

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems



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Table of Contents

Tables and Figures	iii
Abstract	v
Introduction: A Georealist Theory of Great Power Politics	1
Theory of Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning	38
Theory of Offshore Balancing	107
Theory of Alliance Choice	152
Theory of Major War	187
Conclusion	269
Bibliography	291

Tables and Figures

TABLE 2.1: Best Responses to Bandwagoning and Balancing Risks	51
FIGURE 2.2: Balancing, bandwagoning, and buck-passing	55
TABLE 2.2: Selection of Cases	61
TABLE 2.4: Predictions of Austrian Balancing and Bandwagoning Risks	68
FIGURE 2.2: Austrian Balancing and Bandwagoning Risks Scatterplot	68
TABLE 2.5: Theoretical Predictions versus Historical Record	103
TABLE 3.1: Cases Investigated	123
TABLE 3.2 Summary of Results	148
TABLE 4.1: Alliances used from the COW alliance dataset	169
TABLE 4.2: Alliance frequency.....	172
TABLE 4.3: Geopolitical distribution of alliance dyads.....	172
TABLE 4.4: Frequency of alliance dyads per year by geopolitical category.....	172
TABLE 4.5: Model Calculations, 1883.....	176
TABLE 4.6: Main test, contingency table.....	179
TABLE 4.7: Accuracy.....	179
TABLE 4.8: Rule 4 and 5, different thresholds.....	180
TABLE 4.9: Alliances and ideology, aggregate level	181
TABLE 4.10: Alliances and ideology, dyadic level.....	182
TABLE 4.11: Alliances and religion.....	183
FIGURE 5.1: Expected Gains, Victory, and Probability of War	210
TABLE 5.1: Predicted Outcomes.....	210
TABLE 5.2: Wars and Crises Examined.....	212
TABLE 5.3: Historical and Theoretical Conflicts.....	218
TABLE 5.4: Dyads Sharing Conflicts with a Third Great Power	219
TABLE 5.5: Summary of Timing of Wars.....	224
TABLE 5.6: War timing test, contingency table	224
TABLE 5.7: Summary of Predictions on Causes and Alignments.....	227
TABLE 5.8: Summary of Results	266
TABLE 6.1 Alliance Model Predictions by year	289

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Abstract

My dissertation develops *Georealism*, a theory to explain how great powers behave in international relations. The dissertation has two main goals. One is that it aims to create a uniform theory of international relations, particularly balancing, bandwagoning, alliances, and war. The other is that it intends to explain the behaviour of individual great powers in detail, rather than just systemic outcomes. The basic premise of *Georealism* is that states face a threat both from their neighbours and from potential hegemons. In four chapters, I explore the implications of this insight on great power behaviour. First, I explain why continental states choose balancing or bandwagoning when faced with a potential hegemon. Second, I look at how offshore states behave towards the continental states to maximize their security. Third, I create a theory of the alliance choices of great power. Last, I explain which great powers go to war with each other and when. All the theoretical implications are well supported by quantitative and qualitative tests taken from various cases of European great power politics from 1683 to 1913. *Georealism* can indeed predict the behaviour and motivations of individual states with great accuracy on a variety of topics.

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[I]

*Introduction: A Georealist Theory
of Great Power Politics*

“La politique de toutes les puissances est dans leur géographie”¹

Napoleon I

Multipolarity is the most common structure of international systems in history.² Compared to this, the forty-five years of bipolar superpower competition between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War were a short aberration. The twenty-five years of unipolar American supremacy also seem to be nothing more than a fleeting ‘moment’.³ Currently, the world seems to be

¹ “The policies of all powers are in their geography”, Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et cie, 1904), pp. 400-401.

² Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2007), p. 138. Examples of this include the European international system from 1492 to 1945, and the Renaissance Italian, ancient Greek city-states, the Chinese Warring states, and the modern Middle East.

³ Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1, (1990/1991), pp. 23-33.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

returning to multipolarity, with countries like China, India, and Russia playing an increasingly important role.⁴

China has grown tremendously both economically and militarily since opening up to the world in the 1970s. With its increased power, Beijing is becoming an increasingly assertive player from the South China Sea to Africa.⁵ India is lagging behind China, but has also experienced a phenomenal growth in the last decades. Thus, New Delhi seems poised to play an important role in world affairs, for the first time since the Mughal Empire.⁶ Russia currently faces economic difficulties, and a far less promising economic and demographic base than India and China. Yet, the Russian military has seen a remarkable revival over the last 15 years, which has enabled Moscow to enforce its interests with great success in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria.⁷ The EU is currently not playing a role anywhere close to that of a great power due to internal political divisions.⁸ Yet, it possesses the demographic, economic, and technological wherewithal to achieve this status easily if its member states allow it to do so. At the same time, foreign wars, financial problems, and dysfunctional politics have strained America's resources. While it

⁴ Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008); National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008); Randall L. Schweller and Xiaoyu Pu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline," *International Security*, Vol 36, No. 1 (Summer 2011), pp. 41-72; Susan Turner, "Russia, China and a Multipolar World Order: The Danger in the Undefined," *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2009), pp. 159-184.

⁵ Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2012); Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon? China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 149-168; Yong Deng, "Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U. S. Global Strategy," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001), pp. 343-365; Robert D. Kaplan, *Asia's Cauldron: the South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific* (New York: Random House, 2015). For more sceptical views, see David L. Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015).

⁶ Sandy Gordon, *India's Rise as an Asian Power: Nation, Neighborhood, and Region* (Washington D.C.: The Georgetown University Press, 2014).

⁷ Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012).

⁸ Asle Toje, *The European Union as a Small Power: After the Post-Cold War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

is likely to remain a great power for many decades or even centuries to come, the United States has become increasingly wary of playing an active role in Eurasia.⁹ Hence, the global system is increasingly returning towards a normal multipolar state of affairs.

To comprehend future international relations, there is a vital need to understand multipolarity. However, existing International Relations theories provide limited help in this respect. Neorealism, the dominant theory of international relations, was conceived during the Cold War. Its theoretical outlook still reflects this. A core assumption of neorealist theories is that states face only one important threat, which they balance against, or bandwagon with.¹⁰ In multipolar systems, this assumption is simply not true. A great power is potentially threatened by all states capable of projecting power onto it. Explaining the consequences of this requires a new theoretical framework that takes into account all threats great powers face.

The Georealist Argument

To understand how great powers behave in multipolar systems, I develop the theory of *Georealism*. The basic assumption of the theory is that states want to maximize their security. Most importantly, they want to avoid any losses of security, which can occur

⁹ Patrick Porter, *Sharing Power: Prospects for a U.S. Concert-Balance Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College 2013), p. 44.

¹⁰ Alternatively they choose some variation of this dichotomy, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Security*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 137-168; Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Patricia A. Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004). For in-depth analysis of realist literature, see for example Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); William C. Wohlforth, "Realism," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 131-149.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

from two fundamentally different threats. The first is a systemic threat that a rising hegemon will subjugate all states. Such an outcome fundamentally changes the anarchical structure of the international system, by rendering all other states defenceless. Hence, it concerns every state equally. The second threat to states is that neighbours will decrease their power through military force or coercion. This can range from slight losses in spheres of influence to a complete annexation. None of these outcomes threatens the international system as a whole, however.¹¹ Rather it is only a problem to the individual state and possibly to its allies. Yet, to the states it concerns, the threat from neighbours can be just as serious as the threat of hegemony. For example, Austria, Prussia, and Russia erased Poland from the map between 1772 and 1795.¹² Even the comparatively minor loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany in 1871 became the obsession of French foreign policy for the following 47 years.¹³ Moreover, losses in power to neighbours is much more frequent than the rise of hegemons. Comprehending great power politics is therefore impossible while overlooking the threat from neighbours.

Understanding the role and consequences of the threat from neighbours is impossible without looking at geography. Geography strongly inhibits power projection, limiting the number of great powers that actually threaten each other. In particular, states separated by water or other great powers are typically unable to project power onto each other without the use of alliances.¹⁴ Thus, the number of neighbours, meaning great powers with a potential for conflict, is much smaller than the total number of dyads. This influences every aspect of great power behaviour in international security relations. *Georealism* is

¹¹ Unless it happens to all states at once.

¹² Jerzy Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland 1772, 1793, 1795* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

¹³ Bertrand Joly, "La France et la Revanche (1871-1914)," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (April-June 1999), pp. 325-347.

¹⁴ Randolph M. Siverson and Harvey Starr, "Alliances and Geopolitics," *Political Geography Quarterly*, Vol. 9 No. 3 (1990), pp. 232-248.

Chapter I: Introduction

thus a geopolitical theory of great power politics: the great powers' relative power and geographical location to each other determine their behaviour.

Georealism's general argument is that great power behaviour in international relations is a product of the relative threat between neighbours and potential hegemons. In this dissertation, I look at the topics of balancing and bandwagoning, offshore balancing, alliance choice, and war. Below I give a summary of the main arguments presented on these issues. However, the theory is not limited to these topics. Given the pervasiveness of the threat from neighbours and potential hegemons in the strategic outlook of states, it also influences topics such as enduring rivalries and military spending.

Balancing and Bandwagoning

When facing a potential hegemon, any great power must decide whether to balance against or bandwagon with this state. Its decision will however not only depend on the threat from the potential hegemon, but also the threat it faces from hostile neighbours. This is because balancing against the potential hegemon usually increases the threat a state faces from its neighbours. Balancing not only takes up scarce resources that could have been devoted against neighbours, it also gives the neighbours the possibility of allying with the potential hegemon. In contrast, bandwagoning with the potential hegemon can provide a high level of security against threatening neighbours, but at the cost of an increased risk of hegemony. Consequently, great powers determine their response to the potential hegemon based on the relative risk of balancing and bandwagoning. Balancing is the best option if it does not lead to a high threat from neighbours, while bandwagoning makes a hegemonic bid likely. Conversely, bandwagoning is the best option if it is unlikely to provoke a hegemonic bid, while

balancing leads to a high threat from neighbours. If both strategies lead to a high risk from neighbours and potential hegemon, great powers mix the two strategies to decrease their negative impacts. I present these arguments in detail in chapter II.

Offshore Balancing

Separated from other great powers by water, offshore states do not face a direct threat from neighbours. Instead, any threat to such states depends on the continental powers' ability to project power over water, which requires heavy investments in naval power. Usually continental states are unable to make these investments in multipolar systems because of the threat they pose to each other. However, forming strong alliances can overcome this problem. Consequently, offshore states want to prevent any such alliances from materializing. They do this by influencing the alliance preferences of continental great powers with promises of support or threats of enmity. I call this a strategy of 'divide and deter'. Greater involvement by offshore powers through active balancing is only necessary if the divide and deter strategy fails. Chapter III is devoted to outlining this argument in detail.

Alliance Choice

Alliances, together with military spending, are the tools states have to for defence against external threats. Their function on the hegemonic threat is very simple: joining the balancing coalition decreases the risk of a rising hegemon. Alliances have two functions against neighbours. First, they aggregate the capabilities of their members, by ensuring that they face their enemies together rather than alone. Second, alliances decrease any threat the members initially posed to each other. This comes at the cost of giving states new enemies, particularly the neighbours of their allies. Consequently, an alliance never

Chapter I: Introduction

concerns just two states, but all the neighbours of its members. Moreover, the formation of one alliance can make its neighbours form a counter-alliance, which will concern all their neighbours in turn. A simple dyadic approach to geography is therefore not sufficient to understand alliance choice. Rather, geography must be conceptualized systemically by looking at how all states relate to each other. This approach generates a much higher explanatory power than alternative approaches, in particular at predicting the alliance choices of individual great powers. In chapter IV, I elaborate this argument.

Major War

Major war is the most serious undertaking a great power can engage in, due to the considerable destruction involved. Two conditions consequently need to be present to justify these costs. Firstly, the gains of victory need to be sufficient for the aggressor to pay for the costs of fighting the war. Only territorial, regional, and hegemonic conflicts promise such gains. Secondly, the aggressor needs to have sufficient capabilities on its side to expect victory, so that it can enforce its goals. In any multipolar system, this depends on whether other great powers are likely to intervene in the conflict, and on which side. Most states prefer intervening on the side of the defending state. Only states with their own conflicts with the defending state or a strong interest in allying with the aggressor are likely to intervene on its side. Analysing when aggressors both expects sufficient gains to pay for the war and to win therefore enables predicting both the participants and timing of great power wars.

Summary

Georealism offers a coherent and extensive theory of international relations. First, it brings together explanations of balancing and bandwagoning, offshore balancing, alliance

choice, and wars under a very tight overarching theoretical framework. Thus, it also shows how choices on these topics are closely intertwined with each other. Second, *Georealism* offers much more extensive and detailed predictions, about both systemic outcomes and the behaviour of individual states. Using quantitative and qualitative studies from 1683 to 1913, I demonstrate that the behaviour of the European great powers conformed closely to these predictions. Many of *Georealism's* empirical implications are also novel. For example, underbalancing is not caused primarily by domestic constraints,¹⁵ but by the threat from neighbours. The common claim that alignments follow a checkerboard pattern is for instance not true,¹⁶ because states tend to ally with their neighbours against other neighbours. Offshore states may also have a decisive effect on continental great power politics even when they remain non-aligned.

Georealism is primarily a theory of multipolarity, but multipolarity is almost always present in every system in some form. Bipolar systems only consist of two great powers, limiting the direct impact of geography on great power interactions. However, regional sub-systems are likely to be multipolar. This is important, because much of great power politics in bipolar systems takes the form of competition for alliances and influence of minor powers in such systems. American and Soviet competition for supremacy in the multipolar regions of the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa, for instance,

¹⁵ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Powers Politics*, pp. 267-333; and Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*, pp. 1-21.

¹⁶ For example of prominent historians or international relations scholars quoting this term, see L. B. Namier, *Conflicts: Studies In Contemporary History* (London: Macmillan, 1942), p. 14; Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 23; Martin M. Wight, *Power Politics* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2002), p. 159; Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 61; Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane, "The United States and International Institutions in Europe after the Cold War," in *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991*, ed. Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye and Stanley Hoffman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 126; William C. Wohlforth, "U.S. Strategy in a Unipolar World," in *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, ed. G. John Ikenberry (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), p. 108; Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 225-226.

dominated much of the Cold War. However, minor powers are more interested in seeking great power support against their own peer competitors. Without understanding the multipolar interactions between minor powers, realist theories can only explain that the two great powers in bipolar systems tend to have conflictual relations.¹⁷ While this is undoubtedly true, it is hardly very surprising or satisfactory.

The most notable topic not covered in this dissertation is mobilization of internal resources.¹⁸ This is primarily due to constraints of space. Mobilization of internal resources is a crucial topic, as it together with alliances constitute the tools states have to ensure their security and survival. Consequently, it deserves a thorough treatment of its own. Moreover, most decisions about internal mobilization are about the long term. Increasing the size of the army and acquiring new capabilities require significant transfer of resources from civilian to military use. This inevitably takes a considerable time. In contrast, decisions about external balancing, alliances, and war, have an instant effect. Hence, it makes sense to keep internal and external means of behaving conceptually distinct, which is why I focus on the latter.

The Literature

Realist scholarship covers all of the topics in this dissertation, albeit with a varying level of detail. In this section, I review this literature with a twofold purpose: highlighting the many important contributions of the scholarship and illuminate its shortcomings. The general problem of most realist scholarship is that it relies on a dyadic view of

¹⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 337-347.

¹⁸ This is often called internal balancing in the literature, but the term is unfortunate. It presumes that the state is balancing, which might not be the case. Indeed, states that are bandwagoning mobilize their internal resources in the same way as states that are balancing, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 167-170.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

international relations. Important decisions in international relations, whether they are about balancing, alliances, or war, are viewed in terms of relations between two states, rather than the entire system as a whole. However, in multipolar systems, great powers always need to consider about the possible actions of several actors at once.

Some genuine systemic treatments of multipolarity do exist, but these have a different set of problems, most notably a failure to include geography in a rigorous way. This makes the theories too complex and cumbersome for practical use. When modelling the interdependent behaviour of many actors, the main cause of complexity is the number of possible interactions. Introducing geography, thus greatly simplifies the modelling by reducing the number of relevant dyads.

Balance Of Power

The term the ‘balance of power’ has taken a number of meanings over the centuries.¹⁹ Classical realists understood the term as a general theory of how states behave to maintain their security and survival.²⁰ This changed when Kenneth Waltz introduced neorealism in his seminal book, *Theory of International Politics*.²¹ Neorealism had a profound influence on the literature, as it maintained many of the basic insights of the sprawling classical realist scholarship within a rigorous and parsimonious framework. However, this came at the cost of some radical simplifications. Waltz wanted to create a purely structural theory

¹⁹ For a history of balance of power theory, see Michael Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History & Theory* (London: Routledge, 1996). For the many alternative meanings, see Inis L. Claude, *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 13; Martin M. Wight, “The Balance of Power,” in *Diplomatic Investigations Essays in the Theory of International Politics*, ed. Herbert Butterfield, Martin Wight, and Hedley Bull (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966), p. 151; Ernst B. Haas, “The Balance of Power: Prescription, Concept, or Propaganda,” *World Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (July 1953), pp. 446-459.

²⁰ For classical realist treatments of the balance of power, see for example Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), pp. 171-228; Raymond Aron, *Peace & War: A Theory of International Relations*, trans. Daniel J. Mahoney and Brian C. Anderson (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2003), pp. 181-209; Wight, *Power Politics*, pp. 157-169; and Claude, *Power and International Relations*, pp. 11-39.

²¹ Waltz called his theory “structural realism”, but few scholars adopted this term.

Chapter I: Introduction

of international politics. To do this, he exclusively focused on the only truly structural threat states face, namely that a hegemon transforms the system from anarchical to hierarchical.²² All other states want to avoid this outcome, because it will mean the end of their independence. Consequently, they will usually balance against the most powerful state, which poses the greatest hegemonic threat.²³

Later neorealists have generally accepted that great powers should balance against potential hegemons. This is probably because the threat of hegemony is so central to Waltz's theory that it is conceptually difficult to move away from it. Mearsheimer agrees completely with Waltz on this point.²⁴ Walt amends it slightly by arguing that states do not balance against power, but rather against threat. This is a composite measure of aggregate power, geographical proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions.²⁵ Schweller assumes that balancing against the most powerful state is the rational choice, and resorts to domestic politics to explain why states sometimes fail to pursue their objective national interest.²⁶ Critics of Waltz have typically come from outside of realism and have not criticized his theory on its own terms.²⁷ Consequently, the seemingly obvious point that the threat of hegemony is not the only serious threat facing great powers has remained largely unquestioned.

Serious repercussions follow from neorealism's failure to consider the other threats great powers face. This includes difficulties with explaining responses to potential hegemons.

Waltz notes that states often fail to balance against the most powerful state, but rather

²² Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 114-116.

²³ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 121.

²⁴ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 156-157.

²⁵ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 17-28.

²⁶ See for example Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances*, Jason W. Davidson, *The Origins of Revisionist and Status-quo States* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*.

²⁷ Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

bandwagon with it instead.²⁸ However, he does not explain why states act contrary to the core logic of his theory. Walt argues that states bandwagon either because opposition to the biggest threat is futile, or to share its spoils of victory.²⁹ Moreover, he contends that states are prone to bandwagoning if they are weak or have few available allies.³⁰ Mearsheimer argues that bandwagoning never makes sense for true great powers.³¹ They simply buck-pass and hope other states will balance the potential hegemon instead.³² Contiguous and strong states tend to balance, while other states are more prone to buck-passing. Yet, this does not square with historical evidence, as alliances with potential hegemonies are common. Neoclassical realists, led by Randall Schweller, argue that the crucial factor explaining different responses to potential hegemonies lies in domestic politics.³³

The inability to explain bandwagoning adequately has also led to contradictory theoretical predictions and empirical findings. Thus, there is no clear and authoritative explanation of why bandwagoning can be a rational strategy for great powers, despite the centrality of the concept in the literature. Waltz argues that states balance against power, and that balancing is more common than bandwagoning. Walt agrees that balancing is more common, but asserts that states balance against threat rather than power. Mearsheimer agrees with Waltz that great powers balance against power, but argues that they virtually never bandwagon. Lastly, Schweller believes bandwagoning is more common than balancing.³⁴

²⁸ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 126.

²⁹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 21-22.

³⁰ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 29-31.

³¹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 162-163.

³² Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 157-162.

³³ See for example Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances*, Jason W. Davidson, *The Origins of Revisionist and Status-quo States* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*.

³⁴ Waltz, "Evaluating Theories," pp. 913-917; Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 263; Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances*, p. 77; Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 269-272.

Another problem stemming from neorealism's exclusive focus on the threat of hegemony is that it does not give a realistic picture of the threat great powers face. Consequently, the theories cannot predict very much.³⁵ Waltz is completely open about this fact, famously arguing that his theory is of international politics, rather than foreign policy. In practice, this means it can only explain aggregate outcomes in the system, not the behaviour of individual states.³⁶ Thus, his only clear empirical predictions are that balancing behaviour is prevalent and that bipolar systems are more stable than multipolar systems.³⁷ Other realists have been unhappy with the low explanatory power of Waltz theories, and offer more nuanced accounts by considering more variables. This includes geographical proximity and contiguity, the offence/defence balance, domestic politics, and intentions. However, remaining true to Waltz's distinction between international politics and foreign policy, neorealist scholars generally do not attempt to make rigorous predictions about the behaviour of individual great powers. Indeed, Waltz's contention that a theory of foreign policy is necessary to explain the behaviour of individual states may have discouraged many neorealists from making point predictions. This is despite the fact that there is no logical necessity behind this claim.³⁸

The inability to explain bandwagoning and to provide predictions of the behaviour of individual great powers is not only an academic matter. Firstly, the lack of clear predictions and conceptual clarity surrounding bandwagoning makes neorealism difficult

³⁵ Other structural theories, such as that of Morton Kaplan offers far more predictions, but Waltz does not consider it properly structural. See Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2005). For Waltz' criticism of Kaplan, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 50-58.

³⁶ Kenneth N. Waltz, "International Politics Is Not Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* Vol. 6, No. 1 (1996), pp. 54-57.

³⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 168-169.

³⁸ Colin Elman, "Horses for courses: Why nor neorealist theories of foreign policy?," *Security Studies* Vol. 6, No. 1 (1996), pp. 7-53.

to test. Indeed, John Vasquez goes as far as arguing that neorealism is a degenerative research project.³⁹ Moreover, the theory becomes too far removed from actual international relations to be of much use to policymakers.

Offshore Balancing

Realists generally agree that offshore states behave differently from other states, because water inhibits power projection, through the “stopping power of water”.⁴⁰ Yet, sharp disagreement exists about the actual implications of this fact.⁴¹ The scholarship can roughly be divided into two distinct camps: interventionism and isolationism. Isolationists argue that offshore states are so protected by water that it is very unlikely that continental states will ever seriously threaten them. Furthermore, as long as the continental states are left alone, they will typically keep each other busy by automatically balancing against each other. Continental involvement is therefore not necessary for offshore states, except

³⁹ John A. Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 254-272.

⁴⁰ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 114-125.

⁴¹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 141-143; Christopher Layne, “The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise,” *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), pp. 5-51; Christopher Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America’s Future Grand Strategy,” *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer 1997), pp. 86-124; Christopher Layne, “Offshore Balancing Revisited,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2002), pp. 233-248; Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Christopher Layne, “The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States’ Unipolar Moment,” *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 7-41; Christopher Layne, “America’s Middle East Grand Strategy After Iraq: The Moment for Offshore Balancing has Arrived,” *International Studies Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 5-25; Barry R. Posen, “The Case for Restraint,” *American Interest*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (November/December 2007), pp. 7-17; Barry R. Posen, “A Grand Strategy of Restraint,” in Michèle A. Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, ed., *Finding Our Way: Debating American Grand Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Century, 2008), pp. 81-102; Barry R. Posen, “Stability and Change in U.S. Grand Strategy,” *Orbis*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (October 2007), pp. 561-567; Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2014); Daryl G. Press, “The Effects of Wars on Neutral Countries: Why It Doesn’t Pay to Preserve the Peace,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Summer 2001), pp. 1-57; Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, “Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation,” *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Spring 1997), pp. 5-48; Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, “Restraining Order: For Strategic Modesty,” *World Affairs*, Fall 2009, pp. 84-94; Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent, “Graceful Decline? The Surprising Success of Great Power Retrenchment,” *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Spring 2011), pp. 7-44; Christopher A. Preble, *Power Problem: How American Military Dominance Makes Us Less Safe, Less Prosperous, and Less Free* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

Chapter I: Introduction

in extreme cases. Indeed, it tends to be harmful and costly by rendering the continental states dependent on the offshore state, and in worst case turn many of them hostile.

Interventionists are far more sceptical about the ability of continental states to automatically balance against each other. If left alone, interventionists believe that continental states will launch bids for hegemony, a grave threat to the offshore state. Consequently, offshore states need to join continental alliances and wars to balance against potential hegemonies, so that such an outcome does not arise.⁴²

Both isolationists and interventionists are correct as long as their underlying assumptions are true, which they sometimes are. Yet, neither theory provides a full picture of the security strategies available to offshore states. Most notably, nobody properly theorizes the limitations to 'the stopping power of water', and thus fail to delineate the boundaries of their arguments. Isolationism only works if the stopping power of water is absolute, but this is often not the case. Conversely, interventionism implicitly assumes that the stopping power of water is very high, although this is often not true either.⁴³ In addition, neither theory fully considers the effect of multipolarity. The major threat to offshore states in such systems is usually not from potential hegemonies alone, but from alliances. Britain, for example, faced a continental coalition during the War of American Independence, consisting of France, Spain, and the Netherlands, which put Britain's very existence into question.⁴⁴ No individual continental states posed a serious hegemonic threat. In fact, France was unusually weak at the time, and so were the Spain and the Netherlands as

⁴² Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 114-125.

⁴³ Mearsheimer suggests the effect as absolute, but his conclusions point to the fact that it is in fact very limited. Indeed, if water inhibits power projection completely, the offshore state would never have to worry about continental affairs Mearsheimer is aware of this problem, but does not provide a solution, see *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 141-142.

⁴⁴ Jonathan R. Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

well. Hence, they could only pose a threat together. A proper theory of offshore balancing must therefore consider these issues. *Georealism*, with its focus on geography and multipolarity, is well equipped to fill this lacuna.

Alliances

A failure to understand multipolarity is also a recurring problem in the scholarship on alliances. Two different strands exist in the realist literature on this topic. The first sees alliances from a balance of power framework. Waltz argues that states form either balancing or bandwagoning alliances when facing a potential hegemon.⁴⁵ Mearsheimer asserts that bandwagoning is not a viable choice for great powers, and that the alternative to balancing is buck-passing.⁴⁶ These theories are unsatisfactory at explaining alliances in general, because states face many threats besides potential hegemons. Most alliance scholarship therefore maintains the basic theoretical framework, but sees alliances directed for or against threats in general, rather than potential hegemons exclusively.⁴⁷ Walt offers the standard version of this theory, arguing that states either balance against or bandwagon with the biggest threat.⁴⁸ Bandwagoning takes place either defensively because resistance against the threat is futile, or offensively to share in the spoils of victory of the threatening state.⁴⁹ Yet, applying balance of power theory directly to alliances is problematic. The balancing/bandwagoning dichotomy clearly does not cover the full range of strategies that states may choose. Most obviously, neutrality is not an

⁴⁵ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 121-126.

⁴⁶ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 157-159, 163.

⁴⁷ Walt is unclear whether threat is any kind of threat, or just of hegemony. Hence, his theory can be both an alliance theory or a theory of the balance of power, depending on which interpretation is taken.

⁴⁸ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 17-28.

⁴⁹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 21-22.

option.⁵⁰ Most other scholars have therefore abandoned the dichotomy in favour of more realistic frameworks as well.

Patricia Weitsman expands on Walt's theoretical framework,⁵¹ combining it with Paul Schroeder's insight that alliances can also be a tool of management of other states.⁵² Rather than two categories of state behaviour, Weitsman has four, balancing, bandwagoning, hedging, and tethering.⁵³ Hedging takes the form of weak commitments when a state faces several threats and does not want to commit itself. Tethering is a strategy to decrease the threat that two states may pose to each other, through an alliance.⁵⁴ This theory can explain a broader range of behaviours than balance of threat theory, notably by arguing that states may face several threats simultaneously. Yet, many of the problems remain. Neutrality is still not adequately captured. Furthermore, Weitsman takes the threats that trigger alliances as given. While a seemingly natural simplification, this assumption is actually highly problematic. Alliances are not only made against threats, they also greatly influence which states consider each other as threatening. One is therefore not logically prior to the other. A notable instance of this is in the empirical section, when the threat that Germany posed to Austria-Hungary disappears from 1873 to 1879 without any explanation.⁵⁵ Many other scholars have looked at how alliances influence the threats states pose to each other. Nevertheless, this

⁵⁰ Dan Reiter, *Crucible of Beliefs: Learning, Alliances, and World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 53; John D. Ciorciari, *The Limits of Alignment: Southeast Asia and the Great Powers Since 1975* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), p. 4.

⁵¹ Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, p. 3.

⁵² Paul W. Schroeder, "Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," in *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems*, ed. Klaus Knorr (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1976), pp. 230-231.

⁵³ Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, p. 20.

⁵⁴ Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, pp. 20-24.

⁵⁵ Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, pp. 47, 59.

has not led to a general theory of alliances by combining it this intuition with all the other reasons why states ally with each other.⁵⁶

The other strand of the alliance literature uses rational choice theory to model alliances. All alliances provide a certain level of utility, based on security and power calculations. By comparing these various utilities, rational choice theorists aim to predict what alliances states choose. While this literature is more attuned to the importance of multipolarity, it fails to use geography to simplify its consequences. Hence, the theories become far too complex to use in practice. Glenn Snyder offers a comprehensive theory of alliances based on their effects on security and autonomy. Yet, it relies on 19 variables, many of which are impossible to measure. Lacking a practical measure for alliance payoffs, Snyder thus never even proceeds to compare different alliances to each other. Emerson Niou, Peter Ordeshook, and Gregory Rose provide a theory based only on power calculations. As this provides a simpler theory than Snyder does, they are able to compare different alliance choices with each other. However, as they do not include geography, it is difficult to distinguish the payoffs of the different alliances from each other. Hence, they have to make a number of ad hoc assumptions to exclude unrealistic alliances, and even after this, their predictions remain indeterminate.⁵⁷ Michael Altfeld argues that alliances form when they offer security gains.⁵⁸ However, only a small fraction of all the potentially beneficial alliances actually formed, and he never explains why states choose one option over another.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), Marco Cesa, *Allies yet Rivals: International Politics in the 18th Century Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

⁵⁷ Emerson M. S. Niou, Peter C. Ordeshook and Gregory M. Rose, *The Balance of Power: Stability in International Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁵⁸ Michael F. Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally: Theory and a Test," *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4, (1984), pp. 523-544.

⁵⁹ Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally," p. 536.

Great Power War

Although war is an essential part of great power politics, modern balance of power scholarship says surprisingly little about it.⁶⁰ Waltz claims that states fight wars primarily due to miscalculations resulting from the anarchical structure of the international system.⁶¹ Accordingly, multipolar systems are more unstable than bipolar ones, because they offer more possibilities for such miscalculations.⁶² This is very far from offering an explanation of actual conflicts, an endeavour that Waltz asserts is impossible to achieve within a neorealist framework.⁶³ Later realists have found this hard to accept, and aim for at least some more nuance. Mearsheimer claims that states are power maximizers that have the ultimate goal of regional hegemony. Unbalanced multipolar systems are particularly war-prone, because they contain clear contenders for achieving their hegemonic aims.⁶⁴ While this may explain hegemonic wars, it fails to explain major wars in general. This is because wars are often fought over territory and influence rather than hegemony. Notably, the European system experienced four major wars between 1853 and 1871. Yet, power was unusually evenly distributed among the great powers at the time.

A number of other realist explanations of war exist, notably hegemonic stability theory, defensive realism, and neoclassical realism. While neorealists focus on static distributions of power, hegemonic stability theorists look at how changes in relative power between

⁶⁰ James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Summer 1995), p. 380.

⁶¹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), pp. 159-186.

⁶² Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 161-193.

⁶³ Waltz, "International Politics Is Not Foreign Policy," pp. 54-57.

⁶⁴ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 337-346.

rising and declining states cause wars.⁶⁵ Yet, these theories too only explain hegemonic wars. Defensive realists predict that wars become more prevalent when offensive war is relatively more effective.⁶⁶ This is probably true, but establishing which technological developments that favour offensive versus defensive war has proven notoriously difficult.⁶⁷ Lastly, neoclassical realists explain war in terms of domestic factors, in particular arguing that revisionist states tend to go to war.⁶⁸ While this is true, the statement is near tautological without an explanation of why some states are revisionist.

Definitions and Concepts

As the literature review shows, current realist theories are unable to provide satisfactory explanations on great power responses to potential hegemon, alliances, and wars. *Georealism* solves these shortcomings. Given that *Georealism* has a more ambitious scope than other realist theories, it also has different conceptual needs. In this section, I elaborate the key concepts of the theory: international system, multipolarity, hegemon, balancing, bandwagoning, geography, and neighbours.

International System

Throughout the dissertation, I assume that great power interaction takes place within a largely self-contained international system. This means that other actors, such as smaller

⁶⁵ For hegemonic stability theory, see Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 186-210, and Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4, (Spring 1988), pp. 591-613; and A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). For dynamic differentials theory, see Dale C. Copeland, *The Origins of Major War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

⁶⁶ Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214; Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Offense-Defense Theory and Its Critics," *Security Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Summer 1995), pp. 660-691; Steven van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Charles L. Glaser and Chaim Kaufmann, "What is the Offense-Defense Balance and Can We Measure It?," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Spring 1998), pp. 44-82.

⁶⁷ Keir Alexander Lieber, *War and the Engineers: The Primacy of Politics over Technology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

⁶⁸ Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances*, pp. 24-25; Davidson, *The Origins of Revisionist and Status-quo States*.

Chapter I: Introduction

states and great powers outside the system, do not influence great power interaction to a significant extent. Historically, only the bipolar Cold War system approached being truly global. All other systems were regional, because of strong geographical constraints to the projection of power at a distance. *Georealism* applies to all such systems, whether they encompass a single region such as Europe, or the entire world.

Multipolarity

A system is multipolar if it satisfies two basic criteria. Firstly, it needs to have three or more actors. The distinction between multipolar and bipolar systems is important, in that in the former any interaction between the great powers also concerns at least one other great power. Secondly, no great power can be so strong that it can defeat all other great powers at once. If the contrary is the case, then the system is hegemonic.

The distinctions between multipolarity, bipolarity and hegemony are relatively simple. Unipolar systems are however much harder to separate from multipolar ones. Such systems are in essence multipolar systems where the strongest state, the unipole, is very close to establishing itself as a hegemon. A unipole is extremely powerful, but unable to impose its will without risk in the same way as a hegemon, especially if other great powers combine against it.⁶⁹ America can for instance not enforce its view in every global conflict, such as Crimea, Iran, and North Korea, despite its preponderance of power.⁷⁰ If the unipolar state is continental, such systems are likely to be highly unstable, as the

⁶⁹ Nuno P. Monteiro, *Theory of Unipolar Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 40-42. Note that some scholars define hegemony not only in terms of its power, but also the role it plays, see Thomas S. Mowle and David H. Sacko, *The Unipolar World: An Unbalanced Future* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 7.

⁷⁰ Joseph S. Nye, J r., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

unipole will drive for full hegemony.⁷¹ Great powers approximating this role include the Habsburgs under Charles V, France in the late 17th century, and Germany during the First and Second World War. All of these states were extremely prone to war. As a contrast, a unipolar system can be very stable under an offshore state. Such states are not compelled to strive for hegemony due to their higher level of security.⁷² Rather, they aim for preserving the status quo by preventing other states from combining against them. *Georealism* can account for this kind of system, but it is a special case that I do not develop in this dissertation.

Actual and Potential Hegemons

A hegemon is a state that is so powerful that it is able to defeat all other great powers, even combined.⁷³ As any resistance against such states is futile, they face no external constraints to their behaviour. Crucially, they are free to impose their will on all the other states. The hegemony might be regional or global, depending on the size of the system in question.

I assume that the potential hegemon is any state that is significantly more powerful than the other continental great powers in the system.⁷⁴ If two or more great powers are equally strong, then there is no potential hegemon, but this configuration of power is relatively rare in practice. My definition is more expansive than that of some other

⁷¹ Jack S. Levy, "The Polarity of the System and International Stability: An Empirical Analysis," in *Polarity and War*, ed. Ned Sabrosky (Boulder, Col.: Westview, 1985), pp. 49-51.

⁷² Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do States Ally against the Leading Global Power?," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Summer 2010), pp. 7-43.

⁷³ Realists use a variety of different definitions of hegemony, often simply meaning a very powerful state, see Benjamin Miller, "Competing Realist Perspective on Great Power Behavior," in *Realism: Restatements and Renewal*, ed. Benjamin Frankel (London: Frank Cass, 1996), p. 324. I never employ this definition in the dissertation.

⁷⁴ Offshore states have no need to make a hegemonic bid, because their security can be preserved at much less cost and risk by keeping the continental states divided. See chapter III.

scholars.⁷⁵ However, it enables explaining a wider range of cases in international relations. This is because the threat of hegemony always influences great power behaviour, even if its risk is relatively low.⁷⁶

This argument could be taken even further, by assuming that any great power can be a potential hegemon, as they could at some future point become able to defeat all other states. While this is true in theory, the practical advantages of such an assumption are limited, because the hegemonic threat from most states is extremely low. The less powerful states are, the less likely it is that they will be able to establish themselves as hegemon within a relevant time horizon. For instance, it is unlikely that the other great powers in 1740 worried much about the prospect of a Prussian hegemonic bid that would occur 174 years later in 1914. Hence, it makes little sense that great powers with limited resources and many threats should defend themselves against the negligible hegemonic threat posed by other continental states than the strongest. The only times two states pose a hegemonic threat is when the two strongest states are roughly equally powerful. In this case, both of them pose a low hegemonic threat, because they can easily check each other's hegemonic bids.

Balancing and Bandwagoning

Balancing and bandwagoning are defined as strategies purely against the most powerful state in the system, not against any threat. A state is balancing if it is spending sufficient resources in countering any increase in power of the potential hegemon, or all of its

⁷⁵ Mearsheimer for example defines a potential hegemon as “a great power with so much actual military and so much potential power that it stands a good chance of dominating and controlling all of the other great powers”, see Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 44-45.

⁷⁶ Mearsheimer for example only focuses on cases where the threat of hegemony was imminent, such as the Napoleonic Wars, the First World War, and the Second World War, see Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

resources if this is not sufficient. Conversely, bandwagoning involves placing all resources at the side of the potential hegemon. This is virtually never to make the potential hegemon more powerful, but rather to rely on its protection against threatening neighbours. Great powers may also mix balancing and bandwagoning, which decreases both the risks and the benefits of these strategies. While this reduces the conceptual clarity of the balancing/bandwagoning dichotomy, this is unproblematic as long as the real world does not conform to this neat framework. For instance, Italy, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Britain all related to Germany in some way in 1940. However, their responses were fundamentally different. Italy threw in most of its resources with Germany, while Britain fought bitterly against it. The United States and the Soviet Union were both formally neutral, but of a very different kind. Washington D.C. supported Britain tacitly by supplying it with arms and economic support,⁷⁷ while Moscow's non-aggression pact and trade with Germany indirectly assisted German expansion.⁷⁸ Understanding these distinctions is obviously very desirable, which is why most recent scholarship also abandons the balancing/bandwagoning dichotomy.⁷⁹

Security

A key assumption of *Georealism* is that great powers maximize their security. This means the best combination of minimizing the risk of a rising hegemon and harm from neighbours. As great powers achieve the latter by being as powerful as possible compared to their neighbours, *Georealism* has more in common with offensive than defensive realism.

⁷⁷ Gavin J. Bailey, *The Arsenal of Democracy: Aircraft Supply and the Anglo-American Alliance* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

⁷⁸ Roger Moorhouse, *The Devils' Alliance: Hitler's Pact with Stalin, 1939-1941* (New York: Basic Books, 2014).

⁷⁹ Weitsman, *Dangerous Allies*; Cesa, *Allies yet Rivals*; Schweller, *Deadly Imbalance*, Snyder and Christensen, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks".

Geography and Neighbours

Geography is an essential concept in *Georealism*, as the name suggests. I use a very limited definition of the concept, namely the ability of states to project power on each other. All states have a sphere in which they can project considerable amounts of power. Whenever two such spheres intersect, states have the ability to threaten each other with a military attack. This makes them neighbours in the realm of international security. Virtually all physically contiguous states are also neighbours in a security sense. However, not all neighbours are physically contiguous. Minor powers do not inhibit power projection much, unless they are very big, plentiful, or contain difficult terrain.⁸⁰ Great powers only separated by minor powers therefore tend to be neighbours in international security. For example, Russia was a neighbour of Prussia during the Seven Years' War, although Poland separated the two great powers. This was because there was nothing the weak Polish state could do to stop this.⁸¹ Conversely, water, very difficult terrain, and most notably other great powers, inhibit power projection considerably. Any great powers entirely separated by one or more of these obstacles will thus not be neighbours in a security sense. For instance, Napoleon found himself not to be a neighbour of Britain between 1803 and 1805. Despite assembling a massive army of 200,000 men at Boulogne, the English Channel and the Royal Navy prevented him from using this army to invade Britain⁸²

⁸⁰ Tanisha M. Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 70-74.

⁸¹ Herbert H. Kaplan, *Russia and the Outbreak of the Seven Years' War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 115.

⁸² Owen Connelly, *Blundering to Glory: Napoleon's Military Campaigns* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), pp. 70-76.

Assumptions

Georealism is built on standard realist assumptions about great powers, particularly those of offensive realism.⁸³ I assume that the international system is anarchical, compelling great powers to care primarily about maintaining their own security and survival.⁸⁴ Great powers are rational, unitary actors that aim to maximize their security.⁸⁵ I also assume that the possibility of major war dominates great power behaviour in international relations.

Where *Georealism* departs from other realist theories is on information, at least in theory, if less so in practice. I assume that great powers have good information about the capabilities, intentions and likely behaviour of other great powers. In contrast, many scholars argue that estimates about capabilities and intentions tend to be inaccurate, which they use to explain why wars and insecurity exists in the international system. The traditional view of uncertainty has some merit. States are rarely sure about the capabilities of others and intentions are on a philosophical level unknowable. Hitler was for example a master at both overstating his capabilities and hiding his aggressive intentions.⁸⁶ However, the case for uncertainty is both overstated and a bad fundament on which to build a theory.

⁸³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 30-32.

⁸⁴ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 105-107, 111-112.

⁸⁵ I use security in a different meaning from defensive realists, namely having as much power as possible compared to other great powers.

⁸⁶ Stephen J. Cimbala, *Military Persuasion in War and Policy: The Power of Soft* (Westport, CT.: Praeger, 2002), p. 30; Gerhard L. Weinberg, *Hitler's Foreign Policy 1933-1939: The Road to World War II* (New York: Enigma Books, 2005), pp. 191-192; Peter Jackson, "Intelligence and the End of Appeasement," in *French Foreign and Defence Policy, 1918-1940: The Decline and Fall of a Great Power*, Robert Boyce, ed. (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 234-260.

Chapter I: Introduction

States sometimes have an interest in misrepresenting their capabilities in order to improve their bargaining outcomes.⁸⁷ Yet, these attempts are far from always successful. This is because states also have an interest in gaging the military capabilities of others as accurately as possible to avoid being tricked. Consequently, they build up sophisticated intelligence establishments to ensure that they are able to uncover the misrepresentations of others. For capabilities easy to hide or closed countries, this may prove challenging. Yet, getting a general picture of a country's total capabilities is usually not very difficult. Population, economic strength, and level of technological development are very difficult to hide. Even the total size of a military is hard to fundamentally cloud in uncertainty. Key capabilities, such as bomber planes, tanks, helicopters, and aircraft carriers are easy to detect. This is also the case for the major influences a large military has on society due to its demands for manpower and economic costs. Thus, it seems unlikely that states will consistently miscalculate the capabilities of their opponents.

Moreover, states have far from a constant interest in misrepresenting their capabilities. Bluffing may trick opponents to back down, but if the bluff is called, the state may find itself in a war it is not able to win. Hitler, for example, succeeded in coercing the French and the British to accept his remilitarization of Rhineland in 1936 and annexation of Sudetenland 1938. However, against more determined opponents than Baldwin and Chamberlain, Hitler would have faced war against massively superior opponents.⁸⁸ Overstating capabilities is therefore an act of brinkmanship that prudent policymakers are wise to avoid, except for under exceptional circumstances.

⁸⁷ Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," pp. 395-401.

⁸⁸ The German Chief of Staff Ludwig Beck came close to staging a coup d'état against Hitler during the Sudeten Crisis in 1938 to prevent Hitler's brinkmanship, see Jonathan Wright, *Germany and the Origins of the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp 116-122.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Intentions are philosophically inherently unknowable,⁸⁹ but this does not imply that great powers always expect the worst from each other.⁹⁰ Indeed, while offensive realists claim states make worst-case assumptions in general; most of their theoretical implications cannot follow from this assumption. Any kind of cooperation would be impossible if states always fear becoming stabbed in the back. This includes balancing and alliances. Consequently, international relations would simply resemble Hobbes' conception of anarchy, with all states at constant war with each other. Yet, such a world has never existed on the international stage. States frequently balance against potential hegemon, or enter alliances. Defections and betrayals certainly happen, but they are relatively rare.⁹¹ Moreover, although realists cite Hobbes as a major inspiration, even offensive realists describe a much more orderly version of anarchy than the Hobbesian one. Consequently, what they presumably mean is that states usually follow their objective state interests, based on their power and geography, even when this hurts other states. For example, whenever a state believes it advantageous to establish itself as a hegemon, attack an enemy, or desert an ally, it will do so. Neither regime type, ideological proximity, international institutions, nor history can overcome these basic interests.⁹² However, when a state lacks the possibility to go to war or any incentive of defecting an alliance, other states will reasonably assume that it will act according to these interests.

⁸⁹ Sebastian Rosato, "The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers," *International Security*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Winter 2014/2015), pp. 48-88.

⁹⁰ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 45. For other criticism of this argument, see Charles L. Glaser, *Rational Theory of International Politics: The Logic of Competition and Cooperation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 146-147.

⁹¹ Brett Ashley Leeds, Andrew G. Long and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, "Reevaluating Alliance Reliability: Specific Threats, Specific Promises," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44, no. 5 (October 2000), pp. 686-699; Brett Ashley Leeds, "Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining State Decisions to Violate Treaties," *International Organization*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Fall 2003), pp. 801-827.

⁹² Rosato, "The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers," pp. 48-88; John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994-1995), pp. 5-49. This debate goes back to Morgenthau, see Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946).

Chapter I: Introduction

Lastly, any theory should start out with the assumption of good information, because it maximizes the clarity and predictive power of the theory. Imperfect information should only be included once it is clear from the empirical evidence that the assumption of good information is unrealistic and a major problem for the theory. This is not to say that the assumption is always true, or that *Georealism* cannot account for uncertainty. Indeed, the rational choice nature of *Georealism* makes it better able to include the effect of uncertainty in a rigorous way than most other realist theories. It is only if great powers are irrational, have little information, and major war is impossible, that the theory becomes irrelevant.

The exact strictness of the assumptions varies somewhat between the chapters, depending on the complexity of the topic. Using strict assumptions simplifies the theory, but informal assumptions increase its scope. Consequently, there is a trade-off between the two, depending on the theoretical complexity of the questions asked. In chapter II and III, I explain the balancing behaviour of continental and offshore great powers without considering their interaction. These are relatively simple questions, so I keep the assumptions informal, in line with other realists. In contrast, in chapter IV and V, I explain the behaviour of great powers regarding alliances and war when the behaviour of one depends on the actions of others. Such questions are much more complex, necessitating strict assumptions about perfect rationality and information to keep the theory parsimonious and transparent. However, *Georealism* never depends on the exact statement of these assumptions, only that they are present in some form.

Research Methods and Procedures

I use a multi-method approach to test the explanatory power of *Georealism*. Predictions derived directly from the theory are compared to various samples of European great power politics from 1683 to 1914. In chapter II, the arguments about balancing and bandwagoning are tested against Austrian behaviour towards France in seven wars between 1683 and 1797. To test the predictions of the behaviour of offshore states in chapter III, I look at British behaviour towards the continental great powers between 1867 and 1905. Thus, this is a hard case for the argument that Britain was in fact actively involved in European great power politics. In both chapters, I use a case-study approach to evaluate the predictions. In contrast, in chapter IV, I use a formal model of alliance choice from 1823 to 1913 against an alliance dataset to predict yearly alignments. This sample is chosen because good data on capabilities is available, which is essential for deriving accurate about alliance choices. In chapter V, I expand this model to generate predictions about the timing of wars, and the behaviour of the third party states. I test these predictions against case studies of four great power wars and three major crises between 1823 and 1914.

In this section, I only discuss general issues regarding deriving predictions and sample selection. Questions about how exactly to test the various predictions depend on their topic and available data, so I deal with these in their respective chapters.

Deriving Testable Predictions

A main goal of *Georealism* is to provide a theory that is better able to predict the behaviour of individual states. All predictions are stated as precisely as possible, taking the form of '*state A should perform action X around year N*'. Many advantages follow

Chapter I: Introduction

from this precision. Since *Georealism* is a new theory, a large amount of evidence is required to demonstrate that its explanatory power is better than that of other theories. Precise predictions allow for this. Firstly, it enables the use of quantitative analysis of a large amount of data. Secondly, the historical case studies can be made more concise. Moreover, one of the motivations for *Georealism* is to explain the behaviour of individual states, rather than just make predictions about the system at large. Hence, testing precise predictions about the actions of individual states provides the best way of testing whether this goal is achieved.

Predictions with the level of precision that *Georealism* aspires to require high quality data. Moreover, since the theory is built on microfoundations, policymakers at the time must also have had access to similar data. This is the case for the European great powers from 1683 to 1914. Various forms of national power, such as population, economic strength, army size, and military budgets were not secret at the time. Indeed, the numbers were compiled and widely circulated by publications such as the *Almanach de Gotha* from 1763 and *The Statesman's Yearbook* from 1862. These works were widely used as reference works for diplomats and policymakers. Indeed, the Correlates of War Composite Index on National Capabilities (CINC), which I use for data on capabilities between 1823 and 1914, is largely based on these works.⁹³ This is not to say all policymakers had all the data available at any given time, nor that the CINC scores always accurately reflect capabilities.⁹⁴ Other scholars have also noted that policymakers

⁹³ J. David Singer, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965," in *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), pp. 19-48. See the codebook for sources.

⁹⁴ See for example William C. Wohlforth, "'The Perception of Power: Russia in the pre-1914 Balance,'" *World Politics*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (April 1987), pp. 353-381.

tend to be overoptimistic when going to war.⁹⁵ However, in general the data should be realistic enough to yield good predictions, as long as states were rational and the theory is good enough.

Sample Selection

The theory is tested against various cases of European great power politics from 1683 to 1913. To test a comprehensive theory like *Georealism* with its many predictions, a large sample is required. As great powers are naturally restricted in their numbers, having a long sample is the only way to achieve this. This also ensures sufficient variance in all the independent and dependent variables, and decreases the impact of any confounding variables. *Georealism* is based on two variables: power and geography. Consequently, testing the theory requires good data on both of these. The European great power system from 1683 to 1914 provides this. The Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) provides a suitable measure of power after 1816. Before this, it is possible to use the number of men at arms as a proxy for power. Geography in the meaning of power projection is also relatively easy to conceptualize. The European great powers always existed in a relatively restricted geographical area, with little impact of minor powers. Crucially, France and Russia could never project power on each other over land after 1740 without going through Austria or Prussia.

A number of potential criticisms of the sample selection also exist. One argument is that the European great power system is a *sui generis*, so its lessons do not apply to other

⁹⁵ This is however more in terms of skill than material capabilities, see Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 16-34. It must be noted that the optimism argument about war is often taken too far, due to selective citations and misattributions. One famous example of this is that the German Chief of Staff in 1914, Helmuth von Moltke the Younger, did not expect a short war, indeed he thought it would be long and destructive. His argument was that Germany could only win a short war, which was largely correct, see Annika Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 95.

Chapter I: Introduction

systems. However, such a criticism can be levelled with equal force at any other system.⁹⁶ To maximize claims of generalizability, the sample is of much greater length than that of comparable research.⁹⁷ A related potential criticism is that lessons from the European great power system from 1683 to 1914 are no longer applicable due to technological developments. Extensive attention is devoted to this issue in the conclusion chapter of this dissertation. Another potential criticism is that the European great power system during the 18th and 19th centuries was a “golden age of the balance of power”⁹⁸, therefore making it an ideal case to test the theory. It is undoubtedly true that the sample is a good one for *Georealism*, so to counter this criticism, I set very rigorous standards in the empirical testing. No other theory on the balance of power, whatever the sample used, offers such a large number of precise empirical implications as this one. Demonstrating the accuracy of these predictions over such a long sample is a major achievement by any measure.

The exact timing of all cases is chosen due to the availability of data, or to provide as difficult empirical tests for *Georealism* as possible. The case of Austrian behaviour towards France between 1683 and 1797 is chosen because it provides a high level of variation both in the dependent and independent variables. 1683 is chosen as the starting year, as it marks Austria’s rise to the status of a great power. The case ends in 1797 due to constraints of space. Austrian behaviour during the wars of the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth coalitions, and the Congress Era was also in according to *Georealism*. I chose the case of British behaviour towards the European great powers from 1867 to 1905 because Britain is commonly believed to have pursued a strategy of “splendid isolation”

⁹⁶ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 14.

⁹⁷ The samples of Walt; Niou, Ordeshook, and Rose; Snyder; and Weitsman are 26, 43, 26, and 45 years respectively.

⁹⁸ Jack S. Levy, “What Do Great Powers Balance Against and When?,” in *Balance Of Power: Theory And Practice In the 21st Century*, ed. T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michel Fortmann (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 29.

at the time. Consequently, this constitutes a hard case for the argument that Britain in fact followed an activist foreign policy. The range of alternative samples is limited as few offshore great powers have existed, but the theory could also have been applied to further cases of British behaviour. Examples of this include the opposition to the Münchengrätz Agreement of 1833 and actions during the Crimean War.⁹⁹

The European great powers between 1823 and 1914 used in the two last chapters is chosen due to the need for accurate data on great power capabilities. Unlike most other states and periods, the Correlates of War Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) describes relative capabilities reasonably accurately for the European great powers at the time.¹⁰⁰ 1823 is chosen as the year European great power politics returned to normal with the dissolution of the Quintuple Alliance. Before this, great power diplomacy was primarily devoted to the non-state threat of revolutionary uprising in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars.¹⁰¹ 1914 is chosen as the cut-off year because measures of capabilities become unreliable after this point, due to a peculiarity in the construction of the CINC scores. The factor “military personnel” counts reserves mobilized in wartime, but not during peace.¹⁰² Consequently, the CINC score vary greatly depending on the timing of the mobilization, although this says little about the actual capabilities of the different great powers.

⁹⁹ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p 44; Andrew Lambert, *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

¹⁰⁰ Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey, “Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965,” pp. 19-48.

¹⁰¹ Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy After Napoleon* (London: I.B Tauris, 2013).

¹⁰² J. David Singer, “Reconstructing the Correlates of War Data Set on Material Capabilities of States, 1816-1985,” in *Measuring the Correlates of War*, J. David Singer and Paul F. Diehl, eds., (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1990), p. 56.

Chapter I: Introduction

Throughout the entire empirical sample, I treat the European great powers as an autonomous system. While I consider the role of other actors as well, this is only through their exogenous impact on the European great powers, not as integral players in the system. For example, Austro-Russian competition for influence among the Balkan states was an important contributing factor according to *Georealism*. However, I do not look at the independent agency of Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece, only their effect on Austro-Russian relations. Including more actors would increase the explanatory power of *Georealism*, but comes at the cost of a serious loss of parsimony. Great power behaviour is interdependent, meaning that the actions of one great power always affect the others. Consequently, the complexity of the calculations behind the predictions increases exponentially with the addition of each new actor. This is particularly the case in chapter IV and V where I rely on a game theoretical model to generate predictions.

The exclusion of most actors from the model is uncontroversial. Hundreds of small states existed during the time period of the sample, so including all of them in a game theoretical model is clearly infeasible. Adding only some of them would not be a good solution either, because which once played an important role varied greatly depending on the historical context. However, the exclusion of powerful actors such as the United States, Japan, and the Ottoman Empire is controversial. In this case, the question becomes whether the increased explanatory power of adding them warrants the greater complexity that follows. In all three instances, this is arguably not the case.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

The American economy was the biggest in the world already by 1880,¹⁰³ so the United States could easily have played an important role if it wanted to. However, its conscious policy of isolationism towards Europe and miniscule army meant that its impact on the interactions between the European great powers was limited after 1815.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the United States hardly even figured in their calculations, except briefly in the wake of the Spanish-American War. Including the United States as an actor would therefore not be justified.

Japan by the turn of the 20th century had a greater impact on European great power relations than the United States, demonstrated by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 and the Russo-Japanese War.¹⁰⁵ Yet, it was not an integral player in the European great power system. Notably, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was formed in an entirely East Asian context. Consequently, it did not result in London becoming a greater enemy of Japan's enemy Russia, as one would expect. On the contrary, Britain almost immediately sought to improve relations with Russia. Moreover, Japan only had a significant impact in the last 20 years of the sample.

The Ottoman Empire had the most consistent and decisive impact on European great power politics of all actors in the sample. Examples of this include the Münchengrätz Agreement of 1833, the Crimean War, 1853-1856, and the Great Eastern Crisis of 1878. However, Ottoman importance came from its weakness, rather than its strength. The European great powers generally did not seek an alliance with the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁰³ Stephen D. Krasner, "State Power and the Structure of International Trade," in *International Political Economy: Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth*, ed. Jeffrey A. Frieden and David A. Lake (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 28-29.

¹⁰⁴ F. R. Bridge and Roger Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System 1814-1914* (Harlow: Longman, 2005), p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ Ian Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires 1894-1907* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012)

Rather, they wanted to manage the consequences of an Ottoman collapse, which seemed to be an almost perpetual danger due to internal and external pressure.¹⁰⁶ This strictly limited Ottoman agency in these conflicts, as “the weak suffer what they must”.¹⁰⁷ Thus, it is justified to keep the impact of the Ottoman Empire exogenous, rather than including it as an integral player in the model, which it clearly was not in European diplomacy.

Thesis Structure

There are four substantive chapters in this dissertation. Chapter II outlines the main *Georealist* explanation of balancing and bandwagoning among continental states. Chapter III details how offshore states behave towards continental states. Subsequently, chapter IV is devoted to analysing great power alliances, while chapter V explains great power wars. Each chapter also has its own empirical part, as the empirical tests vary greatly in terms of theme and methodology.

¹⁰⁶ The consequences of the decline of the Ottoman Empire is called the ‘Eastern Question’ in European diplomatic history, see M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966).

¹⁰⁷ Thucydides, *The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians*, trans. Jeremy Mynott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 380.

