THE SHADOW OF THE PAST:
THE INFLUENCE OF REPUTATION ON ALLIANCE CHOICES

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Although alliances are the most studied phenomena in international relations, there are a number of unanswered questions. Numerous theories explain why alliances form and end, but we do not know how states choose their partners, or why they end when they do. In addition, despite the voluminous literature on alliances, almost no work explains the variation between alliance institutions. I suggest that a better understanding of reputation may help fill these gaps. If reputation matters, then we should see unreliable states (states that fail to honor their alliance commitments) being treated differently than reliable states (states that honor their commitments). Drawing from existing work in political science, as well as from anthropology, business, and game theory, I argue that reputation can affect a state’s alliance autonomy. States that are perceived to be unreliable should have greater difficulty attracting new partners and preserving existing alliances than states with a reputation for being reliable. Furthermore, a state’s reputation may explain some of the variation between alliances, such as the up-front costs incurred by the signatories, the explicitness of the language, and the level of military integration. To determine the effect of reputation on alliance choices, I test my argument against four cases prior to the First World War. I find that while a state’s reputation has little influence on the duration of alliances, unreliable states do have more trouble forming partnerships, especially with reliable states. I also confirm that a state’s reputation affects the institutional design of its alliances. Specifically, states with
unreliable reputations have more autonomy in choosing their partners and in setting the terms of the alliance. I also discover that a reputation for reliability creates a moral hazard problem, whereby a state with reliable allies will be emboldened to challenge its adversaries. These findings have implications for theories of alliance formation, duration, and variation, but they are also relevant for policymakers; if leaders are concerned about their state’s autonomy, then they must act to develop and preserve its reputation for reliability.
Dedicated to my wife Cindy
and to my parents Daniel and Susan
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done.

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

1.1 The Puzzle

It is widely accepted in business that reputations are a valuable commodity, both for individuals and for firms, and there is significant evidence to support this view. Individual reputations, often in the form of a credit report, influence whether someone qualifies for a loan, an apartment, or a job. Similarly, firms value their reputations as a way to attract top employees, charge premium prices for products, and preserve customer loyalty. For example, after one partner at an accounting firm was found to have taken bribes, The Wall Street Journal reported that:

The nation’s 11th-largest accounting firm is having problems obtaining new clients and partners, retaining current clients, and keeping its executive suite intact. . . . The firm’s travail illustrates the pressures on a professional firm – whether it be in accounting, law, architecture or another field – when its reputation is threatened.¹

An appropriate and logical question to ask is whether reputations are as valuable for states operating in the international system as they are for actors in domestic economic systems.

National political leaders have long believed that their reputations matter. Monarchs like Louis XIV and Philip II saw a direct connection between reputation and the power of the state. Historian Geoffrey Parker writes, “The rulers of every European state believed that to ‘lose face,’ whether by failing to make good a claim or through military defeat, damaged their international standing. . . .”2 Similarly, Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara, President John F. Kennedy’s secretaries of state and defense, respectively, both believed that the loss of South Vietnam to communism would destroy the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization as well as undermine the credibility of other U.S. commitments.3 Much of the deterrence literature likewise assumes that a reputation for resolve is a necessary condition for preventing war,4 and regime scholars have also emphasized how a state’s reputation influences its ability to form and preserve international institutions.5

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There is, however, a growing challenge to the conventional wisdom. Relying upon sociopsychology, Jonathan Mercer claims that allies always perceive one another as irresolute while enemies will always perceive each other as resolved. He concludes that because states cannot change their reputations, they should never go to war out of concern for developing or preserving a reputation. This apparent disconnect between traditional assumptions and recent findings leaves us with a lingering puzzle: do reputations matter in international politics? If they do, then it is important to understand how. If they do not matter, then the crucial question is, why not?

I suggest that Mercer’s findings, though important, are incomplete. States, like firms, have many different kinds of reputations, and his emphasis on resolve does not account for the variety of other reputations that are attributed to a state. Even if Mercer’s argument is correct, there are a number of reasons states should still be concerned with how others perceive them. In particular, states that are perceived to be reliable allies – a different reputation from being resolved – may have greater freedom of action in choosing their alliance partners and in the design of their alliances. I focus on the effect of reputation on alliances, which not only allows me to address the question of reputation in international politics, but also helps to fill gaps in the existing alliance literature.

