



Dr. Fred Hiebert from the National Geographic Society provides training on the 1954 Hague Convention and an overview of cultural heritage in Afghanistan to U.S. civil affairs personnel preparing to deploy to Afghanistan in 2010. Organized by the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield, such training is led by experts with on-the-ground experience. (Photo © U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield)

Planning for Culture

Incorporating Cultural Property Protection into a Large-Scale, Multi-Domain Exercise

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Over the past several decades, the United States has demonstrated repeatedly the might of its armed forces. Superior technical training and advanced weaponry have produced arguably the best military in the world. At the same time, the United States has struggled to defeat insurgencies and build lasting peace despite overwhelming military dominance. Failure to understand the culture of our allies and our adversaries, or what H. R. McMaster has called “strategic narcissism,” is a big part of the problem.¹ Although there has been much progress on this front since 2005, relevant and effective cultural training for military personnel across the services still presents a challenge.² Moreover, such training does not regularly get translated into practice in military planning and operations. Therefore, we support a different approach in both method and content, one which extends beyond the classroom or the briefing slide. Incorporating cultural property protection (CPP) injects as part of the regular challenges that participants encounter in exercises an effective way to integrate cultural understanding into military operations. Our participation in the Blue Flag/Joint Warfighting Assessment 2018 (BF/JWA-18) provides a good example.³ Through CPP, we argue, participants provide commanders with effective recommendations on how to apply concepts of culture that add a vital dimension to situational awareness relevant to achieving strategic goals and guide how to collect further relevant information.

Why CPP Matters

Great military thinkers from Sun Tzu to Thucydides and Carl von Clausewitz acknowledged the importance of culture and cultural property in warfare, particularly as it pertains to morale and will. In

addition to the pithy wisdom of “know thy enemy,” Sun Tzu’s maneuver warfare encouraged restraint and “preservation over destruction.”⁴ Thucydides demonstrated the dangers of adopting an “ends justifying the means” approach.⁵ Likewise, Clausewitz, in his paradoxical trinity, understood the significance of passion and will.⁶ The more war touches the people, the more violent it becomes. While some modern air power theorists like Giulio Douhet have argued that the destruction of cities and cultural property would break the morale of the adversary, conflicting evidence suggests that it may actually strengthen an adversary’s resolve and escalate conflict by posing an existential threat to cultural identity.⁷

Contemporary CPP efforts have their origins with the well-known “Monuments Men” of World War II. Known officially as the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives program, the group consisted of an international cadre of individuals with the knowledge, experience, and determination to seek out and protect works of art threatened during the war. The Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives branch was created under the civil affairs and military governments sections of the

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Allied armies. Currently, U.S. Army Civil Affairs, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative, trains personnel through the 38G program to enhance capability.⁸

operationally—decision-makers might find the easier path of least resistance to justify action (or inaction) on the grounds of “military necessity,” a provision allowed under the legal parameters of the 1954 Hague

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CPP concerns received attention recently over artifacts and sites in Iraq and over the extensive damage to the archaeological site and museum of Palmyra in Syria. However, only a handful of U.S. military personnel with appropriate qualifications have deployed to support CPP efforts throughout the course of wars waged since 2001.⁹

International Agreements on Preservation of Culture in War

International support for CPP derives more generally from the law of armed conflict, and more specifically from the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its Second Protocol (hereinafter 1954 Hague Convention).¹⁰ These are reinforced through the work of Blue Shield International and its national-level committees.¹¹ The 1954 Hague Convention and its First Protocol requires “States Parties” (the ratifying countries) to protect movable and immovable elements of cultural property at all times during periods of peace *and* conflict, and commits member militaries to peacetime training for CPP. The Blue Shield and its national committees’ role is to carry out the work outlined in the 1954 Hague Convention. For example, along with an associated network of heritage professionals, the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield assisted in the protection of cultural property in the NATO air campaign in Libya in 2011, compiling a list of cultural property sites and disseminating it to military partners.¹²

In the heat of battle, however, CPP may appear to present unwelcome complications to the targeting decision process. As a result—tactically and

Convention and the law of armed conflict.¹³ However, the course of action potentially could prove both shortsighted and detrimental to the overall mission. It is vitally important to bear in mind strategic considerations that go beyond strictly legal obligations. Strategy defines the use of means and ways to reach a desired end. That end is almost always a political one. Consequently, tactical, operational, and strategic plans should be nested together, and the manner in which the war is fought should support, not undermine, political objectives when applicable.¹⁴

Numerous recent experiences have demonstrated how culturally offensive actions at the tactical or operational level can have a profound influence in complicating the achievement of strategic objectives (e.g., the intensely adverse domestic, international, and regional reaction to Abu Ghraib abuse, the Baghdad museum looting, and U.S. landing and basing forces in the Babylon archaeological site).¹⁵ Consequently, the impacts of potential cultural affronts and sensitivities should be anticipated as much as possible in advance.