[II]

*Continental Balancing and
Bandwagoning*

The British Empire in the 1930s found itself in a serious strategic dilemma.¹ Following the rise of Hitler, Germany commenced a massive rearmament programme, which by 1939 made its army and air force the strongest in Europe. Hitler appeared to have no immediate desire to weaken Britain or acquire a slice of its empire.² Nor could Hitler use his army to cross the English Channel to reach Britain. However, the growth of German power made Hitler increasingly able to subjugate the continental European powers, such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, France, and the Soviet Union. German hegemony would be a disaster for Britain. Free from continental distractions, Germany could then freely turn all of Europe's capabilities into

¹ Gaines Post, *Dilemmas of Appeasement: British Deterrence and Defense, 1934-1937* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

² Klaus Hildebrand, *The Third Reich* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 26.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

naval and imperial expansion. Yet, Germany was not the only threat to the British Empire. While Britain was an offshore state in Europe, its empire was largely continental in Africa and Asia and thus more vulnerable to aggressors. Mussolini's intentions to make the Mediterranean Ocean his "*Mare Nostrum*" threatened the British control of Egypt and Suez, a vital lifeline of the empire.³ Further east, an increasingly militaristic Japan was threatening Britain in Hong Kong, Malaya, and perhaps even India.⁴

The threats facing Britain were largely independent, as German, Italian, and Japanese aims had little to do with each other. Yet, London's response to one would greatly affect the seriousness of the others. Balancing against Germany would direct military efforts to Europe, leaving scant resources to the empire. This would embolden Italy and Japan, especially if Britain would fare poorly in the war. Conversely, an Anglo-German alliance would free resources to the empire and bar Japan and Italy from realizing their aggressive designs.⁵ Indeed, Hitler even offered a general guarantee of the empire,⁶ at the cost of giving him a free hand in Europe to fulfil his hegemonic ambitions.⁷ Ultimately, Britain did not choose either of the two options, but rather tried to do both simultaneously: defending the empire and balancing against Germany. This strategy contributed to serious reverses almost everywhere, such as France, North Africa, Greece, Malaya, and Burma. Nevertheless, it did avoid the twin dangers of giving Germany a free hand in Europe and total vulnerability in the empire.

³ Robert Mallett, *Mussolini and the Origins of the Second World War, 1933-1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 9.

⁴ Bradford A. Lee, *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1939: A Study in the Dilemmas of British Decline* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), p. 17

⁵ Japan abandoned all plans of attack on Siberia after the similar Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union.

⁶ Andreas Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 69-70.

⁷ Frank McDonough, *Hitler and the Rise of the Nazi Party* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 58.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Facing threats from both potential hegemon and other sources is far from limited to interwar Britain. Indeed, most great powers in multipolar systems have struggled with this problem since the dawn of history. However, no theory has looked at the two threats in combination. Balance of power scholarship generally ignore threats that are not hegemonic.⁸ Alliance theories look at other threats, but then ignored hegemonic threats instead.⁹ Failing to provide a realistic picture of all the dangers facing great powers leads to a simplistic analysis of great power politics and low explanatory power. Scholars have looked at power, offensive capabilities, geographical proximity, contiguity, intentions, and domestic politics. Yet, no theory successfully predicts individual balancing and bandwagoning behaviour without resorting to near-tautological assumptions.¹⁰

A number of theoretical problems also follow from ignoring non-hegemonic threats. Some scholars resort to explaining balancing and bandwagoning with the same set of factors. Walt, for example, argues that threat promotes both balancing and bandwagoning.¹¹ Predicting when threat causes one strategy or the other is thus difficult.

⁸ For realist scholarship on the balance of power, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Organization*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 137-168, Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 72-107; Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Powers Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, *Balancing Risks: Great Power Intervention in the Periphery* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); These theories fall into a long range of sub-groups, such as balance of threat, defensive and offensive realism and neoclassical realism. Yet, they all have in common that they associate the balance of power almost exclusively with resistance to hegemony.

⁹ Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Emerson M. S. Niou, Peter C. Ordeshook and Gregory M. Rose, *The Balance of Power: Stability in International Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Michael F. Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally: Theory and a Test," *Western Political Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 4, (1984), pp. 523-544; Patricia A. Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Marco Cesa, *Allies yet Rivals: International Politics in 18th Century Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press 2010); Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends. Alliance Restraint in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

¹⁰ Assuming revisionist state bandwagon without ever explaining what causes revisionism is an example of this, see Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances*.

¹¹ Walt, *Origins of Alliances*, p. 32.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

Other scholars try to solve this problem by arguing that balancing and bandwagoning states are of a radically different nature. Greedily and foolishly seeking short-term conquests, bandwagoners put everyone (including themselves) at a peril by ignoring structural imperatives.¹² Schweller, for example, categorizes such states as “*jackals*”, hardly a positive term.¹³ However, states often switch between balancing and bandwagoning, making the assumption that they change their nature back and forth every time cumbersome. This is not only an academic problem. With the problems surrounding balance of power theory, it becomes unable to provide guidance on one of the biggest questions in modern IR. As China continues to grow, will other states bandwagon against it or balance with it?¹⁴

In this chapter, I propose the *Georealist* theory of how continental great powers respond to potential hegemonies. To do this, I take multipolarity seriously by analysing how the choice of balancing and bandwagoning influences all external threats that states face. Great powers face two main external threats: the rise of a hegemon harmful from neighbours. When determining whether to balance or bandwagon, great powers simply seek the strategy providing them with the highest level of security from both threats. However, the two strategies have contradictory consequences. Balancing decreases the probability of the rise of a hegemon, but creates vulnerability against neighbours. Conversely, bandwagoning provides protection from neighbours, but at the cost of risking a successful hegemonic bid. Thus, great powers must weigh the risks of balancing and bandwagoning against each other. When balancing involves a high risk of harm from

¹² Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 139-140.

¹³ Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances*, p. 88.

¹⁴ See for example Bruce Gilley and Andrew O’Neil, *Middle Powers and the Rise of China* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014); Denny Roy, “Southeast Asia and China: Balancing or Bandwagoning?,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, Vol. 27 No. 2 (August 2005), pp. 305-322; Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2006), pp. 355-395.

neighbours and bandwagoning a low risk of a rising hegemon, great powers choose the latter option. Bandwagoning is thus often a perfectly rational choice, contrary to all realist claims. Conversely, when balancing creates little harm from neighbours and bandwagoning is likely to provoke a successful hegemonic bid, balancing is the preferable option. If both strategies involve a high risk, great powers mix the two strategies to ensure some protection against both threats.

Georealist Theory of Balancing and Bandwagoning

This section outlines the *Georealist* theory of balancing and bandwagoning. First, I analyse the nature of threats from potential hegemonies and neighbours. Then, I outline the purpose of balancing and bandwagoning against these threats, and explain the risks they cause. Next, I show how great powers weigh these risks against each other when choosing their strategy, in order to explain their individual behaviour. Lastly, I look at the geographical factors that promote balancing and bandwagoning on a systemic level.

The Nature of Threat

Power is the currency of international relations because it determines the ability of great powers to impose the outcomes they want. As Morgenthau famously argued, “[w]hatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim”.¹⁵ One implication of this is that great powers seek to increase their power whenever possible, but most of all they simply seek to avoid any decrease of it. Power, in most cases, has

¹⁵ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), p. 29.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

decreasing returns to scale, making losses in power worse than gains of a similar size.¹⁶

The threat great powers face is the possibility of losing power.

Decreases in power can have many causes. Some of them are due to entirely domestic factors, such as diverging growth rates.¹⁷ Yet, influencing the growth rate of another great power is difficult in multipolar systems. Firstly, internal factors largely determine the economic growth rate. Secondly, most ways to diminish the economic fundamentals of another state, such as sanctions, are easy to bypass in a system with many actors. The only way to decrease the power of another great power significantly is by diminishing its territory or sphere of influence. In extreme cases, this means full annexation. Carthage, for example, went from a leading Mediterranean power to having its civilization levelled to the ground by Rome.¹⁸ Lesser forms of threat include losing provinces, spheres of influence, or simply the death and destruction brought on by war. Defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 made France lose Alsace-Lorraine, significantly decreasing French power and security.¹⁹ Thus, recovering the province became the central aim of France's foreign policy for the next 47 years.²⁰ Austria and Russia had a long-standing conflict over influence in the Balkans, which caused many crises and contributed to a full-scale war in 1914.²¹

¹⁶ Jack S. Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (March 1997), pp. 87-112; Barbara Farnham, ed., *Avoiding Losses/taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994); Andrew H. Kydd, *International Relations Theory: The Game-Theoretic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 24-28.

¹⁷ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 159-168.

¹⁸ Adrian Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage: The Punic Wars 265-146BC* (London: Cassel, 2003).

¹⁹ Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France 1870-1871* (London: Methuen, 1981); Geoffrey Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

²⁰ Duncan Snidal, "Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (September 1991), pp. 701-726.

²¹ M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966).

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Any kind of threat can leave states worse off. Its source is irrelevant, only its severity matters. Losses of power occur in two ways: 1) annexation, loss of territory or influence to neighbours, or 2) a rising hegemon subjugating all other states. Ultimately, both the threats from neighbours and from potential hegemons rest on the threat of war. This is still true even if war does not break out. Blackmail can succeed, but only if the target state believes conditions are so unfavourable that armed resistance is futile.²² War is a complex phenomenon whose outcomes depend on many factors impossible to predict before their outbreak.²³ However, more capabilities always increase the chance of victory in major war.²⁴ Capabilities have decreasing returns to scale, so marginal increases in capabilities have the greatest effect when the two sides are roughly equal. Estimating the probability of a successful war is possible by looking at the relative capabilities of the opponents.

The Threat of Hegemony

Hegemony threatens all states in the system equally, except for the state that establishes itself as a hegemon.²⁵ A hegemon is a state strong enough to defeat all the other states at once, even when they combine their capabilities against it. With any resistance futile, the hegemon is then free to impose its will on all state without risk. Once a state has established itself as a hegemon, nothing can stop it from expanding its power further by subjugating all the other states in the system. When this happens, the consequence is a transformation of the system's basic structure from anarchy to hierarchy.

²² Alexander L. George, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1991); Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 152-153.

²³ Carl Maria von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 122-129.

²⁴ Michael C. Desch, "Democracy and Victory: Why Regime Type Hardly Matters," *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Fall 2002), pp. 5-47; Errol A. Henderson and Reşat Bayer, "Wallets, Ballots, or Bullets: Does Wealth, Democracy, or Military Capabilities Determine War Outcomes," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (June 2013), pp. 303-317.

²⁵ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 114-116; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp 40-41.

While hegemony is bad for all the other states, it is ideal for the hegemon. No other situation offers such a high and durable level of security. Ancient Rome and China, for example, enjoyed peace and prosperity, without experiencing any attack on their core areas for centuries.²⁶ Consequently, many states have attempted to follow their suit, even if none of them has succeeded in Europe since Charlemagne.²⁷ Such endeavours tend to lead to extremely costly wars, because the independence of all states is at stake. Nazi-Germany left tens of millions dead and much of the continent in ruins in the wake of its attempt at conquering Europe. Yet, this case is far from unique. The Habsburg bid for hegemony during the Thirty Years' War left as many as eight million people dead.²⁸

All great powers have an equal interest in avoiding the rise of a hegemon. Whether the potential hegemon can currently reach other great powers is incidental, since once it becomes a hegemon it can project power on every state without restriction. Thus, hegemony is not a geographical threat, contrary to popular claims in the literature.²⁹

The Neighbour Threat

All external threats to a state apart from hegemony come from other states with the ability to project power on it. Every state has some ability to project power at a distance. Whenever two states have overlapping zones of power projection, they are neighbours in

²⁶ Paul Petit, *Pax Romana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 24-45; Sunny Auyang, *The Dragon and the Eagle: The Rise and Fall of the Chinese and Roman Empires* (London: Routledge, 2015).

²⁷ Brendan Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy, from 1453 to the Present* (London, England: Allen Lane, 2003).

²⁸ Norman Davis, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 568.

²⁹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 23-24; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 270-271.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

a security sense and can use force on each other.³⁰ A great power can consequently defeat its neighbours if its capabilities are sufficient to extract concessions in terms of power, territory, or influence. Different states have different sets of neighbours, so the threat they pose is highly individual. This makes the threat from neighbours geographically determined, contrary to that of hegemony.

Neighbouring great powers tend to be physically contiguous or geographically proximate powers separated only by minor powers. This is because geography places strict limitations on power projection capabilities. When scholars have thought about the role of geography, they have typically focused on natural obstacles, such as mountains, jungles, deserts, and particularly water.³¹ However, political geography, meaning how great powers are located in relation to each other, is usually the greater factor. The key question, at least in the modern world, is not where power is projected, but whether it is resisted. Projecting power across the territory of another great power without its consent is above all difficult. Doing this requires expending so many capabilities that it is usually not a viable option. Continental states completely separated by water or another great power are typically not neighbours in a security sense. This means that the number of great power neighbours is considerably smaller than the total number of great power dyads.

Defence against neighbours requires the ability to defeat these states in war, or deter an attack from them in the first place. Achieving this requires the ability to command greater capabilities than any hostile neighbours can. Protection against neighbours therefore

³⁰ Kenneth M. Boulding, *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962), pp. 229-231.

³¹ Boulding, *Conflict and Defense*, pp. 229-231; Patrick Porter, *The Global Village Myth: Distance, War, and the Limits of Power* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2015).

requires as many and powerful allies as possible, both to rely on their capabilities in times of war and to avoid facing such states as enemies. Yet, given that all great powers differ in their capabilities and their set of neighbours, their optimal strategies for achieving this will vary greatly.

Great Power Strategies

When facing a potential hegemon, a great power can balance, bandwagon, or mix these two strategies. Bandwagoning enables relying on the potential hegemon's protection against its neighbours. However, by placing its capabilities at the disposal of the potential hegemon, it also increases the probability of a successful hegemonic bid. Conversely, balancing decreases the threat of hegemony, but only through using capabilities that it could otherwise have used against hostile neighbours. In this section, I look at how great powers weigh the risk of balancing and bandwagoning against each other when deciding their strategy. In addition, I analyse how they can mix the two strategies to decrease their negative impact.

Balancing

Balancing means countering any increase in power by the potential hegemon. Possible actions include war, deterring expansion, containment, or forming alliances,³² to ensure that the potential hegemon does not increase its territory, influence, or defeat other great powers. The purpose of balancing is making the establishment of hegemony less likely. However, balancing comes at a cost. Firstly, focusing on the potential hegemon decreases the ability of great powers to defend themselves against neighbours. Military and

³² Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 156-157. States can also balance internally, but this is outside the scope of this chapter.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

diplomatic resources are finite, so any increase in attention for one purpose must necessarily come at the sacrifice of other goals. Balancing also allows the enemies of the great power to ally with the potential hegemon instead, often making their threat more serious. Secondly, thwarting a potential hegemon at every point goes directly against its interests. Thus, the probability of becoming its next target in its quest to become an actual hegemon increases dramatically. This is particularly dangerous for great powers that are neighbours with the potential hegemon. Dutch efforts to contain French gains on Spain during the War of Devolution (1667-1668), for instance, provoked France to attack the Netherlands in 1672 as punishment.³³ Balancing is therefore the best response to the threat from potential hegemons in isolation, but usually increases the threat from neighbours.

The ‘*balancing risk*’ is the probability that balancing leads to losses in power to neighbours, and the severity of these losses. The risk depends on the relative capabilities of the great power and its allies compared to its hostile neighbours when it is balancing. The more powerful neighbours a great power has, the more likely these states are to win in armed conflict and thus extract concessions through brute force or blackmail. More capabilities also permit pressing for larger concessions. However, the balancing risk is essentially either high or low. Hostile neighbours only have the capacity to extract concessions if they have a significant lead in capabilities. If so, the risk from balancing is clearly high, making it a dangerous option. Otherwise, its neighbours do not expect victory in a war, making it unlikely that they will attack. In such cases, the threat is low.

³³ G. Zeller, “French Diplomacy and Foreign Policy in Their European Setting,” in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 5: The Ascendancy of France, 1648–88*, ed. F. L. Carsten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 213.

Bandwagoning

Bandwagoning is defined as supporting the potential hegemon by placing most capabilities at its disposal. A collateral effect of this is making the establishment of hegemony more likely, although this is not its purpose. By increasing the risk of hegemony, bandwagoning is obviously a bad strategy towards potential hegemons. Nevertheless, it promises extensive benefits as well. The potential hegemon is the most powerful state in the system. It can thus provide more protection against the threat from neighbours than any other state, except when the balancing coalition is very strong.³⁴ Furthermore, bandwagoning states act in the potential hegemon's interest. Consequently, it has no reason to attack these states, so the threat it poses as a neighbour drops significantly.³⁵ While only lasting as long as the potential hegemon needs the support, the high threat it poses as a neighbour makes this valuable. Consequently, bandwagoning is usually the best strategy against threatening neighbours.

The '*bandwagoning risk*' is the probability that joining up with the potential hegemon leads to the establishment of hegemony. The risk of a successful hegemonic war depends on the relative power of the bandwagoning and balancing coalitions, not just the power of the potential hegemon itself. When choosing between balancing and bandwagoning, great powers must consequently estimate the probability of hegemony after they have added their capabilities to either coalition.³⁶ The bandwagoning risk is continuous, in that it can take any value between 0 and 100%. However, a rational potential hegemon only makes a hegemonic bid if it expects victory. If not, it refrains from any action to avoid defeat. Consequently, the bandwagoning risk is also either high or low, depending on whether

³⁴ A strong balancing coalition that matches the potential hegemon and its allies in terms of capabilities can provide comparable or even more security against the threat from neighbours than the potential hegemon.

³⁵ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 21.

³⁶ Robert Power, *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 157-160.

the rise of a hegemon is expected or not. Bandwagoning is a relatively harmless option if the risk is low, but very dangerous when it is high.

Mixed Strategies

Great powers need not choose between balancing and bandwagoning, they can combine the two strategies in any way they please. Mixing strategies decreases the effectiveness of balancing and bandwagoning, but also their costs. The exact size of this reduction depends on the combination of the two strategies.

There are two main forms of mixed strategies. Partial balancing involves working against the potential hegemon, but not with all available capabilities. Spare resources are instead spent on protection against neighbours. Fighting wars against neighbours is the most obvious way this happens. Other forms include stationing military forces on other fronts, declining support from neighbours, or seeking a peace agreement that does not fully thwart the potential hegemon's ambitions, even when that is possible. An example of this is Austria during the War of the Sixth Coalition. After the Battle of Leipzig, the allies looked poised to defeat Napoleon decisively. However, the Austrian Chancellor Metternich continued to press for a peace settlement that left Napoleon still in power and France possessing the left bank of the Rhine.³⁷ Such an enlarged France would have remained a serious hegemonic threat. Partial balancing decrease the effectiveness of the balancing efforts, while increasing the ability of the great power to focus on its neighbours. The potential hegemon is also likely to pay less attention to great powers that cause them fewer problems. Partial bandwagoning similarly involves assisting the

³⁷ Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy After Napoleon* (London: I.B Tauris, 2013), pp. 48-49. Russia was not the potential hegemon. Before Austria's intervention Russia was even with Prussian' assistance unable to defeat Napoleon at the battles of Lützen and Bautzen, see J.P. Riley, *Napoleon and the World War of 1813: Lessons in Coalition Warfighting* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2000), pp. 13-14.

potential hegemon, but trying to limit the assistance to the extent possible. This decreases the likelihood of a successful hegemonic bid. However, the less support the potential hegemon receives, the less protection it offers its allies against their neighbours.

Outcomes

Deciding between the two strategies, great powers must weigh the relative risks against each other. Low risks mean concessions to neighbours or the rise of a hegemon are unlikely. Ignoring such threats is therefore relatively safe. Conversely, high threats imply likely concessions to neighbours and that rising hegemons are imminent, compelling great powers to take precautions. Great powers focus on the risks of balancing and bandwagoning, rather than their advantages, because great powers do not have a genuine choice if the strategies fail at their primary purpose. Balancing leading to a rising hegemon means states can do nothing to avoid hegemony. This cannot be true for all states at once in multipolar systems. Bandwagoning is also unlikely to lead to a certain conquest by neighbours, except for very weak great powers located far away from the potential hegemon.³⁸

TABLE 2.1: Best Responses to Bandwagoning and Balancing Risks

		BANDWAGONING RISK	
		Low	High
BALANCING RISK	Low	(Potential Hegemon)	Balancing
	High	Bandwagoning	Mixed Strategies

Table 2.1: *The table shows the best responses to the different combinations of threats from the potential hegemons and hostile neighbours.*

³⁸ Poland at the end of the 18th century is an example of such a state, but it was very far from a great power.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Table 2.1 summarizes the three best responses to potential hegemons. Balancing is the best option if the risks associated with it are low, while the risks of bandwagoning are high. The low risks of balancing mean that the threat from neighbours is still manageable even while focusing on the potential hegemon. At the same time, bandwagoning is likely to provoke a successful hegemonic bid. Consequently, great powers in this position can safely devote all available resources to fighting the potential hegemon. Similarly, bandwagoning is optimal if it is unlikely to provoke a hegemonic bid while balancing leads to concessions to neighbours. The cost of bandwagoning in this situation is low, while the high threat from neighbours creates a need for as much support as possible from the potential hegemon.

The greatest dilemma facing states is when both the balancing and bandwagoning risks are high. Devoting all resources to either balancing or bandwagoning in this case leads to disaster, as full focus on one threat causes acute vulnerability to the other. A better option is therefore to split resources by mixing the two strategies.³⁹ Partial balancing is likely to be the most common strategy, because it best allows for urgent protection against both the hegemonic and neighbour threat. However, partial bandwagoning may also take place, particularly among weak great powers. For instance, the Italian war effort during the Second World War was so lacklustre that some question whether it actually helped Germany.⁴⁰ Choosing between partial balancing is done based on the relative risks of the two strategies. The greater the risk of balancing, the more the behaviour tends towards bandwagoning and vice versa.

³⁹ In addition, they are likely to increase their spending on the military. For internal balancing, see Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 156-157.

⁴⁰ Steven D. Mercatante, *Why Germany Nearly Won: A New History of the Second World War in Europe* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012), pp. 189-204.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

Mixed strategies are not perfect, because they involve splitting resources in a time of high threats. Resources spent on each threat separately might thus prove insufficient, leading to major losses to neighbours, or to helping the potential hegemon move closer to its aims. However, since power has decreasing returns to scale, spending some resources against both threats provides better results than spending all against one.

A strategy is only mixed if the division of resources significantly decreases a great power's ability to protect itself against one of the two serious threats. Failing to stop a potential hegemon from increasing its power or ending up in a costly stalemate are typical outcomes of partial balancing. This is to distinguish it from when great powers do not use all resources because it is not necessary. For example, the U.S. was not pursuing a mixed strategy against Germany even though it was fighting Japan at the same time. This was because the 'Europe First' strategy meant that sufficient resources were devoted to Europe to defeat Germany decisively.⁴¹ Moreover, no great power is going to lay itself completely open to one threat. For instance, even during its life-and-death struggle against Germany, the Soviet Union still left some soldiers stationed in the east against Japan.⁴²

In the rare event that both strategies have a low risk, the great power faces no serious strategic constraints on its behaviour. However, having both neighbours and the potential hegemon posing a low threat means that the state in question is exceptionally powerful. Thus, this case usually only happens if the state itself is a potential hegemon. Such states

⁴¹ Maurice Matloff, *US Army in WW2: War Department, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1943-1944* (Washington DC: Center of Military History United States Army, 2003), pp. 9-10.

⁴² David M. Glantz, *The Military Strategy of the Soviet Union: A History* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 93.

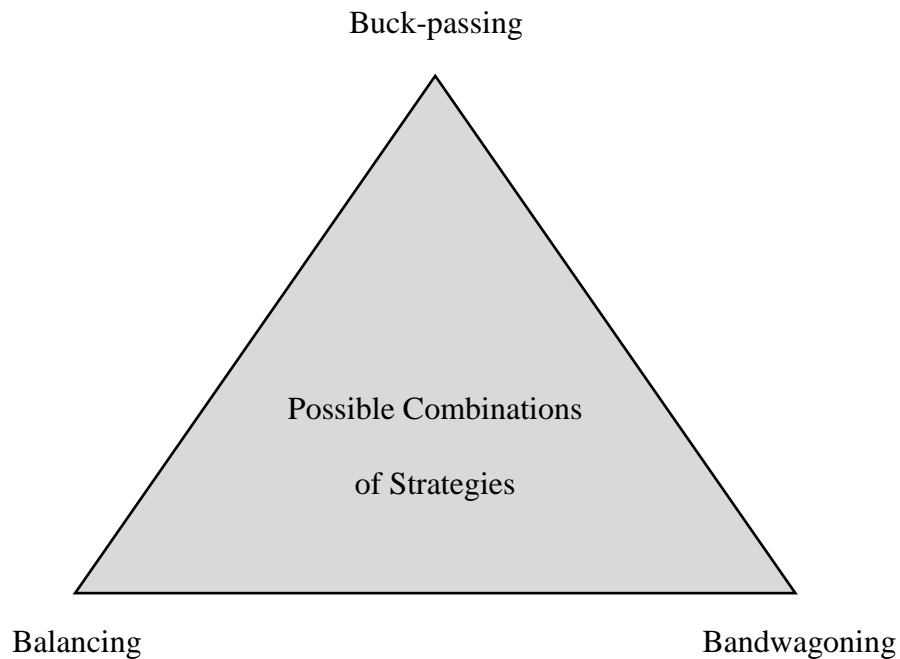
can neither balance against, nor bandwagon with themselves, and hence it is impossible to explain their behaviour using this framework.

Buck-passing

Buck-passing is suggested as a major strategy by a number of balance of power scholars,⁴³ but has never been clearly integrated to the concepts of balancing and bandwagoning. The best way to look at buck-passing is not simply as an alternative to bandwagoning, but a third possible strategy. Buck-passing provides security by avoiding the negative sides of balancing and bandwagoning. In its purest form, which consists of doing nothing, it neither increases the threat from neighbours nor the probability of a hegemonic bid. However, it also provides no benefits. By avoiding association with other states, buck-passing offers neither the protection from neighbours like bandwagoning, nor the security from hegemonic bids provided by balancing. This is why buck-passing is not a good alternative to bandwagoning when a great power faces a high threat from hostile neighbours, but no immediate risk of hegemonic bids. Pursuing a buck-passing strategy under these circumstances would lead to a higher vulnerability against the neighbours, due to the lack of protection from the potential hegemon. At the same time, it does not radically decrease the chances of a hegemonic bid, which are low when bandwagoning anyway. Pure buck-passing is unlikely among great powers. However, aspects of it can be combined with balancing and bandwagoning in any possible way, particularly in cases where the bandwagoning and balancing risks are both high. This is illustrated in figure 2.1.

⁴³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 157-159, 163; Christensen and Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks," pp. 137-168.

FIGURE 2.2: Balancing, bandwagoning, and buck-passing



Factors Influencing Outcomes

The balancing and bandwagoning risks are not directly observable. However, calculating their level is possible by looking at the factors that feed into the hegemonic and neighbour threat. These factors are the power of the state in question, the potential hegemon, the neighbours, and the relative power of the balancing and bandwagoning coalitions.

Power of the State

The more powerful a state is, the less likely it is that it will bandwagon.⁴⁴ This is because the risks of bandwagoning are higher, while the benefits are lower. Firstly, powerful states add more capabilities to the bandwagoning alliance, increasing the probability of a

⁴⁴ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 29-30; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 269-272; Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 11; Michael I. Handel, *Weak States in the International System* (London: Cass, 1990), p. 187; Jack S. Levy, "The Causes of War: A Review of Theories and Evidence," in *Behavior, Society, and Nuclear War*, ed. Philip E. Tetlock et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 231.

hegemonic bid. Secondly, a stronger state is better able to defend itself against neighbours, decreasing its need for protection from the potential hegemon. Weak states are therefore much more likely to bandwagon than strong states.⁴⁵ Potential hegemons, from Louis XIV's France to the USSR, almost consistently had weak allies.⁴⁶ Yet, their motivation tended to be a fear of neighbours rather than a fear of the potential hegemon or a desire for sharing its spoils.⁴⁷

Power of the Potential Hegemon

The impact of the power of the potential hegemon follows a similar logic. All states face a higher risk of bandwagoning as the power of the potential hegemon increases. This is because the potential hegemon needs less additional power to establish itself as an actual hegemon. Hence, the greater the power of the potential hegemon, the fewer states can accept the risk of bandwagoning. Potential hegemons will therefore get fewer and weaker allies as they become stronger. While still recovering from the destruction of the Second World War, the Soviet Union found a willing ally in China. Yet, as Soviet capabilities steadily grew, Mao became increasingly worried about the consequences of the alliance.⁴⁸

Power of Neighbours

Neighbours that are more powerful are also more threatening, except if they are allies. Bandwagoning with the potential hegemon therefore becomes increasingly attractive to provide assistance against this threat. For example, the largely independent threat the Soviet Union faced from Japan increased its willingness to join the balancing coalition

⁴⁵ Eric J. Labs, "Do Weak States Bandwagon?," *Security Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1992), pp. 385-386.

⁴⁶ Maurice Ashley, *Louis XIV and The Greatness of France* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1946), p. 151.

⁴⁷ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 20-21.

⁴⁸ Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict 1947-1958* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 205-213.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

against Germany in August 1939.⁴⁹ However, neighbours that are more powerful only promote bandwagoning as long as they are hostile. Benevolent neighbours willing to form alliances promote balancing, as a contrast.

Power of Balancing and Bandwagoning Coalitions

Joining a balancing coalition is increasingly beneficial the more power it possesses compared to the bandwagoning alliance. A powerful balancing coalition can offer states the same benefits as allying with a potential hegemon against neighbours. For example, the Triple Entente probably offered Italy more security in 1915 than bandwagoning with Germany.⁵⁰ Similarly, Belgium sided with the allies in 1914 because it knew France and Britain would fight at its side.⁵¹

An optimal balancing alliance solves both the hegemonic and the neighbour threat. This happens if states that initially threaten each other can alleviate this threat through an alliance and focus their resources on the potential hegemon. NATO during the Cold War is a good example of this. The purpose of the alliance was, as the first Secretary General Lord Ismay argued, both to keep “the Russians out, and the Germans down”.⁵² Conversely, joining the bandwagoning coalition is increasingly costly the more powerful it is, because the probability of a hegemonic bid increases. For example, the Molotov-

⁴⁹ Zara Steiner, *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History 1933-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 867-917; Martin Malia, *Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), p. 280; Robert F. Miller, *Soviet Foreign Policy Today* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1991), p. 46.

⁵⁰ John Gooch, “An Act of Madness?: Italy’s War Aims and Strategy, 1915-1918,” in *The Purpose of the First World War: War Aims and Military Strategies*, ed. Holger Afflerbach (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2015), pp. 187-208.

⁵¹ Spencer Tucker, *The Great War, 1914-1918* (London: UCL Press, 1998), p. 9.

⁵² Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go It Alone* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 33.

Ribbentrop Pact compelled France and Britain to balance against Germany, as there were no other actors capable of checking Germany's power.⁵³

The Geography of Underbalancing

Underbalancing is the phenomenon when states in aggregate insufficiently balance against the potential hegemon. The consequence of this is an increased probability of hegemony. Distraction by neighbours is the primary cause of this phenomenon. Thus, it can also explain why so many multipolar systems end up with a hegemon.⁵⁴ This fact has escaped the literature, which has generally explained underbalancing with domestic politics.⁵⁵ While domestic politics often does have an impact, it is not its primary cause. For example, domestic constraints limited other Mediterranean powers' balancing against Rome. However, a much more important factor was the capabilities they spent fighting each other, rather than focusing all their attention on the Roman threat. In particular, the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires expended much of their resources in the bitter Syrian Wars between 274 and 168 BCE.⁵⁶

Certain geographical constellations promote balancing behaviour. The existence of an offshore state is the most important of these.⁵⁷ Such states have no great power neighbours, meaning that they can devote themselves entirely to preventing potential

⁵³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 196.

⁵⁴ Stuart J. Kaufman, Richard Little, and William C. Wohlforth, ed., *The Balance of Power in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (London: Routledge, 1992).

⁵⁵ Schweller, *Unanswered Threats*; Randall L. Schweller, "Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing," *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Fall 2004), pp. 159-201; Brian Rathburn, "A Rose by Any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism," *Security Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (2008), pp. 294-321.

⁵⁶ Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); and Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

⁵⁷ See chapter III.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

hegemons from succeeding. While they still prefer other states to do the balancing, they can always intervene if necessary. Offshore states also have a vested interest in keeping the continental states opposed to each other, which helps prevent hegemonic bids.⁵⁸ The distinction between offshore states is sometimes complicated if these states have territorial possessions or strong interests overseas. For instance, Britain during the interwar period was an offshore state in Europe, but a continental state in the empire.

Great powers may also be located in such a way in relation to each other that they have an incentive to ally with each other against the potential hegemon. Three major considerations guide state's choices of alliance partners. Ideal allies are states that are strong, share many enemies, and are neighbours. Strong states are good allies because they offer more security than weaker states. Sharing enemies is an advantage because this means the alliance members gain fewer new threats from allying with each other. Neighbours are particularly good allies because an alliance cancels the threat members pose to each other, making such unions doubly advantageous.⁵⁹ Consequently, the most advantageous geographical structure promoting balancing is when two great powers both border the potential hegemon and each other. For example, Austria and Prussia performed an effective balancing role against France from 1815 to 1859.⁶⁰ Coordinating their resistance to the potential hegemon also becomes easier. Powerful states, particularly when neighbouring the potential hegemon, promotes balancing in the system. Such states offer protection against neighbours, in the same manner as the potential hegemon.

⁵⁸ See chapter III

⁵⁹ See chapter IV.

⁶⁰ See Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 671-691, 745-750; Alan Sked, "The Metternich System, 1815-1848," in *Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848*, ed. Alan Sked (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 118-119.

Great powers bordering the potential hegemon individually without sharing a border are prone to bandwagoning, unless they are very powerful. This helps to explain why Spain remained allied with the potential hegemon France for most of the 18th century.⁶¹ Only having one great power bordering the potential hegemon is also conducive to bandwagoning. Then the other great powers do not fear the potential hegemon as a neighbour, and thus have fewer interests in countering it. Instead, they may distract the balancing state in its efforts.

Empirical Testing: Austrian Responses to France, 1701-1866

In the empirical section, I test whether the choice between balancing and bandwagoning is determined by their relative risks.

Sample

To evaluate the empirical validity of the theoretical arguments, I analyse Austrian⁶² behaviour towards France from 1683 to 1797. The sample begins with the Great Turkish War, which launched Austria as a true great power.⁶³ Historians consider France rising to European predominance with the victory against Spain at the Battle of Rocroi.⁶⁴ However, until around 1680, the main opponents of France were Spain and the

⁶¹ H. W. V. Temperley, "The Age of Walpole and the Pelhams," in *The Cambridge Modern History, Volume 10*, ed. Stanley Leathes, G. W. Prothero, Sir Adolphus, and William Ward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), p. 63.

⁶² The name Austria did not become official until 1804, but is generally used as the name of the possessions of the Austrian Habsburgs in the historical literature, see Michael Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence: War, State and Society in the Habsburg Monarchy 1683-1797* (London: Longman, 2003), p. 9.

⁶³ Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1974), p. 54.

⁶⁴ Mark Koonert, *Early Modern Europe: The Age of Religious War, 1559-1715* (Plymouth: Broadview Press, 2006), p. 201.

Netherlands.⁶⁵ 1797 is chosen because the rise of Napoleon meant the end of the traditional European great power system. France was clearly the only country in Europe to could have any hope of becoming a hegemon, due to its combination of military, economic, technological, and demographic strength.⁶⁶ However, the extent of its threat varied greatly throughout the period.

The sample consists of seven cases, covering all the major great power wars during the period given in Table 2.2 below.

TABLE 2.2: Selection of Cases

Cases	Time Period
1. Great Turkish War and Nine Years' War	1688-1697
2. War of the Spanish Succession	1701-1714
3. War of the Polish Succession	1733-1738
4. War of Austrian Succession	1740-1748
5. Seven Years' War	1756-1763
6. American War of Independence	1778-1783
7. War of the First Coalition	1792-1797

Case Selection

The sample is relevant and useful for three reasons. First, a longitudinal case study approach⁶⁷ is the best way to test the argument rigorously. Using an exhaustive list of cases from a fixed period puts very strict limitations on the case selection. A typical way

⁶⁵ Derek McKay and Hamish M. Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers: 1648–1815*. (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 1-42.

⁶⁶ Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), pp. 73-142.

⁶⁷ Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2014), pp. xxv.

to test the theory would be to take one case for each of the four cells in Table 2.1 on page 51. Given the considerable size of the universe of cases, however, finding three supporting examples is easy. Moreover, it would be virtually impossible to demonstrate that the case selection is not random.

Second, the sample offers a considerable amount of variance. In particular, there were huge changes in the power of France, Austria and Austria's neighbours. Third, all seven cases include major wars when France attempted to expand its power and often came close to establishing itself as a hegemon. Such wars are the instances when the threat from neighbours is the least likely to have a decisive effect. Thus, the sample consists of seven 'least-likely' cases for *Georealism*.⁶⁸ This is because great powers have the greatest interest in balancing when the potential hegemon is at war, actively trying to increase its power.

Last, the sample spans a total of 114 years, limiting the potential impact of confounding variables, such as religion, or dynastic interests. The reason for this is that these variables would have to persist in the same form throughout the entire sample to disturb the empirical data significantly. Given the massive changes Europe underwent during these years, this is implausible.

Apart from suitability for testing the theoretical claims, the sample also plays another important purpose. The relationship between France and Austria from 1683 to 1797 is profoundly important in itself, largely shaping the early modern Europe. Despite this,

⁶⁸ Harry Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," in *Case Study Method: Key Issues, Key Texts*, ed. Roger Gomm, Martyn Hammersley, Peter Foster (London: Sage, 2000), p. 149; John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 115-121.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

there is virtually no comprehensive treatment of the topic by historians in the English language.⁶⁹ Thus, my hope is that my dissertation will help open International Relations to a fascinating world with wars that are largely unknown today, but which can provide valuable lessons about the modern world.⁷⁰

As with any sample, some limitations and issues regarding case selection also exist. Most seriously, only looking at one dyad limits the external reliability of the findings. However, the considerable developments taking place during the sample mitigate this problem. Both Austria and France were dramatically different entities by the beginning and end of the sample. Austria was in 1683 still a semi-feudal entity, while in 1797 it had one of the most highly organized and enlightened despotic governments in Europe.⁷¹ Similarly, France went through massive transformations, from the height of power of Louis XIV, to the troubled years of the second half of the 18th century, to the revolutionary regime after 1792.

Another issue is that the selection of wars is situated much earlier in history, which leads to questions of modern world applicability. While it is impossible to refute this criticism without detailed investigations, it is less convincing than it may appear at first. The general argument that states face threats from both hegemon and neighbours is not particularly time-dependent. For instance, there is little doubt that the Sino-Soviet tensions decreased the ability of the USSR to focus on the US as late as the 1980s.⁷²

⁶⁹ For a very brief treatment, see Paul W. Schroeder, "A Pointless Enduring Rivalry: France and the Habsburg Monarchy, 1715-1918," in *Great Power Rivalries*, ed. William R. Thompson (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 60-79. For a bibliography of the topic, see *ibid*, pp. 80-82.

⁷⁰ For other IR works dealing with the 18th century, see Marco Cesa, *Allies Yet Rivals: International Politics in 18th Century Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

⁷¹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*.

⁷² Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 340; Bobo Lo, "The Russia-China-US Triangle and

Hypotheses

The general *Georealist* argument about responses to potential hegemon is that great powers make decisions about balancing and bandwagoning by weighing their relative risks. This can be summarized into the following three hypotheses:

- H1: Great powers pursue a strategy of balancing when they face a high bandwagoning and low balancing risk.
- H2: Great powers pursue a strategy of bandwagoning when they face a low bandwagoning and high balancing risk.
- H3: Great powers pursue mixed strategies when they face high balancing and high bandwagoning risks.

Research Method

There are two tasks in this section. First, I transform the general hypotheses into testable predictions about Austrian behaviour. Second, I outline how I use the empirical evidence to evaluate these predictions.

Generating Predictions

Transforming the hypotheses into concrete predictions about Austrian behaviour toward France requires a measure of the balancing and bandwagoning risks. The ideal way to test this would be to find an objective measure of balancing and bandwagoning risk, and subsequently test whether this determines behaviour. However, doing this is obviously impossible, as Austria could not pursue both balancing and bandwagoning fully at once.

its post-Cold War Fate,” in Robert Bedeski and Niklas Swanström, *Eurasia’s Ascent in Energy and Geopolitics: Rivalry or Partnership for China, Russia, and Central Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 37.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

Consequently, I calculate the risks theoretically and make predictions of Austrian behaviour based on these. Subsequently, I evaluate whether actual Austrian behaviour conformed to these predictions.

Both the balancing and bandwagoning risks depend on the distribution of capabilities in the system. To measure capabilities, I use the peak number of soldiers in the army of the various relevant actors, primarily of great powers.⁷³ While a parsimonious measure and not applicable to modern day warfare, it is a good proxy for power at the time. States between 1683 and 1797 spent as many resources as they could on the army when at war. Hence, their wartime army size gives a good estimation of their actual power potential. Another advantage of this measure is that army sizes are also roughly comparable. The key components of any army at the time were soldiers armed with muskets. These did not differ radically in terms of training and equipment. This is not to say that counting the number of soldiers is appropriate for every other system. Threat, resting on the probability of war, consists of any capabilities great powers use to fight wars effectively. For each distinct system, it is thus necessary to pick the data that best reflects this. For example, the CINC scores work well for the 19th century great powers, while today taking technological and qualitative differences in militaries would be essential.

⁷³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 134.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

TABLE 2.3: Number of Soldiers, 1683-1797

	Number of soldiers (in 1000s)					
	France	Austria	Russia	Prussia	Great Britain	Ottoman Empire
1683-1697	338 ^c	63.8 ^a	90 ^b	29	80 ^b	114 ^h
1701-1714	360 ^c	135 ^a	220 ^b	40 ⁿ	75 ^b	
1733-1738	205 ^l	205 ^a	200 ^j	80 ^a		113 ^h
1740-1748	330 ^c	203 ^a	200 ^j	210 ^e	70 ^b	
1756-1763	330 ^b	201 ^a	330 ^b	260 ^k	91 ^b	
1777-1783	300 ⁷⁴	308 ^a	270 ^d	200	100 ^b	128 ^g
1792-1797	749 ^f	313 ^a	500 ^b	194 ^k	120 ^m	

Sources: a: Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, b: John Childs, *Armies and Warfare in Europe, 1648-1789*, p. 42, c: Russell F. Weigley, *The Age of Battles: The Quest for Decisive Warfare from Breitenfeld to Waterloo*, p. 260, d: Janet M. Hartley, e: Peter H. Wilson, *Prussia as Fiscal-Military State, 1640-1806*, p. 119; f: Spenser Wilkinson, *The French Army Before Napoleon*, pp. 139-140, g: Virginia H. Aksan, "Ottoman Military Power in the Eighteenth Century," p. 325, h: Gábor Ágoston, "The Ottoman Wars and the Changing Balance of Power along the Danube in the Early Eighteenth Century," p. 96, j: David R. Stone, *A Military History of Russia: From Ivan the Terrible to the War in Chechnya*, pp. 78-79, k: Philip G. Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia 1700-1830*, p. 14, l: John A. Lynn, *Tools of War: Instruments, Ideas, and Institutions of warfare, 1445-1871*, m: Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 284, Nolan, *Wars of the Age of Louis XIV, 1650-1715: An Encyclopedia of Global Warfare and Civilization*, p. 57.

Table 2.3 gives the data used on troop strength to generate predictions. Some caution is necessary when using this data. While the numbers give a good indication of the actual size of the military establishments, there is a level of uncertainty. Different sources give slightly different numbers, depending on exactly what is counted. For example, armies during the period tended to have a de facto lower number of men available for duty than their paper strength, largely due to corruption.⁷⁵ Countries also varied in their ratio of garrison troops, which could not easily be transformed into front line troops. Russia, and especially the Ottoman Empire, relied more heavily on irregular troops, making their

⁷⁴ As it faced not continental opposition, France did not fully mobilize its army. The losses and economic costs of the Seven Years' War and the focus on the navy meant that the number of men it could mobilize was probably slightly lower than the previous war.

⁷⁵ See for example John A. Lynn, "Recalculating French Army Growth during the Grand Siecle, 1610-1715," *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Autumn 1994), pp. 881-906.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

numbers particularly uncertain. Extra-European commitments also decreased the share of men these powers had available for use in Europe.

Bandwagoning risk is measured by calculating the combined share of Austrian and French soldiers to all great powers.⁷⁶ France had to amass marginally more than half of the capabilities of all great powers on its side to expect victory in a hegemonic war. This is because non-great powers such as the Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden also had substantial armies that could affect the outcomes of the wars.⁷⁷ Thus, I set the threshold to 55% of great power capabilities.

I estimate the balancing risk by calculating the share of Austrian capabilities compared to its hostile neighbours. The crucial distinction between a high and low threat is whether this ratio is above or below 1. Any number above 1 means that the hostile neighbours are more powerful than Austria, implying that it was incapable of dealing with this threat on its own. Conversely, a ratio below 1 means that Austria was more powerful than its hostile neighbours, meaning that it had much less of a need for French support against this threat. Which states were enemies are determined by looking at the historical record, and includes all states Austria was at war with, worried about being at war with, or that acted contrary to key Austrian interests.

⁷⁶ The Ottoman Empire is not included, as it was generally not considered a part of the European international system at the time, see Thomas Naff, "The Ottoman Empire and the European states system," in *The Expansion of International Society*, Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 143-170; Hamish Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System, 1740-1815* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 32-35.

⁷⁷ See for example John Childs, *Armies and Warfare in Europe, 1648-1789* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), p. 42.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Given the best responses, a theoretical prediction for Austria's best response in each war is obtained in Table 2.4 and plotted in Figure 2.2. I provide a reminder and explanation of these predictions at the beginning of each case.

TABLE 2.4: *Theoretical Model Predictions of Austrian Balancing and Bandwagoning Risks*

Case	Bandwagoning Risk	Balancing Risk	Bandwagoning Risk	Balancing Risk	Prediction
1683-1697	0.691	1.787	High	High	Mixed Strategies
1701-1714	0.604	0.200 ⁷⁸	High	Low	Balancing
1733-1738	0.594	1.170 ⁷⁹	High	High	Mixed strategies
1740-1748	0.526	1.310 ⁸⁰	Low	High	Bandwagoning
1756-1763	0.438	1.294	Low	High	Bandwagoning
1777-1783	0.516	1.942	Low	High	Bandwagoning
1792-1797	0.568	2.217	High	High	Mixed Strategies

FIGURE 2.2: *Austrian Balancing and Bandwagoning Risks Scatterplot*

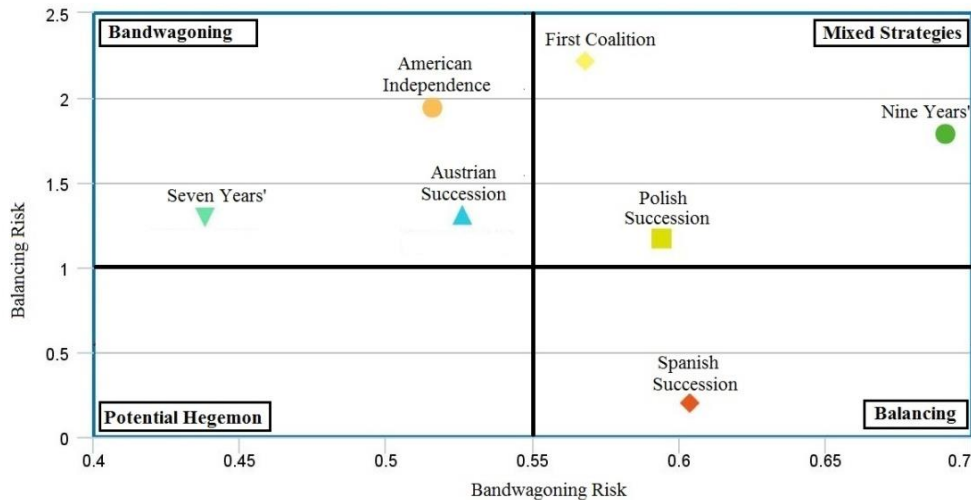


Figure 2.2: The figure plots the best responses predictions for Austria. Bandwagoning risk is measured on the x-axis, where any number above 0.55 is labelled as high risk. The Y-axis measures balancing risk. Any number higher than 1 is considered high, any number below 1 is low.

⁷⁸ Includes Bavaria with 27,000 men, see T. C. W. Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787-1802* (London: Arnold, 1996), p. 10.

⁷⁹ Threat from neighbours also includes Spain with 30,000 men as it was fighting Austria in Italy, and the Polish army of 17,000 men, see Childs, *Armies and Warfare in Europe*, p. 42.

⁸⁰ The threat from neighbours also includes 37,000 men from Saxony and 19,000 men from Bavaria, see Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787-1802*, p. 10.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

Empirical Evaluation

In this section, I first present the historical record of Austrian behaviour in the seven wars that I study. Later on, I will also evaluate whether actual Austrian behaviour conformed to the *Georealist* predictions.

This chapter is about how great powers respond to potential hegemons, and how this is impacted by the threat they face from their neighbours. Hence, I try in the case studies to evaluate the relative Austrian attention to the two threats in the seven most serious cases of French expansionism during the sample. Focusing on a threat manifests itself in fighting wars or stationing troops against them. The greater the number of soldiers devoted to a threat, the more Austria focused on it. Conversely, not focusing on threats involves not stationing troops, seeking peace agreements, appeasing, or simply ignoring it.

Distinguishing between bandwagoning and balancing poses no problems. Balancing would imply Austria spend most of its available capabilities on fighting France, and that it played a significant part in the war effort. Bandwagoning involves seeking assistance from France in fighting neighbours. In cases of likely bandwagoning, a key factor is determining whether this increases the risk of hegemony. Otherwise, the behaviour cannot be classified as such. Distinguishing them both from partial balancing and bandwagoning poses some challenges. Mixed strategies involve limiting attention devoted to the potential hegemon to a significant extent to focus on neighbours instead. Fighting wars against neighbours while simultaneously attempting to balance against France is the most obvious example of this. However, stationing significant amounts of troops on borders of threatening neighbours or turning down alliance offers from such

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

states have much the same effect. To ensure that this behaviour was mixed strategies, rather than simply balancing, I assess whether this behaviour had a significantly negative impact on Austrian balancing efforts.

Georealism is an easily falsifiable theory. The most obvious evidence falsifying it is that Austria clearly focused more on either the threat from neighbours or hegemon when both threats were high. Austria could also do this simply by reaching an accommodation with what it considered the lesser threat, most likely through some form of appeasement. Moreover, such a behaviour would be entirely in line with Walt's balance of threat theory.

The lack of any historical dataset on Austrian behaviour necessitates looking at the historical material instead. All the forms of behaviour I look at, such as going to war, making peace agreements, cease fires, or troop movements are historically uncontroversial. Hence, I rely on the secondary literature to determine this. However, in the crucial shift from balancing to bandwagoning France during the 'Diplomatic Revolution', I look at the Austrian motivation in Kaunitz's famous 1749 memorandum. This is because the historical literature widely points to the importance of this document.⁸¹ Apart from this, covering 114 years of documents in the Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv would take a lifetime, and likely provide limited added information.

⁸¹ See for example Franz A. J. Szabo, *Kaunitz and Enlightened Absolutism 1753-1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 18-19; Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, pp. 83-84; McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, pp. 182-183; Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 331-332.

Background

During the 17th century, France became the leading European power, succeeding at solving religious differences, curbing the power of the aristocracy, and improving state finances. This increased the powers of the state, enabling a phenomenal growth in the army, from 55,000 in 1610, to 338,000 by the Nine Years' War.⁸² With an army vastly surpassing that of any other European state, it was clearly in the best position of achieving hegemony of any other state.⁸³

The Great Turkish War and the Nine Years' War, 1683-1699

The Great Turkish War began with the Ottoman invasion of Austria in 1683 and continued until 1699. Austria had support from Poland, Russia, Venice, and most states in the Holy Roman Empire. The Nine Years' War broke out in 1688 and lasted until 1697. Spain, the Netherlands, Britain, and a number of smaller states joined Austria in this war against France. The war originated with a French invasion of the Rhineland, and the Dutch Stadtholder William III's seizure of power in Britain.⁸⁴ Austria was therefore forced to fight wars on two fronts from 1688 to 1697 against both France and the Ottoman Empire.

Prediction

The Austrian army only reached 63,800 men during the war. However, since the French army was 338,000 men strong, the total Austro-French share of capabilities was 61%.

⁸² Lynn, "Recalculating French Army Growth during the Grand Siecle," p. 902.

⁸³ Charles F. Doran, *The Politics of Assimilation: Hegemony and Its Aftermath* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), pp. 19-20.

⁸⁴ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 41; E. S. De Beer, "The English Revolution," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 193-222.

Bandwagoning with France therefore involved a high risk. The only serious threat Austria faced from its neighbours was the Ottoman Empire, but this in itself posed a very serious danger. The Ottoman army was at 114,000 men, and the two countries were at war with each other. Balancing was consequently also very risky. With both balancing and bandwagoning causing a high risk, mixed strategies is the predicted outcome. The urgent nature of the French hegemonic threat makes it most like that this would take the form of partial balancing.

P1: Austria pursued a mixed strategy during the Nine Years' War.

The War

The Austrian Emperor Leopold I was acutely aware of the challenges of Austria's strategic situation. Worried about French hegemonic ambitions and territorial threat to the Holy Roman Empire, he tried in the early 1680s to focus Austrian resources on the west.⁸⁵ Yet, the massive Ottoman invasion of 1683 and subsequent siege of Vienna put the very survival of Austria at stake.⁸⁶ Austria thus had to turn its attention to the east. While the Ottoman attempt to conquer Vienna was thwarted in 1683 by a Polish-Imperial relief force,⁸⁷ its army remained in the field until 1699, winning several major battles.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire: Volume II: The Peace of Westphalia to the Dissolution of the Reich, 1648-1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 40-41.

⁸⁶ Richard Bassett, *For God and Kaiser: The Imperial Austrian Army, 1619-1918* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2015), pp. 56-82.

⁸⁷ John Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna: The Last Great Trial Between Cross & Crescent* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2011).

⁸⁸ A. N. Kurat and J. S. Bromley, "The Retreat of the Turks, 1683-1730," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 608-647.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

Louis XIV took advantage of Austria's preoccupation with the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁹ In 1681, he seized several territories in Germany, including the strategically important cities of Strasbourg, Kehl, and Philippsburg.⁹⁰ Leopold wanted to oppose this, but the Turkish threat prevented him from doing so.⁹¹ When Vienna was under siege, France also took the key fortress of Luxembourg.⁹² Spain hoped that the Austrians would make peace with the Ottomans to resist Louis XIV instead, but this did not happen.⁹³ With the Ottomans still posing a potent threat and being reluctant to make peace on terms favourable to Austria, Leopold hesitatingly acquiesced to French expansion.⁹⁴ His choice to do this, however, was with France in mind. Leopold correctly believed that eradicating the Ottoman threat, and the territorial gains that followed, would allow him to face France from a stronger position later.⁹⁵ At the same time, French conquests were still relatively minor and thus not bringing it much closer to hegemony.⁹⁶ Thus, while this behaviour goes against the expectation of *Georealism*, it is not a major problem.

The lack of an Austrian reaction to France, and the prospect of a total Ottoman defeat, made Louis XIV even more aggressive. In 1688, France moved its army into Rhineland.⁹⁷ Such a blatant aggression made the international situation much more favourable, opening the possibility of resisting France. William III, the Dutch Stadtholder, was able for the first time since the 1670s to convince the Dutch Republic to take a firm anti-French stance.⁹⁸ The expulsion of French Huguenots also helped to create a strong protestant

⁸⁹ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 74.

⁹⁰ John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667-1714* (London: Longman, 1998), pp. 161-165.

⁹¹ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 38.

⁹² Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, p. 166.

⁹³ John B. Wolf, *The Emergence of the Great Powers: 1685-1715* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 24.

⁹⁴ John P. Spielman, *Leopold I of Austria* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), pp. 116-117.

⁹⁵ Wolf, *The Emergence of the Great Powers*, p. 25.

⁹⁶ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, pp. 37-38.

⁹⁷ Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 191-192.

⁹⁸ William Young, *International Politics and Warfare in the Age of Louis XIV and Peter the Great* (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2004), p. 221.

alliance against France.⁹⁹ Most notably, William III's invasion of England and following Glorious Revolution put England firmly in the anti-French camp.¹⁰⁰

Austria, however, still insisted on continuing the war with the Ottoman Empire, obstructing its efforts to resist France. In 1691, the Imperial Army deployed 75,000 men in Hungary, but only 8,700 and 14,500 on the Rhine and in Italy respectively.¹⁰¹ Fighting France was thus primarily left to the Dutch and the English. Not caring the least about the Ottoman Empire, these states pressured Austria to cease its fighting in the east, but Leopold rebuffed all pressure to conclude a peace with the Ottomans.¹⁰² Allied resources were therefore only sufficient to contain the French, but not to defeat them decisively. Instead, the war consisted of a costly stalemate in the Low Countries and along the Rhine.¹⁰³ Both sides slowly spiralled into economic exhaustion. Ultimately, France had to cave in first, but the allies were only in a marginally better state.¹⁰⁴ The war was a victory for the allies, as France had to abandon its acquisitions on the right bank of the Rhine. However, allied gains were slight and the French threat was still potent, as would be demonstrated four years later during the War of Spanish Succession.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the Nine Years' War was clearly not a successful case of balancing.

⁹⁹ Wolf, *The Emergence of the Great Powers*, p. 35.

¹⁰⁰ John Miller, *The Glorious Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1997).

¹⁰¹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 163.

¹⁰² Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*, p. 43.

¹⁰³ John Childs, *The Nine Years' War and the British Army, 1688-1697: The Operations in the Low Countries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991).

¹⁰⁴ George Clark, "The Nine Years War, 1688-1697," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 223-253.

¹⁰⁵ George Clark, "From the Nine Years' War to the War of the Spanish Succession," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 381-409.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

The transfer of veteran soldiers and the best generals to the west enabled an Ottoman recovery in Hungary.¹⁰⁶ Having reached into Macedonia and Bulgaria, Austria withdrew to a defensive line along the Danube and Sava Rivers. Key strategic points, particularly Belgrade were recaptured by the Ottomans, and Austria was unable to take the fortress of Temesvár (Timișoara).¹⁰⁷ Only when soldiers and generals were redeployed back to Hungary after the end of the Nine Years' War did this picture change. In particular, the brilliant young general Eugene of Savoy almost immediately crushed the Ottoman Army at the Battle of Zenta after arriving from Italy.¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

Austrian behaviour during the Great Turkish War and Nine Years' War conforms well to the predictions of *Georealism*. Firstly, the threat from the Ottoman Empire made Austria unable to devote most of its resources to fighting France in the west. Ottoman reluctance to make peace certainly contributed to this, but it was ultimately a deliberate choice by Leopold. If Austria abandoned territorial claims, the Ottomans would almost certainly have made peace. Indeed, this was exactly what happened after the decisive Austrian victory of St. Gotthard in 1664.¹⁰⁹ The peace treaty of Ryswick was also clearly insufficient to weaken France. The only instance where Austria did not pursue a mixed strategy was when they acquiesced to French expansion during the War of the Reunions. However, this was clearly only meant as a temporary expedient.

