

Elites, Resources, and International Violence in South America

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CHAPTER 1

DOMESTIC SOURCES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT: COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

“American observers should not be fooled: The ongoing diplomatic row between London and Buenos Aires is nothing more than a political smokescreen designed to benefit Buenos Aires. Kirchner would rather have Argentines railing against British “colonialism” than railing against their own government, which has become an international embarrassment.”¹

Last year, as Argentina’s economy suffered with continuous high inflation and massive capital flight, the Argentine President Cristina Kirchner escalated her rhetoric on the dispute over the Islas Malvinas. Also known as the British Falkland Islands, the sparsely inhabited archipelago has been a U.K. possession since 1833. Buenos Aires’ claim over the Falklands dates back to the 1820s, when the flag of the United Provinces of the River Plate (the predecessor of modern-day Argentina) was raised on the islands. The dispute persisted over time and spiraled into war in 1982 under the military dictatorship. Why would Argentina still contest the status of the islands after a military defeat to a great power? Kirchner’s demand for Argentine ownership over the archipelago during a time of internal turmoil points to fact that politics does not stop at the water’s edge. However, the conditions under which foreign policy becomes an attractive and viable response to domestic crises – vis-à-vis other policy alternatives –

¹ Jaime Daremblum, “Argentina’s Slow-Motion Disaster,” *PJ Media*, March 08, 2012, available at <http://pjmedia.com/blog/argentinas-slow-motion-disaster/?singlepage=true>.

have not been fully understood. Likewise, the domestic determinants of foreign policy are still under scrutiny in the recent literature.²

This chapter examines the extant literature on Latin America's "peace" or "violent peace" as well as the domestic sources of international conflict. It concludes that the existing scholarship oversimplifies the relationship between domestic instability and international conflict. Many quantitative studies find a statistically significant positive relationship between internal and international conflict. However, those studies fail to point out the circumstances under which policy-makers choose foreign over domestic policy as a means to deal with domestic challenges. After all, domestic strife can motivate a number of responses, including coup d'état, domestic repression of the opposition, political and economic reform, diversionary aggression against foreign scapegoats, and even international cooperation. Moreover, there is no consensus on the threshold of domestic tension beyond which a diversionary conflict becomes an appealing policy. Another limitation of the literature is that different theories have tended to assert, or to assume, the primacy of one or another type of domestic actor in determining the decision to use military force abroad. The literature is thus fragmented, in the sense that different approaches emphasize the role of *either* the political leaders, *or* economic interests, *or* the military – disregarding how the interaction among these actors might affect the probability of the use of military force abroad.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows: The first section discusses the literature on international rivalries and militarized interstate disputes (MIDs). In this

² For two recent works on the effects of domestic politics on foreign policy see Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Iraq Surge Decision," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Spring 2011): 87–125 and Jacques E.C. Hymans, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Fall 2011): 154–189.

section I dispute the claim that previous conflict predicts or causes future conflict. Rather, I argue that by providing decision-makers the material and discursive contexts that justify foreign aggression, international rivalries are continuously open windows of opportunity for diversionary uses of force. The second reviews the literature on Latin America's "long peace." The third section examines the relationship between domestic institutions and the use of military force. The fourth section assesses the individual level theories of diversionary conflict. Finally, this chapter concludes by affirming the need of a comprehensive theory of diversionary behavior that can account for historical and geographical variation in state institutions and is able to incorporate different types of actors *whenever* they are relevant.

1.1 INTERNATIONAL RIVALRIES AND THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE

International rivalries are marked by spans of time during which no overt threats are issued or international violence is initiated despite the subsistence of the issue under dispute and the dissatisfaction of one or both parties. However, rivalries eventually erupt into militarized disputes. What explains the timing when decision-makers decide to militarize an ongoing international dispute and the level of militarization? This question assumes that rivalries matter. Indeed, extensive literature supports the claim that international conflict within the constraints of a rivalry works differently than conflict between non-rival states.³ This dissertation submits to this assertion, however for a

³ See D. Scott Bennett, "Security, Bargaining, and the End of Interstate Rivalry," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 40, No. 2 (1996): 157-183; D. Scott Bennett, "Measuring Rivalry Termination: 1816-1992," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 41, No. 2 (1997): 227-258; D. Scott Bennett, "Integrating and Testing Models of Rivalry," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (1998): 1200-1232; D. Scott Bennett and Timothy Nordstrom, "Foreign Policy Substitutability and Internal Economic Problems in Enduring Rivalries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2000): 33-52; Michael Colaresi,

different reason than the one usually offered in the literature. I dispute the argument that rivalries are consequential for international conflict because past conflict is a necessary or sufficient cause of future conflict. Rather, I treat international rivalry as a “probability raiser.” That is, international rivalries are causes in the sense that they increase the probability that an outcome will take place.⁴ Indeed, rivalries are highly correlated with greater frequency and severity of international disputes.⁵ As I explain below, this is so

“Shocks to the System: Great Power Rivalries and the Leadership Long Cycle,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 45, No. 5 (2001): 569-593; Michael Colaresi and William R. Thompson, “Strategic Rivalries, Protracted Conflict, and Crisis Escalation,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (May, 2002): 263-287; Michael Colaresi and William R. Thompson, “Hot Spots or Hot Hands? Serial Crisis Behavior, Escalating Risks, and Rivalry” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Nov., 2002): 1175-1198; Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000); S. D. Geller, “Power Differentials and War in Rival Dyads,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 7. (1993): 173-194; Paul R. Hensel, “One Thing Leads to Another: Recurrent Militarized Disputes in Latin America, 1816-1896,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1994): 281-297; Russell J. Leng, *Bargaining and Learning in Recurring Crises: The Soviet-American, Egyptian-Israeli, and Indo-Pakistani Rivalries* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Zeev Maoz and Ben D. Mor, “Enduring Rivalries: The Early Years,” *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 17 (1996): 141-160; Zeev Maoz and Ben D. Mor, “Learning, Preference Change and the Evolution of Enduring Rivalries,” in P. F. Diehl, ed. *The Dynamics of Enduring Rivalries* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998): 129-164; Karen Rasler and William R. Thompson, “Explaining Rivalry Escalation to War: Contiguity, Space and Position in the Major Power Subsystem,” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 44, No. 3 (2000): 503-531; Karen Rasler and William R. Thompson, “Rivalries and the Democratic Peace in the Major Power Subsystem,” *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 38, No. 6 (2001): 659-683; Gerald L. Sorokin, “Arms, Alliances, and Security Trade-Offs in Enduring Rivalries,” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 38, No. 3, (1994): 421-447; William R. Thompson, “Principal Rivalries,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (June 1995): 195-223; William R. Thompson, “Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics,” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 45 (2001): 557-586; John A. Vasquez, “Distinguishing Rivals That Go to War from Those That Do Not: A Quantitative Comparative Case Study of the Two Paths to War,” *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 40 (1996): 531-558; F. W. Wayman, “Rivalries: Recurrent Disputes and Explaining War,” in J. A. Vasquez, ed. *What Do We Know About War?* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000): 219-239.

⁴ James Mahoney, “Toward a Unified Theory of Causality,” *Comparative Political Studies* 41:4/5 (April-May 2008): 415.

⁵ Bennet, “Integrating and Testing Models of Rivalry,” Colaresi and Thompson, “Strategic Rivalries...” p. 263; Diehl and Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry*, 58-59; Charles S. Gochman and Zeev Maoz, “Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976: Procedures, Patterns and Insights,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 28, No. 4 (1984): 585-616, p. 609; Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl, “The Empirical Importance of Enduring Rivalries,” *International Interactions* Vol. 18, No. 2 (1992): 151-63; Paul Huth, Christopher Gelpi, and D. Scott Bennett, “The Escalation of Great Power Militarized Disputes: Testing Rational Deterrence Theory and Structural Realism,” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 87, No. 3 (1993): 609-23; Paul K. Huth, *Standing Your Ground: Territorial Disputes and International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996); Russell J. Leng, “Escalation: Crisis Behavior and War,” in John A. Vasquez, ed. *What Do We Know About War?* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000); Rasler and Thompson, “Explaining Rivalry Escalation to War,” Thompson, “Principal Rivalries,” William

because rivalries produce fertile ground for the initiation of diversionary conflict. The existence of an ongoing, unresolved dispute provides a continuous window of opportunity for domestic elites to use international conflict as means to address their internal feuds.

The enduring rivalries literature yields two main branches. The empirical branch defines “enduring” rivalry in terms of the number and frequency of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) within a dyad.⁶ The socio-psychological branch focuses on the perceptions of the actors in the relationship. Rivals brand each other as a threat.⁷ I object to the empirical approach because it is impossible to know *ex ante* whether any two states are rivals. Moreover, its definition is tautological since the same indicator (MIDs density) measures both cause and effect. Therefore, I adopt the socio-psychological definition of rivalry. Accordingly, “[the] actors in question must regard each other as (a) competitors, (b) the source of actual or latent threats that pose some possibility of becoming militarized, and (c) enemies.”⁸ Contrary to “protracted conflicts,” rivalries do not require that the stakes of the international conflict be “high.” Rivals need not to have fought a previous war. Finally, rivalries do not necessarily involve “whole societies” nor are an instrument to define national identity.⁹

The socio-psychological definition of rivalry has both descriptive and causal aspects. Descriptively, the concept of rivalry connotes “competitive relationships that

R. Thompson, *Great Power Rivalries* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); Vasquez, “Distinguishing Rivals...” and Wayman, “Rivalries.”

⁶ E.g. Diehl and Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry*, 44 and Goertz and Diehl, “The Initiation and Termination of Enduring Rivalries: The Impact of Political Shocks,” *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 39, No. 1 (February, 1995): 30-52, 33.

⁷ E.g. Thompson “Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics,” 560 and “Principal Rivalries,” 200; and Vasquez, “Distinguishing Rivals,” 352.

⁸ Thompson “Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics,” 560.

⁹ Colaresi and Thompson, “Strategic Rivalries, Protracted Conflict, and Crisis Escalation,” 265.

persist over time, through successive conflictual encounters.”¹⁰ Causally, it postulates that the competitive inter-subjective understanding shared by rival leaders is the source of recurring violent conflict. This purported causal relation is predicated on the notion that the perceptual and physical clashes are interdependent.¹¹ While I embrace the descriptive contribution of the concept of rivalry as a scope condition within which my theory applies, I qualify its causal argument and reject its underlying assumption of interdependence. Although the majority of disputes in the international system can be linked to a few dyads of states, it does not follow that previous disputes are a necessary or sufficient cause of future conflict.¹² However, previous disputes facilitate the occurrence of future disputes as I explain below.

Once we discard the interdependence assumption, we can consider the alternative argument that it is not repeated disputes that lead to increasing conflict, but rather the lack of resolution of the underlying grievance.¹³ That is, dyads with unresolved grievances would be more conflict-prone than dyads without unresolved grievances. In other words, international rivalries with unresolved grievances increase the probability of future conflict occurrence. This proposition addresses the distribution of disputes in the international system. However, it does not – and cannot – explain the timing and severity of disputes between rival states. Why would states sharing unresolved grievances resort to force in some times but not others? Why are some of those violent encounters more

¹⁰ Colaresi and Thompson, “Hot Spots or Hot Hands?” 1176.

¹¹ Colaresi and Thompson, “Hot Spots or Hot Hands?” 1178. Two alternative connections between past and future conflicts are also postulated: a nonlinear relationship (Russell J. Leng, “Reagan and the Russians: Crisis Bargaining Beliefs and the Historical Record,” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 78, No. 2 (1984): 338-55; and *Bargaining and Learning in Recurring Crises*) and a negative relationship (Charles McClelland, “The Acute International Crisis,” *World Politics* Vol. 41, No. 1 (1961): 182-204.

¹² Erik Gartzke and Michael Simon. “Hot Hand: A Critical Analysis of Enduring Rivalries,” *Journal of Politics* Vol. 63, No. 3 (1999): 777-98, 781-783.

¹³ Colaresi and Thompson, “Hot Spots or Hot Hands?” 1181.

severe than others? Because “unresolved issues” is a constant for ongoing rivalries it cannot explain the variation in timing and severity of militarized disputes between rival states.¹⁴ This is so because “at the level of the individual case, there are various problems with the idea that causes are probability raisers.” Importantly, “causes that increase the probability of a given outcome in a population need not increase the probability of that outcome in any particular case.”¹⁵

“If previous conflict does not predict systematically to future conflict, an important premise for examining rivalries is eliminated.”¹⁶ I disagree. Neither previous conflict nor unresolved issues are sufficient to explain the occurrence and severity of future military confrontation. Nevertheless, contrary to what is assumed by most research on diversionary behavior, the probability of military action is not invariant across time and space. Rivalry – defined in terms of the actors’ mutual understandings of their relationship – is an important probability raiser of diversionary or opportunistic international conflict.¹⁷ The likelihood of diversionary or opportunistic actions depends upon the opportunities created by pre-existing international threats facing decision-makers during periods of domestic unrest.¹⁸ Consequently, the probability of diversionary uses of force is higher in the opportunity-rich environment of an enduring rivalry. The deep

¹⁴ The same critique applies to Vasquez, “Distinguishing Rivals...” 531 and Hensel, “One Thing Leads to Another,” 281, who argue that the existence of an unresolved territorial dispute increases the chances of violent conflict.

¹⁵ Mahoney, “Toward a Unified Theory of Causality,” 415.

¹⁶ Colaresi and Thompson, “Hot Spots or Hot Hands?” 1175.

¹⁷ This understanding is similar to Mitchell and Prins’ notion of rivalry as environment, Most and Starr’s concept of opportunity, and Goertz’s conceptualization of rivalry as a context. See Sara McLaughlin Mitchell and Brandon C. Prins, “Rivalry and Diversionary Uses of Force,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 48, n. 6 (2004): 937-961; Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, *Inquiry, Logic, and International Politics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989); and Gary Goertz, *Contexts of International Politics* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

¹⁸ James Meernik and Peter Waterman, “The Myth of the Diversionary Use of Force by American Presidents,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (September 1996): 573-590.

mistrust and animosity between enduring rivals facilitates the justification and legitimization of the use of military force for domestic political purposes. “The mutual anticipation of violent coercion provides the pretext and justification for military actions that may have little strategic value.”¹⁹

In other words, rivalry provides the material and discursive contexts that enable domestic elites to invoke foreign threats whenever the use of military force abroad is a suitable strategy to deal with domestic threats. In the context of mass politics, rivalries facilitate the psychological manipulation of a foreign threat, since the leader, elites, and population can identify a clear foreign threat and target. Thus, the context of an international rivalry facilitates the task of convincing the domestic public of the urgency of a foreign threat. However, rivalries do not need to involve “whole societies” or be an instrument to define national identity. International rivalries also provide the material and discursive contexts for the initiation of international violence as a means to private good procurement in non-mass politics societies. The existence of an international rivalry creates more opportunities for “accidental” or unauthorized uses of force to

¹⁹ Mitchell and Prins, “Rivalry and Diversionary Uses of Force,” 945. The United States is an exception to this pattern, being more likely to initiate militarized interstate disputes against non-rivals than against rivals (Dennis M. Foster, “State Power, Linkage Mechanisms, and Diversion against Nonrivals,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2006): 1-21). On works that contest the relationship between domestic politics and dispute initiation by the United States see Matthew A. Baum, “The Constituent Foundations of the Rally-Round-the-Flag Phenomenon,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (2002): 263-298; Benjamin O. Fordham, “Another Look at ‘Parties, Voters, and the Use of Force Abroad,’” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (2002): 572-596; Joanne Gowa, “Politics at the Water’s Edge: Parties, Voters, and the Use of Force Abroad,” *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (1998): 307-324; James Meernik, “Domestic Politics and the Political Use of Military Force by the United States,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (2001): 889-904; Sara McLaughlin Mitchell and Will H. Moore, “Presidential Uses of Force during the Cold War: Aggregation, Truncation, and Temporal Dynamics,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (2002): 438-452.

happen.²⁰ Oftentimes, military or paramilitary actors carry out “accidental” or non-authorized uses of force abroad as a means to pressure their own government.²¹

In sum, this dissertation examines the causes of diversionary uses of military force in the context of enduring rivalries, because such environments offer the material and discursive conditions that facilitate diversionary uses of force – as compared to the strategic context between non-rival states. However, contrary to most of the literature, this dissertation does not consider events of uses of force between rivals to be causally dependent in a deterministic way at the population level. As argued above, enduring rivalries are probability raisers that make future uses of force more likely, but in themselves they do not cause domestic actors to use force. In so far as previous conflict is part of the explanation of a particular outcome, it is so as an INUS cause. That is, as a condition that is an **Insufficient** but **Necessary** part of a condition which is itself **Unnecessary** but **Sufficient** for the result of a particular case.²²

1.2 LATIN AMERICA’S LONG “PEACE”

Latin American is usually characterized as being a zone of peace due to the historically relatively low number of major wars in the region.²³ According to Arie M.

²⁰ The MID dataset excludes non-governmental, covert, and unauthorized actions with the goal of ensuring that the dataset contain only episodes that can be construed as purposive state actions. However, it does not stipulate that the actions precipitating a MID be ordered by national leaders. See Gochman and Maoz “Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976,” 587.

²¹ See Risa A. Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008).

²² J. L. Mackie, “Causes and conditions.” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 2:4 (1965): 245-264.

²³ David R. Mares, *Violent Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); David R. Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace* (New York: Routledge, 2012, Kindle edition); Arie M. Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace in the Third World: South America and West Africa in Comparative Perspective* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998); Arie M. Kacowicz, *The Impact of Norms in the International Society: The Latin American Experience, 1881-2001* (Notre-Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005); and Miguel Angel Centeno, *Blood and*

Kacowicz, Latin America constitutes a “zone of peace” characterized by the relative absence of major wars because those countries have formed a regional international society.²⁴ Conscious of certain interests or common values, Latin American countries conceived themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another.²⁵ As such, they created common institutions aimed at facilitating cooperative behavior and promoting common goals such as limiting violence, enforcing *pacta sunt servanda*; and maintaining spheres of jurisdiction in which the sovereignty of the member states is mutually recognized. Since their independence, Latin American countries have built up a sophisticated system of regional international laws and institutions, including norms and principles such as: (1) *uti possidetis*; (2) the principle of *convivencia* (i.e., peaceful international coexistence); (3) non-intervention and mutual respect of national sovereignties; and (4) peaceful settlement of disputes, including the recourse to arbitration, mediation, and other similar juridical and diplomatic techniques.²⁶ Thus, the Latin American “diplomatic culture,” favoring pre-judicial forms of settlement usually through diplomatic negotiations and procedures, has helped those governments to resolve their disputes short of war, accounting for the relative absence of major wars in the region since 1881.

Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

²⁴ Kacowicz, *The Impact of Norms in the International Society*.

²⁵ On the difference between an international society and the international system see Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 13.

²⁶ Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace in the Third World*, 103. Kacowicz (*The Impact of Norms in the International Society*, 43) argues that evidence of the commitment of Latin American countries to the principle of peaceful resolution of conflict can be found in documents such as the Treaty on the Maintenance of Peace (Lima 1865), the General Treaty of Arbitration between Argentina and Chile (Pactos de Mayo) of 1902, the Bogotá Pact on Peaceful Settlement of 1948, and the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS).

However, the existence of shared norms and institutions is not sufficient to explain either the relative absence of major conflict in South America or the occurrence of uses of military force short of war. Most of those regional norms and institutions began to be adopted by South American countries as early as 1810, or very soon after that.²⁷ Nevertheless, nineteenth-century South America was a typical zone of conflict. The frequency with which force was used among South American countries did not significantly decrease until 1911, having a slight increase for the period of 1921-1940, and then decreasing again from 1941 on, as shown in table 1.1 below. Therefore, there is no correlation between the emergence of international principles and norms of conflict resolution and the actual reduction in the use of force among South American states.

Aiming to explain the several instances of uses of military force short of war in Latin America, David Mares offers a model of militarized bargaining that incorporates domestic politics in the explanation of foreign policy decisions.²⁸ Accordingly, the use of military force abroad is a function of the ability of the decision-maker to convince his/her constituency to bear the costs of the international violence in exchange for the possible private and/or public goods to be obtained by the implementation of such policy. However, Mares' theory has three limitations. The first is that it does not account for unauthorized uses of military force abroad employed as a strategy to change the domestic status quo, as I show in this dissertation. In this sense, my dissertation provides a more nuanced view of domestic politics and its relationship with foreign policy than Mares does. Second, Mares' theory cannot explain cases when the Executive leader is not accountable to the domestic constituency: "but, if the leader is not very accountable to a

²⁷ For example, the principle of *uti possidetis* began to be invoked in the mid-1830s.

²⁸ Mares, *Violent Peace*, and Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace*.

constituency because the press is generally censored or elections are tainted, the leader can choose whether to militarize depending on his personal preferences rather than on the willingness of constituencies to bear costs.”²⁹ My dissertation, on the other hand, is able to explain foreign policies regardless of regime type. It does so by referring to the arrangement of the relations among the domestic elites and the ensuing constraints and incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies. Finally, in Mares’ model war is never an intended outcome: “war might occur, but as a result of escalation dynamics unknowable, unforeseen, or miscalculated by those who made the initial decision to use military force.”³⁰ While I recognize that the escalation of a militarized dispute into war is often not the outcome initially desired, this is not always the case. As we will see in chapter 4, the Argentine politician Bernardino Rivadavia meticulously and deliberately timed the initiation of a war against Brazil as a means to justify the centralization of state power under his leadership. In sum, my theory not only explains the cases within Mares’ scope conditions, but it also accounts for the cases not covered by Mares’s model.

At last but not least, Miguel Angel Centeno hypothesizes that international peace and domestic strife are causally linked:

“Latin American states did not have the organizational or ideological capacity to go to war with one another. The societies were not geared toward the logistical and cultural transformations required by international conflict. Conversely, domestic conflict often reflected the inability of the nascent states to impose their control over the relevant societies.”³¹

²⁹ Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace*, chapter 2, loc 1566 of 3382.

³⁰ Mares, *Violent Peace*, 7.

³¹ Centeno, *Blood and Debt*, 66.

Table 1.1 Use of Force* and Wars in South and Central America, 1816-2001**

Years	Sub-region	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	[99% Conf. Interval]	
1816-1840	South America	52	0	0	0	0
	Central America	52	0	0	0	0
					[95% Conf. Interval]	
1841-1850	South America	43	.1162791	.0494634	.0164579	0
	Central America	43	0	0	0	0
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1851-1860	South America	58	.2241379	.0552348	.0769444	0
	Central America	58	0	0	0	0
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1861-1870	South America	93	.1935484	.0411898	.0852056	.2161002
	Central America	93	0	0	0	0
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1871-1880	South America	32	.375	.086951	.1364027	.3713314
	Central America	32	.03125	.03125	-.0545013	0
					[95% Conf. Interval]	
1881-1890	South America	37	.2432432	.0715068	.0982207	.3018912
	Central America	37	.0540541	.0376874	-.0223795	0
					[95% Conf. Interval]	
1891-1900	South America	51	.1176471	.0455645	.026128	.6135973
	Central America	51	0	0	0	.1170013
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1901-1910	South America	74	.2567568	.0511287	.121528	.3882657
	Central America	74	.1081081	.0363433	.011985	.1304876
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1911-1920	South America	364	.0302198	.0089852	.0069531	.2091661
	Central America	364	.0054945	.0038798	-.0045521	0
					[90% Conf. Interval]	
1921-1930	South America	65	.0923077	.0361825	.0319187	.3919855
	Central America	65	.0769231	.0333087	.0213305	.2042312
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1931-1940	South America	186	.0860215	.0206151	.0323673	.0534865
	Central America	186	.0053763	.0053763	-.0086165	.0155411
					[90% Conf. Interval]	
1941-1950	South America	443	.006772	.003901	.000342	.1526967
	Central America	443	.0045147	.0031887	-.0007414	.1325157
					[90% Conf. Interval]	
1951-1960	South America	332	.0180723	.007322	.0059948	.1396757
	Central America	332	.0150602	.0066943	.0040182	.0193692
					[90% Conf. Interval]	
1961-1970	South America	403	.0223325	.0073697	.0101824	.013202
	Central America	403	.0074442	.0042872	.0003761	.0097707
					[90% Conf. Interval]	
1971-1980	South America	331	.0181269	.007344	.0060131	.0301498
	Central America	331	.0120846	.0060148	.0021633	.0261023
					[90% Conf. Interval]	
1981-1990	South America	346	.0289017	.0090195	.014026	.0344826
	Central America	346	.0404624	.0106083	.0229663	.0145123
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
1991-2000	South America	410	.0195122	.0068393	.0018127	.0302407
	Central America	410	.0195122	.0068393	.0018127	.0220059
					[99% Conf. Interval]	
2001-2008	South America	129159	.003577	.0001661	.0031491	.0437775
	Central America	129159	.0015175	.0001083	.0012385	.0579586

* "Use of force" stands for hostility level number 4 in the MID dataset.

** "War" stands for hostility level number 5 in the MID dataset.

While Centeno is correct to highlight the relationship between domestic conflict and international violence, his theory does not distinguish the impact of different levels of domestic conflict upon the incentives for the initiation of aggressive foreign policies. My theory, in turn, establishes the connection between different levels of domestic conflict and foreign policy. On one side, as I will fully explain below, fragmented elites facing existential threats – i.e., a very high level of domestic conflict – are not inclined to resort to aggressive foreign policies to address their domestic problems. On the other side, fragmented elites facing non-existential threats to their resource bases – i.e., a lower level of domestic conflict – have incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies as a resource appropriation strategy. Moreover, the Chaco War, which was fought by the two poorest South American countries with the lowest degrees of infrastructural power in the region, speaks volumes against the claim that organizational and ideological capacities are necessary for the occurrence of wars.

1.3 DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

One of the greatest advances in contemporary International Relations has been the formalization of bargaining models of war.³² In one of its most persuasive accounts, James Fearon argues that states are not interested in war *per se*, which is always

³² For a review of the bargaining theory progress in International Relations see Robert Powell, "Bargaining Theory and International Conflict," *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol. 5 (2002): 1-30; and Dan Reiter, "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Mar., 2003): 27-43.

inefficient *ex post*, but in the good that can be obtained through war.³³ Therefore, rational states will always seek a point in the bargaining range in which the expected utility of a negotiated settlement is greater than the expected utility of fighting. The three rational conditions under which states fight inefficient wars are cases of private information, commitment problems, and/or issue indivisibility.³⁴ Despite the advantages of formalization,³⁵ bargaining models of war are heavily criticized for assuming that states are unitary actors. Pairing the rationality and the unitary actor assumptions will lead to misleading predictions and to incorrect explanations whenever foreign policy making is not insulated from domestic politics. Realists assume that the unitary actor assumption holds regarding vital matters of national security because the decision-making power becomes concentrated in the national leadership.³⁶

However, the unitary actor assumption remains a very strong assumption even in cases of large security threats. Although special interests such as Exxon and Halliburton cannot be said to have caused the Iraq War, domestic political actors certainly played an important role in driving the United States and Iraq to war.³⁷ This is by no means a new insight. Non-formal, traditional *Innenpolitik* theories have related war proneness to regime type,³⁸ degree of democratization,³⁹ domestic economic interests,⁴⁰ and

³³ James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* v. 49, n. 3 (Summer, 1995): 379-414.

³⁴ James D. Fearon, op. cit.

³⁵ Dan Reiter, op. cit., 33.

³⁶ Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

³⁷ David A. Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2010/11): 7-52; pp. 8-9.

³⁸ See Seung-Whan Choi, "Re-Evaluating Capitalist and Democratic Peace Models," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 55 (2011): 759-769; Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer, 1983): 205-235; Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 80, No. 4 (Dec., 1986): 1151-1169; Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" (1795); Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Politics and

misperceptions, biases, and constraints that prevent states from effectively balancing emerging powers.⁴¹ Rejecting the unitary actor assumption, the current scholarship has taken advantage of formalization and rational choice theory to revamp traditional domestic level hypotheses and to bring forth new ones. As a result, a burgeoning literature has formally modeled the ways in which variations in regime type,⁴² in sensitivity to costs and to losing,⁴³ and in domestic institutions (such as the size of the

War,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4, The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (Spring, 1988): 653-673; John Owen, *Liberal Peace Liberal War: American Politics and International Security* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); John M. Owen, “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Autumn, 1994): 87-125; Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam III, “Democracy, War Initiation, and Victory,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (Jun., 1998): 377-389; Bruce M. Russett, *Controlling the sword: the democratic governance of national security* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Bruce M. Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Brigitte Weiffen et al., “Democracy, Regional Security Institutions, and Rivalry Mitigation: Evidence From Europe, South America, and Asia,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 20 (2011): 378-415.

³⁹ H. E. Goemans, *War and Punishment: The Causes of War Termination and the First World War* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000); Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2007).

⁴⁰ Jeff Frieden, “Sectoral conflict and foreign economic policy, 1914-1940,” *International Organization* v. 42, n. 1 (1988): 59-90; James R. Kurth, “Political Consequences of the Product Cycle,” *International Organization*, n. 33, v.1 (1979): 1-32; Andrew Moravcsik, “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics,” *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Autumn, 1997): 513-553.

⁴¹ See Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*; Jason Davidson, *The Origins of Revisionist and Status-quo States* (2006); Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America’s World Role* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Oct., 1998): 144-172; Andrew Kydd, “Sheep in Sheep’s Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Fall 1997): 114-155; Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

⁴² Graeme A. M. Davies, “Domestic Strife and the Initiation of International Conflicts: A Directed Dyad Analysis, 1950-1982,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 46, n. 5 (October 2002): 672-692; Christopher Gelpi, “Democratic Diversions: Governmental Structure and the Externalization of Domestic Conflict,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 41, n. 2 (1997): 255-282; Brett Ashley Leeds and David R. Davis, “Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 41, n. 6 (1997): 814-834; Mitchell and Prins, “Rivalry and Diversionary Uses of Force;” Ross A. Miller, “Regime Type, Strategic Interaction, and Diversionary Use of Force,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 43, n. 3 (1999): 388-402; Alastair Smith, “Diversionary Foreign Policy in Democratic Systems,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (March 1996): 133-153.

⁴³ Darren Filson and Suzanne Werner, “Sensitivity to Costs of Fighting versus Sensitivity to Losing the Conflict: Implications for War Onset, Duration, and Outcomes,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 5 (Oct., 2007): 691-714. The authors assume that most democracies are cost sensitive and most autocracies are losing sensitive, but this association between sensitivity and regime type is not an exclusive one. See Darren Filson and Suzanne Werner, “Bargaining and Fighting: The Impact of Regime Type on

selectorate and winning coalition,⁴⁴ audience costs,⁴⁵ and the role of opposition party⁴⁶) can lead to different preferences for war initiation, bargaining strategies, and war outcomes.

And yet not all democracies or dictatorships behave the same. Some oligarchic states are just “greedier” than others and some military regimes engage in more conflicts than others. For example, Brazil and Chile share a similar pattern of regime change over time. Both countries had powerful oligarchies in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, and they both experienced military rule. However, since their independences, Chile was engaged in twice as many militarized disputes involving the use of force than Brazil. Aware of this shortcoming, a plethora of recent studies draws on a very rich body of scholarship in the comparative politics to underscore how variations within regime type affect a country’s use of military force.⁴⁷ Those studies investigate,

War Onset, Duration, and Outcomes,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Apr., 2004): 296-313. Their model is an adaptation from Darren Filson and Suzanne Werner, “A Bargaining Model of War and Peace: Anticipating the Onset, Duration, and Outcome of War,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Oct., 2002): 819-837.

⁴⁴ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2003).

⁴⁵ James D. Fearon, “Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes,” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 88 (1994): 577-92. On the audience costs for autocracies, see Jessica L. Weeks, “Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve,” *International Organization* Vol. 62 (Winter 2008): 35-64.

⁴⁶ Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁴⁷ On how variations within democratic institutions affect war initiation see David J. Brulé and Laron K. Williams, “Democracy and Diversion: Government Arrangements, the Economy, and Dispute Initiation,” *Journal of Peace Research*, v. 46, n. 6 (2009): 777-798; David H. Clark and Timothy Nordstrom, “Democratic Variants and Democratic Variance: How Domestic Constraints Shape Interstate Conflict,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (February 2005): 250-270; Glenn Palmer, Tamar R. London, and Patrick M. Regan, “What’s Stopping You?: The Sources of Political Constraints on International Conflict Behavior in Parliamentary Democracies,” *International Interactions*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2004): 1-24; and Dan Reiter and Erik R. Tillman, “Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints on the Democratic Initiation of Conflict,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (Aug., 2002): 810-826. On autocracies, see Weeks, “Autocratic Audience Costs” and Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam, “Identifying the Culprit: Democracy, Dictatorship, and Dispute Initiation,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 2 (May, 2003): 333-337. Supporting the inadequacy of simple conceptualizations of democracy versus autocracy, Reiter

among other things, whether and how variations in public constraints on the government (e.g. percentage of voting population), executive-legislative constraints,⁴⁸ and intra-legislative constraints,⁴⁹ and the number of veto players affect the probability of dispute initiation.

One such approach argues that the greatest determinant of policy making is not the distinction between democratic and non-democratic regimes, or between presidential and parliamentary democracies. Rather, the ability to enact policy, including foreign policy, is a function of the number of and ideological distance among veto players.⁵⁰ One version of the veto players approach proposes that the increase in numbers and ideological distance among veto players curbs the ability of the executive to initiate international disputes.⁵¹ This version assumes that foreign policy making is not a prerogative of the executive power. Another version suggests that compared to majoritarian leaders, presidents are generally subject to more veto players when trying to pass effective or swift legislation in response to domestic problems. Greater opposition in the domestic politics arena would thus cause presidents to have a relatively higher

and Tillman, "Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints," find that Polity has no statistically significant effect upon democracies' initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs).

⁴⁸ Examples of executive-legislative constraints are divided government and the existence of issue-areas that are a prerogative of either the executive or the congress, such as the congress's prerogative to ratify treaties signed by executive adopted in some constitutions.

⁴⁹ Examples of intra-legislative constraints are the effective number of parties in government (ENP), the type of ruling coalition (Single Party Majority, Coalition Majority, or Minority Governments), and party discipline.

⁵⁰ George Tsebelis, *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002). "Veto players are individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo. It follows that a change in the status quo requires a unanimous decision of all veto players" (19). On the relationship between veto players and regime type see chapter 3. On recent applications of the veto players approach in the IR literature see Jacques E. C. Hymans, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Fall 2011): 154-189; and David E. Cunningham, "Veto Players and Civil War Duration," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (October 2006): 875-892.

⁵¹ Reiter and Tillman, "Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints."

proclivity to initiate diversionary force to improve domestic conditions.⁵² A second approach emphasizes the public accountability of executive leaders. Domestic institutions affect the executive's incentives to engage in diversionary conflicts by (1) shaping the extent to which the executive is held accountable for the economy and (2) determining the executive's capacity to address the economy with legislation.⁵³ When institutional arrangements blur the line of accountability for poor economic performance (e.g. coalition governments), executives have few incentives to use force abroad. However, executives that can be held accountable but are unable to implement remedial policy because of legislative opposition have incentives to initiate international disputes to demonstrate leadership competence.⁵⁴

Critics of the veto players approach dismiss it on the argument that legislators who oppose the executive's social and economic policy proposals must not necessarily oppose the executive's foreign policy. Legislative opposition might not have incentives to oppose the incumbent on every single issue. The decision to initiate an international conflict could lie on a dimension that is orthogonal to socio-economic policy preferences.⁵⁵ In other words, the power to veto policy does not imply the preference to veto policy. While this is a valid point, there is nothing in the veto player's approach that prevents it from offering a more refined account of actors' preferences. Veto players might or might not link issues to pass their agendas. This is an empirical matter – not a theoretical one. Moreover, the veto player's approach has two main advantages that the

⁵² Emizet F. Kisangani and Jeffrey Pickering, "Democratic Accountability and Diversionary Force: Regime Types and the Use of Benevolent and Hostile Military Force," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 55, No. 6 (2011): 1021-1046, 1026.

⁵³ Brulé and Williams, "Democracy and Diversion," 778.

⁵⁴ See also Kisangani and Pickering, "Democratic Accountability and Diversionary Force."

⁵⁵ Brulé and Williams, "Democracy and Diversion," 779.

public accountability approach lacks: (a) the consideration of actors outside the legislative arena and, thereby, (b) generalizability across regime types.

In a nutshell, the veto player approach is not about how institutions shape policy preferences, but about how institutions influence policy output given actors' policy preferences.⁵⁶ What does the literature on diversionary conflict have to say about whom the relevant actors are and what their preferences are?

1.4 DOMESTIC ACTORS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

The vast majority of the literature on diversionary conflict focuses on the role of the executive leader. One of the contributions of those theories is to stipulate the conditions under which war is rational from the leadership's point of view, although it might be inefficient for "the state."⁵⁷ The central question is whether political leaders experiencing internal threats are more likely to engage in confrontational foreign policy behavior. A common hypothesis is that when facing domestic challenges, leaders attempt

⁵⁶ Steffen Ganghof, "Promises and Pitfalls of Veto Player Analysis," *Swiss Political Science Review*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2003): 1025.

⁵⁷ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al. *The Logic of Political Survival*; Giacomo Chiozza and Ajin Choi, "Guess Who Did What: Political Leaders and the Management of Territorial Disputes, 1950-1990," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (Jun., 2003): 251-278; Chiozza and Goemans, "Peace through Insecurity: Tenure and International Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 47, n. 4 (2003): 443-467; Giacomo Chiozza and H. E. Goemans, "Avoiding Diversionary Targets," *Journal of Peace Research*, v. 41, n. 4 (2004): 423-443; Chiozza and Goemans, "International Conflict and the Tenure of Leaders: Is War Still "Ex Post" Inefficient?" *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Jul., 2004): 604-619; Michael Colaresi, "The Benefit of the Doubt: Testing an Informational Theory of the Rally Effect," *International Organization*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Winter, 2007): 99-143; Benjamin O. Fordham, "Another Look at "Parties, Voters, and the Use of Force Abroad,"" *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 46, n. 4 (August 2002): 572-596; Dennis M. Foster, "State Power, Linkage Mechanisms, and Diversion against Nonrivals," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, v. 23 (2006): 1-21; M. Taylor Fravel, "The Limits of Diversion: Rethinking Internal and External Conflict," *Security Studies*, 19: 2 (2010): 307-341; Gelpi, "Democratic Diversions;" Leeds and Davis, "Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes;" Mitchell and Prins, "Rivalry and Diversionary Uses of Force;" Miller, "Regime Type, Strategic Interaction, and Diversionary Use of Force;" Natsuko H. Nicholls, Paul K. Huth, and Benjamin J. Appel, "When Is Domestic Political Unrest Related to International Conflict? Diversionary Theory and Japanese Foreign Policy, 1890-1941," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 54 (2010): 915-937.

to divert public and elite attention away from internal problems by initiating and escalating international conflicts. This hypothesis yields at least three different causal mechanisms linking domestic conflict and international aggression. The first two, the scapegoat theory and the in-group/out-group theory or “rally-round-the-flag” effect, are psychologically based and can be mutually reinforcing,⁵⁸ while the third, gambling for resurrection is derived from game theory. This mechanism argues that leaders can rationally choose to initiate an international conflict when they do not anticipate a significantly higher probability of losing office as a result of defeat than the probability of losing office they currently face, while victory increases their time in office.⁵⁹

A recent improvement upon the “gambling for resurrection” theory postulates that not all leaders risking removal from office have the same incentives to engage in diversionary conflict. Rather, engaging in diversionary behavior is most advantageous for leaders who can be irregularly removed from office.⁶⁰ Leaders who anticipate a regular removal from office have little to gain and much to lose from international conflict:

⁵⁸ The scapegoat theory sees international conflict as a means by which leaders attempt to shift the blame for their own failed policies onto the foreign enemy. See T. Clifton Morgan and Kenneth N. Bickers, “Domestic Discontent and the External Use of Force,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36:1 (Mar., 1992): 25-52; and J. Levy and L. Vakili, “External scapegoating by authoritarian regimes,” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, Georgia (September, 1989). The in-group/out-group theory argues that an external threat increases in-group solidarity and cohesion by emphasizing in-group identity. When risking the loss of office, leaders provoke international conflicts in order to create a “rallying around the flag” effect expecting the people put aside their differences with their leaders and support them in times of international crisis. See J. Mueller, *War, presidents, and public opinion* (New York: Wiley, 1973), and J. Levy, “The diversionary theory of war,” in *Handbook of war studies*, ed. M. Midlarsky (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989): 259-88.

⁵⁹ Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival*; George Downs and David M. Rocke, “Conflict, Agency and Gambling for Resurrection: The Principal-Agent Problem Goes to War,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (1994): 362-80; Richards et al., 1993; H. E. Goemans and Mark Fey, “Ricky but Rational: War as an Institutionally Induced Gamble,” *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (2009): 35-54; Mansfield and Snyder, *Electing to Fight*; Smith, “Diversionary Foreign Policy in Democratic Systems.”

⁶⁰ Giacomo Chiozza and H. E. Goemans, *Leaders and International Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Kindle edition, 2011); H. E. Goemans, “Which Way Out?: The Manner and Consequences of Losing Office,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 52, No. 6 (2008): 771-794.

victory does little to decrease their probability of a regular removal and defeat increases the probability of a forcible removal. Thus, leaders with a high risk of regular removal from office are less likely to initiate international conflict: this is the *peace through insecurity* mechanism. On the other hand, irregular processes of removal typically result in additional punishment such as imprisonment, forced exile, and death.⁶¹ For leaders risking such types of removal, even a small probability of victory, with its associated boost in tenure, suffices to make war preferable over peace.⁶² Those leaders can use international conflict as a means to fight against the domestic opposition (*fighting for survival* mechanism)⁶³ or to seek gains from conflict that can be used to bolster their domestic standing (*gambling for survival* mechanism).

The authors found that of the 55 leaders who took the risk of initiating a conflict during a civil war, 44 were able to stay in power throughout the duration of the conflict.⁶⁴ However, how many leaders going through a civil war *did not* initiate an international conflict? And why? The authors do not address this question. Why do more leaders undergoing civil wars *and* risking forcible removal not initiate international conflicts? Let us consider the case of Venezuela, for example. Historically, Venezuelan leaders were subject to very high probabilities of forcible removal from office from independence until 1958, after which the country democratized. Since then, regular removal from office became the norm. Chiozza and Goemans would thus expect Venezuelan leaders to

⁶¹ Regular removal from office can occur with term limits, defeat in elections, voluntary retirement, parliamentary votes of confidence, hereditary succession, etc. Forcible or “irregular” removal from office can entail revolts, revolution, insurrections, coups, forced exiles, jail, or assassinations.

⁶² Goemans, “Which Way Out?” 774-775, 785.

⁶³ See James D. Fearon, “Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2004): 275-301; and Robert Powell, “War as a Commitment Problem,” *International Organization*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (2006): 169-203.

⁶⁴ Chiozza and Goemans, *Leaders and International Conflict*, section 3.4.2, location 1670 (Kindle Ed.).

initiate a higher number of international conflicts before 1958, and especially during the late nineteenth century – the apex of caudillo rule. At the same time, the authors would expect the number of international disputes initiated or escalated by Venezuelan leaders to significantly decrease after democratization. For the reader not familiar with Venezuela, I recall that from the 1960s until the late 1980s, the country was the most stable democracy in Latin America. However, the empirical record contradicts Chiozza and Gomeans' expectations. Five out of the six militarized disputes initiated by Venezuela in the nineteenth century occurred between 1849 and 1859. This pattern sharply contrasts with Venezuela's foreign policy during the second half of the twentieth century. Between 1966 and 2000, Venezuela initiated 22 militarized disputes. Interestingly, a longitudinal study of Venezuela's use of force shows us that Venezuelan decision-makers have initiated international conflicts the most not when the country was under repressive dictatorship nor, contrary to Mansfield and Snyder, when it was democratizing. Rather, Venezuela was the most aggressive internationally when it was the most democratic. Of course no single theory can explain everything. However, outliers call our attention to either equifinality or to omitted-variable bias. In the first case, alternative causal mechanisms that need to be identified, theorized, and demonstrated. In the second case, what if it is not all about the leaders?

The Venezuelan case suggests that there is more to international conflict initiation than just domestic instability and the manner and consequences of losing office. Indeed, it has also been proposed that: (1) domestic unrest actually decreases the probability of external aggression (the *encapsulation* hypothesis);⁶⁵ (2) that domestic unrest and

⁶⁵ Leo Hazlewood, "Diversion Mechanisms and Encapsulation Processes: The Domestic Conflict, Foreign Conflict Hypothesis Reconsidered," in *Sage international yearbook of international studies*, ed. Pat J.

external conflict have a bell-shape relationship;⁶⁶ and that (3) violent domestic strife increases the likelihood of diversionary conflict, whereas nonviolent strife increases the likelihood of repression.⁶⁷ According to the encapsulation hypothesis, for example, the political elite avoids exacerbating internal problems by becoming involved in an international conflict. Or leaders might lack the capabilities to be engaged in an external conflict. The implication of these assertions is that international crises are rarely used to divert attention; rather, they are more likely when leaders are secure in power.⁶⁸ Alternatively, it has also been argued that the increase in the level of domestic strife increases the likelihood of an international conflict, until the strife reaches a certain level at which the likelihood of conflict drops.⁶⁹ While externalization represents the best strategy for dealing with nonviolent strife, repression is the best strategy for dealing with violent strife. However, Davies (2002) found the opposite relationship: i.e., violent domestic strife increases the likelihood of diversionary conflict, whereas nonviolent strife increases the likelihood of repression.

On the other hand, Nicholls et al. argue that it is not the degree of domestic unrest that incentivizes leaders to initiate diversionary foreign policies, but rather where the opposition to the leadership comes from. According to the authors, leaders are more

McGowan (Beverly Hills, Cal.: Sage, 1975): 231-43; Barbara G. Salmore and Steven A. Salmore, "Political regimes and foreign policy," in *Why nations act*, ed. Morris A. East, Steven A. Salmore, and Chris F. Hermann (London: Sage, 1973): 103-23; Bruce Russett, "Economic change as a cause of international conflict," in *Peace, defense and economic analysis*, ed. Christian Schmidt and Frank Blackaby (London: McMillan, 1987): 185-205.; Bruce Russett, "Economic decline, electoral pressure, and the initiation of interstate conflict," in *Prisoners of war? Nation-states in the modern era*, ed. Charles S. Gochman and Alan N. Sabrosky (Lexington, KY: Lexington Books, 1990): 123-40; and Charles W. Kegley, Neil R. Richardson, and Gunther Richter, "Conflict at home and abroad," *Journal of Politics* 40 (1978): 742-52.

⁶⁶ Hazlewood, "Diversion mechanisms" (1975).

⁶⁷ Graeme A. M. Davies, "Domestic Strife and the Initiation of International Conflicts: A Directed Dyad Analysis, 1950-1982," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. 46, n. 5 (October 2002): 672-692.

⁶⁸ Chiozza and Goemans, "Peace through Insecurity," 453.

⁶⁹ Hazlewood, "Diversion Mechanisms and Encapsulation Processes."

likely to engage in diversionary foreign policy behavior when opposition groups from within the winning coalition press for policy changes, but the government rejects those policy demands. In contrast, if the government accommodates opposition demands, or adopts a hardline position against groups that are not within its winning coalition, we should not expect to observe diversionary foreign policy behavior.⁷⁰ An important contribution of this work is to explore the idea of foreign policy substitutability and how it relates to pressures from different domestic groups.⁷¹ This idea is relevant because it stresses that not all opposition groups have the same political weight. However, the authors ignore two significant scenarios regarding the initiation of the use of force abroad. The first scenario ignored is when the military is not completely subject to the civil government. The second scenario ignored is when the use of force abroad serves the private purposes of groups other than the executive leader.

In sum, it is clear that there is no consensus on how much domestic turmoil – if any – is necessary for international conflict to be initiated. After all, not all domestic crises are followed by external conflicts. Moreover, it is still to be demonstrated that domestic unrest is indeed the causal mechanism leading to external conflict. The mere fact that an international conflict temporally follows an internal conflict does not necessarily prove the existence of a causal relation.⁷² The mixed and contradictory empirical findings offered by the quantitative studies on the diversionary theory indicate

⁷⁰ Nicholls et al., “When Is Domestic Political Unrest Related to International Conflict?”

⁷¹ Foreign policy substitutability also appears in Gelpi, “Democratic Diversions,” who proposes that leaders can choose among at least three strategies when faced with domestic unrest: (i) accept the demands of the dissatisfied groups, (ii) repress the dissatisfied groups by force, or (iii) divert the public’s attention by using force internationally. However, Gelpi predicts that democracies respond to domestic unrest with diversion, while autocracies prefer to repress. For the reason discussed above, I find his causal argument based on the distinction of democracy versus autocracy unsatisfying.

⁷² See M. Taylor Fravel, “The Limits of Diversion: Rethinking Internal and External Conflict, *Security Studies*, 19: 2 (2010): 307-341.

that there is more going on in the relationship between domestic and international conflict than is actually assumed.⁷³ Furthermore, the diversionary war literature frames the executive leader as the prime mover and beneficiary of diversionary conflicts. However, some times the executive is the actor refraining from engaging the country in an international conflict, while other domestic groups pressure for war. That was the case with the Chilean President Pinto on the eve of the War of the Pacific (1879-1883) and with the Paraguayan President José Patricio Guggiari during the *fortín* Vanguardia incident (1928).

There are, however, exceptions to the exclusive focus on leaders in the literature on the domestic sources of international conflict. One of such works is Kurt Dassel's "Civilians, Soldiers, and Strife," which claims to offer a complementary approach to militarist and diversionary theories of war.⁷⁴ Dassel focuses on a particular type of domestic strife, contested institutions, i.e. a situation in which powerful groups disagree about the rules of the political game. Dassel argues that in those circumstances the military generally prefers to use force at home to protect its interests. However, if the use of force domestically will divide the military against itself, then the military will protect its interests by pursuing diversionary aggression abroad. An important contribution of Dassel's work is to consider the military as an actor on its own, rather than a mere tool of the executive power. Unfortunately, Dassel's work has similar problems to the leadership-oriented theories: fragmentation. That is, they assert the primacy of one type

⁷³ See Ross A. Miller and Özlem Elgün, "Diversion and Political Survival in Latin America," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 55, 2 (April, 2011): 192-219; and Fravel, "The Limits of Diversion" (2010).

⁷⁴ Kurt Dassel, "Civilians, Soldiers, and Strife: Domestic Sources of International Aggression," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer, 1998): 107-140; Kurt Dassel and Eric Reinhardt, "Domestic Strife and the Initiation of Violence at Home and Abroad," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (Jan., 1999): 56-85.

of actor over another. In other words, both approaches fail to account for how the interaction among these different actors might affect the probability of the use of military force abroad. As a result, Dassel cannot explain external aggression when the military is institutionally weak or subordinate to economic and political interests. Moreover, although Dassel claims to offer a theory about contested political institutions, he is really proposing a theory about threats to the military posed by the contestation of political institutions. This begets at least two problems. First, threats to the military can come from other sources such as budget constraints or changes in military policy. And second, contested political institutions threaten other actors besides the military, and some of those actors can influence the decision on the use of military force, domestically and abroad.

One of the main critiques to the extant literature reviewed thus far is its failure to offer a comprehensive theory able to incorporate actors across the political, economic, and military categories whenever relevant. An attempt at such enterprise can be found in Jack Snyder's *Myths of Empire*, where the author explains irrational, over-expansionist military policies among great powers.⁷⁵ Snyder argues that overexpansion is more common among "cartelized" states than in democracies or unitary states. Cartelized states are characterized as political systems dominated by a number of interest groups or "cartels." In those states, groups that have parochial interests in expansion push their overly aggressive foreign policy agenda through logrolling (or "vote trading") and justify it to the wider population with the myth that security can only be safeguarded through expansion. Democracies and unitary systems, in turn, are immune to overexpansion. On

⁷⁵ Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1991).

the one hand, “democracy creates checks on concentrated interests that would promote overexpansion” (p. 49) since diffuse interests opposed to expansion are more strongly represented and able to check logrolling and mythmaking. On the other hand, the unitary systems’ concentration of power in a single dictator or unitary oligarchy gives those actors the ability to keep overexpansion, imperialist mythmaking, and imperialist logrolling in check (p. 32).

Snyder contributes to the literature on the domestic causes of war by explaining how particularistic interests are able to “highjack” the state through logrolling and implement their own selfish foreign policies. The author also explains why leaders cannot pull back once those counterproductive policies are implemented, even if they do not believe the myth of security through expansion: if their legitimacy depends on the myth, retreat will be politically risky.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, Snyder’s theory encounters similar problems to those existing in theories based upon regime type: i.e., the inability to explain variation within categories. Although democracies, “on average,” tend to reject imperial enterprises that are not profitable (p. 50), “outlier” democracies fail to do so because uninformed median voters are susceptible to demagogic propaganda and/or because cartelized blocs might form within different segments of the elected government (p. 51). In other words, in those cases democracies are more morphologically alike to cartelized systems and, accordingly, behave as such. Another problem is that his theory is not able to make predictions for the third category “unitary system.” While the central leadership is able to keep imperialist logrolling in check, foreign policy is also very

⁷⁶ Overexpansion is counterproductive because it results in either self-encirclement, through which the aggressor provokes an overwhelming coalition of opposing states; and/or in imperial overextension, that is, the point in which additional extension becomes more costly than beneficial – what economists call “decreasing returns to scale.”

vulnerable to the whims of dictators. Most importantly, the reader is left wondering whether, at the end of the day, Snyder's theory is not really a theory about the interactions among domestic elites but rather another regime type theory where democracy explains restraint and less than fully democratic cartelized system explains bellicosity.

The theory I offer in this dissertation addresses both problems. The first problem, i.e. the behavioral exceptions within categories, results from the fact that what constrains actors' behavior is not differences in political systems, but rather differences in how domestic elites relate to each other, which I call domestic Elite Structure. The Elite Structure can vary from very fragmented to very integrated. This variation explains the ability and interest of elites to act together to pass their common agendas through logrolling, if they are integrated, or to veto each other's projects, if they are fragmented. Elite Structure is a more powerful explanatory variable than regime type because in the latter each category can display different elite structures. Thus, democracies might, "on average," present fragmented elite structures, which allow for checks and balances. However, democracies can also present integrated elite structures when the government is united (i.e. a single party dominates both the executive and legislature), ensuing in a cartelized system. Likewise, non-democracies might have integrated elite structures (e.g. Mexico's PRI single party regime) or fragmented elite structures (e.g. caudillo politics). Snyder traces groups' ability to logroll and implement aggressive foreign policies aiming at private gains to the diffusion of interests in the political system, which the author implies to be related to regime type. Differently from Snyder, I argue that the diffusion or

concentration of interests is not a function of the political system. They are a function of the elite structure, which cannot be explained by or reduced to regime type.

As I explain in detail in the next chapter, there is no necessary correlation between elite structure and regime type, as each regime type category can display different arrangements of elite structure. Thus, democracies might, “on average,” present fragmented elite structures, which allow for checks and balances. However, democracies can also present integrated elite structures when the government is united (i.e. a single party dominates all branches of government). Likewise, non-democracies might have integrated elite structures (e.g. Mexico’s PRI single party regime) or fragmented elite structures (e.g. nineteenth century Argentine caudillo politics). In sum, elite fragmentation does not imply or require democracy and elite integration does not imply or require autocracy – or vice-versa.

The second problem of Snyder’s theory concerns his inability to explain the behavior of unitary political systems. This problem happens because the incentives to engage – or not – in counterproductive aggressive foreign policies are not theorized. Snyder assumes that certain domestic groups, which might include economic sectors, state bureaucracies, and the military, have an intrinsic interest in expansion. But are all cartelized systems always over-expanding? Implicit in Snyder’s assumption is the assertion that preferences are an ontological property of certain types of actors – what economists call basic preferences. However, this assertion disregards the fact that counterproductive aggressive policies might also be viable solutions for the problems that elites face domestically – in this case external aggression is an induced preference, that is, a means to an end, as proposed by the literature on diversionary war. Acknowledging this

aspect, my dissertation theorizes the cases in which the initiation of foreign aggression is an attractive and viable strategy for the maximization of private gains not only from the point of view of executive leaders, but for military and economic elites as well.

In a nutshell, my theory proposes that the incentives that domestic elites have to engage – or not – in aggressive foreign policies as a procurement of private goods is a function of two variables: “Threat Intensity” and “Elite Structure.” While Threat Intensity refers to the degree of threat that elites believe they are facing, Elite Structure denotes the organizational pattern of elite relations, which in turn determines their ability to gather resources to avert actual or perceived threats. As stated above, the diffusion or concentration of interest and, subsequently, the ability to coordinate strategies and garner resources is a function of the elite structure. Thus, I expect that elites in a very fragmented elite structure facing very high degrees of threat will avoid engaging in aggressive foreign policies because the stakes of the domestic threats require that they turn all their attention and resources domestically. Elites in a very integrated elite structure facing low or no threats have no incentives to engage in costly aggressive foreign policies as a means to address domestic problems, since less costly domestic solutions exist.⁷⁷ However, fragmented elites facing low to moderate threats and integrated elites facing high degrees of threat have incentives to engage in aggressive foreign policies as a resource appropriation strategy.

The next chapter is dedicated to fully flesh out the logic supporting those hypotheses. In that chapter I consider the relationship between internal and external conflict under the prism of policy substitutability, recognizing that that domestic strife

⁷⁷ The exception is the existence of indivisible goods, private information, or commitment problems involving a pair of states (see Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War”).

can motivate a number of responses, domestically and internationally oriented alike. With that in mind, I specify who are the relevant domestic actors in a given scenario and under what conditions one or more of those actors will choose the initiation of foreign aggression vis-à-vis domestic policies to avert perceived threats to their bases of power.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The remainder of this dissertation is organized as follows:

Chapter 2 presents the conceptual framework I use to think about the initiation of aggressive foreign policies and the level of violence initially employed based on the concepts of Elite Structure and Threat Intensity. In that chapter I define the concept of elite, offer the criteria for its identification, and expound why an elite-based theory is analytically superior to existing theoretical approaches. Then I proceed to define Elite Structure and Threat Intensity and explain the variations within those categories. Finally, I hypothesize how the combination of different types of Elite Structure and Threat Intensity constrains or widens the domestic elites' policy options to address actual or perceived threats to their bases of power. Finally, I briefly describe my data and methods.

The next four chapters illustrate how the elite threat theory contributes to explaining the decision of domestic elites to initiate uses of military force internationally and the intensity of violence initially employed. Those chapters conduct longitudinal case studies tracking the variations of the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity over several decades in four South American countries: Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay. Each pair of chapters (i.e., Brazil & Argentina; Bolivia & Paraguay) studies rival countries over roughly the same span of time. The longitudinal analyses of rivalries allow

us to hold countries and international issues stable over time. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the domestic and foreign policies of Brazil and Argentina, respectively, from their independences in the early 1820s until the beginning of the War of the Triple Alliance in 1864. Likewise, Chapters 5 and 6 examine Bolivia and Paraguay from their post-war period (i.e., the end of the War of the Triple Alliance in 1870 for Paraguay and the end of the War of the Pacific in 1884 for Bolivia) until the Chaco War (1932).

The Conclusion summarizes the advantages of utilizing the elite threat theory for understanding the initiation and degree of militarization of international uses of force as opportunistic or diversionary policies to address domestic problems.

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CHAPTER 2

AN ELITE THREAT THEORY OF AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY

As Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War demonstrates, attempts to explain international conflict go back as far as antiquity. One of the most important lessons we have learned throughout the ages is that most of the militarized confrontations that plague the international system are linked to enduring rivalries— a few dyads of states that share unresolved grievances and whose interactions are depicted as “competitive relationships that persist over time through successive conflictual encounters.”⁷⁸ The concept of enduring rivalries helps clarify the distribution of disputes in the international system. Unfortunately, it does not – and cannot – explain the timing and severity of those disputes.

As a result, we are left with two vexing puzzles. Why do rival states resort to force at some times but not others? And why are some of those encounters more violent than others? The behavior of rival states in South America nicely illustrates these mysteries. On the one hand, the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay over the Chaco region dated back to the 1850s, but was only militarized in the late 1880s, flaring up again in the 1920s. However, it wasn't until 1932 – eighty years after the dispute began – that it escalated into one of the bloodiest wars in Latin American history. Similarly, Argentina was locked in bitter rivalries with several of its neighbors since its

⁷⁸ Michael Colaresi and William R. Thompson, “Hot Spots or Hot Hands? Serial Crisis Behavior, Escalating Risks, and Rivalry” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Nov., 2002): 1176.

independence; yet, it only engaged in military aggression on a few occasions. How can we explain these cases and many others like them? A theory that is dynamic enough to provide for variation – both in explaining why force is used and the intensity of war – is desperately needed.

Scholars are not unaware of the theoretical gaps in explaining these questions; however, past attempts in providing theoretically powerful and empirically supported explanations have been less than satisfying. One of the key reasons for this failure has been the attribution of theoretical primacy to one or another type of domestic actor or institution, thus failing to explain variation within categories. For example, not all democracies or dictatorships behave the same. Likewise, some oligarchic states are just “greedier” than others and some military regimes engage in more conflicts than others. Brazil and Chile, for example, share a similar pattern of regime change over time. Both countries had powerful oligarchies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and they both experienced military rule. However, since their independences, Chile was engaged in twice as many militarized disputes involving the use of force than Brazil.

This dissertation overcomes this drawback by offering an elite-based theory that explains the initiation and hostility level of militarized interstate disputes between rival states. I argue that the vast majority of cases of use of force between rival states can be explained by those states’ domestic elite structures and by the degree of actual or perceived threat to those elites, which I call Elite Structure and Threat Intensity, respectively.

Additionally, this dissertation is based on the proposition that the extant literature on the domestic sources of war oversimplifies the relationship between domestic

instability and international conflict. That is, it fails to consider that domestic strife can motivate a number of responses, including: coups d'état, domestic repression of the opposition, political and economic reform, diversionary aggression against foreign scapegoats, and even international cooperation. Hence, it is necessary to specify which domestic conditions prompt elites to initiate diversionary or opportunistic uses of military force abroad aimed at the procurement of private goods rather than public goods – such as national security. I hypothesize that the decision of a given elite group(s) to initiate the use of military force abroad as a means of private good procurement, and the magnitude of the force employed, is a function of two variables: the elite structure and the elites' perception of threat to their bases of power and privilege.

This dissertation tackles two puzzles, that is, it has two dependent variables: the initiation of aggressive foreign policies and the level of violence initially employed by the initiator of those encounters. The first puzzle is about timing. I am interested to know why violence erupts in some instances but not others, given the continuation of the contentious issue. The second puzzle is about foreign policy choices. States possess a variety of means to deal with conflicting interests. They can resort to non-violent means such as negotiation and arbitration. They can issue threats or move troops to the border to show resolve and improve their bargaining positions. Or they can decide the issue on the battlefield. Recognizing those different tools of statecraft, this dissertation explores why decision-makers choose one of those options over the others.

Table 2.1 Hostility level and corresponding military actions

Hostility Level	Military Action
1 No militarized action	0 No militarized action
2 Threat to use force	1 Threat to use force 2 Threat to blockade 3 Threat to occupy territory 4 Threat to declare war 5 Threat to use CBR* weapons 6 Threat to join war
3 Display use of force	7 Show of force 8 Alert 9 Nuclear alert 10 Mobilization 11 Fortify border 12 Border violation
4 Use of force	13 Blockade 14 Occupation of territory 15 Seizure 16 Attack 17 Clash 18 Declaration of war 19 Use of CBR* weapons
5 War	20 Begin interstate war** 21 Join interstate war**
<p>Source: Codebook for the Dyadic Militarized Interstate Dispute Data, Version 3.10</p> <p>* Chemical, biological, and radiological</p> <p>** War requires at least 1,000 battlefield related deaths</p>	

An “aggressive foreign policy” involves threats to use military force, displays of military force, or actual uses of military force (see table 2.1 above). The standard MID dataset defines *war* as requiring at least 1,000 battlefield-related deaths. Events with battlefield-related deaths below this threshold are characterized as *uses of force*. Nevertheless, many South American events that observers and participants call “war” do not satisfy the standard MID criterion. The Leticia War (1932, Peru vs. Colombia) had 800 casualties and the Falkland War (1982, Argentina vs. Great Britain) had “only” 907 battlefield-related deaths. However, that does not mean that those “wars” were not

regionally significant. While the number of battlefield-related deaths in the Marañon War (1941, Ecuador vs. Peru) falls short of 1,000 its impact cannot be minimized: Ecuador lost 40 percent of its territory and Peruvian troops advanced deeply into undisputed Ecuadorian territory, imposing a peace treaty on Ecuador.⁷⁹ Moreover, the subsequent military encounters between Peru and Ecuador revolved around the outcome of the 1941 “war.” Other notable events are the Acre War (1902-1903, Bolivia vs. Brazil) and the Cenepa War (1981, Ecuador vs. Peru). Therefore, in my in-depth case studies I rely on the belligerents’ understandings of their actions as well as on the impact that military events had on their societies to code cases of “wars” versus cases of “uses of military force” short of war.

I also code as initiation of the “use of military force” (as opposed to initiation of a “war”) cases in which the decision-makers decide to join one of the sides in an ongoing interstate war or in an ongoing foreign civil war. I consider those behaviors to be “limited uses of military force abroad” because of the limited commitments in terms of wealth, military power, and manpower they require. When elites within a state decide to join a foreign interstate or civil war, they might be pursuing defensive and/or offensive goals – that is, they might be attempting to increase their security and/or to seize foreign resources. However, those elites are usually not fighting for their immediate survival, since they are not the target of the war. Elites that join a war – but upon which a war was not imposed – can choose how much of their resources they want to commit to the war effort.

⁷⁹ David R. Mares, *Violent Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001): 33-34.

This is significant because although military events might escalate into wars, the intent of my dissertation is to explain the timing and intensity of the use of force chosen by the “first mover,” that is, by the initiator of a given militarized incident, as a response to domestic and foreign constraints. Unexpected escalation means that the first mover misunderstood and underestimated the incentives of the opposing side to use force. This leads to an important caveat. My theory is not crafted to explain the occurrence of war *per se*, but rather the decision of elite groups within a state to initiate – or not – the use of force abroad. Therefore, the fact that a state’s elites might prefer – and initiate – a display of force, such as border violation, does not prevent that event from escalating. Moreover, the fact that elites might prefer a non-violent settlement of the dispute does not mean that a military campaign cannot be imposed on them. The final outcome of a dispute depends upon the strategic context in which states interact. In this sense, I do not aim to explain or predict the final outcome of a dispute. What I offer is a theory of preference formation. That is, given specified circumstances, I stipulate the elites’ preferences for a certain type of foreign policy over others.

The remainder of this chapter presents my “elite threat theory” of aggressive foreign policy. The first section defines the concept of elite, offers the criteria for its identification, and expounds why an elite-based theory is analytically superior to existing theoretical approaches. Second, I discuss the concept of Elite Structure and its variations: integrated versus fragmented. The next section explores what I call disruptive dynamics, that is, exogenous shocks and/or processes endogenous to society that create threats to vested elites by affecting their bases of resource and altering the balance of power among them. Elites are thus pushed by necessity to consider policies that would revert or

ameliorate the effect of those changes. Hence, in the following section, based on the notion of policy substitutability, I consider how the type of Elite Structure constrains elites' policy choices to deal with actual or perceived threats given the intensity of those threats. Finally, I describe my data and methods.

2.1 ELITES

“And today, though I am the anointed king, I am weak, and these sons of Zeruiah are too strong for me” (2 Samuel 3:39, NIV).

Extant domestic-level theories of international conflict usually establish an exclusive association between foreign policy making and a single type of actor: e.g., the capitalist, the professional politician, or the warlord. However, state institutions and the actors who control them vary geographically and historically. Thus a generalizable theory about the domestic origins of foreign policy must account for those changes. For that sake, the concept of “elite” is most advantageous, for it eschews economic, political, and military determinism, giving us temporal and spatial breadth in the analysis of foreign policy making.⁸⁰ This is so because the concept of “elite” enables us to detect and compare fundamental power structures in different societies in time and space by identifying the loci of power and the actors who control them. In other words, an elite-based framework is malleable enough to be applicable over time and across regime types and economic structures. Notice that the same cannot be said of the ruling class, for

⁸⁰ On the role of the elites as policy makers see H. Zeigler and T. R. Dye, “Editors note,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 13 (November/December, 1969): 167-168; K. Prewitt, “From the many are chosen the few,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 13 (November/December, 1969): 169; Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Thought 1947, 2008): 269. For an opposing view see Bruce H. Mayhew, “System Size and Ruling Elites,” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Aug., 1973): 469.

example. This concept connotes the political rule of a self-aware collective actor mainly defined by its relation to property and means of production,⁸¹ implying the lack of autonomy of professional politicians and of those who control the means of coercion. This theory may or may not at times be true, but it should not be improperly generalized. Moreover, while Karl Marx's theoretical framework assumes the shared interest of the ruling class to reproduce its exploitative relation to the producing class, it disregards the competition for power among rival elites.⁸² Hence, an elite-based theory offers superior analytical power compared to alternative theories that focus exclusively on "the ruling class" or any single type of domestic actor.

Not all people are equally able to effect change. The elite are groups of people who wield power and influence, affecting national outcomes individually, regularly, and seriously, on the basis of having control of a disproportionate share of resources.⁸³ Those resources include means of coercion, means of production or exchange, and the control over organizational and administrative apparatuses. The elite holds, accesses, and deploys

⁸¹ Leandro Losada, *Historia de las Elites en la Argentina: Desde la Conquista hasta el Surgimiento del Perónismo* (Buenos Aires, 2009): 9.

⁸² Richard Lachmann, *Capitalists in Spite of Themselves: Elite Conflict and Economic Transitions in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 9.

⁸³ Eva Etzioni-Halevy, "Democratic-Elite Theory: Stabilization versus Breakdown of Democracy," *European Journal of Sociology* (1990): 323 and "The Autonomy of the Elites and Transitions from Non-Democratic Regimes: The Cases of the Former Soviet Union and Poland," *Research in Political Sociology*, 6, 1993: 258; Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939); C. W. Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956); Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure* (Chapel Hill, 1953); Delbert C. Miller, "Industry and community power structure," *American Sociological Review* 23 (February, 1958): 9-15; William H. Form and W. V. D'Antonio, "Integration and cleavage among community influentials in two border cities," *American Sociological Review* 24 (December, 1959): 804-814; Michael G. Burton and John Higley, "Elite Settlements," *American Sociological Review*, 52:3 (Jun., 1987): 296; Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961); Raymond E. Wolfinger, "Reputation and reality in the study of community power," *American Sociological Review* 25 (October, 1960): 636-644; Nelson Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963); Robert Perrucci and Marc Pilisuk, "Leaders and Ruling Elites: The Interorganizational Bases of Community Power," *American Sociological Review*, 35:6 (Dec., 1970): 1040-1057; G. Lowell Field and John Higley, *Elites and Non-Elites: The Possibilities and Their Side-Effects*, 13 (Andover, Mass.: Warner Modular Publications, 1973): 6-9.

resources through the command of major economic, political, and military institutions.⁸⁴ Those institutions are “the chief means of exercising power, of acquiring and retaining wealth, and of cashing in the higher claims of prestige.”⁸⁵ Because they are means to power, those institutions tend to become ends to the elite that command them. Therefore, I operationalize “elite” as those who occupy the command posts of political, military, and economic institutions able to influence national outcomes.⁸⁶ Thus defined, elite denotes political party leaders, elected officials, economic directors, military chiefs, and “leaders of the masses” such as trade union leaders.⁸⁷ This definition asserts that groups and individuals other than state officials exert power.⁸⁸ Notice as well that this conception emphasizes the role of individuals and essentially refers to leaders, regardless of social class or background – hence the inclusion of union leaders, who are often ignored in the elite literature.

This conceptualization could suggest that the elite-based approach implies total elite autonomy, irrespective of non-elite reactions. This idea is correct in the sense that, *in themselves*, non-elites cannot threaten the elite, even despite widespread anti-elite sentiments. Contentious forms of collective action such as riots, rebellion, and civil violence do not “naturally” emerge from the breakdown of the mechanisms of social

⁸⁴ Richard Lachmann, *Capitalists in Spite of Themselves*, 241 fn. 6.

⁸⁵ Mills, *The Power Elite*, 3-4, 9.

⁸⁶ Mills, *The Power Elite*, 23.

⁸⁷ For denotations of “elites” see David Waldner, *Democracy and Dictatorship in the Post-Colonial World*, forthcoming, Cornell University Press; R. Aron, “Social Structure and the Ruling Class,” *British Journal of Sociology* (1950): 9; T.B. Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (London: Penguin, 1964); Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites* (Englewood Cliffs, N .J.: Prentice- Hall, 1976): 14; Eva Etzioni-Halevy, “Democratic-Elite Theory,” 323 and “The Autonomy of the Elites and Transitions from Non-Democratic Regimes,” 258.

