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SUNY series in Global Politics

James N. Rosenau, editor

United We Stand?

Divide-and-Conquer Politics
and the Logic of
International Hostility

Aaron Belkin

State University of New York Press

Chapter One

Regime Vulnerability and International Conflict

When former president Bill Clinton launched a series of cruise missile strikes against targets in Afghanistan and Sudan just three days after testifying before a federal grand jury in August 1998, observers speculated that this was “a manufactured crisis to divert public attention from his personal troubles.” One columnist referred to the public’s reaction as “an almost textbook illustration of the rally-around-the-flag phenomenon” (*Los Angeles Times*, August 21, 1998, p. B9; August 23, 1998, p. A20). Just six months before the attack, pundits wondered whether the administration would strike Iraq to minimize damage from the just-breaking sexual misconduct scandal. As I suggest below, the diversionary hypothesis is not just conventional wisdom among the public and the press. This idea is so well accepted that one scholar claimed it “to be a general law that human groups react to external pressure by increased internal coherence” (Dahrendorf, 1964, p. 58 cited in Levy, 1989b, p. 261).

But the diversionary hypothesis does not always provide an adequate explanation of foreign policy. In this study, I attempt to turn the diversionary hypothesis on its head by questioning its twin assumptions that cohesion is preferable to divisiveness and that leaders use external conflict to promote internal unity. In short, my claim is that under certain circumstances leaders use international conflict to promote divisiveness at home. My focus is one domestic political realm, civil-military relations, and I advance and test two hypotheses. First, I argue that when the risk of a coup d’état is high, leaders tend to divide their armed forces into multiple organizations that check and balance each other and protect the regime as a byproduct of their independent coercive capacity. (Along with others in the literature, I label this strategy “counterbalancing”).¹ While the combination of strategies that any particular leader selects is indeterminate, I expect almost all vulnerable leaders to include counterbalancing in the portfolio of coup-proofing strategies they pursue to protect themselves from their own militaries when the risk of a coup is high. Dividing the armed forces, however, is only the first step toward avoiding a coup. Once the military is divided, leaders often must make sure

that rival armed organizations stay apart and refrain from conspiring with each other. Counterbalancing, in other words, often requires leaders to promote jealousy and strife among their own forces to prevent the development of lateral networks among potential conspirators. Hence, my second hypothesis is that counterbalancing can provide an incentive for leaders to engage in international conflict. International conflict can create interservice rivalries that drive wedges and promote mistrust among branches of the armed forces when service branches offer divergent threat assessments, use combat success to justify claims for autonomy, advocate particular missions, and attempt to take credit for success or avoid blame for failure. Contrary to the literature on scapegoating and the rally-around-the-flag effect that suggests that leaders use international conflict to promote public unity, my argument is that in the realm of civil-military relations, aggressive foreign policy may reinforce military divisions.

Although I will explain how I conceptualize vulnerability to a coup in much greater detail in subsequent chapters, I address the scope of my argument here by noting that my theory is intended to apply to all regimes, regardless of whether they are democratic, authoritarian, military, civilian, praetorian, or post-communist. The theoretical story that I tell, in other words, is intended to apply to all regimes that are vulnerable to the possibility of a coup, regardless of their type. After developing my theoretical arguments in the second section of this book, I use statistical and historical evidence to test them in the third section.

In ancient Rome, the emperor Augustus was so concerned about the loyalty of the Praetorian Guard that he assembled another corps of body guards, the German custodes, who were "recruited from extreme points of the frontier so that they had no possible political or personal connections with anyone in Rome" (Webster, 1985, p. 101). In Iran, despite generous patronage, terrifying purges, and other control mechanisms designed to secure officers' loyalty, the shah was sufficiently worried about the possibility of military insubordination that no general deployed outside Tehran was permitted to visit the capital city without his permission (Zabih, 1988, p. 5). And in postcommunist Poland, the threat of military conspiracy prompted Solidarity elite to make a "conscious effort to raise the social standing of the military in society" (Busza, 1996, p. 17). The new government ended negative media coverage of the armed forces, revived pre-1939 military ceremonies, removed Defense Minister Jan Parys when his purging campaign gave rise to resentment in the officer corps, and provided generous salaries and pensions despite considerable fiscal pressures. These examples show that in some political circumstances, the loyalty of the military cannot be taken for granted and that reducing the risk of coups d'état may require leaders to expend time-consuming, ongoing and costly effort. As Frazer notes, "multiple mechanisms of control [may] operate each day to keep military personnel in check" (1994, p. 197). Might coup-proofing strategies that leaders implement to protect themselves from their own armed forces sometimes result in international conflict?