¹⁰⁶ Spielman, *Leopold I of Austria*, pp. 149-150.

¹⁰⁷ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 160-164.

¹⁰⁸ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁹ A. N. Kurat, "The Ottoman Empire under Mehmed IV," in *The New Cambridge Modern History: Volume 5, The Ascendancy of France, 1648-88*, ed. F. L. Carsten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 551.

The War of the Spanish Succession, 1701-1714

The War of the Spanish Succession, which took place from 1701 to 1714, was the most serious French bid for European hegemony until Napoleon. After the Spanish king Charles II died childless in 1700, both Phillip, the grandson of Louis XIV of France and Charles, the son of Leopold I of Austria claimed his throne.¹¹⁰ Phillip received more support in Spain, and the more proximate France was better able to enforce its claims. Controlling Spain's European and colonial empire would greatly further French hegemonic ambitions.¹¹¹ No serious threats from neighbours distracted Austria from the war effort. Victory in the Great Turkish War ended the Ottoman threat for the time being. Moreover, the outbreak of the Great Northern War meant that Saxony, Poland, and Russia were preoccupied with Sweden throughout the War of the Spanish Succession.¹¹²

Prediction

The Austrian Army expanded to 135,000 soldiers during the war, while the French army increased to 360,000 men. Their combined share of capabilities declined slightly to 60%, but still made bandwagoning involve a very high risk. Austria's sole threatening neighbour during the conflict was Bavaria, which had an army only 27,000 men strong. This threat was very manageable for Austria, making the risk of balancing low. Consequently, the predicted Austrian strategy is balancing.

¹¹⁰ M. A. Thomson, "Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (December 1954), pp. 111-134; Clark, "From the Nine Years War to the war of the Spanish Succession," pp. 381-409.

¹¹¹ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 54-55; Manus I. Midlarsky, *The Onset of World War* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), p. 136; Jeremy Black, *Great Powers and the Quest for Hegemony: The World Order Since 1500* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), pp. 72-73.

¹¹² Spielman, *Leopold I of Austria*, pp. 183-184; Ragnhild Hatton, "Charles XII and the Great Northern War," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. by J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 648-680.

P2: Austria pursued a strategy of balancing against France during the War of the Spanish Succession.

The War

Austria and France competed fiercely for allies in Germany to support their respective claims to the Spanish throne. Austria easily won this competition.¹¹³ Hence, the Holy Roman Empire, a collective organization of the German states,¹¹⁴ declared war on France in 1702, and provided sizeable contributions to the Austrian war effort. Prussia, the most powerful of the German middle powers provided particularly useful support.¹¹⁵ Bavaria and Cologne did side with France,¹¹⁶ but were far too weak to pose a threat to Austria on their own.

Differences in Austria's contribution to fighting the French in the Nine Years' War and the War of the Spanish Succession are striking. The first troop commitments of the War of the Spanish Succession decided that Austria and the empire would provide 90,000 soldiers, compared to 40,000 from England and 60,000 from the Dutch Republic.¹¹⁷ The Austrian army was also present at most of the great battles of the war. Eugene of Savoy and the Imperial Army played an important part in the great victories of Blenheim, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet.¹¹⁸ In addition, Austria played the leading role in the Italian theatre of the war.¹¹⁹ Despite facing a much larger French army, the Austrians secured the

¹¹³ Linda Frey and Marsha Frey, *A Question of Empire: Leopold I and the War of Spanish Succession, 1701-1705* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1983; Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 176.

¹¹⁴ James J. Sheehan, *German History, 1770-1866* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 11-24.

¹¹⁵ Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany: 1648-1840, Volume 1* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 118.

¹¹⁶ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 58.

¹¹⁷ David Chandler, *Marlborough as Military Commander* (London: Penguin, 2000), pp. 56-57.

¹¹⁸ Russell F. Weigley, *The Age of Battles: The Quest for Decisive Warfare from Breitenfeld to Waterloo* (Bloomington, Indiana: University of Indiana Press, 2004), pp. 73-104.

¹¹⁹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 176-180.

peninsula for the allies with the victory at the Battle of Turin.¹²⁰ Austria also had a contingent in Spain, supporting Archduke Charles' attempt at seizing the Spanish throne.¹²¹ It continued fighting after Britain withdrew from the war in 1713, despite its increasingly difficult economic situation.¹²² Despite some setbacks at the end of the war, Austria massively increased its territory by acquiring most of Spain's European empire. This included Lombardy, Naples, Sardinia, and the Spanish Netherlands.¹²³

Conclusion

Austria played a much bigger part in fighting France during the War of the Spanish Succession than it had done during the Nine Years' War. There is little doubt that this was because the absence of any serious threats from neighbours allowed Austria to deploy all its resources to the west. Unlike the Nine Years' War, the War of the Spanish Succession was a clear defeat of Louis XIV's hegemonic ambitions.¹²⁴ Greatly weakened, France remained peaceful for the next two decades.

¹²⁰ Wolf, *The Emergence of the Great Powers*, p. 75.

¹²¹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 184-186.

¹²² A. J. Veenendaal, "The War of the Spanish Succession in Europe," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 443-444.

¹²³ Mckay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, pp. 65-66.

¹²⁴ Mckay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 94.

The War of the Polish Succession, 1733-1738

The War of the Polish Succession nominally arose from a dispute of the elective Polish throne between French and Russian sponsored candidates.¹²⁵ Yet, in reality, France cared little about the Polish throne. Instead, Paris took advantage of the dispute to weaken Austria and improve its own position without appearing as the aggressor.¹²⁶ Hence, the war was clearly a part of the long Austro-French power struggle.

Prediction

Both France and Austria had roughly 205,000 men under arms during the War of the Polish Succession making their total share of total great power capabilities 59%. Austria's relative strength thus meant that balancing was still very risky. Austria faced a number of threats from neighbours during the conflict. Tensions were high with the Ottoman Empire, which possessed an army of 113,000 men. Austria was also at war with Poland and Spain,¹²⁷ which had armies of 17,000 and 30,000 men respectively. In addition, Austria feared Prussia, which army reached 80,000 during the war. The hostile neighbours combined armies exceeded that of Austria's army by roughly 17%, making balancing involve a high risk. Mixed strategies is thus the predicted outcome. Again this is of the partial balancing type as bandwagoning was very risky, while bandwagoning only moderately so.

P2: Austria pursued a mixed strategy during the War of the Polish Succession.

¹²⁵ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 209.

¹²⁶ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, pp. 19-20; McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 145.

¹²⁷ Spain's naval power in the Mediterranean made it a neighbour of Austria in Italy.

The War

Despite its name, the War of the Polish Succession was primarily fought on the Rhine and in Italy.¹²⁸ Immediately after the war's outbreak, France moved across the Rhine and captured the strategically important bridgehead of Kehl.¹²⁹ However, the main fighting took place in Italy,¹³⁰ as France was keen to avoid British intervention.¹³¹ Austria faced a coalition of France, Sardinia, and Spain, which quickly forced Austria to abandon all of Lombardy.¹³² Subsequently, Spain went on to conquer Sicily, Naples, and Austria's possessions in Tuscany. By 1735, the fortress of Mantua was the only Italian possession still in Austria's hands.¹³³

Austria's neighbours greatly impeded its war efforts against France. In Germany and Italy, Austria had virtually no allies.¹³⁴ Austria's smaller neighbours maintained a pro-French attitude, particularly Bavaria, Sardinia (formerly Savoy), and Poland.¹³⁵ Spain and Sardinia played a major part in Austria's total defeat in Italy. Eugene of Savoy was unable to take decisive action against the French on the Rhine, because the prospect of Bavarian intervention threatened the rear of his army.¹³⁶ The Ottoman threat was also weighing increasingly heavily on Austria by 1735. Russia insisted on a campaign against the Ottoman Empire, which Austria could hardly refuse as long as it depended on Russian support against France.¹³⁷ Prussia offered to assist Austria with an army of 50,000, almost certainly enough to have a decisive impact on the war. However, Charles VI rebuffed this

¹²⁸ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany*, p. 183.

¹²⁹ Jeremy Black, *European International Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p. 155.

¹³⁰ M. S. Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1789* (London: Longman, 2000), p. 260.

¹³¹ Jeremy Black, "British Neutrality in the War of the Polish Succession, 1733-1735," *International History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1986), pp. 345-366.

¹³² Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 210-211.

¹³³ John L. Sutton, *The King's Honor and the King's Cardinal: The War of the Polish Succession* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1980), pp. 88-111.

¹³⁴ Jean Bérenger, *The Habsburg Empire 1700-1918* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 36.

¹³⁵ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 209.

¹³⁶ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 211.

¹³⁷ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 213.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

offer, as he was worried that this would lead to Prussian expansion in Germany. He was also determined not to give Prussia the status of an equal ally, but treated it as a constituent member of the Holy Roman Empire.¹³⁸ The fighting in Poland also forced Austria to maintain a troop presence on its northern flank.¹³⁹ Another problem for Austria was that Britain maintained an unusually pacific attitude during the war.¹⁴⁰ No vital financial support from London was therefore available.¹⁴¹

With the preponderance of the French alliance and the hostility of Austria's neighbours, the war ended in disaster for Vienna. Naples and Sicily were given to a son of Phillip V of Spain, for minor compensations.¹⁴² France secured the Duchy of Lorraine, ruled by the fiancé of the Austrian heiress Maria Theresa.¹⁴³ This completed the century-long French quest of securing its eastern border.¹⁴⁴ French success in the war greatly increased its power and prestige, setting the stage for renewed aggression during the War of the Austrian Succession.¹⁴⁵ Even victory in Poland was problematic to Austria, as the kingdom became a satellite of St. Petersburg.¹⁴⁶

Conclusion

Austria played the leading part in fighting France during the War of the Polish Succession. However, the various threats Vienna faced from other states clearly impeded its ability to focus its entire resources on France. Individually no threat was very high, but

¹³⁸ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany*, pp. 183-184.

¹³⁹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 209.

¹⁴⁰ Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire* (London: Penguin, 2008), pp. 240-243; J. O. Lindsay, "International Relations," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 7: The Old Regime, 1713-1763*, ed. J. O. Lindsay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 205.

¹⁴¹ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 149.

¹⁴² Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire*, p. 95

¹⁴³ Sutton, *The King's Honor and the King's Cardinal*, pp. 208-210.

¹⁴⁴ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 151.

¹⁴⁵ M. S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 4-6.

¹⁴⁶ Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire*, pp. 93-95

combined their effect was significant. In particular, the reluctance to accept Prussian support probably had a decisive effect on the outcome of the war. However, considering the events in the next two wars, this was probably a prescient choice. Austria was therefore not able to prevent a French victory. While the war did not make French hegemony imminent, it clearly set the stage for another 23 years of great power wars. Moreover, as no other great powers were balancing against France, bandwagoning meant that France would face no serious opposition in Europe. Thus, it would be able to expand at will, meaning that bandwagoning was not a viable option.

The War of Austria Succession, 1740-1748

Two years after the end of the War of the Polish Succession, the Austrian Emperor Charles VI died, leaving the throne to his daughter Maria Theresa. Charles VI had spent decades having his daughter recognized as his only heir to preserve the unity of the Habsburg inheritance, called the 'Pragmatic Sanction'.¹⁴⁷ By the time of his death, it appeared that he had been generally successful in this quest.¹⁴⁸ Yet, reneging on his father's promise, the new Prussian King Frederick the Great immediately proceeded to launch an invasion of the rich Austrian province of Silesia.¹⁴⁹ To assist him he had an army of 80,000, which was the best trained in Europe.¹⁵⁰

Prediction

The Austrian Army reached a strength of 203,000 men during the war. The French Army was at 330,000 men strong, implying that the combined Franco-Austrian share of

¹⁴⁷ Bérenger, *The Habsburg Empire 1700-1918*, pp. 33-35.

¹⁴⁸ Reed Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994), pp. 18.

¹⁴⁹ Christopher Duffy, *Frederick the Great: A Military Life* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 22.

¹⁵⁰ James H. Sheehan, *International Relations in Europe, 1689-1789* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 42.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

European capabilities was at 53%. Consequently, the risk of bandwagoning was low, albeit only marginally so. Austria was also at war with Prussia, Saxony, and Bavaria, which combined fielded 260,000 men. Consequently, the risk of balancing was clearly high. The predicted outcome is thus bandwagoning, although verging on mixed strategies due to the bandwagoning risk approximating a high level.

P4: Austria pursued a strategy of bandwagoning with France during the War of the Austrian Succession.

The War

The war began in 1740 with Frederick's invasion of the Austrian province of Silesia.¹⁵¹ Catching the Austrians off guard, Frederick succeeded in capturing the entire province in only six weeks.¹⁵² An attempt by Austria to regain the province met with defeat at the Battle of Mollwitz.¹⁵³ Some months after the Prussian invasion, Bavaria and Saxony also joined the war with significant territorial claims on Austria.¹⁵⁴ Charles Albert of Bavaria also claimed the title of Holy Roman Emperor. This title had been in the possession of the Habsburg family since 1440, and was still an important source of Austrian power and prestige.¹⁵⁵ Lastly, France joined the war in 1741, ostensibly to support Bavaria's claims, but in practice to break up Austria entirely.¹⁵⁶ Thus, Austria faced a two-front war. At the same time, Austria's allies were of little help. Britain was afraid of its position in Hannover, so initially it did nothing to support Austria.¹⁵⁷ Russia was in political turmoil,

¹⁵¹ Black, *European International Relations*, p. 159.

¹⁵² Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, p. 68.

¹⁵³ Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, p. 51-54.

¹⁵⁴ Heinz Duchhard, *Balance of Power und Pentarchie: Internationale Beziehungen 1700-1785* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1997), p. 305

¹⁵⁵ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 22.

¹⁵⁶ McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, pp. 165-166.

¹⁵⁷ Jeremy Black, *British Politics and Foreign Policy, 1727-44* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 214-215.

and busy fighting a war against Sweden.¹⁵⁸ This was the Habsburg monarchy's darkest hour.¹⁵⁹

The desperate situation forced Maria Theresa to make some difficult strategic priorities. Fighting both France and Prussia at once without sufficient support from allies was undesirable, and well beyond Austria's limited resources.¹⁶⁰ The obvious solution was to make peace with one of the two threats. This opportunity soon arose. A majority at the court in Vienna favoured peace with Prussia. Achieving this would have been easy, as Frederick lacked resources for a long war and was thus eager for peace. He insisted on keeping Silesia, but offered a handsome compensation, supporting Maria Theresa's husband Francis Stephen in the imperial election, and even defending Austria's territorial integrity.¹⁶¹ Despite Austria's desperate position, Maria Theresa did not even want to consider Frederick's offer.¹⁶² Her husband, Francis Stephen, added "better the Turks before Vienna, better the surrender of the Netherlands to France, better every concession to Bavaria and Saxony, than the renunciation of Silesia!"¹⁶³ These were not just empty words. Austria attempted to buy off every other enemy including France, which it offered the Duchy of Luxembourg in August 1741.¹⁶⁴ Unfortunately for Maria Theresa, everybody expected a total Austrian defeat and rebuffed the offers. Thus, Austria clearly

¹⁵⁸ Mark A. Thomson, "The War of the Austrian Succession," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 7: The Old Regime, 1713–1763*, ed. J. O. Lindsay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 417-418; David R. Stone, *A Military History of Russia: From Ivan the Terrible to the War in Chechnya* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), pp. 67-68.

¹⁵⁹ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, p. 80.

¹⁶⁰ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, p. 62.

¹⁶¹ Gerhard Ritter, *Frederick the Great: A Historical Profile*, trans. Peter Paret (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 82.

¹⁶² Thomson, "The War of the Austrian Succession," p. 417.

¹⁶³ Browning, *The War of Austrian Succession*, p. 43. For original German quote, see Colmar Grünhagen, *Geschichte des Ersten Schlesischen Krieges nach Archivalischen Quellen, Erster Band* (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Berthes, 1881), p. 86.

¹⁶⁴ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, p. 62, Browning, *The War of Austrian Succession*, pp. 68-69. Note that the Duchy of Luxembourg was much bigger than the modern country.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

did try to bandwagon as predicted by *Georealism*, and failed at this only due to French resistance.

Only serious setbacks against France forced Maria Theresa to change her mind. With its forces primarily directed against the Prussian army in Silesia, Austria was unable to face the Franco-Bavarian army. For a moment, it looked like it would capture the poorly defended Vienna, but eventually, the invasion army turned north to the Austrian heartland of Bohemia instead.¹⁶⁵ This culminated in November 1741 with the capture of Prague, the second biggest Austrian city.¹⁶⁶ The Franco-Bavarian success did not only cause Maria Theresa despair.¹⁶⁷ Frederick feared that Bavarian and Saxon gains on Austria would raise these states to permanent rivals of Prussia.¹⁶⁸ This sudden flash of mutual Austro-Prussian interests led to the infamous agreement of Kleinschnellendorf. Not even a cease-fire, the convention was a secret promise between Austria and Prussia to stop fighting each other, while bizarrely pretending to do so for their allies.¹⁶⁹

While the Kleinschnellendorf agreement was predictably inadequate at promoting a lasting peace between Vienna and Berlin, it did give Austria invaluable breathing space to wear off the crisis. Jealous of Prussian success, Saxony sued for peace and formed an alliance with Austria in September of 1742.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, the 20,000 men strong Austrian army in Silesia was able to move against the Franco-Bavarian force in Bohemia.¹⁷¹ At the same time, another Austrian army counter-attacked in the south, with

¹⁶⁵ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 80-83.

¹⁶⁶ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 250.

¹⁶⁷ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 87.

¹⁶⁸ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany*, pp. 208-235; Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, p. 212.

¹⁶⁹ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 88-89.

¹⁷⁰ D. B. Horn, "Saxony in the War of the Austrian Succession," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 44, No. 173 (January 1929), p. 34.

¹⁷¹ Jean Berenger, *The Habsburg Empire 1700-1918* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 57.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

spectacular success. Not only did it succeed in reconquering Austrian territories, it also captured most of Bavaria, including Munich.¹⁷² Cut off from its supply lines, the Franco-Bavarian army became harmless. However, before Austria could finish off the enemy army, it had to turn its attention north again to face a renewed Prussian threat.¹⁷³

Frederick knew that Vienna did not accept the loss of Silesia. Rather, the Kleinschnellendorf convention was a mere expedient to repel the French invasion undisturbed. Austrian success therefore threatened him.¹⁷⁴ To support the encircled Franco-Bavarian force he resumed hostilities and invaded Moravia in December, compelling Vienna to move its armies north to face Prussia. However, the Prussian army defeated the Austrians at Chotusitz.¹⁷⁵ With no hope of regaining Silesia and under heavy British pressure to end hostilities, Maria Theresa signed a peace agreement with Frederick at Breslau in June 1742.¹⁷⁶ Yet, in its short time, the Prussian intervention had greatly weakened the Austrian position in Bavaria, where it lost most of the territory it had previously conquered.¹⁷⁷

Free to devote itself to France again, Austria had a number of major successes. During the winter, the embattled Franco-Bavarian army fled Bohemia, having lost about two-thirds of its original strength.¹⁷⁸ By the summer of 1743, Austria completed the reconquest of Bavaria. Together with Britain, it also formed the so-called 'Pragmatic Army' on the Rhine. In 1743, this army defeated the French at the Battle of Dettingen.¹⁷⁹ Thus, by

¹⁷² Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 251.

¹⁷³ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 101-102.

¹⁷⁴ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 59.

¹⁷⁵ Larry H. Addington, *The Patterns of War Through the Eighteenth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 127-128.

¹⁷⁶ H. W. Koch, *A History of Prussia* (London: Longman, 1978), p. 111.

¹⁷⁷ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 253.

¹⁷⁸ Anderson, *The Austrian War of Succession*, p. 113.

¹⁷⁹ Thomson, "The War of the Austrian Succession," p. 427.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

1744, Austria and its allies looked poised to invade France.¹⁸⁰ History was about to repeat itself, however. Frederick the Great had watched Austrian successes yet again with growing unease. In August, he decided to attack Bohemia again, just as Austrian forces were threatening France in Strasbourg.¹⁸¹ In September, Prague was in his hands, forcing the Austrians to divert their attention to the north for the third time. Initially successful, the Austrians chased Frederick back to Prussia with great losses.¹⁸² Yet, defeats at Hohenfriedberg and Kesseldorf prevented Austria from recapturing Silesia. By December 1745, Austria made a final peace with Prussia, at least for the duration of War of the Austrian Succession, guaranteeing the Prussian possession of Silesia.¹⁸³

Prussia's intervention allowed France to recover from the defeats of 1744, most notably with the victory at Fontenoy in May 1745.¹⁸⁴ After the peace with Prussia, however, the Austrians went back to enthusiastically focusing on the war with France again. This was not only to counter the French threat, but also to seek compensations for the loss of Silesia.¹⁸⁵ Austria provided the biggest contribution against the French, with 60,000 men on the Rhine and a further 60,000 in Italy.¹⁸⁶ While this helped to slow the French advance, it did not entirely stop it, and by 1747, France had conquered the Austrian Netherlands.¹⁸⁷

The peace negotiations at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 turned out to be anticlimactic. Louis XV decided to renounce his conquests in the Austrian Netherlands for the return of

¹⁸⁰ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 132-133.

¹⁸¹ Edward Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa* (London: Constable, 1996), p. 97.

¹⁸² Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 258.

¹⁸³ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 60-61.

¹⁸⁴ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 142-144.

¹⁸⁵ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 61.

¹⁸⁶ Hochedlinger, *Austria's War of Emergence*, p. 261.

¹⁸⁷ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 171-172

French colonial possessions captured by Britain. Consequently, apart from confirming the loss of Silesia, the peace treaty only meant a few losses to Spain in Italy.¹⁸⁸ Austria had thus survived the crisis, but achieved little to weaken France.

Conclusion

Austria pursued mixed strategies during the war, contrary to *Georealist* predictions. Yet, it did try to bandwagon with France. Vienna's primary focus was clearly dealing with the Prussian threat, attempting to buy Paris off with concessions to do so. It was only when these offers were declined and France invaded Austria that Vienna made peace with Prussia. The war also provides the best illustration of the *Georealist* argument that the ability to counter the potential hegemon varies with the threat from neighbours. During Frederick's campaigns of 1740-1741, 1742, and 1744-1745, Austria clearly devoted too few resources against France. As a result, the French army ended up occupying Prague and threatening Vienna. Whenever not at war with Prussia, as a contrast, Austria devoted all resources against France with significant success.

The Seven Years' War

Continuing Anglo-French and Austro-Prussian suspicions meant that the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle turned out to be a mere armed armistice.¹⁸⁹ Eventually, British and Austrian desire for revenge led to the famous reversal of long-standing alliance patterns of the 'Diplomatic Revolution'.¹⁹⁰ After Britain signed the Convention of Westminster,

¹⁸⁸ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, pp. 193-209.

¹⁸⁹ Szabo, *The Seven Years' War in Europe*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁹⁰ See D. B. Horn, "The Diplomatic Revolution," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 7: The Old Regime, 1713-1763*, ed. J. O. Lindsay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 440-464; Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 72-95.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

increasing cooperation with Prussia, Austria responded by abandoning its 'natural ally'.¹⁹¹ Vienna then proceeded to sign an alliance with its traditional enemy, France.¹⁹² This helped to strengthen the link between London and Berlin further.¹⁹³ Russia joined the Franco-Austrian alliance, which threatened to encircle Frederick. To prevent this, he preemptively attacked Saxony to secure himself a favourable starting position in the war.¹⁹⁴ This helped to cement the brewing coalition against him, and soon the whole continent was engulfed in war.¹⁹⁵

Prediction

The Austrian and French armies remained roughly the same sizes as the previous war, with 201,000 and 330,000 men respectively. However, due to the growth in Prussian and Russian capabilities, their total share declined to only 44% of European capabilities. Bandwagoning consequently clearly entailed a low level of risk. Austria was only at war with Prussia, but its 260,000 strong army alone made balancing a clearly risky option. Bandwagoning is thus the expected outcome.

P5: Austria pursued a strategy of bandwagoning during the Seven Years' War.

¹⁹¹ Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Continuum, 1995), pp. 125-126.

¹⁹² William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 155; Schroeder, "A Pointless Enduring Rivalry," pp. 74-75.

¹⁹³ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 92-95.

¹⁹⁴ Franz A.J. Szabo, *The Seven Years War in Europe: 1756-1763* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2008), pp. 36-53.

¹⁹⁵ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, pp. 97-98.

The War

The origins of Vienna's decision to ally with France lay in the strategic dilemma it had faced during the War of the Austrian succession.¹⁹⁶ Unable to defend itself against Prussia and France simultaneously, Vienna had to re-evaluate its strategic priorities. Ultimately, this ended with an alliance with France. The reasoning behind this can be found in a memorandum from 1749 written by Kaunitz, who would soon become chancellor.¹⁹⁷ His main argument was that it was not France, but Prussia, which was Austria's "greatest, most dangerous, and most irreconcilable enemy".¹⁹⁸ France also seemed to pose less of a hegemonic threat than it had.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, an understanding with France would secure Austria both in Germany and Italy, or even active support.²⁰⁰ Together with Russia, Austria could therefore overwhelm Prussia.²⁰¹ In doing this, Austria was undoubtedly bandwagoning with France. Yet, bandwagoning was neither due to an excessive fear of France, nor due to a desire to share French spoils of victory. It was simply the best option because France was less threatening and offered protection against Austria's neighbours.

Kaunitz's calculations pictured strategic realities quite accurately, but actual events in the Seven Years' War contradicted all expectations. The anti-Prussian coalition should have been vastly superior. For example, it had 70 million inhabitants combined, compared to

¹⁹⁶ Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*, p. 359.

¹⁹⁷ Reiner Pommerin and Lothar Schilling, "Denkschrift des Grafen Kaunitz zur mächepolitischen Konstellation nach dem Aachener Frieden von 1748." in *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung Beiheft 2: Expansion und Gleichgewicht: Studien zur europäischen Mächepolitik des ancient regime*, ed. Johannes Kunisch, Klaus Luig, and Peter Moraw. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1986), pp. 165-239. For the development of Kaunitz's views from 1749 until he became chancellor, see William J. McGill, "The Roots of Policy: Kaunitz in Vienna and Versailles, 1749-1753," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (June 1971), pp. 228-244.

¹⁹⁸ "Gröste, gefährlichste, und unversöhnlichste Feind", Pommerin and Schilling, "Denkschrift des Grafen Kaunitz," p. 208.

¹⁹⁹ Pommerin and Schilling, "Denkschrift des Grafen Kaunitz," pp. 196-200.

²⁰⁰ Pommerin and Schilling, "Denkschrift des Grafen Kaunitz," pp. 214-217.

²⁰¹ Pommerin and Schilling, "Denkschrift des Grafen Kaunitz," pp. 225-226.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

Prussia's mere 3.6 million.²⁰² Yet, they proved unable to transform this into a decisive defeat of Prussia.²⁰³ Aiming to prevent the allies from joining forces, Frederick moved quickly to defeat them separately. In one of the finest campaigns in military history, he succeeded spectacularly at this purpose. First, he defeated the French at Rossbach, and then he crushed a much greater Austrian army at Leuthen.²⁰⁴ Frederick thus survived the dangerous year of 1757, but the arrival of a strong Russian army the following year forced him on the defensive.²⁰⁵ In 1759, Frederick lost against the Russians at Kunersdorf, which almost brought the collapse of the Prussian war effort, and Frederick to the brink of suicide.²⁰⁶ Prussia, however, managed to survive. Passive behaviour from the Austrian and Russian armies made them unable to follow up their victory, which gave Frederick time to recover.²⁰⁷ Moreover, Russia withdrew from the war after the death of its anti-Prussian Tsarina Elizabeth in January 1762.²⁰⁸ With both Austria and Prussia exhausted and unable to defeat each other, the war ended in 1763 with status quo ante bellum.

Austria's strategy of siding with France was not without risks. Free from any serious major continental threats, France could safely focus on knocking Britain out of the war, culminating in the invasion attempt of 1759.²⁰⁹ To assist it for this purpose, the years since 1748 had seen a rapid expansion of the French navy.²¹⁰ However, not enough time

²⁰² James C. Riley, *The Seven Years War and the Old Regime in France: The Economic and Financial Toll* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 75.

²⁰³ Philip G. Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia 1700-1830* (Harrow: Longman, 2000), pp. 170-171.

²⁰⁴ Weigley, *The Age of Battles*, pp. 182-188.

²⁰⁵ Scott, *The Rise of a Great Power System*, p. 104.

²⁰⁶ Szabo, *The Seven Years' War in Europe*, pp. 236-240.

²⁰⁷ Theodor Schieder, *Frederick the Great*, trans. Hamish M. Scott, Sabina Krause (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 132.

²⁰⁸ David Fraser, *Frederick the Great. King of Prussia* (London: Allen Lane, 2000), pp. 419-421.

²⁰⁹ Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War 1754-1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (Harlow: Longman, 2011), pp. 423-443.

²¹⁰ James Pritchard, *Louis XV's Navy, 1748-1762: A Study of Organization and Administration* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1987), p. 22.

had passed for the French Navy to become a serious challenge. After defeats against the Royal Navy at Lagos and Quiberon Bay, Paris abandoned its invasion plans.²¹¹ Yet, profound consequences would have followed a successful invasion. Britain financed every anti-French coalition from 1689 to 1815,²¹² so its defeat would have greatly facilitated further French expansion.

Conclusion

The Austrian decision to ally with France was a clear case of bandwagoning. France was relatively weak at the time, but did use the Franco-Austrian alliance to pursue its hegemonic aims by focusing on knocking out Britain from the war. Yet, this risk was considered less significant in Vienna than the threat posed by its neighbour Prussia. Both Austrian behaviour and the reasoning behind it is therefore in accordance with *Georealism*.

American War of Independence, 1778-1783

The defeat during the Seven Years' War was a disaster for France. Poor performance by the French army and the inability to fund the war led to questions of France's leading position in Europe.²¹³ The total British victory in North America and the loss of all colonies also created much resentment in Paris. When the American colonies declared their independence from Britain, they presented France with an excellent chance for

²¹¹ Jeremy Black, *Naval Power: A History of Warfare and the Sea from 1500 Onwards* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 80.

²¹² Hamish M. Scott, "Britain's Emergence as a European Power, 1689-1815," in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. H. T. Dickinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 435-436; Jennifer Mori, *Britain in the Age of the French Revolution: 1785 - 1820* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 195.

²¹³ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 144.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

revenge.²¹⁴ Following the Battle of Saratoga, France actively joined the war.²¹⁵ However, after the French intervention on the American side in 1778 Britain lost its naval supremacy.²¹⁶ After this, the European theatre was Britain's primary concern.²¹⁷ Spain and the Netherlands also declared war on Britain in 1779 and 1780 respectively.²¹⁸ Thus, while the fighting in the colonies dominates the historiography of the American War of Independence, the interventions of France, Spain, and the Netherlands gave the war an important European dimension as well.²¹⁹

North America was of no concern to Austria, but it faced a number of other threats at the time. After Catherine the Great came to power, Russia became increasingly expansionist in Poland and the Ottoman Empire, clashing fundamentally with Austrian interests.²²⁰ The rise of Prussia as a great power also made it an attractive ally to Russia,²²¹ previously a loyal Austrian partner. Russia consequently started to play Austria and Prussia off against each other for its own advantage.²²²

²¹⁴ Howard H. Peckham, *The War for Independence: A Military History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 89.

²¹⁵ Orville Theodore Murphy, *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes: French Diplomacy in the Age of Revolution 1719-1787* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), pp. 242-260.

²¹⁶ M. A. Jones, "The American Revolution in its Imperial, Strategic and Diplomatic Aspects," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 8: The American and French Revolutions, 1763-93*, ed. Elliot H. Goodwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 499.

²¹⁷ Russell Frank Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 21; Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 16.

²¹⁸ Thomas E. Chavez, *Spain and the Independence of the United States: An Intrinsic Gift* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002);

²¹⁹ Jeremy Black, *War for America: The Fight for Independence, 1775-1783* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1991).

²²⁰ Karl A. Roeder, Jr., *Austria's Eastern Question, 1700-1790* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 109-168.

²²¹ Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia*, p. 190; Hamish M. Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 115-116.

²²² McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, p. 218.

Prediction

The Austrian Army grew during the war to a size of 308,000 men. Since France did not experience any continental fighting, it never mobilized fully. Estimating its peak strength army is thus difficult, but a conservative guess would be roughly 300,000, based on previous conflicts. Combined, the Franco-Austrian capabilities were roughly 52% of continental capabilities. Both Prussia, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire threatened Austria during the conflict, with a combined army of 598,000, which clearly made balancing very risky. Bandwagoning is thus the predicted strategy, verging towards partial bandwagoning depending on the exact estimate of the size of the French army.

P6: Austria pursued a strategy of bandwagoning with France during the American War of Independence.

The War

Since the American War of Independence did not have a continental European theatre, Austria played no direct role in the fighting. Nevertheless, by continuing its alliance with France, Austria gave it considerable indirect support. Paris maintained the Austro-French alliance after the end of the Seven Years' War, as it gave France almost complete security on land.²²³ Transfer of resources from the army to the navy to challenge Britain on the seas could thus safely take place.²²⁴ Austria's decision to bandwagon with France was due to the threat it faced from its neighbours. The Russo-Prussian Alliance of 1764

²²³ France's alliance with its other great power neighbour, Spain, through the Bourbon 'Family Compact' provided further security, see Edward Corwin, *French Policy and the American Alliance of 1778* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1916), pp. 35-36.

²²⁴ Hamish M. Scott, "The Importance of Bourbon Naval Reconstruction to the Strategy of Choiseul after the Seven Years' War," *The International History Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1979), pp. 17-35.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

significantly worsened Vienna's strategic situation.²²⁵ Austrian inability to fight either of these powers individually, let alone combined, compelled it to maintain ties with Paris.²²⁶ The same year as France declared war on Britain, another Austro-Prussian war broke out over the Bavarian succession.²²⁷ While the fighting itself was indecisive, it presented a severe threat to Austria.²²⁸ With Russia leaning towards Prussia, Austria depended on French friendship more than ever.²²⁹ Further east, it looked like the Russian annexation of Crimea would lead to a new Russo-Turkish War, which also demanded Austrian attention.²³⁰

However, while Austria did not take part in the fighting directly, its decision to remain allied with France had profound implications for the war. Most notably, the maintenance of the Franco-Austrian alliance after the Seven Years' War freed Paris from any serious continental threat. This enabled France to focus on its navy, and thus becoming a serious danger to Britain.²³¹ Moreover, the Austrian cooperation with France meant that there was no anchor for an anti-French balancing coalition, as both Prussia and Russia were located too far away. A consequence of this was that weaker powers, such as Spain and the Netherlands also allied with France during the war. Consequently, the Royal Navy was much smaller than the combined allied navies for the duration of the war.²³²

²²⁵ H.M. Scott, "Frederick II, the Ottoman Empire and the Origins of the Russo-Prussian Alliance of April 1764," *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 7, (April 1977), pp. 153-175; Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 13.

²²⁶ Ramon E. Abarca, "Classical Diplomacy and Bourbon "Revanche" Strategy, 1763-1770," *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (July 1970), pp. 313-314.

²²⁷ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany*, pp. 257-258.

²²⁸ Jeremy Black, *European Warfare, 1660-1815* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), p. 81.

²²⁹ Murphy, *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes*, p. 258; Jeremy Black, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon: The Fate of a Great Power* (London: UCL Press, 1999), pp. 129-131.

²³⁰ Alan W. Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea 1772-1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 378-382.

²³¹ Sudipta Das, *De Broglie's Armada: A Plan for the Invasion of England, 1765-1777* (Lanham: University Press of America 2009), pp. 4-13.

²³² Jonathan Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 110.

With the favourable naval situation, France planned an invasion of Britain. This was not the first attempt at such an endeavour, similar plans existed in 1744 and 1759, and again in 1802-1803. However, the invasion attempt of 1779 was by far the most dangerous one to Britain. Indeed, it was probably the greatest threat Britain ever faced since 1066.²³³ France assembled a 40,000 man strong army in Normandy to participate in the invasion.²³⁴ In addition, they managed to concentrate a combined Franco-Spanish fleet of 66 ships off the line²³⁵ in the English Channel.²³⁶ To counter this, Britain only had 20,000 regulars and 38 ships of the line.²³⁷ Unable to even attempt battling the Franco-Spanish fleet, the Royal Navy fled to safety in the harbour of Portsmouth.²³⁸ Only a series of coincidences ensured that the invasion never materialized. The Spanish Navy was delayed, so the armada united in northern France first in August, at the very end of the campaigning season.²³⁹ Moreover, when finally arriving, disease and unfavourable winds plagued the fleet, until France had to abandon the invasion attempt. Hence, the plan was largely lost to popular history,²⁴⁰ despite its great potential significance. Indeed, knocking Britain out of any future anti-French coalition would have had a much greater impact than the conflict in the colonies.

²³³ Georges Lacour-Gayet, *La Marine Militaire de la France sous le Règne de Louis XVI* (Paris: H. Champion, 1905), pp. 231-232.

²³⁴ Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774-1787* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 152.

²³⁵ A ship of the line was the main battleship of the time, see Brian Lavery, *The ship of the Line: a History in Ship Models* (Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing, 2014).

²³⁶ Alfred Temple Patterson, *The Other Armada: The Franco-Spanish Attempt to Invade Britain in 1779* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960), pp. 149-159.

²³⁷ Richard Middleton, *The War of American Independence: 1775-1783* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p. 147.

²³⁸ David Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters During the American Revolutionary War* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1998), pp. 77-78.

²³⁹ Chavez, *Spain and the Independence of the United States*, p. 139.

²⁴⁰ Patterson, *The Other Armada*, p. 1-2.

Conclusion

Austria did not support France directly during the American War of Independence. Yet, its policy of benevolent neutrality was exactly what Paris wanted from Vienna. Free from any continental threats, France could focus its resources on an invasion of Britain, to improve its prospects for European hegemony. Consequently, Austrian behaviour clearly falls within the category of bandwagoning. Again, the bandwagoning was not due to an excessive fear of the threat from France. The Austrian Army had performed well against France during the War of the Austrian Succession, and the French Army had declined further since then. It was decidedly not to share in the French spoils of victory, as Austria could not hope to make any gains in a primarily American and naval conflict anyway. Rather, Austria simply needed security in the west and possibly protection against its neighbours. Determining whether Austria pursued a strategy of full or partial bandwagoning is difficult, as the conflict did not have a European theatre.

War of the First Coalition, 1792-1797

As the revolution took hold of France after 1789, the country descended into chaos. At first, Austria took a detached view of the events, but as the revolution radicalized, this began to change.²⁴¹ At the beginning of the war, Austria and Prussia sought to take advantage of France's perceived weaknesses. However, it quickly became clear that the revolution revitalized French power.²⁴² Most notably, '*levée en masse*',²⁴³ or mass conscription, allowed France to raise far larger armies than its neighbours. After defeating the Austro-Prussian invasion attempt at Valmy in September 1792, the war became one of

²⁴¹ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, pp. 244-260.

²⁴² Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 281.

²⁴³ Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 154.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

French expansion. France intended to secure its 'natural frontiers', meaning the Rhine, the Pyrenees, the Alps, and satellite states beyond this.²⁴⁴ Achieving these aims would mean nothing less than a French hegemony over Western Europe.²⁴⁵

Prediction

The revolution made the size of the French Army jump to roughly 749,000 men during the war.²⁴⁶ The Austrian Army reached a strength of 318,000 men. Combined France and Austria thus possessed roughly 60% of continental capabilities, making bandwagoning a very risky option. Prussia, and to a lesser extent Russia posed a significant threat to Austria by challenging its vital interests in Poland. With 694,000 soldiers altogether, they clearly made the risk of balancing high as well. Thus, *Georealism* predicts that Austria pursued a mixed strategy during the French Revolutionary Wars. Again, the high bandwagoning risk makes partial balancing the most probable outcome.

P7: Austria pursued a mixed strategy against France during the French Revolutionary Wars.

The War

The defeat at Valmy demonstrated that an easy victory was beyond reach, putting great stress on the already fragile Austro-Prussian alliance.²⁴⁷ Prussia did not officially pull out of the war, but quickly withdrew most of its forces to focus on partitioning Poland

²⁴⁴ Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Vol. III* (Paris: E. Plon, 1893-1912), pp. 144-153, 278-279; Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars*, p. 91.

²⁴⁵ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 116.

²⁴⁶ On paper the strength of the French Army was in 1794 at 1,000,000, but it was almost certainly significantly weaker on practice, see Owen Connelly, *Blundering to Glory: Napoleon's Military Campaigns* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), pp. xiv-xv.

²⁴⁷ Patricia Chastain Howe, *Foreign Policy and the French Revolution: Charles-François Dumouriez, Pierre LeBrun, and the Belgian Plan, 1789-1793* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 101-103.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

instead.²⁴⁸ Taking advantage of the Prussian withdrawal, France moved into Germany largely unopposed, conquering most of the Rhineland.²⁴⁹ By the end of the year, France had also occupied the Austrian Netherlands, after defeating the Austrian army at Jemappes.²⁵⁰ Russia was nominally Austria's ally, but did not take part in the fighting during the early years of the war.

One reason for the poor Austrian performance was the limited amount of troops actually devoted to the war against France. In fact, only 29,000 men of the initial allied invasion army were Austrians, even though the total Austrian army numbered roughly 300,000 men.²⁵¹ The presence of other threats is a major explanation for this. Russia and Prussia cared little about the French threat and were eager to benefit from Vienna's exhaustion and preoccupation on the Rhine.²⁵² Neither state was for the moment directly threatening Vienna, but they were clearly undermining vital Austrian interests. Poland's second partition in 1793 best exemplifies this. Austria valued Poland as a buffer state, even if it was weak and a Russian satellite.²⁵³ The crisis began when Russia invaded Poland to prevent it from reforming and leaving St. Petersburg's sphere of influence.²⁵⁴ Prussia also joined the war against Poland, withdrawing its army on the Rhine for this purpose.²⁵⁵ The outcome was a Russian annexation of Eastern Poland, while Prussia acquired a smaller

²⁴⁸ Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*, p. 572.

²⁴⁹ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 111; Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 409.

²⁵⁰ Black, *European International Relations*, p. 212.

²⁵¹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 407.

²⁵² Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 120.

²⁵³ Charles Esdaile, *The French Wars 1792-1815* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 5; Tanisha M. Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 101-117.

²⁵⁴ Jerzy Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland 1772, 1793, 1795* (London: Longman, 1999), pp. 128-150.

²⁵⁵ Philip G. Dwyer, "The Politics of Prussian Neutrality 1795-1806," *German History*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1994), pp. 354-355.

territory in the west.²⁵⁶ Austria, which was busy fighting France, was neither able to prevent this outcome, nor secure a share in the partition.²⁵⁷ Vienna therefore came out of the conflict with two stronger neighbours and a Russia that had expanded far westwards.²⁵⁸

After the defeat at Jemappes, Austrian fortunes recovered for a while. This was largely due to a chaotic France²⁵⁹ and greater mobilization of Austrian resources to respond to the difficult situation.²⁶⁰ In March 1793, Austria defeated the French at Neerwinden and reconquered the Austrian Netherlands.²⁶¹ Success would be short-lived, however. Prussia, which had briefly re-joined the war against France, decided again to focus on Poland and withdrew its forces on the Rhine once more.²⁶² Renewed problems in Poland made Austria unable to reinforce its armies sufficiently to face the French counterattack. Despite assembling a reserve army of 144,000 men, less than 10,000 ended up on the Rhine, and none at all in Belgium.²⁶³ During 1794, the Austrian position therefore collapsed. After the loss in the Battle of Fleurus in June, the Austrian Netherlands were in French hands for good.²⁶⁴ By the end of the year, Rhineland and even Holland were lost as well.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁶ Robert Howard Lord, *The Second Partition of Poland: A Study in Diplomatic History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1915); L. R. Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 8: The American and French Revolutions, 1763–93*, ed. Elliot H. Goodwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), pp. 333-359.

²⁵⁷ Karl A. Roeder Jr., *Baron Thugut and Austria's Response to the French Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 104-105.

²⁵⁸ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 122-123.

²⁵⁹ David Andress, *The French Revolution and the People* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), pp. 191-214.

²⁶⁰ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 411.

²⁶¹ Jeremy Black, *War in the Eighteenth-Century World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 154.

²⁶² Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 412.

²⁶³ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 412-413.

²⁶⁴ J. Holland Rose, *The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Era 1789-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 89.

²⁶⁵ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 267.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

The year 1795 brought further setbacks to Austria in both the east and the west. Prussia signed a permanent peace agreement with France at Basel in April, surrendering the left bank of the Rhine to France. In return, Northern Germany was neutralized under Prussian leadership.²⁶⁶ The latter was a clear Prussian challenge to Austria's predominant position in Germany.²⁶⁷ Vienna was livid at the perceived Prussian betrayal. Some voices went as far as arguing for a peace with France to deal with the Prussian threat once and for all.²⁶⁸ While such a drastic step was never taken, there is no doubt that Vienna's fear of Prussian intentions limited its efforts against the French threat. As historian Hochedlinger argues, the "permanent diversion of attention and resources seriously hampered the Habsburg war effort in the west".²⁶⁹

Polish affairs was another distraction in 1795. Harsh terms in the 1793 partition provoked the Poles to rise in revolt. Austria was not the target of this, but if Poland were to be divided, Austria was determined to secure as large of a share as possible. Thus, Austria sent in a strong army to seize all the territory it could.²⁷⁰ Attempts to exclude Prussia, which had claims overlapping Austria's, ended up in a diplomatic crisis.²⁷¹ Worried that Berlin would assert its claims with force, Austria stationed 80,000 troops on the Prussian border.²⁷² However, in the end, the three states reached a compromise.

After the final destruction of Poland, Austria was better able to focus its resources on the French threat. By the summer of 1796, 170,000 allied forces were deployed along the

²⁶⁶ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 152.

²⁶⁷ Agatha Ramm, ed., *Grant and Temperley's Europe in the Nineteenth Century, 1789-1905* (Harlow: Longman, 1984), pp. 60-61; Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 156.

²⁶⁸ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 424-426.

²⁶⁹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 425.

²⁷⁰ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 423.

²⁷¹ Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System*, p. 211.

²⁷² Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 423-424.

Rhine, a massive change from 1792.²⁷³ France attempted to cross the Rhine and march on Bohemia, but was chased back again by Archduke Charles after defeats at Amberg and Würzburg.²⁷⁴ Had it not been for the extraordinary feats of Napoleon in Italy, this could easily have been the prelude to an Austrian victory in the war.

Conclusion

Austria did attempt to balance against France during the War of the First Coalition. However, the threat posed by Russia and particularly Prussia forced Vienna to pursue a mixed strategy. Similarly to the War of the Austrian Succession, this case also demonstrates how Austria's ability to fight France effectively varied with the threat it faced from its neighbours. Notably, Austria devoted considerable resources to the partitions of Poland in 1793 and 1795, which led to a markedly worse performance against France in the west. Consequently, this case provides solid support to *Georealism*.

Summary of Results and Alternative Explanations

The *Georealist* predictions are in accordance with the empirical record in six out of seven cases, as shown in table 2.5. In the War of Austrian Succession, the overall prediction is wrong. However, in this case, Austria did attempt to appease France in order to focus on the Prussian threat. Only after Paris rejected these overtures did Vienna settle on a strategy of mixed strategies.

²⁷³ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, p. 432.

²⁷⁴ Owen Connelly, *The Wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, 1792–1815* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 84.

Chapter II: Continental Balancing and Bandwagoning

TABLE 2.5: Theoretical Predictions versus Historical Record

Case	Name of War	Theoretical Prediction	Historical Record
1683-1697	Nine Year's War	Mixed Strategies	Mixed Strategies
1701-1714	War of Spanish Succession	Balancing	Balancing
1733-1738	War of Polish Succession	Mixed Strategies	Mixed Strategies
1740-1748	War of Austrian Succession	Bandwagoning	Mixed Strategies
1756-1763	Seven Years' War	Bandwagoning	Bandwagoning
1777-1783	American War of Independence	Bandwagoning	Bandwagoning
1792-1797	War of the First Coalition	Mixed Strategies	Mixed Strategies

Table 2.5: This table compares the theoretical predictions to the historical record. In six out of seven cases, the predictions are correct. The only incorrect prediction, the War of the Austrian Succession is marked in bold.

Given that all cases of mixed strategies consisted of partial balancing, these results agree with the intuition that balancing is more common than bandwagoning. Austria did counter France in five out of seven cases. However, this gives only part of the picture. In four out of five cases of balancing, Austria spent considerable resources on protecting itself against its neighbours instead. This is despite the fact that all cases were major wars when French hegemony was often in sight. Hence, it is obvious that the threat from neighbours had a major impact on Austrian responses towards France. The results suggest that full balancing is rare among central powers, due to the amount of threats they face. As a contrast, more peripherally located great powers would presumably pursue full balancing much more often. Notably, Britain during the same period was balancing in every case, except the War of the Polish Succession.

Walt's argument that bandwagoning either takes place in search of spoils of victory or because resistance to the potential hegemon is futile finds little support in the historical record. The fact that Austria could resist France during the Seven Years' War and the War of American Independence is demonstrated by its ability to counter a far stronger France before and after these wars. Nor was Austrian balancing to share the spoils of

French victory. The Seven Years' War in Europe was caused by Austrian wishes for revenge against Prussia, not French expansionism. During the War of American Independence, Austria could not hope to derive any spoils at all, as the fighting took place in America and on the oceans. Some of Austria's behaviour during the Nine Years' War conformed to a buck-passing strategy as outlined by Mearsheimer. Austria did clearly benefit from English and Dutch efforts to balance against France. However, buck-passing does not explain Austria's preoccupation with the Ottoman Empire. In the other instances of mixed strategies, Austria faced the brunt of French capabilities, sometimes virtually alone. Calling this 'buck-passing' demands considerable conceptual stretching.²⁷⁵ At the same time, simply labelling Austria's behaviour as 'balancing' loses much of the nuance of Austria's behaviour.

Adequately explaining Austria's behaviour through other factors is also impossible. The rise of the ideology of 'raison d'état'²⁷⁶ had rendered religion practically irrelevant in the international system. Austria frequently fought the Catholic France together with the Protestant Britain and Reformed Netherlands. Moreover, when Kaunitz argued for changing alignment to France, he did not even mention France's Catholicism,²⁷⁷ despite the fact that Maria Teresa was highly religious. Dynastic concerns did have an impact in certain instances. Examples include Austria's insistence to continue fighting for the entire Spanish inheritance after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and Maria Teresa's unwillingness to compromise the entire Habsburg inheritance during the War of the Austrian Succession. However, rulers became increasingly willing to disregard dynastic concerns when it suited their interests. Most famously, when Frederick the Great in 1740 received

²⁷⁵ Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 64, No. 4, (December 1970), pp. 1033-1053.

²⁷⁶ Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism: the Doctrine of Raison d'État and its Place in Modern History*, trans. Douglas Scott and Werner Stark (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957).

²⁷⁷ Pommerin and Schilling, "Denkschrift des Grafen Kaunitz," pp. 165-239.

his lawyer's justification for seizing Silesia, he exclaimed "[b]ravo: the work of an excellent charlatan".²⁷⁸ Austria also persistently sought to exchange its dynastically legitimate possession of the Austrian Netherlands with the more strategically suitable Bavaria.²⁷⁹

Concluding Remarks

The *Georealist* theory of the continental great powers' responses to potential hegemons makes a number of contributions. First, it explains balancing and bandwagoning through a unified framework of great powers seeking to avoid losses to their own power. Bandwagoning offers protection against neighbours, but brings with it the risk of a hegemonic bid. As a contrast, balancing decreases the chance of a hegemonic bid, but at the cost of a higher threat from neighbours. Great powers therefore weigh these risks against each other when choosing their strategy. Moreover, if both strategies involve a high risk, the best response is to mix balancing and bandwagoning to decrease their respective costs. Second, *Georealism* offers concrete and testable predictions of the behaviour of individual great powers under specific circumstances. This is in contrast to previous theories, which only look at whether balancing or bandwagoning is more common in aggregate. Its ability to predict Austrian responses to France between 1683 and 1797 demonstrates this.

Georealism's explanation of continental balancing and bandwagoning makes some important contributions, but also opens up a number of important questions. Firstly, offshore states have no neighbours, making their behaviour very different from that of

²⁷⁸ Ritter, *Frederick the Great*, p. 82.

²⁷⁹ Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, pp. 370-375, 418-421.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

continental states. Consequently, in chapter III, I analyse how offshore states best prevent hegemonic bids and other potential threats in multipolar systems. Secondly, as alluded to in this chapter, the threat from neighbours is greatly influenced by alliance choices. By forming alliances, neighbours decrease the threat they pose to each other, giving great powers the possibility of influencing the neighbour threat. In chapter IV, I provide a theory of alliance choice to explain this. Lastly, both the threat from neighbours and potential hegemons depend on the risk of war. To explain this, I outline a theory of major war in chapter V.

[III]

Offshore Balancing

Offshore states are entirely separated by water from other great powers.¹ Projecting power on them requires the use of naval power, meaning that offshore states have no neighbours. Instead, the threat they face is a function of the ability of other great powers to spend on naval power to reach them. Offshore states in multipolar systems therefore have fundamentally different interests and strategies from continental great powers. Hence, for a full understanding of responses to hegemony, it is essential to explain the behaviour of offshore states.

In this chapter, I argue that offshore states do not follow the same strategies as continental states. Given that they have no neighbours, bandwagoning is never a necessary option.

¹ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), pp. 126-128.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Rather, offshore states in multipolar systems choose between three strategies: balancing, isolationism, and *'Divide and Deter'*. The latter involves preventing or breaking up strong continental alliances through promises of support or threats of enmity. By doing this, offshore states both ensure the absence of any hegemonic bids and the inability of continental great powers to invest significantly in naval power. Divide and deter usually offers the highest level of security for offshore states in multipolarity, with fewer risks than isolationism and fewer costs than balancing. This makes it the most common strategy employed by powerful offshore states. I demonstrate this by showing that British behaviour towards the European great powers between 1867 and 1905 largely conformed to this strategy.

Water, Power Projection, and Security

Offshore states are a unique category of actors, because water separates them entirely from other great powers. In this section, I outline how offshore states derive their security. First, I look at the difficulties of projecting power over water and how these can be overcome through investments in naval power. Secondly, I explain how continental alliances and hegemony are the only factors enabling such investments.

Water and Naval Power

Separated from all other great powers by a body of water, offshore states face a very different security situation from continental states. Any threat to them must necessarily come from a state projecting power over water. While water usually offers offshore states a lot of protection, its effect is not absolute. Projecting power onto allied ports or

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

undefended beaches is easy, often easier than projecting power over land.² Amphibious assaults are very difficult military operations,³ but almost every single attempt at one since Gallipoli have in fact been successful.⁴ This is because overcoming the difficulties of amphibious assault is possible through investments in equipment and training. A combination of special soldiers, purpose-made weapons, landing craft, and navies and air forces powerful enough to achieve at least local superiority are required,⁵ making these investments expensive. Most states cannot afford this, but great powers have sufficient resources to invest in naval power if they want to. Yet, only offshore states tend to do so in practice.⁶

Continental states spend a smaller share of their resources on naval power than offshore states because they have different security needs.⁷ Given the difficulties states usually face when projecting power over water, most states face their most serious threats from land. The best defence against land power is naturally land power. Naval power might still have some uses against land-based threats, such as blockades, but it is clearly a secondary tool.⁸ To defend themselves, states therefore need to make sure that they can rely on at least comparable capabilities to their potential enemies. Any significant spending on naval power before reaching this point will compromise the security of the state. After this demand is satisfied, states can freely spend on naval power without much risk. This may be rational, for example to challenge the offshore state, expand territory

² Albert Wohlstetter, "Illusions of Distance," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (January 1968), pp. 242-255.

³ Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *The Defence of Britain* (London: Faber and Faber, 1939), pp. 130; Ian Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 140-141.

⁴ Theodore Gatchel, *At the Water's Edge: Defending Against the Modern Amphibious Assault* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996).

⁵ Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare*, pp. 140-141.

⁶ Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare*, p. 140; Jack S. Levy, William R. Thompson, "Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do States Ally against the Leading Global Power?," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Summer 2010), pp. 8-19.

⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 81-82.

⁸ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 86-97.

and influence overseas, and protect trade.⁹ German behaviour from 1871 to 1914 aptly illustrates this. As long as Germany and Austria-Hungary were weaker than France and Russia, the German Navy remained small.¹⁰ Yet, when reaching parity with these states, Germany began to challenge the Royal Navy.¹¹ Unfortunately for continental states, the constant attention they must pay to land power makes them unable to seriously challenge the naval power of offshore states.¹² Imperial Germany was no exception. For offshore state Britain, the navy was the first line of defence, while for Germany it was essentially a “luxury fleet”.¹³ Thus, Germany abandoned its naval challenge of Britain in 1912.¹⁴

Continental Alliances and Hegemony

Continental states can only threaten offshore states if they are able to shift resources from land to naval power. For this to happen on a significant scale, one or more continental state must have a sufficiently high security to be able to ignore land-based threats. The higher this security is, the more threatening it will be to the offshore state. In a multipolar system, only alliances and hegemony provide this level of security.

Most continental great powers have several neighbours threatening them. Even the strongest states are therefore likely to be less powerful than their potential threats

⁹ Jeremy Black, *Naval Power: A History of Warfare and the Sea from 1500 Onwards* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

¹⁰ David H. Olivier, *German Naval Strategy, 1856-1888: Forerunners to Tirpitz* (London: Frank Cass, 2004).

¹¹ Peter Padfield, *The Great Naval Race: Anglo-German Naval Rivalry 1900-1914* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005).

¹² Since 1494, an offshore state or geographically isolated continental state has been the biggest naval power virtually ever year, see Levy and Thompson, “Balancing on Land and at Sea,” pp. 7-43.

¹³ Holger H. Herwig, *'Luxury' Fleet: The Imperial German Navy, 1888-1918* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1980). This is not to say that the German Navy was entirely without purpose. Most notably, it was intended to deter hostile British actions, see Patrick J. Kelly, *Tirpitz and the Imperial German Navy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), p. 200. However, as Britain was not initially hostile to Germany and had no army capable of threatening it, this was hardly a primary concern.

¹⁴ David Stevenson, “Was a Peaceful Outcome Thinkable?: The European Land Armaments,” in *An Improbable War?: The Outbreak of World War I and European Political Culture Before 1914*, ed. Holger Afflerbach and David Stevenson (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012), p. 143.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

combined. Germany in 1914 was for example by far the most powerful continental state, but still weaker than France, Russia, and Austria-Hungary together. The immediate way to alleviate this insecurity is through forming alliances. These not only help states to combine their capabilities, they also significantly decrease the threat neighbours initially posed to each other.¹⁵ Both of these mechanisms lead to an increase in security, which frees up resources that states can spend on naval power instead.

Alternatively, states can gain security by increasing their power. However, in most cases this does not work. When a state becomes more powerful it poses a greater threat to other states, increasing the probability that they will ally against it. This makes the gain in security limited or even negative.¹⁶ Hegemony is therefore the only way that is certain to allow massive naval spending by a continental state. Free from any threats, the hegemon can freely devote as many of the continent's resources to naval power. Consequently, it can subjugate the offshore state by outcompeting it on the sea. However, achieving hegemony is only possible with the assistance of allies in multipolarity,¹⁷ as no state by definition is strong enough to defeat all other states combined. Preventing strong alliances from forming is therefore always the first line of defence for offshore states in multipolar systems.¹⁸ This might not always succeed, but as long as it is possible, it is the best way to guarantee the security of offshore states.

