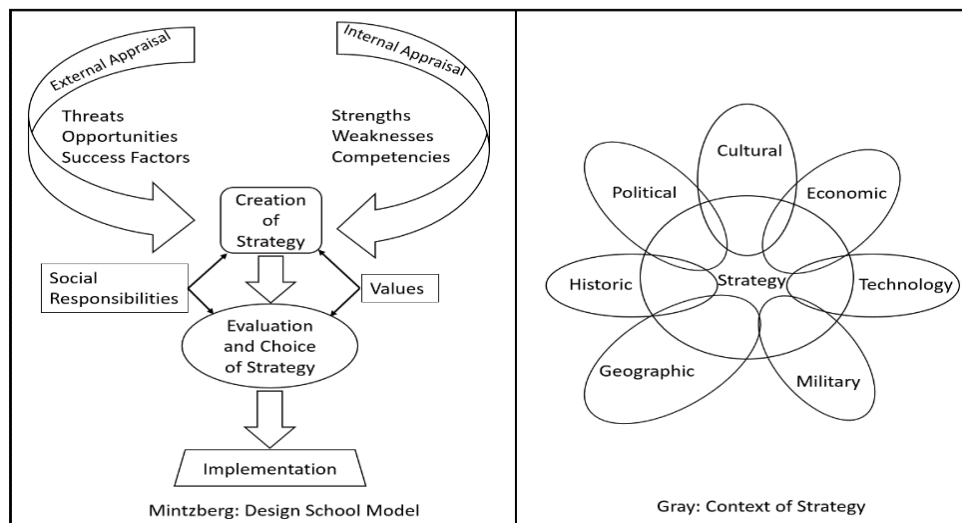

Figure 1: Contexts of Strategy. Graphic created by author. Information from, Henry Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning: Reconceiving Roles for Planning, Plans, Planners* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 37; Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 39.

Strategy's informed nature is further reinforced by the preponderance of theorists whether

explicitly or implicitly.[81] In terms of EWMs, these elements provide context in which strategy is

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[79] Freedman, *Strategy*, 611.

[80] Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 38.

[81] In Clausewitz's definition, the engagement requires context for purpose to exist. Jomini's map represents a contextual basis for abstraction. Moltke acknowledges the "constantly changing circumstances" acting on the leading thought. The indirect approach of Sun Tzu and Liddell Hart require understanding of the enemy, otherwise how does one know if it is direct or indirect? Sun Tzu's water

informed, but are not strategy in themselves. EWMs is a method of operationalizing a strategy and not strategy itself. Informed context is further reinforced by theorist's postulation on strategy's flexibility.[82] Francis Julien best described flexibility and contextual connection. Using Sun Tzu's water analogy, Julien stated:

> The situation of your opponent plays the same role for you as the lie of the land does for water: you mold yourself upon it, go along with it rather than opposing it. In short, you do not stiffen into any form of your own; instead you conform.[83]

Using these very dominant ideas of EWMs and flexibility, it is evident that strategy, by its nature, must be informed. Otherwise, without context, it devolves to nothing more than abstraction for purposeless action.

The final characteristic of strategy's nature is its future orientation. Strategy's linkage to a plan provides evidence of this thought.[84] A plan is defined as a "detailed proposal for doing or achieving something," and is by its very nature future oriented.[85] Strategy's nature as a logic for action, further implies a future orientation. Finally, strategy's future orientation is implicit in gaining advantage over an adversary. Thus, it follows that future orientation and a vision of potential is fundamental to strategy and its nature.

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analogy requires an environment in which conformity takes place. Finally, Luttwak's paradox must be contextual or it is just action, not paradoxical action.

[82] Clausewitz states that the strategist needs to be close to the campaign so the "general plan could be adjusted to the modifications that are continually required." Clausewitz, *On War*, 177; Moltke discusses that strategy will change as the tactical situation develops. Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, 47; Liddell Hart contends that "any problem where an opposing force exists…one must foresee and provide for alternative courses. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 330; Lykke states that "military strategy can change rapidly and frequently, since objectives can change in an instant." Lykke, *Defining Military Strategy*, 8; Dolman states that a strategy unable to adapt to change is not a strategy. Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 78.

[83] Julien, *The Propensity of Things*, 176.

[84] "Strategic theory, therefore, deals with planning." Clausewitz, *On War*, 177; "Strategy, in its simplest form, is a plan for gaining continual advantage." Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 6; "Whereas all strategies are plans, not all plans are strategies." Colin Gray, "The Strategist as Hero," *Joint Force Quarterly* 62 (3rd quarter 2011): 40, accessed March 31, 2019, https://csl.armywarcollege.edu/DSLD/BSAP/docs/5-The%20Strategist%20as%20Hero%20by%20Colin%20S.%20Gray.pdf.

[85] *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed March 28, 2019, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/plan.

Here it is necessary to shift from strategy's nature and speak to what strategy is not. Specifically, strategy is not the Lykke equation of EWM, is not a specific level of authority, and transcends the common perceptions of a plan. More succinctly, strategy is beyond the artificial boundaries placed upon it.

