The Oil Wars Myth
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INTRODUCTION

1. Throughout the book, I use the terms oil and petroleum interchangeably.


8. One of this quotation’s early appearances was in Frank Cleary Hanighen, The Secret War: The War for Oil (New York: John Day Company, 1934), 33.


15. Colgan, “Fueling the Fire,” 154, describes this mechanism as “the most obvious and widely discussed.”


20. See discussion in chapter 1.


1. FROM VALUE TO VIOLENCE

1. This quotation has appeared in Life, the New York Times, and British parliamentary debates, as well as numerous manuscripts in French and English. In addition, it was quoted as, “One drop of oil is worth one drop of blood of our soldiers,” in Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, 4th ed. (1948; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), 111.


6. Yergin, Prize, 24. See also Black, Crude Reality, 22; and Hiro, Blood of the Earth, 6.


16. The boom was short lived. With the invention of the electric lightbulb in 1880, kerosene demand plummeted. Had it not been for the invention of the automobile, the oil industry would have collapsed.


18. The United Kingdom began exploiting North Sea oil in the 1970s.


26. For the percentage, see EIA, *Annual Energy Review 2011* (Washington, DC: Office of Energy Statistics, Department of Energy, September 2012), 29. More recent EIA reviews only report energy consumption by source or agency, rather than the two combined. For the number of barrels consumed, see *Fiscal Year 2018 Operational Energy Annual Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, 2019), 22. This “operational energy” does not include the energy consumed by the DOD’s fixed installations (“installation energy”), which accounts for approximately 30 percent of the DOD’s energy consumption.


34. Oil-consuming states can also collect substantial revenue by taxing petroleum products, such as gasoline.

35. The share of revenue that a host government receives from oil production depends on numerous factors, including ownership of subsoil resources (public or private), the host state’s technological capabilities, the availability of national oil companies, and foreign oil companies’ level of interest in the host state’s petroleum prospects.


42. Gause, Oil Monarchies, 67–68.


47. Oil is usually priced in dollars, regardless of where it originates.


52. There is, of course, a darker side to oil ownership. For a leading discussion of the “resource curse,” as applied to oil, see Ross, *Oil Curse*.


54. The Biafran War (1967–1970) is a borderline case, as the state of Biafra declared itself independent from Nigeria and was formally recognized by five countries. However, most observers regarded it as a civil war.

55. Oil-related civil wars may involve international actors. However, according to conventional conflict definitions, this does not make them interstate wars.


57. This threshold is far lower than the usual figure for interstate wars: one thousand battle deaths. I employ a lower threshold to make the analysis more inclusive.


68. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*, 337n5.


70. On oil’s exceptional importance, see Morgenthau, *Politics* (1967), 111. Morgenthau also added a new section entitled “The Power of Oil” to later editions of *Politics among Nations*.

71. Christopher J. Fettweis, *Dangerous Times? The International Politics of Great Power Peace* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 111; Brooks, *Producing Security*, 49. Although he asserts that oil conquest can pay financially, Fettweis also observes that great powers have not fought wars for oil in the Persian Gulf, Caspian Sea, or Pacific Rim. He attributes this outcome to “pacific norms.”


80. Gholz and Press, “Protecting ‘the Prize,’” 482.


82. McNaugher, *Arms and Oil*, 185.

83. Evan Luard, *War in International Society: A Study in International Sociology* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1986), 180. Luard does suggest that oil “played some part in motivating Japanese attacks in the Pacific in 1941.” But, he states, “it is difficult to point to any other war in which they have had any significant role.”


89. The most prominent qualitative studies are Deese, “Oil, War, and Grand Strategy”; Lesser, Resources and Strategy; Goralski and Freeburg, Oil and War; and Yergin, Prize.


92. Roger Stern explains the persistence of “oil scarcity ideology” by asserting that it rests on “misperceptions.” However, he also asserts that “why misperceptions were so durable deserves more research.” Roger J. Stern, “Oil Scarcity Ideology in US Foreign Policy, 1908–97,” Security Studies 25, no. 2 (2016): 255. My exploration of the oil wars myth provides an answer to Stern’s question.

2. EXPLAINING THE OIL WARS MYTH


2. This is similar to a narrative Le Billon identifies in geopolitical theories of resource wars: “resources as loot.” Le Billon, “Digging into ‘Resource War’ Beliefs.”


5. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651; London, Penguin Books, 1985), 185. People who are motivated by the third factor, glory, fight for reputation. This motive, while a plausible incentive for conflict, is less relevant to the oil wars myth.


14. *Road Warrior*.


17. Malthus, 175.


25. Darwin later adopted the phrase “survival of the fittest,” stating that it was equivalent to natural selection. Rogers, 277–78.

26. There was a revival of this type of thinking in the 2000s. See, for example, Bradley A. Thayer, *Darwin and International Relations: On the Evolutionary Origins of War and Ethnic Conflict* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004); and William R. Thompson, ed., *Evolutionary Interpretations of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2001).


30. German geopolitical theories in the interwar period are most strongly associated with Karl Haushofer, whose thinking purportedly influenced Adolf Hitler.


47. Stalley, “Environmental Scarcity,” 35.


58. The antagonists in these films, in contrast, are often motivated by greed.


64. Occupied, created by Karianne Lund, Erik Skjoldbjærg, and Jo Nesbo, originally aired as Okkupert (2015–), TV2 Norway, distributed in the United States by Netflix.


