Logics of War

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Notes

INTRODUCTION

2. See Lieber (2007) for a contrary view of initial expectations that builds on recent historiography.
3. On the potential for escalation in the 1929 conflict, see Lee (1983, 99) and Wei (1956, ch. 5). For the Iranian decision to adopt maximalist war aims, see for example Bulloch and Morris (1989, 11–12, 103) and Seifzadeh (1997).
4. This figure relies on data introduced in chapter 2. A war is coded as high-intensity for this figure if battle deaths over time are found above the seventy-fifth percentile in the data either in absolute terms or when adjusting for the total population of war participants. While these thresholds are of course rather arbitrary, a similar picture would emerge from any reasonable division. Likewise, while data availability forces me to use only battle deaths here and elsewhere in this project, inclusion of civilian deaths or military deaths outside battle would not affect the point that a small number of wars are responsible for a disproportionate share of deaths.
5. See Stanley and Sawyer (2009) for a similar discussion of equifinality and war.
8. Realists have also disagreed about the underlying mechanism driving great power wars, with Waltz (1979, 170–172) attributing such wars primarily to miscalculation, while Copeland (2000) attributes them to fear of decline.
10. For a recent estimation of total Paraguayan deaths, see Whigham and Potthast (1999).
11. Studies that examine war duration statistically actually go back quite some time: see Weiss (1963), Horvath (1968), Morrison and Schmittlein (1980), and Vuchinich and Teachman (1993). These studies were limited by existing computing power in their ability to include covariates, however, meaning that most assessed only the appropriateness of different assumptions about the functional form of the relationship between elapsed time or total fatalities and the probability of war termination.
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More recent studies have been able to include a more extensive list of more interesting covariates.
14. This review is necessarily cursory and omits a number of important studies on which I build in the next chapter. Even the most pertinent studies have tended not to examine the question of what separates the most destructive interstate wars from those that are either shorter or fought less intensely, however.
15. For particularly important exceptions, see Goemans (2000) and Reiter (2009).
16. Chapter 2 contains a more detailed discussion of the various measures of war destructiveness.

1. EXPLANATIONS FOR LIMITED AND UNLIMITED WARS

1. For the paradigmatic presentation of the bargaining model, see Fearon (1995). Powell (2002) and Reiter (2003) provide useful, if now slightly dated, reviews of the bargaining model literature. See also Jackson and Morelli (2009).
4. Thucydides (1952). For additional work that points to a connection between shifting power and war, see for example Organski (1968), Levy (1987), Copeland (2000), and Powell (2006).
6. Fearon (1995, 382). More recently, Powell (2006) has noted that from a formal perspective issue indivisibilities are simply another example of the commitment problem mechanism that lies behind preventive wars driven by shifting power. Rather than fighting, each side would prefer an ex ante gamble (e.g., a weighted coin flip) in which their probability of getting the issue at stake was tied to their probability of victory in war; the problem is that neither side can credibly commit not to resort to war if it loses the coin flip. This logic gets to the commitment problem in a different way from the shifting power logic, however.
7. For arguments that indivisible issues are important, see for example Kirshner (2000) and Toft (2006). For an analogous argument about the limited importance of indivisible issues in war, including a number of additional examples of such limitations, see Reiter (2009, 47–50).
9. For other problems with risk acceptance as a variable in international politics, see O’Neill (2001).
10. See Slantchev (2003a) for the logic of this mechanism.
11. Powell (1999) and Coe (2011) present the logic of this argument. This mechanism could potentially account for the war proneness of seventeenth-century Sweden, which was relatively poor and sparsely populated and hence could not afford to
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support a large army on its territory for long. As a result, whenever the threat of war was high enough to force the Swedes to gather their army, they needed to invade one of their neighbors almost immediately to permit their army to requisition supplies on enemy territory. Given that it severely antagonized all of Sweden’s neighbors, this strategy worked remarkably well until the disaster of Poltava and subsequent defeat in the Great Northern War cast Sweden from the ranks of the major powers. See Frost (2000, esp. 116–118, 200–208). Coe argues that this mechanism is also responsible for several more recent conflicts, most notably the 2003 invasion of Iraq, although his account depends heavily on both commitment problems (associated with the potential Iraqi acquisition of nuclear weapons) and overoptimism about the likely costs of war. I am unaware of cases in which this mechanism played a primary role in bringing about war.

19. That said, Stalin did believe the Soviet Union to be on the rise, following Marxist-Leninist ideology about the inevitable replacement of capitalism with socialism. Theory, however, indicated to him that the capitalist states were dominated by those who would lose most heavily from this transition, and thus that reassurance was unlikely to work. He thus expected the Soviet Union to be attacked by the West. See for example Roberts (1991, 18). Nonetheless, he ordered consistent compliance with the terms of his pact with Germany even as it became more apparent that Germany was planning to attack; the Germans were fully aware that the Soviets were doing everything that they could to signal benign intentions. Gorodetsky (1999); Chief of Council for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, vol. 6 (1946), 997–1000.
22. Springhall (2001, esp. 210). See also Rock (1989, ch. 2) for a discussion of a similar British decision not to oppose the American rise in the second half of the nineteenth century.
23. On internal balancing, see Waltz (1979, 168). There is also the danger that such production may exacerbate the security dilemma and thus bring about competition that would not otherwise have occurred.
24. Several studies, starting with Fearon (1995), have discussed the reasons why this particular agreement is not generally viable.
25. More imaginative diplomatic options may have been available historically, as when Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of one of the largest armies headed for the Holy Land on the First Crusade, left his brother Baldwin and Baldwin’s family as hostages of the Hungarian king as a pledge of good behavior during the period Godfrey’s army traversed Hungary and hence was in a position to wreak considerable disorder, as indeed a number of crusading armies did both previously and subsequently (Runciman 1951, esp. 148). In the modern era, the use of formal hostages has of course ceased to be a tool of diplomacy.


28. Reiter (2009, ch. 9) points however to additional commitment concerns that motivated the Germans to continue the war on the Western Front even after Brest-Litovsk, which explain the continuation of the war overall. Ultimately, defeat on the Western Front resulted in the abrogation of Brest-Litovsk, with the affected regions either gaining independence or reverting to the control of the Soviet Union.


30. The Iraqi civil war that followed the invasion ultimately entailed many years of additional fighting for American soldiers, of course. This fighting was motivated by a fundamentally different set of concerns, primarily relating to sectarian struggles for control of the Iraqi government, from the concerns that motivated the conventional phase. It is entirely conceivable that with a better plan and a bigger occupation force the coalition might have avoided this violence; in any event, the preventive motivations for the initial invasion were addressed by the conquest of the country and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s regime.

31. This figure and the others like it in this chapter are illustrative. In reality, there is no bright line separating the possible combinations of intensity and duration from impossible ones, as the sharp borders here might seem to imply; instead, the spaces demarcate zones in which wars driven by the mechanism in question typically will fall.

32. See also Reiter (2009) for this argument.

33. For the riskiness of the Schlieffen Plan, see for example Ritter (1958). For the riskiness of unrestricted submarine warfare, see Goemans (2000, 95–98).


35. Reiter (2009, 102). In a similar vein, albeit a different context, Fearon (2004) argues that “sons of the soil” wars are particularly difficult to resolve because the rebels believe that the government is beholden to a constituency that will continue to push for effective expropriation of land belonging to members of the rebels’ ethnic group.

36. Reiter (2009, esp. ch. 3).

37. Schroeder (1994, e.g. 496) describes Napoleon Bonaparte in such a manner, albeit on the basis of limited direct evidence.

38. The paragon of the committed aggressor is Adolf Hitler—see, for example, Schweller (1998)—yet even he was open to political compromises for the first six years of his rule, and as is discussed in greater detail in chapter 4, would have preferred a militarily reasonable political settlement with Britain in the summer of 1940 to continued war.

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42. In theory, a leader faced with an opponent who is believed to be implacably committed to aggression might still be open to a peace deal, despite the understanding that it will necessarily be temporary, if she believes that changes in the intervening time will permit her to wage war more effectively once it resumes. In practice, however, in this situation leaders typically worry that peace will restore the initiative to the aggressive opponent, who can choose when and how to resume the war, while the public will relax under the belief that the war is over and hence will not be prepared for the war’s resumption. In these situations, leaders also occasionally note that a deal that permits them to prepare for the next round of fighting, for example by rearming, will presumably be rejected by the opponent for precisely that reason.


44. For the Russo-Hungarian conflict, see Molnár (1971) and Györkei and Horváth (1999). This situation also describes one of the better-known examples of refusal to negotiate within war from history, namely the Roman decision to utterly destroy Carthage in the Third Punic War. In practice, while the first two Punic Wars were epic clashes, by the time of the third Carthage had been reduced to a Roman tributary state that had no prospect of effectively defending itself. Recognizing this situation, the Carthaginians surrendered hostages and all their weapons and armor rather than fight, but balked when the Romans demanded that they abandon the city and permit it to be razed. The war itself consisted of an extended siege followed by a single battle, with an outcome entirely consistent with expectations. Lloyd (1977, ch. 16), Caven (1980, 273).

45. More precisely, this policy dramatically restricts the range of acceptable settlements to those that address the dispositional commitment problem, minimally through regime change in the country in question. Thus, for example, the American leadership ultimately decided to accept Japanese surrender in World War II because the terms of the surrender would permit them to undertake the fundamental reform of the Japanese political system that they deemed necessary. Hasegawa (2005).

46. The Iran-Iraq War constitutes a marginal case, as it did ultimately end in a negotiated settlement, but only after eight years during which the Iranians refused to consider negotiations with Saddam Hussein’s government; it is this extended refusal that justifies the case’s inclusion in this discussion. Separately, the two World War II cases obviously overlapped, and thus some readers may be reluctant to consider them to be separate examples. As is apparent in chapters 4 and 5, however, a closer look at the history reveals that the same mechanism operated basically independently but roughly simultaneously in the two conflicts.

47. On Roosevelt’s fears, see Dallek (1979, 175). For a discussion of the evidence behind such claims, see chapter 4.


49. Some readers may object that principal-agent conflicts logically also should produce wars to the death, by the same basic dynamic described here. I disagree for two reasons. The first concerns the internal checks placed on leaders: the requirement that the public be kept on board places a limit on what leaders can reasonably claim
to be militarily possible and hence on what sorts of war aims the initiators of these conflicts will pursue, in turn making it less likely that opponents will see the initiators as dispositionally committed to war. Second, given the deception at the center of the initiating leader’s strategy in a principal-agent conflict, the public in the initiating country typically will prefer to replace that leader rather than fight a defensive war to the death on her behalf. Thus, for example, to the extent that the Tanzanians concluded that Idi Amin posed a fundamental obstacle to a viable peace in the Uganda-Tanzania War, they were aided by the unwillingness of the Ugandans to die to keep him in power.

