

# Electing To Fight

## Why Emerging Democracies Go To War

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(Cambridge: MIT Press, forthcoming in 2004)

### Chapter 1 and excerpts from chapters 7 and 8

No mature democracies have ever fought a war against each other. Consequently, conventional wisdom holds that promoting the spread of democracy will promote world peace and security. President Bill Clinton made this ambition a central theme of his foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> In the wake of the September 11, 2001, World Trade Center attack, President George W. Bush came to believe that U.S. security might require preventive wars to unseat dangerous despots so as to build the “infrastructure of democracy” abroad and create a “balance of power that favors freedom.”<sup>2</sup> Declaring that American security from terrorism depends on the success of democracy in Iraq and its neighbors, Bush argued that “sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe — because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty.”<sup>3</sup>

Such views strike a resonant chord across the entire spectrum of American opinion. Since the time of Woodrow Wilson, idealists in the United States have envisioned a global transformation in which peace and democracy are mutually reinforcing. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rising danger of global terrorism created conditions in which these longstanding ideals seemed, to some, both achievable and urgent.<sup>4</sup> U.S.-based activist movements have increasingly pressed a transnational agenda in which “all good things go together”: global democratic accountability, global civil society, improved human rights, and peace.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, over the long run, it is probably true that the further spread of democracy will promote global peace and stability.

In the short run, however, the beginning stages of transitions to democracy often give rise to war, not peace. This link between democratization and war has been widely in evidence in the years since the Cold War, but the fundamental pattern is as old as

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<sup>1</sup> 1994 State of the Union address, “Transcript of Clinton’s Address,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1994, p. A17.

<sup>2</sup> Executive Office of the President, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (September 2002), pp. 21, 29.

<sup>3</sup> George W. Bush, “Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy,” Washington, D.C., November 6, 2003, reported in David Sanger, “Bush Asks Lands in Mideast to Try Democratic Ways,” *New York Times*, November 7, 2003, p. A1.

<sup>4</sup> Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History,” *The National Interest*, No. 16 (Summer 1989), pp. 3–18; Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs*, America and the World, 1990/91, Vol. 70, No. 1, pp. 23–33.

<sup>5</sup> The term is from Robert Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

democracy itself, going back at least to the French Revolution. Not all democratic transitions are dangerous, as we explain in this book: the chance of war rises mainly in those transitional states that lack the strong political institutions that are needed to make democracy work, such as an effective state, the rule of law, organized parties that compete in fair elections, and professional news media. When these institutions are absent or weak, politicians have incentives to resort to violent nationalist appeals, tarring their opponents as enemies of the nation, in order to prevail in electoral competition.

In democratizing states, nationalism is an ideology with tremendous appeal for elites whose privileges may be under threat. It tries to convince newly empowered constituencies that the cleavage between the privileged and the masses is unimportant compared to the cleavages that divide nations, ethnic groups, or races. Nationalism holds that the people as a whole have the right to self-rule, but it does not necessarily promise that the government should be strictly accountable to the average voter through democratic processes governed by the rule of law. Its rhetoric demands government for the people, but not necessarily by the people.

Trying to take a shortcut to democracy before institutions of public accountability are in place risks playing into the hands of those who would foment nationalist violence. President Bush claimed that “it is the practice of democracy that makes a nation ready for democracy, and every nation can start on this path.”<sup>6</sup> However, our review of the evidence shows that this argument, in which most democracy advocates concur, is incorrect, and dangerously so. In fact, ill-prepared attempts to democratize weak states — such as the recent cases of Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Rwanda, and Burundi — may lead to costly warfare in the short run, and may wind up delaying or preventing real progress toward democracy.

Over thirty years ago, Dankwart Rustow issued a call for an approach to the study of democratization that addressed questions of both process and sequence.<sup>7</sup> He complained that existing approaches emphasized the prerequisites for democracy — such as wealth, literacy, and a large middle class — or its functional requirements, such as the rule of law and a free press. These approaches correspond to what Thomas Carothers disparages as the “check-list orientation” of U.S. democracy assistance programs: democracy, it is thought, will emerge when the full inventory of prerequisites has been installed, regardless of the order in which these factors are put into place.<sup>8</sup>

Rustow argued, in contrast, that the stability of democratic consolidation depends on the sequence in which the requisites appear on the historical stage. The “ingredients [of democracy] must be assembled one at a time,” he insisted, “in a manageable sequence of tasks.” He maintained, for example, that democratization typically goes awry when it precedes the emergence of a consensus on national identity. “The hardest struggles in a

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<sup>6</sup> George W. Bush, “Remarks by the President,” November 6, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Dankwart Rustow, “Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model,” *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (April 1970), pp. 337–363, reprinted in Lisa Anderson, ed., *Transitions to Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 14–41.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999); see also Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2002), pp. 5–21.

democracy are those against the birth defects of political community.”<sup>9</sup> A number of leading scholars of democratization and political change made similar arguments around the same time: Robert Dahl, Eric Nordlinger, and Samuel Huntington all pointed out that democratic transitions are most successful when strong political institutions are developed before popular political participation increases.<sup>10</sup> Such ideas about sequencing have not, however, played a central role in much subsequent scholarship or public policymaking on democratic transitions. We believe they should.

In this book, therefore, we study the process and sequence of democratization to identify when and how it leads to peace or may instead increase the risk of war. We use statistical evidence to establish general patterns, and we use case studies to trace causal mechanisms. Our research shows that incomplete democratic transitions — those that get stalled before reaching the stage of full democracy — increase the chance of involvement in international war in countries where governmental institutions are weak at the outset of the transition. In such transitional states with weak institutions, as we show in Chapter 5, the risk of war goes up by a factor of four to fifteen. Seven percent of all wars since 1816 are associated with an incomplete democratic transition. Democratic transition is only one of many causes of war, but it is a potent one.

In the rest of this chapter, we remind readers of some of the many “wars of democratization” that have taken place, especially since the end of the Cold War, but also reaching back as far as the French Revolution. We distinguish the conditions under which wars are most likely: a transition toward democracy that is incomplete, where institutions are too weak to manage the upsurge in the political power of newly enfranchised masses, and where rising or declining elites, or both, play the nationalist card in an attempt to harness that power. We outline the causal mechanisms that we explain more fully in Chapters 2 and 3. We conclude this chapter by stressing why it is crucial to take these dangers into account in devising the foreign policy responses of the U.S. and the international community to the potential challenges posed by troubled democratizing states.

## **Wars of Democratization**

The decade following the end of the Cold War witnessed some peaceful transitions to democracy, yet a number of turbulent experiments with democratic politics led instead to bloody wars. In 1991 Yugoslavia broke up into separate warring nations within six months of elections in which ethnic nationalism was a powerful factor.<sup>11</sup> In the wake of the Soviet collapse, popular sentiment expressed in the streets and at the ballot box fueled warfare between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the disputed enclave of

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<sup>9</sup> Rustow, “Transitions to Democracy,” pp. 34–35. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 5, discuss democratic consolidation as the moment when democracy becomes “the only game in town.”

<sup>10</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971); Eric Nordlinger, “Political Development, Time Sequences and Rates of Change,” in James L. Finkle and Robert Grable, *Political Development and Social Change*, 2d ed. (New York: Wiley, 1971), p. 458; Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

<sup>11</sup> Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 17.

Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>12</sup> As Peru and Ecuador democratized fitfully during the 1980s and 1990s, troubled elected governments gained popularity by provoking a series of armed clashes that culminated in a war in the upper Amazon in 1995.<sup>13</sup> Several years after the collapse of Ethiopia's Dergue dictatorship, the country's elected government fought a bloody border war from 1998 to 2000 with Eritrea, which had just adopted, though not yet implemented, a democratic constitution.<sup>14</sup>

In an especially worrisome case, the nuclear-armed, elected regimes of India and Pakistan fought the Kargil War in 1999. After the 1988 death of Pakistani military dictator Zia ul-Haq, a series of revolving-door elected civilian governments had presided over a rise in militant Islamic efforts to liberate majority-Muslim Kashmir from Indian control. In Kashmir itself, the restoration of elections after Indira Gandhi's period of "emergency" authoritarian rule (1975–77) had polarized politics and led to violent conflict between Muslims and the state. These turbulent processes culminated in the 1999 war, when Pakistani forces infiltrated across the mountainous frontier in northern Kashmir. The war broke out as Pakistan was taking steps toward greater democratization, including constitutional changes in 1997 that were intended to strengthen the powers of elected civilian rulers.<sup>15</sup>

Violence inside some unstable democratizing states also spilled across borders during the 1990s. Democratization played a catalytic role in the horrible slaughters that engulfed central Africa. The 1993 elections in Burundi — even though internationally mandated, free, and fair — intensified ethnic polarization between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, resulting in some 200,000 deaths. In neighboring Rwanda, an internationally orchestrated power-sharing accord intended to usher in more pluralistic and open politics instead created the conditions for the 1994 genocide that killed nearly a million Tutsi as well as some moderate Hutu.<sup>16</sup> The Tutsi exile army based in Uganda invaded to stop the genocide. Its military victory forced Hutu refugees, including many of the genocide's perpetrators, into neighboring Congo, where further fighting involving the troops of several states have led to millions of additional deaths since 1998.

Elsewhere, democratic transitions coincided with renewed or intensified secessionist wars. In East Timor, a favorable vote on independence from Indonesia in an internationally mandated 1999 referendum spurred Indonesian-backed Timorese militias to unleash large-scale backlash violence, creating an international refugee crisis. Newly democratizing Russia fought two wars against its breakaway province of Chechnya.