71. Nicholl, Creature in the Map.

72. Chapman, Golden Dream, 32.


80. Ovid, 7.
82. Virgil’s *Aeneid*, 133.
83. Joshua 7:126.
85. Dante, 286–87.
88. Huston.


108. Kapuscinski, 35.


### 3. WHY CLASSIC OIL WARS DO NOT PAY

1. This study examines only the oil-related obstacles to classic oil wars. There are, of course, other impediments to classic oil wars, including the costs of the manpower and materiel required to prosecute the conflicts, the damage that oil-related contention can cause to belligerents’ broader political and economic relations, and the opportunity costs of conflict. If all of these obstacles are taken into account, then fighting for oil never pays. However, my argument aims to demonstrate that fighting for oil has limited utility, even if only oil-related obstacles are taken into account. In focusing on the variable of interest—oil—rather than wars’ total cost, the study mirrors earlier contributions to the value of conquest debate, such as Stephen G. Brooks, Producing Security: Multinational Corporations, Globalization, and the Changing Calculus of Conflict (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 161; and Peter Liberman, Does Conquest Pay? The Exploitation of Occupied Industrial Societies (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), x.


8. Abbas Alnasrawi, “Economic Consequences of the Iran–Iraq War,” *Third World Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (1986): 873. Iran’s output dropped from 1.3 million barrels per day to 450,000 barrels per day.


10. Alnasrawi, “Economic Consequences,” 873. Iraq’s output dropped from 3.4 million barrels per day to 140,000 barrels per day.


21. For example, Knorr, *Uses of Military Power*, 74; Liberman, *Does Conquest Pay?*, 19; and Rosecrance, *Trading State*, 34. Liberman uses the term *pre-industrial* to refer to these states.

22. Critics of oil war arguments have highlighted this obstacle. See, for example, David R. Henderson, “Do Governments Need to Go to War for Oil?,” in *Handbook of Oil Politics*, ed. Robert E. Looney (New York: Routledge, 2012), 142–43.


31. Michael L. Ross, The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 173–74. These kidnapping incidents increased after the route was completed, as rebels had discovered that ransom payments were an extremely lucrative funding source. See also Le Billon, Wars of Plunder, 74–75.


38. In their analysis of Abqaiq’s vulnerability, Shifrinson and Priebe, “Crude Threat,” conclude that rendering the center inoperable would be extremely challenging for a foreign military (184–87). However, they also concede that local insurgent groups might be able to launch more effective attacks against these types of targets (199).


42. Giroux, Burgherr, and Melkunaite, “Research Note,” 120.


50. Liberman, *Does Conquest Pay?*

51. Gholz and Press, “Protecting ‘the Prize,’” 482.


64. Middleton, “Military Men.”


67. UN Resolution 986 created the oil-for-food program in April 1995. However, phase 1 was not implemented until December 1996.

68. Yergin, Prize, 347. They also struck German synthetic fuel facilities.


76. Angell, Great Illusion, 128.


79. I use the term foreign oil companies to refer to international oil companies and national oil companies that invest overseas.

80. See Brooks, Producing Security, 59, for a general version of this argument.


84. See Brooks, Producing Security, 60, for a general version of this argument.
85. Giroux, Burgherr, and Melkunaite, “Research Note,” 120.
86. Bala-Gbogbo, “Shell to Chevron.”
89. Lee finds that, for intrastate conflicts, the level of decline is conditioned by oil prices. However, the effect is persistent for international conflicts, regardless of oil price. Hoon Lee, “Does Armed Conflict Reduce Foreign Direct Investment in the Petroleum Sector?,” Foreign Policy Analysis 13, no. 1 (2016): 188–214.
90. This principle appears most prominently in the UN Charter, art. 2, para. 4, but has also become part of customary international law.

4. SEARCHING FOR CLASSIC OIL WARS

3. MIDs can last from one day to multiple years and often involve a series of militarized incidents.
5. Territorial and other MIDs are not a universal sample of potential classic oil wars. The MID data set classifies conflicts over maritime areas as policy disputes. Consequently, excluding policy MIDs from my analysis could omit conflicts over offshore oil resources. This risk is small, however, since most interstate disagreements over offshore resources also entail disputes over islands, which the data set codes as territorial. Moreover, to ensure that my analysis did not overlook any classic oil wars, I examined all policy MIDs from 1912 to 2010 that resulted in more than twenty-five battle deaths. None of the one hundred cases examined in this robustness check were classic oil wars.
Paul R. Hensel, and Christopher Macaulay, “The Issue Correlates of War Territorial Claims Data, 1816–2001,” *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 1 (2017): 99–108. I adopted this more inclusive approach, of taking states’ claims into account, as well as conflicts’ physical locations, in order to avoid omitting any oil-driven conflicts from the study. I classified MIDs as “involving hydrocarbon-endowed territories” when at least one participant was engaged in a serious effort to assert control over an area that contained known or prospective oil or natural gas resources.


9. The Petroleum Dispute Dataset is also missing discovery dates for some fields, creating uncertainty about whether MID participants were aware of contested territories’ resource endowments when some of the conflicts began.

10. Hydrocarbon beliefs did not have to be universal or accurate for a case to receive this coding. Petroleum beliefs were mistaken but widespread in the Chaco dispute (Bolivia–Paraguay), the Bakassi Peninsula dispute (Cameroon–Nigeria), and the Agacher Strip dispute (Burkina Faso–Mali).

11. While not depicted in this table, many of the dyads also prosecuted territorial MIDs in regions lacking hydrocarbon endowments, as well as MIDs that were not territorially motivated.