¹⁵ See chapter IV.

¹⁶ Herbert Butterfield, *History and Human Relations* (London: Collins, 1951); John Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism: A Study in Theories and Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951); Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), chap. 3; Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167–214; Charles L. Glaser, "The Security Dilemma Revisited," *World Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (October 1997), pp. 171–201; Shiping Tang, "The Security Dilemma: A Conceptual Analysis," *Security Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (2009), pp. 587–623.

¹⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 40.

¹⁸ Almost all strong continental alliances would include the potential hegemon. However, in systems with a relatively weak potential hegemon, an overly strong balancing coalition could also be a threat to the offshore state. This is because such alliances both have the potential to enable a high level of naval spending among its members and make significant changes in the distribution of power. This will typically

Offshore State Strategies

Offshore states have three possible strategies to maintain their security: balancing, isolationism, and divide and deter. In this section, I briefly outline the purpose of the two former strategies and their limitations, and then explain how a divide and deter strategy functions.

Balancing

Balancing has the same purpose for offshore states as it has for continental states, but the strategy is less risky for the former. By adding its capabilities to the balancing alliance, the offshore state makes a successful hegemonic bid less likely. As the offshore state has no neighbours, balancing does not increase this threat. However, balancing still brings with it some costs. Continental entanglements raise the threat the offshore state poses to other great powers. Hence, it may increase their incentive to spend on naval power to protect themselves. Germany during the First and Second World Wars for example invested heavily in submarines,¹⁹ which hurt Britain greatly. British neutrality would have made this unnecessary. Balancing is therefore only the appropriate strategy for offshore states in order to combat or deter imminent hegemonic bids. For example, Britain actively opposed most hegemonic bids since 1688, but avoided peacetime continental commitments.²⁰

only happen at the end of failed hegemonic bids. For example, a decisive defeat of Louis XIV during the War of the Spanish Succession, 1701-1714, was not in the British interest, because it would have paved the way for Austrian hegemony instead.

¹⁹ Lawrence Sondhaus, *The Great War at Sea: A Naval History of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 136-170, 241-277; Jürgen Rohwer, *Axis submarine successes of World War Two: German, Italian, and Japanese Submarine Successes, 1939-1945* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999).

²⁰ Lawrence Sondhaus, *Navies of Europe, 1815-2002* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 125-126.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

Bandwagoning is never a rational strategy for offshore states, except for some special cases. Their lack of neighbours means that they have no need for the potential hegemon's protection. Bandwagoning thus only increases the chance of a rising hegemon, without providing any benefits. The only time Britain supported the potential hegemon was during the Franco-Dutch War. Moreover, this was only due to secret French subsidies to Charles II and widely seen as a mistake both at the time and today.²¹ However, offshore states may still cooperate with the potential hegemon if other great powers spend more on naval power.

Isolationism

Isolationism involves simply ignoring continental affairs except in times of crisis, for example, a hegemonic bid.²² The purpose of this is to avoid the costs of provoking the hostility of other great powers through continental involvement, and instead focusing on maintaining internal strength. As long as the continental great powers remain divided and

²¹ David Ogg, "Britain After the Restoration," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 5: The Ascendancy of France, 1648–88*, ed. F. L. Carsten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 310-313.

²² Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), pp. 5-51; Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer 1997), pp. 86-124; Christopher Layne, "Offshore Balancing Revisited," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2002), pp. 233-248; Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States' Unipolar Moment," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 7-41; Christopher Layne, "America's Middle East Grand Strategy After Iraq: The Moment for Offshore Balancing has Arrived," *International Studies Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 5-25; Barry R. Posen, "The Case for Restraint," *American Interest*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (November/December 2007), pp. 7-17; Barry R. Posen, "A Grand Strategy of Restraint," in *Finding Our Way: Debating American Grand Strategy*, ed. Michèle A. Flournoy and Shawn Brimley (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Century, 2008), pp. 81-102; Barry R. Posen, "Stability and Change in U.S. Grand Strategy," *Orbis*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (October 2007), pp. 561-567; Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2014); Daryl G. Press, "The Effects of Wars on Neutral Countries: Why It Doesn't Pay to Preserve the Peace," *Security Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Summer 2001), pp. 1-57; Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, "Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Spring 1997), pp. 5-48; Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, "Restraining Order: For Strategic Modesty," *World Affairs*, Fall 2009, pp. 84-94; Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent, "Graceful Decline? The Surprising Success of Great Power Retrenchment," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Spring 2011), pp. 7-44; Christopher A. Preble, *Power Problem: How American Military Dominance Makes Us Less Safe, Less Prosperous, and Less Free* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

distracted by each other, this is a good strategy because it is cheap. However, the threat from neighbours means that balancing among continental states is not automatic, so such a state of affairs is unlikely. Isolationism is therefore dangerous. Firstly, hegemony may rise, as they indeed often have in systems without an offshore state.²³ Secondly, strong continental alliances may form and threaten the offshore state. During the American War of Independence Britain found itself in mortal danger facing an alliance of France, Spain, the Netherlands, and implicitly supported by Austria.²⁴ Preventing the rise of such alliances is therefore much safer and cheaper in the long run. Thus, isolationism is usually only appropriate if there are two offshore states. If so, one can free ride on the other. The U.S. after the Civil War was powerful enough to play a part in European affairs if it had so desired.²⁵ However, since Britain prevented all bids for European hegemony until 1914, the U.S. had no reason to get involved.²⁶

Divide and Deter

Preventing strong alliances relies on manipulating the alliance preferences of continental states. States want alliance partners that can provide as much security as possible. Thus, when states choose allies, they pick the states that have the greatest amount of capabilities compared to the capabilities of the new enemies from whom they need protection. When preventing and breaking up alliances, it is necessary to change the strategic calculations of continental states, by making weaker alliances more attractive in comparison. This is

²³ Stuart J. Kaufman, Richard Little and William C. Wohlforth, ed., *The Balance of Power in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

²⁴ Jonathan R. Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

²⁵ Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

²⁶ D. Cameron Watt, *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's Place 1900-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 24-33.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

done by making the strong alliance less advantageous, or a weaker alliance more beneficial.

Offshore states are particularly well suited to breaking up or preventing alliances, because they can cause much greater changes in the alliance preferences of continental states.²⁷

The geographical isolation provided by water means that offshore states are rarely threatened by, or threatening to any continental states. This gives them the freedom to join any continental alliance they please, while having a major impact on the security of continental states. When an offshore state joins a continental alliance, it increases the security of its members and decreases the security of its enemies. Alliances that are dangerous to the offshore state can be discouraged by threatening to become their enemy. Desirable alliances can be promoted by promising support. By doing this, the offshore state can ensure that continental states choose alignments such as they balance each other out. Whenever this is the case, they cannot spend on naval power, and will consequently not threaten the offshore state.

The best way to keep the continental states focusing on each other does not always require joining continental alliances, but making threats or promises of doing so. Threats of joining the enemies of a strong alliance do not need to be carried out as long as these are successful. Promises of support do require a longer-term commitment, but these should be kept at the minimum level necessary to achieve their aims.²⁸ This is because

²⁷ Timothy W. Crawford, "Wedge Strategy, Balancing, and the Deviant Case of Spain, 1940-41," *Security Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Winter 2008), pp. 1-38; Timothy W. Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions: How Wedge Strategies Shape Power Politics," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (Spring 2011), pp. 155-189; Timothy W. Crawford, "The Alliance Politics of Concerted Accommodation: Entente Bargaining and Italian and Ottoman Interventions in the First World War," *Security Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1, (2014), pp. 113-147; and Yasuhiro Izumikawa, "To Coerce or Reward? Theorizing Wedge Strategies in Alliance Politics," *Security Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2011), pp. 498-531.

²⁸ On threats and promises, see Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 35-46.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

greater continental commitments will decrease the ability to make new threats and promises in the future. Achieving both these aims is possible with a divide and deter strategy.

Deter strategies aim to make the dangerous alliance more costly, by threatening to join the ranks of the enemies of the alliance if it forms. How much this decreases the security provided by the alliance depends on how many capabilities it can bring to bear on the continent. If these are greater than the security benefit of the strong alliance compared to the second best option for at least one member, the alliance will not form. Divide strategies aim at making other alignments better for the potential members of a threatening alliance. By promising support if the state chooses a particular alliance, it will make that alliance more attractive. Again, as long as this support exceeds the benefit a dangerous continental alliance offers compared to the best available option, then the strong continental alliance will not be formed. These promises can either be in particular conflicts or general support. The former is more common, because their implications tend to be less wide-ranging, thus preserving the freedom of manoeuvre of the offshore state. Thus, by a careful application of threats and promises, the offshore state can ensure the continental states remain divided and focused on each other. The offshore state could of course also offer all sorts of other side payments to strengthen the impact of the divide and deter strategies.²⁹ Examples include arms sales, aid, investments, and trade agreements. Yet, alliance threats and promises are likely to dominate the policy when dealing with other great powers in a multipolar system, while side payments might work on the margins.

²⁹ See for example Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 41-49; Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions,"; and Yasuhiro Izumikawa, "To Coerce or Reward?"

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

As with any strategy consisting of threats and promises, divide and deter depends on the credibility of the state that executes it.³⁰ Offshore states get this credibility automatically because they have an objective interest in the outcome of the strategy, and the way they derive their security. The first principle is simple. A divided continent is always the goal of every offshore state, and divide and deter strategy is usually the best way to achieve this. Continental states know this, and expect the offshore state to act accordingly. The knowledge that the strategy is in the interest of the offshore state may even stop the continental states from even seeking strong alliances in the first place. Secondly, offshore states derive their security from the strongest continental camp being contained by its enemies. Whether the offshore states actually join alliances with continental states does not change this, as it does not affect the ability of continental states to project power on them. Hence, as the threats and promises are costless in strategic terms, they can be made freely. There are a number of commitment costs not taken into account here, so the process for offshore states is not quite as in real life. Still, the costs are of a fundamentally different nature to those of continental states. Their security is derived from their own capabilities and their potential enemies, and the capabilities of their allies and their potential enemies. Different alliances provide different levels of security, so a continental state will always choose the alliance where its security is the highest. Any threat of changing alliance lacks credibility, because it will leave the state worse off.

Successfully using divide and deter depends on the capabilities of the offshore state, because this determines how large are the costs and benefits it can provide to continental states. Exactly how great capabilities are needed is impossible to say in general, because it varies for each potential alliance. Yet, it is possible to determine theoretically the

³⁰ Daryl G. Press, *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 1.

highest level of capabilities needed to prevent any possible alliance. This is twice the capabilities of the second strongest state minus the capabilities of the strongest state.³¹ Consequently, the offshore state can be weaker than the strongest continental state and still be able to prevent every alliance it desires. Any decrease in capabilities from this point will decrease its ability to break up or prevent continental alliances, however.

Detachment from the continent is also necessary to optimally employ divide and deter. The strategy depends on the ability to cause as large costs or benefits as possible to continental states at the crucial moment. If an offshore state is already part of a continental alliance, it runs the risk of becoming an enemy of states it wants to prevent forming a strong alliance. Since those states have already incurred the security loss associated with the enmity of the offshore state, they have even more reasons to ally to protect themselves.

Divide and Deter and Limited Alignments

Divide and deter is very simple in theory, but applying it in real life may bring challenges due to limited alignment. Continental states know that offshore states pursue a policy of divide and deter and will take their precautions. Instead of forming strong alliances immediately, they are likely to test the resolve of offshore states through ‘salami tactics’.³² This consists of limited security agreements that do not amount to full alliances, but can be expanded on if the offshore state fails to react. Examples of this include ententes or security agreements with a limited geographical scope. Such agreements are difficult to counter for offshore states, because they may have nothing to do with the

³¹ This is for an alliance between the second strongest and the strongest state, where they are neighbours and the alliance entirely ends the threat they posed to each other, and the second strongest state has no other alternative than non-alignment.

³² Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 66-78.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

offshore state. Take, for example, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) between China, Russia, and the Central Asian States. A high level of secrecy makes it virtually impossible for the U.S. to know its purpose with certainty.³³ It could be the foundation of an anti-American alliance, or just a tool for Russia and China to manage their relations in Central Asia. While the former would be very harmful to the U.S.,³⁴ the latter would be relatively unproblematic.³⁵ In the latter case, an American attempt at deterring the SCO might result in the organization turning into a proper Russo-Chinese alliance to counter the American threat. Applying deter strategies under the wrong circumstances can therefore cause the very thing it is intended to avoid. Overusing dividing strategies is also problematic, because it promotes free riding by continental states.³⁶

The best response to limited security agreements is to answer in the same coin, namely limited security agreements with other continental states. This would help to signal displeasure, but not fully commit the offshore state as an enemy or ally. An example of this is Britain forming the Quadruple Alliance with France, Spain, and Portugal in 1834. Ostensibly about Iberian affairs, the alliance was also a reaction to the Münchengrätz

³³ Kishan S. Rana, *Asian Diplomacy: the Foreign Ministries of China, India, Japan, Singapore, and Thailand* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), p. 33; Matthew Sussex, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: A Future Balancing Coalition in Asia?," in *Power Transition and International Order in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, ed. Peter Shearman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), pp. 69-85; Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 72-75.

³⁴ Sun Zhuangzhi, "New and Old Regionalism: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Sino-Central Asian Relations," *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 4, (Summer 2004) pp. 600-612; and T. V. Paul, "Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 63-64.

³⁵ Robert S. Ross, "Bipolarity and Balancing in East Asia," in *Balance Of Power: Theory and Practice In the 21st Century*, ed. T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michel Fortmann (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 286; Nicklas Swanström, "The Prospects for Multilateral Conflict Prevention and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 41-53; and Richard Weitz, "Why Russia and China Have Not Formed an Anti-American Alliance," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (Autumn 2003), pp. 39-61.

³⁶ For alliances and free-riding, see for example Mancur Olson, Jr. and Richard Zeckhauser, "An Economic Theory of Alliances," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (August 1966), pp. 266-279.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Agreement between Austria, Prussia, and Russia.³⁷ Russia understood the message, and the Münchengrätz Agreement never developed into a full alliance.³⁸

If an offshore state fails to prevent limited security cooperation between powerful continental states, this will lead to systemic punishment.³⁹ This is likely to lead to a change in behaviour. After forming limited alignments, continental states will be in a better position of harming the interests of the offshore state. Breaking up this cooperation therefore merits increased urgency. However, the further these limited alignments have developed, the more effort is required to break them up.

Divide and Deter and Other Strategies

Divide and deter is usually the optimal strategy for strong offshore states in multipolar systems, but there are some exceptions. Analysing these cases helps us to understand when balancing and isolationism are better options. As a rule, divide and deter is safer than isolationism, but more costly in the short term. Balancing provides stronger tools to prevent hegemony, but is much more expensive in terms of autonomy and money. Isolationism is therefore the best strategy when the continent is kept divided without any need of intervention. Balancing is the necessary option when divide and deter cannot prevent strong continental alliances from forming, particularly if this is the beginning of a hegemonic bid. Between these two options, divide and deter is the optimal strategy.

³⁷ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 731-734; Roger Bullen, "The Great Powers and the Iberian Peninsula, 1815-48," in *Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848*, ed. Alan Sked (London: MacMillan, 1979), pp. 71-78; Charles K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830-1841: Britain, the Liberal Moment, and the Eastern Question* (London: G. Bell, 1951), pp. 386-410; Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring 1985), p. 20.

³⁸ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 44.

³⁹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 118.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

Divide and deter fulfils the same purpose as balancing, but with smaller costs. Thus, it is the best option as long as it can be performed successfully. Conversely, balancing becomes the optimal strategy whenever an offshore state is unable to prevent or break up dangerous alliances. This happens when the offshore state is not strong enough to pursue a strategy of divide and deter. For example, Britain had difficulties separating the ‘*Pacte de Famille*’ France and Spain in the 18th century⁴⁰, because France was so strong and Spain had no other great power enemies. Weak offshore states are therefore unlikely to pursue a strategy of divide and deter, such as England before the Glorious Revolution or Japan before the Second World War. In addition, offshore states have to intervene on the continent whenever there is a hegemonic war that is likely to succeed.

Empirical Implications

The most important empirical implication of this theory is the ability to predict how offshore states behave in particular instances. However, a number of more general implications follow as well.

Offshore states aim to prevent strong continental alliances from forming, through a combination of threats and promises of continental involvement. The more powerful the offshore state is compared to the continental states, the less likely it is that strong continental alliances will arise. British behaviour before and after 1815 illustrates this. Before 1815, Britain frequently had to join continental alliances and wars, because France often found powerful allies like Spain or Austria.⁴¹ After 1815, a relatively more powerful

⁴⁰ H. W. V. Temperley, “The Age of Walpole and the Pelhams,” in *The Cambridge Modern History, Volume 10*, ed. Stanley Leathes, G. W. Prothero, Sir Adolphus, and William Ward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), p. 63.

⁴¹ Keir A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, “Waiting for Balancing: Why the World Is Not Pushing Back,” *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 109-139.

Britain could prevent all strong alliances while remaining non-aligned.⁴² The closer the system is to a unipolar system, any attempt at forming strong alliances is increasingly less likely, given the ease in which they can be broken up. The absence of anti-American alliances after the end of the Cold War is thus unsurprising.⁴³

The most conflict-prone and dangerous periods for the offshore state take place when it has failed to prevent limited cooperation between continental states. This is because the continental states have a greater ability to harm the offshore state and its interests, and the offshore state has a greater interest in breaking the alignment up. A failure to break up the alignment may lead to permanent involvement in continental affairs. Washington's inability to prevent the Sino-Soviet alliance in 1950 forced it to increase its involvement in Korea and Indochina.⁴⁴

British Strategy, 1867-1905

In this part I, test whether British behaviour towards the continental states from 1867 to 1905 conformed to a '*divide and deter*' strategy. This is done by analysing every incident during the period when the strategy could reasonably have been expected to be used, shown in table 3.1. The incidents consist of major alignment changes and diplomatic crises between continental powers.⁴⁵ As Britain is popularly believed to have followed a

⁴² See John Lowe, *Britain and Foreign Affairs 1815-1885: Europe and Overseas* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 1-5.

⁴³ Lieber and Alexander, "Waiting for Balancing;" Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "Hard Times for Soft Balancing," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 72-108.

⁴⁴ Izumikawa, "To Coerce or Reward?," pp. 498-531; Barbara W. Tuchman, "If Mao Had Come to Washington: An Essay in Alternatives," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (October 1972), pp. 44-64. On the probability that a Sino-American break to have been avoided in 1949, see also Yu-ming Shaw, "John Leighton Stuart and U. S.-Chinese Communist Rapprochement in 1949: Was There Another "Lost Chance in China"?", *The China Quarterly* Vol. 89 (March 1982), pp. 74-96.

⁴⁵ Crises initiated by and mainly including Britain are not included. I also do not look at the formation of the Triple Alliance of 1882, as I do not look at Italy, see next page.

policy of ‘splendid isolation’ at the time, this is an excellent sample to test the theory.⁴⁶ A divide and deter strategy is, however, in no way limited to this period. Canning and Palmerston, for example, frequently acted according to dictums of the strategy.⁴⁷

TABLE 3.1: Cases Investigated

Event	Year
1. The Franco-Prussian War	1867-1871
2. Formation of the League of Three Emperors and the ‘War in Sight’ Crisis	1873-1875
3. The Great Eastern Crisis and the Congress of Berlin	1877-1878
4. Formation of the Dual Alliance	1879
5. Revival of the League of Three Emperors	1881
6. Bulgarian and Boulanger Crises	1886-1887
7. Formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance	1891-1894
8. The Russo-Japanese War and the Entente Cordiale	1903-1905

Deter strategies are suitable when there is a danger that a hostile alliance is in the process of forming, while divide strategies can be used when there is a crisis between two continental states. Relatively many of the cases are from the early period of the sample. The reason for this is simply that alignments became a lot less fluid after the formations of the Dual Alliance and the Franco-Russian Alliance.⁴⁸ There were consequently fewer possibilities of a strong alliance forming. In the interest of not inflating the number of cases, some cases consist of two related incidents, such as the Bulgarian and Boulanger crises.

⁴⁶ See Christopher Howard, “The Policy of Isolation,” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1967), pp. 77-88.

⁴⁷ Adolphus William Ward and George Peabody Gooch, *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922-1923), pp. 114-115 and Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830-1841*, pp. 386-410.

⁴⁸ See for example Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History* (Boston: Longman, 2011), pp. 78-81, Paul M. Schroeder, “Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management,” in *Historical Problems of National Security*, Klaus Knorr, ed. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1976), pp. 231-248; René Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* (London: Methuen, 1958); Gordon A. Craig and Alexander L. George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 25-41; Michael J. Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 121-136.

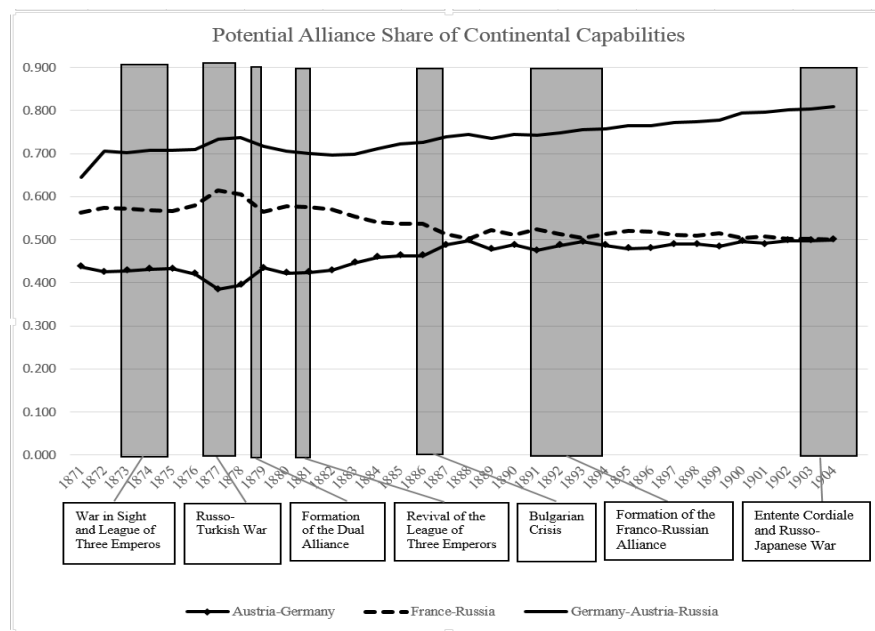
The continental great powers are assumed to be France, Prussia/Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. Italy is not included, as its claim to great power status was always tenuous.⁴⁹ With its long coastline and weak army, it was also so vulnerable to British attacks⁵⁰ that Rome “could not contemplate a war against England”.⁵¹ Hence, it did not pose any threat to Britain.

Hypotheses

Drawing from the previous theory, the following general hypothesis is derived:

- H0: Britain used a divide and deter strategy to stop any security agreement from developing into an alliance, as long as the members combined were considerably more powerful than their enemies.

FIGURE 3.1: Relative Capabilities of Potential Alliances



⁴⁹ See C. J. Lowe and F. Marzari, *Italian Foreign Policy, 1870-1940* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 3-12; Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. xxiv; Gordon Martel, *The Origins of the First World War* (Harlow: Pearson, 2008); Sheehan, *The Balance of Power*, pp. 30-32; Bear F. Braumoeller, *The Great Powers and the International System: Systemic Theory in Empirical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 81.

⁵⁰ James Joll and Gordon Martel, *The Origins of the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 72.

⁵¹ Lowe and Marzari, *Italian Foreign Policy*, p. 70-71.

Figure 3.1 above shows the development in capabilities of the actual or most likely potential alliances between continental states. An Austro-German-Russian alliance was always considerably more powerful than the remaining great power, France. Hence, Britain should resist it throughout the sample. Britain should also have resisted a Franco-Russian alliance until it roughly equalled the capabilities of the Dual Alliance. This is set to 1889 specifically, as this was the first years the two alliances had equal capabilities. No other potential alliances are included, as they never seemed realistic judging from the historical record.

Consequently, I derive the following four predictions about British behaviour towards continental alliances:

- P1: Whenever a security agreement was made that could develop into a strong continental alliance, Britain used a deter strategy to break it up.
- P2: Britain took advantage of conflicts between members of such security agreements through a divide strategy whenever they arose.
- P3: Whenever there was no danger of a strong continental alliance, Britain did not involve itself on the continent, and welcomed developments that increased its security.
- P4: Whenever Britain failed to act in accordance with P1-3, negative consequences for British security and freedom of manoeuvre followed.

P1 and P2 are the main predictions, specifying the instances when Britain should use a divide and deter strategies respectively. P3 is a negative prediction, as it specifies when a divide and deter strategy was not applicable, and how Britain behaved in these instances. This is important in order to ensure that the predictions are falsifiable. A last important argument is that a divide and deter strategy is, under the right conditions, an optimal

strategy. P4 tests for this, by looking at whether negative consequences followed whenever Britain failed to pursue a divide and deter strategy.

To assess the accuracy of the predictions, both British behaviour and justifications for this behaviour are studied. Primary sources, such as the correspondence between Queen Victoria and her ministers, are used to the extent possible.⁵² Historians are primarily used to complement this, but sometimes it is necessary to use their judgement as a substitute.

The Franco-Prussian War

Prediction 1: Britain should have no intervention during the Franco-Prussian War, as there were no threatening alliances.

The Franco-Prussian War is arguably the most important event in the European international system between the Congress of Vienna and the outbreak of the First World War. Power shifted decisively from France, the leading continental power for 200 years, to a united Germany.⁵³ Hence, this led to a new epoch in European politics with Germany being the dominant continental power, which ultimately resulted in the First and Second World Wars.⁵⁴ It is therefore often argued that Britain should have intervened to stop this. Obviously, this never happened. Moreover, even though a Franco-Prussian war was viewed as a distinct possibility after the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, no serious attempt was made to prevent or later end it. This was not due to a lack of opportunities. No action was taken during the Luxembourg Crisis of 1867. Indeed, Prime Minister Stanley wrote

⁵² Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 140-168.

⁵³ Robert William Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe, 1789-1914: A Survey of Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 501.

⁵⁴ David Calleo, *The German Problem Reconsidered: Germany and the World Order 1870 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

to Prussia that if a Franco-Prussian war would break out, there was no chance of a British intervention on either side.⁵⁵ London also refused to have an opinion about the Spanish succession question, the immediate pretext of the war.⁵⁶ After the outbreak of the war, Britain pursued a policy of strict neutrality, apart from securing the integrity of Belgium.⁵⁷ British sympathy, however, lay with the Prussians.⁵⁸ After the decisive French defeat at the Battle of Sedan, British sympathy for France grew and Prime Minister Gladstone disapproved of the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine.⁵⁹ Yet, there was no change in policy, such as offering mediation or trying to cooperate with other powers to alter the outcome of the war.⁶⁰

The failure of Britain to prevent the unification of Germany, or at least to take a more activist course, has been widely criticised. Usually, it is considered to be due to a hapless and confused foreign policy, coupled with a misguided commitment to isolationism.⁶¹ Yet, according to the divide and deter strategy, there was no reason for Britain to intervene. As Prussia had no allies, it represented no threat to European hegemony. Indeed, if Britain could have chosen the leading continental power, Prussia was a much better choice than France could ever be. This was because Prussia would be far less able to threaten Britain, as its primary concerns were its three great power neighbours.

British reasoning behind its non-interventionist policy follows a very similar line to the divide and deter strategy. Queen Victoria, for example, wrote in 1866:

⁵⁵ W. E. Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71: With Special Reference to England and Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 264.

⁵⁶ Richard Millman, *British Foreign Policy and the coming of the Franco-Prussian War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 162-179.

⁵⁷ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, pp. 312-317

⁵⁸ Millman, *British Foreign Policy and the coming of the Franco-Prussian War*, pp. 207-208.

⁵⁹ Paul Knaplund, *Gladstone's Foreign Policy* (London: Cass, 1970), pp. 52-60.

⁶⁰ Millman, *British Foreign Policy and the coming of the Franco-Prussian War*, pp. 208-218.

⁶¹ See for example Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 206.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Germany's wish is to be united under the supremacy of Pr[ussia], & not divided into N[orth] & S[outh], the result of which would be to throw the latter into the arms of Fr.- than which nothing could be worse. A strong, united, liberal Ger[many] would be a most useful ally to E[ngland]⁶²

British interests were to avoid a Franco-Russian alliance, a key goal ever since 1815. A stronger Prussia would be useful in this respect, policymakers appreciated at the time. Prime Minister Stanley argued “[t]he growing jealousy of Russia, and I suspect France also, against Prussia is natural. (...) But to us there is no loss, rather a gain, in the interposition of a solid barrier between the two great aggressive powers on the continent”.⁶³ Prussia would only be dangerous to Britain if allied with Russia, but this outcome was considered unlikely. Instead, Stanley foresaw a renewed Austro-Prussian alliance.⁶⁴ Even Gladstone, Prime Minister during the war, who did not always follow a divide and deter strategy, saw no problems with the unification of Germany, arguing that:

Placed in the very centre of Europe, Germany would have puissant neighbours East, West, and South of her, in Russia, France, and Austria. Overweening and aggressive conduct on her part would be more easily checked by their combined action on her various frontiers, than would similar conduct on the part of any of these three Powers.⁶⁵

Hence, the claim that British inaction was due to a poor policy or a misguided understanding of foreign affairs does not hold in light of the evidence. Everything suggests that British policymakers had an astute understanding of the effects of a Franco-Prussian war on British interests, and that they chose their behaviour strategically.

⁶² George Earle Buckle, ed., *The Letters of Queen Victoria: A Selection from Her Majesty's Correspondence and Journal between the years 1862 and 1878, Vol. I* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1928), p. 364.

⁶³ Stanley to Cowley, 7 Aug. 1866, PRO FO 519/182, quoted from Millman, *British Foreign Policy and the coming of the Franco-Prussian War*, p. 36.

⁶⁴ Millman, *British Foreign Policy and the coming of the Franco-Prussian War*, p. 108.

⁶⁵ William Ewart Gladstone, *Gleanings of past years, 1843-78, Vol. IV* (London: John Murray, 1879), p. 248.

Moreover, history proves that they were right. For the next 35 years, Germany was Britain's perhaps best and most useful partner on the European continent. British inaction during the war and positive attitude towards Prussia therefore clearly supports P3, as the unification of Germany increased British security.

The League of Three Emperors and the 'War in Sight' Crisis

Prediction 2(a): Britain pursued deter strategies to prevent the formation of the League of Three Emperors

Prediction 2(b): After the formation, Britain pursued dividing strategies to break up the alliance agreement.

In 1873 Austria, Germany, and Russia formed the League of Three Emperors (Dreikaiserbund). The agreement did not amount to a full alliance, but promised extensive security cooperation between its members.⁶⁶ Despite the significant implications this agreement had for Britain, the departing Prime Minister Gladstone did not appear to take much note of it.⁶⁷ If Britain had wanted to deter the alliance, achieving this would have been easy. Austria had traditionally relied on British assistance to counter Russian designs in the Balkans. With Gladstone's detached foreign policy, Vienna had to settle with the second best option of reaching an agreement with Russia instead. Britain quickly felt the consequences of this. Having secured its western border, Russia quickly proceeded to expand its territory in Central Asia.⁶⁸ This, as a part of 'the Great Game',

⁶⁶ Douglas M. Gibling, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2009), pp. 177-178.

⁶⁷ Malcolm Pearce and Geoffrey Stewart, *British Political History, 1867-2001: Democracy and Decline* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 148.

⁶⁸ William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1950), p. 40.

was seen as a significant threat to Britain's most important colony, India.⁶⁹ Moreover, the agreement also allowed Russia to pursue a revisionist policy in the Balkans, due to the absence of the traditional Anglo-Austrian restraint. Ultimately, this contributed to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, which brought Britain and Russia to the brink of war.⁷⁰

Disraeli, who succeeded Gladstone in February 1874, saw the threat posed by the League of Three Emperors, and made it a priority to break it up.⁷¹ The opportunity quickly arose with the 'War in Sight' Crisis of 1875, where it was rumoured that Bismarck might launch a preventive war against France.⁷² Queen Victoria sent a letter to the Tsar encouraging him to use his influence to stop Germany.⁷³ Disraeli also warned Germany that Britain would not accept a German preventive war against France.⁷⁴ The British behaviour during the crisis had several important consequences. First, the fact that Britain had moved closer to Germany's enemy France led Bismarck to pursue a more cautious foreign policy after 1875.⁷⁵ Second, Anglo-Russian cooperation during the crisis both illustrated and amplified the weaknesses of the league. Disraeli did not reach his goal of breaking up the association between the three eastern powers. However, he had ensured a good starting point for the Great Eastern Crisis that was beginning to arise.

⁶⁹ T. G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 75-79.

⁷⁰ T. G. Otte, "A Very Intercine Policy: Anglo-Russian Cold Wars before the Cold War," in *Britain in Global Politics Volume 1: From Gladstone to Churchill*, ed. Christopher Baxter, Michael L. Dockrill, Keith Hamilton (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 28.

⁷¹ Lowe, *Britain and Foreign Affairs 1815-1885*, p. 74; Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1966), p. 571; Christopher John Bartlett, *Defence and Diplomacy: Britain and the Great Powers, 1815-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 77.

⁷² Katharine Anne Lerman, *Bismarck* (Harlow: Longman, 2004), p. 210.

⁷³ T. G. Otte, "From 'War-in-Sight' to Nearly War: Anglo-French Relations in the Age of High Imperialism, 1875-1898," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2006), p. 697.

⁷⁴ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 48-49.

⁷⁵ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 52-53.

In all, Gladstone did to attempt to deter the League of Three Emperors, clearly contrary to P1. The negative consequences following from this failure were, however, exactly as predicted in P4. Moreover, Disraeli's efforts to take advantage of the 'War in Sight' Crisis by supporting France and Russia, in order to break up the league, are in accordance with P2.

The Great Eastern Crisis and the Congress of Berlin

Prediction 3: Britain pursued dividing strategies to break up the league of the Three Emperors

Austria-Hungary and Russia's conflicting interests in the Balkans were always the Achilles heel of every security agreement between the three eastern powers. Rebellions in the region from 1875 therefore caused increasing strains to the agreement. For Disraeli, this presented a chance to break up the League completely.⁷⁶ In December 1875, Austria-Hungary and Russia tried to defuse the crisis by sending a joint ultimatum to the Ottoman Empire. While the other continental powers acceded to the ultimatum, Disraeli remained highly sceptical, calling it "an act of imbecility or treachery".⁷⁷ In particular, he was concerned that British support would encourage joint Austro-Russian action against Turkey.⁷⁸ Moreover, Disraeli did his best to encourage Turkey to stand firm by sending a British fleet as a sign of support.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Blake, *Disraeli*, p. 588.

⁷⁷ Geoffrey Hicks, John Charmley, and Bendor Grosvenor, ed., *Documents on Conservative Foreign Policy, 1852-1878* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), no. 308, Disraeli to Derby, DP 920 DER (15) 16/2/240, 9 January 1876, p. 220-221, abbreviated below as *DCFP*.

⁷⁸ *DCFP*, no. 308, Disraeli to Derby, DP 920 DER (15) 16/2/240, 9 January 1876, p. 220-221.

⁷⁹ Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe 1789-1914*, p. 516.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

British resistance to Russia increased after the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War in April 1877. By resisting Russia Disraeli took a considerable risk. One danger was that Russia would not back down and war would ensue. Moreover, the pro-Turkish policy met with considerable resistance in the cabinet, and the government came under harsh attacks from the opposition.⁸⁰ Still Disraeli shrugged the risks aside. Britain sent feelers to Vienna several times during the war to facilitate cooperation to limit Russian gains. While unsuccessful in the beginning, Austria eventually became increasingly sympathetic.⁸¹ In January 1878, as a Russian victory was imminent, Disraeli proposed an alliance with Austria. When the Austrian Foreign Minister Andrassy gave a hesitant reply, Disraeli also sent the British fleet towards Constantinople to demonstrate British resolve.⁸² Preparations were also made to send an army to Constantinople if necessary.⁸³

British efforts paid off after Russia forced the Treaty of San Stefano on the Ottoman Empire in March 1878. The treaty created a very large Bulgaria, which at the time was widely anticipated to become a Russian satellite.⁸⁴ Austria found this unacceptable and joined Britain in demanding a conference to revise the peace settlement. Bismarck accepted, and the congress was convened in Berlin in the summer of 1878. Russian attempts during the preparations to the congress to separate Austria-Hungary from Britain through a separate deal failed,⁸⁵ presumably because Austria was confident of British

⁸⁰ See John Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?: Britain, the Balance of Power, and the Origins of the First World War* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1999), pp. 77-145; and Blake, *Disraeli*, pp. 598-628. For Gladstone's criticism of Disraeli's pro-Turkish policy, see Richard Shannon, *Gladstone: Heroic Minister, 1865-1898* (London: Allen Lane, 1999), pp. 162-201.

⁸¹ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 125-132.

⁸² Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, pp. 113-122.

⁸³ Robert William Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone, and the Eastern Question: A Study in Diplomacy and Party Politics* (London: Cass, 1962), p. 324; Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, p. 133.

⁸⁴ Dick Leonard, *The Great Rivalry: Gladstone and Disraeli* (London: Tauris, 2013), p. 171; Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, p. 140.

⁸⁵ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 143-143; Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, pp. 145-162

support. At the congress itself, Disraeli continued his consistent support of Austria.⁸⁶ Russian gains in the Balkans were largely reversed, most notably by dramatically cutting the size of Bulgaria. British international standing was also greatly enhanced. Disraeli's key achievement, however, was that the Austro-Russian conflict destroyed the last traces of the League of Three Emperors.⁸⁷ Austria for the time being would rely on British support in the Balkans, rather than seeking an accommodation with Russia.

While some argue that Disraeli's key goal was to preserve the Ottoman Empire, this is not true.⁸⁸ Not only did Disraeli seriously consider a partition of the Ottoman Empire,⁸⁹ he even wrote to Foreign Secretary Derby that he was not upholding the Ottoman Empire and that he cared nothing for the Ottomans.⁹⁰ Instead, Disraeli feared that if Russia were not checked, "the Holy Alliance [would] be revived in aggravated form & force", which he said would leave Britain in "a position I trust I should never live to witness".⁹¹ Historians support this interpretation. R. W. Seton-Watson argues that Disraeli was pursuing a foreign policy to "drive a wedge between the three allies (the League of Three Emperors)".⁹² Similarly, Robert Blake maintains that the only consistent thread in Disraeli's policy towards the Eastern Question was "a general determination to assert Britain's prestige and to disrupt the Dreikaiserbund".⁹³ Britain's policy of taking advantage of the Great Eastern Crisis to break up the League of Three Emperors by supporting Austria-Hungary against Russia is as predicted by P2.

⁸⁶ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 250. For Disraeli's conduct at the Congress of Berlin, see for example Blake, *Disraeli*, pp. 645-654.

⁸⁷ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, pp. 160-161.

⁸⁸ Mihailo D. Stojanović, *The Great Powers and the Balkans, 1875-1878* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 69.

⁸⁹ *DCFP*, no. 350, Disraeli to Salisbury, SP, fos 149-151, 3 September 1876, p. 245.

⁹⁰ *DCFP*, no. 353, Disraeli to Derby, DP 920 DER (15) 16/2/2, 6 September 1876, pp. 247-248.

⁹¹ *DCFP*, no. 392, Disraeli to Salisbury, SP, fo. 183, 29 November 1876, p. 269.

⁹² Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe 1789-1914*, p. 506.

⁹³ Blake, *Disraeli*, p. 607. See also Ian St John, *Disraeli and the Art of Victorian Politics* (London: Anthem, 2010), pp. 169-170.

Formation of the Dual Alliance

Prediction 4: Britain did not pursue divide and deter strategies to prevent the formation of the Dual Alliance

Disraeli's success at the Congress of Berlin set the stage for the next important diplomatic event in Europe. Bismarck always tried to avoid having to choose between Austria and Russia,⁹⁴ but the dissolution of the League of Three Emperors forced him to do this. The result was the formation of the Austro-German Dual Alliance in October 1879.⁹⁵ According to neorealist theories of the balance of power, Britain should presumably have reacted negatively to this, as Germany was the strongest power on the continent.⁹⁶ Such an alliance, however, should be welcomed according to a divide and deter strategy. The Dual Alliance was considerably weaker than France and Russia combined, so it could not be directed at Britain. Instead, it only targeted France and Russia, making those states less capable of threatening Britain. Hence, it is not strange that Britain encouraged the formation of the Dual Alliance. At first sight, Russia would have been a better alliance partner for Germany. Russia was considerably more powerful than Austria, and most importantly, a German-Russian alliance would have been the only certain way to preclude the feared Franco-Russian alliance.⁹⁷ Such an alliance had also been proposed by Russia before the Congress of Berlin.⁹⁸ The only good reason for why Austria-Hungary was ultimately preferred was its support from Britain, which more than compensated for Austria-Hungary's weakness. Bismarck explicitly used the British tie as an argument for

⁹⁴ Jonathan Steinberg, *Bismarck: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), David G. Williamson, *Bismarck and Germany: 1862-1890* (Harlow: Longman, 2011), p. 96.

⁹⁵ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 174-185.

⁹⁶ Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 2.

⁹⁷ Lynn Abrams, *Bismarck and the German Empire: 1871-1918* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 44.

⁹⁸ Seton-Watson, *Disraeli Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, p. 158.

the Dual Alliance.⁹⁹ Hence, it is not strange that Foreign Secretary Salisbury publically greeted the formation of the Dual alliance with the words “I will only say to all who value the peace of Europe and the independence of nations (...) it is good tidings of great joy”.¹⁰⁰ While London was clearly pleased about the alliance, it did not follow up German suggestions of aligning itself closer to the alliance. Queen Victoria wrote “[i]f we ally ourselves with Germany and Austria, France might join with Russia and Italy, which would be very serious”.¹⁰¹ This demonstrates an understanding that if Britain committed itself formally to the Dual Alliance, it would later be unable to prevent a Franco-Russian alliance.

To summarize, the fact that Britain welcomed the formation of the Dual Alliance, which increased its security, is in accordance with P3. Moreover, British support to the Dual Alliance may quite possibly have prevented a Russo-German alliance, as P2 predicted.

The Revival of the League of Three Emperors

Prediction 5: Britain pursued deter strategies to prevent the formation of the League of Three Emperors

The only time Britain clearly did not employ divide and deter strategies against a potentially threatening coalition was Gladstone’s failure to stop the revival of the League of Three Emperors in 1881. As Gladstone was perhaps the most idealist Prime Minister Britain has ever had, this is no surprise. While Disraeli saw international politics in terms

⁹⁹ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, p. 174.

¹⁰⁰ Andrew Roberts, *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), p. 235.

¹⁰¹ George Earle Buckle and William Flavelle Monypenny, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield Vol. VI* (London: Murray, 1910-1920), p. 489.

of a geopolitical competition, Gladstone viewed it from a deeply moral point of view.¹⁰² For Disraeli, the final disintegration of the league at the Congress of Berlin was the apogee of his premiership, as Britain won back its freedom of manoeuvre.¹⁰³ Gladstone did not appreciate these advantages, and did little to stop the revival of the league. In fact, he did much to promote it, albeit unintentionally. British support to Austria, as noted, had been a key factor in Germany and Austria's decision to with ally each other. Gladstone had been directly hostile to Disraeli's policies building up to and during the Russo-Turkish War, even writing a highly polemical pamphlet, where he denounced the Turks as "one great anti-human specimen of humanity".¹⁰⁴ In addition, Gladstone was also negatively inclined towards the Austrians.¹⁰⁵ Hence, it was clear that after Gladstone returned to 10 Downing Street in 1880, he would discontinue Disraeli's policy of supporting Austria and Turkey.¹⁰⁶ As Austria and Germany could not then rely on Britain for indirect support, they felt compelled to turn to Russia instead.¹⁰⁷ Considering the continued rivalry between Austria and Russia in the Balkans, Gladstone could have easily prevented this. However, he chose to do nothing, resulting in the revival of the League of Three Emperors in 1881.¹⁰⁸

While Gladstone clearly did not follow a divide and deter strategy, the consequences of his policies were as expected. With Austria, Germany, and Russia reunited, Britain had no role to play in the Balkans, in spite of Gladstone's wishes. Moreover, Gladstone's

¹⁰² For Gladstone's idealism, see Knaplund, *Gladstone's Foreign Policy*, ix-xvii.

¹⁰³ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, pp. 160-161.

¹⁰⁴ William Ewart Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* (London: J. Murray, 1876).

¹⁰⁵ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 284.

¹⁰⁶ Kenneth Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England, 1830-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 138-139.

¹⁰⁷ See Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, p. 172; Williamson, *Bismarck and Germany*, p. 100.

¹⁰⁸ Gladstone does not appear to have even noticed the revival of the secret League of Three Emperors, as there is no mention of it in his diary, see William Ewart Gladstone, *The Gladstone Diaries Vol. 10*, M. R. D. Foot and H. C. G. Matthew, ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Seton Watson argues that this is because Gladstone was distracted by imperial policy, see Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe*, p. 550.

desire for a reformed Concert of Europe quickly came to nought.¹⁰⁹ Most seriously, when Britain the next year occupied Egypt, France was also alienated. For a moment, there was a real danger that France would join the league, uniting all of Europe against Britain for the first time since 1812.¹¹⁰ Hence, Gladstone's policies significantly hurt British security, freedom of action, and ability to pursue its goals. Most historians are also critical of Gladstone's foreign policy in his second term. Charmley, for example, states that it was "the worst of all possible worlds".¹¹¹ Gladstone's failure to deter the formation of the League of Three Emperors yet again is contrary to the prediction of P1. However, the negative consequences that followed from the revival of the league are as expected from P4.

The Bulgarian and Boulanger Crises

Prediction 6(a): Britain pursued dividing strategies to break up the League of the Three Emperors

Prediction 6(b): Britain pursued deter strategies to prevent the formation of a Franco-Russian alliance

St. Petersburg had liberated Bulgaria during the Russo-Turkish War with the intention of the country being a Russian satellite. Even though other European capitals expected this outcome, it did not materialize.¹¹² The causes of the conflict between Russia and Bulgaria are far too complex to recount here. However, in essence, Bulgaria did not intend to

¹⁰⁹ See Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, p. 174.

¹¹⁰ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 302-304.

¹¹¹ See Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, p. 178.

¹¹² Duncan M. Perry, *Stefan Stambolov and the Emergence of Modern Bulgaria, 1870-1895* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 234; William C. Fuller, *Strategy and Power in Russia 1600-1914* (New York: Free Press, 1992), p. 336.

replace the Turkish yoke with subjugation by Russia.¹¹³ On the contrary, the Bulgarian prince Alexander of Battenberg was determined to pursue an independent policy, especially pertaining to the unification with Eastern Rumelia.¹¹⁴ The conflict reached the point where Russia supported a coup d'état against the Bulgarian prince and even considered invading the country.¹¹⁵ As Austria-Hungary was characteristically sceptical about Russia's policy in the Balkans, this gave Britain another chance to break up the league that Prime Minister Salisbury did not miss. As Charmley argues:

As long as the Bulgarian issue was alive, a wedge was driven into Bismarck's *Dreikaiserbund*: Austria would look to England for support; Bismarck would not dare choose between his two allies; and Salisbury would gain some freedom of manoeuvre.¹¹⁶

Despite personally having been a key opponent of the unification of Bulgaria during the Conference of Berlin nine years prior,¹¹⁷ Salisbury chose the opposite course of action. In order to detach Austria from Russia, Britain now took the lead in supporting Bulgarian unification.¹¹⁸ Moreover, Salisbury described the coup as a Russian "encroachment upon the rights of a free and independent people" and encouraged other states to take a stance against Russia.¹¹⁹

What made the Bulgarian Crisis particularly complicated was that it tied in with the Boulanger Crisis between France and Germany.¹²⁰ A wave of revanchist feelings in

¹¹³ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, p. 336.

¹¹⁴ Barbara Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 184.

¹¹⁵ C. J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy 1878-1902, Part I* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 106.

¹¹⁶ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation*, 203.

¹¹⁷ Lady Gwendolen Cecil, *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury, Vol. III* (London: Hodder and Stoughton: 1921-1932), Cecil, *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury, Vol II*, pp. 281-286.

¹¹⁸ Salisbury to Sir Robert Morier, December 2, 1885, quoted in Cecil, *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury, Vol II*, pp. 249-250.

¹¹⁹ Lange, *European Alliances and Alignments*, p. 368.

¹²⁰ Seton-Watson, *Britain and Europe*, p. 562.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

France had brought the general Boulanger into the war ministry, making a French attempt to regain Alsace-Lorraine a distinct possibility.¹²¹ As France would be unable to defeat Germany alone, the fear was that Paris and St. Petersburg would join forces to achieve their respective aims.¹²² While the Dual Alliance was strong enough to counter France and Russia separately, it was far from certain that it could hold its own against the two of them combined.¹²³ Such prospects worried London. An intelligence report cited a Franco-Russian alliance as “the worst combination we have any reason to dread”.¹²⁴ A Franco-Russian alliance could precipitate a European great power war, in which Germany and Austria were in danger of losing. Such an outcome would be very detrimental to British security. Salisbury’s assessment of the situation was as follows:

If, in the present grouping of nations, which (...) is now taking place, (...) it might well happen that the adversaries, who are coming against each other on the continent, might treat the English Empire as divisible booty (...) and though England could defend herself, it would be at fearful risk and cost.¹²⁵

The best way to avoid this was to prevent a Franco-Russian alliance in the first place. This was exactly the strategy Salisbury chose, by tying Britain closer to the Triple Alliance. Contact with Bismarck was close throughout the crisis, and on his suggestion Britain established an entente with Italy and then Austria-Hungary.¹²⁶ Together these arrangements, known as the Mediterranean Agreements, officially guaranteed maintenance of the status quo in the Mediterranean and Balkans.¹²⁷ The agreements did not amount to a full alliance, as they did not explicitly require British assistance. On the

¹²¹ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem*, pp. 61-63.

¹²² Roberts, *Salisbury*, p. 430.

¹²³ Alfred Francis Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914 Vol. II*, trans. Archibald Cary Coolidge (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920-1921), p. 45.

¹²⁴ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem 1865-1925*, p. 68.

¹²⁵ George Earle Buckle, ed., *The Letters of Queen Victoria, Third Series: A Selection from Her Majesty's Correspondence and Journal Between the Years 1886 and 1901, Vol. I* (London: John Murray, 1930), p. 272.

¹²⁶ Buckle, *The Letters of Queen Victoria, Vol. I*, p. 269.

¹²⁷ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 400-404.

other hand, they firmly signalled that Britain was hostile to a Franco-Russian alliance, and that this would have to be accounted for if those states made any moves. Britain also avoided alienating France by not associating itself with Germany directly. The tactic worked well. No Franco-Russian alliance arose on this occasion, and the Bulgarian and Boulanger Crises died down. Through the process, the Triple Emperors' Alliance was also finally broken up and replaced with the weaker Russo-German Reinsurance Treaty in June 1887.¹²⁸

To summarize, British efforts to use the Bulgarian crisis to break up the league by supporting Austria-Hungary are in accordance with prediction P2. Moreover, efforts to deter a Franco-Russian alliance by supporting the Triple Alliance are also as predicted by P1.

Franco-Russian Alliance

Prediction 7: Britain did not pursue divide and deter strategies to prevent the formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance

France and Russia were the two powers most dissatisfied with the outcome of the Congress of Vienna.¹²⁹ An alliance between the two had therefore been the most dangerous revisionist constellation in the European great power system ever since. Consequently, Britain had consistently resisted such an alliance, which Palmerston characterized as “the one great danger to Europe”.¹³⁰ While the revisionist aims of France and Russia would remain until the First World War, their ability to pursue them depended

¹²⁸ Heinrich August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West, 1789-1933*, trans. Alexander J. Sager (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 229-231.

¹²⁹ Sheehan, *The Balance of Power*, pp. 127-130.

¹³⁰ Henry Lytton Bulwer, *Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston: With Selections from His Diaries and Correspondence* (London: Richard Bentley, 1870), p. 268.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

on their lead in capabilities. During the 1880s, this lead was slipping, due largely to the German population, economic, and military growth.¹³¹ According to the CINC scores, the capabilities of the Dual Alliance were about equal to those of France and Russia by 1890. Hence, the British motivation for resisting a Franco-Russian alliance evaporated. Hence, according to P3, no strong reaction should be expected from Britain pertaining to the alliance.

After the dismissal of Bismarck and the subsequent refusal of Wilhelm II to renew the reinsurance treaty in 1890, the now isolated Russia became in need of partners. The obvious choice of ally was France.¹³² In July 1891, a French fleet visited the Russian naval base of Kronstadt. Following the astounding success of the visit, the Franco-Russian Entente was signed the next month.¹³³ In 1892, a formal alliance treaty followed, although the Panama Canal Scandal delayed ratification until 1893.¹³⁴

Given the long history of British fear of a Franco-Russian alliance and the many colonial conflicts Britain had with both states, a strong British reaction would have been a natural outcome. This would also have been easy to achieve. The formation of the alliance took over two years, giving Britain ample of time to act. Germany was also imploring Britain to move closer to the Triple Alliance as a response.¹³⁵ Yet, unlike 1887, Britain remained muted, and the German suggestion went unheeded. Salisbury wrote to the Queen, “it is most important to persuade the French, if we can, that England has no antipathy to

¹³¹ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. xxv-xxxi.

¹³² William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), p. 8.

¹³³ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp. 22-23; Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 334-335.

¹³⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 338

¹³⁵ Gordon Martell, *Imperial Diplomacy: Rosebery and the Failure of Foreign Policy* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1968), pp. 67-68.

France, or any partisanship against her".¹³⁶ Rosebery, who became foreign secretary the following year, followed a similar line. As Gordon Martell argues:

"Rosebery, however, believing the Franco-Russian accord to be aimed at Germany, felt he needed not fear it as long as the Triple Alliance remained intact; what he did fear was a state of affairs in which one alliance would lead to a breakdown of the other and consequent realignment of European diplomacy, in which Britain would likely suffer. To keep Britain out of the [Triple] alliance, Roseberry (...) tried to demonstrate his continuing desire to work with them."¹³⁷

This, of course, demonstrates a way of thinking very much in line with the strategy of divide and deter. Rosebery understood that a Franco-Russian alliance had ceased to be a threat to Britain. On the contrary, it was a useful counterweight to the Triple Alliance, since the two alliances were primarily focused on each other. Some negative repercussions did follow from Franco-Russian cooperation, such as during the Siam Crisis of 1893.¹³⁸ Yet, the negative consequences were relatively minor and did not lead to a change in British policy. Admittedly, there continued to be intermittent talks about Britain joining the Triple Alliance until 1902, which had some support in the cabinet. Salisbury was, however, consistently sceptical, so nothing serious ever arose from any of them.¹³⁹ The main reason for this was the British insistence on a complete freedom of action, which was entirely contrary to the point of the alliance. Germany, quite naturally, had no interest in risking a war with France and Russia for Britain, if it received nothing concrete in return.¹⁴⁰ This indicates that Britain no longer viewed a Franco-Russian alliance as a decisive threat, and consequently did not see the need for stronger involvement on the continent. The British decision not to prevent the formation of the

¹³⁶ Cecil, *The Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury, Vol. IV*, p. 395.

¹³⁷ Martell, *Imperial Diplomacy*, p. 68.

¹³⁸ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp. 44-45.

¹³⁹ For the best coverage of the Anglo-German alliance negotiations, see J. A. S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: The Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Athlone, 1964).

¹⁴⁰ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp. 56-57.

Franco-Russian alliance, as it had turned into a useful counter-balance to the Dual Alliance, is in accordance with P3.

The Entente Cordiale and the Russo-Japanese War

Prediction 8(a): Britain did not pursue deter strategies to break up the Franco-Russian Alliance

Prediction 8(b): Britain pursued a deter strategy to prevent Russia joining the Dual-Alliance

In 1902, Britain entered a local alliance with Japan in East Asia. This was to counteract the heavy Russian naval build-up in the region, and particularly to avoid Japan feeling compelled to come to an agreement with Russia.¹⁴¹ What was not foreseen at the time was that increased Russo-Japanese tensions in the following years put Britain in a very difficult position.¹⁴² In case of a war between Russia and Japan, France would be pressured to support Russia. Due to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, this could easily develop into France facing the stark choice of either fighting a war with Britain or abandoning its ally. The latter outcome was more probable. France had no obligation to intervene on Russia's side, as the Franco-Russian Alliance was defensive and exclusively directed at Germany. Nor did France have any significant interests in Northeast Asia.¹⁴³

While some in Britain welcomed this development, it would be contrary to the divide and

¹⁴¹ See for example Ian Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires 1894-1907* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); George W. Monger, *The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy 1900-1907* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963), pp. 46-66; Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and the Foreign Policy*, pp. 390-420; Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp. 747-786.

¹⁴² Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp. 262-282

¹⁴³ William L. Langer, *The Franco-Russian Alliance, 1890-1894* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929); The Anglo-Japanese Alliance only went into force if Japan was at war with two great powers, hence Britain was not obliged to join the war if Japan was only at war with Russia, see "Anglo-Japanese Agreement, January 30, 1902," in George Peabody Gooch and Harold William Vazeille Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914* (London: H.M.S.O, 1926-1938), p. 117. It is also instructive to note that in 1898 France had back down from war against Britain during the Fashoda Crisis, see Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp. 537-578.

deter strategy. The Franco-Russian Alliance and the Dual Alliance balanced each other closely in the early years of the 20th century, ensuring that Britain was very secure.¹⁴⁴ A break-up of the Franco-Russian Alliance would also revive the danger of Russia seeking support from Germany instead. Germany would almost certainly welcome such a development, and Austria-Hungary would be powerless to stop it. Such a revived League of Three Emperors would be more dangerous to British security than ever before. Hence, the optimal policy of Britain would be to ensure the maintenance of the Franco-Russian Alliance.

Again, the historical reality is in line with a divide and deter strategy. London met the rising Russo-Japanese tensions with an effort to avoid conflict.¹⁴⁵ Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, made considerable efforts to solve the problem by finding a compromise with St. Petersburg in East Asia, but the Russians rebuffed these overtures.¹⁴⁶ Hence, Britain proceeded to negotiate with France instead. An important reason for this was that the French Foreign Minister Delcassé promised that if an entente were made, “he [would] exercise a restraining influence on Russia [in East Asia]”.¹⁴⁷ In 1903, Lansdowne described the consequences of solving Anglo-French colonial disputes in the following terms:

An all-round settlement with France upon the lines now suggested would, I believe, be enormously to our advantage. (...) A good understanding with France would not improbably be the precursor of a better understanding with Russia, and I need not insist upon the improvement which would result in our

¹⁴⁴ The only threat to this had been the continental powers uniting against Britain during the Anglo-Boer War, 1898-1901, see John C. G. Röhl, *Kaiser Wilhelm II: A Concise Life*, trans. Sheila de Bellaigue (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 113.

¹⁴⁵ Monger, *The End of Isolation*, pp. 123-136.

¹⁴⁶ Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 132.