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<sup>12</sup> Stuart Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001), chap. 3.

<sup>13</sup> David R. Mares, *Violent Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), chap. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Tekeste Negash and Kjetil Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). We discuss these cases from the 1990s in Chapter 8.

<sup>15</sup> On India, see Ian Talbot, *India and Pakistan* (London: Arnold, 2000), p. 275; on Pakistan, Hasan-Askari Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), chap. 10. Bruce Russett and John Oneal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: Norton, 2001), p. 48, discuss whether the Kargil War should be counted as a war between democracies.

<sup>16</sup> Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), chapters 3 and 5.

Vladimir Putin won election in 2000 as Russia's president mainly on the popularity of his plan to invade Chechnya to clean out the supposed lair of terrorists and brigands. In all of these varied settings during the 1990s, the turbulent beginning phase of democratization in states with weak political institutions contributed to cross-border violence.

### *Wars of Democratization as a Chronic Danger in History*

War-prone transitions to democracy were not just an aberration of the 1990s. Since the origins of modern mass politics around the time of the French Revolution, virtually all of the great powers turned belligerent and fought popular wars during the early phases of their experiments with democracy. In eighteenth-century France, the popular patriotism unleashed by the revolution sustained a mass army that fought the revolution's perceived enemies all across Europe. This tragedy was, as Karl Marx put it, repeated as farce, when Louis Napoleon, elected as the French president in 1849, touted his military victories to sustain his power in a constitutional, semi-electoral regime. Even in Britain's relatively painless transition to democracy, the urban middle classes enfranchised by the Reform Bill of 1832 provided the enthusiasm that fueled both Palmerston's policy of commercial imperialism and the Crimean War.<sup>17</sup> Germany's more tortured path toward democracy created the impetus toward its five aggressive wars between 1864 and 1939. As monarchical Prussia transformed itself into the democratizing German Empire, Chancellor Otto von Bismarck forged a war-prone political alliance between the nationalist middle classes and the militarist elites, embodied in a political system that combined a legislature elected by broad suffrage and governments appointed by the Kaiser.<sup>18</sup> Japan's early phase of democratic politics was similarly marked by popular, militarized nationalism. When the Great Depression hit democratizing Japan of the late 1920s, the democratic, free-trade coalition of workers and capital in export-oriented consumer industries was soon supplanted by an imperialist coalition that was led by the military and had strong electoral support.<sup>19</sup> In the United States of the 1830s and 1840s, the Jacksonian reforms that installed mass democracy by reducing restrictions on suffrage and expanding the direct election of officials coincided with an upsurge of popular support in the slave states for a war to gain territory for expansion at the expense of Mexico.<sup>20</sup>

As we show in our statistical analyses presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, this historical pattern holds true not only for great powers, but for states in general. Although mature democracies rarely, if ever, fight wars against each other, incomplete transitions from autocracy toward democracy are fraught with the danger of violent conflict in states whose political institutions are weak.

In this book, we focus on democratization and international war, but other studies have suggested that when institutions in democratizing states are weak, the risks of

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<sup>17</sup> Kingsley Martin, *The Triumph of Lord Palmerston* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1924).

<sup>18</sup> Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire 1871–1918* (Leamington Spa/Dover, N.H.: Berg, 1985).

<sup>19</sup> Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> John M. Owen, "Perceptions and the Limits of Liberal Peace: The Mexican-American and Spanish-American Wars," in Miriam Elman, ed., *Paths to Peace: Is Democracy the Answer?* (Cambridge: MIT, 1997), quotation at p. 170; for his larger study, see Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 113–124.

internal ethnic conflict and civil war also rise.<sup>21</sup> Comprehensive studies of civil wars have found that the regime type most likely to experience civil war is a mixed regime, one that is partly democratic and partly authoritarian, with poorly developed state institutions.<sup>22</sup> The causal mechanisms specified in our theory may also help to account for this.

### **What Conditions Make the Democratization Process Less Dangerous?**

Although the process of democratization tends to increase the risk of war, many countries go through the process peacefully. During the 1980s and 1990s, numerous states consolidated their democratic transitions fairly successfully with little if any external or internal violence. These fortunate cases included many in the southern cone of South America, in Northeastern Europe, and in East Asia. South Africa, too, despite some internal violence, experienced a reasonably smooth transition.

These countries had a number of important advantages. They tended to enjoy relatively high per-capita income and literacy; thus, their citizens had the resources and skills to build the institutions and civil society organizations that democracy needs. Before the transition began, many of these success cases had well-developed state institutions, and in particular, administrative bureaucracies that functioned in a reasonably efficient way to advance state objectives with minimal corruption. Some of these successful states enjoyed the benefit of some past experience with independent legal and journalistic institutions that could be adapted for use by the democratizing state. In most of these states, powerful elites did not feel threatened by a successful transition to democracy, in part because trusted state institutions made guarantees that they would have a soft landing credible, so they were less likely to put up resistance to change.

Where, under such conditions, strong democratic institutions emerged quickly, democracy was fairly easily consolidated, and the transition was largely peaceful, as in Brazil, Chile, Hungary, and Poland. Where institutional groundwork was in place, transitions were peaceful even in geopolitically challenging cases where unresolved national partitions raised the risk of war, as in South Korea and Taiwan. In contrast, where the institutions needed by democracy were weak and democratization remained incomplete, war was more likely, as in Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Peru.

This finding bears out arguments advanced by the seminal scholar of democracy and democratization, Robert Dahl. He argued that the peacefulness of the transition to democracy depended on getting the sequence of the transition right. Where rules, habits, and institutions of competitive politics were well established before the holding of unfettered mass elections, as in Great Britain after the Second and Third Reform Bills of 1867 and 1884, the transition to democracy went relatively smoothly. In contrast, where mass electoral politics developed before the institutions to regulate political competition

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<sup>21</sup> Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2000), applies this theory to both civil wars and international wars. That book, however, presents only case study evidence, not statistical analyses.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Esty, Jack Goldstone, Ted Gurr, Barbara Harff, Marc Levy, Geoffrey Dalboko, Pamela Surko, and Alan Unger, "State Failure Task Force Report: Phase II Findings," July 1998; see also James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 1 (February 2003), pp. 75–90, especially pp. 84–85.

were in place, transitions were prone to conflict. In countries that tried to take shortcuts to democracy, Dahl argued, elites tended to feel threatened by political change, and leaders often deployed nationalism as a justification for intolerance and repression.<sup>23</sup> We find exactly these causal mechanisms at work in many wars of democratization.

### **When and How Democratization Increases the Chance of War**

It is possible to imagine several reasons why democratization might be associated with an increased likelihood of war, other than the argument that we advance. Some scholars speculate, for example, that perhaps all kinds of regime change, not just regime change toward democracy, lead to instability and war. Or one might guess that the new democracies are vulnerable and hence targets of attack, but are not aggressors themselves. We explore such alternative explanations in the next chapter and show that none of these is convincing. Instead, we find that war is most likely in incomplete democratization that has stalled during the transition from an authoritarian regime to a mixed regime, when the state suffers from serious institutional deficits. Weak institutions *per se* do not increase the chance of war; they do so only during the early phase of an incomplete democratic transition. It is often a strategic mistake for an institutionally weak state that is handing over power to its people to initiate war, and yet such states often do exactly this. Why?

Such states face a gap between rising demands for broad participation in politics and inadequate institutions to manage those popular demands.<sup>24</sup> Where the institutions of autocratic authority are crumbling, yet new institutions of democratic accountability have not yet been constructed to take their place, routine institutional authority is lacking, and political leaders frequently turn instead to ideological or charismatic appeals to bolster their rule.

Rallying popular support by invoking threats from rival nations is a common expedient for hard-pressed leaders who seek to shore up their legitimacy. During the unraveling of the Yugoslav Communist regime, for example, Slobodan Milosevic employed demagogic rhetoric about the alleged danger of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo to gain a popular following in Serbia's first elections.<sup>25</sup> The institutional weaknesses of early democratization create both the motive to use this strategy of rule and the opportunity to dodge accountability for its high costs and biased rhetoric.

The contest over national self-determination takes place as the fortunes of both elites and mass groups are shifting. Elites left over from the old regime are desperately seeking strategies that will prevent their fall, while rising elites are trying to muscle in, and both are scrambling for allies among the newly aroused masses.

Elites often seek to solve these political dilemmas by invoking nationalism, the doctrine that a distinctive people deserve to rule themselves in a state that protects and

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<sup>23</sup> Dahl, *Polyarchy*, pp. 36–38, 44.

<sup>24</sup> Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*.

<sup>25</sup> V.P. Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994–95), pp. 130–166.

advances their distinctive cultural or political interests.<sup>26</sup> Nationalism helps elites to rally the support of the masses on the basis of sentiment, rather than seeking their loyalty by providing responsive institutions that protect their interests. Nationalism also helps to define the people who are exercising self-determination. It thus clarifies the lines between “the people” and their external foes, who become scapegoats, in a self-fulfilling strategy that rallies support in protection against external threats.