12. Most of the individual MIDs were bilateral.

13. The participant lists for the world wars consist of all hydrocarbon-endowed countries where the associated MIDs were prosecuted.

14. This figure is approximate, as the MID data set codes fatalities for some MIDs as unknown (-9). I investigated these cases myself to estimate fatality figures; most fell short of the twenty-five battle deaths threshold.

15. In November 2004, Japan protested a Chinese submarine sailing through the Ishigaki Strait, in Japan’s territorial waters. A journalist reported that the submarine “was operating in waters near where Chinese vessels earlier this year began exploring for gas deposits.” However, the exploration area was over two hundred miles away from the strait. Edward Cody, “Beijing Explains Submarine Activity,” *Washington Post Foreign Service*, November 17, 2004; Peter A. Dutton, “International Law and the November 2004 ‘Han Incident,’” in *China’s Future Nuclear Submarine Force*, ed. Andrew Erickson et al. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2007), 162–63.


17. Conflicts that result in fewer than twenty-five battle deaths attract limited journalistic and scholarly attention, which introduced some uncertainty into my analysis. Accordingly, other researchers might code some of my mild red herrings as oil spats or vice versa. However, since these are all minor conflicts, any coding discrepancies do not undermine the study’s larger finding: that states avoid classic oil wars.


20. The three exceptions are MIDs 1172 (Argentina–Uruguay), 3825 (Germany–Romania), and 3185 (Turkey–United Kingdom).


27. After Germany occupied Romania in 1940 (MID 3825), it went on to attack the Soviet Union. However, the enlargement of a world war is not the dynamic that commentators envisage when they predict that oil spats will escalate.

28. Again, MID 3825 is somewhat anomalous, as Romania changed sides in the final year of World War II to fight with the Allies against Germany from August 1944 to May 1945.

29. The four exceptions are MIDs 1427 (Ethiopia–Somalia), 3825 (Germany–Romania), 4546 (Iran–Iraq), and 3185 (Turkey–United Kingdom).

30. Four exceptions are MIDs 4317 (Azerbaijan–Iran), 4121 (Eritrea–Yemen), 3610 (Indonesia–Vietnam), and 3014 (Libya–Tunisia). However, while the states that participated in these conflicts had not prosecuted prior MIDs, they had unresolved boundary disagreements at the time of their oil spats. In the fifth and final exception, MID 3825, Germany and Romania had previously confronted each other in World War I, in a campaign that was likely driven by German oil ambitions (although see note 59).


32. Germany and Romania were neighbors by the time of their oil spat, because of Hitler’s incorporation of Austria and Czechoslovakia, and alliance with Hungary.


34. Put otherwise, oil was neither a necessary nor a sufficient cause of conflict.

35. This number is also approximate, because of the −9 category referenced earlier.

after the Rio Protocol resolved the regional dispute. As for the Cordillera area, it contains no petroleum resources. Ecuador did eventually revive its more expansive territorial claim to the Maynas/Oriente. However, leaders did not seriously pursue it or engage in any militarized aggression in that area; instead, they limited their activities to the Cordillera. Ecuador’s primary goal, in the Cordillera confrontations, was to gain control over the headwaters of the Cenepa River in order to obtain an outlet to the Amazon River via the Río Marañón. David Scott Palmer, “Peru-Ecuador Border Conflict: Missed Opportunities, Misplaced Nationalism, and Multilateral Peacekeeping,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 39, no. 3 (1997): 109–48.

37. These issues also dominated aggressors’ decision making in the mild red herrings.


48. Ning, *Flashpoint Spratlys!*, 97–98. China was the last of the South China Sea’s claimant states to do so.

49. Fravel, *Strong Borders*, 288–96; Ning, *Flashpoint Spratlys!*, 90–93. Both authors suggest that hydrocarbon resources were one incentive for China’s expanded presence in the region.
51. Burkina Faso described the Agacher Strip’s manganese deposits in its memorial to the International Court of Justice, which was evaluating the case. Neither state mentioned oil or natural gas deposits. Mémoire de Burkina Faso, Case concerning the Frontier Dispute (Burkina Faso/Republic of Mali), October 3, 1985, 37.
54. Estonia possesses oil shale.
55. All of the historical oil campaigns targeted oil, not natural gas.
57. To identify these cases, I deviated from my focus on conflict onset, as these campaigns occurred in the midst of ongoing wars (MIDs 157, 257, and 258). I based that methodological choice on the campaigns’ significance for conflict studies, generally, and for classic oil wars research, specifically. Two midwar attacks that I did not code as oil campaigns are Great Britain’s assault against the Rashid Ali regime in Iraq (May 1941) and the Anglo–Soviet invasion of Iran (1941–1942). These campaigns occurred in oil-endowed territories but did not target petroleum resources. Instead, Allied aggressors aimed to discourage closer ties between the targeted regimes and Nazi Germany. In the latter incident, Anglo–Soviet intervention also secured supply routes for US lend–lease assistance to the Soviet Union. As I discuss in Chapter 7, I also do not code Germany’s invasion of Romania in World War II as an oil campaign, because it was insufficiently deadly.
58. General Erich Ludendorff, the leader of Germany’s war effort, claimed that oil was not a core motive for the World War I counteroffensive. As he put it, “The subjugation of Romania was a military necessity for us, and we took economic advantage of the conquest en passant. We should never under any circumstances have attacked Romania to seize her economic resources.” Quoted in Ian O. Lesser, Resources and Strategy (New York: St. Martin’s, 1989), 42. Given Ludendorff’s position, the accuracy of his claim is suspect, so I label this an oil campaign. However, if Ludendorff was sincere, his statement provides further evidence of states’ limited willingness to fight for oil.