⁸⁸ Frank Bealey, “Elitism and the Autonomy of the Elites,” *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique*, 17:3, Traditions in Pluralist Thought. Traditions de la pensée pluraliste (Jul., 1996): 322.

control.⁸⁹ This proposition would have to explain why self-interested individuals would join those types of actions in the first place since the social benefits they create are non-excludable, giving incentives for individuals to free ride on the efforts of others.⁹⁰ And yet voter turnout, strikes, protests, and revolutions do happen.

This paradox can be explained by the resource mobilization theory, which posits that collective action flows from groups vying for power. For that sake, leaders mobilize resources and channel discontent into organizational forms that provide selective incentives to reward participation in collective action and/or to punish nonattendance.⁹¹ Rebellion is “simply politics by other means.”⁹² Thus in order to be able to affect national outcomes, non-elites must be mobilized. Accounts that give credit to “the people” for successful political changes fail to see the work of an elite leading the masses.⁹³ Evidence of this important point is that the organized working class is only a part of the working class. Usually most workers do not participate in manifestations, protests, and strikes – which are some of the means through which union leaders exert power.⁹⁴ But once non-elites are mobilized, they become powerful resources – e.g. manpower, votes, or economic production disruption – in the hands of a leader.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ Bert Useem, “Breakdown Theories of Collective Action,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24 (1998): 215.

⁹⁰ Mancur Olson, *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

⁹¹ Bert Useem, “Breakdown Theories of Collective Action,” 216 and Marc Edelman, “Social Movements: Changing Paradigms and Forms of Politics,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 30 (2001): 289. For the other solutions to the collective action problem / social movement paradox see Byron Miller, “Collective Action and Rational Choice: Place, Community, and the Limits to Individual Self-Interest,” *Economic Geography*, 68:1 Rational Choice, Collective Action, Technological Learning (Jan., 1992): 25-26.

⁹² William Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1990 [1975]): 139.

⁹³ Ferdinand Koglar, “The Elite and the Ruling Class: Pareto and Mosca Re-Examined,” *The Review of Politics*, 29:3 (Jul., 1967): 359.

⁹⁴ Ruth Berins Collier, *Paths Toward Democracy: The Working Class and Elites in Western Europe and South America* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 15.

⁹⁵ Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 270.

2.2 FRAGMENTED AND INTEGRATED ELITE STRUCTURES

“It was you who crushed the heads of Leviathan...” (Psalm 74:14, NIV). Immortalized by Thomas Hobbes, the term Leviathan became the epitome for the State, usually thought of as being submitted under one single command. In the International Relations literature, this imagery underlies the so-called unitary actor assumption. However, as suggested by the psalmist, just as the Leviathan might have more than one head, so might have the State. In other words, the State might not always fit within the unitary actor assumption.

An important feature of the definition of elite offered in the previous section is that it allows for pluralism. That is, it rejects the concept of a single unitary elite group as being always the norm and recognizes the possibility of several elites sharing power in a single historical era because each elite controls distinct bases of resources.⁹⁶ This diversity among the elite allows for lower or higher degrees of affinity among them, which in turn affect the way those elites relate to each other in terms of their basic preferences. Thus, the Elite Structure, i.e., the relations among the groups in the elite peculiar to each society,⁹⁷ varies along the continuum between fragmentation and integration. Nevertheless, for analytical purposes I treat elite structure as a dichotomous variable that can take the values of “fragmented” or “integrated.” The key determinant of

⁹⁶ Ferdinand Kogler, “The Elite and the Ruling Class,” 357 and Richard Lachmann, “Class Formation without Class Struggle: An Elite Conflict Theory of the Transition to Capitalism,” *American Sociological Review*, 55:3 (Jun., 1990): 400. This understanding is not always the norm. John P. Heinz et al, “Inner Circles or Hollow Cores?” 356-357, for example, write “Not only will the social, economic, and political interests of elites tend to converge, elites manage political conflict so as to preserve order, thus also preserving their own privileged positions.” Heinz et al. not only wrongly assume that elites are always integrated, but they also fail to consider coordination or collective action problems.

⁹⁷ Raymond Aron, “Social Structure and the Ruling Class: Part 1,” *The British Journal of Sociology*, 1:1 (Mar., 1950): 10. On alternative definitions of elite structure see Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978); Anthony Giddens, “Preface,” in *Elites and Power in British Society*, ed. Philip Stanworth; and Anthony Giddens (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974): ix-xii.

the elite structure is the extent to which the sources of power in society are compatible or mutually exclusive. Compatible sources of power cause elites to have a common stake in reproducing that system since it allows for positive sum games for the elites. Mutually exclusive sources of power cause elite struggle since they create a zero-sum game situation in which one elite's gain is the other's loss.

Thus the *elite structure is integrated* when the elites' bases of power cause them to have common preferences on a given structure of resource extraction and allocation, which involves macro-economic policies, political institutions, electoral rules, etc. Such was the case of the late-nineteenth century Chilean elite structure. The miners of the north, the agriculturists of the center and south, the merchants of Valparaiso and Santiago, and the legislators were closely tied together and shared a strong common preference for free trade. A "very integrated" elite structure – as a Weberian ideal type – *manifests* "the outward appearance of nearly complete unity in that all elite factions publicly profess the same ideology and publicly support the same major policies."⁹⁸ Generally, nearly all members of the elite belong to the same party or movement.

However, as I define it, an integrated elite structure does not necessarily preclude competition between administrative departments or rivalry between individuals, which are inherent in the organization of every human society, as long as competition and

⁹⁸ G. Lowell Field and John Higley, *Elitism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), Michael G. Burton, "Elites and Collective Protest," *The Sociological Quarterly*, 25:1 (Winter, 1984): 55. This type is also termed "totalitarian," "monocratic," or "ideologically unified." See, respectively, Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1969); Frederick J. Fleron Jr., "Toward a Reconceptualization of Political Change in the Soviet Union: The Political Leadership System," in *Communist Studies and the Social Sciences*, ed. Frederic J. Fleron, Jr. (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969): 222-43; and Field and Higley, "National Elites and Political Stability," in *Research in Politics and Society: Studies of the Structure of National Elite Groups*, Vol. 1, ed. Gwen Moore (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1985): 1-44.

rivalry do not take the form of a struggle between independent bodies.⁹⁹ In this sense, what I call “integrated elite structure” subsumes what other authors call “cohesive elite structure.”¹⁰⁰ a category that stands in the middle of the fragmentation-integration spectrum. Similar to integrated elite structures, cohesive elite structures feature shared expectations of nonaggression, mutual toleration, and division of the spoils. But different from the “very integrated” Weberian type structure, cohesive elite structures *manifest* public profession of opposing ideological and policy stances by the elite factions without, however, allowing those disagreements to reach the point of violent conflict. Forcible power seizures do not occur or are not expected. “Although they inveigh against each other on policy questions, they apparently share a tacit commitment to abide by common codes of political conduct.”¹⁰¹ For the purposes of this dissertation, I include what other scholars call cohesive elite structure within the integrated elite structure category since in both cases the elites agree on the “rules of the game,” that is, on the overall scheme of resource extraction and allocation. When that is no longer the case, then we are dealing with a fragmented elite structure.

The *elite structure is fragmented* when the elites’ bases of power cause them to have antagonizing preferences on a given scheme of resource extraction and allocation. An example is the elite structure that emerged in post-independence Argentina:¹⁰² a

⁹⁹ Raymond Aron, “Social Structure and the Ruling Class: Part 1,” 10.

¹⁰⁰ This type is also called “pluralistic,” “competitive-coalescent,” or “consensually unified.” See, respectively, Frederick J. Flerns Jr., “Toward a Reconceptualization of Political Change in the Soviet Union,” Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*; and Field and Higley, “National Elites and Political Stability.”

¹⁰¹ Field and Higley, *Elitism*; Burton, “Elites and Collective Protest,” 55.

¹⁰² As I argue in the next chapter, different from the processes of state formation in Europe, not only the model of the modern state already existed, but also did the very idea of an Argentine state. Indeed, as of 1813, the elites of the littoral provinces accepted the right of Buenos Aires to rule in the name of all, and national unity was only dissolved in 1820. Therefore, I can speak of a “post-independence Argentina” – despite the collapse of power centralization that occurred in the 1820s. Likewise, I can also speak of the

multipolar elite structure characterized by the overlap of political, military, and economic power upon a few individuals. That is, the same individuals who possessed the means of warfare were also the owners of the means of production and the creators and executors of legislation. The most important elite conflict at the time pitted Buenos Aires against the provinces of Santa Fe, Entre Ríos, and Corrientes, which opposed the centralization of foreign trade in the port of Buenos Aires and the restrictions to navigation in the Paraná and Uruguay rivers after independence.¹⁰³ Buenos Aires' monopoly over foreign trade and customs income greatly limited the impact of the agricultural and livestock expansion in those provinces, compromising the bases of power of their respective elites.¹⁰⁴ Other examples are the elite structures in Bolivia and Paraguay in the late 1920s. A "very fragmented" elite structure – a Weberian ideal type – *manifests* as often-violent factional conflicts. "Elite factions deeply distrust each other, interpersonal relations do not extend across factional lines, and factions do not cooperate to contain societal divisions or to avoid political crises."¹⁰⁵ Elite factions see power as personalized and dependent upon direct control of organized coercive forces. Irregular seizures of the executive power by force are frequent or widely expected. Elite factions regularly

relationship among the Plata provinces as elite factionalism rather than as power struggles among independent and sovereign entities.

¹⁰³ The provinces of the Plata region also experienced other two simultaneous axes of conflict: the first was among the littoral provinces, and the second pitted the hinterland provinces against each other. See Rubén Zorrilla, *Estructura Social y Caudillismo (1810-1870)* (Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1994).

¹⁰⁴ See Aldo Ferrer, *A Economia Argentina: de suas Origens ao Início do Século XXI* (São Paulo: Elsevier Editora Ltda, 2006): 53.

¹⁰⁵ Burton and Higley, "Elite Settlements," 296. This type is also labeled "divided," "competitive," or "disunified." See, respectively, C. Beck and J. Malloy. "Political Elites: A Mode of Analysis." Presented at the Sixth World Conference, International Political Science Association, Geneva, 1964; Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*; and Field and Higley, "National Elites and Political Stability."

mobilize segments of non-elites against their elite competitors, resulting in frequent mass demonstrations, strikes, riots, and uprisings.¹⁰⁶

The volatility of a fragmented elite structure results from a lack of consensus about “the rules of the game,” that is, the formal and informal agreements that regulate the extraction and distribution of resources. Elites care about maintaining their privileged status over time, which in turn requires capacity to affect outcomes. Very asymmetric schemes of resource extraction and distribution create an increasing power gap among the elite factions, which in the long-term can compromise the disfavored elite’s base of power and, consequently, its ability to affect outcomes. Under those circumstances, the disfavored elite faction face three options: (a) to overturn the inter-elite hierarchy by capturing the command of the institutions that offer the highest pay-offs; (b) to change the institutional make-up altogether, creating new institutions that will maintain their preponderant position overtime; and (c) to acquiesce. Notice that options (a) and (b) are about preferences; they say nothing about the capacity to impose those preferences. Thus, choosing option (a) or (b) over (c) will be a matter of having the capacity to execute (a) or (b). In turn, choosing between (a) and (b) will depend on the information elites possess about institutional alternatives and their expected costs and benefits.

Notice that I have defined the elite structure in terms of the structure of elite preferences, independent of political stability. While the degree of political stability can be a *manifestation* or a consequence of the relationships among the elites, it does not define or constitute the elites’ relations. In other words, political stability does not cause the configuration of the elite structure, although the opposite is be true. A substantial

¹⁰⁶ G. Lowell Field and John Higley, *Elitism*; Michael G. Burton, “Elites and Collective Protest,” 55.

body of literature proposes that elite integration is key to political stability.¹⁰⁷ Scholars have used elite integration to explain political stability in Mexico since the early 1930s, in Colombia after 1958, and in Venezuela.¹⁰⁸ Notice that these assertions have no bearing on the relationship between elite structure and regime type, as neither elite integration nor political stability imply or require democracy (or autocracy). In other words, variation on the elite structure does not have any causal effect upon the substantive preferences of the elites. That is, the elite structure reflects the degree of compatibility of the elites' preferences, but it does not influence the content of those preferences. Elite agreement on the "rules of the game" can manifest through various schemes of resource extraction and distribution, some of which might take the form of democratic institutions and some of which might not. Examples of non-democratic elite agreements on the "rules of the game" and of political stability are Mexico under the PRI and Brazil's República do Café com Leite.¹⁰⁹

The Elite Structure cannot be explained by or reduced to regime type. To illustrate this point let's consider Jack Snyder's *Myths of Empire*.¹¹⁰ Snyder's theory is not really a theory about the interactions among domestic groups but rather another regime type theory where democracy explains restraint and a less than fully democratic cartelized

¹⁰⁷ See Michael G. Burton, "Elites and Collective Protest," *The Sociological Quarterly*, 25:1 (Winter, 1984): 52.

¹⁰⁸ For Mexico see Susan Kaufman Purcell and John F. H. Purcell, "State and society in Mexico: must a stable polity be institutionalized?" *World Politics* 32 (1980): 194-227; for Colombia see Alexander W. Wilde, "Conversations among gentlemen: oligarchical democracy in Colombia," in *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, ed. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978): 28-81; and for Venezuela see Daniel H. Levine, "Venezuela since 1958: the consolidation of democratic politics," in *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, 82-109.

¹⁰⁹ Neither has the elite structure any necessary bearing on the elite's political and economic preferences. See Kevin Neuhaus, "Democratic Stability in Venezuela: Elite Consensus or Class Compromise?" *American Sociological Review*, 57:1 (Feb., 1992): 118; and C. W. Mills, *The Power Elite*, 21.

¹¹⁰ Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1991).

system explains bellicosity.¹¹¹ Snyder's theory encounters similar problems to those existing in theories based upon regime type: i.e., the inability to explain variation within categories. Although democracies, "on average," tend to reject imperial enterprises that are not profitable, "outlier" democracies fail to do so because uninformed median voters are susceptible to demagogic propaganda and/or because cartelized blocs might form within different segments of the elected government.¹¹² In other words, in those cases democracies are morphologically more alike to cartelized systems and, accordingly, behave as such. If that is the case, then it is not regime type that is lifting the explanatory weight in Snyder's theory.

I argue that these behavioral exceptions within categories result from the fact that what is causing the actors' behaviors are not differences in political systems, but rather differences in how domestic elites relate to each other. As I explicate below, the variation in the elite structure (fragmented vs. integrated) explains the elites' interests to act together to pass their common agendas through logrolling, if they are integrated, or to veto each other's projects, if they are fragmented. Moreover, each regime type category can display different elite structures. Thus, democracies might, "on average," present fragmented elite structures, which allow for checks and balances. However, democracies can also present integrated elite structures when the government is united (i.e. a single party dominates all branches of government). Likewise, non-democracies might have

¹¹¹ On the one hand, "democracy creates checks on concentrated interests that would promote overexpansion" since diffuse interests opposed to expansion are more strongly represented and able to check logrolling and mythmaking. On the other hand, in "cartelized" states, groups that have parochial interests in expansion push their overly aggressive foreign policy agenda through logrolling (or "vote trading") and justify it to the wider population with the myth that security can only be safeguarded through expansion. Snyder is not able to make predictions for his third category "unitary system;" while the central leadership is able to keep imperialist logrolling in check, foreign policy is also very vulnerable to the whims of dictators.

¹¹² Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, 50-51.

integrated elite structures (e.g. Mexico's PRI single party regime) or fragmented elite structures (e.g. nineteenth century Argentine caudillo politics). Recall that Snyder is unable to explain the behavior of unitary political systems (see footnote 102).

This happens because the incentives to engage – or not – in “counterproductive aggressive foreign policies” are not theorized. Snyder assumes that certain domestic groups, which might include economic sectors, state bureaucracies, and the military, have an intrinsic interest in expansion. But are all cartelized systems always over-expanding? Not really. Snyder's theory implicitly assumes that preferences are an ontological property of certain types of actors. However, this assertion disregards the fact that counterproductive aggressive policies might also be viable solutions for the problems that elites face domestically – in this case external aggression is an induced preference, that is, a means to an end, as proposed by the literature on diversionary war. Acknowledging this aspect, my dissertation theorizes the circumstances under which the initiation of foreign aggression is an attractive and viable strategy for the maximization of private gains not only from the point of view of executive leaders, but for military and economic elites as well.

2.3 DISRUPTIVE DYNAMICS AND THE THREAT INTENSITY

“Elites do not last forever; they decline, degenerate and die, sometimes at a fast rate, sometimes slowly.”¹¹³ Although elite strife is a recurring theme in the literature on elites, non-tautological explanations for its occurrence are not common. We must be able to account for elite fighting without referring to elite conflict as a cause. In this section I explain changes in the pattern of elite relations based on disruptive dynamics, that is,

¹¹³ Ferdinand Koglar, “The Elite and the Ruling Class,” 358.

exogenous shocks and/or processes endogenous to society that create threats to vested elites by affecting their bases of resource and altering the balance of power among those groups.

Long-term elite integration results from either (a) the elites' satisfaction with the status quo or (b) a new elite consensus based on the control of institutions and/or material resources that permit elites to prevent the emergence of future challengers.¹¹⁴ These conditions can be upset by actual or expected changes in the distribution of resources in society, which I call disruptive dynamics. Actual or expected changes in the allocation of resources in society constitute actual or expected threats to the existing status quo and can, hence, disrupt the balance of power among the elites. Threatened elites are thus pushed by necessity to implement policies that would revert or mitigate the actual or expected effects of those changes. Notice that what prompts elites to alter their course of action is not only an actual change in material circumstances but can also be an expected transformation of current material circumstances.

The sources of disruptive dynamics can be endogenous or exogenous to society. Disruptive dynamics can also result from processes such as economic prosperity or decline, modernization, and bureaucratization; or from discrete events such as wars or shifts in the pattern of international trade or in the distribution of gold reserves. It is useful to think of disruptive dynamics in terms of three basic types of changes: personnel, political, and socioeconomic.¹¹⁵ First, personnel change refers to the change in the individuals who occupy the governmental and nongovernmental leadership roles of the

¹¹⁴ David Waldner, *Democracy and Dictatorship in the Post-Colonial World* and Richard Lachmann, "Elite Self-Interest and Economic Decline in Early Modern Europe," *American Sociological Review*, 68:3 (Jun., 2003): 352.

¹¹⁵ James N. Rosenau, "Foreign Policy as Adaptive Behavior: Some Preliminary Notes for a Theoretical Model," *Comparative Politics*, 2:3 (Apr., 1970): 365-387.

society. While this may not be a dramatic change where institutions are stable, it can result in significant changes in the balance of forces among the elite factions where politics is highly personalistic. Political change, in turn, modifies not only the governmental personnel and political institutions, but also “the requirements, capabilities, and limitations of their role in relation to each other and to the citizenry.”¹¹⁶ It can be as dramatic as regime change, but it can also result from election outcomes in democratic societies bringing new parties and personnel to power. This was the type of *expected threat* that prompted the nationalist sector of the Argentine military to launch the coup d’état of June 4th, 1943.¹¹⁷ Likewise, the *actual* electoral victory of the Perónistas in the congressional and provincial elections of 1962 led the Argentine Army once again to oust a civilian president.¹¹⁸ Finally, socioeconomic change affects the balance of power among actors outside the government.

“The emergence of new social classes, the decline of established modes of production, the enactment of new welfare policies, the intensification of group conflicts, the introduction of mass media of communication, the reform of educational practices, the deepening of economic recessions these are but a few of the innumerable kinds of socioeconomic trends in a society that can alter the relationships and responsibilities of its nongovernmental leadership roles. Such socioeconomic change, of course, can give rise to (as well as stem from) political change, but there is no necessary correspondence between the two. If the socio-economic change unfolds slowly through time, governmental and political processes may remain unaltered from one time period to another. Obviously, however, the more rapidly the socioeconomic change occurs, the more are the roles of government and politics also likely to undergo change.”¹¹⁹

Disruptive dynamics can ignite actual or perceived threats of lower or higher magnitude. Small changes in the relative share of resources such as increases in taxation,

¹¹⁶ James N. Rosenau, “Foreign Policy as Adaptive Behavior,” 373.

¹¹⁷ Mario Justo López, *Entre la Hegemonía y el Pluralismo*, 216-217.

¹¹⁸ Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Professional Soldier, 1900-2001*. Vol. 2. (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2003): 157.

¹¹⁹ James N. Rosenau, “Foreign Policy as Adaptive Behavior,” 374.

electoral losses in stable democracies, or budgetary cuts constitute *non-existential threats*. These are adjustments within a given resource distribution system. Although they affect the gross amount of resources under the control of elite groups, they are not existential threats in the sense that they do not altogether eliminate any of those groups qua elite. The affected elite groups still control a disproportionate share of resources and continue to compete over relative shares of surplus. An example was the Ecuadorian Armed Forces' expectation of a significant budget reduction due the impending expiration (scheduled for 1995) of the law that destined 12.5 to 15 percent petroleum revenue to the military coffers. At the same time, demands for the privatization of the military business – a total of 31 companies owned or shared by the military – added to the threat, which the Ecuadorian military was able to avert.

An *existential threat*, on the other hand, compromises the capacity of the elites to appropriate resources. Assassination and forced exile are clear existential threats, but other events such as major changes in political institutions and electoral laws, suppression of political parties, land redistribution, or economic shocks can also be included in this category. The threat is existential in the sense that it endangers the continued existence of the affected group or individual as an elite. An example is Perón's dissolution of the Labor Party and his successive interventions in the syndicates in 1946 and 1947 preventing labor elites to control workers independently from the presidency.¹²⁰ Another instances of high-intensity threat were the effect of the great depression of the 1870s upon the prices of copper and silver, the main export commodities of the Chilean

¹²⁰ Milciades Peña, *Masas, Caudillos y Elites: La Dependencia Argentina de Yrigoyen a Perón* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Fichas, 1973): 103-106.

mining elites; and the dramatic drop in silver prices in the turn of the nineteenth century, which caused the disappearance of the Bolivian silver mining elites.

Do disruptive dynamics cause integrated elite structures to become more integrated and fragmented structures to become more fragmented? Or do they cause fragmentation in integrated structures and integration in fragmented structures? After all, both points have been argued. On the one hand, it has been posited that an external threat triggers in-group solidarity.¹²¹ On the other hand, it has been suggested that an exogenous shock actually decreases unity because it accentuates disagreements among group members.¹²² How can we know *ex ante* what effect a disruptive dynamic has on the elite structure? Insights from the literature on state repression help to illuminate this question. Similarly to my definition of elite structure, Theodore McLauchlin and Wendy Pearlman argue that “any movement has an institutional equilibrium constituted by the rules and relationships that distribute power and resources among its members.”¹²³ As state repression disrupts this equilibrium, members might adopt either more cooperative or more conflictive behavior depending on their satisfaction with the preexisting equilibrium.

“When subgroups constituting a movement are relatively satisfied with institutional arrangements, repression will be a challenge to be surmounted and thus an impetus to redouble efforts to unify the community. When movement members are dissatisfied with existing arrangements, repression will present an opportunity to act on that opposition. It can thus leave the movement more divided than beforehand.”¹²⁴

¹²¹ Georg Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliations* (New York: Free Press, 1955).

¹²² Mancur Olson, *The logic of collective action*, 1965.

¹²³ Theodore McLauchlin and Wendy Pearlman, “Out-Group Conflict, In-Group Unity? Exploring the Effect of Repression on Intramovement Cooperation,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, published online 25 December 2011, 2.

¹²⁴ Theodore McLauchlin and Wendy Pearlman, “Out-Group Conflict, In-Group Unity?” 2.

Therefore, it is possible to conceive of either centrifugal or centripetal forces acting upon the elite structure, contingent on the previous institutional equilibrium. Nevertheless, McLauchlin and Pearlman's insights on the effects of repression on group dynamic only apply thus far to the elite threat theory. While the authors theorize on the effect of intense disruptions to a movement's institutional equilibrium, I have indicated above that disruptive dynamics vary in the magnitude of the threats they yield to elite groups. This variation is very significant because it affects the suitability and desirability of alternative policy options available to the elites. The interaction of different types of elite structures with varying degrees of threat and the effects of those interactions upon the elites' policy choices are discussed next.

2.4 AN ELITE THREAT THEORY OF AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY

"I give you the greatest Easter news that you could possibly expect, for which I cordially congratulate you. López has fallen into the trap; he took the Corrientes vapors from us. No complaining; the blow that Rawson was waiting for has been given: we will have war. We have exchanged old hulls for half a Paraguay. The gold from Brazil will pour down torrentially on its way through our territory."¹²⁵

– Rufino de Elizalde, Argentina's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Easter of 1865.

As the passage above suggests, there was more than just safeguarding national security in Argentina's participation in the Paraguayan War (1865-1870). However, the initiation of an international conflict is not always the way threatened elites deal with their domestic opponents. Substitutability refers to the existence of a set of alternative

¹²⁵ *La Tribuna*, Buenos Aires, April 4, 1868 in León Pomer, *Cinco Años de Guerra Civil en la Argentina (1865-1870)* (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 1985): 37.

modes of response by which decision-makers could deal with a situation.¹²⁶ Among the policy options available for elites to deal with impending threats are coups d'état, domestic repression of the opposition, political and economic reform, and even international cooperation. Consider the complexity of the puzzle:


“If leaders face different kinds of domestic threats that call for different policy actions, then it is inadequate on its face to hypothesize that domestic threats, X , cause either (1) a particular foreign policy response, y_1 , or (2) foreign policy responses, Y . In the first case, “ $X \rightarrow y_1$ ” ignores the possibility that “ $X \rightarrow y_2$ ” or any other manifestation of Y , increasing the likelihood of negative findings and Type II errors. The second case, expecting that domestic threats, X , cause foreign policy responses in general fails to recognize either (1) that foreign policy action may be instigated by other stimuli as well or (2) that domestic threats, X , may sometimes lead to foreign policy action and sometimes to domestic policy action.”¹²⁷

In other words, not only (i) domestic instability could be met with different types of foreign policies, but also (ii) a given foreign policy might be caused by factors that are unrelated to domestic instability. Moreover, (iii) domestic instability might sometimes lead to foreign policy and other times not. With that in mind, what are the circumstances that make diversionary or opportunistic foreign policies, aimed at private rather than public goods, more likely to occur? And what are the conditions under which more or less violent foreign policies are preferred? This dissertation hypothesizes that those circumstances are conditioned by the interaction between Elite Structure and Threat Intensity, as displayed in table 2.2 below.

¹²⁶ David Clark, “Trading Butter for Guns: Domestic Imperatives for Foreign Policy Substitution,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45:5 (Oct., 2001): 636-660; Harvey Starr, “Substitutability in Foreign Policy: Theoretically Central, Empirically Elusive,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 44:1, Substitutability in Foreign Policy: Applications and Advances (Feb., 2000): 128-138.

¹²⁷ David Clark, “Trading Butter for Guns,” 640.

Table 2.2 Posited Relationships among Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, and Probability of Use of Military Force Abroad

	FRAGMENTED	INTEGRATED
		
EXISTENTIAL THREAT	DOMESTIC RESPONSES TO THREATS, CONCILIATORY FOREIGN POLICY Argentina, 1820-1823 Mitre (Argentina), 1863-1865 Paraguay, 1870s, 1890-1915	AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY, WAR INCLUDED Paraguay, 1932 (cohesive)
NON-EXISTENTIAL THREAT	AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY Paraguay, 1886, 1888, 1928 Bolivia, 1932 Brazil, 1863-1864	DOMESTIC RESPONSES TO THREATS, CONCILIATORY FOREIGN POLICY Brazil, 1822-1850

In integrated elite structures, the elites' bases of power cause them to have common preferences on a given scheme of resource extraction and distribution. Agreements on an institutional equilibrium do not preclude competition among elite groups, who might try to increase their power relative to other elites by manipulating some institutional features to their favor. However, those are non-existential threats, that is, they are adjustments within a given resource extraction and distribution system. Established elites continue to disproportionately appropriate resources, reproducing the gap between themselves and the non-elite. Integration also mitigates the collective action problem, allowing elites to effectively project power domestically. In this scenario, reform and/or repression are sufficient to deal with latent challengers coming from the non-elite, creating no need for diversionary foreign policies.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Repression incorporates a broad range of actions. It includes negative sanctions (e.g. restrictions on free speech), violations of life integrity rights (e.g. torture and political imprisonment), and even widespread state terror (e.g. genocide). Sabine C. Carey, "The Dynamic Relationship between Protest and Repression," *Political Research Quarterly* 59:1 (Mar., 2006): 2; and Christian Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," *Journal of Peace Research*, 44:4 Special Issue on Protecting Human Rights (Jul., 2007): 487.

This hypothesis might seem counterintuitive since the literature usually associates increased levels of repression with increased levels of threat.¹²⁹ This would lead us not to expect repression when the threat is non-existential. However, this literature neither distinguishes integrated from fragmented elite structures (and how this distinction affects the costs of repression) nor considers the costs of repression *vis-à-vis* foreign policy alternatives. For integrated elites, the costs of domestic alternatives are lower than the costs of aggressive foreign policies to address non-existential threats. If integration allows for effective projection of power domestically, why add the risk of escalation involved in aggressive foreign policies even if that risk is low? In other words, if aggressive foreign policies add no additional value to addressing a non-existential threat compared to domestic alternatives, it makes no sense to incur the additional risks, even if those risks are low. Moreover, unless a war is imposed on them, integrated elites should have no incentives to use military force abroad to pursue a foreign policy goal. Given the costs of war and the existence of a bargaining range, rational foreign policy makers prefer a negotiated settlement to war, except in cases of issue indivisibility, incentives to misrepresent private information, and commitment problems.¹³⁰ In sum, integrated elites facing non-existential threats have no incentives to use military force abroad either to pursue a foreign policy goal for which there is a bargaining range or to divert attention from domestic problems.

¹²⁹ See Patrick M. Regan and Errol A. Henderson, "Democracy, Threats and Political Repression in Developing Countries: Are Democracies Internally Less Violent?" *Third World Quarterly* 23:1 (Feb., 2002): 122-123; and Christian Davenport, "State Repression and Political Order," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10 (2007): 7-8; Franklin, James C. "Contentious Challenges and Government Responses in Latin America." *Political Research Quarterly* 62: 4 (Dec., 2009): 701; Theodore McLauchlin and Wendy Pearlman, "Out-Group Conflict, In-Group Unity?" 6.

¹³⁰ James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49:3 1995, 379-414.

Hypothesis 1: In integrated elite structures, elites facing non-existential threats have no incentives to use military force abroad either to pursue a foreign policy goal or to divert attention from domestic problems. Therefore, they have incentives to deal with ongoing international disputes through non-violent means.

Increasing degrees of elite integration decrease the probability that threats to the elite will originate domestically for two reasons. First, increasing integration means an increasing commitment to the prevailing institutional equilibrium. Second, it also translates into a greater ability to project power by dispensing rewards and punishments to prevent challenges to the order. Therefore we should expect existential threats to integrated elites to come primarily from disruptive dynamics exogenous to society – although their consequence might be the strengthening of domestic challengers. (If the exogenous threat cannot be averted and a competing elite emerges, we will be dealing with a fragmented elite structure, which I will discuss below). Another feature of integrated elite structures is that the more complementary the elites' resource bases are, the greater the chances that a disruptive dynamic affects those elites simultaneously and with a similar degree of intensity. The elites' common interest in the reproduction of the resource extraction and distribution system incentivizes them to band together to confront that common threat. As the degree of threat increases, reform and/or repression become less viable options. On the one hand, the costs of repression increase. On the other hand, concessions tend encourage the challenger to make more demands.¹³¹ In this scenario, and given the existential stakes involved in the threat, an aggressive foreign policy becomes more appealing for three reasons: (a) to divert the domestic attention from the

¹³¹ Based on the value-expectancy model, the act of making concessions raises the expectations of the challenger that his/her goals will be achieved though that means, therefore encouraging the challenger to increase his/her demands. See Sabine C. Carey, "The Dynamic Relationship between Protest and Repression," 3.

ongoing domestic crisis, (b) to justify the manipulation of domestic institutions in order to appropriate a larger sum of domestic resources, and (c) to appropriate foreign resources through military conquest. These strategies can be employed individually or in combination.

Hypothesis 2: In integrated elite structures, elites facing an existential threat have incentives to utilize aggressive foreign policies to avert those threats. They also have organizational capacity to escalate an ongoing international dispute into a full-blow war as a foreign resource appropriation strategy.

As the elite structure moves from integration to fragmentation, elite groups become threats to one another because their antagonistic preferences on structures of resource extraction and distribution can turn their relationship into a zero-sum game. In this context, threats to the elites' bases of resource are constant. Those threats can affect the balance of power among the elites in the long term or in the short term. For analytical purposes, regarding fragmented elite structures, I refer to long-term threats as non-existential threats and to short-term threats as existential threats. An already tense non-existential threat situation can be aggravated and turned into an imminent existential threat situation by a disruptive dynamic. By affecting some groups more severely than others, the disruptive dynamic changes the balance of power among the elites, creating an opportunity for the benefited group to either (a) overturn the elite hierarchy by capturing the command of the institutions that offer the highest pay-offs or (b) to change the institutional make-up altogether, creating new institutions that will maintain their preponderant position overtime. The imminence and severity of the existential threat that elites pose to one another requires the elites' attention and resources to be focused on the domestic politics since the cost of losing the elite conflict is the existence of a given

group as a member of the elite, forced exile, or death. Under those circumstances the initiation of aggressive foreign policies is very unlikely.

Hypothesis 3: In fragmented elite structures, elites facing an existential threat invest all their resources and attention domestically. In this scenario, the initiation of aggressive foreign policies is very unlikely. Those elites deal with ongoing international disputes through non-violent means.

In a fragmented elite structure, a non-existential threat is the constant menace to the elites' bases of power inherent to the very nature of the relationship among those elites. Institutions often favor some actors more than others,¹³² but even more so in fragmented elite structures, resulting in incremental increases in the power gap among the elites. This constant threat can potentially result in the elimination of one or more elite groups qua elite in the long term when a tipping point is reached and the emerging group(s) is able to subdue its competitors. On the one hand, elite groups consider that concessions display weakness and incentivize the challengers to make further demands. On the other hand, fragmentation means increased costs for employing coercive strategies domestically. Recognizing that death might lay ahead, elites resort to all means available to maximize their resources in order to defeat their competitors. In this scenario, an aggressive foreign policy short of war becomes appealing for two reasons: (a) to divert the domestic attention from the ongoing domestic crisis and (b) to justify the manipulation of domestic institutions in order to appropriate a larger sum of domestic resources.

But why would elites prefer the initiation of a limited use of military force abroad to launching a full-scale war as a means to change the domestic balance of power to their

¹³² Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

favor and avert domestic sources of threat? In the case described above – i.e. elite groups in a fragmented elite structure facing non-existential threats –, the preference for limited versus full-scale uses of military abroad is a function of the structural condition in which elite groups are embedded: i.e. the fragmentation of the elite structure. The fragmented nature of the elite structure prevents any single elite group from mobilizing sufficient political, economic, and military resources to engage the country in a potentially successful large-scale military campaign.¹³³ Fragmentation always implies some degree of threat. The greater the degree of fragmentation and threat, the smaller are the incentives of elites to join and allocate resources in foreign enterprises.

As explained above, elites in a fragmented elite structure facing existential threat focus their attention and resources on the domestic conflict. However, elites in a fragmented elite structure facing non-existential threats still lack incentives to joint resources with their competitors, given the trade-off between a possibly profitable foreign venture, thus increasing one's power and security, and the need to maintain enough resources to guarantee one's security. The inability of any single elite group to amass enough resources for a quick military victory makes the initiation of a foreign war as a means to private gains unappealing for two reasons. In the worst-case scenario, insufficient resources could mean a war defeat with high risks for the elite that initiated the war: imprisonment, forced exile, and death being some of the possible fates for that

¹³³ Charles L. Glaser, *Rational Theory of International Politics: The Logic of Competition and Cooperation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 181; Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006); and Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 51:1 (Oct., 1998): 144-172.

elite. The best-case scenario would be victory in protracted war, which is still unattractive due to the economic and military costs and the subsequent political risks entailed.¹³⁴

Therefore, in those conditions, whereas the initiation of war without enough military, economic, and political resources involves very high risks of failure in attaining both domestic and international objectives, the initiation of threats or limited uses of force abroad remain viable options. Foreign policy making is a two-level game. At the international level, domestic decision-makers seek to maximize their ability to alleviate domestic pressures while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments.¹³⁵ Uses of force short of war are less risky policy options from the point of view of the attacking elite group because those uses of force tend to be quicker encounters that do not require economic and military exhaustion. Even in the case of a defeat, the economic and military losses can be framed by the elites that initiated the foreign aggression as a justification for the adoption of policies that centralize power in their offices given the “evident” threat to “national security.” In other words, low-cost defeats can be used to fabricate national security threats that are in turn used to justify policies of power redistribution and accumulation. I sum, although the use of force short of war might accrue little or no material gains from the international target, it can be beneficial to the attacking elite for its diversionary effect and/or as a means of domestic resource appropriation, even in the case of a military “defeat,” which is not nearly as costly as a war defeat. Therefore, given the difficulty for any single elite group to mobilize sufficient political, economic, and military resources to engage the country in a

¹³⁴ Paul Huth and Bruce Russett, “General Deterrence Between Enduring Rivals: Testing Three Competing Models,” *The American Political Science Review* 87:1 (Mar., 1993): 64.

¹³⁵ Robert D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” *International Organization* 42:3 (Summer, 1988): 434.

large-scale military campaign, the initiation of threats or limited uses of force abroad are viable options, but not the initiation of war.

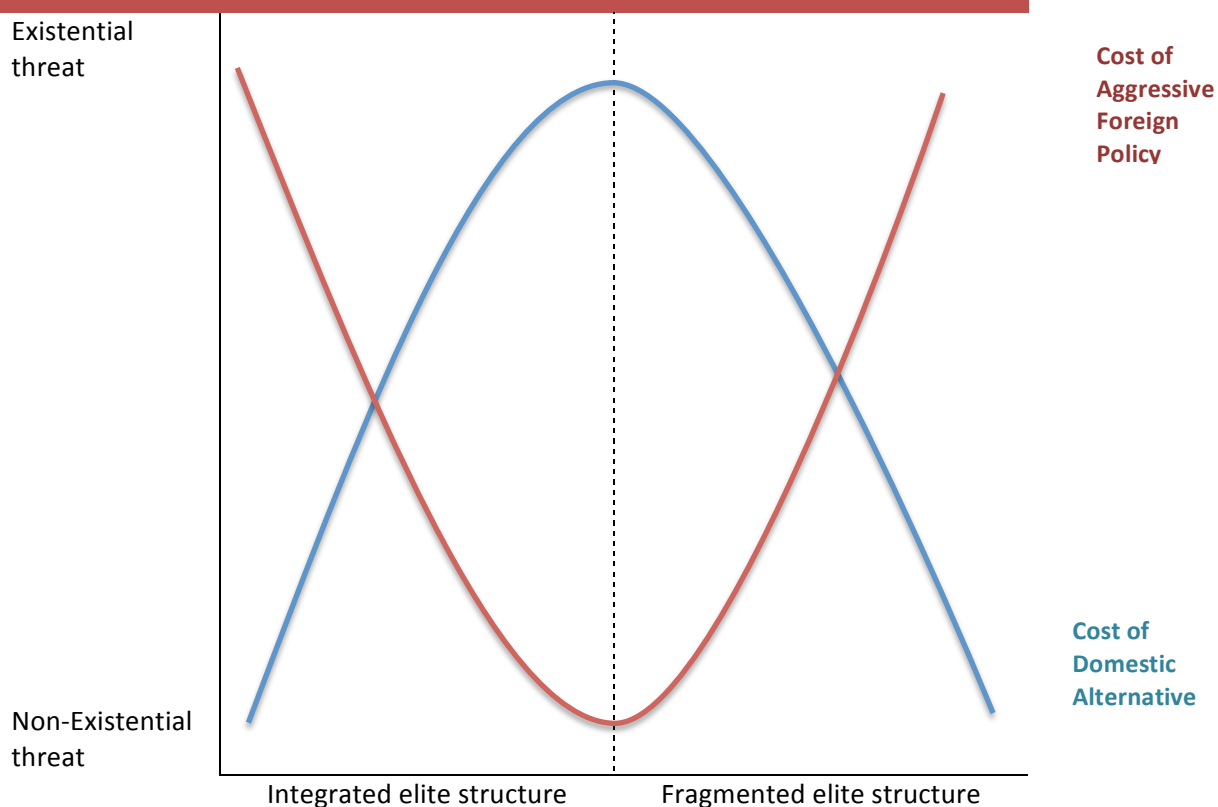
But how do elites who prefer aggressive foreign policies short of war as strategies aimed at solving domestic problems manage the risk of their intended foreign outcome escalating into a full-blown war? A key component of threatened elites' decision to militarize an ongoing dispute is the expectation that the target state will respond with proportional – not overwhelming – force. Historically, a proportional military response has been the rule in South America, where the rate of dispute escalation into full-blown wars is very low, even if we lower the battlefield-related death threshold.¹³⁶ However, statics only show that the expectation of a proportional response is *on average* reasonable. The demonstration of the causal mechanism here described require that we rely not on an assumption about what elites expect from the target state, but rather that we demonstrate those expectations. This issue is related with a similar challenge, which is to distinguish *ex ante* the preference for initiating a limited use of military force from the preference for initiating war. Intentions are very hard to observe. Ultimately, this distinction can be made on a case-by-case basis by the examination of qualitative evidence such as statements issued by key decision-makers and/or by institutions and organisms that represent or are associated with the actors expressing those preferences.

Hypothesis 4: In a fragmented elite structure, elites facing a non-existential threat have incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. The fragmented nature of the elite structure prevents any a single elite faction from amassing the resources necessary to launch a full-blown war.

¹³⁶ Of all cases of militarized actions involving at least one South American state, only 11.53 percent fell into the standard definition of war, that is, had at least 1,000 battlefield-related deaths. If we lower the threshold of war to at least 501 battlefield-related fatalities, the number of “wars” increase only marginally, to 12.25 percent of the cases. Data from www.eugenesoftware.org.

The relationship between the costs of aggressive foreign policy vis-à-vis domestic policy alternatives (repression and/or reform) for elite groups as a function of the variations in the elite structure and degree of threat to the elites is graphically depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1 Posited relationship between the costs of aggressive foreign policy versus domestic policy alternatives as a function of Elite Structure and Threat Intensity



As indicated above, the resources being sought by elite groups by initiating aggressive foreign policies are not limited to goods that can be taken from the target state (e.g. territory, financial compensation). In initiating aggressive foreign policies, elites might also be trying to appropriate domestic resources such as bigger budgets, institutional changes, increases in popularity, changes in fiscal and monetary policy, and

so on. Those domestic resources might be so crucial to secure the power base of a given elite faction that that group might prefer to risk an international war than to risk a domestic defeat. Rational elites, under certain circumstances, choose to militarize an ongoing international dispute not because they value the use of force in itself, but because they value some domestic resource that can be obtained with or justified by the use of military force abroad, and they value that good better than a military victory. Although elites consider the international balance of power, that is not the sole or most important determinant of the elites' decision to use force abroad. There is no consensus, for example, on whether Chile – the initiator – had military supremacy over Peru and Bolivia prior to the War of the Pacific (1879-1883).¹³⁷ Likewise, unfavorable ratios of force didn't stop Ecuador from initiating the use of force against Peru in 1981 (1:2.5) and in 1995 (1:2.02).¹³⁸

Before I proceed to a brief discussion on data and methodology, I must make a few remarks. First, nothing in my theory requires or implies that foreign policy is an effective means to address threats from competing elites. It is possible that resorting to aggressive foreign policies might fail to avert domestic threats, leading to the escalation of domestic tension and instability. Second, my theory does not postulate that foreign policy is always subordinate to domestic policy or that decision-makers never pursue greedy or expansionist foreign policy goals. Under certain circumstances, unthreatened domestic elites might initiate wars of conquest. The first condition for such behaviors is

¹³⁷ See Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Caudillo, 1791-1899 Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc.: 2003), 376-377; and William F. Sater, "Chile during the First Months of the War of the Pacific," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 5:1 (May, 1973): 135.

¹³⁸ See Adrian J. English, *Armed Forces of Latin America* (New York, NY: Jane's Publishing Inc.: 1984), 238-240, 373-377; and Robert Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Professional Soldier, 1900-2001. Vol. 2* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2003), 124.

that the elite structure be integrated. As explained above, a fragmented elite structure imposes constraints on the ability of domestic elites to amount sufficient military, economic, and political resources to wage a successful war. Moreover, rational elite groups within a fragmented elite structure are not willing to take the risks of losing an international war. Elites in an integrated elite structure, on the other hand, face milder constraints to collective action, resembling the state as unitary actor assumption or being its closest fulfillment. Once this first condition is realized, unthreatened elites in integrated elites structures have incentives to initiate wars in cases of issue indivisibility, incentives to misrepresent private information, and commitment problems.¹³⁹

Finally, I am not proposing that there will never be wars when the elite structure is fragmented. Rather, I am saying that elite factions in fragmented structures will not *initiate* a full-blown war. However, the aggressive foreign policies initiated by factions in fragmented structures might be escalated into war by the target state. Furthermore, rival states might take advantage of the domestic situation in a fragmented elite structure and impose a war against that country. Likewise, elites in a fragmented elite structure might also *join* one of the sides in a war, such as Argentina's entrance in the Paraguayan War, especially if the joining state expects the bulk of the costs of the war to be carried by its ally. In this specific case, Mitre accrued all the benefits of an aggressive foreign policy while having the costs minimized: while Brazil sent 139,000 troops, Argentina only sent 18,000 men.¹⁴⁰ Mitre used the war to crack down on domestic challengers, appropriated foreign resources (36,000 square miles of Paraguayan territory), and further centralized the institutions of the nascent Argentine state. Moreover, the Argentine war industry

¹³⁹ Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War."

¹⁴⁰ Francisco Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra: Nova História da Guerra do Paraguai* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002): 483.

greatly benefited from the war: Argentine merchants amassed fortunes by providing food, clothes, tents, horses, weapons, etc.¹⁴¹ In sum, I am not offering a monadic answer (elite-based theory of use of force) to a dyadic phenomenon (war). Rather, I am offering a monadic answer to a monadic phenomenon: the decision of elites within a state whether or not to initiate aggressive foreign policies.

2.5 METHODS AND DATA

“Microbehavior ... requires historical macrofoundations. Yet equally, large-scale comparative analysis is underspecified and incomplete when its microfoundations are left implicit, ad hoc, or undertheorized.”¹⁴² The goal of this dissertation is not to offer a theory of international conflict (i.e., to explain why violent conflict happens). This would require a dyadic approach to a macrophenomenon. Instead, in an attempt to illuminate the microfoundations of a large international event, this dissertation attempts to explain preference formation at the individual and group levels. That is, this dissertation submits a theory of elite preference formation given policy substitutability in the context of domestic and/or foreign threats to the elites’ bases of resources. In other words, this dissertation seeks to understand the trade-offs from the point of view of the elites between domestic and international policies to address different levels of threat to the elites’ power, privileges, and existence. This research objective requires the use of qualitative methods of analysis because to a certain extent it demands from the researcher to understand an individual’s behavior by knowing how that individual “perceives the

¹⁴¹ León Pomer, *Paraguai: Nossa Guerra Contra Esse Soldado* (São Paulo: Global Editora, 7^a ed., 2001): 41-42.

¹⁴² Ira Katznelson, “Periodization and Preferences: Reflections on Purposive Action in Comparative Historical Social Science,” In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, 270-301 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 272.

situation, the obstacles he believed he had to face, [and] the alternatives he saw opening up to him.”¹⁴³

Thus, more than establishing a correlation between Elite Structure, Threat Intensity and Foreign Policy, my research goals require providing empirical evidence (from letters, memoirs, journals, congressional debates, newspapers, etc.) showing that decision-makers craft foreign policies *as a response* to threats, aiming at specific goals (e.g. diversion, foreign resource appropriation, domestic resource appropriation). Indeed, qualitative case studies are particularly helpful when the purported relationship between independent and dependent variables involves equifinality: that is, the existence of multiple causal pathways leading to the same outcome. In this dissertation I hypothesize three different – but not mutually exclusive – causal mechanisms for opportunistic aggressive foreign policies: (a) diversion, (b) foreign resource appropriation strategy, and (c) domestic resource appropriation strategy. It is thus important to “peer into the box of causality” and “see” which of the billiard balls – to use Hume’s billiard ball metaphor – are being hit.¹⁴⁴

The comparative historical analysis conducted in this dissertation allows me to determine the causal sequences producing the outcome of interest in the specific cases examined.¹⁴⁵ More specifically I use process tracing:

“Process tracing consists of analyzing a case into a sequence (or several concatenating sequences) of events and showing how those events are plausibly linked given the interests and situations faced by groups or individual actors. It does not assume that

¹⁴³ Howard Becker, “Life History and the Scientific Mosaic,” in his *Sociological Work: Method and Substance* (Chicago: Aldine, 1970), 64 quoted in John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 70-71).

¹⁴⁴ Gerring, *Case Study Research*, 45.

¹⁴⁵ Jack A. Goldstone, “Comparative Historical Analysis and Knowledge Accumulation in the Study of Revolutions,” in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, 41-90 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 43.

actions always bring their intended consequences, only that actions are understandable in terms of the knowledge, intent, and circumstances that prevailed at the time decisions were made. Process tracing involves making deductions about how events are linked over time, drawing on general principles of economics, sociology, psychology, and political science regarding human behavior.”¹⁴⁶

Thus, I sought to trace and document the links in the causal chain connecting specific values of the interaction between Elite Structure and Threat Intensity and the respective policy outcome adopted by the elites. The process tracing is carried out through “strategic narratives” that structure the case studies by selecting its elements according an articulated theoretical framework.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, each case study conducts more than a mere narrative of historical events. Causal propositions were carefully selected and tested rather than introduced ad hoc as incidental parts of an overall narrative.¹⁴⁸ While recognizing the importance of temporal sequences and the unfolding of events over time, the case studies combine theory and history to offer historically grounded causal explanations for substantively important outcomes in systematic and contextualized comparisons.¹⁴⁹

There is nothing inherent in my hypotheses that would restrict them to South America. However, I have chosen this universe of cases for two main reasons. First, I focus on South America instead of on Latin America because, historically, post-independence South American countries have been freer from the direct military influence of foreign powers, contrary to Central America. Following the collapse of the Nicaraguan and Mexican governments in the early twentieth century, the US Marines

¹⁴⁶ Goldstone, “Comparative Historical Analysis,” 47-48.

¹⁴⁷ Goldstone, “Comparative Historical Analysis,” 50-51.

¹⁴⁸ James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, “Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas,” in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, 3-38 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 11.

¹⁴⁹ Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, “Comparative Historical Analysis,” 11, 13.

stayed in Nicaragua from 1912 to 1933, leaving briefly in 1925-1927. The US Navy controlled Haiti from 1915 to 1934, and the Dominican Republic from 1916 until 1924. And the Platt Amendment of 1901 guaranteed direct intervention in Cuban politics until being rescinded in 1934. With the exception of the Argentine and Brazilian direct interference in Paraguayan (1870-1876) politics, no similar direct military occupation happened in South America.

Second, abundant quantitative data on international disputes is available not only for South America but also for other regions. I do not conduct quantitative analysis in this dissertation, but the study of the relationship of Elite Structure and Threat Intensity and uses of military force in the context of international rivalries is a work in progress. Although my current work focuses on causal explanation by the demonstration of causal mechanisms through process tracing, future quantitative work in order to increase the external validity of my hypotheses is not discarded.

My dissertation examines four distinct longitudinal cases chosen from the South American universe: Brazil 1822-1864, Argentina 1820-1865, Bolivia 1884-1932, and Paraguay 1870-1932. This case selection allows for complete variation in the values of the dependent variables (timing of use of force and degree of force employed) and independent variables (Elite Structure and Threat Intensity) across cases, as well as variation within cases. Moreover, these four countries constitute two pairs of rival states: Brazil & Argentina and Bolivia & Paraguay. The rivalry between the paired countries is constant over time, highlighting the continuously open window of opportunity (i.e. pretext) for the initiation of uses of force against the rival country for defensive or offensive reasons. However, the fact that international violence does not occur all the

time indicates that while international rivalry might raise the probability of international conflict, it is neither necessary nor sufficient to explain those outcomes. Moreover, despite the persistence of “unresolved issues” between rival states, (a) those states resort to force in some times but not others, and (b) some of those violent encounters are more severe than others.

Each of the following chapters conducts one longitudinal case study. Each case study is sub-divided into multiple observations, according to the historical changes in the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity. Therefore, each observation can depict one of the four combinations:

1. Integrated elite structure and non-existential threat
2. Integrated elite structure and existential threat to one or more elite groups
3. Fragmented elite structure and non-existential threat
4. Fragmented elite structure and existential threat to one or more elite groups

Each observation is composed of four sections: Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, causal mechanisms, and policy outcome. In order to compare observations and cases as systematically as possible, the process tracing will look for the following evidences, as displayed in Table 2.3 below. The hypotheses investigated in this dissertation are summarized in the Table 2.4 and Figures 2 and 3 below.

Table 2.3 Criteria for In-Depth Case Study Analysis

1. Elite Structure
<p>Is the elite structure integrated or fragmented?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the elites? What are their bases of power? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic elites: what moves the economy of that country (economic activity as percentage of the GDP)? How much of those resources are controlled by one or few groups? Political elites: what are the political institutions of that country? Are some groups overly represented in those institutions? Do those institutions favor some groups over others? Military elites: how independent is the military from the state? Does the military have an independent source of financing? Are those bases of power mutually exclusive or complementary?
2. Threat Intensity
<p>What is the disruptive dynamic? What level of threat did it trigger across the elite groups?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Are all elite groups threatened similarly or do some elite groups face a greater threat than others? Why? How exactly are elites threatened? What is it that they could lose? What would be the consequences of their loss to their elite status?
3. Causal Mechanisms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the effects of the disruptive dynamic upon the elites ability to overcome the collective action problem and address the impending threat? Did the disruptive dynamic trigger unity or disunity among the elites? How did the combination between the elite structure and the degree of threat affect the comparative costs of the domestic and international policy options available for the elites? What were the elites' perceptions about target state's reaction to an attack?
4. Policy outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how the causal mechanisms link the purported causes to the policy outcome (no military action, military action short of war, and war). If one or more elite groups chose the initiation of aggressive foreign policy, what was the rationale behind it: diversion, domestic resource appropriation strategy, and/or foreign resource appropriation strategy? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate elite preference by showing evidence, such as statements made by decision-makers and/or issued by institutions and organisms that represent or are associated with those decision-makers, that express those preferences.

Table 2.4 Summary of Hypotheses**Hypothesis 1**

In integrated elite structures, elites facing non-existential threats have no incentives to use military force abroad either to pursue a foreign policy goal or to divert attention from domestic problems. Therefore, they have incentives to deal with ongoing international disputes through non-violent means.

Hypothesis 2

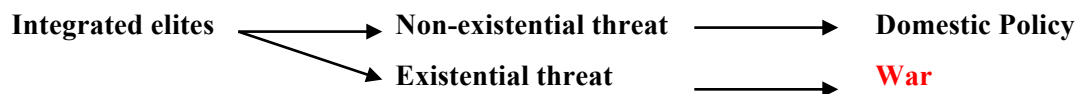
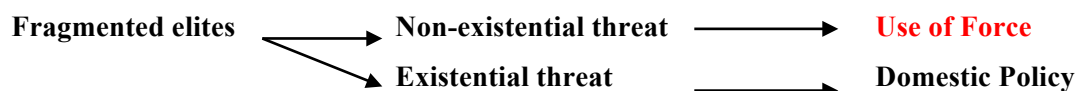
In integrated elite structures, elites facing an existential threat have incentives to utilize aggressive foreign policies to avert those threats. They also have capacity to escalate an ongoing international dispute into a full-blow war as a foreign resource appropriation strategy.

Hypothesis 3

In fragmented elite structures, elites facing an existential threat invest all their resources and attention domestically. In this scenario, the initiation of aggressive foreign policies is very unlikely. Those elites deal with ongoing international disputes through non-violent means.

Hypothesis 4

In a fragmented elite structure, elites facing a non-existential threat have incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. The fragmented nature of the elite structure prevents any single elite faction from amassing the resources necessary to launch a full-blown war.

Figure 2.2**Figure 2.3**

PART I

ELITES AND WAR IN THE PLATA BASIN SECURITY COMPLEX: BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA, FROM INDEPENDENCE TO THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

INTRODUCTION

Part I of this dissertation looks at the uses of military force employed by Brazil and Argentina, from the independence of those countries until the War of the Triple Alliance. The next two chapters recognize the intricacies involved in foreign policy making by the elites of those countries, given the regional context in which they were embedded. More specifically, this chapter treats the Plata Basin as a regional security complex. That is, “as a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.”¹⁵⁰ Such was the situation involving the elites in the nineteenth century Río de la Plata basin political units, which would later become today’s Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Therefore, although the following chapters focus on the domestic politics and foreign policies of Brazil and Argentina, it does not ignore the role played by neighboring countries, as well as by France and Great Britain, in the calculations and decision making of Brazilian and Argentine elites. This dissertation offers an account of how domestic elites use foreign policy as an instrument to serve their self-interest while keeping in mind that foreign policy does not happen in an “international vacuum.”

During the period under consideration, the Plata region experienced two major wars: the Cisplatine War (1825-1828), in which Brazil and Argentina fought over the Cisplatine province (or Banda Oriental, which would later become Uruguay) and the War of the Triple Alliance, where the quintessential South American rivals joined forces

¹⁵⁰ Barry Buzan, *People, states and fear*, end edn (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1991), 190; Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 491.

against Paraguay. In the meantime, Brazil and Argentina were heavily engaged in the Uruguayan Civil War (1836-1851). Argentina also participated in the Chilean war against the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation (1837), while Brazil militarized the disputed border with Paraguay twice (1850 and 1855). The decades that followed the independencies of Brazil and Argentina were certainly quite eventful. The following chapters explain not only those “positive cases,” i.e. the instances of use of military force internationally, but also the “negative cases” or the years of “peace.” For that sake, the chapters are organized in observations according to the historical changes in the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity.

The remainder of Part I is structured as follows: Chapter 3 examines the Brazilian elites, the domestic and international threats they faced, and Brazil’s foreign policy from 1822 until the War of the Triple Alliance. Chapter 4 looks at Argentina’s domestic politics and foreign policies from 1820 until 1865, when Argentine entered the war.

CHAPTER 3

BRAZIL: FROM INDEPENDENCE TO THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Between independence in 1822 and the militarization of the border dispute with Paraguay in 1850, the Brazilian elites refrained from initiating aggressive foreign policies. This period also coincided with the occurrence of a myriad of revolts and rebellions, the last of them being subdued in 1850. Those insurrections were by no means unimportant. In fact, both domestic and foreign observers expected the imminent secession of important Brazilian provinces and, subsequently, the fall of the Empire. However, the initiation of diversionary foreign policies was never contemplated by the Brazilian elites as a means to avert the domestic threats to the established order. Rather, those elites dealt with the contestation of the existing scheme of resource extraction and distribution by adopting a mix of suppressive and conciliatory policies toward challengers. Most important, the entrenched elites perceived such contestation as a challenge to existing institutional equilibrium, but not as an attempt to uproot the institutions in place. In other words, those revolts constituted a non-existential threat to the traditional elites.

The Brazilian foreign policy of that time is thus consistent with my elite threat theory of aggressive foreign policy, according to which elites in an integrated elite structure respond to non-existential domestic threats by resorting to domestic – not

international – policies. This strictly non-interventionist pattern of foreign policy in the Plata region changed in the early 1850s. By that time, the rebellions that swept the country in its first decades of independence had been subdued and the Brazilian elite structure was further integrated with the sharing of power between Conservatives and Liberals in the government. The end of domestic turmoil and the political conciliation allowed foreign policy makers to focus on Brazil's regional objectives qua foreign policy as opposed to as a valve for domestic politics problems. Finally, the Brazilian foreign policy became again an instrument in the service of the particular interests of a single elite group. In the early 1860s, the elites from Rio Grande do Sul threatened to secede once more in case the Imperial government did not deploy the state apparatus to protect their interests in Uruguay. This impending domestic conflict between the governmental and the Riograndense elites was the motivator of Brazil's intervention in Uruguay in favor of the Riograndenses, which in turn would become the root of the War of the Triple Alliance. Table 3.1, found at the end of this chapter, summarizes my findings.

OBSERVATION 1: INTEGRATED ELITES, DOMESTIC TURMOIL, AND NON-INTERVENTIONISM, 1822-1850

Contrary to most of its Hispanic neighbors, especially post-independence Argentina and Uruguay, Imperial Brazil was marked by the relative stability of the monarchical system (1822-1889). The politicians, landowners, and merchants who took power in 1822 were linked to the export-import economy. Those elites shared a consensus on the maintenance of the slave labor and the latifundium system; on parliamentary monarchy as the form of political organization; and on the civilian control

over the means of coercion.¹⁵¹ This section demonstrates that despite several provincial revolts against the central authority, the Brazilian elites were unified around a common interest on the maintenance of existing economic, political, and military institutions. Those revolts were not elite attempts to upheaval the existing system. Rather, those events manifested struggles to achieve greater access to the power vested in the existing institutions and the resources they regulated.

The Brazilian economy was fueled by exports of coffee, sugar, and tobacco and based on a system of latifundium and slave labor. On the one hand, the taxes levied on external trade amounted to 70 percent of the central government budget, making the state bureaucracy highly dependent on the success of the landowning class. On the other hand, when the economy moved from one cycle to another (from the sugar economy to the coffee economy, for example), the state bureaucracy became the obvious channel of upward mobility for the members of the declining economic sector.¹⁵² The relationship between the landed elites and the state bureaucracy was thus characterized by symbiosis. Additionally, the maintenance of the monarchy was considered indispensable for the preservation of the political and territorial unit of the empire.

As for the role and structure of the means of coercion, the Brazilian elites opted for military subordination to civil authorities and the decentralization of the coercive forces while retaining centralized management. This formula found its expression on the National Guard, created in 1831. On the one hand, the National Guard was, since 1848, under the control of the Ministry of Justice. On the other hand, the allocation of

¹⁵¹ Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths & Histories* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), xxi; Vitor Izecksohn, *O Cerne da Discórdia: A Guerra do Paraguai e o Núcleo Profissional do Exército* (Rio de Janeiro: e-papers, 2002), 50.

¹⁵² José Murilo de Carvalho, "Political Elites and State Building: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Brazil," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24:3 (Jul., 1982), 393.

organizational costs upon the regional elites made it both cheaper and safer for the central government; it minimized the threat of military interference common to the Plata states, while granting the landowners great prerogatives of social control. As for the army, its main activity was restricted to border patrolling.¹⁵³

Nevertheless, this agreement on the major institutional set up, economic structure, and role of the military did not eliminate tension and conflict altogether. In fact, the 1830s and 1840s Brazil was plagued by constant revolts, some of them with a secessionist tone. In 1836, the moderate elected regent Diogo Feijó was convinced that the secession of Rio Grande do Sul was inevitable, that maybe Pernambuco would soon follow, and that the country's basic institutions were threatened.¹⁵⁴ Likewise, "visiting Brazil in 1842 and 1843, the Comte de Suzannet observed that Rio Grande do Sul had already seceded, that São Paulo would soon follow and that 'the unity of Brazil is only apparent. All the provinces look forward to independence.'"¹⁵⁵ However, despite great alarmism and a very high incidence of revolts, I show in this section that the pattern of relations among the Brazilian elites placed them on the integrated end of the fragmentation-integration spectrum of the Elite Structure. Those revolts were one of the means through which powerful families struggled over access to the state machinery and patronage resources. That is, the revolts were manifestations of elite competition for relative shares of surplus.

"Long live independence, liberty, and the separation of Brazil," cried Dom Pedro on September 7, 1822, outraged by Portugal's revocation of his decrees and demands of

¹⁵³ Izecksohn, *O Cerne da Discórdia*, 54-57.

¹⁵⁴ Leslie Bethel and José Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," in *Brazil Empire and Republic 1822-1930*, ed. Leslie Bethel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 76.

¹⁵⁵ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 83.

complete Brazilian subordination to Portuguese rule.¹⁵⁶ The reign of Dom Pedro I (1822-1831), also known as *Primeiro Reinado* or First Reign, was marked by constant political tension and conflict. On the one hand, many individuals within the native elite feared re-colonization due to the emperor's dubious commitment to constitutionalism as well as to his family and dynastic ties with Portugal. Those fears were not without reason. On 12 November 1823, Dom Pedro I had forcibly dissolved the Constituent Assembly and established a Council of State to draft a constitution. The Constitution, promulgated in March 1824, centralized power on the emperor, giving him veto power over legislation as well as the prerogative to dissolve the Chamber and call elections. The emperor also nominated ministers and high court judges, appointed provincial presidents and bishops, and dispensed ecclesiastical benefices. He also had the final word in the distribution of resources among the different administrative branches. The central government controlled tariffs on imports and exports; the distribution of unoccupied lands; the regulations for banks, railroads and stock companies; and decided on labor policies and loans.¹⁵⁷ When the news of the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly reached the northeastern province of Bahia on 12 December 1823, anti-Portuguese disturbances and threats of secession ensued, followed by an armed revolt in Pernambuco in March 1824.¹⁵⁸

But the emperor was not politically isolated nor was the monarchical system threatened. As a strategy to offset political opposition, the emperor coopted many

¹⁵⁶ Leslie Bethel, "The Independence of Brazil," in *Brazil Empire and Republic 1822-1930*, ed. Leslie Bethel, 3-44 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989): 32-33.

¹⁵⁷ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 50; Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 58-59.

¹⁵⁸ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 51.

members of the native elite as ministers, senators, councilors of state.¹⁵⁹ Fifty senators and the ten members of the Council of State were chosen by the emperor and served for life. Together with the ministers, those individuals became the core of the Brazilian political elite. “Their support was often decisive for obtaining a loan from a bank, a position in the bureaucracy, a government pension, approval for a joint stock company, or the success of a political career.”¹⁶⁰ Moreover, the monarchy as an institution had great appeal among the elite, being considered as a powerful instrument of national unity and social stability. Indeed, after the abdication of Dom Pedro I in 7 April 1831,¹⁶¹ the elite remained committed to monarchism, despite their divergences over the 1834 Constitution.¹⁶² Only very few local enthusiasts espoused the establishment of a republic. Being a reaction to the abdication of Dom Pedro I, of the remaining popular disturbances and military uprisings of 1831-1832, few had been restorationists, such as the War of the Cabanos in Pernambuco, whereas none of the others had a republican goal. The elite consensus on the monarchy, slavery, and civilian rule of the military remained through

¹⁵⁹ Dom Pedro I also coopted elite members by giving them honorific titles. During 1825-1826, Dom Pedro I granted 104 titles of nobility, more than two-thirds of all the titles awarded during the *primeiro reinado* (Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, “1822-1850,” 55).

¹⁶⁰ Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 59.

¹⁶¹ The alienation from power of the dominant groups in Minas Gerais and São Paulo and some elements in Rio de Janeiro combined with popular hatred of the Portuguese and military disaffection, summed with economic and financial difficulties, eventually caused the fall of the emperor. Dom Pedro I’s new reactionary, more “Portuguese,” cabinet installed on April 5, 1831, triggered the final crisis of the First Empire. Lacking military support and unwilling to yield to popular pressure, Dom Pedro I abdicated the Brazilian throne (Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, “1822-1850,” 55-58). See also Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Caudillo, 1791-1899, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s, Inc., 2003), 149-150.

¹⁶² Moderates proposed reforms through the 1824 Constitution, radicals wanted the establishment of a new constitution, and reactionaries defended the return of Dom Pedro I.

the Regency (1831-1840) and Second Empire (1840-1889), despite the several provincial revolts plaguing the 1830s and 1840s.¹⁶³

Between 1831 and 1848 alone, more than twenty minor revolts and seven major ones broke out in different parts of the country. Of the latter, two proclaimed independent republican governments.¹⁶⁴ Although we cannot ascertain whether or not those movements really aimed at secession, evidence leads us to consider that the threat of separatism in most of those movements was part of a bargaining strategy of disaffected powerful families seeking access to political power through autonomy from the central government. In the Sabinada Revolt, after Salvador (the capital of the province of Bahia) was taken by the rebels, “the municipal *câmara* [chamber] was summoned and proclaimed Bahia to be a ‘free and independent state.’ ... [However,] this decision was later qualified: the secession was restricted to the duration of the regency.”¹⁶⁵ The Cabanagem (Pará 1835), the Sabinada (Bahia 1837-1838), the Balaiada (Maranhão 1838-1841), and the Praieira Revolt (Pernambuco 1848-1849) had been local resistances to the central government encouraged by the political decentralization measures in effect after 1834. The most radical of the Praieira rebel’s demands were federalism, abolition of the moderating power, the expulsion of the Portuguese, the nationalization of the retail trade, and universal franchise. But neither a republican government nor the end of slavery were

¹⁶³ Because the heir to the Brazilian throne was only five-years-old when Dom Pedro I abdicated, the legislature quickly elected a three-man regency. The regency period ended with the parliamentary coup d’état of 23 July 1840, which initiated the reign of 15-year-old Dom Pedro II.

¹⁶⁴ Murilo de Carvalho, “Political Elites and State Building,” 390; Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, “1822-1850,” 58; Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 68; Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 152-155. The separatist rebellions were the Sabinada (1837-1838) in the province of Bahia and the Guerra dos Farrapos (War of the Ragamuffins) (1835-1845) in the province of Rio Grande do Sul.

¹⁶⁵ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, “1822-1850,” 73.

requested.¹⁶⁶ Rather, local elites protested against the central government's replacement of traditionally elected authorities with government appointees, tax collection, intervention in elections, and control over private initiative.¹⁶⁷

Similarly, the revolts sweeping São Paulo and Minas Gerais in 1842 were a reaction to the new Conservative Cabinet's measures to recentralize political power after the moderately liberal interregnum of the regency.¹⁶⁸ Those measures included the restoration of the moderating power, the revival of the Council of State, and the reestablishment of the administrative and judicial structure under the central government.¹⁶⁹ Although secession had been mentioned in São Paulo, its coffee economy was closely linked to the port of Rio de Janeiro, making that idea unattractive. In Minas Gerais, also part of the coffee economy, there was no talk of secession at all.¹⁷⁰ The revolts usually counted with the support of rich families, but very few members of the political elite – i.e. bureaucrats, especially magistrates or judges – were participants. Rather, their leadership was usually composed of local lower-rank military and priests,

¹⁶⁶ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 105. Roderick J. Barman, *Citizen Emperor: Pedro II and the Making of Brazil, 1825-91* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 124.

¹⁶⁷ Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 68-69.

¹⁶⁸ On the rebellions of the 1830s and 1840s see Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 149-155 and Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 58-82, 104-105.

¹⁶⁹ Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 86.

¹⁷⁰ The regency had been able to pass a series of decentralizing legislation. As the most important decentralizing measures, the regents could not dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, grant amnesty, bestow honorific titles, suspend guarantees for individual liberties or declare war. A revenue-sharing system between the central government and the provinces was started, and the permanent three-man regency established in 1831 was replaced with popularly elected regency. However, the compromise with the Conservatives (embodied in the Additional Act of August 1834) maintained the moderating power (which could not be exercised during the regency) and did not end life-terms for the Senate (Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 65). Although Dom Pedro II had been restored to power by a coalition supported by the Liberal Party, bureaucrats, the army, and the National Guard, the liberal cabinet soon collapse, being replaced by a conservative cabinet by the end of March 1841 (Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 80-82).

the latter often coming from wealthy families of landowners and slave owners.¹⁷¹ The priests' discourses emphasized the French inspired ideals of popular sovereignty, separation of powers, and provincial autonomy. But their liberalism did not entail radical social reforms such as the end of slavery or changes in the structure of rural property.¹⁷² This indicates that what was at stake in those rebellions was the access to political institutions, especially at the province level.