As previously discussed, EWMs is part of the context which informs strategy. Nevertheless, because the strategy discourse is saturated with EWMs it is a theory which must be addressed. Primarily, EWMs is too simplistic to codify strategy's nature, but bears more resemblance to a plan. According to Mintzberg, a plan is "an explicit statement of intentions (written on a flat surface!), usually considered in the planning literature to be specific, elaborated, and documented."[86] The Oxford Dictionary defines a plan as "a detailed proposal for doing or achieving something."[87] Whether written, spoken, or inside someone's head, the continuity remains that a plan is "tangible evidence of the thinking of management [*or authority*]," and provides a form for action.[88] Understanding a plan as a form for action, it follows that any plan requires EWMs. For example, if I desire to nail a board down, I know that the board being secured in place is the end, the ways are to hit the nail on the head, and the means are a hammer. Here, it is evident that EWMs is inconsistent to strategy's nature because it applies to something non-adversarial. Neither the nail, hammer, or board are fighting back.[89] The departure point then between a plan and a strategy lies in the complexity of an adversarial environment.[90] As

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[86] Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall*, 32.

[87] *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed March 30, 2019, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/plan.

[88] G.A. Steiner, *Top Management Planning* (New York: Macmillan, 1969). Quoted in Mintzberg, 32.

[89] The author recognizes that what constitutes an adversary is worthy of debate, however, for this paper, an adversary is cognizant, self-aware, and able to react under its own ability to directly contest action.

[90] "…the Lykke equation or structure provides little more than a starting point for planning. Once could use it to build a bridge or any complex edifice, for instance. What distinguishes a strategy from a plan is the nature of the environment and the presence of an adversary or a rival." Echevarria, *Strategy*, 6; Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 12; Freedman, *History of Strategy*, xi.

Freedman points out, "a plan supposes a sequence of events that allows one to move with confidence from one sequence of events to another," or that the form will easily accomplish the end.[91] However, in an adversarial environment, particularly as complexity increases, this is rarely true.[92] Thus, logic must support action's form. However, this does not mean a plan is unnecessary or not applicable. As Dolman states, "a plan is not strategy, though strategy without a plan is absurd."[93] Plans are still necessary since, "strategies are not sharply-defined entities…They are unique conceptions that exist only in people's minds," and it must be a plan that "brings order to strategy, putting it into a form suitable for articulation to others…"[94] Ultimately, EWMs, while valuable in contextualizing strategy, does not adequately capture strategy's nature. Instead, it is prudent as a methodology for planning. Likewise, strategy is not a plan, but rather planning is the product of strategy.[95]

Having demonstrated that strategy is neither EWMs nor a plan, it is necessary to address strategy's subjection to an authoritative level. To be clear, strategy is tied to authority. Strategy, as a logic for action, implies resource apportionment, decision making and leadership to some degree.[96] Rather, it is the specification of the authority which is artificially transposed into strategy literature, and the underlying issue. Nearly all classic and post Napoleonic theorists

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[91] Freedman, *History of Strategy*, xi.

[92] "...the world is never altogether receptive to the order that we wish it to have: inevitably, there is always a discrepancy between the planned model for our action and what we, *with our eyes fixed* on the model, manage to achieve." Julien, *Propensity of Things*, 4-5.

[93] Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 11.

[94] Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall*, 75, 337.

[95] The question arises as to whether previous theorists' definitions or explanations of strategy as a plan is false? For example, even Dolman's definition of strategy was a "plan for continual advantage." A more semantical analyses than can be provided in this paper would be necessary to fully answer this question, however, the research would indicate not. Primarily because strategy is a logic for action and a plan is its natural intermediary. It is plausible that definitions in which strategy is a plan are merely attempting to demonstrate strategy's future orientation toward purposeful action.

[96] "…decision-making is a key element in designing and employing strategy, and so it is vital to strategic theory." Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, 41; The strategist must ensure that "he controls his own capacity to do the harm he intends."; Colin Gray, "The Strategist as Hero," 38.

assign strategy's formulation and implementation to "the general" and many contemporary theorists assign it to the Commander, a political entity, or both.[97] These presentations of strategy are not incorrect; however, the research suggests they are incomplete or specific to the character of their context.[98]

For example, Clausewitz composed a general theory of war in which one part is military action as an extension of politics.[99] The scope and scale of the narrative must support this point.[100] It then follows that Clausewitz makes the central character of this narrative an individual or entity, in this case the general, which is closely related to the political authority, and by extension responsible for attaining the position of advantage for the political body to achieve its aim. Following the world wars, the character of warfare changed, and the context of advantage expanded to include the political sphere into strategy discourse. Here, at the intersection of civilian-military relations, is where the preponderance of contemporary strategy discourse sits.

Most of the authors cited in this paper clearly articulate that the transformation between political purpose and military action is complex and eminently important. Furthermore, the literature is clear that strategy must be informed by its context. However, these representations of strategy are specific to the context of national level leadership and strategy. Furthermore, the existence and prominence of strategy at high levels of authority does not preclude its existence at lower levels. Here Luttwak's vertical and horizontal dimensions of strategy come into view. The

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[97] The "prince or a general…" Clausewitz, *On War*, 177; Jomini states the strategist can be the chief of staff or the general. Jomini, *The Art of War*, 322, 335; Moltke indirectly refers to the "commander in chief (*Feldherr*)" and "supreme commander." Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, 45,46; Strachan focuses civil-military relations, implying strategy formulation resides at a level of organizational hierarchy. Strachan, *The Direction of War*, 25; Strategy is developed through dialogue and negation of "potent stakeholders, civilian and military." Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 56.

