

Democratic Regime Types and International Risk attitudes: Great Britain and the United States

Research Design

Abstract

The question my dissertation addresses is why Great Britain took the risk of war upon herself at least twice as often as the United States in any periods since 1816? The findings that democracies are in general more peaceful than non-democracies and that this notion of democratic peace is even more adequate if we see regimes in degrees rather than types suggest that there may exist a difference among various democratic regimes in their risk attitude.

To be able to answer this question both hypotheses must be drawn up and adequate research methods must be chosen. This paper will deal with the latter of the two, trying to find a useful design that could be the middle ground between a great number of confounding factors and the small number of relevant cases. Therefore, this paper starts with a small outline of the puzzle, and then skipping the theoretical part that was summed up at the 2006 Doctoral Conference as part of my Suez crisis case-study, it discusses the analytical approach, the technique of analysis, the independent variable (partially), the dependent variable, the universe of cases, the actual sample the cases to which the theoretical framework would apply, and the possible variables that cannot be ignored while selecting the cases for analysis. Finally it must be stressed that the current paper is very much of a draft chapter where various elements are still missing even if their place are indicated with red and are in [].

1. Introduction

1.1. Puzzle and Research Question

As the Second World War ended and the primary issue in US executive politics became the reorganization of the defense and intelligence communities, then-Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal wished to stir the American system of presidential preeminence toward British type collegiality, which he believed to be superior to presidentialism. He seriously questioned President Truman's competence in foreign policy and sought to counterbalance it by a move toward collegial decision-making.¹ Accordingly, Forrestal proposed the creation of the National Security Council out of his admiration for the British Committee on Imperial Defense. Forrestal hoped that, similarly to its British counterpart, the NSC would not only serve the president, but would also act "independently on many matters under the direction of a presidential assistant who enjoyed powers analogues to those of the British Cabinet Secretary."² However, President Truman believed that such a body would not only restrict the scope of presidential prerogatives in (foreign) policy-making but was also contrary to the American tradition of presidentialism. As a result, Truman, who had a deep respect for the American political tradition, refused to take the NSC for more than a purely advisory body.³

Regardless of the successful of his propositions, Forrestal did not only express his distrust of President Truman's abilities but touched upon the normative issue of what is the best form of democratic government. More precisely, is it presidential or parliamentary democracy that propels less risk-taking or more peaceful behavior in international politics?

This question has lost none of its relevance in the past 50 years since Forrestal formulated his ideas. It is especially timely today when the present American administration has already engaged in two wars. Current events, indeed, suggest a similar conclusion to that of Forrestal. While at the outset President George W. Bush's wars have found meager opposition within the federal government (Congress included),⁴ his chief ally, British Prime Minister Tony Blair's political life has been rendered more difficult by ministerial resignations and threats of backbencher rebellion even if neither of these were serious enough

¹ Hoopes and Brinkley 1992, 241-4.

² Hoopes and Brinkley 1992, 353-4.

³ Hoopes and Brinkley 1992, 354-5 and Prados 1991, 29-30.

⁴ Opposition only started to build up slowly and only when the war appeared to be a futile effort.

to prevent Blair from entering the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, finding out if different democratic institutional set-up foster less risk-taking, hence propel more peaceful behavior, internationally has its practical relevance in a world where democracy is routinely exported. If various democratic institutions have an impact on the international risk-taking behavior of states, then it may not be entirely immaterial of what specific democratic institutional set-up is exported into countries that has been known for their aggressive or threatening behavior *vis-à-vis* other states.

Forrestal’s propositions are not without its ironies. To be sure, the underlying logic of Forrestal’s idea is appealing: a single-headed executive should be more tightly controlled by the introduction of more restrictive accountability mechanism on the chief-executive officer in order to prevent foreign policy decisions be based on whims and skills of one person. Most strikingly, however, empirical evidence is counter-intuitive: after a quick glimpse at aggregate level data provided by the *Correlates of War 2 (COW)* project, we find that it is the presidential system – not cabinet government – that is more risk averse in its international behavior as the US fought a smaller number of wars than Britain ever since 1816. The difference stands even if we divide the data by the date when there was a shift from the multi-polar international system to the bi-polar structure of the Cold War (Table 1).

	<i>United States</i>	<i>Great Britain</i>
1816 – 1945	5.4	33
1945 – 1989	3.7	8.2

Table 1. Percentage of wars fought in the light of all military conflicts⁵

Not taking into account the number of conflicts states had to face, Tillema listed Great Britain with the greatest number of foreign military interventions – 61 in all in the period of 1945-85. While the United States ranks sixth with only 16 interventions.⁶

My dissertation hypothesizes that the answer is to be found in difference in regime type. Thus, there may a difference in war-fighting among various democratic structures. If so, that would extend democratic peace that so far postulated a difference between democracies and autocratic regimes.

2. Research Design

2.1. Analytical Approach: New Institutionalism

In its approach, this study about the role of democratic institutions in international risk-taking falls within the broad framework of new institutionalism. While new institutionalism is not a “unified body of thought,”⁷ incorporating a variety of different approaches, the various approaches nonetheless share their subject matter and a theoretical core.⁸ As for its subject matter, all sub-variants try to answer the questions what role political institutions play in the determination of social and political outcomes; how and why institutions are formed; how and why they change; and explicitly or implicitly all approaches have a view of what a good

⁵ *Correlates of War 2 Project* 2003.
⁶ Tillema 1989, 184.
⁷ Hall and Taylor 1996, 936; Lowndes 2002, 95.
⁸ Immergut 1998, 5.

institution is like.⁹ It is the first of these topics – how institutions influence social and political outcomes – that is relevant for the purposes of this dissertation.

What is common in all new institutionalist approaches is perhaps best understood by comparing them to those two approaches – old institutionalism and behavioralism – that it was born as a reaction to. First, as opposed to legalistic and descriptive old institutionalism, new institutionalism is “enthusiastic about developing theories” and start out its analyses from theoretical propositions.¹⁰ It does not require any one theory, only that analysis be grounded in some theoretical framework.¹¹ As opposed to behavioralism (and to traditional rational choice), it calls attention to the role institutions play in determining political outcomes and the formation of individual goals, strategies and preferences. In addition, it insists that the state is not a neutral broker and through its web of institutions it influences individual preference formation, and, thus, collective outcomes cannot be equated with the sum of individual preferences.¹² It claims more than that institutions are another factor or that institutions also matter. Rather it asserts that “political institutions are the variable that explains most in political life.”¹³ Yet, it does not believe that that other factors (e.g. class structure, group dynamics, socio-economic development, diffusion of ideas) play no role in political choice.¹⁴

New institutionalism also represent a middle ground between behaviorism and old institutionalism, trying to find a way to analyze both formal political institutions and the informal elements of the political system.¹⁵ Partly as a result of defining its mission in both formal and informal terms, what ‘political institutions’ are is no small problem for institutionalist approaches. To begin with, various new institutionalists prefer different definitions.¹⁶ Rational choice institutionalists go for the minimal definition among institutionalists, seeing them as simply the context that influences and constrains behavior.¹⁷ In contrast, social/sociological institutionalists represent the other end of the spectrum, including symbol systems, moral templates and cognitive scripts in their understanding of institutions.¹⁸ By doing away with the traditional division between ‘culture’ and ‘institutions’ and using an all inclusive definition of institutions, sociological institutionalists run the risk of conceptual stretching.¹⁹

Therefore a middle ground between these appears to be desirable, which is found in the widely accepted definition of Peter Hall that forms the basis of historical institutionalism. Opting for the historical institutionalists’ understanding of institutions also makes sense inasmuch as this project shares many of the views of this particular subvariant of institutionalism. Hall defines institutions as “the formal rules, compliance procedure, and standard operating practices that structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity and economy.”²⁰ That is, the task of the researcher is to unearth the explicitly or tacitly expressed specific rules of behavior that are usually followed by agents. These rules are distinct from habits and rules of thumb. Rules are there not only to be obeyed but also to be broken although rule-breaking involves (a threat of) punishment.²¹

⁹ These are the topics Peters (1999) uses in discussing seven subvariants of new institutionalism. Cf. Lowndes 2002, 99; Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 936-7.

¹⁰ Lowndes 2002, 95 and 102.

¹¹ Lowndes 2002, 108.

¹² Immergut 1998, 6-7; Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 7; Taylor and Hall 1996, 937-8; Lowndes 2002, 95.

¹³ Lowndes 2002, 108; Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 6-7.

¹⁴ Lowndes 2002, 98, 102, 108; Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 3, 10; Taylor and Hall 1996, 938, 942.

¹⁵ Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 3; Lowndes 2002, 98.

¹⁶ Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 2.

¹⁷ Thelen and Steinmo, 7; Hall and Taylor 1996, 944-5.