This question is important because subordination of the armed forces is a critical domestic process that all new states must confront. Kier notes that "the

creation of every state requires that a bargain be struck about the control of the military within the state and society" (1993, p. 24). In Zaire, soldiers mutinied just five days after the country achieved independence, and Zaire is not an isolated example. At the constitutional convention in Philadelphia in 1787, Massachusetts delegate Elbridge Gerry worried that "if there were no restriction on a standing army . . . the representatives of a few states in Congress 'may establish a military government'" (Collier, 1986, p. 242). Indeed, only four years prior to Gerry's speech, Continental Army conspirators in Newburgh, New York, threatened to march on Congress to demand their pay at gun point (Kohn, 1975, p. 17-39). In Israel on June 20, 1948, the SS *Altalena* approached Tel Aviv to unload rifles and machine guns earmarked for right-wing Irgun units of the Israel Defense Forces. When Prime Minister David Ben Gurion insisted that Irgun commanders hand the weapons over to the Army's central command, gun fights ensued, and over twenty soldiers died. According to some, widespread violence between rival Israeli Army factions was only narrowly averted (Rothenberg, 1979, p. 62). These examples suggest that even legitimate, democratically elected leaders may be displaced by the military. According to Huntington, in the first few years after the end of the Cold War there were "more than 20 coups attempts against new democracies" (1995).

Certainly it is true that in some political contexts, subordination of the armed forces may be achieved quickly if leaders institutionalize stable arrangements that vitiates the possibility of a military takeover. In chapter 4 I conceptualize and operationalize coup risk in terms of factors that indicate when leaders are vulnerable to their own armed forces and when they are not vulnerable. In the (very common) situation of high vulnerability, however, subordination of the armed forces is prerequisite for the consolidation of political authority. Before leaders can turn to the multiple tasks of governance including extraction, institutional development, and pursuit of economic growth, they must implement strategies to protect themselves from their own militaries. If protective strategies lead to international outcomes, then states may be predisposed to certain patterns of international behavior by the imperatives of civil-military relations.

Civil-Military Relations and International Conflict

In addition, the question of whether international conflict might follow from leadership efforts to protect themselves from their own armed forces is important because for the most part it has been overlooked by the literatures on civil-military relations and security studies, and because those studies that do address or partially address the question tend to do so in unsatisfying ways. Of all domestic political processes that might be expected to entail international consequences, subordination of the armed forces may constitute a most likely candidate because of the military's external orientation as well as the importance that many vulnerable leaders attach to minimizing the risk of a coup. However, even though scholars have studied the international consequences of numerous other domestic processes (Stohl, 1980,

pp. 300–301), the literature on civil-military relations has paid almost no systematic attention to possible external implications of subordination of the armed forces.

The silence in the civil-military relations literature may, in part, reflect the fact that only a small minority of scholars with expertise on the armed forces are concerned with the causes of war and other central questions in international relations theory. Sociologists, comparativists, and area specialists who dominate the largest academic society in the field, the Inter-University Seminar, tend not to be trained in international relations theory and they tend to focus on organizational and domestic political issues such as the class origins of the officer corps, the determinants of unit cohesion, the relationship between civil-military relations and democratization, and the extent to which service in the armed forces undermines ethnic affiliations (Johnson, 1962; Janowitz, 1964; Bienen, 1983). Leading journals in the field, such as *Armed Forces and Society*, also tend not to include articles about the causes of war. As Kasza notes in a review of the literature, “comparativists rarely analyze the politics of the military in the context of its war-making mission or when the country under study is at war” (1996, pp. 355–356).

A few scholars do use civil-military relations as an independent or mediating variable to explain international outcomes. Some, such as Levy and Vakili (1992), are case-specific studies that do not develop generalizable theories. Others including Biddle and Zirkle (1993) explain outcomes such as military effectiveness that are not the focus of this study. Still others focus on causal processes that have little if anything to do with the subordination of the armed forces and the minimization of coup risk (Kier, 1999; Sagan, 1986; Van Evera, 1984; Van Evera, 1999; Posen, 1984; Snyder, 1984; Schumpeter, 1951). Van Evera, for example, argues that militaries cause war as an unintended side effect of efforts to protect their own organizational interests when they purvey myths that exaggerate the necessity and utility of force (1984, 1999). Posen argues that the degree of international threat influences whether or not civilians allow military preferences for offensive doctrines to prevail (1984). And Snyder (1984) traces the origins of military doctrine to a combination of rational decisions about the military balance, technology, and geography; motivated biases that reflect the military’s organizational interests as well as psychological limitations concerning the inability to manage value trade-offs; and military planners’ need for simplification.