[98] John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 25.

[99] Clausewitz, *On War*, 87.

[100] The selected events, entities, mediation, and framing in narrative all act to create context and understanding for the audience in how to interpret and understand it. H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 15-21, 28-29.

vertical relationship to higher and lower authorities provides strategy context for a changed future and a means for action while the horizontal addresses the relationship to an adversary.[101] Mintzberg points out that military literature on strategy is quick to distinguish strategy and tactics based off pre-conceived notions of what's important and what's merely details, however, he warns that this is dangerous since "one person's strategy is another's tactics—that what is strategic depends on where you sit."[102]

Through this analysis, it is possible to define strategy as a logic for action, informed by a situation, for achieving a position of relative advantage against an adversary. Furthermore, it is important to note that strategy is not EWMs, a plan, or tethered to a specific level of authority. Instead, strategy is the logic behind the plan, can be informed by EWMs, and while authority is inherent to strategy, strategy is not inherent to authority. However, an understanding of strategy loses its utility without an understanding of its conceptualization in military discourse. To this end, a doctrinal analysis of strategy, particularly as it relates to operational art, is necessary.

Strategy in Doctrine: Authority, Planning, and a Level of War

Having explored strategy's theoretical evolution and nature, an analyses of its doctrinal nature and representation is necessary to determine its utility in the military. Like academic writings, doctrine imposes myriad meanings of strategy through varying contexts and usages. Overwhelmingly, strategy is presented as the adjective "strategic" to describe a document, an objective or aim, a capability or the environment.[103] While doctrine does not define "strategic," one can generally infer its usage is applied to assets in limited quantity, capabilities with large geographic reach, or emanating from the upper echelons of military and governmental hierarchy.

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[101] Luttwak, *Strategy*, 90.

[102] Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall*, 27; Grey goes one step further to state that the moniker of 'strategic" is absurd. Gray, "The Strategist as Hero," 41.

[103] The word strategic is used 189 times in *JP 3-0*, 171 in *JDN 1-18*, 580 in *JP 5-0*. The word strategy is used forty nine times in *JP 3-0*, 212 in *JDN 1-18*, and 163 in *JP 5-0*. Conversely *FM 3-0* and *ADRP 5-0* use the terms strategy and strategic eight times cumulatively.

The second most common usage is the actual term "strategy," however, this usage is predominantly found in document titles such as the NSS, NDS, or NMS. Of note, the term military strategy is used several times in doctrine, but with varied meaning. In *JDN 1-18*, military strategy is "the art and science of employing force and the threat of force to secure the objectives of national policy" while *JP 3-0* uses the term to describe a theatre strategy. For the purposes of this paper, analysis focuses on doctrinal representation of strategy as well as its stated relationship to operational art.

The governing doctrinal publication for the definition of strategy is *JP 3-0, Operations*, which defines strategy as,

> A prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve, theatre, national, and/or multinational objectives. [104]

Two major points stand out in this definition. First, that strategy is something abstract, an idea or set of ideas. Second, that strategy resides at a level of authority capable of wielding national power. Unsurprisingly, this tension mirrors that of the theoretical discourse. However, the abstract nature of strategy ceases to exist past this definition and strategy is rooted to an authoritative level.

The first evidence of this leveled entrenchment is strategy's near absence within Army doctrine.[105] This absence is indicative of the military's views on strategy formulation and implementation. Primarily, that strategy is formulated within the highest echelons of command structure and exists exclusively within the Joint and political realms of responsibility. Rather than using strategy or strategic, Army doctrine defaults to the adjective "operational" to describe the

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[104] U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Joint Operations*. (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 2017), GL-15.

[105] Within *ADRP 3-0*, *ADP 3-0*, *ADRP 5-0*, *ADP 1* and *FM 3-0* the term strategy, strategic, or strategies is mentioned less than fifty times, and predominantly in *ADP 1* with reference to the strategic level. Strategy is not defined in *ADP 1-02*.

level of war in which it operates.[106] For example, both *JP 5-0* and *ADRP 5-0* provide methods, tools, and explanations of how to create an operational approach, however, only *JP 5-0* mentions strategy or strategic considerations. Instead, Army doctrine focuses exclusively in the "operational." Furthermore, *JP 5-0* distinctly delineates a strategic environment from an operational environment, demonstrating a level of exclusivity in planning considerations.

The most telling evidence of doctrinal strategy's hierarchical nature is *JP 3-0*'s explanation of levels of war. Interestingly, the opening description is clear that these levels are a cognitive tool and unbounded to a specific physical form, but rather an object's tactical, operational, or strategic character is relative to its purpose.[107] Unfortunately, the doctrine fails to extrapolate on these statements. Rather, past this initial introduction, doctrine clearly articulates what activities occur at each level. Specifically, doctrine dictates that CCDR's receive strategic objectives/guidance through the NSS, NDS, and NMS, develop their own theatre or military strategy, then operationalize this strategy in a campaign plan by using operational art.[108] Within this framework, a mix of strategic guidance and strategic objectives, not a strategy, informs a theatre strategy, which then informs operational art.

Ironically, joint doctrine also attempts to extradite the military of strategic responsibility as quickly as possible and place military commander's firmly in the realm of "operations." Figure 2 highlights this point.

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[106] *ADRP 5-0* uses the term "operational" 229 times and the term "strategic" twice; US Army, *ADRP 5-0, The Operations Process* (2012).