Nationalism is attractive to rising groups, who use it as a populist club that can be wielded against elites who are insufficiently zealous in promoting the interest of “the nation,” that is, “the people.” At the same time, nationalism can be co-opted as a counter-tactic by elites, old and new, who want to evade new democratic constraints on their rule. Claiming to rule for “the people,” but not submitting to direct accountability to them, these elites can tar their opponents as “enemies of the nation” who are in league with external foes, and thus justify curtailing their opponents’ political and civil rights. This nationalist club may be particularly attractive to military elites, economic protectionists, or ethnic entrepreneurs. The nearly universal emergence of nationalist ideology in the early stages of democratization suggests that its usefulness at this formative political juncture is generic and can be adapted for use by almost any would-be ruling group.<sup>27</sup>

In the absence of strong state institutions to knit together the nation, leaders must struggle for legitimacy in an ill-defined, contested political arena. Nationalism is both an easy and an effective way to rally popular support without actually offering accountability for results to a newly mobilized mass public. Democracy requires national self-determination, but people in weak states who are just emerging into political consciousness often lack a clear, agreed answer to the question, “who are we; what is our nation?” Although nationalists often believe that the identity of their own nation was fixed by immutable nature or culture, on the contrary, it is generally a people’s shared experience and shared fate in a strong state that solidifies and demarcates their sense of nationality. Even in a country with a long and venerable history such as France, for example, it was only the shared experiences in the late nineteenth century — common military service, national railways, standardized education, and mass democracy — that completed the process of forging a culturally diverse peasantry into self-conscious Frenchmen.<sup>28</sup>

War may sometimes result from this potent political brew, as a direct result of explicitly nationalist political objectives, such as the aim of regaining a lost piece of national territory. War may also result indirectly from the complex politics of transitional states. It may come as an unintended by-product of belligerent and untrustworthy diplomacy that provokes neighbor’s fears. Nationalists’ mobilizing rhetoric may make war more likely by distorting the nation’s view of the chances of success in a fight, or of the feasibility of reaching a compromise with the enemy. Political leaders may become entrapped in their own swaggering rhetoric, their reputations mortgaged to the nationalist commitments they have made. Heterogeneous political coalitions may become stuck with

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<sup>26</sup> For discussions of the definition of nationalism, see Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*, pp. 21–25; and Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), chapter 1.

<sup>27</sup> Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

<sup>28</sup> Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).



their own reckless policies when uncompromising nationalism becomes the indispensable common denominator that keeps them together. In short, it would be misleading to say that nationalistic publics in incomplete democracies simply “want war.” Instead, war is often an indirect by-product of the nationalist politics of the transitional regime. In Chapter 3, we discuss the effect of nationalism on the risk of war in more detail.

### **Future Challenges of Democratization and War**

There is little reason to believe that the longstanding link between democratization and nationalist war is becoming obsolete. On the contrary, future transitions may be even more difficult and dangerous. The “third wave” of democratization in the 1980s and 1990s consolidated democratic regimes mainly in the richer countries of Eastern Europe, Latin America, Southern Africa, and East Asia.<sup>29</sup> A fourth wave would involve more challenging cases: countries that are poorer, more ethnically divided, ideologically more resistant to democracy, with more entrenched authoritarian elites, and with a much frailer base of governmental institutions and citizen-skills.<sup>30</sup> Botched democratizations in such settings could give rise to grave threats to international peace and security.

Wars of democratization are therefore likely to remain a central problem of international relations in the coming years. Since the end of the Cold War, an army of public intellectuals has speculated on the fundamental nature of the emerging new world order, or disorder. In 1989, Francis Fukuyama foresaw the “end of history,” with peaceful, liberal democracy triumphant in all of the most significant countries.<sup>31</sup> History itself soon tarnished this vision with bloody nationalist conflicts in former Communist states and in Central Africa; Samuel Huntington’s counter-prediction of a cultural “clash of civilizations” better captured the mounting anxiety.<sup>32</sup> However, Huntington’s image of fixed civilizations locked in struggle did not adequately describe a rapidly changing world in which many of the worst conflicts were within, rather than between, civilizations. Thomas Friedman’s *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* did a better job of describing the dual trends of the 1990s — both global liberalization and parochial backlash — but his upbeat conclusions exaggerated the chances of economic success in the developing world and underestimated the degree to which political rivalries could overshadow potential gains from economic liberalization.<sup>33</sup>

Among the contributions by public intellectuals writing recently on global issues, Fareed Zakaria’s work on “illiberal democracy” is closest to our own arguments.<sup>34</sup> Zakaria, too, recounts the adverse implications of flawed democracy for peace, minority rights, and social order. He shows how the global spread of the liberal notion of electoral

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<sup>29</sup> Larry Diamond, “Is the Third Wave Over?” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (July 1986), pp. 20–37.

<sup>30</sup> Adrian Karatnycky, ed., *Freedom in the World: The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 2001–2002* (New York: Freedom House, 2002), pp. 11–15, 20–34.

<sup>31</sup> Fukuyama, “The End of History.”

<sup>32</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

<sup>33</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (New York: Norton, 2003).

politics has sometimes been perverted into serving parochial agendas, including cultural nationalism. In that sense, the themes of Fukuyama and Huntington come together in ironic counterpoint in Zakaria's analysis.

Zakaria, like us, implicitly borrows a seminal idea from Huntington (who was his dissertation adviser). In Huntington's most profound book, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, he showed how rising political participation leads to conflict and instability in states with weak political institutions.<sup>35</sup> Our research shows that this insight is important not only for understanding the stability of democracy within countries but also for understanding international conflict between them. In an era in which troubled, incomplete democratic transitions may engulf such geopolitically salient locations as the Middle East and China, this dynamic could be one of the fundamental determinants of the course of world politics.

Although democratization in the Islamic world might contribute to peace in the very long run, Islamic public opinion in the short run is, in most places, hostile to the United States, reluctant to condemn terrorism, and supportive of forceful measures to achieve favorable results in Palestine, Kashmir, and other disputed areas. Although much of the belligerence of the Islamic public is fueled by resentment of the U.S.-backed authoritarian regimes under which many of them live, simply renouncing these authoritarians and pressing for a quick democratic opening is unlikely to lead to peaceful democratic consolidations. On the contrary, unleashing Islamic mass opinion through a sudden democratization could only raise the likelihood of war.<sup>36</sup> All of the risk factors are there: the media and civil society groups are inflammatory, as old elites and rising oppositions try to outbid each other for the mantle of Islamic or nationalist militancy.<sup>37</sup> The rule of law is weak, and existing corrupt bureaucracies cannot serve a democratic administration properly. The boundaries of states are mismatched with those of nations, making any push for national self-determination fraught with peril.

In the Arab world, in particular, states commonly gain their popular legitimacy not through accountability to their own citizens, but by acting demagogically in the purported interests of the Arab nation as whole, which often means taking a belligerent stand on Palestinian issues.<sup>38</sup> As we show in Chapter 7, when Iraq attempted a partial democratic transition in the late 1940s, the elected leaders of its weak state felt compelled to grant military basing rights to its former colonial ruler, Britain; they then took an inflammatory stance against Israel to try to recoup their diminished nationalist credibility in the eyes of their urban Arab nationalist constituents. This vocal stance by Iraq's flawed democratic regime pushed the more moderate monarchies in the Arab front-line states to reject compromise on the creation of an Israeli state, opening the door to the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and the deepening entrenchment of the Arab-Israeli rivalry.

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<sup>35</sup> Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*.

<sup>36</sup> Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*, chap. 4.

<sup>37</sup> Sheri Berman, "Islamism, Revolution, and Civil Society," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (June 2003), pp. 257–272, draws parallels to belligerent civil society in the flawed democracy of Weimar Germany and stresses the "Huntingtonian gap" between high demand for political participation and ineffective state institutions; *ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

We do not argue that Islam is culturally unsuited for democracy, but rather that the institutional preparations for democracy are weak in most Islamic states. Thus, sudden increases in mass political participation are likely to be dangerous. Evidence of this is found in the theocratic pseudo-democracy established by the Iranian Revolution; it relentlessly pressed the offensive in a bloody war of attrition with Iraq and supported violent movements abroad. It took more than two decades for public opinion in Revolutionary Iran to moderate; at this point, finally, more democracy there might make Iran more peaceful. But even if moderate democracy eventually takes hold in Iran, the costs of the transition will have been exorbitant.

This does not necessarily mean that all steps toward democracy in the Islamic world would lead to disaster. Etel Solingen argues, for example, that reforms leading toward “democratization from above,” combined with economic liberalization, have been consistent with support for peaceful policies in such Arab states as Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, and Qatar. “The more consolidated democratizing regimes become,” she notes, “the less likely they are to experiment with populism and war.”<sup>39</sup> Consistent with our argument, these modest success cases indicate that the most promising sequence for democratization in such settings begins with reforms of the state and the economy, together with limited forms of democratic participation, rather than a headlong jump into popular elections before the strengthening of the institutions — such as efficient and even-handed public administration, the rule of law, professional journalism, and political parties — that are needed to make a democratic system work.

Islamic democratization is hardly the only such danger on the horizon. A future democratic opening in China, though much hoped for by advocates of human rights and democratization, could produce a sobering outcome.<sup>40</sup> China’s Communist rulers have presided over a commercial expansion that has generated wealth and a potentially powerful constituency for broader political participation. However, given the huge socio-economic divide between the prosperous coastal areas and the vast impoverished hinterlands, it seems unlikely that economic development will lead as smoothly to democratic consolidation in China as it has in Taiwan. China’s leadership showed its resistance to pressures for democratic liberalization in its 1989 crackdown on the student movement at Tiananmen Square, but party elites know that they need a stronger basis of popular legitimacy to survive the social and ideological changes that economic change has unleashed.

Nationalism is a key element in their strategy. China’s demand to incorporate Taiwan in the People’s Republic of China, its animosity toward Japan, and its public displays of resentment at U.S. slights are themes that resonate with the Chinese public and can easily be played upon to rally national solidarity behind the regime. At the same time, newly rising social forces see that China’s leaders permit more latitude to expressions of nationalism than to liberalism. Thus, some of the same intellectuals who

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<sup>39</sup> Etel Solingen, *Regional Orders at Century’s Dawn: Global and Domestic Influences of Grand Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 213.