¹⁸ Hall and Taylor 1996, 949.

¹⁹ Lowndes 2002, 103; Hall and Taylor 1996, 949.

²⁰ Quoted in Thelen and Steinmo 2. See also, Lowndes 2002, 103; Hall and Taylor 1996, 938.

²¹ Lowndes 2002, 103-4; Hall and Taylor 1996, 939.

Three additional features of historical institutionalism are relevant in the context of this dissertation. First, power is a central concept for historical institutionalists. Power and the asymmetries of power play an important role in their studies that call attention to how institutions distribute power unevenly among social/political actors and how this uneven distribution of power influences social/political outcomes.²² One way to put the main assertion of this dissertation is that presidential and parliamentary systems represent different dynamics with regard to the power relations between relevant actors in foreign policy-making. Second, as opposed to rational choice institutionalists, historical and other branches of institutionalism do not believe in instrumentally rational human beings.²³ Rather historical institutionalism treat individuals as boundedly rational – satisficers rather than utility maximizers. Such a view allows for suboptimal choices as a result of cost-benefit analysis and also leaves room for institutional inefficiencies and unintended consequences.²⁴ It must however be stressed that it is not necessarily the task of this dissertation to see if one or the other democratic regime-type is more likely to produce ‘wrong’ decisions even if for the sake of the clarity of analysis it is impossible to avoid a statement if the decision was ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ in some cases. The main focus of this analysis is what factors led to the war decision regardless of whether they were right or wrong. Three, the argument of this dissertation about the role of democratic institutions in international risk-taking is close to the path-dependency argument of historical institutionalism that claims that an institutional choice at one point in time influences subsequent choices.²⁵

Finally, unlike old institutionalism that aimed at the holistic comparison of political systems, new institutionalism works at the level of mid-range theory and analyses cross-country differences through the use of intermediate-level institutions. It usually focuses on some component of political institutions, such as the electoral system, tax and benefit system, or cabinet decision-making. For instance, instead of analyzing how the British Ministry of Defense works, it is more likely to examine decision-making, budgetary or procurement procedures²⁶

2.2 Technique of analysis: Process tracing

While most studies in democratic peace proceed with statistical analysis, this project belongs to the field of qualitative data analysis. In part this is dictated by necessity rather than by choice as far as research is driven by sample size.²⁷ With regard to democratic accountability structures and risk-taking, one can only increase the sample to a very limited degree. Apart from language barriers and financial constraints, more cases could only be included at the price of introducing or accentuating some biases. And, in the final analysis, even if such a trade-off were made, it is still unlikely that enough cases could be gathered to perform large-N statistical analysis.

In this respect, the available number of wars by presidential democracies is especially problematic: few cases could be added to the very thin database of 15 wars fought by the United States between 1816 and 2000.²⁸ This is largely a reflection of the fact that successful consolidated presidential regimes are rather rare.²⁹ Consolidation or the survival of a presidential – or parliamentary – regime from the beginning of the examined period is vital. On the one hand, this makes it more likely that one finds general patterns through the analysis

²² Thelen and Steinmo, 1992, 2; Hall and Taylor 1996, 940-1.

²³ For more on this dissertation’s relationship to rational choice and individual rationality, see below in chapter ?.

²⁴ Hall and Taylor 1996, 939-940 and 941-2; Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 8.

²⁵ Hall and Taylor 1996, 941-2.

²⁶ Lowndes 2002, 97-8, 100; Thelen and Steinmo 6 and 10, 11.

²⁷ Lieberman 1991, 308-9.

²⁸ *Correlates of War 2 Project* 2003.

²⁹ Shugart 1995, 170.

instead of coming across the first attempts of a system to assert itself. On the other hand, this is a necessity is as much as the notion of democratic peace does not apply in case of unconsolidated states.³⁰

However, it is not only the limited number of presidential democracies and other constraints listed below that point toward qualitative methods. Both the theory described in the previous chapter and that hypothesizes about the process that might cause the difference and the meta-theoretical approach new (historical) institutionalism require a specific qualitative approach. By focusing on the politics as a process, process tracing can, thus, help in seeing how various factors relate to each other.³¹

2.3. Independent variable: Democratic regime types

[to be written.]

While investigating the influence of regime types could involve more than the two countries that have given rise to the original puzzle, the analysis will still be limited to the United States and the United Kingdom and for multiple reasons. First, these two countries come closest to the ideal types of presidential and Westminster-style parliamentary regimes. Second, these two states have been consolidated democracies with stable institutional history for long, which suggests that they fall within the limits of democratic peace theory. Third, limiting the comparison to two countries with first-past-the-post election systems appears to be a beneficial starting point. The fact that the British cabinet system did not have to deal with coalition governments, that is, with a junior coalition partner in foreign policy-making at least reduces the number of possible confounding variables with one. Fourth, in the examined period, the Cold War, both of these countries were at least middle range powers. Power status is a necessary prerequisite inasmuch as only countries with sufficient military capabilities are able to act – threaten and carry out the threat – effectively in the long run.

2.4. Dependent variable: Risk attitude

So far the words ‘risk-taking’ and ‘war’ were used interchangeably and in rather a cavalier fashion. The dependent variable here is government’s risk attitude in the international arena. War is used as a proxy to measure risk-taking behavior, because war as a choice by decision-makers is able to capture the inherently probabilistic nature of risk assessment: outcomes decision-makers weigh may or may not occur, their effect may be more or less devastating than anticipated, factors not considered *ex-ante* may occur.³² That is, war always introduces a random shock – although not always of the same magnitude – into the international system whose consequences are difficult to foresee. Correspondingly, government’s decision not to opt for war but for some other solutions – negotiations, economic pressure, the sending of military advisors, providing weapons, covert action etc. – to impeding crises is equated with risk-averse behavior, precisely because these outcomes are expressions of the desire to avoid all the dangers associated with war and, thus, minimize risk.

[Such an operationalization of risk differs from those used in the literature so far, namely, the psychological approach of Vertzberger and the expected utility approach of Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman toward risk.]

³⁰ **[non-consolidation doesn’t go with dem. peace]**

³¹ Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 12-3.

³² McDermott 1998 [2004], 1.

2.4.1. *Psychological approach to risk* [to be written]

2.4.2. *Expected utility theory and risk*

Another major paradigm of decision-making under risk is (subjective) expected utility theory, which has been used by Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman in their analysis of war and peace.³³ To construct the utility function to see the expected utility of pay-offs for various options available for decision-makers in the international arena, they start out from the assumption that the chief aim of a state's existence is to guarantee security for their citizens. Therefore, we can infer something about decision-maker's risk-taking attitude if we examine their willingness to trade security off for other objectives. That is, risk-taking leaders are ready to sacrifice more security for achieving some other – ideologically or domestically motivated – objectives while risk-averse decision-makers cultivate higher level of security at the expense of other objectives.³⁴

Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman's approach is appealing as it makes risk-taking directly (numerically) measurable. Alliance portfolios (formal military alliance agreements) are used as revealed choices of national preferences on security issues, and risk attitudes are recovered from alliance decisions (preference orderings). This use of alliance portfolios to measure security preferences is based on the general understanding of 'alliance' as a trade-off between security and autonomy: more security, that is, more alliance, results in less autonomy and vice versa. That is, risk-averse nations sacrifice more autonomy for security than risk-takers. In other words, risk attitudes are treated as national attributes rather than those of the individual decision-makers.

In nations' alliance portfolios, three kinds of formal alliances are ranked according to their implied reduction in autonomy/cost: listed from the most costly to the least costly they are defense pacts (require military support of attacked ally), non-aggression and neutrality pacts (promise of non-support for the aggressor of an ally), and ententes (require consultation when ally is attacked). The least (or zero) commitment is when no promise whatsoever is made to another nation. To measure "the shared pattern of commitments," the authors correlate states alliance portfolios, assuming that the more similar the revealed security preferences of two states (= alliance portfolios), the smaller the utility of a demand (the difference between winning and losing) between the two states, and consequently the less preferred is a confrontation. Large difference between alliances is thought to reveal large difference in goals. To allow for change over time in the alliance patterns of nations, correlation of portfolios are assessed on a year-by-year basis.

In accordance with expected utility theory, decision-makers are seen as rational actors, who aim at maximizing their utility. Decision-makers of a state are collapsed into a unitary actor and the units of analysis are states.³⁵ Interaction in the international system takes the form of a game between two states that starts with a chance move by nature.³⁶ In *War and Reason*, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman analyses dyads – interaction between two countries. This assumes that dyadic interaction is the chief form of interaction in the international system, which excludes third party participation from the model, but this conceptualization of IR fits well the game theoretic model the authors apply.³⁷

Such an approach is problematic both because of the measurement/operationalization used and on theoretical grounds. As for measurement problems, while viewing international

³³ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992.

