

**Minor Powers Confronting Major Powers: A Comparative
Examination of the Conditions Facilitating Decisions to go to War**

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ABSTRACT

The political landscape of the world is constituted by states of varying degrees of influence and capability. Major powers have immense resources at their disposal, while minor powers are often constrained in terms of structure and material. Thus, for minor powers, engaging in conventional wars against much larger and more powerful states is potentially ruinous to their economies and endangers their political survival.

While researchers have explored interstate asymmetric conflicts involving major and middle powers, this project specifically analyzes asymmetric conflicts between minor and major powers, focusing on the former, and the post Cold-war period. This research aims to analyze conditions, highlighted by theories on war, under which minor powers go to war challenging major powers. This research employs multiple theories, thereby establishing an innovative, pluri-theoretical framework. This theoretical framework works well with a medium-N research design, namely a crisp set methodology in Qualitative Comparative Analysis).

This study finds that by looking through the lenses of multiple theories, one can observe a more nuanced relationship between conditions faced by minor powers in militarized disputes and their decisions to go to war against a major power. First, different combinations of conditions can result in conflict. Second, domestic crisis, not external threat, tends to be of primary concern to minor powers. Third, minor powers of autocratic regime type can also misperceive the situation through anomalous beliefs. The importance of the study stems from the observation that minor powers still fight conventional asymmetric wars, despite growing military capabilities of major powers. Understanding the risks, minor powers gamble, hoping to keep their political benefits. This study enhances our understanding of conditions shaping the occurrence of asymmetric conflict.

INTRODUCTION

Minor powers¹ fighting a conventional interstate war against major powers, that is, participating in an asymmetric conflict, tend to lose. Furthermore, fighting against major powers is very costly. According to Sullivan (2007, 507), in the post-WWII period, weaker sides have suffered 81 percent of battle deaths in conflicts against major powers. Likewise, according to Arreguin-Toft (2001, 96-97), the stronger side almost always wins an asymmetric conflict. This is why most scholars studying minor powers and security have observed that minor powers tend to avoid costly wars. Indeed, minor powers tend to favor strategies that move away from the use of force (Steinmetz and Wivel 2010, 10), such as limiting power politics through governance and international rules (Neumann and Gstöhl 2006, 19-21), joining a powerful group to counter-balance the threat (Ponizilova 2013, 89), establishing neutrality (Hey 2003, 6), and building up large military capabilities (Reiter 2006, 242), along with bandwagoning, engaging in preventive diplomacy, hiding, enacting irrational behavior and employing mixed strategies (Momani 2011, 114; Ponizilova 2013, 89; Schelling 1960, 18-19; Schneider 2009, 12; Steinmetz and Wivel 2010, 10).

Inevitably, given the broad consensus that minor powers seek to avoid wars, we might come to the conclusion that the regimes of these countries must be suicidal, as their behavior seems to contradict the realist assumption that states seek survival. Reflecting the above, this research seeks to address conditions facing regimes of minor

¹The concept of minor power overlaps with concepts of small power, small state, minor state, and weak state. In most cases they refer to the same concept, however, as I will discuss later, there can be notable differences.

powers when they choose war in interstate militarized disputes, that is, disputes where a minor power has both a military option, and an option to comply. Given the weak prior theoretical inquiry into conflicts between states (and state-like entities) with large power discrepancies, this study is a pioneer in comparatively studying all minor powers in situation of asymmetric militarized disputes in the post Cold-war period. This study not only provides an answer to this overlooked puzzle, but it also connects more recent conflicts to older theories, provides a more nuanced, and a pluri-theoretical explanation. Simply, the aim is to refine and rebuild older contributions to a new research puzzle.

As expected, researchers have picked up on this interesting puzzle and offered some tentative answers. After all, the distribution of capability between belligerent states has been a core concept in war typology literature (Levy 1983, 51-52; Lider 1977; Midlarsky 1986 and 1988; Small and Singer 1982, 46-52; Siverson and Sullivan 1983; Vasquez 1983 and 1993; Wright 1965), balance of power theory, and power preponderance theory (DiCicco and Levy 1999; Gochman 1990; Huth, Bennett, and Gelpi 1992; Geller 1993; Kugler and Lemke 1996). Hinting at the answer, Hayden (2003, 278) cited Thomas' statement that "every nation has the right to defend itself," and if attacked "a nation will try to resist the attacker." Nevertheless, when a minor power does not avoid a war against a major power, it "contradicts rational expectations of how a war is likely to turn out based on the unequal distribution of material capabilities between the belligerents" (Chan 2012, 173). The right to defend themselves, therefore, still leads us to believe that the leaders of minor powers are either reckless or out of touch with reality. Moving away from the right to defend one's own territory, both military and civilian scholars have attempted to find the reasons as to why minor powers in asymmetric militarized disputes choose to accept armed conflict,

rather than avoid it. In effect, why does the weaker side opt to take such a risk?

Several explanations have been proposed. Chan (2010) focused exclusively on the nature of contestants' foreign alignments, concluding that having one-sided patronage may be one of the most significant factors inducing minor powers to militarily challenge their stronger opponents. Findley and Edwards (2014) emphasized the institutional structure of the weaker side, which may surprise the stronger opponent. Fischerkeller (1998) pointed to the cultural judgment a minor power may have regarding the stronger enemy. When a minor power judges the enemy to be inferior, a conflict is more likely to occur. While these studies have focused only on a single variable, thus having a more limited explanation, several scholars have posited explanations that focus on more than one variable. Katagiri (2013), for example, highlighted several important factors affecting the strategy of minor powers, such as the nature of the terrain where the war plays out and the reception of external support. However, he looked mostly at non-state actors, that is, intrastate conflicts. The main problem with some studies on asymmetric conflict, such as Katagiri, is that they have not focused on states as their main unit of analysis. Focusing on non-state actors might be less puzzling. After all, it is likely easier for non-state actors to win asymmetric conflicts due to the inability of the opponent (usually a powerful state) to precisely locate their adversaries and seize their resources. Thus, in conflicts where the opponent is a non-state actor, the opponent often operates in secrecy and among civilians. In such conflicts, identification becomes one of the main issues (see for example, Kiss 2014). It is an entirely different question when focusing on state and state-like actors, which defend a defined territory using conventional military capabilities.

Studies by Thaza Paul (1994) and Sang Hyun Park (2004) have come closest to

explaining why minor powers, that is, states, decide to confront a major power in a military conflict, using more than one theoretical framework. Paul (1994) found that the most important factors are a limited aims/fait accompli strategy and the support of a major power that induces the minor power to engage in the conflict. Park (2004) discovered that the weaker state in a loss frame could seek to gamble with a war against the strong states in the hope of achieving huge benefits. However, both studies have lacked in certain aspects. First, they have focused only on asymmetric conflicts initiated by the minor power. However, the side that initiates the war may not be the side that is responsible for the crisis. The responsibility seldom lies only on one side. Second, the power asymmetries between the states studied by Paul and Park were not vast. Argentina was not vastly weaker than the United Kingdom, nor was the Japanese empire vastly weaker than the United States. Therefore, it is difficult to call one side in these studies a minor power, and the conflict truly asymmetric. Third, the studies largely examined wars during the Cold-war period, when the international balance of power was framed as bipolar. The post Cold-war period may have changed the strategy of minor powers due to unipolar character of international balance of power. Finally, although they employed pluri-theoretical frameworks, both studies utilized conventional research methods that were not able to engage the more complex relationships between variables that would indicate necessity and sufficiency roles. Despite these limitations in all of the aforementioned studies, however, the generally conflicting claims and findings indicate that there is a more complex relationship involved in asymmetric conflicts than most theorists have envisioned.

Thus, while I do ask a similar question as Paul (1994) and Park (2004), namely under what conditions and why do the regimes of minor powers see the choice of war

against a stronger opponent as an attractive option, I include both offensive and defensive wars, vast power asymmetry differentials, the post Cold-war period, and greater complexity. The research question is thus more nuanced than the one offered by Paul (1994) and Park (2004), and addresses the weaknesses of previous studies. Specifically, *why or under what international, domestic and individual-level conditions have minor powers attempted to resist or challenge others they know to be significantly more powerful than they by force of arms in the post Cold-war period?* The key, therefore, is a focus on militarized interstate disputes and a minor power's choice between war and acquiescence.

Looking at the whole universe of cases since the end of the Cold-war, this study presents a medium number of cases, twenty, which is a good number for a comparative study. A comparative study is an effective approach for studying how minor powers in militarized asymmetric dyads experiencing an armed conflict differ in their international, domestic and individual-level conditions from minor powers in militarized asymmetric dyads that remain peaceful. Therefore, this is a multi-level study, since some of the variables are international (foreign support), some are domestic (domestic crisis) and some are individual (anomalous beliefs). Inclusion of different levels of analysis is beneficial, and perhaps even necessary, since levels of analysis are not completely independent, even though logical connection may not always be explicit (Levy 2011, 15). Also following a comparative logic, I utilize an innovative technique for studying international relations, namely Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) whose strongest aspect is analysis of conditions. While the choice of conditions is based on their preexisting propensity to affect minor powers' decision making, as the following discussions will show they are in no way conclusively detrimental to peace. In majority

of interstate militarized disputes, acquiescence has been the favored choice of a minor power. Still, the choice of conditions is based on the most relevant, interesting conditions (Bretthauer 2014b, 53).

While this study tests several prominent hypotheses from previous theoretical insights, it also refurbishes theory by developing other important empirical contributions. For a start, I borrow two variables highlighted as most important – *anomalous beliefs* and *foreign support* – and add three others, partially influenced by the following studies. Chan (2010) indicated that the weaker side in an asymmetric conflict may be more inclined to instigate a war when presented with a *window of opportunity*. Katagiri (2013) introduced the importance of organizational stability, which roughly translates into *regime stability* for state actors. Third, I include *domestic crisis* – an issue raised by both Park (2004) and Paul (1994). In these studies, Park and Paul looked at several cases, including that of Argentina in the lead up to the Falklands War. They established that the Argentinian regime was facing disastrous economic conditions, which threatened the legitimacy of the regime itself. In an attempt to divert attention away from the economic problems, and to potentially make gains in other political spheres (particularly in war), the Argentinian regime chose to try to regain control of the Falklands, i.e., it chose conflict. In sum, I analyze five variables (conditions) that may have an impact on minor powers' decisions.

In doing so, this study provides a more nuanced, complex, theoretical explanation of the relationship between the five conditions highlighted in this study, and the choice of a minor power to militarily challenge a major power. This research also offers an explanation that includes both the conflicts initiated by the minor power and those initiated by the major power. Furthermore, this study breaks new ground in

studying asymmetric conflicts where warring sides exhibit vast power differentials. Finally, I look at more recent cases that have not been included in previous studies on minor powers in asymmetric conflict.

The organization of this study is as follows. The next section provides a medium-N, QCA analysis of the empirical record, assessing the outcomes of all 20 militarized interstate disputes that have taken place in the post Cold-war era. QCA is the most proper method given that the focus of this study is on several conditions and their complex relationship. QCA results show that 9 of the 20 cases of asymmetric militarized disputes resulted in war, confirming the importance of this phenomena. Moreover, the analysis reveals that not a single variable is both necessary and sufficient to explain the minor power's choice to go to war. However, *domestic crisis* seems to be of particular importance, as it is a necessary variable for the outcome to occur. Other variables only contribute to one or more pathways. The study concludes that in all three cases, the minor powers' regimes concentrated on solving a *domestic crisis*, but also believed that there was an international factor that could help them win. The last section focuses on discussing four most important implications of the study.

QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MINOR POWERS IN ASYMMETRIC CONFLICT

The family of configurational comparative methods (Rihoux and Ragin 2008a) is better known under the acronym QCA (Qualitative Comparative Analysis). QCA is based on set theory rather than on the general linear model. It seeks to describe the relationship between causal conditions and outcomes in terms of the relationships

between sets (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 8). It gained prominence in social science through Ragin (1987, 2008a). The main focus of QCA is the presence and absence of certain conditions. If we are interested in three conditions A, B, and C for the outcome Y, a number of possible combinations are available: presence of A, but not of B nor C; presence of A and B, but not of C; absence of all three and so on. QCA employs a table of all possible combinations of conditions and then allocates the empirical cases to these combinations. It is within this process that the qualitative nature of QCA comes into play as some in-depth knowledge of cases is needed to calibrate conditions. Afterward, these sets of conditions are minimized to provide a solution formula, the end product of a boolean algebraic process that enables simplification of results (Bretthauer 2014a, 6).

QCA's most important epistemological feature is that it bases itself on multiple conjunctural causation allowing, for example, different pathways to lead to the same outcome and for one condition to have a different effect depending on the context. Specifically, Schneider (2009, 57) defines conjunctural causation as "a situation in which one single condition unfolds its impact on the outcome to be explained only when combined with one or more other conditions(s)." Although not necessarily exclusive in this assumption, QCA is particularly beneficial in analyzing context conditions as it focuses on the pathways and combinations of conditions that lead to an outcome (Bretthauer 2014a, 6). Specifically, the case study literature on asymmetric conflict often uses conjunctural rather than additive causation. For example, Cherkasova (2010, 75) argues that support from an external power leads a minor power to choose conflict if a "feeling of creeping annexation" exists as well. Similarly, Park (2004, 31) argues that only minor powers facing a domestic crisis can be risk acceptant and thus choose risky

war. The reason is that in a loss frame, an actor can make the risky choice and have a slight chance of getting a high utility. The safer choice is to go back to the *Status Antes*, that is, domestic crisis. Therefore, indirectly they argue that a minor power chooses conflict only when one of these conditions occurs in conjunction with another condition. This way, using QCA in order to explain contradictory results on the links between various conditions and the choice of conflict by a minor power presents a new approach in studying asymmetric conflict.

Since QCA concentrates on a combination of conditions, it employs a language of necessity and sufficiency to assign roles to these conditions. For a condition to be necessary, every presence of the outcome must show the presence of a condition as well. If *foreign support* is a necessary condition for a minor power to resist a major power, all minor powers experiencing an asymmetric conflict have *foreign support*, but not all minor powers with *foreign support* experience an asymmetric conflict. For a condition to be sufficient, every presence of the condition must show the presence of the outcome. If *foreign support* is a sufficient condition for a minor power to resist a major power, all minor powers with *foreign support* experience asymmetric conflict, but not all countries experiencing asymmetric conflict have *foreign support* (Berg-Schlosser et al., 2008, 10). Using a set theoretic language, with a necessary condition, cases showing presence of the outcome are a subset of cases that show presence of the condition. Equally important, with sufficient conditions, cases showing presence of the condition are a subset of cases showing the outcome, as shown in Figure I.

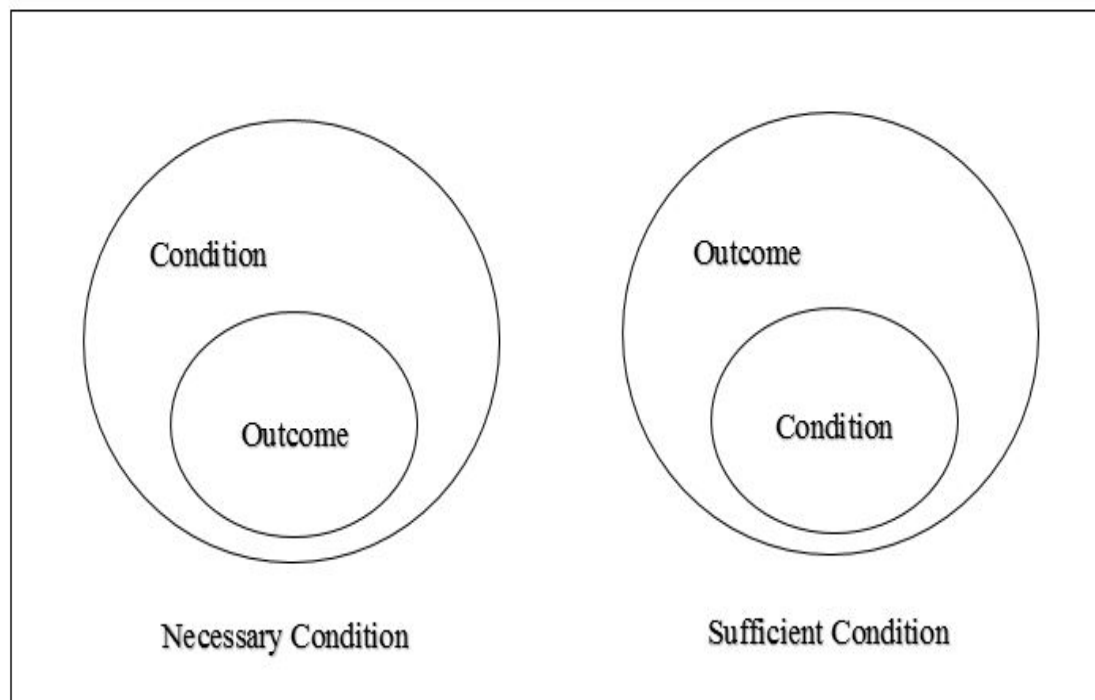


Figure 1. Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

These two subset relations are possible to analyze by using specialized software, such as fsQCA (Davey and Ragin, 2009). Following the conventional approach, I analyze necessary conditions by focusing on single, individual conditions, while at the same time I analyze sufficient conditions by focusing on combination of conditions (pathways).

QCA has two main methods in approaching cases as configurations, a fuzzy-set approach and a crisp-set approach. Crisp-set approach relies on a dichotomous principle, where a membership of a condition in a set is either present (1) or absent (0). Thus, the boundaries are sharp between members and non-members. This approach is better utilized with nominal-scale measurement. Fuzzy set approach is different from the crisp set approach by allowing different degrees of inclusion in a set. As such, membership of a condition is a matter of degree. Therefore, it can include greater

specifications such as sophisticated level of technological development or high military spending. Although crisp-set approach encounters stronger philosophical critiques, it is a more suitable method for this study since my variables are nominal. They are not necessarily dichotomous, but the measurement of *regime stability*, *foreign support*, *anomalous beliefs*, *domestic crisis* and *window of opportunity* in terms of degrees would be nearly impossible. Therefore, I employ a crisp set approach by indicating whether each of these conditions was present (1) or absent (0).

Appendix II contains more detailed descriptions of the crisp-set scoring system and their sources of data. There are five conditions, reflecting significant prior theoretical contributions: *foreign support*, *window of opportunity*, *domestic crisis*, *regime stability*, and *anomalous beliefs*. In order to calibrate these conditions for crisp-set QCA, each condition has been reduced to either a 'present' or an 'absent' form. A score of 1 indicates 'presence' while a score of 0 indicates 'absence'. Thus, the variables are dichotomous. However, due to lack of measurable 'breaking points', that is, whether a case falls into 'presence' or 'absence', a qualitative judgment is required. Of course, given the dichotomy, some cases which fall into the 'grey area' (near the breaking point) are a matter of dispute. To my best ability, I tried to place these cases in their respective category.

In order to control for reverse causalities, for example an armed conflict leading to a domestic crisis or an unstable regime, data for all the cases has been sought prior to the conflict, ideally a few months to a couple of years, depending on the availability of data. Using the example of Gaddafi's regime, I relied on descriptions of his beliefs and attitudes prior to the 2011 downfall. Secondary sources were sought for explicit statements regarding each variable. If such data were not available, I deduced

descriptive sources to the most likely answer.

As mentioned above, the aim of this study is to capture asymmetric conflict between minor and major powers, thus excluding middle powers. For a dispute to be truly asymmetric, that is, between a major power and a minor power, the discrepancy in material capabilities (power) must be high. Consequences for this choice are as follows. First, twenty cases are the total number of militarized interstate disputes since the end of the Cold-war. I chose this period in order to control for possible effects of different polarity, such as during the Cold-war. Second, discrepancy in material capabilities is at least 10:1 in order to operationalize 'vast power differential' between states. These two points require elaboration.

On the first point, what is a militarized interstate dispute? The common definition is that it is a dispute that includes the threat, display, or use of force by at least one of the participants. The acts must be explicit, overt, non-accidental, and government sanctioned (Singer and Diehl 1990, 228). Such definition provides an "operational criterion to identify those disputes in which the threat of war becomes explicit and overt" (Singer and Diehl 1990, 228). Therefore, such behavior ought to be a strong signal of a possible armed conflict. The assumption is that states do not initiate a threat, display, or use of force without being prepared that the opponent may retaliate. The aforementioned definition attempts to clarify that a militarized interstate dispute differs from just any "interstate dispute", since the latter can include minor disputes that are completely non-military in nature. I employ a set theoretic approach of QCA to capture the conjunctural causation between militarized interstate disputes containing five conditions and the outcome of war, aiming to explain previous contradictory empirical results. A similar framework was applied by Bretthauer (2014b).

Correlates of War Project (COW) has compiled a dataset of "militarized interstate disputes" (MID). The MID data list contains the starting and ending date for each dispute, the participants, and the highest level of hostility each state reached in the course of the dispute (Ghosn, Palmer and Bremer, 2004). Given that there is no dataset focusing exclusively on militarized interstate crises, I rely on the 'militarized interstate dispute' dataset as a way to include all militarized crises short of war. There are separate data on interstate war which signifies that crises are incorporated into the category of 'militarized interstate disputes'.

However, some militarized interstate disputes are not included in this analysis, because the seriousness of war breaking out is disputable. This includes primarily fishing boat incidents, but also incidents over illegal immigrants, border security and third-parties². Exclusion was applied because although such cases usually violate sovereignty of another nation, there is a lack of clear intent to pose a threat to that nation. For example, United States and Canada had a militarized border dispute over fishing rights, dubbed "salmon wars", which made the relationship between two countries slightly bumpy, but was hardly likely to escalate into a military confrontation. I also do not include cases of minor powers with exceptional capabilities, that is, nuclear weapons, such as Israel. Possession of nuclear weapons by a minor power may provide a strong deterrence to major powers.

On the second point, to account for much greater power differentials, it is necessary to be able to compare military capabilities of states during a conflict. I follow

²This refers to non-state actors making threats or incursions into a foreign territory. MID data set has included this conflicts as interstate, although the militarized dispute never occurred between the two governments directly.