5. RED HERRINGS


3. These included the Quijarro–Decoud Treaty (1879), Tamayo–Aceval Treaty (1887), Ichazo–Benítez Treaty (1894), and Pinilla–Soler Protocol (1907).


10. La Paz was reluctant to improve connections between its eastern provinces and Argentina before a strong linkage had been established between its own east and west. Buenos Aires wanted to expand its own oil industry and had little interest in bringing competing Bolivian products into the international marketplace. Argentina was especially hostile because the oil was being produced by Standard; officials had clashed with the company earlier in the 1920s. J. Valerie Fifer, “Bolivia’s Pioneer Fringe,” *Geographical Review* 57 (1967): 22–23; Fifer, *Bolivia*, 191–92; Rout, *Politics*, 56–58.


16. Bolivia calls the lake Chuquisaca; Paraguay calls it Pitiantuta.

17. Quoted in Farcau, *Chaco War*, 37. See also Ireland, *Boundaries*, 75; and Zook, *Conduct*, 69–73.

18. The war was not formally declared until 1933.


20. Cote, “Bolivian Oil Nationalism,” 164; Seiferheld, *Economía*, 459–62. Tristán Marofo (the pen name of Gustavo Adolfo Navarro) was one of the most prominent intellectuals blaming the war on multinational oil companies.


30. Finot, *Chaco War*.


34. I include Bolivia and Paraguay’s Chaco confrontations on the list of militarized interstate disputes involving hydrocarbon-endowed territories based on these popular assumptions. Although incorrect, and not shared by high government officials, the beliefs were widespread.


37. Senator Long (LA), Congressional Record, June 7, 1934, 10811–12.
38. This accusation appeared in the state’s submission to the League of Nations. League of Nations, Dispute, 111.
40. Cote, Oil and Nation, 82–83.
45. Translated from Seiferheld, Economía, 475.
46. Senator Long (LA), Congressional Record, January 7, 1935, 566.
48. Fifer, Bolivia, 200; Ireland, Boundaries, 70; Kain, “Bolivia’s Catastrophe,” 709; Rout, Politics, 46.
49. Farcau, Chaco War, 8, 14; Rout, Politics, 22n35, 50–51n25; Warren, Rebirth, 154.
50. Rout, Politics, 51.
52. Schurz, “Chaco Dispute,” 653; Farcau, Chaco War, 8–9; Fifer, Bolivia, 28–30, 260.
53. Bolivia and Chile signed a truce in 1884, which allowed Chile to occupy Bolivia’s coastal territories, and a settlement in 1904, which formally transferred the province to Chile but gave Bolivia “guaranteed commercial transit rights.” Fifer, Bolivia, 66.
54. The Bolivian vice president called the Tacna–Arica decision a “final blow” to national prestige. Quoted in Rout, Politics, 27.
55. The phrase is from Paraguay’s submission to the League of Nations, which presented it mockingly and asserted that Bolivia’s isolation was a “myth.” League of Nations, Dispute, 155. On Bolivia’s efforts to acquire a sea outlet via the Amazon, see Fifer, Bolivia, 104–36.
58. Farcau, Chaco War, 24. See also Wood, United States, 24.
59. Rout, Politics, 24.
60. Fifer, Bolivia, 196; Rout, Politics, 13, 17; Zook, Conduct, 30.
63. Chesterton, Grandchildren of Solano López, 57, 110–11; Bridget Maria Chesterton, “Introduction: An Overview of the Chaco,” in Chesterton, Chaco War, 5–7; Farcau, Chaco War, 9, 26; Fifer, Bolivia, 209; Rout, Politics, 9, 18; Schurz, “Chaco Dispute,” 654; Zook, Conduct, 38, 46–47, 50, 54.
65. Farcau, *Chaco War*, 13. Paraguay’s submission to the League of Nations included a quotation from Salamanca: “It [Paraguay] is the only country we can attack with the certainty of victory.” League of Nations, *Dispute*, 151.


67. Initially, many Bolivians were enthusiastic about the war. Herbert S. Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 178. However, much of the population turned against Salamanca by October 1932, after significant Bolivian military defeats. Cote, *Oil and Nation*, 75–76.


69. Herbert S. Klein, *Orígenes de la revolución nacional boliviana: La crisis de la generación del Chaco* (La Paz: Juventud, 1968), 220. Translated from the original: “Esta mitología de la guerra por el petróleo vino a ser universalmente aceptada por todos.”