This question is important because if a state’s perceived reliability as an ally influences the behavior of other states, then leaders must pay attention to their reputation if they wish to preserve their state’s autonomy. Therefore, my goal is to test a series of

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hypotheses so that scholars and academics alike will have a better opportunity to evaluate the influence that a state’s reputation has on the behavior of other states, particularly with respect to their alliance choices. In doing so, I will try to make sense of the existing literature, discussing both the positive and negative aspects of earlier studies of reputation. I borrow from the business literature in developing my hypotheses, because it is an area that is rich with studies on how one actor’s reputation influences the behavior of others.

1.2 Reputation and Alliances

Alliances are one of the most studied aspects of international relations. As George Liska offers, “It is impossible to speak of international relations without referring to alliances.”7 Moreover, the most frequently studied component of alliances is their formation. Other alliance issues that have been examined are the effects that they have on wars, the conditions that contribute to their duration, and how frequently alliance obligations are kept.8 In spite of the level of attention given to the subject, there are still large gaps in our understanding of alliances, which I suggest can be partly filled by incorporating reputation into existing alliance theories.

7 George Liska, Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 3.

By examining how the concept of reputation may affect alliances, I hope to gain a greater understanding of whether a state’s reputation influences the behavior of other states more generally. If one state’s reputation does not alter the behavior of other states, then that would support those who are critical of reputation as an important variable in international relations. However, if a state’s alliance behavior is influenced by the reputations of other states, then this strengthens the conventional wisdom and improves our understanding of alliances.

It is logical to presume that a state’s reputation should matter in international politics, given the absence of a central authority to punish unacceptable behavior. However, I would not expect reputation to be able to explain all alliance behavior. A more appropriate standard is simply whether reputation improves our ability to explain alliance choices. If so, then incorporating reputation can increase the effectiveness of our


existing theories of alliance and institutional behavior. If not, then at least this project gives reputation a fair test in an area where it should matter a great deal because of the inherent dangers associated with any alliance.9

In applying reputation to the study of alliance behavior, I focus on four aspects of alliances: formation, duration, institutional design, and the connection between alliances and war. I examine each of these issues in greater detail in chapter 3, but it is worth a brief discussion here. First, I address whether a state’s reputation influences the willingness of other states to form an alliance. One gap in the alliance formation literature is our inability to explain a state’s choice in partners. We have numerous explanations for why states align, and that seek to identify the types of states they target.10 However, we have difficulty explaining why states choose to ally with one state over another.

The business literature tells us that among other things a company’s reputation will affect the quality of employees it can attract: “The firm’s return to its reputation . . .

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is the ability to attract and retain higher-quality workers at a lower cost than would be incurred absent the reputation.”11 Similarly, individuals with good credit are more likely to be successful at obtaining a bank loan. Accordingly, if reputation also matters in international relations – if one state’s behavior is influenced by the reputation of another – then a state’s reliability as an ally should influence its ability to find allies. Some of the institutions literature already assumes that this is true. Robert Keohane, for instance, argues that “International regimes alter the information available to governments and the opportunities open to them; commitments made to support such institutions can only be broken at a cost to reputation.”12 But we can test this assumption by focusing on alliances as a specific type of institution. As such, reputation may contribute to our understanding of alliances by helping to explain how states choose their partners. At the very least, it would clarify why some states are unattractive as potential alliance partners.

The second aspect of alliances I address is their duration, and I examine whether a state’s reputation is a factor in the termination of its existing alliances. Scholars have identified a number of variables that contribute to the end of an alliance.13 Among these, neorealists have the most basic prediction – alliances end when the geostrategic circumstances that led to their creation disappear.14 However, all of these arguments

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13 See fn8.

have difficulty explaining why specific alliances break down when they do. We can again turn to the business literature and see that a company that develops a bad reputation will lose customers and partners: “[O]wing to the effect of reputation, high quality firms have more customers, because they have fewer dissatisfied customers who leave, and word-of-mouth advertising results in more arrivals.”

Therefore, it is conceivable that if a state is in an alliance and its reputation declines (perhaps because of its failure to honor some other commitment), then that alliance should be more likely to end. As Kenneth Waltz argues, “If a member of one alliance tries to settle differences, or to cooperate in some ways, with a member of another alliance, its own allies become uneasy.” For example, US leaders during both the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War believed that a failure to stand up to the Soviet Union would weaken US reliability in the eyes of its European allies, and potentially weaken the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) itself. Historian Robert Dallek portrays Vice President Lyndon Johnson’s concerns after a 1961 visit to South Vietnam. According to Dallek, Johnson believed that, “If we did not make ‘a major effort to help these countries defend themselves,’ the Vice President advised, it would signal to the world that we ‘don’t live up to our treaties and don’t stand by our

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16 Waltz, Theory of International Politics, p. 166.
If reputation does influence the behavior of other states, then we should see alliances ending when states perceive a decline in their ally’s reliability. However, even if alliances do not end as a result of an altered reputation, we should see some changes in the structure of the alliance to reflect the new situation. This brings me to the third aspect of alliances addressed here.