¹⁴⁷ Hamilton to Curzon, 9 July 1903. Hamilton MSS, Letters to Curzon, vol. v., quoted in Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 129.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

international position, which, in view of our present relations with Germany as well as Russia, I cannot regard with satisfaction.¹⁴⁸

Despite a long history of Anglo-French tensions, the British efforts for an entente were successful, as the French Foreign Minister was eager to avoid a conflict with Britain.¹⁴⁹ In April 1904, the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France was signed. While the agreement is often seen as the beginning of British efforts to balance against Germany,¹⁵⁰ there is little evidence for this view.¹⁵¹ The actual agreement barely mentions Germany and never in hostile terms.¹⁵² Indeed, British relations with Germany were generally good, with the cabinet discussing an alliance as late as 1902.¹⁵³ Instead, the agreement exclusively deals with solving outstanding colonial issues.¹⁵⁴ Hence, Monger argues that the British motivation for improving relations with France in 1903 was to avoid alienating the Franco-Russian alliance, in view of a widely expected Russo-Japanese War.¹⁵⁵

When the war broke out, Britain was anxious to remain detached from the conflict, despite its alliance with Japan. Prime Minister Balfour noted: “the interest of this country is now and always – peace”.¹⁵⁶ Maintaining neutrality, however, proved to be challenging. With the blockade of the Russian Pacific Fleet at Port Arthur, St. Petersburg sent the Baltic Fleet to East Asia for reinforcement. As the fleet passed through Dogger Bank, it fired on some British trawlers, mistaking them for Japanese torpedo boats.¹⁵⁷

Public opinion in Britain responded with outrage over Dogger Bank incident and many

¹⁴⁸ Memo by Landsowne, 10 Sept. 1903. F.O. 27/3765, quoted from Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 133.

¹⁴⁹ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 419.

¹⁵⁰ Sheehan, *The Balance of Power*, p. 135.

¹⁵¹ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, p. 313.

¹⁵² Monger, *The End of Isolation*, 134.

¹⁵³ See Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 21-45.

¹⁵⁴ Joll and Martel, *The Origins of the First World War*, p. 61.

¹⁵⁵ Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 127.

¹⁵⁶ Sydney H. Zebel, *Balfour: A Political Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 108.

¹⁵⁷ For an account of the incident, see Denis Warner and Peggy Warner, *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905* (Abingdon: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 401-417.

members of the cabinet argued for war.¹⁵⁸ The incident could easily have been used as a pretext for a hawkish policy towards Russia. Yet, Foreign Secretary Lansdowne was determined to preserve peaceful relations and his arguments ultimately won the day.¹⁵⁹ Instead of using the Dogger Bank Incident as a pretext to war, the conflict was solved by an international investigation and a Russian apology.¹⁶⁰ This peaceful solution was reached due to the British willingness to compromise and French help to defuse the situation. The Entente Cordiale thereby served its intended purpose.¹⁶¹

Lansdowne's line proved to be the correct one. Germany had waited since the outbreak of war for a possible Anglo-Russian conflict to detach Russia from France. Hence, in the wake of the Dogger Bank Incident, the Germans made an alliance offer to Russia.¹⁶² Taylor argues that Russia might have grasped at a German alliance if the conflict with Britain escalated.¹⁶³ Consequently, it is likely that the conciliatory British approach in solving the Dogger Bank Incident prevented a revival of the League of Three Emperors.¹⁶⁴ It is thus more useful to view the Entente Cordiale in the context of British support for the Dual Alliance and the Mediterranean Agreements, rather than in the context of the British alliance with France and Russia during the First World War. The Entente Cordiale did not become a fully-fledged alliance before the outbreak of the War. Serious Anglo-French military talks were not held until 1906, and then only in the

¹⁵⁸ Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 172.

¹⁵⁹ Thomas Wodehouse Legh Newton, *Lord Lansdowne: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1929), pp. 315-318; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 174.

¹⁶⁰ John A. White, *Transition to Global Rivalry: Alliance Diplomacy and the Quadruple Entente, 1895-1907* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 111.

¹⁶¹ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?*, p. 314.

¹⁶² Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 419-423.

¹⁶³ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 423.

¹⁶⁴ It is important to note that Austro-Russian rivalry in the Balkans would not have been an obstacle to this, as there had been no serious disagreements between the two states in that area since the Austro-Russian Balkan Entente of 1897, see for example Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*, p. 212; and Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, p. 382.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

strictest secrecy.¹⁶⁵ Even more notable is the fact that the British justification for entering the First World War was not the German declaration of war against France, but the German violation of the Treaty of London of 1839 with the attack on Belgium.¹⁶⁶

To conclude, British behaviour with regards to the Russo-Japanese war aimed at maintaining the Franco-Russian Alliance, by making it less costly to its members, is in accordance with P3. Moreover, British attempts to deter a renewed League of Three Emperors conform to the prediction of P1.

¹⁶⁵ See Monger, *The End of Isolation*, pp. 236-256.

¹⁶⁶ Hew Strachan, *The First World War, Volume I: To Arms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 96-97.

*Summary of Results****TABLE 3.2 Summary of Results***

Event	P1	P2	P3	P4
1. Franco-Prussian War	-	-	Support	-
2. Formation of the League of Three Emperors and the 'War in Sight' Crisis	No support	Support	-	Support
3. Russo-Turkish War and the Congress of Berlin	-	Support	-	-
4. Formation of the Dual Alliance	-	Support	Support	-
5. Revival of the League of Three Emperors	No Support	-	-	Support
6. Bulgarian Crisis and the Mediterranean Agreements	Support	Support	-	-
7. Formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance	-	-	Support	-
8. The Russo-Japanese War and the Entente Cordial	Support	-	Support	-
Instances supporting the predictions	2/4	4/4	4/4	2/2

Table 3.2: *This table gives a summary of the accuracy of the theoretical predictions compared to the historical record. In 8 out of 10 cases, Britain applied divide and deter strategies to prevent the formation of strong continental alliances. In two cases Britain failed to deter the formation of a security agreement between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. However, in both cases, negative consequences followed from British security and influence, exactly like expected.*

Table 3.2 compares the theoretical predictions to the historical record. In 10 out of 12 incidents, British behaviour was exactly as expected. Moreover, the justifications used by policymakers at the time was very similar to what a divide and deter strategy would suggest. In two cases, however, Britain clearly did not follow the strategy, namely in the failure to prevent the formation of the League of Three Emperors in 1873 and in its revival in 1881. These two cases are almost identical, in that the same person, Gladstone, failed to prevent the same alliance, for the same reason. Moreover, the consequences of British behaviour were clearly negative, just as expected. Overall, the support for Britain pursuing a 'divide and deter' strategy between 1867 and 1905 is therefore strong.

Alternative Explanations

Conventional balancing is the most obvious alternative explanation of British behaviour. This strategy has much in common with divide and deter, but there is one important distinction. Divide and deter assumes that the main threat to offshore states comes from

alliances. Balance of power theory, as a contrast, assumes that the most powerful or threatening state poses the greatest danger.¹⁶⁷ To counter this threat, the offshore state joins continental states and wars. During the Great Eastern Crisis and the Bulgarian Crisis, British behaviour resembled balancing against Russia. Overall, balancing fails to provide a convincing explanation of British behaviour, however. Germany was clearly the most powerful continental state and most likely potential hegemon from 1871 onwards, but Britain primarily focused on countering Russia. This could be because that Britain simply considered Russia its biggest threat.¹⁶⁸ However, this is an ad-hoc solution as long as it is not explained why this was the case. Balance of power theory does not do this, but divide and deter does. Unlike France and Germany, Russia had a realistic possibility of allying with both continental camps. Thus, it makes a lot of sense that Russia was Britain's primary target in successfully executing a divide and deter strategy. Between 1888 and 1904, Britain did not pursue a policy of balancing against any state whatsoever. Relations with Germany were particularly cooperative, with serious alliance negotiations taking place as late as 1902. Divide and deter is therefore clearly a better description of British strategy than balancing.

Another explanation is that Britain pursued an ideology-based foreign policy, countering the countries that it had the least in common with ideologically.¹⁶⁹ This explanation is even more problematic. Russia was undoubtedly the furthest away from Britain ideologically, but British policies ceased to be anti-Russian after 1888 and the two countries reached an entente in 1907.¹⁷⁰ Nor were ideological differences mentioned as a

¹⁶⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

¹⁶⁸ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 21-24.

¹⁶⁹ Mark L. Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

¹⁷⁰ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem*, pp. 132-140.

justification for British policies during the Great Eastern and Bulgarian Crises. To make matters worse, the Conservatives were anti-Russian, while the very liberal Gladstone was pro-Russian, directly contradictory to ideological expectations.¹⁷¹

Since divide and deter is a form of wedging, the wedging literature does not offer any alternative explanations. The wedging literature would in general predict that Britain would break up alliances, but divide and deter gives much more detailed predictions about which alliances were prevented, why, and how.

Concluding Remarks

Protected from the continental great powers by water, offshore states are in a unique position. Since projecting power over water is difficult, continental states must invest heavily in naval power to be able to threaten the offshore states. Only hegemony and strong continental alliances permit this, so the key goal of offshore states is preventing these two outcomes. Preventing or breaking up continental alliances through a strategy of divide and deter is the best way to achieve this in multipolar systems. Without strong alliances, hegemonic bids become impossible. Continental great powers will also remain divided and too threatened by each other to invest in naval power. Consequently, offshore states can maintain a high level of security without the enduring the costs of continental involvement. The fact that Britain pursued this strategy with great success between 1867 and 1905, a period of 38 years, demonstrates this logic. Balancing and isolationism also take place in multipolar systems, but only under certain conditions. Unless there are two offshore states, pursuing a strategy of isolationism is likely to prove too risky. The threat from neighbours makes continental states prone to underbalance. Balancing is only

¹⁷¹ Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics*, pp. 90-104.

Chapter III: Offshore Balancing

necessary to fight or deter imminent hegemonic bids, otherwise divide and deter can achieve the same level of security at a lower cost. Having outlined how continental and offshore states respond to potential hegemonies, the next step is to better explain how great powers protect themselves against the threat from neighbours.

[IV]

Alliance Choice

So far, I have explained how great powers position themselves in response to potential hegemon. For a complete picture of alliance behaviour, it is also necessary to understand how great powers behave towards their neighbours. Dealing with the threat from neighbours is more complex than with that of hegemony. The latter threat only originates from one great power, namely the potential hegemon. Thus, great powers simply decide whether they should balance against, or bandwagon with, this threat. In contrast, the threat from neighbours is an amalgamation of many individual threats, because most great powers have several neighbours. Alliances serve to manipulate the geopolitical position great powers find themselves by getting rid of some enemies, at the cost of gaining others. Consequently, neighbours need not to be enemies, and non-neighbours may become threatening as well.

Chapter IV: Alliance Choice

In this chapter, I offer the *Georealist* theory of great power alliance choice, explaining both why great powers form and abandon alliances.¹ My argument is that alliances serve to aggregate the capabilities and decrease the threat between their members. However, this comes at the cost of each great power gaining the neighbours of the other members as their enemies. When choosing allies, great powers therefore seek allies that add as much security and bring as weak enemies into the alliances as possible. All great powers try to achieve this aim simultaneously. A systemic framework is thus necessary to understand alliance choice, by looking at the preferences of all great powers and their interaction. Doing this provides a much more realistic picture of the strategic situation great powers find themselves in. The advantages of this are considerable. Most notably, the explanatory power of *Georealism* increases considerably. I demonstrate this in the empirical section. Using a formal model of the theory, I accurately predict 89% of the alignment behaviour of the European great powers from 1823 to 1913 on a yearly basis. No other theories offer equally detailed and accurate predictions of individual great power behaviour.² Furthermore, the theory also offers a number of novel and counter-intuitive implications. Most notably, great powers are not enemies with all their neighbours, nor do

¹ With certain adjustments, the theory should also apply to smaller states.

² Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Security*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 137-168; Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Patricia A. Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Emerson M. S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook, and Gregory F. Rose, *The Balance of Power: Stability in International Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Michael F. Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally: Theory and a Test," *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4, (1984), pp. 523-544; Dan Reiter, *Crucible of Beliefs: Learning, Alliances, and World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Paul W. Schroeder, "Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," in *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems*, ed. Klaus Knorr (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1976), pp. 231-248; Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); Marco Cesa, *Allies yet Rivals: International Politics in the 18th Century Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); James D. Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances," *American Journal of Political Science* 35, no. 4 (November 1991), pp. 904-933.

they tend to ally with the neighbours' of their neighbours. Consequently, contrary to conventional wisdom, international alignments do not resemble a 'checkerboard pattern'.³

The plan of the chapter is as follows. First, I make some assumptions about rationality, information, alliances, and geography. Second, I outline the interaction between alliances and geography. Third, I give a theory of how great powers use alliances to maximize their security. Last, I test this theory against the alignment behaviour of the European great powers from 1823 to 1913. Last, I analyse whether the theory is likely to apply to the modern world.

The Georealist Theory of Alliance Choice

Great power alliance choice is inherently interdependent, because the preferences of one actor influence the choices of other great powers. A systemic framework is therefore necessary to understand the phenomenon fully. Analysing the preferences and interactions of four to six great powers is an inherently complex endeavour. To counteract that, I simplify the theory through stricter assumptions, which eliminates uncertainty and disturbing factors. Stricter assumptions come at the cost of limiting the applicability of the theory. However, it is possible to adjust for this by later relaxing the assumptions if necessary.

³ Kautilya, "Arthashastra," in *Balance of Power*, ed. Paul A. Seabury. (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965), p. 8; L. B. Namier, *Conflicts: Studies in Contemporary History* (London: Macmillan, 1942); Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 23; Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1978); Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 61; Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane, "The United States and International Institutions in Europe after the Cold War," in *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991*, ed. Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye and Stanley Hoffman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 126; William C. Wohlforth, "U.S. Strategy in a Unipolar World," in *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power*, ed. G. John Ikenberry (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), p. 108; Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 225-226.

Chapter IV: Alliance Choice

I assume that great powers are rational security maximizers when choosing allies.⁴ The security of a state is defined as its capabilities plus the capabilities of its allies, minus the capabilities of the combined neighbours of the alliance and their allies.⁵ No limit is set on how much security great powers want, although this can easily be included to get more nuanced predictions.⁶ A consequence of this is that great powers will never choose an alliance that makes it worse off than another available alignment. Actors have perfect information about capabilities, geographic location, and the responses of other actors.⁷

The theory does not depend on the exact specification of these assumptions, and they can be relaxed in order to increase the theory's applicability. Doing this is easy due to the inherent flexibility of the underlying rational choice framework of *Georealism*. However, it inevitably increases complexity. Uncertainty about capabilities, geography, and the responses of others all have in common that they decrease the determinacy of which predictions can be made. This is because the payoff of any alignment becomes an interval, rather than a single number. However, this does not mean that all predictions become indeterminate. As long as the lowest expected payoff of one alliance exceeds the highest possible payoffs of every other alignment, the great power will still choose this alliance. Since most of the alignments in the sample are much more beneficial than the alternatives, introducing low to medium levels of uncertainty is unlikely to have a significant effect in general. However, introducing uncertainty would provide valuable insights cases where the difference between alternatives is marginal. An example of this is Italy's dithering between the Dual Alliance and the Franco-Russian Alliance after the

⁴ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 118; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 31.

⁵ I assume that the threat between allies is zero, but accounting for this is unproblematic.

⁶ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*; Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Charles L. Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994-1995), pp. 50-90.

⁷ Niou, Ordeshook, and Rose, *The Balance of Power*, pp. 56-61.

year 1900, which the model captures well. The best way to account for uncertainty in practice would be by making probabilistic, rather than dichotomous, estimates of alliance choices. The more beneficial an alignment is compared to its alternatives for its members, the higher the probability is that this alliance will be chosen.

The rational choice framework of *Georealism* also makes it easy to integrate other variables, depending on the need. Thus, it can bridge realist and liberalist understandings of alliances. For example, democratic peace theory or economic interdependence can be integrated by giving a payoff bonus to alliances where both members are democracies or interconnected through trade and investments.⁸ Finding an objective measure of these bonuses may prove challenging in practice. However, this is a general problem, rather than a shortcoming of *Georealism* in particular. As with uncertainty, the introduction of other factors is unlikely to change the predictions significantly. History has repeatedly demonstrated that great powers ignore trade and ideology when these factors clash with power political concerns. An example of this is the Grand Alliance between Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union during the Second World War. Churchill famously argued for the Anglo-Soviet Alliance by saying “[i]f Hitler invaded hell I would make at least a favourable reference to the devil in the House of Commons.”⁹ However, in marginal cases introducing these factors could provide useful insights.

I also make very simplifying assumptions about alliances and geography. In my model, alliances aggregate the capabilities of its members perfectly and take away any threat its

⁸ Michael W. Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 205-235; Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); John M. Owen, “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1994), pp. 87-125; Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, et al., “An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 93, No. 4 (December 1999), pp. 791-807.

⁹ Winston S. Churchill, *The Grand Alliance* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), pp. 370-371.

Chapter IV: Alliance Choice

members initially posed to each other. A great power either has the ability to project all its capabilities onto another great power, or none at all. The real world is obviously more complex, but it is easy to account for this. Accounting for limitations to capability aggregation, threat reduction, and power projection is theoretically easy, by inserting parameters ranging from 0 to 1. Values for these parameters can be estimated using the logic of *Georealism*: capability aggregation based on shared enemies, threat reduction from the benefit the alliance provides, and power projection on geographical barriers, proximity, and the capabilities of intermediate states. I discuss the reasoning behind my assumptions and limitations in the relevant parts of the chapter. Accounting for these factors will undoubtedly increase *Georealism's* explanatory power, both in terms of the accuracy of its predictions and its application to new topics such as limited alignments.¹⁰ Yet, doing so is not necessary to illuminate the main innovations of the theory.

This chapter's purpose is strictly speaking to explain the mutual interests behind great power alliances, not alliance treaties. Usually, there is no contradiction between the two. Signing a treaty avoids any ground for confusion in a world with imperfect information and is costless as long as the members have an interest in being allies.¹¹ The only significant divergence between formal alliances and interests may take place when alliances cease to be rational. Its members may then not immediately terminate the alliance, in case circumstances revert back. Prussia and Austria were formally allies through the German Confederation right up the outbreak of war between them in 1866.

¹⁰ John D. Ciorciari, *The Limits of Alignment: Southeast Asia and the Great Powers Since 1975* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010).

¹¹ James D. Morrow, "Alliances: Why Write Them Down?," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 3 (2000), pp. 63-83.

Yet, the alliance was by then a chimera, discounted by both powers in the preceding years.¹²

The Neighbour Problem

The neighbours of a state consist of all other great powers that can project a considerable amount of power on it. While geography restricts power projection capabilities, most great powers still end up with many neighbours. All but very powerful or geographically isolated great powers face a fundamental problem of being weaker than their neighbours combined. For example, Germany was clearly the most powerful European power after 1871. Yet, it still deeply feared its neighbours joining forces, which Bismarck called his “nightmare of coalitions”.¹³ Consequently, most great powers are unable to ensure their own security and depend on a successful diplomatic strategy of keeping potential enemies divided.¹⁴ The next sections are devoted to explaining how great powers use alliances to achieve this aim.

Geopolitical Position

The potential threat each great power faces from its neighbours can be conceptualized by its geopolitical position. A great power’s geopolitical position is defined as its capabilities, minus the combined capabilities of the great powers that can project power onto it. Consequently, the concept combines the distribution of power with the geographic location of great powers. On its own, the distribution of capabilities can merely give information about the amount of capabilities great powers can project. Where this power

¹² W. E. Mosse, *The European Power and the German Question 1848-71: With Special Reference to England and Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 213-252.

¹³ Otto Pflanze, *Bismarck and the Development of Germany, Volume II: The Period of Consolidation, 1871-1880* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 432.

¹⁴ Timothy W. Crawford, “Preventing Enemy Coalitions: How Wedge Strategies Shape Power Politics,” *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (Spring 2011), pp. 155-189.

Chapter IV: Alliance Choice

can be projected is determined by how great powers are located in relation to each other geographically. Hence, the geopolitical positions of great powers constitute their initial condition and determine the amount of potential threat that each of them faces.

Geopolitical position depends heavily on the territorial configuration of great powers, which is essentially fixed. Yet, great powers are not locked into their geopolitical position. Through forming alliances, they can manipulate which great powers threaten them. When great powers ally, they decrease the threat they pose to each other and acquire each other's enemies. International alignments, meaning which great powers end up as allies and enemies, is the outcome of this process.¹⁵

This logic can be illustrated by Germany's situation before the First World War. Initially, Germany was surrounded by three potential threats: Austria-Hungary, France, and Russia. By forming the Austro-German Alliance, the threat of Austria-Hungary was largely eliminated. Britain, initially posing no harm to Germany, gradually became a threat by 1914 through its association with France and Russia. Italy, at first, had little to do with Germany, but became an ally to protect the southern frontier of Germany's ally Austria-Hungary.

Alliances and Security

Alliances provide protection in two ways. First, they aggregate capabilities by ensuring that the members fight their enemies together, rather than alone. Second, alliances decrease the threat between neighbours, because the members rationally depend on each

¹⁵ The alignment of a great power is defined as its position in the international system, namely which states it is and is not allied with.

other for their security. The cost is that great powers may gain new enemies through alliances, particularly any new neighbours its allies bring into the alliance.

The fundamental purpose of alliances is capability aggregation.¹⁶ By promising each other mutual defence, the allies meet their enemies united rather than alone. The obvious alternative to this is relying on internal resources for security instead. While these two are substitutes,¹⁷ this is only in the long run in multipolar systems. Replacing an ally of roughly equal size may require doubling military expenditures, something that at best takes years, and at worst is prohibitively expensive. Consequently, it is feasible to explain alliance choices, which can change much more rapidly, while holding internal mobilization constant.

Capability aggregation is never perfect in practice, due to the inherent uncertainty of relying on others.¹⁸ Hence, as long as an alliance and non-alignment offers roughly the same security, the latter is always the better option. The level of capability aggregation is likely to depend on the number and capabilities of the neighbours the allies share, as this determines their willingness to raise arms to come to each other's assistance.

By binding the security of its members together, the alliance aggregate their capabilities. Yet, alliances must consequently also aggregate the potential enemies of its members. This crucial point is poorly understood in the literature,¹⁹ but there are many examples of

¹⁶ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 18; George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 26; Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 4; Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry," pp. 904-933.

¹⁷ James D. Morrow, "Arms Versus Allies: Trade-Offs in the Search for Security," *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 207-233.

¹⁸ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), p.188; Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 10.

¹⁹ Aggregation of enemies is not among the costs listed in Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 44.

this. When Britain allied with Prussia before the Seven Years' War, it gained Austria and Russia as enemies, despite having no quarrels with those two states. The French alliance with Austria had a similar effect, turning the recent ally Prussia into an enemy.²⁰ Enforcing alliances among equals is virtually impossible,²¹ which has made many realists largely dismiss them.²² Yet, alliances tend to be self-enforcing, because states depend on their allies for their security and therefore have a rational interest in protecting them. Empirical evidence supports this, as states maintain their alliance commitments 74.5% of the time when war breaks out.²³ For example, Britain was not obliged to go to war with Prussia in 1756 according to the Convention of Westminster. However, a Prussian defeat would have had dire implications for Britain by leaving it without a continental ally. Hence, Britain intervened despite having no formal obligation to do so.²⁴

The fact that states are often compelled to intervene on behalf of alliance partners means that alliances often involve a level of moral hazard.²⁵ This gives all states an interest in managing the behaviour of their allies.²⁶ This interest is particularly strong when diverging interests might force a state to support allies in costly wars where it has no direct stake. The desire to manage allies is therefore not an independent cause of

²⁰ Derek McKay and Hamish M. Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers* (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 181-192.

²¹ Harvey Starr, *Anarchy, Order, and Integration: How to Manage Interdependence* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), p. 94.

²² Joseph M. Parent and Sebastian Rosato, "Balancing in Neorealism," *International Security*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Fall 2015), p. 57.

²³ Brett Ashley Leeds, Andrew G. Long and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, "Reevaluating Alliance Reliability: Specific Threats, Specific Promises," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (October 2000), pp. 686-699; Brett Ashley Leeds, "Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining State Decisions to Violate Treaties," *International Organization*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Fall 2003), pp. 801-827.

²⁴ Franz A. J. Szabo, *The Seven Years' War in Europe, 1756-1763* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 15-18.

²⁵ Brett V. Benson, *Constructing International Security: Alliances, Deterrence, and Moral Hazard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

²⁶ Paul M. Schroeder, "Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," in *Historical Problems of National Security*, ed. Klaus Knorr (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1976), pp. 231-248; William Brian Moul, "European Great Power Pacta de Contrahendo and Interstate Imperial War, 1815-1939: Suggestions of Pattern," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (March 1983), pp. 81-102; Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*.

alliances,²⁷ but rather a consequence of the aggregation of enemies. For example, Bismarck had to manage the relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The alternative was risking a war with Russia over a Balkan conflict, in which Germany had no interest and no prospective gains.

Alliances significantly decrease the threat states might have initially posed to each other.²⁸ According to realists, alliances are a representation of their underlying interests.²⁹ This means that the states are more secure facing their enemies together rather than alone. As long as this is the case, they cannot rationally fight each other, because this would render them unable to fulfil this task. Today's friend can still become tomorrow's enemy,³⁰ but the more a state benefits from its alliance, the less of a threat it will pose to its alliance partners. The security benefits an alliance between potential enemies provides can be calculated by looking at their alliance preferences. It must be noted that security, defined as a great power's capabilities compared to those of its enemies, can only be obtained at the expense of other great powers. All great powers in the system forming an alliance for complete security is therefore not possible.³¹

²⁷ Christopher Gelpi, "Alliances as Instruments of Intra-Allied Control," in *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space*, ed. H. Haftendor, Robert. O. Keohane, and C. Wallander (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 107-139.

²⁸ Initial investigations suggested alliance cause conflicts, but later research find them to have a pacifying effect, see Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 159-164; Stuart A. Bremer, "Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 1992), pp. 309-341; Halvard Buhaug, "Dangerous Dyads Revisited: Democracies May Not Be That Peaceful After All," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (April 2005), pp. 95-111.

²⁹ John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994/1995), p. 11.

³⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), p. 10.

³¹ This would be a form of collective security, see Inis L. Claude, *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 115-123; Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, pp. 417-429.

Chapter IV: Alliance Choice

The assumption that states choose the best possible allies is impossible to reconcile with the common intuition that alliances are formed against predetermined threats.³² This is because following the latter policy may mean abandoning optimal choices. Alliances help states to pick the best possible allies and avoid the worst possible enemies. Palmerston's famous argument that "Britain had no eternal allies, and [...] no perpetual enemies" is true for all great powers,³³ as they choose both allies and enemies based on expediency, rather than on sentiment. Given the level of threat most states face, having unnecessary enemies is a luxury they can ill-afford. Two states that could benefit from an alliance are likely to overcome whatever quarrels they may have. China and the U.S. were sworn enemies during the first half of the Cold War.³⁴ Nevertheless, under Nixon, they managed to overcome their fundamental ideological hostility, mutual hostility, and tenuous diplomatic ties, to become informal allies against the Soviet threat.³⁵ Rivalries still occur, but primarily between states than have no strong strategic reasons to ally anyway.

Continental States

Explaining the behaviour of each state requires calculations of their preferences. In this section, I outline the *Georealist* theory of alliance choice without using any mathematical equations. Yet, I use a game theory model to derive testable predictions in the empirical part.

Each alignment option has a certain payoff. Because non-alignment is always an option, any alliance must provide marginally more security than non-alignment to be viable. The

³² Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, p. 12.

³³ Elizabeth M. Knowles, *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 566.

³⁴ Odd Arne Westad, *Restless Empire: China and the World Since 1750* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), pp. 285-364.

³⁵ Henry Kissinger, *On China* (London: Allen Lane, 2011), pp. 202-293.

benefit of an alliance is how powerful the ally is compared to the power of the enemies it brings into the alliance. This is a function of their capabilities, whether they are neighbours, what neighbours they share, and the capabilities of these neighbours. Of these four factors, the first three are positive, while the last one is negative. The more capabilities a state has, the more net capabilities it brings into the alliance. If the two states are neighbours, forming an alliance also decreases the threat they initially posed to each other, increasing the security for both of them. However, the cost of this is that both states will gain the enemies of its ally. This means that the ally must expend some capabilities against its enemy, making it less able to provide protection against other threats to the alliance. If a great power is weaker than the enemies it brings into the alliance, it will offer little to no protection to its partners. However, a state will not gain all the enemies of its allies, because it may already share some of them. This decreases the negative effect of allies. From this, it follows that the best allies are powerful, neighbours, and have enemies that are weak or have many common enemies. Calculating the payoff of each alliance for every state is therefore a matter of simple arithmetic, using readily available data.³⁶

All alliances concern several states, making it necessary to look at how states interact in their alliance choices. At the basic level, every alliance requires the approval of at least two member states. Yet, every state faces a different strategic situation, so one alliance rarely provides the same level of benefits to two states.³⁷ The outcome of this is that

³⁶ The validity of these calculations depends on the accuracy of the data used, J. David Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War Data Set on Material Capabilities of States, 1816-1985," *International Interactions*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1988), pp. 115-132; Ted Robert Gurr, "The Political Dimension of National Capabilities: Concepts and Measurement," *International Interactions*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1998), pp. 113-139; Richard L. Merritt and Dina A. Zinnes, "Validity of Power Indices," *International Interactions*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1988), pp. 141-151.

³⁷ The level of the security is the same, but the benefit differs as members faced a different security situation before forming the alliance.

interests are often not complementary. If *A* prefers to ally with *B*, it is not given that *B* prefers to ally with *A*. One state might for example be the first choice of two other states. An example of this is that both Prussia and Austria competed for an alliance with Russia during the reign of Catherine the Great.³⁸ Whenever one state is the first choice of several states, it simply chooses the one that provides it with the most security. The other state will then have to move to its second preferred option.

Another problem is that alliance choices are interdependent,³⁹ meaning that an alliance between two states could compel other states to change their behaviour. When Nixon and Mao formed an informal Sino-American alliance, this was not directed at India. Yet, the alliance raised suspicion in New Delhi, compelling it to increase ties with the Soviet Union.⁴⁰ Two outcomes are possible if an alliance between states *A* and *B* causes an alliance between state *C* and *D* to form. On the one hand, if *A* and *B* are still more secure than without an alliance, the alliance will be implemented. On the other hand, if *A* and *B* are made worse off, they will not form an alliance with each other in the first place. This is because no rational great power with perfect information⁴¹ will make any move that makes it worse off.⁴²

Offshore States

As I explained in chapter III, offshore states have a significant impact on great power alliance choices. Seeking to keep the continental great powers divided, they intervene

³⁸ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 12.

³⁹ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 166-168.

⁴⁰ Robert J. MacMahon, "The Danger of Geopolitical Fantasies: Nixon, Kissinger, and the South Asia Crisis of 1971," in *Nixon in the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969-1977*, ed. Fredrik Logevall and Andrew Preston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 262.

⁴¹ With imperfect information this will depend on the probability of a counter-alliance

⁴² The rare incident in which two great powers have the exact same capabilities can also lead to indeterminate predictions.

through promises of support or threats of enmity to prevent or break up any strong continental alliance. The purpose of this is to change the alignment preferences of the continental power sufficiently to make them discard the strong alliance. If the capabilities the offshore state can deploy exceeds the benefit of the strong alliance compared to the second best option for at least one member, the alliance will not form.

The Threat of Hegemony

Understanding how great powers respond to neighbours is impossible without also considering the threat from potential hegemonies. As noted in chapter II, the best way to avoid successful hegemonic bids is to make sure the bandwagoning alliance does not have sufficient capabilities to expect success in war. Otherwise, all great powers lose their independence.⁴³ A simple way to model this is simply assuming that no alliance not including the offshore state can have more than half the capabilities in the system. This does not allow for the full complexity facing great powers, particularly not in a situation when both threats are high. However, it does preserve the intuition that weak potential hegemonies or great powers promote bandwagoning alliances.

Testing the Georealist Theory of Alliance Choice Empirically

Two different tests are used to evaluate the arguments presented in the previous section, using European great power alignments from 1823 to 1913 as a sample. First, a number of aggregate predictions relating to the impact of geography are tested. Second, the predictions of a game theory model of *Georealism* are compared to actual great power

⁴³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 140-143.

behaviour.⁴⁴ Game theoretical predictions using real world data offer the most direct way to test the theory, especially as the central aim is to provide unit-level predictions. Furthermore, this method combines the large samples permitted by regression analysis with the ability to provide a causal story.

Case Selection

The European great power system from 1823 to 1913 provides a good sample. First, the capability data reflects the historical consensus about the relative capabilities of the great powers well. Second, operationalizing the geographical locations of the great powers is easy. Throughout the period, the continental great powers had large armies and relatively small navies, meaning that they could only seriously threaten each other on land. As there were few minor powers in Europe at the time, invasion routes over land were also limited. Thus, only neighbours had the ability to project power onto each other, with the exception of Austria and France prior to the Italian unification. Third, the impact of other states on the European great power alliances was limited during the period.⁴⁵ The sample is about twice as long as those used by scholars like Walt, Ordeshook, et al., Snyder, and Weitsman.⁴⁶ Notably, it consists of what scholars consider four separate balance of power systems,⁴⁷ which increases its claims of generalizability.

⁴⁴ For other examples of formal models tested empirically, see Niou, Ordeshook and Rose, *The Balance of Power*, pp. 215-270; Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally," pp. 523-544.

⁴⁵ No scholar working on this time-period includes Japan or the United States in their samples.

⁴⁶ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 11; Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 3; Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, p. 36, Niou, Ordeshook, and Rose, *The Balance of Power*, p. 215.

⁴⁷ Joseph S. Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History* (New York: Longman, 2011), pp. 78-81; Michael J. Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 121-136.

Data

All data is adopted from the Correlates of War (COW) project, namely the Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) for capabilities, the Direct Contiguity data for geographical locations, and the Formal Alliance Dataset for alliances.⁴⁸ The CINC scores consist of a very specific set of factors of capabilities: total population, urban population ratio, iron and steel production, energy consumption, military expenditure, and military personnel. These are not relevant for all state systems, but fit the European great power systems from 1823 to 1913 well.⁴⁹ Below I clarify all adjustments made to the data.

Alliances

This theory only deals with capability aggregating alliances. No attempt is made at explaining agreements whose commitments fall short of military support in case of war. Consequently, all agreements not conforming to this definition are omitted. This includes all ententes, non-aggression pacts, neutrality pacts, and alliances which geographic scope did not overlap with the core territory of its members.⁵⁰ Information about the geographic scope of alliances is taken from the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) dataset.⁵¹ The dependent variable is dichotomous, allied or not allied. Great powers sharing memberships in several alliances simultaneously are only counted as allied once,

⁴⁸ J. David Singer, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965," in *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), pp. 19-48; Douglas M. Gibler, *International military alliances, 1648-2008* (Washington DC: CQ Press, 2009); Douglas M. Gibler and Meredith Sarkees, "Measuring Alliances: The Correlates of War Formal Interstate Alliance Data set, 1816-2000," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2004), pp. 211-222; Douglas M. Stinnett, et al., "The Correlates of War Project Direct Contiguity Data, Version 3," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2002), pp. 58-66.

⁴⁹ See for example the similarity with the measures used by A. J. P. Taylor in his history of the period, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), pp. xxvii-xxxii.

⁵⁰ The Triple Entente is dropped because it never committed Britain to defend France and Russia and was not used as the justification for entering the World War I. See George Monger, *The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy 1900-1907* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963); James Joll and Gordon Martel, *The Origins of the First World War* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2007), pp. 49-86.

⁵¹ Brett Ashley Leeds, et al., "Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions, 1815-1944," *International Interactions*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (2002), pp. 237-260.

such as Germany and Austria-Hungary being members of both the Dual and Triple Alliance after 1882.

TABLE 4.1: Alliances used from the COW alliance dataset

Alliance	In force	Great Power Members
German Confederation	1815-1848	Prussia, Austria
	1850-1866	
Crimean War Alliance	1854-1856	Britain, France, Austria
Prusso-Italian Alliance	1866-1866	Prussia, Italy
Dual Alliance	1879-1918	Germany, Austria, Hungary
Triple Alliance	1882-1915	Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy
Franco-Russian Alliance	1894-1914	France, Russia
Treaty of Björkö	1905-1905	Germany, Russia

Table 4.1 gives the selection of alliances remaining in the sample, and their duration. The specifications mean that the number of alliances is somewhat restricted, but this is unavoidable, as there are no other alliances conforming to my definition. However, this is not a serious issue, as the theory concerns alliance choice, not formation. Long alliances consist of many data points, as great powers have to continuously consider whether their alliance commitments still serve their interests, due to changing circumstances. Many alliances were formally renewed after a set number of years, such as the Triple Alliance, which was renewed six times between 1882 and 1914. Even without a formal re-negotiation mechanism, nothing stops great powers from leaving alliances that no longer serve their interests. Prussia, for example, left the nominally eternal German Confederation in both 1850 and 1866. In addition, alliance choice involves the absence of alliances as much as involvement in them. The number of dyad years (the number of dyads times the number of years they existed) in the sample is 1175, but this overstates the true size of the sample. Given that the independent variables, capabilities and geography, developed slowly, there is a considerable level of temporal dependence in the data on alliance choice. This leads to a problem of pseudoreplication: each year does not

represent an independent observation. Estimating exactly the extent of the temporal dependence is difficult. Controlling for temporal independence in the model, the sample size is 628. A historically informed estimate of the true sample size is to divide the number of dyad years by three, given that great powers typically renewed alliances every three years.⁵² This leaves a sample size of 392. To further control for temporal dependence, I also run the model for 3, 5, and 10 year-intervals. In all cases, the predictions are very statistically significant.

Geopolitical Position

One exception exists to the rule that only neighbours could project power onto each other. Until the unification of Italy, only the minor power Sardinia-Piedmont separated Austria and France, which competed fiercely over the hegemony of Italy.⁵³ To model this, I subtract the capabilities of Sardinia-Piedmont from the total capabilities of France and Austria when calculating the threat they posed to each other. For the sake of consistency, this practice is continued after Italian unification, but its effect is then negligible.

Capabilities

The capabilities of the great powers are adjusted so that total capabilities always equal 1. This prevents alliance choices from being influenced by changes in the capabilities of outside states. Countries like China and the U.S. have major changes in CINC scores, but these states had a very limited impact on alliances between European states.

⁵² I control for temporal dependence by estimating how much more durable alliances are in the predictions than in a purely random model with the same ratio of alliances to non-alliances. The temporal dependence in the outcome variable, alliance choice, is much lower than the temporal dependence in the explanatory variables, capabilities and geography, because small changes in capabilities can lead to big changes in optimal alliance choices.

⁵³ Paul W. Schroeder, "A Pointless Enduring Rivalry: France and the Habsburg Monarchy, 1715-1918," in *Great Power Rivalries*, ed. William R. Thompson (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 70-74.

Hypotheses on Aggregate Behaviour

- H1: Neighbours are more likely to ally than non-neighbours, because allying with a neighbour decreases the threat it poses.
- H2: Great powers with at least one common neighbour will ally more than great powers without any common neighbours, because the costs of allying are lower for such actors.
- H3: Neighbours with at least one common neighbour is the dyad with the highest frequency of alliances.
- H4: Central powers⁵⁴ will ally more frequently than peripheral⁵⁵ and offshore powers.⁵⁶ This is because they face a higher threat, and thus have a greater interest in forming an alliance.
- H5: Alliances between peripheral powers only take place when the central powers are already allied, because otherwise such great powers are unlikely to have a large overlap of threats.

I define offshore, peripheral, and central powers as states with great power neighbours to none, one, or several directions to them respectively. In order to contrast *Georealism* with neorealist predictions, I also test three claims from Walt:

- W6: Non-neighbours ally more than neighbours.
- W7: Alliances between neighbours of neighbours are most common.
- W8: Peripheral great powers ally the most frequently with each other.⁵⁷

As the definition of alliances used in this chapter is quite strict, these claims are also tested on the entire COW dataset.

⁵⁴ Prussia/Germany, Austria, and Italy.

⁵⁵ France and Russia.

⁵⁶ Britain.

⁵⁷ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 23-24.

Results

The results give strong support to all the hypotheses derived from *Georealism*, no matter which definition of alliances is used. I will explain the results in relation to the initial hypotheses below. At the same time, the results are contrary to the predictions of Walt.

TABLE 4.2: *Alliance frequency*

Category	Alliances per year (chapter definition)	Alliances per year (all alliances)	Total dyad Years
All neighbours	0.24	0.44	470
All non-neighbours	0.12	0.24	705
Common neighbour	0.24	0.46	561
No common neighbour	0.06	0.25	614
All countries	0.15	0.35	1175

Table 4.2: This table compares the relative frequency of alliances per dyad years between neighbours and non-neighbours, and common neighbours and no common neighbours. For example, neighbours were allied 24% of all possible dyad years, compared to 12% for non-neighbours, according to the alliance definition used in this chapter.

TABLE 4.3: *Geopolitical distribution of alliance dyads*

Category	Alliances per year (chapter definition)	Alliances per year (all alliances)	Total dyad years
Non-neighbours without common neighbour	0.02	0.26	288
Neighbours with common neighbour	0.29	0.60	273
Neighbours without common neighbour	0.16	0.33	417
Non-neighbours with common neighbour	0.20	0.22	197
All countries	0.15	0.35	1175

Table 4.3: This table compares the relative frequencies of alliances between the interactions of being neighbours and having common neighbours per dyad years.

TABLE 4.4: *Frequency of alliance dyads per year by geopolitical category*

Category	Alliances per year (chapter definition)	Alliances per year (all alliances)	Total Dyad Years
Central-Central	0.73	0.76	197
Central-Peripheral	0.01	0.25	470
Central-Offshore	0.01	0.22	144
Peripheral-Peripheral	0.23	0.37	91
Peripheral-Offshore	0.02	0.31	182
Total	0.15	0.35	1175

Table 4.4: This table gives the relative frequency of alliances between the different forms of geopolitical dyads. For example, central powers were allied with other central powers (Prussia/Germany, Austria, and Italy) 73% of all possible years. In contrast, peripheral powers (France and Russia) were allied with other peripheral powers in only 23% of the possible dyad years.

Neighbours ally much more than non-neighbours, as shown in table 4.2, which is in accordance with H1 and against W6. As predicted in H2, states with at least one common neighbour also ally considerably more often than great powers without a common neighbour. Table 4.3 shows that the by far most frequent alliance dyad is neighbours with at least one common neighbour, in conformity with H3, and contrary to the checkerboard claim in W7. Lastly, table 4.4 shows that alliances between two central powers are also by far the most common alliance dyad, being about three times as frequent as alliances between two peripheral powers, as predicted in H4. There is thus little evidence that alliances between two peripheral powers are particularly common, as postulated by W8. Such alliances took place when all the central powers were allied, in accordance with H5.

The results show that the predictions of *Georealism* are more plausible than Walt's balance of threat theory. Perhaps the most noteworthy result is the complete lack of evidence for the checkerboard hypothesis, a statement widely presented as fact in the literature.⁵⁸

Formal Predictions

While the aggregate predictions appear to support *Georealism*, the crucial test is whether the theory can provide accurate unit-level predictions. To do this I make a game theory model based on five decision rules. Decision rules 1-3 are derived directly from *Georealism*, while rule 4 and 5 are auxiliary rules, added to make the model more realistic. Thresholds are chosen for theoretical reasons, rather than to maximize the

⁵⁸ Kautilya, "Arthashastra," p. 8; Namier, *Conflicts*; Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 23; Wight, *Power Politics*; Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p. 61; Nye and Keohane, "The United States and International Institutions in Europe after the Cold War," p. 126; Wohlforth, "U.S. Strategy in a Unipolar World," p. 108; Jervis, *System Effects*, pp. 225-226.

accuracy for the predictions. Nothing in the rules therefore tailors them particularly to the European great power system.

Core Decision rules:

1. Continental powers choose the available alignment that maximizes their security.
2. The offshore state joins the weaker continental side only when there is a predominant continental alliance. For alliances that do not include Italy, this is set to 55% of the capabilities of the four most powerful continental states, while for alliances that include Italy this is set to 55% of the total capabilities of the continental great powers.⁵⁹
3. No great power will join an alliance if that makes the capabilities of the alliance exceed 50% of the total capabilities in the system.

Auxiliary decision rules:

4. In order for a great power to prefer an alliance to non-alignment, the security increase must be at least equivalent to 10% of that state's capabilities.
5. In order for a great power to switch from one alliance to another, the security increase must be at least equivalent to 10% of that state's capabilities.

Decision Rule 2

The threshold for Britain becoming involved is set to 55% for the following reason. Britain should want the alliances on the continent to be as balanced as possible, meaning that the ideal is that two alliances each have half of the total continental capabilities. However, as the distribution of capabilities between the great powers is fixed for each year, a perfectly balanced continent is rarely possible. Hence, the best that Britain can do is to be indifferent about whether the state that chooses its alignment last, usually meaning the weakest state, joins the weaker alliance, or remains non-aligned. The

⁵⁹ See explanation on next page.

threshold that achieves this in the sample ranges from 53 to 58%, depending on the distribution of capabilities, with an average of 55%.

Italy's rise to great power status in 1861 complicates the rule. Since the capability scores are normalized, the addition of Italy changes the capabilities of the other great powers considerably. The capabilities of the continental powers combined increase, but the capabilities of the original continental powers decrease. Without amending the rule, this would allow for much bigger continental alliances compared to British capabilities. There is no evidence that the tenuous Italian rise to great power status had such a decisive effect. The solution is to calculate the share of alliances between the original members the same way throughout the entire sample. I test two alternative solutions to this problem as well. One is to eliminate Italy out of the sample, as Italy was only a marginal great power anyway,⁶⁰ and the other is to calculate all alliances based on total continental capabilities.

Decision Rule 3

This rule includes the danger of hegemony to the model. If capabilities can be used for offence and defence with the same efficiency, the threshold should be 50%. Adding an offence/defence balance is not a problem in theory, but is not done here.⁶¹

⁶⁰ R. J. B. Bosworth, *Italy, the Least of the Great Powers: Italian Foreign Policy before the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. xxiv; Bear F. Braumoeller, *The Great Powers and the International System: Systemic Theory in Empirical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2013).

⁶¹ Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214; Steven van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Charles L. Glaser and Chaim Kaufmann, "What is the Offense-Defense Balance and Can We Measure It," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Spring 1998), pp. 44-82; Keir Alexander Lieber, *War and the Engineers: The Primacy of Politics over Technology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

Decision Rules 4 And 5

Rule 4 is added to make non-alignment a marginally better option, because non-alignment avoids inherent uncertainty of relying on the promises of other great powers. Rule 5 adds a cost to switching alliances, as this sends a costly signal. The increase is in both rules set to 10% of the state's capabilities. This number is low enough not to cause serious problems with temporal dependence. I also run the model without the rule and for alternative thresholds to avoid the risk of over-fitting.⁶²

*Example***TABLE 4.5: Model Calculations, 1883**

Capabilities		First Round		Second Round	
Great power	Power	Alignment	Security	Alignment	Security
Germany	0.191	Germany	-0.216	Germany-Austria	-0.121
Austria	0.076	Austria	-0.447	France-Italy	-0.030
France	0.180	France	-0.087	Russia	-0.116
Russia	0.151	Russia	-0.116	Germany-Austria-Italy	-0.007
Italy	0.057	Italy	-0.200	France-Austria-Italy	-0.029
Britain	0.344	Germany-Austria	-0.121	Germany-Austria-Russia*	-0.163
Total	1.000	Germany-Russia*	-0.258	France-Russia-Italy*	-0.223
		Germany-France*	-0.256	France-Germany-Italy*	-0.143
		Germany-Italy	-0.159	France	-0.087
		Austria-France	-0.143		
		Austria-Russia	-0.145		
		Austria-Italy	-0.390		
		France-Russia*	-0.337		
		France-Italy	-0.030		
		Russia-Italy	-0.240		

Table 4.5: Mutually optimal alignments are given in bold. Note that Britain follows different rules when choosing alignment, in that it only joins the enemies of alliances controlling more than 55% of continental capabilities. All alliances that cause British intervention are marked in an asterisk *. The first column shows the capabilities of each great power used to calculate the security of the various possible alignments. Consequently, the numbers of this column are not comparable to the other columns. The first round column shows the security provided by all non-alliances and dyadic alliances. The second round column shows the security provided by all alignments resulting from unilateral changes from the ideal first round alignments. All numbers are given to three decimals, but the actual calculations use no rounding to avoid cumulative rounding errors.

⁶² Rule 4 and 5 prevents Russia and Italy from switching alignments yearly for limited periods.

Chapter IV: Alliance Choice

This section is devoted to presenting the calculations made for the year 1883, to illuminate how the model works in practice. All the alliance preferences are given in table 4.5. First, the model calculates the security of each power and alliance using data on its capabilities and the capabilities of its neighbours.⁶³ For example, Germany's neighbours are Austria-Hungary, France, and Russia, meaning that its security is $0.191 - (0.076 + 0.180 + 0.151) = -0.216$. Similarly, a Franco-Austrian alliance's security is their combined capabilities minus those of Germany, Russia, and Italy: $(0.076 + 0.180) - (0.191 + 0.151 + 0.057) = -0.143$. Negative values represent the fact that a great power or alliance is weaker than its combined neighbours.

Germany and Austria-Hungary are each other's best alliance partners. Germany prefers this alignment because Austria-Hungary is so weak that an alliance does not cause British intervention on the continent. Austria-Hungary also favours this alignment, as Germany is its best alliance partner as the most powerful continental state. Both powers also have an added benefit from the alliance because they are neighbours and lower costs because they share potential enemies. France and Italy have no common neighbours, but they are still better off in an alliance with each other. Since they are neighbours, they have a double benefit from allying. This outweighs the cost that France and Italy obtain Austria-Hungary and Germany, respectively, as enemies. Russia has no potential partner that makes it better off than it is alone, so non-alignment is the preferred option. The second round checks whether any actors want to switch, given the choices of others in the first round. Russia still has no alliance it prefers to non-alignment, but Italy is better off allying with Austria and Germany than remaining with France. This set of alignments is the core, as no actor can increase its security by switching partners.

⁶³ Small powers and non-European great powers are excluded in this chapter, as everywhere else in the dissertation.

Evaluating Statistical Significance

The predictions are tested against a null hypothesis that the predictions are no better than random. Since the dependent variable is dichotomous, allied or not allied, purely random predictions yield an accuracy of 50%. Yet, to make the test as rigorous as possible, I set the null-hypothesis to 72 % accuracy instead. A random model with the same ratio of alliances to non-alliances as present in the data would yield this accuracy. Given that the sample contains about 6.7 times more non-alliances, it is necessary to ensure that a high accuracy is not just due to over-predicting these. The threshold is not chosen because it gives the highest possible accuracy, which is a model only predicting non-alliance. Rather, it gives the best trade-off between type I and type II errors. Yet, the real challenge is predicting alliance dyads, as there are few of these in the sample.

Results

For every year, the model predicts whether each dyad should be allied or not allied. Then I compare these predictions to actual great power alignments. This leaves four possible outcomes. The model can correctly predict an alliance, correctly predict a non-alliance, fail to predict an alliance (type I error), or fail to predict a non-alliance (type II error).⁶⁴ Table 4.6 gives the summary of all these predictions. The numbers in brackets represent the expected predictions of a random model with the same ratio of alliances to non-alliances as the sample. 140 out of 175 alliance dyads are correctly predicted, compared to the 34 expected from a random model. Despite the fact that the model somewhat over-predicts the frequency of alliances, it also predicts non-alliances better than a random model.

⁶⁴ In 1883 for example, the model correctly predicted three alliance dyads and 12 non-allied dyads.

TABLE 4.6: Main test, contingency table

	Actual allied	Actual not allied
Predicted allied	140 (34)	89 (191)
Predicted not allied	35 (143)	911 (807)

$\chi^2 = 256.7$, p-value: $p < 10^{-9}$. Degrees of freedom: 1

Table 4.6: This table provides the number of alliances and non-alliances accurately predicted by the model, and the number of type I and II errors. The brackets provide the comparable numbers expected from a random model with the same ratio of alliances to non-alliances as the sample.

Table 4.7 gives the percentage accuracies of the model for alliances, non-alliances, and in total. The overall accuracy is 89%, a very high number for such an endeavour. Moreover, alliances are predicted four times more accurately than in a random model.

TABLE 4.7: Accuracy

Measure	Percentage
Accuracy	89.2 (71.6)
Alliances predicted	80.0 (19.4)
Non-alliances predicted	91.1 (85.1)

Table 4.7: The bracketed values are the accuracies expected from a random model of alliances with the same ratio of alliances to non-alliances as in the sample

In order to control for temporal dependence in the model, the sample size is cut from 1175 to 628. However, the χ^2 is still extremely high, suggesting that this does not entirely control for the problem of pseudoreplication. Consequently, the model was also run for 3, 5, and 10 years intervals. The p -value never exceeded 1×10^{-11} in any of these models. Lastly, I calculated that the sample size have to decrease by a factor of 83 before the p -value of the predictions rise above 0.05. This is only marginally smaller than the number of years in the sample. Consequently, pseudoreplication cannot possibly be the cause of the statistical significance of the accuracy of the predictions.

I also ran the model for two different versions of decision rule 2, given in Table 4.8. If Italy is left out of the sample, the accuracy of the model remains at 89%. Without the fix in decision rule 2, the accuracy decreases to 81%, although the accuracy in predicting alliances decreases by more.

TABLE 4.8: *Rule 4 and 5, different thresholds*

Dyad	0%	5%	10%	20%
Accuracy	81.2	85.1	89.2	91.2

All p-values: $p < 10^{-9}$

Table 4.8: *This table provides the accuracy of different thresholds for rules 4 and 5, which are not a part of the main model. The predictions remain highly significant even if the rules are dropped entirely*

To assess how much the auxiliary rules 4 and 5 contribute to the explanatory power of the model, I ran them for thresholds of 0, 5, and 20% as well. While the two auxiliary rules increase the explanatory power, the accuracy of the predictions is still very significant without them.

The results also compare favourably to previous research results, given that determinate predictions of great power alliance choices are absent from the literature.⁶⁵ This is almost certainly due to an inability to do so, as scholars always want to explain as much as possible with their theories.⁶⁶ Therefore, *Georealism* makes a novel addition to the literature in terms of explanatory power.

⁶⁵ Exceptions include Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally,"; Niou, Ordeshook, and Rose, *The Balance of Power*, 215-270; and Reiter, *Crucible of Beliefs*, p. 92, but none are as precise and detailed as the predictions presented above.

⁶⁶ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 29-31.

Confounding Variables

It is necessary to ensure that a significant reason for the high accuracy of the model is not due to an omitted confounding variable.⁶⁷ The most serious candidate is ideology.⁶⁸ Not only did some alliances explicitly mention ideological concerns, such as monarchical solidarity,⁶⁹ but ideology also has a clear geographic distribution. Ideologies can be both unifying and divisive, but liberalism and conservative monarchism, the two main ideologies of the time,⁷⁰ should both be unifying.⁷¹ It is thus tested whether great powers are more likely to ally the more ideologically similar they are. Ideological similarity of state *A* and *B* is operationalized as their difference in Polity IV democracy score, ranging from 0 to 20 going from most to least ideologically similar.⁷² Because the alliance definition used in the chapter is rather restrictive, 7 out of 15 dyads have no alliance years at all. Consequently, ideology is also tested on the full COW alliance dataset. To test whether ideologically similar great powers ally more often, I simply compare the average ideological similarity of all allied and non-allied great powers. Table 4.9 shows that on average this is indeed the case.

TABLE 4.9: Alliances and ideology, aggregate level

Ideological similarity	Chapter definition	All alliances
Allies	4.3	5.0
Non-allies	7.2	7.7
Difference	-2.9***	-2.7***

⁶⁷ James Lee Ray, "Explaining Interstate Conflict and War: What Should be Controlled For?," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (September 2003), pp. 8-11.

⁶⁸ Mark L. Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

⁶⁹ Doyle "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," p. 232; Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Andrew Gould, *Origins of Liberal Dominance: State, Church, and Party in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999), pp. 1-24.

⁷¹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp. 36-37.

⁷² Monty G. Marshall and Keith Jagers, *Polity IV Project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2002*. (College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, 2005).

*** p -value (t -test) < 0.001

Table 4.9: *This table gives the difference in Polity IV score between allies and non-allies. Allies are significantly more ideologically similar than non-allies, regardless of the definition of alliances used.*

Yet, if ideology does have an effect on alliances, this relationship should also hold on a dyadic level. This means that in any given dyad, the two powers are more likely to ally when they are more ideologically similar.⁷³ Otherwise, the correlation between ideology and alliances is likely to be spurious. This is in practice the same as controlling for country fixed effects, but on a dyad level.

TABLE 4.10: *Alliances and ideology, dyadic level*

Ideological similarity	Chapter definition	All alliances
Allies	6.6	6.3
Non-allies	4.6	6.4
Difference	2.0***	-0.1

*** p -value (t -test) < 0.001

Table 4.10: *Looking at the relationship between ideology and alliances on a dyadic level dramatically changes the impact of ideology. Using the alliance definition of this chapter, two great powers are significantly less likely to ally the more ideologically similar they are, against all expectations. On all alliances, ideological similarity has no significant impact. This suggests that ideology does not have an important influence on alliance choices in the sample.*

Table 4.10 shows that the relationship between ideological similarity and alliance choice entirely disappears on a dyadic level. For the entire COW alliance dataset the effect is virtually zero, while in the chapter sample it is significant, but in the opposite direction. Ideological similarity is thus highly unlikely to be a confounding variable in the sample.

Another possibly confounding variable is religion, as great powers with the same religion could have more in common and a greater propensity to ally. Table 4.11 demonstrates

⁷³ Haas *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics*.

that this is not the case. In fact, dyads with different religions allied more frequently, ruling out this variable.

TABLE 4.11: Alliances and religion

Religion Dyad⁷⁴	Chapter definition	All Alliances
Same religion alliances per year	0.12	0.25
Different religion alliances per year	0.16	0.38
Difference	-0.04	-0.13

Table 4.11: *Regardless of the definition of alliances used, states with the same religion, Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox, ally less frequently. This suggests that religion has no significant impact on alliance choices in the sample.*

Testing for more confounding variables, particularly trade, investments, and culture is desirable, but the lack of good data makes this difficult. No meaningful datasets exist on culture and investments, while datasets on trade cover only half of the period and is of poor quality.⁷⁵ However, little in the vast literature on diplomatic history suggests that these variables played an important role in great power alliance choice during the period. Culture could only have been important in the case of the German Confederation and the Dual Alliance, due to the common German heritage of Austria and Prussia. Yet, this is clearly not the case. Metternich, the founder of the German Confederation, was hostile to German nationalism and cited strategic reasons for the alliance.⁷⁶ German nationalism instead pulled the two powers apart, most vividly illustrated in 1850 and 1866.⁷⁷ Investments played an important role in the Franco-Russian Alliance, but the alliance

⁷⁴ Britain and Prussia/Germany were protestant; Austria, France, and Italy catholic; and Russia orthodox.

⁷⁵ Katherine Barbieri, Omar M. G. Keshk, and Brian Pollins, "TRADING DATA: Evaluating our Assumptions and Coding Rules," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 26, No. 5 (November 2009), pp. 471-491.

⁷⁶ Clemens Wenzel Lothar, Fürst von Metternich, *Memoirs of Prince Metternich 1773-1835* (London: Bentley, 1880-1882), p. 589.

⁷⁷ See chapter V.

caused the investments, not vice-versa.⁷⁸ While including these variables could extend the explanatory power of the model further, little suggests that excluding them significantly inflates the accuracy of its predictions.