[107] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-0, Joint Operations* 2017, I-13.

[108] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-0, Joint Operations* 2017, I-13; US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Planning* 2017, II-11.
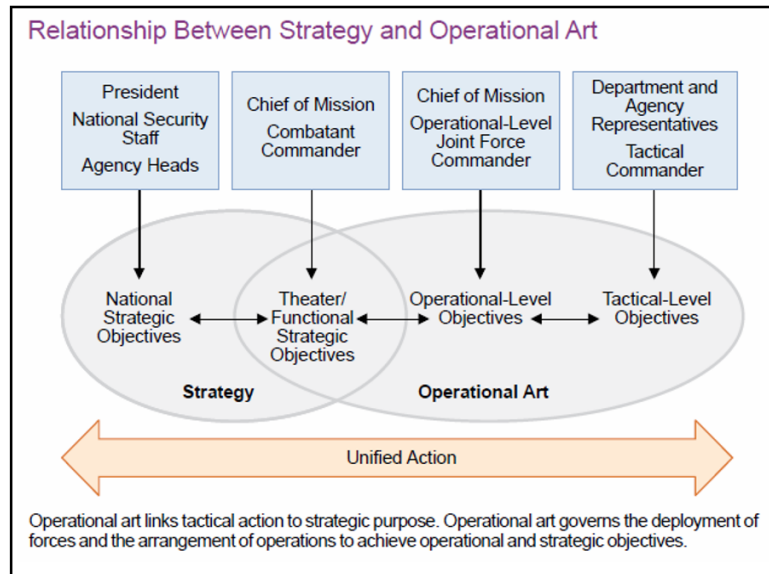
Figure 2. Relationship of Strategy and Operational Art. Joint Staff, *JP 3-0, Joint Operations 2017*, I-13

Designed to visually display that operational art links "tactical action and strategic purpose," Figure 2 also provides a specific cut line of where strategy formulation occurs and operational execution begins. The diagram clearly displays military echelons ensconced in the operational sphere with only a slight over-lap into the strategic.

Within this framework, the military places the linkage of strategy and operations to its organizational hierarchy. However, fully understanding this linkage requires a greater understanding of the transformation point, or at the intersection of the theatre strategy and theatre campaign plan. Currently, joint doctrine has marked this as the point in which operational art interprets and operationalizes strategy.

According *to JP 5-0*, strategy, presumably a theatre or military strategy, is "a broad statement of the CCDR's long term vision guided by and prepared in the context of the [Secretary of Defense's] priorities and within projected resources. *Strategy links national strategic guidance to joint planning*."[109] The publication goes on to state that the CCDR's strategy "prioritizes the

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[109] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Planning* 2017, III-1; US Joint Staff, *JND 1-18, Strategy* 2018, I-7: Emphasis added by author.

ends, ways, and means within the limitations established by the budget, [Global Force

Management] processes, and strategic guidance/direction."[110] *JP 5-0* as describes strategy as,

> The art and science of determining a future state/condition (ends), conveying this to an audience, determining the operational approach (ways), and identifying the authorities and resources (time, forces, equipment, money, etc.) (means) necessary to reach the intended end state, all while managing the associated risk. Strategy should not be confused with strategic-level guidance…[111]

To understand these descriptions and definitions requires further contextualization. Within the

former descriptions, strategy is referencing a published document or plan, but the omission of the

terms "theatre strategy" or "CCDR's strategy" leave room for interpretation. The latter

description implies a process; yet, doctrine is unclear whether it's a cognitive process or staff

process. Still, it is notable that there is a clear delineation between strategy and strategic guidance.

Two important points stand out in these descriptions. First, strategy links national

guidance to the joint planning process, and not to operational art. Second, strategy is necessary to

determine an operational approach with no mention of operational art. However, per Figure 2,

operational art links strategic purpose to tactical action. To analyze this linkage to strategy it is

necessary to expand on operational art and planning.

Operational art is the "cognitive approach by commanders and staffs-supported by their

skill, knowledge, experience, creativity, and judgment—to develop strategies, campaigns, and

operations to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means" and is

found in both Joint and Army doctrine.[112] In *JP 3-0*, operational art allows the commander to

discern objectives and end state (ends), determine a sequence of action (ways), determine

required resources (means), and understand chance of failure (risk).[113] Figures 3 and 4 visually

depict operational art's encompassing role in determining an operational approach.

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[110] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Planning* 2017, III-2.

[111] Ibid., I-5.

[112] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-0, Joint Operations* 2017, II-3; US Army, *ADRP 3-0* (2017), 2-1.