Robert J. Art's recommendation that capabilities of a state's military forces must be made relative to those of another state, not with reference to some absolute scale (1980, 5). Doing otherwise could be misleading, since military power of United States is far more developed than even that of other major powers, such as Russia and China. Nonetheless, military capability is a frequent measure of national power. As Peter Paret summarized, "military power expresses and implements the power of the state in a variety of ways within and beyond the state borders, and is also one of the instruments with which political power is originally created and made permanent" (1989, 240). However, how to measure military capability is a matter of debate. Tellis et al. argue that one or two individual measures, such as the number of personnel under arms, are unlikely to capture key factors for assessing military power (2000, 135). Instead, they recommend assessing information pertaining to the following variables: size of the defense budget, military manpower, military infrastructure (bases and installations), research and development, military industrial base, and military inventory and support. Data for some of these variables is qualitative and thus not easily comparable between states. Thus, I rely once again on the 'correlates of war' database. It contains the annual values for total population, urban population, iron and steel production, energy consumption, military personnel, and military expenditures. These six indicators together form the Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) score (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972).

Referring back to operationalization of 'vast power differentials', the selection of dyads from the database ought to ensure large discrepancy in military capabilities. A conventionally accepted assumption in the military is that in order to ensure combat success, the attacking side must have a supremacy of at least 3:1 in the assault zone.

However, Soviet military thinking changed this ratio to 5:1 and even 10:1 in favor of the attacker (Evron 2005, 216). Of course, the underlying assumption is that there is no large qualitative gap between the two combatants. Nonetheless, to ensure that there would be no miscalculation by the minor power about the nature of the asymmetry, I selected only the cases where there was a 10:1 ratio in CINC scores favouring the major power. Major powers are the main reference point of this study for the particular reason that minor powers, by their own efforts, cannot defend against any of the major powers (Handel 1981, 76). In addition, major powers such as United States, China and Russia have a veto over Security Council resolutions. Finally, some studies already claim that the weaker adversary is more likely to win an asymmetric conflict if it receives direct military support from one of the major powers (Deriglazova 2009, 86). Table I shows the case selection with the corresponding CINC scores, reflecting the asymmetry. A brief description of each case is available in the Appendix I. Two of the cases are state-like entities, Taiwan and Republika Srpska. US courts described Republika Srpska as "Karadzic's regime controlled territory and people, and entered into agreements with other governments....therefore, the court found that actions of Karadzic's regime were done under color of state law" (Samborn 1995, 30).

Case Name (ID)	Date	Antagonists	CINC score
Invasion of Panama (P01)	1989	1) Panama 2) United States	1) 0.0003048 2) 0.1466928
The Gulf War (P02)	1990	1) Iraq 2) United States	1) 0.0125427 2) 0.139376
War of Transnistria (P03)	1992	1) Moldova 2) Russia	1) 0.0006665 2) 0.0652206
Operation Deliberate Force (P04)	1995	1) Republika Srpska 2) United States	1) 0.0005348 (approx.) 2) 0.1406412
NATO bombing of Yugoslavia (P05)	1999	1) Serbia 2) United States	1) 0.0019634 2) 0.1428883
War in Afghanistan (P06)	2001	1) Afghanistan 2) United States	1) 0.0012123 2) 0.1420117
Iraq War (P07)	2003	1) Iraq 2) United States	1) 0.0066267 2) 0.1420938
Russo-Georgian War (P08)	2008	1) Georgia 2) Russia	1) 0.0005039 (approx.) 2) 0.0392739 (approx.)
Operation Unified Protector (P09)	2011	1) Libya 2) United States	1) 0.0017627 (approx.) 2) 0.1421487 (approx.)
Georgian Civil War (N01)	1991	1) Georgia 2) Russia	1) 0.0009231 2) 0.097295
Dispute Over Taiwan (N02)	1994	1) Taiwan 2) China	1) 0.0101998 2) 0.1301491
Syrian Border Fortification (N03)	1996	1) Syria 2) United States	1) 0.0040923 2) 0.1383393
Russia and CIS in Afghanistan (N04)	1996	1) Afghanistan 2) Russia	1) 0.0011876 2) 0.0569312
Operation Uphold Democracy (N05)	1994	1) Haiti 2) United States	1) 0.0004392 2) 0.1448253
Spratly Islands I (N06)	1995	1) Philippines 2) China	1) 0.0056465 2) 0.1355899
Spratly Islands II (N07)	1994	1) Vietnam 2) China	1) 0.0087169 2) 0.1301491
Russo-Latvian Border Dispute (N08)	1998	1) Latvia 2) Russia	1) 0.0003422 2) 0.0492318
Russo-Estonian Border Dispute (N09)	1994	1) Estonia 2) Russia	1) 0.0002192 2) 0.0651541
Chinese Intrusions into Bhutan (N10)	2004	1) Bhutan 2) China	1) 0.0000414 2) 0.1825703
Russo-Norwegian Territorial Dispute (N11)	2008	1) Norway 2) Russia	1) 0.0016396 (approx.) 2) 0.0392739 (approx.)

Table I: National Capability Scores in Asymmetric Dyads

Dependent Variables

Outcome (Use of Force)

The purpose of the outcome is to be able to measure whether a minor power militarily challenged the major power. In order to do so, it must answer the question "did the minor power attempt to defeat the military forces, or part of, those belonging to the major power?"

Outcome (Acquiescence)

All of the remaining cases were coded as acquiescence. Each case was also qualitatively inspected, since a minor power may have displayed hostility, but this hostility was ignored by a major power.

Independent Variables

Foreign Support (FS)

Foreign support, or an alliance, is a very common variable used in assessing causes of war (see for example, Senese and Vasquez 2008). To ensure their security when facing threats, states must have internal preparations, such as military forces, and external preparations, that is forming an alliance (Thalakada 2012, 3). As Gulick (1955, 61) stated, alliance is one the ways for a states to preserve themselves. Of the five conditions in this study, foreign support is the easiest to measure as it is usually very explicit in treaties between countries, public statements or shipment of aid. It is meant to address the question "prior to the conflict, did a minor power expect any form of foreign support from another major power?" This includes active support, but also willingness of an ally to constrain the opponent and the ability of an ally to create a costly deterioration of a relationship with the opponent. For example, United States has considered

intervening against the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria. Although not formally allies, Russia has been the key arms conduit for Assad. Likewise, Russia has consistently backed Assad at the United Nations. Thus, the foreign support was significant enough to shape Assad's military strategy. There is one caveat in this variable. If an ally is one that could not hypothetically match a major power, then such an ally is of a dubious usefulness, depending on a myriad of other factors.

Window Of Opportunity (WOO)

One of the oldest historians, Thucydides, stated a long time ago that "in war opportunity waits for no man". This variable refers to the window of opportunity theory or the power vacuum theory (Van Evera 1999). I measure window of opportunity by asking the question "did a minor power have a window of opportunity that will enable it to have a temporary advantage?" A window of opportunity is the time period within which an actor can provide maximum benefit to itself before circumstances change, diminishing the value of potential benefits (Kickul and Lyons, 2012, 48). There are two ways I look for a window of opportunity, in line with the previous literature. First, a major power is spending its vital resources elsewhere, such as another costly conflict, economic crisis, or a social upheaval (not simply demonstrations). While crisis, or intense difficulty, is a qualitative measure, in some cases it can be captured by economic indicators, for example. The logical importance of this variable is that power ratio differential may matter less given the high possibility that a major power cannot make use of its full potential. Second, a minor power has a temporary advantage which it may lose in the future. For example, it might have a powerful weapon whose properties might not be as useful in the near future. Although this example refers to a non-state actor, United States supplied Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to mujahideen to defend against Soviet

helicopters. This weapon was only a temporary advantage, since the Soviets could have developed a strategy to bypass this weapon. This second way of looking for a window of opportunity is less likely to be found, but is still theoretically plausible.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

The Argentine regime in 1982 was subject to a "deepening economic and political turmoil" such that war against Britain over Falklands became one of the few options the government had to do to ensure popular support (Paul, 1994, 16). Domestic turmoil was thus one of the main variables that Paul identified as contributing to a war. James (1988, 93) however, believes that "even a disintegrating domestic situation would not be sufficient to make war a viable option". This is a curious contrast. I assess whether a similar situation existed in other cases by asking the question "did a minor power have a very serious domestic crisis that had few, if any, solutions?" In a way, this is an inverse of the window of opportunity (WOO) variable, except that in WOO domestic crisis applies to a major power. Thus, a serious economic crisis is an obvious example, but so is another internal conflict, or a social upheaval (civil war).

Regime Stability (RS)

Regime stability has been established as an important variable in influencing states' intrastate conflict behavior (Mitchell 2012, 174; Hegre et al.- 2001; Maoz 2004). However, nature and stability of the regime has also been used to explain interstate behavior (Paul 1994). The measurement of this variable reflects on the question "did the minor power have a stable regime?" That is, whether a country faced serious prospects to have a different kind of rule. While the question is simple, the answer is not. Thus, I decided to measure this variable in different ways, depending whether a regime is a democracy or not. For democracies, I looked for whether a regime faced a powerful

opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime. Such opposition is revisionist in the sense that it seeks to rearrange country's political institutions, policies and ideals. Prosecution of the old regime is often common. One can determine this by looking at the speeches, policies and measures taken by the parties in response to their opposition. For authoritarian regimes, role of political opposition does not matter as much as role of the security services and key aides. It is the security services which usually play a key role in maintaining law and order, keeping the opposition under constant check. If there is significant loss of support from the security services, a regime is losing stability.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

This variable is the most challenging to measure, however, it attempts to measure what Moseley refers to as the strongest emotional or appetitive desires that lead to war (2002, 108). He describes that a leader may be obsessed with a specific goal. Drive by individualistic desires or that of a small community I see as anomaly to beliefs that most international leaders would have. Thus, I framed the question as "did the regime of a minor power have anomalous beliefs prior to the dispute?" The answer, however, depends on what one sees as 'anomalous' or a 'belief'. Being a politician often entails hiding one's beliefs. However, if one does not act according to one's beliefs, then it matters less to science than those beliefs according to which one acts. Thus, to answer this question, I relied on the common beliefs present in the international political community as the norm. Those that deviate from the norm might be less likely to have friends, thus they might be more concerned about their self-preservation. Their anomalous beliefs might also shape their worldview in a more conflicting manner. According to Garfinkel and Skaperdas (2007, 677) choosing war can be attributed to

mis-perceptions, misunderstandings, or simply to irrationality and base instincts. Stance on the value of human life, for example, could set a leader apart from others in his/her desire to wage war. Mental health is included in this because it might inhibit calculation. For example, strongly following ideological behavior that pertains to one group of people, heavy alcohol consumption, and illness all inhibit good strategy, just as engaging in a criminal behavior desensitizes one to violence.

Data Table

The most important part of assigning membership scores is to create a data table that displays all of the conditions and the outcome with their respective membership scores. In other words, all the cases are converted into configurations. A configuration is a given combination of conditions associated with a given outcome (Rihoux and De Meur, 2009). Membership scores for each case are shown in the Table II. Again, a score of 0 indicates absence of a condition, while a score of 1 indicates presence. Outcome score of 1 indicates choice of a conflict, while 0 indicates not choosing conflict. IDs that start with a 'P' refer to the outcome of 'conflict' while those starting with 'N' refer to the outcome of 'acquiescence' or 'non-conflict'.