84. “Saddam and His Advisers Discussing Iraq’s Decision to Go to War with Iran,” September 16, 1980, SH-SHTP-A-000-835, Saddam Hussein Regime Collection, Conflict Records Research Center, National Defense University, Washington, DC. This document, like others cited in this chapter, is from the Iraqi regime’s archives and was acquired by US forces during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.
86. Quoted in Tareq Y. Ismael, Iraq and Iran: Roots of Conflict (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1982), 91.
91. The “usurped” terminology was Saddam’s. For example, “Iraq Ends 1975 Border Pact with Iran as Frontier Clashes Continue,” New York Times, September 18, 1980.
105. Murray and Woods, *Iran–Iraq War*, 22; Swearingen, “Geopolitical Origins,” 415. The Iraqis were not attempting to secure oil transportation. Although some oil equipment was shipped via the Shatt al-ʿArab to Basra, most crude oil and petroleum products from Iraq’s southern fields were transported to the state’s Gulf export terminals by pipeline, because of the waterway’s limited draft and the increasing size of crude carriers.
108. Tehrani, “Iraqi Attitudes,” 16. In this process, they were guided by the Treaty on International Borders and Good Neighborly Relations, which the states signed on June 13, 1975, as a follow-up to the Algiers Agreement. According to this treaty, the boundary would be redeclared on the basis of the Constantinople Protocol (1913), the minutes of the Turkish–Persian Border Demarcation Commission (1914), the Tehran Protocol (March 15, 1975), and the minutes of the Iranian and Iraqi foreign ministers’ talks held in spring 1975.
110. On September 17, 1980, Banisadr acknowledged that Iran had failed to return the border areas as instructed by the Algiers Agreement. His attitude toward the accord was dismissive; he “asked rhetorically, ‘Who signed that agreement. Even the Shah’s regime did not apply it.’” Abdulghani, *Iraq and Iran*, 203.
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132. Discussing the oil motive, Renfrew claims that “Iraqi officials only half admit it and then only off the record.” Pipes offers only suppositions; he asserts that “Baghdad did not make control of this province one of its stated goals, but Iraqi leaders surely aspire to conquer it” partly for oil-related reasons, and “even if taking Khuzistan [sic] is only a remote possibility . . . the possible advantages to Iraq are so great that surely they must have entered into Baghdad’s calculations and added importantly to the other reasons for going to war in September 1980.” None of these authors offer any evidence to support their classic oil war claims. Renfrew, “Who Started the War?,” 103; Pipes, “Border Adrift,” 22–23.


6. OIL SPATS


6. In 1966, the Colonial Office became the Commonwealth Office, which was absorbed into the Foreign Office in 1968.


10. Dodds, Pink Ice, 156.


12. Dodds, Pink Ice, 152–56; Gustafson, Sovereignty Dispute, 89; Silenzi de Stagni, Las Malvinas, 73.


15. O’Shaughnessy, “Britain Denies.”

16. Quoted in Charlton, Little Platoon, 42.


19. Silenzi de Stagni, Las Malvinas, 76. The article was entitled “Fear of Falklands Oil War.”


27. Donaghy, *British Government*, 92–93. There was confusion in the British Foreign Office as well. In a later interview, Rowlands recounted that, when a desk officer ran up to him, saying, “They’ve shot Shackleton!” he was initially confounded: “for a split second I actually thought that they’d shot Eddie Shackleton. Of course it was in fact the RRS *Shackleton*, the research vessel named after his father, on which an Argentine destroyer had just opened fire. Indeed, it was a rather hectic afternoon.” Rowlands quoted in Charlton, *Little Platoon*, 49.


40. “Diplomacy to ‘Cool’ Argentine Incident.”


42. Quoted in Charlton, *Little Platoon*, 46.


47. Charlton, 55; Freedman, *Official History*, 79.


54. Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, 49–57.
57. Caselli, Morelli, and Rohner, “Geography”; Safire, “In Defeat”; Westing, “Appendix 2,” 208–9. Many Argentine scholars have also asserted that Britain’s persistent commitment to holding the Falklands is driven by oil interests. For example, Alberto O. Casellas, *El territorio olvidado* (Buenos Aires: Centrol Naval, Instituto de Publicaciones Navales, 1974). British citizens, in turn, have accused Argentina of attempting to take the islands in order to obtain more oil. For a discussion, see Peter Calvert, *The Falklands Crisis: The Rights and the Wrongs* (London: Frances Pinter, 1982), 46.
62. Quoted in Freedman, 40–41.
71. O’Shaughnessy, “Britain Denies.”

**7. OIL CAMPAIGNS**


5. Japan also invaded Burma, another oil producer, launching its main attack in January 1942 and seizing the state’s oil fields at Yenangyaung in April 1942. However, Allied forces had significantly damaged the region’s wells and refinery before the Japanese arrived. Robert Goralski and Russell W. Freeburg, *Oil and War: How the Deadly Struggle for Fuel in WWII Meant Victory or Defeat* (New York: William Morrow, 1987), 149, 152.


10. For a detailed discussion of this time period, see Shimada, “Designs.”


19. Goralski and Freeburg, Oil and War, 93.


22. Dorothy Borg, The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933–1938: From the Manchurian Incident through the Initial Stage of the Undeclared Sino-Japanese War (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964); Crowley, Japan’s Quest for Autonomy, 165; Neu, Troubled Encounter, 138; Thorne, Limits of Foreign Policy, 15.


27. Thomas W. Burkman, Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914–1938 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 109; Butow, Tojo, 11, 19; Iriye,

28. President Wilson resisted the clause because he believed it would increase the difficulty of treaty ratification. The British opposed it on behalf of Australian authorities, who were highly resistant to Japanese immigration. Burkman, Japan, 56, 80–85; Butow, Tojo, 18; Neu, Troubled Encounter, 100. On the racial discrimination issue more broadly, see Naoko Shimazu, Japan, Race, and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919 (London: Routledge, 2009); and Ward, “Race.”

29. On the war scare, see Butow, Tojo, 11. On Hirohito’s remarks, see David A. Titus, translator’s introduction to Morley, Final Confrontation, xxxv.

30. For the quotation, see Crowley, Japan’s Quest for Autonomy, 49. See also Crowley, 35, 43–44, 47–50, 52, 54–56; Neu, Troubled Encounter, 130; and Thorne, Limits of Foreign Policy, 37.