Among these are, first, the court of international public opinion and necessary strategic messaging. Careless endangerment or damage to cultural property of host nations can lead to force protection issues and jeopardize alliances and partnerships on both a regional as well as global level.

Second, on a practical level, failure to protect cultural treasures may enable adversaries because looted artifacts often generate funds to support adversaries by selling them on the lucrative antiquities black market.¹⁶

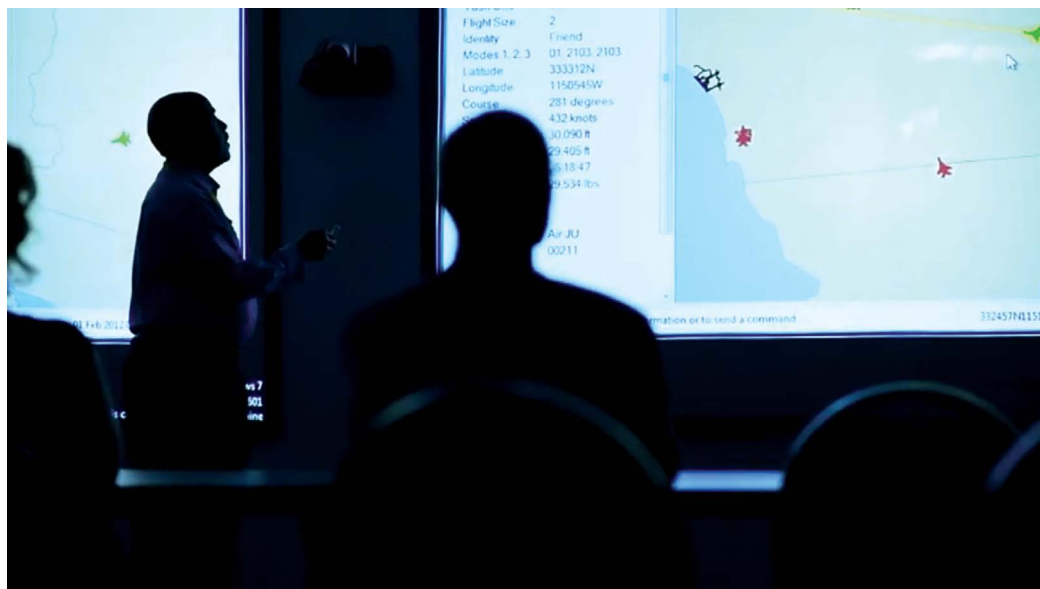
Third, destruction of cultural monuments, intentional or not, can dramatically complicate efforts for negotiated peace and escalate conflict.¹⁷

Fourth, many nations generate a great deal of profit from tourism from monuments, museums, nature preserves, and significant architectural sites. Their destruction can delay postconflict economic recovery and social reconciliation because an important source of local and national funding has been cut off, hindering stabilization efforts and making it harder to “win the peace.”¹⁸

Unfortunately, discussions with U.S. military personnel over the past four years revealed that few have heard of the 1954 Hague Convention or the Blue Shield, yet most were aware of the higher profile cases of cultural property destruction, were eager to protect cultural heritage as much as possible, and

appreciated the positive second- and third-order effects of such actions. Nevertheless, they also expressed frustration over the practical aspects of CPP, such as vetting potential targets in the midst of conflicts in which adversaries were using such as shields, or estimating the great effort and drain on combatant resources required to protect national museums and their collections.

Many in the military may even see these latter sorts of dilemmas, in particular, as the responsibility of the



The Blue Flag/Joint Warfighting Assessment 2018 in which the cultural property protection team participated was a computer-driven exercise conducted in a controlled area with many wall-mounted map screen arrays similar to those depicted in a different exercise shown above featuring salient developments as the exercise progressed. (Screenshot taken from video by Sr. Airman Mychal Fox, U.S. Air Force; William Lewis; and Tech. Sgt. Scott Olguin, U.S. Air Force)

Department of State, nongovernmental organizations, or the host-nation government. However, these other entities “don’t have guns” and cannot act in contested environments without the security provided by the military. That noted, it should be clear that both due to the changing nature of military activity and our U.S. responsibilities as signatories of the 1954 Hague Convention, airmen and their joint partners need to be prepared to address cultural heritage dilemmas in the operational environment.