Although this literature sheds light on important issues such as the origins of war, some scholars in this subfield tend to base their accounts on great powers, for whom the risk of coups d’état usually is low. For example, Snyder (1984) and Posen (1984) focus almost exclusively on the origins of strategic doctrine among European great powers. As a result, their analyses tend to ignore the risk of military conspiracies. Related to this point, some of the most important scholarship in this subfield tends to black-box important questions about domestic political process. Van Evera, for example, tends to emphasize the distribution of power at the expense of domestic political process (1999, pp. 7–11). Moreover, Snyder is quite explicit about his decision not to theorize interactions among political leaders and the armed forces (1984, p. 39). This is not to say that scholars in this subgenre have

ignored domestic politics. Quite to the contrary, they have theorized important individual, organizational, and domestic variables such as motivated bias, organizational culture, and institutional interests (Snyder, 1984; Kier, 1999; Posen, 1984). That said, scholars in this subfield have not theorized relationships among leaders who fear coups and military organizations that threaten them. For example, when Posen’s civilians intervene into the planning and execution of strategic doctrine, usually they are responding to foreign policy failures, ambitions, or other external considerations (1984, pp. 225–226). While these important studies do answer essential questions concerning civil-military relations and the causes of war, they do not address international implications of the causal process that is central to this inquiry.

A few studies invert the question that I ask in the study by exploring whether international threats or participation in war might enhance leadership efforts to minimize the likelihood of a coup (Frazer, 1994; Andreski, 1968; Desch, 1996a; 1996b; 1999; Janowitz 1964). Frazer, for example, shows that involvement in anticolonial war may lower the risk of conspiracy in newly independent states by familiarizing political leaders with the management of the military (1994). Also, Desch (1999) shows that high levels of international threats help political leaders maintain stable civil-military relations and consolidate civilian control of the armed forces. International threats, as Desch shows, orient the military’s attention externally and lead to a consolidation of civilian institutions that leaders can use to monitor the armed forces. Certainly it is important to know whether and how international conflict might influence civil-military relations, but until scholars determine if causal arrows flow in the opposite direction, knowledge of the relationship between civil-military relations and international conflict will remain one-sided and incomplete.

Finally, the two studies in the civil-military relations literature that do account for the causes of international conflict in terms of the military’s potential threat to regime stability are premised on flawed assumptions. Dassel and Reinhardt argue that domestic instability is most likely to lead to international conflict when the military’s interests are challenged (1999). However, their theoretical mechanism depends heavily on the assumption that domestic instability leads to coups (1999, p. 59). As the analyses in chapter 4 indicate, however, popular protest has, at most, a modest association with coups. To the extent that coups and domestic instability are statistically related, military disloyalty probably causes instability by opening a window of opportunity for protest. In addition, Dassel and Reinhardt assume that the military is a unitary actor, and they fail to theorize or even notice the origins and international implications of military fragmentation. Dassel (1998) does theorize the international implications of military fragmentation. However, as discussed below, his theoretical mechanism depends on the assumed validity of the rally-around-the-flag hypothesis. Subordination of the armed forces is a critical matter that may constitute a most likely candidate among all those domestic political processes that might be expected to lead to international conflict. It does not seem to be an overgeneralization, however, to claim that the literature on civil-military

relations has tended not to address whether international conflict might follow from vulnerable leaders' efforts to protect themselves from their own armed forces. And those studies that do address or partially address this question tend to provide unsatisfying answers.

Regime Vulnerability and International Conflict

Even though the civil-military relations literature tends not to address whether international consequences might follow from vulnerable leaders' efforts to protect themselves from their own armed forces, there is another literature, a subfield of international relations theory, that addresses the connection between regime vulnerability and international conflict. According to the diversionary or scapegoat hypothesis, leaders wage war to increase national unity and to divert public and elite attention away from domestic problems. Domestically vulnerable leaders or elite factions may use aggressive foreign policies to distract popular attention from internal discontent, fend off domestic enemies, consolidate their own support, buttress their position at home through success abroad, and appear to be the strongest defender of the national interest through a hard-line foreign policy (Levy, 1989b). According to one of many examples, Huth and Russett argue that when there is "dispute among high-level government elites . . . political leadership is more likely to adopt an aggressive foreign policy in the expectation that rally-round-the-flag effects will help to stymie elites who may have been considering a coup" (1993, p. 66).