35. Yusuke Tsurumi, “Japan in the Modern World,” Foreign Affairs 9, no. 2 (1931): 262. In the chapter’s text, I present Japanese names using the conventional order of surname first. In the notes, I adhere to the format employed by each source. Some authors’ names are therefore presented with surname first and some with surname second.


37. Grew, 934n930.

38. Butow, Tojo, 190; Pelz, Race to Pearl Harbor, 157, 190.


40. By December, the United States had extended $25 million in loans. “China Welcomes $25,000,000 Loan as Victory,” Chicago Tribune, December 18, 1938; Grew, Turbulent Era, 1208.

41. Sumio Hatano and Sadao Asada, “Japan’s Decision to ‘Go South,’” in Pearl Harbor and the Coming of the Pacific War: A Brief History with Documents and Essays, ed. Akira Iriye (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1999), 126; Tsunoda Jun, “Confusion Arising from a Draft Understanding between Japan and the United States,” in Morley, Final Confrontation, 4. Loans were offered in response to Japan joining the Tripartite Pact, but also in March 1940. “New 20 Million Dollar Loan Is Made to China,” Chicago Tribune, March 8, 1940.

43. Butow, Tojo, 125.
45. Grew, Turbulent Era, 1225.
48. “Summary Draft of a Policy for the South,” Navy National Policy Research Committee, April 1939, in Lebra, Co-prosperity Sphere, 64–65. Leaders referred to “peaceful means” in the “Fundamentals of National Policy,” issued at the Five Ministers’ Conference, August 7, 1936, in Lebra, Co-prosperity Sphere, 36. The phrase was also repeated in a September 19, 1940, Imperial Conference. Ike, Japan’s Decision for War, 8. Many observers also asserted that the navy’s enthusiasm for a southern strategy was a “bureaucratic tactic” to counterbalance the army and secure larger budgets. Sadao Asada, “The Japanese Navy and the United States,” in Borg and Okamoto, Pearl Harbor as History, 244; Peattie, “Nanshin,” 213–17.
52. Butow, Tojo, 237; Feis, Road to Pearl Harbor, 105.
54. Ike, Japan’s Decision for War, 131, 153, 181; Tsunoda, “Decision for War,” 258, 276, 292.
57. Butow, Tojo, 237; Goralski and Freeburg, Oil and War, 94; Lesser, Resources and Strategy, 89–90; Tsunoda, “Decision for War,” 277–78.
58. Seventy-five percent of planes on aircraft carriers were torpedo bombers and dive bombers, which had a range of about two hundred miles. Their attacks were able to disable enemy carriers.
60. Barnhart, Japan Prepares, 28–29; Levy, Oil Strategy, 29–30. Japan gave up the North Sakhalin concession in 1941 as part of its Neutrality Agreement with the USSR. Japan also acquired a concession in Dutch Borneo in 1930, but abandoned exploration because of insufficient funds. “Memorandum.”
61. Barnhart, Japan Prepares, 102; “Memorandum.”
64. The figures are from Anderson, *Standard-Vacuum*, 150–54, who quotes them in tons: 3.15 million tons and 1.85 million tons. I have used a standard conversion of seven barrels per ton. See also Barnhart, *Japan Prepares*, 165–66.
67. Utley, *Going to War*, 143–45
69. Quoted in Ike, *Japan’s Decision for War*, 246.
70. Quoted in Ike, 270.
71. Quoted in Ike, 236.
72. Butow, *Tojo*, 243, cites the figure of twelve thousand tons per day. See also Feis, *Road to Pearl Harbor*, 206–7, 261.
73. *FRUS, Japan: 1931–1941*, 2:714. At the Imperial Conference meeting that made the decision for war on December 1, 1941, Togo reiterated that, should Japan fail to stand up to the United States, “our very survival would be threatened.” Ike, *Japan’s Decision for War*, 270.
78. Schroeder, *Axis Alliance*, 89.
79. Quoted in Utley, *Going to War*, 173. There are two prominent, competing explanations for American intransigence. One emphasizes the information that the United States was receiving about Japan’s war preparations. The United States had broken Japan’s codes in September 1940, so authorities were aware that, as the Japanese pursued diplomatic negotiations, they were also preparing for war. US leaders interpreted this as evidence of Japanese perfidy and concluded that further negotiations were not worthwhile. Another explanation asserts that the Roosevelt administration was attempting to draw Japan into war and it was therefore the Americans who were negotiating in bad faith. For a variation of the latter argument, see John M. Schuessler, “The Deception Dividend: FDR’s Undeclared War,” *International Security* 34, no. 4 (2010): 133–65.
80. Quoted in Ike, *Japan’s Decision for War*, 263.
81. Feis, *Road to Pearl Harbor*, 293. Feis is paraphrasing Tojo as the war decision was being made.
82. The phrase is from Levy, *Oil Strategy*, 34.
83. The first quotation is from Prince Konoe, speaking at an Imperial Conference on September 6, 1941; the second was expressed at a Liaison Conference on October 30, 1941. Ike, *Japan’s Decision for War*, 138, 198.
84. Quoted in Ike, 152. Tojo later highlighted other perceived American threats, including Roosevelt’s “arsenal of democracy” speech, mounting US expenditures on military expansion, the country’s pursuit of a two-ocean fleet, expansion of the US Air Force, a new US base in Alaska, recommendations to evacuate US women and children from East Asia, and the proclamation of a state of national emergency. Butow, *Tojo*, 225.
85. The phrase is from Levy, *Oil Strategy*, 16.


90. Kershaw, *Hitler*, 446. See also Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, on the imperative for German expansion.