It is also difficult to use these variables in a multivariate regression analysis in a simple way, due to the nature of the data. One problem is that the correlation between the dependent and lagged dependent variables is 0.94, an extremely high number. Consequently, its inclusion in any time series logistic regression greatly diminishes the statistical significance of other variables. Survival analysis is also not an appropriate tool to analyse alliance choice. This is because it is important to determine the duration of the alliance, not just its initiation. Moreover, several dyads in the sample were allied at two distinct points, which survival analysis is ill-equipped to account for.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I argue that great powers face two threats: their neighbours and potential hegemon. The function of alliances against the latter threat is predominantly negative. A grand balancing coalition is occasionally necessary, but usually great powers just need to avoid making alliances that could permit a hegemonic bid. Great powers usually form alliances to protect themselves against neighbours, to aggregate their capabilities and decrease the threat they pose to each other. The cost of this is that the alliance may give its members new enemies, particularly each other's neighbours. Modelling this requires a systemic conceptualization of geography, since alliances always affect more states than its members alone.

⁷⁸ Lars S. Skålnes, *Politics, Markets, and Grand Strategy: Foreign Economic Policies as Strategic Instruments* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), pp. 71-108.

The *Georealist* theory of alliance choice yields both detailed and accurate predictions of great power alliance behaviour. Balance of power theorists have only focused on the threat of hegemony, which cannot be used to explain alliances formed against other threats. Rational choice theories look at other threats, but their models are too complex for practical use. Niou and Ordeshook, who provide the closest comparison to my model, have asserted that expecting a simple formal model to predict great power behaviour over a period of several decades without ad hoc changes is “ludicrous”, because alliances is such a complex phenomenon presumably influenced by a wide variety of historically contingent factors.⁷⁹ Yet, *Georealism* does this very thing. A game theory model derived directly from *Georealism* predicted the alliance choices of the European great powers over a period of 90 years with an accuracy of 89%. At the same time, these predictions do not come at the cost of parsimony, as both the distribution of power and geography are variables already widely used in the literature. A number of theoretical and empirical implications also follow from the theory. Most notably, it demonstrates the inaccuracy of the common claim that international alignments follow a checkerboard or sandwich pattern.

The theory of alliance choice also solves many theoretical shortcomings presented in the first two chapters of *Georealism*. Chapter II left unanswered any question requiring looking at the interaction of preferences between great powers. Firstly, I noted that responses to potential hegemonies depended on the relative capabilities of the balancing and bandwagoning coalitions. Secondly, I argued that certain geographical configurations allow neighbours to use alliances to overcome the threat they pose to each other to focus

⁷⁹ Emerson M. S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook “Return of the Luddites,” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), pp. 93-94.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

on the potential hegemon. The *Georealist* theory of alliance choice explains in detail the conditions that need to be in place for these conditions to arise. Describing the alignment preferences of continental states also provides a much better understanding of how offshore states can impact alliances using a 'divide and deter' strategy.

[V]

Major War

Both the threat from neighbours and potential hegemons ultimately rest on the possibility of major war, meaning war between great powers.¹ Balancing against potential hegemons and allying for protection against neighbours are to either avoid war, or fight them under favourable circumstances. By implication, major wars should tend to break out when great powers fail to achieve these aims. Furthermore, analysing the threat from potential hegemons and neighbours in great detail should reveal what gains motivate great powers to seek war. Providing a theory of major war is therefore integral to *Georealism*. Indeed, a failure to do so would greatly diminish the reliability of its findings on balancing and alliance behaviour.

¹ Dale C. Copeland, *The Origins of Major War* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 27-28.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Explaining major war is also an endeavour of inherent importance in its own right. Major war is the most important concept in international relations.² No other form of great power interaction can lead to such decisive outcomes, nor do other events leave so much destruction in their wake. Yet, despite the wealth of research on war, we still know little about when great powers go to war and why.³ A particular problem with realism is that its exclusive focus on hegemonic wars has rendered it unable to explain other forms of major wars.⁴

The *Georealist* theory of war is based on the assumption that major war takes place when a great power finds it beneficial to solve its differences with a peer using force.⁵ Two conditions must be present for this to take place. Firstly, the aggressor must expect sufficient gains to pay for the costs of the war. Three types of conflicts can provide this: territorial, regional, and hegemonic. Territorial conflicts take place over territory possessed by the defending state, regional conflicts over influence of minor powers, and hegemonic conflicts over the system as a whole. All other great powers have a hegemonic conflict with the potential hegemon, while territorial and regional conflicts take place between neighbours. Secondly, the aggressive great power must have an expectation to win the war. Otherwise, it will not expect to derive any gains from the war by imposing

² Stephen M. Walt, "The Renaissance of Security Studies," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 1991), p. 212.

³ For a summary of the literature, Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *Causes of War* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); Greg Cashman, *What Causes War: An Introduction to Theories of International Conflict* (New York: Lexington Books, 1993); Geoffrey Blainey, *Causes of War* (New York: Free Press, 1988).

⁴ For realist scholarship alone, see for example Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York ; London: McGraw-Hill, 1979); Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Spring 1988), pp. 615-628; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Copeland, *The Origins of Major War*.

⁵ Note that I only explain under what conditions war may take place, not the slightly different question of why states resort to force rather than diplomacy when these conditions are present, see James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Summer 1995), pp. 379-414.

its will on its opponents. To expect to win, the aggressive state needs together with its allies to possess more capabilities than the defending state and its allies. *Georealism* provides insights on both these conditions.⁶ The central factor determining the aggressor's chance of victory is whether other great powers intervene in the conflict. When aggressors make decisions for war, they must therefore look at the distribution of capabilities of all great powers and their inclination to intervene in the conflict. My argument is that other great powers tend to remain neutral or support the defending state. This is because the aggressive state tends to be stronger, and victory will increase its power further, which is detrimental to the security of other great powers. However, two important exceptions to this exist. Firstly, great powers that have another conflict with the defending state may use the war as an opportunity to settle this. Secondly, great powers may also find a victory of the aggressor in their interest if they are allied with this state or believe they may become so in the near future.

To test the *Georealist* theory of war, I compare its empirical predictions to the European great power system from 1823 to 1914. Firstly, I outline all potential territorial, regional, and hegemonic conflicts between the European great powers based on their geographical locations. Secondly, I use data on capabilities and from the alliance choice model from the previous chapter to make predictions about the probability of great power intervention and its consequences. Combining these two models, I predict which great powers expected both victory and sufficient gains from war and when. These predictions are then compared to the participation and timing of actual wars. In addition, I also test the causal mechanism of my model through case studies of all four wars, and three major crises

⁶ These two conditions are related to the concepts of opportunity and willingness, see Harvey Starr, "Opportunity" and "Willingness" as Ordering Concepts in the Study of War," *International Interactions*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (1978), pp. 363-387.

during this time period. The Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the German Autumn Crisis of 1850 are studied in particular detail.

Explaining Major Wars

A general problem of realist scholarship on war is the fact that it primarily looks at factors that permit war, ignoring why states fight wars in the first place. Such an outcome is as unsatisfactory as only explaining markets in terms of supply.⁷ As the historian Blainey argues: “no war has just ‘happened’ simply because circumstances were favourable. An act of will is always required”.⁸ Furthermore, the concepts discussed, such as polarity and changes in the distribution of power are far too general to explain specific outcomes. To provide a theory considering both factors, I outline the *Georealist* theory of war. First, I explain how and to what extent territorial, regional, and hegemonic conflicts provide great powers with sufficient gains to fight wars. Second, I outline how the distribution of capabilities and the dispositions of other states to intervene may provide them with the victory necessary to achieve these aims.

Expected Gains and War

“War is merely the continuation of policy by other means”, as Clausewitz famously argued.⁹ Consequently, it is necessary to determine what makes great powers willing to resort to force in order to explain major war.¹⁰ The goal of major wars is almost always to increase the power of the aggressor. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a great power accepting

⁷ Randolph M. Siverson and Harvey Starr, *The Diffusion of War: A Study of Opportunity and Willingness* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), p. 8.

⁸ T. C. W Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars: 1787-1802* (London: Arnold, 1996), p. 11.

⁹ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 87.

¹⁰ By this I mean what states can gain from war, not why they choose it over other forms of bargaining, see Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” pp. 379-414.

Chapter V: Major War

the risks and costs of a major war, if it decreases its power, even if it provides other benefits such as prestige. At minimum, the instigator must believe that war will leave it better off than remaining at peace,¹¹ because it expects the gains to exceed the costs of fighting.¹² Major wars are very costly to both sides due to the destruction they cause, so the gains must be correspondingly large to cover them. It must be noted that the destruction caused by war always leads to a total net loss from fighting. Hence, if both parties have the same information, the war can only be profitable for one side, usually the aggressor.¹³ This is done by transferring the costs of fighting the war to the opponent.

Although increasing power is a unifying factor in all great power wars, the exact form this takes can manifest itself in three different ways. A great power can increase its power by establishing itself as a hegemon. This means that the great power becomes so powerful that it can subjugate all other great powers in the system. Alternatively, the increases can take a limited form through gains in territory or influence. This can happen in two ways. Firstly, the aggressor can acquire a territory directly possessed by another great power. Secondly, a great power can take firm control over minor powers over which it competes with other great powers for influence. Controlling smaller states individually is usually not sufficient to justify the costs of a major war in itself. However, if these states are located in a large geographically coherent area so it is possible to control many of them at once, this quickly changes. I label these kinds of areas 'regions'.¹⁴

¹¹ Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," pp. 379-380.

¹² Such gains could be merely relative, but in multipolar systems they almost always have to be absolute as well. Duncan Snidal, "Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (September 1991), pp. 701-726.

¹³ Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," pp. 379-414.

¹⁴ The threat of territorial acquisitions or regional conquests together constitutes what is elsewhere in this dissertation described as the threat from neighbours.

Territorial Conflict

Territorial conflicts take place between two great powers where one power desires a piece of territory possessed by the other.¹⁵ Such conflicts usually take place between contiguous great powers, which have greater interests in controlling each other's territory and have a better ability to fight each other. Yet, historical exceptions exist, particularly in the early modern era when territorial claims tended to reflect dynastic considerations.¹⁶ There are also many examples of great powers sharing a common border without having a territorial conflict with each other. Expanding their territories is a goal of states, because it increases the demographic and economic resources that they command. In addition, greater territory often increases the security of a state by making its borders more defensible.¹⁷ France for example long sought to expand to its 'natural frontiers', based on the natural barriers of the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine.¹⁸

Territorial conflicts are always negative-sum. Any gains of the victor necessarily come at the cost of the vanquished and both sides have in addition costs of fighting. The war may still pay off for the aggressor, as it can force its costs over to the defending state if it wins. However, this means that the expected outcome for the defending state both its territorial losses and paying for the cost of fighting both parties. Since its losses are thus greater than the gains of the aggressor, its willingness to avoid defeat is also greater than the

¹⁵ See Douglas M. Gibling, *The Territorial Peace: Borders, State Development, and International Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); John A. Vasquez, Marie T. Henehan, *Territory, War, and Peace* (London: Routledge, 2010); John A. Vasquez, Marie T. Henehan, "Territorial Disputes and the Probability of War, 1816-1992," *Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol. 38 No. 2 (March 2001), pp. 123-138; Paul Huth, *Standing Your Ground: Territorial Disputes and International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998); Paul R. Hensel, "Charting A Course To Conflict: Territorial Issues and Interstate Conflict, 1816-1992," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring 1996), pp. 43-73.

¹⁶ Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires and International Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

¹⁷ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005), p. 417.

¹⁸ Xavier de Planhol, *An Historical Geography of France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 113-118.

willingness of the aggressor to win.¹⁹ Loss aversion increases this effect even further.²⁰ In addition, the territories changing hand tend to be limited, restricting the potential gains of the conflicts. Exceptions to this exist, notably Nazi Germany's plans to annex the entire European part of the Soviet Union.²¹ However, these exceptions are very rare in the modern international system. In fact, the last great power permanently occupied by other great powers was Burgundy in 1477.²² For all these reasons, territorial conflicts are rarely the primary cause of major wars.²³

While rarely a cause of major war in themselves, territorial gains often accompany regional and hegemonic conflicts. Capturing its territory is one of the most effective ways of weakening a dangerous enemy, making it a valuable tool. Germany's reason for going to war in 1914 remains controversial, but it is beyond any doubt Berlin used the war as an opportunity to establish itself as a European hegemon.²⁴ The territorial claims Bethmann-Hollweg intended to make on France reflects this.²⁵ None of the territories had previously been claimed by Germany. Rather, the intention behind them was to destroy France as a great power by denying it important economic and natural resources.²⁶

¹⁹ See the logic behind limited wars, Robert Endicott Osgood, *Limited war: The Challenge to American Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

²⁰ Jack S. Levy, "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (March 1997), pp. 87-112; Barbara Farnham, ed., *Avoiding Losses/taking Risks: Prospect Theory and International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994); Andrew H. Kydd, *International Relations Theory: The Game-Theoretic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 24-28.

²¹ Victor Rothwell, *War Aims in the Second World War: The War Aims of the Major Belligerents, 1939-45* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), pp. 43-48.

²² Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London: Longman Group, 1973).

²³ For a survey on the causes of wars, see K. J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order, 1648-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 274-278.

²⁴ Annika Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 132.

²⁵ Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), pp. 104-105.

²⁶ Holger H. Herwig, "Industry, Empire and the First World War," in *Modern Germany Reconsidered: 1870-1945*, ed. Gordon Martel (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 56.

Regional Conflict

Regional conflicts differ fundamentally from territorial conflicts as they are over territories controlled by minor powers, rather than one of the great powers.²⁷ This means that the gains of the victor can be largely paid for by third parties. Such an outcome is thus much more attractive to the defeated state, because it does not have to pay the full benefits to the victor, in contrast to territorial wars. In addition, the size and resources of regions make the potential gains of controlling them very significant.

A region is an area consisting of several geographically contiguous territories not directly controlled by any great power. Whether one state or many control these regions, such as the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans before 1878 or Southeast Asia during the Cold War, does not matter.²⁸ The important thing about the region is that the actors controlling the region are too weak to protect themselves against great powers on their own. This makes it possible for a great power to conquer or dominate the entire region if it can project enough power on it, which neighbouring great powers typically can. An example of this was the Roman and Parthian Empires seeking to control the intermediate Kingdom of Armenia.²⁹

The basic problem a great power faces when seeking to control a region is that other great powers want to achieve the same aim. Regional actors use this fact to play great powers up against each other, thereby maintaining their own independence. Consequently, the

²⁷ Minor power are states unable to defend themselves against any of the great powers. This resembles Rothstein's definition of small powers as a state that "can not primarily obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities". See Robert L Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 29.

²⁸ Saul Bernard Cohen, *Geopolitics of the World System* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), pp. 43-44.

²⁹ Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.-A.D. 337* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993);

Lawrence Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army: From Republic to Empire* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 146.

Chapter V: Major War

gains great powers yield from involvement in contested regions are therefore usually very limited. At the same time, withdrawing from the region is not an option, because a competing great power can then establish control and greatly increase its power. Regional competition is therefore much like a prisoner's dilemma. Both great powers are better off if they leave the region, but they are unable to commit to this in fear that the opponent will defect.³⁰ Superpower competition over the Middle East during the Cold War offers a good illustration of this dynamic. Oil and a strategic location made control of the region a focal point during the Cold War, with both superpowers offering large amounts of aid and military equipment.³¹ However, the regional states merely used the superpower support for their own aims, caring little about the overall Cold War. Superpower involvement in the Middle East therefore provided few benefits to the U.S. or the Soviet Union.³²

Great powers are typically reluctant to withdraw from a region voluntarily during times of peace, but it is an attractive option after having lost a war. This is because giving up regional involvement is cheap compared to territorial losses for the defending state, because it did not derive many benefits from its presence anyway. The only major cost is that the victor will have a considerable increase in power. While this is serious to great powers caring about relative gains,³³ it is much preferable to a territorial loss when it loses relatively to all states. At the same time, the great gains made by the victor means that it will often settle with regional control, rather than territorial gains. Even Napoleon's

³⁰ Kydd, *International Relations Theory*, pp. 38-44.

³¹ Peter Sluglett, "The Cold War in the Middle East," in *International Relations of the Middle East*, ed. Louise Fawcett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 60-61.

³² Peter Mangold, *Superpower Intervention in the Middle East* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

³³ Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 485-507; Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (December 1991), pp. 1303-1320; Duncan Snidal, "Relative Gains and the Pattern of International Cooperation," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (September 1991), pp. 701-726; Duncan Snidal, "International Cooperation among Relative Gains Maximizers," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (December 1991), pp. 387-402.

many decisive campaigns against Prussia and Austria between 1797 and 1809 ended with very few French territorial acquisitions on those states.³⁴

Hegemonic Conflict

Hegemonic conflict is over control of the system as a whole, rather than particular parts of it. If one state becomes so powerful that no combination of great powers can expect defeating it in a war, it becomes the hegemon of the system.³⁵ Hegemony provides states with the highest and most durable level of security.³⁶ Thus, great powers often seek hegemony as a permanent solution to their security problems,³⁷ such as France under Louis XIV and Napoleon and Germany under Wilhelm II and Hitler.³⁸

The more powerful a state is, the more likely it is that it will pursue its hegemonic aims. Consequently, the most powerful continental state is usually the potential hegemon.³⁹ Offshore states are unlikely to have hegemonic ambitions given that their geographical position already offers them a very high level of security. This decreases their interest in incurring the tremendous costs and risks associated with hegemonic bids. All other great powers have a hegemonic conflict with this state, as they have a constant interest in preventing its rise. However, the intensity of the hegemonic conflict will vary greatly both with circumstances and between actors.

³⁴ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 170-176, 210-230, 282-284, 330-338, 366-367.

³⁵ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 199-200.

³⁶ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 40-42; Christopher Layne, "The 'Poster Child for Offensive Realism': America as a Global Hegemon," *Security Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2002), pp. 129-130.

³⁷ See for example Brendan Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy: 1453 to the Present* (London: Allen Lane, 2013).

³⁸ Charles F. Doran, *The Politics of Assimilation: Hegemony and Its Aftermath* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), pp. 19-20; Joseph S. Nye Jr, *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 61-62.

³⁹ While offshore states play an important role in hegemonic bids, they are unlikely to have hegemonic ambitions themselves given that their geographical position already offers them a very high level of security.

A great power needs to go through two stages to become a hegemon. Firstly, the great power needs to establish itself as a clear potential hegemon, so it is in the position to make a hegemonic bid in the future. Sometimes natural economic growth rates can ensure that, but historically great powers have achieved a preeminent position through war. Systems without a clear hegemon are therefore prone to hegemonic conflict, because two or more powers will struggle to get the upper hand. An example of this is Rome and Carthage during the First and Second Punic Wars.⁴⁰ Such conflicts will often be over limited gains, but with the goals of establishing a state as dominant in the system. All the other great powers might not even be involved, or just keep their involvement limited. Louis XIV pursued a strategy of limited gains until the all-out attack on the Netherlands in 1672, which successfully avoided a major reaction from other great powers.⁴¹

The second type of hegemonic conflict is when the potential hegemon makes a bid to become an actual hegemon. As the danger of a successful bid for hegemony is much more serious in these hegemonic wars, the stakes are much higher for every state in the system. The involvement of all great powers is therefore much more likely, and the greater resources involved in fighting brings more destruction in its wake.⁴² In contrast to the limited wars fought during the early part of Louis XIV's reign, the Nine Years' War and the War of Spanish Succession were about French hegemony over Europe. These conflicts involved all great powers in the system and dominated European international relations between 1688 and 1714.⁴³ Other great hegemonic bids include that of Charles V

⁴⁰ Adrian Keith Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars* (London: Cassell, 2000).

⁴¹ John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV: 1667-1714* (London: Longman, 1999).

⁴² Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 186-210.

⁴³ George Clark, "The Nine Years War, 1688-1697," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University

and Phillip II of Spain, France under Napoleon, and Germany under Wilhelm II and Hitler.⁴⁴

When one great power is clearly the most powerful, but not sufficiently strong to make a hegemonic bid, the scope for hegemonic conflict is much smaller. Other great powers are much less willing to accept gains in power of a state once it is clearly the strongest state in the system. This is because the risk of it becoming a hegemon increases exponentially the more powerful the potential hegemon becomes. To prevent such an outcome, other states are therefore likely to intervene against the potential hegemon, which raises the expected costs of the war. If the potential hegemon is not sufficiently powerful to expect to prevail in such wars and offset the costs on the other states, it will refrain from provoking them in the first place. Instead, potential hegemons are likely to bide their time until their power increases even further before they attempt to unleash a full hegemonic bid. Germany, for example, waited 43 years from establishing itself as a potential hegemon in 1871 to making its hegemonic bid in 1914.⁴⁵

The level of hegemonic conflict also varies a lot between the different great powers. It is likely to be at its greatest between the potential hegemon and the second most powerful continental state, for three reasons. Firstly, this state is the second closest to hegemony, and might often harbour hegemonic ambitions on its own. Secondly, this state is the primary obstacle to the potential hegemon in achieving its aims. Thirdly, this state is the

Press, 1970), pp. 223-253; A. J. Veenendaal, "The War of the Spanish Succession in Europe," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 6: The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1715/25*, ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 410-445.

⁴⁴ Jeremy Black, *Great Powers and the Quest for Hegemony: The World Order Since 1500* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008); Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring, 1985), p. 15.

⁴⁵ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 187-188.

least likely to seek alliances with the potential hegemon against its neighbours, due to the risks involved with such a strategy.⁴⁶

Combinations of Conflicts

Territorial, regional, and hegemonic conflicts are conceptually separate, but often occur at the same time. The territorial conflict over Alsace-Lorraine between France and Germany, for example, was intertwined with the wider conflict over European hegemony.⁴⁷ Alliance partners may also have different motivations for fighting. During the Thirty Years' War, for example, France and Sweden had radically diverging aims. France was primarily interested in preventing Habsburg hegemony over Western Europe. Sweden, in contrast, fought an aggressive war to create a federation of Protestant states under Swedish leadership.⁴⁸

Expectations of Victory

Large expected gains are in themselves not a sufficient cause of major war, great powers also need to expect victory to achieve their aims. Otherwise, it makes no sense to seek war, as a defeat provides no gains to pay for the conflict. In this part, I demonstrate how the probability of victory depends on the relative power of the conflicting parties. Given that other great powers can always intervene in a conflict, this again depends on the distribution of power among all great powers, their alignment preferences, and the complementarity of conflicts.

⁴⁶ See chapter II

⁴⁷ Brendan Simms, *Europe*, p. 244.

⁴⁸ Peter Hamish Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (London: Penguin, 2009), pp. 461-464; Derek McKay and HamishM Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), pp. 1-2; Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 183.

Capabilities and the Probability of Victory

When choosing whether to go to war, great powers make their decision based on the relative capabilities of itself and its allies compared to the defending state and its allies. This is not to say that there is a perfect relationship between relative capabilities and outcomes. War is a complex phenomenon, making it difficult to predict outcomes exactly.⁴⁹ As German Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke the Elder argued, “no plan of operations extends with any certainty beyond the first contact with the main hostile force”.⁵⁰ Seemingly random events can change the outcomes of wars in unexpected ways. A good example of this is the Mechelen Incident. In January 1940, a German aircraft carrying the plans for the invasion of France had to make an emergency landing in Belgium, where the plans were confiscated and given to the French. Consequently, the Germans created a new and innovative plan that was much more successful than the more conservative original plans could have ever been.⁵¹ However, although random events can have major consequences, great powers do not base their decisions on these. The simple reason for this is that random events by their very nature are impossible to predict in advance. Capabilities in a broad meaning of the term is thus the only factors great powers can have a good estimate of before going to war, which is why decisions are based on capabilities.

⁴⁹ Clausewitz, *On War*, pp. 119-121.

⁵⁰ Daniel Hughes, ed., *Moltke on the Art of War: Selected Writings* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1995), p. 92.

⁵¹ Samuel W. Mitcham, *The Rise of the Wehrmacht: Vol. 1* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008), pp. 276-280.

In a war, the side with the greater amount of capabilities has the highest probability of winning the war.⁵² A more powerful state can always send more men to the decisive point. It can also arm more men and produce more materiel, making it able to sustain greater losses and recover more easily from defeat. Soviet military deaths were for example roughly twice that of Nazi Germany and its allies.⁵³ Yet, its greater demographic and industrial resources enabled it to weather these losses and eventually win a decisive victory.⁵⁴

When predicting the likelihood of victory, it is mostly appropriate to use aggregate capabilities.⁵⁵ This is because there is a strong correlation between military, economic and demographic capabilities.⁵⁶ However, the exact importance of various forms of capabilities may vary greatly with the context. Military capabilities are always important, because these are the tools with which the states actually fight wars. These capabilities are not restricted to material factors such as the number of men under arms and the amount of material. Doctrine, training, organization, and morale are also important,⁵⁷ but the greater difficulties of measuring these make them harder to take into account. Non-military factors such as manpower, industry, and finance also matter, often decisively so in long wars. In shorter conflicts, however, they have a limited impact because states do

⁵² Michael C. Desch, "Democracy and Victory: Why Regime Type Hardly Matters," *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Fall 2002), pp. 5-47; Errol A. Henderson and Reşat Bayer, "Wallets, Ballots, or Bullets: Does Wealth, Democracy, or Military Capabilities Determine War Outcomes," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (June 2013), pp. 303-317.

⁵³ Alexander Hill, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, 1941-45: A Documentary Reader* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 287-289.

⁵⁴ Chris Bishop and Chris McNab, *Campaigns of World War II Day By Day* (London: Amber, 2006), pp. 244-252.

⁵⁵ J. David Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States, 1816-1985," *International Interactions*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1988), pp. 115-132

⁵⁶ Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "Measuring Military Allocations: A Comparison of Different Approaches," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (September 1986), pp. 553-581; Jacek Kugler and Douglas Lemke, *Parity and War: Evaluations and Extensions of the War Ledger* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 161-162.

⁵⁷ Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

not have the time to transfer latent power into military power. For example, Israel won the Six-Day War almost entirely due to the element of surprise and its superior military capabilities alone, due to the short duration of the war.⁵⁸ As a contrast, the Union won the American Civil War almost entirely due to its superior economic and demographic resources.⁵⁹

An aggressive state can expect victory when it together with its allies has more capabilities than its opponent and its allies. This statement depends on the assumption that offensive and defensive war are equally effective. In practice, this is likely to vary with technology and circumstances,⁶⁰ but the offence/defence balance is notoriously hard to measure.⁶¹ On the tactical level, a 3:1 force ratio is often cited as necessary to achieve a successful breakthrough, but this does not hold on the operational level.⁶² Empirical evidence suggests that only a moderate lead in capabilities is necessary to have a reasonable expectation of victory.⁶³

The Role of Great Power Interventions

When choosing to go to war, the aggressive state must calculate how powerful its coalition is going to be compared to its combined opponents. To do this, it is necessary to look at the distribution of capabilities of all great powers, and their probability of

⁵⁸ Michael Oren, *Six Days of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 305-317.

⁵⁹ Williamson Murray and Alvin Bernstein, *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 234-241.

⁶⁰ See Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214; Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Offense-Defense Theory and Its Critics," *Security Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1995) pp. 660-691; Steven van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Charles L. Glaser and Chaim Kaufmann, "What is the Offense-Defense Balance and Can We Measure It?," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Spring 1998), pp. 44-82.

⁶¹ Keir Alexander Lieber, *War and the Engineers: The Primacy of Politics over Technology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

⁶² John J. Mearsheimer, "Assessing the Conventional Balance: The 3:1 Rule and Its Critics," *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Spring 1989), pp. 54-89.

⁶³ Henderson and Reşat Bayer, "Wallets, Ballots, or Bullets," p. 310.

intervening for the two sides. In a war expected to be bilateral, the aggressive state must be stronger than the defending state to expect to win. The aggressive state also tends to be the most powerful state in multilateral wars, but this is not strictly necessary. Another option is to compensate for the lack of capabilities with having more powerful allies than the defending state. Denmark-Norway, for example, declared war on a much more powerful Sweden in 1700, because it knew it could rely on Russian and Polish support.⁶⁴ Yet, the empirical evidence supports the intuition that the aggressive state is usually more powerful than the defending. Aggressors win roughly 65% of the wars they initiate, and they tend to be significantly more powerful than the defender.⁶⁵

The fact that intervention from other great powers is possible in any major war⁶⁶ makes it essential to determine why other great powers intervene. In the case of hegemonic conflicts, all other great powers have an interest in intervening on the defending side.⁶⁷ This is because the establishment of a hegemon will end the independence of all other great powers.⁶⁸ Local conditions, particularly more threatening neighbours might compel bandwagoning instead. However, this is never in the interest of helping the potential hegemon achieving its aim.

⁶⁴ Robert I. Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558 – 1721* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), pp. 226-229.

⁶⁵ Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam III, "Democracy, War Initiation, and Victory," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (June 1998), pp. 383-384.

⁶⁶ On empirical work on intervention and war, see Paul K. Huth, "Major Power Intervention in International Crises, 1918-1988," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 6 (December 1998), pp. 744-770; Brett Ashley Leeds, "Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (July 2003), pp. 427-439; Brett Ashley Leeds, "Alliances and the Expansion and Escalation of Militarized Interstate Disputes," in *New Directions for International Relations: Confronting the Method-of-Analysis Problem*, ed. Alex Mintz and Bruce Russett (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005), pp. 117-134; Suzanne Werner, "Deterring Intervention: The Stakes of War and Third-Party Involvement," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (October 2000), pp. 720-732; Patrick M. Regan, "Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (June 1996), pp. 336-359.

⁶⁷ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 121; Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 18-19; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁸ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 168.

States have no direct interests in the territorial and regional conflicts of other countries.⁶⁹

Decisions to intervene are thus based on two consequences of the war on the distribution of capabilities. First, the expected outcome of a war is that the aggressor, meaning the stronger state, wins and increases its power. Second, wars also temporarily weaken both belligerents during the duration of the conflict, given that they have to spend large parts of their capabilities fighting each other.

The prospect of the aggressor winning the war generally favours intervention on behalf of the defending state. The aggressive state tends to be stronger, and a victory will increase the resources at its disposal even further. Making strong states become even stronger increase their ability to threaten their neighbours, usually causing the other great powers to be less secure. If the expected increase in threat is sufficiently large, they will be inclined to prevent such an outcome by intervening on the side of the defending state. Britain and France did not have a direct stake in the 1939 Polish-German dispute over Danzig. Yet, they were profoundly concerned about the implication of any further increases in the power of Nazi-Germany.⁷⁰ This gives the defending state a clear advantage when seeking allies among other great powers.

Interventions on the defending side usually take the form of re-establishing a situation resembling the status quo ante bellum, not decisively defeating the aggressive state. Often this is the only thing the defending state wants. However, sometimes the defending state may also have aggressive aims initially, or get them during the course of the war. This is

⁶⁹ It is logically possible for three or more great powers to have a claim on the same territory, but very unlikely in practice. Three or more countries desiring control of the same region is possible, but two great powers can never jointly control a region.

⁷⁰ Zara Steiner, *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History 1933-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 733-741.

Chapter V: Major War

particularly the case if the defending state beats expectations and looks poised to win the war. The Soviet Union turning the tide of the war against Nazi Germany in 1942-1943 was followed by extensive territorial claims on Poland and Germany.⁷¹ Once this happens, the defending state becomes an aggressive one, giving other great powers no interest in helping it achieve its expansionist aims. Returning to status quo or causing minor losses to the aggressive states is therefore usually the best method of returning to a satisfactory distribution of power. For example, the superpowers enforced peace during the Yom Kippur War in 1973, preventing a decisive Israeli victory against Egypt and Syria.⁷²

Great powers may sometimes intervene on the side of the aggressive state, even if that makes it stronger, if they have an interest in that state winning the war. This happens when great powers either have a strong interest in an alliance with the aggressor or have their own territorial and regional conflicts they can settle with the defending states. Understanding the dynamics of these situations is therefore the key to explaining when aggressive great powers can expect to win a major war.

An ally increasing its power does not have the same effect as other states becoming more powerful. Allies are much less threatening to each other, meaning that the negative consequences of an increase in power of such a state are much smaller. At the same time, states benefit from their allies becoming stronger, because this increases the capabilities they can use to defend their allies. The existence of an alliance or a strong interest in allying therefore provide an interest for great powers to intervene on the side of that state

⁷¹ Rothwell, *War Aims in the Second World War*, pp. 146-157.

⁷² J. Michael Greig and Paul F. Diehl, *International Mediation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), p. 76.

in case of war.⁷³ The logic of supporting allies in times of war is basically the same for defending and aggressive states. Yet, the implications are much more important for the latter, given that states usually have no interest in intervening on the side of the aggressor.

It is however important to note that alliances do not automatically make states intervene on the side of an allied aggressor, because countervailing interests also exist. Firstly, intervening on the side of an ally requires fighting a costly war. Alliances involve moral hazard, as the aggressor in a conflict would be able to get most of the benefits of a successful war, but share the costs with its partners.⁷⁴ Obviously, states want to avoid such an outcome to the extent possible. Indeed, the costs of major wars often deter the aggressors themselves. The design of alliances clearly shows this, as they are almost exclusively defensive pacts coming into force in case of attack from an aggressor.⁷⁵ Secondly, the increased power of the aggressor can make it abandon its allies after the war is over. This is because changes in the distribution of power alter alliance preferences. Britain was reviled in European history for abandoning its allies as soon as it had achieved its aims, earning it the nickname the 'Perfidious Albion'.⁷⁶ Napoleon was also notorious for blatantly disregarding the interests of his allies once he had won the campaign.⁷⁷ Supporting aggressive allies by intervening in a war is therefore only done when strictly necessary.

⁷³ Alliances increase the probability of war, see Paul D. Senese and John A. Vasquez, *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 167.

⁷⁴ Brett V. Benson, *Constructing International Security: Alliances, Deterrence, and Moral Hazard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁷⁵ Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (July 1984), pp. 461-495.

⁷⁶ Karl W. Schweizer, *England, Prussia, and the Seven Years War: Studies in Alliance Policies and Diplomacy* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1989), p. iii; Ragnhild M. Hatton, "New Light on George I of Great Britain," in *England's Rise to Greatness, 1660-1763*, ed. Stephen Bartow Baxter and William Andrews Clark (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1983), p. 237.

⁷⁷ See for example Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 303-310.

Chapter V: Major War

The necessity of intervening on the side of an ally is primarily a function of how dependent the state is on the alliance. Dependence means how much the state benefits from the alliance compared to its second best choice. States with low dependence do not have to support aggressive allies in costly campaigns, because they can credibly threaten to find new partners instead. Conversely, states with nowhere else to go are vulnerable to blackmail from allies. Austrian dependence on its alliance with Russia for example compelled it to go to war with the Ottoman Empire in 1787, even though it had little interest in the conflict.⁷⁸

A great power only intervenes on the side of its allies if it expects its involvement will change the outcome of the war.⁷⁹ If not, there is no reason to incur the costs of intervention. The most likely scenario of this is if the aggressor is expected to win anyway. In such cases, the allies are likely to maintain a state of benevolent neutrality, delaying an actual intervention until it is necessary. Alternatively, the intervention can fail to change the outcome because it will lead to interventions by even more powerful states on the opposing side.⁸⁰ Such states may also take advantage of this by making threats of intervention to deter weaker powers from entering the war. By doing this, they can ensure the outcomes they want, without any costs.

The temporary decrease in the power of states at war may also encourage interventions on either side. This is because the warring parties' preoccupation with each other makes them easier to defeat, providing an opportunity for other great powers to settle any territorial or regional conflicts they may have with either belligerent. For example, Italy

⁷⁸ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 56-61.

⁷⁹ Unless it has any gains to make itself.

⁸⁰ The state in question could also be too weak to change the expected outcome of the conflict, but this is relative unlikely among great powers.

had no direct interest in the regional conflict between Prussia and Austria over Germany in 1866. However, Italy did desire the Austrian province of Venetia, and the prospect of Austro-Prussian War gave Italy a unique opportunity to defeat its more powerful neighbour. Consequently, Italy sought an aggressive alliance with Prussia.⁸¹ This alliance is a good example of an alliance built entirely on mutual expansionist interests, as it had a duration of only three months and a purely aggressive *casus foederis*.⁸²

Offshore States

Offshore states do not have alliance preferences or shared conflicts, making them behave act differently from continental great powers. Most of all, their detachment continental affairs gives offshore states little interest in intervening in most major wars. Nor do they usually have the ability to change outcomes decisively either in the short run. Their focus on the navy means that their armies tend to be small by continental standards. Four exceptions exist to this rule. First, offshore states will intervene to prevent a continental state from establishing itself as a hegemon. Second, offshore states will be sceptical of any increase in power of the strongest continental state, because this brings it closer to hegemony. Third, the offshore state may also go to war if this is necessary to break up a very strong and threatening continental alliance. Taking such a drastic step is usually not necessary to achieve this aim, but it can result from deterrence failure. The Great Eastern Crisis of 1878 is an example where this came close to happening.⁸³ Fourth, the offshore

⁸¹ Geoffrey Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War: Austria's War with Prussia and Italy in 1866* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 44-49.

⁸² Douglas M. Gibler, *International Military Alliances, 1648-2008, Vol. 2* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2009), p. 168. *Casus foederis* means the terms under which the alliance comes into force.

⁸³ See pages 131-133.

state could have territorial or regional conflicts with the continental states overseas. For instance, Britain came close to going to war with France in 1898 over Sudan.⁸⁴

Sufficient Gains and Expected Victory

Neither expected sufficient gains nor likely victory are in themselves enough to cause war. Rather, great power behaviour is determined by the combination of the two. Sufficient expected gains are essential for any kind of confrontation. If lacking, there will be no conflict, even if victory is expected. Similarly, it does not matter much if the potential gains are large if the great power has no expectation of achieving them through victory. Both factors are necessary for a war to break out. Cases of serious conflicts where the aggressor has no possibility of winning often see rivalry and crises. Yet, when war becomes a distinct possibility, the aggressor will back down in fear of defeat. Hitler, for example, backed down in a crisis with Czechoslovakia in May 1938, because Britain and France, against which defeat was virtually certain, threatened to intervene.⁸⁵ Instead, he waited until September 1939, when prospects were much more promising.⁸⁶ A summary about the interaction between expected victory and sufficient gains is found in Figure 5.1 below.

⁸⁴ Darrel Bates, *The Fashoda Incident of 1898: Encounter on the Nile* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁸⁵ Igor Lukes, *Czechoslovakia between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Beneš in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 141-157; Victor Rothwell, *The Origins of the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 83-85.

⁸⁶ Wilhelm Deist, *Wehrmacht and German Rearmament* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1981), p. 52.

FIGURE 5.1: *Expected Gains, Victory, and Probability of War*

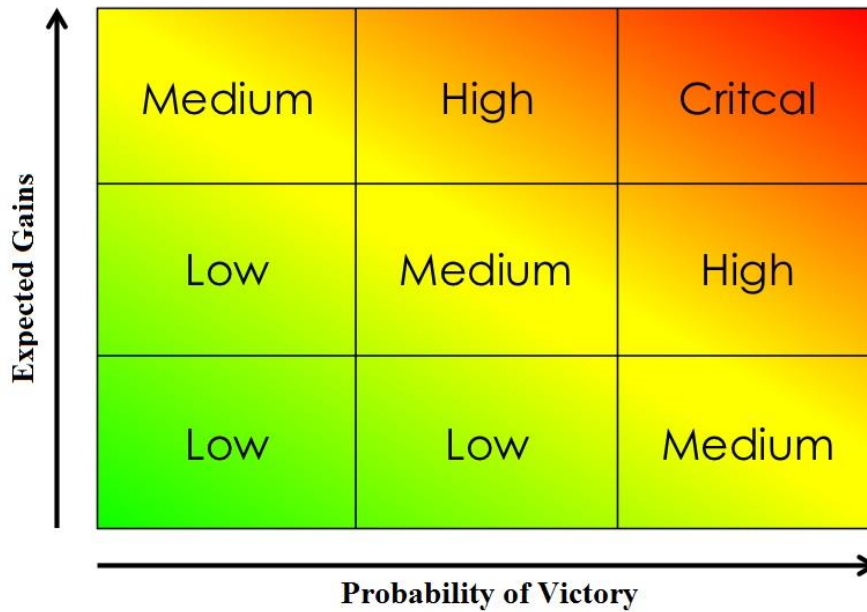


Figure 5.1: *The figure gives the likelihood of the aggressor going to war based on the size of the expected gains and the probability of victory. Green means a low, yellow a moderate, and red a high probability of war.*

A high probability of victory can compensate for low expected gains. Large gains also increase the willingness of aggressor to take risk. Hegemonic conflicts is a particular case of this, where the gains are massive, but the risk is also considerable. This can be simplified by looking at the most likely outcomes depending on whether victory is expected and the gains of fighting are sufficient to pay for the war, as seen in table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1: *Predicted Outcomes*

		EXPECTED VICTORY	
		Yes	No
SUFFICIENT GAINS	Yes	War	Rivalry, Crises
	No	No conflict	No conflict

Table 5.1: *Wars are only likely to take place when an aggressor both expects victory and the gains of victory are likely to be greater than the costs of fighting. If only the latter is present, there will be rivalries and crises, but the aggressor will ultimately back down. When there are no sufficient gains of fighting, no conflict is expected.*

Empirical Section

In order to evaluate the theory developed so far, its predictions are compared to the behaviour of the European great powers from 1823 to 1914. This is done in two ways. First, I use a formal model of the theory to estimate during which intervals potential aggressors expected both sufficient gains and victory. These predictions are compared to the actual timing of wars. Second, I evaluate whether the model's predictions about the behaviour of third part great powers is correct.

Case Selection

The European great power system offers a good case to test the theory developed. Most importantly, there is very good data measuring the relative power of the great powers. None of the many shortcomings of the CINC scores of the Correlates of War (COW) applies to the European great powers of the period. Indeed, the factors used are virtually the same as those used by A. J. P. Taylor in his famous history of the period.⁸⁷ The period also offers a number of major wars and crises, which provides a sizeable sample. Moreover, primary evidence about the deliberations of the statesmen involved is available, and there is also a huge secondary literature.

⁸⁷ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), pp. xxv-xxxii.

TABLE 5.2: Wars and Crises Examined

Wars	Timing	Participants
Crimean War	1853-1856	France and Britain vs Russia
Second War of Italian Unification	1859	France vs Austria
Austro-Prussian War	1866	Prussia and Italy vs Austria
Franco-Prussian War	1870-1871	Prussia vs France
Crises		
Rhine Crisis	1840	France vs Prussia and Austria
German Autumn Crisis	1850	Prussia vs Austria
'War in Sight' Crisis	1875	Germany vs France

Table 5.2 gives the list of all the incidents of wars and crises I examine. The list of major wars is exhaustive from 1823 to 1913. To avoid any selection on the dependent variable, I also include three major crises, namely the German Autumn Crisis, the Rhine Crisis, and the 'War in Sight' Crisis. These incidents provide the best examples of 'the dog that didn't bark'. I select crises that resembled the wars as closely as possible, to provide 'most-similar cases' with a diverging outcome, to use Mill's method of difference.⁸⁸ The German Autumn Crisis closely mirrors the Austro-Prussian War, as it had both the same cause and participants. The 'War in Sight' Crisis had the same participants as the Franco-Prussian War, but the causes differed somewhat. The hegemonic conflict between Berlin and Paris was present in both instances, but the regional conflict over the South German states was no longer relevant in 1875. No crisis mirrored the Second War of Italian Unification perfectly. However, the Rhine Crisis of 1840 provides a relatively good comparison, given that Austria and Prussia largely switched places in the two conflicts. No crises similar to the Crimean War exists, so I do not compare it to a crisis.

⁸⁸ John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 131-144; Alexander L. George, Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 2004), pp. 151-158.

Evaluating Predictions

To generate predictions, I use a formal model of *Georealism*. The model calculates when wars should break out based on the existence of a conflict and the expectation of the aggressor to win. First, I run this model to predict the timing of wars and compare these to the timing of actual wars. Second, I use case studies to test implications of this theory regarding the cause of the war and the willingness and impact of third party great powers to intervene. As the Austro-Prussian War and the German Autumn Crisis provide the best ‘most similar’ case, look at this case in detail to determine the motivations of the various actors. For the Austro-Prussian War, I also make extensive use of primary sources. The other cases are treated more briefly, focusing on simply determining behaviour, which is much more easily available. The shorter cases serve to increase the number of empirical observations significantly, even if they are less detailed.

I maintain the assumptions from chapter IV, as I rely on the alliance model to determine the preferences of third party great powers to intervene. This means that I assume that great powers are rational, unitary actors maximizing security with good information about the capabilities, preferences, and actions of other actors. In addition, I assume that offensive and defensive war are equally effective.

Given that the *Georealist* theory is relatively sparse on the behaviour of offshore states, I only look at the actions of continental powers. The exception of this is the Crimean War, where Britain had a decisive influence due to its naval supremacy.

Data

For data on capabilities, the Correlates of War (COW) Composite Index on National Capabilities (CINC) scores are used.⁸⁹ In order to determine the potential for territorial, regional, and hegemonic conflicts, I simply use a map of the time period to determine contiguity and contested regions. For information about opportunities for war, I use the *Georealist* model of alliance formation. In order to evaluate the evidence, I primarily rely on secondary literature, particularly Mosse's *The European Powers and the German Question, 1848-71*⁹⁰ and A. J. P. Taylor's *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*.⁹¹ This is because both these works overlap with the topic of this chapter and are built on extensive investigations of primary sources. However, in the Austro-Prussian War case, I make extensive use of German, French, and Austrian primary sources from *Die auswärtige Politik Preussens*,⁹² *Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleons III*,⁹³ *Les origines diplomatiques de la guerre de 1870-1871*,⁹⁴ and *Quellen zur deutschen Politik Österreichs*.⁹⁵ However, a great deal of secondary literature is also used.

⁸⁹ J. David Singer, Stuart Bremer and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965," in *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), pp. 19-48.

⁹⁰ W. E. Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question 1848-71: With Special Reference to England and Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958).

⁹¹ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*.

⁹² Historische Reichskommission, et al., *Die Auswärtige Politik Preussens, 1858-1871: Diplomatische Aktenstücke* (Oldenburg i. O: G. Stalling, 1932-), abbreviated below as *APP*.

⁹³ Hermann Oncken, *Die Rheinpolitik Kaiser Napoleons III: von 1863 bis 1870* (Stuttgart: Deutschen Verlags-Anstalt, 1926), abbreviated below as *Oncken*.

⁹⁴ Ministère des affaires étrangères, *Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-1871* (Paris: G. Ficker, Imprimerie Nationale, 1910), abbreviated below as *Origines*.

⁹⁵ Oskar Schmid and Heinrich Ritter von Srbik, ed., *Quellen zur deutschen Politik Österreichs 1859-1866* (Oldenburg: G. Stalling, 1934-1938), abbreviated below as *Quellen*.

Generating Testable Predictions

To predict the timing and participants of major wars from 1823 to 1914, it is necessary to determine which conflicts promised sufficient gains and when great powers expected victory.

Territorial Conflicts

The European great power system from 1823 to 1918 consisted of five to six great powers, namely the United Kingdom, France, Prussia/Germany, Austria, Russia, and Italy (from 1861).⁹⁶ Among these states, there are six contiguous dyads: France-Italy, France-Prussia/Germany, Prussia/Germany-Austria, Prussia/Germany-Russia, Austria-Italy, and Austria-Russia. Thus, all these dyads had the potential for territorial conflict. However, in many of them, this actually never occurred. Only two serious and official disputes about the ownership of one or more province actually led to war. These were the Franco-German dispute over Alsace-Lorraine from 1871 to 1914⁹⁷ and the Austro-Italian conflict over Veneto from 1861 to 1866.⁹⁸ In addition, some other conflicts where at least a sizeable part of the population in one great power claimed territory from another great power existed. Italian nationalists had a claim on Nice, Savoy, and Corsica from France, and Southern Tyrol and Trieste from Austria-Hungary.⁹⁹ France would also occasionally voice claims about its 'natural frontiers', which included the Prussian province of

⁹⁶ Melvyn Small and J. David Singer, *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars 1816-1980* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1982), pp. 44-45, Jack S. Levy, *War in the modern great power system, 1495-1975* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1983), pp. 16-17.

⁹⁷ John Keiger, *France and the Origins of the First World War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p. 68.

⁹⁸ Taylor, *The Struggler for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 112-125, 159-170.

⁹⁹ Hall Gardner, *The Failure to Prevent World War I: The Unexpected Armageddon* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 41-42.

Rhineland.¹⁰⁰ Prussia/Germany, Austria, and Russia had no serious territorial conflicts with each other, despite the existence of other conflicts among them. This suggests that territorial contiguity alone is not enough to cause territorial conflicts, especially among states with an interest in alliances with each other.

Regional Conflicts

Within Europe, four regions were likely to be contested by great powers, according to *Georealism*. These were: the minor Italian states until Italian unification in 1859, the minor German states until German unification in 1871, and the Balkans and the Low Countries throughout the period. Three of the regions were contested by their neighbouring great powers. Italy by Austria and France,¹⁰¹ Germany by Austria, and Prussia,¹⁰² and the Balkans primarily by Austria and Russia, but also to a certain extent Britain.¹⁰³ France did border the minor German states and had traditionally played a role there as well, but was locked out from any influence at the Congress of Vienna.¹⁰⁴ The exception was the Low Countries, but this was because they were in effect a British protectorate.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany: 1840-1945, Volume 3* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 40-41; Hagen Schulze, *The Course of German Nationalism: From Frederick the Great to Bismarck 1763-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 64-69.

¹⁰¹ Paul W. Schroeder, "A Pointless Enduring Rivalry: France and the Habsburg Monarchy, 1715-1918," in *Great Power Rivalries*, ed. William R. Thompson (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999) pp. 71-73.

¹⁰² Brendan Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany, 1779-1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 150-194; John Breuilly, *Austria, Prussia and the Making of Germany, 1806-1871* (Harlow: Longman, 2011).

¹⁰³ M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966).

¹⁰⁴ Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy After Napoleon* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), pp. 131-133.

¹⁰⁵ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 560-564.

Hegemonic Conflicts

The potential hegemon is the most powerful continental state in the system. According to the CINC scores, this was Russia between 1823 and 1838, France between 1857 and 1870, and Germany between 1879 and 1914. From 1838 to 1856 and from 1870 to 1879, the scores are essentially tied between France and Russia, and France and Germany respectively.¹⁰⁶ Hegemonic conflicts take place between the potential hegemon and all other great powers. However, they are expected to be particularly intense during the periods when two powers are equally powerful, or when one great power has the potential of making a hegemonic bid.

Summary of Conflicts

In Table 5.3, I summarize all the conflicts that could have taken place during the period. I split this list into the conflicts that actually took place and the ones that remained theoretical. For each conflict, the years of its existence are given, as well as the source of the conflict.

¹⁰⁶ Singer, Bremer and Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War," pp. 19-48.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

TABLE 5.3: Historical and Theoretical Conflicts

	Historical	Theoretical
Territorial	France-Prussia Rhineland, (1823-1871) France-Germany Alsace-Lorraine, (1871-1918) France-Italy Nice, Savoy, Corsica, (1861-1918) Austria-Italy Veneto (1861-1866), South Tyrol, (1861-1918)	Prussia/Germany-Austria (1823-1918) Prussia/Germany-Russia (1823-1918) Austria-Russia (1823-1918)
Regional	Austria-Prussia (Minor German States, 1823-1871) Austria-France (Minor Italian states, 1823-1859) Austria-Russia (Balkans, 1823-1914) Prussia-France (South German states, 1866-1871)	France-Prussia/Germany (Low Countries, 1823-1918) Prussia-France (Minor German states, 1823-1866) Austria-France, (Minor German states, 1823-1866)
Hegemonic	France-Russia (1839-1856) France-Germany (1870-1879) Germany-France/Russia (1910-1914)	

Table 5.3: *This table gives all the historical great power conflicts in the sample, sorted after whether they were territorial, regional, or hegemonic. In addition, I list all the conflicts that could have happened based on geography. For example, Austria and Russia had the possibility of having a territorial conflict throughout the sample, as they shared a common border. I have not included any actual or theoretical colonial conflicts.*

Many possible conflicts remained theoretical throughout the sample. This is unproblematic for *Georealism*, as there are many reasons why great powers would not engage in a conflict even if they can. Most notably, the existence of conflicts complicates forming and maintaining alliances. This fact can probably explain the lack of territorial issues between, Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Other conflicts did not take place for more historically contingent reasons. The Congress of Vienna institutionally excluded France from any influence in Germany, making it hard for Paris to re-establish any presence in the region.¹⁰⁷ However, before the Napoleonic Wars France had actively competed for

¹⁰⁷ Schroder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 291.

dominance in Germany. The Low Countries was an area of vital interest for London and was thus in practice already a British protectorate.¹⁰⁸

Expected Victory

To predict when potential aggressors expect victory, it is necessary to determine when two great powers had complementary war aims, and the alignment positions of all the great powers. Table 5.4 gives all the dyads that both had a regional or territorial conflict with a common third great power, based on Table 5.3.

TABLE 5.4: Dyads Sharing Conflicts with a Third Great Power

Dyad	Overlap	Target	Shared conflicts	Likely intervention
Austria-France	1823-1866	Prussia	Austria: regional conflict, Germany France: territorial conflict, Rhineland	No, Prussia status quo power, allied with Austria
Austria-Prussia	1823-1861	France	Prussia: territorial conflict, Rhineland Austria: regional conflict, Italy	No, Austria status quo power, allied with Prussia
France-Prussia	1823-1859	Austria	France: regional conflict, Italy Prussia: regional conflict, Germany	No, Prussia allied with Austria
Prussia-Italy	1861-1866	Austria	Prussia: regional conflict, Germany Italy: territorial conflict, Venetia	Yes, 1861-1866
Italy-Russia	1861-1914	Austria	Italy: territorial conflict, Venetia, Tyrol Russia: regional conflict, Balkans	Yes, 1861-1882, 1900-1914

Table 5.4: This table lists all the dyads in the sample that shared a conflict with a third party great power. In all cases, I give the target great power they shared a conflict with, the conflicts both states had with a target, and whether this was likely to cause an intervention in a conflict. The content of this table is based on the information from table 5.3.

Not all of these shared conflicts had the possibility of leading to war. Prussia already possessed Rhineland, giving it no interest in joining Austria in an aggressive conflict with France. Austria was also a status quo power in Germany and Italy, as it had a weak leadership in both regions. Thus, the two first shared conflicts were unlikely to lead to interventions. Prussia would also be unlikely to join France in a war with Austria, because

¹⁰⁸ Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy*, p. 50; A. Vandenbosch, *Dutch Foreign Policy Since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), pp. 47-58.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

Berlin depended on an alliance with Austria against France until 1860. A French victory would consequently likely make Prussia less secure.

The Austro-Italian conflict over Venetia 1861 to 1866 had much potential to lead to intervention. Firstly, Venetia was a rich province inhabited by ethnic Italians, making the province easy to incorporate into the new state of Italy. Secondly, Italy depended on outside support in the conflict, as it was far weaker than Austria. Thirdly, Italy never had a strong preference for an alliance with Austria between 1861 and 1866. Italy could also take advantage of a Russo-Austrian conflict to settle its remaining territorial claims on Austria, but only after it ceased to rely on the Triple Alliance for its security after 1900.

I calculate alignment preferences by using the model of alliance choice from the previous chapter. First, I calculate how much security potential alliances with the defending and aggressive state would offer all the other great powers. Second, I find the best alternative alignments to these alliances for each of the other great powers. By subtracting the latter number from the former, I get an estimate of how much every third party great power depends on the defending and aggressive states for their security. Chances of intervention increase the more dependent other great powers are on an alliance. An intervention would usually require a dependence above 0 as this means that the potential alliance is the best possible option. Any number below this is unlikely to lead to intervention, because the great power already has better available allies to maintain its security.

In order to expect victory, the inclination of all third party great powers to intervene must lead to the aggressive states with its allies having a preponderance of power.

General Condition for Expected Victory

- I) The aggressor state expects to fight the war, alone or together with its allies, with greater capabilities than the defending state and its allies.¹⁰⁹

This could happen in many ways, from bilateral war to a war including all great powers.

To account for this complexity, a more detailed definition is necessary.

Specific Conditions for Expected Victory

1. The aggressor state is expected to win the war because:
 - a. The aggressor is more powerful than the defending state if the war is expected to be bilateral, or
 - b. The aggressor and its expected allies are more powerful than the defending state and its allies if the war is expected to be multilateral
2. No further third party state interventions are expected to change the outcome of the war will occur, because:
 - a. Third parties are expected to maintain a position of neutrality; or
 - b. Any intervention on the side of the defending state leads to a stronger state or combination of states intervene on the side of the aggressor, keeping the outcome constant; or
 - c. There are no remaining third party states

Test I: Predicting Wars

Determining whether an aggressor expects victory in a war requires information on the relative capabilities of the two conflicting parties and the disposition of other states to intervene. To illustrate how this is done, I use the Austro-Prussian conflict dyad as an example. In this case, Prussia was the aggressor for dominance among the minor German states. Italy after its creation would intervene in this conflict on Prussia's side to settle its own territorial conflict with Austria over Venetia. France and Russia would only

¹⁰⁹ If offensive war is less effective than defensive war, the aggressor needs to have a correspondingly larger lead in capabilities to compensate for this. This therefore has a stabilizing effect of inhibiting war.

intervene in a conflict if they were dependent on an alliance with either Austria or Prussia for their security. Figure 5.2 below illustrates the dependence of France and Russia on an alliance with Austria, Prussia, or Italy between 1823 and 1871.