[113] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-0, Joint Operations* 2017, II-4.
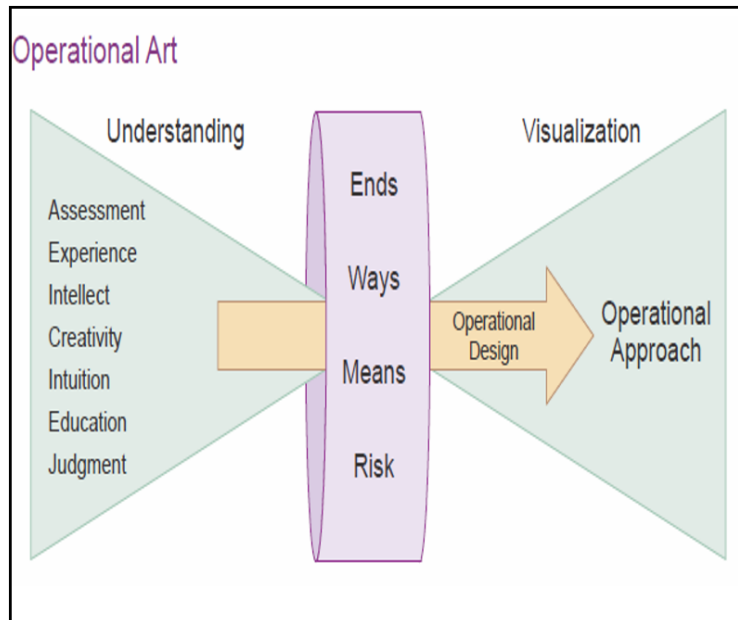
Figure 3. Operational Art. Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, IV-5.
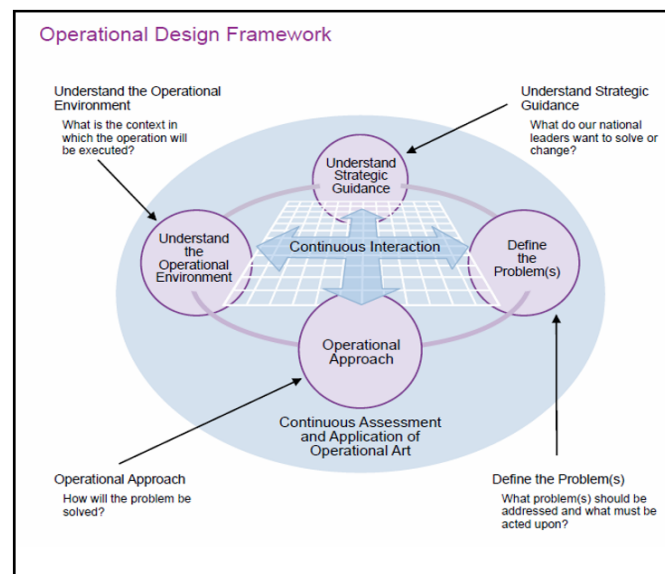
Figure 4. Operational Design Framework. Joint Staff, *JP 5-0: Joint Operations* 2017, IV-7.

Army doctrine similarly describes operational art, except in *ADRP 3-0*, which states that operational art allows commanders to "translate their operational approach into a concept of the operation," rather than acting as the guiding force behind all thought and analysis.[114] Nevertheless, while Army doctrine echoes the joint definition of operational art and its

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[114] US Army, *ADRP 3-0* (2017), 2-1.

relationship to ends, ways, and means, Army doctrine provides no additional discussion on what ends, ways, and means are or how it applies in a uniquely Army context.

Finally, the element of planning bears consideration. Planning is not officially defined in the joint dictionary but is defined in Army doctrine. *JP 5-0* describes planning as "the deliberate process of balancing ways, means, and risk to achieve directed objectives and attain desired end states (ends) by synchronizing and integrating the employment of the joint force. It is the art and science of interpreting direction and guidance and translating it into executable activities with imposed limitations to achieve a desired objective or attain an end state."[115] Army doctrine defines planning as "the art and science of understanding a situation, envisioning a desired future, and laying out effective ways of bringing the future about."[116] According to these definitions and descriptions, planning serves the same functions as operational art and strategy by making sense of an environment, envisioning a future, and guiding the organization to that future. Yet, doctrine is clear that these concepts, while connected, are different. Furthermore, aside from overlapping responsibilities and functions, additional inconsistencies and confusions exist.

The first inconsistency is *JP 5-0*'s statement that "Commanders, skilled in the use of operational art, provide the vision that links strategic objectives to tactical tasks through their understanding…"[117] Ironically, strategy is similarly described as the "broad statement of the CCDRs long term vision."[118] Thus, is the vision of the future an output of strategy or an output of operational art? The next inconsistency in the strategy-operational art relationship is the definition of operational art itself. Operational art allows commanders and staffs to develop strategies by integrating ends, ways, and means. Yet, if operational art links strategy and tactics, then strategy

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[115] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, I-4.

[116] US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 5-0, The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 6.

[117] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, IV-4.

[118] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, III-1.

formulation must exist outside of operational art. Next, both joint and Army doctrine describe the planning process as something that operational art is applied to, however, if planning is the art and science of moving the organization toward its assigned objective, then what role does operational art have? Finally, the use of the word strategy is inconsistent throughout doctrine. Specifically, if strategy is a prudent idea for the use of instruments of national power, then how can a CCDR have a theatre strategy unless he is given authority over all instruments of power? Furthermore, doctrine accepts that echelons below the CCDR may require campaign plans, thus begging the question of whether they require a strategy as well?[119]

Furthermore, strategy is ominously missing from doctrinal figures and explanations. In Figure 3, operational art encompasses the entirety of the planning process from understanding to creation of an operational approach, but joint doctrine also uses strategy to fill the same functions.[120] Furthermore, if strategy determines EWMs, and operational art is its integrator, then the question remains of how strategy and operational art communicate? In the case of Figure 3, strategy, or strategic guidance, would be part of the understanding frame of the graphic. In the case of Figure 4, strategy is neither a part of the process nor is it an input for the design framework. Instead, it is strategic guidance (which, as stated above, is different from strategy) that fills the void.