Challenges on Educating the Force

As professional military education faculty of the Air Force Culture and Language Center (AFCLC), we accept CPP education and training as part of our mission, especially in the absence of specific units or training programs dedicated to CPP in the U.S. Air Force. However, we are realistic about the benefits that may result from one-off lectures, videos, or computer-based training, as well as the increasing burden of ever-growing mandatory training requirements. Research and practice from other militaries and services indicate that CPP success requires consideration at every step in planning, executing, and analyzing operations.¹⁹ Furthermore, to paraphrase Gen. George S. Patton, the force needs to “train like we fight.” Since we know CPP plays a critical role at tactical, operational, and strategic levels of warfare, we must prepare airmen for their encounters with cultural heritage at those levels rather than in the abstract. CPP dilemmas can serve as

Lt. Dale Ford (left) and Sgt. Harry Ettlinger were among the “Monuments Men” who in 1945 helped repatriate a Rembrandt self-portrait found among a trove of art in a German salt mine. (Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration)

concrete reminders of the enduring importance of the human domain, a critical domain to include when exercising and planning for multi-/all-domain operations.

Initial Overtures to Join the Team

With those goals in mind, AFCLC approached the 505th Combat Training Squadron (CTS) at Hurlburt Field, Florida. The 505th CTS commander suggested Blue Flag as an ideal exercise to incorporate CPP dilemmas, and invited us to collaborate in providing realistic and rich content that would challenge the training audience to think about the operational *environment* (beyond the screens and monitors) as well as the tasks

they were to accomplish.²⁰ One of many exercises the 505th CTS coordinates, Blue Flag is an operational-level exercise for air and space operations centers held yearly with different geographic combatant commands.

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“We thus built a team that combined professional expertise in anthropology, history, art history, museum studies, European studies, exercise and wargaming, strategic military decision-making, and international law pertaining to cultural heritage.”

In 2018, the first year AFCLC supported the exercise, the U.S. Army’s Joint Warfighting Assessment (JWA) combined with Blue Flag and resulted in BF/JWA 18-1.

Approximately 5,500 U.S. and coalition personnel participated. For the Air Force, the 603rd Air and Space Operations Center at Ramstein Air Base served as the primary training audience, with six three-star U.S. Army commands, the U.S. Navy 3rd Fleet, and U.S. Army Special Operations Command also taking part in the combined joint exercise.²¹ The exercise scenario entailed an attack on a NATO ally in Europe, which would trigger Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. The overall objective was to practice multi-domain command and control and “fight as a single, cohesive, and multinational division against a near-peer adversary ... to foster interoperability and ... multi-domain operations.”²²

Preparation of the Cultural Property Injects

Effective implementation of CPP training injects into a multi-domain exercise requires careful preparation, particularly in choosing appropriate personnel, knowing the area of operations (AOR), and writing plausible inject materials. We gathered a team diverse in experience and large enough to support implementation of scenarios via multiple syndicates. For BF/JWA-18, our team consisted of five civilians: four from the U.S. Department of Defense (including a retired U.S. Air Force colonel) and Dr. Paul Fox from the UK Committee of the Blue Shield, also a retired colonel in the British Army with a PhD in history and visual culture. We thus built a team that

to cultural heritage. Such broad theoretical, regional, and practical experience was necessary to support an exercise that involved “162 organizations representing the militaries of the United States and nine North Atlantic Treaty Organization partners.”²³

A benefit of a large and diverse team that included military experience became clear when we realized that the Air Force training audience would not be colocated with the exercise controllers. The situation called for someone with an understanding of air and space operations centers to observe the training audience and relay what was happening to the rest of the team. We could track the training audience’s actions from the exercise headquarters, but we wanted to be able to track their deliberations and their decisions to refrain from acting, both of which are essential to understanding how CPP takes place.

In the year preceding the exercise, members of the team attended planning conferences to facilitate collaboration with exercise leaders and conducted a field study of the AOR. Designing realistic, plausible, and effective CPP training injects required specific content knowledge of the culture of the region and a firm understanding of exercise scenarios. With support from the AFCLC, the authors visited the region to bolster their familiarity with the geographic and cultural context of the exercise. The site study included roughly twenty internationally or locally recognized cultural locations, ranging from UNESCO world heritage sites to small, local museums; from nature preserves to historic neighborhoods; and religious pilgrimage destinations ranging from national cathedrals to roadside shrines.²⁴ The trip also involved discussions

with national and local heritage professionals, and the diversity of our academic backgrounds fostered an interdisciplinary approach to the region. While we recognize a short site visit cannot substitute for longer term ethnographic engagement, firsthand experience

precision munitions could safely eliminate the enemy asset while preserving historical structure, but our site visit revealed structural weaknesses not apparent in satellite photos. Any attack risked severely damaging not only the hilltop structure but also sev-



We explored how nationally and locally important sites might be contested by different ethnolinguistic and national groups.



of the AOR was invaluable in building our knowledge of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and interwoven cultural identities of the people in the region, resulting in more realistic injects. For example, we explored how nationally and locally important sites might be contested by different ethnolinguistic and national groups. In times of conflict, such sites might be utilized by an adversary for tactical, operational, and strategic effects. Part of our CPP mission is to prepare airmen to anticipate those possibilities and counter them with appropriate responses.