Liberals favored local autonomy – and hence federalism. They demanded the abolition of the Council of State and the moderating power, and opposed the appointment of life senators. They advocated the principle that “the king reigns but does not rule.” Conservatives strongly defended central authority, the moderating power, and the Council of State. They favored life tenure for the Senate and the principle that “the king reigns and rules.” Despite their divergences regarding the concentration of political power, both Liberals and Conservatives endorsed slavery, the established social order, and a free press.¹⁷³ Agrarian interests were equally represented in both parties: the Conservatives drew their support from the landed oligarchy of the Northeast and the coffee planters of Rio de Janeiro, and the Liberals counted with the landowners and planters of São Paulo, Minas Gerais, and Rio Grande do Sul. The Conservatives were also supported by influential Portuguese-born merchants in Rio de Janeiro and most of the senior officials in the national government, while urban middle-class and Brazilian-

¹⁷¹ José Murilo de Carvalho, “Political Elites and State Building,” 391.

¹⁷² José Murilo de Carvalho, *A Construção da Ordem: A Elite Política Imperial* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Campus Ltda, 1980): 145-146.

¹⁷³ Thomas L. Whigham, *The Paraguayan War: Causes and Early Conduct*, Vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2002), 59; Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 69.

born merchants sided with the Liberals.¹⁷⁴ But in general, liberals and conservatives came from the same social and economic constituency.

Thus, whether the cabinet was Liberal or Conservative did not pose an existential threat to any dominant social group or economic interest.¹⁷⁵ “Since liberals and conservatives spoke for the same social groups, it is not surprising that party affiliation was usually more a question of family and kinship.”¹⁷⁶ The political struggle among the Brazilian elites was thus a fight over the degree of centralization of political institutions and the patronage resources that came with it. In other words, the elites were not interested in an overhaul of the political system. Rather, their relationship was characterized by a competition for power between prestigious families over relative shares of surplus. “Nothing more resembled a Conservative than a Liberal in power.”¹⁷⁷ Indeed, although the Liberals had pushed for federalism and the devolution of political power to the provinces in the 1830s, they promptly reversed that policy when they finally returned to power in 1844.¹⁷⁸ Importantly, none of the elite disagreements questioned the legitimacy of the system as whole.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Joseph Smith, *A History of Brazil, 1500-2000* (London: Longman, 2002), 53; Thomas E. Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 49.

¹⁷⁵ Richard Graham, “1850-1870,” in *Brazil Empire and Republic 1822-1930*, ed. Leslie Bethel, 113-160 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 139.

¹⁷⁶ Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 71-72.

¹⁷⁷ Graham, “1850-1870,” 144.

¹⁷⁸ Smith, *A History of Brazil*, 53.

¹⁷⁹ Graham, “1850-1870,” 145.

3.2 THE REVOLUÇÃO FARROUPILHA (REVOLT OF THE RAGAMUFFINS), 1835-1845

Of all the revolts of the 1830s and 1840s, the most consequential for Brazilian domestic stability as well as foreign policy was the Revolução Farroupilha or Revolt of the Ragamuffins. Beginning on September 20, 1835, with the overthrow of the provincial government in Porto Alegre, the Revolt of the Ragamuffins agitated Rio Grande do Sul and national politics for close to ten years.

The conflict in Rio Grande do Sul was particularly troubling because of its political, economic, and military interdependence with the politics of the Hispanic neighbors in the Río de la Plata Basin. Although the Cisplatine Province seceded from Brazil in 1828, becoming the Oriental Republic of Uruguay,¹⁸⁰ the ranchers of Rio Grande do Sul retained extensive land and interests in the region. The lands of Rio Grande do Sul as well as those of Uruguay were of great strategic and economic value: their fertile plains were perfect for raising cattle. Moreover, from a strategic stance, whoever took possession of the riparian network of that region would also control trade flux and access to the Brazilian hinterland provinces of Mato Grosso and Goiás.¹⁸¹ Those intricate ties and the geostrategic importance of Rio Grande do Sul explain why the Farroupilha Revolt was the most threatening domestic challenge to the Empire and, hence, the strength of the gaucho elites' relative power vis-à-vis the government and landowners from other provinces.

¹⁸⁰ On the secession of the Cisplatine Province, the Cisplatine War between Brazil and the United Provinces, and the independence of Uruguay see Júlio José Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai*. 13th Edition (São Paulo, São Paulo: Editora Ática, 2010): 36; Gilbert Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay* (London: Charles Knight & Company Limited, 1975): 76; Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 94-104.

¹⁸¹ L. A. Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro e a formação dos Estados na Bacia do Prata: Argentina, Uruguay e Paraguai – da colonização à Guerra da Tríplice Aliança* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Revan, 1985), 31-33.

The heart of the Farroupilha rebellion was the gauchos' demand for governmental protection of the domestic industry of charque (dried beef) – a major part of the slaves' diet.¹⁸² While the Riograndense charque reached Rio de Janeiro at \$440 to \$480 réis per arroba, plus \$280 réis of freight and taxes, the charque from Buenos Aires or Montevideo cost between \$400 and \$410 per arroba, freight included.¹⁸³ Thus, the Riograndense charque industry demanded an additional 25 percent tax on foreign charque.¹⁸⁴ However, either a tax increase on foreign charque or governmental subsidy on domestic charque would result on extra costs to be paid for by the Brazilian slave-owning elites.¹⁸⁵

The Riograndense elites were not a monolithic bloc. Most of the charque industrialists and a section of the estancieros sided with the central government. On the one hand, the charqueadores depended on the Brazilian market to sell their product and on the estancieros for raw material. Moreover, the charque industrialists knew that the slaves who worked in the province's charque establishments were potential recruits for the revolt. As a group with a sizeable capital investment in slaves, the charque industrialists felt threatened by any movement towards abolition, as implied in the Ragamuffin rebellion.¹⁸⁶ On the other hand, the estancieros could maintain their business without the government *if – and only if* – they could partner with Uruguayan charqueadas. Secession would hence only be a viable plan for the Riograndense

¹⁸² Brazil had six to seven million inhabitants, of which at least 3,5 million were slaves.

¹⁸³ One arroba corresponded to 32 pounds.

¹⁸⁴ Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 68-69.

¹⁸⁵ Kraay and Whingham, *I Die with My Country*, 5; Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai*, 35.

¹⁸⁶ Spencer L. Leitman, "The Black Ragamuffins: Racial Hypocrisy in Nineteenth Century Southern Brazil," *The Americas* 33:3 (1977): 505-506.

estancieros if they could arrange a political merger with Uruguay and possibly with some Argentine provinces.¹⁸⁷

What were the chances of the formation of a new political unit on those lines? The odds were not negligible. In 1842, colonel Bento Gonçalves, the leader of the Farrapos and president of the secessionist Piratini Republic (founded in November 1836), and the brigadier Pedro Ferré, governor of Corrientes, signed a secret alliance aimed at breaking the yoke of Buenos Aires. Those leaders expected to celebrate a similar pact with general José Maria Paz, governor of the province of Entre Ríos. In October 1842, Rivera promoted the Congress of Paysandu, where the Uruguayan president proposed the formation of the Uruguayan Federation, comprising Uruguay, República do Piratini (Rio Grande do Sul), and the provinces of Entre Ríos and Corrientes.¹⁸⁸

Some argue that the Revolt of the Ragamuffins was aimed at the complete severance of the province from the empire, pointing to the establishment of the Republic of Piratini as proof. However, evidence suggests that the goal of the rebellion was not separation, but rather federation. That is, the founding of the Republic of Piratini was a bargain strategy aimed at forcing the imperial government to grant a larger autonomy to the province.¹⁸⁹ The historians Helio Vianna, J. Pandiá Calógeras, and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda agree with this interpretation. Accordingly, instead of being separatists, the Farrapos fought for the local liberties. In fact, in several opportunities the Farrapos

¹⁸⁷ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 71-72; Thomas L. Whigham, "The Paraguayan War: A Catalyst for Nationalism in South America," in *I Die with My Country: Perspectives on the Paraguayan War, 1864-1870*, ed. Hendrik Kraay and Thomas L. Whigham (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 185-186.

¹⁸⁸ Amado Luiz Cervo and Clodoaldo Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil* (Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 2^a ed. 2002): 60-61; Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 60.

¹⁸⁹ Percy Alvin Martin, "Federalism in Brazil." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 18:2 (1938): 151.

manifested the desire to re-enter the Empire under the federal formula and they had no hesitation to return once the causes of the revolt disappeared.¹⁹⁰ i.e., the price of the *charque* and provincial autonomy as conflicts over relative shares of resources. Thus, Buarque de Holanda concludes, “The analysis of the *Revolução Farroupilha* as a separatist movement is, therefore, fallacious. On the contrary, the revolt expressed an attempt to reorganize, in the framework of imperial politics, the relations between the Central Power and the Province.”¹⁹¹

How threatening would it be for the Brazilian elites to lose Rio Grande do Sul to a “Great Uruguay”? Although the secession of the so-called Piratini Republic would be no small loss, especially from the geopolitical and national security points of view, it would not pose a short-term existential threat to the most valued Brazilian institutions: monarchy, the *latifundium* system and slavery, and the civilian control over the military. In other words, even if the leadership of the revolutionary movement might have in fact considered the secession of the Piratini Republic and its union within a Uruguayan Federation, the nature of this threat implied a loss to the imperial elites, but not the overthrow of the established elites. Moreover, the territorial loss would probably entail a reshuffle of the cabinet, but it did not involve the risk of forced exile or premature death for those politicians – as it was common in the neighboring Hispanic republics. Another potential threat would be the impacts of a successful secession of the República do Piratini upon the recrudescence of local rebellions. As we saw above, the various revolts

¹⁹⁰ Helio Vianna, *História do Brasil Volume III Monarquia e República* (São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1972), 42; J. Pandiá Calógeras, *Formação Histórica do Brasil*, 4^a ed. (São Paulo: Nacional, 1945), 155; Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira Tomo II O Brasil Monárquico 2º Volume Dispersão e Unidade* (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1967), 502-503.

¹⁹¹ Buarque de Holanda, *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira Tomo II 2º Volume*, 502.

within the other provinces had been struggles over the allocation of patronage resources. Their main demand was greater autonomy at the provincial level. However, as discussed above, those movements did not aim at the uprooting of the existing institutions. Finally, the magnitude of the threat posed by the formation of a Uruguayan Federation was contingent on who controlled Uruguay, as we will see below.

For the Empire it was better to maintain territorial integrity and keep both *estancieiros* and *charqueadores*. Thus, between 1835 and 1845, the central government carried out several military campaigns to subdue the Riograndense insurgents. But the Empire also offered concessions to the rebels such as the 25 percent import duties on foreign charque (introduced in 1840) and the incorporation of rebel leaders into the armed forces in Rio Grande do Sul. The government was finally able to suppress the Farroupilla Revolt in 1845. Nevertheless, the length of the rebellion and the concessions offered by the imperial government had the effect of increasing the bargaining power of Riograndense elites vis-à-vis the central government. Thus, the local predominance of the *estancieiros*, *charqueadores*, and exporters was consolidated with the peace of 1845, within the limits of economic and political frameworks of the empire and at the price of the submission of their financial pretensions to the economic imposition of the “North.”¹⁹² This change in the domestic balance of power would later prove fundamental for the initiation of Brazilian aggression in Uruguay, which in turn triggered the onset of the Paraguayan War.

¹⁹² Buarque de Holanda, *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira Tomo II 2º Volume*, 504. See also Antonio Mendes Junior et al., *Brasil História Texto e Consulta Volume 2 Império*. 2a edição (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1979), 234.

3.3 BRAZIL IN THE CISPLATINE WAR, 1825-1828

From independence until mid-century, the Brazilian foreign policy is consistent with my theory's expectations. In those three decades, integrated elites faced continuous, but non-existential threats. That is, there were disputes among elites over relative shares of resources instead of challenges to the political, economic, and military institutions that constitute those elites qua elites. As predicted by my theory, those elites chose domestic policies – a mix of suppression and concession – to deal with those non-existential threats. In that period, the Brazilian elites did not initiate aggressive behaviors against neighboring political units. During that time Brazil fought the Cisplatine War (1825-1828), but not as the aggressor. Rather, the Brazilian elites were reacting to the Argentine-supported invasion of the Cisplatine province, led by Manuel Oribe and Juan Antonio Lavalleja. In the words of the Brazilian Emperor Don Pedro I on May 6, 1826:

“There is tranquility throughout the Empire, except for the Cisplatine province. The continuation of such peace, the need for the constitutional system, and my effort to ensure that the Empire be governed by such system, [all these conditions] urge that there shall be such harmony between the senate and the chamber of deputies, between the former and the latter, and between the government and both chambers, such as that it will make that all be capacitated, that revolutions do not originate from the system, but rather from those who in the shadow of the system seek to pursue their private goals. The Cisplatine province is the only province where there is no peace, as I said before, since ungrateful men that much owed to Brazil have raised themselves against [this country] and today they find themselves supported by government of Buenos Aires, currently in war against us. The national honor requires that we support the Cisplatine province, since it has been sworn to the integrity of the Empire.”¹⁹³

Initially, Brazil tried to dissuade the United Provinces from supporting the rebellion with a show of naval force. It was only after Lavalleja declared the

¹⁹³ Don Pedro I's address to the Brazilian Congress, in Câmara dos Deputados, *Falas do Trono: Desde o ano 1823 até o ano de 1889* (São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1977), 97.

independence of Uruguay in April 25, 1825, that Brazil began dispatching significant reinforcements to its small squadron in the Plata River.¹⁹⁴ In June 21, perhaps to ensure the continuation of aid from Buenos Aires, Lavalleja recanted the pledge of independence and declared Uruguay's union with the United Provinces. It is important to stress that Brazil did not declare war against the Provinces until December 10, after receiving a diplomatic note from the United Provinces sent in November 4 affirming the reincorporation of the Banda Oriental into the United Provinces and committing to its defense.¹⁹⁵ However, when the war became inevitable, the Brazilian Parliament cohesively and unanimously approved the resources to wage war against the United Provinces.¹⁹⁶ Once the war had started, the chamber of deputies replied to the Emperor's request for coordination between the senate and the chamber of deputies, as well as between both chambers and government with the following words:

“The chamber of deputies has also given thanks to His Imperial Majesty for the unrelenting effort with which he has maintained the integrity of the Empire sustaining the union of all its provinces, and [the chamber of deputies] promises to His Imperial Majesty to cooperate with the government with all means at our disposal, so that the honor and national dignity do not suffer the least damage.”

– Chamber of Deputies, May 6, 1826.

¹⁹⁴ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 96; Vicente D. Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina: de la Anarquía y la Época de Rivadavia a la Revolución de 1828 (1819-1829)* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Científica Argentina, 1967), 436; Vicente F. López, *Historia de la República Argentina: su origen, su revolución y su desarrollo político hasta 1852* (Buenos Aires: Librería La Facultad, Tomo IX, 1911), 233.

¹⁹⁵ Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 76; Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai*, 36; and Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 94; Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 56; Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 48-49.

¹⁹⁶ There was in Brazil at the time a significant liberal group hostile to the autocratic policies of Dom Pedro I, and hence not all parliament members agreed with the justice of the war. However, the Brazilian elites were all very sensitive to the “war of opinion” initiated in Buenos Aires against the Brazilian institutions. See J. E Pivel Devoto, “Uruguay Independiente,” in *Historia de América y de Los Pueblos Americanos*, Tomo XXI, ed. Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta, p. 405-638 (Barcelona: Salvat Editores, S.A., 1949), 455-456.

Brazil's foreign policy in this case does not contradict my theory, since the Empire was the target and not the initiator of the aggression. It was the United Provinces who provoked the war by declaring the annexation of the Cisplatine and by committing to its military defense. The Cisplatine War ended in August 27, 1828 with a British-mediated preliminary peace convention that served Brazil's strategic interest for the region: Uruguay remained independent and free navigation unobstructed. As long as those conditions endured there was no reason for an aggressive Brazilian foreign policy towards the Plata states. Thus, from the independence of Uruguay until mid-century, non-aggression was the norm in Brazilian regional affairs.¹⁹⁷

OBSERVATION 2: INTEGRATED ELITES, PEACE AT HOME, FOREIGN THREATS, AND INTERVENTIONISM

After 1828, a non-aggressive Brazilian foreign policy in the Plata Basin had been possible due to the confluence of two factors. On the one hand, integrated elites responded to non-existential domestic threats to their margins of resource accumulation by employing a mix of suppressive and conciliatory domestic policies. On the other hand, as long as there was free navigation in the Plata Basin, there were no major foreign threats to national security, that is, to the Empire's ability to access and defend the provinces of Mato Grosso, Goiás, São Paulo, Paraná, and Rio Grande do Sul. Free navigation, in turn, depended on the independence of Uruguay and Paraguay from the Argentine Confederation.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 41, 59.

¹⁹⁸ Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 117-118.

However, two international developments increased the degree of foreign threat to the security of the Empire: Oribe's victory over the Colorados in Uruguay in December 1842, projecting Rosas' influence in that country; and the authorization and support given by the legislature of Buenos Aires for Rosas to reincorporate Paraguay into the Confederation, on March 18, 1850. The Brazilian policy-makers saw Rosas' foreign policy as an attempt to reconstruct the former Río de la Plata Viceroyalty. As the imperial government in Brazil understood it, if the Argentine Confederation seized Uruguay, Paraguay, vulnerable in its geographic position for having no access to the sea, would not be able to resist Rosas. Once Uruguay and Paraguay were annexed to the Confederation, the next domino to fall would be Bolivia.¹⁹⁹ Rosas' project would also reinforce the monopoly of the port of Buenos Aires by eliminating competition from the port of Montevideo, benefiting the *porteño* merchants.²⁰⁰ If Rosas were successful, the potential consequences would be the creation of a political unit rival in power to Brazil and the nationalization of the Plata riparian system, thus compromising Brazil's access to and defense of its western territories.

URUGUAY UNDER ORIBE – The odds of this scenario becoming true increased in the 1840s with the extension of Rosas' power over Uruguay through Oribe and with the Argentine caudillo's defeat of the French and British blockades to the port of Buenos Aires. Since its independence, Uruguay had been racked by constant civil war fueled by the rivalry between the Brazilian Empire and the Argentine Confederation. The two Platine powers championed competing factions within the Oriental Republic: Brazil

¹⁹⁹ Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 45-46, 60, 117-118.

²⁰⁰ Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 58-59. Since the end of nineteenth century, the term *porteño* is used to refer to the inhabitants of the city of Buenos Aires, whereas the term *bonaerense* refers to the inhabitants of the province of Buenos Aires. This is how those terms are employed in this dissertation.

supported Rivera's Colorados while Argentina favored Oribe's Blancos. On December 6, 1842, Oribe crushed Rivera at the Battle of Arroyo Grande. All Uruguay fell under Oribe's forces, except for Montevideo, which was besieged by Oribe by land and blockaded by Buenos Aires by water.²⁰¹ Two competing governments emerged in Uruguay: the Defense Government of Rivera in Montevideo and the Cerrito Government of Oribe in the rest of the country. But Rivera was unable to re-enter the besieged capital, and the Colorado legislature named Joaquín Suárez provisory President of the Defense Government.

In the meantime, Rivera's support to the Farrapos and his plans to form a Great Uruguay that included Rio Grande do Sul cost him Brazil's support. Anticipating the imminence and inevitability of Oribe's victory and given Rivera's betrayal, the imperial government saw entering into alliance with Rosas against Rivera as its best course of action. In that way, Oribe's rise would happen under a Brazilian-Argentine concert assuring Buenos Aires's commitment to respect the independence of Uruguay, as agreed in the Preliminary Convention of 1828.²⁰² By disowning Rivera, the Brazilian policy makers aimed simultaneously at ending foreign support for the Riograndense rebels and guaranteeing, at least in the short-term, the independence of Uruguay and free navigation in the Plata River.

But whereas the domestic threats to the Brazilian elites were being subdued, the Argentine threat to the Brazil's national security continuously increased. Domestically, the pacification of Rio Grande do Sul in 1845 and the defeat of other internal revolts by midcentury resulted in a strong and politically unified elite under Dom Pedro II. Brazil

²⁰¹ See also Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 77; and Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai*, 36.

²⁰² Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 63-64.

featured stable institutions, political conservatism, party conciliation, and a collaborative process of elaboration and conduction of foreign policy.²⁰³ In other words, the Brazilian elites became increasingly integrated as domestic threats were progressively eliminated.

However, internationally, Brazil faced two main interrelated challenges. First, the growth of Rosas' power in Uruguay since December 1842, further accentuated by the retreat of Great Britain and France from the region in the late 1840s,²⁰⁴ alarmed the Brazilian elites, who were convinced that the Argentine caudillo sought regional expansionism. Oribe's Uruguay was already under Rosas control. Paraguay and Bolivia would be his next prey, so it was thought, and maybe even part of the Rio Grande do Sul, thus reassembling the former viceroyalty.²⁰⁵ The realization of this scenario constituted a direct threat to be averted. Second, it was the imperial government's goal to secure free navigation in the Plata Basin, especially in the Paraguayan sections of the Paraná and Upper Paraguay rivers. Without unimpeded access to those waters, the Brazilian province of Mato Grosso would be completely cut off from the rest of the nation. This policy involved a free navigation agreement with Paraguay. The Paraguayan President Carlos Antonio López, in turn, understood that his control of the river routes to Mato Grosso

²⁰³ Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 65-67.

²⁰⁴ Rivera was defeated on March 27, 1845. Fearing that Rosas' victory would end free navigation in the Plata Basin and compromise their trade interests, France and Great Britain blockaded Buenos Aires on July 31, 1845. However, with the unfolding of the 1848 Revolutionary movements in Europe and the US-Mexican War in North America, France and Great Britain decided to seek an accommodation with Rosas. The blockade began to be raised in July 1847 and peace treaties with Rosas were signed on November 24, 1849 (by Great Britain) and August 31, 1850 (by France). See Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 118, 120-122; Pivel Devoto, "Uruguay Independiente," 514-515; and Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 71.

²⁰⁵ Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 114; Moniz Banderia, 67; Francisco Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra: Nova História da Guerra do Paraguai* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002), 28.

was a powerful bargaining chip in the negotiation of the border dispute with Brazil.²⁰⁶ Therefore, López was not willing to concede free navigation without getting a border settlement of his liking.

As argued in the previous chapter, elites in an integrated elite structure have an advantage at responding to foreign threats. Those elites do not constitute immediate threats to one another, and their common interests and small numbers facilitate decision-making and joint action. In the late 1840s, the Brazilian elites saw Rosas as an immediate existential threat, and guaranteeing free navigation in Paraguayan waters as their top foreign policy goal. On the one hand, having subdued the domestic revolts, the Brazilian elites in the late 1840s and early 1850s were now in a better condition to *confront* – rather than *avert* – the Rosas’ threat. On the other hand, in its policy towards Paraguay, the Imperial Government sought both an ally against Rosas and the concession of unhindered passage in the Paraguayan rivers, to be achieved if possible through negotiation.²⁰⁷

Thus, in its relationship with Paraguay, the Imperial Government employed a mixed strategy of diplomacy and military pressure. As a positive inducement, the Brazilian diplomat in Asunción Pimenta Bueno signed the act that recognized the Paraguayan independence in September 14, 1844. Closer relations with Paraguay were part of the imperial policy to isolate Rosas in the Plata region.²⁰⁸ This policy was followed by a negative inducement: in 1847, the Imperial Government ordered the construction of a fort at Fecho dos Morros, a border area disputed with Paraguay since colonial times, as an attempt to compel Paraguay to grant Brazil unimpeded passage in

²⁰⁶ The main disagreement between Brazil and Paraguay was whether the boundary between Paraguay and the Brazilian province of Mato Grosso was the river Apa or the river Blanco (see map 1 below).

²⁰⁷ León Pomer, *Paraguai: Nossa Guerra Contra Esse Soldado* (São Paulo: Global Editora, 7^a ed., 2001), 20.

²⁰⁸ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 27.

the Paraná River (the fort was not established until 1850). Next, the Empire sent Bellegard at the end of 1849 to propose a treaty of navigation and commerce to López. Negotiations began in Asunción in 1850. Midway through the talks Carlos Antonio López learned of the Brazilian fort at Fecho dos Morros.²⁰⁹ Arguing that there could be no navigation treaty while the border problem persisted, López refused the proposal and sent troops to Fecho dos Morros and in October 14, 1850 expelled the Brazilians forces.²¹⁰ Notice that Brazil did not respond militarily to the Paraguayan aggression. Instead, Brazil momentarily suspended the navigation and border issues with Paraguay in order to address a greater and more imminent threat: Rosas' goal to annex Paraguay.

GROWING INTERNATIONAL THREAT: ROSAS AUTHORIZED TO ANNEX PARAGUAY –

On March 18, 1850, Rosas obtained from the Buenos Aires legislature the authorization to “dispose without any limits of all provincial funds, revenues, and resources of all kinds until the effective reincorporation of the Province of Paraguay into the Argentine Confederation.”²¹¹ Thus, despite their failure to reach an agreement on the navigation and border issues, Brazil and Paraguay signed an alliance against Rosas in December 25, 1850.²¹² In order not to contradict the Preliminary Convention of 1828 and thus avoid any

²⁰⁹ Fecho de Morros was located sixty-three miles north of the confluence of the Apa and Alto Paraguay Rivers (see map 1 below). The Brazilian fort posed a threat to Paraguay because it was situated near a 1,350-foot-high plateau with a panoramic view of the countryside in all directions. From the top of that summit, the Brazilians could establish an artillery battery that could cut off the Paraguayans from their base at Olimpo (Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 85-86).

²¹⁰ Wanderley Loconte, *Guerra do Paraguai*. 4th Edition (São Paulo, São Paulo: Editora Ática, 2001), 13; Pelham Horton Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War* (New York: Russell & Russell, [1930] 1967), 32.

²¹¹ Efraim Cardozo, “Paraguay Independiente,” in *Historia de América y de Los Pueblos Americanos*, Tomo XXI, ed. Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta, p. 1-404 (Barcelona: Salvat Editores, S.A., 1949), 114.

²¹² Cardozo, “Paraguay Independiente,” 115. Although Paraguay overthrew the local Spanish administration on 15 May 1811 and established a national government and state institutions, its independence was not recognized by the Argentine Confederation. Until 1842, when the Paraguayan issued a further declaration of independence, the country's relation with the Argentine Confederation had been based on a non-aggression pact. Failing to receive a confirmation of its independence from the Argentine Confederation and seeking to revert to Francia's isolationism, Carlos Antonio initiated a relationship with

pretext for a British intervention, the Brazilian Government did not want to declare war against Rosas. Instead, the Empire preferred to attack Rosas indirectly by supporting the governor of Entre Ríos Justo José Urquiza against Rosas and Oribe.²¹³ Thus, in May 29, 1851, Brazil, Uruguay's Defense Government, and Entre Ríos signed a defensive and offensive treaty to defeat Oribe and Rosas.²¹⁴ In August 18, 1851, Rosas declared war on Brazil. Urquiza, who was a former ally of Rosas, led the military operations. Oribe was defeated and peace was reached in October 8, 1851. Urquiza continued the war against Rosas, who was defeated in the Battle of Caseros in February 3, 1852. With the help of General Urquiza, Brazil achieved its two most important strategic goals: the prevention of a reconstructed viceroyalty led by Buenos Aires and freedom of navigation in the Plata River. As for Paraguay, Urquiza recognized its independence on July 17, 1852, followed by Great Britain, France, and the United States.

the rebel province of Corrientes. As retaliation, Rosas blockaded the Paraguay River in January 1845. Rosas also protested Brazil's formal recognition of Paraguay. López formally declared war on Rosas on December 4, 1845. Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 42.

²¹³ Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 71.

²¹⁴ Pivel Devoto, "Uruguay Independiente," 516.

MAP 1 – DISPUTED AREA BETWEEN BRAZIL AND PARAGUAY

[MAP 1 HERE]

Source: Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 79.

NAVIGATION AND BORDER DISPUTES WITH PARAGUAY RESURFACE – In the early 1850s, Brazil enjoyed political stability, internal peace, and some prosperity based on coffee exports. The last domestic revolt had been subdued in 1850. During the next ten years, Liberals and Conservatives reached a political agreement and served together in the same administrations in what became known as the Conciliation Cabinet (1853-1859).²¹⁵ Moreover, the prohibition of the slave trade in September 1950 made a vast sum of money available for investments in other enterprises.²¹⁶ Externally, Great Britain had been given satisfaction on the slave trade question and Rosas was defeated in February 1852. It was in that context of elite further integration and the demise of Rosas' threat that the navigation and boundary disputes with Paraguay reemerged.

Unsuccessful border and navigation treaty negotiations occurred in 1852, 1853, 1855, and 1856. Failing to reach an agreement, Brazil and Paraguay decided to shelve the border dispute until 1862, but free navigation remained a contentious issue.²¹⁷ During this time, Brazil advanced on a disputed territory and built a fort in Salinas in 1855. But once again the Paraguayan forces expelled the Brazilian troops. Both sides began preparations of war. As a show of force, Brazil sent a naval squadron to Paraguayan waters, but halted it off Corrientes. This crisis was surmounted with the negotiation of a treaty in March 21, 1855 postponing the settlement of the boundary dispute for one year.

Despite displays and limited uses of force by both sides, the dispute did not escalate. Instead, Brazil and Paraguay consistently backed down in favor of a negotiated

²¹⁵ Bethel and Murilo de Carvalho, "1822-1850," 84, 111; Izecksohn, *O Cerne da Discórdia*, 27-28.

²¹⁶ Donald E. Worcester, *Brazil: From Colony to World Power* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 101-102, 106.

²¹⁷ In the Treaty of April 6, 1856, Carlos Antonio conceded freedom of navigation on the Upper Paraguay. However, on August 10, 1856, López decreed dues that effectively annulled the freedom of navigation. See Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 45, 64-65; Loconte, *Guerra do Paraguai*, 13-14; Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 33-36; Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 32-33, 38.

approach to their divergences. This behavior is consistent with the theory presented in the previous chapter. That is, integrated elites facing non-existential threats – domestically and internationally – show a preference for a negotiated approach to their international disputes. At the time, the elite structures in both Brazil and Paraguay were integrated, neither country faced existential threats domestically, and their main international existential threat – i.e. Rosas – had been defeated.

**OBSERVATION 3: ELITE FRAGMENTATION AND THE RIOGRANDENSE THREAT:
THE ORIGINS OF THE PARAGUAYAN WAR**

On October 12, 1864, Brazilian troops entered northern Uruguay. The rumors of the invasion reached Asunción in October 25. The Uruguayan government requested that the Paraguayan President Francisco Solano López give the promised help, which López denied arguing that the news was not official.²¹⁸ López response confirmed a firmly held assumption among Brazilian foreign policy makers: i.e. that Paraguay would not initiate a war against Brazil, either to seize the disputed territory between the Apa and Blanco rivers or to prevent a Brazilian intervention in Uruguay (see map 1 above). Indeed, in the Senate session of August 4, 1866, the Brazilian Prime Minister Zacharias de Góes e Vanconcellos affirmed that when formulating Brazil's policy towards Uruguay in 1864 he had not for a moment dreamed that Paraguay would act if Brazil enforced its claims on Uruguay.²¹⁹ Indeed, López's seizure of the Brazilian mail steamer *Marquês de Olinda* – i.e. his first act of war against Brazil – did not happen until November 11, 1864: one month after the Brazilian incursion in Uruguay. The Paraguayan declaration of war

²¹⁸ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 66.

²¹⁹ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 152.

against Brazil was not issued until December 13, and the Paraguayan invasion of Mato Grosso waited until the following year.²²⁰

Brazil's initiation of the use of military force against Uruguay in 1864 did not aim at Paraguayan politics or at any dispute Brazil had with Paraguay. Moreover, the Brazilian use of force in Uruguay was not even related to national security goals. As this section demonstrates, Brazil's foreign policy towards Uruguay was a function of the elite fragmentation initiated in 1859, with the end of the Conciliation Cabinet, and the Uruguayan threat to the Riograndense interests.

ELITE FRAGMENTATION IN THE EARLY 1860S – The end of the Revolt of the Ragamuffins in 1845 resulted in the creation of a new balance between the elites of Rio Grande do Sul and the central government. On the one hand, the peace consolidated the local power of the *estancieros* and *charqueadores*, since many of their demands were accepted by the central government. On the other hand, the peace had been established within the political and economic framework of the empire, with the acquiescence of the Riograndense elites in their submission to central government. After the last internal rebellion was pacified in 1850, Brazil entered a period of peace and prosperity underlined by political conciliation.

In an effort to eliminate political factionalism and to support a program of administrative reform and economic development, Liberals and Conservatives cooperated under the leadership of Honório Hermeto Carneiro Leão, marquês de Paraná. Together, they formed the "Party of Conciliation," headed by a "Ministry of Conciliation." One of

²²⁰ Due to extremely poor land communications between Rio de Janeiro and Mato Grosso, it took forty-seven days (February 22, 1865) before the Brazilian government heard of the first rumors of the Paraguayan attack, and confirmation was not received by mail until March 17 (Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 314).

the Conciliation Cabinet's most important measures had been the creation in 1855 of single-member electoral districts. By allowing the Liberals a chance to elect some members of parliament, despite the Conservative control of the electoral system in general, the new measure drew Liberals into peaceful participation and signaled the possibility of their once again attaining power. As a result of this law a sizeable minority of Liberals was elected in 1856.²²¹

The Conciliation Cabinet lasted until 1859. The Conservative cabinet of 1859-1861 reversed several of the liberal policies that had been initiated during the Conciliation, including the direction of the electoral reform by enlarging the area of electoral districts. This new electoral policy favored regional chieftains to the detriment of local and minority interests.²²² The "Party of Conciliation" disintegrated. In the elections of December 1860, the more progressive Conservatives joined the Liberals to form a parliamentary coalition called the Progressive League, which ruled from 1862 until 1868.²²³ The victory of the League in the election of 1860 marked the dawn of a new era. According to the statesman Joaquim Nabuco, the Liberal victory "assumed the proportions of a peaceful revolution against the oligarchy in the senatorial stronghold."²²⁴ The victory of the liberal alliance in the legislative elections in 1860 had brought liberals to the center of the political decision-making. A liberal cabinet took power in 1862, the

²²¹ Graham, "1850-1870," 147.

²²² Graham, "1850-1870," 148.

²²³ Graham, "1850-1870," 149-151; Worcester, *Brazil*, 109. The Progressive League was officially formed in 1862.

²²⁴ Worcester, *Brazil*, 106. See also Skidmore, *Brazil*, 49.

first since 1848, and a newly elected Chamber of Deputies largely comprised of young Liberals came into office on January 1, 1864.²²⁵

Although the League shared a similar purpose with the Conciliation Cabinet, i.e., to create a governing coalition in order to implement reforms, the two groups espoused opposing political goals.²²⁶ In 1864 the League presented the country its political program, which contained *several fundamental reforms to the Constitution and to the administration of the country*, including direct elections and the reorganization of the National Guard. The League also intended to remove judicial powers from police authority, which the Conservatives thought would threaten the existing order. More extreme Liberals, however, regarded such reform as a mere first step towards the revision of the entire Constitution. Ultimately, extreme Liberals wanted to restrict the emperor's "moderative power," end life terms for the Senate, allow provincial presidents to be elected instead of appointed, and have direct elections of the Chamber of Deputies.²²⁷ Overall, the reforms would change the existing balance between provincial and central power, to the advantage of the municipal and provincial interests.²²⁸ Thus, the rule of the League, especially since early 1864 when Liberals dominated both the Cabinet and Chamber of Deputies, introduced fragmentation into the Brazilian Elite Structure.

THE RIOGRANDENSE INTEREST IN URUGUAY – By the early 1860s, about 50,000 Riograndense cattle raisers had settled in northern Uruguay, having purchased some of the largest and best estates in the country. However, the profitability of those ranches

²²⁵ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 44; Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 146; Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 120.

²²⁶ Raymundo Faoro, *Os Donos do Poder: Formação do Patronato Político Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Globo, 1958), 195, 231.

²²⁷ Graham, "1850-1870," 149.

²²⁸ Faoro, *Os Donos do Poder*, 232; Mendes Junior et al., *Brasil História Volume 2*, 304-305.

depended upon two conditions: slave work and the driving of the herds to saladeros in Brazil, both of which required the cooperation of the government in Montevideo.²²⁹ When the Uruguayan President Bernardo Prudencio Berro (1860-1864) imposed a tax on the export of cattle to Rio Grande do Sul and prohibited the use of slave work by the Brazilian ranchers, the latter had two responses: demand the intervention of the Brazilian government and engage in cattle rustling. The cattle-rustlers inevitably collided with the local authorities, and small armed engagements became frequent.²³⁰ Among the most important Riograndense cattle raisers in Uruguay were General Marques, General Osorio, General Netto and Colonels Saldanha and Illa. These men had participated in the Farroupilha rebellion (1835-1845) with General Antonio de Souza Netto as their leader. Their vital economic interests demanded a government in Montevideo favorable to the Empire. Hence, when Venancio Flores and his Colorado comrades invaded Uruguay on April 18, 1863, resuming the civil war, the Riograndense ranchers found an opportunity to replace Berro's Blanco government for a Colorado administration protective of the Riograndense interests. Many Colorado militants had served in the Farrapo armies and were well known in southern Brazil. Thus, the Riograndense caudillos saw Flores as a potential ally.²³¹

CHANGE IN THE IMPERIAL DISCOURSE TOWARDS THE RIOGRANDENSE ISSUE – It is important to stress that in 1863 the Conservative elites in the central government did not consider the interests of Riograndenses ranchers in Uruguay as their own interest or contemplated the conduction of a military intervention in Uruguay on behalf of the

²²⁹ The Uruguayan ranchers utilized free labor.

²³⁰ Pómer 2001:22; Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 109; Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 80; Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 145; Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 45.

²³¹ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 112; Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 80.

Riograndenses. Neither did the imperial government approve the alliance between the Riograndenses and Flores. The government had been officially aware of the alliance since May 8, 1863, when the Uruguayan foreign minister Juan José Herrera reported to the Brazilian government the depredations of raiders from Rio Grande do Sul operating in Uruguay on behalf of Flores.²³² Opposed to an intervention in Uruguay, the Government sternly admonished the president of Rio Grande do Sul on December 22, 1863.²³³

“The Imperial Government has seen with profound regret that in spite of its urgent and repeated orders and recommendations the cause of the rebellion which at the moment afflicts Uruguay continues to receive the support and cooperation of certain reckless Brazilians, who, mistaking their own interests and those of the country, thus expose the Government to accusations of disloyalty in its solemn declarations, and perhaps to international disputes involving gravest consequences.”²³⁴

Moreover, the Government ordered the president of Rio Grande to employ all the means in his power to prevent Brazilian subjects from participating in the Uruguayan civil war and if necessary to “punish with the full rigor of the law those who, deaf to the voice of reason and duty, persist in their insane design.”²³⁵

The official position of Rio de Janeiro would change dramatically in March 1864, after the Riograndense elites threatened to take matters in their own hands. General Antonio de Sousa Netto had been the leader of Riograndense separatists during the Revolt of the Ragamuffins and owned large estates in Uruguay, where he lived. Aiming to convince the imperial government to intervene in favor of the Brazilian estancieros in Uruguay, General Netto came to Rio de Janeiro in late 1863 and stayed there until April

²³² Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 114.

²³³ Pomer, *Paraguai*, 36-37.

²³⁴ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 116.

²³⁵ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 117.

1864. “[Netto’s] threat was very concrete: either the Emperor intervene with his troops in favor of Flores or 40,000 Riograndenses established in the old Cisplatine would do justice with their own hands, with the natural support of their brothers from Rio Grande [do Sul].”²³⁶

Addressing the Chamber of Deputies in April of 1864, Netto asked for official military support in defense of the Riograndense cattle raisers. Meanwhile, amid suspicions that he might resurrect the separatist ideal, Netto sent one thousand of his gauchos to the proximities of the Uruguayan border. If Dom Pedro II refused to intervene in Uruguay, Netto and his comrades could not only provoke an incident in order to force the Emperor to act on the behalf of the Riograndense elites in that country, but also resuscitate the fallen flag of the failed Piratini Republic, or maybe even the project of a Great Uruguay.²³⁷ In the words of the Argentine diplomat José Mármol in Rio de Janeiro,

“The interests of the riograndense caudillos have put the imperial government in a dilemma: to repress with weapons, in the Rio Grande Province, the disobedience to the sovereign authority or to shoot Orientales to corroborate Gen. Netto’s pretensions of supporting Flores’ revolutionaries.”²³⁸

There was a credible threat that the gaucho ranchers, together with the Colorados, would initiate a war against Montevideo with or without the support of the Imperial government.²³⁹ Thus, as the threat from the Riograndense elites became more prominent, the official discourse of the Brazilian Government regarding the Riograndense issue in Uruguay also changed. First, the Empire denied the alliance between the Riograndenses

²³⁶ Pomer, *Paraguai*, 36-37.

²³⁷ Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 146; Pomer, *Paraguai*, 36-37.

²³⁸ Pomer, *Paraguai*, 36, my translation.

²³⁹ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 51.

and Flores on May 1863.²⁴⁰ Then the Government rebuked the behavior of the Riograndenses in Uruguay on December 1863. Finally, on May 18, 1864, the Brazilian Government demanded the Uruguayan Government to address the causes of the Riograndense dissatisfaction.²⁴¹

What was the degree of threat to the parts involved? For the Riograndense elites, not receiving the Imperial support against the Uruguayan authorities meant pecuniary losses given the taxation and anti-slave policies of Montevideo. But there was no threat of forcible seizure of their lands by the Uruguayan Government. The threat intensity for the Riograndense elites was thus non-existential. The threat to the governing elites was that Rio Grande do Sul would either secede, initiating another costly civil war against the Empire, or drag the country into a military venture in Uruguay. The threat of secession was no greater than it had been during the *Revolução Farroupilha*. The real threat thus was to involve Brazil in a costly military campaign in Uruguay. Preferentially, the imbroglio should be resolved diplomatically. But the threat to the governing elites was also non-existential. Nevertheless, the Liberals elites had a greater stake in a successful resolution than the Conservatives, due to the unpopularity of the English Question of

²⁴⁰ Upon receiving Herreras' report on May 8, 1863, the Brazilian commander on the Quarahim frontier, General David Canavarro, forwarded, through the Chargé in Montevideo, assurances that the Riograndense cattle raisers were not acting with Flores (Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 114).

²⁴¹ On that occasion, Saraiva informed the Uruguayan Government that the Imperial Government was resolved to prevent Brazilian subjects domiciled in Rio Grande do Sul from taking any part in the civil war in the neighboring Republic. However, the Brazilian diplomat also highlighted that the cry from the Brazilian residents in Uruguay had been receiving ample support throughout the Empire and especially in the Province of Rio Grande do Sul. Therefore, the Imperial Government could not anticipate the effects of such clamor if the Uruguayan Government did not contribute promptly to remove the causes of the Riograndense dissatisfaction in Uruguay (Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 127; Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai*, 37).

1863. In that incident Great Britain compelled Brazil to compensate Her Majesty for the loss of the British ship *Prince of Wales*, which sank in the coast of Rio Grande do Sul.²⁴²

BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN URUGUAY – In sum, the initial preference of the Government was not to use force against Uruguay, if possible. Given Riograndense interests in Uruguay, the least costly solution for the Brazilian Government would be to negotiate the restructuration of the Uruguayan government, pushing away the Blanco elements opposed to Brazilian cattle raisers' interests and incorporating the Colorados, who were friendlier to the Riongrandense interests, into the cabinet.²⁴³ The best way to achieve this goal was through exercising a mediating role in the Uruguayan civil war. Thus, together with Argentina and Great Britain, Brazil tried to strike a negotiated solution between Blancos and Colorados. The trio managed to arrange a truce between the two sides, and on June 1864 there were high hopes that the civil war was nearing an end and that a coalition government between Blancos and Colorados would be installed. However, pressured by extreme Blancos, the Uruguayan President Aguirre gave up the compromise in the last minute.²⁴⁴ Failing to secure the Riograndense demands through a negotiated settlement in Uruguay, the Brazilian Government switched strategies. And on August 4, 1864, the Brazilian diplomat José Antonio Saraiva presented Montevideo with

²⁴² The Brazilian government broke relations with Great Britain due to the British blockage and capture of five Brazilian merchant ships in the Guanabara bay, in November 31, 1862, and January 5, 1863. The British action aimed at pressuring the Brazilian government to pay the compensation for the ship *Prince of Wales*, which sank in the coast of Rio Grande do Sul. Under duress, the liberal Brazilian government paid the compensation (Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 50-52). See also Richard Graham, "Mauá and Anglo-Brazilian Diplomacy, 1862-1863," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 42:2 (May, 1962), 199-211.

²⁴³ Graham, "1850-1870," 149-151; Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 54.

²⁴⁴ Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 81.

an ultimatum. Simultaneously, a Brazilian army massed at the Uruguayan frontier and the Brazilian naval squadron stood by in Uruguayan waters.²⁴⁵

Saraiva expected that the intervention would reach only low levels of violence. The Brazilian diplomat was convinced that Brazil would reach its objectives in Uruguay, safeguarding the lives and property of Brazilian farmers, and promoting the internal peace in Uruguay.²⁴⁶ However, since Brazil and Argentina had been supporting the Colorados, elements within the Blanco Party averse to a coalition government reached out to Paraguay to defend their cause.²⁴⁷ In response, in August 30 Solano López declared that if Brazil sent troops to Uruguay, Brazil would become an enemy of Paraguay since such an action would upset the balance of power in the Plata, directly and negatively affecting Paraguayan national security.²⁴⁸ López implied that a Brazilian intervention would be reason for a *casus belli*.²⁴⁹ However, neither the Brazilian nor the Argentine government found the Paraguayan implicit threat of war to be credible.²⁵⁰ Their belief was reinforced by the fact that on August 25, Herrera had asked Solano López for such intervention, but it had been denied. The Brazilian delegation in Asunción took knowledge of this denial in the same day and interpreted it as proof of Solano López's desire to move away from the Aguirre government.²⁵¹

Therefore, assuming the neutrality of Great Britain, Argentina, and Paraguay, and considering the Aguirre Government's failure to comply with the Brazilian ultimatum,

²⁴⁵ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 52; Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 81.

²⁴⁶ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 54.

²⁴⁷ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 313.

²⁴⁸ Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai*, 37; Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 59.

²⁴⁹ Juan E. O'Leary, *El Paraguay en la Unificación Argentina: La Guerra de la Triple Alianza* (Asunción, Paraguay: Instituto Colorado de Cultura, 1976): 113; Izecksohn, *O Cerne da Discórdia*, 32.

²⁵⁰ Cervo and Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*, 123.

²⁵¹ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 60.

Brazilian troops marched into northern Uruguay on October 12. The news of the entrance of Brazilian troops in Uruguayan territory reached Asunción in October 25, as a rumor. The Uruguayan representative requested Solano López the promised help, which López denied saying that the news was not official. The Brazilian delegation again interpreted López's denial as his unwillingness to help Aguirre. Viana de Lima reaffirmed that he did not believe that Paraguay would enter in the war against Brazil, although Solano López and his ministers continued to affirm that Paraguay would soon enter the war.²⁵² These facts indicate that the Brazilian assumption about Paraguay's preference was not altogether unreasonable. Nevertheless, contrary to all expectations, Francisco Solano López decided to initiate war against Brazil.

PARAGUAYAN ELITE STRUCTURE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

Although this chapter is dedicated to investigate elite dynamics in Brazil and the corresponding changes in Brazilian foreign policy, this section provides a brief overview of elite dynamics in Paraguay in the early 1860s and a glance over Solano López's decision to initiate a war against Brazil. When the 1856 Treaty expired in 1862 no progress had been made towards solving the border dispute between Brazil and Paraguay. The Brazilian chancellor Carvalho Borges was instructed to avoid the border negotiations if his Paraguayan counterpart continued to deny the Brazilian request to maintain its presence until the Apa River (see map 1 above). This strategy was predicated on the assumption that the border question would be solved "peacefully," i.e. that Paraguay

²⁵² Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 66.

would ultimately concede to the Brazilian demands. Moreover, there was a widespread consensus among Brazilian policy makers that Paraguay would never initiate an attack against Brazil. One of the most important leaders of the Conservative Party, José Maria da Silva Paranhos also known as Visconde do Rio Branco, shared that opinion. Addressing the Chamber of Deputies, Rio Branco argued that Paraguay could not initiate a war against Brazil, given the power asymmetry between the two countries.²⁵³ The belief that Paraguay would not militarily attack Brazil – either over the border issue or over Brazilian interference within Uruguay in 1864 – was firmly and widely held among the Brazilian elites until the attack happened. Contrary to all expectations, Francisco Solano López ordered the capture of the Brazilian steamer on November 11, 1864.

ELITE STRUCTURE IN PARAGUAY – From 1814 to 1840 Gaspar Rodrigues de Francia built a very integrated elite structure characterized by the centralization of political power on the executive leader and the state monopoly over the economy. To accomplish this task, Francia altogether eliminated – by means property confiscation, death, or forced exile – all competing elites who formed, at the time, an incipient merchant bourgeoisie.²⁵⁴ The success of Francia's project of elite integration and the security that such condition created could be seen in the size of the armed forces: In 1827, the standing army had 5,000 men with a reserve of another 20,000 – small numbers considering the extremely unstable regional environment.²⁵⁵ Those numbers also indicated that Francia had no intention of meddling in his neighbors' domestic and foreign imbroglios. When Francia died in 1840 he had given his country twenty-eight

²⁵³ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 37-38.

²⁵⁴ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 11-12, 50-51; Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 28; Loconte, *Guerra do Paraguai*, 9; Pomer, *Paraguai*, 13-16, 18.

²⁵⁵ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 15.

years of unbroken peace, without militarizing Paraguay.²⁵⁶ The continuous existence of border disputes with both Argentina and Brazil and the virtually uninterrupted internal turmoil within those countries gave Francia various opportunities for initiating opportunistic attacks against its neighbors. However, having exterminated all domestic opposition, Francia had no need to implement aggressive foreign policies aimed at procuring domestic power.

The transition of government after Francia's death occurred without the slightest disturbance. On March 12, 1841, Congress elected two Consuls, Carlos Antonio López and Mariano Roque Alonzo. On March 14, 1844, Congress ratified a new republican constitution, and elected Carlos Antonio López the first President of Paraguay, for a term of ten years. His tenure was then extended by three years, and in 1857 he was elected for another 10 years.²⁵⁷ But whereas the power transition from Francia to Carlos Antonio had been smooth, the same could not be said of the transition after the death of Carlos Antonio. While still gravely ill in August 1862, Carlos López had in his first political testament named his son Angel Benigno López as vice-president, to assume the office upon his father's death. Partaker of liberal ideas, Angel Benigno had studied many years in the Escola Naval da Marinha Braliseira (Brazilian Navy School). However, his brother Solano López, who was also the Minister of War and Navy, compelled his father to change the testament and have him be named vice-president.²⁵⁸

Carlos López died in in September 10, 1862. Assuming the executive power, Solano López took a number of precautions: he doubled the guards round the Presidential

²⁵⁶ In 1827 Francia organized a standing army of 5,000 men with a reserve of another 20,000 (Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 15).

²⁵⁷ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 16; Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 33.

²⁵⁸ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 40.

Palace, sent strong patrols through the streets, and took possession of his father's State papers. The Congress, composed of one hundred members, who were for the most part judges and chiefs of police directly nominated by and dependent on the Government, gathered on October 16 to elect the new president. However, the candidacy of Solano López was not unquestioned. The deputy José María Varela passed a motion questioning the legitimacy of passing the power from father to son as well as a proposal to revise the Constitution in order to determine the limits of the executive power.²⁵⁹ Pressured, Varela withdrew his motion, and Solano López was unanimously elected for a 10-year mandate on October 2, 1862. However, this event shows that whereas Francia and Carlos Antonio ruled virtually unopposed, Solano López faced an incipient opposition. As the British Chargé d'Affaires at Buenos Aires who was in Asunción at the time noticed,

“His Excellency was not free from anxiety, and in conversation expressed to me that his position was one surrounded with difficulties tho' he hoped to be able to silence his opponents. I heard from a confidential source that Don Benigno López, his youngest brother, was the leader of a party against the President who has opposed his election to the Presidency.”²⁶⁰

What this less than smooth presidency transition meant was that although the Paraguayan Elite Structure remained integrated, since as head of state Solano López controlled the existing economic, political, and military institutions in place, there were emerging – at that point non-existential – challenges to his dominance. Thus, as expected by my theory, Solano López adopted domestic measures to avert that incipient non-existential threat. In order to secure his position as undisputed ruler of Paraguay Solano López proceeded to silence aspiring challenging elites. Dissident Congressmen were imprisoned. José María Varela, the priest Fidel Maíz, and the president of the Supreme

²⁵⁹ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 182.

²⁶⁰ Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 69.

Court Pedro Lezcano were sentenced to five years of prison. Benigno López was confined to the countryside. Before the end of the year, the Spanish families and foreigners who remained in Paraguay after Francia's purge began to leave Asunción, mostly to Buenos Aires. López seized their property.²⁶¹ In order to ensure ample popular support, López enacted policies such as the extension of the school system and the creation of thirty annual scholarships for study in Europe. López also adopted economic measures designed to maim foreign merchants and native exporters.²⁶² Like the two previous Paraguayan rulers, Solano López had a profound distrust of the Porteños and of the Liberal Paraguayans associated with them.²⁶³

Indeed, it was in response to the Liberal Government of Mitre, and not against Brazil, that Solano López began to militarize Paraguay in 1864. Suspicious of Mitre's support of the Colorado Venancio Flores in Uruguay, López demanded an explanation from the Argentine government on September 6, 1863. Mitre evaded the question and reminded López of the still unsettled boundary questions between the two countries. In February 1864, López ordered a general conscription throughout Paraguay. Between March and August about 64,000 men received military training (before this, the total number of men under arms had been no more than 28,000). At this stage, the Paraguayan preparations for war were directed against Argentina, and not Brazil, which had not yet delivered its final ultimatum to Uruguay.²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ Doratioto, *Maldita Guerra*, 41-42; Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 69-70.

²⁶² Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 70-71, 73. Some of those measures were granting governmental loans to native-born Paraguayans for "enterprises of general utility," exemption from import duties on all machinery and tools designed for the country's agriculture and industry; and government subsidy to promote the cultivation of cotton.

²⁶³ Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 59.

²⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, 82-83.

Paraguay's national security – and hence Solano López's rule – depended on the maintenance of the regional status quo. It was paramount that Brazil and Argentina continued to balance each other's power in order to prevent any of them from dominating the whole region, one piece of territory at a time. It was a shared understanding among the Plata Basin countries that the key to this balance was Uruguay's independence.²⁶⁵ Therefore, after the Uruguayan President Aguirre rejected Saraiva's ultimatum in August 4, 1864, Solano López sent a diplomatic note to the Brazilian Government stating that,

“[The] Government of the Republic of Paraguay would consider any occupation of Uruguayan territory by Imperial forces ... as an attack upon the balance of power of the Platine states, which interests the Republic of Paraguay as the guarantee of its security, peace, and prosperity. That Government protests in the most solemn manner against such an act, disclaiming at once all responsibility for the ultimate consequences of the present declaration.”²⁶⁶

It could be argued that Paraguay's attack of Brazil was a preemptive strike given López suspicions of the Empire's intentions. After all, despite official denials about Brazil's goal to incorporate Uruguay, there were powerful elites in Brazil that favored such course of action. Indeed, one of such individuals had even approached the United States' Minister in Rio de Janeiro to inquire what his government would think of a possible Brazilian conquest and annexation of Uruguay.²⁶⁷ And once Brazil had Uruguay, Paraguay could be the next domino to fall. Moreover, it was also known that Brazil had been stockpiling munitions of war in Mato Grosso.²⁶⁸ Brazil's conquest of Paraguay meant an existential threat to Solano López. In the best-case scenario, the Paraguayan president could be sent into exile or imprisoned, in order to be replaced by a Brazilian appointee. As we have seen above, there would be no lack of indigenous candidates for

²⁶⁵ Pomer, *Paraguai*, 22.

²⁶⁶ Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 157.

²⁶⁷ Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 85.

²⁶⁸ Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 86.

the position of “Paraguay Province” governor, including Solano López’s own brother, Benigno López, who had a quite favorable view of Brazil. The worst-case scenario was of course death. In this context, López’s initiation of war against Brazil is a case of integrated elite structure (centered on the person of López) responding to an existential foreign threat with the initiation of war. According to one account, in the day when he issued the decision of the capture of the Brazilian mail steamer, López remarked, “If we don’t have a war now with Brazil, we shall have one at a less convenient time for ourselves.”²⁶⁹

Nevertheless, it is puzzling that the crossing of the Uruguayan frontier by Brazilian troops in 16 October 1864 did not draw an immediate Paraguayan response. And even more intriguing is the fact that Francisco Solano López’s order for the capture of the Brazilian mail steamer *Marquês de Olinda* was not issued until November 11, *after* the Brazilian ship had passed the fortress of Humaitá (in Paraguay), exchanged the customary salutes, arrived without incident at Asunción, and left the Paraguayan capital in direction to Corumbá (in Mato Grosso) in the morning of 12 November. Solano López knew that the *Marquês de Olinda* was due to enter the Paraguay River in the first weeks of November, since the Brazilian steamer made passage between Montevideo and Corumbá monthly. Why pursue the *Marquês de Olinda* after it had left Asunción, or even Humaitá for that sake? Moreover, if the independence of Uruguay was crucial for the security of Paraguay, why not send any military help to the Blancos in Uruguay?

²⁶⁹ Whigham, *The Paraguayan War*, 160.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter described the integration of the Brazilian structure since Brazil's independence from Portugal in 1822 until the 1850s. We have seen that the Brazilian elites agreed on the political and economic institutions, as well as on the size, constitution, and role of the military. Those elites strived to hold political offices and accrue the benefits of it, but they did not contemplate an overthrow of the existing system. Until 1850, the Brazilian elites were faced with a series of rebellions coming mostly from non-elites, the exception being the Farroupilha Rebellion in Rio Grande do Sul. Because the defiance to the established order came from non-elites, those disturbances constituted low-level threats to the entrenched elites and were dealt with domestic policies, mostly repressive but sometimes concessionary. In this scenario, the already integrated Brazilian elites had no incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies either as a diversion or as a resource appropriation strategy. As explained above, Brazil's participation in the Cisplatine War (1825-1828) does not contradict my theory, since the Empire was the target and not the initiator of the aggression.

Brazil began to develop a more interventionist and aggressive foreign policy in the Plata affairs in 1850, after the rebellions that swept the country in its first decades of independence had been subdued. This showed us that the entrenched and integrated elites opted for domestic policies to address non-existential threats to their bases of power rather than making use of foreign policy as a strategy to address domestic problems. However, once those rebellions had been deal with, the Brazilian elites turned their attention to national security, at the time defined as easy access to and defense of the province of Mato Grosso. The assurance of this condition depended on free navigation in

the Plata Basin, which in turn, required the cooperation of Paraguay and to maintain Uruguay independent and free from Rosas' influence. Therefore, Brazil's interventionist and aggressive regional policies of the 1850s was motivated by its international interests, not by domestic challenges.

I argued in the previous chapter that integrated elites facing non-existential threats have no incentives to use military force abroad either to pursue a foreign policy goal or to divert attention from domestic problems. Instead, those elites prefer to deal with ongoing international disputes through non-violent means. Brazil's foreign policy towards Paraguay shows a mixed record in this regard. On the one hand, the Brazilian strategy to obtain unimpeded navigation in the Paraguayan rivers relied heavily on negotiations. On the other hand, Brazil and Paraguay also had an ongoing territorial dispute, which the Paraguayan leaders linked to Brazil's request of free navigation. While Brazil and Paraguay had continuous – but failed – negotiations on the territorial dispute, Brazil also used the construction of fortifications in the disputed territory as a foreign policy tool – a behavior not expected by my theory. However, it is important to highlight that whenever Paraguay repelled the Brazilian forces in those newly built forts Brazil did not retaliate. This behavior confirms a lack of desire to escalate or further militarize the ongoing dispute.

Table 3.1 Timeline: Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, and Brazilian Domestic and Foreign Policies

1822-1852 Integrated elite structure & non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several revolts demanding greater provincial and local power, but not threat to the political, economic, and military institutions No initiation of aggressive foreign policies for diversionary or opportunistic reasons 	
09/07/1822	Independence
12/12/1823	Revolt in Bahia
03/1824	Revolt in Pernambuco
12/10/1825 – 08/27/1828	Cisplatine War
04/07/1831	Emperor D. Pedro I abdicates. Regency period begins. Uprisings.
09/20/1835 – 03/01/1845	Revolução Farroupilha (Revolt of the Ragamuffins, Rio Grande do Sul)
1837 - 1838	Sabinada Revolt (Bahia)
1838 - 1841	Balaia Revolt (Maranhão)
1842	Revolts in São Paulo and Minas Gerais December: Uruguay under Oribe
1847	Brazil orders building of fort in territory disputed with Paraguay
1848 - 1850	Praieira Revolt (Pernambuco)
1849	Failed Negotiation of Border & Navigation with Paraguay
1850	End of slave trade March 18: Rosas authorized to reincorporate Paraguay into the Argentina October 14: Paraguay expels Brazilians from Fecho dos Morros December 25: Brazil-Paraguay alliance against Rosas
1851	Urquiza fights Oribe and Rosas with Brazilian support
1852-1859 Integrated elite structure & no threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political stability, internal peace, and economic prosperity Brazilian integrated elites approximate unitary actor assumption Pursuit of foreign policy towards Paraguay 	
02/03/1852	Defeat of Rosas
1852	Failed Negotiation of Border & Navigation with Paraguay
1853 - 1859	Conciliation cabinet
1853	Failed Negotiation of Border & Navigation with Paraguay
1855	Brazil orders building of fort in territory disputed with Paraguay Preparations of war, show of force
03/21/1855	Negotiation of Border & Navigation with Paraguay
1859-1864 Fragmented elite structure & non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservative reactionary policies followed by Liberal control of government Uruguayan civil war resumed 	
1859-1860	Conservative reaction
1860	Liberal alliance victory in legislative elections Riograndense (RS) economic interests in Uruguay threatened by Blanco government
1862	Progressive League is formally founded; Liberal cabinet installed
1863	April 18: Uruguayan civil war resumed May 08: Brazilian government officially informed about Flores and RS elites December 22: Brazilian government admonishes RS elites not to intervene in the Uruguayan civil war

1864

January 01: Liberal majority in Chamber of Deputies & Liberal cabinet
Progressive League launches threatening political program

March: RS elites threaten to intervene in Uruguayan war

April: RS elites demand government's intervention in Uruguay on their behalf

May 18: Brazilian government demands Uruguay to compensate RS elites

June: failed negotiations between Blancos and Colorados in Uruguay

August 04: Brazilian ultimatum against Blanco government in Uruguay

October 12: Brazil invades Uruguay

November 11: Paraguay seizes Brazilian ship, initiating the Paraguayan War

CHAPTER 4

ARGENTINA: FROM INDEPENDENCE TO THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

4.1 INTRODUCTION: ARGENTINE “STATEHOOD” AND FOREIGN POLICY BEFORE 1862

Differently from the Brazilian independence experience, the dissolution of the former viceroyalty of Río de la Plata did not immediately yield a centralized Argentine state.²⁷⁰ Rather, the process of formation of the Argentine state was long and violent. Despite previous attempts to create a centralized state, a national government was not consolidated until 1862, and national institutions were still on the making in 1880. Some argue that in this context it would be erroneous to talk about “Argentine” foreign policy prior to 1862 since there was no Argentine state before that time.²⁷¹ Such reasoning would imply that we should not analyze the behavior of those political units in terms of state behavior. However, I believe that we can legitimately talk about an Argentine foreign policy before 1862. Not only the idea of an Argentine state was upheld and sought for by local elites since at least the wars of independence, but also many times the provinces behaved towards foreign nations as a *de facto* single political entity.

²⁷⁰ The viceroyalty of Río de la Plata comprised what are today’s Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

²⁷¹ For this argument see Joseph T. Criscenti, “Argentine Constitutional History, 1810-1852: A Re-examination,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 41:3 (Aug., 1961): 367-412 and José Carlos Chiaramonte, “Legalidad Constitucional o Caudillismo: el Problema del Orden Social en el Surgimiento de los Estados Autónomos del Litoral Argentino en la Primera Mitad del Siglo XIX,” *Desarrollo Económico* 26:102 (1986): 176.

Differently to the processes of state formation in Europe, not only the model of the modern state already existed, but also did the very idea of an Argentine state since the wars of liberation from the Spanish empire.²⁷² As of 1813, the elites of the littoral provinces accepted the right of Buenos Aires to rule in the name of all provinces. The national Argentine state did not disintegrate until 1820.²⁷³ During the General Constituent Assembly of 1813, the provincial elites acknowledged, without a doubt, the existence of the Argentine Nation as a unity, as evidenced in the February 8 resolution, according to which “the representatives from the United Provinces are representatives of the Nation in general...”²⁷⁴ This is very significant because a centralized Argentine state was advocated not only by the *porteños*, who had the most to win from it, but also by local bosses from other provinces. Such were the cases of Comandante Tomás Bernal, from Santa Fe, and José Francisco Bedoya, from Corrientes. In the late 1810s, those leaders called their respective provinces to overlook their minor grievances against Buenos Aires

²⁷² As Charles Tilly and Hendrik Spruyt explain, modern states in Europe did not emerge as a result of deliberate efforts to construct centralized states, as if the actors involved had clear idea of the outcome. However, while European states as we know today emerged “accidentally,” the same cannot be said of post-colonial states, which had a model to follow and a goal to achieve. On the processes of state formation in Europe see Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Backwell, 1992) and Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994). On state making in the Third World see Mohammed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System* (London: Boulder, 1995).

²⁷³ In 1820 the troops of Entre Ríos and Santa Fe, commanded by Francisco Ramirez and Estanislao López, defeated Buenos Aires and almost took that city. See Chiaramonte, “Legalidad Constitucional o Caudillismo,” 177; and David Bushnell and Neill MacAulay, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988): 121.

²⁷⁴ “Los diputados de las Provincias Unidas so diputados de la Nación en general, sin perder por esto la denominación del pueblo a que deben su nombramiento, no pudiendo, en ningún modo, obrar en comisión.” In Ricardo Santiago Katz, *Historia de las Elecciones Presidenciales Argentinas 1826-2003* (La Plata, Argentina: Gráfica Print Graf, 2006): 31.

and join the latter to fight their true enemies: Spain and Portugal. The idea of provincial sovereignty was rejected in Santa Fe as late as 1816 and in Corrientes as late as 1820.²⁷⁵

This is not to say that pressures for provincial autonomy were absent. Several constitutional projects were discussed prior to the sanction of the 1819 Constitution. On the one hand, one of such projects called for a republican form of government in which “the sovereignty of the State lies in the people.” On the other hand, a competing project proposed “each province [to] retain its sovereignty, freedom, or independence, and all power, jurisdiction, and right that is not explicitly delegated by this confederation to the united provinces.”²⁷⁶

The Constitution of the United Provinces of South America, sanctioned on April 22, 1819, had a strong unitary character, with the words *republic* and *people* carefully avoided – although the document made no mention of the form of government per se. The charter provoked strong opposition among the provincial elites, especially from Estanislao López in Santa Fe, Francisco Ramírez in Entre Ríos, Martín Güemes in Salta, and Bernabé Araóz in Tucumán. Together, those caudillos defeated Buenos Aires in the Battle of Cepeda (February 1, 1820) and imposed the Treaty of Pilar (February 23, 1820), which protected provincial autonomy.²⁷⁷ Egregious inter-provincial conflict followed the collapse of the central government in 1820.²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, despite strong disagreements over institutional form, the idea of the Argentine state was ubiquitous, as well as attempts to unify the provinces into a national government with centralized state institutions.

²⁷⁵ Sujay Rao, “Arbiters of Change: Provincial Elites and the Origins of Federalism in Argentina’s Littoral, 1814–1820,” *The Americas* 64:4 (April 2008): 511–512, 524, 544.

²⁷⁶ Santiago Katz, *Historia de las Elecciones Presidenciales Argentinas*, 33.

²⁷⁷ Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Caudillo, 1791–1899, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s, Inc., 2003), 114.

²⁷⁸ See Chiaramonte, “Legalidad Constitucional o Caudillismo,” 177; and Bushnell and MacAulay, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, 121.

In sum, the ideas of provincial autonomy and of a sovereign national Argentine state existed simultaneously. Many times provincial elites engaged neighboring countries as leaders of their provinces, not as representatives of an “Argentine state,” such as the navigation agreement between Paraguay and Governor Joaquín Madariaga of Corrientes, which affirmed the sovereignty of the rebellious province, on December 2, 1844.²⁷⁹ But that does not mean that there were no instances of “Argentine foreign policy” before mid-nineteenth century. In fact, regardless of the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the provinces of over time, there was a constant consensus on yielding the control of the foreign policy of the provinces to the governor of Buenos Aires. In these cases, it is legitimate to talk about an Argentine foreign policy before 1862.

The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to explaining three main moments in Argentina’s foreign policy: first, Argentina’s participation in the Cisplatine War (1825-1828); second, Juan Manuel de Rosas’ foreign policy towards Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Chile (1829-1852); and third, Argentina’s entrance in the War of the Triple Alliance (1865-1870). By tracking the variation in the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity for the Argentine elites over time, this chapter aims to explain the preferences of the Argentine elites regarding both the timing of the initiation of aggressive foreign policies, as well as the intensity of the force used internationally. Those findings are summarized in table 4.4 at the end of this chapter.

²⁷⁹ Pelham Horton Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War* (New York: Russell & Russell, [1930] 1967), 18-21; Gilbert Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay* (London: Charles Knight & Company Limited, 1975), 42-43.

4.2 ARGENTINA IN THE CISPLATINE WAR (1825-1828)

Juan Antonio Lavalleja's expedition to liberate the Banda Oriental from Brazil is often portrayed as the trigger of the Cisplatine War between the United Provinces and the Brazilian Empire. Lavalleja and his *Inmortales* initiated the liberation war on April 19, 1825. A few days later, in the Congress of Florida, the Uruguayan revolutionary declared the annexation of the Banda Oriental with Brazil to be null and void.²⁸⁰ On June 21, expressing before Congress of Buenos Aires the desire of the Cabildo of Montevideo to see the Banda Oriental reunited with the United Provinces, Lavalleja requested assistance in the liberation war.²⁸¹

Although Lavalleja's expedition was an important catalyst of Cisplatine War, it neither caused the war between the United Provinces and Brazil, nor was the war inevitable. Several leaders – Argentine and Cisplatine alike – had been calling for war since the formal annexation of the Banda Oriental to the Brazilian Empire in July 8, 1821.²⁸² A more opportune occasion for the Argentine recovery of the Cisplatine would have been after the independence of Brazil (September 7, 1822), exploiting the feud between restorationists, republicans, and the supporters of Dom Pedro II.²⁸³ However, the Argentine provinces did not declare the *de facto* reincorporation of the Banda Oriental, committing to back that statement militarily in a war against Brazil, until

²⁸⁰ Carl von Leenhof, *Contribuições para a História da Guerra entre Brasil e Buenos Aires: Uma Testemunha Ocular* (Belo Horizonte, Brasil: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1975): 147; L. A. Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro e a formação dos Estados na Bacia do Prata: Argentina, Uruguay e Paraguai – da colonização à Guerra da Tríplice Aliança* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Revan, 1985), 47.

²⁸¹ Leenhof, *Contribuições para a História da Guerra entre Brasil e Buenos Aires*, 156.

²⁸² Ernesto Palacio, *História de la Argentina: 1515-1976* (Buenos Aires: Abeledo-Perrot, 1979), 256; Vicente D. Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina: de la Anarquia y la Época de Rivadavia a la Revolución de 1828 (1819-1829)* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Científica Argentina, 1967), 260. Those leaders included Estanislao López, the Montevideo Cabildo, and even the Portuguese general Costa.

²⁸³ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 245.

October 1825 and did not initiate the use of force until after the Brazilian blockade of the Buenos Aires in December 25.

It could be argued that the end of the Spanish American wars of independence in the Battle of Ayacucho (December 9, 1824) removed an important constraint for the United Provinces' initiation of the war against Brazil: the possibility of a two-front war. However, as this section demonstrates, the decision to initiate the war against Brazil was not a function of the consideration of systemic and dyadic variables alone. Decreases in the degree of elite fragmentation and, subsequently, in the degree of threat those elites posed to one another created incentives for the initiation of an opportunistic foreign policy aimed at furthering elite cohesion and centralizing the Argentine state. In other words, the Cisplatine War resulted neither from a Brazilian threat to the security of the Argentine provinces nor from a national sentiment towards the Orientales. Rather, the Cisplatine War was a strategy conceived by the Unitarian elites to implement their domestic agenda of power concentration through the creation of a national state apparatus. The initiation of the war was carefully timed by the Unitarians to enhance their centralizing domestic policies. In fact, Unitarian politicians consistently maneuvered to keep provincial elites from initiating a military conflict against Brazil until they were able to obstruct the federalist-oriented constituent Congress of Córdoba and replace it for the Unitarian-inclined constituent Congress of Buenos Aires.