ID	Case Name	Main Antagonists	date	FS	WOO	DC	RS	AB	OUT
P01	Invasion of Panama	Panama - US	1989-1990	0	0	1	0	1	1
P02	The Gulf War	Iraq - US	1990	0	0	1	1	1	1
P03	War of Transnistria	Moldova - Russia	1992	0	1	1	1	0	1
P04	Operation Deliberate Force	Serb Entity - US	1995	1	0	1	1	1	1
P05	NATO bombing of Yugoslavia	Serbia - US	1999	1	0	1	1	0	1
P06	War in Afghanistan	Afghanistan - US	2001 - ?	0	0	1	0	1	1
P07	Iraq War	Iraq - US	2003	1	0	1	1	1	1
P08	Russo-Georgian War	Georgia - Russia	2008	1	0	1	1	0	1
P09	Operation Unified Protector	Libya - US	2011	0	0	1	0	1	1
N01	Georgian Civil War	Georgia - Russia	1991 - 1993	0	1	1	0	0	0
N02	Dispute over Taiwan	Taiwan - China	1994 - ?	1	0	0	1	0	0
N03	Syrian Border Fortification	Syria - US	1996	0	0	0	1	0	0
N04	Russia and CIS in Afghanistan	Afghanistan - Russia	1996 - 2001	0	1	1	0	1	0
N05	Operation Uphold Democracy	Haiti - US	1994 - 1996	0	0	0	1	1	0
N06	Spratly Islands I	Philippines - China	1995 - ?	1	0	0	1	0	0
N07	Spratly Islands II	Vietnam - China	1994 - ?	0	0	0	1	0	0
N08	Russo-Latvian Border Dispute	Latvia - Russia	1998 - 1999	1	1	0	1	0	0
N09	Russo-Estonian Border Dispute	Estonia-Russia	1994	1	1	0	1	0	0
N10	Chinese Intrusions into Bhutan	Bhutan - China	2004	1	0	0	1	0	0
N11	Russo - Norwegian Territorial Dispute	Norway - Russia	2008	1	0	0	1	0	0

Table II: Data Table Showing Membership Scores

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Under set relations the assumption is that causality is not necessarily symmetric. That is, relations might work in a unidirectional mode. Presence of some conditions might explain a conflict outcome, while absence of these conditions does not necessarily explain the absence of conflict. One would need separate analyses for the conflict and non-conflict outcome. Asymmetric causal relations studied through QCA also establish differentiation between necessary and sufficient combinations of conditions. Two measures are used as tools for measuring necessity and sufficiency - consistency and coverage. They are given for each solution formula. Consistency measures the degree to which a relation of necessity or sufficiency between a causal condition (or combination of conditions) and an outcome is met within a given data set (Ragin 2006a). It indicates how closely a perfect subset relationship is approximated. When consistency is 100%, it signals a perfect necessity, in which the condition seems to 'enable' the outcome. But to open up the possibility to take e.g. measurement errors, chance, randomness and other 'troubling aspects of social data' into account, a necessity threshold is usually set at 90 percent (Pattyn 2012, 11; Schneider and Wagemann 2012, 143). Coverage answers the question "what proportion of the membership scores of the cases with the outcome has been "explained"? It measures empirical relevance. A necessary condition is trivial if it appears in both the presence and the absence of the outcome, or when its coverage value is lower than 50 percent³

³The coverage value should not be applied mechanically and thus depends on the circumstances. However, 50 percent is a typical measure used.

(Pattyn 2012, 12). Conjunctural causation also assumes conditions to be interrelated.

Minor Power's Choice of Conflict

The analysis of necessary conditions for the choice of conflict computes one necessary condition: the presence of domestic crisis has a consistency score of 1.0, as seen in Table III. This means that all cases where the conflict is chosen display the condition 'domestic crisis'. Without 'domestic crisis', no conflict can occur. A coverage score of 0.82 can also be considered high. Such a high coverage indicates that cases with a domestic crisis represent a large portion of cases where a conflict is chosen. There are a few cases which have a domestic crisis but do not choose conflict.

In different words, domestic crisis is an important variable that explains many choices of conflict by a minor power. Thus, there is some support for the explanations and theories claiming that minor powers choosing conflict are a subset of minor powers facing a domestic crisis - a threatening situation at home.

Analysis of Necessary Conditions		
Outcome Variable: choice of conflict		
Conditions tested:	Consistency:	Coverage:
(presence of) foreign support	0.44	0.40
(absence of) foreign support	0.56	0.50
(presence of) window of opportunity	0.11	0.20
(absence of) window of opportunity	0.89	0.53
(presence of) domestic crisis	1.00	0.82
(absence of) domestic crisis	0.00	0.00
(presence of) regime stability	0.67	0.40
(absence of) regime stability	0.33	0.60
(presence of) anomalous beliefs	0.67	0.75
(absence of) anomalous beliefs	0.33	0.25

Table III. Consistency and coverage scores of presence and absence of all five conditions when the outcome is present.

To analyze sufficient conditions, an intermediate solution⁴ is taken from the analysis. An intermediate solution contains only the logical remainders that "make sense" given the researcher's substantive and theoretical knowledge are incorporated into the solution. An important benefit of intermediate solutions, according to Ragin (2008b, 111) is that they will not allow removal of necessary conditions, or more precisely "intermediate solutions are superior to both the complex and parsimonious solutions and should be a routine part of any application of any version of QCA." An intermediate solution yields three pathways for a minor power to choose conflict (see Table IV). All three contain presence of domestic crisis (capitalized conditions indicate presence; small letters indicate absence). The second and third pathway also contain a stable regime. Apart from these commonalities, the three pathways contain a rather different conjunctural combination.

The first pathway indicates that presence of anomalous beliefs along with a domestic crisis will lead the regime to choose conflict, only when there is no window of opportunity. This supports some theories on anomalous beliefs, which state that a minor power with a leadership that has anomalous beliefs is likely to choose conflict, but this analysis shows this is only when also facing a domestic crisis (and there is no window of opportunity). In other words, anomalous beliefs are insufficient but necessary part of a configuration which is itself unnecessary but sufficient for the result (INUS condition). Panama (1989), Iraq (1990), Afghanistan (2001) and Libya (2011) are covered by this first pathway.

⁴QCA gives three different solution formulas with different levels of complexity. This article focuses on the intermediate formula.

The second and third pathway, being more similar to each other, indicate that stable regimes experiencing a domestic crisis will choose conflict either when they have a window of opportunity or foreign support. The second pathway is a unique case of Moldova, since it had an opportunity to face off against the Russian 14th army during Russia's internal turmoil. Major powers do not commonly have such a situation, indicated by the low coverage. The third pathway covers Republika Srpska (1995), Serbia (1999), Iraq (2003) and Georgia (2008).

Intermediate Solution			
Solution pathways	AB x DC x woo	RS x DC x WOO	RS x DC x FS
Cases covered by pathways	Panama (1989) Iraq (1990) Afghanistan (2001) Libya (2011)	Moldova (1992)	Republika Srpska (1995) Serbia (1999) Iraq (2003) Georgia (2008)
Solution formula	AB x DC x woo + RS x DC x (WOO + FS) -> choice of conflict		
Solution consistency	1.00		
Solution coverage	1.00		

Table IV. Intermediate Solution for Conflict Choice

In terms of the remaining findings, the foreign support literature is also often accurate, thus confirming that it is an influential condition. However, it is only a sufficient condition when occurring together with a stable regime and a domestic crisis; it is an INUS condition. Window of opportunity theory also shows good predictability, but just like with foreign support, it is a sufficient condition when occurring along with regime stability and a domestic crisis (INUS condition). Finally, regime stability also seems to be an INUS condition, that is, sufficient when occurring together with domestic crisis and either a window of opportunity or foreign support.

With the exception of Panama (1989), all of the minor powers covered by this

solution were already involved in another armed conflict, usually a civil war. This means that, for the minor power, the choice of war against a major power had to take into account consequences on the already established domestic front as well. Facing a loss of power, most of the leaders in these cases might have felt trapped. Accepting ultimatums from major powers could have meant losing on the domestic front. Yet even under such circumstances, stable regimes did not accept direct hostilities unless they might have believed they could win at least politically, either through foreign support or a window of opportunity. According to the results, only regimes with anomalous beliefs tend to overlook the importance of foreign support and window of opportunity. This shows how the various conditions occur together and create a situation where a domestic crisis has a different effect depending if it occurs with a stable regime, or with anomalous beliefs. Stable regimes seem to be much more aware of the international situation and their viable options. Different effect of anomalous beliefs perhaps indicates regimes' inability to comprehend or harness international opportunities. Overall, these combinations raise questions regarding the independent role of any single condition as being deterministic for a minor power to choose conflict.

Minor Powers Not Choosing Conflict

Although the primary purpose of this study has been to understand conditions which contribute to the choice of conflict, for comparative reasons it would be insightful to see how these same conditions fare for the choice of non-conflict. As mentioned earlier, in set theory, the relations are asymmetric, and therefore it is not simply the case that choice of non-conflict is an inverse formula of the choice of conflict. A special analysis of its own is required.

The analysis of necessary conditions for a minor power's choice of non-conflict found that no condition comes close to being a necessary condition (consistency of 0.9 or greater). This means that cases sharing a given condition do not strongly agree in displaying the outcome in question, as table V shows (Ragin 2006a, 292). Although the absence of domestic crisis and presence of regime stability seem to come somewhat close to being necessary conditions, this result shows that maintenance of non-conflict encapsulates a greater diversity of conditions, of which key conditions were sometimes overlooked by the literature on asymmetric conflict.

Analysis of Necessary Conditions		
Outcome Variable: not choosing conflict		
Conditions tested:	Consistency:	Coverage:
(presence of) foreign support	0.55	0.60
(absence of) foreign support	0.45	0.50
(presence of) window of opportunity	0.36	0.80
(absence of) window of opportunity	0.64	0.47
(presence of) domestic crisis	0.18	0.18
(absence of) domestic crisis	0.82	1.00
(presence of) regime stability	0.82	0.60
(absence of) regime stability	0.18	0.40
(presence of) anomalous beliefs	0.18	0.25
(absence of) anomalous beliefs	0.81	0.75

Table V. Consistency and coverage scores of presence and absence of all five conditions pertaining to the negated outcome (non-conflict).

Analyzing the sufficient conditions for non-conflict outcome also presents three pathways: absence of anomalous beliefs combined with regime stability and absence of domestic crisis; absence of regime stability combined with a window of opportunity and absence of foreign support; regime stability combined with absence of domestic crisis, absence of a window of opportunity, and absence of foreign support (see Table VI).

These various pathways that lead to the choice of non-conflict are somewhat more complex than pathways that lead to the choice of conflict. The reason is that the second pathway actually makes no theoretical sense. That is, presence of a window of opportunity should not play a role for a government to access whether it wants to remain in non-conflict. It makes no logical sense, however, only because such a condition becomes important in a conflict, not in non-conflict. The pathways do indicate, however, that domestic crisis can also exist among minor powers that choose acquiescence. That is, it is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for a minor power to choose war. The first and third pathways present a more logical and inverse relationship related to the outcome of choice of war. Namely, a stable regime that faces no domestic crisis, has no window of opportunity, and no foreign support is likely to choose peace. As well, a stable regime that has no anomalous beliefs and no domestic crisis is also likely to choose peace. As such, regime stability together with absence of domestic crisis are reasonably strong conditions influencing a minor power to choose to avoid conflict.