FIGURE 5.2: *Austro-Prussian conflict alignment preferences*

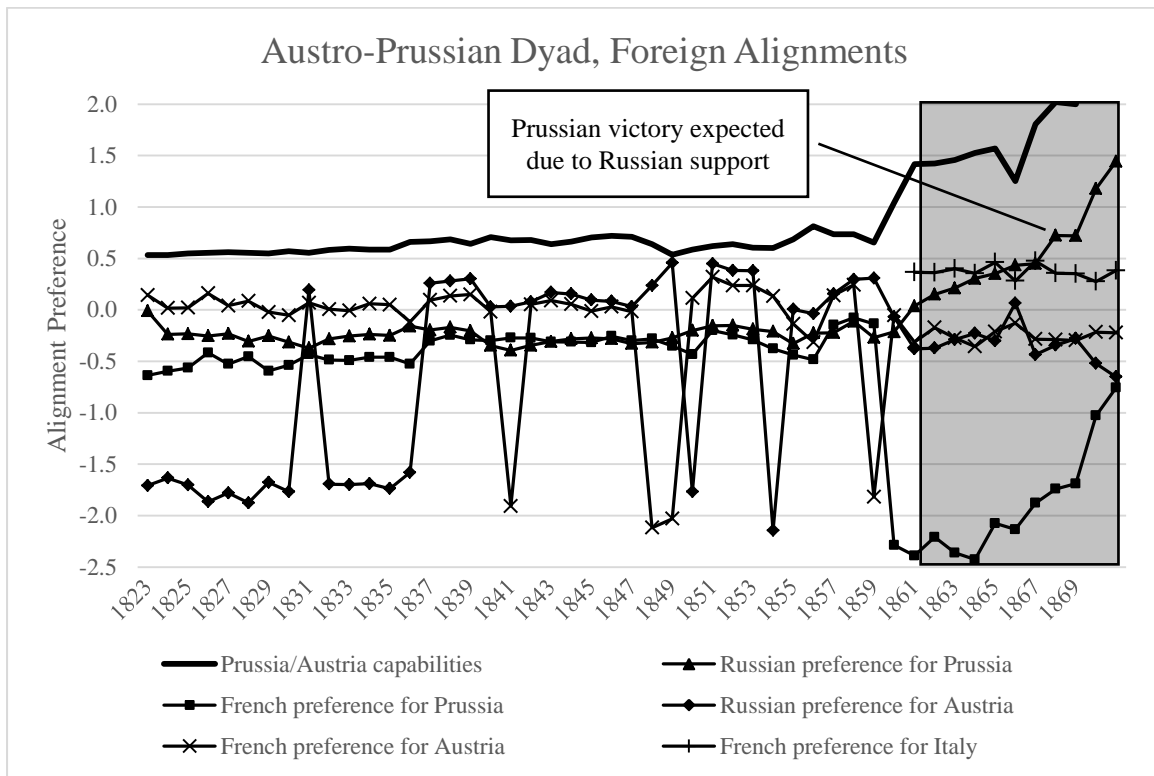


Figure 5.2: *The thick line gives the relative Prussian/Austrian capabilities, where any value above 1 means that Prussia was stronger than Austria. The various lines with markers give the French and Russian preferences for an alliance with Austria, Prussia, and Italy. Any value above 0 means that the alliance offers more security than non-alignment, meaning that the great power is likely to intervene on the side of that great power. The shaded area gives the period when Prussia begins expecting victory in a war with Austria. This is because its capabilities exceed Austria’s from 1861 and, at the same time, Russia starts preferring an alliance with Prussia to non-alignment. In 1865, Russia benefits from both an alliance with Prussia and Austria, but much more with the former. Hence, it would always want to intervene on the Prussian side after 1861. The large oscillations in the alignment preference for the Austro-Russian and Austro-French dyads are because these alliances occasionally become sufficiently powerful to provoke British involvement to counter them. This increases the power of the alliances’ enemies, and thus greatly decreases their payoffs. A more sophisticated modelling of British involvement would control for this. However, this is not necessary for better predictions, because the preferences rarely significantly exceed 0 anyway.*

Prussia could expect to defeat Austria only from 1861 until the end of the decade. This was due to three factors. Firstly, Prussia’s capabilities exceeded Austria’s this year, which

Chapter V: Major War

for the first time enabled victory in a bilateral war. Secondly, a Russo-Prussian alliance became a viable option for Prussia, because it provided Russia with more security than non-alignment. The logic here would be the same if Russia's second best option were an alliance instead. Consequently, Prussia was increasingly likely to enjoy Russian support if necessary, because Russia depended on a Prussian alliance to maximize its security. Before 1860, by contrast, Russia was either neutral or pro-Austrian. France was neutral in the conflict for most of the period. Austria would be unlikely to initiate a war at any point during the sample. Firstly, it had a weakly dominant position among the minor German states through its leadership in the German Confederation, giving it less interest in challenging the status quo. Secondly, France and Russia would either be neutral or hostile in any aggressive Austrian war, except Russia around the year 1850.

Below, Table 5.5 gives the predicted intervals of major wars for all the conflict dyads during the sample. I calculate the numbers in the same way as I did in the Austro-Prussian dyad. In every actual conflict, I determine which great power was the likely aggressor by looking at what party in the conflict had the most to gain by altering the status quo. Examples of this include Prussia against Austria over Germany or Italy against Austria in its territorial conflict over Venetia. For each of these aggressors, I subsequently calculate when the aggressor together with its allies possessed more capabilities than the defending state and its allies. To do this, I determine the likely third party great power interventions in the conflict based on their alignment preferences, shared conflicts with either belligerent, or fear of the aggressor as a neighbour or potential hegemon. The only exception to this is the Franco-Russian hegemonic conflict dyad. Their ability to go to war with each other depended on British support, which I am unable to estimate, as I do

not include Britain formally.¹¹⁰ Hence, I simply give the years when the conflict took place, rather than when Russia or France expected victory within this interval.

TABLE 5.5: Summary of Timing of Wars

Dyad	Aggressor	Type	Predicted War		Actual War	
			Start	End	Start	End
Austria-Prussia	Prussia	Regional	1861	1870	1866	1866
France-Austria	France	Regional	1860	1870	1859	1859
France-Prussia	Prussia	Regional/Systemic	1870	1871	1870	1871
Italy-Austria	Italy	Territorial	1866	1866	1866	1866
France-Russia¹¹¹	France	Systemic	1839	1856	1853	1856
Germany-France	Germany	Systemic	ca 1910	- ¹¹²	1914	1918

Table 5.5: This table summarizes the predictions of the main intervals when an aggressor had both a conflict with sufficient potential gains to pay for the conflict and expected victory. Some more years exist when these conditions were present. In the case of the Franco-Russian dyad, I give the full duration of the systemic conflict, because the expectation of victory depended on British intervention, which is not a part of the model.

Table 5.5 only gives the main predicted intervals for war, with a couple of more expected wars being scattered at other years. In total, there are 52 predicted dyad war years among 417 dyad years.¹¹³ These predictions are presented in table 5.6.

TABLE 5.6: War timing test, contingency table

	Actual war	Actual no war
Predicted war	4 (0.59)	45 (48.41)
Predicted no war	1 (4.41)	364 (360.59)

p-value: 0.0008 (Fisher Exact Probability Test, one-tailed)

Table 5.6: This table summarizes the number of wars and non-wars correctly predicted, and the type I and II errors. Although there were 8 war dyad years, I counted each war as one dyad year in order to avoid overstating the statistical significance.

¹¹⁰ Locate Navy during the campaign in Crimea.

¹¹¹ Depending on British intervention

¹¹² Sample ends in 1914

¹¹³ The model also predicts a possibility of war between France and Austria in 1840-1842, 1847, and 1855-1856

Chapter V: Major War

Despite the limited number of wars in the sample, which increases the scope for chance, the accuracy of the predictions is highly statistically significant.¹¹⁴ The statistical significance could also be increased even further, by focusing only on the years when a dyadic war was the most likely. For example, Prussia had an opportunity to go to war with Austria already in 1861, but its chances of victory were much higher in 1866, making war more probable that year.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, the wars in the sample are not entirely independent, which inflates the statistical significance of the results. Most notably, tacit Russian support of Prussia enabled both the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian Wars. Furthermore, the Italian attack of Austria in 1866 dependent on the Prussian attack of Austria the same year. The extent of this interdependence is a historical rather than a statistical question, making it difficult to estimate quantitatively.

A possible alternative explanation would be to reverse the causal story. The predictions of war are partially based on the argument that great powers go to war once they have sufficient capabilities. However, a state that already intends to go to war, may increase military spending and men under arms to get sufficient capabilities to win. If this is the case, this could explain some of the accuracy of the predictions. Testing whether this was the case is possible by looking at changes in the relative military and economic capabilities of great powers before going to war. Consequently, I split the CINC scores into its military indicators; military personnel and military spending, and the economic indicators; iron and steel production, energy consumption, total population, and urban population. If this alternative explanation were true, great powers going to war would

¹¹⁴ In the case of the 1859 war between Austria and France, the predictions were only one year off. If this is counted as a correct prediction, the *p*-value decreases to 0.00002.

¹¹⁵ See the figure 5.2 on page 221.

experience a sustained relative increase of military compared to economic capabilities.¹¹⁶ This was only the case for Prussia in the three years preceding the Franco-Prussian War. However, these increases were due to the introduction of conscription to the areas annexed after the Austro-Prussian War.¹¹⁷ Thus, there is scant evidence that military build-ups before wars inflate the accuracy of the *Georealist* predictions.

Test II: Predicting Great Power Preferences and Interventions

In order to test the model further, I analyse whether the empirical evidence also supports the model's mechanism for great powers expecting victory. I do this by looking at all wars and three major crises between 1823 and 1913. In particular, I look at the predictions about the causes of the war and the disposition to intervene by third party great powers. Both factors play a key role in the theory, and are easily testable. A great power's disposition to intervene is based on its alignment preference or shared conflicts with either belligerent. In addition, I predict whether these states would actually intervene. To do this, I calculate whether their intervention would change the expected outcome of the war, or instead provoke the interventions of stronger states on the opposing side. For example, the model predicts that Austria was pro-French during the Franco-Prussian War. However, it should not intervene, as this could not change the outcome of the conflict because an Austrian intervention would trigger the more powerful Russia to support Prussia. Table 5.6 on the next page provides a summary of all the predictions from the model. At the beginning of every case, I provide a reminder of these predictions.

¹¹⁶ To do this I compared the difference in relative military and economic capabilities in a given year to a moving average of the five preceding years.

¹¹⁷ The size of the Prussian Army compared to its population remained constant throughout the decade.

Chapter V: Major War

TABLE 5.7: Summary of Predictions on Causes and Alignments

Incident	Cause	Prussia	Austria	France	Russia	Italy
German Autumn Crisis, 1850	Regional					
Disposition		-	-	Neutral	Austria	-
Intervention		-	-	No	Yes	-
Specifications	No war, due to the superior capabilities of the Austro-Russian side					
Austro-Prussian War, 1866	Regional					
Disposition		-	-	Neutral	Prussia	Prussia
Intervention		-	-	No	No	Yes
Specifications	Russian intervention only to prevent Prussian defeat					
Crimean War, 1853-6						
Disposition	Systemic	Neutral	Neutral	-	-	-
Intervention		No	No	-	-	-
Italian Reunification, 1859	Regional					
Disposition		Austria	-	-	Neutral	
Intervention		Yes	-	-	No	
Specification	Only weak Prussian preference for Austria which ends in 1860.					
Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1	Regional/hegemonic					
Disposition		-	France	-	Prussia	France
Intervention		-	No	-	No	Yes
Specifications	Austrian intervention deterred by threat of Russian intervention.					
Rhine Crisis, 1840	Territorial					
Disposition		-	Prussia	-	Neutral	
Intervention		-	Prussia	-	?	
Specifications	War, but French power only marginally exceeding the German Confederation's ¹¹⁸					
'War in Sight' Crisis, 1875	Territorial/hegemonic					
Disposition		-	Germany	-	France	France
Intervention		-	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
Specifications	No war predicted due to superior capabilities on the side of France					

Table 5.6: This table summarizes the main Georealist predictions on war, concerning causes and likely interventions of third party great powers.

¹¹⁸ Prussia, Austria, and the minor German states

Austria-Prussia

Austria and Prussia is the main case of the theory, the dyad offers two most-similar cases with a divergent outcome. The two states went to war with each other in 1866, but in addition, they also almost went to war in 1850 for the same reason. Thus, finding out why Prussia acted differently in 1850 and 1866 provides the best test of whether the expectation of victory played a central part. Two general arguments are tested. Firstly, Austro-Prussian tensions and eventually war was caused by a regional competition over the minor German states. Secondly, Prussia went to war in 1866 because it thought it would be able to win, while it backed down in 1850 because it thought it would lose. This was because of the following two more testable factors:

- 1) Russia was supportive of Austria in 1850, but of Prussia in 1866.
- 2) France was not supportive of either state in 1850 or in 1866.

Thus, instead of simply presenting a historical narrative, I test these four claims and attempt to assess how prominently they figured in Prussian decision-making.

Background

Austria and Prussia had a long-standing rivalry over the leadership of the minor German states.¹¹⁹ The rivalry began with Prussia's acquisition of Silesia in 1740, a direct challenge to the authority of Austria's traditional role as the predominant German state.¹²⁰ The two states also clashed during the Seven Years' War and the War of Bavarian Succession. Mutual suspicion also made Austro-Prussian coordination against France

¹¹⁹ Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany*; Eric Dorn Brose, *German History, 1789-1871: From the Holy Roman Empire to the Bismarckian Reich* (Providence: Bergahn Books, 1997).

¹²⁰ M. S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995); Hamish Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System, 1740-1815* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 39-71.

during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars impossible.¹²¹ Following the Congress of Vienna, security reasons¹²² compelled Prussia to accept a subordinate role to Austria in the newly founded German Confederation.¹²³ Nevertheless, Berlin was never entirely happy with this state of affairs, usually seeking equality with Austria. The minor German states used the Austro-Prussian rivalry to play the great powers against each other to maintain their status and influence. As the historians Bridge and Bullen argue, the German princes saw “the institutionalized rivalry of Austria and Prussia in the Confederation as the best guarantee of their own independence”.¹²⁴

While both great powers sought to increase their influence in Germany, Prussia was clearly the revisionist state. The reason for this was that the structures of the two states meant that Prussian leadership would involve much more radical changes. As a multinational empire, Austria had little appeal to the German nationalists that dominated the middle class.¹²⁵ Austrian dominance consequently had limited popular appeal, making the creation of an Austrian-led federal state unfeasible. Any increase in power would have to come from strengthening the German Confederation, where it held the presidency. This implied increased cooperation with the German princes, who jealously guarded their independence.¹²⁶ Austria’s approach in Germany was therefore essentially conservative.¹²⁷ Conversely, Prussia pursued a federalist approach to German unification,¹²⁸ which ended with the German Empire in 1871. To use modern

¹²¹ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 231-323.

¹²² Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany*, pp. 105-108.

¹²³ Jürgen Müller, *Der Deutsche Bund 1815-1866* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2006).

¹²⁴ F. R. Bridge and Roger Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System 1814-1914* (Harlow: Longman, 2005), pp. 112.

¹²⁵ Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany*, pp. 130, 158-162.

¹²⁶ Roy A. Austensen, “Austria and the “Struggle for Supremacy in Germany,” 1848-1864,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (June 1980), pp. 195-225.

¹²⁷ Roy A. Austensen, “The Making of Austria’s Prussian Policy, 1848-1852,” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (December 1984), pp. 861-876.

¹²⁸ Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany*, pp. 105-201.

International Relations language, the Austrian approach to German leadership was intergovernmental, while Prussia's was supranationalist.¹²⁹

The German Autumn Crisis, 1850

Predictions			
Cause	France	Russia	Outcome
Regional conflict over minor German states	Intervention on either side only to receive Rhineland	Supported Austria to return to status quo	Prussia backing down due to Austro-Russian superiority

When revolutions swept Europe in 1848, the hitherto stable European great power politics was shocked to its very foundations.¹³⁰ The wave of insurrections hit Austria particularly hard, as it not only had to cope with liberal uprisings, but also nationalist rebellions in Italy, Bohemia, and especially Hungary. Hence, for a time, the very existence of the Austrian Empire was at stake.¹³¹ As the regime had to devote itself entirely to domestic threats, Austrian power and influence in Europe collapsed.¹³² This presented Prussia with an opportunity to replace Austria as the dominant German power.¹³³ For a time, the indecisive Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, vacillated between a course of conservative monarchical solidarity and one of liberal German unification.¹³⁴ However, in April 1849, he publically stated his desire to lead a German federal state and proposed meetings with other German princes to this end.¹³⁵ This turned into the Erfurt Union with

¹²⁹ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, pp. 6-7; George Tsebelis and Geoffrey Garrett, "The Institutional Foundations of Intergovernmentalism and Supranationalism in the European Union," *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Spring 2001), pp 357-390.

¹³⁰ Michael Sheehan, *The Balance Of Power: History & Theory* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 122-133.

¹³¹ Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 42.

¹³² Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 215-218.

¹³³ Gunther E. Rothenberg, *The Army of Francis Joseph* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1998), p. 48.

¹³⁴ David E. Barclay, *Frederick William IV and the Prussian Monarchy 1840-1861* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 189-196; Edgar Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany 1850-1918* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 4

¹³⁵ Barclay, *Frederick William IV and the Prussian Monarchy*, p. 196.

a number of Northern German states.¹³⁶ Constituting a clear threat to Austria's traditionally leading position in Germany, the Erfurt Union caused a major crisis between the two powers. Ultimately, Prussia capitulated in November 1850 by giving up the Erfurt Union and returned to the German Confederation in its original form under Austrian leadership.¹³⁷

Causes of the Crisis

As predicted by *Georealism*, the cause of the Austro-Prussian crisis was clearly and explicitly supremacy over the minor German states, particularly north of the river Main. The Erfurt Union attempted to redesign Germany, excluding Austria and placing Prussia as the dominant state.¹³⁸ This was a clear challenge to traditional Habsburg dominance and was fiercely resisted as soon as Austria recovered from its internal crisis.¹³⁹ Schwarzenberg, the Austrian minister-president, also wanted to increase Austrian influence in Germany. He proposed including all of Austria into a new federation, creating 'an empire of 70 million'.¹⁴⁰ Due to the huge Austrian population, this would have cemented its dominance further. However, some scholars argue that this was just a tactical ploy and that Austrian aims were essentially conservative.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ Mark Hewitson, *Nationalism in Germany, 1848-1866: Revolutionary Nation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 67-68.

¹³⁷ James Joll, "Prussia and the German Problem, 1830-66," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 10: The Zenith of European Power, 1830-70*, ed. J. P. T. Bury (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 502-503.

¹³⁸ Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany*, p. 3.

¹³⁹ William J. Orr, Jr., "British Diplomacy and the German Problem, 1848-1850," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Autumn 1978), pp. 224-225.

¹⁴⁰ Klaus Hildebrand, *German Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 32.

¹⁴¹ Joll, "Prussia and the German Problem," pp. 504-505; Lawrence Sondhaus, "Schwarzenberg, Austria, and the German Question, 1848-1851," *The International History Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (February 1991), pp. 1-20.

French Attitude

France had a predominantly detached view on the German question in 1848-1850.¹⁴² The main reason for this is undoubtedly that the revolutions also sent France into a state of political turmoil. Between 1848 and 1852, France went from a constitutional monarchy, to republic, dictatorship, to finally an empire, the two latter under Napoleon III.¹⁴³ Political instability made the various regimes primarily focused on internal consolidation. The other great powers were also extremely wary that revolution would lead to war, as in 1792. The moderate new regime in Paris was also concerned that the chaos of war would propel radical forces into power. Consequently, French foreign policy was particularly unassertive during the period.¹⁴⁴

On the German question, the French attitude was initially mildly pro-Prussian, but in a purely negative sense. Thinking Austria was the stronger power, the foreign minister Bastide wanted to ensure German disunity, arguing, “Germany unification is as it is now emerging would turn a people of 40 million into a very different power than Germany is today – and one to be feared. Therefore, I do not believe that it is in our interests to desire unification let alone press for it”.¹⁴⁵ This called for a pro-Prussian policy, but no concrete steps were taken to support Prussia.¹⁴⁶

After Louis Napoleon, who later was crowned as Napoleon III, came to power, French policy continued in the same vein. Despite the common argument of Louis Napoleon’s

¹⁴² Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck: 1800-1866* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 553.

¹⁴³ William Fortescue, *France and 1848: The End of Monarchy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005).

¹⁴⁴ Bridge and Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System*, pp. 106-107.

¹⁴⁵ William Carr, *The Wars of German Unification 1864-1871* (Abingdon: Pearson, 1991), p. 149.

¹⁴⁶ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 16.

Chapter V: Major War

sentimental attachment nationalism,¹⁴⁷ the policy he pursued was entirely opportunistic. Indeed, in 1850, he offered to both Austria and Prussia to support their plans if France would in return acquire Rhineland.¹⁴⁸ In June of the same year, Louis Napoleon argued that he could not remain neutral if Russia intervened, but stated that he would support whichever state offered him the most territory.¹⁴⁹ Thus, Napoleon's attempt to use the Austro-Prussian conflict to settle French aims in a cheap way is as predicted by *Georealism*. Yet, neither Austria nor Prussia decided to take Louis Napoleon up on his offer. During the autumn of 1850, the French role was very limited. Its main contribution was expressing a desire to a return to the status quo. France also resisted Schwarzenberg's plans for expanding the German Confederation,¹⁵⁰ contributing to Vienna settling to return to status quo instead.¹⁵¹

The only anti-Austrian act of France took place in Italy, where it in 1849 sent an army to Rome where the Pope had been deposed. Bridge and Bullen argue that this was neither to support the Pope nor help the nascent Republic of Rome. Rather, Napoleon's intention was simply "to assert [French] power at last in the peninsula".¹⁵² Yet, eventually Austria and France ended up cooperating with restating the Pope.¹⁵³ Intervention to support Sardinia in its wars against Austria was also seriously debated, but ultimately Paris settled

¹⁴⁷ Alan Cassels, *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 71.

¹⁴⁸ James F. Mcmillan, *Napoleon III* (London: Longman, 1991), p. 76.

¹⁴⁹ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 39.

¹⁵⁰ Matthias Schulz, "A Balancing Act: Domestic Pressures and International Systemic Constraints in the Foreign Policies of the Great Powers, 1848–1851," *German History*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2003), p. 339-340.

¹⁵¹ David Goldfrank, *The Origins of the Crimean War* (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 67-68.

¹⁵² Bridge and Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System*, pp. 110-111.

¹⁵³ Paul W. Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War: The Destruction of the European Concert* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 5.

on simply sending verbal protests.¹⁵⁴ Hence, no steps were made to launch a general challenge to Austrian hegemony on the peninsula.¹⁵⁵

To summarize, France played an essentially neutral role during the German Autumn Crisis. Its only departures from the line of neutrality were some attempts to settle its own disputes with Prussia and Austria over Rhineland and Italy. However, these efforts were too lacklustre to have any effect.

Russian Attitude

Unlike France, Russia played a decisive role in the German Autumn Crisis through its support to Austria. Traditionally Russia had been neutral in the German conflict, but leaning on the conservative support of Prussia and Austria through the Münchengrätz Agreement.¹⁵⁶ Russia also consistently expressed a desire for Austro-Prussian cooperation throughout the crisis, so that these states would act as a bulwark against France. The republican government in Paris and its support for Polish independence gave this matter increased urgency.¹⁵⁷ Though relations were good with both states, its primary ally was clearly Austria, the more powerful of the two. However, this briefly changed when the revolutions of 1848 cast doubts on the survival of Austria as a great power. Desperately seeking a buffer against France, historian Mosse argues that Russia would probably have condoned a united Germany under Prussia, as long as it was monarchical and conservative.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851*, p. 221.

¹⁵⁵ Lawrence C. Jennings, "Lamartine's Italian Policy in 1848: A Reexamination," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (September 1970), pp. 331-341; Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁵⁶ Schroder, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 731-734.

¹⁵⁷ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Questions*, pp. 17, 27.

¹⁵⁸ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Questions*, pp. 16-18.

Chapter V: Major War

By 1849, the Russian attitude changed as Austrian conservatives turned back the tide of the revolution. Liberals controlled Vienna for a brief moment, but in November 1848, they were replaced by a staunchly counter-revolutionary government under Felix Schwarzenberg.¹⁵⁹ Czech nationalists were beaten and Prague recaptured by October 1848, and Italian nationalists were defeated decisively at the Battle of Novara in March 1849.¹⁶⁰ All these events were met with approval in St. Petersburg, and Russia even intervened to ensure the defeat of the Hungarian rebellion.¹⁶¹ As a contrast, the Russians were “mightily unhappy” with the Erfurt Union project, and put increasing pressure on Berlin to ensure its abandonment.¹⁶² As time passed, Russia became increasingly pro-Austrian, exactly as predicted by *Georealism*. Among the manifestations of this was its consent to Schwarzenberg’s plans to expand the German Confederation to include the entire Austrian territory.¹⁶³

By the summer of 1850, Austria was ready to challenge Prussia over the Erfurt Union. Yet, aware of the importance of Russian support, Schwarzenberg postponed making a move on Prussia until he was certain of St. Petersburg’s attitude.¹⁶⁴ After Russian support had been ensured, he picked his battle over restoring monarchs in Holstein and Hesse, where revolutionary regimes had taken hold.¹⁶⁵ Prussia resisted such a move, as Hesse was of vital strategic importance to Berlin as it was located on the military road connecting the eastern and western parts of the kingdom.¹⁶⁶ For several weeks, the two

¹⁵⁹ Stefan Lippert, *Felix Fürst zu Schwarzenberg: Eine politische Biographie* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998).

¹⁶⁰ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Questions*, pp. 25-26.

¹⁶¹ Ian W. Roberts, *Nicholas I and the Russian Intervention in Hungary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991).

¹⁶² Barclay, *Frederick William IV and the Prussian Monarchy*, p. 204.

¹⁶³ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 33.

¹⁶⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 37.

¹⁶⁵ Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany*, p. 4.

¹⁶⁶ James J. Sheehan, *German History, 1770-1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 714.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

armies faced each other in an uneasy standoff. War seemed imminent, with Austria and Prussian forces exchanging shots on the 8th of November.

Russia continued to play an essential role in the standoff by forcing Prussia to back down. In late October 1850, it put four army corps on a war footing in Poland. At the same time, Tsar Nicholas I made it clear that he considered the conflict in Hesse a “*casus belli*”.¹⁶⁷ Prussia clearly took this threat seriously, as the Prussian minister made preparations to leave St. Petersburg.¹⁶⁸ Thus, Prussia’s position by 1850 was becoming hopeless.¹⁶⁹ Prussia was probably still militarily stronger than Austria,¹⁷⁰ but the Prussian Minister of War Stockhausen made it clear that Prussia could not fight both Austria and Russia at once.¹⁷¹ After some intense weeks, Prussia eventually backed down on the 28th of November. This resulted in the Punctation of Olmütz, where Prussia agreed to give up the Erfurt Union and resurrect the old German Confederation.¹⁷² Implicitly, this meant accepting Austria’s dominance in the German Confederation and thus also the minor German states.¹⁷³ This was widely seen as a humiliation in Prussia.¹⁷⁴

Russian support to Austria was decisive in forcing Prussia to back down. However, as predicted by *Georealism* its assistance did not extend beyond this goal. Many Austrians wanted to use its favourable position in November 1850 to settle the rivalry with Prussia permanently through war, but Russia advised against such a move.¹⁷⁵ In 1851, the

¹⁶⁷ An act provoking war.

¹⁶⁸ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 36.

¹⁶⁹ Adolph Schwarzenberg, *Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg: Prime Minister of Austria 1848-1852* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), pp. 156-157.

¹⁷⁰ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 41.

¹⁷¹ H. W. Koch, *A History of Prussia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 244-245.

¹⁷² Lippert, *Felix Fürst zu Schwarzenberg*, pp. 337-344.

¹⁷³ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 544-548.

¹⁷⁴ Edgar Feuchtwanger, *Bismarck: A Political History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), p. 38.

¹⁷⁵ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, p. 3.

German princes, with support from Nicholas I, also rejected Schwarzenberg's proposal to include all of Austria into the confederation.¹⁷⁶

Summary

The German Autumn Crisis proceeded almost exactly as expected by *Georealism*. A decrease in Austrian power due to the revolutions of 1848 gave Prussia an opportunity to acquire a predominant position among the minor German states.¹⁷⁷ Russia was initially ambivalent to these designs, but came in strongly on the side of Vienna once Austria power recovered. Faced with the prospect of war against a vastly superior Austro-Russian coalition, Prussia backed down. However, Russian support of Austria amounted in principle simply to a return to the pre-1848 situation.

The Austro-Prussian War and the Austro-Italian War

Predictions				
Cause	France	Russia	Italy	Outcome
Regional conflict over minor German states	Intervention on either side only to receive Rhineland	Supported Prussia	Supported Prussia to receive Venetia	Prussia going to war

Prussia was deeply unhappy about the outcome at Olmütz, making it Berlin's primary goal to reverse its outcome.¹⁷⁸ Yet, Prussia could do little as long as Austria remained more powerful. This was beginning to change with the significant growth in Prussian power during the 1860s. The industrial revolution gained a foothold in Prussia, leading to

¹⁷⁶ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of German History Since 1815* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 100-101.

¹⁷⁷ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 37.

¹⁷⁸ Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, pp. 608-611.

a phenomenal growth in railroads and industrial production.¹⁷⁹ Militarily Prussia also became a lot stronger, as the humiliation at Olmütz set in motion a number of reforms.¹⁸⁰ In 1864, Bismarck also secured a victory for the king in his constitutional conflict with the Prussian Diet over army expenditures.¹⁸¹

Austro-Prussian cooperation lasted until 1864, when the two countries expelled Denmark from the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Yet, the division of spoils after the war proved contentious, and there is general agreement among historians that Bismarck used this to provoke an Austro-Prussian War.¹⁸² Bismarck also managed to secure an alliance with Italy, which forced Austria to divide its army.¹⁸³ When war broke out in June 1866, the Prussian Army quickly decisively defeated the Austrian Army and expelled Austria from Germany.

Causes of the War

The immediate pretext for the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 was the administration over Schleswig and Holstein. Yet, the real cause of the war was the continuing Austro-Prussian competition for supremacy in Germany,¹⁸⁴ as predicted by *Georealism*. This can be seen most clearly in the outcome of the war. Prussia did not acquire any Austrian territory,¹⁸⁵ but annexed all Austrian allies north of the River Main, except Saxony. In addition, Prussia took firm control over the remaining north German states by forming the

¹⁷⁹ Geoffrey Wawro, *Warfare and Society in Europe, 1792- 1914* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 74-75; Joll, "Prussia and the German Problem, 1830-66," p. 505.

¹⁸⁰ Rothenberg, *The Army of Francis Joseph*, p. 49.

¹⁸¹ A. J. P. Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955), pp. 48-51.

¹⁸² Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War*, p. 44.

¹⁸³ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany, Vol 3*, p. 178.

¹⁸⁴ Heinrich Friedjung, *The Struggle for Supremacy in Germany, 1859-1866* (New York: Russel & Russel, 1966).

¹⁸⁵ It did annex Holstein, which had been under Austrian administration.

North German Confederation.¹⁸⁶ The Southern German states remained nominally independent, but had to form defensive alliances with Prussia.¹⁸⁷ Consequently, the conflict finally settled the century-long Austro-Prussian rivalry in Germany decisively in favour of Prussia.

Russian Attitude

Russia played a very different role in 1866 than it had done in 1850. Its support of Austria in 1850 had been decisive in deterring Prussia from resorting to war. In 1866, it was nominally neutral. Maintenance of peace and the status quo was also clearly Russia's priority, and it repeatedly urged moderation and conciliation to both parties.¹⁸⁸ Yet, St. Petersburg took its neutrality to the absurd level of arguing that it did not even have an opinion about which side was the aggressor.¹⁸⁹ Since Bismarck's revisionist plans obviously aimed to overturn the very status quo Russia wanted to maintain, such an attitude was in effect decidedly pro-Prussian. This is exactly as predicted by *Georealism*.

Both Prussia and Austria were aware of Russia's importance and tried to solicit its support. Revertera, the Austrian ambassador in St. Petersburg, suggested that Russia should support Austria. His argument was that the situation was very similar to that of 1850. Gorchakov then bluntly replied that it was not.¹⁹⁰ Austria also considered buying Russian support. Revertera, for example, argued that a Russian alliance could be bought through concessions regarding the Danubian Principalities or the Schleswig-Holstein

¹⁸⁶ Taylor, *The Course of German History*, p. 122.

¹⁸⁷ Gordon Alexander Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 6-7.

¹⁸⁸ See for example Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, pp. 216, 233.

¹⁸⁹ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 224.

¹⁹⁰ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 216.

question.¹⁹¹ Yet, given that Russia expressed little interest in these questions, it is doubtful whether this could have actually worked.

Bismarck was also very aware of the vital role of Russia in the conflict, writing in his memoirs, “for the German future of Prussia the attitude of Russia was a question of great importance”.¹⁹² Consequently, he did everything he could to maintain good relations with St. Petersburg.¹⁹³ In 1863, he signed the Alvensleben Convention with Russia,¹⁹⁴ providing Prussian support in defeating the Polish rebellion in Russian Poland.¹⁹⁵ Considerable domestic and international repercussions followed this move.¹⁹⁶ However, Bismarck stressed in his memoirs that the convention was essential to ensure Russian support in the coming wars.¹⁹⁷ His emphasis on the importance of Russian support is in accordance with a *Georealist* logic. The same year, Bismarck also enquired with Russian ambassador Oubril about the possibility of Russian support to Prussia in a potential Austro-Prussian conflict.¹⁹⁸ The reply was that Russia preferred peace between Austria and Prussia, as a barrier against France. Moreover, the Tsar could not promise outright support, as Russia was too preoccupied in Poland at the moment.¹⁹⁹ However, he promised that he would spare no pains to “bring the Austrians to their senses”.²⁰⁰ Compared to Russia’s blunt dismissal of Austrian overtures, these were very encouraging words. The Russian desire not to fight a war remained constant in the coming years, due

¹⁹¹ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, pp. 225-226.

¹⁹² Otto, Fürst von Bismarck, *Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman: Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto, Prince von Bismarck Vol. I*, trans. Arthur John Butler (Leipzig: B. Tauchnitz, 1899), pp. 339-340.

¹⁹³ Bismarck, *Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman Vol. I*, pp. 341-342.

¹⁹⁴ *APP*, III, No. 164-169.

¹⁹⁵ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany*, p. 166.

¹⁹⁶ Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck: 1800-1866*, pp. 685-686.

¹⁹⁷ Bismarck, *Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman Vol. I*, pp. 342-343.

¹⁹⁸ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 134-135.

¹⁹⁹ Löen to Bismarck, telegram, 21 September 1863, *APP*, p. 802.

²⁰⁰ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 136.

to a focus on domestic concerns, such as Alexander II's reforms.²⁰¹ However, Gorchakov argued in a memorandum in September 1865 that Berlin was an increasingly important barrier against France. Strengthening Prussia was therefore in Russia's interest.²⁰² This line of thinking continued during the war, when Russia stuck to the principle of preferring "une Prusse puissante à une Autriche puissante".²⁰³ Russian interests in accepting an increase in Prussian power at the cost of Austria is in clear conformity with *Georealism*.

After the war broke out, the Prussians quickly and decisively defeated the Austrians at the Battle of Königgratz. Tsar Alexander II expressed dissatisfaction about the Prussian annexation of so many princely states. Yet, he still welcomed the increase in Prussian power and its dominance in Germany. On the 24th of August, he wrote to the Wilhelm I that Prussia and Russia should remain "old and faithful allies". Indeed, he hoped that Russia's relations with Prussia would become even closer than before.²⁰⁴ When Bismarck enquired at the same time whether Russia would keep Austria neutral during a Franco-Prussian War, Gorchakov did not fully commit himself. Yet, the German ambassador argued that Bismarck was in effect free to take a strong line on France.²⁰⁵ The improvement of Prusso-Russian relations after the Prussian victory in the war gives further credence to the *Georealist* argument.

²⁰¹ Larisa Zakharova, "The reign of Alexander II: A Watershed?," in *The Cambridge History of Russia Volume 2: Imperial Russia, 1689–1917*, ed. Dominic Lieven (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 593–616.

²⁰² Доклад министра иностранных дел Горчакова Александру I, 3 сентября 1865, *Красный Архив, исторический журнал*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (Москва: государственное социально-экономическое издательство, 1939), pp. 107–108. (Foreign Minister Alexander Gorchakov Report I, September 3, 1865, *Krasnyi arkhiv*, Moscow: State Socio-Economic Publishing House, 1939).

John Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem 1865–1925* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), p. 26; Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, p. 233.

²⁰³ "A powerful Prussia to a powerful Austria". Le Baron de Talleyrand, Ambassadeur à Saint-Petersbourg, à Drouyn de Lhuys, 13 July 1866, *Origines*, XI, no. 2975, p. 27.

²⁰⁴ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 248.

²⁰⁵ Manteuffel to Bismarck, 24 August 1866, *APP*, VIII, no. 3.

That Russia's benevolent attitude towards Berlin enabled the Prussian victory in the Austro-Prussian War is uncontroversial.²⁰⁶ However, the standard reasoning for this is based on history and sentiment rather than power calculations. According to this explanation, Austria offended Russia during the Crimean War by not supporting it, even though Russia had saved Austria during the Hungarian Rebellion in 1849. At the same time, Prussia earned St. Petersburg's gratitude for its support during the January Uprising in Poland in 1863.²⁰⁷ The problem with this explanation is that it is unclear whether Russia actually had such sentiments. In fact, Bismarck's adventurist foreign policy and disregard of St. Petersburg's advice for moderation clearly irritated Gorchakov and Alexander II.²⁰⁸ Nor were Austro-Russian relations uniformly bad after the Crimean War. Indeed, Gorchakov told the Austrian ambassador in October 1864 that as far as he was concerned, "past grudges had been banished".²⁰⁹ *Georealism* therefore offers a more convincing explanation. Russia preferred cooperation between the German powers to protect it against the more powerful France. However, as this became increasingly implausible, St. Petersburg chose to rely on the more powerful of these states, which in 1866 was Prussia. Consequently, it accepted an increase in Prussian power to be in its interests, making it demand no compensation for its benevolent neutrality.

French Attitude

France was the most powerful state in continental Europe in 1866. In terms of army size, economic strength, and population, France exceeded both Prussia and Austria by a wide margin.²¹⁰ French intervention on either side of the conflict could therefore decisively tip

²⁰⁶ Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman*, p. 67.

²⁰⁷ Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, pp. 685-686.

²⁰⁸ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 225.

²⁰⁹ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 216.

²¹⁰ Geoffrey Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 2.

the scale in the direction it pleased. Yet, despite its excellent bargaining position and expansionist designs, France failed to receive any compensation for Prussia's massive increase in power.²¹¹

The French attitude towards the Austro-Prussian War is the subject of substantial historical debate. Napoleon III was notoriously secretive, rarely writing his opinions down and frequently contradicting himself to his ambassadors.²¹² Constructing a clear line through his policies has consequently proven difficult. Some argue that Napoleon III was in favour of nationalist projects and therefore supported Prussia and Italy. Others argue that he was a proponent of *Realpolitik* and only prevented from supporting Austria by circumstances.²¹³ Available evidence does not warrant a firm conclusion of this debate, but the most plausible explanation lies between these two positions. Napoleon III was eager to exact compensations, but lacked a strong preference for either side, making him unable to choose.

Following a reasoning resembling *Georealism*, Bismarck was well aware of the importance of France, arguing:

Our position... however the goals, which we... set ourselves, and the whole direction, which we ought to give our policy, will be principally conditioned of France at any given moment... The consideration of France will provide... a fundamental, and in a specific moment, perhaps the deciding factor.²¹⁴

²¹¹ McMillan, *Napoleon III*, pp. 110-114.

²¹² E. Ann Pottinger, *Napoleon III and the German Crisis, 1865-1866* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 5.

²¹³ Pottinger, *Napoleon III and the German Crisis*, pp. 5-8; Alan Cassels, *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World*, pp. 69-75.

²¹⁴ Bismarck to Goltz, August 16, 1865, no. 164, Otto, Fürst von Bismarck, *Die Gesammelten Werke*, ed. Friedrich Thimme, (Berlin: O. Stolberg, 1925-1935), V, pp. 271-273, abbreviated as *GW* below.

Bismarck was consequently willing to go far to ensure French neutrality. For example, he voiced support to a European order where France would control all French-speaking territories.²¹⁵ Compensations in the Rhineland were also discussed. Although Bismarck was reluctant to commit himself to abandoning a Prussian territory, he never flatly rejected this scheme either.²¹⁶ However, Bismarck naturally sought to minimize any actual concession to France by remaining vague and non-committal in his promises. In this endeavour, he was undoubtedly very successful. Yet the French failure to derive any compensations was not primarily due to Bismarck's diplomatic skill, but Napoleon III's reaction to it.

French neutrality was vital for Prussia, so if Napoleon III had decisively pressed his case for compensations, Bismarck would have had to yield or abandoned his plans. What enabled Bismarck to remain evasive was that Napoleon III played right into his hand in being equally evasive in return.²¹⁷ When Napoleon III met with Bismarck at Biarritz in October 1865, an excellent opportunity to exact concessions from Prussia, he made a point of not expressing any desires for territories whatsoever.²¹⁸ Nor was Bismarck's allusion to France acquiring all French-speaking territories followed up. The French Foreign Minister Drouyn de Lhys simply pointed out that the offer was interesting, without taking further actions.²¹⁹ Bismarck's proposal of an alliance also met an equivocal reaction.²²⁰

²¹⁵ Lefebvre de Béhaine to Drouyn de Lhuys, September 27, 1865, *Origines*, VII, p. 89-91.

²¹⁶ Mcmillan, *Napoleon III*, pp. 100-101.

²¹⁷ Taylor, *Bismarck*, p. 80.

²¹⁸ Emile Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral* (Paris: Garnier frères, 1895-1918), VII, p. 475.

²¹⁹ Drouyn de Lhuys to Lefebvre de Béhaine, October 22, 1865, *Origines*, VII, p. 145-146.

²²⁰ Bismarck to William, October 5, 1865, *APP*, VI, p. 403-404.

Napoleon III only started making concrete demands in March 1866, when the preparations for the war were well underway. He listed Belgium, Rhenish Palatinate, Luxembourg, French Switzerland, the left bank of the Rhine, Saarbrücken, and Landau as desirable options.²²¹ Napoleon's opportunistic attempts for use the German crisis to secure long-standing French territorial claims is in accordance to *Georealism*. Unfortunately for Napoleon III, his new approach of naming all possible demands had much the same effect as not naming any. Bismarck could easily escape committing himself to one, thereby postponing his decision to a future date.²²² However, the French list of demands gives valuable insights into French policy. Firstly, it shows that France was a thoroughly opportunistic power with wide-ranging territorial demands. Other despatches underline this interpretation. In February 1866, Drouyn informed Berlin that France remained detached to the German conflict. However, it could change its behaviour solely based on "necessities of the situation" and "advantages to be gained".²²³

Napoleon III's indecision was not due to unclear aims. Belgium was without a doubt his big prize,²²⁴ and he was confident that the local population would welcome a French annexation.²²⁵ Bismarck was also more than willing to direct French plans for compensation away from Prussian territory.²²⁶ However, avoiding French control of the Low Countries, particularly the port of Antwerp, was long-standing British policy.²²⁷ Thus, in September 1865, London informed Paris that a French annexation of Belgium

²²¹ Goltz to Bismarck, March 6, 1866, *Oncken*, I, pp. 94-6.

²²² Llewellyn Woodward, *The Age of Reform, 1815-1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 299.

²²³ Drouyn de Lhuys to Benedetti, February 22, 1866, *Origines*, VII, pp. 311-312.

²²⁴ Sidney Pollard and Richard S. Tedlow, *Economic History* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 23-27.

²²⁵ Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, III, p. 110; C. A. Tamse, "The Role of Small Countries in International Politics of the 1860s: The Netherlands and Belgium in Europe," in *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae IX: Studies on the History of the Netherlands, IX, I*, ed. Schöffer (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), pp. 160-161.

²²⁶ Willard Allen Fletcher, *Mission of Vincent Benedetti to Berlin 1864-1870* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1965), p. 117.

²²⁷ Colin S. Gray, "History for Strategists: British Sea Power as a Relevant Past," in *Seapower: Theory and Practice*, ed. Geoffrey Till (London: Frank Cass, 1994), p. 26.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

would be considered “un cas de guerre”.²²⁸ This was as serious of a continental commitment as Britain was willing to make throughout the decade.²²⁹ France could still press its claims for Belgium, as Britain could probably not prevent it with its small army. Yet, doing so and thus ensuring the enmity of Britain would be very costly in the long term.

Contributing to Napoleon III’s indecision regarding compensations was his inability to choose sides in the conflict. The main reason for this was that he believed that Austria would prevail in a war due to its superior resources, but that the war would be long.²³⁰ If so, France would have plenty of time to intervene when the situation would be clearer. To facilitate such an intervention, it was necessary to keep all channels open. Napoleon III therefore negotiated with Vienna simultaneously with his talks with Berlin. As a defender of the status quo, Austria had less compensation to offer France. However, relations between Paris and Vienna were good throughout the crisis. One example of this was the French loan to Austria in November 1865. While not economically very significant,²³¹ the signals it sent about French intentions greatly worried Bismarck.²³²

As the prospect of war drew increasingly close, Bismarck became convinced that Napoleon III was not going to intervene in the war anyway. Consequently, he fended off the last French attempts for a deal to avoid giving unnecessary compensations. Instead, Napoleon III turned to Austria, and the two countries ended up signing a treaty on the 12th of June 1866. According to this agreement, France promised to maintain a policy of

²²⁸ “A casus belli”. Dotézac to Drouyn de Lhuys, September 27, 1865, *Origines*, VII, p. 91-92.

²²⁹ See Mosse, *The European Great Powers and the German Questions*; and Richard Millman, *British Foreign Policy and the coming of the Franco-Prussian War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

²³⁰ Pottinger *Napoleon III and the German Crisis*, pp. 102-103.

²³¹ Pottinger, *Napoleon III and the German Crisis*, pp. 44-45.

²³² Bismarck to Goltz, November 26, 1865, *Oncken*, I, p. 79.

neutrality. In return, Austria promised to transfer Venetia to Italy, regardless of the outcome of the war. Austria was free to make compensations on Prussia if it won, but would consult France if there were any changes in the balance of power.²³³ As A. J. P. Taylor argued, the treaty did secure Napoleon III “everything he wanted” at the cost of doing nothing.²³⁴ However, understanding Napoleon III’s motivation for this deal is impossible by looking at the German conflict alone. To do this it is necessary to turn to the other issue dominating Europe in the mid-1860s, namely the Italian Question.

The Austro-Italian War

Napoleon III had one constant aim building up to the war in 1866: supporting Italy in obtaining Venetia. As A. J. P. Taylor has argued, Venetia was “the only price for which Napoleon cared”.²³⁵ France had failed to secure this province for Italy in 1859 during the Second War of Italian Unification, but Napoleon III had sought to reverse this settlement ever since.²³⁶ This is as predicted by *Georealism*. Scholars have generally argued that Napoleon III supported Italy for sentimental reasons. Yet, the strategy made excellent sense strategically as well. Before 1859, Austria and Prussia could easily attack France on two fronts, as only the small Sardinia-Piedmont protected France’s southern borders. With Italian unification, France bordered a weak and dependent great power instead.²³⁷ Support for Italy therefore represented a continuation of the strategy Napoleon III had to abandon in 1859.

²³³ Projet de Convention secrete entre la France et l’Autriche, *Origines*, X, 27: Franco-Austrian Treaty of June 12, 1866, *Oncken*, I, 266.

²³⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 167.

²³⁵ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 161.

²³⁶ Nancy Nichols Barker, “Austria, France, and the Venetian Question, 1861-66,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 1964), pp. 145-154.

²³⁷ Roger Abasalom, *Italy Since 1800: A Nation in the Balance?* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 78.

Italy was also intent on securing Venetia for itself. Exactly as predicted by *Georealism*, the rising tensions between Austria and Prussia presented an excellent opportunity to do so.²³⁸ Given their complementary strategic interests, Italy therefore sought an alliance with Prussia. Bismarck welcomed such a development and Chief of Staff Moltke argued that an Italian alliance was essential, because it would divert the Austrian war effort.²³⁹ Napoleon III also encouraged the Italians to seek an agreement with Prussia in February 1866. In April, right before the alliance was signed, he also promised the Italians that protection in case Prussia would leave them in the lurch.²⁴⁰

Most of all, Napoleon III preferred a peaceful Austrian surrender of Venetia. Unfortunately, Austria was predictably unwilling to give up a valuable province,²⁴¹ presenting a serious obstacle in Franco-Austrian negotiations. Napoleon III made a number of proposals to overcome this impasse, most notably the Venetian-Danubian exchange. Austria would surrender Venetia to Italy and in return annex the Danubian Principalities²⁴² as compensation. However, Vienna resisted this solution,²⁴³ being reluctant to give up one of its richest provinces for a much poorer one.²⁴⁴ Nor did it help that Russia threatened with war to prevent the scheme.²⁴⁵ Other French proposals had equally serious international implications. Metternich, the Austrian ambassador to Paris complained to Napoleon III, “as to compensations, you have offered us none which would not convulse Europe”.

²³⁸ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem*, p. 26.

²³⁹ Moltke's notes on the meeting of the Crown Council, February 28, 1866, *APP*, VI, p. 618.

²⁴⁰ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 160-161.

²⁴¹ Barker, “Austria, France, and the Venetian Question, 1861-66,” pp. 145-154

²⁴² Moldavia and Wallachia, roughly the eastern part of Romania.

²⁴³ Richard B. Elrod, “Austria and the Venetian Question, 1860–1866,” *Central European History*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (June 1971), p. 154.

²⁴⁴ Bridge and Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System*, pp. 150-151.

²⁴⁵ Talleyrand to Drouyn de Lhuys, March 14, 1866, *Origines*, VII, p. 433.

When war looked imminent after the Prussian-Italian alliance, Austria said that it was willing to surrender Venetia as a part of a general European settlement. According to Vienna's proposals, it would give up Venetia to Italy, which would be turned into a federation of states by restoring the territories of the Papal State and reinstating the rulers of Modena and Tuscany.²⁴⁶ Austria would then receive Silesia from Prussia as compensation, which in turn would acquire territories in Northern Germany. French mediation could be rewarded with Belgium, and the Belgian king compensated with creating a Rhenish kingdom.²⁴⁷ This proposal was so wide-ranging, and obviously disadvantageous to Italy and Prussia, that it is doubtful whether Vienna meant it seriously. However, Napoleon III supported the plan in principle, desiring only to amend the Italian aspect.²⁴⁸ Ultimately these plans came to nothing, and Austria simply agreed to accept the cessation of Venetia to Italy as the price of French neutrality. Despite the Italian defeat in the war,²⁴⁹ France was careful to ensure that Vienna followed this agreement.²⁵⁰

Summary

A close examination of primary and secondary evidence from the Austro-Prussian War demonstrates that the *Georealist* predictions fare well. There is no doubt that the war was about supremacy in Germany. No exchange of territory took place between Austria and Prussia. Rather, the Peace of Prague rearranged Germany under a formal Prussian leadership and excluded Austria. Russia and Italy were clearly pro-Prussian, Russia

²⁴⁶ Privatschreiben des Grafen Mensdorff an den Fürsten Metternich, Vienna, April 30, 1866, no. 2603, *Quellen*, V, pp. 549-550; Projet d'allocation pour l'ouverture du Congrès, May 29, 1866, *Origines*, IX, pp. 298-303.

²⁴⁷ Privatschreiben des Grafen Mensdorff an den Grafen Moritz Esterházy, Vienna 22 April, 1866, no. 2586, *Quellen*, V, pp. 527-529.

²⁴⁸ Pottinger, *Napoleon III and the German Crisis*, pp. 115-116.

²⁴⁹ Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War*, pp. 100-123.

²⁵⁰ Pottinger, *Napoleon III and the German Crisis*, pp. 177-178.

because it believed it beneficial to its own security and Italy to take advantage of the war to gain Venetia from Austria.

Given Napoleon III's enigmatic approach, the French attitude is a bit more difficult to determine with certainty. However, the most reasonable conclusion is that he was essentially undecided about the Austro-Prussian conflict, but pro-Italian. All of this is exactly as predicted by *Georealism*. This is not to say that Napoleon III's diplomacy was perfect, indeed it was highly flawed. However, his mistake was not in his choice of alignment, but rather a failure to limit the extent of Prussia's gains or to ensure sufficient compensations. A strategy of non-alignment was the best way to ensure this regardless of the outcome of the war. Yet, Napoleon III's unwillingness to name the price for his neutrality and the speed and decisiveness of the Prussian victory made this impossible.

Other Wars and Crises

In this section, I compare *Georealist* predictions to great power behaviour during other wars and crises from 1823 to 1914. These case studies do not have the same level of historical rigour and detail as that of the German Autumn Crisis and the Austro-Prussian War, and I primarily rely on secondary evidence. However, most of the information I use is uncontroversial. All the remaining major wars during the period are investigated, meaning the Crimean War (1853-1856), the War of Italian Unification (1859), and the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). To account for non-wars, I also investigate the Oriental Crisis of 1840, and the War in Sight Crisis (1875). Poor data makes it impossible to provide formal predictions about the First World War directly from the model. However, given the importance of this conflict, I do explore some informal *Georealist* predictions of its origins, although this does not constitute a proper test.

The Crimean War

Predictions			
Cause	Prussia	Austria	Outcome
Franco-Russia hegemonic conflict being the leading European state	Neutral	Neutral	War if France could rely on British support to reach Russia

The origins of the Crimean War are highly complex, with even historians of the war finding it “bizarre”.²⁵¹ On the surface, the Franco-Russian side of the conflict was about how the Christian holy places in the Ottoman Empire should be shared.²⁵² Yet, this was hardly a conflict of sufficient importance to justify a three year long major war. Russia and Austria clearly did have significant interests dominating Balkans, but French interests were limited. Nor were there any territorial issues at stake between Russia on one side and France and Britain on the other. The best way to classify the true cause of the war is therefore in hegemonic terms. As A. J. P. Taylor argues, “Napoleon III wished to substitute [Russian hegemony] with his own hegemony”.²⁵³ France largely fulfilled its aims in the war, severely weakening Russia,²⁵⁴ breaking up the association between Russia, Austria, and Prussia,²⁵⁵ and establishing France as the leading European power.²⁵⁶ Thus, as predicted by *Georealism*, the Crimean War was essentially a hegemonic conflict between two roughly equal powers vying for predominance.

Britain’s decision to support France in the conflict is more puzzling. Palmerston’s major aim according to Schroeder was to “isolate Russia, deal her a diplomatic defeat, break up the Holy Alliance, and assert Britain’s leadership in the Eastern question”.²⁵⁷ Palmerston

²⁵¹ Goldfrank, *The Origins of the Crimean War*, p. 5.

²⁵² Candan Badem, *“The” Ottoman Crimean War: (1853 - 1856)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 64-68.

²⁵³ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 61.

²⁵⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 82.

²⁵⁵ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, p. 39; Goldfrank, *The Origins of the Crimean War*, p. 76.

²⁵⁶ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 61.

²⁵⁷ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, p. 49.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

had previously tried to break up this association at its inception in 1834.²⁵⁸ There is also no doubt that Austrian and Prussian dependence on Russia was even stronger after the revolutions of 1848-1850.²⁵⁹ However, a major war should not have been necessary to ensure this outcome, indeed, it was achieved even before war broke out. Moreover, the irony of British involvement in the Crimean War was that the Russian threat was just replaced with that of France.²⁶⁰

Allied supremacy of the sea and Russian dominance on land meant that neither side could hope to decisively defeat the other during the Crimean War. Prussian and Austrian attitudes of the conflict were therefore of vital importance to both sides:

“[T]he characteristic diplomatic pattern of the Crimean War [was]: the attempt by the two conflicting sides to involve the central Powers and so to achieve a decision. Both Prussia and Austria aimed at neutrality, Prussia because she had no interests at stake, Austria because she had too many”.²⁶¹

Schwarzenberg's successor Buol knew that Austria's precarious international position meant that war, whatever its outcome, was likely to bring Austria losses and complications. Russian designs in the Balkans were radically against Austrian interests,²⁶² but an increase in the position of Napoleon III was also fraught with risk.²⁶³ In accordance to *Georealism*, Austria persistently sought to preserve peace before the outbreak of war, most notably through the 'Vienna Note'.²⁶⁴ However, both sides pressured Austria to join.

²⁵⁸ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 48.

²⁵⁹ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 2-23

²⁶⁰ Andrew Lambert, *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 342.

²⁶¹ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 54.

²⁶² Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, pp. 166-168.

²⁶³ Badem, “The” *Ottoman Crimean War*, pp. 66-67.

²⁶⁴ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, pp. 41-82.

Particularly serious was the French threat of supporting revolutions in Italy if Vienna did not oppose Russia, a threat Buol took seriously.²⁶⁵ This, coupled with Buol's desire to establish a moderate peace, increasingly drove him into the western camp, contrary to *Georealist* expectations.

The first instance of Austria's pro-western stance came when it rejected Russian offers of buying Austrian neutrality through promises of protection and joint protectorates in the Balkans.²⁶⁶ After this, a number of Austrian efforts hostile to Russia followed, in order to induce St. Petersburg to sue for peace. Most notable among these were sending Russia an ultimatum to leave the Danubian Principalities and mobilizing its army to make Russia come to terms under the Four Power Plan.²⁶⁷ Ultimately, Austria also signed an alliance treaty with the western powers, although it did not actually join the war. To increase pressure on Russia and secure itself in Germany, Austria also formed an alliance with Prussia.²⁶⁸ However, Austria was in no way unequivocally pro-western. Its efforts were primarily in order to establish peace, and it made a consistent effort to moderate British and French war goals, particularly through the four-point plan.²⁶⁹ Vienna was also always extremely reluctant to join the fighting.²⁷⁰ Overall its policy is best described as pro-western, however, as Austrian efforts clearly hurt Russia. In particular, the threat of Austrian intervention contributed to Russia's defeat as it had to tie down large forces in Poland, which constrained the Russian war effort in Crimea.²⁷¹

²⁶⁵ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, pp. 103-104.

²⁶⁶ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, pp. 139-141; Paul W. Schroeder, "Bruck versus Buol: The Dispute over Austrian Eastern Policy, 1853-1855," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (June 1968), p. 204.

²⁶⁷ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, pp. 178-181, 200-231.

²⁶⁸ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, pp. 166-168.

²⁶⁹ Gavin B. Henderson, "The Diplomatic Revolution of 1854: I The Four Points," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (October 1937), pp. 22-50.

²⁷⁰ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 80.

²⁷¹ Bernadotte E. Schmitt, "The Diplomatic Preliminaries of the Crimean War," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (October 1919), p. 60.

Berlin found it much easier to maintain its neutrality, as it had no interest in the Balkans or the Black Sea. Friedrich Wilhelm IV described Prussia's position as "not vacillating and indecisive neutrality, but sovereign neutrality - genuinely impartial, independent and self-confident".²⁷² Consequently, Berlin guarded itself carefully against any attempt to drag it into the war, particularly by Austria. The Austro-Prussian alliance was in Berlin's eyes for example primarily intended to restrain Austria in the Danubian Principalities.²⁷³ Similarly, after the Austrian mobilization in October 1854, Prussia offered to extend this alliance on the condition that Austria did not ally with the western powers.²⁷⁴ However, Prussia also found it hard to remain neutral in the conflict. During the final months of the war, Friedrich Wilhelm IV strongly advised the new Tsar Alexander II to make peace. He also warned that Prussia did not want to join the war, but might be forced to if France threatened to attack on the Rhine.²⁷⁵

The causes of the Crimean War were highly complex, but can most usefully be described as a limited hegemonic conflict between France and Russia. Prussia pursued a strict policy of neutrality in conformity with *Georealism*. Austria's pro-western attitude is however in contradiction to *Georealist* predictions.

²⁷² Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 63.

²⁷³ Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War*, p. 153.

²⁷⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 69.

²⁷⁵ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 80-81.

The Italian War Of 1859

Predictions			
Cause	Russia	Prussia	Outcome
Austro-French regional rivalry over minor Italian states	Neutral	Supported Austria reluctantly	War after 1861, France backing down before

Today the Italian War of 1859 is most famous for leading to the unification of Italy. However, the main fighting parties were France and Austria, making the conflict a major war as well.²⁷⁶ Austria had enjoyed a relatively loose dominance of the Peninsula since 1815,²⁷⁷ and France wanted to challenge this by promoting Italian nationalism.²⁷⁸ To some extent, this policy might have been for personal reasons, but Napoleon III also expected the new Italian state to be dependent on France.²⁷⁹

France was much stronger than Austria throughout the 19th century, but war would bring the risk of intervention by Austria's ally Prussia, which would balance the scales. Nominally, this would not be a problem. The German Confederation did not cover Lombardy and Venetia, so Prussia was under no formal obligation to intervene.²⁸⁰ The prospect of a decisive Austrian defeat could still lead to Prussian intervention on the Rhine, however. In accordance to *Georealism*, this was a major worry of Napoleon III.²⁸¹ Yet, he hoped that Berlin's hatred of Austria after Olmütz would prevent this outcome.²⁸² To make Prussian intervention even less likely, Napoleon III also sought Russian help to

²⁷⁶ Frank J. Coppa, *The Origins of the Italian Wars of Independence* (London: Longman, 1992), p. 93.