<sup>40</sup> For a balanced view that discusses many of the following points, see David Bachman, “China’s Democratization: What Difference Would It Make for U.S.-China Relations?” in Edward Friedman and Barrett McCormick, eds., *What If China Doesn’t Democratize?* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), pp. 195–223.

played a role in the Tiananmen pro-democracy protests turned up a few years later as authors of a nationalist text, *China Can Say No*.<sup>41</sup>

Like many other established elites who have made use of popular nationalist rhetoric, China's party leadership has walked a fine line, allowing only limited expressions of popular nationalist outrage after such provocations as the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, anti-Chinese pogroms in Jakarta, or the U.S. spy plane incident of 2001. They realize that criticism of external enemies can quickly become transformed into popular criticism of the government for not being sufficiently diligent in defense of Chinese national interests.

The period of democratization by great powers has always been a moment of particular danger, in part because when states are militarily strong, they may seek to use their force in pursuit of nationalist goals. Vladimir Putin, for example, calculated carefully in using the Second Chechen War to win election as President in Russia in 2000. A similar strategy may appeal to politicians in a transitional China. How should the United States, the international community, or other powerful actors work to avert such dangers?

### **Promoting Democracy in the Face of the Risks**

Our findings about the dangers of war during the process of democratization suggest ways to design strategies for promoting democratization. Admittedly, most transitions to democracy result from a convergence of dynamic social forces, and nobody has full control over their timing and sequence. Nonetheless, a host of powerful actors — the United States government, the United Nations, the community of transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the indigenous pro-democracy movements in various countries — have set for themselves the explicit goal of speeding the transition to democracy and shaping its trajectory. Sometimes their efforts make little difference, but sometimes — as in Burundi in 1993 and in East Timor in 1999 — their efforts can be decisive, sometimes for the worse. As two great powers, Russia and China, remain at the dangerous early stages of this transition, the international community now has strong incentives to make sure that its influence is part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Our prescriptions stress the importance of getting the sequence right in taking steps toward democracy. Of particular value are the insightful recommendations made in an earlier context by the political scientist Eric Nordlinger. “The probabilities of a political system developing in a nonviolent, nonauthoritarian, and eventually democratically viable manner are maximized when a national identity emerges first, followed by the institutionalization of the central government, and then the emergence of mass parties and mass electorate.”<sup>42</sup> We examine the extent to which this insight applies not only to the domestic violence that Nordlinger studied, but also to international wars.

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<sup>41</sup> Song Qiang, Zhang Zangzang, and Qiao Bian, *Zhongguo keyi shuo bu* (China can say no) (Beijing: Zhonghua gongshang lianhe chubanshe, 1996).

<sup>42</sup> Nordlinger, “Political Development, Time Sequences and Rates of Change,” p. 458. We would qualify Nordlinger's sequence by pointing out that the emergence of a national identity is advantageous only if that identity is congruent with the borders of the state.

Spreading democracy is a worthwhile long-term goal, both as a value in itself and as an eventual means to increasing global peace and stability. Although some democratic transitions are risky, there is no alternative: political change cannot be frozen. In the long run, democratization is an inexorable global trend associated with social and economic development. What democracy promoters must do — whether they are U.S. occupation forces, NGOs, or reform coalitions in transitional states — is to try to create favorable institutional conditions in the sequence most likely to foster transitions that result in successful, peaceful consolidation of democracy. Urging a democratic transition when the necessary institutions are extremely weak risks not only a violent outcome, but also an increased likelihood of a long detour into a pseudo-democratic form of nationalism.

Approaches to promoting democracy, especially by the United States, are often naïve and insufficiently strategic. Thomas Carothers argues that activists typically arrive with a shopping list of the ingredients that a mature democracy comprises, such as free speech, the rule of law, a vocal opposition, and a vibrant civil society, and try to mount programs to develop all of these simultaneously, with no strategy for sequencing or integrating these elements in a way that takes into account the dynamics of transition.<sup>43</sup> Yet many of these elements may be counterproductive for democratic consolidation if they are promoted in an institutionally immature setting. Where media are unprofessionalized and dependent on self-serving elites, for example, free speech and vibrant civil society are often hijacked as vehicles for nationalist rhetoric and activism.<sup>44</sup> To avoid this, international democracy promoters and political leaders in transitional states must pay attention to the sequence and pace of democratic experiments.

Our most general rule is to start the process by building the institutions that democracy requires, and then encouraging mass political participation and unfettered electoral competition only after these institutions have begun to take root. Too often, as in Bosnia after the Dayton Accords, elections have come too soon and merely locked in the dominance of illiberal elites who won votes by playing the nationalist card.<sup>45</sup> This is a lesson that seems difficult for some promoters of democracy to learn. During the U.S. occupation of Iraq, for example, the French government called in 2003 for a quick handover of sovereignty to an elected Iraqi government.<sup>46</sup>

The first step toward democratic self-determination must be to define the boundaries of the nation in a way that has broad legitimacy. Where this problem is not already solved by demography or history, national legitimacy can only be achieved by constructing effective state institutions that begin to meet a people's needs for security and create for them a shared fate even if they do not share nationality. In this process, the top priority is to strengthen the ability of the administrative apparatus of the state to act rationally, consistently, and impartially in implementing the policy of the regime. At the

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999).

<sup>44</sup> Sheri Berman, "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (April 1997), pp. 401–429; Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, "Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Fall 1996), pp. 5–41.

<sup>45</sup> For a good analysis of Bosnia's post-Dayton electoral institutions, see Sumantra Bose, *Bosnia after Dayton: Nationalist Partition and International Intervention* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, "Irak: Les Chemins de la Reconstruction," *Le Monde*, September 13, 2003, p. 1.

same time, the leaders of a would-be pro-democracy coalition, together with its international backers, needs to seek out and empower a strong political constituency that anticipates benefits from a successful democratic transition, while neutralizing potential spoilers who might have the power and the motive to wreck it. In many cases, this will involve “center-right” coalitions that include economic and bureaucratic elites left over from the authoritarian regime.<sup>47</sup> Such a solution may be distasteful to some advocates of democratization, but tactical accommodations are sometimes unavoidable in order to achieve idealistic goals in the long run.

Once in power, the pro-reform leadership should work on a broad front to build institutions, and put in place the machinery that is necessary to regulate political participation in a working democracy: institutionalize the rule of law in administrative matters and economic contracting; establish the courts as an independent, reliable guarantor of civil rights; and professionalize objective mass media that reach a broadly inclusive public. Democratic competition is meaningful only once these institutions have begun to take root. At that point, priority can shift to the strengthening of representative institutions and the unleashing of mass political parties.

This process does not necessarily have to go slowly. In the Czech Republic and South Africa, for example, where these preconditions were already in place or could be easily created, consolidation happened quickly and successfully. Elsewhere, however, the reform government and its international supporters must get the sequence right to avoid creating the opportunity and motive for illiberal nationalist strategies to subvert the process and turn it toward violence. In these slower-paced transitions, the problem will be to maintain the momentum of democratic institutional development without risking a poorly institutionalized mass politics that could degenerate into a nationalist bidding war. Of course, the international community and their pro-democracy allies may not be able to manage each transition in the optimal way, but if the sequence goes wrong, the world should expect trouble.

In Chapter 2, we set our contribution in the context of the theory of the democratic peace as we address some alternative explanations for the war-prone nature of democratizing states. In Chapter 3, we lay out more fully the logic behind our argument about incomplete democratization as a cause of nationalism and war. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present statistical tests of our argument. Chapters 7 and 8 examine a select subset of these historical and contemporary case studies to trace the causal mechanisms in more detail. In Chapter 9, we end by discussing the implications of our findings for broader understandings of democratic transitions, and prescriptions for how to manage this potentially turbulent process.

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<sup>47</sup> Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

## Excerpts from Chapter 7

### *Iraq in the Palestine War, 1948–49*

Iraq's constitutional monarchy, torn by turbulent experiments with parliamentary government, played a catalytic role in pushing the shaky Arab states into war in 1948–49 to try to prevent the partition of Palestine and the creation of the Israeli state. In May 1948, 16,000 Iraqi troops joined four other Arab armies in attacking the new Israeli state.<sup>48</sup> Our database considers Iraq an incompletely democratizing initiator of the war, based on transitions from autocracy to a mixed regime as measured by constraints on the executive and the openness of executive recruitment. This case not only illustrates several of the causal mechanisms of our theory, but also shows the role of incomplete democratization in heightening a still vexatious conflict that has continued to bedevil the world for over half a century.