50. This argument has the additional implication that leaders who are particularly predisposed to explain behavior in dispositional terms—as for example may have been the case with the theocratic government in Iran during the Iran-Iraq War—will be more likely to conclude that their opponent is a war lover who will continue to launch wars until removed from power. Technically, these actors would have a prior belief function that allows for a higher baseline probability that any given actor is dispositionally aggressive; given this higher prior probability, less evidence of a disposition for aggression would be necessary to tip the actor over to believing that it faces a dispositional commitment problem. Developing an *ex ante* testable hypothesis from this point is difficult, however, given the difficulty of observing prior beliefs. One possibility would be that actors that have less experience with international politics would be more likely to have these sorts of prior beliefs.

51. For the security dilemma, see Jervis (1978).

52. Leffler (1992, 49–54, 203–206). This case has of course been minutely dissected, with different schools allocating blame for the Cold War in quite different ways. That American and Soviet officials had different interpretations of the implications of each side’s actions is not in dispute, however.

53. Given the significance of misunderstood intentions to this argument, one might wonder why the two sides cannot use costly signals to establish trust. There are several reasons why such an approach is both unlikely to be adopted and, if adopted, unlikely to work. First, under this argument both sides see the opponent as the primary obstacle to peace, and hence would likely believe that the other side should take the first step in signaling benign intentions. Second, as Kydd (2005) notes, while costly signals can produce trust, in situations of significant distrust signals must be unusually costly (as with Gorbachev allowing Eastern Europe to leave the Warsaw Pact) to be credible. The initiator of the preventive war will be reluctant to send such signals, as doing so will likely entail abandoning the initial goal of the war and hence giving the opponent the long-term advantage; the target of the preventive war will be disinclined to send such signals both because doing so will hamper efforts to enforce unconditional surrender and because a truly dispositionally aggressive opponent would simply swallow the concessions and continue the attack.

54. Sincere demands for unconditional surrender are conceptually distinct from, if sometimes related to, the more common phenomenon of foreign-imposed regime change. Most cases of foreign-imposed regime change involve great powers intervening in the domestic politics of minor-power neighbors, with limited or even no fighting in most cases. Given these differences, it would be theoretically inappropriate to test predictions about unconditional surrender on cases of foreign-imposed regime change.


57. Fearon (1995) points out that divergent expectations alone are insufficient for war; it also has to be the case that actors are unable to share the bases for their differing expectations credibly. Given conflicting preferences, however, actors have an incentive to claim to be strong or resolved even when they are not, because successful bluffing will lead to a better political settlement. This incentive undermines credible signaling, however, because weak or irresolute actors will claim to be more formidable than they actually are, leaving observers uncertain whether claims to be willing to fight are sincere or bluffs.

58. Fey and Ramsay (2007), building on Aumann’s (1976) observation that rational actors cannot agree to disagree, have argued that arguments about mutual optimism provide a theoretically incoherent explanation for war. Slantchev and Tarar (2011) however convincingly argue that this result hinges on strong assumptions about exogenous settlement terms and especially the ability of either party in a dispute to impose peace on the other.

59. This observation thus explains why a popular “puzzle”—why a weaker power would ever go to war against a stronger one—is in fact less puzzling than it at first seems. Typically, scholars who advance this puzzle assume that the weaker power is starting a war that it should know that it cannot win; as this discussion demonstrates, however, it is quite possible that, even if it cannot win militarily, the weaker power might win politically, which is after all what matters.

60. Bensahel et al. (2008), Woods et al. (2006, 30).


67. There is some debate in the literature about whether private information is a necessary condition for divergent expectations; from a practical perspective, one could easily imagine that leaders might reach divergent expectation even on the basis of the same information, whether because of psychological biases or simply because of the sheer complexity of international politics. Kirshner (2000), Johnson (2004). Ultimately, however, this distinction is not one that is of great significance for this project. From a practical perspective, distinguishing between divergent interpretations of common information and divergent expectations based on private information is impossible, as in every case some information is available to both sides and some is private, while determining the precise bases on which leaders form their expectations is notoriously difficult. For my purposes, the more important question is less where divergent expectations come from than what happens once they produce a war.

68. Blainey (1988, 56). For formal demonstrations of this process, see Wagner (2000), Filson and Werner (2002), Slantchev (2003b), and Powell (2004). Note that saying that beliefs converge is not the same as saying either that the two sides reach complete agreement or that both sides know who would ultimately triumph militarily. All that is necessary is that the participants roughly agree on the relative probability...
that each side will win; they can then construct a settlement that gives each side something at least as good as its certainty equivalent to the lottery associated with continued fighting.


70. For the details of this war, which is also referred to as the Second Austro-Sardinian War, see King (1967) and Blumberg (1990). It is worth noting that this case is a war with major powers on both sides in which fighting ended in short order; the short duration is likely the reason why many scholars (incorrectly) omit it from the list of major power wars in the past two centuries.


72. Reiter (2009, esp. 122) concludes that this case—the most limited war that he examines—is particularly well captured by informational dynamics. See also Van Dyke (1997) and Edwards (2006).

73. Powell (2004), Smith and Stam (2004). See also Iklé (1991) for the argument that from a rational perspective wars driven by divergent expectations should not last long.


75. For a representative example of explanations for World War I grounded in over-optimism, see Johnson (2004, ch. 3).


77. Reed (2003), Slantchev (2004).

78. Davies (1972).

79. For an early version of this argument, see Kant ([1795] 1957).


81. Lenin (1920, esp. chs. 5–7).


85. For a review of the economics literature on principal-agent problems, see Eisenhardt (1989). There are, of course, significant differences between employer-employee relations and leader-public relations—for one, in the latter the principal (the public) is far more disaggregated, raising potential collective action problems—but the basic dilemmas that a principal-agent dynamic raises are still relevant.

86. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003).


88. Ibid.

89. Similar arguments that partial democracies are particularly prone to engaging in undesirable actions in the security arena include Snyder (1991) and Mansfield and Snyder (2005).

90. Decalo (1989, 111–113), Kasozi et al. (1994, 124–127). This possibility also can prevent rejectionists from extending a war when settlement is on the table, as for example happened when the Kiel mutiny at the end of World War I torpedoed attempts by hardliners in the German navy to launch a fresh offensive with the goal of undermining settlement talks. Iklé (1991, 70).
91. For the French mutinies, see Pedroncini (1967) and Rolland (2005).
95. There exist two standard logics of diversionary war. One posits that leaders can use war to exploit in-group/out-group effects, rallying a divided society against an external threat, at least so long as internal divisions are not too severe. Simmel (1898, 1955), Coser (1956). An alternate view sees war as a noisy signal of leadership competence: good leaders who have been unlucky in domestic politics or incompetent leaders who hope to get lucky in foreign policy may have an incentive to start a conflict so as to improve public perceptions of them and thus increase the probability that they are able to remain in office. Richards et al. (1993), Smith (1998b), Tarar (2006).
96. For typical examples of studies that found a relationship between domestic political conditions and the use of force, see Ostrom and Job (1986), Nincic (1990), James and Oneal (1991), Gaubatz (1991), and Wang (1996).
98. Chiozza and Goemans (2003). Relatedly, Moore and Lanoue (2003) note that the diversionary hypothesis seems in tension with the observation that domestic economic difficulties are a far more robust predictor of the use of force than presidential approval ratings, given that the president should only need to divert attention from the economy if its troubles are affecting his popularity.
99. For evidence of significant popularity gains in external crises in the United States and elsewhere, see Mueller (1970, 1973), Sprecher and DeRouen (2002), and Lai and Reiter (2005). For the finding that the gains from the average crisis are small, see Lian and Oneal (1993), James and Rioux (1998), and Baker and Oneal (2001). For the finding that the big gains occur in precisely those crises that are least open to manipulation, see Chapman and Reiter (2004) and Lai and Reiter (2005). Colaresi (2007) similarly emphasizes the role of constraints on rally effects.
101. For more discussion of this case, see chapters 4 and 5.
103. See Schlafl ey (1999) for an example of such speculation, and Hendrickson (2002) for a skeptical view.
104. Indeed, even given the general consensus in World War II, Roosevelt still experienced significant criticism. Prior to the war, Roosevelt’s policies of assistance to Britain and the Soviet Union were controversial, and even after enemy attack had rallied the public to the war, congressional Republicans closely monitored government competence in its prosecution while at times arguing that Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull were responsible for the surprise at Pearl Harbor. Darilek (1976, esp. ch. 2), Casey (2001).
105. The agent’s private information is an essential component of the most compelling models of diversionary war and gambling for resurrection. As such, it features in all formal models; de Figueiredo and Weingast (1999) provide a particularly clear discussion of its importance. Note that just because leaders have access to better information does not mean that they will necessarily make good use of it. Jervis
(1976, 2006). That said, what the leader does with information available to her is less important than what claims she can make on the basis of its existence.


109. This process could be seen, for example, in the spread of control over India. See Lawson (1993, e.g. ch. 4).

110. That said, even well prior to the development of modern communication technology a significant amount of information about ongoing wars was frequently available, if at a greater delay. Thus, for example, English peasants appear to have been surprisingly well informed about developments in France during the Hundred Years War despite the presence of many obstacles to communication that do not exist today. Updates about events in France were passed back through the churches, where priests reported them in sermons; regular citizens seem to have followed developments closely. Seward (1978, e.g. 82).

111. See for example Genova and Greenberg (1979) and Krosnick (1990).

112. Gartner (2008). Likewise, there is evidence that draft-eligible Americans during Vietnam were more likely to favor an immediate withdrawal when their probability of being drafted increased. Bergan (2009).


114. This perspective is consistent with the selectorate theory of international politics, which emphasizes the importance of the size of the group of people who influence the selection of the leader. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003). Leaders with small selectorates—generally autocrats—face fewer constraints in exploiting members of the general public who do not influence leadership selection.

115. For the argument that democracies tend to be more selective in initiating wars, see Reiter and Stam (2002) and Slantchev (2004).

2. Research Strategy and Statistical Tests

1. Indeed, focusing on well-known cases may be particularly perverse if there are systematic differences related to the mechanisms in question that lead some cases to be well known while others are not. Thus, for example, I argue that in policy wars—nondiversionary principal-agent conflicts—leaders will seek to limit the availability of information about the war. This strategy, if effective, may mean that subsequent historians have difficulty determining everything that happened in the war, as indeed appears to have happened in the Franco-Turkish conflict discussed in chapter 7.