The site study proved a crucial element in the team's success in writing suitably detailed injects. Firsthand experience allowed meaningful and specific assessments of the terrain, generating greater appreciation of the local and regional importance of sites that otherwise might be reduced to points on a map and highlighting more subtle elements like structural instability or proximity to other infrastructure. Drawing from this research, we assembled seven cultural property injects.²⁵ These included the recovery of looted national treasures; placing radar arrays, GPS jammers, or other "tempting" targets on sensitive cultural sites; and a false flag attack on a significant site. Although of great religious and national importance to the host nation, the temporary nature of the latter site prevented its inclusion in no-strike lists, created a blind spot for our personnel, and wound up elevated to command-level consideration right as the exercise began.

In another instance, we recommended that the Red Team controllers put a radar array on a hilltop where a fifteenth-century structure and national landmark was located.²⁶ Satellite imagery suggested

eral surrounding sites and artifacts of both national and international significance, potentially jeopardizing relations with coalition partners. Drawing from the actual history and culture of the AOR, the specificity of the injects added realism and enhanced their training value. In contrast to notional or generic sites or those taken from a database without the context to understand what they represent, specific examples demonstrated the real-world complexities of decision-making and weighing the relative (strategic) "worth" of eliminating a target versus the potential blowback of destroying a particular site or artifacts even if determined to be legal and of military necessity. Such elements help to reinforce the concept that combat occurs not in a vacuum but in a space inhabited by real people with their own complex cultures and histories and should be considered in operational planning. A second benefit of visiting the AOR was that the knowledge we developed enabled flexible responses to the evolving needs of the three-week exercise.

The Academics' Learning Curve

A second part of preparation included building our understanding of inject design, the exercise planning process, and the computer programs used by exercise controllers. As academics, we had a lot to learn about storyboards, timelines, training objectives, and training audiences before creating credible and useful injects that would get "play" in the overall scenario as the exercise evolved.

Through our field site visit and other research, we could envision situations in which CPP could become



a factor, but our injects needed to align with the flow of the larger exercise and provide opportunities to practice specific skills or processes. To that end, team members attended BF/JWA-18 planning.²⁷ The overall objective of BF/JWA-18 was to practice multi-domain interoperability in a near-peer conflict, but each inject of the scenario had to support that by engaging certain audiences in training for their roles in air and/or land operations.²⁸ Key to this process was determining which training audience (e.g., Judge Advocate General's [JAG] Corps, civil affairs, public affairs, targeteers, or higher command) we wanted to respond to a particular inject and what we wanted them to *do* in terms of concrete activities that go beyond abstract or general awareness of the concepts. Appropriate responses might include running a target option through the chain of command, requesting appropriate satellite imagery, planning movement of troops to avoid sensitive sites, or countering false claims of property destruction.

Our mandate (in line with our motive of getting people to think about CPP when planning operations)

Nicole Giannattasio makes a presentation to the September 2018 Military Cultural Heritage Action Group Conference based on an applied exercise for conference participants hosted and devised by the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative. An AY19 Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) student, Giannattasio was attending this conference as part of an elective, Cultural Heritage in Conflict, taught at Air War College and ACSC. (Photo courtesy of the authors)

was not to create new training objectives but to integrate culture and CPP into existing ones. The more an inject was tied to the commander's desired training objectives, facilitated opposing force needs, or fit the scenario, the more likely it found play. Well-crafted injects prepared in advance to meet particular training needs helped convince reluctant syndicate partners, and demonstrated how CPP could be integrated into the exercise to enhance rather than distract from fundamental training objectives.