Most scholarship on regime vulnerability and international conflict fails to notice the armed forces as a potential challenge to the regime. Two reviews of the literature on regime vulnerability and international conflict survey over 100 studies, but they mention the military as a source of regime vulnerability only once (Levy, 1989b, p. 264; Stohl, 1980).² Indeed, even the literature on regime vulnerability and the origins of war in the developing world, where coups are most frequent, tends to remain curiously silent on the military (Holsti, 1993; Azar & Moon, 1988; Midlarsky, 1992; Buzan, 1983; Job, 1992; Ayoob, 1991). According to these studies, competing ethnic and religious groups contest the central authority of regimes that rest on narrow social bases, and the administrative capacities of state agencies fail to keep pace with the demands of growing populations. As a result, war in the underdeveloped world occurs when domestic violence "spills over" into interstate conflict, as was arguably the case in the India-Pakistan war of 1970 (Holsti, 1993). State weakness, then, is identified as a cause of war. But its operationalization almost never includes vulnerability to the armed forces, depending instead on limited coercive capacity, scarcity of resources, institutional and administrative incompetence, and lack of national cohesion (Job, 1992, p. 22).

Perhaps more troublesome than its near-universal silence on the military as a source of regime insecurity, however, most scholarship on regime vulnerability and international conflict depends on the questionable assumption that leaders

seek to use external aggression to unify domestic challengers. According to Bodin, "the best way of preserving a state, and guaranteeing it against sedition, rebellion and civil war is to . . . find an enemy against whom [the subjects] can make common cause" (1955, cited in Waltz, 1959, p. 81). Shakespeare advised statesmen, "Be it thy course to busy giddy minds/With foreign quarrels" (1845, cited in Levy, 1989b, p. 259). More recently, Walt has argued that revolutionary governments may "exaggerate . . . a foreign threat in order to improve [their] internal position, that is, by rallying nationalist support for the new leaders or to justify harsh measures against internal opponents" (1992, p. 343). Dassel and Reinhardt assume that militaries use external threats to protect their organizational interests because "international crises encourage a 'rally 'round the flag effect'" (1999, p. 63; Dassel, 1998, p. 121). In his explanation of brinkmanship crises, Lebow says that "domestic political instability or the fragility of the state itself was instrumental in convincing leaders to provoke a confrontation. They resorted to the time-honored technique of attempting to offset discontent at home by diplomatic success abroad" (1981, p. 66). Herbst says that war may allow "a highly extractive state . . . [to] cloak demands for greater resources in appeals for national unity" and that "the presence of a palpable external threat may be the strongest way to generate a common association between the state and the population" (1990, pp. 121, 122). And Desch argues that "an external threat will actually produce better civil-military relations . . . [and] will tend to unify the various potential and actual factions in a military, but orient them outward" (1996b, pp. 6, 8).

The ingroup-outgroup hypothesis is the notion that external conflict generates internal group cohesion, and it is consistent with several distinct sociological and psychological mechanisms (Brown, 1988). For example, Simmel's conflict-cohesion hypothesis maintains that conflict with another group increases internal group cohesion if the group already perceives itself as a preexisting entity, if the outside threat is recognized as a menace to the entire group, and if group members believe that coordinated action can overcome the threat. A corollary of this hypothesis is that "groups may actually search for enemies with the deliberate purpose or the unwitting result of maintaining unity and internal cohesion" (Coser, 1956, p. 104, cited in Levy, 1989b, p. 261). To take another example, social identity theory claims that "people seek a positive self-identity that they gain by identifying with a group and by favorable comparison of the in-group with out-groups" (Mercer 1995, p. 241). Regardless of which mechanism is invoked to sustain the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis, external conflict is said to divert group members' attention from internal dissent and to promote unity or ingroup favoritism.