This analysis demonstrates it is evident that doctrine fails to provide a coherent representation of strategy, and by extension confuses strategy's relationship to operational art. Doctrine presents strategy as a level of war, a plan emanating from high military and political echelons, and a prudent idea in the use of instruments of national power. Furthermore, strategy is described as an art and science of determining EWMs, as well as the linkage between national guidance and the joint planning process. This diverse representation bifurcates strategy's nature

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[119] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, II-4.

[120] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, I-5.

between its cognitive function and authoritative character. This bifurcation, while itself confusing, further complicates the relationship between strategy and operational art; first through its description that operational art creates strategies and second, by failing to coherently connect strategy and operational art. Instead doctrine maintains that the "strategic level" provides an end, aim, or objective which operational art translates into a plan or operations. However, this is nothing more than a nesting concept, which is used in the lowest tactical echelons.[121] From this standpoint, doctrine has correctly identified aspects of strategy's nature while simultaneously altering it to fit within the construct of levels of war. The results of this alteration have been an incomplete characterization of strategy which divorces it from operational art and all but dismisses its utility to military formations below the theatre level.

Findings: A Synthesis of Competing Theories

The general theory of strategy remains a topic of scholarly debate, and this paper's findings will not change that fact. The purpose of this paper is to enrich the strategy discourse by providing an alternative view of strategy's nature, provide an analysis of strategy in US doctrine, and better understand strategy's relationship and operational art. Overall, the research suggests that a general theory of strategy is split between concepts in the abstract and strategy tied to a level of authority, specifically at and above the point of civilian-military interface. Arguably, many differences are more attributable to a character of strategy versus a general theory, but regardless, the conceptual schism remains. Rather than implementing a hard break between concepts, doctrine attempted to combine them and force them into the bureaucratic systems and organizational lexicon of the defense establishment. This attempt, coupled with the conceptualization of an operational "level" or military specific zone of war, has created confusion within the doctrine overall and a conceptual gap in Army doctrine. Finally, operational art, to be

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[121] "*Nested concepts* is a planning technique to achieve unity of purpose whereby each succeeding echelon's concept of operations is aligned by purpose with the higher echelons' concept of operations." US Army, *ADRP 5-0* (2012), 2-20.

maintained within the "operational level," has become the catch all for any and all cognitive processes concerning military action.

Through analysis of strategy theory, strategy's nature was identified as a logic for action, informed, future oriented, flexible, seeking a position of relative advantage, and adversarial. Furthermore, this analysis led to the conclusion that strategy is not EWMs, is more than a plan, and is not tethered to a specific level of authority. At the conclusion of this analysis, strategy was defined as a logic for action, informed by the environment, to seek a position of relative advantage over an adversary. However, strategy without action is meaningless abstraction and must be operationalized through a plan and a plan without strategy is aimless and irrelevant.

It is at this point that operational art enters the equation as the cognitive approach to create these plans of action.[122] The implication of this analysis is that strategy exists in the realm of cognition ahead of the application of operational art. Nevertheless, while the two frames of cognition are separate, they are intertwined, and consistently informing one another as to what is practical, possible, and necessary. Furthermore, both frames are continually informed by tactical action taking place while simultaneously providing the logic and form for the same. From this perspective, operational art is the mediator between strategic purpose and tactical action which doctrine describes, however, this space is not the physical linkage of a political entity through a military headquarters to another military headquarters. Instead it is the primary generator which begins the process of conceptual planning.[123] In this sense, the strategic, operational, and tactical are not levels of war tied to formation sizes, but instead represent a system of ideas to action in a complex adversarial environment.

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[122] Huba Wass de Czege, "Thinking and Acting Like and Early Explorer: Operational Art is Not a Level of War," *Small Wars Journal* (March 14, 2011), 4-5.

[123] Bryan Lawson, *How Designers Think: The Design Process Demystified*, 4th ed. (Burlington, MA: Architectural Press, 2006), 46.

Doctrine provides a very different perspective on this process but simultaneously recognizes its logic. Doctrine recognizes the necessity for strategy' operationalization, but rather than recognizing strategy as a cognitive process occurring at any organizational level, strategy is explained as ideas and plans from the national command authority which are translated to military action by the CCDR. For all leaders below the CCDR, operations are driven by assigned objectives and only planning is necessary. While several flaws exist in this framework, one stands above the rest.

This primary flaw is the idea that a single strategy derived at the top of an organization is enough for the entirety of the organization. The greatest evidence of this flawed logic can be found within doctrine itself. Primarily, in the fact that each CCDR requires a unique theatre strategy to account for their environment. However, the argument goes deeper. One can no more say that China and Russia are the same as someone can say that Afghanistan and Iran are the same. Within Afghanistan itself, comparing Kandahar to Kabul is comparing apples to oranges, and a strategy for the Taliban may not be the same as a strategy for the Haqqani. The list can continue; however, the point is that each of scenario requires a unique strategy as the threat reveals itself. It is this adversarial context which potentially creates the confusion.