Intermediate Solution			
Solution pathways	ab x RS x dc	rs x WOO x fs	RS x dc x woo x fs
Cases covered by pathways	Dispute Over Taiwan (N02)	Georgian Civil War (N01)	Syrian Border Fortification (N03)
	Spratly Islands I (N06)	Russia and CIS in Afghanistan (N04)	Spratly Islands II (N07)
	Chinese Intrusions into Bhutan (N10)		Operation Uphold Democracy (N05)
	Russo-Norwegian Territorial Dispute (N11)		
	Russo-Latvian Border Dispute (N08)		
	Russo-Estonian Border Dispute (N09)		
Solution formula	ab x RS x dc + rs x WOO x fs + RS x dc x woo x fs -> not choosing conflict		
Solution consistency	1.00		
Solution coverage	1.00		

Table VI. Intermediate Solution for a Choice of Non-Conflict

Discussion

This analysis helps us understand competing claims regarding the importance and the role of conditions that have an effect on whether a minor power chooses to engage in conflict with a major power or not. Particularly, I find that domestic crisis is the condition that must be present when a minor power chooses to engage in conflict facing a major power. It is the only necessary condition for such a decision to occur. This is in line with several theories, including diversionary, desperation and prospect theory (DeRouen 2000; Kang 1995; Park 2004 respectively). Although there are variations among these theories as to how a domestic crisis affects the leadership, they all point out that given a lack of options in a desperate situation, a minor power will choose war.

The results also show a peculiar but important role of regime stability. It is a condition which is present in pathways both for the choice of conflict and non-conflict. Thus, it is an important variable for both pathways. However, lack of regime stability does not seem to play any role in a minor power's choice of war. This is somewhat counterintuitive, that regimes lacking stability are not under any pathway going to choose war. In fact, it is stable regimes which choose war when facing a domestic crisis and either a window of opportunity and foreign support. Scholars such as Paul (1994, 33) would find this result rather surprising, since Paul argued that insecure and militaristic regimes are more keen to wage war. Yet Paul is not wrong either, given the importance of regime stability for the choice of peace as well. Such an interesting outcome only shows the importance of conjunctural causation, whereby regime stability can have a different effect, depending on other conditions it is combined with.

Window of opportunity and foreign support seem to be mutually interchangeable conditions, which is logical, given that they both give some advantage to a minor power. This may explain why certain scholars are skeptical regarding the necessity of foreign

support (Cheraskova 2010; Fischerkeller 1998). Foreign support only matters when there is a domestic crisis and it is replaceable by another condition: opportunity. Opportunistic behavior confirms that offensive realists are sometimes right, that is, war may be chosen when other conditions match the opportunity. Yet neither foreign support nor opportunity seem to play an important role when a regime has anomalous beliefs. In such cases, a minor power is more keen to choose war, confirming Fischerkeller's statement that "we need cases where power-determinist theories do not apply" (1998, 10). That is, minor powers will sometimes choose war due to beliefs that can shape sensitivity to war, violence, sacrifice, glory and legitimacy. Having anomalous beliefs, a minor power is more likely to misperceive or misunderstand the situation it faces. Even if a minor power has a good strategic calculation, its anomalous beliefs may mean that it has very few friends abroad, and very little diplomatic influence, seeing war as the only choice to affect international players. This could be an interesting angle to explore in future studies.

These results explain some of the contradictory results of previous studies. Previous studies on asymmetric conflict tended to restrict themselves to very few theoretical frameworks which rarely captured the conjunctural and combinatorial logic of QCA. Many scholars, such as Cheraskova (2010, 5) raised skepticism regarding studies that rely on a single, or two variables. This is why grasping complexity can help us answer the question "did we miss something important?" (Polsky and Sommer, 2013).

Results of this study show under which conditions minor powers choose conflict facing a major power, which does not directly relate to the previously used definition of asymmetric warfare, given that the previous conceptualization has been used to study all asymmetric dyads, including wars between empires (Japan and Russia). This study

is specific to minor powers and their vastly stronger opponents, major powers. As such, it shows that minor powers do not always make choices which some scholars believe to be optimal, for instance, to internalize the norms and rules of the institutional order in order to constrain powerful states, or to ally with a dominant power to shield themselves from its capabilities or to seek to influence its policies (Ikenberry, Mastanduno and Wohlf 2009, 18-21). While this chapter neither asks nor answers why do minor powers make seemingly 'irrational' choices, the fact that a pattern of conditions can exist which is so closely related to asymmetric conflict suggests that there is a need to further extrapolate the causal logic of minor powers' decisions.

While employing a methodology of crisp-set QCA that carries a specific understanding of causation to this research topic has proved to be fruitful due to the insight into the specific combination of conditions existing at international, domestic and individual levels and a minor power's choice of conflict, there are limits to the usefulness of QCA as a methodology. First, the number of conditions that can be included in an analysis is limited from four to seven for an intermediate n , due to the fact that the number of possible combination of conditions increases exponentially with each new condition (Berg-Schlosser and De Meur 2008, 28; Bretthauer 2014a, 18). As a result, a risk exists of overlooking or not being able to include relevant conditions. In such a case, there could be other conditions that can yield interesting insights, for example, the role of particular weapons or how these conditions fare in a bipolar system of the Cold-war are interesting aspects that can be included in future research. Overlooked variables might also explain those cases that are not covered by the solution formulas offered so far. In contrast to regression analysis, QCA does not yield any results to the importance or size of impact of certain conditions (Bretthauer 2014a, 18). So while

domestic crisis stands out from other conditions in the analysis as it is a necessary condition as well as part of a sufficient term, it is impossible to estimate its impact vis-a-vis other conditions.

Yet, the epistemological aspect of conjunctural causation brings new insights. This study shows the benefits of including multiple pathways for the same outcome allowing for conjunctural and asymmetric causality. As mentioned earlier, scholars of asymmetric conflict have often pointed that multiple pathways, that is, different combinations of conditions may play an important role, reflecting that the additive causality of statistical analysis may not be always appropriate. Three different pathways were shown to influence a minor power to choose conflict, covering different types of countries, from democracies to military dictatorships. This shows that the same outcome can be brought about by different combinations of conditions. Conjunctural causation allows QCA to explore the ways in which different conditions work together, such as in militarized disputes that lead a minor power to perceive that it must fight. Interaction effects can also be captured with statistical analysis, but the number of these that can be included is usually very limited. Not only would the combination of conditions analyzed here be problematic to include as an interaction term, such conditions would also be difficult to quantify, because they are of qualitative nature (nominal).

Causal asymmetry of set relations, as already mentioned, allows for a situation where causes of the nonoutcome are not mirror images of the causes of the outcome as shown in this study. This situation can provide new insights as asymmetric causalities cannot be detected by statistical analysis and case studies are often more focused on explaining an outcome rather than a nonoutcome. By being close in epistemology, QCA

adds to the results of case studies by allowing for a systematic comparison across cases. Whereas case studies often focus on analyzing the causes and mechanisms that lead to the choice of conflict, QCA includes cases that lead to the nonoutcome, which increases the generalizability of results compared to case studies. Overall, this study, as have few studies in the past, shows that QCA as a method can add new insights to the study of conflict. Using a specific notion of causal complexity, the focus of QCA research is often on questions that are slightly different to those answered by either statistical research or qualitative case studies (Bretthauer 2014a, 19).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Capturing complexity of social reality has only made a few inroads into international relations. Using configurational comparative methods such as crisp-set QCA allows researchers to ask and answer more challenging questions, particularly where theoretical arguments employ a logic of causal complexity. One such topic is that of minor powers in asymmetric conflict, where past empirical studies find many points of disagreement. This study takes the international, domestic and individual-level conditions into account in order to overcome previous contradictions by employing a crisp-set QCA, whose methodological basis allows for a combination of theoretical contributions and thus provides a more holistic answer. After identifying twenty cases of asymmetric conflict (nine of which experienced conflict between 1989 and 2014), I have tested five hypotheses: the role of foreign support, window of opportunity, domestic crisis, regime stability, and anomalous beliefs. I found most support for the literature indicating a necessary role of domestic crisis. While this is somewhat intuitive, more

surprising results indicate that domestic crisis is only sufficient when occurring together with a stable regime and either foreign support or window of opportunity. Likewise, regimes with anomalous beliefs tend to ignore the importance of variables such as foreign support or window of opportunity. This analysis therefore shows that the assumption of causal complexity in QCA as method can add to the study of international, domestic and individual level conditions and minor powers in asymmetric conflict. By separately analyzing the presence and absence of a decision for conflict, and allowing for different pathways to the same outcome, QCA presents a slightly different focus, complementing theories and other methodological approaches.

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APPENDIX I

A.1 OUTCOME: PRESENCE OF A CHOICE OF CONFLICT

P01 - Invasion of Panama (1989 - 1990)

In December of 1989 United States invaded Panama as a result of a long chain of events that led to the military confrontation. In particular it was the American desire to remove Noriega from power, a long-term American policy toward Latin America, that overshadowed the entire chain of events. Although they attempted more peaceful means at first, including staging a coup, Noriega managed to retain power and as a result became even more aggressive towards the United States (Strong 2005, 184).

P02 - The Gulf War (1990)

Also known as the Operation Desert Storm, the Gulf War was a response of United States and some 27 other countries to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The Security Council ordered the Iraq to immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces from Kuwait. It authorized member states cooperating with the Government of Kuwait to use any means necessary to uphold Security Council's decision, unless Iraq withdrew. Iraq did not comply, which led to the military operation totaling over 800,000 military personnel from 36 countries (Human Rights Watch 1991, 69).

P03 - War of Transnistria (1992)

Once the Soviet Union began to dismantle, three distinct movements for self-determination were present in Moldova. One of them was a self-determination movement for the Dniester area. However, the central government in Moldova ignored this movement and promoted Moldovan culture. Amidst a tense political situation which involved various levels of political harassment, the result was a self-proclaimed Dniester Republic. As the hostilities escalated, spontaneous defense units sprang up, slowly coalescing into an organized army. Moldovan Government Forces consisted of volunteers, police officers and hastily assembled National Army soldiers. Dniester also formed joint command forces, but had many volunteers from Ukraine and Russia. The Russian 14th army, which was the only army stationed in Moldova at the time of independence, partially participated on the side of Dniester. Although exact involvement of the Russian 14th army is unclear, members of Dniester's political elite often thanked the Russia and the Russian 14th army for their key role in sustaining the republic during the war (Dailey 1993, 18 - 23).

P04 - Operation Deliberate Force (1995)

This was a bombing operation against a self-proclaimed state of 'Republika Srpska' (or the Serb Republic), a Bosnian Serb entity established in January of 1992. Air forces from United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Turkey participated in targeting Bosnian Serb forces, which was justified as

a defense of humanitarian values in the face of "undeniable Serb brutality against military prisoners and noncombatant civilians" (Owen 2001, 63). The Serbs however, were not willing to compromise, and launched counterattacks whenever possible, including hostage-taking.

P05 - NATO bombing of Yugoslavia (1999)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization conducted a seventy-eight-day bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in an effort to end Yugoslavia's crackdown on the Albanian insurgency in Kosovo. More specifically, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia failed to comply with NATO demands, which included an interim political settlement on the future of Kosovo, an end of the anti-insurgency campaign, deemed by NATO to be excessively and disproportionately carried out by the Serb Army and Special Police Forces in the region, and most importantly access by NATO forces to all of Yugoslavia (Wheatley 1999, 478; Kaplan 2004, 126). American, British and French forces under NATO command bombed Serbian targets throughout Yugoslavia, and Yugoslavia resisted for 78 days.