The ingroup-outgroup hypothesis does much of the explanatory work in theories of regime vulnerability and international conflict, and it is an important driving force in each of the studies that I described. That said, and despite the robustness of the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis in laboratory settings as well as the many historical studies that explain leaders' willingness to use force in terms of efforts to divert the public's attention from domestic problems and bolster their own domestic standing, quantitative studies have found quite limited empirical

support for this proposition (Baker & Oneal, 2001; Levy, 1989b; Stohl, 1980; Wilkenfeld, 1973; Tanter, 1966). Hence, scholars have begun to debate conditions under which leaders might use aggressive foreign policies to promote domestic rallies and to consider mediating factors such as regime type, interaction opportunities, and the nature of domestic strife that might help explain when leaders use aggressive foreign policies to promote domestic popularity and when the use of force leads to a rally effect (DeRouen Jr., 2000; Leeds & Davis, 1999; Miller, 1999; Gelpi, 1997; Smith, 1996; Dassel & Reinhardt, 1999).

One realm in which the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis seems particularly ill-suited for sustaining the link between regime vulnerability and international outcomes is when regime insecurity stems from the threat of military conspiracy. As Bueno de Mesquita notes, external conflict does not always lead to domestic cohesion (1980). Stein reports that "once a war has begun . . . the process of waging it *always* decreases cohesion" (1978, p. 88, emphasis added). The argument does not necessarily invalidate the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis because many wars may fail to satisfy preconditions that are necessary for enhancing internal cohesion: the group must already perceive itself as a preexisting entity; the external threat must be recognized as a menace to the entire group; and group members must believe that coordinated action can overcome the threat. Still, if a sizable percentage of international conflicts undermine domestic cohesion because they do not satisfy the antecedent conditions of the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis, then surely the literature on regime vulnerability errs by placing so much explanatory load on the hypothesis.

In addition, even if it were true that external conflict promoted ingroup cohesion within the armed forces, leaders would not try to protect themselves from the risk of coups d'état by unifying the military. Cohesion is not equivalent to loyalty, and even if the armed forces were internally cohesive, officers would not necessarily show allegiance to the regime or to the leadership. Positive feelings about the group, in other words, should not be confused with positive feelings about the group leader. There are many instances in which the armed forces have unified around their common dislike of political authorities, and unified militaries pose a considerable threat to leaders when the risk of coup is high. When the risk of coup is high, I argue in chapter 2 leaders almost always divide the military and pit rival branches against one another to protect themselves from their own armed forces (Migdal, 1988). Yasir Arafat, for example, split the Palestinian security forces into nine organizations soon after achieving limited autonomy from Israel. As discussed in chapter 4, coup risk is the most powerful determinant of leadership efforts to divide the military. When regimes are vulnerable to the risk of coups, leaders do not seek to unify their armed forces because unified militaries are dangerous.

Of course, some theories that link regime vulnerability to international conflict do not depend on the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis. According to Rosecrance, for example, "there tends to be a correlation between international instability and the domestic insecurity of elites" (1963, pp. 304, 306). Rosecrance's elites do not challenge international harmony to distract popular attention or overcome inner

antagonisms but rather to reshape other states' ideologies and political structures according to their own preferences. Similarly, Brody shows that the public rallies in support of the president not because foreign policy adventurism increases domestic cohesion but because opinion leaders sometimes refrain from criticizing the chief executive after limited uses of military force (1991). Still, these theories are exceptions. Most of the scholarship on regime vulnerability and international conflict ignores the military, and most depends at least partially on the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis as an important driving force for linking domestic causes to international outcomes. The ingroup-outgroup hypothesis, however, is ill-suited for sustaining the link. International conflict seems as likely to lead to dissent as cohesion. And even if external conflict were a cause of internal cohesion, leaders who feared their own armed forces would not try to unify the military. In order to determine if and how leadership efforts to protect themselves from their own militaries might lead to international conflict, a different causal mechanism must be identified.

Plan of the Book

In this text, I explore whether or not strategies that leaders use to protect themselves from their own armed forces might provide an incentive for them to engage in international conflict. The purposes of this effort are to develop a generalizable mechanism of domestic politics, to link that mechanism to international outcomes, to correct for the failure of the literature to trace the international implications of regimes' vulnerability to their own armed forces, and to correct for the literature's overreliance on the ingroup-outgroup hypothesis. The emphasis of this study is theory development, and my intent is to use data to test my theory rather than using theory to describe my data. While some philosophers of science argue convincingly that pure deduction is not possible, I try to approximate the deductive (theory-driven) approach as much as possible. Hence, I developed my theory first and then used statistical and historical evidence to test it. Certainly it is true that theory-driven research entails enormous intellectual costs, including the possibility that scholars might see what they expect to see when they approach their data with strong theoretical preconceptions. In other words, scholars might impose a story or explanation on their evidence rather than letting data and theory inform each other in a sort of dialectical conversation. Despite this risk, which I attempt to minimize by discussing confidence estimates of theoretical claims in the final chapter, theory-driven approaches offer the tremendous advantage of forcing scholars to ask nonobvious questions about their evidence that are derived from theory and that might not be posed by journalists, area specialists, or others who may sometimes be more concerned with data than theory. Rather than dismissing the critical value of data-driven scholarship or mixed approaches that blend deductive and inductive methods, I contend that all approaches can yield useful scholarship, that this study is as theory driven as possible, and that the disadvantages that result from my approach can be minimized by acknowledging them candidly and by