**OBSERVATION 1: ELITE FRAGMENTATION AND EXISTENTIAL THREAT: THE
“POSTPONING” OF THE CISPLATINE WAR**

The *casus belli* of the Cisplatine War – i.e. the Brazilian occupation of the Banda Oriental – occurred amidst intense civil war among the Argentine provinces. The overwhelming rejection by the provinces of the highly centralist 1819 Constitution led to the collapse of the central government based on Buenos Aires, which was followed by widespread violence among provincial caudillos in 1820. The governor of Tucumán don Bernabé Aráoz fought governor Juan Felipe Ibarra of Santiago del Estero and general Martín Güemes of Salta; the *Supremo Entrerriano* Francisco Ramírez fought Martín Rodríguez of Buenos Aires and Estanislao López of Santa Fe; the Chilean general José Miguel Carrera joined Ramírez and invaded Córdoba; among other smaller conflicts.²⁸⁴ When Portugal formalized the annexation of the Banda Oriental in the Cisplatine Congress of July 8, 1821, some of those wars were still under way. The inter-provincial wars of 1820 were a reflection of a very fragmented elite structure in which the provincial elites had mutually exclusive preferences about the setup of national institutions and the scheme of resource distribution those institutions embodied.

On the one hand, the subsistence of the import-export trade during the worst moments of the war of liberation sustained the port Buenos Aires, allowing the *porteño* elites to carry the financial burden of the war. Those elites, who formed the Unitarian Party, demanded a unitary national state under the dominance of Buenos Aires, along with the control over customs revenue based on the monopoly of the port of Buenos Aires as the exclusive transshipment point for all foreign trade in the region. Buenos Aires opposed any national subsidy policy to redistribute revenue to the provinces. The success of this scheme depended on the restriction of navigation in the Plata riparian

²⁸⁴ Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina*, 205-234.

system, especially in the Plata, Paraná, and Uruguay rivers. This, in turn, could only be assured in a unitary state under the rule of Buenos Aires.

On the other hand, the liberation war devastated the industries, properties, and land in the north and littoral provinces. Those provincial elites thus blamed Buenos Aires for losing their properties, suffering economic stagnation, and paying a tribute of blood. They saw the centralism of Buenos Aires as an abusive continuation of viceregal tyranny.²⁸⁵ The provinces resented the centralization of foreign trade in the port of Buenos Aires and the restrictions to navigation in the Paraná and Uruguay rivers imposed after independence. Those policies curtailed the development of the interior and littoral provinces since Buenos Aires' monopoly over foreign trade and customs revenue curtailed agricultural and livestock expansion in those provinces.²⁸⁶ Constituting the Federal Party, those elites proposed provincial autonomy, ideally in the form of a confederation.²⁸⁷

Prima facie, this conflict would seem to indicate a fragmented elite structure pitting two competing groups: a coalition of provinces versus Buenos Aires. But this would be a crude oversimplification of the Argentine elite dynamics in 1820.²⁸⁸ The preference of the *Federalists* for decentralization was a function of their power – or lack of it thereof – vis-à-vis their competitors. That is, provincial autonomy was an induced preference aimed at securing their local bases of power given their inability to control the

²⁸⁵ Palacio, *Historia de la Argentina*, 222.

²⁸⁶ Aldo Ferrer, *A Economia Argentina: de suas Origens ao Início do Século XXI* (São Paulo: Elsevier Editora Ltda, 2006): 53.

²⁸⁷ Linda Chen, "Argentina in the Twenty-first Century," in Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline (eds.), *Latin American Politics and Development* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2007): 105; Ricardo Levene (ed.), *Historia de la Nación Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial el Ateneo, 2nd ed., 1950), 56.

²⁸⁸ Leandro Losada, *Historia de las Elites en la Argentina: Desde la Conquista hasta el Surgimiento del Peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 2009): 63-64.

central government, rather than a basic preference (i.e. the control of the central government).²⁸⁹ For instance, the federalist caudillo don Francisco Ramírez, of Entre Ríos, had conceived a vast project of national unification under his influence, to be achieved by rallying other elites against a historical enemy. Initially, Ramírez thought of a war against Paraguay and later considered an attack to the territory of Misiones under Portuguese occupation. However, being unable to mobilize sufficient domestic support and resources to initiate such enterprises, and fearing that his extended presence overseas would leave his domestic bases of power vulnerable, Ramírez abandoned those plans. Instead, Ramírez opted to forcibly overthrow the government of Buenos Aires by forging a coalition with Estanilao López, from Santa Fe – but the *santafesino* declined the invitation.²⁹⁰

Oftentimes, tensions among the provinces overshadowed the dispute with Buenos Aires.²⁹¹ A more accurate description of the Argentine elite relations in 1820 identifies three simultaneous axes of conflict: (1) the aforementioned conflict over the monopoly of the port of Buenos Aires; (2) the “littoral” conflict, pitting the coastal provinces against one another, including Buenos Aires; and (3) the “mediterranean” conflict among the hinterland provinces, as shown in Table 4.1 (below).²⁹²

Another characteristic of the post-independence Argentine elite structure was the great overlap of political, military, and economic power on the person of the caudillo, as shown in Table 4.2 (below). That is, the same individuals who possessed the means of

²⁸⁹ Vicente F. López, *Historia de la República Argentina: su origen, su revolución y su desarrollo político hasta 1852* (Buenos Aires: Librería La Facultad, Tomo IX, 1911), 169.

²⁹⁰ Palacio, *Historia de la Argentina*, 238-239.

²⁹¹ Sujay Rao, “Arbiters of Change,” 524.

²⁹² Rubén Zorrilla, *Estructura Social y Caudillismo (1810-1870)* (Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1994).

warfare were also the owners of the means of production and the creators and executors of legislation.²⁹³ This feature aggravated the degree of threat that elites posed to each other, since it facilitated decision-making, concentrated on the person of the caudillo, who also had the economic and military means to execute his will. Add to that the fact that throat cutting of the defeated *caudillo* and his militia was a customary practice.²⁹⁴ That is, the threat elites posed to one another was existential both in the sense of the loss of the elite status, but also because defeat and death were frequently synonyms.

Table 4.1 Elite Conflict in Post-Independence Argentina

Conflict	Provinces	Rival Caudillos
1. "Port" conflict	Provinces vs. Buenos Aires	
2. "Littoral" conflict	Banda Oriental vs. Entre Ríos Entre Ríos vs. Santa Fe (sometimes allied with Córdoba) Entre Ríos vs. Corrientes and Buenos Aires Corrientes vs. Buenos Aires Santa Fe vs. Buenos Aires	Artigas vs. Ramírez Ramírez vs. López Echagüe vs. López Echagüe vs. Cullen Echagüe vs. Ferré Echagüe vs. Berón de Astrada López vs. Dorrego Urquiza vs. Rivera Urquiza vs. Madariaga Urquiza vs. Rosas
3. "Mediterranean" conflict	La Rioja vs. Santa Fe and Tucumán Tucumán vs. Salta and Santiago del Estero (with the intervention of Catamarca, Mendoza, San Juan, and Córdoba)	Güemes vs. Aráoz Quiroga vs. López Latorre vs. Heredia Heredia vs. Ibarra, Brizuela and Cubas
Data from Rubén Zorrilla, <i>Estructura Social y Caudillismo</i> , 56-58.		

²⁹³ The origins of the military power of the landowning elite date back to the colonial time. Since 1760, a border defense system began to be put in place based on regular troops and complemented by militias belonging to landowners. With the independence revolution, the regular forces left the countryside to fight the revolutionaries, leaving the protection of rural property to the militias. With the demise of the regular army in 1820, militarily defeated by littoral caudillos and internally fractured by political opposition within its own corps, the militias became the main source of military power not only in the countryside but also in the province as a whole. See Tulio Halperín Donghi, "La expansión Ganadera en la Campaña de Buenos Aires (1810-1852)," *Desarrollo Económico*, 3:1/2, América Latina 1 (1963): 90-91.

²⁹⁴ Rubén Zorrilla, *Estructura Social y Caudillismo*, 56; Bushnell and MacAulay, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, 129.

Table 4.2 Elites' Sources of Power²⁹⁵

Caudillo	Province	Military	Politics	Land	Commerce	Religion ²⁹⁶
Artigas	Banda Oriental	✓		✓		
Rivera	Banda Oriental	✓	✓	✓		
Rosas	Buenos Aires	✓	✓	✓		
Varela	Catamarca	✓				
Bustos	Córdoba	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ferré	Corrientes	✓	✓		✓	
Ramírez	Entre Ríos	✓	✓	✓		
Urquiza	Entre Ríos	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Peñaloza	La Rioja	✓	✓			
Quiroga	La Rioja	✓	✓	✓		
Aldao	Mendoza	✓	✓	✓		✓
Güemes	Salta	✓	✓			
Benavidez	San Juan	✓	✓	✓		
López	Santa Fe	✓	✓			
Ibarra	Santiago del Estero	✓	✓	✓		
Taboada	Santiago del Estero			✓		
Aráoz	Tucumán		✓	✓	✓	
Heredia	Tucumán	✓	✓			

Data from Rubén Zorrilla, *Estructura Social y Caudillismo*, 85-86, 89

If ratified, the 1819 Constitution would lock a distribution of power that exceedingly favored the elites of Buenos Aires over the provincial elites. Therefore, the possible establishment of the 1819 Constitution aggravated the existing level of elite

²⁹⁵ Based on the information provided in Rubén Zorrilla, *Estructura Social y Caudillismo*, 85-86, 89, I established the criterion for *military power* as being ranked lieutenant (*teniente*) or above. Most of the caudillos in Table 4.2 were military chiefs and/or commanded troops in the fight for independence. The criterion for political power is to have held a political office at least once. Most of the caudillos named above were governors, a few were mayors, and one (Rivera) became president. The criterion for *economic power* is the ownership of haciendas or to come from landowning family.

²⁹⁶ Differently from Mexico, the Church was not a source of power in the nineteenth century Argentine provinces. Buenos Aires and the littoral together possessed only one bishop and roughly 30 parishes. Individual priests had neither the wealth nor the popular following of their Mexican counterparts. Sujay Rao, "Arbiters of Change," 518.

threat. Hence the document elicited a visceral reaction from the provinces, manifested in the civil wars of 1820. The imminence and severity of the threat required the elites' attention and resources to be focused on the domestic politics since the cost of losing the elite conflict was losing the resources that constituted a given caudillo or group as members of the elite, forced exile, or death. Under those circumstances the initiation of aggressive foreign policies ranked low on the menu of policy alternatives to address elite threat.

When Portugal formally annexed the Cisplatine in July 1821, the intensity of the civil wars had decreased and the provincial elites were organizing the constituent Congress of Córdoba, to be held in September 1821. However, the *porteño* elites, whose main spokesman was Bernardino Rivadavia, then minister of government of Buenos Aires, vigorously opposed the Congress of Córdoba due to its federalist orientation.²⁹⁷ Rivadavia also disapproved of a war against Brazil at that time. Rivadavia saw the initiation of a foreign war was a great strategy to minimize party cleavage and unite the country. However, in that specific moment a war would mean uniting the country around the *Federalistas*. This was the Buenos Aires elites' predicament: Despite being the richest, most populous, and most powerful of the provinces, Buenos Aires had neither military strength nor political capital to impose its will regarding the establishment of political institutions to regulate the distribution of power among the provinces. Militarily, the province of Buenos Aires was stronger than any other province but was not equal to

²⁹⁷ Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 76.

their combined weight.²⁹⁸ Politically, the Federalists dominated almost all interior provinces and their capitals, and would have a clear advantage on any election.²⁹⁹

Given those conditions, Rivadavia devised a two-fold strategy to prevent the growth of Federalist power within the Confederation. Domestically, Rivadavia instructed the representatives from Buenos Aires to sabotage the Congress of Córdoba and to press for the continuation of a system of inter-provincial pacts. Had the Congress of Córdoba been successful, the new federalist-led “national state” could have submitted Buenos Aires – and its resources – to a war against the Portuguese.³⁰⁰ Rivadavia planned to call another constituent and legislative Congress in a more opportune time. He wanted to unite the country, but only behind Buenos Aires leadership. Boycotting the Congress of Córdoba, Rivadavia sent Diego Estanislao Zavaleta in 1823 to the center and north provinces to prepare an alternative National Congress.³⁰¹

Internationally, Rivadavia sent Valentín Gómez to Brazil to diplomatically request the devolution of the Banda Oriental and the territory of Misiones to the littoral provinces. In diplomatic notes dated January 17 and February 5, 1824, Gómez notified the Brazilian Foreign Affairs minister to have received a letter from Rivadavia, dated September 8, 1823, informing that the provinces of Entre Ríos, Santa Fe, and Montevideo had formed a treaty to go to war against Brazil. According to Rivadavia’s letter, the conflict could be avoided if the Brazilian government returned the Banda Oriental.³⁰² As expected, the Brazilian Emperor communicated to Valentín Gómez in February 1824 that

²⁹⁸ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. I*, 114.

²⁹⁹ Leenhof, *Contribuições para a História da Guerra entre Brasil e Buenos Aires*, 157.

³⁰⁰ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 245; Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 57, 62.

³⁰¹ Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 70.

³⁰² Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina*, 321.

Brazil would by no means give up the Cisplatine Province.³⁰³ Unsuccessful at a first glance, Rivadavia's diplomatic maneuvers stalled the impetus for war in the Confederation and bought him time to develop his domestic politics.

During 1824, Buenos Aires took the lead in the organization of the new National Congress, with preparations beginning in February.³⁰⁴ In September the provinces decided that the Congress would be held on Buenos Aires, and the solemn opening occurred on December 16. In this way, under the leadership of Rivadavia the province of Buenos Aires returned to center of national politics.

OBSERVATION 2: ELITE COHESION AND THE CISPLATINE WAR AS A STRATEGY FOR DOMESTIC POWER CONCENTRATION

After the installation of the Congress of Buenos Aires, the next step was to conceive the Fundamental Law (*Ley Fundamental*) to govern the relationship among the provinces. The project of law submitted to the Congress gave the nation a new name, *Provincias Unidas del Rio de la Plata en Sud América*.³⁰⁵ Regarding foreign relations, the project stipulated that the provinces would enter into a firm league for common defense and for the security of their liberty and independence. Moreover, no province would be allowed to enter any war without the consent of the United Provinces' Congress.³⁰⁶ Throughout 1825, the debates in the Congress of Buenos Aires concerned

³⁰³ Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 70.

³⁰⁴ In February 12, the Governor of Buenos Aires proposed a project of law according to which the number of representatives in the Congress for each province should be proportional to population. The law was sanctioned in February 27. The election of representatives was scheduled for March 18, but it was not approved until October 9.

³⁰⁵ United Provinces of the Plata River in South America, from now on referred to as United Provinces.

³⁰⁶ This clause was specifically designed to proscribe actions such as those of Entre Ríos and Sante Fe's threat of war against Brazil in 1823.

three main themes: the war against Brazil, the degree of power to be centralized in the “national” state (versus the degree of autonomy of the provinces), and the administration of the “national” resources.

The defeat of Spain in the Battle of Ayacucho (Peru) in December 9, 1824 removed an important barrier to the war against Brazil: the fighting of a two-front war. Following Ayacucho’s victory, the federalist caudillo from Buenos Aires colonel Manuel Dorrego called the Argentine people, in the newspaper “El Argentino,” to liberate the Cisplatine Province. But the organs responsible for the execution of the provinces’ foreign policy – i.e., the Governor of Buenos Aires and in his minister of government and foreign affairs – did not accede to the appeal to arms.³⁰⁷ The possibility of a military conflict with Brazil over the Cisplatine Province called for a legitimate national Executive Power, with national attributions. However, there was no agreement in the Congress regarding what “national unity” meant, where the “national” resources came from, and how those resources would be managed.

Meanwhile, in early 1825, Juan Antonio Lavalleja and the rebels in the Banda Oriental planned its secession from Brazil, with the connivance of Buenos Aires’ local authorities. First, it was in the political and strategic interest of the Unitarians within the Buenos Aires political elite to fraction the Brazilian Empire, which was a source of foreign threat to a possible unified Argentine state. Moreover, as owner of most of the land in the province of Buenos Aires and having the monopoly of the charque industry in that province, it interested Juan Manuel de Rosas to hurt the saladeiro industry of Rio

³⁰⁷ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 256; Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 76. In 1824, those offices were represented by General Gregorio de Las Heras and Manuel José García, respectively.

Grande do Sul by cutting off the supply of cattle from the Banda Oriental.³⁰⁸ Rosas and his cousins were pivotal in raising money for Lavalleja's mission.

But the Buenos Aires merchants in general preferred peace fearing that a war against Brazil would disturb their activities. To demonstrate their neutrality, they prohibited Lavalleja's army to be supplied in Argentine ports. Likewise, the *Federalists*, both in Buenos Aires and in the provinces, opposed the incorporation of the Banda Oriental into the United Provinces and argued that a war with Brazil was unnecessary to guarantee the independence of the rebellious province. According to the Buenos Aires minister of government and foreign affairs José García, the Banda Oriental had never really been part of Argentina, since many Orientales willingly seceded from the Confederation during the war of independence. García also reasoned that in the case of war, if the United Provinces were defeated, nothing would change for the Orientales; but if the Provinces won, the Banda Oriental would continue to be a province. The Orientales would then be equally willing to fight Buenos Aires over their independence, just as they were doing with Brazil. While Córdoba and the other littoral provinces depended on the port of Buenos Aires, Montevideo had the best natural port of the Plata. Therefore, it was more convenient and prudent for the United Provinces to provide only covert help Lavalleja.³⁰⁹

The war for the liberation of the Cisplatine Province started in April 1825. On early June the Argentine Congress approved military help for the *orientales* and on June 21 Lavalleja requested the reincorporation of the Banda Oriental into the United

³⁰⁸ Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 165 fn 25. The Riograndense saladeiros competed with their *porteño* counterparts for the markets of Brazil, Cuba, and the United States.

³⁰⁹ Leenhof, *Contribuições para a História da Guerra entre Brasil e Buenos Aires*, 159; Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 94, 116; Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 47-48; Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina*, 436; López, *Historia de la República Argentina*, 227-229.

Provinces. On July 8, 1825, the Unitarian representative Julián Segundo de Agüero demanded from government of Buenos Aires an explanation regarding the situation with Brazil. Agüero noticed that it had been 56 days since the Congress voted for reinforcements to be sent to Uruguay and nothing had been done to accomplish that task thus far. On July 11, the Governor of Buenos Aires General Gregorio de Las Heras sent a note to Congress asking to be relieved from the responsibility of exercising the national Executive Power, but Congress denied his request in July 16.³¹⁰ Despite Las Heras' refusal to initiate a war against Brazil, the provinces represented in the Congress of Florida decided on August 25, 1825 that the Banda Oriental should be reunited with the United Provinces.³¹¹ Indisposed against the national executive power, the Congress called an urgent session on October 25, 1825, and declared the *de facto* reincorporation of the Oriental Province into Republic of the United Provinces of the Plata River. Once the law was given, the Executive Power was left with the task to execute it.³¹² The diplomatic note that informed the Brazilian Empire of this decision, sent in November 4th, read:

“According to the unanimous vote of the provinces of the State and by request of the Eastern Province through the organ of its representatives, in the law of August 25th of the current year (1825), the Congress, in the name of the peoples it represents, recognizes [the Eastern Province] as reincorporated to the Republic of the United Provinces of the Plata River, to which [the Eastern Province] by right has belonged to and wants to belong. By this solemn declaration the general government commits itself to the defense and security of the Eastern Province, and will sustain this obligation through all means available, until the evacuation of the last military posts that are still being guarded with the troops of the Emperor,” that is, Montevideo and Colonia.³¹³

Brazil declared war against the Provinces on December 10, 1825, and the Argentine Congress officially declared war against the Empire on January 1st, 1826. Soon

³¹⁰ Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina*, 461.

³¹¹ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 258.

³¹² López, *Historia de la República Argentina*, 257.

³¹³ Leenhof, *Contribuições para a História da Guerra entre Brasil e Buenos Aires*, 160.

after that, Rivadavia and the Unitarians began to exercise greater pressure for political centralization. On January 27, Congress created the National Bank and on the following day deputy Bedoya presented the Congress once again the question of a permanent national executive power.

The law of November 19, 1825, had doubled the number of representatives in the Congress to 87, but most of the new representatives had not arrived at Buenos Aires yet. Foreseeing that his party would become a minority once the new representatives arrived, Rivadavia hastened the realization of the presidential election. On February 7, with only about one third of the representatives present in the Congress, Bernardino Rivadavia was named the first constitutional president of the United Provinces, receiving 34 votes against 3.³¹⁴ The national president was elected without the full participation of the provinces. Despite the blatant illegality of this congressional act, Rivadavia expected that a war with Brazil would bring a political truce: after all, national union and internal peace were necessary for a successful war effort.³¹⁵

After the approval of the Law of the Presidency and the election of Rivadavia,³¹⁶ the next item on the Unitarians' power centralization agenda was the creation of a national treasure and the nationalization of the province of Buenos Aires. The latter, however, contradicted the Fundamental Law that guaranteed the autonomy and integrity of the provinces and was hence opposed by governor Las Heras, the Federalists, and even some within the Unitarian Party. Despite the opposition, the nationalization of Buenos Aires was sanctioned on March 03, 1826, with 25 against 14 votes. Four days later,

³¹⁴ Mariano A. Pelliza, *Historia Argentina desde su Origen hasta la Organización Nacional* (Buenos Aires: J. Lajouane y Cia. Editores, tomo segundo, 1910): 7-8; Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina*, 491-492.

³¹⁵ Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina*, 471; Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 263

³¹⁶ The Law of the Presidency passed on February 6, 1826, established how the president would be elected and sworn. The length of the presidential tenure was to be decided together with the Fundamental Law.

Rivadavia declared the end of the executive and legislative functions of the province of Buenos Aires.³¹⁷

Although the centralization efforts ultimately failed, the behavior of the Unitarian elites is consistent with the expectations of my theory. Once elite infighting and with it the degree of existential threat declined, the Unitarian elites opted for a combination of domestic and international policies aimed at reconfiguring the institutions that regulated the relationship among the provinces to their advantage. Those tactics can be clearly seen in the boycott of the Congress of Córdoba by the Unitarians, the organization of the Congress of Buenos Aires, and the very careful timing of the Argentine foreign policy towards Brazil, to follow and complement the domestic developments. Notice that Francisco Ramírez, the *Federalist* caudillo from Entre Ríos, had contemplated the same strategy – i.e., the use of aggressive foreign policy as a means of amassing domestic resources – just a few years earlier.

4.3 ELITE CONFLICT REGIONAL SPILLOVER AND ARGENTINE FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE RULE OF ROSAS (1829-1852)

Rivadavia miscalculated the effect of the war effort upon the willingness of the provinces to submit to Buenos Aires. Amid intense opposition to the Unitarian Constitution of December 24, 1826,³¹⁸ and great protest against his misconduct of the

³¹⁷ Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 133-134; López, *Historia de la República Argentina*, 613, 615; Palacio, *Historia de la Argentina*, 263.

³¹⁸ Although the Constitution technically recognized the autonomy of the provinces and provincial rights of self-administration and established a republican form of government, it also stipulated that governors or “privileged employees” would exercise the provincial executive power. That is, the absolute autonomy of the peoples of the provinces to intervene in the election of their own governors disappeared, since the governors were now employees of the National Executive and named by the Senate. See Santiago Katz,

war,³¹⁹ Rivadavia resigned the presidency on June 28, 1827. The struggle between Unitarians and *Federalists* intensified. The National Congress was dissolved, the National Executive Power was extinct, and the United Provinces, as a political unit, disappeared juridically. The autonomy of the provinces was restored and their international status redefined as a Confederation. The Buenos Aires federalist caudillo Manuel Dorrego, who had rallied the provinces against Rivadavia, assumed the government of the provinces of Buenos Aires, continued the war against Brazil and negotiated the peace.³²⁰

Juan Manuel de Rosas is often portrayed as the Restorer of the Confederation: the leader who unified the provinces after the civil wars that followed the end of the Cisplatine War.³²¹ However, such imagery tends to conceal the nature of the Argentine elite structure during Rosas' rule. From rise to demise, Rosas' rule as governor of Buenos Aires and leader of the Argentine Confederation (1829-1832 and 1835-1852) was marked by continuous civil and international violence. During his government, Rosas faced

Historia de las Elecciones Presidenciales Argentinas, 35-37; Levene, *Historia de la Nación Argentina*, 145.

³¹⁹ The Argentine plenipotentiary, Manuel José García, signed with Brazil a Preliminary Peace Convention in May 24, 1827, against the written orders of Rivadavia, but according to the verbal instruction of the Argentine leader. This document gave Brazil the Banda Oriental, agreed to disarm the Martín García Island, and allowed free navigation in the rivers Plata, Paraná, and Uruguay (Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 168 (fn 68), 54). These terms outraged the public opinion in Buenos Aires, and Rivadavia denounced the Convention and resigned the presidency.

³²⁰ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 102, Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 54- 55. The Preliminary Convention that established the independence of Uruguay was signed in August 27, 1828.

³²¹ Rivadavia's misconduct of the Cisplatine War led not only to his resignation, but also to the failure of his project to unify the Argentine provinces in a unitary state under a strong executive power established in the city of Buenos Aires. Manuel Dorrego, a federalist caudillo also from the province of Buenos Aires, assumed the provincial government and with it the conduction of the foreign relations of the provinces. After the end of the Cisplatine War (August 27, 1828), the troops of the *Unitarian* Juan Lavalle surrounded Buenos Aires and executed Dorrego. Lavalle expected to resume Rivadavia unification project. An agreement between Lavalle and Rosas in June 24, 1829, pacified the province of Buenos Aires, but as the *Unitarian* general failed to hasten the return of interprovincial peace and prosperity, he also lost the support of the bonaerense landowners. Instead, those conservative forces decided to endorse the federalist Juan Manuel de Rosas, hacendado and saladerista, electing him as governor of Buenos Aires in December 8, 1829. See Criscenti, "Argentine Constitutional History," 400-401; Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 54-55; Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 93-98.

intermittent internal conflict against factions within the Federalist Party and against Unitarians. Moreover, Argentina was constantly involved in military conflicts against foreign powers. Indeed, between 1829 and 1852 there were fifteen years of military conflict against eight years of relative peace.³²² How to explain this state of affairs? On the one hand, the incidence of civil war was a manifestation of the high degree of fragmentation and perceived threat. Highly threatened elites in a fragmented elite structure are unlikely to initiate the militarization of international disputes. Given the very high stakes of the domestic conflict, the elites' resources and attention are focused in the elimination of the immediate internal sources of threat. In this case, diverting resources to fight a foreign power is risky and inefficient. On the other hand, if the elites' resources and attention were allocated towards securing their bases of power against the threat posed by competing elites, how to explain Argentina's constant involvement in military conflicts abroad? If the elite structure was really fragmented, how was it possible to sustain military campaigns abroad for so long? Prima facie, the simultaneous occurrence of domestic and international military conflict over a long period of time seems to contradict my elite theory of aggressive foreign policy.

However, as I explain in this section, such contradiction is only apparent. As I demonstrate below, although the Argentine elite structure was very fragmented in the political sphere, it was not so in the economic and military spheres. Therefore, while the fragmentation among the political elites was the root of the continuous civil wars, the concentration of economic and military power in the person of Manuel de Rosas allowed the governor of Buenos Aires to conduct the Argentine foreign policy as if the elites were

³²² Eduardo Míguez, "Guerra y Orden social en los orígenes de la Nación Argentina, 1810-1880," *Anuario IEHS* 18 (2003): 18.

integrated. Moreover, we must also distinguish the cases in which Argentina is the initiator of the use of military force in a dispute from the cases in which a military conflict was imposed upon it.

OBSERVATION 3: POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY INTEGRATION, AND ROSAS' FOREIGN WARS

Despite Rosas unending efforts to purge factionalism by physically eliminating dissenting elites – through imprisonment, exile, and death – the caudillo's efforts did not create even cohesion, much less integration, among the political elites in 1830- and 1840-Argentina. In the political sphere, the Argentine elite structure was very fragmented. It featured competition and rivalry not only between Federalists and Unitarians, who had incompatible preferences about the design of national institution, but also among Federalist elites themselves.

Who were the Argentine elites in the 1830s and 1840s? The post-independence Argentine elite structure was characterized by the overlap of political, military, and economic power on the person of the caudillo (see Table 4.2 above). A significant disruption of the overlap between political, economic, and military power would only take place after the mid-1860s, when national institutions and bureaucracy began to be established. However, incipient changes in the distribution of economic and military power among the Argentine elites began in the aftermath of the Cisplatine War. With Rivadavia's failure to create a unitary state under a strong executive power established in the city of Buenos Aires, the provinces remained politically autonomous. Thus, the office of provincial governor remained as an important source of political power. Since only a

few families controlled their own private militias and possessed vast tracts of land within each province, the difference in their relative positions of power derived from holding a public office, the most important being that of provincial governor. Therefore, the provincial governor had a privileged position of power compared to other wealthy families within his province, given his capacity to control the provincial budget and military forces and to appoint public officials within the province. Since the governor embodied the provincial sword, purse, and scale, most of the elite infighting revolved around the struggle over that office.

The struggle over provincial power also had implications at the national level. The Argentine elites had not yet agreed on the fundamental political institutions to regulate access to and distribution of power among the provinces. Governors were directly involved in choosing the representatives of the Constituent Congress. The ongoing dispute over the substance and design of national political institutions meant that each provincial governor sought not only to maintain his office, but also to make sure that likeminded individuals – that is, individuals with compatible preferences regarding the schemes of resource distribution – held the government of the remaining provinces, since the latter was a guarantee of the former. That is, a Unitarian governor amidst a majority of Federalist governors was not expected to last long, being threatened of removal by either institutional means – in case a federalist constitution was approved – or by force.

With Rivadavia's failure to promote elite consensus in the 1826 Constitution, the quintessential Argentine conflict between Federalists and Unitarians regained momentum both within and among the provinces. The inter-provincial armed conflict over the design of the national institutions resumed in the battle of the Federal Pact versus the Unitary

League (also known as Interior Pact).³²³ The Unitary League was defeated on March 1831, its major leaders went into exile, and the provinces enjoyed the absence of violent conflict until 1834.³²⁴

The elite agreement that emerged out of the victory of the Federal Pact entailed the internal autonomy of each province, with governors for life naming the legislative chambers in their provinces. Each province was to have its own income and customs revenue, being financially independent.³²⁵ The provinces authorized the governor of Buenos Aires to conduct their foreign relations while recognizing the “liberty, independence, . . . and rights” of each other. The “Representative Commission of the Governments of the Littoral Provinces of the Argentine Republic” could arrange treaties and declare war, but all of its actions required the approval of the participating provincial governments.³²⁶ In sum, those federalist caudillos were establishing themselves as dictators for life, based on their joint military power.

Although the threat from the Unitarian elites had been – at least temporarily – averted, it did not eliminate the menace that Federalist caudillos posed to one another, and provincial governors attempted to increase their personal power in their regions. Such was the case of the war between the federalist governors of Tucumán and Salta, Alejandro Heredia and Pablo Latorre, respectively, between August and December

³²³ Criscenti, “Argentine Constitutional History,” 401. The Unitary League of August 31, 1830, was led by the Unitarian General Jose Maria Paz, governor of Córdoba, and joined by the interior provinces. The Federal Pact of January 4, 1831, was an offensive and defensive counter-alliance between the bonaerense governor Rosas and the governors of Entre Rios and Santa Fe.

³²⁴ Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 93-98, 126-127.

³²⁵ Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 104, 153.

³²⁶ Criscenti, “Argentine Constitutional History,” 402.

1834.³²⁷ The war ended with the assassinations of Latorre and of the governor of La Rioja Facundo Quiroga.³²⁸ This crisis catalyzed the growth of Rosas' power vis-à-vis other provincial governors. Rosas attributed the assassinations of Latorre and Quiroga to the Unitarians,³²⁹ whose strengthening and regrouping in the neighboring countries gave Rosas a justification to obtain increased political powers. Indeed, Argentine Unitarian émigrés, especially in Bolivia and Uruguay, were offering their host countries fractions of Argentine territories in Jujuy, Salta, and Cuyo in exchange for their support in overthrowing the incumbent federalist governors. About his views of the Unitarians and his goals for the Confederation, Rosas wrote to Ibarra in March 1835,

“My friend, do not be deceived, the Unitarians are the most perverse men under the Sun. They have sworn to exterminate us and they will not give up in their efforts to do so while they believe they can harm us. The governments of this province [Buenos Aires] and of Santa Fe have not recognized the intruder from Salta nor the emancipation of Jujuy. The remaining provinces in the Confederation will probably do the same because, according to the treaty upon the Confederation is founded, a consensus of the federated provinces must precede the acknowledgment of the aforementioned emancipation and, above all, because in a federal Republic, nothing, nothing can be accepted to be

³²⁷ Carlos Escudé and Andrés Cisneros, “La situación interna de las provincias del noroeste entre 1834 y 1836,” *Historia General de las Relaciones Exteriores de la República Argentina*, <http://www.argentina-rree.com/3/3-050.htm>. Each governor accused the other of facilitating Unitarian attacks to his province with the goal of increasing personal power in the region. On the one hand, Latorre accused Heredia of giving refuge to coronel Pablo Alemán, who had attempted to overthrow Latorre in August 1833. On the other hand, Heredia accused Latorre of cooperating with the Unitarian general Javier López's invasion of Tucumán from Bolivia in June of 1834, by allowing López to pass unimpeded through Salta. To aggravate matters, José María Fascio declared the independence of Jujuy, until then part of the province of Salta, as an autonomous province, which was promptly recognized by Heredia.

³²⁸ Quiroga had been sent by the interim governor of Buenos Aires, Don Manuel Vicente Maza (October 4, 1834 – March 7, 1835) to negotiate the autonomy of Jujuy.

³²⁹ In a letter sent to Ibarra, governor of Santiago, commenting the outcome of the civil war between Salta and Tucumán, Rosas reprimanded Ibarra's treaty with the new governor of Salta, the Unitarian coronel José Antonino Fernández Cornejo y de la Corte, saying:

“My fellowmen Mr. López has sent me a copy of the treaty celebrated on the 6th of last month by you [Mr. Ibarra] as governor of this province [Santiago], Mr. Heredia [as governor of the province] of Tucumán, with the representative of the intruder government of Salta, and I cannot conceive how or why you [two] have given such an unpremeditated step, opening the most awful breach to the national cause of the federation, legalizing the atrocious conduct of the murderers of Mr. La Torre and tacitly sanctioning the principle that the Unitarians can end the most illustrious Federalists with impunity, and upon their bodies rise up as arbiters and lords of all the Republic.” (reproduced in Spanish by Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 181).

heterogeneous in its composition, and everything, everything must be evidently homogeneous, since the doubts that can emerge regarding [the absence of homogeneity] are sufficient to convulse the Republic.”³³⁰

Until then, Rosas’ authority had been only local. His license to conduct the foreign relations of the Confederation did not authorize him to intervene in the domestic politics of the provinces.³³¹ This changed in March 7, 1835, when the Buenos Aires legislature named Rosas governor and general captain of the province for five years with extraordinary powers.³³² The provincial governors accepted Rosas’ prerogative regarding the execution of national justice through the intervention in dissident states. Among his strongest supporters were Estanislao López and Pascual Echagüe in the littoral, Ibarra and Heredia in the north, Aldao in Cuyo and Manuel López in Córdoba.³³³

But Rosas’ federalist alliance was not unproblematic. Despite the success of the Customs Law of 1835 in protecting the domestic industry,³³⁴ the provinces disapproved the exclusivity of the port of Buenos Aires as the only customs house in the Confederation. Like the Unitarian governments before him,³³⁵ Rosas not only refused to nationalize the revenue from the port of Buenos Aires, but also closed the Plata River and

³³⁰ Rosas letter to Ibarra, reproduced in Spanish by Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 181.

³³¹ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 330.

³³² Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 160-161; Palacio 335, 338.

³³³ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 336.

³³⁴ The law protected the domestic industry by prohibiting the importation of several foreign goods and was thus welcomed by the Confederation.

³³⁵ Indeed, Enrique M. Barba (86, 90, 94) argues that contrary to Dorrego, who was a true adept of federalist principles as they were advocated in the United States, Rosas had never been a federalist before the Cisplatine War, and his relationship with the Federalist Party was merely instrumental, devoid of ideological conviction. In fact, during the 1820s Rosas had supported the Partido del Orden (Order Party), of centralist and liberal vocation. Federalist caudillos such as Pedro Ferré and Justo José de Urquiza of Entre Ríos accused Rosas of acting too much like a Unitarian by asserting Buenos Aires’ control over the country’s trade. See Enrique M. Barba, “Como llego al poder don Juan Manuel de Rosas,” *Revista de Historia de América* 32 (Dec. 1951): 117; and Lowell S. Gustafson, “Factionalism, Centralism, and Federalism in Argentina,” *Publius* 20:3 The State of American Federalism, 1989-1990 (Summer 1990): 165; and Jorge Gelman and Sol Lanteri, “El sistema militar de Rosas y la Confederación Argentina (1829-1852),” in *La Construcción de la Nación Argentina: El Rol de las Fuerzas Armadas. Debates históricos en el Marco del Bicentenario (1810-2010)*, ed. Oscar Moreno (Buenos Aires: Publicación del Ministerio de Defensa de la Nación, 2010), 59.

its tributaries to foreign navigation.³³⁶ Those policies hurt the commercial interests of Entre Rios, Corrientes, and Santa Fe, which began to seek independence from Buenos Aires and the internationalization of the rivers.³³⁷

In the 1830s and 1840s, the Argentine elite structure was characterized by fragmentation among the political elites and by high degrees of threat in the form of forced ousts from public offices involving imprisonment, forced exile, or death. In this context, we would expect to see no initiation of uses of military force abroad, since elite fragmentation and threat requires that elites' resources and attention be turned inwards. And yet, Rosas seemed to be constantly dragging the Argentine Confederation into military conflicts abroad. In order to understand these appearingly contradictory facts we must consider two aspects: the relationship between Rosas and the other provincial governors, and the nature of the international conflicts in which Argentina got involved.

Historically, the governor of Buenos Aires not only controlled the budget and political appointments within his province, but he also had the prerogative to conduct the foreign relations of the Confederation. This did not change in the 1830s and 1840s. However, in those decades the governor of Buenos Aires became much more independent in the conduct of the provinces' foreign relations than before. This fundamental change resulted from the monopoly of the port of Buenos Aires and the closing of the Plata River and its tributaries to foreign navigation, giving Rosas unmatched economic power among the provincial governors. Moreover, Rosas also

³³⁶ Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 58; Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 335.

³³⁷ Criscenti, "Argentine Constitutional History," 407.

owned most of the land in the province of Buenos Aires and had a virtual monopoly of charque production and exportation in that province.³³⁸

Rosas' economic power buttressed his military power. In 1841, the military forces of the province of Buenos Aires comprised 10,777 troops, without counting the Indians. The army represented 85.8 percent of all paid public employees and if we include the police forces that figure rises to 96 percent.³³⁹ Financed by Buenos Aires' customs revenue, Rosas was able to build a confederated army overwhelmingly stronger than any provincial force.³⁴⁰ Buenos Aires' help to Córdoba in 1840, to suffocate a Unitarian rebellion in the province, illustrates the discrepancy in military power between Rosas and other governors. While the governor of Córdoba was able to contribute with 1,500 troops, Rosas was able to send 24,000 men.³⁴¹ It was the revenue from the port of Buenos Aires that allowed Rosas to maintain long and expensive military campaigns abroad.³⁴²

We have established that the governor of Buenos Aires had the political, economic, and military capacity to initiate uses of military force abroad independently from the other provinces. Given the pervasiveness of unrest within and among the provinces, why would Rosas want to entangle himself in foreign conflicts? In other words, what were his incentives to do so? As I demonstrate below, Rosas' military campaigns in neighboring countries were actually extensions of the Argentine elite conflict being fought in foreign territories. Rosas' foreign policy faced four major

³³⁸ Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 165.

³³⁹ Raúl Fradkin, "Sociedad y militarización revolucionaria. Buenos Aires y el Litoral rioplatense en la primera mitad del siglo XIX," in *La Construcción de la Nación Argentina: El Rol de las Fuerzas Armadas. Debates históricos en el Marco del Bicentenario (1810-2010)*, ed. Oscar Moreno (Buenos Aires: Publicación del Ministerio de Defensa de la Nación, 2010): 52.

³⁴⁰ Raúl Fradkin, "Sociedad y militarización revolucionaria," 53.

³⁴¹ Gelman and Lanteri, "El sistema militar de Rosas," 62.

³⁴² Gelman and Lanteri, "El sistema militar de Rosas," 58; and Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Guerra y finanzas en los orígenes del Estado Argentino (1791-1850)* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2005 (1982)).

challenges: (1) the impact of the Uruguayan domestic politics upon the balance of power among the Argentine elites; (2) the Unitarian émigrés in Bolivia and their threat to Federalists in Argentina; (3) Paraguay's "second independence" and declaration of war to the person of Rosas; and (4) a territorial dispute with Chile. The first two challenges were direct extensions of the Argentine elite conflict. The last two challenges were initiated not by Rosas but by Chile and Paraguay, with the latter also interfering in the Argentine elite conflict. Rosas addressed the first two challenges with military force, but responded the threat from Chile diplomatically. Finally, despite the Paraguayan declaration of war and aggression (by joining rebel forces in Corrientes), Rosas's army fought the Correntino rebels but did not engage the Paraguayan forces or retaliate militarily against that country.

The key variable to explain those different patterns in Rosas' foreign policy is the relationship between the sources of threat (i.e. Uruguay, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Chile) and the Argentine elite conflict. On the one hand, the Chilean attack affected the Argentine elite conflict only indirectly, by detracting resources from the domestic elite conflict in case Rosas opted for responding militarily to the Chilean attack. On the other hand, domestic politics within Uruguay, Bolivia, and Paraguay affected the Argentine elite conflict directly because exiled Unitarians and their sympathizers provided military support to the Unitarian forces within Argentina, thereby upsetting the balance of power among the Argentine elites.

ROSAS' FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS URUGUAY – Rosas' policy towards Uruguay was framed in the context of the interconnectedness among the Uruguayan domestic politics and: (a) its relationship with the Argentine elite conflict; (b) the French and

British commercial interests in the region; and (c) Brazil's perception of the regional balance of power. During the 1830s and 1840s, the two most powerful elite members in Uruguay were Manuel Oribe and Fructuoso Rivera, leaders of the Blanco (White) and Colorado (Red) parties, respectively. Overall, Blancos and Colorados drew upon the same elements of society to fill the ranks of their armies.³⁴³ Both Rivera and Oribe were born into wealthy families – Oribe in Montevideo and Rivera in its vicinities. Rivera had battled the Portuguese forces in the Banda Oriental in 1816-1820 and Oribe had fought the Brazilian forces in 1823 and 1825. The two caudillos had even participated in the same administration: Oribe as president and Rivera as the commander of the army (1835-1836). And yet, despite their similar economic and military bases of power, their struggle for political power – more specifically, the presidency of Uruguay – pitted the two Uruguayan caudillos in a civil war that would last fifteen years and which ramifications would extend until the turn of the century.³⁴⁴

Both Brazil and Argentina had an interest in the outcome of the Guerra Grande, as the Uruguayan civil war became known. The ties between Oribe and Rosas,³⁴⁵ on the one

³⁴³ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 281-282. Among the Blancos led by Manuel Oribe were large ranchers, merchants, and high clergy. The Colorados, led by Fructuoso Rivera, comprised the Uruguayan gauchos, the intellectuals, the "have-nots," the Argentine émigrés, and the dispossessed European liberals.

³⁴⁴ Rivera was the first constitutional president of Uruguay, elected by the Uruguayan General Assembly in October 24, 1830. Succeeded by Oribe in May 1st, 1835, Rivera retained the command of the army. However, after investigating the public finances during Rivera's term, Oribe passed a series of laws affecting Rivera's interests in the countryside and relived him of his command over the army. Rivera rebelled against the incumbent president in July 16, 1836, initiating the Uruguayan civil war, also known as Guerra Grande, which would last until 1851.

³⁴⁵ After leading a failed revolt against Brazil in the Cisplatine Province in 1823, Oribe fled to Buenos Aires and, with the connivance of the local authorities, colluded with Manuel Lavalleja to plot the war of independence of Uruguay, which was financed by Rosas and his cousins. See Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 165 fn 25; J. E. Pivel Devoto, "Uruguay Independiente," in *Historia de América y de Los Pueblos Americanos*, Tomo XXI, ed. Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta (Barcelona: Salvat Editores, S.A., 1949), 456; Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 499 fn 14.

side, and between Rivera and Dom Pedro II,³⁴⁶ on the other side, dated back to the early 1820s. On the one hand, Rosas supported Oribe and the Blanco Party not only as a means to project influence in the region by establishing a puppet government in Uruguay, but also – and most importantly – as a means to eliminate the Unitarian threat coming from within the Uruguayan borders. The Argentine émigrés were amongst Rivera’s most fervent supporters. On the other hand, Dom Pedro II supported Rivera because he was the only anti-Rosas viable option at the time despite having joined Lavalleja in the fight for the secession of the Cisplatine Province in 1825.³⁴⁷

Mediated by Great Britain, the Treaty of Montevideo (August 27, 1828) ended the Cisplatine War between the Brazilian Empire and the Argentine Confederation and created the Republic of Uruguay as an independent buffer state between the two South American powers. The treaty bounded Brazil and Argentina not to intervene in the domestic affairs of the Orientales, reflecting the British interest in a balance of power between the Empire and the Confederation. England also desired to maintain the port of Montevideo open and the navigation in the Plata Basin unhindered, facilitating free trade. Hence, from Rosas’ perspective, any open military intervention in Uruguay had to consider more than just the balance of power between Blancos and Colorados and the relationship of those groups with the Argentine Unitarian exiles. Rosas had also to factor a possible Brazilian reprisal and British intervention. Under those constraints, Rosas’

³⁴⁶ As for Rivera, defeated in the war against the Portuguese in the Cisplatine Province in 1820, he joined the invaders and accepted a commission in the Portuguese army. In 1822, Rivera sided with the Brazilians against the Portuguese. See Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 499 fn 1.

³⁴⁷ Rivera would also cause the Emperor much trouble a decade later by supporting the secessionist Farroupilha rebellion in Rio Grande do Sul.

policy towards Uruguay consisted of offering veiled support to Lavalleja, who lived in Buenos Aires, to invade Uruguay in early August 1836 to help Oribe against Rivera.³⁴⁸

Rosas covert help to the Blancos was interrupted by the French blockade of Buenos Aires, that lasted from March 28, 1838 until October 29, 1840. The blockade severely curtailed customs revenue, which plummeted to slightly more than two percent of the previous year income.³⁴⁹ During that time, Jujuy, Salta, Catamarca, and Tucumán rebelled against Rosas.³⁵⁰ To aggravate the situation, Berón de Astrada, governor of Corrientes, joined Rivera in his opposition to Rosas on December 31, 1838. Isolated by the French blockade and surrounded in the Montevideo by Rivera, Oribe renounced the presidency in October 24, 1838 and fled to Buenos Aires. Rivera was reelected president and, leading a new Congress, declared war on Rosas (but not on Argentina) on February 24, 1839.³⁵¹ When the blockade was lifted Rosas resumed his interference in the Uruguayan civil war and defeated Rivera.³⁵²

³⁴⁸ Lavalleja and Rivera had once fought together in the liberation of the Banda Oriental in 1825. However, enmity resumed between the two caudillos after the independence of Uruguay. Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 174-178.

³⁴⁹ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. I*, 117-118; Gelman and Lanteri, "El sistema militar de Rosas," 63. While Buenos Aires exported about 360,000 cowhides in 1838, this figure fell to 8,500 in 1839, picking up to 84,000 in 1840.

³⁵⁰ Gelman and Lanteri, "El sistema militar de Rosas," 62; Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 351. Domestically, the deaths of federalist governors Estanislao López (Santa Fe, June 15, 1838) and Alejandro Heredia (Tucumán, November 12, 1838) represented great losses for the Rosas' Federalist cause. In Santa Fe, the anti-Rosas Domingo Cullen replaced López. In the north, Heredia had managed to subject Jujuy, Salta and Catamarca during his six years of governorship. On Rosas' side were Oribe, Ibarra, and Aldao, whose coalition defeated the rebellious provinces in 1841.

³⁵¹ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. I*, 118, 282-283; Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 196-197, 217. Although Rosas defeated Astrada in March 31, 1839, in October Pedro Ferré assumed the governorship of Corrientes and once again Corrientes was allied with Rivera and Lavalle against Rosas.

³⁵² On land, Rosas supplied half of Oribe's troops, which defeated Rivera in the Battle of Arroyo Grande on December 6, 1842. On water, Rosas initiated a naval campaign against Rivera's squadron, no longer protected by the French, in early 1841 and initiated the blockade of Montevideo on January 3, 1843. The Colorados still controlled Montevideo, but Rivera was unable to re-enter the besieged capital. See Amado Luiz Cervo and Clodoaldo Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil* (Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 2ª ed. 2002): 60-61; Moniz Bandeira, *O Expansionismo Brasileiro*, 60; Instituto Nacional

ROSAS' FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS BOLIVIA – In 1837, Rosas sent a formal complaint to General Andrés de Santa Cruz, the executive leader of the newly formed Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation, about Unitarian attacks to Argentine provinces initiating from Bolivian territory.³⁵³ Arguing that the Argentine Republic had no national authority, Santa Cruz refused to reply Rosas who, in response, declared war on Bolivia in May 19. If Rosas and the federal caudillos faced similar existential threats from émigrés hosted by both Bolivia and Uruguay, why to declare war against the first, but not against the latter? In other words, given the same leader, same elite structure, and similar threat from Unitarian émigrés, why two different responses (veiled support versus open war)?

Decision-makers do not choose policy options based solely on either domestic or international factors. While domestic elites use foreign policy as an instrument to serve their self-interest, they keep in mind that foreign policy does not happen in an “international vacuum.” Rosas’ foreign policy demonstrates the weight of international factors in foreign policy decision-making. First, both Brazil and Argentina were constrained by Great Britain not to intervene in the domestic affairs of Uruguay. If Rosas initiated an open incursion in Uruguayan politics, he could attract not only Brazil into the conflict, but also Great Britain. However, no such condition applied to the relationship between the Argentine Confederation and Bolivia. Second, Chile was already in war against Bolivia (since December 28, 1836).³⁵⁴ Therefore, Rosas was not initiating a war, but rather joining in an ongoing foreign war in which Chile had a much greater stake than

Browniano, “Brown, Comandante en Jefe de las Fuerzas Navales de la Confederación,” at http://www.inb.gov.ar/brown_guillermo/el_libro/fuerzas_confederacion.htm.

³⁵³ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 117, 134; Gelman and Lanteri, “El sistema militar de Rosas,” 62. Santa Cruz had also supplied armaments to the Unitarian Interior League in 1831.

³⁵⁴ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 339; Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 134.

Argentina.³⁵⁵ Moreover, Rosas supported the war against Bolivia, but it were the Northern provinces (Tucumán, Santiago del Estero, Salta, Jujuy, Catamarca, also some some tarijeños) who paid for it.³⁵⁶ Under these conditions, Rosas and the Federalist governors from the Northern provinces planned to take advantage of the supposedly weakened Bolivian state, occupied with the war against Chile, to pursue the Unitarians in Bolivia as well as to expel Unitarian affiliates from Salta and Jujuy.³⁵⁷

ROSAS' FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS PARAGUAY – Rosas foreign policy towards Uruguay and Bolivia can be contrasted with Rosas foreign policy towards Paraguay in 1845 and towards Chile in the 1840s. Anticipating Rosas and Oribe's victory against Rivera in Arroyo Grande (December 6, 1842) and concerned about Rosas' expansionism in the Plata region, the Paraguayan Congress reiterated the independence of Paraguay in a solemn declaration on November 25, 1842. The Paraguayan Consuls communicated that act to Rosas in the following month, asking the Argentine executive leader to recognize it. But Rosas' response on April 26, 1843 was very ambiguous, tantamount to a denial,³⁵⁸ exacerbating Paraguayan apprehensions about Rosas' intentions. On March 14, 1844, Rosas restated his refusal to recognize Paraguay's independence. The Paraguayan President Carlos Antonio López responded by signing a treaty of navigation and commerce with the rebellious province of Corrientes on December 2, 1844. Rosas

³⁵⁵ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 136.

³⁵⁶ Gelman and Lanteri, "El sistema militar de Rosas," 63.

³⁵⁷ Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 182.

³⁵⁸ Rosas replied that "because of the circumstances through which the Confederation was passing [i.e., the alliance of Rosas and Oribe an the beginning of the siege of Montevideo, followed by protests from England and France] he was not able to accord this recognition; but at the same time he asserted that never would the arms of the Argentine Confederation disturb the peace and tranquility of the Paraguayan people." Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 437.

retaliated by embargoing Paraguay and Corrientes on January 8, 1845, and Oribe did the same on the 17th.

Convinced that Rosas was a threat,³⁵⁹ Carlos Antonio concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Corrientes against the Argentine Confederation on November 11, 1845. The alliance presupposed the sovereignty of Corrientes, since it stipulated that Corrientes surrendered to Paraguay the territories of Eastern Corrientes in the Misiones region, the Tranquera de Loreto, and the Puntas del Río Aguapey.³⁶⁰ López then declared war on Rosas (but not on Argentina) on December 4, 1845. In early 1846, a Paraguayan force of 5,000 crossed the Paraná River and entered Corrientes. The President's son – later to be president himself – Francisco Solano López commanded the force.

When Carlos Antonio established relations with Corrientes, the Argentine-Paraguayan dispute became entangled in the Argentine elite conflict since Paraguayan economic and military support strengthened the correntino governor Joaquín Madariaga was vis-à-vis Rosas. Rosas sent General Justo José de Urquiza to suffocate the rebellion in Corrientes,³⁶¹ but refrained from crossing the Paraná River in pursuit of the retreating Paraguayan forces.³⁶² This indicates Rosas' primary concern with the elite conflict in Argentina.

ROSAS' FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS CHILE – Rosas displayed a similar behavior towards Chile. On September 21, 1843, the government of Chile declared taking

³⁵⁹ According to Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 19-21, Brazil played an especial role in this convincing.

³⁶⁰ Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 20-21.

³⁶¹ Urquiza finally defeated the Correntino rebels in the battle of Vences on November 27, 1847.

³⁶² Box, *The Origins of the Paraguayan War*, 18-22, Phelps, *Tragedy of Paraguay*, 42-43; Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. I*, 121. After a short period of “cooperation” with the correntinos (the allied forces were ruffled with misunderstanding and strife), Francisco Solano López re-crossed the Paraná “without firing a shot.”

possession of the Magellan's Strait and its territory, founding a colony there. This action compromised the Argentine territorial integrity since the Argentine-Chilean borders in that region had not been fully defined. Official information about the Chilean colony in the Strait only reached the Confederation government in 1847, after which Rosas requested that Chile present the documents upon which its claim was based (December 15, 1847).³⁶³

At the time of this request, the British had raised their blockade of Buenos Aires (July 1847),³⁶⁴ Urquiza had defeated Madariaga's forces (Battle of Vences, November 27, 1847), and Corrientes newly elected provisional governor Miguel Virasoro reintegrated the province into the Confederation.³⁶⁵ The Chilean occupation of the Magellans' Strait and the lingering dispute it engendered created an opportunity for Rosas to rally the Argentine elites around his leadership with the goal of furthering elite integration against a foreign enemy. But that did not happen. Similarly to the case of Paraguay, Rosas had a pretext to initiate a retaliatory aggressive foreign policy, but he did not have the incentive to do so.

UNDERSTANDING ROSAS' FOREIGN POLICY – The concentration of economic and military power in the person of Manuel de Rosas allowed the governor of Buenos Aires to conduct the Argentine foreign policy as if the elites were integrated. However, the Argentine elites were politically fragmented, and that remained a constant source of concern during the 1830s and 1840s. Therefore, Rosas' primary concern was with the

³⁶³ Pelliza, *Historia Argentina*, 351-360.

³⁶⁴ Scheina, *Latin America's Wars Vol. 1*, 118, 120-122. The French would lift their blockade of Buenos Aires early in 1848, although they maintained the blockade the ports in Uruguay controlled by Oribe. On November 24, 1849, and August 31, 1850, respectively, Great Britain and France signed peace treaties with Rosas.

³⁶⁵ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 411.

elite conflict in Argentina, where he allocated his money, army, and attention. Every time Rosas initiated the use of military force abroad (i.e. Uruguay and Bolivia), those uses of force were directed towards dealing with sources of threat related to Argentine elite conflict: that is, the aggression was not directed towards a foreign enemy, but rather towards a domestic enemy acting in foreign territory. This explains why Rosas was constantly involved in the Uruguayan domestic conflict and why he supported the war of the northern provinces against the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation. After all, Uruguay and Bolivia were the most important safe havens for exiled Unitarian military elites who had not abandoned their goal of establishing a centralized Argentine state. The urgency of the Argentine elite conflict also explains why Rosas refrained from attacking Paraguay and Chile. In the context of existing high degree of threat and elite structure fragmentation, Rosas' resources and attention were better allocated inwardly – or towards domestic threats, though located in foreign territories – rather than outwardly towards foreign potential threats.

One might question the intensity of the degree of threat to Rosas, since economic and military power were concentrated in the governorship of Buenos Aires. However, let us recall that any long-term institutional arrangement regarding the relative degree of autonomy of the provinces (whether in the form of a confederation of autonomous provinces, as desired by the Federalists, or as a centralized national state as proposed by the Unitarians) required that likeminded individuals – that is, individuals with compatible preferences regarding the schemes of resource distribution – held the provincial governorships. In this sense, Rosas' economic and military power alone were not sufficient to establish a Federalist Republic. It was also necessary that other elites would

join his state project. Therefore, although Rosas' overwhelming economic and military power allowed him to conduct foreign policy as if the elite structure were integrated, the goals of his foreign policy were primarily oriented towards eliminating the threats that fueled the political fragmentation of the Argentine elite structure and compromised his state project objectives.

THE FALL OF ROSAS – Rosas' last battle was fought in Caseros (Argentina) on February 3, 1852.³⁶⁶ The fall of the bonaerense caudillo was occasioned by an alliance between the Brazilian empire, the Colorado "Defense Government" in Montevideo, and his former ally, General Justo José de Urquiza. Formed on May 29, 1851, the alliance's primary goal was the "independence and pacification" of Uruguay, by which was meant the overthrow of the Rosas' supported Blanco government of Manuel Oribe. The alliance also established that if the government of Buenos Aires opposed such purpose, the alliance would immediately turn into an alliance against Rosas. Urquiza began the military operations against Oribe in July 8. Supported by all provinces but Urquiza's Entre Ríos, Rosas declared war against Brazil, which was financing Urquiza's military campaign, in August 18.³⁶⁷ Although Rosas was the first side to declare war, it is clear that given the declared anti-Rosas purpose of the alliance a war was imposed on him. Even if Rosas conceded the overthrow of Oribe – which was very unlikely given Rosas' recent military victories and the strategic value of controlling Uruguay – it could not be assumed that the allies would not turn against Rosas after installing a Colorado government in Montevideo.

³⁶⁶ After his defeat, the bonaerense caudillo spent the rest of his day exiled in the United Kingdom.

³⁶⁷ Palacio, *História de la Argentina*, 435-436, 441.

MAP 2 THE “ARGENTINE CONFEDERATION,” ADAPTED BY STEVEN BROWN FROM A MAP PUBLISHED CA. 1850 BY JOHN TALLIS AND CO.

[MAP 2 HERE]

Source: Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, xii.

4.4 ARGENTINA BEFORE THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Argentine Elite Structure based on the overlap between military, economic and political power contained in the formula *caudillo/hacendado/provincial governor* would be gone. Two main factors contributed to this transformation. First, there was a marked decrease in the number of caudillos (see table 4.3 below) after the fall of Rosas. Although Justo José de Urquiza remained a powerful caudillo, whose base of power rested on military, economic, and political resources, the same could not be said of Vicente Peñaloza, Antonio Taboada, and Felipe Varela (see table 4.2 above). Second, the continuous modifications in the military, economic, and political structures entailed in the processes of state centralization caused both the emergence of new elites as well as new patterns of elite relations. Very importantly, a new elite group whose power did not come from the ownership of the means of production or from the control of the coercive apparatus would be born: i.e., a political elite whose power lied on the control of the state bureaucracy and the ability to mobilize voters. However, none of those factors occurred smoothly.

In the course the events leading to the war of Brazil and Uruguay against Paraguay in 1964, Argentina's President Bartolomé Mitre established a policy of strict neutrality. Above all, Mitre was concerned that entangling Argentina in an international war would disrupt internal stability and derail the consolidation of the Argentine national institutions. The politics of the Plata Basin was a highly divisive subject within Argentina: while the Liberals in Buenos Aires tended to support Brazil, the interior provinces hated Dom Pedro II and Flores, and Entre Ríos and Corrientes were great

sympathizers of Paraguay.³⁶⁸ Meddling the country in such a contentious issue could only split the nation.

As this section demonstrates, Mitre would have preferred not to enter any foreign war. This preference is consistent with the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity at the time: despite the defeat of the Federalists in the Battle of Pavón (September 1861) and Mitre's ensuing efforts to centralize the country by the creation of national institutions, the Federalist elites had not been overcome and there was still great opposition to the Unitarians across the Republic. The Federalist resistance to the newly unified Argentine state was not channeled institutionally and its goals were not limited to the confines of the political system. Instead, as soon as the Federalists defeated at Pavón were able to regroup their forces, they began to organize revolts, maintain a state of civil war, undermine the authority of the national government and, if possible, overthrow it.³⁶⁹ In sum, before the Paraguayan War, the Argentine elite structure was fragmented and the threat intensity was existential.

As the events leading to the war of Brazil and Uruguay against Paraguay unfolded, Mitre sent multiple and clear signals about his commitment to a neutral regional policy. However, despite Mitre's preferences not to participate in the regional war and his consistent signaling of his preference, Paraguay's unjustified attack to the province of Corrientes forced the Argentine President to join Brazil and Uruguay. As explained in chapter 2, Elite Structure and Threat Intensity explain elite preferences, but not interactive international outcomes.

³⁶⁸ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 190; Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 202.

³⁶⁹ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 32-33; Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 143.

Table 4.3 Generations of Argentine *Caudillos*

1 st generation: 1813-1825	2 nd generation: 1835-1852	3 rd generation: 1852-1870
Juan M. de Rosas (†1877)	Juan M. de Rosas (†1877)	Justo J. de Urquiza (†1870)
Fructuoso Rivera (†1854)	Fructuoso Rivera (†1854)	Vicente Peñaloza (†1863)
Juan Felipe Ibarra (†1851)	Juan Felipe Ibarra (†1851)	
José G. de Artigas (†1850)	José G. de Artigas (†1850)	
Estanislao López (†1838)	Justo J. de Urquiza (†1870)	Antonio Taboada (†1871)
Facundo Quiroga (†1835)	Vicente Peñaloza (†1863)	Felipe Varela (†1870)
Juan B. Bustos (†1830)	Pedro Ferré (†1867)	
Bernabé Aráoz (†1824)	Nazario Benavidez (†1858)	
Martín Güemes (†1821)	Félix Aldao (†1845)	
Francisco Ramírez (†1821)	Alejandro Heredia (†1838)	

Adapted from Rubén Zorrilla, *Estructura Social y Caudillismo*, 45.

STATE CENTRALIZATION PROCESSES – In May 31, 1852, all the provincial governors that just joined Rosas in the war against Brazil and Urquiza submitted their forces to the entreriano caudillo and installed him as Provisional Director of the Argentine Confederation.³⁷⁰ The only exception was Buenos Aires, whose new Unitarian administration refused to join the Argentine Confederation, remaining an autonomous and independent political entity for the next 8 years.³⁷¹ But despite Buenos Aires' exclusion from the Confederation, the centralizing measures adopted by the provinces laid the foundations for national unification.

The confederated provinces agreed to eliminate interior customs and promote free navigation in the Paraná River to foster domestic and international trade. This policy paved the way for national unification not only by integrating the provinces physically and institutionally, but also by stripping the provincial governments from their main

³⁷⁰ Santiago Katz, *Historia de las Elecciones Presidenciales Argentinas*, 53.

³⁷¹ David Bushnell and Neill MacAulay, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, 221-222, 225.

source of revenue thus causing them to depend on the national government for income. Alternative sources of income – such as direct taxes or sale of fiscal land – were not as remunerative as customs, even in provinces with fairly sophisticated institutional structures such as Córdoba and Corrientes. As subsidies from the National State became indispensable for the provinces, their autonomy was also reduced.³⁷²

When Buenos Aires' regional trade policies became an existential threat to Urquiza and the Confederation,³⁷³ its secession was ended by force in the Battle of Cepeda (October 23, 1859). The military defeat of Buenos Aires had two important consequences. Nationally, Buenos Aires agreed to pay a subsidy to the Confederation while examining the Constitution in order to propose amendments. Provincially, the defeat forced the extreme supporters of secession, the so-called *localistas*, out of office. The new provincial legislature elected Bartolomé Mitre, a supporter of national union, as governor in March 1860.³⁷⁴

The centralization of the Argentine state involved a series of bargains and pacts among the elites regarding the distribution of power between national and provincial governments. The most important of those pacts were negotiated by Bartolomé Mitre with Justo José Urquiza and with Adolfo Alsina. With the former, Mitre set the

³⁷² Leandro Losada, *Historia de las Elites en la Argentina*, 103-104.

³⁷³ David Bushnell and Neill MacAulay, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, 225-226; David Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina, 1860-1916* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002): 7. Despite the reopening of the Paraná River, the greater part of the trade continued to flow through Buenos Aires, which had the best facilities for the handling and distribution of goods as well as the richest internal market. The Buenos Aires government also launched a campaign of virtual economic warfare to discourage foreign ships from going up to the Paraná River. Ultimately, Buenos Aires' control over foreign trade left the Confederation in dire financial straits, which in turn bred growing opposition to Urquiza's rule.

³⁷⁴ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 7.

boundaries of Urquiza's influence, to remain within the confine of Entre Ríos.³⁷⁵ With the latter, Mitre and Alsina settled the limits and responsibilities of the municipal, provincial, and national governments residing in the city of Buenos Aires.³⁷⁶ Having preempted the greatest potential threats to the national state, Mitre assumed the presidency of Argentina in October 12, after running unopposed.³⁷⁷

Mitre's project of state centralization involved the establishment of national institutions such as the armed forces, national administration, federal justice, and an education system.³⁷⁸ However, those institutions were not automatically aligned with or supportive of the national political elite that established them. Such was the case of the Armed Forces, whose foundations were in the provinces.³⁷⁹ Therefore, national elites could not always effectively coerce the provincial elites.

³⁷⁵ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 30; José S. Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época* (Tapiales, Argentina: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1980), 134-135; William H. Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina* (New York: Library Publishers, 1952), 168-169.

In late 1861, after Mitre defeated Urquiza in the Battle of Pavón, the two leaders struck a deal according to which Mitre would allow Urquiza to remain governor of Entre Ríos so long as he kept out of national politics.

³⁷⁶ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 12, 25, 26. The most contentious issue between Mitre's nationalists and Alsina's autonomists was the federalization of the city of Buenos Aires. Alsina's autonomists, or *localistas*, feared losing control over trade revenues with the federalization of the provincial capital. They insisted that the revenue from the port should be spent in the development of their own province. Alsina's party had a strong base of landowners, many of whom had formerly supported the regime of Rosas. Mitre's nationalists, on the other hand, counter-argued that Buenos Aires had more to gain by investing in the creation of new markets in the other provinces. Mitre and Alsina reached a compromise that established both the national and the provincial governments in the city of Buenos Aires for the next five years. The national government would administer the municipal government, the port, customs, barracks, and the cathedral. All other institutions would remain under provincial jurisdiction, including the Bank of the Province of Buenos Aires and the justices of peace. As a major concession, the national government agreed to subsidize the provincial government with two million paper pesos per month. In 1863, almost seventy percent of the provincial income came from the national government.

³⁷⁷ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 21.

³⁷⁸ Júlio José Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Paraguai* (13th Edition. São Paulo, São Paulo: Editora Ática, 2010): 36.

³⁷⁹ During the Confederation, most of the military force was composed by the National Guards, which were under the provincial governments. See Leandro Losada, *Historia de las Elites en la Argentina*, 104.

OBSERVATION 4: ELITE FRAGMENTATION, EXISTENTIAL THREAT, AND MITRE'S RELUCTANCE TO ENTER THE WAR

Mitre's centralization project also involved the replacement of Federalist governors with Unitarian ones. His main strategy consisted of offering national subsidies in order to incite the local Unitarians to seize power by force.³⁸⁰ Since the fall of Rosas in 1852, the Unitarians had been increasing their support in the provinces. By the 1860s much of the northwest was overtly Unitarian: from Santiago del Estero (under the Taboada family) extending to Córdoba, Tucumán, Salta, Jujuy, and Catamarca. However, the eastern provinces of Entre Ríos, Santa Fe, and Corrientes, remained Federalist, and Federalist resistance was strong in the Western provinces of Mendoza, San Luis, and La Rioja. Despite the installation of liberal governors in those provinces, they soon realized they needed military protection.³⁸¹

The epicenter of the resistance was the province of La Rioja, where Ángel Vicente Peñaloza, also known as "El Chanco,"³⁸² led the Federalist caudillos of the central, northern, and western provinces in uprising against the national government in March 1863. On March 29, Mitre gave clear instructions to Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, then director of war, about the measures to end the rebellions, which were suffocated in November:³⁸³ "I do not want any operation in La Rioja to be characterized as a civil war. (...) I want La Rioja to be a police war. La Rioja is the new den of thieves that threaten their neighbors, and where there is no government to maintain the security

³⁸⁰ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 16.

³⁸¹ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 15, 31; Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 208.

³⁸² Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 32-33; Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 143.

³⁸³ Rock, *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina*, 34-35; Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 160-161.

of the province.”³⁸⁴ Mitre added that Sarmiento should “[declare] the *montoneros* to be thieves, without giving them the honor of considering them political [actors] or raising their depredations to the level of reaction.”³⁸⁵ In sum, Mitre wanted to avoid the politicization of the Federalist rebellions in the provinces, labeling them as criminal activities instead, in an attempt to preserve his efforts at national unification.

From his exile in Buenos Aires, the Colorado Venancio Flores invaded Uruguay in April 18, 1863, resuming the civil war against the Blanco government of Berro, supported by Paraguay. Suspicious of Mitre’s support of Flores, the Paraguayan President Solano López demanded an explanation from the Argentine government on September 6, 1863. Mitre denied providing governmental aid to Flores.³⁸⁶ The politics of the Plata Basin was a highly divisive subject within Argentina, with Buenos Aires Liberals supporting Brazil and the Colorados in Uruguay, and the Federalists in the interior provinces backing Paraguay and the Blanco government in the Oriental Republic.³⁸⁷ Aware that involving Argentina in a foreign war could revert the state centralization processes initiated during his administration, Mitre adhered to a strictly neutral foreign policy towards Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. In a letter to Urquiza dated January 9, 1865, Mitre explains:

“[As President I have considered] also the immense damages that the country would suffer in general if it would be interrupted in its march for peace and prosperity if it had to abandon its works to bear arms; [this is] what has weighted most in the counsel of the government, [to the point of] inducing [the government] to adopt the only policy that

³⁸⁴ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 169.

³⁸⁵ Idem.

³⁸⁶ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 190. However, the help of the Argentine Liberals to the Uruguayan Colorados had been substantial and López suspicion was not unjustified. Moreover, Mitre and Flores were personal friends.

³⁸⁷ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 190; Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 202.

could avoid this evil, which was the most strict neutrality in the questions that surround us.”³⁸⁸

Therefore, Mitre avoided any act or gesture that could be interpreted as an intervention implicating Argentina in the international conflict. Thus, in three different occasions Mitre declined the Brazilian invitations to form a joint Argentine-Brazilian action against the Blanco government in Uruguay.³⁸⁹ After the war of Brazil and Uruguay against Paraguay began, the Brazilian government requested Mitre the right to move troops across the Argentine territory, but Mitre denied the request.³⁹⁰ Thus, when López made a similar demand to Mitre in January 1865, asking permission to march across Corrientes to attack Brazil, the Argentine president also said no. Significantly, López had asked to cross the territory of Corrientes, not Misiones, through which Urquiza had already granted López the right of passage (see map 2 above).³⁹¹ Was López trying to force Mitre to take a side in the conflict?

Mitre wrote to Urquiza with instructions not to allow López to pass through Corrientes. The Argentine President added that the crossing of the Argentine territory would constitute a violation of sovereignty. Moreover, given the long common frontier between two belligerents, passing through Corrientes was not necessary to the prosecution of the war. Besides, Argentina guaranteed that the free transit of the rivers would be upheld, including for the transportation of weapons. As evidence of the

³⁸⁸ Letter of Bartolomé Mitre to Justo José Urquiza, dated January 9, 1865, in Museo Mitre (ed.), *Correspondencia Mitre-Urquiza 1860-1868* (Buenos Aires: Impresora Americana S.A.I.C., 1980), 97.