2. More specifically, the cases in the statistical dataset were divided according to length—delineated by a relatively natural break between wars shorter than and longer than one year—and intensity, where conflicts were coded as more intense if they were above the seventy-fifth percentile either in absolute war intensity (deaths per unit time) or in war intensity adjusted by population (deaths per capita per unit time). One case was then selected randomly from within each category. This approach admittedly does involve selection on the dependent variable; if possible, it would have been preferable to select randomly from among the list of wars driven by each of the different mechanisms. Compiling such a list, however, would have
required extensive research on every case in the dataset prior to case selection, an infeasible proposition. As the relevant case studies demonstrate, the wars selected do provide significant variation in the independent variable, as we would have hoped.

3. For detailed discussions of the criteria for identifying wars, see Singer and Small (1972) and Sarkees and Wayman (2010).

4. Other studies that disaggregate multilateral wars in this way include Bennett and Stam (1996), Goemans (2000), and Reiter and Stam (2002).


6. This information is available on an IQSS Dataverse, at http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/weisiger.


8. Clodfelter (2007). The most common data source for battle death data is the Correlates of War dataset, which focuses on the slightly broader category of battle-related fatalities. See Sarkees and Wayman (2010, 49–52). This approach, however, results in some anomalies, such as the Ottoman Empire suffering twenty thousand war deaths in the Second Balkan War despite fighting no battles (two thousand soldiers did die of disease), or US deaths in the Mexican-American and Spanish-American Wars being higher than those of their opponents, contrary to all historical accounts, because deaths from illness are only available on the American side. In practice, however, the statistical results presented below are substantively identical when substituting the COW death figures.

9. Determining the dates of war onset and termination can be trickier in civil wars, where fighting is more likely to escalate gradually as rebels establish themselves or to gradually taper off into a stalemate.


11. For example, in the nineteenth-century Pacific War, Bolivia withdrew militarily from the conflict in 1880 (leaving Peru to oppose Chile unaided) but only signed a peace agreement in 1884, several months after the Peruvians had capitulated; COW codes the Bolivian-Chilean conflict, and hence the war, as continuing even after the Peruvian capitulation.

12. For a discussion of these costs in the context of the Iraq War, see Stiglitz and Bilmes (2008).

13. Capella (2012). I am deeply indebted to Rosella Capella for sharing this data with me.

14. Maddison (2003). Calculating war cost is a highly imprecise science. Given an initial report of total expenditures, I converted any value in US dollars or British pounds into 2012 dollars using standard conversion rates. For expenditure totals in other currencies (e.g., francs or rubles), I first converted the total into same-year dollars either using known historical exchange rates or, where exchange rate data were unavailable, by using the precious metal content of currency to calculate an effective exchange rate. Thus, for example, I converted Chinese expenditures in the First Sino-Soviet War, which were reported in Chinese taels, into dollars by determining that the tael contained roughly thirty-five grams of silver, which at that time had a value of fifty-nine cents.

15. This approach differs from the strategy in the power transition literature of identifying points at which one country passes another, or alternately points at which countries are relatively equal in power. From a theoretical perspective, the power transition approach is unattractive because it downplays the central dynamic identi-
fied by theory, which is fear of significant future decline. Indeed, bargaining model theory indicates that there is no theoretically coherent reason to believe that power shifts should be more dangerous at points of relative equality than at other points along the dimension (see Powell [1999]). Thus, for example, the Bush administration clearly feared an incipient rise in Iraqi capabilities prior to the 2003 war. Although a nuclear-armed Iraq would still have been far weaker than the United States, an increase in Iraqi capabilities would have limited American freedom of action in the Middle East and would have permitted Saddam Hussein to pursue new policies antithetical to American interests.


17. This approach admittedly will not capture anticipated shifts related to qualitative technological advances, such as (most obviously) the acquisition of nuclear weapons. The 2003 Iraq War provides the only case in which fears related to a purported nuclear weapons program produced war, however, meaning that this deficiency should not greatly bias statistical results.

18. Singer et al. (1972). The international relations field has never developed a fully satisfactory measure for power, nor, for that matter, is it likely to be able to do so; see Baldwin (1989) for a discussion of the central problems. Basic material capabilities, captured by variables like population, economic production, and military capacity, end up forming the basis for any measure of power that spans a wide range of countries and time, with the National Military Capabilities dataset the overwhelming choice. This dataset is certainly open to criticism, among other things because it treats an inherently relational concept in a fundamentally nonrelational way, because it fails to include important determinants of state capacity such as geography, and because it focuses purely on measurable capabilities, thus ignoring “soft power” and other nonmaterial forms of influence (see Nye [2004]). However, attempts to improve on existing measures, as for example in Organski and Kugler (1980), generally produce operationalizations that differ only marginally from the existing approach. To ensure comparability with the rest of the discipline, therefore, I use the standard dataset.

19. This approach unfortunately does produce a number of cases for which I have missing data, because at least one participant did not exist five or ten years prior to the war. For those cases in which data were available for at least five years prior to the war, I filled in missing data for ten-year shifts by extrapolating backward for cases in which the country existed but did not meet COW’s requirements for system membership and by using data from the year of independence for cases in which the country genuinely did not exist ten years prior to the war. Alternate approaches to handling missing data in these cases, including substituting the size of the shift over the five years prior to war or simply excluding the observations, had no substantive effect on the results.

20. The intensity of fighting is, of course, only one possible indicator of the speed with which participants learn new information, but it is also by far the most theoretically and empirically appropriate. Thus, for example, one might argue that information should be revealed by allies failing to come to a country’s aid. This scenario is quite possible; it is also possible, however, that the ally’s decision to intervene might be equally surprising for the opponent. Moreover, in many cases, as with the Russian decision to aid Serbia or the Italian decision not to assist Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I, the ally’s decision is no surprise to either side in
the conflict. There is thus no clear scenario in which allied behavior is likely to be unusually informative. Another possibility concerns the speed of communication—in the modern era, bad news from Afghanistan reaches the United States almost instantaneously, whereas for much of the nineteenth century communication between Central Asia and the West might have taken months. In practice, however, this situation simply meant that leaders in earlier times were forced to delegate greater authority to local representatives. Thus, in the Anglo-Iranian War discussed in chapter 6, the British delegated the decision to declare war to the government in India, while the Iranians appointed a representative with significant leeway to negotiate in Constantinople and Paris. Communication difficulties nonetheless lengthened the war marginally, if only because it took a month for news of the peace agreement to reach the battlefield, but not by enough for the difference to be statistically detectable, especially given the relatively small sample of interstate wars.


22. WIT distinguishes between military and political losers, as in some cases the military victor may fare less well politically. To give an example, in the Austro-Iranian component of the Seven Weeks War, Austria clearly defeated Italy on the battlefield, but the Austrians ended up having to cede Venetia to the Italians as part of the price of peace with Prussia. Most of the cases of variation between military and political victors arise either in draws or in circumstances in which postwar diplomacy (like the Congress of Berlin after the 1877–78 Russo-Turkish War) reallocated benefits; as the latter developments occur after the fighting ends, it is preferable to use the military outcome here.

23. Specifically, the only noticeable variations in governance on the losing side occur in World War II (partially democratic Japan contrasted with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy), the Palestine War (monarchical Jordan contrasted with partially democratic Egypt and Syria), and Vietnam (democratic United States contrasted with relatively undemocratic South Vietnam). Alternate approaches to handling these cases do not affect empirical results.


25. This threshold is conventional and does not greatly influence results. A variable that simply uses the Polity score of the initiator is similarly associated with shorter wars, but is typically statistically insignificant.

26. Slantchev (2004). For the rare cases in which my dataset includes a war that was not in his, I use terrain codings from a conflict in a geographically similar area, so that, for example, the Austro-Iranian component of the Seven Weeks War is given the same terrain coding as the Austro-Sardinian War of 1848.

27. Stinnett et al. (2002). Substituting the basic contiguity score, which includes intermediate categories for countries separated by limited stretches of water, has no effect on the results.


30. I also experimented with using capabilities data from all participants—i.e., including the (generally quite weak) minor participants in multilateral wars—and with discounting capabilities over distance in the manner introduced by Bueno de Mesquita (1981, 105). Neither alteration had any effect on results.


33. Henderson and Tucker (2001). Huntington is not always entirely clear into which civilization he would classify given countries. That said, most uncertainties either concern countries that have not fought wars or do not affect the coding (e.g. whether Israel is coded as a member of the Western civilization or comprises its own civilization is irrelevant, given that it only fights wars against countries in the Islamic civilization). An alternate coding that identifies a civilizational conflict in multilateral wars when at least one dyad crosses civilizational lines differs only in the coding for the Second Balkan War (based on the Ottoman Empire’s involvement); results using a modified variable are thus essentially identical to those presented below.

34. Liberal nationalist ideas often directly threatened members of the old order in the nineteenth century, even when the proponents of liberal positions were not particularly democratic. Thus, for example, Italian nationalism (closely allied at the time with liberal forces), which was ultimately co-opted by (monarchical) Sardinia-Piedmont, posed a significant threat to (monarchical) Austria. Similarly, Bartolomé Mitre’s liberal leanings alienated him from Francisco Solano López in the Paraguayan War, even though neither side showed any great commitment to democracy (see Leuchars [2002, 17]). (Mitre was admittedly an elected official during the war, but he demonstrated his low commitment to democratic norms by launching two rebellions once out of power.) The division between liberals and conservatives was pertinent in Europe and throughout Latin America, although the exact meaning of the terms differed somewhat across continents.

35. Once again, changing these variables to code a clash if any dyad within a multilateral war crosses ideological lines results in very few changes and thus does not affect the statistical or substantive significance of the key variables.


38. A few prior studies of interstate wars have distinguished among types of war termination but along markedly different lines. See Wright (1970) and Pillar (1983). More recent work that has differentiated among types of war termination in a statistical context has focused on victory or defeat (from the perspective of a democratic participant or of the initiator). Bennett and Stam (1998), Slantchev (2004), DeRouen and Sobek (2004). Scholars studying civil wars have generally shown a greater interest in the ways in which wars end, although here too some differences with the simple conquest/settlement dichotomy that follows from theory exist. See for example Licklider (1995), Mason and Fett (1996), and Walter (1997, 2002).

39. The possibility of guerrilla resistance after conventional conquest at times complicates this distinction. For a discussion of this issue, see Weisiger (2012).

