CONQUERING MYTHS

Testing Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist Arguments about State Vulnerability to Conquest

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International relations theorists of all stripes assume that state death is rare.[1] Ethan Kapstein, for example, claims that "relatively few states go out of business" (1995, 771), while Arnold Wolfers asserts that "survival has only exceptionally been at stake, particularly for the major Powers" (1952, 488), and Alexander Wendt says that "The death rate of states is almost nil" (1999, 279). Even Kenneth Waltz, whose structural-realist theory of international politics suggests that the absence of an international sovereign makes state survival difficult, especially for weak states, concurs. According to him, "The death rate among states … is remarkably low" (1979, 137-8).

Given the ubiquity of the assumption that states rarely die, it is not surprising that critics of structural-realist theory have argued that the "fact" of low state death rates means that "it is wrong to argue … that the international system generates pressure on states in the same way that markets generate pressure on firms" (Kapstein, 1995, 771), that "the selection process could exercise only a very weak constraint on [state] decisions" (McKeown 1986, 53), and that since "weak states [are] not getting killed off left and right," the "kill or be killed logic of the Hobbesian state of nature has been replaced by the live and let live logic of the Lockean anarchical society" (Wendt 1995, 78; Wendt 1999, p. 279). What is surprising, however, is the lack of effort scholars have made to examine the empirical accuracy of this assumption.

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Yet only when this is done will scholars be able to test the effects of anarchy, polarity, norms, and other variables on state vulnerability to death.

In this paper, I begin the process of determining and explaining state death rates. Specifically, I present new data on conquest, union, disintegration, and collapse in Europe and the Middle East from 1800-1994 and test the ability of realist, liberal, and constructivist theories to explain historical trends in conquest rates. In doing so, I dispel two myths. First, contrary to the conventional wisdom, historical state death rates have been quite high. Second, contrary to liberal and constructivist claims, relative capabilities, polarity, great power decline, the offense-defense-deterrence balance, and prevailing economic technologies are better predictors of conquest than democratic, juridical, statist, or collective norms.

STATE DEATH DEFINED

According to Max Weber, a state is "a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (1958, 78). Thus a state exists and survives when a particular community, defined in terms of its political structure or hierarchy, monopolizes force over some territory. It dies when that community is no longer able to do so, either because its political structure collapses without being replaced by a new one or because external or internal rivals render that structure powerless by developing or otherwise acquiring a monopoly of force over all of the state's territory.[2] Thus states may die in five ways: through conquest, union, revolution, disintegration, or collapse.

[2]When a state loses its monopoly of force over part of its territory it is dismembered, not dead.

A state is conquered when it involuntarily loses its monopoly of force over all of its territory to an external rival or rivals. This may occur either directly, through the complete collapse or surrender of a state's military forces, or indirectly, through the surrender of political leaders in response to military threats or operations. A state dies by union when it freely cedes its monopoly of force over territory to a pre-existing state or to form a new state. A state dies by revolution when it loses its monopoly of legitimate force to an internal rival that forges a new state within the preexisting territory. It dies by disintegration when it loses its monopoly of force to internal rivals who carve the territory into two or more new states. Finally, a state dies by collapse when it loses its monopoly of legitimate force within the territory, and no other state arises or is imposed in the region.

In this paper, I focus on the historical incidence of conquest, union, disintegration, and collapse.[3] Unlike revolution, these means of death alter the number of states in the international system. That is, they affect death rates both directly (through the death of a particular state) and indirectly (by decreasing the number of states remaining in the system and thus the number of subsequent deaths necessary to affect death rates by a given percentage). Thus determining the incidence of conquest, union, disintegration, and collapse lays the foundation for all subsequent work on state vulnerability to death.

[3]On the historical incidence of revolution, see Adams (2000).

DATA ON STATE DEATH

To examine the empirical accuracy of the assumption that state death is rare, I developed the State Survival and Death (SSAD) data set of conquest, union, disintegration, and collapse among all of the states that existed in Europe and the Middle East from 1816-1994. The unit of analysis in the data is the state year. In other words, each year from 1816-1994 that a state was alive is a single case. There are 8,539 cases in the data. The states included in the SSAD data and the dates and descriptions of their births and deaths are listed in Table 1.

In developing the data, I relied heavily on the Polity 3d data set, which codes the institutional attributes of polities worldwide from 1800 to 1994.[4] A polity is "the basic political arrangements by which national political communities govern their affairs. These systems are described in terms of their authority pattern." When a community's authority pattern changes in significant ways, "the change is treated as signifying the end of one polity and the beginning of another" (Gurr and Gurr 1978, 129).

Over time, the Polity project's definition of change has evolved, as have the institutional characteristics under consideration (McLaughlin *et al.*, 1998, 233-237). In Polity 3d, polities are coded along five dimensions of authority: the regulation and competitiveness of political participation, the openness and competitiveness of executive recruitment, and constraints on the

[4]Since 1974, when Ted Robert Gurr and Erika Gurr compiled Polity I, the Polity project has produced several data sets. Of these, Polity 3d is the most precisely dated. For information on the Polity data sets, as well as the data itself, see the Polity Data Archive at http://k-gleditsch.socsci.gla.ac.uk/Polity.html. For a description of Polity 3d, see McLauglin, *et al.* (1998).

chief executive (Jaggers and Gurr 1995, 472). Scores on each dimension are then summed, resulting in a democracy index, an autocracy index, and a democracy-autocracy index. These indices provide information on major changes in authority patterns (which include revolutions, disintegrations, and collapses), as well as interruptions and interregnums (which include conquests and unions).

Because my dependent variables are state survival and death, not polity change, the first step in developing the SSAD data was to determine which of the polities identified in Polity 3d were states. Scholars usually do so by determining whether a given polity is regarded as a "system member" by the Correlates of War (COW) project.[5] To be considered a system member, entities must have a population of at least 500,000 and "exercise a fair degree of sovereignty and independence" – indicated from 1816 to 1920 by diplomatic recognition by Britain and France, and after 1920 by membership in the League of Nations or United Nations, or by diplomatic recognition by two major powers (Singer and Small 1972, 20-21).

Since the independent existence of a state -- its ability to monopolize force over territory, not its diplomatic recognition by other states -- is what concerns me here, I did not use COW system membership as an indicator of statehood. Instead, I used historical sources to determine whether each polity included in the Polity data set in 1800 was empirically sovereign -- as indicated by having military control of at least some territory and the final word on foreign and domestic policy in the land. Given the time-consuming nature of this enterprise, I limited the geographic scope of my inquiry to Europe and the Middle East.

[5]COW Interstate System data set (states.CSV), available at http://pss.la.psu.edu/intsys.html.