96. USSBS, *German Oil Industry*, 70. The original figure is 906,000 tons; USSBS, *Oil Division*, 25. German forces captured few stocks in the other countries they conquered.


98. The number is calculated from Levy, *Oil Strategy*, 15–16. He estimated that oil production, in all German-occupied territories, was approximately 75 million barrels in 1941 and that normal oil consumption for that year, without restrictions, would have been

99. On Soviet and Romanian responses, see Goralski and Freeburg, *Oil and War*, 23. Hitler had been aware of the blockade risk since at least 1937; he mentioned it in the meeting described in the “Hossbach Memorandum.”


101. Krammer, “Fueling the Third Reich,” 400; USSBS, *German Oil Industry*, 8, 20; USSBS, *Oil Division*, 14. The last provides the figures of 230,000 to 1 million tons. Stokes, “Oil Industry,” 261–62, argues that tariffs aimed mostly to encourage synthetics; the German government had low expectations for German crude.


105. USSBS, *German Oil Industry*, 21; USSBS, *Oil Division*, 14, 18, 21. The goal was 2.584 million tons, but actual output was 1.467 million tons.

106. USSBS, *Oil Division*, 21, reports that the synthetic fuels program provided 32 percent of total oil supplies in 1940 and 47 percent in 1944.

107. USSBS, *German Oil Industry*, 22; USSBS, *Oil Division*, 22.

108. Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 117–18. The original figure is 8.7 million tons.


116. The next year, Romania exported twenty-one million barrels (three million tons) of oil to Germany. USSBS, *German Oil Industry*, 46.

117. Toprani, “Germany’s Answer,” 952 (29 million tons). The surplus was 1.5 million tons (10.5 million barrels).


120. “Hossbach Memorandum.”

121. Ericson, *Feeding the German Eagle*, 65–66, 89, 89, 102, 116, 126–27, 129, 134. The original figures are 34,000 tons, 155,000 tons, and 200,000 tons. See also Rich, *Hitler’s War Aims*, 208. The Germans were partly to blame for the shortfalls, as some were retaliatory. However, by August 1940, Germany had fulfilled 55 percent of its deliveries, compared with the Soviets’ 30 percent. Ericson, *Feeding the German Eagle*, 134.


123. Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 117–18. Original figures are from 8,701,000 tons to 5,577,000 tons.

124. Quoted in Goralski and Freeburg, *Oil and War*, 55.


128. An August 1940 study by the Military Geography Department of the General Staff also highlighted “the fundamental importance of Baku as an operational objective.” Horst Boog et al., *Germany and the Second World War*, vol. 6, *The Global War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), xiii–iv. See also Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 102; and Liddell Hart, *History*, 150.


130. The phrase is from Overy, *Russia’s War*, 84.


134. Trevor-Roper, *Hitler’s War Directives*, 51. In the process, Germany would acquire Estonia’s oil shale resources and the Soviet-controlled oil fields in Galicia. Goralski and Freeburg, *Oil and War*, 74; Krammer, “Fueling the Third Reich,” 409; Toprani, “Navy’s Success,” 98. The former were heavily damaged by retreating Soviet forces, and the latter did not significantly increase German oil supplies, as the Soviets had been selling their share of Galicia’s oil to Germany since September 1939.


136. Trevor-Roper, 93.
137. Quoted in Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 107. See also Goralski and Freeburg, *Oil and War*, 78–79; Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 95, 123–24; and Kershaw, *Hitler*, 641. Yergin, *Prize*, 334, asserts that 58 percent of Germany’s oil came from Romania in 1940. Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 99, states that 94 percent of the country’s imports came from Romania.


141. Quoted in Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 118. See also Hayward, 102, 117.

142. Quoted in Joel Hayward, “Too Little, Too Late: An Analysis of Hitler’s Failure in August 1942 to Damage Soviet Oil Production,” *Journal of Military History* 64 (2000): 771. Also see Hayward, “Hitler’s Quest for Oil,” 95–96; and Toprani, “First War for Oil,” 815, 839, 845–46, 854. The southern offensive was renamed Operation Brunswick at the end of June.


148. Hayward, “Too Little, Too Late,” 780.


8. OIL GAMBIT


7. Saddam used the phrase “mother of all battles” to refer to the US-led response to his invasion of Kuwait.


16. This figure was reported by Tariq ʿAziz. Viorst, “Report” (1990), 91.


18. After the Iran–Iraq War the state’s petroleum infrastructure also required significant investment before production could increase.


23. Gause makes a similar argument, observing that the economic crisis was perceived as “part of a more general play aimed at weakening and destabilizing the Ba’ath regime, orchestrated from the outside.” Gause, “Iraq’s Decisions,” 53.

24. ‘Aziz, interview in “Gulf War”; “Interview Session #4 (13 February)” and “Interview Session #9 (24 February),” in Battle, Saddam Hussein Talks. This hypothesis also appears in Iraqi regime documents. For example, see “General Military Intelligence Directorate (GMID) Reports and Analysis about US Attacks against Iraq in 1993, GMID Role in Iraqi Battles, Um Al-Ma’arik, Qadissiyah Saddam,” July 1991–September 2001, SH-GMID-D-000-513, Saddam Hussein Regime Collection, Conflict Records Research Center, National Defense University, Washington, DC; and “Report about the Iraq–Kuwaiti Relations before and after Persian Gulf War,” undated, SH-MISC-D-000-870, Saddam Hussein Regime Collection. These document, like others cited in this chapter, are from the Iraqi regime’s archives and were acquired by US forces during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.