Our coordination and planning occurred mostly with the 505th CTS prior to the exercise, so our injects were primarily related to air operations. While there



The remains of a Libyan air defense battery sit in the shadow of an ancient Roman fort 29 September 2011 after being destroyed by precisely targeted NATO attacks in Ras Almergib, Libya. Five air defense batteries defending a radar installation were destroyed with little damage to the archaeological site. (Photo by © Dr. Joris D. Kila. Used with permission)

Cultural Property Protection Success in Libya

During the NATO bombing campaign against Libya 19 March 2011–31 October 2011, forces of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi stationed a radar station on the top of a hill near Leptis Magna, the remains of an ancient Roman fort near the city of Khums, Libya, now called Ras Almergib. The radar station was protected by a circle of five anti-aircraft batteries, that were placed next to the Roman walls still standing up and varying from two to three meters in height. When the cultural emergency mission team visited the location 29 September 2011, it found six heaps of metal rubbish; all military installations had been completely destroyed but the Roman walls and the vaults situated next to the anti-aircraft weapons had little visible damage beyond small surface scratches obviously caused by pieces of shrapnel from munitions that had destroyed the anti-aircraft battery. Local archaeologists accompanying the team found the visit to the top a great moment since it was their first time at this location to which access was strictly forbidden under the former regime. The location of the site had been passed to NATO planners. The Ras Almergib case demonstrated that NATO was able to execute precision bombardments when cultural property was at stake in Libya. The case demonstrates the importance of providing map coordinates of such sites to limit damage in the event of future such operations. (Vignette provided by Dr. Joris D. Kila, *The Hague*, 6 October 2021)

were some introductory conversations early on, for the most part, coordination with U.S. Army personnel, international partners, and the training audience occurred at the Grafenwoehr Training Area (U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria, the exercise headquarters) in the days immediately preceding the start of the exercise and during the exercise itself.

This led to another learning curve about the Army's approach to the exercise, air-land coordination, and the participation of international partners. In short, keeping up with "who was doing what, where, when, how, and why" presented daunting challenges. For example, during planning conferences, a particular area of the AOR was to be limited to the lead-up section of the exercise, which was slated to end before our first inject. Instead, activity in that location extended well beyond the lead-up portion of the exercise and therefore we lacked appropriate injects for it. We likewise knew nothing about the absence of certain training audiences critical to CPP injects. Therefore, despite our best advance efforts, we still arrived at Grafenwoehr with much to learn about the combined and joint nature of the exercise.

Exercise Execution

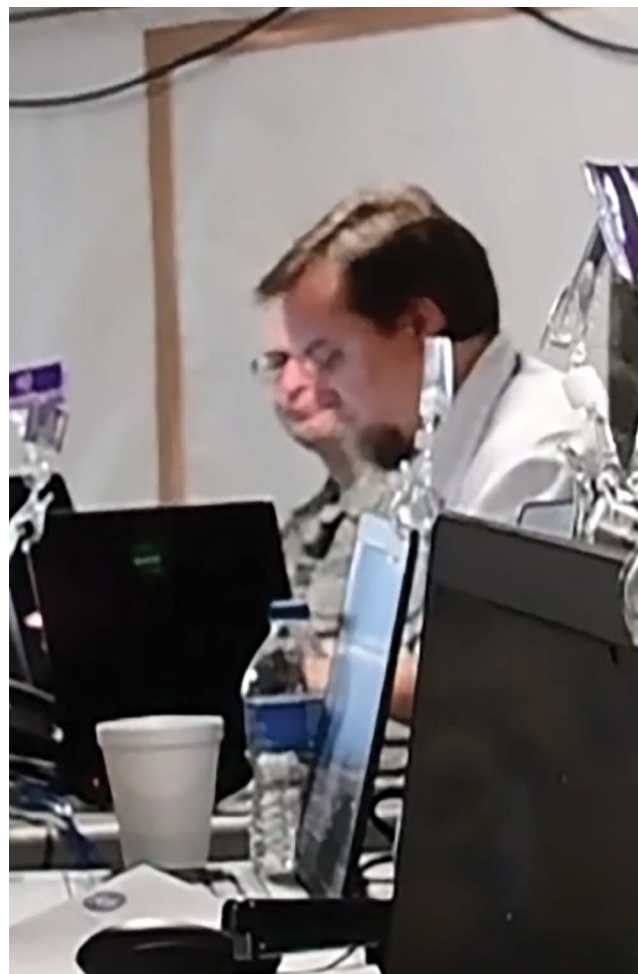
During the exercise itself, our preparation strategies helped us adapt and respond to new situations and controllers' changing needs over the three weeks of BF/JWA-18. Having several members of the team with different subject-matter expertise served us on multiple fronts. CPP injects require cross-coordination with multiple subgroups of the controllers and training audience. For example, we worked with the Red Team controllers to ensure the injects fit the training narrative, the Blue Team air response cell to track actions of the Air Force training audiences, Red and Blue media groups to convey the impact of CPP in public opinion, the intelligence cell for generating imagery and other information, public affairs to get the necessary information approved for release to the training audience, and JAG personnel in both higher command and the

training audience to coordinate legal advice on CPP matters. Each group held daily meetings, sometimes concurrently, and maintaining the relevancy of our injects required coordinating with all of them. With four team members at exercise headquarters, we sometimes lacked sufficient numbers to simply cover the meetings, much less work in depth with each group.