The second step in developing the SSAD data was to identify states missing from Polity 3d. According to Ted Gurr and his associates, the Polity data contains polities in "all independent members of the international system with populations of greater than 500,000 in the early 1990s" (Jaggers and Gurr 1996, 6), as well as the "polities of 20 historical Eurasian countries … like the Ottoman Empire, Bavaria, and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which once enjoyed independence but subsequently broke up or were absorbed by others" (Gurr 1990, 2). But there are a number of states with populations below the 500,000 threshhold, and far more than 20 states have lost their independence worldwide in the last two hundred years.

To identify states missing from the Polity data, I examined William Langer's *Encyclopedia of World History* (1980), *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2002), James L. Erwin's *Footnotes to History* (2002),[6] and a proprietary data set compiled by Clockwork Software, Inc., publisher of the *Centennia* historical atlas software.[7] In doing so, I found more than 75 states missing from the Polity data on Europe and the Middle East alone. Without these missing states, the SSAD data set would contain just 5,343 state-year cases. Thus the Polity data contains just 63% of the European and Middle Eastern states that existed from 1816-1994. COW data also contains just 63% of the empirically-sovereign states in the region (5,354 cases). Since most of the missing states were small, weak, or non-European states that died by conquest or union, my SSAD data set, though limited to Europe and the Middle East, is a

[6]*Footnotes to History* describes and provides bibliographic information on more than 100 "ephemeral states, micronations, secessionist states, and every other kind of country you never heard of in high school." The data are available at http://www.buckyogi.addr.com/footnotes/.

[7]For information on the Clockwork database, see Adams (2000, Appendix C).

marked improvement on the Polity and COW data.[8]

HISTORICAL TRENDS IN CONQUEST, UNION, DISINTEGRATION, AND COLLAPSE

From 1816 to 1994, there were 129 deaths among 197 European and Middle Eastern states. That is, more than 65% of the states that existed in this region in the last two centuries died by conquest, union, disintegration, or collapse. Thus it is simply not the case that "relatively few states go out of business" (Kapstein 1995, 771), that "survival has only exceptionally been at stake" (Wolfers 1952, 488), that "The death rate of states is almost nil" (Wendt 1999, 279), or even that "The death rate among states … is remarkably low" (Waltz 1979, 137-8). Historically, state survival has been far from assured. Moreover, since among the 129 European and Middle Eastern deaths were 75 conquests, 50 unions, two disintegrations, and two collapses, it is clear that states have not died primarily of their own volition. Fully 38% of historical states died by conquest.

Since the number of European and Middle Eastern states alive in a given year ranged widely -- from a low of 23 in 1942 to a high of 73 in 1825 -- and since the number of deaths was variable as well -- ranging from a low of zero conquests in 140 years to a high of 9 in 1940 and from a low of zero unions in 161 years to a high of 19 in 1867 -- historical trends in state vulnerability to death are best indicated by death rates. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, conquest rates ranged from 0% in 140 years to 26% in 1940, and union rates ranged from 0%

[8]For analysis of the states missing from and the non-state entities included in the Polity and COW data sets and their implications for international-relations and comparative politics research, see Adams (2002b).

in 161 years to a high of 35% in 1867.

EXPLAINING STATE VULNERABILITY TO CONQUEST

Since the marked clustering of conquests and unions suggests that contextual factors may affect state vulnerability to death, in the remainder of this paper, I elaborate and test realist, liberal, and constructivist claims about the contextual variables that affect state vulnerability to conquest. I focus on conquest because it has occured more often than any other type of death and has been most extensively discussed by international-relations theorists.

Classical Realism

Classical realism, which posits that war springs from an unchanging and violent human nature that makes war a constant feature of international life (Morgenthau 1973), yields the following hypothesis about the historical incidence of conquest:

H1: The incidence of conquest should not vary systematically from 1816-1994.

Structural Realism

Structural realism, which suggests that international anarchy makes states vulnerable to conquest, might also be interpreted as yielding H1. In fact, however, structural-realist theory makes more nuanced predictions about state vulnerability to conquest -- predictions that hinge on relative capabilities, polarity, great power decline, the offense-defense deterrence balance, and prevailing economic technologies.

Anarchy and Relative Capabilities

The anarchic structure of the international-political system has four primary effects: states are in competition with one another; war is always possible; balances of power recurrently form; and states must help themselves if they are to survive. These effects of anarchy combine to mean that states are always vulnerable to conquest. Thus, just as structural-realist theory explains that "wars occur because there is nothing to prevent them" (Waltz 1959, 232) it explains that states are conquered because there is no international sovereign to keep other states from attacking and occupying them. International anarchy is the ultimate cause of conquest.

Anarchy inhibits the survival of all states, but structural-realist theory suggests that some states will be more vulnerable to conquest than others. Since whether states "live, prosper or die depends on their own efforts" (Waltz 1979, 91) the states most likely to die are those that lack the capabilities or the inclination to advance their own survival. Conversely, the states most likely to survive are those that have the capabilities and the will to do so.[9] Even able and willing states may die, however, due to the security dilemma -- the possibility that efforts taken to secure a state may backfire by making other states less secure. But capable states should die less often than incapable ones. Thus the first structural-realist hypothesis about conquest is that:

> *H2: More capable states should be less vulnerable to conquest than less capable states.*

[9]Waltz acknowledges that state survival is more than a matter of capabilities. It is also a matter of preferences. "One may behave as one likes to … [but] those who conform to accepted and successful practices more often rise to the top and are likelier to stay there" (1979, 92).

Polarity

For structural realists, anarchy is the ultimate cause of state death because it makes state survival tenuous and gives rise to the importance of relative capabilities. But other contextual conditions -- especially polarity, great power decline, prevailing military and economic technologies -- may heighten or lessen state vulnerability in particular eras.

Polarity refers to the distribution of capabilities in the international-political system, specifically "the number of principal parties that constitute the system" (Waltz 1979, 162). Multipolar, bipolar, and unipolar systems constrain powerful states to help themselves in different ways and with different implications for alliances (Waltz 1979, 168). In a multipolar world, powerful states are vulnerable to the possibility of alliances against them. Thus they strive not only to enhance their political, military, and economic capabilities but also to combine their capabilities with those of other states; in other words, both internal and external balancing efforts are needed. In a bipolar system, by contrast, alliances are of little strategic consequence to the two primary states. In fact, focusing on alliances may diminish a great power's ability to balance the power of its rival. In such systems, internal efforts are paramount because the capabilities of the two rivals are vastly greater than those of other states in the system. Self-help is even more important to the primary state in a unipolar system, which needs alliances even less than great powers in a bipolar system and whose alliances are likely to call into being the very balancing coalition most detrimental to that state. Because it is so much more powerful than other states, the primary state in a unipolar system may nevertheless spearhead or otherwise underwrite alliances. Such a state is so little constrained

by anarchy and the distribution of power that it can do what it likes.[10] But it will prosper longest and hold off balancing efforts against it most effectively if it does not engage in external balancing.