Interwar Iraq was a country with no coherent identity, tradition, or political institutions, undergoing the strains of socio-economic modernization and decolonization.<sup>49</sup> Under a British mandate, Iraq's 1924 constitution divided powers between the king and a parliament that was indirectly elected through electors chosen by universal manhood suffrage. After gaining independence in 1932, Iraq suffered a series of tribal rebellions, leadership struggles, and finally a coup by nationalist military officers, which triggered British reoccupation of the country from 1941 to 1945.<sup>50</sup>

Following the Second World War, the British encouraged the Regent Abd al-Ilah, ruling on behalf of the young King Faysal II, to liberalize the regime to enhance its popular legitimacy in the eyes of alienated urban middle classes who were attracted by nationalist and socialist doctrines. Press restrictions were removed, opposition parties were licensed, and electoral districts were redrawn to reflect population shifts to urban areas. However, the plan for political liberalization provoked resistance from established elites.<sup>51</sup> The Iraqi prime minister told a British diplomat that his government had “decided to allow political parties in order that it should become clear how harmful they are and their abolition be demanded.”<sup>52</sup> Reflecting traditions of patronage politics in a still largely rural society, local notables dominated the parliament chosen in the election of 1946.<sup>53</sup>

Middle-class nationalists, though thinly represented in parliament, remained loud voices in public debate. Important in government service, in the military, in the economy, and potentially in the streets, these educated urbanites could not be ignored. To appease such critics, Iraqi diplomats took the most radical stance on the Palestine issue at the June

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<sup>48</sup> Michael Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq* (London: Frank Cass, 1994), p. 190. Michael Clodfelter, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts*, 2d ed. (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2002), p. 631, says that there were 10,000 Iraqis among the 55,000 Arabs deployed against the Israelis by October 1948.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in Reeva Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars: The Creation and Implementation of a Nationalist Ideology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 3–4.

<sup>50</sup> Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder: Westview, 1985), pp. 55–93.

<sup>51</sup> Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, pp. 96–100; Matthew Elliot, “Independent Iraq”: *The Monarchy and British Influence, 1941–1958* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p. 25.

<sup>52</sup> Elliot, “Independent Iraq,” p. 26.

<sup>53</sup> Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 101; Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 139.

1946 meeting of the Arab League, gratuitously calling for a boycott of British and American trade that they knew the Saudis and Egyptians would have to veto.<sup>54</sup> Such public relations tactics became increasingly entrenched in 1947, as the new Iraqi Prime Minister, Salih Jabr, groped to find a rhetorical stance that would reconcile Iraq's diverse constituencies to his weakly institutionalized regime.

Jabr faced a general economic crisis, severe food shortages, and a shortfall of money for salaries of civil servants, a prime constituency for Arab nationalist groups.<sup>55</sup> Despite widespread malnutrition in the country, entrenched rural interests insisted on the right to export scarce grain for hard currency. The regent and the traditional ruling elites hoped that British economic and military aid would, as usual, help them weather the crisis and fend off burgeoning urban radicalism. In pursuit of that strategy, Jabr counted on early renegotiation of Iraq's treaty with Britain to eliminate the embarrassment of British air bases on Iraqi soil and to create a firmer basis for economic and political cooperation.<sup>56</sup>

For the nationalists, however, even an improved agreement with the former colonial overlord was anathema. To immunize themselves from nationalist objections, Jabr and other Iraqi elites relied on demagoguery on the Palestine issue.<sup>57</sup> Previously a moderate on the Palestinian issue, Jabr converted to the rhetorical hard line to get ideological cover for renewal of the treaty with Britain. In August 1947, he broke precedent in calling for the use of the regular armies of Arab states, not just volunteers, to fight against the Jews in Palestine.<sup>58</sup> At the culmination of the debate over the British treaty in December 1947, Jabr falsely told the Iraqi parliament that Iraq and Transjordan were committed to a joint policy of creating a unitary Arab state in all of Palestine.<sup>59</sup> However, amid a worsening of the economy and a shortfall of expected British aid, the strategy of nationalist demagoguery on the Palestine issue failed to reconcile Iraqi nationalists to the renewal of the treaty with Britain. The signing of the treaty in January 1948 provoked a wave of student strikes, demonstrations, and denunciations from political parties, leading to Jabr's replacement by a politician who was untainted by association with the treaty.<sup>60</sup>

While Jabr's rhetoric on Palestine failed to achieve its intended consequences, its unintended consequences were profound. A British diplomat reported that "the Iraqi Government is now to some extent the victim of their own brave words, which the opposition is not slow to challenge them to make good."<sup>61</sup> In a vicious bidding war, the

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<sup>54</sup> Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System, 1945–1954* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 36.

<sup>55</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 167; Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 103.

<sup>56</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, pp. 159, 162–163; Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, pp. 101–102.

<sup>57</sup> Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System*, p. 49; Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 143.

<sup>58</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, pp. 164–166.

<sup>59</sup> Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System*, p. 57.

<sup>60</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, pp. 174–175; Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, pp. 101–105.

<sup>61</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 169.



regent, the parliamentary notables, and the socialist parties now all competed with the nationalist opposition to adopt the most militant position on Palestine.<sup>62</sup> Since Iraq was not a front-line state, the costs of undermining the chances of compromise in Palestine were low compared to the domestic political costs of being outbid on the Arab nationalism issue.

This rhetoric reverberated not just within Iraq, but throughout the Arab world. Jabr's militant stance on Palestine at the October and November 1947 meetings of the Arab League helped to set off a bidding war with other Arab states.<sup>63</sup> Initially, a number of the Arab states had hoped that the Palestine issue could be resolved through compromise. Egypt felt it was too weak to embark on a war. The Syrians feared that even a victorious war led by the Transjordanian army might lead the Hashemite monarchy to swallow up their country as part of a Greater Palestine. In comparison, Iraq was consistently more militant than Egypt and Syria from 1946 to 1948 because its more democratic political system made it more sensitive to public opinion.<sup>64</sup> Only Iraq rejected the UN's call for a ceasefire in July 1948. To curry favor with the nationalist opposition, the Iraqi regime even authorized public demonstrations condemning concessions made by other member states of the Arab League.<sup>65</sup> For a time, the less democratic Egyptian and Syrian regimes had greater leeway than Iraq to resist popular pressure to adopt radical positions on Palestine.<sup>66</sup> However, as Iraqi rhetoric ratcheted up the expectations of the Arab street, Egypt's King Faruq began to worry that the establishment of a Jewish state would spark riots. Despite his worries about the state of his army, he began to hope for a successful war to restore his waning prestige.<sup>67</sup> In the echo chamber of popular Arab politics, Iraq's incompletely democratized regime led the way in adopting a demagogic strategy that increasingly tied the hands of less democratic Arab states that otherwise might have been able to resist such popular pressures.<sup>68</sup>

In short, the Iraqi case illustrates several of the mechanisms of our theory. In a state with weak institutions and heterogeneous political constituencies undergoing an incomplete democratic transition, new entrants into politics used nationalist doctrines of popular self-rule as a battering ram to gain access to political power. Established elites responded with nationalist outbidding in an attempt to legitimate their waning power.<sup>69</sup> Because of the mismatch between the boundaries of the Arab states and the wider Arab nation, Iraq's opportunistic rhetoric helped to catalyze similar bidding wars in other less

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<sup>62</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, pp. 141–142, 181, 193; Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System*, p. 56; Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 102.

<sup>63</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 158.

<sup>64</sup> Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System*, p. 78.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 56, 78.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>67</sup> Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 185; Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System*, p. 67.

<sup>68</sup> For general statements by scholars along these lines, see Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System*, p. 49; Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 158; for a related argument, see Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 87–91 and *passim*.

<sup>69</sup> For an argument expressed in almost exactly these terms, see Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*, p. 194.

democratized, initially less belligerent Arabs states. Thus, our theory not only explains Iraqi policy, but also sheds light on the origins of the war more generally.<sup>70</sup>

### **The Democratizing Initiators: An Overall Assessment**

Of the ten countries reviewed in this chapter, seven — France, Prussia/Germany, Chile, Serbia, Iraq in 1948, Argentina, and Turkey — provide clear support for our theory and demonstrate in a robust way the presence of our causal mechanisms. Of these seven countries, three — France, Prussia/Germany, and Serbia — fought additional wars that were not coded by our database as initiated by a democratizing state, but that nonetheless manifested the same causal mechanisms and were part of a state's longer-term trajectory of democratization and war. Two cases (the United States in the Mexican War and Thailand in the Franco-Thai War) neither clearly support nor refute our theory. Four wars with ostensibly democratizing initiators are false positives: Guatemala's two wars, the Franco-Spanish War of 1823, and the Iran-Iraq War. Three of these four false positives were based on our crudest indicator of democratic transition, the openness of executive recruitment.

Setting aside the false positives, these cases illustrate the full range of causal mechanisms that our theory predicts, and they bear out our predictions about the conditions under which we expect to find them. Political institutions were extremely weak at the moment of transition in at least five of these cases: Chile, Serbia, Thailand, Iraq, and Turkey. In all of the countries, with the partial exception of Chile, the ruling elite used nationalist rhetoric to shore up its endangered legitimacy in ways that heightened the risk of war. As predicted, ethnic nationalist themes — Serb, Turk, Thai, and Iraqi Arab — were particularly salient in the states with the weakest political institutions. Counterrevolutionary themes were prominent in countries with stronger administrative institutions: France, Prussia/Germany, and Argentina. In the United States, with strong participatory institutions, expansionist ideology took a largely civic nationalist form. Nationalist bidding wars occurred between elite groups for the competitive recruitment of mass supporters in all cases except Thailand, where the ruling party bid high on nationalism without the goad of other nationalist elite competitors. Four of these cases (France, Prussia/Germany, Iraq, and Argentina) involved gambling for resurrection, in the strict sense that the hard-pressed ruling group largely manufactured an

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<sup>70</sup> Our database records a false positive for Iraq as a democratizing initiator in the Iran-Iraq War of 1980. In 1979, Saddam Hussein was chosen by a two-thirds vote of the Revolutionary Command Council to succeed Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr as President of Iraq. At the same time, plans were underway for non-competitive, universal suffrage elections to a National Assembly. These elections, the first in Iraq since the fall of the monarchy in 1958, were held in 1980. Although these developments did nothing to democratize the regime in any way, Polity codes this as a transition to democracy based on the openness of executive recruitment. Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, José Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi, *Democracy and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) code this as a transition from autocracy to "bureaucracy." Iraq attacked revolutionary Iran in 1980, because the Shi'a fundamentalist regime of Ayatollah Khomeini had weakened Iran's army in the short run, yet the revolutionary regime loomed as a long-term threat that might link up with Iraq's large Shi'a minority. These events have nothing to do with our theory. See Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 231; Magid Khadduri, *The Gulf War: The Origins and Implications of the Iraq-Iran Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 74–76.

issue on which to fight a popular war primarily to raise its domestic prestige. Nationalist media manipulation by the state or by nationalist political parties played a prominent role in France, Germany, Chile, Serbia, Thailand, Argentina, and Turkey.