³⁴ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 293.

³⁵ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 11, 16-7.

³⁶ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 31-2.

³⁷ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 16, 280-1.

relations as dyads may be desirable from a modeling point of view, it creates a wide gap between theorizing and reality as the international system is “one network of international relations and not [...] a set of dyadic interactions between nations.”³⁸ Any state actors have to deal with numerous other states at the same time and evaluate the expected utility of foreign policy choices targeted toward another country not only in the light of that dyad but the reactions of several third actors must be also taken into account.³⁹ All in all, decision-makers have to evaluate the expected utility of outcomes with regard to the wider international context not just the actual dyad.

Second, as the authors themselves acknowledge, formal military alliances only capture a small aspect of how nations relate to each other. Neither is it sensitive enough to follow the fluctuation in the relations of states because not all changes in security relations will manifest themselves in a change in the alliance portfolios.⁴⁰ Alliances as indicators of risk suffer from the limitation that follows from the small number of potential allies. Morrow also calls attention to the influence of the existing alliance patterns, geopolitical location and the distribution of power among states in a state’s ability to conclude alliances. As a result, alliances formed will not be the optimal ones but ones that improve a state’s security position *albeit* not necessarily to the desired degree. This results in an inaccuracy in the measure: the smaller the number of allies the greater will the inaccuracy be this measure.⁴¹

Similarly faulty is the assumption that changes in the alliance portfolio (making of new alliances or dissolving old ones) are necessarily a decision made by the country whose alliance portfolio is under scrutiny. This ignores the fact that alliance decisions also depend on (potential) allies: for example, an alliance may disappear from the alliance portfolio of a state because of an allies’ decision that contains no hostile intentions or demands toward the country in question. The simplest way to demonstrate this is to imagine a situation where countries A, B, and C, are bound together by an alliance. Country A may decide to terminate the alliance as part of its mounting conflicts with B. However, such a decision by country A will also affect country C’s alliance portfolio who did not sacrifice its security but whose security was sacrificed by another country.⁴²

There is also a wide discrepancy between the fact that expected utility theory expresses *individual* utility functions, treating risk as an individual personality attribute and that EU theory is used to measure the risk-attitudes of *states*. In harmony with EU theory, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman assume that risk is a characteristic that varies across individuals.⁴³ However, they themselves acknowledge that alliance portfolios cannot measure “differences across countries that relate to the propensity of this or that leader to take risks.”⁴⁴ Instead, they treat states as individuals and talk about *national risk attitudes*. In other words, they treat nations as unitary actors.

However, it is a highly questionable to assume that nations have risk attitudes. First, the unitary actor assumption hinges on the observation that in every state – democratic or not – the final policy decision is under the authority of one individual.⁴⁵ If so, then national risk attitude in reality is one individual’s disposition toward risk. However, if risk varies across individuals, it is unclear how nations can have permanent attitude toward risk unless we treat risk as a collective phenomenon among people belonging to the same nation. At best, this suggest, that risk is culturally determined or, at the worst, we end up with a concept uncannily

³⁸ Faber 1990, 307, 318.

³⁹ Faber 1990, 308.

⁴⁰ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 288-9.

⁴¹ Morrow 1987, 436-7. 434.

⁴² **[example?]**

⁴³ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 298.

⁴⁴ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 291.

⁴⁵ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 26.

close that of national stereotypes. It has been suggested to exclude individual risk attitudes from the equation when decision-making takes place in an organizational setting (as it does in foreign policy decision-making), because risk is centrally determined.⁴⁶ This could only solve the national risk attitude problem if countries had the same institutional/organizational structure in the period under examination (1815-1970). This is simply not the case: even if we disregard changes in informal practices, it is clear that many countries have changed their system of government and institutions over time. Indeed, there is a more general and, from our point of view, more important problem hidden here. Treating states as unitary actors is inadequate for the purposes of studying the influence of domestic institutions on international risk-attitudes, because the prerequisite for such a study is precisely the opposite assumption, that is, in explaining the risk taken by states it is not indifferent what is going on within a particular state.

In addition, the status quo is conceptualized as the mid-point between winning and losing. In other words what can be won equals with what can be lost. This produces some incredible results: for instance, the Third Reich is measured as mildly risk averse while, in fact Hitler's Germany was extremely risk-acceptant in that it sought extreme changes in the status quo. Such unlikely results occur, because the "risk indicator [...] is incapable of separating" the security and autonomy benefits that result from alliances with other revisionist nations.⁴⁷

By assuming that the game starts with a chance move by nature, the authors remove the effect of perceptual differences on the risk of war. If one side starts the conflict as it were a chess game – though here the first mover is to have an advantage – this removes the ability of the other players, and, thus, of both players to be able to say anything about the risk attitude of the other player.⁴⁸ Later in an article, which examines the influence of perception of the other player on the risk of war, Bueno de Mesquita himself moves away from the concept that the game starts with a move by nature.⁴⁹

Equally problematic is that the distribution of power among state/their differences in capabilities is also missing from the risk term. Yet, if the correlation of the alliance portfolios of state A and B and those of A and C are the same, the size of A's risk taken by a change in the alliance portfolios may be completely different if B has superior capabilities to A while C's military capabilities are substantially smaller than A's.⁵⁰ It is not to say that it is missing from the calculation of expected utility: it does figure in it as EU is calculated by the weighting of preference orderings by the probability of success, which Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman measure as a function of the material capabilities of a nation and its prospective allies.⁵¹

Rather, the problem is a more general theoretic one with the role of risk in the von Neumann–Morgenstern expected utility concept. While the utility term under certainty ($v(x)$) is determined by the strength of preferences, when one has to decide between lotteries the utility term ($u(x)$) also includes attitude toward risk.⁵² Then, to calculate expected utility this utility term is weighted with the probability that such an event will occur. Uncertainty introduces both risk and (subjective) probability to the calculation but their relationship remains unclear.⁵³

⁴⁶ This has been suggested in the limited context when the decision-making unit is a group of individuals. Paul J. H. Schoemaker 1982, 534-5.

⁴⁷ Morrow 1987, 436.

⁴⁸ Luce and Raiffa 1957, 279.

⁴⁹ Kim and Bueno de Mesquita 1995, 51-65.

⁵⁰ [example?]

⁵¹ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 47, 294-6.

⁵² Schoemaker 1982, 534.

⁵³ [ref. relationship of Risk and P]

Further shortcomings are also inherent in the EU model. Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman chose EU theory because it “holds out great promise for explaining” human behavior.⁵⁴ Yet, while EU theory may have some predictive power, its ability to *explain* and *describe* how people behave is severely limited. McDermott, for example, argues that EU theory is a prescriptive theory that only tells how people *should* behave.⁵⁵ **Because the number of choice options are too large to be able to think of them all or to be able to evaluate all of them, people use other strategies – satisficing for example – to arrive at a decision.**⁵⁶ Kahneman and Tversky demonstrated in numerous experiments that people systematically violate the transitivity, dominance, and invariance assumptions of EU theory when they make actual choices.⁵⁷ More central to this dissertation is the observation that EU’s modeling of individual’s behavior toward risk as a given – either risk averse or risk-seeking – is equally refuted by real life evidence of human behavior.

2.4.2.1. Prospect Theory

The criticism of the expected utility model for it not taking human behavior into account was a point of departure for Kahneman and Tversky in developing their alternative model, prospect theory, which accommodates the psychological aspect of human decision making. To begin with, they pointed out that although people’s choice under risk may be influenced by their personal characteristics, the framing of a decision problem is a major factors in people’s behavior toward risk. Contrary to EU theory’s invariance assumption,⁵⁸ risk attitudes tend to shift. When a decision problem is presented in the terms of gains (relative to a reference point), people are generally risk averse but when a decision problem is framed as losses, they behave as risk-takers. This is to suggest that part of the risk attitude is exogenous to human personality and, thus, is context dependent.

Seeing things as gains and losses also calls the postulates of expected utility about the evaluation of outcomes into question. The values of alternatives are defined not in term of final asset positions but of changes in the asset position (the reference point – which can shift from situation to situation – and the magnitude and direction of the change), stressing that losses loom larger than gains.⁵⁹ Gains are more easily accommodated, thus the loss frame also seem to prevail longer than the gain frame.⁶⁰ The fact that individuals tend to make relative as opposed to absolute judgments thus questions the holistic nature of the EU model, that is, “the attractiveness of an alternative is evaluated independently of the other alternatives in the choice set.”⁶¹

Similarly other features of the decision-making process call attention to the varying effect of factors – such as institutional setup – outside of the individual on risk attitude. EU theory assumes that the evaluation of alternatives is a one-phase process, that is, “a compound lottery [...] is as attractive the simple lottery that would result when multiplying probabilities of the compound lottery.”⁶² This, however, has been disconfirmed by experimental evidence, which led Kahneman and Tversky make prospect theory into a two stage process.⁶³ In the editing phase a preliminary analysis of prospects are performed often leading to the simplified

⁵⁴ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 23.