If structural-realist theory is right, polarity should mediate between anarchy and the vulnerability of states in two ways. First, polarity should affect what it takes for a great power to balance the power of other great powers and thus avoid death. Second, polarity should affect the willingness of great powers to assist other states. Since in this paper I am concerned the historical incidence of conquest in the aggregate, I focus on the latter effect.

The logic here is simple. Great powers are most likely to assist one another and less powerful states in multipolar eras because alliances may enhance their internal and external balancing capabilities, and the way to attract allies is to offer assistance. In bipolar systems, by contrast, great powers are very unlikely to assist one another. Moreover, because alliances with less-powerful states are of so little consequence to the central balance, great powers in a bipolar world are likely to see such alliances as superfluous. The great powers in a bipolar system may nevertheless assist less powerful states, especially if they believe this will promote their balancing efforts, but such assistance is likely to be more limited, conditional, and vulnerable to termination than in a multipolar system. States other than the most powerful states may, of course, extend aid. But systems in which the great powers do not do so should

[10]States may always do as they like. As Waltz explains, "Structurally we can describe and understand the pressures states are subject to. We cannot predict how they will react to the pressures without knowledge of their internal dispositions" (1979, 71). But the primary state in a unipolar system is able to follow its whims with few immediate consequences and is thus more likely than other states to do so. Ultimately, though, such behavior and the unbalanced capabilities that make it possible will call forth balancing efforts and a new bipolar or multipolar distribution of power.

have much lowers overall levels of international assistance than those in which they do. Thus states should be more vulnerable to death in bipolar eras than in multipolar ones.

State vulnerability to death should be even greater in a unipolar system. In such a system, no state is capable of assisting the primary state to survive. Furthermore, less powerful states are unlikely to receive substantial or sustained assistance from the leading state, both because that state gains little from such assistance and because the demands upon it are so great that whatever assistance it offers is spread more thinly.

Since the international-political system was multipolar until the end of World War II, bipolar until the demise of the Soviet Union in 1989, and is presently unipolar, the structural-realist conception of polarity yields the following hypothesis about state vulnerability to conquest:

> *H3: Conquest rates should be high in the unipolar era (1990-1994), moderate in the bipolar era (1945-1989), and low in the multipolar era (1816-1944).*

Great Power Decline

The decline of great powers should also affect state vulnerability to conquest, for three reasons. First, declining great powers should be more concerned with their own survival than that of their allies. Second, declining great powers should eschew the system- or region-wide maintenance tasks they previously performed (Waltz 1979, ch. 9), making not only their formal allies but also other states vulnerable to instability and uncertainty. Third, since the decline of one great power may reduce competitive pressures on others, states should receive less international assistance and thus be more vulnerable to conquest when one or more great

powers is in decline than when the balance of power is more stable. Thus structural-realist theory also suggests that:

> *H4: Conquest rates should be high when two or more great powers are in decline, moderate when one great power is in decline, and low when no great powers are in decline, as follows:*[11]
>
> *1816-1817 = moderate (Allied conquest of France, 1815)*
> *1818-1870= low*
> *1871-1873 = moderate (German conquest of France, 1871)*
> *1874-1917 = low*
> *1918 = moderate (Allied conquest of Austria-Hungary, 1918)*
> *1919-1920 = high (Allied conquest of Austria-Hungary, 1918; Allied conquest of Germany, 1919)*
> *1921 = moderate (Allied conquest of Germany, 1919)*
> *1922-1939 = low*
> *1940-1944 = moderate (German conquest of France 1940; German and Allied conquest of Italy 1943)*
> *1945-1947= high (German and Allied conquest of Italy 1943; Allied conquest of Germany, 1945; British decline, 1945)*
> *1948-1988 = low*
> *1989-1991 = moderate (Soviet decline, 1989)*
> *1992-1994 = low*

[11]This periodization is based on the great powers identified in Table 2.

Prevailing Military Technologies

Structural-realist theory explains international outcomes with reference to the structure of the international-political system. This structure consists of anarchy and polarity (1979, ch.5) -- not economic interdependence, international norms, or prevailing technologies (Waltz 1986; Waltz 1995, 113). But in applying structural-realist theory, it is consistent with the theory's concern with state capabilities to consider prevailing technologies, which affect the specific military, economic and political capabilities states need to survive in particular eras.[12] Specifically, states should be more vulnerable to conquest when state-of-the-art military technologies make offensive operations more effective than defensive or deterrent ones and when state-of-the-art economic technologies provide incentives for states to conquer others to achieve economies of scale.

Elsewhere (Adams 2002a), I have explained that the theory behind arguments about the offense-defense-deterrence balance is structural-realist theory, which explains that war is likely when the offense is dominant because offensive operations are easy and there is no international sovereign to rule them out.[13] I have also elaborated an argument about the technological sources of the offense-defense-deterrence balance and tested its ability to explain historical trends in great power conquest and war participation. To summarize, my argument is that the deterrent, defensive, and offensive capabilities states need to survive internationally

[12]Doing so is also a response to Wendt's challenge to "return to realism's materialist roots by showing that the background understandings that give capabilities meaning are caused by still deeper material conditions" (1995, 79).

[13]Theories are comprised of descriptive statements ("conquest is easy") and theoretical notions (international anarchy) (Waltz 1979, 5).

vary with technological changes affecting the lethality, protection, and mobility of military operations. In offense-dominant eras, states that wish to avoid conquest must have the capability and will to move first. In defense- and deterrence-dominant eras, by contrast, states need different capabilities and can take a less aggressive approach. Since there is no international sovereign to regulate their behavior, states will not necessarily act in accordance with the opportunities and constraints posed by the offense-defense-deterrence balance. Some may eschew offensive operations even in offense-dominant eras, while others pursue offensive operations in defense- or deterrence-dominant ones. Yet since states seek, at least, to survive, "[f]ear of unwanted consequences" (Waltz 1979, 92 and 118) should stimulate them to act in accordance with the offense-defense-deterrence balance, making conquest most prevalent in offense-dominant eras.