Causal mechanisms involving pressure groups and coalition dynamics were also present in several cases. Logrolling among economic, military, and governmental elites led to more belligerent policies in Germany's "coalition of iron and rye," Argentina's junta, and Iraq's deals among rural elites, urban middle classes, and the monarchy. Weak brokerage of pluralistic politics by the central state was a factor contributing to war in Germany, Serbia, and Turkey. In France, Prussia/Germany, and elsewhere, precarious rulers used nationalist one-upmanship to gain advantages over elite coalition partners. Single-issue interest groups wielded enormous direct influence in favor of war in a few of the cases: Chilean nitrate firms, the Argentine Army and Navy, and the German military and economic cartels. In several cases, cryptic and muddled political dynamics hindered the state's ability to send coherent, credible diplomatic signals (Chile, Germany), to send signals that represented its real views (Iraq), to retain diplomatic flexibility and nimbleness (France, Turkey), or to perceive signals correctly (Argentina). In short, the majority of these cases of democratizing initiators manifest many of the mechanisms of our theory.

The strongest competing explanation for these cases is probably *Realpolitik* opportunism. Democratizing initiators won eight of the wars they started, and lost only three (France in 1870, Iraq in 1948–49, and Argentina in the Falklands). A few of the decisions to initiate war seem quite reasonable from a realist standpoint. Geopolitical incentives to attack were obvious for Thailand and the United States. Prussia profited handsomely from its war against Denmark and especially its war against Austria. Arguably, Turkey was goaded into attacking. However, some of the winners paid heavy economic or diplomatic prices, or wound up gaining little: France in the Roman Republic, Chile, Thailand, and Turkey. If we included wars in a larger series of conflicts involving a democratizing state, but which were not themselves coded as initiated by a democratizer, this would add two losers (France in Mexico, Germany in the World Wars), two more winners (France in Crimea, Prussia in 1870), and a mixed bag of Serbian wins, losses, and draws. Assessed as a whole, these wars were not so enticing or unavoidable that the decision to attack can be understood without taking into account other causes which, we argue, were the effects of democratization.

Finally, these cases reveal patterns that add insight on the questions of time lags and reversals of democratization. The database identifies cases of war initiation at various time lags after democratization. Four countries experienced wars one year after a transition as measured by at least one of the component indices: France in the Roman Republic, Argentina in the Falklands, Turkey in Cyprus, and the United States in Mexico. Only two of the wars, Serbia in 1912 and Thailand in 1940, were preceded by no transition more recent than five years. Two countries (Prussia under Bismarck and Thailand under Phibun) initiated wars after first democratizing and then undergoing a relapse into a more authoritarian mode of rule, in which rhetoric continued to stress populist themes. France under Napoleon III is similar, but even more complicated: the war against the Roman Republic was initiated in the democratizing phase, then three wars

were fought in a pseudo-populist authoritarian phase, and the Franco-Prussian War was initiated in a second democratizing phase.<sup>71</sup>

In sum, the cases of democratizing war initiators examined in this chapter provide many examples of the expected causal mechanisms. Although a few cases turned out to be false positives, these are arguably more than balanced out by a number of relevant cases that were not counted in our statistical results as wars initiated by democratizing states. Tracing these causal processes has shown that our arguments may be relevant to some cases that were not identified as wars initiated by democratizers in our statistical tests, and to patterns that unfold over longer periods of time. To that end, the next chapter, which considers wars that are too recent to be included in the database, concludes with some further remarks on the developmental trajectories that war-prone democratizing states follow.

## Excerpts from Chapter 8

### The India-Pakistan Kargil War and Its Precursors

In 1999, Pakistani soldiers disguised as civilian volunteers launched an offensive into the remote Indian-held Kargil area of Kashmir, provoking Indian counterattacks that left over a thousand soldiers dead. It seems most likely that the initiative for the attack came principally from the Pakistani military, though there is some dispute about how early Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was brought into the planning process.<sup>72</sup> Strategic explanations for the attack stress Pakistan's frustration with the success of Indian repression of the Kashmiri insurgency and the false confidence that Pakistan's new nuclear deterrent would galvanize an international effort to negotiate a favorable settlement to avert disastrous escalation.<sup>73</sup> Such miscalculations reflected the fact that Pakistani civilian and military leaders were viewing their strategic options through the kaleidoscopic prism of a domestic political process that had been shaped for decades by endemic nationalist rivalry. In the turbulent democratizing politics in the 1990s, a militant policy in Kashmir backed by a nuclear ace-in-the-hole had become the common denominator of Pakistani politics and a potential trump card for any hard-pressed faction in the country's party and bureaucratic struggles.

Especially in Pakistan, the gap between demands for mass political participation and weak state institutions has repeatedly created incentives for both civilian and military politicians to play the nationalist card to gamble on establishing a base of mass legitimacy. The side effects of this political strategy have been repeated warfare since 1947 and the locking in of rivalry with India. Wars have typically come during moments in Pakistan of fitful democratization. The causal pathways that produced these wars illustrate some of the principal mechanisms in our theory.

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<sup>71</sup> For some statistical results that indicate the dangers of this kind of back-and-forth transition, see Michael Ward and Kristian Gleditsch, "Democratizing for Peace," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. 1 (March 1998), pp. 51–61.

<sup>72</sup> Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 90–104.

<sup>73</sup> Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 121–123.

After the British Raj ended with the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, Kashmir remained anomalous: despite its Muslim majority, its Hindu maharaja and substantial Hindu and Buddhist minorities were loath to accede to Pakistan. Even many Muslims in central Kashmir were attracted by the prospect of land reform in Nehru's India and repelled by the dominance of reactionary landlords in Pakistan. After the Pakistani army came to the aid of Muslim tribal rebels, the maharaja and other Kashmiri leaders called for Indian military support and agreed to join India. When the fighting reached a stalemate, Kashmir was divided *de facto* along the Line of Control between India and Pakistan, with India asserting sovereignty over the majority-Muslim central valley. Thus, the initial fighting reflected the ambiguities of poorly institutionalized national identities and the tension between Pakistan's religious principle of national identity and India's secular principle.<sup>74</sup>

India, after partition, quickly consolidated a functioning democratic system of rule, taking advantage of its strong institutional foundations in the Congress Party, which had engineered the independence movement, and the central administrative and legal structures that were a legacy of the British Raj. Pakistan, however, had neither a firm institutional base nor, despite its Muslim rationale, a clear national identity. Pakistan occupied the geographical and institutional periphery of the Raj rather than its administrative centers. Its founding movement, the Muslim League, was weakly institutionalized compared to the Indian Congress. These institutions proved woefully inadequate to bind together a splintered society consisting of several major ethnolinguistic groups, separated by a thousand miles of Indian territory between the populous Bengali East and the ethnically diverse West, and dominated by tradition-minded landlords and by a military elite disproportionately tied to the West Pakistani region of Punjab. Pakistan's elected, revolving-door parliamentary governments failed to establish any coherent policy in the early 1950s. Hardly anyone expressed regret when General Ayub Khan established military rule in 1958.<sup>75</sup>

In an attempt to establish a source of democratic legitimacy outside of the divisive party system, Ayub created a system of locally elected but government-nominated administrative boards that he dubbed Basic Democracies. These local officials were the electorate in indirect elections for a national legislature and the presidency. Samuel Huntington's classic 1968 book, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, praised Ayub as a "Solon" who had devised a promising system for filling the gap between weak state institutions and rising demands for mass political participation.<sup>76</sup> However, Ayub's system of managed democracy was subjected to constant criticism from regional politicians, jurists, and those who sought to bring back the party system. Ayub's opponent in the 1965 presidential election, Fatima Jinnah, the widow of Pakistan's founder, attracted large crowds and over a third of the vote.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, pp. 15–30.

<sup>75</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958–1969* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), p. 11; Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (New York: St. Martin's, 1998), pp. 126–127.

<sup>76</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 250–251.

<sup>77</sup> Ziring, *Ayub*, pp. 23–43; Talbot, *Pakistan*, pp. 160–161.