Recruiting team members with different disciplinary and work backgrounds helped us bridge the gaps between military and civilian approaches to CPP. Dr. Paul Fox's military service and experience in the CPP community proved particularly valuable. Having multiple team members also enabled us to split up tasks based on our disciplinary and personal specialties. Fox focused on working with the JAGs and ensured that the correct language from the 1954 Hague Convention was used when discussing States Parties and their delegates, rights, and responsibilities. Our European historian excelled in writing news stories and "intel reports" to prompt the training audience into action. Others also wrote press releases and supporting materials for the injects, and updated and tracked events through the necessary computer programs and websites. We all made ourselves available to attend regular meetings of different committees and answer requests for information when contacted by the training audience. BF/JWA-18 was especially busy in this way because it involved joint and combined forces, with the U.S. Army and Air Force controlling different elements of the exercise and with coalition partners in the training audience.

Upon arrival at exercise headquarters at Grafenwoehr Training Area, our team also found an unexpected but welcome partner in Lt. Col. Deborah Molnar, who was leading the U.S. Army Green Cell, a new addition to the Joint Warfighting Assessment.²⁹ Our partnership with the Green Cell enhanced our reach with leaders and training audiences, aided our understanding of different elements of the exercise, and generated further opportunities to inject CPP. They could often transmit regional, cultural, and CPP information through the Army chain of command more efficiently than we could, and we provided them with cultural background to enhance their storylines and injects. In one example, at the behest of their commanding officer, the Green Cell devised an inject pertaining to civilians fleeing the battlespace as the

blue forces advanced. We had designed an inject around a fictional archive of government documents to illustrate that heritage sites do not have to be "old" or "art" or towering monuments; such archives can just be important to the culture, history, and governance of the local population, particularly when



Dr. Scott Edmondson works on delivering cultural property protection content to exercise participants by interacting with higher headquarters controllers to provide appropriate exercise interjects during Blue Flag 2019. (Screenshot taken from video by Petty Officer 2nd Class Hunter S. Harwell, U.S. Navy)

heritage and land rights are disputed. We proposed merging the archive inject with the Green Cell's displaced civilians inject to complicate the response for the training audiences. Which would they attend to first, or whom would they delegate to deal with each one? Would the advancing forces pay attention to the inject and redirect their ground troops around the archive so as not to damage it in crossfire?

In the end, the training audience successfully dealt with both, and the injects served exercise controllers' purposes as well by moderating the speed of advancing blue forces. U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Joel K. Tyler, the commanding general of the Joint Modernization Command at the time of BF/JWA-18, named the CPP team an essential element of the JWA 18 Green Cell, and recommended that future Green Cells be staffed to support CPP.

partnership in which we contributed our cultural expertise and learned from their intel expertise and resources. As a side benefit, they helped us decode the several types of mapping coordinates in regular usage.

While advance preparation in cultural content and exercise procedures proved crucial to success, cultural agility and flexibility were equally important. During the exercise, we conducted our own open-source research into heritage sites in regions previously predicted to



Although not specifically identified in the Blue Flag/Joint Warfighting Assessment 2018 exercise, the Regional Museum in Suwalki, Poland, is one example of an invaluable cultural site that would be at great risk in the event of a large-scale conflict in Europe. Among its other treasures, the Regional Museum in Suwalki has permanent archaeological exhibits depicting artifacts from the early history of the region. (Photo courtesy of the Regional Museum in Suwalki)

Nevertheless, there were periods of downtime during the exercise when the simulators were not online, when controllers were shifting from one phase of the exercise to another, or when our injects were not in play. These turned out to be opportunities to put our other preparation and collective experience to use. One opportunity for collaboration arose with the Army intelligence cell. We offered to use our knowledge of the AOR to enhance some of their intel products created for the training audience for more realism, and they accepted. This resulted in a particularly fruitful

be outside the scope of the exercise to offer culturally important solutions to controllers when they asked what was out there. We adapted our existing injects to the evolving scenario context. For example, near the end of the exercise, the planners sought a targeting inject requiring strategic-level decision-making. They wanted to capitalize on the presence of several general officers visiting the Air Force training audience to offer the trainees a chance to adjudicate a targeting dilemma with the general officers' assistance. We modified an inject dealing with the looting of museum items (attempting to recover them

and conducting strategic messaging) to place the looted artifacts in a convoy with a Red Team VIP traveling to a religious site also serving as a military headquarters (in the exercise scenario). To target either the convoy or the site, personnel had to recognize the risk posed to important cultural items, the potential negative impact the loss of these items might have on a negotiated peace agreement, the impact to postconflict recovery, and the potential legal implications of such actions. By international law, senior military leaders must approve any actions that endanger cultural items.