Offense-defense scholars generally agree that technology favored offense in the Napoleonic era, defense in World War I, offense in World War II, and defense after the advent of nuclear weapons. There is less agreement, however, about when offense or defense dominance took hold.[14] Yet in elaborating and testing offense-defense-deterrence arguments, determining when these changes occurred is vital and, to avoid tautology, must be done with great care. I have done so by identifying technologies that affected force lethality, protection, and mobility and, thus, the relative efficacy of offensive, defensive, and deterrent operations from 1800 to the present. I define offensive, defensive, and deterrent operations as follows:

[14]For example, Quester argues that offense dominance prevailed from 1789-1849, when railroads and breech-loading rifles made defense dominant (1977, chs. 7 and 8). Van Evera, by contrast, dates the switch at 1816, due to demobilization and "defense-enhancing diplomacy" after the Napoleonic Wars (1998, 17 and 27). For summaries and criticisms of the offense-defense literature, see Levy (1984) and Lynn-Jones (1995).

- *Offensive operations* are actions in which a state uses force to attack another state's military and/or non-military assets to conquer its territory or compel compliance with policy directives (impose its will on the other state),[15]

- *Defensive operations* are actions in which a state uses force to attack another state's military assets to repel and limit damage from that state's attacks to retain control of its territory and avoid having the other state impose its will upon it.

- *Deterrent operations* are actions in which a state prepares to use force and/or demonstrates its ability to use force to attack another state's non-military assets to deter that state from attacking it at all or to deter it from further attacks once a war has begun.[16]

In dating changes to the historical offense-defense-deterrence balance, I use the year a balance-tranforming technology was developed,[17] not the year it was first used in war or years in which states procured or deployed men and materiel in ways consistent with the technology. Thus I define the balance in terms of what was technologically possible at the operational level, not in terms of the strategic, operational, or tactical moves states made.

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[15]Military assets include a state's military forces and the agencies, industries, and infrastructure that command and support those forces. Non-military assets include citizens; cities; non-military industries, agencies, and infrastructure; cultural artifacts; and natural resources.

[16]Deterrent *operations* (preparations to retaliate and demonstrations of the ability to do so) always involve punishment; that is what distinguishes them from offensive operations to conquer or compel and defensive operations to deny victory and limit damage (Snyder 1961, 14). By contrast, deterrent *outcomes* (decisions not to attack) can occur either because one state fears another's capability to punish or because it fears the other's capability to deny victory. Demonstrations of a state's ability to punish attackers can take various forms, including weapons testing and demonstration strikes. In a demonstration strike, a state uses force against the non-military targets of a state that has already attacked it or that state's allies to remind the attacker and its allies of the state's ability to retaliate more extensively should attacks continue. Demonstration strikes in deterrent operations differ from attacks in offensive and defensive operations in that their purpose is to demonstrate the ability to retaliate -- not to limit damage, deny victory, conquer territory, or compel compliance with policy directives other than stopping attacks on a state and/or its allies.

[17]Specifically, I consider one offense-defense-deterrence era to end the year a balance-transforming technology is developed and a new era to begin the following year.

Table 3 summarizes my periodization of the offense-defense-deterrence balance from 1800 to the present. This periodization yields the following hypothesis about historical trends in conquest:

> *H5: Conquest rates should be high in the two offense-dominant eras (1800-1849, and 1934-1945), moderate in the defense-dominant era (1850-1933), and low in the deterrence-dominant era (1946 to present).*

Prevailing Economic Technologies

Although generally associated with liberal and Marxist theories of international politics, concern with prevailing economic technologies is also consistent with structural-realist theory. After all, states must have economic capabilities to provide resources to the military, to compete economically with other states, and to provide for the well-being of citizens so they do not revolt, and prevailing economic technologies should affect the character of the requisite capabilities.

Robert W. Cox has proposed a useful scheme for characterizing the dominant economic technologies of the last two hundred years. He identifies three periods: craft production until "the last decades of the nineteenth century," Fordism from the late 1800s until "the economic crises of 1973-4," and post-Fordism since 1973-4 (Cox 1996, 276-7; Cox 1989, 42-45). As summarized in Table 4, this scheme rests on the scale of production (e.g., capital intensity and size of production facilities) and the segmentation of labor markets. For Cox, the craft tradition is epitomized by "the small-scale manufacturing of Birmingham, the steel of Sheffield, and the silk of Lyons, all of which produced varieties of goods for segmented markets." By contrast, Fordism "is based on mass production, the assembly line, and the

replacement of the skilled worker under factory discipline by a large proportion of semi-skilled quickly trainable workers in Taylorized production systems." Finally, post-Fordism "meant a shift away from large plants mass-producing standardized goods, towards shorter-run production for a greater variety of more specialized markets." As a result, post-Fordism, like craft production "is built upon a segmentation of labor markets" (1996, 276-280). As Cox explains, however, this segmentation is not complete because in the post-Fordist era some industries continue to have considerable economies of scale (1989, 46).

Cox's scheme is useful because the scale of production seems likely to affect state vulnerability to conquest and union. On the one hand, if the dominant economic technology of the day is large-scale, states should come under pressure to conquer and/or unite with other states to achieve scale economies. By contrast, if the scale of production is small, conquest and union should be less prevalent.

There are two drawbacks to Cox's scheme, but both are easily rectified. The first is that the names he gives to the three dominant economic technologies are not quite apt. First, although the industrial production of the early 1800s had much in common with earlier craft production, it also differed in important ways -- especially in its use of light machinery such as the spinning jenny after 1764 and the factory system after 1781. Thus I refer to the dominant economic technology in this period as small-scale, light industry. Second, since Fordism *per se* did not emerge until 1908, when Henry Ford introduced the Model T, it is better to refer to the dominant economic technology in the second period as one of mass production. Since this period was also characterized by the prevalence of heavy industries such as coal, iron, steel, and chemicals, I refer to the dominant economic technology of the time as mass

production/heavy industry. Finally, because it is always better to refer to something in terms of what it is, rather than what it is not, I refer to the dominant economic technology in the post-Fordist era as flexible production and information/service industry (Sable 1982; Piore and Sable 1984, Borrus and Zysman 1997).

The second drawback is the scheme's loose periodization, but this too is easily addressed. Continuing with my rule of using the year in which key technologies were introduced, I date the three economic-technological environments since 1800 as follows: small-scale, light industry from 1800 to 1844; mass production and heavy industry from 1845-1969; and flexible production and information/service industry from 1970-1994. These dates reflect the patenting of the first practical sewing machine and the invention of the rotary press in 1846, and the development of the first microprocessor in 1969 (Wetterau 1990, 183 and 188-189).[18] Thus my final structural-realist hypothesis about state vulnerability to conquest is as follows:

> *H6. Conquest rates should be high in the mass production/heavy industry era (1845-1969), moderate in the flexible production/information and services era (1970-1994), and low in the small-scale production/light industry era (1800-1844).*

[18]Microprocessors made possible the "fourth-generation" computers of the 1970s, which were essential to the rise of flexible production. Floppy disks, also important in decentralizing production, were introduced in 1970. In dividing the last two hundred years into three economic-technology environments, I am not suggesting that the years encompassed by any one of them were technologically undifferentiated. A variety of economic technologies came and went in each of the economic-technology eras. For example, although the dominant economic technology from 1845-1969 was mass production, the particular mass-production capabilities states needed changed over time. These changes are discussed in Adams (2000, ch. 4).