⁵⁵ McDermott 2001, 17.

⁵⁶ **[ref. not all alternatives considered]**

⁵⁷ McDermott 2001, 17-8; Kahnemann and Tversky 1979. **[satisfying article]**

⁵⁸ Quattrone and Tversky 1988, 272.

⁵⁹ Kahneman and Tversky 1979, 277, 279.

⁶⁰ Berejekian, 1997, 792-3.

⁶¹ Shoemaker 1982, 530, fn 1. See also 534.

⁶² Shoemaker 1982, 532.

⁶³ Cf. McDermott (2004, 20) who describes prospect theory as a three-stage process of editing, framing and evaluation.

representation of prospects. Edited prospects vary, depending on the order in which the editing procedures are performed.⁶⁴

All in all, the most useful insight of Kahneman and Tversky with regard to the question investigate in this dissertation is that depending on context the evaluation of a probabilistic outcome may vary. In other words, although while it is easy to accept that in general governments take considerable risk by opting for war, within certain domestic political contexts such an option seem the less risky, thus preferred alternative, to not fighting.

2.5. Definition and selection of the sample

While it has already been established that ‘war’ is used as a proxy for risk-taking, little has been said about its definition or the overarching concept of the dependent variable. The dependent variable is risk attitude operationalized as crisis outcome, which maybe war or any other non-war or risk-averse options such as negotiations, economic pressure, or covert action. Crises are used for analysis in order to differentiate a situation from ordinary politics. This is necessary so as to ensure that information always reaches the top of the executive branch and decision is made at the highest level.⁶⁵ While in crises, the decision problem always reaches the top – if for nothing else, then at least to have the top decision-maker(s) cast a positive or negative vote on the recommendation of lower level officials –, in non-crisis situations, lower-level political appointees or bureaucrats have the authority to make decisions. Consequently, decisions often remain at the departmental/agency level not necessarily making it into the agenda of the top of the executive hierarchy. Crises are thus used to make sure that the decision problem was certainly referred to the top of the decision hierarchy in order to determine that presidential/parliamentary divide is indeed meaningful in influencing risk attitudes.

In addition, analyzing crises also have certain additional analytical advantages: as opposed to non-crisis decision-making, the starting point and end point of a crisis can be fairly unambiguously defined. As we shall see below, crises are associated with a rather limited time-period, whether it is a week or half a year, while non-crisis decisions may comprise years, or sometimes even decades, of deliberations. Taking into account that several case studies need to be carried out in the course of this project, non-crises situations may be unfeasibly time-consuming.

Finally, settling on crises as the universe of cases begs the question if a crisis still displays the relevant characteristics of everyday policy-making, that is, whether the selection of crises biases against the hypothesis. After all, one likes to believe that when the stakes are high, politicians disregard their petty selfish concerns – policy disputes, political and bureaucratic rivalries etc – and consider developments only in light of what is best for the survival and security of the nation. If so, then it is hopeless to find any trace of domestic political influence in the selected crisis or war cases there seems to be ample reason to believe that no substantial bias will be introduced by such a selection. Fortunately for this project, contrary to folk believes, crises will not make statesmen out of politicians: policy disputes, political and bureaucratic rivalries – the pursuit of such interests – do not cease but are present during crises as much as during everyday policy-making, so there may remain a chance that they actually influence decisions.⁶⁶ Neither will crises make politicians more cool-headed than they are at other times. In essence, as G. H. Snyder argues, crises are “international

⁶⁴ Kahneman and Tversky 1979, 274-5. They describe 6 editing operations: *coding* (definition of the reference point and the presentation of the outcomes – gains/losses), *combination* (~ of alternatives that are associated with the same outcome), *segregation* (~ of the risky and risk-free components), *cancellation* (ignoring the part of two alternatives that are identical), *simplification* (probabilities and outcomes are rounded) and *detection of dominance* (scanning of alternatives to exclude dominated ones from further consideration).

⁶⁵ Holsti 1989, 17

⁶⁶ Post, 1991, 488.

politics in microcosm. [...] A crisis is a concentrated distillation of most elements which make up the essence of politics.⁶⁷

2.5.1. Defining 'Crisis' and 'War'

While there has always been an interest in the terms of 'crisis' and 'war', the necessity of precise definitions for them became especially pressing in the 1960s and 1970s when researchers started to compile databases in an effort to make statistical testing possible in the process of finding the reasons of war. As a consequence a great number of definitions (and databases) were born,⁶⁸ which pointedly signal a lack of agreement between researchers about the meaning of these terms.

2.5.2.1. Crisis

Of the two terms, crisis is the less problematic and the less contested. Until the late 1970s, scholars worked with the C.F. Hermann's definition that defined a political-military 'crisis' as a situation that

- (1) threatens high priority goals
- (2) restricts the available response time (~short time)
- (3) involves an element of surprise.⁶⁹

However, as further empirical research proved this definition unsupportable, certain modifications have been introduced. To begin with, 'crisis' usually appears as a result of change in the outside environment that threatens *basic values* rather than high priority goals as the earlier definitions suggested.⁷⁰ 'Basic values' are understood as consisting of *core values* (that are usually constant in time and space e.g. survival of the society, political sovereignty, territorial integrity or independence) and *high priority values* (that are defined by those in power in a given moment in time).⁷¹ In order to have reasonable correspondence between the definition of 'crisis' and its subcategory, 'war', this dissertation treats threat both relevant in terms of values and goals as an element of its 'crisis' definition. While values and goals are different things they at least are related in the sense that goals are usually defined on the basis of values.

Once threat to values (and goals) appear, it generates two additional features: *finite* time for response and a high probability of military hostilities.⁷² Note that the latter category is entirely new to the old definition and is used in order to separate 'crises from other situations where the possibility of war is remote and abstract and not real and immediate. As such, this criteria helps us most in linking crisis and war on the same continuum, where crisis precedes war. War is a possible outcome of a crisis and does not eliminate but accentuates crisis.⁷³ In addition, shortness of time has been replaced by finite time, acknowledging that sometimes the time limit is far from being short. Rather, decision-makers perceive that there is a deadline to reach a decision.⁷⁴

⁶⁷ Quoted in Brecher, 1993, 8.

⁶⁸ Most and Starr 1983 139, Richardson 1994, 10.

⁶⁹ Quoted by Brecher 1978, 5. [\[journal article, 382\]](#). Brecher 1993, 3.

⁷⁰ Brecher 1978, 7 and/or [\[journal article, 382\]](#).

⁷¹ Brecher 1978, 8, [\[383?\]](#)

⁷² Brecher 1978, [\[383\]](#)

⁷³ Snyder and Diesing 1977, 6; Richardson 1994, 11-2. Brecher (1993, 4-7) questions this sequencing by calling attention to the existence of intra-war crises (IWCs). However, since my dissertation measures risk-taking in a dichotomous variable (war/no-war), IWCs cannot be conceptualized within this framework as the event they are a part of has already qualified as wars, that is, risk-taking behavior

⁷⁴ Brecher 1978, 7 [\[383?\]](#). See also Brecher 1993, 3; Richardson 1994, 10.

So far crisis has been defined on the micro level and in perceptual terms: not only does the definition concentrate on the reactions of one single state, crises are limited to what decision-makers of a given state view as such. In other words, it is up to the individuals in power to decide whether high probability of war, finite time, and threat to values and goals were present.⁷⁵ Consequently, ‘crisis’ is seen as ‘foreign-policy crisis’ or in general falls under the decision-making definition of the term. As opposed to this, there exist ‘systemic’ and ‘international’ crises that involve a threat to the breakdown or transformation of the structure of the international system.⁷⁶ However, systemic definitions are too restrictive for the purpose of this study.

Viewing crisis in terms of foreign-policy crisis may still allow for system-level analysis.⁷⁷ They appear to have the advantage of defining crisis without invoking an additional actor in the definition as conceptualizations of ‘war’ do (see below).⁷⁸ A one-state definition is problematic as long as only one party sees the crisis as a crisis. While a crisis may start and end at different points in time for two countries, unless there is a time period when both adversaries perceive a situation as a crisis, the likelihood that the situation leads to war as defined above diminishes. Consequently, crisis must be more than a foreign policy crisis for one country. Rather, two adversarial states must perceive a situation in terms of crisis.⁷⁹

The definition used by the Correlates of War project comes close to seeing crisis as a foreign policy crisis of one state. Its “crisis database” contains ‘militarized interstate disputes (MIDs),’ that is, “one state threatened, displayed, or used force against another.”⁸⁰ Leng and Singer find the definition too broad as MIDs may be resolved before they could become interstate crises (e.g. through clarification of misunderstanding). Therefore, they argue, the indication of the willingness to resort to force must be part of the definition. On this basis they constructed the category ‘militarized inter-state crisis (MIC)’ and construct the crisis database of the Behavioral Correlates of War (BCOW) subproject.⁸¹ While they pride themselves that the definition of MICs excludes the perceptual aspect and, thus, offer an alternative definition, they could not successfully avoid the conceptual criteria. Not only does such a definition closely resemble the perceptual prerequisite of a dangerously high risk of war, but an indication to be ready to resort to arms will only bring the necessary environmental change about if the adversary takes it as a threat. Nonetheless, what their definition does is that it successfully operationalizes a perceptual and often evasive definition.