³⁸⁹ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 190, 193; Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 199.

³⁹⁰ Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 202.

³⁹¹ In a letter to Mitre dated December 29, 1864, Urquiza said, “No one would mind the free and innocent transit of both [belligerents] through the unpopulated territory of Misiones, if it came to that.” See Museo Mitre (ed.), *Correspondencia Mitre-Urquiza 1860-1868*, 94.

Argentine commitment to free navigation, Mitre had already refused to allow Brazil to blockade the rivers.³⁹²

Despite Mitre's profuse signals of his desire not to get involved in the ongoing war, Paraguay invaded the province of Corrientes on April 15, 1865, and seized two unarmed Argentine ships.³⁹³ Only after the invasion of Corrientes did Mitre accept the war and agree to join the Brazilian-Uruguayan alliance against Paraguay, which was signed on May 1. Argentina declared war on Paraguay on May 9.³⁹⁴

Not all Argentine elites, even within the government, shared Mitre's preference for not entering the war. His very own minister of Foreign Affairs, Rufino de Elizalde, as well as his minister of Interior, Guillermo Rawson, had been expectantly waiting for the Paraguayan invasion. As Elizalde wrote (to an unidentified friend) after the Paraguayan invasion,

"I give you the greatest Easter news that you could possibly expect, for which I cordially congratulate you. López has fallen into the trap; he took the Corrientes vapors from us. No complaining; the blow that Rawson was waiting for has been given: we will have war. We have exchanged old hulls for half a Paraguay. The gold from Brazil will pour down torrentially on its way through our territory."³⁹⁵

Elizalde was the son-in-law of a Brazilian diplomat, had links to the Empire, and expected pecuniary benefits from Argentina's participation in the war.³⁹⁶ Rawson, in turn, saw in the war an opportunity to crack down on the Federalist elements within the provinces, which he did by targeting Federalists in the war draft, thus undermining the

³⁹² Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 204; Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 192-193.

³⁹³ The Paraguayan declaration of war against Argentina was sanctioned on March 18 and its communication to the Argentine government was sent on March 29. However, the Argentine government did not receive the diplomatic note until May 3.

³⁹⁴ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 195; Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 205.

³⁹⁵ Rufino de Elizalde, quoted in *La Tribuna*, Buenos Aires, April 4, 1868 in León Pomer, *Cinco Años de Guerra Civil en la Argentina (1865-1870)* (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 1985): 37.

³⁹⁶ Pomer, *Cinco Años de Guerra Civil en la Argentina*, 37.

Federalist elites' manpower.³⁹⁷ However, although Elizalde and Rawson welcomed Argentina's declaration of war to Paraguay, there is no evidence that any of them took any measures to precipitate that outcome.

Likewise, the Federalist caudillos also had their own reasons to favor Argentina's entrance in the war: i.e. to take advantage of the government's military commitment at the warfront in order to uproot the Liberal governors in the provinces and hopefully overthrow the Liberal presidency. As Mitre remarked in January 24, 1867, "Who does not know that the traitors encouraged Paraguay to declare war on us?"³⁹⁸

As Mitre had feared, after Argentina's entrance in the Paraguayan War, there were uprisings in several provinces, usually expressing local disapproval of the war and involving mutinies incited by anti-Mitre elements within the battalions.³⁹⁹ Having begun as incursions of caudillos in small villages, the Federalist revolts became more frequent and eventually provoked serious political and institutional conflicts, forcing the national government to intervene within the rebellious provinces. Seven of such interventions were carried out during the Paraguayan War.⁴⁰⁰ The rebellion spread through Cuyo, Mendoza, San Luis, San Juan, La Rioja, Catamarca, Salta, and Jujuy, and the rebel movement also counted with the support of Federalist groups in Córdoba, Santa Fe, and

³⁹⁷ David Bushnell and Neill MacAulay, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, 228; Ariel de la Fuente, "Federalism and Opposition to the Paraguayan War in the Argentine Interior," in *I Die with My Country: Perspectives on the Paraguayan War, 1864-1870*, ed. Hendrik Kraay and Thomas L. Whigham (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 152.

³⁹⁸ Archivo Marcos Paz, tomo VII, 282-283, Mitre a Paz, Yatayty, January 24, 1867 in Pomer, *Cinco Años de Guerra Civil en la Argentina*, 112.

³⁹⁹ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 197, 200.

⁴⁰⁰ Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 180; 207.

Entre Ríos, as well as with the support of Chile, Paraguay, and Bolivia.⁴⁰¹ Reflecting on those events, Mitre remarked,

If half of Corrientes had not betrayed the national cause arming itself in favor the enemy, if Entre Ríos had not rebelled twice, if almost all provincial militias had not uprisen while fulfilling their duty, if a sympathetic opinion towards the enemy had not encouraged betrayal, who doubt the war would already be over?”⁴⁰²

In sum, elite fragmentation and the existential threat to Mitre’s presidency explain his preference not to involve Argentina in the ongoing war of Brazil and Uruguay against Paraguay. However, as seen above, this preference was not shared by all Argentine elites alike, as the theory developed in this dissertation would initially expect. Members’ of Mitre’s cabinet were not as averse as the president towards entering the war, for they expected to use the war as a justification to procure various domestic and foreign resources. Likewise, the Federalist elites also expected to benefit from the war, both by rallying support against the government and by taking advantage of the displacement of the repressive apparatus to the warfront. Moreover, López had not only expressed his hatred of Mitre, but had also proposed an agreement with Entre Ríos to overthrow the Argentine president. When he invaded Corrientes, López expected to receive aid from most of the interior provinces.⁴⁰³

This indicates that Argentina’s war against Paraguay entailed different costs – and hence difference levels of threat – for different Argentine elites. For Mitre, the Paraguayan War would mean fighting a “two-front war:” i.e. a war against a foreign

⁴⁰¹ Campobassi, *Mitre y Su Época*, 197, 199, 200-203; de la Fuente, “Federalism and Opposition to the Paraguayan War in the Argentine Interior,” 141.

⁴⁰² Archivo Marcos Paz, tomo VII, 282-283, Mitre a Paz, Yatayty, January 24, 1867 in Pomer, *Cinco Años de Guerra Civil en la Argentina*, 112.

⁴⁰³ Jeffrey, *Mitre and Argentina*, 205.

enemy and a war against a domestic enemy. But for the Federalist elites Argentina's participation in the Paraguayan War meant an easier war against the Mitre's government, whose forces would be deployed internationally. Moreover, the Federalists expected not to be targeted by the Paraguayan forces. In other words, the Paraguayan army would be a resource serving the Federalists' domestic purposes. That is, as a disruptive dynamic, the Paraguayan War affected domestic Argentine elites differently, changing the balance of power among them.

Table 4.4 Timeline: Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, and Argentine Domestic and Foreign Policies	
1820-1822 Fragmented elite structure & existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intense elite fragmentation and existential threat ▪ Focus on interprovincial conflict 	
1819	Provinces reject centralist constitution
1820	Widespread interprovincial violence
07/08/1821	Brazil annexes the Cisplatine Province
09/1821	Failed Federalist Congress of Córdoba
09/07/1822	Brazilian independence
1823-1825 Fragmented elite Structure & non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Congress of Buenos Aires. Main themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – War against Brazil, – Degree of “national” power versus the degree of provincial autonomy – Administration of the “national” resources ▪ Rivadavia uses war to create centralized state institutions 	
1823	Unitarian Rivadavia begins to organize Unitarian Congress
1824	January/February: Rivadavia stalls impetus for war against Brazil Rivadavia continues to organize Unitarian Congress December 9: End of Spanish American wars of independence December 16: Unitarian Congress of Buenos Aires
1825	April 19: Liberation war of Cisplatine begins June 21: Orientales ask to be reincorporated within the Argentine Confederation and request assistance in the liberation war August 25: Argentine Congress declares desire to reincorporate of the Cisplatine October 25: Argentine Congress declares de facto reincorporation of the Cisplatine November 4: sent of diplomatic note to Brazil announcing the reincorporation December 10: Brazil declares war on the United Provinces. Cisplatine War begins.

1826	January 1: United Provinces declare war on Brazil January 27: creation of National Bank February 6: Law of the Presidency approved (without full Congress) February 7: Rivadavia elected president (without full Congress) March 3: nationalization of Buenos Aires December 24: Unitarian constitution
1827-1865 Fragmented elite structure & existential threat	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provinces reject Unitarian Constitution; interprovincial conflict resumes Rosas assumes the leadership of the Argentine Confederation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political fragmentation: continuous conflict between Unitarians and Federalists spilling over neighboring countries Economic and military concentration of power on Rosas: avoidance of international conflict unrelated to the Federalist-Unitarian conflict, involvement in international conflict related to the Federalist-Unitarian conflict Conflict between Buenos Aires and the provinces continues after defeat of Rosas (1852) Conflict between Liberals and Federalists continues after creation of the national state (1862)
1827	June 28: Rivadavia resigns National Congress dissolved, National Executive Power extinct, provincial autonomy restored
1828	August 27: Cisplatine War ends
05/19/1837	Confederation joins Chile in war against Bolivia
08/1836 – 03/1838	Rosas covert help to Oribe in Uruguay
03/28/1838 – 10/29/1840	French blockade
11/25/1842	Paraguay reiterates its independence from Argentina
04/26/1843	Rosas does not recognize Paraguay's independence
09/21/1843	Chile declares possession of Magellan's Strait
03/14/1844	Rosas reiterates his denial of Paraguay's independence
12/02/1844	Paraguay signs treaty of navigation and commerce with Corrientes
1845	January 8: Rosas embargoes Paraguay and Corrientes December 4: Paraguay declares war on Rosas
1846	Paraguay marches in Corrientes against Rosas. Rosas does not retaliate
1847	Rosas is made aware of Chile in Magellan's Strait
1851	War against Entre Rios and Brazil
1852	February 2: end of Rosas rule May 31: Provinces rejoin in the Confederation minus Buenos Aires
10/23/1859	Battle of Cepeda forces Buenos Aires back into the Confederation
09/17/1861	Battle of Pavón: Buenos Aires defeats provinces and becomes dominant member of the Confederation
1862	Consolidation of the National State October 12: Bartolomé Mitre sworn president
1863	Internal conflict between Unitarians (Liberals) and Federalists continues April 18: Uruguayan civil war resumes
1863/1865	Mitre: Policy of neutrality in the Uruguayan civil war Mitre: Policy of neutrality in the war between Brazil and Paraguay
1865	April 15: Paraguay invades Corrientes May 1: Argentina signs treaty with Brazil and Uruguay against Paraguay May 9: Argentina declares war on Paraguay

PART II

THE CHACO WAR

INTRODUCTION

It was not until about half a century after independence that Bolivia and Paraguay drew their attention to settling their border in the Chaco region. The first attempt at an amicable solution was the Decoud-Quijarro Treaty of October 15, 1879, negotiated amidst Bolivia's misadventures along Peru in a war against Chile, which became known as War of the Pacific (1879-1883). Three other treaties and five protocols later,⁴⁰⁴ the last of them signed on July 19, 1915, and the two countries were still unable to agree on their common border. Both countries attempted to reinforce their legal claims by first colonizing the disputed territories and then by establishing a military presence in the contested region. Militarized incidents involving attacks to fortified positions occurred in 1888, 1906, 1927, 1928, 1930, 1931 and 1932, but only the latter escalated into a full-blown war. Why? What is the difference between those episodes?

War is a dyadic phenomenon and, as such, a complete account of its occurrence must consider the interaction between the parts involved. My goal in the next two chapters is not to explain the occurrence of the war. Instead, the following chapters examine the decision-making processes within Bolivia and Paraguay, respectively, that culminated in the escalation of the dispute into one of the bloodiest interstate wars in Latin America: the Chaco War (1932-1935).⁴⁰⁵ The following chapters do so by analyzing the variation in the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity in both countries over

⁴⁰⁴ Those treaties and protocols were the Decoud-Quijarro Treaty (October 15, 1879), the Protocol of January 9, 1883, the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty (February 16, 1887), the Protocol of February 14, 1888, the Protocol of August 3, 1894, the Benites-Ichaso Treaty (November 23, 1894), the Pinalla-Soler Treaty (January 07, 1907), the Protocol of April 05, 1913, and the Protocol of July 19, 1915.

⁴⁰⁵ "Of the 250,000 Bolivians mobilized for the Chaco War, 52,400 died and 24,000 were captured. (...) Paraguay had mobilized 100,000 men, of which 36,000 died and 4,000 were captured" (Robert Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Professional Soldier, 1900-2001*. Vol. 2. (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2003): 103).

time. The next chapter focuses on Bolivia's decision-making regarding its use of military force abroad and its contribution to the military escalation of the dispute with Paraguay into the Chaco War. Paraguay's decision-making regarding the use of force internationally will be examined in the following chapter. In sum, I am not offering a monadic answer (elite-based theory of use of force) to a dyadic phenomenon (war). Rather, I am offering a monadic answer to a monadic phenomenon: the decision of elites within a state whether or not to initiate aggressive foreign policies.

CHAPTER 5

BOLIVIA'S FOREIGN POLICY FROM THE END OF THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC UNTIL THE CHACO WAR

5.1 ELITE FRAGMENTATION, THREAT INTENSITY, AND BOLIVIAN FOREIGN POLICY: AN OVERVIEW

The War of the Pacific (1879-1883) was a watershed for the Bolivian domestic and foreign policies. In its complete defeat to Chile, Bolivia lost its entire seacoast and became a land-locked country. As a result, Bolivia's foreign policy has ever since been primarily concerned in finding an outlet to the sea. Domestically, the aftermath of the war inaugurated a political party system and crowned the rise of the mining elites. After the War of the Pacific, the sources of power in the Bolivian society and those who controlled them were as follows:

Economically, there was the primacy of silver mining until the mid-1890s, which was replaced by the primacy of tin mining by the turn of the century. The mining prosperity was followed by the growth of landowning, which became increasingly important as commercial agriculture developed, spurred by the mining industry and the extension of the railroad system. Finally, the third main source of income was public office.

Politically, post-war politics was characterized by the emergence of a two-party system, launched by the mining elites as a way to regulate and institutionalize access to

political power in a way that favored wealth while delegitimizing brute force. Whoever dominated the political system by controlling the Executive and Legislative Powers would be able to use state resources to guarantee their control over those positions and shape the institutions to their advantage.

Militarily, the Bolivian Army, composed of 690 officer and 2,165 other ranks, was practically dissolved after the war against Chile. The Military College was not reopened until 1891, when the Bolivian Army counted with 900 men and 373 officers,⁴⁰⁶ but serious reorganization efforts did not begin until the French mission (1905-1909), which left an army of 300 officers and 4,000 other ranks. In 1924, the Bolivian Army had increased to approximately 6,000 men.⁴⁰⁷ Military interference in politics did not resume until the 1920s. The most important military leaders from the War of the Pacific and from the Acre War (1902-1903) entered politics as professional politicians such as Eliodoro Camacho, José Manuel Pando, and Ismael Montes.

In terms of the concatenation of or the relationship among those actors, two main organizational patterns can be discerned. The first ranges from the end of the War of the Pacific until 1920, and the second extends from 1920 until the Chaco War (1932-1935). The first organizational pattern, or Elite Structure, was characterized by both the overlap between economic, political, and military power and its concentration on the miners-landowners coalition, institutionalized in the Conservative Party from 1884 until 1899 and then on the Liberal Party from 1899 until 1920. This was overall a cohesive elite structure in the sense that there was a compatibility of preferences about the scheme of

⁴⁰⁶ Julio Díaz A., *Historia del Ejército de Bolivia 1825-1932* (La Paz: Imprenta Int. Central del Ejército, 1940), 23.

⁴⁰⁷ Adrian J. English, *Armed Forces of Latin America* (New York, NY: Jane's Publishing Inc., 1984), 75-76.

resource allocation among most of the elite members most of the time, with the exception of the years between 1888 and 1899, when the elite structure was fragmented and the threat intensity was existential. Between 1884 and 1920 there were oscillations in the fragmentation-integration spectrum, that is, there were sometimes integrative pressures and other times fragmentation tendencies, which I will discuss in detail below. However, because overall between 1884 and 1920 there was an overlap between economic, political, and military power in the miners-landowners coalition, as well as a compatibility of preferences on resource distribution and allocation between those elites, we can consider that period to be broadly defined as cohesive.

The second organizational pattern, or Elite Structure, ranging from 1920 until the Chaco War, had two main characteristics. First, there was a dispersion of power across the Bolivian elites, disrupting the previous overlap between economic, political, and military power upon the mining-landowning coalition. Second, the political elites in control of the Executive Power and the economic elites now had incompatible preferences on resource extraction and allocation. Those changes moved the relationship among the elites from cohesion to fragmentation. The most important aspect of this alternative organizational pattern was that the mining and landowning interests were no longer in control of the Executive Power, although they still retained seats in the Legislative Chambers. Moreover, the mining-landowning coalition, which had been institutionalized in the Liberal Party from 1899 until 1914, split as the landowners threw the support to the newly created Republican Party in 1915.

Another significant aspect of this period was the emergence of socialist and communist parties and movements in Bolivia; this increased social tension and therefore

posed an inconvenience, if not a threat, to the Executive Power. The problem posed by the socialist and communist movements to the Bolivian elites in general, and more severely to the Executive Power, was not only the creation of social tension, which became a problem with the advent of mass politics and secret ballot, but also the diversion of resources required to repress those movements. Every cent spent in repression is not being embezzled or spent in the maintenance of political allies. Moreover, the greater the number of labor strikes, the greater are the losses of economic productivity, but also the repressive forces deployed to disperse those activities are spread thinner, creating potential vulnerability gaps in terms of the physical security of the regime. Add to all this the negative impact of the world economy to Bolivia's economy, society, and politics by the end of the 1920s, beginning with the drastic drop in the world prices of tin in 1927 and being greatly exacerbated with the crash of the New York stock market in October 1929.

What does all of this have to do with foreign policy? While the Bolivian elite structure was cohesive, there was a clear trend towards avoiding entangling the country in militarized foreign conflicts, to the extent of relinquishing very large tracts of territory and pursuing even a non-retaliatory response to foreign aggression. There are two domestic aspects involved in the explanation of this phenomenon. First, the concentration of economic, political, and military power upon the mining-landowning coalition allowed those elites to address potential and actual threat to their exclusive claim to political power with repression, vote buying, and bribery. Having sufficient resources to frustrate their domestic contestants, those elites saw no need to divert focus and resources into expensive and risky foreign conflicts as an alternative means to neutralize domestic

enemies. Second, the mining elites, who were the strongest member of the mining-landowning coalition, had a clear project for resource distribution: the bulk of state income was to be allocated into railroad construction, in order to decrease the transaction costs of mineral exportation.

It could be argued that most of Bolivia's foreign rivals were more powerful countries, which in itself was a deterrent to foreign aggression. However, this explanation is not sufficient to explain all of Bolivia's foreign policy behavior. Relative power could explain Bolivia's lack of aggression towards Chile, Peru, Argentina, and Brazil, but in itself it fails to account for Bolivia's irresponsiveness to Paraguayan attacks. The Bolivia-Paraguay rivalry over the Chaco Boreal began in the mid-nineteenth century. Bolivia claimed the Chaco, and access to the Paraguay River, based on the Audiencia of Charcas created in 1559. Paraguay's claim was based primarily upon exploration and occupation, which had begun during the colonial era.⁴⁰⁸ Bolivia repeatedly demanded rights to the Paraguay River in the early 1850s and also after the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870).⁴⁰⁹ However, the Chaco did not become an issue of national security for Bolivia, nor was pursued through military means until the 1920s, after the Bolivian elite structure became fragmented while the threat intensity was non-existential.

⁴⁰⁸ David H. Zook Jr., *The conduct of the Chaco War* (New Haven, Conn.: Bookman Associates, 1960), 25-26.

⁴⁰⁹ After learning that an 1852 treaty between Paraguay and Argentina recognized the Rio Paraguay as belonging to the former "from bank to bank," the Bolivian *chargé d'affaires* in Buenos Aires protested that his country had riparian rights on the west bank between parallels twenty and twenty-two. Bolivia remained on the sidelines during the 1865-1870 War of the Triple Alliance after the Allies had assured to protect her rights on the west bank of the Rio Paraguay. After Paraguay's defeat, Bolivia attempted to secure Allied recognition of her Chaco claims, which the victors ignored. After protracted negotiations, Argentina and Paraguay divided the Chaco in three parts. The region south of the Pilcomayo was recognized as belonging to Argentina and the portion from the Rio Verde to Bahia Negra to Paraguay. The area between the main arm of the Pilcomayo and the Verde was submitted to the arbitration of the President of the United States Rutherford B. Hayes, who rejected to consider Bolivia's claims since La Paz was not a party to the treaty soliciting the decision. The disputed area was entitled to Paraguay. See David H. Zook Jr., *The conduct of the Chaco War* (New Haven, Conn.: Bookman Associates, 1960), 25-26.

Indeed, Bolivia not only did not retaliate the Paraguayan military aggression of 1888, but the only mention about the incident in Congress was of a very conciliatory nature. Interestingly, President Siles (1926-1930) offered a much more passionate account of those events decades later, when asking the Congress for extraordinary powers to retaliate against the Paraguayan attack to the Bolivian fort Vanguardia in 1928.

Indeed, after the Bolivian elite structure became fragmented, but featuring non-existential threats, there was a marked shift in Bolivia's policy towards the Chaco. The previous focus on colonization through the granting of land concessions was replaced by colonization through the establishment of military presence in the disputed zone. The growing military presence of both Bolivian and Paraguayan forces in the Chaco led to several skirmishes (i.e. episodes of unpremeditated fighting) and also to deliberate attacks. The fragmentation of the Bolivian elite structure is an important part of the explanation of retaliation and initiation of attacks but lack of escalation. The process of elite fragmentation in the 1920s Bolivia involved the dissolution of the overlap between economic, political, and military power, which used to be concentrated upon the same elite coalition. With fragmentation, the governing elites began to depend upon the support of the masses and of the military, instead of the mine owners and landowners. In fact, mine owners began to be more heavily taxed and landowners were ultimately forsaken by governmental policy during the economic crisis in 1931. With the support base of the political elites shifting from the economic elites to the popular masses and the military, there also came a change in the political discourse. Instead of highlighting the economic side of foreign policy, a greater emphasis was placed on the "national sentiment" and dignity.

In other words, Bolivia displayed a more aggressive foreign policy as the popular masses and middle classes became one of the supporting legs of the governing elites, along with the support of the military. The governing elites had an understanding of the international context and of the risks involved in escalating the dispute with Paraguay into a war. President Hernando Siles (1926-1930) was aware that the logistical difficulties created by the lack of roads into the Chaco, especially when compared with Paraguay's riparian access to the region, could result in an unpopular military defeat. Similarly, despite his policy of maximum expansion, President Daniel Salamanca (1931-1934) wanted at all costs avoid initiating any clashes with Paraguayan forces. Salamanca's concern was to not have Bolivia labeled as aggressor during the diplomatic talks under the auspices of the Pan American League being held in Washington D.C. since November 11, 1931, especially considering that both Argentina and Chile favored Paraguay. Siles and Salamanca's challenge involved encouraging just enough military focus on the Chaco to satisfy the military and popular and middle classes sectors without passing the point of no return, i.e., provoking a war.

The remainder of this chapter is organized in two parts. Part 1 examines Bolivian foreign policy during the time when Bolivia's elite structure was overall cohesive, from 1884 until 1920. Part 2 assesses the changes in the Bolivian foreign policy resulting from the fragmentation of the elite structure, from 1920 until 1932. Each part is subdivided into smaller sections, as described in table 5.1 below. A summary of this chapter's findings can be found in table 5.7 at the end of the chapter.

Table 5.1 Organization Chapter 5
PART 1: Elite Cohesion and Avoidance of Military Conflicts, 1884-1920
Observation 1: Elite Cohesion, Elite Consensus, and Non-Existential Threat, 1884-1888
Observation 2: Elite Fragmentation and Existential Threat, 1888-1899
The Restructuration of the of Bolivian Elites, 1896-1899
Explaining Bolivian Foreign Policy during the Conservative Rule
Observation 3: Cohesive Elite Structure, Internal Peace and Foreign Threats
Observation 4: Fragmentation Trends: The Emergence of the Republican Party
Explaining Liberal Foreign Policy
PART 2: Elite Fragmentation and Limited Use of Military Force, 1920-1932
Observation 5: Fragmented Elite Structure and Increased Military Presence in the Chaco
The Bolivian elite structure in the 1920s
Observation 6: Elite Fragmentation and the Origins of the Chaco War, 1931-1932

PART 1: ELITE COHESION AND AVOIDANCE OF MILITARY CONFLICTS, 1884-1920

5.2 BOLIVIAN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND MILITARY ELITES AFTER THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC

From independence (1825) until the mid-1860, a few landowning *criollo* (Spanish Americans) families controlled the government with the support of military caudillos, most of whom had family ties to the landowning elite.⁴¹⁰ The alternation of the national executive power often resulted from coups d'état or revolutions led and financed by those

⁴¹⁰ Alipio Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*. Tomo V (La Paz: Librería Editorial “Juventud,” 1986), 1329-1332.

few landowning families and executed by their private militias. The landowning base of power rested on the combination of latifundium system and Indian servitude. The head tax on Indian peasants was the most important source of government revenue, accounting for 43 percent of the Bolivian national budget in 1846. If the tax on coca production (which was consumed exclusively by Indians) is added, then direct taxation on Indians accounted for 50 percent of all government income. Meanwhile, mining and smelting taxes contributed to only 11 percent of the budget. In that same year, 45 percent of the government's expenditures went to maintaining the standing army.⁴¹¹

This make-up of the Bolivian elite structure was gone by the end of the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), although not as a result of the war.⁴¹² By then the landowners had lost their economic supremacy to a new economic group: the silver mine owners. This changed resulted not from a decrease in the absolute economic power of the landowners, but rather from their relative decline vis-à-vis the new silver elites. The introduction of joint-stock companies in the silver business allowed for the accumulation of capital and its investment in the deep exploration of silver with the introduction of new machinery and scientific methods of extraction. The consequence of increased output coupled with the rising prices of silver in the international market was the formation of private fortunes that rapidly and greatly surpassed the agrarian wealth.⁴¹³ Among those silver millionaires

⁴¹¹ Herbert S. Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia: 1880-1952* (Aberdeen: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 5-6.

⁴¹² Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1313. The reemergence of silver mining masked almost completely the economic effects of the military defeat and the loss of Bolivia's maritime coast to Chile.

⁴¹³ Between 1825 and 1865, silver mining was conducted by a large number of very small firms. By the early 1880s those firms had been replaced by a few joint-stock companies. This new business model soon showed results. While the yearly average of silver production was 344,000 marks in the 1860s, that figure increased to 956,000 in the 1870s, to 1.1 million in the 1880s, and 1.6 million in the 1890s, with the peak of 2.6 million marks in 1895. One mark equals 230 grams. See Herbert S. Klein, *Bolivia: The Evolution of a Multi-Ethnic Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, 2nd ed.), 143; Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 16.

were Avelino Aramayo, owner the Sociedad del Real Sovacón; Aniceto Arce, owner of the Huanchaca S.A.; and Gregorio Pacheco, owner of Compañía Guadalupe, and shareholder of Portugaleta and Aullagas de Colquechaca.⁴¹⁴ By the end of the 1870s, Arce's Huanchaca mining company alone generated more income than the central government.

The change in the economy was accompanied by a shift from caudillo to party politics, where elections were held regularly but with very limited participation, key issues and agencies were excluded from public control, and civil liberty was significantly limited.⁴¹⁵ The silver elites' claim for political power was manifest in the presidential nominees for the May 1884 presidential election. Two out of the three presidential candidates were the wealthiest mine owners in Bolivia: Gregorio Pacheco running for the Democratic Party and Aniceto Arce running for the Constitutionalist Party. The third candidate, Eliodoro Camacho running for the Liberal Party, was a war veteran, though deeply committed to civilian politics.⁴¹⁶ Although the mining interest had been represented in the Congress before, it had never controlled the Executive Power.

With the newly created party system, the mining elites redefined the rules of access to political power, delegitimizing the use of brute force and institutionalizing a system in which they had the most advantage, in which whoever had the most money bought the most votes. In order to guarantee a majoritarian governing coalition, the mining elites proposed a power-sharing pact to the landed elite, in which the latter would still get some political representation while reserving the higher political offices to the

⁴¹⁴ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1315-1319.

⁴¹⁵ Paul. W. Drake, *Between Tyranny and Anarchy: A History of Democracy in Latin America, 1800-2006* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 4-5.

⁴¹⁶ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1352.

mining owners. Unable to financially compete with the mine owners, the landowners acquiesced to the mining domination. The pact was reflected in the nomination process of the Constitutionalist Party, with the voluntary abdication of the representative of the landed interest, Mariano Baptista,⁴¹⁷ in favor of the nomination of the silver magnate Aniceto Arce.⁴¹⁸

The political power of the mining elites was further consolidated in the merger between the Constitutionalist and Democratic parties. Since none of the presidential candidates obtained the absolute majority required by the Constitution for a victory, the election would be decided by a congressional vote.⁴¹⁹ However, the composition of the Congress disfavored the mining frontrunners: 30 liberals, 24 constitutionalists, and 22 democrats. Hence, Mariano Baptista leading the constitutionalists and Jorge Oblitas and Casimiro Corral leading the democrats negotiated a pact merging both parties into the Conservative Party. As part of the pact, Arce would resign his candidacy and constitutionalist and democrat legislators would elect Gregorio Pacheco. In turn, Pacheco would support Arce in the next election. Newspapers from both groups published the missives describing those negotiations. The congressional vote of September 1 proclaimed Pacheco as president with 47 votes against Camacho's 29.⁴²⁰

The Conservative rejection of caudillismo was not a critique of the military class, but rather a strategy to justify the electoral means to political power. The Conservatives

⁴¹⁷ Marta Irurozqui, "Political Leadership and Popular Consent: Party Strategies in Bolivia, 1880-1899," *The Americas* 53: 3 (Jan., 1997): 396.

⁴¹⁸ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1367-1368; 1468, 1480.

⁴¹⁹ The result of the May 1884 presidential elections was: Gregorio Pacheco 11,760 votes; Aniceto Arce 10,263 votes; and Eliodoro Camacho 8,202 votes. The Constitution required an absolute majority of 15,233 votes for a candidate to be elected.

⁴²⁰ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1360-1361; Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 445, 449.

did not deny the importance of the military, but rather sought to limit and restructure its responsibilities within a civilian framework. Therefore, the Conservative attack of caudillismo was followed with praise for the military class⁴²¹ along with measures to weaken established military leaders by undermining the moral and discipline of the armed forces.⁴²²

The professional politicians of the Liberal Party formed the third – and weakest – faction within the Bolivian elite. The Liberal Party was formed around the military caudillos and the groups with commercial interests in southern Peru. The base of power of the Liberal Party rested on popular and middle class support.⁴²³ The growth of the mining economy stimulated the development of a middle sector composed of liberal professionals such lawyers, physicians, intellectuals, priests, and public employees. Although those individuals did not aim at the exclusive domination of the state, they demanded active participation in the government and politics.⁴²⁴ If we consider the Bolivian enfranchised to comprise whites and mestizos,⁴²⁵ then as a rough approximation we can estimate that 32.28 percent of the electorate was white and 67.72 percent of the electorate was mestizos in 1900, based on the data of Table 5.2 below.⁴²⁶ However, voting was not mandatory and the majority of the electorate was still composed of

⁴²¹ Irurozqui, “Political Leadership and Popular Consent,” 405.

⁴²² Alcides Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia (El proceso de la nacionalidad), 1809-1921* (La Paz: Arnó Hermanos, 1922), 436. Accordingly, President Pacheco (1884-1888) would fuel the passions of the soldiers, whom he called “sons.” He paid them visits without the presence of their superiors and promoted insubordination against the higher officers by encouraging lower rank soldiers to anonymously denounce cases of abuse committed by their superiors. Pacheco sent gifts to the barracks (such as fruit baskets), authorized the use of alcohol, and fomented espionage.

⁴²³ Marta Irurozqui, “Political Leadership and Popular Consent: Party Strategies in Bolivia, 1880-1899,” *The Americas* 53: 3 (Jan., 1997): 396, 414.

⁴²⁴ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia, 1357-1358*.

⁴²⁵ Irurozqui, “Political Leadership and Popular Consent,” 403, 414.

⁴²⁶ This rough estimate also assumes that the distribution of whites and mestizos reflects the distribution voters across those race categories, although this is a poor assumption since literacy was a requisite for voting and it is fair to surmise that the literacy rate was higher among whites than mestizos.

mestizo artisans who lacked any organic organization and were unaware of their subversive potential or rights. Therefore, those numbers reflect the potential, not the actual Liberal electoral threat to the Conservatives. Furthermore, the Conservative Party was threatened not by any inherent strength of the popular sectors per se, but rather by the ability of the Liberal Party to mobilize those sectors.⁴²⁷ If the Liberal Party were able to mobilize the artisan-mestizo vote throughout the country it would obtain a clear electoral advantage over the Conservative Party.

Table 5.2 Population distribution by race: Bolivia, 1900

All races	White	Mestizo	Indian	Negro	Unknown
1,633,610	231,088	484,611	792,850	3,945	121,116

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Bolivia, Summary of Biostatistics* (Washington: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1948): 43.

OBSERVATION 1: ELITE COHESION, ELITE CONSENSUS, NON-EXISTENTIAL THREAT, 1884-1888

The Conservatives' strategy to further and maintain their political dominance was to nullify the Liberal electoral threat by making the Liberal Party a merely symbolic presence. On the one hand, once in power, Pacheco invited the most renowned liberal politicians to important cabinet and diplomatic positions.⁴²⁸ On the other hand, the execution of the Conservative strategy entailed employing widespread electoral bribery, vote buying, and coercion to prevent the Liberal candidates from capturing the Executive Power and obtaining congressional majority. This strategy was employed in every

⁴²⁷ Irurozqui, "Political Leadership and Popular Consent," 412-414.

⁴²⁸ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 435.

presidential and legislative election since the first contest in 1884 and it was effective at maintaining the Liberal threat at low levels as long as the legitimacy of the party system was not challenged. The Conservative strategy to keep the Liberal electoral threat at bay was initially successful because of the Liberal commitment to democratic procedure embraced by the leader of the Liberal Party, Eliodoro Camacho. Accordingly, the Liberal Party affirmed that it would enter the Government Palace “not through the window, but through the door.”⁴²⁹

The Liberals’ perception of the threat posed by the Conservatives to their access to political power through electoral channels was not immediate, despite rampant corruption during the 1884 elections. This feature repeated itself in the 1886 local and legislative elections leading to widespread Liberal discontent as manifested in the sessions of the Lower Chamber.⁴³⁰ However, until early 1888 the leadership of the Liberal Party still believed that access to the Executive Power was possible. As the national elections of May 1888 approached, Camacho proposed a compromise to incumbent president Pacheco hoping to bring the Liberal Party to national power through an elite pact. Accordingly, the electorate from both parties would elect the leader of the Conservative Party for president and the leader of the Liberal Party for vice-president, or vice-versa. The elected president would govern for two years and then renounce, allowing the vice-president to govern for the remaining two years.

However, the Conservative elites, and especially the Conservative presidential nominee Aniceto Arce, had no incentive to enter such pact.⁴³¹ At that juncture, the

⁴²⁹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1475.

⁴³⁰ Bolivia, *Redactor de la Cámara de Diputados* 1886 (Sucre, 1886).

⁴³¹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1388.

Conservatives did not need the support of the Liberals to remain in power. The Conservative coalition possessed the economic resources necessary to run a “successful” presidential campaign, the control of the state machinery, and the control of the means of the coercion. Therefore, Arce rejected Camacho’s proposition and Pacheco deployed the state’s resources to guarantee Arce’s victory. President Pacheco marched with the army to La Paz, sent the Second Vice-President with troops to Oruro, and kept the First Vice-President supported by the army in Sucre.⁴³² Arce was declared winner with 25,396 versus Camacho’s 7,183 votes.⁴³³

OBSERVATION 2: ELITE FRAGMENTATION & EXISTENTIAL THREAT, 1888-1899

The May 1888 presidential elections were a watershed in the relationship between the Conservative and Liberal party elites. It had finally become clear to the Liberals that the Conservatives had no intention to a power sharing compromise. Being denied both an arranged and an electoral path to the Executive Power, the Liberals turned to extra-electoral means to seize the command of the nation. The first of such attempts happened on September 8, 1888, just a few days before the inauguration of the newly elected government. The leader of the Liberal Party Eliodoro Camacho and the Liberal senator Belisario Salina tried to prevent Arce from assuming office by leading revolutionary movements from both La Paz and Sucre.⁴³⁴ The Liberal coup received the support of the Second Battalion, the Artillery and part of the Third Battalion. The revolutionaries

⁴³² Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1389.

⁴³³ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 460.

⁴³⁴ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 465-466; Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1389.

assembled a 840 person strong force with eight pieces of artillery.⁴³⁵ The Liberal coup failed and once reinstalled the Congress passed a motion expelling all the Liberal representatives that had participated in the September 8 revolution.⁴³⁶ Two sergeants were executed, numerous soldiers were tortured to death, and several liberal politicians were exiled or imprisoned.⁴³⁷

If until the presidential elections of 1888 the Liberal threat to the Conservative exclusive claim to the Executive Power had been kept at very low levels, it was no longer so. Uncommon until then, states of siege began to be regularly declared, usually following elections: 1888, 1890, 1892, 1894, and 1898. The constant redeployment of the repressive apparatus around elections indicates the increase in the degree of threat perceived by the Conservative elites to their exclusive control of the government. Given the Liberal Party's growing popular support, the Liberal threat to the Conservatives was of both electoral and extra-electoral nature.⁴³⁸ During the campaigning season for the legislative elections of 1890, the Liberals began to openly proclaim the right to rebel amidst protests throughout the country.⁴³⁹ From his exile in Puno (Peru), Camacho sent messages to his political followers encouraging them to "cast to the nation's ground the ominous tyranny that has been filling [the nation] with shame and misery in the last twenty months" while presenting "armed resistance against this government of fraud and

⁴³⁵ Coronel Julio Díaz A., *Historia del Ejército de Bolivia 1825-1932* (La Paz: Imprenta Int. Central del Ejército, 1940), 317.

⁴³⁶ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 467.

⁴³⁷ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1389.

⁴³⁸ On electoral and extra-electoral threats, see Nina Barzachka, "When Winning Seats Is Not Everything: Tactical Seat Loss During Democratization," *Comparative Politics*, forthcoming.

⁴³⁹ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 471.

violence that, having seized the destinies of the Republic, corrupts society and national institutions, bringing [the nation to its] ruin.”⁴⁴⁰

Whereas being deliberately denied access to means of national decision-making and the only source of economic power outside mining and land could mean the long term “extinction” of the professional liberal politicians as members of the elite, in the short term their lives also became endangered. In the words of the liberal representative Mr. José David Berríos,⁴⁴¹

“Since the year of 1888 there have been frequent decrees of state of siege, some with more or less plausible motives and other without any cause, to such extreme that we could call Bolivia the *Republic of the state of siege*. In 1888 and 1890 the state of siege was motivated by true commotions, by revolutionary movements, by armed riots. But in the following years there was no justifying cause. (...) [Regarding the siege of 1892], the alleged conspiracists were exiled, condemned without being heard; they suffered the sanction without judgment, without any indication of culpability.”⁴⁴²

The Conservatives responded to the Liberal threat with repression.⁴⁴³ Given the disparity in the correlation of material forces between Liberals and Conservatives, the costs of repression were acceptable for the entrenched Conservative elites. For while the former were a minority in Congress and relied on public support, the latter were a majority in Congress, controlled the National Executive, the state bureaucracy and the military, and owned the means of production of the Bolivian economy. Hence, the Conservative elites had no incentive to initiate a more costly and risky diversionary policy based on the militarization of its border disputes with powerful Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Brazil, or even with weaker Paraguay.

⁴⁴⁰ Quoted in Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 472.

⁴⁴¹ José David Berríos was himself exiled in 1892. See Blanco Elías Mamani, “José David Berríos Franco,” *Diccionario Cultural Boliviano*, <http://elias-blanco.blogspot.com/2011/02/jose-david-berrios-franco.html>.

⁴⁴² Bolivia, *Redactor del Congreso Nacional*, October 21, 1898, p. 48.

⁴⁴³ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 472.

The Liberal electoral threat to the Conservatives continued to increase when, despite losing the presidency to the Conservative Mariano Baptista in May 1892, the Liberals elected a majority in both houses of Congress for the first time. The Conservatives tried to buy the Liberals' acquiescence with two secretaries of states, a passive military office for Camacho, and other less visible political offices for Liberals who had not openly participated in the last elections.⁴⁴⁴ However, the Liberal leaders insisted in not compromising their electoral victory since they now contemplated the possibility of executing institutional reforms through congress.⁴⁴⁵ The Conservatives responded with another state of siege, decreed at the arrival of the newly elected deputies in the capital (August 4, 1892), aimed at eradicating a possible Congressional obstacle to Baptista's presidency.⁴⁴⁶ Defending the siege, the Conservative Deputy Juan Jofré said,

“The political mistakes of a government or of a party can be corrected or forgotten, they do not profoundly affect society or the future generations; but the mistakes of a Congress affect society and have influence beyond the present moment...”⁴⁴⁷

As described above, the Conservative elites feared the long-term changes to the existing order that could be enacted by a Liberal Congress. In the following day President Arce imprisoned and then exiled eight liberal representatives, Camacho, and twenty other

⁴⁴⁴ This bargain occurred in August 3, 1892, when representatives from both parties, including the newly elected President Mariano Baptista and the Liberal leader Eliodoro Camacho met in the city of Oruro at the invitation of the mayor Mr. Tamayo.

⁴⁴⁵ The Liberal counteroffer rejected their participation in the cabinet but included a commitment not to challenge the results of the presidential election, as long as the military and public authorities involved in electoral fraud were expelled from their offices. The Liberals also demanded the government's commitment not to bar institutional reforms initiated in the Congress and not to prevent the newly elected Liberal representatives from taking office. Finally, the electoral results should be annulled and new elections called in the districts where there were electoral fraud and violence. See Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 501-502; Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 27.

⁴⁴⁶ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1389; Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 501.

⁴⁴⁷ Bolivia, *Redactor del Congreso Nacional*, October 21, 1898, p. 42.

members of the Liberal Party under the charge of sedition.⁴⁴⁸ As described by the Liberal Senator Samuel Oropeza,

“The siege of August 5, 1892, was exclusively preventive, an unheard fact and without precedent in our history. The Government back then, about to make the transition of the legal rule, found itself with a parliamentary majority in the opposition, which could use its political plans [to] purge the public administration and institutions of the vices and defects of which they were accused. In order to change this oppositional majority in the government, it was necessary to deport some representative outside of the republic, to confine others to Creveax and to Covendo, to alienate and nullify influential political characters, to constitute thus an homogeneous congress and form a situation without obstacles or resistances to the advent of the new Government ... To this result a preventive siege was decreed against an unproven sedition.”⁴⁴⁹

In sum, feeling increasingly threatened, the Conservative elites resorted to repression as a preemptive measure against a Liberal take over, first of the Congress, and later of the Executive Power and other state institutions. Although the Bolivian elites were fragmented in the political sphere featuring a divide between Conservatives and Liberals, military and economic power were highly concentrated upon the Conservative elites. The overlap between political, economic, and military power upon the Conservatives allowed them to effectively project power domestically. In this scenario, repression was a more cost efficient policy to avert the electoral threat of the Liberal elites when compared to risky opportunistic and/or diversionary foreign policies.

5.3 THE RESTRUCTURATION OF THE OF BOLIVIAN ELITES, 1896-1899

The composition and structure of the Bolivian elites changed by the turn of the century, after which the Liberal Party ruled unopposed for 14 years. The reorganization of the Bolivian elite structure in the late 1890s was a culmination of two factors: (1) a

⁴⁴⁸ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 502-503.

⁴⁴⁹ Bolivia, *Redactor del Congreso Nacional*, October 21, 1898, p. 36.

split within the Conservative Party ignited by the expansion of commercial agriculture and fueled by the resentment of the landowners regarding their status within the Conservative coalition. This dynamic was accentuated by the sharp declines in the price of silver beginning in 1892 and in silver output beginning in 1896. And (2) the growing electoral power of the Liberals was buttressed by the Liberal victory in all municipal elections in 1897.

The growth of the mines in the departments of Oruro and Potosí created new demands for foodstuffs and labor, stimulating commercial agriculture while the expansion of railroads opened new markets in hitherto marginal areas.⁴⁵⁰ These developments, along with the decline in importance of the Indian head tax, prompted the recovery and expansion of the hacienda system as landowners successfully pushed for the privatization of previously communal lands.⁴⁵¹ However, the silver boom also contributed to the creation of two distinct regions within Bolivia: an agrarian region in the central valleys and eastern plains of Chuquisaca and a mining region in the mountains of La Paz, Potosí, and Oruro.⁴⁵² The landowners resented the virtually complete allocation of the federal budget in the construction of railroads in the western mining departments while neglecting the agricultural central plains.⁴⁵³ Meanwhile, the international price of silver dropped sharply in 1892, 1893, and 1894, as shown in Table 5.3 below. Although the decrease in price was compensated by greater output in 1894 and 1895 (see table 5.4 below), the output also plummeted from 1896 on. The strife between landowners and the

⁴⁵⁰ Until then, the absence of a strong economy, modern agricultural techniques, and wage salaries yielded an insignificant agricultural production, insufficient to satisfy even domestic demand.

⁴⁵¹ Klein, *Bolivia*, 151-152. While in 1880 the Indian communities constituted about half of the rural population and held about half of the lands in Bolivia, by 1930, the Indian communities had been reduced to less than a third of the rural population and held less than a third of the land.

⁴⁵² Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1441.

⁴⁵³ *Ibidem*, 1440.

mine owners over the appropriation of national resources manifested in the competing demands that the Executive and Legislative Powers be exclusively located either in Sucre (as wished by the landowners) or in La Paz (as preferred by the mine owners).⁴⁵⁴

Table 5.3 World Production and Price of Silver, 1873-1895

Year	Production, fine ounces	Per cent.	Price of silver per ounce in pence	Per cent.
1873.....	63,267,187	100	59 $\frac{1}{4}$	100
1874.....	55,300,781	87.5	58 $\frac{5}{8}$	98.4
1875.....	62,261,719	98.3	56 $\frac{3}{4}$	96
1876.....	67,753,125	107	52 $\frac{3}{4}$	89
1877.....	62,679,916	99	54 $\frac{1}{8}$	92.5
1878.....	73,385,451	116	52 $\frac{9}{8}$	88.7
1879.....	74,383,495	117.5	51 $\frac{1}{4}$	86.5
1880.....	74,795,273	118.2	52 $\frac{1}{4}$	88.2
1881.....	79,020,872	124.7	51 $\frac{1}{8}$	87.6
1882.....	86,472,091	136.6	51 $\frac{5}{8}$	87.5
1883.....	89,175,023	140.9	50 $\frac{9}{8}$	85.5
1884.....	81,567,801	128.9	50 $\frac{5}{8}$	85.7
1885.....	91,609,959	144.7	48 $\frac{5}{8}$	82.6
1886.....	93,297,290	147.4	45 $\frac{3}{8}$	76.6
1887.....	96,123,586	151.9	44 $\frac{5}{8}$	75.3
1888.....	108,827,606	172	42 $\frac{7}{8}$	72.4
1889.....	120,213,611	198.8	42 $\frac{1}{8}$	72.1
1890.....	126,095,062	199.3	47 $\frac{1}{8}$	72
1891.....	137,170,919	216.9	45 $\frac{1}{8}$	80.6
1892.....	153,151,762	242	39 $\frac{3}{8}$	76.1
1893.....	165,472,621	262.5	35 $\frac{5}{8}$	67.4
1894.....	164,610,394	260.4	28 $\frac{1}{8}$	60.2
1895.....	168,308,353	266	29 $\frac{7}{8}$	48.9

Source: Edward S. Meade, "The Fall in the Price of Silver Since 1873," *Journal of Political Economy* 5:3 (1897): 321.

Table 5.4 Bolivian Production of Silver, 1893-1897, in Fine Ounces

Year	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897
Production	13,631,449	21,999,966	28,444,400	11,500,000	10,500,000

Source: Meade, Edward Sherwood, "The Recent Production of Silver and Its Probable Future." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 14 (1899): 46.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibidem, 1458.

In the mean time, the Liberal Party won all the municipal elections in the Department capitals realized at the end of 1897, but for La Paz where fraud assured the victory of the Conservative Party. The Liberals challenged those results and reclaimed four out of the six seats in the La Paz municipal council. The government refused to accept the new result, and the masses of La Paz soon gathered to support the Liberal opposition and resist the government. Nationwide, the triumph of the Liberal Party in the municipal elections of 1897 fueled the hope of the middle classes to obtain political representation.⁴⁵⁵ The national government decreed a state of siege in January 07, 1898. The Liberal Deputy Guillermo Sanjinez thus described the threat faced by his party,

“[The Conservatives] sustain, and do it with ardor, that the Executive Power has the faculty of dictating decrees of preventive siege, that is, whenever [the Executive Power] finds [the siege] convenient, whenever [the siege] pleases [the Executive Power], and whenever [the siege] fits within [the Executive Power’s] political interests. In other words, [the Conservatives] intend to authorize the Executive to make use of such attribution whenever the Executive is contradicted in its purposes in some sphere. If the Executive notices that the opposition party has probabilities of victory in an upcoming election, for example, it will decree the state of siege, without being concerned with the motive, since according to the report from the Commission of Constitution, the National Congress has no right to examine the Executive’s decree. With the declaration of the state of siege comes the right to make use of extraordinary faculties, a dangerous weapon, which show is sufficient to scare the voters without having to use it. Then, voter registration and all the electoral field will be at the sole disposition of the adherents of the Government; those will name Mayors and national Representatives and among themselves will form one sole element, homogeneous, uniform; ... the country will enjoy unequaled peace.”⁴⁵⁶

Given the upcoming split within the Conservative coalition (October 1898), one might wonder how would the Conservatives be able to impose a dictatorship as the Liberals feared. With hindsight, this is a valid concern. However, we must remember that in any given historical moment decision-making is not influenced solely by *real* threats; it is also influenced by threats *perceived to the real*. Therefore, the imposition of a

⁴⁵⁵ Ibidem, 1458-1459.

⁴⁵⁶ Bolivia, *Redactor del Congreso Nacional*, October 21, 1898, p. 60.

Conservative dictatorship did not have to be a highly probable event to affect the decision-making of the Liberal elites; it only had to be *perceived* as being probable.

Whereas the Liberals feared an impending Conservative dictatorship, the Conservative elites feared to be overthrown in a revolution, as described both by the Deputy Miguel Lora and Minister of Instruction Macario Pinilla Vargas, respectively,

“The situation in La Paz was disastrous and a disturbance of the public order could be feared; in this sense the Executive worked correctly when decreeing the siege. (...) The motives could have been worse, it is true, but it is known that revolutions do not manifest in a clear manner, nevertheless the sedition was latent and very naturally a pronouncement was feared. The press in La Paz reported that these occurrences not only prevailed in the city, but they also invaded even the villages, and because of that the declaration of a state of siege was necessary.”⁴⁵⁷

“Should the Executive wait to be overthrown to only then declare a siege?”⁴⁵⁸

Amidst the political turbulence in La Paz, the government began to consider relocating to that city, which in turn inflamed the traditional landowning elites of Sucre. The breakdown of the Conservative coalition was concretized with the passing of the *Proyecto de Radicatoria* in both the Lower and Upper chambers (October 31, 1898), ratifying the establishment of the Legislative and Executive Powers in Sucre. In face of the southern landowning self-assertion, the paceño Minister Macario Pinilla renounced and the paceño deputies and senators returned to La Paz.⁴⁵⁹ “An uprising occurred in La Paz, due to a local cause, a circumstance which was exploited by the Liberal Party to provoke a general insurrection in the Republic.”⁴⁶⁰ Under the pretext of replacing the unitarian system in which the southern landowning elites were overly represented with a

⁴⁵⁷ Bolivia, *Redactor del Congreso Nacional*, October 22, 1898, p. 88-89.

⁴⁵⁸ Bolivia, *Redactor del Congreso Nacional*, October 25, 1898, p. 130.

⁴⁵⁹ Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 536; Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1460-1462.

⁴⁶⁰ Daniel Salamanca, minority representative and future Bolivian president, September 04, 1908. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1908* (La Paz: Tipo-Litografía Iris de Abel F. Plaza, 1909), 367.

federal system, the Liberals initiated the Federalist Revolution on December 14 and were joined by the emerging tin elites of La Paz.⁴⁶¹ The National Guard stayed in the barracks, thus consenting on the revolution.⁴⁶² Adding to the lower and middle class masses, the Indian peasants were mobilized for the first time in republican Bolivia, greatly increasing the ranks of the Liberals and thus putting the Conservatives at a numerical disadvantage.⁴⁶³ Thus ended the Conservative rule.

5.4 EXPLAINING BOLIVIAN FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE CONSERVATIVE RULE

During the Conservative rule, Bolivia not only did not initiate any use of force abroad, but most significantly it not even responded with proportional force when targeted by neighboring countries: once by Chile in March 1884 and twice by Paraguay in February and September of 1888.⁴⁶⁴ Moreover, in three other occasions, neighboring

⁴⁶¹ In 1888 the ton of tin was worth £63; in 1889 the price increased to £144. In 1890 Bolivia exported 1,000 tons of tin; in 1899 this figure increased to 3,500 tons, and would reach 15,000 tons in 1905 (Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1520).

⁴⁶² Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 536; Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1460-1462.

⁴⁶³ Klein, *Bolivia*, 154, 163. The Indians troops were disarmed and their leaders executed after the civil war.

⁴⁶⁴ The Correlates of War (COW) dataset does not record any MIDs between Bolivia and Paraguay between February 1888 and 1906. Therefore, COW does not record the Paraguayan apprehension of the Bolivian governmental officials in Puerto Pacheco in September 1888. However, the capture of the Bolivian government officials by Paraguayan authorities in Puerto Pacheco appears in both the Paraguayan and Bolivian presses in September 1888 (for a more accurate Bolivian account (date-wise, at least) of those events see Luis S. Crespo, "Fuerzas militares paraguayas se apoderan de Puerto Pacheco," *El Diario*, September 13, 1927 at http://www.eldiario.net/noticias/2011/2011_09/nt110912/1_05opn.php). Another problem is that both the Bolivian historiography and the official documents I consulted in my research omit the September 1888 events. In fact, in his state of the union of August 1929, the Bolivian President Hernando Siles Reyes recounts the Paraguayan attack to Puerto Pacheco as having happened in February 13, 1888. The Bolivian Vice President at the time, José Manuel de Carpio, does not even mention any Paraguayan attack to Puerto Pacheco in his address to the Congress on December 9, 1888. Finally, COW registers the occurrence of a Paraguayan use of military force for the interval of December 23, 1887 to February 13, 1888, when Paraguay in fact sent reinforcements to two forts (which technically constitute a display of force, not a use of force, according to COW's coding rules). However, if we consider that Fuerte Olimpo was located in a territory that would belong to Bolivia if the 1887 border treaty had been ratified,

countries displayed force against Bolivia: Peru in 1896 and Paraguay in August 1886 and October 1897. Those displays of force presented the Bolivian elites with windows of opportunity for the initiation of aggressive foreign policies as a means to either divert from or capitulate upon their domestic conflict. However, no such strategies were employed.

From a mere balance of power stance, it is understandable why Bolivian decision-makers would refrain from retaliating attacks from more powerful rivals such as Chile and Peru. As shown in Table 5.5 below, Chile's military capabilities were almost six times larger than Bolivia's in 1884 and Peru was almost two and a half times stronger than Bolivia in 1896. However, in terms of military capabilities, Bolivia was always stronger than Paraguay.

Table 5.5 Correlation of Forces	
Chile-Bolivia, 1884	5.77 : 1
Peru-Bolivia, 1896	2.45 : 1
Paraguay-Bolivia, 1886	1 : 3.94
Paraguay-Bolivia, 1887	1 : 3.49
Paraguay-Bolivia, 1897	1 : 1.67
<p>The correlation of forces was calculated based on the annual values for the computed Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) score. The six capability components are Military personnel, Military expenditures, Energy consumption, Iron/Steel production, Nominal urban population, Nominal total population.</p> <p>Source: http://www.correlatesofwar.org/COW2%20Data/Capabilities/nmc3-02.htm#cinc.</p>	

As demonstrated above, throughout their political rule the Conservative elites controlled the National Executive, the state bureaucracy and the military, maintained a majority in Congress, and owned the means of production of the most profitable Bolivian economic activities. Until early 1888, their political rule was not challenged, because the

we can code the Paraguayan fortification of Fuerte Olimpo as a “use of force,” since the fortification was realized in disputed territory.

Liberal Party elites still expected to have their time in the presidency. Therefore, until early 1888 the Conservative elites had political, economic, and military dominance and faced no threat to their bases of power. Hence they had no incentives to venture into risky and expensive military enterprises.

After 1888 the Liberal Party became an electoral and extra-electoral threat to the Conservative elites. Over time, the Liberal capacity to mobilize popular and middle class support became stronger despite the rampant vote buying, bribery, and violence employed by the Conservative Party in order to guarantee electoral victory. The potential Liberal electoral threat first became tangible for the Conservatives in 1892, when the Liberals obtained their first congressional majority. Five years later, the Liberals swept away the municipal councils throughout the country. Because the Conservatives still controlled the most important sources of economic, political, and military power, responding with repression was an available and cost effective option, and thus, since 1888, states of siege became a common feature in Bolivian politics. Hence, the Conservative elites had no incentive to initiate a more costly diversionary policy based on the militarization of its borders disputes with powerful Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Brazil, or even with weaker Paraguay.

The Liberal professional politicians, on the other hand, were the weaker members of the Bolivian elite in terms of their resource base: they relied on popular support, some cabinet positions, and a minority in Congress. We have seen above how the popular support for the Liberal Party increased over time, reflecting on their numbers in Congress and on their local, municipal reach. We have also shown that at the beginning of party politics in Bolivia, the Liberal Party expected to be an equal partner along with the

Conservative Party within some framework for the alternation of the Executive Power. It was not until the May 1888 presidential elections that it became clear to the Liberal leadership that the Conservatives had no intention to include the Executive Power in the power sharing formula. However, by mid-1886 there was already widespread discontent concerning the Conservative use of state resources and bureaucracy to manipulate electoral outcomes, as seen in the Congressional debates of during the fall of 1886. Therefore, if the Liberals were to have initiated an unauthorized use of force short of war, it would have been between mid-1886 and early 1888, since after the May 1888 elections violence returned as an integral part of Bolivian politics and the Conservative threat to the Liberal elites became existential, involving forced exiles, imprisonment, and death.

However, there was no initiation of the use of military force abroad between mid-1886 and early 1888. Instead, Bolivia and Paraguay signed the Aceval-Tamayo treaty in February 16, 1887, although the congresses of both countries failed to ratify the treaty. These events were followed by the Paraguayan reinforcement of the disputed Fuerte Olimpo in February 1888, the Protocol of February 14, 1888, the Paraguayan aggression at Puerto Pacheco in mid-September 1888, and the ratification of the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty by Bolivia in November 23, 1888, under the protest of the Bolivian diplomat in Paraguay, Dr. Claudio Pinilla.⁴⁶⁵ Notice that the congressional ratification of the treaty occurred after the Liberal revolution against Arce in September 8, 1888, which was followed by a state of siege and by the expulsion of the Liberal representatives from Congress.

⁴⁶⁵ Harris Gaylord Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 153-157; Isaac S. Campero, *Tratados Internacionales de Bolivia con el Perú, Brasil, Paraguay, Argentina y Chile Tomo Segundo* (La Paz: Escuela Tip. Salesiana, 1907), 38; J. M. del Carpio, President of Congress, December 9, 1888. Bolivia, *Sesiones del Congreso Nacional de 1888* (Sucre: Imprenta Sucre, 1889), 48.

Lets recall the complexity of explaining diversionary and/or opportunistic foreign policies, as discussed in Chapter 2:

“If leaders face different kinds of domestic threats that call for different policy actions, then it is inadequate on its face to hypothesize that domestic threats, X , cause either (1) a particular foreign policy response, y_1 , or (2) foreign policy responses, Y . In the first case, “ $X \rightarrow y_1$ ” ignores the possibility that “ $X \rightarrow y_2$ ” or any other manifestation of Y , increasing the likelihood of negative findings and Type II errors. The second case, expecting that domestic threats, X , cause foreign policy responses in general fails to recognize either (1) that foreign policy action may be instigated by other stimuli as well or (2) that domestic threats, X , may sometimes lead to foreign policy action and sometimes to domestic policy action.”⁴⁶⁶

In other words, domestic threats can not only be related to different types of foreign policies (i.e. aggressive vs. diplomatic), but domestic threats might also sometimes be responded with foreign policy and other times not. I have hypothesized that variations in the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity create incentives and constraints to the execution of diversionary or opportunistic foreign policies, that is, to foreign policies aimed at private rather than public goods. That is, Elite Structure and Threat Intensity help us to understand the circumstances that make diversionary or opportunistic foreign policies more likely to occur and the conditions under which more or less violent foreign policies are preferred. A key component of my hypothesized explanation for opportunistic aggressive foreign policies short of war is the idea of capacity: that is, elite fragmentation constrains the capacity of elites to gather and mobilize resources. Therefore, in a context of elite fragmentation, elites that opt for a diversionary foreign policy as a means to deal with domestic threats can only go as far as initiating limited uses of force abroad. However, the fact that elites might prefer – and initiate – a limited use of military force abroad does not prevent that event from escalating. Elites in the

⁴⁶⁶ David Clark, “Trading Butter for Guns,” 640.

initiator state might expect that elites in the target state respond with a proportional use of force, or they might call for mediation after conducting the use of force internationally, hoping to prevent the militarization of the dispute from escalating. Nevertheless, a proportional military response or the contained of violence within certain levels are not guaranteed. Hence, there is a trade-off between the risks of initiating opportunistic or diversionary foreign policies and the benefits of averting domestic threats.

When explaining the strategy chosen by the Bolivian Liberal elites to address the Conservative threat, we must have a clear appraisal of how their available resources conditioned the policy options available to them. We know that in August 1888 the Liberal political elites were able to garner the support of the Second Battalion, the Artillery, and part of the Third Battalion. However, I found no evidence of whether that support already existed in mid-1886 and in 1887 or how committed those forces were to Liberal cause back then. As demonstrated above, the Liberal elites' resource base was primarily their control over the popular and middle class vote – a resource that does not easily translate into the execution of foreign policy aggression, but that was suited to their electoral strategy. Therefore, the Liberal elites adopted a domestic strategy, instead resorting to a diversionary foreign policy, despite the Liberal rhetoric about the importance of defending Bolivia's territorial integrity.

OBSERVATION 3: COHESIVE ELITE STRUCTURE, 1900-1920

“The triumphant Liberal Party organized a government based upon an immense national majority. There was no powerful enemy before it, because the Constitutional Party had been almost undone. Hence, the stability of the new governments and the public tranquility. The government was not resisted nor attacked and therefore had no need to be violent.”⁴⁶⁷

With these words, Daniel Salamanca Urey, who at the time was a minority representative in the Liberal Congress, summarized the fifteen years of unchallenged Liberal rule in Bolivia. In the aftermath of Federal Revolution (1899) the Conservative Party disappeared and most of its members joined the Liberal Party.⁴⁶⁸ The ruling coalition was composed of tin mining elites, the Liberal professional politicians, and the landed elites. Despite the change in the composition of the Bolivia elite, many of the public policies pursued during the Conservative era remained, including “massive government subsidization of transport, heavy support for the mining industry, and development and modernization of its urban centers.”⁴⁶⁹ Between 1909 and 1930, roughly 40 percent of the foreign loans contracted by the government were used in railway construction: a major interest of the mining elites.⁴⁷⁰ Moreover, both Liberal and Conservative administrations actively sought the destruction of the Indian communities and the expansion of the hacienda system. Another commonality was the preference for a negotiated approach to international disputes whenever possible.

Tin exports increased five-fold from 1900 to 1929, and Bolivia’s share of world production more than doubled, accounting for approximately a quarter of total world

⁴⁶⁷ Daniel Salamanca, minority representative, September 04, 1908. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1908* (La Paz: Tipo-Litografía Iris de Abel F. Plaza, 1909), 367.

⁴⁶⁸ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1482-1483; and Klein, *Bolivia*, 154, 163.

⁴⁶⁹ Klein, *Bolivia*, 164.

⁴⁷⁰ Manuel E. Contreras, “Debt, Taxes, and War: The Political Economy of Bolivia, c. 1920-1935,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 22: 2 (May, 1990): 277.

production from 1918 to 1929. From 1910 on, mining exports represented generally over 90 percent of the total exports, with tin accounting for 60 percent of the mining exports.⁴⁷¹ While the transition from silver to tin occurred smoothly for the Bolivian economy and society, the same cannot be said about the traditional silver elite, from which only the Aramayo family survived.⁴⁷² By the 1920s three families (Patiño, Hochschild, and Aramayo) controlled about 80 percent of the total exports of tin. Simón Patiño alone owned 50 percent of the tin national production in 1924 and 60 percent in 1929.⁴⁷³

The tin-mining industry produced a new elite group, distinct from the silver magnates in both social background and outlook. While the silver elite had traditionally maintained direct control over both their mines and the government, the new tin elite refrained from doing so. In the business front, foreign engineers and administrators ran the tin mining facilities. In politics, instead of occupying public offices themselves, the tin magnates, through the *Asociación de Industriales Mineros de Bolivia*, hired prominent members of the Senate as attorneys in order to represent their interests in Congress. Those politicians and lawyers were known as the *rosca*.⁴⁷⁴ The tin barons also influenced electoral results through the mobilization of the votes of the miners. According to *El Diario* (February 26th, 1913):

⁴⁷¹ Contreras, "Debt, Taxes, and War," 265; Mahmood Ayub and Hideo Hashimoto, *The Economics of Tin Mining in Bolivia* (Washington, 1984); Jonh Hillman, "Bolivia and the International Tin Cartel, 1931-1941," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (May, 1988): 1984.

⁴⁷² While grandfather José Avelino Aramayo had begun the fortune in silver mining in the 1850s, his son Félix and grandson Carlos Víctor were to move easily into the age of tin, with the aid of foreign capital (Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia* 34 fn 1; Klein, *Bolivia* 161, 163).

⁴⁷³ Hillman, "Bolivia and the International Tin Cartel," 86.

⁴⁷⁴ Guillermo Lora, *A History of the Bolivian Labour Movement (1848-1971)* (CUP, 1977): 383-384; Klein, *Bolivia*, 164; Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1493, 1562; Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 33.

On the political front, don Simón I. Patiño has control over the province of Bustillo in the Department of Potosí and the province of Huanuni in the Department of Oruro. His control there is sufficient to tip the balance to whatever side he chooses. In the province of Ayopaya in the Department of Cochabamba a new and prosperous mining enterprise is being established at Kami which is entirely owned by Mr. Patiño who... possesses all the elements necessary for electoral success in that province.”⁴⁷⁵

In a letter dated December 20th, 1910, to his friend the Minister of Government, Patiño recommends a candidate to fill the vacant post of sub-prefect of the Bustillo province. In another instance, the Prefect of Potosí observed in 1914 that one sub-prefect in his jurisdiction had recently resigned in order to become manager of an important mining enterprise. In May 1915, Aramayo secured his election as deputy for the province of Sud Chichas, where his miners were located.⁴⁷⁶ Sub-prefects, *corregidores*, and the police controlled the suffrage and were often themselves controlled by the mine-owners.⁴⁷⁷

THE EMERGENCE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY: SEEDS OF ELITE FRAGMENTATION, 1914-1920 – The Liberal Party ruled unopposed until the formation of the Republican Union Party in 1914. The Bolivian elite structure would remain cohesive until 1920, when the professional politicians of the Republic Party would hold the reigns of the Executive Office and become de facto members of the Bolivian elite. However, the seeds of the fragmentation that would ensue in the 1920 were sown in the creation of the Unión Republicana in 1914. The discontent among the Liberal elites that culminated in the

⁴⁷⁵ El Diario, quoted in Lawrence Whitehead, “The Electoral Process in Bolivia's Mining Camps,” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Nov., 1981): 320-321.

⁴⁷⁶ Whitehead Whitehead, “The Electoral Process in Bolivia's Mining Camps,” 322-323. Simón Patiño supported the Liberal Party. The former Conservative President Aniceto Arce, also a mining-magnate, and Carlos Víctor Aramayo, Patiño's main competitor in the tin mining sector, joined the opposition Republicans.

⁴⁷⁷ Whitehead, “The Electoral Process in Bolivia's Mining Camps,” 322-323.

creation of the new party did not emerge over night, but dated back to the transition into the third Liberal administration. President-elect Fernando Eloy Guachalla (1908) died before assuming office. Guachalla was a political figure of his own right, supported by the Liberal minority in Congress,⁴⁷⁸ and had in fact opposed several of President Montes' political initiatives (1904-1908). This situation offered an opportunity for the former president Ismael Montes to extend his influence by installing a more malleable public figure in the presidency. Therefore, whereas Montes and his followers argued that Guachalla's death invalidated both presidential and vice-presidential elections, the opposition led by Daniel Salamanca contended that the vice-presidential results were still valid. Montes' majority in Congress was able to invalidate the elections, disregarding the rights of the elected Vice President Lucio Pérez Velanco, but that vote was far from unanimous: more than one third of the representatives in Congress voted against the bill. In that occasion, anticipating the formation of an opposition party, Daniel Salamanca remarked,

“... the liberal governments, lacking brakes, have freed the reins to all the personal desires of the governing group, counting with the submission of its party and the absence of a true opposition. ... From this lack of restraint, and from the habit of not posing any obstacles to their own will, was born the project of law here discussed, an extremely grave error and violation of our institutions, error and violation that will be charged in the account of the Liberal Party. In this way the vicious circle of our politics resurfaces. The errors and violence of the government engender resistances, and those in turn provoke new violence. The old Liberal Party, already shaken in its organization, is close to being disaggregated due to those errors...”⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁸ Daniel Salamanca, minority representative, August 28, 1908. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1908* (La Paz: Tipo-Litografía Iris de Abel F. Plaza, 1909), 223-224. See also Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1543-1544 and Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 43.

⁴⁷⁹ Daniel Salamanca, minority representative, September 04, 1908. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1908* (La Paz: Tipo-Litografía Iris de Abel F. Plaza, 1909), 368.

At that point, the Bolivian political elites still formed a cohesive elite structure. On the one hand, the political elites publicly professed opposing policy stances. In that case, the most notorious issues regarded Bolivia's territorial integrity, especially the 1904 Treaty with Chile, and the Speyer contract that handed the construction of railroad lines over to private control – both policies being fiercely opposed by the congressional minority. On the other hand, the elites shared expectations of nonaggression, mutual toleration, and division of the spoils. At that time, those disagreements were not allowed to reach the point of violent conflict and forcible power seizures were not expected.

The cohesion of the Liberal Party continued throughout Eliodoro Villazón's government (1909-1913), but it did not resist the financial reform initiated during Montes' second administration (1913-1917).⁴⁸⁰ Private bankers strongly opposed the monopoly of currency issue granted by Montes to the state-controlled Banco de la Nación. As private banks began to severely restrict credit, financial panic ensued and several private fortunes were ended. Two of the three foreign banks with branches in Bolivia terminated their operations. With strong support from private bankers, dissident Liberal politicians led by Bautista Saavedra and Daniel Salamanca began to organize a new party, the *Unión Republicana* (Republican Union) in April 1914. The party's motto was "defensa nacional contra los avances del poder."⁴⁸¹

After fifteen years of ruling unopposed, a major political opposition to the Liberal Party emerged in the Republic Party. The first manifestation of elite fragmentation was the state of siege initiated on August 08, 1914, on the eve of national Republican Party first national convention. Montes also exiled forty leading opposition leaders and closed

⁴⁸⁰ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1543.

⁴⁸¹ Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 47; Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 545.

down thirteen newspapers. Montes' repressive attempt at dismantling the opposition failed and the Republican Union held its national convention in January 1915, right after the lift of the state of siege in December 1914.⁴⁸² Initially spearheaded by private bankers and Liberal dissenters, the Republican Union also received the support of landowners and the artisans.⁴⁸³

As the 1917 elections approached, the Ismael Montes government continued his attacks to the Republic Union, once again charging the members of that party with sedition.