Hard pressed to maintain a semblance of popular legitimacy, Ayub followed the lead of his ambitious Foreign Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in using the Kashmir issue to generate popular enthusiasm for his presidency, a tactic facilitated by India's crackdown on the opposition in Kashmir. During the 1964–65 presidential election campaign, Bhutto promised “retaliatory steps to counter the Indian attempt to merge the occupied parts of Kashmir with India,” and “results in the very short future.”<sup>78</sup> He asserted that “Kashmir must be liberated if Pakistan is to have its full meaning.”<sup>79</sup> The tactic was effective in the elections: while Ayub fared poorly in Bengal and Sindh, he amassed an adequate margin of victory in the Punjab, whose electorate cared intensely about the fate of nearby Kashmir.<sup>80</sup>

Rather than planning for war, Ayub may have thought initially that the tension between India and China following their recent war would give him an opportunity to bargain with New Delhi over the fate of Kashmir. However, Pakistani military intelligence units created the false impression, both in public and in governmental circles, that powerful Kashmiri resistance forces would rise up to join an insurgency to be touched off by infiltrating Pakistani commandos into the India-occupied sector.<sup>81</sup> Under the influence of false information and blowback from his own government's domestic political rhetoric, Ayub approved the infiltration operation, which did not spark a Kashmiri uprising but did trigger a massive Indian counterattack into West Pakistan. Historian Ian Talbot concludes, “The normally cautious Ayub, perhaps because he wanted success in Kashmir to bolster his generally failing fortunes, nevertheless gambled on the ... proposal.”<sup>82</sup>

Saddled with an unpopular peace settlement following Pakistan's defeat in the 1965 war (the Tashkent accord), Ayub found that his opponents were increasingly effective in playing the nationalist card against him. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League demanded increased autonomy from a state that exploited the Bengalis in East Pakistan to raise capital for investment in West Pakistan. In the West, Bhutto resigned from the government to organize an opposition party that played on urban discontent and the Kashmir issue. Ironically, the relative success of Ayub's policies in increasing crop yields and urban industrial growth helped spur these popular movements: whereas Ayub's paternalist indirect democracy might have worked in a static society, the rising demand for political participation in a highly unequal and rapidly changing society swept him and his system away.<sup>83</sup> Facing this inexorable popular pressure, the military junta that succeeded Ayub allowed fully competitive multiparty elections in 1971.

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<sup>78</sup> Ziring, *Ayub*, p. 58; see also *ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>79</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 277; see also *ibid.*, pp. 276, 284, 287.

<sup>80</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan*, p. 283.

<sup>81</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan*, p. 287. Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, pp. 31–50, stresses Pakistani leaders' excessive optimism about a false “window of opportunity” as the cause of the war, but does not examine in detail the domestic political origins of the urge to act or the bureaucratic and political origins of falsely optimistic estimates.

<sup>82</sup> Talbot, *Pakistan*, p. 177.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153–154.

This electoral competition led directly to another Indo-Pakistani war and to the breakup of Pakistan. The winner in the more populous East, and the prospective holder of an absolute majority in Pakistan's National Assembly, was Mujib's autonomy-seeking Awami League. The victorious party in the West was Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, energized by a rising constituency of urban professionals who had been excluded from power under Ayub. Weak in party organization, the PPP had to rely on Bhutto's passionate oratory, which condemned Ayub's betrayal of Kashmir in the Tashkent peace accord and promised "a thousand years war with India."<sup>84</sup>

"Both Mujib and Bhutto were explosive orators" who "mustered passionate followings," says Lawrence Ziring. "Each rode a wave of history he could not control."<sup>85</sup> Nationalist rhetorical excesses and the weakness of the PPP's party discipline left little room for compromise over the Awami League's autonomy demands. Bhutto was hemmed in by the military's resistance to autonomy and by the ethnic splits within the PPP. He believed that playing the Kashmir card would help him to unify West Pakistanis around the PPP. Bhutto rejected Mujib's proposals on the grounds that Bengali autonomy would weaken Pakistan in its confrontation with India over Kashmir. Bhutto seized an opportunity to praise two young Kashmiris who hijacked an Indian airliner and forced it to land in West Pakistan. Mujib played into Bhutto's hands by condemning the action.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, as a Shi'a Muslim from the province of Sindh, in a state dominated by an officer corps that was mostly Punjabi and Sunni, Bhutto could establish his credibility by outbidding the nationalist military on the issue of national unity.<sup>87</sup> On the heels of this breakdown of democratic politics, the Pakistani military's bloody repression of the Bengali autonomy movement caused millions of refugees to flee into India, which invaded East Pakistan and supported the creation of the independent state of Bangladesh.

The 1971 war demonstrates three distinct causal mechanisms linking the early phase of democratization in conditions of weak institutions to nationalist politics and international war. The first mechanism is the tendency of elections in poorly institutionalized multinational states to polarize society along ethnic lines, creating the risk that internal violence will spill over into international war. The second mechanism is the tendency of weak democratizing regimes to appease hard-line veto groups, in this case the military and the Punjabis, by pursuing an uncompromising nationalist policy. The third mechanism, echoing Ayub's 1965 Kashmir strategy, is the attempt of the hard-pressed leader to rally support from a divided constituency by means of a nationalist confrontation with an external foe.

This legacy of nationalist rivalry and war became ingrained in the domestic political life of the fitfully democratizing Pakistani state. Its themes were routinely available to be deployed in political maneuvering, whether by civilians who needed to show their militancy or by military figures who needed to show their national populism.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 198; Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: From Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to Benazir Bhutto* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), p. 58.

<sup>85</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan*, p. 335.

<sup>86</sup> Richard Sisson and Leo Rose, *War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 75–76.

<sup>87</sup> Talbot, *Pakistan*, pp. 198–204.

Although India's increased military superiority after 1971 dampened the risk of war, international rivalry remained a potent tool in Pakistani internal politics, even after Bhutto was deposed by General Zia ul-Haq. Whereas Bhutto's nationalist appeal had been largely secular, Zia sought popular legitimacy for military rule through the rhetoric of Islamic fundamentalism and alliance with militant Islamic groups dedicated to the liberation of Kashmir and Afghanistan. In this setting, militant Islamic ideology gained a foothold among the younger cohorts of the military, especially its Inter-Services Intelligence branch (ISI), which coordinated strategy with Islamic organizations.<sup>88</sup> Rather than showing loyalty to Zia and his circle, these militant pressure groups grumbled that the army's failure to dislodge Indian forces from Kashmir's contested Siachen Glacier proved that Pakistan's top brass were unprofessional and corrupt.<sup>89</sup> Despite the fostering of Islamic groups and sensibilities, India and Pakistan came close to war only once under the autocratic Zia—during India's Brasstacks maneuvers in 1986, which were a calculated attempt on the part of the Indian military commanders to intimidate Pakistan and deter it from aiding Sikh separatists.<sup>90</sup>

Following Zia's death in a 1988 air crash, the PPP, now headed by Bhutto's daughter, gained a plurality of seats in competitive multiparty elections and governed in coalition with the party of former refugees from the 1947 partition. During Benazir Bhutto's first term as prime minister in 1990, armed clashes broke out between Pakistani-supported insurgents and Indian forces in Kashmir; the Pakistani army mobilized some units near the border, and the two states seemed momentarily at the brink of war. What role did Pakistan's return to democratization play in this confrontation?

Initially, Bhutto seemed ready to moderate Indo-Pakistani relations. Preliminary talks with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi seemed mildly promising. The United States believed that Bhutto might help rein in the Pakistani nuclear program, and the Pakistani military feared this might be true.<sup>91</sup> Despite this, Bhutto initially maintained good relations with the army commander, General Mirza Beg, since both shared a common interest in containing the growing influence of the ISI, which had been strengthened by its successful campaigns in Afghanistan. Disgruntled as a result of Afghanistan-related personnel decisions, the ISI bought off some PPP legislators and nearly unseated Bhutto in an October 1989 confidence vote. Adding to her difficulties, Bhutto then quarreled with Beg over the use of the army to suppress riots in her home province of Sindh. Meanwhile, the PPP's chief electoral rival, Nawaz Sharif's coalition of Islamic parties, held a lock on the government of Punjab, Pakistan's most important province. Politically and bureaucratically weakened, Bhutto had no possibility of checking the ISI-supported infiltration into Indian Kashmir, and even her most minimal peace gestures made the army distrustful. Tacking with the political wind, Bhutto revived her father's call for a thousand-year war to liberate Kashmir.<sup>92</sup> Under these

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<sup>88</sup> Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations*, p. 207; Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 77; Jessica Stern, "Pakistan's Jihad Culture," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 6 (November/December 2000), pp. 115–126.

<sup>89</sup> Rizvi, *Military, State and Society*, p. 204.

<sup>90</sup> For background on these arguments, see Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, pp. 85–88.

<sup>91</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan*, p. 527.

<sup>92</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, pp. 92–93.



circumstances, democracy meant little more than institutional anarchy in which various parties, bureaucracies, and informal groups of drug-runners and insurgents vied for the mantle of Islam and nationalism in confrontations with Pakistan's perceived rivals.

Proclaiming that Bhutto had lost the capacity to govern, Pakistan's president dissolved the National Assembly in 1990. Nawaz Sharif, bankrolled in part by the ISI with the army commander's approval, prevailed in new elections.<sup>93</sup> Although Sharif hewed to the military line on Kashmir and the nuclear program, his power was soon broken, too, in an ill-advised test of constitutional authority with the military-backed president. Benazir Bhutto was elected to head another coalition government in October 1993. In this second term, Bhutto learned to adhere closely to the militant position on the issues of Kashmir and nuclear weapons, which she linked in her rhetoric.<sup>94</sup> Despite Pakistan's efforts to stay in Washington's good graces by contributing troops to international peacekeeping efforts, the Clinton administration placed Pakistan on a "watch list" of potential terrorist states.<sup>95</sup> Looking back on this period, Bhutto later said that her main regret was that she made "relations with India hostage to the Kashmir issue" and used hawkish posturing to curry favor with the military.<sup>96</sup>

When corruption scandals and family squabbles drove Bhutto from power a second time, Nawaz Sharif once again became prime minister. Gaining an absolute majority in the 1997 election, Sharif pushed through a constitutional amendment revoking the president's authority to dissolve the National Assembly. This change led the Polity database to code Pakistan as making a transition to full democracy. And yet, as Hasan-Askari Rizvi argues, "Pakistan faced a paradox. Sharif had accumulated more power than any previous prime minister since Pakistan began its transition to democracy in 1985. However, the government's ability to evoke voluntary support at the popular level was on the decline and it presided over a weak and fragmented polity."<sup>97</sup> Sharif's regime remained dogged by economic crisis, corruption, ethnic rioting, and international economic sanctions following Pakistan's 1998 nuclear test, which had been a direct response to India's nuclear explosion. In this context of endemic crisis and waning popularity, Sharif's move to replace the country's secular legal code with *shari'a* in 1998 was an attempt to shore up his popular support among the religious parties, the Kashmir liberation groups, and militant Islamic army factions, including those in the ISI.

