Christopher Gelpi, "Crime and Punishment: The Role of Norms in Crisis Bargaining"

Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov is an impoverished and unemployed former student in St. Petersburg. Thinking himself a great man above morality, he kills a mean old lady with an ax in order to rob her and put her money to better use, but in the process is forced to kill her kindly sister as well. He gradually goes crazy from guilt, confesses, and is sent to Siberia. In the end, the Christian love a kindly prostitute whom Raskolnikov met during his misadventures redeems him.

Huth and other realists are wrong, normative standards of behavior can influence state action in security related conflicts. This paper tests this proposition by seeing if states that violate a previous agreement are more likely to back down when "punished" than states that have not violated such an agreement.

Gelpi examines cases in which a previous dispute is reinitiated by two countries. The earlier dispute may or may not have concluded with a legitimate settlement. The first state to threaten or take military action to reinitiate the dispute is the challenger, the other nation the defender. The defender responds with a bargaining strategy, and the dispute is solved in one of three ways:
>   1. The challenger remains intransigent and forces concessions.
>   2. The challenger accepts a compromise.
>   3. The challenger abandons its bid to overturn the status quo.

The plan is to predict whether the defender will be able to persuade the challenger not to overturn the status quo.

Dispute settlements should make defense of the status quo easier for two reasons:
>   1. They normatively alter the challenger's interpretation of the defender's bargaining strategy, making it seem more legitimate and less threatening.
>   2. The existence of a past settlement will increase reputational costs for challenging the status quo.

The realist (null) hypothesis:
>   Hypothesis 1. In the absence of previous dispute settlements, the appeasement and bullying strategies will make the challenger highly intransigent, while a firm-but-flexible strategy will make the challenger less insistent.

Then normative hypotheses:
>   Hypothesis 2. When a challenger has violated a dispute settlement and the defender responds with appeasement, the challenger's insistence will be higher than if there was no previous settlement.

>   Hypothesis 3. When a challenger has violated a dispute settlement and the defender responds with a bullying strategy, the challenger's insistence will be lower than it would if there were no previous settlement.

>   Hypothesis 4. When a challenger has violated a dispute settlement and the defender responds with a firm-but-flexible strategy, the challenger's insistence will be at least as low as if there were not previous settlement.

In creating a model, Gelpi also includes a number of traditional realist variables from theories of iterated conflicts. He used data from The International Crisis Behavior Project measuring disputes between 1929 and 1979. In this set there were 122 crises that reinitiated previous disputes.

The probit test of this data found support for Gelpi's hypothesis. Furthermore, the realist variables in the equation did not prove to be particularly important, calling realist assumptions into question. Norms are important, and realists fail to notice that threats can be interpreted in a variety of ways.