40. The online appendices contain the verbatim coding rules, the coding decisions, and explanations for decisions in all potentially questionable cases.

41. For a summary of duration analysis, see Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (2004).

42. I use the semiparametric Cox specification instead of more parametric specifications like the popular Weibull because it imposes fewer assumptions about the...
shape of the baseline hazard rate (roughly the probability that a war would end on any given day, which may vary substantially over the course of the war). The Cox specification does assume that the effect of variables on the hazard rate is proportional over time (so that if a variable reduces the baseline probability of settlement by half a month into the war, it will have the same effect several years into the war). Tests of the proportional hazard assumption consistently produce no evidence of violations, either for the model as a whole or for specific variables. I also conduct robustness checks with a log-normal specification—which both the Akaike Information Criterion and comparison of log-likelihoods indicate is the appropriate parametric specification—with results that are consistently substantively unchanged.


44. There are thousands of ways in which one might combine the different control variables. It is thus unsurprising that some combinations result in the power shift variable losing significance, although even then it typically is close to significance. I have been unable to find a specification for any dependent variable in which the sign is reversed.

45. I do not include a similar graph for government spending, again for reasons of space. Results are analogous, however: working from model 6 and holding other variables at their median, predicted total spending as a share of GDP is over four times higher when the capability shift variable is at its ninetieth percentile than when it is at its tenth percentile.


47. An alternate approach would be to code a major power war as occurring whenever a major power is involved, rather than only when there is a major power on each side. Measured in this way, major power conflicts are no longer than nonmajor power conflicts, although they do continue to be markedly deadlier. Other variables in the relevant regressions are unchanged.

48. I present results only for cultural difference, given overlap with ideological difference. Either variant of the ideological difference variable is, however, consistently statistically insignificant.


50. To save space, I present only models that include all explanatory and control variables. Results are consistent in sparser models, however—for example, results for all variables are consistent in every regression if the war intensity variable is dropped from the regression.

51. The findings for duration until settlement are particularly robust here—whereas in the pooled analysis (as in table 2.2), the shifting power variable is frequently insignificant in the absence of statistical controls, in the competing risks specification the variable is always a significant predictor of duration until settlement and is typically a significant predictor (in the opposite direction) of duration until conquest.

52. As before, introducing a quadratic term reveals no evidence that losing partial democracies are particularly averse to settlement.

53. An alternate testing strategy would be to bifurcate the sample into relatively short and relatively long wars and run the analysis separately on each, with the expectation that increased war intensity would be associated with quicker settlement in short wars but with slower settlement in long wars. Conducting these tests, which are reproduced in the online appendix, produces precisely the predicted results; as
this approach raises concerns about selection on the dependent variable, however, I focus on the full-sample tests here.

54. See for example Frieser (2005) for a discussion of the riskiness of Germany’s use of blitzkrieg—a maneuver strategy—in World War II.

55. Reiter and Meek (1999). Their study looked not at wars but at the peacetime plans of a set of countries in particular years, with specific country-years chosen at random.

56. To facilitate interpretation, reported results are for total production divided by 1,000,000. This proxy is conventional given that reliable GDP data for a wide range of countries extend back only to World War II. Reiter and Meek also use each side’s energy consumption—also a component variable in the NMC dataset—in a robustness check; substituting that variable produces similar results. Substituting interpolated GDP estimates from Maddison (2003) results in a substantial reduction in the total number of observations, but otherwise produces analogous results.

57. To avoid overstating the degree of learning, I code this variable as 0 when a single actor in a multilateral war fights a series of campaigns using a maneuver strategy, unless of course that actor had relevant experience prior to the war. This approach avoids, for example, attributing the German use of blitzkrieg against France in World War II to the success of a similar strategy against the Netherlands.

58. The one exception concerns iron/steel production, which is negative in both reported regressions, although it is positive but insignificant in many robustness checks. This result holds substituting energy consumption for iron/steel production as the measure of economic development.

59. Further analysis, contained in the online appendix, demonstrates that these results are consistently robust. The sole exception arises in a robustness check of the strategy analysis that reaggregates the disaggregated multilateral wars—the lack of robustness to this case is unsurprising given that more than half the cases in which a participant is coded as using maneuver occur during World War II.

3. War to the Death in Paraguay

1. Given the severity of the Paraguayan War, it is frankly astonishing that it has not garnered significant attention from political scientists. To my knowledge, only Abente (1987) and Schweller (2006) have seriously applied political science concepts to explain the war, and neither attempts to explain the failure to reach a settlement once the war was underway. Initial historical literature, written mostly either by Argentines or Brazilians or by participants who were greatly influenced by Paraguayan leader Francisco Solano López’s despotism in the latter stages of the war (e.g., Thompson 1869, Washburn 1871), pinned the blame for the war squarely on the Paraguayan dictator’s supposed unjustified aggression (see also Box 1929). As time passed, however, there was some recognition of the difficult situation that he faced (e.g., Phelps 1975). Coinciding with revisionist histories of the Cold War, dependency theorists produced a wave of studies whose ultimate villain was economically liberal Britain, which purportedly financed the Triple Alliance to eliminate the nascent Paraguayan system of state socialism as an alternative to capitalism. Fornos Peñalba (1982) provides the best English-language summary of this perspective; Bethell (1996) briefly but thoroughly debunks it. See also McLynn (1979) and Abente (1987). The most recent historical literature, especially Whigham (2002) and Leuchars
(2002), has, without downplaying López’s significant failings, explored in greater
detail the challenges that he faced, which ultimately provide the basis for a signifi-
cant reinterpretation of the history of the war.

2. Significant debate has surrounded the number of Paraguayans who died in the
war, as the general limits of population records of the time and the destruction and
dislocation associated with the war make precise estimates impossible. For an early
estimate that deaths were around two-thirds of the total population, see Box (1929,
179). More recently, two studies have reexamined the issue, with one concluding
that initial estimates were far too high while the other concluded that they were
roughly accurate. See Reber (1988) and Whigham and Potthast (1999), as well as
critiques of the two efforts by Whigham and Potthast (1990), Reber (2002), and Klein-
penning (2002). The war severity data used in the statistical analysis here focuses on
battle deaths and thus omits the huge numbers of Paraguayans who died of starva-
tion or disease (and who are harder to count), but even so the war is eclipsed in per
capita deadliness only by the World Wars.


4. The declaration came in 1813; Brazil was the first country to recognize Paraguayan
independence, which it did (largely to gain Paraguayan support against Argentina’s

5. For the possibility of that these regions would gain independence, see for example
Box (1929, 276), Whigham (1991, 53–56), and Rector (2009, ch. 5).

6. Given that the focus of this study is on political decision making, the summary of
the military side of the war will be quite brief. For more details on the military cam-
paigns, see Leuchars (2002).

7. The most detailed account of Paraguayan capabilities prior to the war is Whigham
(2002, ch. 7).

8. For an overview of work on the Paraguayan state’s role in the economy, see Pas-
tore (1994).


11. The overthrow was the culmination of the La Plata War of 1851; see Lynch (1981)

12. Quoted in Leuchars (2002, 39). See also Saeger (2007, 82, 93) for evidence of close
relations between López and Urquiza.


14. Historians have attributed Urquiza’s loyalty to a range of considerations, includ-
ing Mitre’s solicitousness, the recognition that Argentina shorn of Buenos Aires was
not a viable country, concerns about López’s plans and war-weariness, a possible
desire to succeed Mitre in the next elections, and putative personal financial gains
from the alliance with Brazil. McLynn (1979), Katra (1996, 257–258), Whigham (2002,
221).


17. It is also worth noting that Mitre in Argentina and Emperor Pedro in Brazil over-
estimated the ease with which Paraguay could be defeated. Whigham (2002, 217,
272–273). This overestimation likely contributed to the refusal to attempt to allay
López’s concerns, as neither side seems to have believed that the Paraguayan attempts to reach a final understanding on borders with both Brazil and Argentina, see Whigham (2002, chs. 4–5).

18. Leuchars (2002). Indeed, Buenos Aires’s ability to restrict Asunción’s trade under the old Spanish Viceroyalty had been a major reason why the Paraguayans desired independence upon the collapse of the Spanish Empire. Humphreys (1957, 619).

19. For the history of the border disputes, see Box (1929, chs. 2–3) and Williams (1979, chs. 9–10).


22. For Paraguayan concerns about these shipments, see Whigham (2002, 213–215). In practice, many of the cannons that the Brazilians shipped to Mato Grosso were ancient and worthless, and had been included in shipments only as ballast. (Personal communication with Thomas Whigham.)

23. Attempts to reunify old Spanish administrative units that had broken apart upon independence frequently underlay wars in Latin America in the nineteenth century. To cite some of the main examples, Chile went to war to break up a Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation, Colombia fought a brief war against Ecuador with the goal of re-creating Gran Colombia, and the Guatemalan Justo Rufino Barrios made several attempts to forcibly re-create the Central American Union (see Scheina [2003]). Had it managed to deal effectively with its internal divisions, Argentina easily might have tried to force Paraguay and Uruguay into union.


25. See McLynn (1979) for an analysis that highlights the centrality of changes in Argentine domestic politics to the decisions that led to the war, although his interpretation grossly overstates the degree to which Mitre intended to bring about the war that his appearance produced.


30. Saeger (2007, 104). The seriousness of this potential threat can be seen in a previous crisis in the 1840s, in which an Argentine river blockade—to which “war was the only reply”—helped provoke the Paraguayans into a declaration of war. In that case, the crisis ended without a direct clash, with the Argentines dropping the blockade. Box (1929, 20–22).

31. Box (1929, chs. 2–3).


33. Thus, for example, López’s protest was met “with shouts of laughter” and with recommendations to its author “to attend to the state of his huts and settle the squabbles of his half-naked squaws at home.” Quoted in Whigham (2002, 158).

34. The terms of the Treaty of Triple Alliance obviously could not influence López’s decision for war, as the treaty had not yet been signed when López decided on war, and its territorial clauses remained secret until the British published them in early 1866. Whigham (2002, 279–280). That said, the nature of the territorial terms
good reason to consider the war indeed to have been “a war over the partition of Paraguay,” precisely in line with López’s fears. Leuchars (2002, 46).


37. Thompson (1869, 25).

38. In the 1839–52 Uruguayan civil war, the Blancos, acting with Argentine support, overran rural Uruguay but were unable to take Montevideo. They besieged the city starting in 1843 but were unable to prevent supply from the sea; outside assistance thus permitted the Colorados to hold on until the anti-Rosas coalition under Urquiza invaded in 1852 and forced the Blancos to surrender.