Given that strategy is adversarial, it is understandable why the highest political and military levels are characterized as a strategic level. Strategy exists at points of conflict and tension, and states continually interact on the global stage. Thus, it is logical that strategy persists at the highest levels of government.[124] Doctrine seeks to describe the workings of the military within peace and war, and during times of peace, the theatre and national levels are the primary

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[124] Simplistically, the US has been in a state of adversarial competition since the end of WWII. However, more theoretically, because "…politics is, by its very nature, always embedded in ongoing human relationships" and "politics are inherently adversarial," then the argument can be made that in an age of globalization, with continues global intergovernmental interaction, that a state of perpetual competition exists; Alan Lamborn, "Theory and the Politics in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (June 1997): 191; Strachan, *The Direction of War*, 13.

actors in unremitting competition.[125] However, all echelons engage in an adversarial

confrontation during conflict, necessitating strategy at all levels. For example, the NSS and the

NDS explain that the nation is in a period of great power competition, and that part of the strategy

to maintain advantage is to strengthen alliances.[126] This could then be operationalized into a plan

to strengthen ties between the US military and an allies' military through the tactics of equipment

sales, military exercises, key leader engagements, and annual conferences on regional security.

The subordinate units or entities executing these training exercises do not require a strategy, as

their mission is not adversarial. However, in times of war or conflict, units below the theatre level

will be faced with adversaries which require a strategy to defeat.

Finally, doctrine fails to adequately articulate how strategy informs operational art. In

Figure 2, operational art links strategic purpose and tactical action, but the linkage ends with this

definition. References to planning or the operations processes are synthesized by operational art,

but informed by the myriad of terms such as strategic aim, strategic environment, strategic

objective, strategic end-state, and strategic guidance. This explanation of strategy's relationship to

operational art is incomplete. First, the simple act of placing the moniker "strategic" in front of

something does not mean it is linked to strategy. Rather, as demonstrated in Figure 5, providing

an aim or objective is "nesting" or "linking" within planning efforts.[127]

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[125] The author recognizes that the threshold of peace and war is one of scholarly debate. However, for the purposes of this paper, the terms peace and war represent those activities short of and within the threshold of combat.

[126] The President of the United States, *National Security Strategy* (Washington DC: The White House, 2017), 2-4; The Secretary of Defense, *National Defense Strategy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2018), 2, 8-9.

[127] Richard Berkebile, "Military Strategy Revisited: A Critique of the Lykke Formulation," *Military Review* (May 7, 2018): 2, accessed March 31, 2019, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/Online-Exclusive/2018-OLE/May/Military-Strategy/.

End State, Objectives, Effects, Tasks

Level	Guidance
National strategic	Strategic end state Objectives
Theater strategic	Military end state Objectives Effects Tasks
Operational	Military end state Objectives Effects Tasks
Tactical	Mission Objectives Tasks

End state describes the set of conditions to meet conflict termination criteria.

Objectives prescribe friendly goals.

Effects describe the conditions related to the objectives.
- Desired effects describe conditions needed to achieve objectives.
- Undesired effects describe conditions that will impede achievement of objectives.

Tasks describe friendly actions to create desired effects or preclude undesired effects.

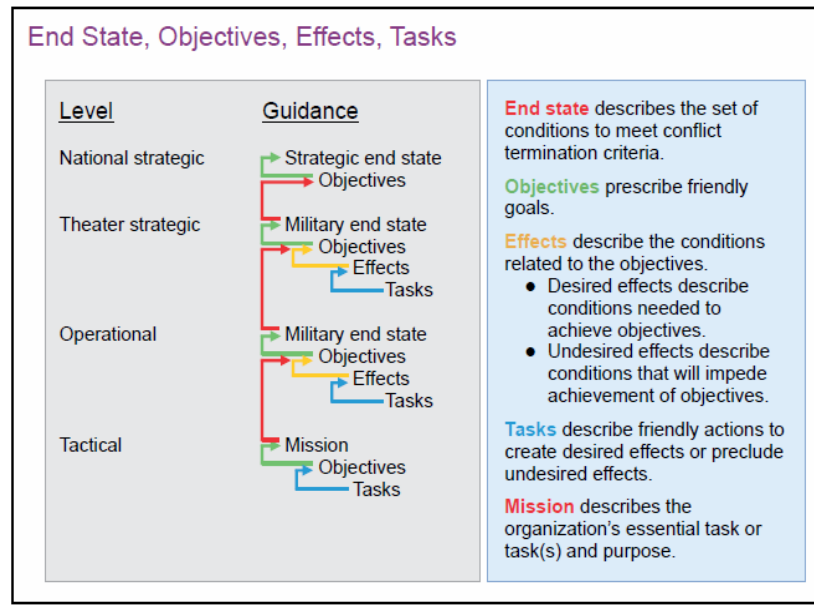**Mission** describes the organization's essential task or task(s) and purpose.

Figure 5. Concept of Nesting. Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, IV-22.

Finally, Army doctrine describes operational art without reference to a strategic context, but instead to the objectives given. Thus, while joint doctrine claims that operational art links strategy to tactics, Army doctrine does not. Consequently, the undisciplined usage of jargon and the incomplete conceptualization of how these concepts interact creates and leads to misunderstanding.

Conclusion: Strategy's Unrealized Potential

Political and military dialogue has included the concept of strategy for thousands of years. Beginning with the ancient Greeks and Chinese, the idea of gaining advantage over an adversary has withstood the test of time. Reemerging in the late 1700s, strategy has remained an integral part of military discourse. To do so, strategy has consistently adapted to the changing character of war. With each theorist, strategy theory evolved, but continuities remain. Through these continuities it is possible to determine strategy's nature and *ipso facto* to define strategy in a way that enhances understanding. This paper has defined strategy as a logic for action, informed by the environment, to gain a position of relative advantage against an adversary.