2.5.2.2. War

There exist a dazzling number of war definitions. Yet, as Most and Starr point out, all ‘war’ definitions share some common features. Accordingly, the essence of war can be summarized in seven points:

- (1) there are at least two states involved – one on each side,
- (2) participants have conflictual goals/values,
- (3) are aware of the conflictual nature of these wars,
- (4) are willing to attain their goals,
- (5) have the opportunity and capacity to pursue their goals,

⁷⁵ Brecher 1978, 6, 7, 8.

⁷⁶ Brecher 1993, 3 and Richardson 1994, 10-11.

⁷⁷ Brecher 1978, 9.

⁷⁸ On the latter problem see Most and Starr 1983.

⁷⁹ Richardson 1994, 11-12.

⁸⁰ *Correlates of War 2 Project* 2003. Leng and Singer 1988, 159.

⁸¹ Leng and Singer 1988, 159.

- (6) are able to resist overt use of force to avoid immediate defeat (which suggests the appearance of casualties in war)
- (7) goals cannot be achieved by a single use of force or a series of single uses of force over a dispersed period of time.

On this basis, war can be defined as a particular type of outcome of the interaction of at least a dyadic sets of specified varieties of actors in which at least one actor is willing and able to use military force against some other, resisting actor and some number of fatalities will occur.⁸²

[a review of many datasets and how they fail this project on the definition]

The most popular and most comprehensive war dataset, the *Correlates of War* database, conform to the seven criteria above even if the phrasing might differ. For example, instead of the capacity to fight and the ability to resist, they simply necessitate combat by armed forces.⁸³ Furthermore, the COW project differentiates between three kinds of wars: inter-, extra-, and intra-state wars. The first involves at least one state actor on each side, while extra-state wars require one state actor on one side and an external non-state actor on the other. Colonial wars typically fall into this category. Intra-state wars are essentially civil wars and are not relevant here unless an outside third party got involved. The reason is that this project measures international risk-taking and civil wars do not fit this concept. Yet, because the COW2 project appears to fail to make the differentiation between civil wars *per se* and civil wars with outside involvement, the intra-state war database cannot be entirely ignored when selecting wars.

Finally, COW project introduces the number of death criteria out of the desire to differentiate between wars and inconsequentially low-level hostilities such as border-disputes. The required number of battle deaths was drawn at 1,000 and included battle-related death but not civilian ones. Furthermore, as table 2 shows, different death criteria were drawn up for inter-, extra- and intra-state wars.

	<i>Inter-state</i>	<i>Extra-state</i>	<i>Intra-state</i>
<i>Parties minimally involved</i>	Two states	One state and an external non-state actor	Two internal state actors (includes civil wars)
<i>Number of deaths</i>	At least 1,000 battle related deaths among all participants	At least 1,000 battle related deaths among all participants	1,000 deaths including both battle and civilian death.
<i>Period in which deaths must occur</i>	N/A	If war lasted longer than a year, battle deaths must reach 1,000 per year	Per year

Table 2. The death criteria in inter-, extra- and intra-state wars as defined by Meredith Sarkees⁸⁴

The number of deaths is, however, a problematic unit of measurement, which is called into our attention even by the *COW2* database itself. It treated the number of battle-related deaths rather flexibly, thus defying its own selection criteria: it registers the Falklands conflict as war even though battle related deaths remain under 1000 (precisely at 920). Indeed, 1000 is an artificial cut-off point that may not match the nature of wars fought with limited means on limited territory that make up a substantial part of the wars in the Cold War. If a war is limited

⁸² Most and Starr 1983, 139-41.

⁸³ **[Check this definition and ref.]**

⁸⁴ Stuart A. Bremer, 2003, "Battle-death Threshold for Wars," COW 2 Message Forum in *Correlates of War 2 Project* 2003.

in nature, one also expects its effects, including the death toll, to be also more restricted. Moreover, the additional criterion for extra-state wars is questionable in the sense that the intensity of fighting in such wars may be similar to that of an inter-state war.

In addition, in some extra-state wars, death values register only those of the state actor but not those of the non-state actor such as in the case of British war in Indonesia in 1945. Excluding civilian deaths is also debatable in the sense that in case of non-state participants, the differentiation between the active ‘fighters’ and civilian support in form of food etc. involves these people in the conflict. Had they been members of a conventional army providing supplies for the fighting soldiers, their activities and deaths would have counted as battle-related. In addition, excluding civilian deaths is impractical because (military) strategy may aim at intimidating the population by taking-away their feeling of security and their trust in the existing government’s ability to govern and keep order. Similarly, on the part of the government a similar effort may help reduce active popular support for the insurgents. Thus, such deaths are very much part of conflicts.

To overcome this problem, I propose to replace the death criterion with the criteria that (1) the government decision must involve the introduction and use of (additional) military – army – units. The purpose of such a move can vary from the goal of helping the police to keep order to destroy or drive the enemy out of the given area. However, to actually face a war situation, (2) it is essential that troops be involved in active combat with the enemy which involves tracking down, destroying or driving the adversary out of a give territory – in short, the engagement of the adversary in fighting. This definition would effectively exclude border disputes or an exchange of fire between two sides on occasion.

[Start of war to be defined]

2.5.3. Limitations on the actual sample

2.5.3.1. Looking for necessary conditions only

The ideal approach in order to investigate risk attitude or war would be to both analyze war and non-war cases. However, such a broad study is beyond the limits of this dissertation, only war cases will be subjected to scrutiny, which makes it inevitable that until the finding here are not extended to cover non-war crises, the most that can be hoped at uncovering necessity but not sufficient conditions for behavior toward risk. Moreover, sufficient conditions are beyond reach in another sense. As Most and Starr argue, the “focus on war as aggregated outcome of behaviors of individual nations precludes the development of an understanding of the conditions that are sufficient for any one nation’s decision.”⁸⁵

2.5.3.2. Constraints due to differences in power status

To make sure that war involvement does actually measure risk-taking, a few additional constraints must be set. Most of these are due to the asymmetry in power status between the United States and Britain. As argued above, states must at least be middle-range powers so as to make sure that the decision was a real one and was not solely determined by constraints in capabilities and resources. But while both the US and Britain qualify as major powers, the United States also belong to the more elite circle of superpowers. This asymmetry in power status may bias the sample in favor of the outlined hypothesis. After all it is reasonable to expect that the US – the primary actor of the West in the Cold War – demonstrated more risk-averse attitude simply by the fact that it faced a greater number of direct confrontations with the Soviet Union. As direct superpower confrontations threatened with a higher likelihood of spiraling into catastrophic outcomes, which decision-makers were highly aware of, this would suggest more restraint in the American case. Consequently all crises – both American and

⁸⁵ Most and Starr 1983, 155.

British – where the USSR was a participant from the beginning, are excluded from the sample.

In addition, the difference in power between the US and Britain also resulted in the fact that the US faced decidedly weaker adversaries in all her wars. Accordingly, cases where Britain faced an adversary of an equal – major – power should not be included in the sample either. In the Cold War two other major powers existed: France and China. British crisis where these were adversaries are excluded. In practice, this means only the exclusion of confrontations with China, since France was Britain's ally. To date when China actually became a major power is not entirely clear. The *COW 2* project names China as a major power from January 1, 1950,⁸⁶ that is, the victory of the Communists in the Chinese civil war. Huth talks of China as a major power only from 1953, probably feeling the demonstration of such status (in the Korean war) as a necessary condition.⁸⁷ One more possible date could be China's rise to nuclear power status in 1964. Of the three, the cut-off point of 1950 seems the most adequate for the purposes of my dissertation, because the potential international engagement of China (given its manpower and resources) is sufficient to perceive her as a member of the major power group.

Many times crises were entered into together with allies by both Britain and the United States. This is no source of concern in American crisis cases, because in whatever status the US entered such conflicts, its superpower status guaranteed that it could play the major role in crises. For Britain, crises where the United States was also involved are an issue, since American involvement drastically reduced risk-taking by Britain. Therefore, such crises will not make the sample either.