Liberalism

Liberal and constructivist critics of structural-realist theory argue that states are far less vulnerable to conquest than structural realists suggest and that historical trends in conquest are best explained by prevailing international norms. For liberals, the relevant norms are democratic vs. authoritarian and juridical vs. empirical.

Democratic vs. Authoritarian Norms

According to Mark W. Zacher, several factors have given rise to a norm against using force to alter state boundaries (i.e., conquer other states), including "the perceived relationship between territorial aggrandizement and major international wars, the power relations between possible territorial aggressors and the major powers supporting the norm, the costs and benefits of territorial aggrandizement, and moral predispositions concerning territorial aggression" (2001, 238).

According to Zacher, the first of these factors -- fear of major war -- has been strongly affected by the introduction of nuclear weapons. Thus this factor is coterminous with the structural-realist offense-defense-deterrence balance. Zacher's second factor -- power relations among states -- is coterminous with the structural-realist notion of relative capabilities. His third factor -- the costs and benefits of territorial aggrandizement -- is affected by prevailing economic technologies. But Zacher's fourth factor -- moral predispositions concerning territorial aggression -- lies outside the structural-realist domain.

According to Zacher, the moral predispositions that encourage states to accept international norms against conquest arise from the liberal democratic ethos, which emphasizes

self-determination, self-government, and the effects of war on individual security and liberty (2001, 238-9). If this is the case, state vulnerability to conquest should be inversely proportional to the percentage of democratic states in the system. Since this percentage rose steadily in Europe and the Middle East from 1816 on, Zacher's argument yields the hypothesis that:

H7: Conquest rates should fall each year from 1816 to 1994.

Juridical vs. Empirical Norms

In earlier work with Robert H. Jackson, Zacher developed a similar argument about the liberal roots of international norms against conquest. There, however, the argument was that although "the moral idea that foreign occupation without the consent of those populations is fundamentally unacceptable" was avowed at Versailles and affirmed by the League of Nations, the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and the Stimson Doctrine, it was not until the founding of the United Nations that juridical sovereignty norms according international legitimacy and protection to all existing states, whether or not they have empirical sovereignty, took hold (Jackson and Zacher 1996, 24). After 1945, "new international norms such as anti-colonialism, ex-colonial self-determination, and racial sovereignty" meant that "weak, marginal, and insubstantial states" obtained military protection, economic assistance, and above all, international legitimacy. Thus, whereas "in the not very distant past [weak states] might have been conquered, partitioned, or in other ways eliminated by stronger internal or external powers" (Jackson 1993, 349), now they are "exempted from the power contest at least in part and treated as

international protectorates" (Jackson 1990, 23; Jackson and Rosberg 1982). This is not because individual weak states are supported by stronger allies but because weak states as a group are protected by "the new democratic post-colonial international society" (Jackson 1990, 171). The result is that states of all kinds are extremely unlike to die by conquest. Thus this argument yields the following hypothesis:

H8: Conquest rates should be high from 1800-1944 and low from 1945-1994.

Constructivism

Like liberals, constructivists doubt that material factors such as the absence of an international soveriegn, relative capabilities, polarity, great power decline, and prevailing technologies affect state vulnerability to conquest. Unlike liberals, however, constructivists focus on constitutive, not causal, norms (Wendt 1999, 77-78). Two constitutive norms relevant to conquest have been identified by constructivists: statist vs. nationalist norms and individual vs. collective norms.

Statist vs. Nationalist Norms

According to J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin (1994), prevailing international principles (which they treat as equivalent to norms) determine how the international community defines "the mutually exclusive domains" recognized as having sovereignty in different eras. There are two alternatives: "state sovereignty, which stresses the link between sovereign authority and a defined territory, and national sovereignty, which emphasizes a link between

sovereign authority and a defined population" (108).[19] Since "it is impossible to completely satisfy the statist and nationalist principles simultaneously," state sovereignty and national sovereignty are dialectically opposed to one another, and the pendulum swings back and forth from one principle to the other:

> The legitimizing principles are called into question during major systemic crises, such as world wars or widespread political upheavals, because the new dominant coalition often sees the previous emphasis on one form of sovereignty as the cause of the crisis. The coalition then creates a postwar order that reflects this belief. … [But] the new system tends to generate its own crisis, leading to a reevaluation of the normative principle (108).[20]

According to Barkin and Cronin, "These principles cannot be objectively deduced solely from the nature of states and the distribution of capabilities, but must also be induced from the process of building the coalition and the intersubjective consensus among the members of the coalition as to the cause of the war" (114). This cognitive and constitutive explanation of normative change is what makes theirs a constructivist argument.

As the principles for defining sovereign units change over time, they "affect the ways in which states are constrained and enabled to act in their international relations" (129). When national sovereignty norms are embraced, "Efforts to alter state boundaries to reflect nationalist sentiments have a certain legitimacy … [and] the international community will be

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[19]Because Barkin and Cronin do not address Jackson and Zacher's argument about empirical vs. juridical sovereignty, it is difficult to say whether their conceptions of state and national sovereignty are primarily empirical, juridical, or combinations of both. My sense is that they are both. Barkin and Cronin argue that "mutual recognition among government leaders … [is] the very foundation of the nation-state system" (110). But elsewhere they argue that both state sovereignty and national sovereignty are accorded based on empirical criteria such as, for states, "integrity of borders based on historical possession, national frontiers, and viability" and, for nations, "specifically defined populations" (112-113).

[20]Barkin and Cronin describe the relationship between state and national sovereignty as dialectical (1994, 115),

more sympathetic to pleas for national self-determination, often at the expense of established states" (129, 108). In such periods, states that do not correspond to "communities of sentiment" (111) – whether because their borders encompass more than one ethnic group or contain just a fraction of one such group or because although a homogenous community exists it is not politically empowered – should be vulnerable to conquest. But lack of national cohesion should not weaken such states directly. Instead their vulnerability should be the result of international norms, which induce other states to see them as illegitimate and makes them justifiable targets of conquest. By contrast, when the international norm of state sovereignty prevails, existing states are seen as legitimate and few states should die. States in such eras should be invulnerable to conquest because forcible change in the territorial status-quo is seen as undesirable, regardless of national or ethnic conflicts.