34. This quotation is from the official Iraqi transcript of the meeting, available in “Confrontation in the Gulf; Excerpts from Iraqi Document on Meeting with US Envoy,” New York Times, September 23, 1990.


37. Saddam also highlighted this issue in his ACC summit speech. However, this belief predated the ceasefire; in the mid-1980s, Saddam told his advisers that the United States wanted to establish bases in the Gulf. “Transcripts of Meetings between Saddam, Vice President of the RCC Izzat Ibrahim al-Tikriti, Minister of Defense Adnan Khairallah, and Army Chief of Staff Abd al-Jawad Zinun during the Iraq–Iran War,” February 25, 1985–July 31, 1985, SH-SHTP-A-000-607, Saddam Hussein Regime Collection.


44. “Report by the Iraqi Military Intelligence Forces,” SH-PDWN-D-000-546, presents an extended analysis of this issue.

45. Freedman and Karsh, Gulf Conflict, 32; Obderdorfer, “Missed Signals.”

46. For the text of Saddam’s April 1 speech, see “President Warns Israel, Criticizes U.S.,” Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic (1030 GMT, April 2, 1990), FBIS-NES-90-064, 32-36. In the speech, Saddam also railed against Bull’s assassination and international reactions to the Bazoft execution.

47. Baker, Politics of Diplomacy, 270; Jentleson, With Friends like These, 155–59, 162.


49. The Kuwaiti portion of the field is known as Ratqa.
55. Schofield, 246–49.
57. Peter Mansfield, *Kuwait: Vanguard of the Gulf* (London: Hutchinson, 1990), 51. Qasim repeatedly insisted that he would not use force to press the territorial claim and pragmatically pointed out that if he had wanted to invade Kuwait, he would have done so immediately rather than publicly announcing the claim, thereby offering the United Kingdom an opportunity to fortify its position in the region. Mustafa M. Alani, *Operation Vantage: British Military Intervention in Kuwait, 1961* (Surrey: LAAM, 1990), 225–26.
59. Schofield, *Iraq–Kuwait Dispute*, 246–49, 266–73, 293–98. As a British official wrote of as-Suwaidi’s claim to the entirety of Kuwait, “It was clear from the rest of the text of the memorandum . . . that he did not really expect such arguments to be taken seriously.” Richard Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991), 79.
60. The port issue was increasingly pressing, as Iraq’s one other Gulf outlet, the Shatt al-ʿArab, was approaching its shipping capacity. Khadduri and Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf*, 4649; Schofield, *Iraq–Kuwait Dispute*, 247–49; Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, 78.
65. This included loans and transportation of Iraqi oil resources in Kuwaiti tankers. The latter action would precipitate the so-called Tanker War between Iran and the US Navy.
70. Tariq ʿAziz told Iraqi journalist Saʿd al-Bazzaz that the invasion would give Iraq “a lung, open to the sea.” Quoted in Musallam Ali Musallam, *The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait*:


73. Baker, Politics of Diplomacy, 360. See also “General Military Intelligence Directorate,” SH-GMID-D-000-513.


75. Baram, “Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait,” 9; “Meeting Between Saddam and Iraqi Officials Regarding the Arab Summit,” undated (1989–1990), SH-SHTP-A-000-732, Saddam Hussein Regime Collection; Viorst, “Report” (1990), 91. Iraq’s July 15 memorandum to the Arab League, mentioned later, also made the argument about other oil producers benefiting from the war. As the memorandum put it, “These funds found their way into the treasuries of the other oil-producing countries.” Schofield, Iraq–Kuwait Dispute, 790.


79. Freedman and Karsh, Gulf Conflict, 46–47.

80. Khadduri and Ghareeb, War in the Gulf, 106.


82. Heikal, Illusions of Triumph, 218.

83. All quotations are from the memorandum, in Schofield, Iraq–Kuwait Dispute, 786–91.

84. Schofield, 792–94.


86. Text in Schofield, Iraq–Kuwait Dispute, 788.


89. Obberdorfer, “Missed Signals.”


91. Quoted in Woods, Mother of All Battles, 49.


93. “Glaspie telegram.”

94. Heikal, Illusions of Triumph, 228.


103. “Interview Session #9 (24 February)”; “Saddam and His Senior Advisors Discussing Iraq’s Historical Rights to Kuwait and the United States’ Position,” December 15, 1990, SH-SHTP-D-000-557, Saddam Hussein Regime Collection. In his interview for “Gulf War,” ‘Aziz also characterized the attack as “defensive.”


106. ‘Aziz, interview in “Gulf War.”

107. ‘Aziz interview.


115. For example, Michael Renner, “Post-Saddam Iraq: Linchpin of a New Oil Order,” *Foreign Policy in Focus*, January 1, 2003.
132. EIPG briefings.
136. EIPG briefings.
139. EIPG briefings.
CONCLUSION


3. The inverse is less likely, as the “shale revolution” has dramatically reduced US dependence on foreign energy resources.


6. Oil war skeptics make this claim, as described in chapter 1. However, this section’s title is borrowed from Stephen Krasner, “Oil Is the Exception,” *Foreign Policy* 14 (1974): 68–84, which argued that oil is exceptional in the sense that it is the one resource whose price could be manipulated by an international cartel.


8. Over the last quarter century alone, the number of oil-producing states has doubled.


19. For an examination of this question applied to water, see David Katz, “Hydro-political Hyperbole: Examining Incentives for Overemphasizing the Risks of Water Wars,” *Global Environmental Politics* 11, no. 1 (2011): 12–35.


24. Gholz and Press, “Protecting ‘the Prize.’”