2.5.3.3. Cold War

While the time-frame of analysis has been referred to above, it must be explicitly stated that the analysis will be limited to the Cold War period (1945-1990). While the number of cases could be somewhat increased by covering other periods and, thus, other international system structures, it may inflate validity. As Tanter argues, while “maximizing variation in predictors is a laudable goal, it may conflict with the need to control confounding variables. If all the relevant variables are allowed to vary, it may be difficult to make an inference about the separate effects of any of them.”⁸⁸ Moreover, because systematic data collection in the executive branch started in the late 1910s in Britain and even later in the United States, a longitudinal extension of the dataset could mostly produce additional cases that cannot be thoroughly examined. Not to mention that this is the only period when both of these countries were ready to carry the burden of international involvement. Before the Cold War and apart from the two major wars – World Wars I and II – the United States simply withdraw from international/global politics as much as it could.

To limit analysis to the Cold War is only possible, however, if the outlined difference in war-proneness stands in this period. While the Cold War did seem to reduce the number of wars across all nations, the difference between Britain and the USA persists in this period (see tables 1 in chapter 1 and table **[? Where, which show a drop in wars with regard to all superpowers with the dawning of the Cold War]**).

2.5.4. The sample

Even though no one database fit all the criteria, the *Correlates of War* comes closest to it. Therefore, it was the initial starting point for selecting the sample. However, since the death criteria has been replaced, the number of potential case had to be checked against other

⁸⁶ “State System Membership List v2002.1.” in *Correlates of War* 2003.

⁸⁷ Huth 1998, 754.

⁸⁸ Tanter 1978, 358.

sources. The most obvious one would be a crisis database. Unfortunately, the most promising, the MIC database of the BCOW project is not a comprehensive database, encompassing only a selection of crises.⁸⁹ Lacking an adequate database, historical sources were consulted.⁹⁰ These sources yielded the following wars for Britain (table 3) and the US (table 4)

<i>Name of War</i>		<i>Start of War</i>	<i>End of War</i>
1.	Indonesia	11/10/45	10/15/46
3.	Malaya	6/18/48	8/31/57
3.	Kenya	10/20/52	?/?/56
4.	Cameroon	?/?/55	?/?/60
5.	Cyprus	04/01/55 ⁹¹	02/01/59 ⁹²
6.	Suez	10/29/56	11/6/56
7.	Borneo	12/?/62	8/11/66
8.	Falklands	3/25/82	6/20/82

Table 3. British war sample

<i>Name of War</i>		<i>Start of War</i>	<i>End of War</i>
1.	Korea	6/24/50	7/27/59
3.	Vietnam	2/7/65	4/30/75
4.	Dominican Republic	4/28/65	6/?/65
5.	Grenada	24/10/83	11/?/83
6.	Panama	12/21/89	01/03/90

Table 4. American war sample

2.6. Case selection

Of the sample, two criteria were used to select cases for process-tracing. First, only wars where domestic politics was most likely to play a role were chosen for analysis. That is to say, crucial cases where the hypothesized relationship is most likely to appear are selected.⁹³ If the hypothesized relationship between different democratic regime types and war do not occur in cases where they are most likely to appear (British wars decided on in the midst of political trouble for the government), then it is not reasonable to expect such difference in other cases. Alternatively, the hypothesis is also disconfirmed if domestic factors play a role where they should have no influence (American wars with domestic political turmoil).⁹⁴ There is an additional idea behind this. Because wars start for many reasons, it is unrealistic to explain that any theories could explain all of them. Therefore, the scope conditions must be set: the theory should apply in cases where the domestic conditions detailed below at are met. Second, the results are combined with three potential confounding factors – party affiliation of the government, the personality of chief executives and the crisis intensity at hand. In order to

⁸⁹ “Codebook” BCOW 2007.

⁹⁰ Carver 1990 and *Britain’s Small Wars 2007*.

⁹¹ Start of EOKA’s military campaign

⁹² Agreement on the conditions of independence and end of EOKA’s anti-British efforts.

⁹³ On the crucial case studies approach, see King et. al. 1994, 209.

⁹⁴ Note that selecting crucial cases leaves room for multi-causality.

account for their possible influence and, thus, enhance measurement validity, cases selected should vary on these factors as much as possible.

2.6.1. Scope conditions and T2 conflicts

To select wars that were decided on by governments facing problems at home, variables that may indicate the importance of accountability-related domestic factors are used to differentiate among wars in the sample. They are: the timing of the war with regard to the term of office – whether the war occurred at the end of the term close to elections –, the government’s popularity, relations with the legislative branch and division within the executive branch. The fourth factor is only relevant in Britain’s case. Domestic politics are likely to be a factor in decision-making if it occurred at the end of the electoral term, the government was unpopular [what is low/high popularity?] or experienced a sudden large drop in popularity, relations with the legislative was problematic (in case of Britain, this could mean a small majority or some rather large and influential faction within the governing party) and existing division/struggle for leadership within the executive, including attempts to remove the prime minister. If one in the American and two in the British cases of these factors appeared with the expected sign, conflicts were judged likely to have been driven by domestic motivations. These are called Type 2 (T2) conflicts. As expected, the overwhelming majority of British conflicts – 7 out of 8 – qualified as T2 conflicts. As for American conflicts, while the balance went in favor of T2 conflicts, the margin was insignificant – 3 to 2.

[short narrative description of the table below.]

<i>War</i>		<i>End of term conflict</i>	<i>Low popularity</i>	<i>Trouble with Legislative</i>	<i>Division in executive</i>	<i>Type</i>	
<i>Name</i>	<i>Start</i>						
1.	Indonesia	10/11/45	X	X	X	X	T1
2.	Malaya	18/06/48	√	√	X	√	T2
3.	Kenya	20/10/52	X	√	√	√	T2
4.	Cameroon	?/?/55	X	√	√		T2
5.	Cyprus	01/04/55	√	√	√	√	T2
6.	Suez	29/10/56	X	√	√	√	T2
7.	Borneo	?/12/62	√	√	X??	√	T2
8.	Falklands	25/03/82	√	√	X?	√	T2

Table 5. British wars in the light of domestic factors

<i>War</i>		<i>End of Term conflict</i>	<i>Low popularity</i>	<i>Trouble with Legislative</i>	<i>Type</i>	
<i>Name</i>	<i>Start</i>					
1.	Korea	24/06/50	X	√	√	T2
2.	Vietnam	07/02/65	X	X	X	T1
3.	Dominican Republic	28/04/65	X	√	X	T2
4.	Grenada	24/10/83	√	X	√	T2
5.	Panama	21/12/89	X	X	X	T1

Table 6. American wars in the light of domestic factors

2.6.2. Party Affiliation

As it can be seen from table 7, the overwhelming number of wars came under Conservative prime ministers. This agrees with the traditional view that Labour pursued a markedly different foreign policy from that of the Conservative Party. While the Tories are seen as the party of the Empire whose main purpose was to preserve the colonies, Labour is often credited to be the party of anti-colonialism, having entertaining sympathy with colonial nationalist movements.⁹⁵ This suggests that what party was in power may be a confounding effect. However, a more thorough analysis raises doubts about this. First, we face a rather unfortunate historical coincidence: the Tories were in power in the fifties and the first half of the sixties when colonial retreat took place. By the time of the Callaghan cabinet, the Empire, apart from a few small territories, was practically gone, making it impossible to draw further conclusions about Labour's attitudes toward the colonies than those of the Attlee government.

Second, under any government only a minority of the cases were contested in military terms. This and the liquidation of the empire by 1964 also point to the fact that conservative governments started with a large number of territories peacefully. For instance, while Macmillan started the war in Borneo, his Colonial Secretary Ian McLoad granted independence to many African colonies.⁹⁶ Third, whatever foreign policy Labour might have preferred in theory, as it were thrown into power in 1945, it pursued pro-empire policies. In 1945-6, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin proposed to expand British colonial presence in Africa.⁹⁷ Although, the Attlee government decided to let India and Pakistan go without hostilities and did not believe that Palestine was worth spilling British blood, in Indonesia and Malaya it opted for a military solution. That is to say, we can depict a similar combination of retreat and firmness under Labour and Conservative governments.

<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Labour</i>
Kenya Cameroon Cyprus Borneo Falklands	Indonesia Malaya

Table 7. British T2 wars according to the party affiliation of prime ministers

Out of five American wars in the Cold War, three were initiated under Democratic and two, under Republican presidents (see table 8). Although the difference is meaningless, it still follows the traditional division between the Democrats and Republicans, the former being more interventionist and the latter more cautious. However, this division also comes from the rather unfortunate situation that an eight-year-long Republican control of the executive branch were characterized by *détente* and the relaxation of tensions between the two superpowers, which presupposes fewer opportunities for war. Excluding this period (1969-1975), the difference between the war-proneness of democratic and republican presidents substantially shrinks: 20 years of democrats in power resulted in four wars while 17 years of Republican rule lead to two wars. Without the period of *détente*, we can find only one president from each party – Eisenhower and Carter – who did not initiate war. Nonetheless, the sample will include wars both under Democratic and Republican presidents.