reporting confidence estimates of the extent to which my evidence establishes the plausibility of my theoretical claims.

In the next two chapters I develop a domestic theory of civil-military relations and then link that domestic mechanism to international conflict. Chapter 2 consists of a theoretical story pitched entirely at the domestic level. The independent variable in chapter 2 is coup risk, and the dependent variable is counterbalancing. The argument is that high coup risk usually is sufficient for causing leaders to divide their armed forces into rival factions because coup risk is too important a problem to ignore, because other strategies for reducing the risk of a coup rest on fickle foundations, and because counterbalancing is the only strategy that pits force against force. The particular combination of coup-proofing strategies that any particular leader selects is indeterminate, but I expect almost all vulnerable leaders to include counterbalancing in the portfolio of strategies they pursue to protect themselves from their own militaries when coups are possible.

In chapter 3, I turn to the relationship between domestic and international politics, and I argue that counterbalancing at the domestic level can provide an incentive for leaders to engage in international conflict. Counterbalancing is not effective if rival organizations conspire with each other, and international conflict sometimes is the best available strategy for promoting mistrust within the military. International conflict can create interservice rivalries when service branches offer divergent threat assessments, use combat success to justify claims for autonomy, advocate self-serving missions, and take credit for success or avoid blame for failure.

In chapters 4, 5 and 6 I turn from theory to data. Chapter 4 is a pooled, time-series analysis of almost every country in the world during the second half of the Cold War (1966–1986). Along with coauthor Evan Schofer, I find that the possibility of a coup d'état is strongly and positively related to counterbalancing regardless of the specification of the variables. Vulnerable leaders are much more likely to counterbalance than leaders who are not vulnerable to their own forces, and coup risk is a more powerful predictor of counterbalancing than other important determinants such as domestic violence. In addition, we find through an event history analysis that counterbalancing is strongly and positively related to international conflict behavior. Even though our two measures of international conflict overlap only partially, counterbalancing is associated positively with both conflict measures. Statistical analysis does not, of course, constitute proof positive of the theoretical claims advanced in chapters 2 and 3 but these tests provide some confirmation of the plausibility of the theoretical claims.

Chapters 5 and 6 are case studies that focus on the distinct theoretical claims developed in chapters 2 and 3. The case study of Syrian civil-military relations in the early 1970s (chapter 5) is intended to test the first claim, that coup risk usually is sufficient for causing regimes to divide their militaries into rival forces. Syria is a hard test for my theory, and the evidence shows that the possibility of a coup was an important driving factor behind the creation of rival armies. When Hafiz al-Asad became president in February 1971, Syria's ground forces included

a single army and a few lightly equipped militias. By 1976, Syrian ground forces consisted of six fully equipped armies. Alternative explanations of the creation of rival armies in Syria yield expectations that are not confirmed, while counterbalancing theory developed in chapter 2 of this study yields accurate predictions. Although I use the case primarily as a laboratory for testing my first theoretical claim, I also suggest that military counterbalancing provided Asad with an incentive for participating in the 1973 war.

The case study of Georgian civil-military relations in the mid 1990s (chapter 6) is intended to test the second claim, that counterbalancing can provide an incentive for international conflict. My argument is that President Eduard Shevardnadze built the Georgian Army not in response to foreign threats, but rather to balance other "power" ministries. Then Shevardnadze inflamed Georgian-Russian relations to drive a wedge between the Army, which maintained close ties to the Russian armed forces, and the Border Guard which was oriented toward Europe and the United States. Although there were several determinants of Georgian-Russian hostilities, my argument is that one important consideration was Shevardnadze's use of diversionary tactics to promote antagonisms among his own forces.

I begin the study in the next chapter by developing a theory of civil-military relations.