“According to the Political Charter of the State, the reunion of persons that attribute to themselves the rights of the people consists of a crime of sedition. Well, it is before the constitutional precept that we place the organized group with elements of different political nuances, under the name of Republican Union, and it is in that sense that their propaganda and action, aiming at or appearing to accomplish, not a party struggle, which was legitimate even amidst excesses, but a fight against authority. With that goal they have called themselves representatives of the people and only agent of the Nation, and in this way, following the logic of the facts, both their press as well as their managers and candidates, have worked not within the political interests of a party, but claiming to be the voice of the people and arm of the Republic.”

“Similar attitude, openly contrary to the law, was characterized by a candid call to violence... (...) Henceforth, during the period of electoral preparation, de facto aggression against persons and also against police agents have developed almost through all Republic, with systematic uniformity. Moreover, the disturbs produced by the use of firearms in Election Day in several places have not had another cause.”

“Finally ... the deputy David Alvístegui, who performed the function of secretary of the republican candidates, invited the officers from one of the corps of the Army ... to support the revolutionary movement that, according to [Mr. Alvístegui], should break out in Potosí.”⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸² Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 48; Arguedas, *Historia General de Bolivia*, 547.

⁴⁸³ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1613, 1616.

⁴⁸⁴ President Ismael Montes, August 06, 1917. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1917* (La Paz), 23-24.

The Republican Rafael de Ugarte (who was also brother-in-law of Salamanca and former employee of the Banco Mercantil owned by Simón I. Patiño)⁴⁸⁵ protested the words of the President:

“In the message that the Honorable Congress has just heard, the Republican Party is accused of subversive action, and the one making this accusation is the same that has neither ceased to conspire in the opposition nor has stop to do so during his presidential administrations. Party Chief, not President of the Republic, don Ismael Montes, has constantly subverted the institutional order of the nation. There is no right that has not been attacked, freedom that has not been violated, nor guarantee that has been respected. Don Ismael Montes came to power as Party Chief, [he has] governed the Republic in the same character and today he leaves the supreme rule always maintaining his condition of political caudillo. And this is, gentlemen Congressmen, the same who dares to charge as subversive the ones who have had no other norm of conduct than to call him to fulfill his constitutional duties. On behalf of the parliamentary minority that with honor occupies its place of abnegation and sacrifice in this precinct, I protest against the inflammatory libel that labeled as a Message, President Montes has read as the most solemn act of the Congress of 1917.”⁴⁸⁶

The Liberal presidential candidate José Gutiérrez Guerra defeated the Republican José María Escalier with 73,000 to 9,000 votes.⁴⁸⁷ Answering to Republican-incited mob violence, on account of the murder of former president José Maria Pando, newly elected President Gutiérrez Guerra decreed a state of siege was decreed in December 5, 1917.

“The decree of the siege indicates as its foundation or cause the acts of commotion produced on December 5 by popular groups of the Republican Party, with armed attack against the forces responsible for safeguarding the free functioning of the Legislative Power and spreading resistance, revealing preconceived goals of altering the public order, which imposed the adoption of energetic and immediate measures by the Executive.”⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁵ Luis Antezana Ergueta, *Historia de las libras esterlinas en Bolivia* (La Paz: Plural Editores, 2003), 38-42.

⁴⁸⁶ Representative Rafael de Ugarte, August 06, 1917. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1917* (La Paz), 71-72.

⁴⁸⁷ Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 53.

⁴⁸⁸ President José Gutiérrez Guerra, September 13, 1918. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1918-1919* (La Paz), 66.

5.5 EXPLAINING LIBERAL FOREIGN POLICY

The early Liberal years were marked by high international tension. Still amidst the Federal Revolution, the new Liberal government was faced with the first Acre War, i.e., a rebellion of Brazilian settlers that lived in the rubber rich Bolivian territory of Acre.⁴⁸⁹ For the Bolivian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Luis Salinas Vegas, the secessionist revolution in Acre was but a façade behind which was an invasion supported by the Brazilian province of Amazonas for the sake of commercial advantage. Indeed, Salinas Vegas threatened to remove its representation from Brazil if the Brazilian Government did not prevent the province of Amazonas from intervening in Acre.⁴⁹⁰ Meanwhile, in the Peruvian front, the political and military chief don Leopoldo Collazos declared the creation of the province of Grau in Alto Purús on behalf of Peru in 1900.⁴⁹¹ The foreign threat to Bolivia increased amidst rumors of a plan for the partition of Bolivia between Brazil and Argentina in late 1900.⁴⁹²

Attempting to maintain its sovereignty over the Acre, the Bolivian Government offered a vast concession (approximately 75,000 square miles) to an Anglo-American Syndicate in December 20, 1901.⁴⁹³ However, such measure only served to invite a war

⁴⁸⁹ While in 1890 rubber provided 2 percent of the government income, its contribution had increased to 49 percent in 1898, due to an astronomic increase in the world demand for rubber (Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 33). In January 1899 Bolivia levied a 30 percent export tax at the newly constructed Puerto Alonso customhouse on all rubber leaving Acre. On July 14, 1899 the Spaniard colonist Luis Gálvez Rodríguez proclaimed himself to be President of the newly created independent State of Acre. Having recognized Bolivia's right to erect Puerto Alonso, the Brazilian Government decided not to intervene. The Bolivian forces finally defeated the rebellion in April 1901. See J. Valerie Fifer, *Bolivia: Land, Location, and Politics since 1825* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 123-125.

⁴⁹⁰ El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 8-XII-1900, p. 3. "El Acre (noticia de Río de Janeiro)."

⁴⁹¹ El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 21-XII-1900, p. 5. "El Amazonas boliviano (Noticia del Nacional de La Paz)."

⁴⁹² El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 5-XI-1900, p.3 "Supuesta desmembración de Bolivia (Paris)."

⁴⁹³ Frederic William Ganzert, "The Boundary Controversy in the Upper Amazon between Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru, 1903-1909," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 14:4 (Nov., 1934): 436. On the rights granted by Bolivia the Anglo-American Syndicate see Fifer, *Bolivia*, 123-124.

from Brazil and renew Peru's territorial claims against Bolivia.⁴⁹⁴ The Liberal representative Abel Iturralde explained the Bolivian international predicament:

“Some will say that Peru is not strong and will not impose its will on Bolivia; but instead we have seen that in the Treaty of Ancón Chile forced Peru to cede the temporary possession of the provinces of Tacna and Arica. What is happening right now in the territory of Acre? By the Treaty of 1867 we know that the region is part of the Bolivian nationality (sic); all public men in Brazil, in its government and outside the government, have recognized the Bolivian rights upon that territory and nevertheless they want in fact to take possession of it, based on their force.”⁴⁹⁵

The Liberal Government faced simultaneous threats from Argentina, Brazil, and Peru. Moreover, the events in Acre had been followed closely by the Chilean press, focusing on the demands of the Brazilian settlers, paralleling the Chilean situation in Antofagasta before 1879.⁴⁹⁶ As President Pando understood Bolivia's options,

“It is better to avoid violence which would be the declaration of a very difficult war and the definitive Brazil occupation without any compensation than to get into muddy waters as the example from Chile.”⁴⁹⁷

In the context of military inferiority and encroachment by all its sides, the Bolivian Government pacified its strongest opponents by conceding massive pieces of territory to both Brazil (Treaty of Petrópolis, November 17, 1903) and Chile (Treaty of Peace and Friendship, October 20, 1904) in exchange for financial compensation. Bolivia lost 400 kilometers of coast and 120,000 square kilometers to Chile and around 190,000 square kilometers to Brazil. The Bolivian Government agreed to use the £2 millions it

⁴⁹⁴ Fifer, *Bolivia*, 79-81, 141-145.

⁴⁹⁵ Abel Iturralde, representative from La Paz, September 24, 1903. In Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional de 1903* (La Paz, 190X), 83.

⁴⁹⁶ El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 10-V-1900, “Telegrama. Brasil. Los acrenses están dispuestos a rechazar a los bolivianos. Elección de nuevo presidente,” p. 3.

⁴⁹⁷ El Comercio, 27-III-1903, p. 4. “Brochazos para El Comercio de Bolivia.”

received from Brazil and the £300,000 from Chile to extend its railroad system.⁴⁹⁸ Those treaties epitomized the primacy of the mining interests, for whom it was better to have railroads than ports, since railroads were fundamental to transporting Bolivian minerals overseas. According to the Bolivian Ministers in London and tin mine owner, Félix Avelino Aramayo,⁴⁹⁹ the Liberal philosophy was:

“[To] end the border issues and commercial restrictions and apply all available resources of the Treasury and all elements from international arrangements to the development of the public wealth, that is, to the opening of ways that will make our products available abroad and that attract the influx of capitals so that the powerful elements that we possess may yield fruit.”⁵⁰⁰

During the Liberal undisputed rule, Bolivia only initiated the use of force abroad twice: in the Fall of 1906 and Winter of 1910-1911, both times against Peru. Whereas the 1906 incident is not even mentioned in the Congressional records, the 1910-1911 incident stands as an example of moderation from the part of the Government. The clashes of the 1910-1911 Winter occurred upon the release of the decision of the Argentine arbitration regarding the border dispute between Peru and Bolivia in the Ucayali-Urubamba and Madre de Dios basins. In Bolivia the award was received with great disappointment and the Congress refused to accept the decision.⁵⁰¹ Public opinion was agitated with hostile manifestations towards Argentina and Peru and a war against both countries became imminent.

The clashes between Bolivian and Peruvian troops occurred in that context. However, contrary to public opinion, the Villazón Government opted for negotiations and

⁴⁹⁸ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1490; Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional de 1903* (La Paz: Congreso Nacional, 1903), 224, 229-230.

⁴⁹⁹ Félix was the son of the silver magnate José Avelino Aramayo.

⁵⁰⁰ Félix Avelino Aramayo, “La cuestión del Acre y la legación de Bolivia en Londres,” Imprenta de Wertheimer (London, 1903), p. 7.

⁵⁰¹ Fifer, *Bolivia*, 141-145.

after recovering a few territories from Peru it was able to mitigate the conflict and fully extinguish the possibility of a new war.⁵⁰² President Villazón referred to the clash between Peruvian and Bolivian garrisons as “unexpected and unforeseen facts,”⁵⁰³ indicating that he publicly disapproved the incident. Villazón expressed similar sentiments towards the border issue with Paraguay with which Bolivia sought to maintain “friendly and peaceful relations.” Villazón stressed that “difficulties originating from [Paraguayan] internal politics, which are publicly known, have not permitted us to continue to discuss the question of the limits, which adjustment is of our immediate interest.”⁵⁰⁴ Regarding the priorities of Bolivian foreign policy, he remarked:

Being intensely concerned with our economic expansion and with awakening the mental and social living forces that must be the support of our future, we find ourselves very distanced from attempting adventures or flaming intrigues in the field of foreign relations. We want to be understood and respected as a people capable of having an autonomous life through progress, justice, and faithfulness.”⁵⁰⁵

In sum, there was no “rally-round-the-flag” motivated by border issues with Argentina, Peru, or Paraguay. Villazón made use of public statements condemning the border clashes as well as of the call for negotiations as efforts to maintain the international violence from escalating. However, there was also no guarantee that any of those countries would not escalate the dispute.

⁵⁰² Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia* 1495.

⁵⁰³ Eliodoro Villazón, President of Bolivia, August 6, 1911. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional de la Legislatura Ordinaria de 1911* (La Paz): 7.

⁵⁰⁴ Eliodoro Villazón, President of Bolivia, August 6, 1911. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional de la Legislatura Ordinaria de 1911* (La Paz): 7.

⁵⁰⁵ Eliodoro Villazón, President of Bolivia, August 6, 1911. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional de la Legislatura Ordinaria de 1911* (La Paz): 3.

PART 2: ELITE FRAGMENTATION AND LIMITED USE OF MILITARY FORCE, 1920-1932

In the 1920s there is a fundamental change in the organization of the Bolivian elite structure. For the first time since 1884, the economic and financial elites were not in control of the Executive and Legislative Powers. Another significant change in the composition of the Bolivian elites was that during the administration of José Guitérrez Guerra (1917-1920) the military re-emerged as a self-interested group, intervening again in the Bolivian politics along with the Republican Party.⁵⁰⁶ Thus, the government of Guitérrez Guerra ended with the Republican-military coup of July 12, 1920.

After the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), the Bolivian Army, composed of 690 officer and 2,165 other ranks, practically dissolved. The Military College was only reopened in 1891, when the Bolivian Army counted with 900 men and 373 officers.⁵⁰⁷ However, the reorganization and equipment of the Army were far from complete when the first Acre War (1899-1901) broke out. Recognizing the deficiencies of the existing military establishment, the Government contracted a French military mission in 1905. When the French left in 1909, Bolivia had an army of 300 officers and 4,000 other ranks. Bolivia received a German military mission led by Major Hans Kundt in 1911 and, after the end of the First World War, Kundt returned to Bolivia to serve as Chief of Staff of the

⁵⁰⁶ Díaz A., *Historia del Ejército de Bolivia 1825-1932*, 41.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, 23.

Army from 1921 to 1926. In 1924, the Bolivian Army had a total personnel strength of approximately 6,000.⁵⁰⁸

These modifications in the Bolivian elite structure correlate with a fundamental change in the Bolivian foreign policy, characterized by a focus on the dispute over the Chaco region. This new Bolivian foreign policy towards the Chaco manifested a marked increase in the number of fortifications built in the Chaco accompanied by the public attention given to this issue, especially from the Executive leader – a feature unseen before. However, throughout this period and despite the initiation of the Chaco War in 1932, Bolivian policy-makers, civilian and military alike, had no intention to initiate a full-blown war.

The conventional explanation for the Chaco War attributes the war to Bolivia's attempt to reverse the deterioration of its geopolitical position caused by the loss of its entire seacoast to Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879-1883) and to a lesser extent to Bolivia's loss of the territory of Acre of Brazil (1902-1903). When Peru and Chile peacefully solved the Tacna-Arica dispute in the Treaty of Lima (July 28, 1929), the Bolivian chances of peacefully obtaining a Pacific littoral were virtually nullified.⁵⁰⁹ As the prospects for a successful military victory against Chile, and probably against Peru, were minimal, Bolivia began to consider the Paraguay River as a suitable outlet to the Atlantic Ocean. However, this explanation is not consistent with the timing of events. Both the political framing of the Chaco issue as a matter of national interest and the

⁵⁰⁸ English, *Armed Forces of Latin America*, 75-76.

⁵⁰⁹ According to Treaty of Lima (1929), Chile kept Arica, ceded Tacna to Peru, and paid the Peruvian government \$6,000,000 in compensation. See David R. Mares, *Violent Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 69-70; Leslie B. Rout Jr., *Politics of the Chaco Peace Conference 1935-1939* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1970), 26-27; Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Caudillo, 1791-1899* Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2003), 388.

increase of military presence in the region anteceded the Treaty of Lima. Moreover, Bolivia lost its coast to Chile *de facto* in the Treaty of Ancón (October 20, 1883), when Chile and Peru ended the war without consulting Bolivia and *de jure* in 1904 Peace Treaty with Chile. (Until then, the two countries were technically in a state of war, since only a truce had been signed in 1884.) However, only in the 1920s was the Chaco region recognized in the political discourse as an issue of national interest. Until the 1920s, the political discourse on the Chaco had been about civilian colonization, that is, the need to grant concessions to private investors in order to establish a Bolivian civilian presence in the region. However, in the 1920s we see a change towards military colonization, that is, the need to claim Bolivia's sovereign rights over the Chaco by increasing the military presence in the region.

OBSERVATION 4: ELITE FRAGMENTATION, THE MILITARIZATION OF THE CHACO, AND USES OF FORCE SHORT OF WAR

ELITE STRUCTURE AND THREAT INTENSITY IN SAAVEDRA'S ADMINISTRATION – Gutiérrez Guerra was the last Liberal president of Bolivia, overthrown in the bloodless Glorious Revolution of July 12, 1920. He was also the last Bolivian president who represented the economic and financial elites of Bolivia. The next two presidents of Bolivia – i.e. Bautista Saavedra (1921-1925) and Hernando Siles (1926-1930) – had been directly involved in the Glorious Revolution. Bautista Saavedra, who was third in rank in the Republican Party, led the revolution in La Paz, and Hernando Siles in Oruro. The revolutionaries had the support of the urban middle class and the military help of Colonel Juan J. Fernández. While the republican landowning elites had opposed the revolutionary

means, they did not refrain from joining the post-revolutionary Government Junta, formed by Baptista Saavedra and two representatives of the landowners, José María Escalier and José Manuel Ramírez.⁵¹⁰ However, the republican coalition did not last long. Salamanca, Escalier and Ramírez (representing the landowning elites) seceded to form the Genuine Republican Party, whereas Saavedra and his followers formed the Saavedrista Republican Party supported by the middle class.⁵¹¹ The Liberal Party continued to be the political arm of the economic and financial elites.

In the 1920s, Bolivians were faced by pressing economic and social problems. By 1921 the domestic credit was exhausted and public employees and the army had not been paid for months. Inspired by the syndical movement in Chile,⁵¹² a number of minor political parties of socialist and Marxist orientation emerged in Bolivia. Saavedra thus confronted an over-assertive military class, growing social turmoil, student radicalism,⁵¹³ Indian and labor protests,⁵¹⁴ and political opposition. Reflecting upon his four years in government, Saavedra said in his last address to the Congress in August 15, 1925,

“My call to concord was responded with the revolt of a regiment in the month of my presidential inauguration. And since then the politics of opposition has had no other form of manifestation than with constant rebellion outbreaks and failed rebellions that have filled the four years of my government.”⁵¹⁵

⁵¹⁰ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1613-1614.

⁵¹¹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1615; Clarence H. Haring, “Revolution in South America,” *Foreign Affairs* 9: 2 (Jan., 1931): 284.

⁵¹² Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1619.

⁵¹³ Klein, *Bolivia*, 172.

⁵¹⁴ Labor and Indian protest, such as the massive uprising in Jesús de Machaca in the Lake Titicaca district in 1921, the Uncia mine strike in 1923, and Indian peasants protests at Chayanta in Potosí in 1927, were brutally suppressed by the military, which indiscriminately killed workers and their families. See Brian Loveman, *For La Patria: Politics and the Armed Forces in Latin America* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc. Imprint, 1999), 105-106; and William L. Schurz, “The Chaco Dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay,” *Foreign Affairs* 7: 4 (Jul., 1929): 652-653.

⁵¹⁵ Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1925 (La Paz)*, 30.

Since the Saavedrista Party's main resource base was the middle and popular classes, it was imperative for Saavedra to prevent the socialists from outbidding him for the labor vote.⁵¹⁶ Thus, in order to increase government funds and alleviate the social tension, Saavedra raised mining taxation, regulated and enforced tax collection, and took a one million dollar loan from Stifel Nicolaus, St Louis, in early 1922.⁵¹⁷ As a result, total tax revenue from exports almost doubled, reaching 12.8 percent for the period of 1924-1928. Increased revenue enabled Saavedra to introduce many public improvements in La Paz and Cochabamba, such as paved streets, water systems, boulevards and public buildings – policies that directly benefited his constituency.⁵¹⁸

SAAVEDRA'S MILITARIZATION OF THE CHACO – Having brought back the ghost of military coups with the Glorious Revolution, Saavedra increased the military presence in the Chaco as a strategy to avert his own overthrow by occupying the military's attention and resources with a foreign mission.⁵¹⁹ During the Saavedra administration, the forts "Muñoz" and "Saavedra" were built in the Chaco, both in 1923. The increased Bolivian presence in the Chaco resulted in a series of displays of military force, the first being initiated by the Bolivian military (Fall of 1921 and Fall of 1922) and the later as a response to Paraguayan displays of force (Fall of 1923 and Fall of 1924). But Saavedra's strategy was not foolproof. The President's tax policy had elicited the fierce opposition of the mining interests. Although the economic and political elites were no longer in control of the military forces, they nonetheless were still able to finance a series of civil-military rebellions against the Government: one in March 3, 1922 and two in

⁵¹⁶ Whitehead, "The Electoral Process in Bolivia's Mining Camps," 323-324.

⁵¹⁷ Contreras, "Debt, Taxes, and War," 268.

⁵¹⁸ Haring, "Revolution in South America," 284.

⁵¹⁹ Alfonso Crespo Rodas, *Hernando Siles: el poder y su angustia* (La Paz: Empresa Editora Siglo Ltda., 1985), 99-100.

1924.⁵²⁰ The rebellions were financed by the tin magnate Simón I. Patiño and conducted by the Liberal coronel Oscar Mariaca Pando, who had been previously relocated to a garrison in the Chaco.⁵²¹

It is impossible to ascertain the extent of the effect of Saavedra's strategy upon the preference and the capacity of the competing elites to resort to extra-electoral paths to power. Would the revolts of 1922 and 1924 have succeeded had Saavedra not increased the military presence in the Chaco? Would there have been more military revolts? But regardless of the actual success of Saavedra's strategy, what is relevant is that the greater Bolivian military presence in the Chaco was neither a response to a Paraguayan threat per se nor a "rally-round-the-flag" strategy. Instead, Saavedra's Chaco policy was a means to allocate domestic resources – in this case, the military forces – in such a way as to decrease the amount of ammunition available for competing elites to use against him.

If Saavedra's military policy had been a response to a Paraguayan threat, we would have seen indications of the alleged pre-existing threat in the Congressional debates previous to October 1921. However, no such indications existed. The Congressional debates of 1921 were consumed with the discussion about the validity of the Bolivian Constitution after the Glorious Revolution. During the last Liberal administration (Gutiérrez Guerra, 1917-1920), the Chaco region was briefly addressed in January 19, 1920, but the focus had been on the construction of irrigation systems and the initiation of colonization programs.⁵²² Paraguay was not even mentioned in Gutiérrez

⁵²⁰ Fifer, *Bolivia* 206.

⁵²¹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1695; Robert Brockmann S., *El General y Sus Presidentes: Vida y tiempos de Hans Kundt, Ernst Röhm y siete presidentes de Bolivia, 1911-1939* (La Paz: Plural Editores, 2009), 78.

⁵²² Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1919-1920* (La Paz), 208-216.

Guerra's state of the union of 1919, although the President alluded to Bolivia's relations with Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, Great Britain, France, and the United States.⁵²³ Before that, Gutiérrez Guerra had mentioned the diplomatic negotiations with Paraguay regarding the border issue in the state of the union of August 6, 1918.⁵²⁴ However, no allusions to the Bolivian display of force against Paraguay of November-December 1918 were ever made, indicating that the border issue with Paraguay was not a national security threat at that time.

Likewise, the 1921 and 1922 displays of force against Paraguay were not an attempt to fabricate a threat for the purpose of rallying either popular or congressional support around the presidency. Not only did the Congress never discuss the Bolivian displays of force against Paraguay in 1921 and 1922, but also the few mentions to the border issue were conciliatory and reported the Paraguayan behavior as resulting from a misunderstanding.

“The foundation of two forts in the Chaco, to safeguard the status quo line agreed with the Republic of Paraguay, gave way to certain intense agitation in that Republic. In Asunción it was believed that the Government of Bolivia had bellicose purposes against that country; however, having their Government been convinced that we had such intentions and that we had only meant to safeguard certain portion of our border, the fears of that Republic were dissipated. It would be desirable that both republics reach a convenient agreement, arriving at a transaction in their extreme pretentions.”⁵²⁵

ELITE STRUCTURE AND THREAT INTENSITY IN SILES' ADMINISTRATION – President

Hernando Siles (1926-1930) faced even harder domestic circumstances than his predecessor. It was during his government that the border issue with Paraguay assumed a

⁵²³ Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1919-1920* (La Paz), 2-11.

⁵²⁴ Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1918-1919* (La Paz), 8-9.

⁵²⁵ President Bautista Saavedra, August 15, 1925. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1925* (La Paz), 27-28.

national security threat character. Hernando Siles started his administration with the adoption of conciliatory measures towards his political opponents and by courting the military. The opposition parties responded well to Siles' gestures of conciliation and soon many influential opposition leaders accepted positions in the new government. Siles also reorganized the army to install loyal personal followers, such as Colonel David Toro, into key staff positions. He also reinstated Colonel Carlos Blanco Galindo, who had been a target of the previous administration.⁵²⁶ In his first year as president, Siles signed a £1.87 million arms contract with the British company Vickers-Armstrong. Foreign policy looked promising, when in March and November of 1926 the American Secretary of State Kellogg proposed to Chile and Peru that the Tacna-Arica area either be turned over to a tripartite administration including Bolivia or be given to Bolivia as an outright possession.⁵²⁷

However, his presidential bliss did not last long due to a combination of political and economic crises. Politically, Siles began to move out of the auspices of the former president Saavedra.⁵²⁸ First, Siles managed to force the Vice-President Abdón Saavedra (brother of former president Bautista Saavedra) into exile in November 16, 1926, with the help of Liberals, Genuine Republicans, and his own personal followers.⁵²⁹ Second, Siles created his new party, the Party of National Unity (Partido de la Unión Nacional) or

⁵²⁶ Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 88-89.

⁵²⁷ Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 102; Crespo Rodas, *Hernando Siles*, 153.

⁵²⁸ In order to receive Saavedra's support for his candidacy, Siles had to sign a manuscript document in which he committed to: (1) Strictly fulfill the program of the Saavedrista Republican Party, as candidate and as President of the Republic, not seeking either cooperation or reconciliation with the opposing political parties; (2) All his acts in international politics, small or big, be in complete agreement with the Party Leader Batista Saavedra, under strict obedience to Saavedra's ordinances; and (3) In case of any disagreement or conflict with the Leader of the Party, then President Siles should immediately submit to the directives of the party (Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1660).

⁵²⁹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1662.

Nationalist Party, counting several young ex-Liberals with the membership.⁵³⁰ Soon, Siles' Nationalists replaced the Saavedristas in the state bureaucracy, to which the Saavedristas responded by organizing popular manifestations against Siles, such as the conflict with the students in the Mercado de Flores (Flower Market) in May 4, 1927.⁵³¹

In the economic front, the decline in tin prices in 1927 initiated a severe financial crisis. Mines were closed down, labor agitation increased, and there were threats of a general strike. Siles reduced government salaries and increased import taxes, favoring small and medium mine-owners at the expense of importers and large mine-owners, for whom imported goods constituted 80 percent of production costs. To appease the mining interests, Siles used over 80 percent of the US\$ 14 million loan contracted from the American Dillon, Read & Co. in 1927 for railway construction.⁵³²

SILES' MILITARIZATION OF THE CHACO – Siles expanded Saavedra's fortification of the Chaco. Whereas Saavedra had founded two forts in 1923, Siles installed two other forts in 1926 and eight more in 1927.⁵³³ The chain of Bolivian forts was matched by Paraguay, and contact between Bolivian and Paraguayan troops became more frequent. In this context, there are two outcomes to be explained. One is the Paraguayan attack of the Bolivian fort Vanguardia in December 5, 1928. This outcome will be analyzed in the next chapter. The other, subject of this chapter, is the Bolivian response to the Paraguayan attack. Among the Bolivian policy options were (a) not to respond with military action,

⁵³⁰ Among those individuals were Liberals Rafael Taborga, Fabián Vaca Chávez, Luis Fernando Guachalla, Enrique Finot, José Tamayo, José Antonio Arze, Augusto Céspedes, and Augusto Guzmán.

⁵³¹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1670.

⁵³² Contreras "Debt, Taxes, and War," 272, 280; Haring "Revolution in South America," 279. In 1928 the government took another loan of US\$ 23 million from Dillon, Read & Co., which was used almost exclusively to refinance previous loans, including the loan contracted in the previous year for arms purchase.

⁵³³ Fifer, *Bolivia*, 207; and President Hernando Siles Reyes, August 6, 1929. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1929* (La Paz), 7.

but to pursue a strict diplomatic approach to the issue, (b) retaliate, or (c) escalate the event into a full-blown war. Although proportional retaliation seems to be the common sense response, no military action and escalation into war also fit within the realm of not only possible, but also probable responses. On the one hand, Bolivia has a history of not responding militarily to attacks. If we look Table 5.6 at the end of this chapter, we can see that out of thirteen attacks received between 1884 and 1932, Bolivia did not respond militarily to seven of them, and responded with a lower level force than received in one case. In fact, Bolivia only responded with a higher level of force than the one employed by the attacker in one case: the incident at Fort Sorpresa, in which a Paraguayan officer was killed when his small group entered the Bolivian fort in February 1927. On the other hand, the escalation of the 1928 Vanguardia incident into a full-blown war was not inconceivable. In fact, the Chaco War emerged from a similar situation.

It was after the military incident at Fort Sorpresa that the Chaco issue began to be portrayed by Bolivian politicians as a matter of national security. The Vice-President Mr. Román Paz even compared the Chaco issue with the loss the Pacific coast to Chile. In Mr. Román Paz's words, "...the issue of the Pacific, which is analogous to the Chaco, for being so vital to Bolivia the reintegration of its fluvial sovereignty in the extreme east of its territory, just as the maritime [reintegration] is in the West."⁵³⁴ Stressing the importance of the Chaco issue to the Bolivian people, the Vice President remarked that the Bolivia-Paraguay controversy was a problem that "most deeply shatters the public

⁵³⁴ Vice-President Mr. Román Paz, August 6, 1927. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria y Extraordinaria de 1927* (La Paz), 61-62.

spirit.”⁵³⁵ Notice that these declarations preceded the Paraguayan attack to the Bolivian fort in 1928.

THE VANGUARDIA INCIDENT AND SILES’ DOMESTIC POLITICS – The Paraguayan attack of December 5, 1928, was unexpected because diplomatic negotiations had been renewed since the death of the Paraguayan patrol-leader Lieutenant Rojas Silva in 1927. Nevertheless, Siles used the opportunity to extend a truce to his opposition, by offering an absolute amnesty and calling the Bolivian political parties to unite around the Chaco issue. In his words, “Hoping that partisan work would not obscure the international question and that it was necessary to create the union of the Bolivians around it, the decree of December 9, 1928, granting absolute amnesty in political matters was issued.”⁵³⁶ The government received support from all political parties and popular mass demonstrations occurred for three days in a row. Santa Cruz, which had historically been a separatist department and the center of the 1924 rebellion, was filled with anger and excitement over the attack on Fort Vangardia, four hundred miles away. Now the cry was “Viva Bolivia! Muera el Paraguay!”⁵³⁷ On December 12th, 1928, the Bolivian Cabinet resigned to give President Siles an opportunity to form a Ministry to deal with the impending crisis. On the next day, many thousands of people enrolled themselves as volunteers in La Paz and Sucre, and troops were moved to the border.

Despite the intensely bellicose popular sentiment at the time, President Siles avoided to escalate the dispute beyond retaliation. For the historian Valencia Vega, Siles considered the logistical difficulties imposed by the lack of access routes to the Chaco.

⁵³⁵ Vice-President Mr. Román Paz, August 6, 1928. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1928* (La Paz), 76.

⁵³⁶ President Hernando Siles Reyes, August 6, 1929. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1929* (La Paz), 11-12.

⁵³⁷ Fifer, *Bolivia*, 212.

Therefore, Siles confined the dispute to the diplomatic territory.⁵³⁸ According to the historian Crespo Rodas, Siles believed that “the country was not prepared to [engage in] this maximum commitment which is the war.”⁵³⁹ This explains Siles’ belief concerning the feasibility of a military victory given the logistic requirements of a possible campaign. In this context, a limited military response had the advantage of satisfying the public opinion and boosting Siles’ popularity while avoiding a military loss.

Thus Siles called the 1926 and 1927 reserves to buy time and appease the masses,⁵⁴⁰ but refused to order a general mobilization. Siles sent the nationalistic agitators to Villazón, the first military outpost to the Chaco, to placate the pressure for war. The commander-in-chief ordered the recapture of Vanguardia and the capture of the Paraguayan fort Boquerón, which was accomplished on December 14. On the next day, the Bolivians conducted an unsuccessful air attack against the Paraguayan port of Bahía Negra.⁵⁴¹ Once Vanguardia and Boquerón had been occupied, Siles’ order was to halt all advances of the troops – which the General Staff Chief José Quiroz ignored. Siles also accepted the mediation of Kellogg in the framework of Pan-American Conference,⁵⁴² for which he received a vote of confidence from the Senate in December 19.

Some say that it was the energetic note of reprimand sent to Bolivia by the Chilean chancellor Conrado Díaz Gallardo on December 16 what averted the war.⁵⁴³ Accordingly, Chile’s favoritism towards Paraguay would have tilted the balance of power

⁵³⁸ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1719.

⁵³⁹ Crespo Rodas, *Hernando Siles*, 261.

⁵⁴⁰ Crespo Rodas, *Hernando Siles*, 262.

⁵⁴¹ The four bombs failed to explode. Scheina, *Latin America’s Wars Vol. 2*, 86. See also *Bulletin of International News*, Vol. 5, No. 12 (Dec. 22, 1928): 11-24.

⁵⁴² Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia*, 105.

⁵⁴³ Vicente Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas: Eusebio Ayala, Vicente Rivarola, Guerra del Chaco* (Buenos Aires: Industria Gráfica del Libro SRL, 1982), 381.

in favor of the Guarani nation, dissuading Bolivia from escalating the dispute into a war. I don't dispute that balance of power concerns might have been part of Siles' calculations. However, Siles carefully designed response predated Días Gallardo's warning: Boquerón was captured on the fourteenth. Siles' response to the Paraguayan attack was calculated to appease the public opinion, avoid a full-blown war (assuming that Paraguay would show similar restraint), and increase his repressive power, which is a form of resource appropriation. Although the border issue with Paraguay had been submitted to arbitration, Siles maintained dictatorial powers in January 1929, asserting that force was needed to preserve order and safeguard the country's interest.⁵⁴⁴

The circumstances of December 1928 paralleled those of February and September of 1888. However, back then the response of the Bolivian Government had been much milder. In the only congressional comment about the Paraguayan attack to the Bolivian fort of Puerto Pacheco in 1888, Vice President José Manuel de Carpio emphasized the need for diplomatic negotiations saying,

“[The current Legislature] has approved the work on the limits with the Republic of Paraguay, inspired by feeling of sincere friendship and distancing itself from this meticulous politics that, with no value to solve the border issue, indefinitely deferred it, causing real damage to the Republic.”⁵⁴⁵

President Siles, in turn, had a much more dramatic version of the 1888 events, which according to him caused a great impact upon public opinion.

“The scandal of February 13, 1888 was caused by the surprise deployment of Paraguayan troops in Puerto Pacheco, the capture of Bolivian officials and their transfer to Asunción. ... Public sentiment was inflamed on account of the attack, and it was not possible to

⁵⁴⁴ Klein, *Parties and Political Change*, 105.

⁵⁴⁵ December 9, 1888. Bolivia, *Sesiones del Congreso Nacional de 1888* (Sucre: Imprenta Sucre, 1889): 48.

suppress it [the public sentiment] in a zone where our military action had not decisively arrived yet.”⁵⁴⁶

Until mid-1929, Siles was still capitalizing upon the 1928 occurrences:

“I pass now to the painful account of the recent occurrences. The Estado Mayor of Paraguay left its capital to situate itself in Concepción, as if it were in war. Such grave information has taken away from us the confidence in which we lived. In the dawn of December 5, 1928, 400 Paraguayan troops surprised and riddled by fire shots the small Bolivian force in Vanguardia, took several prisoners that were taken to Galpón, devastated and burnt the fort, to later abandon it. (...) Our troops were surrounded at dawn. We suffered several losses. The bulk of the invading troops did not suffer any [losses]. There was therefore no combat, but a premeditated crime.”⁵⁴⁷

However, when the final recommendations from the neutral commission on the border issue with Paraguay were made in September, the artificial war scare collapsed.⁵⁴⁸

From that moment on, the political standing of Siles became increasingly precarious. The US stock market crashed in late October, aggravating the Bolivian financial crisis that had begun in 1927. Siles’ nomination of General Kundt as Chief of Staff of the Estado Mayor in 1929-1930 cost him the support of the military,⁵⁴⁹ despite the increase on military expenditure.

THE FAILED ATTACK TO ISLA-POÍ AND SILES’ FALL – Under the pretext of continuing the implementation of the program of the Nationalist Party, Siles decided that he must remain in office despite the ending of his term and the constitutional ban on

⁵⁴⁶ President Hernando Siles Reyes, August 6, 1929. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1929* (La Paz): 7. See footnote 455 about the inaccuracy of Siles’ account of the events of 1888.

⁵⁴⁷ President Hernando Siles Reyes, August 6, 1929. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1929* (La Paz), 8.

⁵⁴⁸ According to the 12 September 1929 agreement, Paraguay would reconstruct the Vanguardia fortín and return possession of the place to Bolivia, while Bolivia would return Boquerón to Paraguay. See Bruce W. Farcao, *The Chaco War: Bolivia and Paraguay, 1932-1935* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 14.

⁵⁴⁹ General Kundt had been a German instructor in the Bolivian army before the World War. Kundt returned to Germany during First World War, but was invited to return to Bolivia by Saavedra, naturalized by presidential decree in 1920, and appointed first Minister of War and later Chief of Staff. His name was associated with many of the arbitrary acts of Saavedra's administration. Haring, “Revolution in South America,” 286 fn 3; Fifer, *Bolivia*, 205.

immediate reelection. His efforts to extend his tenure began in early October 1929, when he deported the leader of the Liberal Party Ismael Montes. (Vice-President Abdón Saavedra, had already been exiled in 1926. Abdón was brother of Siles' political opponent and former president Bautista Saavedra, also in exile).⁵⁵⁰ Commenting on those events, the Paraguayan daily *El Diario* remarked, "Mr. Siles, seeking his reelection, imprisons, expatriates, and even snatches refugees in foreign embassies."⁵⁵¹ The purge of competing elites was followed by an attempt to rally the country behind the attack to a Paraguayan fort Isla-Poí on January 16, 1930. According to *El Diario*, the incident at Isla-Poí was not accidental, but had "a definitive, visible, [and] persistent purpose. It is the employment of the tactic that Bautista Saavedra called, back in 1912, 'the incorporation of the Chaco.' This is also Siles' tactic before the next presidential election."⁵⁵² The Paraguayan paper added,

"It can be clearly, manifestly, and obviously seen that the purpose of the government of La Paz when provoking those skirmishes is no other than distracting the attention of the Bolivian people, who are living through times of anguishing uncertainty [given] the comings and goings of the politics of the government of Siles. (...) [The] government of Siles aspires to remain two more years in power and in order to do so it needs to distract the opinion of its people with the ghost of war."⁵⁵³

This opinion was shared not only by the Paraguayan press, but also by the Bolivian former president Bautista Saavedra:

"Mr. Bautista Saavedra has spoken in very clear terms. (...) The [border] issue is not about us anymore. Mr. Saavedra is the one who denounces the intentions of President Hernando Siles, thus confirming the report opportunely formulated: domestic politics reasons motivated the incursions in Isla-Poí. At this time it would be highly unpopular [for Siles] to return [the Paraguayan fort] Boquerón [captured on December 14, 1928],

⁵⁵⁰ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1680.

⁵⁵¹ "La lucha de dos voluntades," *El Diario*, October 8, 1929.

⁵⁵² "El Incidente de Isla-Poí," *El Diario*, January 20, 1930.

⁵⁵³ "Nueva Agresión Boliviana," *El Diario*, January 20, 1930.

when [he] is in the eve of elections. [To return Boquerón now] would be a loud blow to [his] reelection or to the prorogation of his term. The only suitable [political option] in this case is to show himself ferociously intransigent.”⁵⁵⁴

Unsuccessful in raising enough popular support to back his reelection plans, Siles decided to resort to a coup d'état. But this plan, which consisted of a political maneuver to change the Constitution to allow his re-election, also failed and a military junta ruled from May 1930 until March 1931.⁵⁵⁵

Before I proceed, I must briefly consider the possible endogeneity between Bolivia's territorial losses to Chile (1883) and Brazil (1903) as well as its conciliatory policies towards Argentina, Peru, and Paraguay during Villazón's administration in the early 1910s and the subsequent military buildup, which in turn contributed to cause of the Chaco War. The Bolivian previous territorial losses and military defeats and back downs might be indeed related to the strengthening of military in the 1920s. However, although the Bolivian military expansion might have been a permissive cause of the Chaco War, it was not a triggering cause. According to my theoretical framework, the presence of a strong (or stronger) military per se does not explain the escalation of uses of force into full-blown wars. Instead, an explanation for such event would be related to the relationship between the military and the other elites in the country (whether they are integrated or fragmented and whether they feel threatened or not), such as offered in the next section. Finally, my dissertation proposes to explain the decision of domestic elites to initiate the use of military force abroad by referring to changes in the Elite Fragmentation and Intensity Threat. However, it does not claim to explain the changes in

⁵⁵⁴ “Atando Cabos,” *El Diario*, February 6, 1930.

⁵⁵⁵ Siles plan was to resign the presidency and install a Council of Ministers, which would then call for a National Convention to change the Constitution introducing presidential reelection for consecutive terms. See Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1676, 1679-1680; Haring, “Revolution in South America,” 285-286; Loveman, *For La Patria*, 106.

fragmentation and threat (although it describes those processes). That is, a theory of elite rearrangement is outside of the scope of my dissertation.

THE ORIGINS OF THE CHACO WAR, 1931-1932

When Daniel Salamanca Urey (1931-34) assumed the presidency in March of 1931, the public debt was of 214 million Bolivianos, whereas total fiscal revenues for that year were less than 35 million Bolivianos.⁵⁵⁶ Salamanca's nomination had been unanimously agreed among the political parties, although there were disagreements regarding the vice presidential candidate.⁵⁵⁷ Although Salamanca's election brought the landowning elites back to the Executive Power,⁵⁵⁸ the Liberals were able to dominate the Congress by clever institutional manipulation.⁵⁵⁹ Tin prices continue to plummet,⁵⁶⁰ and sectoral and intra-sectoral conflict intensified with demands of mutually exclusive exchange rate policies.⁵⁶¹ The conflict over currency devaluation became the most salient

⁵⁵⁶ See Carmenza Gallo, "The Autonomy of Weak States: States and Classes in Primary Export Economies," *Sociological Perspectives* 40: 4 (1997): 645; Manuel E. Contreras, "Debt, Taxes, and War," 267.

⁵⁵⁷ Liberals and Genuine Republicans wanted José Luis Tejada Sorzano for Vice-President, while the Saavedristas proposed the name of Bautista Saavedra. See Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1692.

⁵⁵⁸ His first Cabinet Ministers Luis Calvo (Government and Justice), Florián Zambrana (Development and Communication), and Bailón Mercado (Public Instruction and Agriculture) were Genuine Republicans and representatives of the landowning interests. Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1698.

⁵⁵⁹ Before 1931, the voter selected a printed slip containing the name of his chosen candidate and sealed it in an envelope. However, new official regulations stipulated that the voter must write out in longhand, in a darkened cubicle, the names of the candidates for whom he wished to cast his vote. This apparently minor alteration handicapped the Republican Party, whose numerical strength came from the working class and peasants, i.e. the least educated voters. See Klein, *Bolivia*, 180; Farcao, *The Chaco War*, 18; and Whitehead, "The Electoral Process in Bolivia's Mining Camps," 326.

⁵⁶⁰ Tin prices fluctuated from £239 per ton in January 1929, to £176 in January 1930, to £112 in December 1930, to £104 in May 1931, to £122 in May 1932, and to over £200 in the summer of 1933. See Lawrence Whitehead and Mario R. dos Santos, "El impacto de la Gran Depresión en Bolivia," *Desarrollo Económico* 12: 45 (Apr. - Jun., 1972):69; Loveman, *For La Patria*, 106.

⁵⁶¹ Small and medium mine-owners, who did not rely on expensive imported capital goods, pressured for devaluation, which could substantially reduce their production costs. However, devaluation was very detrimental to the tin barons, for who imported goods constituted around 80 percent of the production costs,

political struggle during the summer and fall of 1931.⁵⁶² Salamanca decided to sacrifice the importers and landowners for the benefit of the large mine owners. In late July 1931 Salamanca announced the default on the external debt.

During the crisis, several Bolivian landowners experienced a critical reduction in their income as the demand for foodstuff declined. Because credit to purposes other than mining was severely curtailed, many landowners went bankrupt. Banks suddenly became owners of large amounts of lands that had been mortgaged as guarantee for previous loans. The crisis also deprived the government of the normal tools to garner support among certain sectors. Public employees were massively dismissed and those who kept their jobs had a fifteen percent wage reduction. As the budgetary deficit increased, the government was forced to reduce the supply of fundamental services. The Federación Nacional Postal Telegráfica y Radiotelegráfica had struck on April 10, and labor manifestations erupted in Oruro and Potosí in August.⁵⁶³ Unable to buy off allies with patronage and favors, President Salamanca depended increasingly on the military, the only public sector whose expenditure increased despite the economic crisis.⁵⁶⁴ Along with the increase in military expenditure, Salamanca also announced his intention to suppress union activism. Alluding to a Communist menace, the President proposed a Social Defense Law giving him emergency powers to confront the threats to internal

as well as to importers. See Whitehead and Santos, "El impacto de la Gran Depresión," 75-78; Hillman, "Bolivia and the International Tin Cartel," 87-88; and Contreras, "Debt, Taxes, and War," 283.

⁵⁶² Those issues pitted importers and large tin producers against small and medium mine-owners. Devaluation benefited small and medium mine-owners, who did not rely on expensive imported capital goods. However, devaluation was detrimental to large tin producers. See Hillman, "Bolivia and the International Tin Cartel," 87-88; Whitehead and Santos, "El impacto de la Gran Depresión," 75-76, 78-79; Contreras, "Debt, Taxes, and War," 283.

⁵⁶³ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia 1703-1704*.

⁵⁶⁴ Whitehead and Santos, "El impacto de la Gran Depresión," 79.

disorder. But the Liberal Congress refused to grant Salamanca the requested extraordinary authority.

In the economic crisis, Salamanca managed to alienate the landowners, importers, the middle class, all the traditional parties, and student, labor and radical movements for the benefit of the mining industry. Although the Great Depression directly affected the tin barons, they were not at the mercy of the Bolivian economy. Patiño, Hochschild, and Aramayo were actually able to increase their power and expand their international position during the crisis with cartelization and the taking over of smaller firms.⁵⁶⁵ The Liberals, who were the political arm of the mine interest, dominated the Congress and the Army benefited from increased military expenditure. In his state of the union of August 6, 1931, Salamanca defined the political strife in terms of a conflict over public employment: “The discontent political groups, desiring to take all employment for their own [members], also throw themselves upon the Government with an incessant work of smear. (...) In sum, the bottom of this fight is the dispute over public employment.”⁵⁶⁶ Among that the social elements that added to the political and economic crisis, Salamanca enumerated “the communist ferment [that] continues with its work of social undermining,”⁵⁶⁷ the press,⁵⁶⁸ and the “bad influences of diverse character that work to deviate [the Army] from its institutional position and convert it into an instrument of disorder and ruin for the homeland.”⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁵ Hillman, “Bolivia and the International Tin Cartel,” 86-87.

⁵⁶⁶ President Daniel Salamanca, August 6, 1931. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1931* (La Paz), 222.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 221.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 222.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, 218.

Since May 2, 1931, encouraged by Salamanca, the Estado Mayor General (EMG, General Staff) had been engaged in a major plan of penetration, exploration, and military occupation of the Chaco.⁵⁷⁰ Salamanca's "maximum expansion policy" represented a change from the previously defensive approach to the Chaco. In line with his new, more assertive Chaco policy Salamanca officially broke diplomatic relations with Paraguay on July 1, 1931, following a border clash between Paraguayan and Bolivian patrols. However, Salamanca insisted that he had no intention of leading Bolivia towards a war. "We must only look at this financial situation to understand that would be craziness of our part to provoke international disturbances of bellicose nature."⁵⁷¹ According to Salamanca, "the incident that caused the suspension of our diplomatic relations with Paraguay ... had no other goal than to safeguard the dignity of Bolivia."⁵⁷²

But while Salamanca's Chaco policy and military appeasement might have kept the military threat at bay, the political crisis continued. His Cabinet resigned on February 18, 1932, and on March 8 a new Cabinet was sworn.⁵⁷³ Addressing the Congress in an extraordinary night session in May 13, 1932, Vice-President José Luis Tejada Sorzano acknowledged "the perfect agreement of all political parties, or even better, of all Bolivian people, without any distinction, with the way in which the Executive Power

⁵⁷⁰ Loveman, *For La Patria*, 106-107; Klein, *Parties and Political Change*, 134. Salamanca's plan on extension into the non-occupied areas of the Chaco was formulated in "two or three" meetings with Ministers, the Chief of the General Staff, and Bolivian notables. Minister of War Coronel José L. Lanza and Chief of General Staff Coronel Filiberto Osorio were left in charge of the execution of the plan. In order to give continuity to the project amidst the plummet of public revenue caused the economic crisis, the Government took a £50,000 loan from Mr. Simón I. Patiño (Daniel Salamanca, "Documento No. 2: Salamanca refiere a grandes rasgos la ejecución del plan de penetración al Chaco y los orígenes de la guerra," in *Documentos para Una Historia de la Guerra del Chaco Volumen I* (La Paz: Editorial Don Bosco, 1951), 43-44).

⁵⁷¹ Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1931* (La Paz), 213.

⁵⁷² *Idem*.

⁵⁷³ *Bulletin of International News* 8:18 (Mar. 3, 1932): 11 and 8:19 (Mar. 17, 1932): 10. After that, Salamanca had two more changes of Cabinet in 1932 alone, on October 25 and on November 14.

faces and manages our international relations.”⁵⁷⁴ Tejada Sorzano added that Bolivia’s international issues “will be solved giving preference to the law and entirely excluding [the use of] force.”⁵⁷⁵ However, the Vice President also highlighted that the national consensus around the international issue did not translate into unity in other policy areas: “A majority that almost reached unanimity constituted [our current] government in its executive branch, but this national majority did not become a parliamentary majority.”⁵⁷⁶ As a result, the Vice President deemed the parliamentary labor to have become “seriously defective,” “[lacking] direction,” and irresponsible.⁵⁷⁷

But the national consensus around Salamanca’s international policy was not as unanimous as the Vice-President indicated. In fact, while the Bolivian diplomats negotiated the non-aggression pact in Washington, the Chamber of Deputies approved with a great majority a resolution “de-authorizing, disapproving, and rejecting the idea of the non-aggression pact,” which they considered an obstruction to the development of the plans of penetration and nationalization of the Chaco. In response, Salamanca convened a conference of Bolivian notables, which was attended by former presidents such as General Montes and Dr. Bautista Saavedra, former Chancellors, former diplomats, presidents of the diplomatic business commissions of both chambers, cabinet members, among others.⁵⁷⁸ Accordingly,

“The dominant opinion back then among those illustrious personages was also that Bolivia should persevere in its goal to penetrate in the Bolivian Chaco ... and that the

⁵⁷⁴ Vice-President José Luis Tejada Sorzano, May 13, 1932. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Extraordinaria 1932* (La Paz), 448.

⁵⁷⁵ Idem.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibidem, 451.

⁵⁷⁷ Idem.

⁵⁷⁸ Dr. Demetrio Canelas, “Las Responsabilidades de la Guerra del Chaco,” in Daniel Salamanca, *Mensajes y Memorias Póstumas* (Cochabamba, Bolivia: Editorial Canelas S.A., 1976), 105.

non-aggression pact could constitute a nuisance to the Bolivian penetration in the Chaco. At the end of the conference ... all or almost all speakers had shown a bellicose inclination...”⁵⁷⁹

Contrasting to the overall opinion and despite his record of inflammatory war speeches about the 1928 attack,⁵⁸⁰ Salamanca’s actions indicate that he did not intend to initiate a war. On April 25, 1932, a Bolivian reconnaissance aircraft discovered the location of a freshwater lake in the central Chaco with some apparently deserted buildings along its eastern shore.⁵⁸¹ General Filiberto Osorio, Bolivian Chief of Staff, asked the President to authorize a reconnaissance mission. Salamanca authorized the mission under the condition that “a hundred times we agreed that under no circumstances was a conflict to be provoked, not even a skirmish with the Paraguayan forces,” after having expressed “the fear that the barns were a Paraguayan fort.”⁵⁸² However, the Bolivian army command believed that the occupation of the lagoon was essential before a positional status quo declared in the ongoing peace negotiations occurring in Washington D.C.⁵⁸³ Therefore, disobeying the Presidential orders, Coronel Francisco Peña commanded Major Oscar Moscoso to occupy the lagoon regardless of a possible Paraguayan presence.⁵⁸⁴ So the Bolivian forces attacked and occupied the Paraguayan fort Carlos Antonio López on June 15, 1932.

⁵⁷⁹ Canelas, “Las Responsabilidades de la Guerra del Chaco,” 106.

⁵⁸⁰ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 385-386; Cnl. Dem. Francisco Barrero U., *Conduccion Politico-Diplomatica de la Guerra con Paraguay* (La Paz: Editorial El Siglo, 1979), 49-53; and Crespo Rodas, *Hernando Siles*, 264.

⁵⁸¹ Leslie B. Rout Jr., *Politics of the Chaco Peace Conference 1935-1939* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1970), 219.

⁵⁸² Daniel Salamanca, *Mensajes y Memorias Póstumas* (Cochabamba, Bolivia: Editorial Canelas S.A., 1976), 14.

⁵⁸³ Farcau, *Chaco War*, 29-30.

⁵⁸⁴ The order to occupy the Chuquisaca Lagoon was issued on May 21 and repeated in June 3, 1932. See Rout, *Politics of the Chaco*, 219; and Barrero, *Conduccion Politico-Diplomatica*, 68.

According to Salamanca, the occupation of the lagoon did not result from miscommunication, but it was rather a blatant case of military insubordination to the civilian government. For Salamanca, it was “difficult to admit that [Major Moscoso] ignored the fundamental base of our work in the Chaco, which was to carefully avoid all motive for conflict. (...) Being among the most intelligent and instructed men in the Army, he could not have ignored the consequences of an armed attack.”⁵⁸⁵ When General Osorio informed Salamanca of the capture of the Paraguayan fort, the President retorted, “Sir, this is war. Order the evacuation of the fort.”⁵⁸⁶ Upon hearing the presidential order, the Commander of the Fourth Division, Coronel Peñaranda, responded to the Estado Mayor that it was not convenient to abandon the fort. Instead, the fort should be reinforced.⁵⁸⁷ Also sharing Peñaranda’s opinion were the Chief of the General Staff, General Osorio; the Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Juan María Zalles; and the Minister of War, Dr. Enrique Hertzog.⁵⁸⁸ Under strong protest from both the military and from his own Cabinet, Salamanca dropped the withdrawal issue.⁵⁸⁹ In sum, military insubordination forced President Salamanca to escalate the conflict.

On July 15, 1932, responding to the Bolivian attack, Paraguayan forces recaptured fort Carlos Antonio López. Salamanca informed the nation that Paraguayan troops had occupied the Bolivian fort Mariscal Santa Cruz on the Chuquisaca Lagoon – omitting the fact that the seized fort had been previously taken by Bolivia from Paraguay. On the evening of July 18, in a special emergency cabinet meeting, Salamanca ordered the

⁵⁸⁵ Salamanca, *Mensajes y Memorias Póstumas*, 15.

⁵⁸⁶ Canelas, “Las Responsabilidades de la Guerra del Chaco,” 107.

⁵⁸⁷ Canelas, “Las Responsabilidades de la Guerra del Chaco,” 107.

⁵⁸⁸ Salamanca, “Documento No. 2,” 47.

⁵⁸⁹ Rout, *Politics of the Chaco*, 220; Barrero, *Conduccion Politico-Diplomatica*, 70.

immediate taking of the Paraguayan forts Corrales and Toledo in response to the Paraguayan victory at fort Santa Cruz. According to the President, the decision of reprisal resulted from unanimous consensus from the Cabinet.⁵⁹⁰ Colonel Osorio firmly opposed this plan, arguing that the Bolivian forces were not prepared, and pressed the president for a diplomatic solution. General Osorio had been aware of the difficulties related to the transport and mobilization of troops in the Chaco, but according to the military leaders, Salamanca did not really understand those difficulties. For Salamanca, all they needed was to “leave the western region six months in advance.”⁵⁹¹ A major public demonstration in support of the government was organized on July 19. Salamanca replaced Osorio with General Carlos Quintanilla, and on July 21 martial law was proclaimed throughout the country. Salamanca ordered a general mobilization and declared a state of siege. The Army resisted Salamanca’s orders. Only after the General Staff received a written acknowledgement of the president’s full responsibility for a “suicidal” war against the national interest did it agreed to carry out Salamanca’s decision.⁵⁹² Under state-of-siege authority, labor leaders and leftist politicians were jailed or conscripted as Bolivia mobilized for all-out war. Between July 26 and July 31, Bolivia captured the forts Corrales, Toledo, and Boquerón.

As seen above, the President and the General Staff disagreed about the location of the point of no return. For the military, Salamanca’s reprisal would certainly lead to a war. According to Colonel Osorio,

⁵⁹⁰ Daniel Salamanca, “Documento No. 3: El Ex-Presidente Salamanca se refiere a la actuación de la guarnición de Laguna Chuquisaca en las acciones del 29 de Junio y 15 de Julio de 1932” in *Documentos para Una Historia de la Guerra del Chaco Volumen I* (La Paz: Editorial Don Bosco, 1951), 51.

⁵⁹¹ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1719.

⁵⁹² Klein, *Parties and Political Change*, 150-151.

“The president surely – one has to honor his word – did not want nor think to unleash war; but he could do no less than provoke it with his violent attitude. Perhaps the president also ingenuously believed that with the so-called reprisals that he ordered he was going to frighten the Paraguayan people and that they would not react.”⁵⁹³

For Salamanca, the safeguard of the national honor demanded retaliation: “These aggressions caused indignation in all country and imposed upon the Government the duty to safeguard the Bolivian dignity.”⁵⁹⁴ Moreover, a calculated military aggression also had another perks. More specifically, it allowed Salamanca to adopt extra-ordinary measures to combat the domestic communist threat: “It was necessary to declare a state of siege for two reasons: 1st – The need to legitimize the use of the extraordinary faculties that the [international] situation demands: 2nd – The need to silence the communist movement that ostensibly works against the Nation.”⁵⁹⁵ According to Salamanca, the state of siege was necessary because:

“When the international danger occurred, this situation was instantly changed, with the Bolivian patriotism overcoming the causes of internal disorder. The only exception to this national sentiment was communism, which according to its doctrines took advantage of the public danger to double its activities.”⁵⁹⁶

However, after the forts Corrales, Toledo, and Boquerón were captured Salamanca gave orders to stop the military operations, since the national honor had been satisfied.⁵⁹⁷ “I must express that the offenses received from Paraguay in Laguna Grande have already been redressed by our Army. We have captured the forts Corrales, Toledo, and Boquerón. These measures, undertaken as legitimate reprisals, caused the impression

⁵⁹³ Quoted in Klein, *Parties and Political Change*, 152.

⁵⁹⁴ President Daniel Salamanca, August 6, 1932. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1932* (La Paz: Litografías e Imprentas Unidas, 1933), 4.

⁵⁹⁵ Salamanca, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional (1932)*, 4.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibidem, 11.

⁵⁹⁷ Valencia Vega, *Historia Política de Bolivia*, 1721.

of an imminent war...”⁵⁹⁸ However, “The Government of Bolivia understood that it should not oppose the opinion and exhortation of all the Continent and has shown itself willing to celebrate an armistice.”⁵⁹⁹

In attempting to explain the origins of the Chaco War, several Latin American scholars have accused the petroleum princes of New Jersey of starting the conflict. Julio José Chiavenato claims that “there are many evidences of the presence of the Standard Oil behind the war. One of the most interesting of them is the effort of known front men, such as Spruille Braden, in denying that involvement.”⁶⁰⁰ However, contrary to Chiavenato’s reasoning, the denial of the involvement does not constitute proof of involvement. In fact, according to the reporter Augusto Céspedes, President Salamanca was not acting on behalf of the foreign oil interests when conducting Bolivia’s foreign policy.

“ME. – The Standard, thanks to the stupidity of the Bolivian politicians, does not feel attached to the war nor to the destiny of Bolivia, but only to the consequences that are convenient to it. The Standard, black oil god, will impassively watch the death of the Bolivian Indians at the feet of its steel towers, while the Bolivian government – which before the world appears as its associate – not only does not receive any pecuniary help but must also buy gas from Argentina, Peru, and the United States to defend those wells. What do you think?

HIM. – Incredible. Dr. Salamanca must not know about this.

ME. – He knows, but he does not care. His impregnable egotism caused him to candidly fall in the trap set up by the provoking Paraguayan agents. He sees the Chaco conflict only as a land demarcation issue between Bolivia and Paraguay and not as the motor that pushes the Guarani soldiers from the law firms of Buenos Aires against the Bolivian soldiers, who in turn, really defending the territorial patrimony, end up virtually defending the oils of Standard, and for free.”⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁸ Salamanca, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional (1932)*: 5.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibidem, 6.

⁶⁰⁰ Julio José Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Chaco (leia-se petróleo)* (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1979), 114.

⁶⁰¹ Augusto Céspedes quoted in Chiavenato, *A Guerra do Chaco*, 113.

Just because the oil companies would benefit from the war outcome, we cannot infer from that that they were pulling the strings behind the scene. To do so would be to incur in an *ex post facto ergo propter hoc* logical fallacy. In his state of the union of August 1932, Salamanca mentioned the importance of the Chaco as an outlet to oil exports:

“I think that Bolivia will not be satisfied with one port in the Paraguay River as the sole vent of the vast territories that it possesses. It is not possible that Bolivia resigns itself to be a Nation perpetually cloistered. Right now, it is enough to mention one example. Bolivia has in the oriental slope of its mountains great oil riches, with several wells already drilled that could be immediately explored. [Bolivia] really needs those resources and sees itself forced to contemplate them as sterile wealth. Bolivia cannot take those resources to Argentina because that country, considering its interests, has closed the path with strong protectionist rights. The natural and logical solution would be to build a pipeline to the Paraguay River. But there is the Republic of Paraguay, usurper of Bolivian territories, also obstructing the path.”⁶⁰²

However, all of this was to explain why Bolivia “would not be willing to give the fabulous gifts that it in vain offered in other times.”⁶⁰³ The overall tone of the discourse was not alarmist or bellicose. Nowhere did Salamanca call the Bolivians to war or ask Congress support for such enterprise. As argued above, once the retaliation had been conducted, Salamanca was militarily satisfied and ready to return to the table of negotiations.

Nevertheless, none of this comprises a full explanation for why the Chaco War happened. Wars are dyadic phenomena and as such require dyadic explanations. What I have done in this section was to explain President Salamanca’s and Bolivia’s General Staff’s preferences regarding the use of military force. Retrospectively, the capture of Laguna Chuquisaca is said to be beginning of the war. However, at the time it was not so.

⁶⁰² Salamanca, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional* (1932), 7.

⁶⁰³ *Idem*.

On the one hand, the Bolivian military elites did not believe that the capture of the Laguna would lead to a war, despite Salamanca's objections and, hence, the President's order of withdraw from the Laguna. Attesting to the military's belief was the size of the force sent to recognize the Laguna: 18 men.⁶⁰⁴ Although the Bolivian military captured Chuquisaca Lagoon (June 15, 1932), where a Paraguayan force was already established, without the express authorization of the Executive Power, that accomplishment satisfied their military goal. After that, the General Staff consistently opposed any further military Bolivian expansion in the Chaco, even if to respond to Paraguay's recapture of the Laguna. On the other hand, Salamanca did not believe that his right to retaliate to Paraguay's attack would lead to a war either. After the capture of the forts Corrales, Toledo, and Boquerón (July 31, 1932), President Salamanca declared to be satisfied since the honor of Bolivia had been avenged. Whether or not Salamanca's and the General Staff's beliefs were correct or even rational is not the point. The point is that at the time, those were their expectations and preferences.

After July 31, 1932, both the Bolivian military chiefs and the President were satisfied with the intensity of the conflict and did not want further escalation. But they could not cause the Paraguayan elites to share the same preference. The Bolivian elites' preference for a limited use of force abroad did not mean that a military campaign could not be imposed on them. And so it was. In the next chapter, I will examine the domestic conditions that incentivized the Paraguayan military and Executive Power to escalate into a full-blown war what was intended by Bolivian decision-makers to be only one more military incident.

⁶⁰⁴ Canelas, "Las Responsabilidades de la Guerra del Chaco," 107; Salamanca, "Documento No. 2," 45.

Table 5.6 Bolivia's Militarized Disputes, 1884-1935

Start	End	Rival's Highest Hostility Act	Bolivia's Highest Hostility Act	Role of Bolivia
1884, March 1	1884, April 4	Chile, Use of F.	NMA	Target
1886, August 10	1886, August 10	Paraguay, Display	NMA	Target
1887, December 23	1888, February 13	Paraguay, Use of F.	NMA	Target
1888, September*	1888, September	Paraguay, Use of F.	NMA	Target
1896**	1897	Peru, Display of F.	NMA	Target
1897, October 8***	1897, October 8	Paraguay, Display of F.	NMA	Target
1902, June 19	1903, April 31 st	Brazil, Use of F.	Display	Target
1906, January 1	1906, January 31	Paraguay, NMA	Display	Initiator
1906, June 1	1906, December 31	Peru, NMA	Use of F.	Initiator
1910, November 19	1911, March 30	Peru, Use of F.	Use of F.	Initiator
1918, November 1	1918, December 31	Paraguay, NMA	Display	Initiator
1920, July 15	1920, August 22	Chile, Use of F. ****	NMA	Target
1921, October 1	1921, December 31	Paraguay, Display of F.	Display	Initiator
1922, September 1	1922, November 31	Paraguay, NMA	Display	Initiator
1923, October 1	1923, December 31	Paraguay, Display of F.	Display	Target
1924, August 1	1924, December 31	Paraguay, Display of F.	Display	Target
1927, February 26	1927, February 27	Paraguay, Display of F.	Use of F.	Target
1927, August 1	1927, September 31	Paraguay, Display of F.	Display	Initiator
1928, October 31	1928, October 31	Brazil, NMA	Display	Initiator
1928, August 22	1929, May 13	Paraguay, Use of F.	Use of F.	Target
1930, January 16	1930, January 26	Paraguay, Use of F.	Use of F.	Initiator
1931, Sept. 7♦	1931	Paraguay, NMA	Use of F.	Initiator
1932, June 15	1935, June 12	Paraguay, War	War	Target

Source: Correlates of War (COW).

NMA stands for no military action.

* Source: "Bolivianos presos," *La Democracia*, September 28, 1888, and Luis S. Crespo, "Fuerzas militares paraguayas se apoderan de Puerto Pacheco," *El Diario*, September 13, 1927 at http://www.eldiario.net/noticias/2011/2011_09/nt110912/1_05opn.php). Not coded by COW. Refers to the Paraguayan attack to Puerto Pacheco, which was under Bolivian administration, and the Paraguayan capture of Bolivian governmental authorities at that port.

** Source: Bolivia, Redactor del Congreso Nacional 1897, p. 2. The incident was a border violation. Not coded by the COW.

*** Source: Bolivia, Redactor del Congreso Nacional 1897, p. 27. The incident was a show of force in which Paraguay deployed 250 troops and two cannons in Puerto Pacheco. Not coded by the COW.

**** According to Arze Quiroga 355 Chile's action was a Display of Force since Chile's highest military action was the mobilization of troops to the border with Bolivia.

♦ Source: Lewis, Political Parties, 150. On September 7 the Bolivians took the Paraguayan fort of Samaklay. Not coded by the COW.

Table 5.7 Timeline: Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, and Bolivian Domestic and Foreign Policies

1884-1920 Overall cohesive elite structure and avoidance of international conflicts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overlap between economic, political, and military power on the miners-landowners coalition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Conservative Party: 1884-1898 – Liberal Party from 1899-1920 ▪ Avoidance of entangling the country in militarized foreign conflicts: relinquishing of very large tracts of territory; non-retaliatory response to foreign aggression ▪ Potential and actual domestic threat addressed with repression, vote buying, and bribery 	
1884-1888 Elite Cohesion, elite consensus, and non-existential threat	
1884	March-April: does not retaliate against Chile's use of force
1886	August: does not retaliate against Paraguay's display of force
1888	February: does not retaliate against Paraguay's display of force
1888-1899 Elite fragmentation and existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Political fragmentation: Conservatives vs. Liberals ▪ Concentration of economic and military power on the Conservative coalition ▪ Existential threat: zero-sum game: Liberals want to overthrow the system; Conservatives want to exclude Liberals 	
1888	September 8: failed liberal coup; state of siege September 24: does not retaliate against Paraguay's seizure of Bolivian authorities
1890	State of siege; Liberals begin to proclaim the right to rebel
1892	State of siege; first liberal majority in Congress
1894	State of siege
1896	Decline of silver elites Does not retaliate against Peru's border violation
1897	Liberal Party win all municipal elections; October: does not retaliate against Paraguay's display of force
1898	January 7: state of siege October 31: <i>Proyecto de Radicatoria</i> : split of the Conservative coalition December 14: Federal Revolution / civil war
1899	Federal Revolution / civil war
1900-1920 Cohesive Elite Structure & Internal Peace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overlap of political, economic, and military power on coalition formed by tin mining elites, Liberal professional politicians, and landed elites 	
1899-1901	Rebellion of Brazilian settlers in the Bolivian territory of Acre December 20: Anglo-American Syndicate concession in Acre
1902-1903	Acre War against Brazil
1906, 1910-1911	Initiation of use of force followed by conciliatory discourse
1914	April: creation of Republican Party August 7: state of siege August 8: (attempted) national convention of the Republican Party December: state of siege
1915	January: national convention of the Republican Party
1917	December 5: state of siege
(continues)	

1920-1932 Fragmented elite structure and the militarization of the Chaco	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Republican-military coalition takes power ▪ Mining and landowning elites no longer control of the Executive Power, although they maintain legislative representation ▪ Split of the mining-landowning coalition; landowners support Republican ▪ Incompatible preferences between political elites in control of the Executive Power and the economic elites ▪ Military buildup ▪ Militarization of the Chaco
1920	July 12: Republican-military coup
1921	Military buildup begins
1922	March 3: civil-military rebellion
1923	Building of forts “Muñoz” and “Saavedra”
1924	Two civil-military rebellions
1926	Building of two forts in the Chaco
1927	February: Sorpresa incident: Paraguayan officer killed in the Chaco Building of eight forts in the Chaco
1928	December 5: Vanguardia incident
1929	July 28: Peru and Chile peacefully solve Tacna and Arica issue without Bolivia Pres. Siles exiles VP A. Saavedra and leader of Liberal Party Ismael Montes
1930	January 16: failed Bolivian attack to Paraguayan fort Isla-Poí April: Siles’ failed constitutional coup
05/1930 – 03/1931	Military junta
1931	September: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Samaklay
1932	April 25: Bolivian reconnaissance aircraft finds installations in the Chuquisaca Lagoon in the Chaco June 15: Bolivian military occupies Paraguayan fort Carlos Antonio López July 15: Paraguay recaptures the fort; Salamanca reports the act as an unprecedented attack July 21: Salamanca declares martial law July 26: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Corrales July 28: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Toledo July 31: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Boquerón Salamanca stops military operations: “the national honor had been satisfied”

CHAPTER 6

PARAGUAY'S FOREIGN POLICY FROM THE END OF THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE UNTIL THE CHACO WAR

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this chapter is to explain Paraguay's decision-making regarding its use of military force abroad and its contribution to the military escalation of the dispute with Bolivia that culminated in the Chaco War (1932-1935) as a function of the Elite Structure and Threat Intensity in Paraguay, from 1870 until 1932. Between 1870 and 1931, Paraguay displayed a fragmented Elite Structure with varying degrees of Threat Intensity. Only after mid-July 1932 the Paraguayan elite structure became cohesive, with the Colorado factions out of Congress, the unification of the Liberal factions, and the support of the military chiefs and economic elites behind the presidency of Eusebio Ayala. However, because the unification of the Liberal Party in the face of an imminent war did not involve any renegotiation of the scheme of resource extraction and allocation among the Paraguayan elites, the elite structure moved into cohesion, but not integration. Ayala's preoccupation with the solidness of his support was reflected in the design of the military mission destined to recapture the fort Boquerón from the Bolivians: the use of military force should be limited, aimed to send a specific message to the international and domestic audiences, as we will see below. A summary of this chapter's findings can be found in table 6.4 located at the end of this chapter.

6.1 PARAGUAYAN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND MILITARY ELITES AFTER THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

The War of the Triple Alliance (WTA, 1864-1870) was a watershed in Paraguay's history. A series of personal dictatorships⁶⁰⁵ was replaced by party politics. The state-controlled economy gave way to the domination of foreign enterprises. The army was destroyed. A once isolationist country became now open to the continuous interference of Brazil and Argentina.⁶⁰⁶

In the political sphere, post-WTA Paraguayan elites quickly formed rival political clubs, foreshadowing the creation of the Centro Democrático and Asociación Nacional Republicana, more commonly known as the Liberal and Colorado parties, in 1887.⁶⁰⁷ Although the political fragmentation between Colorados and Liberals constituted the main axis of conflict among the Paraguayan elites, fragmentation also occurred within

⁶⁰⁵ The first of that of Dr. José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia (1814-1840), then Carlos Antonio López (1844-1862), and finally his son, Francisco Solano López (1862-1869).