P06 - War in Afghanistan (2001 - ongoing)

Following the September 11 attacks on World Trade Center in New York, NATO and allied forces intervened in Afghanistan with two strategic objectives: first, dismantle al-Qaeda and kill or capture Osama bin Laden, second, remove the Taliban from power (V.I. 2009, 166). The pretext to the invasion was that Osama bin Laden was hiding in

Afghanistan. After the US demanded that bin Laden be handed over, the Taliban regime declined to extradite him without evidence on his involvement on September 11 attacks. The US refused to negotiate and launched a military operation in October of 2001, initially with the United Kingdom, but followed by other allies. Although the Taliban were driven out of power rather quickly, their defeat (rather than acceptance of American conditions) and subsequent insurgency establish a clear choice to resist, whether in power or not.

P07 - Iraq War (2003)

Iraq was named as being part of the "axis of evil" in January 2002 by the US President at the time, George W. Bush. This stemmed from the American claim that the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein sought weapons of mass destruction and domination of the Middle East, threatening US allies, as well as oil supplies (Copson, 2003, 2). Asserting that Iraq failed to comply with the WMD disarmament mandates, the Bush administration conducted a military operation without ever declaring war, the main goal stressed as being regime change. The operation included US allies such as United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland. Iraq briefly resisted before collapsing, suffering up to 10,800 casualties during the invasion phase (Conetta 2003).

P08 - Russo-Georgian War (2008)

Abkhazia and South Ossetia are two breakaway territories of Georgia. On August 7 of 2008, Georgia attacked South Ossetia, allegedly in response to attacks on its

peacekeepers and villages, and because the Russian troops were moving into South Ossetia from Russia. However, on August 9, Russian troops mounted a counter-offensive and forced Georgians to retreat. Russian troops continued to push into Georgia proper. Despite their poor morale and rapid defeat, Georgian troops fought back until ceasefire was implemented (Gahrton 2010, 177-9).

P09 - Operation Unified Protector (2011)

Libya was undergoing a civil war when the UN Security Council gave an ultimatum to Ghadaffi to end the violence. However, Ghadaffi forces continued to advance to Benghazi in mid-March. Rebels pleaded for help, and the UN Security Council authorized the use of all necessary means to protect civilians and civilians populated areas under threat of attack, as well as to secure the no-fly zone. On 19th of March, an ad hoc coalition of states, including the US, the UK, and France, working through the NATO framework, attacked Libyan government's targets. Ghadaffi's forces (Ulfstein and Christiansen 2013, 159-61)

A.2 OUTCOME: ABSENCE OF A CHOICE OF CONFLICT

These are the cases where a serious dispute involved display or use of force against a minor power, but the minor power decided to not engage. In other words, there was a military challenge that a minor power did not take up. However, brief violations of territorial waters or airspace are not included, as such violations lack data and might not be considered a serious challenge. For example, when Cuba shot down two American airplanes owned by the Brothers to the Rescue, it cannot be considered

as a relevant case because the two airplanes acted on their own risk, without the approval of the US government. Damaging, prolonged and more frequent violations against state property however, are included, as in the case of Russo-Norwegian territorial dispute.

N01 - Georgian Civil War (1991)

Georgia sought to gain control over separatist South Ossetia and Abkhazia which resulted in a civil war. Both South Ossetia and Abkhazia were backed by Russia, politically but also militarily. Despite being a civil war, Georgia recognized the threat coming from Russian involvement in the war, and sought to appease it by reaching an agreement. Even though there were other episodes of Russian intrusions into Georgian territory, some of those were not aimed at challenging Georgia, but rather Chechen militants operating from its territory. Thus, the Georgian Civil War illustrates the best case of Russian intervention against Georgia.

N02 - Dispute Over Taiwan (1994)

Both China and Taiwan engaged in intimidation tactics, causing protests from the other side. Such tactics included seizure of fishing vessels, alerts and military exercises. However, at no point did Taiwan engage in hostilities with the Chinese military.

N03 - Syrian Border Fortification (1996)

Syria amassed troops near the border with Turkey after it accused Turkey of being behind the blasts that rocked the country for a few weeks. In response to Syrian border fortification, United States threatened confronting Syria militarily if Syria goes to war with Turkey. In 2004, US forces in Iraq exchanged gunfire with Syrian border troops over the Iraq-Syria border. Subsequently, the US reinforced the border, but Syria did not respond. Other incidents also occurred later on, such as in 2008, when US helicopters and troops fired at several buildings five miles inside the Syrian territory.

N04 - Russia and CIS in Afghanistan (1996)

Once Taliban came into power in Afghanistan, relations between CIS states and Afghani government continued to be unstable at the border. The Taliban government supported Islamic militants which threatened to destabilize the former Soviet States. In June 2000, a clash occurred between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. Uzbekistan launched airstrikes into Afghanistan, but Afghanistan didn't offer any serious engagement (Correlates of War).

N05 - Operation Uphold Democracy (1994)

This case refers to the US plan to remove a military regime from power in Haiti in 1994. With the approval of the UN Security Council, United States began planning for the operation in August 1994. However, when most of the force was airborne, Haitian officials agreed to restore democracy and allow the American troops to land. Shortly after, the military regime abdicated peacefully.

N06 - Spratly Islands I: Philippines and China (1995)

China has challenged its weaker neighbours over the disputed Spratley Islands by a slow encroachment. Even though the dispute predates the end of the Cold-war, in 1995 there were many incidents which caused protests from the other side. For example, on May 13, China and Philippines engaged in mutual "show of force", in which Chinese vessels blocked a Philippine navy vessel sailing toward the Spratlys. In subsequent years incidents continued, and Philippines often made serious preparations for a war with China. However, apart from intimidation tactics and arrests of fishermen, Philippines did not engage the Chinese military.

N07 - Spratly Islands II: Vietnam and China (1994)

Similarly, with the Philippines, Vietnam has faced Chinese pressure over the control of these crucial islands. There were several incidents which indicated that Vietnam will not challenge China militarily, despite the strong verbal protest by the Vietnamese government. 1994 is the highlighted year because it involved several serious incidents between the two countries. One such occurred in May, whereby China engaged in a show of force by increasing its naval presence around the Spratly Islands. Two months later, two Chinese warships blockaded a Vietnamese oil rig. Vietnam did not engage with the Chinese navy.

N08 - Russo - Latvian Border Dispute (1998)

From 1998 to 1999 Russia reinforced the border after Latvian Prime Minister stated that Latvia was going to begin to unilaterally demarcate the contested border.

N09 - Russo - Estonian Border Dispute (1994)

After Estonia gained independence, it claimed that a strip of land in the Pechory (Petseri) district of south-eastern Estonia belong to it, as according to the Russian Estonian Treaty of Tartu of 1920. However, Russia objected to this and proceeded in 1994 to demarcate the border according to the post-1940 border by installing new posts and bringing troops to the disputed area.

N10 - Chinese Intrusions into Bhutan (2004)

China has consistently used a dual strategy toward Bhutan, by offering both sticks and carrots. On one occasion in 2004, 200 Chinese troops entered Bhutan to work on construction projects. Bhutan declared that this intrusion was a violation of its territorial sovereignty, but it did not respond by force. India also protested Chinese actions in Bhutan.

N11 - Russo - Norwegian Territorial Dispute (2008)

As global energy demands grow, Arctic's resources have increasingly become a focus of interstate tensions, such as Russia and Norway, which lacked a clear

delineation of territorial waters. Although this dispute predates 2008 and contained many Russian violations of Norwegian airspace as well as fishing grounds, it was in 2008 when Russia increased its naval presence in the disputed waters near the Spitsbergen islands, which belong to Norway.

APPENDIX II

List of interstate disputes, taken from the Correlates of War Project, titled ' Militarized Interstate Disputes (v.4.01). Only disputes coded with hostility level of dispute 3, 4 and 5 were looked at, each pertaining to display of force, use of force, and war (in their respective order). Threat to use force and lower hostility levels cannot account for militarily challenging a state.

Variables contain a set of questions to which an answer to 'yes' or 'no' would indicate whether there was a presence or an absence of a condition. Thus, if at least one question can be answered with a yes, a condition is coded with a 1.

Coding of Data:

Invasion of Panama (P01)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Brzezinski, when referring to the leadership of Panama at the time stated that "Manuel Noriega has already discovered he has no allies" (Brzezinski 2008, 50). Although he was supported by the CIA until mid 1980s, by 1989 he was more of a liability to the US than an ally.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy began to grow, reaching the peak during 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

According to Galvan (2012, 186), Panama at the time was a country "in social chaos, a stagnant economy, simmering discontent, and street protests".

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Noriega was brutal against any potential opposition. For example, he ordered torture and murder of Dr. Spadafora. When a president of Panama at the time, Nicolas Barletta, attempted to inquire into the matter, Noriega forced him to resign. When he named Delvalle as the next puppet president, the new president attempted to relieve Noriega as director of the armed forces. Delvalle was also forced to resign. When he orchestrated controversial elections in 1989, as a sign of desperation, he beat up opposition politicians on the street. Thus, it was clear that regime was very unstable given the increasing aggression (Galvan 2012, 189).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Noriega was ideologically neutral, however, due to involvement in violence and crime he had a reputation of being violent. For example, already at a young age he raped a 13-year-old girl. His drunken behavior was also one of his prominent features (Galvan 2012, 184-86).

The Gulf War (P02)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Although Iraq had some diplomatic support from states such as Libya and Sudan, no powerful ally was in support of Saddam. UN Security Council resolution 678 was passed without a veto from permanent members. This is why Ruane and James (2012) stated that Iraq had "no allies" among major powers (107).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy began to grow, reaching the peak during 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Economic problems were such that they might cause instability of the Baath regime. Iraq lost \$452.6 billion in a war against Iran. The basic needs of Iraq were not

met (Park 2004, 53-59). Therefore, Saddam Hussein needed to act if he wanted to get Iraq out of possible trouble.

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

According to Park (2004), domestic political instability was a possible trajectory given the economic crisis. However, since I am looking for a situation prior to the conflict, it was not the case that a serious political crisis broke out to challenge the Baath regime (53-59). Hussein purged his political opponents much earlier.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

According to a psychological study of Saddam Hussein, he followed a developmental path vowing to "never again, never again shall I submit to superior force". His own studies also shaped his worldview to hate foreigners. He was also known as a street thug (Post and George 2004, 211-215).

War of Transnistria (P03)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

International support for Moldova depended upon Western countries' relations with Russia, which is why United States did not want to recognize Moldova before Russia did (Olson, Pappas and Pappas 1994, 223). Moreover, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) established a mission in Moldova only in 1993 (Olson, Pappas and Pappas 1994, 222). There was thus little Moldova could have expected prior to the conflict.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

In the late 1991, just a few months before the conflict, Russian state did not really exist. That is, according to Kuchins (2013), the regime lacked a clear sense of what it was striving to create. The absence of a coherent strategy led to the disagreement over economic reforms, spawning a constitutional crisis that ended in violence in 1993 (31-32). Political drama, lack of economic progress and social upheaval make it clear that Russia was severely constrained.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Transnistria declared independence from Moldova at the same time when Moldova declared independence from the USSR. Gagauzia also pushed for autonomy and formed its own defence forces. According to Roper (2001), the Russian 14th Army was stationed in Transnistria and supplied the Transnistrian paramilitary force with weapons and ammunition. Boris Yeltsin placed the 14th Army under direct Russian control. The Russian Congress of People's Deputies passed a resolution in support of the population in Transnistria. 14th Army also directly intervened actively on the side of Transnistria (106 - 108). Therefore, while facing Russia on the side of Transnistria, Moldova faced serious obstacles to keep the country together.