⁹⁵ Morgan 1985, 189.

⁹⁶ See, for example O 1991, 173-213 and 384-427.

⁹⁷ Morgan 1985, 188-232 especially 193-203.

<i>Republican</i>	<i>Democratic</i>
Grenada Panama	Korea Vietnam Dominican Republic

Table 8. American T2 wars according to the party affiliation of presidents

2.6.3. Leadership Style

While few deny that the person in power when a given decision is to be made does count, the agreement on the magnitude of the influence of the personality is less unanimous. Even researchers focusing on the role of individuals in decision-making are not necessarily convinced that individuals are the most important single variable influencing decisional outcome.⁹⁸ Although it would be unreasonable to deny its influence, this dissertation relegates the effect of personality behind that of institutions. Nevertheless, it cannot be entirely ignored since institutions allow for some leeway for chief executives to define their role and behavior within the institutional framework.⁹⁹

Research on the influence of executive leaders in politics has a particularly important position in the United States where the sophisticated analysis of leaders' psychology became prominent in the 1970s. The popularity of leader centered executive research may be in part a result of the unequalled importance of the president who is both directly elected and the sole executive official to be held accountable.¹⁰⁰ Particularly influential were Neustadt's 1960 study of presidential leadership styles and James Barber's discussion of presidential character. Richard Neustadt examined leadership style by concentrating on informal power and persuasion and used the dichotomous distinction between circular and pyramid structures. The former provides relatively open access to the president because no gatekeeper is employed. The latter is a highly hierarchical structure where usually the president employs a chief of staff to limit traffic to the Oval Office. Communication is primarily top down in nature.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile, Barber classified presidents by orientation toward life (i.e. character). His study was based on the assumption that character is defined by experience from childhood to early adulthood. He differentiated between presidents by two dimensions: how much presidents invested into their jobs (active-passive) and how much satisfaction their profession brings into president's lives (positive-negative).¹⁰²

It was Neustadt's more restricted approach that became the basis of further study in the more recent literature that attempted to classify presidential leadership styles with special emphasis on the foreign policy process. That is, these works enquire about the way leaders manage the task at hand, mobilize information, and deal with and coordinate their advisors.¹⁰³ Studying the influence of personality on the basis of leadership style is rooted in either the assumption that background factors – past experience – shape president's character as well as their leadership style or that personality will shape leadership style directly.¹⁰⁴ That is, leadership style is the result of the same process and, thus, captures the same phenomenon as

⁹⁸ Helms 2005, 18, 19.

⁹⁹ Helms 2005, 19

¹⁰⁰ Helms 2005, 18.

¹⁰¹ **Neustadt 1990.**

¹⁰² Barber 1992 [1972].

¹⁰³ Definition based on Kegley and Wittkopf 1996, 514.

¹⁰⁴ Kegley and Wittkopf 1996, 504 and 514 respectively. For the assertion of direct causation, see also George 1980, 147.

the rather alluding concept of personality. Moreover, operationalizing personality as leadership style is especially useful in analyzing institutions, because it helps explicate the structurally relevant aspects of a president's personality.

Alexander George differentiates between three presidential management styles on the basis of presidents' informational needs, sense of efficacy and competence, and attitude toward conflict among advisors. Formalistic management is built on hierarchical lines of communication, orderly structure and discouragement of conflict and bargaining among agencies. The competitive style thrives on conflict among advisors while the collegial model utilizes policy making in groups in order to benefit of competition by avoiding parochialism.¹⁰⁵ Hermann and Preston noted the relevance of five variables – involvement in the policy-making process, willingness to tolerate conflict, motivation for leading, management of information and conflict resolution technique – and ordered them via two dimensions: hierarchy (control) and focus of centralization (coordination). While their typology yielded four subtypes by the formal/informal control and process-focused/problem focused dimensions, they came to recognize that certain presidents will end up as mixed types.¹⁰⁶

In contrast to the thriving of executive leadership research in the United States, similar works with regard to parliamentary regimes or those that aim at an internationally relevant comparative conceptualization of leadership style are rather rare.¹⁰⁷ This is problematic, because the American literature is tailor-made to analyze presidential regimes and is not useful in classifying executive leadership styles in parliamentary democracies.¹⁰⁸ Yet, Juliet Kaarbo notes that while one-to-one adaptation is undesirable, Hermann and Preston's five variables are general enough to fit parliamentary regimes if variables are operationalized differently.¹⁰⁹ Drawing on these five variables and the insights on organizational leadership, she adapts their typology the parliamentary regimes with a focus on Germany and Britain. However, unlike Hermann and Preston, Kaarbo refuses to collapse the five dimensions, claiming that this would avoid the appearance of mixed types.¹¹⁰ Even though this may be true, the result is the creation of so many analytical categories that no small-N study could cover all the variation

In Europe, the primarily institutional and constitutional-legal focus in the field of leadership research was a hindrance to examine the influence of personality and leadership style.¹¹¹ As a result of this and the considerably fewer opportunities in parliamentary regimes for innovation, systematic and comparative studies of prime ministerial leadership styles are lacking.¹¹² Those that actually look at cross-country or within-country variation of prime ministerial leadership style, often attribute the variation to structure – constitutionally defined dimensions of prime-ministerial power across countries, nature of the cabinets (single or multi-party), coalition type etc.¹¹³ A rare comparative exception is Helms' *Presidents, Prime Ministers and Chancellors*, which is a comparative study of leadership styles, discussing the

¹⁰⁵ George 1980.

¹⁰⁶ Herman and Thomas 1994.

¹⁰⁷ Helms 2005, 18 and Kaarbo 1997, 554, 555.

¹⁰⁸ Helms 2005, 18.

¹⁰⁹ Kaarbo, 1997, 562.

¹¹⁰ Kaarbo 1997, 571.

¹¹¹ Helms 2005, 19.

¹¹² R.A.W. Rhodes, 1995, "From Prime Ministerial power to Core Executive," in *Prime Minister, Cabinet and Core Executive*, edited by R.A.W. Rhodes and Patrick Dunleavy (New York: St. Martin's Press), 14 found only three: L. Iremonger, 1970, *The Fiery Chariot: British Prime Ministers and the Search for Love* (London: Seckler & Warburg); H. Berrington, 1974, "Review Article – The Fiery Chariot: British Prime Ministers and the Search for Love," *British Journal of Political Science* 4(3): 345-69; and M. Foley, 1993, *The Rise of the British Presidency* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).

¹¹³ Kaarbo 1997, 556.

styles of American, British and German chief executives after 1945 both in relation to the core executive and the legislative branch.¹¹⁴ As for Britain, Hennessy's *The Prime Minister* offer a discussion of the leadership styles of post-war prime ministers from Attlee to Blair.¹¹⁵ However, both of these works are narrative descriptions of executive leadership and lack a systematic classification of leaders on the basis of their leadership style.

In order to gain comparable results but limit variation to two dimensions, leadership style in Britain and the United States is understood here along two dimensions: (1) formal sub-structure (2) informal operation. The former seeks to answer the question as to what structure the leader preferred or set up to operate in and the latter, how he actually operated within that framework. Although ideally these two aspects should correlate, they did not do so in all cases, which suggests that there may be a gap between the politically possible and desirable or that certain chief executive lacked an adequate knowledge of their own needs and personality.

While the questions over leadership styles are relevant in both democratic systems, they must be operationalized differently. To answer the question of what structure presidents generally draw up, I will rely on the traditional dichotomous distinction of presidential studies: circular and pyramid structures. Such a differentiation is more adequate to examine the relations of the president and the White House staff than that of the chief executive and the cabinet. The relevance of the White House staff – in which I also include dealings with cabinet ministers on an individual bases but not as a collective body – is given by its involvement in policy-making. Cabinet as a policy-making institution is foreign to the American system and in spite of the wishes of several presidents to rely on their cabinet and never came to play an influential part. Even presidents (i.e. Eisenhower and Carter) who had a higher regard for the cabinet only used it for brainstorming or as a sounding board.¹¹⁶

Three presidents employed the pyramid/top down communication method. Eisenhower used Sherman Adams as his chief of staff to limit traffic in the Oval Office. President Nixon had a tendency to delegate to his ministers (especially in domestic politics) and recommendations were demanded in writing to allow the president to decide things without even consulting his senior advisors. Finally, Ronald Reagan used the troika of James Baker, Michal Deaver and Edwin Meese who collected information from subordinates and decided both on policy recommendation to the president and on what information was to be forwarded to Reagan. Quite logically, these three presidents were the least involved in detailed policy-making.