According to Barkin and Cronin, the national sovereignty norm has prevailed twice since 1800, first in the post-World War I era and now in the post-Cold War era. The norm of state sovereignty prevailed twice as well, first in the post-Napoleonic era then in the post-World War II era. Thus this argument yields the following hypothesis about state vulnerability to conquest:

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but there is no synthesis in the process they describe.

H9: Conquest rates should be high from 1920-1944 and 1990-1994 (post-World War I and post-Cold War nationalist norms) and low from 1815-1919 and 1945-1989 (post-Napoleonic and post-World War II statist norms).[21]

Individual vs. Collective Norms

For Alexander Wendt (1999, ch. 6), the constitutive norms relevant to international conquest pertain not to states' beliefs about sovereignty but instead to their self-identification as enemies, rivals, or friends. According to him, since at least the Peace of Westphalia, the "kill or be killed logic of the Hobbesian state of nature has been replaced by the live and let live logic of the Lockean anarchical society" (279). Moreover, since 1945 European Union and NATO members have established friendships that transcend rivalry. They "identify with each other, seeing each other's security not just as instrumentally related to their own, but as literally their own (242, 301-2, 305). Thus Wendt's argument yields the following hypotheses, only the latter of which I will be able to test with my SSAD data:

H10: Conquest rates should be higher before 1640 than after 1640.

H11: European Union and NATO members should be less vulnerable to conquest than other states.

[21]Barkin and Cronin do not date their nationalist vs. statist normative eras, but since they argue that norms prevail from the end of one war to the end of the next it is easy to assign dates to them. Those I use reflect the Congress of Vienna, the Paris Peace Conference, the ratification of the UN Charter, and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

METHODOLOGY

To test these realist, liberal, and constructivist hypotheses about state vulnerability to conquest, I assigned numerical codes to independent variables identified in the various hypotheses, then used the quantitative technique of event history analysis to examine the relationship between these variables and the historical incidence of conquest.

Ideally, to test the structural-realist hypothesis that relative capabilities affect state vulnerability to conquest (H2), I would have used COW data on indexed capabilities.[22] But since so 63% of European and Middle Eastern states are missing from the COW data, it was necessary to develop other, more inclusive indicators. To this end, I gathered data on population sizes for as many states as I could (92% of all state-year cases in the SSAD data). I also created a variable for the number of years a state was alive after 1816. This tests the possibility that a long history of statehood makes states more capable of avoiding conquest.

To test the structural-realist hypotheses that polarity, great power decline, and military and economic technology affect conquest rates (H3, H4, H5 and H6), I assigned numerical codes of 0 (low), 1 (moderate), and 2 (high) to eras characterized by multipolarity, bipolarity, and unipolarity; no great power decline, one great power in decline, and two or more great

[22]This index measures each state's overall capabilities relative to the capabilities of all other states in the system, based on annual, country-level data on military personnel, military expenditure, energy consumption, iron and steel production, urban population, and total population from 1816-1993 (Singer 1988). The data are available at http://www.umich.edu/~cowproj/dataset.html#Capabilities and are included in the SSAD data set. To download the data, I used D. Scott Bennett's and Allan Stam's, *EUGene* software, version 2.25, available at http://eugenesoftware.org/ (Bennett and Stam 2000).

powers in decline; deterrence-dominance, defense-dominance, and offense-dominance; and small-scale production, flexible production, and mass production, respectively.

To test Zacher's liberal hypothesis that the historical incidence of conquest has been affected by steadily stronger democratic norms (H7), I used the case year as an independent variable. To test Jackson and Zacher's hypothesis that vulnerability to conquest declined with the emergence of juridical sovereignty norms in 1945 (H8), I assigned codes of 1 to the period from 1816-1944 and 0 to the subsequent period. Similarly, to test Barkin and Cronin's hypothesis that conquest rates are affected by statist and nationalist sovereignty norms (H9), I coded nationalist periods 1 and statist periods 0. To test Wendt's hypothesis that members of security communities are less vulnerable to conquest than other states (H11), I assigned codes of 1 to members of the European Union and 0 to non-members. Finally, to allow for the possibility that certain states are more vulnerable to conquest than others, I adjusted standard errors for clustering on country codes.

To test the effects of these independent variables, I used multivariate event history models. These models are appropriate for examining "the patterns and correlates of events," such as the incidence of conquest (Yamaguchi 1991, 1; Allison 1984; Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 1997; Bennett 1999). Specifically, I used the Cox proportional hazards model to determine whether it was appropriate to assume that the baseline hazard rates for conquest were constant from 1816-1997. Then, because these rates were quite constant, I used the discrete-time logit model to test the various hypotheses.[23]

[23]The baseline hazard rates for conquest ranged from .999957 to 1.0. Logit is appropriate both because the baseline hazard rates are steady and because the clustering of conquest in time (*i.e.*, the tied nature of the data)

FINDINGS

My findings about the causes of conquest in Europe and the Middle East from 1816 to 1994 are presented in Table 5. To summarize, in multivariate logit analysis all of the structural-realist variables are significant or approaching significance and have the expected signs. As predicted by the hypothesis about relative capabilities (H2), states that are young and states that have small populations are more vulnerable to conquest that those that are more venerable and have large populations. Moreover, as predicted by the hypotheses about international polarity and great power (H3 and H4), states are less likely to be conquered in multipolar eras than in bipolar and especially unipolar ones, and they are less likely to be conquered when no great power is in decline than when one or more great powers in decline. Congruent with hypotheses H5 and H6, states are also most likely to be conquered when the offense-defense-deterrence balance favors offensive operations and when mass production technologies prevail.

Since these findings indicate that vulnerability to conquest varies systematically across states and over time, they contradict the classical-realist hypothesis that state vulnerability does not exhibit systematic patterns (H1).

Two of the four liberal and constructivist arguments also lack support. The hypothesis about democratic norms derived from Zacher's argument (H7) and the hypothesis about statist vs. nationalist norms derived from Barkin and Cronin's argument (H9) are significant, but the signs of the coefficients are the reverse of what they should be. This indicates that the spread

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reduces the accuracy of the Cox proportional hazards model (Yamaguchi 1991, 16-17).

of democracy and the prevalence of statist sovereignty norms are associated with higher, not lower, rates of conquest.