40. Details on the exact content of the discussions are unfortunately unavailable. For a summary of the available evidence, see Cunninghame Graham (1933, 199) and Leuchars (2002, 145–147).


42. That said, the need to strike into Uruguay, explained by the preventive motivation, was the reason that he was willing to contemplate the risk of attacking Argentina in the first place.

43. For examples, see Leuchars (2002, 145–147). The differing views on whether to negotiate with López was a significant source of friction between the allies; Emperor Pedro at one point complained that Mitre “drags his feet and aims to drag me into a peace which our honor does not let us accept.” Quoted in Bernstein (1973, 103). The Uruguayan force was too small to be of significance in this case; its leadership does, however, seem to have been open to talks.

44. Leuchars (2002, 147).


47. On rebellion in Argentina, see de la Fuente (2004). On the connection between the war and eventual domestic change in Brazil, see Bernstein (1973) and Needell (2006).

48. Quoted in Box (1929, 23). Urquiza, whose interests were more aligned with Paraguay’s than they were with those of Buenos Aires, did formally recognize Paraguay as independent after taking power in 1851, but the porteños did not consider themselves bound by this act.


51. For the negotiation and terms of the treaty, see Whigham (2002, 276–281).

52. See Warren (1978, 116) for the terms of the Brazilian-Paraguayan treaty. In addition to granting the Brazilians the extent of their prewar territorial claims (but no more), the treaty also called for Paraguay to pay a tremendous indemnity, but the Brazilians also made it clear that they would not require payment so long as the Paraguayans cooperated in limiting Argentine gains, something that Paraguay’s leaders were more than happy to do.

53. Peterson (1932, 10–11).

54. Leuchars (2002, 46). For other examples of Brazilian intransigence (beyond the repeated refusals to negotiate highlighted above), see Kolinski (1965, 125), Phelps (1975, 167), and Barman (1999, 230).

61. Barman (1999, 356–361). From a domestic political perspective, it is also worth noting that the war was backed by both liberals and conservatives in Brazil. Bernstein (1973, 91–92).

4. World War II

4. For an essay that helped clarify the terms of the functionalist-intentionalist debate, see Mason (1981). Browning (1992) provides a relatively recent influential functionalist perspective, while Goldhagen (1996) advances an extreme (and historically unconvincing) intentionalist perspective.

5. Thus, for example, Broszat (1966, esp. 51) argues that Nazi ideology was fundamentally incoherent (and hence that it cannot be seen as the basis for the Holocaust), but he acknowledges that race politics and the acquisition of Lebensraum—the key elements of ideology for my argument—were present early and basically unchanged throughout Hitler’s political career.

6. This stance is similar to that of Rich (1973), although I highlight different evidence.

7. His optimism with respect to Britain was repeatedly in evidence in Mein Kampf and in his unpublished second book, although by the late 1930s evidence of unexpected hostility reduced his confidence. Hitler (1925, e.g. 664–665), Hitler (1928, esp. ch. XIV). On confidence on the eve of war, see Taylor (1952, 266–267) and Blainey (1988, 48–49); Powell (2006, 195–199) provides a contrasting view. Note also that Hitler’s optimism prior to the invasion of France was not shared by his generals. May (2000, ch. 18).

8. On preinvasion German confidence, see Cecil (1975, ch. 8). On the purge of the Red Army and related weaknesses, see Gorodetsky (1999, 115) and Reese (1989). For examples of similar expectations of a quick Soviet collapse in Britain and the United States, see Dallek (1979, 278) and Gilbert (2000, 831).

12. See Gorodetsky (1999, e.g. ch. 10) for a discussion of Soviet conciliation of the Germans during the period prior to Barbarossa.
13. For an example of the relatively early recognition among the generals that defeat was coming, see Bullock (1953, 716–717).
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14. Cecil (1975, 23). Infighting and the selective use of information within the Nazi hierarchy also limited Hitler’s effective policy freedom to a degree that was not recognized at the time. Kershaw (1985, ch. 4), Shore (2003).


17. Quoted in Rothfels (1961, 82).


24. Many studies that try to present Hitler as a calculating actor responding to developments in the international system, as this one does, as a first step bracket Hitler’s racial ideology, arguing that anti-Semitism and the focus on the German race and German racial purity were important primarily in internal politics. See for example Taylor (1961) and Copeland (2000). This approach typically follows from a desire to separate a rationalist explanation for German foreign policy from Nazi domestic policies—especially the Holocaust—that were particularly horrific. As the discussion below indicates, however, I believe this approach to be fundamentally mistaken: without understanding Hitler’s beliefs about the world, as grounded in his ideology, it is impossible to understand why he made the foreign policy choices that he did or what his ultimate aims were.

25. The discussion in this section relies primarily on Hitler’s Mein Kampf, written in 1924 during his prison stay following a failed coup, and his unpublished second book, completed in draft form by 1928 but never published. For a summary of Hitler’s ideology that is quite compatible with the one presented here, see Rich (1973, vol. 1, 3–10, 81–82).

26. See Smith (1986) for a discussion of the long-running competition between two ideological justifications for German imperialism, which he calls Weltpolitik and Lebensraum, in which Hitler, although drawing on the economic logic of Weltpolitik, gave policy priority to the goals associated with Lebensraum.

27. Hitler (1925, 131).

28. Ibid., 131, 138. See also 642–643 for the first principle that “foreign policy must safeguard the existence on this planet of the race embodied in the state, by creating a healthy, viable natural relation between the nation’s population and growth on the one hand and the quantity and quality of its soil on the other hand” (emphasis removed).

29. Ibid., 133–135.

30. Ibid., 139, 644.

31. Ibid., 646.

32. Hitler consistently rejected calls for a return to the borders of 1914. See, for example, Ibid., 651–652, and Hitler (1928, chs. 8–9).

33. Hitler (1925, 661; emphasis removed).

34. Ibid., 140, 143; Hitler (1928, 76–77).
35. Hitler (1925, 654). An interesting question is why Hitler did not see territory gained through conquests in Western Europe as sufficient to guarantee Germany’s security. The answer is partly racial—he saw the French and especially the Dutch and Scandinavians as racially superior to the Slavs, and hence intended to some degree to co-opt them rather than displacing or killing them—and partly strategic, in that even the incorporation of the whole of the western conquests would still leave Germany overshadowed in the long run by Soviet Russia.

36. Hitler (1925, 141), Hitler (1928, 70, 191).


38. For the argument that Germans outside the Reich were being lost to the race, see for example Hitler (1928, 99–100).


40. Ibid., 138. See also 654.

41. Hitler (1928, 89–90).

42. Quoted in Kershaw (1998, 442).

43. Documents on German Foreign Policy, series D, vol. 1, doc. 19, 30.

44. Quoted in Kershaw (2000, 88).

45. Thus, for example, most of his advisors believed that the remilitarization of the Rhineland could have been accomplished through negotiation in another year or two, but he was unwilling to wait. Kershaw (1998, 582, 584). Similarly, in the Munich Crisis, he responded to British willingness to accept the transfer of the Sudetenland by raising his demands, although in this case he ultimately backed down after being convinced that further time for rearmament would favor Germany. Overy (1999), Copeland (2000, 133).

46. For similar arguments about Hitler’s beliefs in a deteriorating military situation, see Copeland (2000, ch. 5) and Powell (2006).

47. Documents on German Foreign Policy, series D, vol. 1, doc. 19, 34.


50. Copeland (2000, 123–145) makes a convincing case that the generals shared Hitler’s fears of decline and were quite prepared for a preventive war, although they differed at points on questions of timing.

51. Hitler predicted inevitable French opposition to German expansion in Mein Kampf, although he was more sanguine about a possible alliance with Britain. Hitler (1925, 665), Rich (1973, vol. 1, 4–5). By the late 1930s, however, British behavior and reports from his representatives in London had left him with few grounds for expecting British cooperation. See for example then-ambassador and future foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop’s January 1938 assessment of British intentions toward Germany. Documents on German Foreign Policy, series D, vol. 1, doc. 93, 162–168.

52. For the British view, see Ripsman and Levy (2008).

55. Kershaw (2000, 44, 285–286). For a contemporary lecture by the German ambassador to the Soviet Union that emphasizes the significant, if temporary, impact of the purges on Soviet capabilities, see Documents on German Foreign Policy, series D, vol. 1, doc. 610.
56. For Hitler’s focus on the importance of avoiding fighting on two fronts, see for example Hitler (1928, 78–79, 185, 187).
57. Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, vol. 3, 575. In June 1940, a German intelligence report noted that the Russians were disturbed by the prospect of a quick German victory in the West, but that “active participation of Russia in the war is entirely out of the question because of military weakness and inner-political instability.” Ibid., vol. 6, 984.
59. Quoted in Clark (1965, 24) and Warlimont (1964, 112).
61. Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, vol. 6, 1000.
62. For the belief that Britain was holding out in the hope of eventual Russian assistance, see Halder (1988, 227). For an example of the interpretation of Barbarossa as primarily driven by the desire to convince the British to negotiate, see Iklé (1991, 53). For the invasion being Hitler’s greatest mistake, see Schulman (1948, ch. 10) and Kahn (1978, ch. 24).
64. Kershaw (2000, 43).
65. Another source of puzzlement has been his cavalier attitude toward the United States, most notably his declaration of war following Pearl Harbor. This point is ancillary to the primary concerns here, but it is worth noting that by December 1941 the United States was already at war with Germany in everything but name—the navy, for example, had been operating for several months under a standing order to shoot any German vessel encountered in the Atlantic on sight. In this context, Hitler could quite reasonably have seen a declaration of war as simply an acknowledgment of reality, as well as an opportunity to improve the sometimes strained relations with Japan and hence possibly bring about an eventual Japanese attack on Russia in the Far East. For an argument along these lines, see Rich (1973, vol. 1, ch. 20).
66. Domarus (1997, vol. 3, 1845–1846). Remarkably, after the victory in the west, Hitler’s demands of Britain in some ways dropped, as he no longer explicitly insisted on the retrocession of the colonies (although of course he demanded recognition of the new situation with respect to France).
69. Allen (2005). See FRUS 1944, vol. I, 484–579, for discussions of German peace feelers in the closing stages of the war, when a wide range of individuals and groups sought to arrange some sort of deal, generally involving the overthrow of Hitler and peace in return for some sort of political concessions from the Allies. Also worth noting is the quixotic personal mission of Rudolf Hess, one of the highest-ranking Nazis, who, officially without authorization, flew personally to Britain in May 1941 in a unilateral attempt to negotiate a peace deal, an act that resulted only in his arrest and incarceration.