²⁷⁷ David Laven, "Austria's Italian Policy Reconsidered: Revolution and Reform in Restoration Italy," *Modern Italy*, Vol. 2 (August 1997), pp. 3-33.

²⁷⁸ Mcmillan, *Napoleon III*, p. 84.

²⁷⁹ Derek Beales and Eugenio F. Biagini, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 151-152.

²⁸⁰ Arnold Blumberg, *A Carefully Planned Accident: The Italian War of 1859* (London: Associated University Press, 1990), p. 88.

²⁸¹ He emphasized in March 1859 the importance of "keeping my enemies divided", a clear reference to Austria and Prussia given the circumstances, see Ernst d'Hauterive, *The Second Empire and Its Downfall: The Correspondence of Napoleon III and his Cousin Prince Napoleon*, trans. by Herbert Wilson (London: Hutchinson & CO), p. 128.

²⁸² Arnold Blumberg, "Russian Policy and the Franco-Austrian War of 1859," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (June 1954), p. 137.

deter Prussia.²⁸³ He also appealed directly to Berlin, but the Prussians rebuffed his offers.²⁸⁴ Nor did Prussia show any inclination towards sacrificing its alliance with Austria to make another bid for supremacy in Northern Germany.²⁸⁵ Although not entirely sure about Prussia's stance, Napoleon III ultimately made a gamble and went to war.

Napoleon III's calculations were only partially correct. Prussia never intervened in the conflict,²⁸⁶ and Austro-Prussian tensions made Vienna reluctant to call on Berlin for support.²⁸⁷ However, after Austrian defeats at the battles of Magenta and Solferino, Prussia mobilized. Fearing a Prussian invasion on the Rhine, France pulled out before achieving its aims of entirely expelling Austria from Italy.²⁸⁸ As historian Holborn argues, "[t]he threat of a Franco-German war that the Prussian mobilization posed was undoubtedly the chief cause for [Napoleon III's] direct approach to Austria" to end the war".²⁸⁹ Both the Prussian mobilization and its effect on France are exactly as predicted by *Georealism*.

Russian policies during the war were predominantly neutral,²⁹⁰ as predicted by *Georealism*. Eager to secure as much support as possible, Napoleon III invited Russia to join his planned war against Austria, offering Galicia as a reward. Alexander II declined to join any war, but offered to amass 150,000 soldiers on the border with Austria, but at a

²⁸³ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 109-110.

²⁸⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 112.

²⁸⁵ Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War*, p. 15.

²⁸⁶ Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 511.

²⁸⁷ Friedjung, *The Struggle for Supremacy in Germany*, pp. 11-13.

²⁸⁸ Paul R. Hensel, "The Evolution of Franco-German Rivalry," in *Great Power Rivalries*, ed. William R. Thompson (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 97-98.

²⁸⁹ Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany Vol. 3*, p. 135.

²⁹⁰ G. J. Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (March 1977), pp. 121-144.

hefty price. In return, he demanded the abrogation of the Black Sea Clauses imposed on Russia after the Crimean War two years earlier and a French guarantee against both Britain and Germany.²⁹¹ Napoleon was actually willing to agree to these terms, but was stopped by his Foreign Minister Walewski. The outcome was thus simply a secret treaty where Russia promised neutrality.²⁹² Later that year, Austria seems to have been given assurances of Russian neutrality as well, allowing it to concentrate its forces in Italy.²⁹³ Historian Blumberg argues that what made Russia shrink from an alliance with France was an increased interest in cooperation with Prussia.²⁹⁴ When Prussia mobilized its army, Russia did nothing to deter it from entering the war, but rather put pressure on Paris to sue for peace.²⁹⁵ Thus, while Austria's ungrateful behaviour during the Crimean War is generally believed to have made Russia vehemently anti-Austrian,²⁹⁶ there are no traces of this in actual Russian behaviour.

While the *Georealist* prediction that the war should not take place before 1861 is wrong, the other predictions are correct. Firstly, France clearly hoped that Prussia would not intervene, not an implausible assumption given that the Austro-Prussian alliance was beginning to crumble. Secondly, Prussia was pro-Austrian, and France backed out as soon as Prussian intervention looked certain. Lastly, Russia was essentially neutral to the conflict.

²⁹¹ Blumberg, "Russian Policy and the Franco-Austrian War of 1859," pp. 138-139.

²⁹² B. H. Sumner, "The Secret Franco-Russian Treaty of 3 March 1859," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 48, No. 189 (January 1933), pp. 65-83.

²⁹³ Thurston, "The Italian War of 1859 and the Reorientation of Russian Foreign Policy," p. 136.

²⁹⁴ Blumberg, "Russian Policy and the Franco-Austrian War of 1859," p. 140.

²⁹⁵ Blumberg, "Russian Policy and the Franco-Austrian War of 1859," pp. 149-151.

²⁹⁶ John Gooch, *The Unification of Italy* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 27.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

The Franco-Prussian War

Predictions				
Cause	Russia	Austria	Italy	Outcome
Franco-Prussian regional conflict over South German states and hegemonic conflict over being the leading power in Europe	Supported Prussia, deterring Austrian entry	Supported France, deterred from entering the war by Russia	Supported France	Prussia going to war with France

The Franco-Prussian War had its immediate cause in a Hohenzollern²⁹⁷ candidature to the Spanish throne.²⁹⁸ However, even Bismarck later admitted that this incident was only used as a pretext. In reality, the war was the final stage of the Wars of German Unification and over which state would become the predominant continental power. Bismarck wanted to complete the unification by annexing the still independent Southern German states. Such a development was anathema to Napoleon III,²⁹⁹ who wanted to reverse the whole process to maintain French pre-eminence. While the war also concluded with a German annexation of the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, this played little part in the war's origins.

Bismarck believed the French to be a formidable foe, making it imperative to avoid any great power interventions on the side of France.³⁰⁰ In accordance with *Georealist* predictions, the power most likely to do this was Austria-Hungary.³⁰¹ Still not reconciled to its defeat, it seemed quite likely that it would use a Franco-Prussian war to reverse the

²⁹⁷ Prussian royal house

²⁹⁸ Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France 1870–1871* (New York: Methuen, 1981), pp. 48-57.

²⁹⁹ Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War*, pp. 23-25.

³⁰⁰ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 171-200.

³⁰¹ Austria turned into the dual Monarchy Austria-Hungary after the Ausgleich of 1867, see Robert William Seton-Watson, "The Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich of 1867," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 19, No. 53/54 (1939-1940), pp. 123-140.

Chapter V: Major War

settlement of 1866. Serious talks were also held between Austria-Hungary and France about an alliance, although this never came to fruition.³⁰²

France also attempted to recruit Russia to its cause, but these efforts quickly came to nought.³⁰³ Instead, St. Petersburg took a decidedly pro-Prussian stance in the conflict. When Bismarck before the outbreak of the war enquired if Russia would support Prussia in the case of Austrian intervention, he received clear support. Exactly as predicted by *Georealism*, Russia promised to concentrate an army of 300,000 men on the border to deter Austria and move into Austrian Galicia if war were declared.³⁰⁴ Such clear support made Austrian intervention futile, because Russia was much more powerful than Austria, compelling Vienna to a neutral policy.³⁰⁵ Bismarck was thus presented with a unique opportunity for defeating France.

Italy did not intervene on the French side, contrary to the predictions of *Georealism*. France had generally been supportive of Italian unification. However, strong clericalist currents in France compelled Napoleon III to save the independence of the Pope by sending a French garrison to Rome.³⁰⁶ When Napoleon III requested Italian assistance against Prussia in the years before 1870, the Italian government unsurprisingly named Rome as its price.³⁰⁷ With an increasingly fragile domestic position, Napoleon III was

³⁰² Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 185, 191-197.

³⁰³ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem*, pp. 34-35.

³⁰⁴ Telegram an den Gefandten in München, Freiherrn von Werthern, Berlin, 17 July 1870, *GW*, 6b p. 389; Erlaß an den Gefandten in Petersburg, Heinrich VII Prinzen Reuß, Berlin, 26, July, 1870, *GW*, 6b, pp. 422-427.

³⁰⁵ Mosse, *The European Powers and the German Question*, p. 306.

³⁰⁶ Roger Lawrence Williams, *The Mortal Napoleon III* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 106-108, 124-125.

³⁰⁷ Michael Foot, "The Origins of the Franco-Prussian War and the Remaking of Germany," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 10: The Zenith of European Power, 1830-70*, ed. J. P. T. Bury (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 599-600.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

unwilling to pay this price.³⁰⁸ Even when war broke out, Victor Emmanuel II, the Italian king, wanted to intervene on the French side, believing that France would offer Rome as a gift in return. However, his more cautious ministers restrained him.³⁰⁹ An alliance might eventually have developed, had it not been for the sudden decisive French defeat at Sedan.³¹⁰ Instead, Italy chose to annex Rome as soon as the French garrison withdrew.³¹¹

Russian and Austro-Hungarian behaviour fits *Georealist* expectations exactly. This provides a crucial piece of evidence for *Georealism*, given the specific nature of the predictions. Italian behaviour does not conform to *Georealist* predictions, although this was almost certainly because of Napoleon III's inability to offer it Rome. Given that France never looked close to victory in the war and the defeat caused the fall of the empire, this was almost certainly an irrational act.

The Rhine Crisis

Predictions			
Cause	Russia	Austria	Outcome
Franco-Prussian conflict over Rhineland	Neutral	Supported Prussia	France backing down, marginally

In the 1830s, France attempted to increase its influence in the Middle East by supporting Egypt in its fight against the Ottoman Empire.³¹² However, the other great powers acted in unison to save the fledgeling Ottoman Empire and defeated the Egyptians. Humiliated by its impotence in supporting its ally the events took a surprising twist, with France

³⁰⁸ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 195.

³⁰⁹ Gooch, *The Unification of Italy*, pp. 36-37.

³¹⁰ Beales and Biagini, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy*, p. 150.

³¹¹ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem*, p. 18.

³¹² Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 736-756.

turning its attention to Germany.³¹³ This culminated in an infamous speech by the French Prime Minister Thiers, where he argued that French borders should be expanded to its “natural frontiers”.³¹⁴ In accordance with *Georealist* predictions, this was generally taken to mean the Rhine, which had been the French border between 1795 and 1814.³¹⁵

The Rhine Crisis was the perhaps closest the European great powers came to war between 1815 and 1848. It created great excitement in Germany, causing a great surge in nationalism.³¹⁶ Yet, despite Thiers’ public statement, France never took any practical moves to expand its borders. Paris’ problem after 1815 was that it was weaker than Austria and Prussia combined. Any aggressive move thus depended on division among the German powers. In 1840, it quickly became evident that such a division was not forthcoming, confirming *Georealist* predictions. Prussia quickly mobilized its forces, and although the Austrian response was slower, the two German powers remained cooperative.³¹⁷ Seeing no prospect of victory, France backed down and the belligerent Thiers was forced from office in October the same year.³¹⁸

As expected by *Georealism*, no war broke out between France and Prussia in 1840. Austria was pro-Prussian and the two German powers combined were stronger than France.

³¹³ Jürg Ulbert, “France and German Dualism, 1756-1871,” in *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe: From "Hereditary Enemies" to Partners*, ed. Carine Germond and Henning Türk (New York: Macmillan, 2008), p. 44.

³¹⁴ Schulze, *The Course of German Nationalism*, p. 64.

³¹⁵ Peter Sahlins, “Natural Frontiers Revisited: France’s Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 95, No. 5 (December 1990), pp. 1423-1451.

³¹⁶ James M. Brophy, “The Rhine Crisis of 1840 and German Nationalism: Chauvinism, Skepticism, and Regional Reception,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 85, No. 1 (March 2013), pp. 1-35.

³¹⁷ Alan Sked, “The Metternich System, 1815-1848,” in *Europe’s Balance of Power 1815-1848*, ed. Alan Sked (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 118-119.

³¹⁸ David H. Pinkney, *Decisive Years in France, 1840-1847* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 131-132.

The 'War in Sight' Crisis

Predictions				
Cause	Russia	Austria	Italy	Outcome
Franco-German territorial conflict over Alsace-Lorraine and hegemonic conflict over being the leading power in Europe	Supported France	Supported Germany	Supported Germany	Germany deterred from entering the war by Russian support of France

The 'War in Sight' Crisis of 1875 was a complex diplomatic confrontation, whose true meaning has eluded scholars for 140 years. Historian James Stone names 14 different strands of interpretation of the incident, not including his own.³¹⁹ The crisis got its name from an article in the semi-official Berlin newspaper *Post*. In the article, it was suggested that Germany might launch a preventive war against France, whose military had recovered unexpectedly quickly after its defeat in 1870-1871.³²⁰ Bismarck always vehemently denied any such plans.³²¹ Knowing this for sure is impossible, however, particularly as Bismarck was notoriously self-serving and never eager to admit mistakes.³²² It is also clear that the idea of a preventive attack to avoid a French war of revenge when it had rearmend enjoyed widespread support, especially in military circles.³²³

While the origins of the 'War in Sight' Crisis are controversial, its consequences are not. Bismarck's efforts to use the crisis to portray France as the aggressor due to its rearmament failed.³²⁴ Instead, the other great powers responded in accordance to *Georealism* by showing a genuine concern about the prospect of another Franco-Prussian

³¹⁹ James Stone, *The War Scare of 1875: Bismarck and Europe in the Mid-1870s* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010), pp. 18-33.

³²⁰ Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem*, p. 41

³²¹ Bismarck, *Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman Vol. I*, p. 252.

³²² John Bew, *Realpolitik: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 227.

³²³ Stone, *The War Scare of 1875*, pp. 22-23.

³²⁴ Winifred Taffs, "The War Scare of 1875 (I)," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 9, No. 26 (December 1930), pp. 343-344.

War.³²⁵ Their reaction was also markedly different from what it had been in 1870. Both Britain and Russia sent a stern message to Bismarck that any further German gains on France would be unacceptable.³²⁶ The hostile reaction led to what historian Pflanze called the greatest diplomatic defeat in Bismarck's career.³²⁷ German diplomacy also became markedly more conservative in aims and cautious in methods in the wake of the crisis.³²⁸

The Austrian Foreign Minister Andrassy was markedly sceptical about any prospect of Germany increasing its power further.³²⁹ Some sources also report that he welcomed the Anglo-Russian intervention with glee.³³⁰ Yet, he refused British and Russian offers of joining their warning to Bismarck.³³¹ Instead, Andrassy conformed to *Georealism* by wanting to use the crisis to replace the League of Three Emperors with an exclusive Austro-German alliance.³³² To do this, he was careful not to make any action to anger Bismarck, while at the same time not encouraging a preventive war.³³³ Italy pursued a strategy similar to Austria-Hungary by being careful not to associate itself with Britain and Russia in order not to anger Germany.³³⁴ The weight both countries placed on ties with Germany and Bismarck only needed their benevolent neutrality in a Franco-German war, means that both countries can be described as pro-German in the crisis. However, both were clearly veering towards a neutral stance.

³²⁵ Stone, *The War Scare of 1875*, pp. 249-272.

³²⁶ Janorschke, *Bismarck, Europe und die 'Krieg-in-Sicht' Krise von 1875* (Paderborn: Fredinand Schöningh, 2010), pp. 396-413.

³²⁷ Otto Pflanze, *Bismarck and the Development of Germany, Volume II: The Period of Consolidation, 1871-1880* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 272.

³²⁸ William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), pp. 52-53.

³²⁹ Stone, *The War Scare of 1875*, pp. 263-264.

³³⁰ Otto Pflanze, *Bismarck and the Development of Germany*, II, p. 491.

³³¹ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, pp. 48-49.

³³² Janorschke, *Bismarck, Europe und die 'Krieg-in-Sicht'-Krise von 1875*, p. 418.

³³³ Stone, *The War Scare of 1875*, p. 265.

³³⁴ Janorschke, *Bismarck, Europe und die 'Krieg-in-Sicht'-Krise von 1875*, pp. 422-423.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

The 'War in Sight' Crisis proceeded much like predicted by *Georealism*. The outbreak of war between Paris and Berlin in 1875 would have had the likely outcome of eliminating France as a major power. Implications of this to the European balance of power would have been radical, which explain the hostility of other great powers. Russia's complete turnaround since 1870 is particularly noteworthy in this respect. Reluctant Austro-German support to Germany is as expected from *Georealism*. The only point where *Georealism* fails is that Italy supported Germany, rather than France.

The First World War

The CINC scores give a poor picture of the distribution of power in the build-up to the First World War, as it drastically overstates Russian capabilities. Deriving meaningful predictions from *Georealism* is therefore impossible. However, given the importance of the war I do look at two key *Georealist* prediction of its origins. Firstly, the war should arise from a combination of Franco-German systemic conflict and Austro-Russian regional conflict over the Balkans. Secondly, Germany should Austrian defection and Austria fear German hegemony.

The First World War is very complex in its origins,³³⁵ with the historical narrative tending to support a wide range of arguments and theories.³³⁶ A short case study thus cannot possibly give justice to all the various factors that contributed to the outbreak of the war. However, I will highlight some implications of *Georealism* to the origins of the war, which the literature largely ignores.

³³⁵ For a summary of the literature, see Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War*.

³³⁶ Copeland, *The Origins of Major War*, p. 56.

Austria-Hungary played a vital role in German war planning.³³⁷ For the Schlieffen plan to succeed Germany had to concentrate most of its army in the west, leaving Austria to face the brunt of the Russian offensive.³³⁸ Despite Austria's weakness, Germany could not have made its bid for European hegemony without the Dual Alliance. Historian Farrar argues, "Germany might indeed have surrendered if it had not been able to count on Austria-Hungary – but then it would probably not have gone to war".³³⁹ Thus, preserving Austria-Hungary as a great power ally became "a major foreign policy goal for Germany".³⁴⁰

German war aims in 1914 were clearly hegemonic.³⁴¹ This caused the basic problem that Berlin depended on Austria-Hungary's support, but Vienna had no interest in Berlin's hegemonic aims.³⁴² The historical record supports this intuition. Austria-Hungary's support of Germany in crises started by Berlin was tepid, particularly in the Agadir and Moroccan Crisis,³⁴³ despite Vienna's dependence on the Dual Alliance. The fact that the First World War started in a Balkan Crisis where Austria-Hungary thought its survival was at stake is thus no accident.³⁴⁴

³³⁷ Annika Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke and the Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 82.

³³⁸ Terence Zuber, *Inventing the Schlieffen Plan: German War Planning 1871-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 141-146.

³³⁹ J. J. Farrar, Jr., "The Strategy of the Central Powers, 1914-1917," in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War*, ed. Hew Strachan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 28.

³⁴⁰ James Joll and Gordon Martel, *The Origins of the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 68.

³⁴¹ John H. Maurer, *The Outbreak of the First World War: Strategic Planning, Crisis Decision Making and Deterrence Failure* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), p. 97.

³⁴² John H. Maurer, "Field Marshal Conrad von Hötendorf and the Outbreak of the First World War," in *Personalities, War and Diplomacy: Essays in International History*, ed. T. G. Otte and C. Pagedas (London: Frank Cass, 1997), pp. 59-60.

³⁴³ David Stevenson, *Armaments and the Coming of War: Europe, 1904-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 74-75.

³⁴⁴ Gordon Martel, *Origins of the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 4.

Summary of Results

TABLE 5.8: Summary of Results

Incident	Cause	Prussia	Austria	France	Russia	Italy
German Autumn Crisis, 1850						
Predictions	<u>Regional</u>	-	-	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Austria</u>	-
Empirical Evidence	<u>Regional</u>	-	-	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Austria</u>	-
Austro-Prussian War, 1866						
Predictions	<u>Regional</u>	-	-	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Prussia</u>	<u>Prussia</u>
Empirical Evidence	<u>Regional</u>	-	-	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Prussia</u>	<u>Prussia</u>
Crimean War, 1853-6						
Predictions	<u>Systemic</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	-	-	-
Empirical Evidence	<u>Systemic</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	-	-	-
Italian Unification, 1859						
Predictions	<u>Regional</u>	<u>Austria</u>	-	-	<u>Neutral</u>	
Empirical Evidence	<u>Regional</u>	<u>Austria</u>	-	-	<u>Neutral</u>	
Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1						
Predictions	<u>Regional/</u> <u>Systemic</u>	-	<u>France</u>	-	<u>Prussia</u>	<i>France</i>
Empirical Evidence	<u>Regional/</u> <u>Systemic</u>	-	<u>France</u>	-	<u>Prussia</u>	<i>Neutral</i>
Rhine Crisis, 1840						
Predictions	<u>Territorial</u>	-	<u>Prussia</u>	-	Neutral	
Empirical Evidence	<u>Territorial</u>	-	<u>Prussia</u>	-	?	
'War in Sight' Crisis, 1875						
Predictions	<u>Systemic</u>	-	<u>Germany</u>	-	<u>France</u>	<i>France</i>
Empirical Evidence	<u>Systemic</u>	-	<u>Germany</u>	-	<u>France</u>	<i>Germany</i>
Correct	7/7	2/2	4/4	2/2	5/5	1/3
Total	7/7			16/18		

Table 5.8: This table summarizes the main Georealist predictions, and compare them to the historical record. Correct predictions are underlined and incorrect predictions are given in italics.

Table 5.8 gives the summary of all the cases. The instances where the empirical evidence supported *Georealism* are underlined, while contrary evidence is put in italic. Overall, the predictions of the theory clearly receive strong support from the empirical evidence, both in terms of causes and interventions. While other realist theories may be able to explain the causes of some of these wars and the behaviour of third party great powers, the ability to predict so many wars with a high level of accuracy in such a rigorous way is unique. Indeed, most realist does not attempt at explaining the timing of individual wars.

Chapter V: Major War

Comparing the most similar cases provides further evidence for *Georealism*. Prussia backed down during the German Autumn Crisis in 1850 due to Russian support to Austria. Conversely, when Russia supported to Berlin in 1866, Prussia went to war. Most other factors were constant between the two incidents, particularly the regional conflict over the minor German states and the participants. The only other major change was that Prussia was a lot stronger compared to Austria in 1866 than it had been in 1850. However, this cannot have been decisive, as Prussia believed that it could defeat Austria individually in 1850 anyway. Similarly, Russian support of Prussia during the Franco-Prussian War was of vital importance. It is impossible to determine with certainty that Bismarck intended to go to war with France during the 'War in Sight' Crisis. Nevertheless, the fact that Russia's hostile reaction to rumours of a German attack had a decisive effect on Bismarck's behaviour for the next 15 years is uncontroversial. The coordinated Austro-Prussian resistance to France during the Rhine Crisis of 1840 also forced France to back down. Conversely, France went to war with Austria in Italy in 1859 only after believing that Prussia would not intervene. When this proved to be false, France withdrew from the conflict before achieving its full aims.

Conclusion

Major war is a complex phenomenon. Predictions about war have therefore tended to be vague and indeterminate. This chapter presented the *Georealist* model of war to derive more detailed predictions, by arguing that major war takes place when gains are potentially greater than costs and victory is expected. Territorial, regional, and hegemonic conflicts can all bring sufficient gains to enable major war. Expected victory always depends on the distribution of power and willingness of all great powers to intervene in the conflicts. Usually, great powers tend to support the defending state, as they do not

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

want the stronger aggressor to increase its power further. However, the aggressor might find support among great powers that have an interest in allying with it or have other conflicts with the defending state they want to settle.

To evaluate this argument, I use two empirical tests. Firstly, I use the model to predict the timing of major wars in the European great power system from 1823 to 1914. The Crimean War, Austro-Prussian War, Franco-Prussian War, and the First World War all fell within the narrow intervals predicted by *Georealism*. In addition, the Second Italian War of Unification occurred only two years before predicted. Secondly, I test whether the positions of other great powers were as expected in all the wars and three additional crises. In 16 out of 18 incidents, this was the case.

Using a simple and general theory to explain such a rare phenomenon as major war is the most important contribution of the chapter. In addition, a number of implications follow from the *Georealist* theory of major war. Firstly, pure territorial conflicts are rare between great powers. Such wars are negative sum games, meaning that the losses of the defeated state are greater than the gains of the victors. Hence, territorial wars are unlikely to bring sufficient gains to pay for the war, unless fighting the war is relatively cheap. Regional wars, contests over influence of larger territories controlled by minor powers, are much more likely to lead to major wars, as these minor powers can provide the gains. Secondly, any aggressor must always consider the power and inclination of all other great powers when choosing to go to war, because the outcome of the war depends on their choice to intervene or not. Consequently, no wars in multipolar systems are truly bilateral in a broader sense of the term.

[VI]

Conclusion

*“Meine Karte von Afrika liegt in Europa. Hier liegt
Rußland, und hier - nach links deutend - liegt Frankreich,
und wir sind in der Mitte”¹*

Otto von Bismarck

My dissertation had the goal of developing *Georealism*, a new theory of great power politics in multipolar systems. Based on the assumption that great powers face a threat from both neighbours and potential hegemon, I explained the balancing behaviour of continental great powers, offshore balancing, great power alliance choices, and major war. Four tasks remain. The first is to settle whether *Georealism* delivers on its promise

¹ “My map of Africa lies in Europe. Here is Russia, and here... is France, and we are in the middle”, Eugen Wolf, *Vom Fürsten Bismarck on seinem Haus: Tagebuchblätter* (Berlin: Egon Fleischel & CO, 1904), p. 16.

to offer a clear and rigorous theory with a high level of explanatory power. To do this, I compare its main theoretical contributions and predictive power to those of competing theories. Secondly, I explore the limitations of *Georealism* and areas of further research. The third task is to analyse the applicability of *Georealism* to systems beyond 18th and 19th century Europe; particularly its contemporary relevance. Finally, I outline some policy implications following from *Georealism* in an increasingly multipolar modern world.

Explanatory Power

My goal was to create a simple yet extensive theory making determinate, falsifiable, and accurate predictions about great power politics. These standards were set high for a reason. Many theories on great power behaviour already exist, such as classical realism, defensive realism, offensive realism, neoclassical realism, and balance of threat theory. The wealth of theories makes the realist research project hard to test, as realists take opposite sides on almost every major question.² Consequently, any new theory needs to provide important new insights and explain new phenomena to stand out and contribute. Does *Georealism* fulfil this requirement? To assess this, I summarize the main arguments and innovations of each chapter and compare these to the extant literature.

Chapter II explains why great powers sometimes balance, but at other times bandwagon when facing potential hegemons. This question has been the most central debate dividing realists. Scholars disagree about why states bandwagon, what states balance with or

² John A. Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Chapter VI: Conclusion

bandwagon against, and which strategy is the more prevalent.³ Chapter II offers a unifying explanation to this problem. Understanding bandwagoning requires looking beyond the dyadic relations between the great power and the potential hegemon. This is because great powers also face a threat from neighbours that compete for the same resources. Full balancing only takes place when the threat from neighbours is negligible. Conversely, great powers bandwagon when neighbours are much more threatening than the potential hegemon. If both threats are high, great powers divide their resources with a strategy of partial balancing. Austrian responses to France between 1683 and 1797 followed this pattern closely. The attention devoted to neighbours therefore explains most underbalancing occurring in the international system. *Georealism* consequently provides a clear, simple, and realistic theory of great power responses to potential hegemons.

In chapter III, I explain the behaviour of offshore states. A main implication of the previous chapter is that the threat from neighbours may compel great powers into strong alliances with the potential hegemon. Such alliances threaten offshore states, directly by enabling increased spending in naval power, or indirectly by permitting hegemonic bids. Consequently, the best strategy for offshore states in multipolar systems is preventing strong continental alliances from forming.⁴ Isolationism is only appropriate balancing among the continental powers is automatic, an outcome unlikely unless there are two offshore states. Balancing is necessary only when the offshore state is unable to prevent strong alliances or hegemonic bids. Consequently, *Georealism* bridges the two distinct strands of the offshore balancing literature and describes an entirely new form of behaviour between the two. While the point that offshore states can rely on preventing

³ Vasquez, *The Power of Power*, pp. 253-255; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), pp. 162-163; Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 72-107.

⁴ See footnote 18 page 110.

continental alliances has escaped the literature, past offshore states have pursued this strategy. Britain's behaviour between 1867 and 1905 demonstrates this, as it almost consistently acted to prevent strong continental alliances from forming. The theory also predicts which alliances Britain prevented and by what method.

Chapter IV explains great power alliance choices. Unlike the hegemonic threat, the threat from neighbours does not emanate from one source, but many. Nor is the magnitude of this threat given. By choosing allies, great powers also determine which states ultimately threaten them. Allying with a neighbour takes away the threat it poses, but at the cost of becoming enemies with that state's neighbours instead. Analysing this process enables estimating the utility of all alliances and consequently predicting individual great power behaviour. In the empirical section, I use a game theory model to predict 89% of European great power alignments from 1823 to 1913. No competing work offers equally numerous, detailed and accurate predictions. Moreover, by arguing that alliances work against both hostile neighbours and potential hegemons, the chapter bridges a number of different views on alliance scholarship together.

Lastly, chapter V offers a general *Georealist* explanation of major war. Most realist scholarship has focused exclusively on hegemonic wars. While such wars are very important, many major wars are fought over smaller stakes with a more limited set of participants.⁵ To explain all forms of major war, I analyse both what conflicts enable sufficient gains and which conditions make aggressors expect victory. In the empirical section, I predict the timing of all major wars in Europe between 1823 and 1914. Using the alliance model from the previous chapter, I also predict most third party great powers'

⁵ Robert Endicott Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

attitude to the conflict. Again, providing such detailed and accurate predictions constitute a valuable contribution to the realist literature on war.

On balancing, offshore balancing, alliance choice, and major war, *Georealism* provides important new theoretical and empirical insights. Its explanatory power is also high. Indeed, it consistently predicts great power behaviour with an accuracy above 80% in every chapter,⁶ using a variety of methods. No other realist theories to my knowledge offers similarly numerous, detailed, and accurate predictions on such a wide range of topics. The number and precision of the predictions make *Georealism* easily falsifiable, contributing to making realism a clearly progressive research project.⁷ Despite increasing the explanatory power of realism, *Georealism* is no more complex than established theories in terms of input. The theory is based on two factors, power and geography, and the assumption that great powers are rational, unitary, security-maximizing actors. All of these are widely shared by other theories.⁸

Limitations and Further Research

The perhaps most significant limitation of *Georealism* is its reliance on relatively strong assumptions about rationality and information. While the distinction between *Georealist* assumptions and those of other realist theories is not as large as it seems, it is a bigger problem for *Georealism* if the assumptions are not accurate. This is because one of the main contributions of the theory is its more detailed and accurate predictions. Accounting

⁶ Chapter II: 6 out of 7 predictions correct. Chapter III: 10 out of 12 predictions correct. Chapter IV: 1015 out of 1175 point predictions correct. Chapter V: 20 out of 23 predictions correct. Average chapter accuracy is 86%.

⁷ John A. Vasquez, "The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs: An Appraisal of Neotraditional Research on Waltz's Balancing Proposition," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (December 1997), pp. 899-912.

⁸ Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 21-26.

for limited information and rationality is possible, but the less strict the assumptions are, the more closely the explanatory power of *Georealism* will resemble that of other realist theories. In such case, the main contributions of *Georealism* will be its most basic lessons. This is that great powers face threats from both hostile neighbours and potential hegemon, offshore states primarily seek to prevent strong continental alliances, geography has a systemic impact on alliance choices, and the possibility of going to war depends on the alliance preferences of third party great powers. These lessons in themselves do constitute an important contribution to realist scholarship, however.

Throughout the dissertation, I have strived to subject *Georealism* to the most rigorous empirical testing possible. A large number of predictions have been derived from the theory and compared to empirical data using both descriptive statistics and historical case studies. The most important limitation regarding the empirical testing is the lack of any multivariate regression analysis. Consequently, I cannot rule out that a confounding variable inflates the explanatory power of the theory, even if the long sample and consistently high accuracy of *Georealism* makes this unlikely. Moreover, it becomes difficult to compare the explanatory power of *Georealism* to that of non-realist theories. Unfortunately, the lack of good data on most intervening variables, such as investments and trade limits the utility of multivariate regression for this sample. Thus, the best way to solve this problem is to apply *Georealism* to new systems with better data.

The last major limitation is the fact that *Georealism* is only tested on the European great power system. Both the general nature of the assumptions and the long duration of the sample suggests that *Georealism's* scope extends beyond Europe. However, it is impossible to determine this with certainty without applying it to other systems. Thus,

Chapter VI: Conclusion

further empirical testing is necessary before the theory can make any claims to general applicability. In the following section, I discuss the relevance of the *Georealist* assumptions to the modern world.

Although *Georealism* probably applies beyond the European great powers, its explanatory power is unlikely to be equally high for other systems. This is because the European great power system is in many ways an ideal case for *Georealism*. It consisted of a clearly defined system of five to six great powers in close geographical proximity to each other, where other actors only had a limited influence. Most policymakers were highly experienced and explicitly tried to follow a realist logic.⁹ Moreover, large armies were the main component of power, which was difficult to hide from other states. This gave policymakers relatively good information, on which they could base their decisions. Lastly, other factors such as trade, investments, ideology, religion, and culture appear to have had a very limited influence on diplomatic decisions. Consequently, a more complex and nuanced theoretical framework will almost certainly be necessary to achieve a comparable level of explanatory power in other systems.

A number of topics must still be explored before *Georealism* can claim to be a truly general theory of great power politics. Most notably, it is necessary to discuss the role of power projection in more detail. For the European great powers between 1683 and 1914, most neighbours in a security sense were also physically contiguous. This was because they were located in a relatively compact geographical area with few areas controlled by minor powers. Russia and France could for example never reach each other over land without going through Austria and Prussia. In other international systems, notably the

⁹ Jack S. Levy, "What Do Great Powers Balance Against and When?," in *Balance Of Power: Theory And Practice In the 21st Century*, ed. T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michel Fortmann (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 29.

modern one, there is much more space between the great powers controlled by weaker states. Natural geographical factors such as mountains, deserts, and rivers may also have a bigger impact. For example, China and India being separated by the Himalayas clearly affects their ability to project power on each other. Consequently, it is no longer useful to conceptualize geography in a dichotomous way.

Important topics of international relations also remain. Military spending and enduring rivalries are of particular importance in this respect. Together with alliances, military spending is the tool states have to protect themselves against external threats.¹⁰ While the short-term trade-off is limited, in the long run, the substitution effect is almost perfect. Including military spending into the model will therefore not only bring new insights on a topic of inherent importance. It will also increase our understanding of alliances and balancing.

Rivalries are another central part of great power politics. I explain alliances in chapter II and war in chapter V. However, much goes on besides these two forms of interaction. Notably, some great powers have much more hostile relations than others, which among other things make them more prone to go to war. Presumably, enduring rivalries function as a theoretical counter pole to long-term alliances. They tend to take place between neighbouring great powers with little incentive to ally with each other. Consequently, the possibility of future cooperation will not temper their bellicose behaviour.

¹⁰ James D. Morrow, "Arms Versus Allies: Trade-Offs in the Search for Security," *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 207-233.

Modern World Relevance

Georealism does very well at explaining European great power politics in the 18th and 19th centuries. While this is an important achievement in itself, it does not prove its applicability to other systems. Given the ability of *Georealism* to explain the past, an important next goal is to provide policy advice on future great power politics as well. This makes analysing *Georealism's* contemporary relevance of particular importance. Confirming this requires formal testing in the same manner as is done in this dissertation, a major research project in itself. However, it is possible to give an indication by looking at the modern day relevance of *Georealism's* fundamental assumptions. First, if the assumptions on which the theory is built are no longer present, the theory obviously no longer applies. Second, the rise of intervening factors can diminish the impact of the assumptions to the point of insignificance.

Relevance of Assumptions

The fundamental assumption of *Georealism* is that states face two main threats: neighbours and potential hegemon. If these two threats are still present, this implies that most wars and militarized disputes should take place between neighbours or include a potential hegemon. Testing this only for great powers in the modern era does not make sense, as the international system since 1945 has not been multipolar. However, the principle should be true for other states as well. Consequently, I test whether most wars or militarized disputes included a potential hegemon or at least one contiguous or geographically proximate dyad. As data, I use the COW datasets for wars and Militarized International Disputes (MID).

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

The COW dataset of wars shows that since 1945 there have been 40 wars.¹¹ 34 of these included at least one contiguous opposing dyad, usually the most relevant dyad. Three further wars were also between states with proximate territories, namely the Falklands War, and two wars between China and Taiwan. The only three wars not between any neighbours involved the U.S., the strongest state in the system. Thus, all wars since 1945 fall within the framework of my theory. Looking at all the 1781 militarized disputes since the year 1945, the same pattern arises.¹² 62% of the disputes included at least one directly contiguous opposing dyad, and a further 18% included at least one proximate opposing dyad. Of the remaining disputes, 100 included either the U.S. or the Soviet Union. Thus, 89% of total disputes, or 1583 out of 1781, were between neighbours or included a potential hegemon.¹³ Some argue that neighbours fight each other due to having more grounds for conflict, rather than their ability to reach each other.¹⁴ This does not pose a fundamental challenge to *Georealism*. As long as neighbours fear the possibility of war with each other, the principle applies regardless of the reason for this.

Another potential criticism is that minor powers have their ability to project power restricted by geography, but great powers do not. When it comes to missile-launched nuclear weapons, this is undoubtedly true. The U.S., Russia, China, Britain, France, and India all have nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines capable of causing untold

¹¹ Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816 - 2007* (Washington DC: CQ Press, 2010).

¹² Faten Ghosn, Glenn Palmer, and Stuart Bremer, "The MID3 Data Set, 1993–2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (April 2004), pp. 133-154.

¹³ Contiguity has also proven to be a consistently positive and very significant factor of wars and MIDs in regression analysis, see John R. Oneal and Bruce M. Russett, "The Classical Liberals Were Right: Democracy, Interdependence, and Conflict, 1950-1985," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (June 1997), pp. 267-294; Håvard Hegre, "Development and the Liberal Peace," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (January 2000), pp. 5-30; Michael Mousseau, "The Social Market Roots of the Democratic Peace," *International Security*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Spring 2009), pp. 52-86.

¹⁴ Paul D. Senese and John A. Vasquez, *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

Chapter VI: Conclusion

destruction anywhere in the world. However, because all these powers have, or can obtain, credible second-strike capabilities, it is very hard to imagine any use of nuclear weapons against each other in practice.¹⁵ Nuclear weapons might therefore temper aggressive states, but it certainly does not make war or security competition obsolete.¹⁶

When it comes to conventional weapons, the U.S. clearly has true global power projection capabilities. However, this is unproblematic as Britain obtained this already in the 18th century.¹⁷ Other great powers presently simply lack global conventional power projection capability and are very far from obtaining it.¹⁸ David Shambaugh argued in 2012 that even China has no ability to project conventional power outside of its immediate periphery.¹⁹ Consequently, nobody would argue that China poses the same threat to Germany and Vietnam. Moreover, even if all great powers become able to project power on each other in the future, this would only make more great powers neighbours. Some of the geographical aspects of *Georealism* would then no longer apply. However, the fact that great powers face a greater threat from neighbours would distract them even more from balancing against the potential hegemon. At any rate, the fundamental assumptions of *Georealism* are likely to remain relevant for decades to come.

Possible Intervening Factors

Although the fundamental conditions of *Georealism* are still present, the rise of intervening factors might have rendered them irrelevant. Both neighbours and potential

¹⁵ Richard R. Muller, "The Origins of MAD: A Short History of City-Busting," in *Getting MAD: Nuclear Mutual Assured Destruction, Its Origins and Practice*, ed. Henry D. Sokolski (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2004), pp. 15-50.

¹⁶ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 130-133.

¹⁷ Richard Harding, *The Emergence of Britain's Global Naval Supremacy: The War of 1739-1748* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010).

¹⁸ Patrick Porter, *The Global Village Myth: Distance and Strategy in Modern War* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2015).

¹⁹ David L. Shambaugh, "China's Role in Global Security," in *Charting China's Future: Domestic and International Challenges*, ed. David Shambaugh (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 98-99.

hegemony are only threatening as long as major war is a possibility. Otherwise, great powers may still engage in alliances or balancing behaviour. Yet, this will be for different aims, which presumably produce very different behavioural patterns.

The last five centuries, major wars have become progressively less frequent, shorter, but more destructive.²⁰ Since the end of the Korean War in 1953, no major war has taken place at all. Many scholars argue that democratic peace, economic interdependence, and nuclear weapons make major war obsolescent.²¹ However, these factors merely make wars less probable, rather than impossible. Democratic peace cannot preclude the possibility of major wars as long as China and Russia are not democracies.²²

The modern world in total is clearly more economically interdependent today than ever before,²³ but this in itself does not preclude major war. When deciding whether to go to war with each other, great powers presumably care about their level of mutual trade, not the total amount of global trade. As the modern great powers do not trade more with each other than the European great powers did before 1914²⁴, it seems implausible that trade

²⁰ Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983).

²¹ Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 205-235; Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Richard N. Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

²² For other criticisms of democratic peace theory, see Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1994), pp. 5-49; David E. Spiro, "The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1994), pp. 50-86; Erik Gartzke, "Kant We All Just get Along? Opportunity, Willingness, and the Origins of the Democratic Peace," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (January 1998), pp. 1-27; Joanne Gowa, *Ballots and Bullets: The Elusive Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

²³ Paul Knox, John A. Agnew, and Linda McCarthy, *The Geography of the World Economy* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 50-51.

²⁴ In 1913, the average inter-great power trade to GDP was 17.4 %, although the number is a ballpark figure, as a couple of trade figures and Russian GDP is missing, see edited by Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, *International Historical Statistics, 1750-2000* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Today, the same number is 13.5 %, see "World Integrated Trade Solution, *World Bank*, accessed March 23, <http://wits.worldbank.org/>.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

would prevent any major war. Investments between great powers also account for a small share of the economy. For example, foreign direct investments (FDI) between the U.S. and China consisted in 2014 of only 0.4% and 0.1% of their respective GDPs.²⁵ China admittedly owns U.S. treasury bonds worth roughly 10% of its GDP, but this share is rapidly decreasing.²⁶ It is therefore difficult to imagine that economic interdependence totally prevents the outbreak of major war.

Nuclear weapons present the most compelling argument against the contemporary relevance of major war.²⁷ As long as major war is certain to escalate to nuclear confrontation, with all its unimaginable destruction, no potential gain can justify war.²⁸ However, any nuclear attack against an opponent with a credible second-strike capability is inherently irrational.²⁹ Certain annihilation might still promote irrationality and therefore escalation, but the smaller the stakes of the conflict, the less sense nuclear escalation makes.³⁰ This is a crucial point, because most conflicts in history were not total wars with the aim of annihilating the opposing side. Rather, they are limited in terms of aims and means. If leaders in the past did not escalate such wars conventionally, it is hard to see why modern leaders would escalate at the cost of nuclear holocaust. Major war is therefore still a possibility, albeit probably less likely than in the past. The empirical

²⁵ “Direct investment position of the United States in China from 2000 to 2014,” *Statista: The Statistics Portal*, accessed March 22, 2016, <http://www.statista.com/statistics/188629/united-states-direct-investments-in-china-since-2000/> and “Foreign direct investment (FDI) from China in the United States from 2002 to 2014,” *Statista: The Statistics Portal*, accessed March 22, 2016, <http://www.statista.com/statistics/188935/foreign-direct-investment-from-china-in-the-united-states/>

²⁶ Daniel Kruger, “China’s Selling Tons of U.S. Debt. Americans Couldn’t Care Less,” *Bloomberg Business*, October 18, 2015, accessed March 5, 2016, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-10-18/china-s-selling-tons-of-u-s-debt-americans-couldn-t-care-less->

²⁷ Kenneth N. Waltz, “Structural Realism after the Cold War,” *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), pp. 5-41.

²⁸ Robert Jervis, “The Political Effects of Nuclear Weapons: A Comment,” *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall 1988), p. 83.

²⁹ Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Emerging Structure of International Politics,” *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1993), pp. 53-54.

³⁰ Barry R. Posen, *Inadvertent Escalation: Conventional War and Nuclear Risks* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

record supports this intuition. Border clashes and limited wars have taken place between nuclear powers, such as the 1969 Sino-Soviet conflict, the Kargil War, and the Korean War. Egypt and Syria even launched a full-scale attack on the probable nuclear power Israel in 1973 without possessing nuclear weapons themselves.³¹ Quantitative work also suggests that nuclear states have no less conflictual or war-prone relations with each other than non-nuclear states.³² The significant and sophisticated conventional capabilities possessed by every great power would also make little sense if they consider major war an impossibility.³³

Conventional war is probably less likely today than in the past, but states use coercive diplomacy in its place.³⁴ The American B-52 bomber flights over the contested Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in November 2013 were an example of this.³⁵ “[C]oercive diplomacy is based on the power to hurt”³⁶ if a conflict breaks out, particularly at the next step of escalation which is conventional war.³⁷ Alliances add to capabilities when using coercive diplomacy as it does when fighting wars, making them still matter significantly.

³¹ John Mueller, “The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World,” *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall 1988), pp. 55-79; S. Paul Kapur, “India and Pakistan’s Unstable Peace: Why Nuclear South Asia Is Not Like Cold War Europe,” *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Fall 2005), pp. 127-152; Thomas J. Christensen, “Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao’s Korean War Telegrams,” *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Summer 1992), pp. 122-154; Lyle J. Goldstein, “Do Nascent WMD Arsenal Deter? The Sino-Soviet Crisis of 1969,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 118, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 53-79.

³² Mark S. Bell and Nicholas L. Miller, “Questioning the Effect of Nuclear Weapons on Conflict,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (February 2015), pp. 74-92.

³³ Richard K. Betts, “Nuclear Peace and Conventional War,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1988), pp. 79-95.

³⁴ Alexander L. George, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991); Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003).

³⁵ Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015).

³⁶ Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 3.

³⁷ On the current arms race in East Asia, see Andrew T.H. Tan, *The Arms Race in Asia: Trends, Causes and Implications* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); George Till, *Asia’s Naval Expansion: An Arms Race in the Making?* (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2012); Robert D. Kaplan, *Asia’s Cauldron: The South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific* (New York: Random House, 2015).

No arguments for the irrelevance of *Georealism* are thus convincing. Potential hegemons and neighbours remain a threat. Major war is still possible, although most great power confrontation is likely to take the form of coercive diplomacy instead. This is not to say that a formal version of *Georealism* can be applied directly to the modern world. Doing this requires many adjustments, particularly regarding geographical limitations to power projection. Lack of quality data on capabilities may preclude making as numerous and accurate predictions as was done for the European great power system between 1683 and 1914. However, some general policy implications follow.

Policy Implications

The modern world is still unipolar, with American power vastly surpassing that of any other country.³⁸ However, a combination of faster growth rates and increased military spending among the Eurasian powers mean that the world is developing towards multipolarity.³⁹ The further this development proceeds, the better predictions *Georealism* can provide. Two policy implications for future international relations stand out. Firstly, the threat from neighbours means that the continental powers will not balance against each other automatically. Secondly, the U.S. should pursue a policy of ‘divide and deter’ to separate other great powers from China, particularly Russia and India.

³⁸ William C. Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World,” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 5-41; Stephen G. Brooks & William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); G. John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno, and William C. Wohlforth, “Unipolarity, State Behavior, and Systemic Consequences,” *World Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 1-27; Stephen M. Walt, “Alliances in Unpolarity,” *World Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 86-120; Robert Jervis, “Unipolarity: A Structural Perspective,” *World Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 188-213; Nuno P. Monteiro, *Theory of Unipolar Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

³⁹ Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008); National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2008); Randall Schweller and Xiaoyu Pu, “After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline” *International Security*, Vol 36, No. 1 (Summer 2011), pp. 41-72; Susan Turner, “Russia, China and a Multipolar World Order: The Danger in the Undefined,” *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2009), pp. 159-184.

China is clearly the potential hegemon among the Eurasian powers.⁴⁰ Its huge population alone means that its economy can vastly exceed that of Russia, the EU, or the U.S. even at relatively low per capita income.⁴¹ India has similar demographic resources, but is likely to remain less economically developed for decades.⁴² However, Russia, India, and possibly Japan and the EU will remain powerful players on the international stage. Combined, they will exceed China in population, GDP, technology, and military sophistication for decades. Balancing against China should therefore not be a problem, were it not for other serious threats these states face.

Russia's weak demographic and economic base means that it must dominate its neighbourhood to remain a great power.⁴³ NATO and EU expansion in Eastern Europe makes this impossible, thus posing a vital threat to Russian interests.⁴⁴ To Delhi, its old arch-nemesis Pakistan remains as intractable and hostile as ever.⁴⁵ The obvious solution to these threats is seeking an alliance with Beijing. China is Pakistan's only close ally,⁴⁶ so no state is better able to solve the Indo-Pakistani conflict. Moscow would also benefit

⁴⁰ Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2012); Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon? China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 149-168; Yong Deng, "Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U. S. Global Strategy," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001), pp. 343-365; Kaplan, *Asia's Cauldron*. For more sceptical views, see David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Christensen, *The China Challenge*.

⁴¹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 398.

⁴² RAND Corporation, *China and India, 2025: A Comparative Assessment* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011), pp. 53-54.

⁴³ Anna Jonsson, "Russia and Europe," in *Routledge Handbook of Russian Politics and Society*, ed. Graeme Gill and James Young (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 450; Kenneth N. Waltz, "NATO Expansion: A Realist's View," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2000), pp. 23-38; Stephen M. Walt, "Why Alliances Endure or Collapse," *Survival*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (1997), p. 173; John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 5 (September/October 2014), pp. 77-78.

⁴⁴ Vladimir Soldatkin, "Putin names United States among threats in new Russian security strategy," *Reuters*, January 2, 2016, accessed January 10, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/russia-security-strategy-idUSKBN0UG09Q20160102>

⁴⁵ Sandy Gordon, *India's Rise as an Asian Power: Nation, Neighborhood, and Region* (Washington D.C.: The Georgetown University Press, 2014), pp. 184-186.

⁴⁶ Andrew Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia's New Geopolitics* (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2015).

Chapter VI: Conclusion

from a Chinese alliance through financial support and by allowing it to focus all its military and diplomatic resources on Eastern Europe. Some believe such alliances cannot arise, for structural, political, cultural, or historical reasons.⁴⁷ However, states with an interest in allying are likely to overcome any problems they might have. Indeed, much stranger unions have materialized in the past. In 1968 for example, the U.S. and China were exceedingly bitter strategic and ideological enemies with virtually no communication. Nevertheless, a couple of years later they were acting in concert against the Soviet Union.⁴⁸ Simply assuming that India and Russia will act differently from so many states in the past is naïve. This is not to say that they will certainly ally with China, or even that an alliance is the most likely outcome. However, it is a distinct possibility, which would have profound implications for the world.⁴⁹

Like Britain in the past, the U.S. has an interest in avoiding such an outcome, and a ‘divide and deter’ strategy is the most likely way to do so. Deter strategies involve promising to move closer to India if China moves closer to Russia, and closer to Russia if China moves closer to India. China, as the strongest party, would benefit the least from such alliances. Consequently, the U.S. could also increase pressure on China further by increasing ties with China’s neighbours, particularly Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Philippines.

Dividing strategies primarily consist of offering India and Russia support in specific conflicts. By doing this, the U.S. decreases their need for them to ally with China to solve

⁴⁷ Bobo Lo, *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), pp. 166-167.

⁴⁸ Henry Kissinger, *On China* (London: Allen Lane, 2011), pp. 202-274.

⁴⁹ Some even argue that a China-Russia axis has already materialized, see Douglas E. Schoen and Melik Kaylan, *The Russia-China Axis: The New Cold War and America’s Crisis of Leadership* (New York: Encounter Books, 2014).

their security problems, but without necessitating permanent American involvement. New Delhi's many actual and latent conflicts with China provide ample opportunities for this. Assistance against Pakistan would be particularly useful because of the threat it poses, and since the support would only indirectly threaten China. Solving the Indo-Pakistani conflict would be even more desirable, but this will probably prove impossible. Supporting Indian interests in Bhutan, Nepal, and the Indian Ocean may also prove useful.⁵⁰ If none of these actions succeeds, the U.S. could also initiate general security cooperation with India against China. Yet, this step should only be taken if it is absolutely necessary.

A Russo-Chinese axis will likely prove harder to divide, as there are fewer current conflicts to exploit. Unfortunately, this alliance also seems more likely to materialize. Western expansion into Eastern Europe has helped to push Russia into the arms of Beijing. However, it is still possible to save the situation. Washington could offer to accept a Russian sphere of influence in Ukraine, Belarus, and the Caucasus, as long as Moscow ceases its pro-Chinese stance. As this solves Russia's most vital security concern, it is likely to work. Politically such a course of action would be difficult, given Russia's behaviour in Ukraine. Yet, the alternative – provoking a Russo-Chinese alliance by supporting Ukraine – is far worse. Washington can also offer Russia support against China in Central Asia,⁵¹ and in the worst case, general support.

⁵⁰ Francine R. Frankel, "The Breakout of China-India Strategic Rivalry in Asia and the Indian Ocean," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2011), pp. 1-17; David Scott, "The Great Power 'Great Game' between India and China: The Logic of Geography," *Geopolitics*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2008), pp. 1-26; Sanjay Upadhya, *Nepal and the Geo-Strategic Rivalry between China and India* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012).

⁵¹ Charles E. Ziegler, "Russia and China in Central Asia," in *The Future of China-Russia Relations*, ed. James Bellacqua (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp. 233-265.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

Disengaging strategically from Asia will be the biggest challenge in implementing a 'divide and deter' strategy.⁵² Through its hub-and-spokes alliance system, the U.S. has formal security agreements with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and a de facto commitment to Taiwan.⁵³ Ties to Vietnam have also been strengthened the last couple of years.⁵⁴ Many of these alliances are not directed at China exclusively. Yet, deep American involvement in the region inevitably clashes with Beijing's interests. Committing so heavily to China's neighbours may also embolden them to take a stronger stance in conflicts with China.⁵⁵ The difficulty is scaling down commitments sufficiently not to threaten China, while at the same time reassuring these states sufficiently so as not to throw them into the arms of Beijing.⁵⁶ The exact policies will vary from country to country. Taiwan is likely to have to be completely abandoned. Its geographical location means that China will increasingly be at such an advantage in projecting power onto the island that defending it will become infeasible. Moreover, American ties to Taipei commit it against what China views as its territorial integrity.⁵⁷ Japan should be much less problematic. Its distance from China makes maintaining some support less threatening to China. Japan can also replace American involvement with indigenous capabilities.

⁵² Victor Cha, "Powerplay: The Origins of the U.S Alliance System in East Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Winter 2009/2010), pp. 158-196.

⁵³ David Arase and Tsuneo Akaha, ed., *The US-Japan Alliance: Balancing Soft and Hard Power in East Asia* (London: Routledge, 2011).

⁵⁴ Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. Eases Embargo on Arms to Vietnam," *New York Times*, October 2, 2014.

⁵⁵ Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, "Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Spring 1997), pp. 5-48; Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 163-172; Michael Beckley, "The Myth of Entangling Alliances: Reassessing the Security Risks of U.S. Defense Pacts," *International Security*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Spring 2015), pp. 9-10; Chi Wang, *Obama's Challenge to China: The Pivot to Asia* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 281; Phillip C. Saunders, "China's Rising Power and U.S. Rebalance to Asia: Implications for U.S.-China Relations," in *China's Power and Asian Security*, ed. Mingjiang Li and Kalyan M. Kumbur (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 98.

⁵⁶ On previous American efforts to scale back commitments in Asia, see Andrew J. Gawthorpe, "The Ford Administration and Security Policy in the Asia-Pacific after the Fall of Saigon," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (September 2009), pp. 697-716.

⁵⁷ John J. Mearsheimer, "Taiwan's Dire Straits," *The National Interest*, No. 130 (March/April 2014), pp. 29-39; Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy since the Cold War* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 2012), pp. 35.

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

A return to multipolarity is not necessarily a welcome development. No system could be better than unipolarity, at least as long as you are the unipole or living under its benevolent protection. With more great powers, the more opportunities there are for misunderstandings and conflicts.⁵⁸ Thus, a more enlightened, far-sighted, and competent diplomacy is necessary. Particularly for the U.S., a return to multipolarity will also involve many difficult choices and sacrifices. The good news is that most of the problems of multipolarity can be managed. The U.S. will remain powerful enough to block any kind of strong continental alliances for decades. Hegemonic bids or even struggles are therefore unlikely. Moreover, if all the great powers understand each other's rational aims and interests, they can avoid most conflicts. *Georealism* aims to contribute to this understanding, to maintain peace with all its blessings. It is hard to imagine a more important purpose.

⁵⁸ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), pp. 159-186; Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), pp. 161-193; Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Spring, 1988), pp. 615-628.

Appendix

TABLE 6.1 Alliance Model Predictions by year

Year	Predicted Alignments				Correct Predictions
1823	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France		7/10
1824	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1825	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1826	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France		7/10
1827	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1828	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1829	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1830	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1831	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1832	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1833	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1834	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1835	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1836	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1837	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1838	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1839	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1840	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1841	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1842	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1843	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1844	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1845	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1846	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1847	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	9/10
1848	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1849	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		8/10
1850	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France		7/10
1851	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1852	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1853	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1854	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France		6/10
1855	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	7/10
1856	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	7/10
1857	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France		7/10
1858	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France		7/10
1859	Britain	Prussia-France	Austria-Russia		7/10
1860	Britain	Prussia-Austria	France	Russia	10/10
1861	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	14/15
1862	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	14/15
1863	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	14/15
1864	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	14/15
1865	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	14/15
1866	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	13/15
1867	Britain	Prussia-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	13/15
1868	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France-Italy		12/15
1869	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France-Italy		12/15
1870	Britain	Prussia-Russia	Austria-France-Italy		12/15
1871	Britain	Germany-Russia	Austria-France-Italy		12/15

Great Power Politics in Multipolar Systems

1872	Britain	Germany-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	13/15	
1873	Britain	Germany-Austria	Russia	France-Italy	13/15	
1874	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France	Russia	12/15
1875	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France	Russia	12/15
1876	Britain	Germany-Austria	Russia	France-Italy		13/15
1877	Britain	Germany-France	Austria-Russia		Italy	13/15
1878	Britain	Germany-France	Austria-Russia		Italy	13/15
1879	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France	Russia	13/15
1880	Britain	Germany-Austria	Russia	France-Italy		14/15
1881	Britain	Germany-Austria	Russia	France-Italy		14/15
1882	Britain	Germany-Austria	Russia	France-Italy		12/15
1883	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France	Russia	15/15
1884	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1885	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1886	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1887	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1888	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1889	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1890	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1891	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1892	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		14/15
1893	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1894	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1895	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1896	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1897	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1898	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1899	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1900	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1901	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1902	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1903	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1904	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1905	Britain	Germany-Austria	France	Russia	Italy	11/15
1906	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1907	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1908	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1909	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1910	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1911	Britain	Germany-Austria-Italy		France-Russia		15/15
1912	Britain-Russia		Germany-Austria-France		Italy	9/15
1913	Britain	Germany-Austria	France-Russia		Italy	12/15

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