By contrast, the hypothesis about empirical vs. juridical norms derived from the work of Jackson and Zacher (H8) is significant, and the hypothesis about security community membership derived from Wendt's work is a perfect predictor of conquest rates. But if Jackson and Zacher's argument is right, states should either not have been conquered after 1945, or their conquests should have been reversed by collective security operations. The former is almost true. Of all of the European and Middle Eastern states in existence from 1945-1994, just two died by conquest: Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Kuwait in 1990. But the marked decline in conquests after 1945 is also, and very well, explained by the military-economic environment: Deterrence dominance eliminated opportunities for conquest among nuclear states and their allies, and after 1970, the rise of flexible production reduced incentives for conquest as well. Thus which of these arguments is most satisfying depends greatly on how well they explain the two cases of conquest since 1945.

According to Jackson and Zacher, the American-led war against Kuwait was an instance of successful collective security: “Almost all members of the UN called for Iraq's withdrawal; Iraq was expelled by UN-sanctioned force” (1996, 12). But it is also possible to explain the Gulf War with reference to unipolarity. As Paula Fleming (1995) argues, “The absence or muting of superpower rivalry in the crisis, by removing an important constraint on the use of American military power, may have contributed both to the United States' decision to intervene in the gulf with force, and to its failure to achieve an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait through coercive diplomacy” (95).

Jackson and Zacher do not count the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia as an instance of conquest, no doubt because of their emphasis on formal changes in borders. The logic here is that Iraq annexed Kuwait, while the Soviet Union simply occupied Czechoslovakia. Because Czechoslovakia retained its own color on the map and its seat at the UN, it is regarded as never having died. But Czechoslovakia did die. For two months, Czechoslovakia was involuntarily occupied by Soviet troops, and the last word on domestic and foreign policy was uttered in Moscow, not Prague. Why was a collective security operation not mounted in response to this violation of the territorial covenant? Since the answer revolves around the relative power of the Soviet Union and its possession of nuclear weapons, Jackson and Zacher's argument about the power of juridical sovereignty norms is difficult to sustain.

The ability of Wendt's argument about security community membership to predict the historical incidence of conquest must also be considered in light of the special circumstances of the post-1945 environment in which the European Union and NATO emerged and functioned. In particular, it is important to recall that these organizations emerged not simply as a community of like-minded states but as deliberate creations of the United States in its quest to balance the power of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, it is important to recognize the sensitivity of this hypothesis' predictive power. If just one European Union state had been conquered in the 1970s, H11 would not have been a significant predictor of conquest rates.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In light of these problems with liberal and constructivist hypotheses, as well as the ability of the structural-realist hypotheses to explain historical trends in state death over almost two centuries, it is clear that the prevalent assumption that structural realism affords little insight into the problem of state vulnerability to conquest is simply a myth. Because structural realists have subscribed to the conventional wisdom that states rarely die, they have contributed to the power of this myth. Yet once the historical ubiquity and severity of state vulnerability to conquest is recognized, structural-realist theory provides the firmest foundation for identifying the states that are most likely to have their sovereignty wrested from them, as well as the eras in which many states are likely to experience this fate.

Deterrence dominance and flexible production mean that contemporary states face fewer opportunities and incentives to conquer other states than did their historical counterparts. Yet the continuing absence of an international sovereign; the large number of small, weak, and young states; and the lack of incentives for international assistance provided by unipolarity mean that conquest remains a live issue.

Table 1
States Surviving and Dying by Conquest, Union, Disintegration, and Collapse in Europe and the Middle East, 1816-1994[24]

(see following pages)

[24]The data are sorted by country code and start year. States are coded as alive when they have military control of at least some territory and the final word on foreign and domestic policy in the land. State birth is dated based on (1) the day the last occupying troops leave the country if their purpose is to run the country and/or its foreign policy, not simply assist the state in implementing its own policies; (2) the day the occupying state recognizes the sovereignty of the national government in some concrete way (e.g., by signing a treaty relinquishing control of foreign, defense, and domestic policy and beginning to withdraw its troops; or by signing a treaty relinquishing control of policy and stipulating that any remaining troops are there at the discretion of the other state and for the purpose of assisting that state in implementing its own policies); or (3) the day a sovereign government (one that has control of at least some territory) is declared, formed or returned to power (e.g., after a national uprising or liberation by other states). To be considered alive, states born in the third way must seek independence from their erstwhile overlords (not just control of policy within the current state, which makes for a civil war not the birth of a new state), have at least some independent administrative apparatus and military capability, and survive at least one month.

Codes for means of death denote conquest (1), union (2), disintegration (4), and collapse (5). Conquest is dated according to the day national troops are completely overrun by or surrender to occupying forces or the day political leaders surrender control of national military forces and decision-making in response to military threats or operations by external rivals. Union is dated according to the day the national government voluntarily surrenders sovereignty over foreign and/or domestic policy over all of its territory to another state. Disintegration is dated according to the day national troops or the national government are completely overrun by or surrender to the troops or government of two or more domestic rivals. Collapse is dated according to the day the national government loses control over all of its territory without a new state arising to take its place.

States with decimal places in their country codes are missing from the COW (and usually the Polity) data.