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

After March 1990 parliamentary elections, a popular front was formed comprising 66 per cent of the seats. Government was composed almost entirely of ethnic Moldovans. Mircea Snegur was elected president by the parliament and he faced a very

weak opposition (Roper 2001, 104-105). He enjoyed strong support within the regime before the conflict.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Snegur was a strong supporter of unification with Romania, but he did not advocate the extreme position of unifying the two states (Roper 2001, 106). He was also initially opposed to military action, preferring negotiations due to a fear of reprisals from Russia and Ukraine (Olson 1994, 488).

Operation Deliberate Force (P04)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Republika Srpska (RS) did not initially enjoy any international support from powerful states. However, Pouliot (2010, 163-180) indicates that Russia's orientation to the world changed considerably between 1993 and 1995 in response to NATO enlargements. Thus, by mid-1995, Russians were already in protest over bombing of Serb positions. Even as diplomatic, such support is valid.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy began to grow, reaching the peak during 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Economic sanctions were put in place in 1994 to punish the Bosnian Serbs. (Stedman 177-196) However, since Bosnia was embroiled in a civil war, the Bosnian Serb's primary responsibility was to carry out the domestic war successfully.

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Although there were plans in early 1995 by Milosevic to depose of Karadzic by infiltrating his security services, Karadzic acted early enough by reorganizing his police (Doder and Branson 208). Thus, he remained in a stable role before the conflict.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Karadzic was nationalistic, corrupt, and was running a smuggling system. He also became paranoid later during his presidency (Doder and Branson 208). From the young age he had obsession with themes of blood and violence. Some who met him noticed a deep-seated hostility (Sell 2002, 159). Thus, Karadzic showed more anomalous beliefs than average political figures.

NATO bombing of Yugoslavia (P05)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Although Russia made it clear to the Milosevic regime that it would not stand in

NATO's way, there is evidence that the Russian involvement in the crisis did help Milosevic bolster his own position (Sell 2002, 314). If anything, Russian refusal to acquiesce a UN resolution to authorize NATO action played an important part in the overall crisis.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy began to grow, reaching the peak during 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Serbia at the time was under economic sanctions, but also rebellion in Kosovo made the future of sovereignty in Serbia uncertain, including that of Milosevic's regime (Sell 2002, 195).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Before the conflict, Milosevic solidified his power by engineering a nearly total fragmentation of the body politic. Of the fifty-three parties that fielded political candidates for the parliament, more than half of them were run by his agents. He also had the support of the intellectuals and the media. (Doder and Branson 208, 76).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

There are some elements of anomalous beliefs in Milosevic. While his wife was hard-line marxist, he appealed to charisma, and used Serbian nationalism to boost his power. He often brushed his opponents as national traitors (Sell 202, 182). However, he also had a lighter side of his personality, amusing European delegates, for example. Even with his Yugoslav opponents, he kept a respectful attitude (Sell 2002, 252). Among domestic parties, Milosevic purged the 'hardliners', preferring to work with moderates, including a pro-European New Democracy (ND). At times, even Pentagon

flirted with Milosevic as an ally (Brown 1996, 125-130). Thus, it would be difficult to portray him as someone with strong elements of anomalous beliefs, despite some elements of such disposition.

War in Afghanistan (P06)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Not only did Afghanistan under Taliban have no foreign support of another major power it had no international recognition apart from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Loyn 2009, 190).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy grew during the 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007). There was not much change in the early 2000s.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Taliban's hold on Afghanistan prior to American engagement was vulnerable. There was the worst drought not seen for many years, and the opposition was far more determined to continue the military fight against Taliban (Loyn 2009, 202).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

The Taliban faced two problems in order to have a stable regime. First, they were unexperienced, uneducated and thus incapable of governing a country. Second, Taliban faced internal fissures. As Ahmed Rashid suggested such fissures were growing more serious as paid fighters began to split (Goodson 2012, 125). The most problematic tension was between Taliban and al-Qaeda over antagonizing the United States (Laub 2014). On the other hand, the Taliban did enjoy some domestic support, yet given the lack of experience in stable governance, the Taliban regime can be coded as unstable. Seeing it as stable would be more problematic.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

According to David Loyn (2009), Taliban was reckless, discounting the importance of foreign acceptance, or the UN which attempted to tell them what it meant to be a country (109). Their interpretation of Islam was shunned by most of the world. Thus, perhaps Taliban did not have anomalous beliefs, but their regime was bent on strictly ideological, that is, religious lines which made the regime rather inflexible.

Iraq War (P07)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Iraq had no formal allies among major powers. However, members of the Security Council disagreed on the use of force. In fact, most of the members wanted the inspections to continue (Bunn and Chyba 2006, 60). This could have restrained the United States.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

Herring (2013) restates that among the weakness of the United States, none relate to another costly conflict, economic crisis or social upheaval. Rather, United States' biggest weakness was its dependence on bases and petroleum products. Thus, there were no serious impediments for the United States to act.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Herring (2013) states that Saddam Hussein had a domestic rebellion in the North and South to deal with.

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Ellen Lust (2013) describes Hussein's Iraq under the Baath party as a major actor in regional politics due to an important requirement to be a major actor: "stable and competent Iraqi domestic state" (379). Jonathan Schanzer (2005) also confirms that

prior to the war in spring of 2003 "Iraq could never have been characterized as a state with weak central authority" (127). Such authority of course, stemmed from Hussein's iron fist.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

According to a psychological study of Saddam Hussein, he followed a developmental path vowing to "never again, never again shall I submit to superior force". His own studies also shaped his worldview to hate foreigners. He was also known as a street thug (Post and George 2004, 211-215).

Russo-Georgian War (P08)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Cherkasova (2010) claims that United States warned Georgia that it would be foolish to count on the US support, because signals were not strong enough (2010, 13). However, she also states that United States made significant military and diplomatic assistance to Georgia and that such assistance could have signaled to Georgia that United States was willing and ready to protect Georgia's interests, even diplomatically

(25). Comparing Georgia with Ukraine, she signals that at least other factors had to play a role. I agree. However, equipping, financing, and advising the Georgians, even throughout the war, meant that Georgia could at least count on diplomatic support (Treisman 2012, 325).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

In 2008 the Russian economy was booming with record-high oil prices. There were no notable weaknesses that Russia had which could be exploited (Mankoff 2010, 10-11).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Georgia was losing its breakaway territories, and there was build-up of military infrastructure on the ground in these territories. Thus, there was an unbearable feeling of 'creeping annexation' which existed, especially since Saakashvili campaigned that he will return Georgia's 'territorial integrity' (Cherkasova 2010, 75).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Most vocal protests and internal disagreements within the regime came after the war, especially in 2009. Prior to the conflict, opposition did threaten to substantially change the system, but the opposition was small and divided (Lansford 2013, 519-521). Thus, the regime was still fairly stable.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Saakashvili was by some accounts successful in rebuilding Georgian state (Jones 2013, 86). Although his attack on South Ossetia was by some accounts foolish, he was successful in Achara (52). Some described him as nationalist, impatient, head charging and uncompromising. Yet he was also strongly opposed to corruption and charismatic. There are no indications that he had a dark, problematic personality, or a propensity for great risks.

Operation Unified Protector (P09)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Gaddafi had little international support, if any. He alienated most other regional leaders. His regime also did not have major ties with other non-Western patrons, such as Russia and China (Duncan 66).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

Although United States may have lost some of its monopoly of international leadership to China, that is, with dispersion of global power and innovation, the US continues to have the largest military and one of the most dynamic economies in the world. Thus, there are few, if any indicators of weaknesses for the US to act in Libya (see for example, Kegley and Banton 2014).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

What started as protests in a city of Benghazi, soon became a civil war, fueled by long-held tribal rivalries, chaotic governance and Islamic militancy. Thus, the situation was clearly very difficult (Inbar 2013, 6).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

With a country embroiled in a civil war, Gaddafi's regime was crumbling internally as well. Large swaths of his military defected, along with prominent diplomats, the interior minister and even his foreign minister (Inbar 2013, 6).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Gaddafi was described as compulsively disruptive, someone who had an incurable love for chaos. He seemed to have an internal struggle going on. Thus, he was eccentric, bizarre. Although perhaps successful in some ways, he managed to alienate himself. Taking all this into account Kawczynski (2011) describes him as power seeking and deeply vain. Thus, when others describe him as immature, impatient and

inconsistent, it becomes difficult to see him as a credible political figure.

Georgian Civil War (N01)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

The West had good relations with the Soviet Union and Russia during the collapse of the Soviet Union. United States thus regarded Georgian independence and conflicts as an internal Soviet affair. As such, United States recognized Georgia only on December 25, 1991 (Lansford 2013, 519). Therefore, there was no foreign support during Georgia's early years.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

In 1991 the Russian state did not really exist. That is, according to Kuchins (2013), the regime lacked a clear sense of what it was striving to create. The absence of a coherent strategy led to the disagreement over economic reforms, spawning a constitutional crisis that ended in violence in 1993 (31-32). Political drama, lack of economic progress and social upheaval make it clear that Russia was severely constrained.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Separatist governments assumed control in all three breakaway regions of Georgia in the early 1990s. Thus, a civil strife was raging as Georgia attempted to become independent (Lansford 2013, 519).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Gamsakhurdia was first elected leader of Georgia, but even before his election he faced highly critical opponents. Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and two other senior ministers resigned in August over Gamsakhurdia's controversial politics. Even more so, Georgian National Guard split into pro and anti-government factions. In December there was a coup d'etat (Lansford 2013, 519-520). Thus, the regime was very unstable.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Gamsakhurdia was very nationalist and often he is blamed for making situation irreparable for Georgia's national minorities. He is also cited as being authoritarian in disguise. However, he was also a good scholar (Waters 2004, 49). Being a borderline case, I will code Gamsakhurdia's regime as 0, because he was still somewhat respected after his death.

Dispute over Taiwan (N02)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Taiwan historically had an intimate relationship with the United States, which existed as an "informal alliance". Such a relationship did not being to cool down until 2000 (Lee 2010, 288).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

I found no major issues that would restrain China's ability to act in 1993, maybe

for the exception of the peaceful but heavily manipulated leadership transition from Zhao Ziyang to Jiang Zemin as the President of China. It was a very smooth year for China during which it further privatized its economy and encouraged economic integration with the West.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

There were only minor incidents that caused tensions with China. Overall, Taiwan was undergoing a rapid economic growth. Situation was rather favourable (Ash, Garver and Prime 2013, 104).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Taiwan had a vibrant political system, considered the first stable democratic polity in the Chinese tradition (Ash, Garver and Prime 2013, 4).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Taiwan had a vibrant political system, considered the first stable democratic polity in the Chinese tradition (Ash, Garver and Prime 2013, 4).