Amid these turbulent democratizing politics in the 1990s, the use of force in Kashmir, underwritten by Pakistan's newly demonstrated nuclear capability, had become the common denominator of Pakistani politics and a tempting source of legitimacy for the country's political and bureaucratic factions. Leaders of the Pakistani military were frustrated by the success of Indian repression of the Kashmiri insurgency and unjustifiably confident that Pakistan's new nuclear deterrent would spur an international

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<sup>93</sup> Rizvi, *Military, State and Society*, p. 193.

<sup>94</sup> On the connection between Pakistani nuclear weapons and Kashmir, see Mario Carranza, "Rethinking India-Pakistan Nuclear Relations," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 36, No. 6 (June 1996), pp. 561-573.

<sup>95</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan*, pp. 552-554.

<sup>96</sup> Benazir Bhutto, "Pakistan's Regression to an Authoritarian Past," remarks to the Director's Forum, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., May 25, 1999.

<sup>97</sup> Rizvi, *Military, State, and Society*, p. 231.

effort to negotiate a favorable settlement to avert escalation.<sup>98</sup> Consulting, at least loosely, with Nawaz Sharif, the military, disguised as volunteers, attacked the remote Kargil area of Kashmir in 1999.<sup>99</sup> Following the failure of the offensive, Sharif was ousted in a showdown with General Pervez Musharraf, the army chief who had overseen the Kargil operation.

Despite Musharraf's subsequent efforts to moderate Pakistan's risky foreign policies, some of the same political dynamics prevailed during Musharraf's period of military rule as they had under the elected governments of the 1990s. Despite U.S. pressure on Pakistan to curtail Islamic terrorists after the attack on the World Trade Center and the subsequent war on the Afghan Taliban regime, Musharraf found it difficult to rein in the violent groups who were infiltrating Indian Kashmir. Even when India mobilized a million soldiers on the Pakistani frontier in 2002 in response to a Pakistani terrorist attack on India's parliament, Musharraf was slow to crack down on the responsible groups. In part, his reluctance reflected the entrenched position of the militant groups and their bureaucratic patrons in the ISI. In part, it also reflected the need to maintain a popular nationalist stance in anticipation of an eventual return to competitive democratic politics. Although extremist Islamic parties rarely garner more than 5 percent of the Pakistani vote, in a survey taken on October 11–12, 2001, 83 percent of Pakistanis told the Gallup poll that they supported the Taliban, and over half blamed Israel rather than Osama bin Laden for the attack on the World Trade Center.<sup>100</sup> Surviving several assassination attempts that may have been mounted by militant groups, Musharraf tried to make Pakistan's international stance less provocative, meeting in January 2004 with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and investigating the transfer of nuclear weapons know-how to Iran. Nonetheless, the perverse, ingrained dynamics of incomplete democratization continued to complicate foreign-policy decision-making even when Pakistan was in the military-rule phase of its cycle of instability.

In short, the Pakistan case echoes a number of the causal mechanisms highlighted in our theory: the nationalistic appeal for support against foreign rivals to enhance domestic legitimacy, the need of weak regimes to appease militant veto groups, and the polarizing effect of elections in transitional societies where the boundaries of states and cultures are not congruent. This military struggle between two nuclear-armed, elected regimes is a particularly dramatic example of a broader danger that darkens the path toward enlargement of the democratic peace.

### ***Causal mechanisms of recent wars of democratization***

At the most general level, there is little doubt that rising levels of political participation intersected with weak political institutions in ways that sharpened violent conflicts in the cases of democratization and war in the 1990s. In a few of these cases, however, it might be argued that the quasi-anarchy of weak institutions, rather than

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<sup>98</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, pp. 121–123.

<sup>99</sup> Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, pp. 90–104.

<sup>100</sup> Douglas Frantz, "Pakistani Police Kill 2 Protesters Near Airport Used by U.S. Planes," *New York Times*, October 15, 2001, p. B6.

democratic electoral mobilization per se, was the main culprit. For example, Rwanda, which had a rising political pluralism but no elections, got into even worse trouble than did Burundi, which had both. Similarly, Eritrea, which had no elections, was just as important an instigator of war as was Ethiopia, which did. Moreover, although Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ecuador, Pakistan, Peru, and Yugoslavia had some free and fair elections in which nationalist candidates did well, it could be argued that the weakness of political institutions in these countries might have led to external frictions even in the absence of mass voting. Consequently, it is worthwhile to assess whether the more specific causal mechanisms of our theory were at work in these cases.

Nationalistic ideology was a blatant factor in all of these cases. Many of the types of nationalism discussed in our theory were well represented. As our theory predicts, weakly institutionalized democratizing politics in culturally diverse societies heightened ethnic nationalism in Armenia and Azerbaijan and produced hybrids of ethnic and counterrevolutionary nationalism in Serbia, Rwanda, and Burundi. Somewhat more surprisingly, civic territorial forms of nationalism were likewise implicated in several of the recent wars. This included the conflicts between India and Pakistan and between Eritrea and Ethiopia, where civic-territorial principles of loyalty to the state clashed with ethno-federal or religious ones. However, this category also included the conflicts between Peru and Ecuador, which were animated by civic-territorial claims to legitimacy on both sides. Although both Peru and Ecuador are not lacking in divisive ethnic politics internally, that was not the issue motivating their external war. Civic nationalism has hardly been a silver bullet for preventing conflict between today's democratizing states.

How can this finding be reconciled with the historical example of civic Britain and our theoretical argument that civic nationalisms tend to be more prudent in their foreign strategies? A civic-territorial ideology does not obviate the need for strong participatory institutions. Civic nationalism arguably requires coherent institutions even more than other types, because loyalty, in this case, attaches precisely to participatory political institutions, not to substitutes such as culture or religion. Thus, successful experiments in civic nationalism need to follow nineteenth-century Britain's example in establishing institutions before unleashing mass political participation. Proper sequence is just as important for civic nationalisms as for other types.

Many of our more specific mechanisms were well represented in these recent cases. Nationalist media manipulation played a central role in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda. The ideas that were spread through hate broadcasts, while originally developed in the context of internal ethnic violence, later animated warfare and atrocities in these conflicts' subsequent international phases. This media blitz was a tactic in elites' larger strategy of gambling for resurrection with a program of ethno-nationalist violence in Serbia, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Logrolling and coalition politics pushed outcomes toward violence in several cases. In Pakistan, Musharraf's motive for pushing the Kargil offensive may have been to regain the nationalist prestige of the regular military in order to shore up its political legitimacy against the Islamic radicals in the ISI and against Nawaz Sharif's push for increased civilian authority. Arguably, neither Nawaz nor Musharraf would have wanted to confront India recklessly without these political motivations, while without the active backing of these high authorities, the ISI could not have acted on its own. In the case of

Eritrea, prevailing scholarly wisdom holds that the conflict with Ethiopia was needed in part to hold together the ruling coalition of Christians and Muslims. In Ethiopia, the Tigrean pressure group in the ruling coalition had the power to discredit Meles if he had continued to resist taking a hard line with Eritrea. Similarly, weak brokerage by coalition leaders was a factor in several cases. Militant factions ousted more moderate ruling coalition leaders before, during, or after the fighting in Pakistan, Armenia, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Nationalist bidding wars pushed outcomes toward violence in several cases, including some in which top leaders had no intrinsic preference to escalate nationalist violence. In Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif both engaged in diplomacy with India over Kashmir before they were pushed toward confrontational rhetoric by Islamic militants or the army. In Serbia, Milosevic was entirely opportunistic in using nationalism to outbid the reform communist leadership of Ivan Stambolic, and then he continued in that vein in order to avoid being outflanked on the nationalism issue by more extreme nationalist politicians such as Vojislav Seselj. These were not simply cases where the preferences of the median voter or the overwhelming power of the militant faction drove the moderate leader to cave in to the inevitable outcome. Rather, as in the German case discussed in Chapter 7, the interaction over time of the rhetoric of the ruling circles and other elite factions increased the militancy of prevailing discourse and of voter attitudes through the processes of blowback and lock-in.

We are more skeptical that the signaling handicaps of weakly democratizing states played an independent causal role in these recent cases. Our criterion here would be that all crucial actors clearly preferred some bargain to fighting the war, and that the inability to signal threats or promises clearly and credibly prevented that bargain from being struck. But in all these recent cases, there were essential actors who preferred fighting to any conceivable compromise. Commitments to these actors hemmed in other decision makers who were caught in their own rhetoric or coalition logics. It was not mainly signaling problems that made Karabakh Armenians, Kosovar Albanians, the Ecuadoran and Pakistani militaries, and Isaias in Eritrea prefer fighting to any possible agreement, nor were signaling problems the main reason that other actors refused to give in to their demands without a fight.