Figure 1
Conquest Rates in Europe and the Middle East, 1816-1994

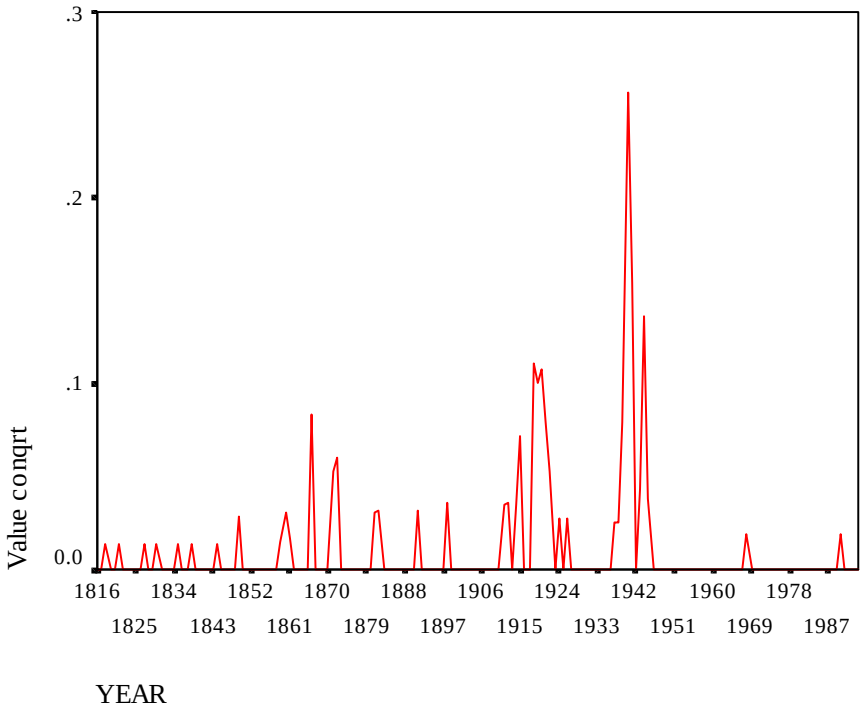

Figure 2
Union Rates in Europe and the Middle East, 1816-1994

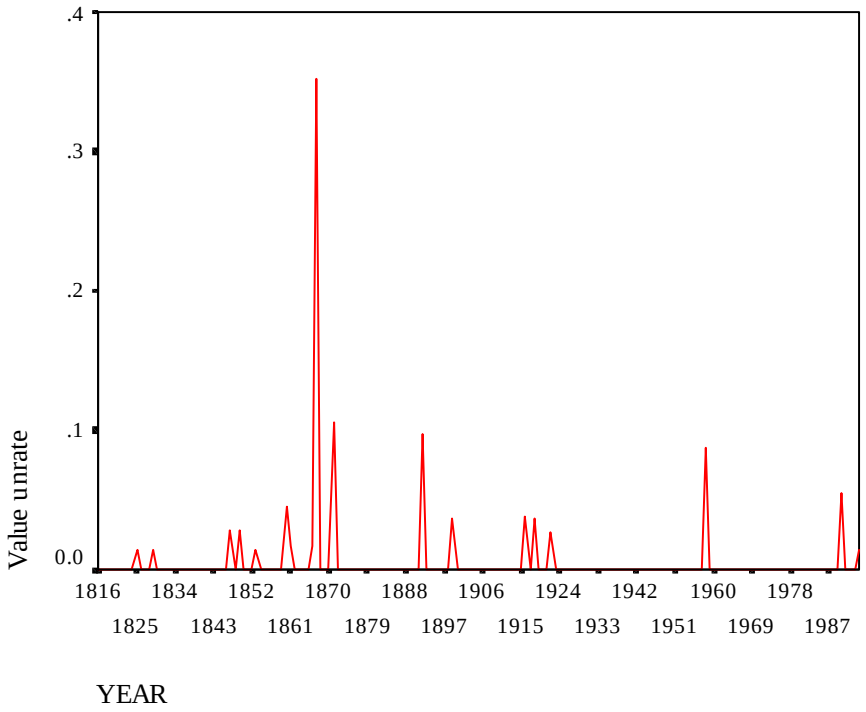

Table 2
Great Powers, 1800-1997

	Great Power[25]
England/Great Britain/UK	1495-1945
France	1495-1815, 1818-1871, 1873-1940
Spain	1556-1808
Austria/Austria-Hungary	1556-1918
Russia/Soviet Union	1721-1989
Prussia/Germany	1740-1806, 1813-1919, 1930-1945
Italy	1861-1943
United States	1898-1997
Japan	1905-1945

[25]Based on Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), pp. 22-49. My coding differs from Levy's in three ways. First, Levy counts Prussia from 1807-1812, France in 1816, 1817, and 1872, and Germany from 1920-1929 as great powers despite their occupation by other states. I do not do so because great powers are, by definition, peers -- not super- and sub-ordinates. Second, Levy codes the UK, France, and Germany after 1945, as well as China after 1949, as great powers because of their UN vetoes, military capabilities, and global reach. By contrast, I code just the US and Soviet Union as great powers after 1946 because their capabilities put them in a class by themselves. Finally, since Levy's data end in 1975, it was necessary to date the decline of the Soviet Union. I use 1989 because Soviet gross national product was stagnant from 1985-1989, and by 1989, the USSR could no longer service its hard currency debt on time. My coding of great powers also differs from the Correlates of War (COW) project's list of major powers from 1816-1997. COW does not include the Soviet Union from 1918-1921 during its period of non-recognition by the US, Britain, and France but does include Japan after 1895; Germany after the Locarno Pact of 1925; the UK, France, and China after 1945; Germany after 1991; and Russia after 1990. For COW's major power system membership criteria, see Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Resort To Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816-1980* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1982), pp. 44-45.

Table 3
Dimensions of the Offense-Defense-Deterrence Balance and Assessment of the Overall Balance, 1800-present

Lethality	Protection	Mobility	Overall ODD Balance
1800-1945 *No Mode Dominant* due to the absence of an absolute weapon and the ability of both attackers and defenders to use state-of-the-art weapons, depending on their ability to protect and deliver them.	*1800-1849* *Offense Dominant* due to the lack of defensive lethality and agricultural and industrial technologies facilitating offensive depth.	*1800-1835* *Offense Dominant* due to innocuous defensive fires and improvements in mobile artillery.	*1800-1849* *Offense Dominant*
		1836-1929 *Defense Dominant* due to the invention of telegraph, railroad, and steamship.	
	1850-1933 *Defense Dominant* due to the lethality afforded by the conoidal bullet and later advances in firearms and artillery, as well as improvements in fortification technology.		*1850-1933* *Defense Dominant*
		1930-1945 *Offense Dominant* due to improvements in tanks, planes, and especially radio.	
	1934-1945 *Offense Dominant* due to the development of well-armed and armored tanks and dive bombers.		*1934-1945* *Offense Dominant*
1946-Present *Deterrence Dominant* due to the absolute nature of nuclear weapons.	*1946-Present* *Deterrence Dominant* due to the lethality of nuclear weapons and the ease with which they can be hidden, delivered, and produced.	*1946-Present* *Deterrence Dominant* due to the small size of nuclear weapons and the variety of means for delivering them.	*1946-Present*

Table 4
Cox's Scheme for Periodizing Economic Technology

Period	Scale of Production	Segmentation of Labor
Craft Production	low	mixed (some highly skilled; some not)
Fordist Production	high	low
Post-Fordist Production	mixed	high

Table 5
Logit Results for Great Power and Nuclear State Vulnerability to Conquest

Independent Variable	Coefficient	Robust Standard Error
Population	-.000	.000#
Age	-.007	.004*
Polarity	2.331	1.385*
Great Power Decline	1.121	.194**
ODD Balance	1.333	.295**
Economic Technology	.540	.293*
Democratic Norms (Year)	.022	.007**
Empirical/Juridical Norms	5.568	1.975**
Statist/Nationalist Norms	-.883	.499*
Constant	-54.792	13.083**

Log Likelihood = -293.518
chi2 (9df) = 117.78
Prob > chi2 = .000
Pseudo R2 = 0.166
N = 7813

Standard errors adjusted for clustering on country code
EU membership variable rejected by Stata because it is a perfect predictor of conquest

* = p< .01; * = p< .05; # = p<.10; one-tailed tests of significance

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