⁶⁰⁶ Paul H. Lewis, *Political Parties and Generations in Paraguay's Liberal Era: 1869-1940* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 15-16; Paul C. Sondrol, "Paraguay: Democracy Challenged," in *Latin American Politics and Development*, ed. Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2007), 328-329-331; and Diego Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State in Paraguay during the Liberal Republic (1870-1936)," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21: 1 (Feb., 1989), 62.

⁶⁰⁷ On the one hand were the lopistas, i.e., an amorphous group of war veterans, government officials, and diplomats that were once related to Francisco Solano López. Those individuals were politically organized first in the Club Unión Republicana (March 31, 1869), soon renamed Club del Pueblo Club del Pueblo (March 24, 1870). On the other hand were the anti-lopistas coming from the Paraguayan Legion, i.e., a group of exiles started in April 1865 who volunteered to fight along the Brazilian and Argentine armies at the Paraguayan War. Those individuals formed the Club del Pueblo (June 26, 1869), renamed Grand Club del Pueblo (March 23, 1870). (The Paraguayan Legion, which was later attached to the Argentine army, had been created by a self-proclaimed government in exile called Asociación Paraguaya, formed in December 1864. Many of the Asociación's leaders had belonged to the Sociedad Libertadora, a club created in August 1858 to rally Paraguayan exiles against the dictatorship of Carlos Antonio López.) Formal political parties emerged from those clubs in 1887, with the lopistas forming the Asociación Nacional Republicana, also known as Colorado Party, and the anti-lopistas forming the Centro Democrático, or Liberal Party. See Harris Gaylord Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic: The First Colorado Era, 1878-1904* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), 4-5; Lewis, *Political Parties*, 17-18, 23; Frederic Hicks, "Interpersonal Relationships and Caudillismo in Paraguay," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 13: 1 (Jan., 1971), 92.

those groups, to a smaller extent in the 1870s, and then openly and significantly since 1892, when factions from within those parties became political parties on their own. Of the years between 1870 and 1931, the 1880s were the years when elite fragmentation was the least severe. It was also in that time when the Paraguayan foreign policy was the least conciliatory, as we will see below.

Economically, after the WTA, agro-exports moved the Paraguayan economy, and laissez-faire doctrines dictated economic policies. Capital accumulation developed in the private domain with virtually no participation of the state, especially after the controversial Laws of Sale of Public Lands and Yerbales of 1883 and 1885.⁶⁰⁸ Until the 1910s, foreign companies such as the Argentine La Industrial Paraguaya and the French-Argentine Domingo Barthe and Co. dominated the economy, while the local elites were relegated to a junior partnership status. Foreign companies not only owned the main sources of export earnings (i.e. yerba mate, tobacco and hides), but they also controlled Paraguay's railroads and shipping lines,⁶⁰⁹ depriving the Paraguayan state of the resources needed to develop a consistent policy aimed at attenuating economic dependence. The retreat of the state, combined with a completely open economy, weakened the local businesses, which could not compete with the powerful foreign

⁶⁰⁸ The retreat of the state from the economy began with the 1883 and 1885 Laws of Sale of Public Lands and Yerbales (mate plantations). Those laws dilapidated most of the 74.1 million acres of public land, created domestic and foreign latifundia, and facilitated the foreign domination of the economy, mostly by Argentine companies. The Argentine La Industrial Paraguaya purchased 8,400 square miles, including a sizeable proportion of Paraguay's best yerbales. The French-Argentine Domingo Barthe and Co. owned about 3,000 square miles. Together those two foreign companies exercised a virtual monopoly on the Paraguayan yerba trade. See Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State," 67; Hicks, "Interpersonal Relationships and Caudillismo in Paraguay," 91; and Robert Wilcox, "Paraguayans and the Making of the Brazilian Far West, 1870-1935," *The Americas*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Apr., 1993), 489.

⁶⁰⁹ In the 1920s the foreign capital amounted to fifty million gold pesos, while the domestic capital was less than nine million. See Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State," 63-65, 71-72.

companies, mostly Argentine.⁶¹⁰ As the most important Paraguayan foreign market, Argentina not only dominated Paraguayan foreign trade but also had a powerful voice in its political affairs.⁶¹¹

Nevertheless, the domestic political elites were able to establish an important, if subordinated, economic position based on land ownership devoted to ranching. Although the retreat of the state from the economy hurt the Paraguayan local businesses as a whole, it nonetheless benefited some members of the political elite. Among the members of the board of directors of La Industrial were influential Paraguayan politicians and military men from both political parties, such as the Colorado Paraguayan President General Bernardino Caballero (1880-1886) and the Liberals Vice-President Adolfo Saguier (1878-1880) and Dr. Juan Bautista Gaona. It was during Caballero's presidency that the Law of Sales of Public Lands and Yerbales, which enabled the formation of La Industrial, was passed and enacted. The Caballero administration also granted the future Colorado president General Patricio Escobar (1886-1890) the concession to exploit the very productive yerbaes of Tacurupucti. La Industrial Paraguaya found it politically expedient to include the Colorado elites on its board of directors. However, some its principal shareholders, such as the Liberal politicians Saguier and Ganoa (who would later become president, 1904-1905), would contribute heavily to the 1904 revolution that ousted Caballero and his political machine from power.⁶¹²

⁶¹⁰ Sixty to eighty percent of all Paraguayan exports were destined to Argentina. See Erico, "Estructura y Desarrollo," 133; and Paul C. Sondrol, "Paraguay: Democracy Challenged," 328-329-331.

⁶¹¹ Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State," 62-64, 67, 71-72.

⁶¹² See Diego Abente, "The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy," *The Americas* 45: 4 (Apr., 1989), 529; Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State," 67; and Hicks, "Interpersonal Relationships and Caudillismo in Paraguay," 91; Lewis, *Political Parties*, 51-52.

The makeup of the Paraguayan economic elites began to change in the late 1890s, with the economic growth of the merchants vis-à-vis the ranchers. This change was reflected in President Emilio Aceval's cabinet (1898-1902). A well-known businessman himself,⁶¹³ Aceval was not only the first representative of the urban bourgeoisie to reach the presidency. The president also enlisted others of a similar background to his cabinet, such as Guillermo de los Ríos (Interior) and José Urdapilleta (Finance), who were both wealthy bankers and businessmen.⁶¹⁴ When the last Colorado government managed to alienate merchants, bankers, and farmers, and the middle class with a degree of corruption that was abusive even for Paraguayan standards, it was the leading bankers and businessmen, from different parties and factions, who funded the Liberal Revolution (1904) that casted the Colorados out of power.

As a result of the WTA, the population of Paraguay fell from 525,000 to 221,000, of whom only 28,000 were adult males. The Paraguayan military was decimated after the war, and the Brazilian and Argentine occupation forces remained in the country until 1876. For the remainder of the nineteenth century, the re-emerging Paraguayan military could not be considered a fully professional national institution.⁶¹⁵ The army consisted of a few widely dispersed units of not more than company size for the defense of the frontiers and security and ceremonial duties at the capital. When Bernardino Caballero took office (1880-1886), Paraguay's armed forces were hardly sufficient to maintain internal order. Caballero inherited an "army" of 57 officers and 550 men. In 1881, Congress authorized the purchase of a gunboat (renamed Pirapó), which under Captain

⁶¹³ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 85.

⁶¹⁴ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 87-88.

⁶¹⁵ See Gustavo Gatti Cardozo, *El Papel Político de Los Militares en el Paraguay, 1870-1990* (Imprenta Salesiana: Asunción, 1990), 15 and Fernando López-Alves, *State Formation and Democracy in Latin America, 1810-1900* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 205.

Domingo A. Oritz was Paraguay's coastal guard. By 1892 the army still numbered only 600 men. It was not until 1895 when 25 officers were sent for training in Argentine and Chilean military schools, and new weaponry was not acquired until 1898. The National Guard was organized on August 22, 1898, but very few men joined. By the turn of the century the army comprised a single infantry battalion and several independent companies, two or three squadrons of cavalry and two field batteries.⁶¹⁶ During the Liberal administrations, weapons purchases were procured in 1906, 1911, 1922, 1923, 1927, 1930, and 1932. The Military School was reopened in 1916. Finally, military missions contracted by the government were realized in 1913, 1925, and 1930. Especial emphasis on the professionalization of the military was given during Eligio Ayala's administration (1924-1928).

6.2. ELITE RELATIONS AFTER THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

After the WTA, the Colorado political elites controlled the state machinery and the military, initially with the support of the Brazilian occupation army and later under the blessing of the Brazilian Foreign Minister.⁶¹⁷ This configuration lasted until commerce emerged as an alternative source of capital accumulation at the turn of the century, with the new merchants throwing their support behind the Liberals and moderate Colorados.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁶ Adrian J. English, *Armed Forces of Latin America* (New York, NY: Jane's Publishing Inc., 1984), 347; Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 31-32.

⁶¹⁷ Although the Colorado Party only emerged in 1887, I use the term Colorado elite retroactively, denoting the Colorado Party "ancestors" as well, i.e., the group of powerful individuals known as the *lopistas*.

⁶¹⁸ Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State," 75-77, 80; and Abente, "The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy," 531.

Colorados and Liberals agreed on many issues: the need of immigrants, colonization, and more productive agricultural techniques; incentivize commerce; exploit natural resources; create a sound financial system; invest on infrastructure and education; and to promote internal peace. There were groups from both parties that opposed the sale of public lands and the creation of huge holdings.⁶¹⁹ Nevertheless, and despite the Colorado control of the state, the struggle among elite factions for public offices – between and within political parties – was severe and constant. In a context of utter poverty and lack of opportunity for economic mobility, politics offered an important avenue for personal advancement. Managing concessions for public works such as railways and telephone and telegraph lines offered a relatively easy and fast way for politicians to enrich themselves by way of commissions.⁶²⁰

Therefore, although public contestation and competition were purportedly upheld and free speech existed *de facto*,⁶²¹ Paraguay experienced nine coups, two attempted coups, thirteen rebellions, one civil war, and several political assassinations between 1870 and 1924. The Army was disbanded twice.⁶²² The 1870 Constitution enfranchised all citizens older than 18 years of age regardless of race, property, or literacy,⁶²³ but electoral fraud and clientelism were rampant.⁶²⁴

Elite relations were also affected by the geopolitical interests of Brazil and Argentina. Geopolitical interests led to continuous Brazilian and Argentine intervention in Paraguayan politics, with the former power supporting the Colorados and the latter

⁶¹⁹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 69.

⁶²⁰ Abente, “The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy,” 529; Lewis, *Political Parties*, 42.

⁶²¹ Abente, “Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State,” 61.

⁶²² For a list of those events see Gatti Cardozo, *El Papel Político de Los Militares en el Paraguay*, 16-21.

⁶²³ Abente, “The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy,” 533.

⁶²⁴ Abente, “The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy,” 537.

backing the Liberals.⁶²⁵ In this context, accommodating a regional power was preferred to accommodating a domestic rival, since foreign support could grant exclusive control of the state,⁶²⁶ which in turn could be used to achieve economic and military domination. Therefore, the Brazilian-Argentine interference in Paraguayan politics hindered elite accommodation and reinforced elite fragmentation.

6.3. THREAT INTENSITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

Between 1870 and 1931, Paraguay displayed a fragmented Elite Structure with varying degrees of Threat Intensity. Only after mid-July 1932 the Paraguayan Elite Structure became cohesive, with the Colorado factions out of Congress, the unification of the Liberal factions, and the support of the military chiefs and economic elites behind the presidency of Eusebio Ayala. We will now trace the variation in the intensity of actual or perceived threat in order to explain the incentives and constraints to the initiation of the use of military force as a policy alternative to address domestic problems. As we will see below, only in the 1880s when the threat intensity was mitigated by the opening of alternative sources of wealth available to both Colorado and Liberal elites, the Paraguayan foreign policy was the least conciliatory. In turn, during times of existential threat evidenced by the incidence of political violence in its several forms (i.e., assassinations, revolutions, coups, forced exile, etc.) as well as by its ubiquitous expectation, such as in the late 1870s, mid-1890s, and 1900s, the Paraguayan foreign policy was the most conciliatory.

⁶²⁵ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 38, 43. Having satisfied its territorial claims with the Loizaga-Cotegipe Treaty (1872), Brazil's main goal in Paraguay became the hindrance of Argentine influence in that country. The Brazilian objective was to prevent a Paraguayan-Argentine peace that involved the surrender of the Chaco territory to the Platine power, putting Argentina right on Brazil's western flank.

⁶²⁶ Abente, "The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy," 538.

MAP 3 COLORADO BOUNDARY TREATIES

[MAP 3 HERE]

Source: Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 148.

**OBSERVATION 1: HIGH ELITE FRAGMENTATION AND EXISTENTIAL THREAT:
THE DECOUD-QUIJARRO TREATY OF 1879**

The first decade after the WTA was filled with political turmoil and violence. The provisional government inaugurated on August 15, 1869 faced two attempted coups before the completion of the Constitutional Convention in November 1870.⁶²⁷ The first constitutional president, Cirilo Rivarola (November 1870 – December 1871) was deceived by his Minister of Treasury, Juan Bautista Gill, into resigning. Vice-President Salvador Jovellanos, who finished Rivarola's term, faced an Argentine-funded revolt (March 1873-February 1874) led by the lopistas Cándido Bareiro and Bernardino Caballero – both of whom would later become presidents.⁶²⁸ The revolt ended with the Brazilian mediation, which secured the uncontested victory of Bautista Gill for the presidency on June 1, 1874, but not after crushing another revolt (April 1874), this time led by Major José Dolores Mola and ex-president Cirilo Rivarola.⁶²⁹ Revolts, imprisonments, exiles, and political assassinations continued in the following years.⁶³⁰ Those conflicts cut across the lopista and anti-lopista divide. Violence was not targeted

⁶²⁷ The first failed coup (June 29, 1870) was orchestrated by Cándido Bareiro, a leader of the lopistas, aiming at packing the Constitutional Convention with lopista delegates. The second failed coup (September 1, 1870) was staged by the anti-lopistas Facundo Machaín and Juansilvano Godoi, intending to make Machaín president of the Republic. See Lewis, *Political Parties*, 16, 29-31; Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 6.

⁶²⁸ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 36-37.

⁶²⁹ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 40-43.

⁶³⁰ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 46-49. Among the most outstanding cases of political violence in those years were the exile of the former Minister of Interior Benigno Ferreira in 1874; the Brazilian-backed revolt led by General Serrano against the Gill government in December 1875; the assassination of Gill on April 12, 1877; the revolt against the Vice-President Higinio Uriarte (finishing Gill's term) orchestrated by Gill's assassins, Juan Silvano Godoi and Major José Dolores Molas, along with ex-president Cirilo Rivarola; and the imprisonment (October 15, 1877) and assassination of the orthodox liberal Facundo Machaín (October 29, 1877), orchestrated by Bareiro and Caballero.

exclusively against a member of the rival group, but was instead directed towards either defending or capturing the Executive Power, regardless of political affiliation.⁶³¹

If ratified by the congresses of both countries, the Decoud-Quijarro Treaty would have surrendered at least one-half of the Chaco that Paraguay currently owns (see map 3 above). The negotiations of the treaty occurred during the administration of Cándido Bareiro (1878-1880), amid very high elite fragmentation and existential threat. Bareiro's inauguration in November 1878 had occurred under internal anarchy, rumors of invasion, fears of revolt, and a state of siege. Early in his administration (June 1879), Bareiro faced another Argentine-backed revolt.⁶³² The domestic conflict aggravated an economy already in shambles. As described by the conservative newspaper *La Reforma*,⁶³³

“The revolution is over, but not without leaving bitter memories and immense damages that will torture the conscience of its authors for a long time. (...) We do not know exactly how much the government spent in the mobilization of forces, but it can be assured that those costs will be no less than sixty-thousand pesos fuertes. (...) At the same time, those resources are snatched from the payment of the internal debt, which with much effort the government desires to minimize in order to increase the credit of the country.”⁶³⁴

Under those circumstances, the Bravo proposal for the extensive development of the Chaco, presented by President Bareiro for Congressional appraisal on July 11 found a welcoming environment. The entrepreneur Francisco Javier Bravo had requested the

⁶³¹ For example, in March 1873 until February 1874 Argentine-backed revolt against the government, both acting President Jovellanos and his Interior Minister Benigno Ferreira were members of the anti-lopista Grand Club del Pueblo, although Jovellanos had previously been a member of the lopista Club Unión Republicana. Among the rebels, Bernardino Caballero, Cándido Bareiro, Antonio Taboada, Juan B. Egusquiza, and Major José A. Dolores Molas were lopistas, though Taboada had been previously a member of the anti-lopista Club del Pueblo. But the rebels were also joined by several anti-lopistas such as the Decoud, Machaín, and Iturburu families, Juan Silvano Godoi, Idelfonso Benegas, and Major Eduardo Vera. See Lewis, *Politics Parties*, 39-40.

⁶³² Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 41, 48-49. The revolt against Bareiro was organized by Juan Silvano Godoi and Héctor Francisco Deoud, with the veiled support of some Argentine officials.

⁶³³ *La Reforma* was edited by Cándido Bareiro's Minister of Justice, José Segundo Decoud. Minister of Foreign Affairs Benjamín Aceval often contributed to the newspaper as well.

⁶³⁴ “Deuda interna,” *La Reforma*, June 29, 1879. Until July 31, 1879, the internal debt was of \$f 900,800 (see “Deuda interior,” *La Reforma*, August 13, 1879).

Paraguayan government a concession to build a railway linking Santa Cruz (in Bolivia) to a port on the Paraguay River. The project would “open ports, build railways, and colonize the territory.”⁶³⁵ President Bareiro encouraged the congress to approve the concession.⁶³⁶ “The colonization of that desert region promises the country, besides population growth, an immense development of production, which will undoubtedly increase the public wealth, without which it is impossible to conceive any prosperity at all,”⁶³⁷ said Bareiro. The Bravo proposal also received high praises from the conservative press: “... the acceptance of the Bravo proposal, such as recommended in the message of the President, praises our honor, opens new sources of wealth for the homeland and attracts two and a half million of thankful supporters and allied democrats.”⁶³⁸

The Paraguayan Congress approved the concession on August 4. However, the execution of the Bravo enterprise also depended on the approval of Bolivia, which in turn wanted a boundary treaty with Paraguay.⁶³⁹ The Bolivian plenipotentiary arrived in Asunción in late September, and throughout the month of October *La Reforma* published a series of editorials encouraging the dispatch of scientific expeditions to the Chaco, such as the one sent by Mr. Bravo. *La Reforma* welcomed the Decoud-Quijarro Treaty, signed in October 15, as being “conducive to the mutual well being of both peoples.”⁶⁴⁰

However, after the passing of Bareiro, who died in office on September 3, 1880, the border the treaty met severe criticism in Paraguay, not only from Liberals, but also

⁶³⁵ “Sección Oficial,” *La Reforma*, July 12, 1879.

⁶³⁶ Idem.

⁶³⁷ Idem.

⁶³⁸ “Un documento eslástico,” *La Reforma*, July 13, 1879.

⁶³⁹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 49, 150-152.

⁶⁴⁰ “Bolivia y Paraguay,” *La Reforma*, October 21, 1879.

from Conservatives.⁶⁴¹ Under the influence of President General Bernardino Caballero, Congress rejected the border treaty, and Paraguay adopted a less friendly, bolder foreign policy towards Bolivia.

**OBSERVATION 2: LESSENING OF FRAGMENTATION AND THREAT: THE
FORTIFICATION OF FUERTE OLIMPO (1886) AND THE PUERTO PACHECO INCIDENT
(1888)**

Political Catechism⁶⁴²

In the Republic of Paraguay, what is the trinity?

- The Executive Power, the Legislative Power, and the Judicial Power.
- Is the Executive Power God?
- Yes, father.
- Is the Legislative Power God?
- Yes, father.
- Is the Judicial Power God?
- Yes, father.
- Are they three gods?
- No, they are rather one only true God, as also one only Omnipotent, one only Lord.
- Is the Executive Power also Legislative?
- No, father.
- Is the Judicial Power the Executive or the Legislative?

- No, father.
- Why?
- Because the persons are distinct, although it is only one true God.
- Which one?
- The Executive.
- How [is the Executive] Almighty God?
- Because with all its power it does whatever it wants.
- How [is the Executive] Creator?
- Because it created senators, deputies, and judges out of nothing, that is, from obscurity.
- And for what goal [did the Executive] create them?
- For them to serve during four years, as they have served and will continue to serve.
- Amen!

In the satire above, *El Heraldo* depicts the nature of General Bernardino Caballero's administration (1880-1886): the epitome of Coloradismo. In fact, Caballero was perhaps the only Colorado president to effectively impose party discipline. The

⁶⁴¹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 152-153.

⁶⁴² *El Heraldo*, August 21, 1886.

Congress was no more than a rubber stamp for the Executive.⁶⁴³ Caballero became president through a coup, in the event of Bareiro's death on September 3, 1880.⁶⁴⁴ The lack of public commotion against the coup testified the weakness of the opposition. Indeed, many of the most important Liberal politicians defected to Coloradismo, hoping to influence the government from the inside.⁶⁴⁵ With the opposition weakened, an ensuing "peace by exhaustion" lasted for almost a decade.

The Bolivian Congress approved the Decoud-Quijarro Treaty on August 3, 1881, but President Caballero was much less inclined than his predecessor to make generous concessions to Bolivia, and the Paraguayan Congress rejected the treaty.⁶⁴⁶ Cándido Bareiro had seen the Decoud-Quijarro Treaty as an instrument to create economic growth through the colonization and development of the Chaco as well as by channeling the Bolivian commerce through the Paraguay River. Caballero's strategy for economic relief focused not on the potential long-term economic growth to be derived from the Bolivia trade, but instead relied on the short-term influx of money in the economy through the massive expansion of land sales, especially after July 1885.⁶⁴⁷ The laws of land sales, approved by Congress during Caballero's administration (September 24, 1883 and May 28 and July 11, 1885), were successful in stimulating the economy, growing local

⁶⁴³ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 28-29.

⁶⁴⁴ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 50; F. Arturo Bordon, *Historia Política del Paraguay: Era Constitucional. Tomo I* (Asunción: Orbis, 1976), 191. After the death of President Bareiro, Vice-President Adolfo Saguier was prevented from assuming the provisional presidency as stipulated by the Constitution. Instead, Saguier was arrested and forced to sign a letter of resignation. Meanwhile, the Minister of War and Marine Colonel Pedro Duarte informed the Cabinet that the Minister of Interior Bernadino Caballero would be named provisional president. The coup was orchestrated with the connivance of Bareiro's Minister Justice, Worship, and Public Instruction, José Segundo Decoud, who would mentor Caballero's presidency.

⁶⁴⁵ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 51-53. Among those individuals were José Segundo Decoud, Adolfo Saguier, Benjamín Aceval, José Urdapilleta, Juan G. González, and Cirilo Solalinde.

⁶⁴⁶ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 153. Instead, Caballero agreed to a protocol (January 9, 1883), which provided that modifications in the treaty could be made indefinitely.

⁶⁴⁷ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 169-170. The land sales policy began in November 1875, but did not reach astronomical proportions until the laws May 28 and July 11, 1885.

businesses, promoting overall prosperity, and increasing the state's revenue, which allowed for the initiation of important public works. Foreign capital fueled the expansion of the livestock and agricultural sectors, which now were able to supply the domestic market and even export.⁶⁴⁸

The land law of July 11, 1885, authorized the sale of *all* public lands, greatly enlarging the amount of and opportunities for obtaining rents in an activity other than holding public office. The land sale bonanza made rents available not only to the state bureaucracy (e.g. side payments negotiated along with the land sales), but also for both Liberal and Colorado elites as members of the board of directors of powerful foreign owned holdings. By opening up alternative sources of wealth the sales of public lands temporarily mitigated the elite threat caused by the existence of a limited and mutually exclusive source of income: public office. This alternative source of revenue, along with the weakening of the Liberal opposition alleviated, but did not eliminate elite threat and fragmentation. This was the context of the bolder Paraguayan foreign policy towards Bolivia in the Puerto Pacheco incident, beginning in 1886.

THE REESTABLISHMENT OF FUERTE OLIMPO, 1886 – On July 16, 1885, the Bolivian entrepreneur Miguel Suárez Arana built a port called Pacheco (named after the Bolivian president) at Bahia Negra, south of the line that marked Paraguay's northernmost claim.⁶⁴⁹ The project had been welcomed in the Paraguayan press, including the opposition paper *El Heraldo*, which reproduced an article from *El Nacional* of Buenos Aires entitled "La Bandera Boliviana en el Alto Paraguay" (The Bolivian Flag

⁶⁴⁸ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 56-60.

⁶⁴⁹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 153-154. The concession had been approved by the Paraguayan Congress, granting Suárez Arana the right to build a port and road connecting the port to Sucre. The concession carefully reserved to Paraguay all territorial rights.

in the Alto Paraguay).⁶⁵⁰ The article of May 11 attested the success of the project. But Suárez Arana felt short of resources, and the concession was nationalized on September 25, after which the Bolivian Government sent troops to Puerto Pacheco and raised the Bolivian flag – though the Decoud-Quijarro treaty had not been ratified.⁶⁵¹

However, none of those actions elicited an immediate response from the Paraguayan Congress or press. Manifestations against the Bolivian acts of sovereignty in the port did not occur until May 1886, during the campaign for the presidential election scheduled for September. Caballero had already been actively working to elect the Patricio Escobar-Rosario Miranda ticket.⁶⁵² One of his measures included drafting the editor of the opposition paper *El Herald*o, José de la Cruz Ayala, into the army and sending him to the Chaco, to be later exiled.⁶⁵³ Facing Congressional and press opposition to the Bolivian presence in Puerto Pacheco during the presidential campaign, Caballero decreed the reestablishment of the garrison in Fuerte Olimpo on August 10, 1886 – a month before the presidential election.⁶⁵⁴ The fort was located within the Bolivian jurisdiction under the Decoud-Quijarro treaty.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵⁰ “¡A Bolivia!” *El Herald*o, May 11, 1885. This statement was a response to a previous article from *La Democracia* that published that the Suárez Arana concession had run out of money.

⁶⁵¹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 154; “La Ruta Oriental de Bolivia y La Empresa Nacional,” *Revista del Centro Boliviano* (1886): 167.

⁶⁵² Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 64. Caballero sponsored the creation of the Club del Pueblo in 1885 to support the candidacy of Escobar. Among the members of Club del Pueblo were men who within two years would form the Liberal Party: Benjamín Aceval, Cecilio Báez, José María Fretes, Iganacio Ibarra, among others.

⁶⁵³ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 64.

⁶⁵⁴ Fuerte Olimpo had been evacuated during the WTA.

⁶⁵⁵ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 154-155. Despite Tamayo’s protest to the Paraguayan display of force, the Bolivian government did not respond militarily.

Given the ubiquitous electoral corruption, the opposition already expected Escobar's victory.⁶⁵⁶ This leads us to conclude that Caballero's display of force in Fuerte Olimpo was not aimed at intimidating the Liberal opposition or rallying the Liberals' national sentiments behind a strong Executive. Instead, the reestablishment of the garrison within a disputed territory was meant to galvanize the support of the conservative elites and combat dissent within the conservative ranks. Caballero's brazen control of the nomination and election processes, along with his repressive actions such as done to Cruz Ayala, cost the Colorados the support of many young intellectuals. Although General Patricio Escobar won the election, his candidacy had not been without objection.⁶⁵⁷

THE ACEVAL-TAMAYO TREATY (1887) AND THE PUERTO PACHECO INCIDENT (1888)

– The Aceval-Tamayo Treaty, signed on February 16, 1887, was even more favorable to Bolivia than the treaty of 1879 (see Map 3 above). In this new agreement, Paraguay would have retained only 124,000 of the disputed 340,000 square kilometers. The Aceval-Tamayo Treaty was not only a drastic departure from the policy adopted only six months before (i.e. the fortification of Fuerte Olimpo). The new treaty also made an even greater territorial concession than the previous pact rejected by Congress in 1883. And yet President Escobar recommended the approval of the treaty emphasizing the benefits to be gained from trade.

This event is puzzling to my theory, given that the elite structure and the degree of threat did not significantly change between August 1886 and February 1887. However, evidence suggests that Brazil “exerted a discreet pressure on Paraguay to sign the treaty

⁶⁵⁶ “Política Ligera,” *El Herado*, July 24, 1886; “La próxima presidencia,” *El Herado*, August 5, 1886.

⁶⁵⁷ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 64.

with Tamayo,” perhaps a side payment in its own border negotiations with Bolivia.⁶⁵⁸ Was Escobar’s public record on the treaty then just for show? I do not know. However, it is known that the new treaty came into intense criticism from both Congress and press by the end of the year,⁶⁵⁹ and that in 1888 the bolder foreign policy towards Bolivia was resumed. The Liberal press supported the establishment of military and political commands in the departments of Villa Hayes and Fuerte Olimpo on January 13, 1888.⁶⁶⁰ Moreover, when the Paraguayan Commander of Fuerte Olimpo, Angel Gimenez, imprisoned “a Mr. Moscoso, alleged *Governor* of ‘Puerto Pacheco’ and various individuals that served as his guards”⁶⁶¹ in mid-September, *La Democracia* remarked: “it seems thus without a doubt that the Bolivian government intended to introduce itself subtlety in our territories ... to quietly take possession of them.”⁶⁶² The daily added, “The Paraguayan government ... must ... work with resolve and energy against all Bolivian intrusion or pretension...”⁶⁶³

⁶⁵⁸ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 155.

⁶⁵⁹ “Cuestión nacional,” *El Imparcial*, November 25, 1887; “Puerto Pacheco,” *La Nación*, December 20, 1887; “Cuestión de Limites,” *El Imparcial*, December 21, 1887.

⁶⁶⁰ “Guarniciones militares en el Chaco,” *La Democracia*, January 16, 1888; “Comandancias Militares en el Chaco,” *La Democracia*, January 18, 1888; “Documentos Diplomáticos,” *La Democracia*, January 19, 1888; “Cuestión de Limites con Bolivia,” *El Imparcial*, January 19, 1888; “Cuestión de Limites con Bolivia,” *El Imparcial*, January 20, 1888. The establishment of the commands was explained on the grounds of the protection of Paraguayan citizens against the Indians and justified as being within Paraguay’s right, since the Aceval-Tamayo treaty had not been yet ratified. The Liberal papers emphasized that Paraguay had been exercising sovereignty in those regions since time immemorial.

⁶⁶¹ “Bolivianos presos,” *La Democracia*, September 28, 1888.

⁶⁶² “Bolivianos presos,” *La Democracia*, September 28, 1888.

⁶⁶³ Idem. See also Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 156. Notice that in his state of the union of August 1929, the Bolivian President Hernando Siles Reyes recounts this event as having happened in February 13, 1888. The Bolivian Vice President at the time, José Manuel de Carpio, does not even mention any Paraguayan attack to Puerto Pacheco in his address to the Congress on December 9, 1888. Likewise, the Correlates of War (COW) registers the occurrence of a Paraguayan use of military force for the interval of December 23, 1887 to February 13, 1888, when Paraguay in fact sent reinforcements to two forts (which constitute a display of force, not a use of force, according to COW’s coding rules). The COW dataset does not record any other MIDs between the two countries until 1906, and therefore does not record the Paraguayan apprehension of the Bolivian governmental officials in September 1888. Nevertheless, the capture of the Bolivian government officials by Paraguayan authorities in Puerto Pacheco appears in both

The Paraguayan political elites had material incentives not to accept the ratification of the new border treaty: they did not want to surrender or limit the rents obtained in the sale and concession of public lands.⁶⁶⁴ The sale of public lands was so extensive that the opposition paper *El Heraldo* commented “there is not enough territorial extension to grant concessions to all solicitors, even trespassing a lot over the limits of this territory.”⁶⁶⁵ *El Heraldo* added, “... the sale is excessive and ... we have sold even what is not ours.”⁶⁶⁶ In other words, *El Heraldo* foresaw the negative impacts of Caballero’s land policy upon Paraguay-Bolivia relations given the possibility of having infringed upon Bolivia’s territorial rights by selling lands before a border demarcation.⁶⁶⁷

Notice also the timing when the territorial dispute with Bolivia reemerges. The threat posed by the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty to the political elites’ material interests had been present since February. However, the press did not resurrect the threat of the Bolivian national acts in Puerto Pacheco until the intensification of factionalism, by December 1887, following the formal organization of political parties between July and September.⁶⁶⁸

the Paraguayan and Bolivian presses in September 1888 (for a more accurate Bolivian account (date-wise, at least) of those events see Luis S. Crespo, “Fuerzas militares paraguayas se apoderan de Puerto Pacheco,” *El Diario*, September 13, 1927 at http://www.eldiario.net/noticias/2011/2011_09/nt110912/1_05opn.php). Unfortunately, the issues of the Paraguayan paper *La Democracia* for February 12, 13, and 14, 1888, were not available in the archives of the National Library of Paraguay. Likewise, the issues of *El Imparcial* for February 13, 14, and 15, 1888 are also missing and other papers are not available for those dates.

⁶⁶⁴ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 155.

⁶⁶⁵ “Dificultades en el Chaco,” *El Heraldo*, September 15, 1885.

⁶⁶⁶ Idem.

⁶⁶⁷ Idem; “Porque nó,” *El Heraldo*, September 17, 1885.

⁶⁶⁸ After almost obtaining a majority in the Chamber of Deputies after the elections of February 13, the Liberals organized themselves in the Centro Democrático (July 1887), which was the official official name of the Liberal Party until 1894. Alarmed, the Colorados organized themselves in the Asociación Nacional Republicana (September 1887). During the month of December 1887, the Liberal paper *El Imparcial* published a series of editorials about the party competition in Paraguay.

CONCLUSION – Compared to the 1870s when political violence in its multiple forms was rampant, the 1880s witnessed a peace by exhaustion. Powerful political contenders such as Cirilo Rivarola, Benigno Ferreira, Cándido Bareiro, Facundo Machaín, and Bautista Gill were dead or exiled. Many of the most important Liberal politicians such as José Segundo Decoud defected to Coloradismo. The threat to the remaining Liberal opposition was lessened with the passing of the laws of land sales, which gave access to alternative sources of enrichment outside public office to Colorado and Liberal elites alike. Coloradismo experienced the apex of its party discipline behind its most important leader, General Bernardino Caballero. Those conditions mitigated the intensity of the threat caused by the death and life struggle over public office, but did not eliminate threat and fragmentation altogether.

In this context of lessened elite fragmentation and threat, the Colorado presidents Caballero and Escobar initiated and supported aggressive foreign policies towards Bolivia with the goal of strengthening the party ranks. The timing when the “Bolivian threat” is invoked by the Colorado press is indicative of that strategy: neither the establishment of the Bolivian presence in Puerto Pacheco (named after a Bolivian president) nor the Brazilian-pressured signature of the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty elicited immediate response from the Paraguayan Congress or press. Instead, those issues were raised during times when party discipline and cohesion were important: i.e., during the campaign for the presidential election scheduled for September 1886 and after the formal organization of political parties between July and September 1887. In sum, those aggressive foreign policies were aimed at boosting an important domestic resource: the Colorado Party organization.

OBSERVATION 3: ELITE FRAGMENTATION, REVOLUTIONS, AND BORDER TREATIES, 1889-1915

The following two decades in the Paraguayan political history displayed two main features: the constant menace of revolution and unprecedented political fragmentation, triggered by a failed attempt at a truce between Liberals and Colorados (September 1889 - March 1890).⁶⁶⁹ The threat of armed rebellion was unceasing until 1915. The realized and preempted revolts, revolutions, and coups are listed in table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Preempted and Realized Revolts, Revolutions, and Coups in Paraguay, 1891-1915	
June 1890	Preempted liberal revolt
October 18, 1891 to September 1892	Liberal revolt
March 21, 1892	Mutiny
June 9, 1894	Cavalcanti coup
January 9, 1902	Intra-Colorado coup
August-December 1904	Liberal Revolution
December 9, 1905	Forced resignation of President Juan B. Gaona
Early 1906	Failed coup led by Capt. Jara and the Radicals
Late 1906	Failed coup led by Capt. Jara and the Radicals
July 2, 1908	Major Jara-Radicals coup
August-September 1909	Colorado revolt
January 17, 1911	Major Jara-led coup
February 1911	Radical revolt against President Jara
July 5, 1911	Radical revolt against President Jara and coup
November 1911	Radical revolt
February 27, 1912	Colorado coup
March 1912	Major Jara-led revolt
March 22, 1912	Radical coup
January 1, 1915	Cívico revolt

⁶⁶⁹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 75-76.

By the end of 1892, each political party had split in two factions. The Liberals had divided into moderate Liberals (or Cívicos, after their newspaper, *El Cívico*)⁶⁷⁰ and radical Liberals (or Radicals). The Colorados had separated into *caballeristas* and *egusquicistas* (or *civilistas*). The moderate Liberals favored a policy of cooperation with moderate Colorados. Their leader was General Benigno Ferreira after his return from Buenos Aires in 1895. The Radicals, on the other hand, demanded a complete break with the Colorado regime and a redirection of the party's efforts toward revolution. Their leaders were Cecilio Báez and Fernando Carreras, editors of *El Pueblo*.⁶⁷¹ The old lopista generals Caballero and Escobar led the *caballeristas*. The *egusquicistas* (or *civilistas*) were members of the Colorado Party, such as José Segundo Decoud and Juan Gualberto González, who believed that the party was the only feasible way to moderate the military chiefs who run the country.⁶⁷² During the late 1890s, the *caballeristas* dominated the party directorate, while the *egusquicistas* controlled the government and the barracks, creating a balance between the two factions.⁶⁷³

During this period, Paraguay's foreign policy towards Bolivia was consistently conciliatory, with three main events deserving mention: the signature of the Benítez-Ichazo Treaty (November 23, 1894), the Swan concession, and the signature of the Pinilla-Soler Protocol (January 1907).

THE BENÍTEZ-ICHAZO TREATY (1894) AND THE SWAN CONCESSION (1897) – Like the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty, the Benítez-Ichazo Treaty was another bilateral agreement negotiated and signed under the influence of Brazil. Between June and November 1894,

⁶⁷⁰ *El Cívico* was edited by Adolfo Soler and Carlos Luís Isasi.

⁶⁷¹ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 84.

⁶⁷² Lewis, *Political Parties*, 66.

⁶⁷³ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 85.

the Brazilian representative in Paraguay Dr. Amaro Cavalcanti orchestrated the deposition of the Colorado President González, prevented the pro-Argentine José Segundo Decoud to be elected,⁶⁷⁴ and ensured the electoral victory of González's minister of war and marine, General Juan Bautista Egusquiza, for the presidency. Meanwhile, the Bolivian plenipotentiary Dr. Telmo Ichazo arrived in Asunción to negotiate and sign another border treaty. The treaty received the ample endorsement of the moderate coalition of Cívicos and *civilistas* behind the pro-Brazilian newly elected President Egusquiza (1894-1898). As explained by the moderate Liberal paper *La Democracia*, the border treaty with Bolivia was a means to free Paraguay from the economic dependency on Argentina by pursuing an alternative trade partner:

“The tariff war in the Plata River to the Paraguayan goods caused our goods to loose markets – and economic situation of Paraguay worsens daily. We produce little and do not have where to sell it to pay for what we consume from abroad. We lost our southern friends – now we must seek our northern friends. Bolivia can never be our commercial rival as Argentina and Uruguay are. Bolivia can consume our goods and have an outlet to its goods in Paraguay, being freed from the Chilean tutelage in Antofagasta and Arica. Paraguay can be to Bolivia what Montevideo is in the Plata River, i.e., the warehouse of all trade to its neighboring countries. Paraguay would be mandatory route for all trade from Bolivia and we would get out of the growing anemia, which is our current ruin. (...) In the economic, commercial and industrial situation that Paraguay passes through today, the delimitation of the borders with Bolivia and the [creation of an] outlet for Bolivia with a railroad to our river is the most secure hope for the salvation of Paraguay.”⁶⁷⁵

The previous border treaty with Bolivia had also been signed under Brazilian pressure. However, back then Paraguay resumed its aggressive foreign policy towards Bolivia soon after the signature of the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty. President Caballero reestablished the Paraguayan garrison in Fuerto Olimpo and President Escura supported the apprehension of Bolivian government officials in Puerto Pacheco. But the same did not occur after the signature of the Benítez-Ichazo Treaty, despite a similar opportunity

⁶⁷⁴ José Segundo Decoud was suspected to favor the annexation of Paraguay with Argentina – the ultimate Brazilian nightmare.

⁶⁷⁵ “Asuntos paraguay-bolivianos,” *La Democracia*, July 16, 1894.

for militarization created by the concession granted by the Bolivian Government to E. F. Swan in 1897. The Swan concession renewed the Paraguayan public attention to the Bolivian advance on disputed territory but did not elicit the use of force against Bolivia.⁶⁷⁶

The Aceval-Tamayo Treaty had been signed under the shadow of the relative party discipline, economic bonanza, and mitigated elite fragmentation and threat created during Caballero's administration. The Benítez-Ichazo Treaty occurred in a context of very high elite fragmentation, not only between Liberals and Colorados but also within parties, with constant and credible threats of revolution from both sides of the political spectrum. The Liberals had been actively attempting to violently overthrow the Colorado dominance since 1890 and Egusquiza had come to power through a Brazilian-sponsored intra-Colorado coup. In their daily *El Pueblo*, the Radicals publicly threatened to take over the government if the Benítez-Ichazo Treaty were ratified:

“With the confirmation of the terms of the treaty of limits published yesterday by *La Democracia*, the plenipotentiary Mr. Gregorio Benitez, as well as Mr. don Marcos Morínigo⁶⁷⁷ and his ministers that approved the treaty ... have compromised the peace of the Republic. (...) [The Liberal Party's] position is essentially revolutionary. (...) [The Liberal Party] will not acknowledge the constitutional legality of the treaty and will resort to the last supreme recourse of the oppressed peoples. (...) [The Liberal Party] will fight with abnegation and with the sacrifice of its elders. It will water the sacred ground of the Homeland with the generous blood of its sons. Bellicose elements shall not lack when pride and valor to defend the compromised integrity of the country abound. The fight will not be a party issue, but an essentially national matter. It is thus convenient that the Executive Power and the Congress weigh with the due maturity the treaty, because with such pact the internal and external peace of the Republic are compromised.”⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶ Representing the American Development Company, the Swan enterprise would build a railway as well as telegraph and telephone lines from the Paraguay River to Santa Cruz.

⁶⁷⁷ As Vice-President (1890-1894) Marcos Morínigo finished González term after the Cavalcanti coup, occupying the presidency until November 25, 1894.

⁶⁷⁸ “El tratado, el Gobierno y el pueblo,” *El Pueblo*, November 27, 1894.

Rumors of a Liberal Argentine-aided revolt arose again in November 1895, and President Egusquiza began military preparations to preempt an upheaval.⁶⁷⁹

When *La Democracia* published the rumors (that would be later confirmed) about the Swan concession on early July,⁶⁸⁰ the Paraguayan Executive Power adopted two measures. One was to send reinforcements to garrisons already under its control (Fuerte Olimpo and Puerto Pacheco).⁶⁸¹ Those actions constituted a show of force, but not a use of force that consisted on a provocation or called for retaliation. The second was to submit a project of law to Congress. The project authorized the Executive Power to organize the National Guard and was “approved immediately”⁶⁸² and “with great hurry”⁶⁸³ by the Chamber of Deputies. The Senate confirmed the project by the end of the month. The new law granted the Executive Power not only the organization of the National Guard, but also the right to legislate its specific terms.⁶⁸⁴

The Moderate Liberal daily *La Democracia* denounced the law for compromising the separation of powers. But both the *caballerista* paper *La Opinión* and the Moderate Liberal *El Cívico* highlighted the positive effects of the law upon the public spirit,

⁶⁷⁹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 95, 99. Keeping his end of the bargain with moderate Liberals, Egusquiza allowed the election of two Liberal senators and four Liberal deputies in the 1895 congressional election and sternly prohibited Colorado opposition to these men at the polls. Amnesty was granted to all who had been convicted or exiled for political crimes in April. Egusquiza also loaded the courts with Liberals. But cooperation with Liberals soon faded away when the return of Liberal leaders from exile, especially Benigno Ferreira from Buenos Aires, created the possibility that that Liberal factions would unite and start a revolution with the aid of Argentina.

⁶⁸⁰ *La Democracia*, July 6, 1897; “La Cuestión Boliviana,” *La Democracia*, July 7, 1897; “Se Mueven,” *La Democracia*, July 9, 1897.

⁶⁸¹ Warren, *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic*, 159-160.

⁶⁸² “Organización de la Guardia Nacional,” *La Opinión*, July 17, 1897.

⁶⁸³ “La Guardia Nacional,” *La Democracia*, July 17, 1897.

⁶⁸⁴ The text of the project read: «Article 1st – Authorizes that Executive Power to organize the National Guard of the capital and of the countryside whenever it sees fit. Article 2nd – The Executive Power will regulate this law.» See “La Guardia Nacional,” *La Democracia*, July 17, 1897.

especially among the youth.⁶⁸⁵ However, *La Opinión* and *El Cívico* diverged on the relationship between the organization of the National Guard and the conflict with Bolivia: the former saw the international conflict as a catalyst for the organization of the National Guard and the latter rejected that idea altogether. Only the Radical paper *La Opinión* exposed the connection between the need for militarization engendered by the Bolivian threat to the government's domestic repressive apparatus:

"The Bolivian issue has greatly alarmed the countryside, where it is believed that a war is imminent. The concern gained magnitude when the Congress voted the law by which it authorizes the Executive Power to mobilize the National Guard and ordered the political chiefs [in the countryside] to take a census of the citizens able for combat. In order to tranquilize the political chiefs, the government sent a memorandum saying that [the measure] is not about [military] enrollment, but rather about assessing the number of citizens who are apt for service, adding that ... *the peace is guaranteed*. Curious, this peace of ours, that so much costs the nation. The expenditure of the ministry of war is always increasing; its extraordinary expenditure reaches colossal proportions relatively to its importance in the public treasure. On the other hand, our [internal] peace is greatly *militarized*, as often seen in election days. In the city, the streets are toured by cavalry troops and the *guardians* of peace take their posts in the corners. In the countryside, the political chiefs chase the dwellers, as hunters raiding animals in the forests. This is the peace trumpeted daily by the ministerial organs; and it is also the peace referred to in the memorandum from the Ministry [of war]. (...) The internal peace, thus, does not exist, and neither does the international peace, since the border treaty with Bolivia is still pending..."⁶⁸⁶

In sum, in a context of high elite fragmentation and existential threat, the Egusquiza administration (1894-1898) followed a conciliatory foreign policy towards Bolivia, abandoning the aggressive posturing adopted by Caballero and Escobar. Both the Aceval-Tamayo Treaty (1887) and the Benítez-Ichazo Treaty (1894) had been signed under Brazilian influence. However, while the generosity embodied in the 1887 treaty was soon replaced by a bolder foreign policy stance, taking possession of an outpost located in a disputed territory and later imprisoning the Puerto Pacheco Bolivian

⁶⁸⁵ "Organización de la Guardia Nacional," *La Opinión*, July 17, 1897; "The National Guard," *El Cívico*, July 24, 1897.

⁶⁸⁶ "La paz Paraguaya," *El Pueblo*, August 3, 1897.

“governor,” the same change of attitude did not occur after the signing of the 1894 treaty. Instead, the potential Bolivian threat associated with the Swan concession justified the Executive Power’s organization of the National Guard, as well as the prerogative to legislate the “conditions and formalities that will preside the calling, organization, and discipline of the National Guard.”⁶⁸⁷ The reinforcement of distant military outposts can be definitely used as a means to neutralize outstanding members of the opposition by drafting them and sending them to those remote locations. However, the strengthening and increase of instruments of the state repressive apparatus, such as the National Guard, have a more pervasive reach in society.

THE LIBERAL REVOLUTION (1904) AND THE PINILLA-SOLER PROTOCOL (1907) –

The fragmentation of the elite structure and existential threat continued after those events. Amidst severe economic depression,⁶⁸⁸ the year 1900 was filled with multiple political crises⁶⁸⁹ and rumors of an impending coup, which was realized on January 9, 1902. The coup removed the *egusquicista* Emilio Aceval from power and restored the *caballeristas* to the presidency, but completely estranged the moderate Colorados.⁶⁹⁰ In the following months there were constant rumors of a counter-revolt as well as preemptive military preparations. Finally, the rent appropriation and redistribution of the landowning

⁶⁸⁷ “La Guardia Nacional,” *La Democracia*, July 17, 1897.

⁶⁸⁸ An outbreak of bubonic plague in 1899 caused Argentina to impose a quarantine on Paraguayan goods, which in turn threw Paraguay into a severe economic depression.

⁶⁸⁹ The entire cabinet offered its resignation in January, but General Egusquiza convinced the cabinet members to withdraw their resignations. Other crises with Decoud, Urdapilleta, and Caminos resigning from the cabinet in March, followed by Queirolo and Legal. Ferreira gave up his seat on the Supreme Court and Campos left the Finance Ministry a few months later.

⁶⁹⁰ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 89-92. The January 1902 was conducted by the Colorado War Minister Colonel Juan A. Escurra, acting on the counsel of generals Caballero and Escobar.

caballerista governmental elite reached such abusive levels, even for Paraguay,⁶⁹¹ that leading bankers and businessmen, from different parties and factions, were willing to fund an armed uprising to overthrow the government.⁶⁹² A revolutionary junta with excellent contacts in the Argentine government was formed in early 1904, and the *caballerista* government was overthrown in December.⁶⁹³

The joint forces of *civilista* Colorados, Cívicos, and Radicals were able to overthrow the *caballerista* government but were not enough to produce a consensus regarding access to the government machine among the *civilista* Colorado, Cívico, and Radical elites. As a consequence, political violence became even more frequent, as shown in table 12 above. This time, not only Paraguay signed the Pinilla-Soler Protocol in January 1907, but President Benigno Ferreira also “rushed to ratify [it].”⁶⁹⁴

THE ARGENTINE INCIDENTS – The years 1911 and 1912 were specially convoluted, with at least seven different revolts and coups (see table 12 above). Given the high incidence and intensity of political turmoil in Paraguay in those years, the Paraguayan uses of force against Argentina in early 1911 and early 1912, as coded by the Correlates of War, would seem to contradict one of my hypothesis: i.e. that elites in a very

⁶⁹¹ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 95; Warren “The Paraguayan Revolution of 1904,” 369-370; Abente, “Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State,” 81-83. The massive corruption alienated merchants, bankers, and farmers, the middle class, and even the very children of the *caballerista* elite. On January 31, 1903, Captain Patricio Alejandro Escobar, son of the ex-president, and Captain Albino Jara, son of the commander of the Northern Military District, trusted Colorado officer and war hero, Colonel Zacarias Jara, were arrested for plotting.

⁶⁹² Lewis, *Political Parties*, 95. Those individuals were Guillermo de los Ríos, Emilio Aceval, Gualberto Cardús Huerta, Francisco Campos, Juan Bautista Gaona, and Emilio Saguier.

⁶⁹³ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 96; Abente, “The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy,” 531; Harris Gaylord Warren, “The Paraguayan Revolution of 1904,” *The Americas* 36: 3 (1980): 365-384. The revolutionary junta was formed by the Cívico General Benigno Ferreira, the Radicals Cecilio Báez and Emiliano González Navero, and the *civilista* Colorados as well as bankers and businessmen Guillermo de los Ríos, Emilio Aceval, Francisco Campos, and Emilio Saguier. Two Paraguayan exiles, Lieutenant Manuel J. Duarte and Lieutenant Elías Ayala, both graduates of the Argentine Naval Academy and officers in the Argentine navy, provided the crucial link with Argentina.

⁶⁹⁴ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 119.

fragmented elites structure facing high levels of threat would not initiate any use of military force abroad. I argue, however, that it is important to put those events in their proper context: the spillover of the Paraguayan elite conflict into Argentina.

The Paraguayan Executive Power had been under the control of the Radicals since the coup of July 2, 1908, led by Major Albino Jara that overthrew the *Cívico-civilista* government. However, the fight for the control of the Executive Power continued, featuring both guerrilla fashion attacks from Colorado groups that had found refuge in Corrientes (Argentina) as well as several intra-Radical revolts and coups.⁶⁹⁵ In 1910 elements from both sides of the Paraguayan conflict took control of several Argentine merchant ships, eliciting Argentina's formal complaint to the Paraguayan Radical government, which returned the ships and promised to pay for damages. Those events were aggravated by the obstruction of free trade in the Plata tributaries by Paraguayan armed forces. In order to stop those acts, the authorities in Buenos Aires initiated a special naval patrol.⁶⁹⁶ In late 1911 and early 1912, relations between the Argentine and Paraguayan governments further deteriorated. Argentina protested incursions by Paraguayan troops into the Argentine Chaco, and Rojas, after discovering that Argentine

⁶⁹⁵ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 110-116. The Radicals provisional government was followed by President-elect Manuel Gondra in late 1910. However, Gondra lasted less than two months in office, being overthrown by his Minister of War, Major Jara on January 17, 1911. Jara's government, in turn, lasted less than seven months. During that short span of time, Jara successfully crushed a Radical revolt (mid-February), uncovered a conspiracy inside the government to replace him, and arrested the Congressmen who planned on impeaching him. Jara was defeated by a maverick Radical revolt on July 5, 1911, and Liberato Marcial Rojas assumed the presidency. Rojas' administration lasted eight tumultuous months, filled with cabinet changes, continual political infighting between Radicals, Cívicos, and Colorados, and a second Radical revolt (November 1911). Rojas was arrested by his own personal guard on February 27, 1912, but the new Colorado government only lasted for twenty one days. During that time, the Colorados were pressured simultaneously by another of Jara's revolts as well as by revolt led by the Radicals, who recaptured the government. The new Radical government still had to deal with Jara's revolt that had initially aimed at the Colorados and was now joined by Cívicos and Colorados against the Radicals.

⁶⁹⁶ Isidoro Ruiz Moreno, *Historia de las relaciones exteriores argentinas (1810-1955)* (Buenos Aires: Perrot, 1961), 138-139; Carlos Escudé and Andrés Cisneros, *Historia General de las Relaciones Exteriores Argentinas* (2000), <http://www.argentina-rree.com/7/7-079.htm>.

ships were transporting rebel units, broke off relations.⁶⁹⁷ The diplomatic relations between the two countries were re-established on February 19, 1912, after an exchange of diplomatic notes. As a closer look at those events reveal, the Paraguayan aggression (see footnote 687) towards Argentina was in fact targeted at resources being utilized by the rival elite groups based on Argentine territory. In this case, the “Paraguayan-Argentine” militarized dispute of 1911-1912 is better understood as an extension of the Paraguayan elite conflict into Argentina.

OBSERVATION 4: ELITE COHESION INTERREGNUM, 1915-1922

Eduardo Schaerer (1912-1916) was the first Paraguayan president since Egusquiza (1894-1898) to complete a term, although not without first suppressing a revolt (January 1, 1915).⁶⁹⁸ On August 15, 1916, Manuel Franco took office in a peaceful transition and in 1920 Manuel Gondra began his second term as president.⁶⁹⁹ By 1915, the Radicals’ fiercest opponents were no longer: Caballero, Escobar, Decoud, Jara, Ferreira, and Taboada were dead. Báez retired from politics to become the rector of the National University. During this overall peaceful interregnum, the Radical administrations focused

⁶⁹⁷ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 114-115; Escudé and Cisneros, *Historia General de las Relaciones Exteriores Argentinas* (2000), <http://www.argentina-rree.com/7/7-080.htm>. Among the incidents that resulted in the rupture of the diplomatic relations between Paraguay and Argentina were: (i) the retention of the Argentine ship *Iberá* by the Paraguayan customs office of Encarnación; (ii) the rejection of the Argentine-Brazilian proposition of a cease-fire by the Paraguayan authorities; (iii) the resulting entrapment of Argentine ships in the cross-fire between Paraguayan governmental and rebel forces; (iv) Buenos Aires’ threat to intervene militarily after the Argentine torpedo boat *Torne* was hit; (v) the asylum offered by the Argentine ships *Paraná* and *Lambaré* to Paraguayan rebels; (vi) the shooting of several Argentine merchant ships by the Paraguayan government in retaliation; (vii) the Paraguayan government accusation that Argentine authorities were allowing the smuggling of war material to the revolutionaries; (viii) the detainment and use of the Argentine ships *Aimará*, *Iguazú*, and *Paso de la Libertad* by governmental forces; and (ix) the forced conscription of Argentine civilians into Paraguayan detachments in Puerto María and Puerto Sastre.

⁶⁹⁸ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 119. The revolt was led by the Cívicos Colonel Manuel J. Duarte and Gómez Freire Esteves.

⁶⁹⁹ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 120. President Franco died of a heart attack before completing his term, and was succeeded by Vice-President José P. Montero in June 1919.

on rebuilding Paraguay's economy and infrastructure,⁷⁰⁰ introducing a series of democratizing measures,⁷⁰¹ and reasserting the state control over the economy.⁷⁰² This reinstatement of the state into the economy introduced a low-level conflict between the state and the merchants over relative shares of resource, since the merchants could no longer dictate monetary policy at will.

In the political realm, two factions within the Radical Party emerged: *gondristas* and *schaereristas*, the followers of Manuel Gondra and Eduardo Schaerer, respectively. With no particular philosophical or ideological disagreement, the *gondristas* and *schaereristas* struggled over the control of the government and the party machine and functioned as opposing political parties.⁷⁰³ Nevertheless, until 1922, their divergences over the division of governmental and party positions were settled within the framework of the party.

Likewise, the conflict of interest between political and economic elites remained at the lower level. That is, political and economic elites did not pose an existential threat towards one another, although they fought over relative shares of resource. The conflict emerged as the political elite adopted measures to reassert state control over the economy, thereby enhancing their autonomy vis-à-vis foreign companies *and* the

⁷⁰⁰ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 118.

⁷⁰¹ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 121. Franco's administration was noted for the introduction of the secret ballot, universal suffrage, obligatory voting, and the "incomplete list," which guaranteed minority representation in Congress to the opposition. In May 1917 Congress passed an amnesty law that allowed Colorados, jaristas, and Cívicos to return to Paraguay.

⁷⁰² Lewis, *Political Parties*, 124; Abente, "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State," 85. The most important step towards this goal was the Law 182 of January 28th, 1916, which created an *Oficina de Cambios* to regulate the trade of foreign currencies. This measure gave the state access to and control of part of the foreign earnings of the nation, giving the Executive Power more patronage to dispense.

⁷⁰³ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 120.

mercantile elite that had brought them to power.⁷⁰⁴ The political bureaucracy's most successful step towards independence was the Law 182 of January 28th, 1916, which created an *Oficina de Cambios* to regulate the trade of foreign currencies.

“The new monetary legislation required exporters to negotiate 20 percent of their earnings in the exports of hides, yerba, tobacco, and tannin at the official rate. As a result, the official rate of exchange of the Paraguayan peso increased by some 30 percent. That measure undermined the ability of the mercantile elite to dictate the national monetary policy at will.”⁷⁰⁵

With this measure the state guaranteed access to and control of part of the foreign earnings of the nation, giving the Executive Power more patronage to dispense.⁷⁰⁶ Moreover, the political elites could now manipulate the profitability of the commercial elites through monetary policy. However, this conflict over relative shares of resource did not pose any existential threat to the economic elites.

OBSERVATION 5: ELITE FRAGMENTATION AND EXISTENTIAL THREAT: THE 1922-1923 CIVIL WAR

Since 1912, the Radical administrations had been a compromise between *gondristas* and *schaereristas*.⁷⁰⁷ However, by 1920 this delicate balance that had been the basis of the power sharing agreement among the Radical elite factions began to be disrupted by the incompatibility of preferences about the allocation of political power

⁷⁰⁴ Although Liberal politicians such as former Vice-President Adolfo Saguier played the leading role 1904 Revolution, investing their own personal fortunes in the revolt, the mercantile money played a decisive political role by ensuring the triumph of the liberals. “By one account, probably an exaggerated one, the revolutionary forces raised as much as 1.1 million gold pesos in Asunción commercial circles.” Abente, “Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State,” 81.

⁷⁰⁵ Abente, “Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State,” 85.

⁷⁰⁶ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 124.

⁷⁰⁷ Schaerer was president between 1912 and 1916; President Franco was a close friend of Gondra, but his vice-president Montero was a close friend of Schaerer; and Gondra won the presidential election for the 1920-1924 term while Schaerer took over the presidency of the Liberal Party in 1920.

between the leader of the *schaererista* faction Eduardo Schaerer and a prominent member of the *gondrista* faction, José P. Guggiari. When the claims over the control of the party machine and state apparatus became exclusive, the existential threat inherent to those exclusive claims resulted in the 1922-1923 civil war.

On the one hand, as president of the Liberal Party, Schaerer intended not only to build a disciplined party machine to prepare his return to the Executive Power in 1924, but also to rule from behind the curtains during Gondra's presidency (1920-1924) as well.⁷⁰⁸ On the other hand, by mid-1920 a movement of resistance and reaction within the Liberal Party against Schaerer's "*unicato*" [i.e. power monopoly] was being formed, with José P. Guggiari, Gondra's minister of interior, as one of its main leaders.⁷⁰⁹

Not only did Guggiari begin to fight for the control of party organization, but he also achieved an important political victory in the party convention of September 1921,⁷¹⁰ posing a significant threat to Schaerer's plans. In the face of rumors of a revolt in case Gondra did not subject to Schaerer's ultimatum (issued on October 29) to dismiss Guggiari from the Interior Ministry,⁷¹¹ the President ordered the war minister Colonel Aldofo Chirife to arrest Schaerer. Chirife refused to obey the president's order, and Gondra resigned. Vice-President Félix Paíva resigned on November 7 and the party decided on Eusebio Ayala, Gondra's foreign minister, as the compromise president.⁷¹²

⁷⁰⁸ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 126-127.

⁷⁰⁹ Colonel Arturo Bray, *Armas y Letras (Memorias) Tomo I* (Asunción: NAPA, 1981), 119. According to Colonel Arturo Bray, Schaerer "installed and dismissed ministers, named the high officials of the government, handpicked the candidates for senate and deputy and, in general ran the show in all happenings of the political life of the country."

⁷¹⁰ On September 1921, Guggiari's men ousted Schaerer's men in about half of the confrontations in the local assemblies where the party candidates for the next March's congressional elections were chosen.

⁷¹¹ There were rumors that the Concepción garrison, whose commander Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Brizuela was a Schaerer's supporter, was about to revolt.

⁷¹² Lewis, *Political Parties*, 128-130.

However, after the *gondristas* swept the elections for the party directorate in May 1922, the Colorados joined the *schaereristas* and passed a bill in Congress requiring a new presidential election to be held on July 16. They also proposed the candidacy of Colonel Adolfo Chirife.⁷¹³ When Eusebio Ayala vetoed the bill on May 22, both Congress approved a resolution that called upon the armed forces to intervene in support of people's elected representatives. Chirife launched the civil war on June 9, 1922, which would last until July 9, 1923 with the victory of the *gondristas*.⁷¹⁴

**OBSERVATION 6: ELITE FRAGMENTATION AND NON-EXISTENTIAL THREATS:
ACCIDENTAL AND NON-AUTHORIZED USES OF FORCE: THE SORPRESA (1927) AND
VANGUARDIA (1928) INCIDENTS**

Since the end of the WTA, there had not been a professional military in Paraguay. When Eligio Ayala assumed the presidency on August 15th, 1924,⁷¹⁵ the army was in a deplorable shape. There was no real training for the soldiers and no functioning general staff. The integrity, morale, and professionalism of the armed forces as a politically neutral institution had been compromised by decades of political interference in promotions and assignments.⁷¹⁶ However, by the end of the Ayala administration, the situation of the armed forces had improved significantly, mainly as a result of Ayala's

⁷¹³ The Colorados had got back into politics in 1917 in Franco's amnesty, but had since then been only a minority party.

⁷¹⁴ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 130-133.

⁷¹⁵ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 135-138. Eligio Ayala (no relation to Eusebio Ayala) led the *gondrista* forces during the civil war after Eusebio was tricked by the The Liberal Party's president, Belisario Rivarola, into resigning.

⁷¹⁶ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 133.

successful economic policies.⁷¹⁷ The President used the budgetary surplus on a program of military spending designed to restructure and prepare the military for war. Ayala contracted weapons from Europe, built forts in the path of Bolivia's advance,⁷¹⁸ ran telegraph lines from Asunción to strategic points in the Chaco, hired a French mission to train the army,⁷¹⁹ and sent military officers for training in Europe.⁷²⁰

Credited with winning the civil war by his vigorous leadership, Eligio Ayala had been elected in 1924 with the support of every Liberal faction and the unprecedented loyalty of the military. Contrastingly, his successor José Patricio Guggiari (1928-1932) had neither been the Liberal's unanimous choice, being opposed by the party's left wing, nor had the trust of the military. The increase in the military's relative power during Eligio Ayala's administration would add to the political tension during Guggiari's term. The top military officers doubted Guggiari's willingness to continue Ayala's rearmament program.⁷²¹ With the exception of Eligio Ayala, the *gondristas* had always been criticized for their inadequate military preparation in the face of the growing Bolivian

⁷¹⁷ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 140. Ayala promoted a balanced budget, achieved by raising taxes and reducing expenditures. The currency was stabilized and the president honored Paraguay's most pressing overseas debts.

⁷¹⁸ The Spanish word is *fortín* (plural, *fortines*), which means literally small fort. However, a *fortín* hardly met the specifications of a real military establishment. Usually it was a group of makeshift huts for the lodging of a few troops, surrounded by trenches, if any at all. Some *fortines* grew into small villages, but those, especially before the Chaco War, were the exception. I will use the term "fort" instead throughout the text when referring to *fortín*. See José Félix Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco: Marshal Estigarribia's Memoirs of the Chaco War 1932-1935* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1950), 6.

⁷¹⁹ Abente, "The Liberal Republic and the Failure of Democracy," 543; Lewis, *Political Parties*, 142. A plan for reorganizing the Army was accepted in the beginning of 1925. The French military mission arrived in Paraguay in 1926. Ayala also embarked on an impressive secret rearmament program. 10,363 Mauser rifles were acquired from Spain, 176 Masen light machine guns were acquired from Denmark, and 32 Colt-Browning heavy machine guns were acquired from the United States. Eight Schneider Model 127 105mm mountain howitzers and 24 Model 1927 75mm mountain guns were purchased from France (English 1994:348).

⁷²⁰ Among those officers were Arturo Bray and Félix Estigarribia, who would play important roles in the events leading to the Chaco War.

⁷²¹ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 147.

threat.⁷²² Furthermore, Guggiari was also known for his disregard towards the professional military. According Colonel Manlio Schenoni, who had commanded the loyalist troops in the 1922-1923 civil war,

“[Guggiari’s] psychology as a politician and caudillo makes him think that vulgar caudillo leadership has more influence than discipline in promoting the cohesion and military virtues that make armies strong. Dr. Guggiari is a believer in a partisan military, rather than a national army. He thinks that the [party] “colors” strengthen the sense of duty more than the healthy, moral education that forms the basis of true discipline. He is convinced that governments are better sustained by uniformed party men than by army soldiers. He has learned nothing from past experience, which shows that political armies have served only to promote revolts, and that such armies never are motivated by patriotism.”⁷²³

Both Ayala’s and Guggiari’s administrations were faced with the increasing advance of Bolivian forts in the Chaco. The Bolivian president Dr. Bautista Saavedra (1921-1925) founded two forts in 1923 and his successor Dr. Hernando Siles (1926-1930) installed two more forts in 1926 and another eight forts in 1927.⁷²⁴ The chain of Bolivian forts was matched by Paraguay, and contact between Bolivian and Paraguayan troops became more frequent. Both Paraguayan presidents, Ayala and Guggiari, had to deal with incidents between Paraguayan and Bolivian troops in the Chaco. However, despite the differences in popularity and levels of support pointed above, both presidents reacted to the incidents similarly: with caution and restraint.

The similar foreign policies towards Bolivia reflect a commonality between the governments of Ayala and Guggiari: a fragmented elite structure. Although Ayala had come out of the civil war branded as a national hero, the fundamental structure of the elite relations had not changed from its pre-civil war arrangement. Ayala had

⁷²² Capitalizing on the civil war of 1922-1923, Bolivia systematically penetrated in the Chaco. When war finally broke out in July 1932, Bolivian troops were only 130 miles from Asuncion.

⁷²³ Quoted in Lewis, *Political Parties*, 134.

⁷²⁴ Fifer, *Bolivia* 207; and President Hernando Siles Reyes, August 6, 1929. Bolivia, *Redactor del H. Congreso Nacional, Legislatura Ordinaria de 1929* (La Paz): 7.

strengthened and given greater ambitions to the military elites. But nothing had been done to address the incompatibility of preferences among the political elites and their exclusive claims to power.

THE SORPRESA INCIDENT (1927) – One of the encounters between Paraguayan and Bolivian troops in the Chaco resulted in the death of the Paraguayan Lieutenant Adolfo Rojas Silva in February 1927.⁷²⁵ Accordingly,

“On February 26 a Paraguayan patrol was captured at the Bolivian fort, “Sorpresa.” On the 27th, the Bolivian Chargé d’Affaires at Asunción protested against the violation of his country’s territorial sovereignty. The patrol-leader, Lieut. Rojas Silva, was killed later when attempting, according to the Bolivian note of March 17, to escape, after wounding the sentry on guard over him.”⁷²⁶

As meticulously described by Captain Ramiro Escobar, Lieutenant Rojas Silva and his men found the Bolivian fort Sorpresa by chance, when hunting for game given the scarcity of food in the region.⁷²⁷ Although the incident inflamed the Paraguayan military with nationalism after reaching the press, it was followed by negotiations instead of escalation. The Sorpresa incident was neither intended by the military and civilian Paraguayan authorities nor capitalized upon by them. President Eligio Ayala governed with the support of a broad coalition, which included the armed forces, and was himself not facing any threat. In this case, a risky military escalation served no political purpose. His domestic policy of rearming and professionalizing the military was enough to guarantee the peaceful conclusion of his term.

THE VANGUARDIA INCIDENT (1928) – Negotiations between Paraguay and Bolivia were broken off on July 1928, and both countries resumed their military preparations. On

⁷²⁵ Lieutenant Rojas Silva was son of former president Liberato Rojas.

⁷²⁶ “Chapter II: The Chaco Dispute.” *The American Journal of International Law* 28:4 Supplement: Official Documents (Oct., 1934), 162.

⁷²⁷ Captain S. R. Ramiro Escobar, *Rafagas de Metrallas, Sangre en los Pajonales: Guerra del Chaco* (Asunción, El Gráfico, 1982), 11-19.

December 5, 1928, another incident took place, this time reaching greater proportions. A Paraguayan detachment took possession and then incinerated the Bolivian fort Vanguardia, which the Paraguayan forces understood to be located within Paraguayan territory. Like the events at Sorpresa, the taking of Vanguardia occurred without the premeditated knowledge of the Paraguayan military chiefs and Executive Power.⁷²⁸ The Bolivian Government retaliated by recapturing Vanguardia, seizing the Paraguayan fort Boquerón, and conducting an – unsuccessful – air attack to the Paraguayan port of Bahía Negra.⁷²⁹ Both countries ordered the mobilization of the reserves, but before any actual fighting broke out the belligerents returned to the negotiating table.⁷³⁰ In sum, Paraguay did not respond to Bolivia's retaliation with use of force.

The troop call-up in December exposed the precariousness of the Paraguayan military preparations.⁷³¹ The Colorados used those circumstances to inflame the political discourse against a quarter century of Liberal Party rule. Guggiari tried to calm the

⁷²⁸ Informed of the establishment of a Bolivian fort north of the Paraguayan fort Galpón along with the suspicion that another Bolivian fort was to be founded in that region, the Chief of the Bahía Negra Garrison and Commander of the Fifth Regiment of Infantry, Major Rafael Franco, requested authorization from the National Government to conduct a reconnaissance mission as well as to establish a new post north of Galpón, thus anticipating the Bolivian advances. (The Fort Vanguardian had been founded by the Bolivians on September 5, 1928, but its foundation only reached the Paraguayan intelligence on December). According to the Paraguayan version, when the Paraguayan reconnaissance troops reached Vanguardia, they were received with fire and thus proceeded to seize the fort. The Bolivian version, in turn, reports that the Paraguayan troops shot first. See Ramiro Escobar, *Rafagas de Metrallas*, 30-45. In the words of the historian Paul H. Lewis (*Political Parties*, 149), Franco “took matters into his own hands.” The Paraguayan Liberal writer and deputy Policarpo Artanza also share this view saying that Rafael Franco acted “out of his own inspiration ... and, therefore, without the knowledge of the government” (See Policarpo Artaza, *Ayla, Estigarribia y el Partido Liberal* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Ayacucho, 1946), 33). The daily *La Patria* reported that Franco had been “fulfilling an order received from his superiors to establish an advance post north of [his] Fort Galpón.” However, *La Patria* did not clarify whether evacuating the Bolivians from the fort [Vanguardia] discovered “in territory indisputably Paraguayan” was within Franco's orders. See “Los Sucesos de Fortín Galpón: Información Oficial,” *La Patria*, December 7, 1928.