71. Mastny (1972), Koch (1975). Separately, as part of pushing for peace with the Western powers, Himmler responded to British and American truculence by threatening to reach a separate peace with the Soviets, with the consequence that Germany would fall to communism. *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*), 1944, vol. I, 491. This threat was seen, almost certainly correctly, as baseless bluster.


73. Ibid., 330–331.

74. For comments on the wasted deaths of World War I or on the costs of shedding blood for inappropriate goals, see for example Hitler (1925, 651–652) and Hitler (1928, 85–86).

75. Thus in the closing months of the war Hitler repeatedly returned to the miraculous Prussian escape in the Seven Years’ War, when the death of Empress Elizabeth precipitated Russia’s withdrawal from the war; the death of President Roosevelt fostered a brief period of hope in the last month of the war. Kershaw (2000, 791–792).

76. See for example Schweller (1994).

77. Other views of Hitler’s war aims are possible. Thus, for example, many American policymakers concluded that Hitler’s political aims changed over time, increasing in response to the pusillanimity of his opponents. Jervis (1976, 223). The argument against unlimited aims advanced here also addresses the logical claims of such an alternate view.

78. Whether there were territorial limits to how far Hitler planned to go is a separate question, of course, from whether the Allies believed such limits to exist. I discuss Allied beliefs in the context of unconditional surrender later in this chapter.

79. For reviews of the relevant debate, see Michaelis (1972) and Kershaw (1985, ch. 6). Most globalists argue that Hitler had an intentional plan to conquer the world, typically through a three-step process of peaceful expansion, a European war, and then a war of world conquest. The most prominent exponents of this view in English are Hildebrand (1970), Hauner (1978), Hillgruber (1981), and Weinberg (2005, ch. 1). A smaller group agrees that Germany would have continued to expand indefinitely but argues that that expansion by domestic political imperatives rather than an innate desire for expansion. See for example Broszat (1970). For the continentalist position that Hitler’s aims were limited to the acquisition of Lebensraum in Eastern Europe, see for example Trevor-Roper (1960) and Rich (1973, vol. 2, ch. 12).

80. Rauschning (1940). Rauschning broke with the Nazis in 1934 and wrote the book with the intention of convincing Germans to withdraw their support for Hitler’s regime; it subsequently attracted significant attention during the war in Britain and the United States.

81. Kershaw (1998, xiv), for example, comments that the book is “now regarded to have so little authenticity that it is best to disregard it altogether.”

82. Molotmann (1961, 201). I would argue that a “world power” in Hitler’s terms is a nation with territory sufficient to protect itself and to support its population; by those terms, multiple world powers existed, but Germany was not one of them.


86. See for example Weinberg (1995, ch. 15).
87. It should, however, be noted that Hitler is less uniformly dismissive of the United States in *Mein Kampf* than is typically believed, at one point for example contrasting its “immense inner strength” with “the weakness of most European colonial powers.” Hitler (1925, 139).

88. For the relevant discussion, see Hitler (1928, ch. 9). Purported allusions to a future war depend on Hitler’s claim that only a state that follows his recommendations “will be able to stand up to North America” (116); this comment was a rhetorical aside that in no way implies a planned invasion of the Americas.

89. Weinberg (1964).
90. Compton (1967, 247–248). Compton more generally attributes Hitler’s disinterest in the United States to a combination of ideology, which saw Americans as racially mixed and hence degenerate, and geopolitics, in which countries outside the European continent were seen as largely irrelevant.

93. Smart (2003, ch. 3).
94. Quoted in Jackson (2003, 1).
95. Quoted in Reynolds (1990, 329).
100. Gilbert (1994, e.g. 158). A range of interpretations of these events exist, including for example the claim that Halifax sought to capitulate while Churchill aimed to continue the war or the argument that both Churchill and Halifax were in principal open to negotiations, albeit not on the terms that Hitler was willing to offer. See Costello (1991) and Carlton (1993), respectively.
102. This point is muddied in the historical record by Roosevelt’s odd and untrue claim that he advanced the demand as an off-the-cuff comment in a press conference, an interpretation belied both by extensive evidence of prior discussions of the demand and by the conviction with which he subsequently defended the policy. See Sherwood (1950, 696) and Dallek (1979, 373–376) for useful discussions of Roosevelt’s behavior in this incident.
103. For details on the advisory committee’s discussions, see Notter (1949, Part 2) and *FRUS: Conferences at Washington, 1941–2, and Casablanca, 1943,506n 2.*
104. Notter (1949, 85).
105. Ibid., 101, 127.
106. Quoted in Sherwood (1948, 418).
112. Ibid., 337–338, 341. See also 119, 155, 163, and 255 for pessimistic or negative comments by British leaders about the Americans during the critical period. See also Woodward (1962, 78–79).
113. Smart (2003, ch. 3).
115. Ibid., 313.
116. With the French collapse, Churchill acknowledged that the blockade was “largely ruined,” but he continued to hold out hope that bombardment might weaken the German economy, for example objecting later in the summer to Herbert Hoover’s plans to provide food aid to the occupied populations on the grounds that “the front lines run through the factories.” Quoted in Gilbert (1994, 441) and Doenecke (2000, 95).
119. On the severity of the U-boat threat, see Churchill (1950, esp. ch. 7). For discussions of the expectations of a German invasion and its likely consequences, see Hinsley (1979, vol. 1, ch. 5) and Bell (1974, 50).
123. On motivated bias, see Jervis (1976, esp. ch. 10).
125. Butler (1957, xviii).
126. The Special Operations Executive (SOE), tasked by Churchill to work covertly to “set Europe ablaze,” provides a similar example of motivated bias: at its creation, British leaders apparently hoped that it might provoke a general uprising that would provide the coup de grâce originally expected from the French army, but in the event it immediately entered into factional battles within the British bureaucracy and ultimately served as at best an auxiliary to the war effort. In the summary of one historian, the SOE emerged “as a desperate attempt to plug the gaping hole in British strategy caused by the collapse of France, and wildly unrealistic hopes were pinned upon it at the very highest levels—as they also were on other ‘indirect’ methods of defeating the Germans such as economic warfare and strategic bombing”; one of the organization’s leaders described it after the fact as “no more than a hopeful improvisation devised in a really desperate situation.” Stafford (2006, 49). For a fuller history of the SOE, see Foot (1966) and Stafford (1980).
129. Trachtenberg (2005), Schuessler (2009).
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137. Darilek (1976, 18, 24).
138. Ibid., ch. 2.
141. See Powell (2006) and in particular Reiter (2009, ch. 6).
143. See for example Chase (1955) and Armstrong (1961).
146. The exception to this claim is the argument that Roosevelt somehow “gave away” Eastern Europe to the Soviets. Baldwin (1950, 14), Wittmer (1953). In practice, however, unless the Western Allies were prepared either to invade France far earlier than June 1944—which they ultimately decided they were militarily incapable of doing—or make a deal with Germany to fight the Soviets—which no serious commentator in the West advocated, even in retrospect—Eastern Europe simply was not Roosevelt’s to lose. Reynolds (2006, 66–67).
147. For examples of contemporary criticism, see Hull (1948, 113), Chase (1955, 113), Balfour (1970, 719), and Villa (1976).
148. Sherwood (1950, 695). In practice, evidence that the demand strengthened German resistance is scanty, especially in comparison with the clear effect of the aerial bombardment of German cities. Chase (1955, 267).
149. Hull (1948, 1570).
150. Reiter (2009) similarly argues that the refusal to negotiate followed from a mistrust of Hitler’s character, but he lacks a strong theoretical explanation for the origin of that mistrust.
151. English translations of the book were quite limited prior to World War II, with the first full translation appearing only in 1939, and the book’s poor organization tended to put off those who attempted to read it in German. As a result, relatively little was known about it, which aided Hitler’s attempts in international diplomacy to downplay his earlier statements. See Ensor (1939) for a fascinating contemporary discussion of the book, and Barnes and Barnes (1980) for a history of the delay in the book’s translation.
152. Indeed, in 1939 Stalin had reason to hope that whichever country lost the war would turn communist, as Russia had done in World War I. A purported secret speech to the Politburo defends the pact with Hitler in precisely these terms.
(Pleshakov 2005, 43–44); Sluch (2004) however makes a fairly convincing (if not definitive) case that this speech never occurred, although he acknowledges that the main arguments attributed to Stalin were likely close to what the dictator believed. 

153. This point should not be taken as implying that there were no policy differences among these men—clearly such differences existed. The central point is simply that their interpretations of German behavior shifted in similar ways and in response to similar observations over time, and that this shift took all of them from the view that one could negotiate with Germany to the view that negotiation was impossible.


156. Ibid., 214. His openness to the approach to Mussolini in the May War Cabinet meetings can also be attributed to greater optimism that France might be induced to continue to fight, a hope that he held onto longer than others. Lawlor (1994, 57). Halifax also apparently did not see a significant threat to British morale from the knowledge that negotiations were occurring; here most historians have sided with Churchill in arguing that negotiation would have undermined the popular will to continue resistance, whatever the terms that Germany demanded.


161. Quoted in Gilbert (1977, 452).


163. Ibid., 228–229.

164. Ibid., 318.

165. Quoted in Gilbert (1977, 1001).

166. Quoted in Kimball (1997, 44).


169. Dallek (1979, 144, 149).


171. Dallek (1979, 175).


175. Ibid., 588–589, 592.


177. Kecskemeti (1958, ch. 4).

178. For a discussion of the varied diagnoses of the German problem among Allied leaders, see Armstrong (1961, 21–22, 28).

179. Casey (2001, esp. ch. 5).


5. ADDITIONAL COMMITMENT PROBLEM CASES

1. This summary of the onset of the war is extremely abbreviated. For useful discussions of the prewar negotiations with contrasting views on the reasonableness of various sides’ demands, see Rich (1985) and Goldfrank (1994).

2. On the Russian policy of restraint, see Kerner (1937). The Russians recognized that they held predominant influence at the Porte and that in the event of Ottoman collapse the likely result would be a partition that would saddle them with great power rivals on their southern flank.


5. This point was generally accepted, although there were important differences of opinion as to when the collapse would occur. For examples, see Curtiss (1979, 65–66).


7. Argyll (1906, 448). Similarly, Foreign Minister Clarendon, in an address to the House of Lords shortly after the British declaration of war, averred that “there is not a man in Russia that does not believe that Constantinople will ultimately belong to Russia. It will be our duty as far as possible to see that that expectation shall be disappointed. Because were it to succeed … it is not too much to anticipate that more than one power would have to undergo the fate of Poland.” Annual Register (London: 1854, 57).