Syrian Border Fortification (N03)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Hafez al-Assad enjoyed a strong alliance with Iran. He attempted to re-establish military support from Moscow in but at this time to no avail. Syria also had some oscillating relations with the Gulf states but overall, the alliance with Iran and PKK made Syria relatively isolated at the time (Maoz and Yaniv 2013, 237).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy grew during the 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that

maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Syria had a strong dislike of Turkish and Israeli military cooperation, as well as disagreements with Turkey over territory and the sharing of water from the Euphrates. Turkey also retailed covertly against Syria due to its support of the PKK. Therefore, it seems that Syria willingly created a difficult situation to put pressure on Turkey (Tejel 2008, 75). Situation was therefore redeemable.

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Hafez al-Assad kept a stable regime through repression and technological support. He had a consensus system based on clan solidarity which helped the system absorb tensions and protect the regime throughout his reign (Trombetta 2014, 35). As such he was able to protect his regime from both internal and external enemies. His

regime was not always safe, but it was relatively stable.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Assad was brutal but he only used it when necessary, keeping his ambitions in check. Some believe he even had impressive skills, patience (Pipes 1991,5). Therefore, Hafez al-Assad was a dictator, but he had a pragmatic attitude and he was compromising as well (Trombetta 2014, 35).

Russia and CIS in Afghanistan (N04)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

As mentioned already, not only did Afghanistan under Taliban have no foreign support, apart from the frontier in Pakistan, it had no international recognition apart from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Loyn 2009, 190).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

By the summer of 1996, Russia was pulling back from a disastrous defeat in Chechnya, where 100,000 Russian citizens lost their lives (Kuchins 2013, 33). Chechnya's situation remained unresolved, making Russia inept to deal with its most important problems.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

In 1996, Taliban technically seized the power in Kabul, but ethnic-based fighting did not cease. In 1996 and 1997 the front lines shifted back and forth, making the situation very unstable (Goodson 2001, 78).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Before consolidating their power, Taliban was even more inexperienced, uneducated and thus incapable of governing a country. There were also doubts about

the outcome of internal cohesion once the enemy was defeated (Goodson 2012, 125).

Thus, even though the Taliban did enjoy some domestic support, it could hardly be said that Taliban established a properly functioning regime.

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

As mentioned already, Taliban was reckless, discounting the importance of foreign acceptance, or the UN which attempted to tell them what it meant to be a country (David Loyn 2009, 109). Their interpretation of Islam was shunned by most of the world. Thus, perhaps Taliban did not have anomalous beliefs, but their regime was bent on strictly ideological, that is, religious lines which made the regime rather inflexible.

Operation Uphold Democracy (N05)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

The actions of General Cedras isolated Haiti, and his government was only recognized by the Vatican (Whitney 1996, 303-32).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

America's new economy began to grow, reaching the peak during 1990s, to which some attributed American power as even greater than before (Ikenberry 2008, 23). As a hegemon that maintained the only leading position in the world, there are hardly any problems that made United States vulnerable or 'exploitable' (see for example, Black 2007).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Despite the attempts by foreign players to create a difficult situation for Cedras and force him to step down, he and his ruling class were living a rich lifestyle even under sanctions (Gibbs and Duffy 2012, 443). Thus, there was no significant domestic crisis.

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Cedras' regime of terror was quite effective at keeping opponents quiet, even using psychological tools. As Ballard (1998) claims, the regime was quite resistant to diplomatic and economic pressures, perhaps because only a few select individuals performing administrative functions who were getting richer even during shortages (63).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

General Cedras rejected every accord because he was called a criminal. Some called him a 'pompous prick'. Blatant lies about the situation in his country made him appear devious and unreliable abroad, angering even his own associates (Girard, 80). To add to this, he engaged in a reign of terror, executing children, raping women, killing priests, to what has been labeled sheer sadism (1). He was also engaged in drug dealing and theft (Ballard 1998, 122). Thus, such a violent character is far from rational.

Spratly Islands I (N06)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Although Philippines closed down US bases on its territory in response to anti-US sentiment, the two countries remained allies as stipulated in the US-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty (Blackwill and Dibb 2000, 4).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

China was undergoing a smooth period. There were military exercises conducted by China off of Taiwan, which brought some tensions with the US, however these were not too serious. Domestically, China was developing its impoverished regions and situation looked stable (Benewick and Wingrove 1999, 263-266).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Although economic reforms were underway, majority of the population was still impoverished. Muslim separatists in the South also presented a threat. Nonetheless, these problems were given less attention as they were under control (Leifer 2013, 30).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Fidel Ramos was the president. His presidency brought in more stability and economic growth to the Philippines. Armed forces accepted his civilian rule and thus there was no threat to the regime (Bertrand 2013, 84).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Although there are some indicators that Ramos wanted a constitutional change to stay in power, this was a rumor. He ruled under democratic and rational principles (Bertrand 2013, 84).

Spratly Islands II (N07)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Traditional patron of Vietnam during the Cold War, Russia, withdrew its last military advisors in 1992. Attempts by Vietnam in 1994 to sign new security agreement were also fruitless (Donaldson, Noguee and Nadkarni 2014, 343). United States just lifted its trade embargo on Vietnam in only 1994, a positive development but far from assuring. India and Indonesia have military ties with Vietnam but more related to exchanges of personnel and servicing (Thayer 1994, 71)

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

China's faced no major issues in 1993-1994 period. The relationship with the US was boosted with the most-favoured-nation trading status. Politically China was conservative but this did not cause any turmoil (Benewick and Wingrove 2000, 274).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Vietnam did not face any conflict or social upheaval except small demonstrations in response to the socio-economic situation, which Vietnam was slowly working to transform (Luong 2003, 92).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Vietnam already had a sophisticated regime to channel concerns of the citizens to the authorities in a non-threatening manner, as well as establish control over the different levels of society. As such public demonstrations were not necessarily threatening. The communist party was well entrenched, loosening political restrictions in some areas (Luong 2003, 33-35).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

The general secretary at the time, Đỗ Mười, ruled on consensus rather than autocracy. He published essays and seemed to be driven to achieve what he believed to be "the true, the good and the beautiful" (Woodside 1997, 67). There are no indications that him or the party ruled with anomalous beliefs.

Russo-Latvian Border Dispute (N08)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Latvia was an associate partner in Western European Union. In 1994 it joined the Partnership for Peace programme. Even before its membership, Latvia worked with NATO forces. Bill Clinton visited Latvia in 1994 and gave a speech at the Monument of Freedom, an occasion that the Balts compared to President Kennedy's visit to Berlin during the Cold War. United States was a crucial partner in getting Russians to withdraw their troops from Latvia between 1991 and 1994. Americans also provided financial aid, guided reformation, and participated in the Peace Corps since 1992 (Pabriks and Purs 2013, 138).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

By the summer of 1996, Russia was pulling back from a disastrous defeat in Chechnya, where 100,000 Russian citizens lost their lives (Kuchins 2013, 33). Chechnya's situation remained unresolved, making Russia inept to deal with its most important problems. By 1998 situation in Chechnya was still problematic. In addition to that, in August of 1998, there was a financial collapse (34).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

The government (not the regime) was unstable, and there were some negative economic consequences due to tensions with Russia. Language rights and citizenship policies were causing friction but the situation was not causing any serious harm (*The Europa World Year Book 2004*, 2578).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

In 1998 the Minister of the Economy was dismissed. The ruling coalition, fearing collapse, began to disintegrate. Although indicative of an unstable regime, the ruling party requested that a vote of no confidence be conducted to test personal integrity (*The Europa World Year Book 2004*, 2578).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Krasts' government was open to challenges and cared about personal integrity. There is nothing to indicate anomalous beliefs (*The Europa World Year Book 2004*, 2578).

Russo-Estonian Border Dispute (N09)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Similar to Latvia, Estonia was an associate partner in Western European Union. In 1994 it joined the Partnership for Peace programme. United States was a crucial partner in getting Russians to withdraw their troops from Estonia between 1991 and 1994. Americans also provided financial aid, guided reformation, and participated in the Peace Corps since 1992 (Pabriks and Purs 2013, 138).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

Yeltsin attempted to provide a new constitution to solve conflicts between the center and the regions over the distribution of power. However, Chechnya did not

acquiesce to the maintenance of the federal order. In December of 1994 Yeltsin decided to use force to deal with Chechnya (Kuchins 2013, 33). Executive-legislative standoff in late 1993 that almost resulted in a civil war were also recent events affecting Russia's image.

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

While years prior to 1994 were still somewhat uncertain for Estonia, from 1994 Estonia began to consolidate its independence, reflected in the intensification of the security debates. Although Estonia was still rebuilding its economy, the period was bearable (Aalto 2013, 66).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

In November of 1994 Mart Laar's government was ousted from power due to the 'roubles scandal'. However, this occurred later in the year and did not threaten Laar's political career. Thus, the regime was very stable (Aalto 2013, 160).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

As mentioned Mart Laar's government was accused of a 'roubles scandal', which related to clandestine sale of 2.3 billion roubles for 1.9 million US dollars. However, such an action does not amount to anomalous beliefs (Aalto 2013, 160).

Chinese Intrusions into Bhutan (N10)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

India is responsible for Bhutanese security. It supports Bhutan in training and modernization of its army, among other things. India is also the principle donor for Bhutan for its economic development. Finally, India has also been vocal against Chinese intrusions into Bhutan (Sharma, Gorla and Mishra 2011, 190).

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

China had tolerable problems such as quarrels over energy resources with its neighbors, as well as territorial dispute over Spratly Islands. Price hike of crude oil did not help Chinese difficulties either, but the economy grew overall and there are no indications that China was 'tied down' (Wu 2014, 224).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Bhutan has slowly developed hydro power, and sought to develop prosperity via decentralization and democratization. Apart from a threat perception coming from China, there are no signs of domestic crisis (Sharma, Gorla and Mishra 2011, 187).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

The King of Bhutan himself has helped in the transition of country to democratic country, and there are thus no signs of an unstable regime (Sharma, Gorla and Mishra 2011, 1-31).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

The King of Bhutan seems to be rational, developing a democratic society, keeping repression low, and working not to antagonize any of his neighbors. He even developed a "gross happiness index" (Sharma, Goria and Mishra 2011, 187).

Russo-Norwegian Territorial Dispute (N11)

Foreign Support (FS)

Did a minor power expect any form of foreign support prior to the conflict?

Norway was one of the original founding member nation states of NATO. Foreign support is thus a given.

Window of Opportunity (WOO)

A major power is involved in another costly conflict?

A major power had economic crisis?

A major power had social upheaval?

In 2008 the Russian economy was booming with record-high oil prices. There

were no notable weaknesses that Russia had which could be exploited (Mankoff 2010, 10-11).

Domestic Crisis (DC)

A minor power is involved in another costly conflict?

A minor power had a devastating economic crisis?

A minor power had social upheaval?

Norway is perhaps one of the most prosperous countries in the world, far from having any domestic crisis (see for example, OECD Economic Surveys: Norway 2008).

Regime Stability (RS)

For a democracy, was there a powerful opposition keen to erase democratic principles of the current regime?

For an authoritarian regime, were key aides and security services united in supporting the regime?

Norway is an old and stable democracy, by many accounts (Strom and Narud 2006, 523).

Anomalous Beliefs (AB)

Was the regime overly ideological or zealous?

Was the regime engaged in criminal activities?

Was the leading figure mentally ill or abusing substances?

Long-standing practice of democratic principles makes it almost extremely difficult to have anomalous beliefs in Norway (see for example, Strom and Narud 2006).