Ultimately, the concept and exploration of strategy is something purely academic, and as Colin Gray points out, "definitions are intellectual inventions; they cannot be true or false."[128] Admittedly, the definition of strategy posed in this paper is not exempt from this declaration. Still, even more salient is his statement that "since ideas drive actions, intellectual confusion must promote confused activity."[129] Presently, the defense and political communities have wholly embraced the concept of strategy by including it into professional military education, codifying it in doctrine, and legally obliging its creation. Thus, the study of strategy is an intellectual endeavor worth effort. However, it is imperative that the concept is effectively communicated and the organization understands it in a manner that makes it useful. For the Department of Defense, doctrine is meant to provide the medium which meets these goals. However, as recognized in this paper, this is not the case.

Strategy in doctrine remains bifurcated between the physical and cognitive realms. This bifurcation emerges in strategy's multifaceted usage as a plan, a document, a prudent idea, and a level of war. This dilution is promulgated by undisciplined usage of the word as a adjective, a pronoun, and a noun. Ultimately, the defense community must decide the role that strategy is going to play and establish the baseline for what it is. Until then, the discourse on strategy will remain confused and disjointed, and pundits and practitioners will continue to debate on immature understanding of the concept. To better align the dialogue, this paper recognizes several points for doctrinal revision

First, research suggests a review of Joint Doctrine to provide clearer definitions, remove unnecessary jargon, and better align usage of the word strategy and its derivatives to the determined definition. The definition presented in this paper may provide a starting point. Currently, terms such as strategy, grand strategy, military strategy, and theatre strategy appear

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[128] Gray, *Strategy Bridge*, 18.

[129] Ibid., 17.

disjointed and do not follow a logical thread. For example, theatre strategy is "An overarching construct outlining a combatant commander's vision for integrating and synchronizing military activities and operations with the other instruments of national power in order to achieve national strategic objectives," while military strategy, not formally defined, is the "art and science of applying force and the threat of force to secure the objectives of national policy."[130] Clearer definitions could be, "the logic for action of the combatant commander to achieve relative advantage within a theatre of operations and attain national security objectives," and "a logic for applying force or the threat of force against an adversary to gain a position of advantage to secure national security objectives." This method could also be applied to the NSS, NDS, and NMS, while also recognizing that these logics are formalized in documents by the same name. Furthermore, contradictory or confusing explanations are rampant. One example is the use of strategy and operational art as the the cognitive process to determine an operational approach.[131] Only by clarifying these definitions and explanations will it be possible to prevent the confused activity that Gray describes.

Second, research indicates that levels of war be removed or renamed. Currently, the strategic and operational levels of war are named similarly to strategy and operational art. Yet, as Multi-Domain Operations potentially changes modern warfare, the possibility exists that historic conceptions of these levels become irrelevant or outdated.[132] The usage of the term strategic fires is an example.[133] As presented in doctrein, the word strategic implies these fires are related to the

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[130] US Joint Staff, *JDN 1-18, Strategy* 2018, I-7, GL-2.

[131] US Joint Staff, *JP 5-0, Joint Operations* 2017, xii, xxi.

[132] US Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, The U.S. Army in Multi Domain Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2018), 6-15.

[133] Jen Judson, "Beyond Line of Sight: Army Precision Fires Tackle Targeting at Long Ranges," Defense News (October 8, 2018), accessed March 31, 2019, https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/ausa/2018/10/08/beyond-line-of-sight-army-precision-fires-tackle-targeting-at-long-ranges/; Joseph, Trevithick, "The Army Now Wants Hypersonic Cannons, Loitering Missiles, and a Massive Super Gun," *The Warzone* (April 3, 2018), accessed March 31, 2019, https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/19847/the-army-now-wants-hypersonic-cannons-loitering-missiles-and-a-massive-supergun.

national authority, while in reality, the strategic moniker is meant to convey extremely long range. Furthermore, as social media becomes increasingly prolific, the actions at "tactical" echelons will have greater bearing in political spheres. Eliminating levels of war and speaking to environments more holistically, provides opportunity to embrace this complexity. While a full discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of this paper, further research may be fruitful.

Finally, the research suggests that the Army should integrate strategy into doctrine. Currently, Army doctrine speaks primarily to an "operational" level. However, strategy is beyond a specific level of authority. In this sense, Army doctrine has failed to recognize strategy as a useful departure point for framing operations in regards to the adversary as well as discussing leadership in terms of strategic thinking. By integrating strategy into Army doctrine, opportunity may present itself for more complex and holistic thinking, while simultaneously integrating the political aspects of warfare into lower echelon decision making.

Ultimately, strategy must be useful to be relevant and relevant to be useful. This paper provides an alternative perspective of strategy from that presented in current doctrine. By recognizing strategy's relevance outside the scope of national authority, potential implications for strategic study and education are various. By exploring these possibilities, the potential exists beyond doctrinal modification, but also for divergent perspectives on planning processes and methodologies for professional military education. Through greater exploration of these possibilities, the potential exists for a more adaptive force capable of cognitively meeting the challenges of the future battlefield.

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