8. In this context, it is worth remembering that Russia was the sole major continental power to have been untouched by the revolutions of 1848. In particular, the demonstration of Austrian reliance on Russia—the Austrians had been able to put down Hungarian uprisings only with the assistance of several hundred thousand soldiers from Russia—raised fears that Russia might be in a position to unilaterally revise the status quo with respect to Turkey. See for example Taylor (1964, 91–93), who argues that Russia assisted Austria in Hungary precisely to gain a free hand with respect to Constantinople.

9. For British war aims, see Rich (1985, esp. 107–110). Palmerston, who was prime minister for the second half of the war, and Stratford de Redcliffe, the British ambassador to the Porte, had particularly ambitious aims that entailed significant territorial losses by Russia from the Baltic to the Black Sea region.

10. Without the preventive motivation, it is highly unlikely that the war would have happened. That said, divergent expectations also played a significant role in bringing about the conflict. Most notably, Nicholas consistently underestimated the probability that the British would be willing to cooperate with the French in opposing Russian actions in Constantinople; had he known that the British would be willing
to fight (and that the Austrians and Prussians would not back him), he likely would not have adopted a policy as aggressive as he did. See for example Lincoln (1978, 333–341).

11. Some might object to this argument on the grounds that it would have been unreasonable for the Russians to believe that they could achieve the kind of military success necessary to impose unconditional surrender. While it is no doubt possible that this situation played a role in Russian thinking, it is worth remembering that at the time that American policymakers formulated the unconditional surrender policy in World War II the Americans and their British allies were completely excluded from the Continent as a result of unprecedented German victories; without the benefit of hindsight, a policy aiming at the total defeat of Germany was simply audacious at the time.

12. The lack of clarity in Russian war aims arose both because documentation on Russian decision making is limited relative to the availability of information about the other powers (partly because of the concentration of power in the hands of a few men and partly because of the vagaries of subsequent history) and because the Russians generally were on the defensive and thus simply sought to induce the Allies to limit their demands.


14. For discussions of wartime negotiations, see for example Rich (1985, ch. 9) and Wetzel (1985, chs. 6–7).


17. Pulcini (2003, 89).


19. Experience with international politics of course left the Russians with few doubts about the likelihood that other powers would acquiesce to their acquisition of Constantinople, and both the tsar and Nesselrode thus repeatedly disavowed interest in direct acquisition. At the same time, however, Russian plans for the event of Turkish collapse consistently involved Russia temporarily taking control of the Bosporus; as the British experience in Egypt a decade and a half later was to show, of course, “purely temporary” control could become quite protracted.


22. For examples of studies that present the Japanese decision for war as ultimately self-defeating and irrational, see Snyder (1991, ch. 4) and Kupchan (1994, ch. 5).


24. The decision that the war could end only through unconditional surrender came quite early in the war, although it was made public only in January 1943. For more information, see chapter 4.

25. Sagan (1988) provides the best extant account of the preventive motivations behind the Japanese attack, including substantially more detail than can be presented here.


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30. For the centrality of resource problems in Japanese strategic planning, see Barnhart (1987).
34. Ibid., 152.
35. Ibid., 247–249.
36. For a discussion of unconditional surrender that focuses in particular on Japan, see Hellegers (2002).
40. Informational accounts have a particularly difficult time explaining this conflict: by 1944 at the latest it was apparent to all that Japan was doomed, and yet fighting continued, with quite possibly over half of all deaths in the war occurring after this point. Dower (1993, 293–294).
43. Even the acceptance of the figurehead role for the emperor was controversial with large segments of the US public. See for example Kecskemeti (1958, 163–167).
44. Gieling (1999, ch. 6) usefully reviews relevant sermons by high-ranking figures that discussed the decision for peace, including calculated rhetorical shifts in the way that the war was presented to the public.
47. See for example King (1987, 10), Karsh (1987/88, ch. 1), Chubin and Tripp (1988, 28–29), Hiro (1989, 37), and Ghareeb (1990, 35). For an exception that explains the Iraqi invasion (and all other political decisions by either side) in terms of domestic politics, see Pelletiere (1992). The strongest domestic political argument is that Saddam fought the war to protect his own position, rather than to protect Iraq as a whole. While his government was unpopular with many in Iraq, it is also true that a wide constituency, most obviously among the Sunnis but also in other ethnic groups, would have been opposed to his replacement by a theocratic government along the lines of the one in Iran.
48. For examples, see Pelletiere (1992, 32).
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55. Robins (1989, 47), Hiro (1989, 38). It is worth noting that domestic funding for the war in Iran and Iraq came primarily from oil revenues, although the Iraqis also benefited from large foreign loans.
57. For examples, see Chubin (1989) and Pelletiere (1992).
59. It is worth noting that domestic funding for the war in Iran and Iraq came primarily from oil revenues, although the Iraqis also benefited from large foreign loans.
60. For examples, see Chubin and Tripp (1988, 38, 49) and Gieling (1999, ch. 6).
64. Pelletiere (1992, 29) describes the desire to export the revolution violently as the preference of a “radical fringe” that did not control policy after the revolution. Khadduri (1988, 67) notes that Khomeini espoused a peaceful interpretation of jihad prior to the revolution, although he believes that Khomeini switched to a more violent interpretation once in power.
65. This case is admittedly unusual, in that it is almost certainly true that the revolutionary leadership was particularly predisposed to explain behavior in dispositional terms, given its theologically based tendency to divide the world into regions of believers and unbelievers, where the latter were inherently corrupt. This sort of predisposition could easily make the dispositional inference more likely.

6. SHORT WARS OF OPTIMISM

1. On the disputes over loan forgiveness and Kuwaiti overproduction, see Baram (1993) and Khadduri and Ghareeb (1997, chs. 6–7).
2. For a history of this claim, including a significant crisis in 1961 that was resolved only through British intervention, see Finnie (1992).
3. Thus, for example, even with 100,000 Iraqi soldiers massed on the border, the Kuwaiti representative at the final meeting between the two sides—at Jidda two days before the invasion—was instructed to hold firm in the face of pressure. Khadduri and Ghareeb (1997, 115–117).
5. Some have argued that Saddam may also have gained confidence from the expectation, grounded in Cold War history, that American opposition would ensure that Iraq would receive Soviet support. Gorbachev (1996, 552), Hassan (1999, 4, 39). Although plausible, there is little evidence that expectations of Soviet support played
a significant role in Iraqi thinking; rapid and categorical Soviet denunciations of Iraqi policy in any event provided no basis for optimism as the crisis unfolded.

6. For general discussions of casualty aversion and its implications for the foreign policy of the United States or of democracies more generally, see Smith (2005) and Wrede-Braden (2007).


9. Quoted in Long (2004, 14). See also comments to this effect by David Newton, who as US ambassador to Iraq in the mid-1980s had Saddam emphasize this point to him on several occasions. Woodward (1991, 258). Analysis of polling data after the war indicates that the expectation that significant casualties would lead to a substantial drop in popular support for the war was “basically sound,” although the Iraqis failed to impose the level of casualties necessary to bring about this drop in support. Mueller (1994, 121, 124–129).


12. That said, when she observed that “we have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait,” she relied on a stance that was designed to deal with a situation in which Iraq requested American support in the border dispute. Viorst (1991, 66). The comment was thus more encouraging to Iraq than it had been meant to be, but it was not dramatically out of line with US policy, and it was a reasonable response given that Glaspie had not been given time before the meeting to check in with Washington. Indeed, in contemporary domestic discussions, State Department representatives observed that the United States had “no special defense or security commitments to Kuwait,” and Glaspie was never instructed to make unambiguous deterrent threats. Quoted in Stein (1992, 152).

13. As Jervis (1993, 177) notes, simultaneously deterring and reassuring a potential opponent in international politics is an extremely difficult task, and conceivably an impossible one in this case.


17. For the desire for an “Arab” solution to the crisis, see for example Khadduri and Ghareeb (1997, 161–167). The expectation that the Saudis might buy off Saddam clearly was not groundless, given their history of using money to resolve conflict; indeed, the Americans worried that the Saudis might decide to resort to financial diplomacy and undermine the strong line that the Bush administration preferred. Yetiv (2004, 34).

18. Woodward (1991, 268), Long (2004, 39–43). The Iraqi claim not to have intended to invade Saudi Arabia gains credence from the observation that they did not attack during the period immediately after the invasion or during the first few weeks of the
American deployment to Saudi Arabia, during which time the force protecting the
main Saudi oilfields would have posed little greater obstacle to an Iraqi advance
than the Kuwaiti army had.

19. See for example Simpson (1991, 276). Saddam also sought to tie opposition to the
Iraqi invasion to Israel, in the hope that doing so would fracture the coalition.

January 11, 1991, A8. See also New York Times, “Bush May Recall Congress to Con-

21. New York Times, “Debate This Week: Approval Appears Likely After Heavy Argu-


23. For examples of attempts to find ways to credibly signal resolve, see Bush and


Out or End,” October 21, 1990, 12; and Bush and Scowcroft (1998, 425). For examples
of higher public estimates at the time, see New York Times, “Fighting the Iraqis: Four
Peace: A Sampling from the Debate on Capital Hill,” January 11, 1991, A8. A contem-
porary statistical estimate predicted that total deaths on both sides from the war
would exceed 100,000 and might reach 1,000,000. Cioffi-Revilla (1991).


30. Given the intractability of the Israel-Palestine conflict and of Syrian involvement
in Lebanon, these demands were seen in the region and elsewhere as a rhetorical
ploy to cover an intent to remain in Kuwait indefinitely. Yetiv (2004, 40).


32. For the text of this proposal, see New York Times, “Moscow’s Statement: Transcript

33. For details on the cease-fire terms, see Schwarzkopf (1992, 479–490). For Iraqi
acceptance of the, in their words, “unfair and vindictive measures” contained in the
relevant Security Council Resolutions (in particular Resolution 687), see New York
Times, “Excerpts From Letter to U.N.: Iraqis ‘Accept This Resolution,’ ” April 8,


35. Quinlivan (1999). Oakes (2006) argues that a leader in Saddam’s position is more
likely to use represion to retain power than diversion.

36. I am aware of four book-length studies of this war: English (1971), the best English-
language source on the conflict; Hunt and Townsend (1858) and Outram (1860),
which are most useful for military questions; and Bushev (1959), which provides an
alternative (Russian) perspective, albeit based on similar sources as those used by
English. Akhmedzhanov (1971) provides a useful history of the Herat question, albeit
suffused with a significant anti-British bias. A number of works also discuss various
aspects of the conflict as one part of a broader analysis. Most work unsurprisingly focuses on the British perspective, with little information on decision making inside the Iranian court; in this regard, Amanat (1997, esp. ch. 7) is particularly useful for its insight into the Iranian court. See also Walpole (1912, vol. VI, 266–273).