Three Democratic Presidents, Truman, Kennedy, and Carter used the circular structure. Although Truman started the institutionalization of the policy process and was a super delegater, the degree of access to the president remained remarkably open. As opposed to this, Kennedy had little regard for formal committees and operated in the midst of informality. Great number of advisors were consulted in the policy process, where the president did not hesitate to ask for the opinion of lower level officials in various departments. While all presidents using the circular structure were very much involved in the decision-making process, Carter's concern with detail was rather excessive. After two Republican presidents, he moved back to the circular structure and was the last president to operate without a chief of staff.

Presidential practice and the instituted structure were mismatched in three occasions. Lyndon Johnson, who inherited the presidency from the assassinated Kennedy, was deprived of a 'new beginning' because of the circumstances of his coming into power. Thus, he used the open-access structure but his personal style that lacked tolerance, rivalry or dissent

¹¹⁴ Helms 2005.

¹¹⁵ Hennessy 2000.

¹¹⁶ [presidents not using cabinets]

hindered the working of the circular structure. George H. W. Bush came to power as the second best alternative after a popular President Reagan who was constitutionally deprived of a third term. To live up to the expectations of continuing in Reagan shoes tied Bush's hands in innovation. Bush used a pyramid structure, which only partly worked in practice: not only could a number of close associates of the president never be forced to operate through his chief-of-staff, but Bush's good relations with his cabinet ministers also encouraged informal consultations with the president. Ford, who was pressured for an open style by the failure of Nixon's highly authoritative pyramid structure, stands in between two categories. His personal style was rather informal, ensuring open access, which correlated with the early set-up of his administration but when he later moved toward a more closed, chief-of-staff driven system.¹¹⁷

In the British context, where the cabinet has traditionally served as the forum of policy-making, the crucial element of prime ministerial leadership style is his/her attitude toward the usage of the cabinet. Thus, here the question of what structure the leader has drawn up is operationalized as to how much a prime minister was willing to play out things in the cabinet. In other words, it measures how much respect they had for the traditional cabinet system. However, not taking everything in the cabinet is not disrespect for the system *per se*: the role of cabinet committees grew with time out of the recognition that somehow the excessive burden on the cabinet should be reduced while preserving some element of collegiality by having the relevant (and often the interested) ministers involved in cabinet committees. As opposed to this, one-to-one dealings with ministers, inner cabinets, the complete ignorance of the cabinet in decisions, meaningless cabinet meetings where ministers had no space to express their opinion will be taken as ignorance of the cabinet system. As a consequence the second dimension of leadership style is how prime ministers operated in their preferred systems. In other words, did they engage in democratic (circular) and authoritarian (top-down) relationship with their staff.

In many cases these two dimensions heavily correlated. Perhaps, Callaghan is the best example of prime ministerial preference for the circular system. He did not only believe in taking things in front of the cabinet, but left ample space for ministers to play issues out in that forum. Despite all accusation of presidentialism, Harold Macmillan had a great appreciation for the cabinet and did use it as a sounding board, forcing ministers to come up with their own ideas and criticism. The cabinet also determined the general policy outlines. Inexperience in most policy areas and the fact that he became prime ministers as a compromise candidate that no one in particular preferred in the party for their leader, Douglas-Home exercised strong collegiality and delegated a lot to his ministers.

As opposed to this, neither Margaret Thatcher nor Harold Wilson during his first premiership really believed in working through the cabinet, which was rather seen as a necessary burden. Accordingly, Thatcher preferred policy-making through her Downing Street staff and as soon as opponents were entirely purged from the cabinet around 1983, she ditched even the appearance of collegiality. Wilson brought together small, inner-cabinets of trusted advisors that were augmented with bilateral dealings with ministers. Churchill also used the top-down approach. In spite of his deep but theoretical appreciation for the cabinet, he never aimed at any levels of collegiality. He introduced overlords to coordinate various departments, which somewhat resembles the American chief-of-staff approach of the Reagan's triumvirate. Although cabinets were frequently called, they had little to contribute to policy-making as cabinets were only places where time was taken up by Churchill's ramblings on his pet issues and Churchill preferred to operate through individual audiences

¹¹⁷ The classification of presidents is based on Jones 2005, 52-112 and Helms 2005, 36-54.

with ministers.¹¹⁸ His only interest lay in foreign policy where his involvement left little space even for his Foreign Secretary to meaningfully contribute to the direction of policy.

Some prime ministers ended up in mixed systems. Edward Heath was a firm believer of the cabinet mechanism and set out to deal with the cabinet with exemplary collegiality. Yet, his brusque, authoritative manner prevented the cabinet to work as an effective forum of discussion as he hoped. He also used an inner cabinet to discuss and, on occasion, decide major policy issues. Similarly, Anthony Eden was thrown in the collusion of his willingness to take things in front of the cabinet and his own personality. His constant worrying made him interfere too much with the job of his ministers and his tantrums discouraged colleagues to express their views. Wilson during his second premiership – having resigned of his alternative presidency to the cabinet – gave considerable freedom to his ministers but policy was essentially made through the Wilson-Callaghan axis.¹¹⁹

On this basis, three leadership styles are differentiated: The pyramid structure in America and ignorance of the cabinet in Britain are classified as the ‘top-down’ approach to leadership, while respect for the cabinet in Britain and circular decision-making style are classified under term ‘circular’. Because there were presidents and prime ministers whose preference of structure and operating style deviated from each other, a third category, ‘mixed’ leadership style is introduced. Table 9 classifies all post-war presidents and prime ministers according into these three categories:

	<i>Top-down</i>	<i>Mixed</i>	<i>Circular</i>
Presidents	Eisenhower Nixon Reagan	Johnson Bush	Truman Kennedy Carter Ford
Prime Ministers	Churchill Wilson I Thatcher	Eden Heath Wilson II.	Attlee Macmillan Callaghan Douglas-Home

Table 9. Presidential (US) and Prime Ministerial (UK) leadership styles

2.6.4. *Crisis Intensity*

An important part of the hypothesis of this dissertation was its distinction between high and low priority conflicts. This has grown out of the recognitions that not all conflicts are equally acute and, thus, salient, which may influence attitude toward risk. That is to say, both domestically and internationally the pressure and the stakes are greater for decision-makers in high-intensity than in low intensity conflicts, because as opposed to the former, the latter fall outside of the interest of most of the public and, therefore, are less likely to make or break governments and influences the fortunes of the chief executives in a more moderate degree.

[how to distinguish between these two]

The classification of T2 conflicts according to conflict intensity is shown in tables 10 and 11. Of T2 American conflicts, two qualify as high-intensity conflicts: the Korean and Vietnam wars, while of British conflicts only the Suez crisis and the Falklands war meet the criteria of high-intensity conflicts.

¹¹⁸ One-to-one discussions were also used by Callaghan but it was a method to keep informed about problems and not one to define policy.

¹¹⁹ The classification of prime ministers is based on Hennessy 2000 and Helms 2005, 70-86.

High	Low
Suez Falklands	Malaya Kenya Cameroon Cyprus Borneo

Table 10. British T2 wars classified

High	Low
Korea, Vietnam	Dominican Republic, Grenada, Panama

Table 11. American T2 wars classified

2.6.5. combining the four dimensions and selecting cases

If we combine the three dimensions, we get the following result:

<i>Leadership style</i>	<i>Party affiliation</i>	
	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Conservative</i>
Top down		Kenya ('55), Cameroon ('55), Falklands ('82)
Circular	Malaya ('48)	Borneo ('62)
Mixed		Suez ('56) , Cyprus ('55)

Table 12. T2 British conflicts in the light of prime ministerial leadership style and the party affiliation of the chief executive. High-intensity conflicts are indicated in bold

<i>Leadership style</i>	<i>Party affiliation</i>	
	<i>Republican</i>	<i>Democratic</i>
Top down	Grenada ('83)	
Circular		Korea ('50)
Mixed		Dominican Republic ('65)

Table 13. T2 American conflicts in the light of presidential leadership style and the party affiliation of the chief executive. High-intensity conflicts are indicated in bold

As the tables above show, American and British cases often fall into different cells and there are non that are exactly the same by all dimenions. There is only one Labour initiated war and only one high intensity war for the United States. Therefore, these must make their way into the sample. In addition, maximum variation and the likely availability of sources were the criteria for case selection. On this basis all three American wars (Grenada, Korea and the Dominican Republic) will be analyzed and contrasted with three British wars (Malaya, Suey and Kenya).

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¹²⁰ The database was renamed and contents moved to another site after November 2005 but the contents have not changed except for the message board that has been removed.

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