Our team then served as role-players for this particular inject, speaking to military personnel who called “higher headquarters” for information about the trea-

sures. Our observer with the training audience served as a direct conduit of information between the general officers at the training location and our team at the controller’s location. He relayed information from the debate over that particular targeting dilemma and was on the spot when the general officers asked how they could get more information. We were better positioned to provide that information in detail after seeing the collection in person; we could respond to questions about the items’ cultural and national importance beyond the general information one might find on Wikipedia. As a result, our team supported these senior decision-makers



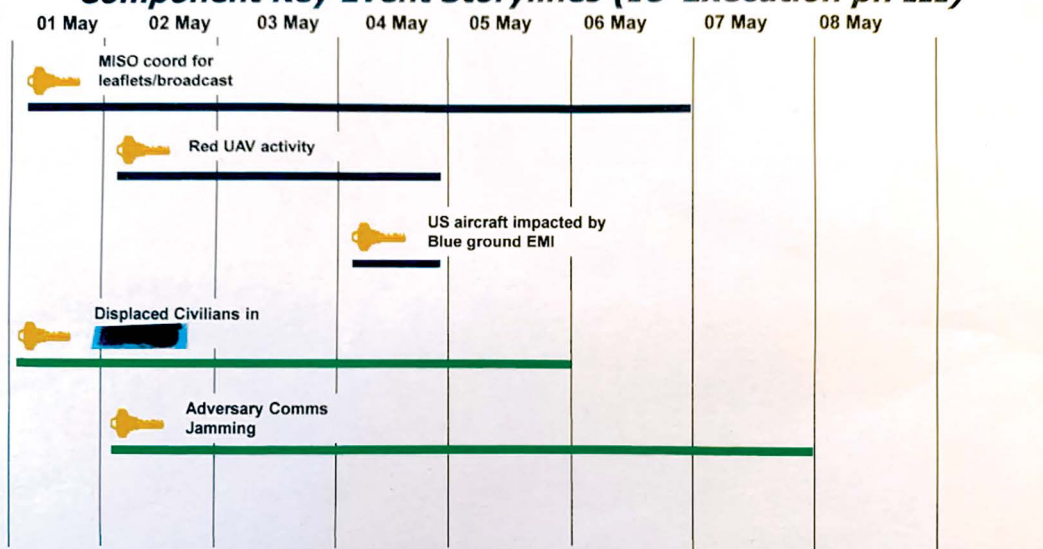
The Regional Museum in Suwalki, shown in this 7 September 2012 photo, is in Suwalki, Poland, a small city at the heart of the Suwalki Gap, commonly identified among military strategists as a likely Russian invasion corridor to separate the Baltic states from NATO member states to the west if conflict broke out in the region. It is one example of an invaluable cultural site that would be at great risk in the event of a large-scale conflict in Europe. (Photo by Adrian Piekarski via Wikimedia Commons)

with critical cultural intelligence and proved the concept that even in the “high-end fight,” CPP matters and often quickly elevates to strategic-level considerations. Therefore, by drawing on the breadth of our team, our site visit knowledge, and our pre-exercise preparation of diverse types of injects, we were able to meet controllers’ needs *and* develop CPP concerns into a key element of the third week of the exercise.

Summary and Conclusions

To say we learned a lot in the preparation and execution of BF/JWA-18 is an understatement of the highest

Component Key Event Storylines (IO-Execution ph III)



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magnitude. However, it is well worth the time and effort for civilian heritage professionals and academics to enter the world of large-scale military exercises for the dividends it pays. In our case, for example, we developed relationships with the 505th CTS that held through Blue Flag 19-1 and Blue Flag 20-1, the latter of which was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These sorts of civil-military coordination efforts are crucial for any CPP scenarios to be accepted and included in future exercises with the 505th CTS or more widely in the military. We built on our knowledge of the exercise development process and inject creation process for the later Blue Flags, and we were able to integrate our injects much more easily in the flow of the design and execution process. Our goal was to gain acceptance for CPP injects as a normal part of planning for and exercising operations, and to a small extent, we achieved it. Success for one or two years does not equate to long-term continuity, as anyone who works with the military knows. Rotation of personnel and changes to requirements necessitate an ongoing commitment to working with senior leaders, operational units, professional military education institutions, training squadrons, and individual airmen to ensure that we educate and train our personnel for the inevitable intersections of cultural heritage assets and military operations.