37. It took more than a month for communications to pass between European capitals and Asian cities like Tehran and Bombay in which significant decisions concerning the war were made. On the difficulty of communication, see for example Hunt and Townsend (1858, esp. ch. 4).

38. For the significance of Iran and Herat within the Great Game, see Akhmedzhanov (1971, 17–21).


40. A total of roughly 1,500 to 2,000 people died in the war (the vast majority of them Iranian soldiers), a very low total for a war between two relatively large countries.

41. One anecdote provides evidence of the extent to which the Iranians recognized the inevitability of military defeat in the event of war with Britain. At the start of the war, the Iranian prime minister ensured that one of his political enemies would be named as the commander-in-chief for the Iranian forces, thus positioning him to take the blame for the anticipated subsequent military disaster. That man, similarly recognizing the futility of fighting, took so long to reach the front that the war was already lost by the time that he arrived. English (1971, 119–120).

42. Bushev (1959, 40).

43. Quoted in English (1971, 28–29).

44. Waller (1990).

45. See Barker (1915, 2) and English (1971, 63). Instead of invading, the British formed an alliance with the prince of Kabul Dost Mohammed Khan (the man who ultimately reunified Afghanistan in 1863), although the alliance ended up being more of a defensive nature and was in any event not sealed until late January, leaving little time for any real action in the war. Kaye (1864, vol. 1, 427–448).

46. Hunt and Townsend (1858, 180), Walpole (1912, 270–271). Amanat (1997, 278, 286) reports Iranian disappointment when the news of the end of the Crimean War arrived, at a point when the Iranians had already committed to the seizure of Herat.

47. It is worth noting that the possibility for Russian intervention—an additional potential source of divergent expectations—seems to have played no role in the move to war, despite fears in some British quarters that the war with Iran might herald a new clash with Russia. Bushev (1959, 86). The Russians were not eager for another fight with Britain so recently after the Crimean War, and there is no indication that the leaderships on either side ever considered such an eventuality at all likely.


50. For the full text of the treaty, see Rawlinson (1875, vol. 4, 370–373).


52. See for example English (1971, 43).


56. Ibid., 140–141.
57. Holt (1964, 202–204). It is possible that a similar outcome would have arisen over the war with Iran, but in practice the Chinese dispute, in which Britain was attempting to force the sale of an addictive narcotic to address its trade deficit, provided a far more attractive basis for opposition criticism. Hurd (1967).

7. THE LIMITS ON LEADERS

3. On the Falklands lobby, which had managed as early as 1967 to get a public pledge that no deal would be struck against the islanders’ wishes, see Dillon (1989, ch. 3) and Charlton (1989, ch. 4).
5. For evidence of the strong positive reaction in Argentina, see Femenia (1996, esp. 96–98).
15. For succinct rebuttals to the argument that the junta acted in response to economic unrest, see Gamba (1987, 132) and Arquilla and Rasmussen (2001, 748).
16. For works that emphasize the role of divergent expectations, see for example Lebow (1985), Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse (1991), and Fravel (2010).
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21. The British also planned to withdraw the survey team that provided the only British presence on South Georgia, although as with the *Endurance* this decision was forestalled at the last minute.


23. Ibid., vol. 1, ch. 11.


32. See for example Hughes and Larson (1985) and Arquilla and Rasmussen (2001).


38. Freedman (2005, vol. 1, 143–147, 168–169, 199–200). There were also concerns that there might be a British submarine in the area.

39. Ibid., vol. 1, 187.

40. For the full history, see Haig (1984, ch. 13) and Freedman (2005, vol. 2, sections 2 and 4). The talks included a lot of detailed bargaining over subsidiary issues, in large part because the mediators sought to build a consensus by starting with issues—such as the composition of an interim authority—on which agreement might be reached before tackling the more difficult questions of sovereignty, while each side was reluctant to directly reject any mediator proposals to avoid being blamed for the failure of negotiations. On the central sovereignty question, however, neither side ever made a substantial concession.

41. The British were permitted to make use of an American base on (British-owned) Ascension Island, and the United States and other countries (notably France) provided intelligence on Argentine capabilities. That said, the Argentine Navy ultimately effectively withdrew from the war in part because naval leaders believed that the United States was providing Britain with extensive satellite intelligence, well beyond the very limited amount that was actually provided. Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse (1991, 270), Freedman (2005, vol. 2, 71, 236).


47. Attacks on the Argentine mainland would have been politically counterproductive. Thatcher (1993, 221).


52. For a similar argument about the limits of diversionary war, see Fravel (2010).

53. Historiography on this conflict is quite limited, and accounts of specific incidents are frequently contradictory. Indeed, Zeidner (2005, 3), in an admittedly opinionated work on the war, asserts that “much, if not most, of what [prior scholars] have said about it is wrong.” The best-covered aspect is the great power diplomacy of the period, in which the relationship between France and Britain is particularly important. There is also a reasonable literature on the emergence of the Kemalist movement to replace the Ottoman Porte and on the partially coterminous Greco-Turkish War. Coverage of events on the ground in Cilicia and of direct negotiation between the two sides is particularly limited. Of the four sources that treat the war in detail, Saakian (1986) and Tachjian (2004) are most interested in the fate of the Armenian population and are consequently somewhat less useful for the questions here. Nakache (1999) is the most detailed source, but her work relies almost exclusively on French-language sources. Zeidner (2005) is thus the only significant work to look in detail at the political and military developments of the war using both French and Turkish sources. There are, of course, also works in Turkish, which my language skills do not permit me to use; even here, however, there apparently is little in the way of serious scholarly work. Zeidner (2005, 3–4).

54. Technically, the French possessions in territory claimed by Turkey included some land east of the Amanus Mountains that typically is not considered part of Cilicia. While the greater difficulty of projecting power further from the coast meant that there were significant differences between the two regions with respect to the military course of the war, in political negotiations the distinction was rarely significant. Nakache (1999, part II). References to Cilicia here thus should be read as including the eastern territory.

55. The map was produced by the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs and is available on a free content license at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Sykes-Picot-1916.gif.

56. Toynbee (1922, 88–89). Thus, for example, the French estimated that they held some 75 percent of the entire Ottoman public debt, while independent estimates put the figure at more than 60 percent; they were thus hopeful that the empire might survive, if in a diminished form. Busch (1976, 200), Saakian (1986, 41). For a detailed discussion of French investments in Syria and Cilicia in particular, see Nakache (1999, 51–55, 75–84).

61. A truce reached on May 30, 1920, was never fully implemented and ultimately collapsed after only a few weeks. Zeidner (2005, 238).
64. The importance of the colonial party is a consistent theme in literature on French policy in Cilicia. In addition to the works cited below by Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, who directly address the colonial party, see for example Saakian (1986, 48–49), Nakache (1999, 89–95), Tachjian (2004, 21–26), and Zeidner (2005, 22–31).
69. Andrew and Kanya Forstner (1976, 991–993), Zeidner (2005, 258). Andrew and Kanya-Forstner do note that members of the colonial party were not above using expeditions to further both French prestige and their own business interests simultaneously. The business side was typically secondary, however, and in any event it is hard to argue that France as a whole benefited from policies designed to serve the specific economic interests of policymakers.
70. Andrew and Kanya-Forstner (1976, 986). The one exception was with French silk producers, as French sericulture had been effectively destroyed by disease. Silk production played only a minor role in the French economy, however.
71. As a side note, this disjuncture poses a significant problem for Marxist interpretations of French imperialism such as that of Saakian (1986). For a relevant discussion, see the debate between Abrams and Miller (1976) and Andrew and Kanya-Forstner (1976), in which the latter are far more convincing. See also Andrew and Kanya-Forstner (1981, 17).
72. See Nakache (1999, 725) for a parliamentary speech by Édouard Daladier, a future prime minister, that frames the war in Cilicia in precisely these terms.
73. The French do seem to have held out some hope for a security guarantee from the United States, but the return to isolationism in Washington, especially following President Wilson’s stroke in October 1919, killed that prospect. To the extent that a guarantee ever was a possibility, however, French colonial designs, conflicting as they did with the spirit of Wilson’s Fourteen Points, were again a significant irritant. Zeidner (2005, 55).
75. Cumming (1938), McCrum (1978).
76. Quoted in Andrew and Kanya-Forstner (1976, 984), my translation.
79. Ibid., 717, 721.
80. Zeidner (2005, 262). See Nakache (1999, 707–709) for a discussion of coverage of Cilicia in the press, including a list of specific articles, many of which had first been published in British newspapers.

81. Complaints increased over the course of 1920, and by the end of the year parliament was refusing to renew funding for more than an additional two months. Nakache (1999, 726).


89. Some readers may wonder whether Turkish domestic politics similarly influenced the duration and severity of the war, given the strong split between the Porte and the Kemalists. In practice, however, the Porte’s decision not to resist was out of line with the preferences of the public that it claimed to represent, but in a direction that favored peace rather than war; by contrast, the Kemalist stance seems to have matched the preferences of the Turkish public fairly closely. Zürcher (1984, 116).

90. Sonyel (1975, 23–24).

91. Indeed, the only direct reference that I found to such concerns is Toynbee (1922, 85), who complained specifically about lack of French concern about the possibility that Turkey might seek to undermine the French position in Syria.

92. The significance of Ottoman debts can be seen in the intensity of Anglo-French debates over whether reparations should have priority over prewar debts. Montgomery (1972, 779).


Conclusion


4. See for example Collier et al. (2004) and Ross (2004).
5. For a representative example that also highlights the reluctance of the international community, and the United States in particular, to intervene even once conflict begins, see Power (2002).
6. On the logical impossibility of perfectly predicting war ex ante, see Gartzke (1999).
10. This discussion assumes, of course, that China’s development continues along its current course. Japan’s experience of tremendous growth in the 1980s followed by a decade of stagnation provides a salutary reminder that current trends are not guaranteed to continue, and concerns about an overheated economy and about internal unrest associated with increasing economic inequality and unrepresentative government provide potential bases for concern. That said, China’s large population and other advantages provide reason to believe that, even should its growth be derailed for any of these reasons, the country will ultimately rise to rival the United States as a world power.
11. See for example Friedberg (2011).
12. It is worth noting, however, that in recent history, internal unrest in China has been associated with increased flexibility in external disputes. Fravel (2005).