⁷²⁹ Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Professional Soldier, 1900-2001*, Vol. 2. (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2003), 86. See also *Bulletin of International News*, Vol. 5, No. 12 (Dec. 22, 1928): 11-24.

⁷³⁰ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 149.

⁷³¹ There was shortage of weapons, ammunition, uniforms, medical supplies, and food.

situation by setting up a multi-party initiative, i.e. the National Defense Council.⁷³² However, Eduardo Schaerer, representing the opposition within the Liberal Party, refused to cooperate with the government. The President informed the Council that Paraguay had neither military resources nor materiel and could count on no allies in the impending war.⁷³³ Guggiari had no political support to escalate the incident.

Guggiari's political standing became even more delicate in early January. After Guggiari accepted the ruling of the arbitration of International Conference of American States on Conciliation and Arbitration that labeled the aggressor and ordered it to rebuild Vanguardia for the Bolivians, the Colorado and Liga Independiente Nacional representatives in the Council resigned. Facing the dissolution of the Council, Guggiari proposed Schaerer the union of the Liberal Party. In that moment, the Liberal Party was divided in three factions: the governing Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal gubernista* or *situacionista*) presided by Dr. Luis De Gásperi, the opposing Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal opositor*) led by Eduardo Schaerer, and the dissident Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal disidente*) directed by Modesto Guggiari.⁷³⁴

To the President's proposal of party unification, Schaerer replied, "It is not convenient to do so, because what interests the country is a National Council, not a council that can be labeled Liberal League. (...) Regarding the liberal union, this will happen in the opportune time, through the adequate means."⁷³⁵ After the failed attempt at

⁷³² The duties of the short-lived Council were to consider ways of promoting unity and improving defensive measures. The Council had representation from all major political parties, except the Communists: i.e. the two faction of the Liberal Party (opposing and governing), the two factions of the National Republican Party (i.e. infiltrista and abstencionista), the Liga Nacional Independiente (which was a political movement and not a political party), and a representative of the Paraguayan church.

⁷³³ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 149.

⁷³⁴ Artaza, Ayla, *Estigarribia y el Partido Liberal*, 54.

⁷³⁵ Artaza, Ayla, *Estigarribia y el Partido Liberal*, 36; 54.

unification, each Liberal faction reassumed their uncompromising positions, resuming the virulent factionalism prior to the Vanguardia incident, as described by the Liberal opposition daily *La Tribuna* on December 06, right before the Vanguardia incident came to public knowledge: “Two features characterize with highlighted importance the action of the governing party before the destiny of the country: (...) in the political sphere, [that feature is] to stimulate anarchy in its own midst, and wave the flag of factional intolerance against the remaining parties.”⁷³⁶

The remainder of Guggiari’s term was filled with protests, coup attempts, military mutiny, and a congressional investigation on his administration.⁷³⁷ In other words, Guggiari’s mishandling of the international crisis further accentuated the pre-existing elite fragmentation. When Paraguay failed to recapture fort Samaklay,⁷³⁸ taken by the Bolivians on September 7, 1931, Guggiari suppressed the divulgation of the news by the press,⁷³⁹ instead of trying to capitalize upon the Bolivian takeover and rally the country around it.

OBSERVATION 7: ELITE COHESION AND THE PRELIMINARIES OF THE CHACO WAR

Since early 1932, the Bolivian military encroachment upon the Paraguayan Chaco had been a consistent theme in the opposing Liberal political discourse, divulged in *El Diario*, owned by the Radical Eduardo Schaerer. From mid-May on, *El Diario* published

⁷³⁶ “El país reclama una acción restauradora del Gobierno en lo económico y en lo político,” *La Tribuna*, December 06, 1928.

⁷³⁷ Lewis *Political Parties*, 150-152.

⁷³⁸ On the Samaklay incident see José Félix Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco: Marshal Estigarribia’s Memoirs of the Chaco War 1932-1935* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1950), 8-9.

⁷³⁹ Andrew Nickson, “The Overthrow of the Stroessner Regime: Re-Establishing the Status Quo,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 8: 2 (1989): 187.

a series of news exposing the continuous concentration of Bolivian troops in the Chaco, despite the ongoing negotiations of a non-aggression pact started in November 15, 1931. “Bolivia sends delegates to Washington to negotiate a pact of non-aggression and simultaneously concentrates troops in the Chaco and acquires war materials in Europe, all with the money obtained with the suspension of the service of its foreign debt.”⁷⁴⁰ *El Diario* added,

“...Bolivia’s purpose ... is to pressure the Neutral Delegates by convincing them that if its claims are not satisfied in Washington, it will immediately trigger the war. That Bolivia has the purpose of attacking us, we do not have the least doubt; it will do it expand its current possessions...”⁷⁴¹

El Diario’s omen happened soon enough. On June 15, a Bolivian detachment led by Major Oscar Moscoso occupied the Paraguayan fort “Carlos Antonio López” situated in the Pitiantuta lagoon (which the Bolivians called Chuquisaca). This news reached the pages of *El Diario* on July 7, explaining why “The Government decided to immediately remove the Paraguayan Delegates from the conferences being held in Washington.”⁷⁴² Like in the seizure of the Samaklay fort in 1931, Bolivia had taken another Paraguayan fort. This indicates that the taking of the Paraguayan fort by Bolivian forces in itself is insufficient to explain the initiation of the Chaco War. Even the Paraguayan recapture of the fort in July 15 cannot account for the war, since similar patterns of behavior had happened in 1928.

⁷⁴⁰ “La concentración de tropas bolivianas en el Chaco,” *El Diario*, May 23, 1932.

⁷⁴¹ “Con la concentración de tropas en el Chaco Bolivia trata de presionar a los Neutrales,” *El Diario*, May 28, 1932.

⁷⁴² “El Gobierno ha resuelto retirar de inmediato los Delegados del Paraguay a las Conferencias que se realizan en Washington,” *El Diario*, July 7, 1932.

Table 6.2 Important Military and Political events in Paraguay, 1932

May 8	Elections for the Electoral College
June 12	Dr. Eusebio Ayala win Paraguayan presidential elections
June 15	Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Carlos Antonio López (Pitiantuta)
July 7	Paraguay announces the removal of its delegates from the non-aggression pact conferences in Washington
July 15	Paraguay recaptures Fort Carlos Antonio López (Pitiantuta)
Mid-July	Unification of the Liberal Party
July 26	Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Corrales
July 28	Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Toledo
July 31	Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Boquerón
August 1	Paraguay initiates full mobilization
August 15	Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Carayá Dr. Eusebio Ayala assumes the presidency of Paraguay
August 17	Paraguay recaptures Fort Carayá
August 19	Bolivian failed attempt at capturing the Paraguayan fort Falcón
September 1	Lt. Col. Estigarribia receives secret telegram from President Ayala ordering the recapture of Boquerón

As we have seen above, the elite structure in Paraguay during the Guggiari administration was characterized by intense fragmentation across the political parties as well as between the Executive Power and the military elites. Fragmentation was mitigated, but not eliminated, with the nomination of Dr. Eusebio Ayala as the Liberal Party presidential candidate. Like Guggiari before him, Ayala was not especially popular. His opponents vilified him as unwilling to fight for the nation's interests due to his alleged Jewish heritage. Moreover, Ayala's pacifism was particularly disliked among anti-Liberal army officers, who blamed the Liberal Party for Paraguay's lack of military preparedness.⁷⁴³ Differently from Guggiari, Ayala had been the Liberal Party's unanimous choice – an indication of party unity around his name. Moreover, Ayala

⁷⁴³ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 154-155.

counted with the support of the financial and business community as well as the higher ranks within the military.

Eusebio Ayala was sworn president on August 15, with the military conflict between Paraguay and Bolivia already under way. However, long before being inaugurated, Ayala had been well informed about Paraguay's position in both the diplomatic and military fronts, as evidenced by his correspondence with the Paraguayan plenipotentiary in Buenos Aires, Dr. José Vicente Rivarola Coello. The missives, in which Rivarola Coello and Ayala discussed Paraguay's foreign policy towards Bolivia, date back to February 1932.⁷⁴⁴ That is: three months before the elections for the Electoral College (May 8), four months before Eusebio Ayala was elected president (June 12), and six months before Ayala assumed the Executive Power (August 15). Moreover, as remarked by Lieutenant Colonel José Félix Estigarribia, who *de facto* conducted the Paraguayan military operations, the Paraguayan defense continued to be confronted by the same leaders of the Liberal Party despite the succession in the presidency.⁷⁴⁵ In other words, the inauguration of Ayala did not disrupt foreign policy making.

In his public speeches, Ayala consistently emphasized his preference for a diplomatic solution to the Paraguayan-Bolivian dispute. Commenting on the removal of the Paraguayan Delegation from Washington in early July as a protest against the Bolivian capture of the Paraguayan fort in mid-June, Dr. Eusebio Ayala said, "Now the spirits are exalted and it impossible to deal with the neighboring republic before calming the nerves. I trust a lot in the next conference to be held in Washington in which a pact of

⁷⁴⁴ José Vicente Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas: Eusebio Ayala, Vicente Rivarola, Guerra del Chaco* (Buenos Aires: Industria Gráfica del Libro SRL, 1982).

⁷⁴⁵ José Félix Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco: Marshal Estigarribia's Memoirs of the Chaco War 1932-1935* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1950), 30.

non-aggression will be negotiated.”⁷⁴⁶ In his inauguration speech, Ayala stated that the dispute with Bolivia could not descend to the level of war; “we do not intend to take an inch of Bolivian territory.”⁷⁴⁷ Even in the face of the loss of three forts to Bolivia (between July 26 and 31) and under the firm belief that the Paraguayan military could overturn this situation, Ayala still would have preferred a negotiated solution if he could have had his way. As Ayala explained to Rivarola Coello in a private letter on August 13:

“Boquerón can be retaken in three days, without any doubt. But if we inflict on Bolivia a defeat, won’t our position be even worse than now? I believe so. On my part, I think that we must not seek military victories, but a decent solution to both countries. This is my idea: 1st suspend the hostilities based on the Neutral’s formula; 2nd immediately discuss a mutual security agreement; 3rd negotiate an arbitral commitment. The most important is point 2. Once the war is eliminated, all the rest will not offer major difficulty; many solutions that are now impossible can be feasible in an environment without much hostility and animosity.”⁷⁴⁸

With Ayala’s public commitment to and private preference for a peaceful solution to the crisis, as well as Paraguay’s patent inferiority in military capabilities as shown in Table 13 below, how is it possible to explain the escalation of the dispute after the point of no return? War is a dyadic phenomenon and, as such, a full explanation for its occurrence must include the role of Bolivia. On the one hand, as we will see below, the Bolivian President Salamanca triggered a militarization spiral by creating audience costs for himself that forced him to respond militarily to the Paraguayan retaliation. On the other hand, after mid-July, the Paraguayan elite structure became cohesive: the absence of all Colorado factions in Congress after the resignation of the *infiltristas* in October 1931 and the unification of the Liberal factions in mid-July 1932 created a unified Liberal

⁷⁴⁶ “Sobre el conflict del Chaco Boreal habló el president electo del Paraguay, Dr. Eusebio Ayala,” *El Diario*, July 7, 1932.

⁷⁴⁷ *Bulletin of International News*, 9: 4 (Aug. 18, 1932), 23.

⁷⁴⁸ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 71.

government behind the leadership of President Eusebio Ayala, who also enjoyed the support of the military chiefs and of the economic elites. However, because the unification of the Liberal Party in the face of an imminent war did not involve any renegotiation of the scheme of resource extraction and allocation among the Paraguayan elites, the elite structure moved into cohesion, but not integration.

SALAMANCA'S PREDICAMENT – We have seen in the previous chapter that on June 15, without express orders from the Executive Power, the Bolivian military took the Paraguayan fort Carlos Antonio López (which Paraguayans also called Pitiantuta, for being located in that lagoon). Paraguayan forces led by Lieutenant Colonel José Félix Estigarribia recaptured the fort a month later. On that occasion, the Bolivian President Daniel Salamanca addressed his nation, explaining that Paraguayan troops had occupied the Bolivian fort Mariscal Santa Cruz on the Chuquisaca Lagoon (which the Paraguayans called Pitiantuta Lagoon). By portraying to the Bolivian public Paraguay's military action as an unprecedented and uncalled for aggression – instead of as a retaliation – Salamanca created a situation in which his political survival demanded a military response. That is, the Bolivian president increased his costs of backing down.

Although the Bolivian military chiefs advised Salamanca not to respond militarily, his report had inflamed public outcry for a war against Paraguay. In the context of an impending war, Salamanca decreed a state of siege aimed not only towards war preparedness, but also against the government's political enemies, including the growing communist movement. Under the guise of defending the national honor, Salamanca ordered the capture of three Paraguayan forts – Corrales, Toledo, and Boquerón – which were taken in late July. In early August, Salamanca declared Bolivia's honor to be

avenged, indicating that he was willing to stop the military advance in the Chaco and have the new status quo as the base of a non-aggression pact.

Table 6.3 Paraguayan Perception of the Comparative Military Preparation of Paraguay and Bolivia, Mid-1932

Bolivia	Paraguay
<i>Population.</i> ~ 3,500,000	<i>Population.</i> ~ 1,000,000
<i>Military expenditure.</i> US\$ 12,000,000	<i>Military expenditure.</i> US\$ 4,000,000
<i>Military institutions.</i> A General Staff well organized and well supplied; a Superior School of War for the preparation of officers of the General Staff; various Schools of Application of Arms; a Military Academy for the training of officers; a School of Military Aviation well equipped; Arsenals of War perfectly equipped; and a School for noncommissioned officers.	<i>Military institutions.</i> A General Staff functioning precariously and with a scarcity of equipment and officers; a Superior School of War under the direction of an Argentine Military Mission which had entered the second year of its functions; a Military School of cadets; a School of Aviation; and a School for noncommissioned officers recently established.
<i>Effectiveness.</i> Six divisions of infantry with 2,000 men in each one; 2,000 chiefs and officers, among them 19 generals in active service; 1,000 chiefs and officers of the serves; an abundant reserve of chiefs and officers of all ranks; and, since the country little less than totally militarized, Bolivia could rely upon an instructed reserve of at least 10,000 noncommissioned officers and 300,000 men.	<i>Effectiveness.</i> One division of infantry (in formation). The units, insufficiently organized, were: 4 regiments of infantry, 1 regiment of cavalry, 1 group of artillery, and 1 company of engineers. The effectives were: 355 chiefs and officers, among them 3 generals; 146 chiefs and officers of the services; 200 cadets; 690 noncommissioned officers; 2,635 soldiers of the five arms. Total: 3,321 troops. Paraguay had no territorial organization. She did not possess any instructed reserve. They had never practiced a single maneuver in the country.
<i>Armaments.</i> 300 modern cannons of various models; 1,500 machine guns; 150,000 Mauser rifles; 80,000 lances; 60 war planes; equipment and diverse elements for 150,000 men. They had in store artillery munitions for 80 batteries, to the extent of 1,000 shots for each one, and a considerable quantity of cartridges for rifles and machine guns. They had on order munitions and equipment for 60,000 men, part of which material had been already received in La Paz.	<i>Armaments.</i> 16 cannons of 105 and 75; 24 Stokes-Brandt mortars; 32 heavy and 100 light machine guns; 12,000 rifles, only 5,000 in good condition; 8 war planes; 1,000 artillery shells; and 4,000,000 infantry and machine gun cartridges.
<i>The High Command.</i> The Bolivian High Command was vested in a General Staff composed of professionals of the first order with all the necessary elements.	<i>The High Command.</i> In time of peace there existed in Paraguay no High Command. Preparations for defense were badly distributed among the Inspector General, the Ministry of War and Navy, and the General Staff of the Army.
Source: José Félix Estigarribia, <i>The Epic of the Chaco: Marshal Estigarribia's Memoirs of the Chaco War 1932-1935</i> (Austin: The Univeristy of Texas Press, 1950), 13-14.	

The Paraguayan press incessantly exposed Salamanca's twisted version of the military events in the Chaco.⁷⁴⁹ Moreover, Salamanca's political predicament was well understood in the Paraguayan diplomatic circles. Writing to Eusebio Ayala on August 14, Rivarola Coello commented:

"[The Argentine diplomat] Dr. Saavedra wants to reach a truce at our expense. (...) ... I anticipated myself and told him that only the Bolivian point of view was being contemplated, without considering, in any aspect, ours. This irritated him, who retorted that there was no other solution; that if not upon that base [i.e. the status quo of early August] Bolivia would not make any truce, since [any other arrangement could provoke] the fall of the civil government, to be replaced by a military one, with which it would be always harder to make peaceful arrangements for the issue."⁷⁵⁰

Ayala himself expressed his understanding of Salamanca's situation: "They say that Salamanca is afraid of being overthrown if he agrees with what the Neutrals ask for. It is shameful to use the internal political situation as an argument to resolve a foreign conflict"⁷⁵¹ (August 24). And, "I have no doubt that if we can recuperate our forts, and we do it, Bolivia will fall into the most terrible anarchy..."⁷⁵² (August 27).

FOREIGN POLICY MENU – Not only were Paraguayan decision-makers aware of Salamanca's self-imposed audience costs, but the Bolivian President also demonstrated

⁷⁴⁹ From *El Diario* alone, see "Como explica Bolivia el 'Ataque Paraguayo,'" *El Diario*, July 11, 1932; "Sobre la agresión boliviana los neutrales piden informes al Paraguay," *El Diario*, July 12, 1932; "Cómo el Paraguay ha podido atacar un fortín boliviano situado cerca de Roboré?" *El Diario*, July 15, 1932; "Desmiente otra vez, Salamanca. También desmiente el ministro de guerra" *El Diario*, July 18, 1932; "El incidente inicial de Pitiantuta que motivó el retiro de la Delegación Paraguaya de las Conferencias de Washington," *El Diario*, July 19, 1932; "Bolivia denuncia un ataque paraguayo," *El Diario*, July 20, 1932; "No es al Paraguay que debe pedir cuenta el pueblo boliviano sino a sus gobernantes," *El Diario*, July 21, 1932; "La verdad sobre los hechos ocurridos en el Chaco," *El Diario*, July 21, 1932; "La situación creada por los acontecimientos de Pitiantuta," *El Diario*, July 21, 1932; "El gobierno de Bolivia no aceptará una investigación de los sucesos de Pitiantuta ante el temor de que se descubra la verdad," *El Diario*, July 23, 1932; "Quinientos paraguayos atacaron nuestro destacamento, causando 7 muertos y 3 heridos, dice Bolivia," *El Diario*, July 23, 1932; "Debe averiguarse en poder de quien esta el fortín 'Mariscal Santa Cruz' para que conozca el pueblo boliviano la verdad," *El Diario*, July 26, 1932; "Los bolivianos confiesan haber dado a Pitiantuta el nombre de Mcal. Santa Cruz," *El Diario*, July 28, 1932.

⁷⁵⁰ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 73.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibidem*, 84.

⁷⁵² *Ibidem*, 89.

his resolve by adopting costly measures *ex ante* such as mobilization and concentration of troops in the Chaco.⁷⁵³ Upcoming Bolivian mobilization and troop movements were fairly accurately known by Paraguayan military intelligence.⁷⁵⁴ Overall Bolivian concentration of troops in the Chaco and military purchases were widely publicized in the Paraguayan press.⁷⁵⁵ Perceiving Bolivia as a contender with a high degree of resolve, Paraguayan foreign policy options were the following: (a) to capitulate to Bolivia's demands; (b) to trust Brazil and Argentina to brand Bolivia as the aggressor and force that country to back down;⁷⁵⁶ (c) to inflict limited military losses on Bolivia with the hope of causing that country to re-assess its demands; and (d) to escalate the dispute into a war.

Outright capitulation was out of question, as indicated by the removal of the Paraguayan delegates from the Inter-American Conference in Washington – a decision fully supported by the Liberal Party⁷⁵⁷ – and confirmed by the recapture of Pitiantuta. Despite allegations to the contrary, Ayala was not naïve about the limits of diplomacy:

“I am profoundly sorry that Paraguay has removed its delegation from the Washington Conference. We recognize, however, that there was no other way; to witness beautiful declarations in Washington and subscribe to gorgeous treaties while there are forces from both countries in the Chaco Boreal would have been simply sarcastic. Between Paraguay and Bolivia there is a situation of latent war caused by the proximity of the Bolivian forts that invade our territory with grave risk to the peace between the two nations, motivated by the frequent encounters between the patrols. It is thus not in question signing a non-aggression pact before first of all suppressing the causes of those aggressions; that is, suppressing the proximity of the forts. That is the root of the question. The treaties are

⁷⁵³ On Foreign Policy signaling mechanisms see James Fearon, “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41:1 (1997), 68-90.

⁷⁵⁴ See for example Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco*, 26.

⁷⁵⁵ El Diario published a series of daily articles from May 19 until June 1 regarding the concentration of Bolivian troops in the Chaco as well as armament purchases from Europe. Those topics continued to receive attention in the month of June.

⁷⁵⁶ Lewis, *Political Parties*, 155.

⁷⁵⁷ “La reunión de Senadores, Diputados y Miembros del Partido Liberal realizada ayer en el Palacio de Gobierno,” *El Diario*, July 12, 1932.

singed by the diplomats, but the interesting [factor] in this case are not the diplomats but the military, who before a lamentable situation incite direct aggression. We must begin by suppressing this situation.”⁷⁵⁸

Indeed, Ayala was more confident in Paraguay’s military prowess than the military chiefs themselves, who favored the defensive strategy conceived by Lt. Col. Juan B. Ayala (Chief of Staff from 1931 to 1935) and supported by Brigadier General Manuel Rojas A., appointed Commander-in-Chief on July 23.⁷⁵⁹ In the orthodox military view, “the only adequate procedure to check the Bolivian avalanche was to organize our defense upon the Paraguay River, because of the dire scarcity of equipment available for the defense, and, above all, because of the lack of preparation by the country for war.”⁷⁶⁰ Indeed, in the next day after assuming the Chief Command, General Rojas ordered Lt. Col. José Félix Estigarribia to retreat the Battalion guarding Pitiantuta.⁷⁶¹ But for Estigarribia, that strategy amounted to “[defending] the Chaco after it had been conquered by the enemy.”⁷⁶² The lieutenant added, “the weakest point of our army existed in the superior command:”⁷⁶³ never having set foot in the Chaco, Gen. Rojas’ “chief shortcoming consisted in his blank ignorance of the terrain over which his troops would move.”⁷⁶⁴

Estigarribia, on the other hand, had conducted several journeys in the Chaco, “crossing the vast territory from one extreme to the other,”⁷⁶⁵ since 1927. Given the

⁷⁵⁸ “Entre Paraguay y Bolivia existe una guerra latent, declaró Ayala,” *El Diario*, July 9, 1932.

⁷⁵⁹ Scheina, *Age of the Professional Soldier Vol. 2*, 93.

⁷⁶⁰ Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco*, 20.

⁷⁶¹ Ibidem, 22.

⁷⁶² Ibidem, 19.

⁷⁶³ Ibidem, 5.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibidem, 19.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibidem, 6.

Paraguayan numeric inferiority, Estigarribia believed that their advantage depended upon rapidity of action. Moreover, said Estigarribia,

“Far from permitting the enemy to arrive unchecked upon the Paraguay River, thus facilitating his march through the desert, the defense should go to the encounter at the greatest possible distance from the river, making in this manner the desert our ally in our endeavor to trammel his advance.”⁷⁶⁶

Lt. Col. Estigarribia had been asking for a rapid Paraguayan action since at least July 12, as seen in his note forwarded to the Minister of War:

It is possible that Bolivia at this time has ordered the mobilization of her army, which operation will occupy three months. Paraguay, on the other hand, can mobilize in less than half of this time and because of the numerical inferiority of the national army, the advantage of getting ahead in mobilization must be intensely exploited. In order to initiate its operations, the Paraguayan army must not wait for the assembly of the Bolivian columns, which, as we know, will take place in the Puerto Casado sector.⁷⁶⁷

THE UNIFICATION OF THE LIBERAL PARTY – The examination of the events leading to the Chaco War shows us the effect of the change in the Elite Structure upon the timing of Paraguay’s decision-making. President Ayala only began to publicly favor a rapid military reaction against Bolivia after the unification of the Liberal Party that followed Paraguay’s proportional retaliation (i.e., the recapture of the lost fort) on July 15.⁷⁶⁸ Whereas the unification of the Liberal factions failed after the Bolivian capture of Vanguardia and Boquerón, as well as the – failed – bombing of Bahía Negra in the Vanguardia incident, it succeeded after the Paraguayan retaliation in Pitiantuta. According to the opposing Liberal Policarpo Artaza, “Given the imminence of the war ... the union of the citizenry to defend the territory was not sufficient. It was also necessary to

⁷⁶⁶ Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco*, 20.

⁷⁶⁷ Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco*, 19

⁷⁶⁸ Artaza, *Ayla, Estigarribia y el Partido Liberal*, 17.

strengthen the Government and cooperate with its men, who were also Liberals, in the fulfillment of so great responsibility.”⁷⁶⁹ After the unification, “The party recovered all its power.”⁷⁷⁰

During Guggiari’s administration, the Colorado Party was divided in two factions: the *infiltrista* faction, which still participated in politics and was a minority party in Congress, and *abstencionista* faction, which refused to participate in the political system altogether. However, after October 23, 1931, when government forces killed eleven students who participated in a manifestation to demand a stronger Paraguayan stance against Bolivia, the *infiltrista* faction abdicated their congressional seats. After that, the Congress had been exclusively Liberal, but the Liberal factions still opposed each other fiercely. However, with the unification of the Liberal Party in mid-1932 and the absence of the Colorado factions in public office, the Paraguayan political elite became cohesive. Given that the economic elites and military chiefs had already thrown their support behind President Eusebio Ayala, the result was an unprecedented cohesion of the elite structure in Paraguay.

It is important to emphasize here that the rearranging of the Paraguayan elite structure was into cohesion, but not integration. The unification of the Liberal Party ended factionalism among the political elite, but did not in itself establish a new covenant about the scheme of resource extraction and allocation. Elite cohesion, and not integration, is reflected in Ayala’s decision about the level of force to be employed in Paraguay’s next military move. The use of force was to be limited and its objective was to accomplish both international and domestic goals. The latter included “to give

⁷⁶⁹ Artaza, *Ayla, Estigarribia y el Partido Liberal*, 66.

⁷⁷⁰ Artaza, *Ayla, Estigarribia y el Partido Liberal*, 67.

satisfaction to the public opinion and to the army,” indicating that Ayala still had concerns about the extent of his domestic support. Those concerns are corroborated Ayala’s apprehension that an agreement in which Bolivia retained the Paraguayan forts of Corrales, Boquerón, and Toledo would create a “difficult situation” for him:

“I have been told that Bolivia pleads its difficult political circumstances [as the reason] to oppose the devolution of our forts. I do not know what [Bolivia] will do; but whatever it is, the maintenance of the forts in their possession will also create another even more difficult situation here. Indeed, rumor has it that [Bolivia] will ask us the existing *status quo* as the base for the end of the hostilities. This simply cannot be, and I would ask the friend Dr. Saavedra Lamas to prevent that demand from reaching us.”⁷⁷¹ – Ayala, August 13, 1932.

THE BEGINNING OF PARAGUAY’S MILITARY CAMPAIGN – Ayala was aware of Estigarribia’s military strategy and shared the lieutenant’s positive view of Paraguayan military chances. In Ayala’s words (July 31),

“I consider our situation in the Chaco to be very favorable. It seems to me that if no military mistake is done or there is no unforeseen emergency, it is easier that we inflict a defeat on Bolivia [than the reverse]. But this would not be desirable for the sake of our invariable objective: to avoid the war.”⁷⁷²

A few days later, on August 3, Ayala reiterated, “The military situation in the Chaco is clearly favorable and with some little time we will be able to inflict Bolivia a rude blow that will end its boasting and its bullying.”⁷⁷³ Despite Ayala’s preference for avoiding the war, full mobilization was ordered on August 1.⁷⁷⁴ On August 13, Ayala expressed views very similar to those of Estigarribia, regarding the need of a prompt Paraguayan military action:

⁷⁷¹ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 71.

⁷⁷² Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 65.

⁷⁷³ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 67.

⁷⁷⁴ Scheina, *Age of the Professional Soldier Vol. 2*, 87. Before June 15, 1932, there were perhaps 3,000 to 3,500 Paraguayan soldiers stationed in the Chaco. By August 28th 18,000 men there were in the Chaco.

“I don’t know what the Bolivians are up to. But this continuous wait is dangerous and may even be deadly to us. After Pitiantuta and once we realized the war designs of Bolivia, we began our concentration [of troops]. ... [We] have today, without a doubt, a temporary superiority over the adversary and it is urgent to make use of it, because soon that will no longer be possible because then the factor of quantity and of the elements will come into play. Our command understands this and manifests that it will not be responsible if we let Bolivia, without impunity and in the shadow of diplomatic talks, prepare itself to drown us with [its superior] numbers.”⁷⁷⁵

On September 1, Estigarribia received a secret memorandum sent by President Ayala and delivered personally by Lt. Col. Manuel Garay. Ayala’s message authorized the capture of Boquerón, after which all of Estigarribia’s troops would be expected to return to Isla Poí, in compliance with General Rojas withdrawal order. Ayala warned that the attack must look like a spontaneous escalation of a clash between opposing patrols and commanded that all necessary forces be employed to guarantee the success of the operation. The message was unsigned and had not been handwritten, giving Ayala plausible denial if the attack failed or received a negative reaction.⁷⁷⁶ From General Rojas’ perspective the costs of such maneuvers were low. If Estigarribia were victorious, Rojas, as army commander, would receive the credit, whereas if the attack failed General Rojas would have the excuse of having been disobeyed.⁷⁷⁷ The document is reproduced below.

⁷⁷⁵ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 70.

⁷⁷⁶ Farcau, *Chaco War*, 49-50.

⁷⁷⁷ Farcau, *Chaco War*, 42, 48-49.

(1) TAKE BOQUERON.

Object: (a) To demonstrate to the neutrals and other countries of America that Paraguay possesses military capacity.

(b) To give satisfaction to public opinion and to the army.

With this action it is hoped to gain better consideration in the eyes of the neutrals so that in their propositions they should not consider that Paraguay should always give in. Further, it is necessary that the troops prove their military capacity.

(2) Having secured the OBJECTIVE sought, the troops should be returned to Isla Poí.

EXECUTION

For the sake of international policy the Command must adopt such a plan so as not to appear to be the aggressor. To the outer world the collision must appear to be the consequence of reconnaissances and this must be made in reports previous to the action and afterwards.

Nevertheless, the military success must be assured by the employment of the necessary forces and must be conducted in such manner as to reach a rapid and full decision.

If success is obtained, the pursuit should be undertaken only to the extent necessitated by tactical reasons. In this case satisfactory pretexts for the return to Isla Poí must be found. For example: The doctor advises that the shelters should not be occupied because they are infected and should be burned; further, the water is found to be contaminated so that it would be dangerous to remain in Boquerón.

If the enemy eludes any decision the same pretexts for our return may be employed.

In case the enemy offers serious resistance or counterattacks immediately, thus stabilizing the combat, or succeeds in repulsing our troops, retirement should result as a consequence of the lack of water, since any further supply will be very difficult.

CONSEQUENCES

The enemy may proceed towards Isla Poí with important forces.

To anticipate this event all the troops at your command must have been already prepared at the initiation of the operation, since the possibility might arise that they would be required to support the forces engaged, in order, for instance, to facilitate their retirement.

In the event of strong forces advancing upon Isla Poí the Caballero detachment from Nanawa will cooperate with the forces under your orders, in which case you will communicate in time with the chief of that detachment.

CONCLUSIONS

The sole object of this instruction is to make known to the Command the extent which must be given to this operation and to the object sought.

It is important that the operation should appear as the result of an initiative on the part of the Command.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷⁸ Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco*, 36.

To give some authenticity to the document, Major Garay in his own handwriting placed at the foot of the note the following message:

I delivered this document into the hands of Lt.-Col. José F. Estigarribia, Commander in Chief of the First and Second Divisions, by order of the President of the Republic, Dr. Eusebio Ayala, today, the 1st of September, 1932, in Casanillo (Casado Line).
M. Garay, Major.⁷⁷⁹

In the words of President Ayala (September 22), “It must not be believed that the siege of Boquerón and our resistance to suspend the hostilities mean a desire to conquer glories. No. It is a matter of security.”⁷⁸⁰ However, the note above indicates that the recapture of Boquerón also targeted domestic political goals: “To give satisfaction to public opinion and to the army;” to be accomplished with a limited use of military force: “Having secured the OBJECTIVE sought, the troops should be returned to Isla Poí,” and “If success is obtained, the pursuit should be undertaken only to the extent necessitated by tactical reasons.”

⁷⁷⁹ Estigarribia, *The Epic of the Chaco*, 37.

⁷⁸⁰ Rivarola Coello, *Cartas Diplomáticas*, 99.

Table 6.4 Timeline: Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, and Paraguayan Domestic and Foreign Policies

1870s Intense elite fragmentation and existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuous political turmoil and violence ▪ Brazilian and Argentine interventions 	
1879	October 15: Decoud-Quijarro Treaty
1880	September 3: Bernardino Caballero takes the presidency with a coup
1880s Lessened elite fragmentation and non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paraguay discipline within the Colorado Party ▪ Laws of lands sales lessen fragmentation and threat ▪ Economic prosperity 	
1883	September 24: Law of Sale of Public Lands and Yerbales
1885	May 18, July 11: Laws of Sale of Public Lands and Yerbales
1886	August 10: Caballero orders militarization of Fuerte Olimpo in contested territory
1887	February 16: Aceval-Tamayo Treaty signed under Brazilian pressure
1888	February 13: militarization of Villa Hayes and Fuerte Olimpo September: Paraguay imprisons Bolivian authorities in Puerto Pacheco
1889-1915 Intense elite fragmentation and existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuous political turmoil and violence ▪ Brazilian and Argentine interventions ▪ Conciliatory foreign policy and border treaties 	
09/1889 – 03/1990	Failed Liberal-Colorado truce
June 1890	Preempted liberal revolt
10/1891 – 09/1892	Liberal revolt
1892	March 21: Mutiny Late 1892: Liberals split into Cívicos and Radicals), Colorados split into <i>caballeristas</i> and <i>egusquicistas</i>
1894	June 9: Brazilian-sponsored Cavalcanti coup November 23: Benítez-Ichazo Treaty signed under Brazilian pressure
1897	Swan concession and the organization of the National Guard
1902	January 9: Intra-Colorado coup
1904	August-December: Liberal Revolution
1905	December 9: Forced resignation of President Juan B. Gaona
1906	Early 1906: Failed coup led by Capt. Jara and the Radicals Late 1906: Failed coup led by Capt. Jara and the Radicals
1907	Pinilla-Soler Protocol
1908	July 2: Major Jara-Radicals coup
1909	August-September: Colorado revolt
1911	January 17: Major Jara-led coup February: Radical revolt against President Jara July 5: Radical revolt against President Jara and coup November: Radical revolt
1912	Late 1911 / early 1912: Paraguayan civil war spillover in Argentina February 27: Colorado coup March: Major Jara-led revolt March 22: Radical coup
1915	January 1: Cívico revolt

1915-1922 Elite cohesion interregnum, focus on domestic reconstruction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dominance of the Radical Party, divided into <i>gondrista</i> and <i>schaererista</i> factions ▪ Economic and infrastructural reconstruction, democratizing measures, state reassertion into the economy ▪ Conflict over relative shares of resource solved within the framework of the party 	
1922-1923 Civil War	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Claims over the control of the party machine and state apparatus became exclusive 	
1924-1931 Elite fragmentation, non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligio Ayala administration (1924-1928): military buildup ▪ Guggiari administration (1928-1932): protests, coup attempts, mutiny, and a congressional investigation ▪ Accidental uses of force and no escalation: Sorpresa (1927) and Vanguardia (1928) ▪ September 1931: Failed attempted at recapturing fort Samaklay taken by the Bolivians 	
1932 Elite cohesion and the Chaco War	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Absence of Colorados in Congress since October 1931 and unification of the Liberal Party in Mid-July, together with the support of the economic elites and military chiefs to President Eusebio Ayala led to cohesive elite structure. 	
1932	<p>May 8: Elections for the Electoral College</p> <p>June 12: Dr. Eusebio Ayala win Paraguayan presidential elections</p> <p>June 15: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Carlos Antonio López (Pitiantuta)</p> <p>July 7: Paraguay announces the removal of its delegates from the non-aggression pact conferences in Washington</p> <p>July 15: Paraguay recaptures Fort Carlos Antonio López (Pitiantuta)</p> <p>Mid-July: Unification of the Liberal Party</p> <p>July 26: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Corrales</p> <p>July 28: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Toledo</p> <p>July 31: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Boquerón</p> <p>August 1: Paraguay initiates full mobilization</p> <p>August 15: Bolivia captures the Paraguayan fort Carayá</p> <p>August 15: Dr. Eusebio Ayala assumes the presidency of Paraguay</p> <p>August 17: Paraguay recaptures Fort Carayá</p> <p>August 19: Bolivian failed attempt at capturing the Paraguayan fort Falcón</p> <p>September 1: President Ayala giver the order to recapture of Boquerón</p>

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation I have been concerned with a double empirical puzzle: why do states involved in an enduring rivalry decide to initiate the use of military force after a span during which no overt threats are issued or international violence is initiated, and when doing so, how much force do they initially decide to employ? In the previous chapters I have proposed that not all use of military force abroad occurs in the pursuit of purely foreign policy goals. Although sometimes that might be the case, many other times foreign policy is an instrument to serve domestic along with international objectives. In this dissertation I have hypothesized that the connection between the initiation of aggressive foreign policies in the context of enduring rivalries as well as the level of militarization of such policy is a function of the nature of the relationship among domestic elites. More specifically, I have proposed that aggressive foreign policies respond to the arrangement of elite preferences – i.e., whether they are compatible or incompatible – and to how threatened those elites believe they are.

As I have defined it above, the Elite Structure refers to the relations among the groups in the elite peculiar to each society and varies along the continuum between fragmentation and integration. The key determinant of the elite structure is the extent to which the elites' preferences about the distribution of sources of power in society are compatible or mutually exclusive. Compatible preferences cause elites to have a common stake in reproducing that system since it allows for positive sum games for the elites.

Mutually exclusive preferences cause elite struggle since they create a zero-sum game situation in which one elite's gain is the other's loss. Threat Intensity, in turn, refers to the degree of perceived or actual threat faced by elites in a given society. Disruptive dynamics, that is, endogenous and/or exogenous changes to the elites' resource bases in a given society, can ignite actual or perceived threats of lower or higher magnitude. Those threats can be non-existential, that is, they can produce adjustments within a given resource distribution system. Or they can be existential, that is, they can compromise the capacity of the elites to appropriate resources, thus jeopardizing the continued existence of the affected group or individual as an elite.

My argument about the incentives and constraints posed by the interaction between Elite Structure and Threat Intensity upon the decision of domestic elites to initiate or not diversionary and/or opportunistic uses of force abroad, and the degree of force initially employed, is summarized in table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1 Elite Structure, Threat Intensity, and diversionary and/or opportunistic uses of force abroad

	FRAGMENTED ELITE STRUCTURE	INTEGRATED ELITE STRUCTURE
EXISTENTIAL THREAT	<p>No Use of Force</p> <p>Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.</p>	<p>Use of Force Including War</p> <p>Use of aggressive foreign policy, including war, to avert foreign existential threats.</p>
NON- EXISTENTIAL THREAT	<p>Use of Force Short of War</p> <p>Use of aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. Fragmentation hinders capacity for war.</p>	<p>No Use of Force</p> <p>Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. <i>Ceteris paribus</i>, conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.</p>

I examined those hypotheses in four longitudinal cases studies: Brazil 1822-1864, Argentina 1820-1865, Bolivia 1884-1932, and Paraguay 1870-1932. The investigation of my hypotheses demanded, among other things, an understanding of how individual elites “[perceived] the situation, the obstacles he believed he had to face, [and] the alternatives he saw opening up to him.”⁷⁸¹ Thus, I relied on qualitative methods to evaluate empirical evidence from letters, memoirs, journals, congressional debates, newspapers, etc., to assess those perceptions and to identify the elites’ preferences regarding the trade-offs between domestic and international policies as alternative means to address different levels of threat to their power, privileges, and existence.

Table 7.2 (below) presents a summary of the findings of this dissertation. The table lists the case studies conducted, the observations within each case, the main characteristics of each observation and their coding (i.e., the values of Elite Structure and Threat Intensity), the expected outcome (as described in table 7.1 above), and the actual outcome. Overall, the case studies provide strong support for the hypothesized effects of the interaction between Elite Structure and Threat Intensity upon the incentives of domestic elites to initiate – or not – uses of military force abroad as a means to address threats to their resource bases and existence, despite a few potentially anomalous cases that will be discussed below.

⁷⁸¹ Howard Becker, “Life History and the Scientific Mosaic,” in his *Sociological Work: Method and Substance* (Chicago: Aldine, 1970), 64 quoted in John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 70-71).

Table 7.2 Summary of Findings**Case 1: Brazil, 1822-1864****Observation 1: 1822-1852 Integrated elite structure & non-existential threat**

Several revolts demanding greater provincial and local power, but not threat to the political, economic, and military institutions.

Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad

Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. *Ceteris paribus*, conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.

Actual outcome: No initiation of aggressive foreign policies for diversionary or opportunistic reasons.

Uses of force abroad as a response to foreign threat:

- Cisplatine War (December 1825)
- Offensive alliance with Entre Ríos against Rosas (1851)

Potentially anomalous case:

- Brazil orders building of fort Fecho dos Morros in territory disputed with Paraguay (1847)

However: Brazil does not retaliate Paraguayan expulsion of Brazilian forces from Fecho dos Morros (October 14, 1850) and signs an alliance with Paraguay (December 25, 1850) to avert the threat from Rosas (since March 18, 1850).

Observation 2: 1852-1859 Integrated elite structure & no threat

- Political stability, internal peace, and economic prosperity
- Brazilian integrated elites approximate unitary actor assumption
- Pursuit of foreign policy towards Paraguay

Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad

Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. *Ceteris paribus*, conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.

Actual outcome: Pursuit of a negotiated solution to the border and navigation disputes with Paraguay: 1852, 1853, 1855

Potentially anomalous case:

- Brazil builds Fort Salinas in a territory disputed with Paraguay (1855), followed by displays of force (i.e., preparations of war and shows of force).

However: the dispute does not escalate and Brazil and Paraguay reach and sign a border and navigation treaty.

Observation 3: 1859-1864 Fragmented elite structure & non-existential threat

- Political fragmentation between Conservatives and Liberals accentuated in 1864
- Uruguayan civil war resumed
- RS elites' economic interests in Uruguay threatened by Blanco government since 1860

Expected outcome: Use of Force Short of War

Use of aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. Fragmentation hinders capacity for war.

Actual outcome: Government elites decide to invade Uruguay (after diplomatic means are exhausted) to avert threat from RS elites.

- RS elites threatened to invade Uruguay and help the Colorado forces to overthrow the Blanco government as a means to get the support and resources of the Brazilian government to defend their interests in Uruguay
- Government elites expected the use of force in Uruguay to be limited; they did not expect Paraguay's intervention or the escalation into a war.

Case 2: Argentina, 1820-1865

Observation 1: 1820-1822 Fragmented elite structure & existential threat

Intense elite fragmentation and existential threat.

Expected outcome: No Use of Force

Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.

Actual outcome: No use of force abroad, elites focus on interprovincial conflict:

- Elites do not militarily respond to Brazilian annexation of the Cisplatine Province (07/08/1821) even after Brazilian independence (09/07/1822).
- Facing intense interprovincial violent conflict, federalist caudillo Ramírez (Entre Ríos) abandons two national unification projects to be achieved by rallying other elites behind his leadership in: (a) a war against Paraguay and (b) in an attack to the territory of Misiones under Portuguese occupation.

Observation 2: 1823-1825 Fragmented elite Structure & non-existential threat

Argentine provincial elites attempt to achieve agreement on national state formula.

Expected outcome: Use of Force Short of War

Use of aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. Fragmentation hinders capacity for war.

Actual outcome: Rivadavia carefully timed the initiation of the war against Brazil as a means to centralize state institutions. Rivadavia's Unitarian Congress of Buenos Aires focused on:

- War against Brazil,
- Degree of "national" power versus the degree of provincial autonomy
- Administration of the "national" resources

Timing: power centralization measures follow Brazil's declaration of war (December 1825):

- 01/01/1826: United Provinces declare war on Brazil
- 01/27/1826: Creation of National Bank
- 02/06/1826: Law of the Presidency approved
- 02/07/1826: Rivadavia elected president
- 03/03/1826: Nationalization of Buenos Aires
- 12/24/1826: Unitarian constitution

Anomalous case: my theory would expect limited use of force while Rivadavia planned a full-blown war.

Observation 3: 1827-1865 Fragmented elite structure & existential threat

- Rosas assumes the leadership of the Argentine Confederation
 - Political fragmentation: Unitarians vs. Federalists spilling over neighboring countries
 - Economic and military concentration of power on Rosas
- Conflict between Buenos Aires and the provinces continues after defeat of Rosas (1852)
- Conflict between Liberals and Federalists continues after creation of the national state (1862)

Expected outcome: No Use of Force

Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.

Actual outcome: No initiation of aggressive foreign policies for diversionary or opportunistic reasons.

- Rosas: avoidance of international conflict unrelated to the Federalist-Unitarian conflict, involvement in international conflict related to the Federalist-Unitarian conflict
- Mitre (1863-1865): policy of strict neutrality towards Uruguay, Brazil, and Paraguay until Paraguayan invasion of Corrientes (04/15/1865)

Case 3: Bolivia, 1884-1932	
Observation 1: 1884-1888 Cohesive Elite Structure & non-existential threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlap between economic, political, and military power on the miners-landowners coalition • Potential and actual domestic threat addressed with repression, vote buying, and bribery 	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. <i>Ceteris paribus</i> , conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: Avoidance of entangling the country in militarized foreign conflicts; relinquishing of very large tracts of territory; non-retaliatory response to foreign aggression. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1884: does not retaliate against Chile's use of force • 1886: does not retaliate against Paraguay's display of force • 1888: does not retaliate against Paraguay's display of force
Observation 2: 1888-1899 Elite fragmentation and existential threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political fragmentation: Conservatives vs. Liberals • Concentration of economic and military power on the Conservative coalition • Existential threat: zero-sum game, political violence (attempted coups and constant states of siege) 	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: No use of force. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No retaliation against Paraguay's seizure of Bolivian authorities (September 24, 1888) • No retaliation against Paraguay's display of force (October, 1897)
Observation 3: 1900-1920 Cohesive Elite Structure & non-existential threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlap of political, economic, and military power on coalition formed by tin mining elites, Liberal professional politicians, and landed elites 	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. <i>Ceteris paribus</i> , conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: Non-military approach to the Brazilian threat in the territory of Acre: Anglo-American Syndicate concession (12/20/1901) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1902-1903 Acre War against Brazil: responding to foreign aggression. <p>Potential anomalous cases: uses of force in 1906, 1910-1911. However, uses of force followed by President's conciliatory discourse. Unavailable data on the role of the military makes observation undetermined.</p>
Observation 4: 1820-1832 Fragmented elite structure and non-existential threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Republican-military coalition takes power • Military buildup • Mining and landowning elites no longer control Executive Power, but keep legislative representation • Split of the mining-landowning coalition; landowners support Republicans • Incompatible preferences between Executive Power and the economic elites 	
Expected outcome: Use of Force Short of War Use of aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. Fragmentation hinders capacity for war.	Actual outcome: Uses of force short of war, unintended escalation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous militarization of the Chaco • Sorpresa (1927) and Vanguardia (1928) incidents do not escalate • Salamanca's use of force in the Chaco was a means to crack down on socialists and communists • Unintended escalation into war due to fragmentation between Executive Power and Military Chiefs

Case 4: Paraguay, 1870-1932	
Observation 1: 1870s Intense elite fragmentation and existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous political turmoil and violence & Brazilian and Argentine interventions 	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: No use of force abroad. Conciliatory foreign policy in the generous Decoud-Quijarro Treaty (10/15/1879).
Observation 2: 1880s Elite fragmentation and non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disciplined Colorado Party Laws of lands sales (1883, 1885) lessen fragmentation and threat 	
Expected outcome: Use of Force Short of War Use of aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. Fragmentation hinders capacity for war.	Actual outcome: Uses of force short of war. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caballero orders militarization of Fuerte Olimpo in contested territory (08/10/1886) Aceval-Tamayo Treaty (02/16/1887) signed under Brazilian pressure followed by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Militarization of Villa Hayes and Fuerte Olimpo (02/13/1888) and, Imprisonment of Bolivian authorities in Puerto Pacheco (09/24/1888)
Observation 3: 1889-1915 Intense elite fragmentation & existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous political turmoil and violence & Brazilian and Argentine interventions 	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: No uses of force despite opportunity, conciliatory foreign policy, foreign aggression related to spillover of elite conflict. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benítez-Ichazo Treaty (11/23/1894) signed under Brazilian pressure but not followed by aggressive foreign policy despite the potential threat of the Bolivian Swan concession (1897). Instead, the Swan concession was used to justify the organization of the National Guard, strengthening the state repressive apparatus. 1907 Pinilla-Soler Protocol signed and ratified amidst intense elite conflict. Use of force against Argentina (late 1911 / early 1912) as a result of spillover of Paraguayan elite conflict in that country.
Observation 4: 1915-1922 Elite cohesion interregnum & non-existential threat	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dominance of the Radical Party, divided into <i>gondrista</i> and <i>schaererista</i> factions Conflict over relative shares of resource solved within the framework of the party 	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. <i>Ceteris paribus</i> , conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No use of force abroad Economic and infrastructural reconstruction, democratizing measures, state reassertion into the economy
Observation 5: 1922-1923 Civil War: Elite fragmentation & existential threat	
Expected outcome: No Use of Force Elites focus their resources and attention domestically. The initiation of aggressive foreign policies is unlikely. Conciliatory foreign policy and non-violent means of dispute resolution.	Actual outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No use of force abroad Civil war

Observation 6: 1924-1931 Elite fragmentation & non-existential threat

- Eligio Ayala administration (1924-1928): military buildup
- Guggiari administration (1928-1932): protests, coup attempts, mutiny, and a congressional investigation

Expected outcome: Use of Force Short of War

Use of aggressive foreign policies short of war as (a) a diversionary strategy and/or (b) a domestic resource appropriation strategy. Fragmentation hinders capacity for war.

Actual outcome: Uses of force short of war, no escalation

- Accidental uses of force and no escalation: Sorpresa (1927) and Vanguardia (1928)
- September 1931: Failed attempted at recapturing Fort Samaklay taken by the Bolivians

Observation 7: 1932 Elite cohesion and the Chaco War

- Absence of Colorados in Congress since October 1931 and unification of the Liberal Party in Mid-July, together with the support of the economic elites and military chiefs to President Eusebio Ayala led to cohesive elite structure.

Expected outcome: No Use of Force Abroad

Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. *Ceteris paribus*, conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.

Actual outcome:**No Use of Force Abroad**

Elites respond to domestic threats with reform/repression. *Ceteris paribus*, conciliatory foreign policy and peaceful means of dispute resolution.

&

Use of Force Including War

Use of aggressive foreign policy, including war, to avert foreign existential threats.

Timing and sequencing:

- Commitment to the diplomatic negotiations in Washington D.C. until Bolivian attack on June 15.
- Paraguay removes delegates from non-aggression pact conferences on July 7
- Paraguay recaptures stolen fort on July 15 (retaliation)
- Mid-July: Unification of the Liberal Party → unified Liberal Congress + Liberal President + support of economic elites and military chiefs
- Bolivian aggression (July 26, 28, and 31)
- Paraguay initiates full mobilization (August 1)
- Ayala assumes the presidency (August 15)
- Paraguay recaptures stolen fort (August 17)
- Ayala orders the recapture of Boquerón: “the military success must be assured by the employment of the necessary forces and must be conducted in such manner as to reach a rapid and full decision.” (September 1) → War

Two of the potentially anomalous cases were the Brazilian order to build the Fort Fecho dos Morros (1847, although the fort was not built until 1850) and the building of Fort Salinas (1855), both in territory disputed with Paraguay. The 1855 can be easily conciliated within my theoretical framework because between 1853 and 1859 the integrated elite structure in Brazil closely approximated the unitary actor assumption. In the absence of domestic threats, Brazilian elites focused on the pursuit of their regional strategic goals. During that time, Brazil attempted to find a negotiated solution to its border and navigation dispute with Paraguay three times. The last of those attempts resulted in a treaty acceptable to both parts, although the Brazilian military pressure might have had some weight on Paraguay's signature of the treaty. The 1847 case can also be understood through the same lenses if we consider the outbreak of the Praieira Revolt (1848-1850) as a factor that delayed the domestic stability that enabled the Brazilian elites to function as a unitary actor internationally.

Another potentially anomalous cases were the Bolivian uses of force in 1906, 1910-1911. The 1906 incident is not mentioned in the Congressional records, and the 1910-1911 incident was followed by President Villazón's conciliatory discourse. Thus, that incident is an example of moderation from the part of the Government. As discussed in chapter 5, there is no indication that those incidents were used by the Executive Power as diversionary or resource appropriation strategies. However, the unavailability of data on the role of the military on those occasions leaves the observation undetermined.

Finally, Rivadavia's plan to initiate a full-blown war against Brazil stands out as an anomalous case, since my theory would expect a limited use of force given the fragmented nature of the Argentine elite structure at the time. Rivadavia's decision to

provoke the war is even more puzzling if we consider the correlation of forces between Brazil and the United Provinces. Of the 10,000 men Brazilian army, 6,000 were in the Cisplatine Province. The governor of the province of Buenos Aires, Juan de las Heras, in turn, raised an army of 800 men. Even counting Lavalleja's 2,000 men army, the Argentine-Oriental army was no match to the Brazilian forces. Furthermore, the Buenos Aires' navy was decidedly inferior to that of Brazil.⁷⁸²

Despite those exceptions, my theory was successful in explaining the vast majority of the seventeen observations examined in this dissertation. Moreover, the theoretical framework developed in this dissertation also yields a promising research agenda, beyond the study of the domestic determinants of international conflict. First, an elite-based approach gives us greater historical and geographical breadth, since the concept of elites permeates the political, economic, and military spheres, allowing us to incorporate all these actors *whenever* they are relevant. That enables us to account for historical and geographical variation in state institutions, and on how those institutions empower certain actors – but not others – at a time.

Second, the concept of Elite Structure bridges the divide in the International Relations literature regarding unitary actor assumption and the ensuing state autonomy versus liberal accounts that open up the black box of the state. It does so by illuminating the circumstances in which the assumption of the state as a unitary actor holds: i.e., when domestic elites are highly integrated and, hence, foreign policy making is not subject to the domestic struggles for power inherent in elite infighting. Moreover, integrated elites face milder constraints to collective action and thus are the closest fulfillment of the state

⁷⁸² Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Caudillo, 1791-1899 Vol. I* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc.: 2003), 95-96.

as unitary actor assumption. On the other hand, assuming the validity of the unitary actor assumption unconditionally will lead to misleading predictions and to incorrect explanations whenever foreign policy making is not insulated from domestic politics – even when vital matters of national security are at stake. This dissertation demonstrated both cases at work. We could see that Brazil between 1850 and 1859 behaved internationally as a unitary actor in the pursuit of its strategic interests – i.e., free navigation and border settlement – in its relationship with Paraguay. We also saw how elite cohesion among the Paraguayan elites after mid-July 1932 contributed to Paraguay’s unhindered pursuit of strategic and military objectives in the conflict with Bolivia. In fact, by allowing swift action in the battlefield, elite cohesion proved to be more important than mere numerical strength, giving Paraguay an overwhelming military victory.

Finally, before concluding, I would like to consider three contributions of this dissertation. The first contribution of this dissertation is to provide a more comprehensive explanation for the alleged “Latin American Peace” or “violent peace.”⁷⁸³ Arie M. Kacowicz explained Latin America’s relative absence of major wars as a result of those countries having formed a regional international society.⁷⁸⁴ However, we saw in chapter 1 that the existence of shared norms and institutions is not sufficient to explain either the relative absence of major conflict in South America or the occurrence of uses of military

⁷⁸³ David R. Mares, *Violent Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); David R. Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace* (New York: Routledge, 2012, Kindle edition); Arie M. Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace in the Third World: South America and West Africa in Comparative Perspective* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998); Arie M. Kacowicz, *The Impact of Norms in the International Society: The Latin American Experience, 1881-2001* (Notre-Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005); and Miguel Angel Centeno, *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

⁷⁸⁴ Kacowicz, *The Impact of Norms in the International Society*.

force short of war. While most of the regional norms and institutions shared by South American countries began to emerge as early as 1810, or very soon after that,⁷⁸⁵ nineteenth-century South America was a typical zone of conflict. The frequency with which force was used among South American countries did not significantly decrease until 1911, having a slight increase for the period of 1921-1940, and then decreasing again from 1941 on, as shown in table 1.1 in chapter 1. Therefore, there is no correlation between the emergence of international principles and norms of conflict resolution and the actual reduction in the use of force among South American states.

We have also seen that my dissertation provides a more nuanced view of domestic politics and its relationship with foreign policy than David Mares' model of militarized bargaining does.⁷⁸⁶ Aiming to explain the several instances of uses of military force short of war in Latin America, Mares argues that the use of military force abroad is a function of the ability of the decision-maker to convince his/her constituency to bear the costs of the international violence in exchange for the possible private and/or public goods to be obtained by the implementation of such policy. However, Mares' theory has three limitations. The first is that it does not account for unauthorized uses of military force abroad employed as a strategy to change the domestic status quo, whereas my elite threat theory of foreign policy does that. Second, Mares' theory cannot explain cases when the Executive leader is not accountable to the domestic constituency.⁷⁸⁷ My dissertation, on the other hand, is able to explain foreign policies regardless of regime type. It does so by referring to the arrangement of the relations among the domestic elites and the ensuing

⁷⁸⁵ For example, the principle of *uti possidetis* began to be invoked in the mid-1830s.

⁷⁸⁶ Mares, *Violent Peace*, and Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace*.

⁷⁸⁷ Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace*, chapter 2, loc 1566 of 3382.

constraints and incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies. Finally, in Mares' model war is never an intended outcome.⁷⁸⁸ While I recognize that the escalation of a militarized dispute into war is often not the outcome initially desired, this is not always the case. As we have seen in chapter 4, the Argentine politician Bernardino Rivadavia meticulously and deliberately timed the initiation of a war against Brazil as a means to justify the centralization of state power under his leadership. In sum, my theory not only explains the cases within Mares' scope conditions, but it also accounts for the cases not covered by Mares's model.

At last but not least, while Miguel Angel Centeno was correct to highlight the relationship between domestic conflict and international violence,⁷⁸⁹ his theory does not distinguish the impact of different levels of domestic conflict upon the incentives for the initiation of aggressive foreign policies. My theory, in turn, establishes the connection between different levels of domestic conflict and foreign policy. On one side, fragmented elites facing existential threats – i.e., a very high level of domestic conflict – are not inclined to resort to aggressive foreign policies to address their domestic problems. On the other side, fragmented elites facing non-existential threats to their resource bases – i.e., a lower level of domestic conflict – have incentives to initiate aggressive foreign policies as a resource appropriation strategy. Moreover, the Chaco War, which was fought by the two poorest South American countries with the lowest degrees of infrastructural power in the region, speaks volumes against the claim that organizational and ideological capacities are necessary for the occurrence of wars.

⁷⁸⁸ Mares, *Violent Peace*, 7.

⁷⁸⁹ Centeno, *Blood and Debt*, 66.

Another contribution of my dissertation is that not only it uncovered cases of use of force not listed in the Correlates of War dataset, but it also explained why those uses of force did not escalate to full-blown wars. Those missing cases are: (a) all uses of force employed by Argentina under the leadership of the governor of Buenos Aires (either as United Provinces or as Argentine Confederation) before 1843, including (i) the Cisplatine War, (ii) Argentina's involvement in Chile's war against Bolivia in 1824, and (iii) Argentina's intervention in the Uruguayan civil war; (b) Peru's border violation against Bolivia in 1896; (c) Paraguay's use of force against Bolivia in September 1888 and show of force against the same country in 1897; (d) and Bolivia's seizure of the Paraguayan fort Samaklay in 1931.

Finally, as stated in the introduction, there is nothing inherent in my theory that makes it exclusive to South America. As such, my theory has also implications for the current domestic and international events in other regions such as the Muslim World, despite the many obvious differences Latin America and the Middle East. On the one hand, the emergence of political stability in the aftermath of the Arab Spring will depend, among other factors, on elite integration – or at least elite consensus. That is, the current revolutionary changes in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya should lead to stable regimes – be they democratic or not – as long as the domestic political, economic, and military elites within those countries are able to reach an agreement on their preferences over resource extraction and allocation.

Comparing Tunisia and Egypt, for example, the democratization scholar Alfred Stepan argues that the transition in Tunisia is more likely to result in a successful stable democracy than the one in Egypt because of what the author calls “political society.” “In

a ‘political society,’ organized segments of civil society negotiate and forge agreements over issues such as the electoral law or whether to choose a parliamentary or presidential system.”⁷⁹⁰ In Egypt, however, despite the magnitude of the protests, the political society is much less developed and thus, the chances for the emergence of a successful stable democracy are smaller in that country. Notice that Stepan’s “political society” – a cause of stable democracies – requires that agreements over important issues related to the distribution of power in society be reached. While I might disagree with Stepan about the exact segments of the civil society that must be included in such agreements to assure their durability, I concur with the author that elite agreement on the rules of the game is necessary for political stability.

In this regard, much has been recently said about the suitability of the Turkish model for the possible establishment of democracy in Egypt. In the so-called Turkish model, the military provides the space for a secular democracy to thrive while serving as an important check on elected governments until the democratic institutions are able to run on their own.⁷⁹¹ On the one hand, the Turkish and Egyptian militaries share some important similarities:

“For example, like the Turkish General Staff, which worked tirelessly to ensure the political order that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his commanders established after the end

⁷⁹⁰ David Cortright and Steve Reifenberg (eds.), “The Tipping Point: Transitions to Democracy in Latin America and the Middle East,” Kellogg Institute for International Studies, January 2012, at <http://kellogg.nd.edu/about/Tipping%20Point-Arab%20Spring.pdf>

⁷⁹¹ Michael J. Koplow, “Officers and Democrats: Can Egypt Pull Off the Turkey Trick?” *Foreign Affairs* July 6, 2013 at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139563/michael-j-koplow/officers-and-democrats?cid=nlc-this_week_on_foreignaffairs_co-071113-officers_and_democrats_4-071113&sp_mid=42035342&sp_rid=YWFhOGFAdmlyZ2luaWEuZWR1S0; Laurel E. Miller, Jeffrey Martini, F. Stephen Larrabee, Angel Rabasa, Stephanie Pezard, Julie E. Taylor, Tewodaj Mengistu, *Democratization in the Arab World: Prospects and Lessons from Around the Globe* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2012), xxi, 111-112 at http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2012/RAND_MG1192.pdf

of World War I, the Egyptian officer corps has long maintained a commitment to the regime that its predecessors, the Free Officers, founded in the early 1950s.”⁷⁹²

Much like the Egyptian army, Turkish officers were looking to protect their place in the system and their own privileges, and both militaries also developed robust economic ties to their countries’ political systems.⁷⁹³ The junior officers who carried out the 1960 coup in Turkey had done so because the government had been neglecting the armed forces’ upkeep, putting it at a disadvantage compared to its NATO counterparts. In the case of Egypt, the fact that the Egyptian military worked with the Muslim Brotherhood until doing so was no longer convenient speaks volumes about the army’s self-interested agenda.⁷⁹⁴

Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the composition and arrangement of the elites in Turkey and Egypt. First, the Turkish officers enjoyed the support of a broad coalition including the economic elites along with judges, lawyers, academics, the press, and average Turks who were committed to defend Kemalism against smaller groups of Islamists and Kurds.⁷⁹⁵ In other words, the Elite Structure in Turkey could be placed in the integrated end of the integration-fragmentation continuum.

In turn, there are few influential supporters for the military becoming the arbiter of the Egyptian politics. During the revolutionary events of 2011, more than two dozen political parties demanded that the military provide a specific outline of the time and

⁷⁹² Steven A. Cook, “Istanbul on the Nile: Why the Turkish Model of Military Rule Is Wrong for Egypt,” *Foreign Affairs*, August 1, 2011 at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68003/steven-a-cook/istanbul-on-the-nile>

⁷⁹³ Cook, “Istanbul on the Nile.” In Turkey, the armed forces supported the control of large holding companies by a few established families. In Egypt, the military itself is directly involved in a wide array of economic activities, including agriculture, real estate, tourism, security and aviation services, consumer goods, light manufacturing, and, of course, weapons fabrication.

⁷⁹⁴ Koplow, “Officers and Democrats.”

⁷⁹⁵ Cook, “Istanbul on the Nile.”

manner of transfer of power to a civilian government.⁷⁹⁶ The only group that offered a strong support to the military during the Egyptian revolution was the Muslim Brotherhood. However, the support of the Brotherhood to the military was a strategy to undermine opposing revolutionary groups, liberals, and secularist parties. As such, the Brotherhood did not contemplate a political role for the officers after a transition to civilian leaders, and this incompatibility of preferences between the Brotherhood and the Egyptian military resulted in the recent coup that ousted the Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi from power three years before the end of his term. In sum, the elite consensus that sustained the Turkish model does not seem to exist in Egypt and hence the prospects of political stability in the Egyptian near future are low.

Given the degree of elite fragmentation in Egypt, two major patterns of foreign policy can be expected, depending on the Threat Intensity. Under high degrees of fragmentation and threat as currently exhibited, we should not expect Egypt to initiate aggressive foreign policies. The high, existential stakes of the domestic conflict force elites to devote their energy and resources inwards. However, if Egyptian elites begin a process of accommodation and the threat intensity decreases to conflicts of relative shares of revenue without compromising the existence of the elites as such in the short term, we should expect the initiation of aggressive foreign policies short of war as a strategy of (a) diversion and/or (b) domestic resource appropriation.

Notice that the initiation of aggressive foreign policies as a strategy of resource appropriation does not necessarily require a transition to democracy, as Mansfield and

⁷⁹⁶ Cook, "Istanbul on the Nile."

Snyder would predict.⁷⁹⁷ Instead, a change in the elite structure towards the lessening of fragmentation and threat is all that is needed for the elites to contemplate aggressive foreign policies as strategies targeted to address domestic problems. Thus, diversionary and/or opportunistic foreign policies should occur even if the transition aims to establish less than democratic forms of government.

Another interesting phenomenon has been the change in the Turkish foreign policy from a close relationship with the United States towards growing anti-Americanism as the elite cohesion in Turkish wore off and elite threat became existential. This event highlights both the applicability of my Elite Theory of Aggressive Foreign Policy to other regions besides Latin America, as well as possible limits to the empirical reach of my theory. On the one hand, anti-Americanism is an appealing venue for the display of aggressive foreign policy rhetoric, since it involves a much smaller threat of military escalation as compared to the initiation of uses of military force short of war. On the other hand, anti-Americanism alone offers a more limited pretext for institutional changes aimed at domestic resource appropriation, since the threat of an impending war against the United States is virtually negligible.

Since the electoral victory of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002, the Turkish elite structure has been fragmented along two main camps. The first group includes center-right politicians, liberals, and the religious elites that fully support the AKP in the party's effort to free Turkish politics from subjugation by the military and the judiciary. The other camp is composed of secularists, the military and civilian bureaucratic elites, and various types of nationalists. They claim that the AKP is

⁷⁹⁷ Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2007).

contemptuous of its political opposition, authoritarian, interested in destroying the opposition press, and determined to weaken the Turkish military despite the country's unstable neighborhood.⁷⁹⁸

The degree of threat posed by the AKP to the military and secular elites and vice-versa has continuously increased, becoming existential.⁷⁹⁹ The AKP has launched a repressive campaign against the press, intimidating journalists and editors who advocate on behalf of Kurds or even merely criticizing the government.⁸⁰⁰ The AKP has also targeted the military establishment since 2003, adopting measures to decrease the ability of the military to pressure the civilian government.⁸⁰¹ The military responded to the AKP encroachment on its power with a veiled threat (published on the General Staff's website on April 27, 2007) to intervene if Abdullah Gül, the AKP candidate, was elected president.⁸⁰² In an attempt to avoid being ousted in a military coup, such as happened with the first Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, in 1997 and with the Refah Party, which was outlawed in 1998, the AKP has accused current and former military

⁷⁹⁸ Morton Abramowitz and Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey's Transformers: The AKP Sees Big," *Foreign Affairs* 88:6 (November/December 2009): 118-119.

⁷⁹⁹ Miller et al., *Democratization in the Arab World*, 112, 138.

⁸⁰⁰ "More than 90 journalists are now sitting in Turkish prisons -- more than in any other country in the world -- and the state has over 4,000 lawsuits pending against members of the press. Many of these reporters are stuck in a legal limbo, as Turkey's laws allow imprisonment of journalists for up to three years without trial. In 2011, Reporters Without Borders ranked Turkey 148th out of 178 countries in its annual index of press freedom." See Michael J. Koplow and Steven A. Cook, "The Turkish Paradox: How the AKP Simultaneously Embraces and Abuses Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* June 27, 2012 at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137754/michael-j-koplow-and-steven-a-cook/the-turkish-paradox>

⁸⁰¹ "Under a reform package introduced by the AKP in July 2003, the National Security Council (NSC) was reduced to a truly advisory body, the requirement that the NSC secretary be a military officer was abolished, and the number of civilian members of the NSC was increased. Meetings were also reduced from once a month to once every two months. These changes made it difficult for the military to use the NSC as a vehicle for exerting pressure on the civilian government." See Miller et al., *Democratization in the Arab World*, 139.

⁸⁰² "The [Turkish] presidency had traditionally been held by a secularist. The military leadership feared that Gül's election would remove an important check on the AKP's ability to change the Turkish constitution in ways that would weaken secularism and gradually move Turkey in a more Islamist direction." See Miller et al., *Democratization in the Arab World*, 113, 139.

officials of plotting coups and initiated a massive suppressive campaign against the armed forces.⁸⁰³ The cases against the officers have been marked by allegations of forged documents, detentions without evidence, and what seems like an attempt to subordinate the military not to the institutions of the state but to the AKP itself.

This growing elite fragmentation and threat in Turkey has been accompanied by a change towards an anti-Americanist foreign policy. The military and bureaucratic elites that came to power in the 1980 coup favored a close strategic relationship with the United States throughout the 1980s and 1990s.⁸⁰⁴ However, after the growth in power of the new Islamist elites and the ensuing fragmentation of the Turkish elite structure since 2002, Turkey has adopted an anti-American foreign policy supported not only by the Islamist elites, but also by the military elites. After the AKP rise to power in 2002, the Turkish Parliament refused to allow US troops the use of Turkish territory in preparation for their invasion of Iraq in March 1, 2003. More significantly, the bill was rejected not only by the usual suspects – i.e., the AKP elites – but it also failed to receive support from the Turkish military and bureaucratic elites, old and trusted partners of the United States.⁸⁰⁵

⁸⁰³ “Twenty percent of all Turkish generals are currently in prison, and in March 2012 prosecutors demanded 15–20-year jail sentences for 364 active-duty and retired officers. After the government arrested another slew of senior officers on murky charges of plotting coups, the Turkish chief of staff and the commanders of the air force, navy, and land forces all resigned in protest. Earlier that year, the government arrested former Chief of Staff Ilker Basbug.” See Koplow and Cook, “The Turkish Paradox,” and Miller et al., *Democratization in the Arab World*, 140.

⁸⁰⁴ Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, “Friends No More?: The Rise of Anti-American Nationalism in Turkey,” *The Middle East Journal* 64:1 (Winter 2010): 52, 55.

⁸⁰⁵ Grigoriadis, “Friends No More?” 57, 65.

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