An example of an integrated exercise timeline for events and injects that included the appearance of large numbers of displaced civilians in the battle space. (Photo courtesy of the authors)

Furthermore, CPP is one of many skills that make up cultural competence, but one that makes sense to military personnel, since they have usually seen firsthand the negative effects of not protecting cultural heritage. CPP serves as an ideal “gateway” to other cultural competence skills and more abstract concepts, and yet still forces planners to consider culture’s complex influences beyond more simplistic “dos and don’ts.” During both Blue Flags we participated in, people came to us not only with questions about cultural heritage and property but also with questions about the cultures of the regions in general. Therefore, CPP injects and our presence at the exercises serve multiple ends for the exercise personnel and the training audiences. Bringing cultural awareness and CPP to military training and education can be an uphill battle, one that seems to wax and wane through the years, depending on national security strategies and current conflicts. We hold that culture will always be important because our allies and adversaries are people who draw from their cultures

to make decisions about warfare, partnerships, and even daily interactions with our personnel. Cultural property and heritage are elements of culture that everyone has a stake in protecting; we urge others to

take up this cause for military education and training, and hope that by presenting our lessons learned, we might help bridge the gap between academia and military practice for others. ■

Notes

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9. Perhaps the most notable U.S. personnel in this effort in the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq invasion (and since) were retired Army Reservist Maj. Cori Wegener and Marine Col. Matthew Bogdanos. For more information on the work of Cori Wegener, see <https://global.si.edu/people/corine-wegener>, and Bogdanos's *Thieves of Baghdad: One Marine's Passion to Recover the World's Greatest Stolen Treasures* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005). For the argument for increased CPP by arguably the international model CPP unit in the Italian Carabinieri, see Paolo Foradori, "Protecting Cultural Heritage during Armed Conflict: The Italian Contribution to 'Cultural Peacekeeping,'" *Modern Italy* 22, no. 1 (2016): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1017/mit.2016.57>.

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20. Without the support of leadership at the 505th Combat Training Squadron, this proof of concept would not have been possible; special thanks to Lt. Col. Matt McKinney and John Drain.

21. Mayrem Morales, "USAFE Concludes Joint-Combat Readiness Exercise," U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa, 10 May 2018, accessed 25 March 2021, <https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1517466/usafe-concludes-joint-combat-readiness-exercise/>; "BF/JWA-18–Blue Flag/Joint Warfighting Assessment," U.S. Army Fort Bliss, 10 September 2019, accessed 25 March 2021, <https://home.army.mil/bliss/index.php/units-tenants/joint-modernization-command/jmc-archives>.

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24. We would also like to thank those staff and participants from the Language Enabled Airman Program at the Air Force Culture and Language Center who helped us learn about the region and shape our itinerary, and Martin Perschler, PhD, program director, U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, Cultural Heritage Center, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (SA-5), U.S. Department of State.

25. These scenarios were conducted in the virtual training world and all troop movement occurred within the confines of the military bases where the exercise participants had gathered. No historical sites or national treasures were ever put at risk.

26. This is the section of the exercise controlling group that is dedicated to forming the movements of the opposing force. Red Team and Blue Team are commonly used to represent adversaries and allies, respectively.

27. At first, the exercise was limited to the U.S. Air Force, but early in 2018, the Army added its joint warfighting assessment to the overall scenario, making the exercise truly focused on multi-domain interoperability.

28. See Krisjand Rothweiler, "Wargaming for Strategic Planning," *The Strategy Bridge*, 29 March 2017, accessed 25 March 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/3/29/wargaming-for-strategic-planning>. Blue Flag is a training exercise, not a wargame. A wargame does not include actual movement of troops or materiel, and the outcomes of a wargame are not a foregone conclusion. This gives planners and players the opportunity to test different courses of action and weigh different outcomes. An exercise has clear training objectives that participants must practice. The exercise scenarios are largely predetermined (e.g., whether or not forces can repel an adversary or evacuate U.S. citizens), and the success of the exercise depends on how (and how well) the personnel run processes and tasks.

29. A. E. Vellenga, foreword to Marine Corps Civil-Military Operations School (MCCMOS) Circular 3.1, *Green Cell* (Quantico, VA: MCCMOS, 1 September 2017), v, accessed 25 March 2021, <https://www.trngcmd.marines.mil/Portals/207/Docs/wtbn/MCCMOS/MCCMOS%20Circular%20Green%20Cell%20September%202017.pdf>. A Green Cell "helps the Commander and staff better understand the civil dimension of the battlespace and the nature of the problem" that the unit confronts; it may also serve as a liaison with civil society organizations.

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