There is growing interest in the international regimes literature for explaining the causes of variation among institutions, and many of these same factors should be applicable to military alliances. However, one factor that has not yet been addressed is the reputation of the member countries. Someone with poor credit may be able to obtain a loan, but the conditions of the loan will be different from that given to someone else with better credit. Similarly, alliance structures may vary because of the reputations of the member states. If an unreliable state is able to find a willing ally, that agreement may differ from the commitment made between two reliable states. For example, the language of an alliance with an unreliable state may be more binding and restrictive than an alliance among reliable states; just as friends conducting a business transaction may accept an oral agreement while strangers would require a more binding, written contract. Other possible distinctions based on a state’s reputation could be the amount of up-front costs required to form an alliance and the level of military integration within the alliance (both of which involve the use of costly signals to offset an unreliable reputation).


The common thread between all three ways in which a state’s reputation might affect alliances is the value that states place on their autonomy. All three aspects of alliance behavior examine whether or not reputation is a valuable commodity, focusing on the effect that a state’s reputation has on its ability to form or preserve alliances, or on the type of alliances it is able to create. To be more precise, the value of a reputation for reliability should be an increase in a state’s freedom of action. On the other hand, the cost of a reputation for being unreliable should be less freedom of action; an unreliable state may have fewer options for selecting an ally, may have more trouble keeping allies, and may have more restrictions placed on its behavior by any alliances that it is able to form.

Although I have suggested a number of ways in which having a reputation for reliability improves a state’s freedom of action, the flip side to reliability is that it might embroil states in conflicts they would otherwise prefer to avoid. A moral hazard problem exists when an actor that is insured is more likely to take risks. The parallel to this in international politics is that when a state has a reliable ally, it may display a greater willingness to escalate a conflict than it otherwise would if it were alone or if it could not count on its ally for support. In other words, having a reliable ally may embolden a state to push a conflict to the brink of war.

Addressing this puzzle is important for academics and policymakers alike, for if a state’s reliability as an ally does influence the behavior of other states, then I strengthen the conventional wisdom and show the importance of leaders paying attention to their state’s reputation. Then the next step, based on the evolution of the business literature on reputation, would be to focus on the ways in which states can improve their reputations.
If, by contrast, a state’s reputation does not affect the behavior of others, this would have important implications, but then the challenge would be to explain why reputations matter in the domestic economic sphere, where contracts are legally binding and enforceable, but not in international politics where commitments must be self-enforced, and where prior behavior is frequently the best measure of a state’s character. In the chapters that follow, I develop the concept of reputation more fully, and test the above propositions in an attempt to explain if and how reputation is applicable to international politics in the same way that it applies to economics.

1.3 Project Outline

To address the puzzles discussed above, this project proceeds as follows. Chapter Two reviews two different literatures. First, I focus on the concept of reputation, as it has been studied by international relations scholars as well as by scholars in other disciplines such as economics, business, and sociology. In addition, Chapter Two examines the alliance literature to identify gaps in the existing theories and to elaborate upon how the concept of reputation might help our understanding of alliances by improving the effectiveness of those theories.

In Chapter Three, I outline my assumptions and discuss my variables and how I will measure them. In addition, I highlight the hypotheses that will be tested in the substantive chapters (Chapters Four and Five). In doing so, I draw from theories and arguments in the existing literature on reputations, alliances, and regimes to develop a series of tests of how a state’s reliability as an ally might influence the behavior of other states, either already allied or considering an alliance.
Chapters Four and Five each comprise two cases that allow me to test my hypotheses against a number of observations. For example, Chapter Four deals with the period 1900 to 1907 and the British government’s decision to abandon its historical policy of “splendid isolation”. In the first case, I focus on the British decision to negotiate an Anglo-German alliance to balance against the rising Franco-Russian threat to British naval and colonial interests, and also to prevent Russian expansion into Asia. However, the British ultimately rejected an alliance with Germany, and instead pursued an alliance with Japan. The alliance with Japan was tested during the Russo-Japanese War and later renewed as a result of Britain’s “benevolent neutrality”.

The second case in Chapter Four represents the first of three crises that make up the main source of evidence for Mercer’s argument about reputation. This case focuses on the First Moroccan Crisis (1905-1906), which not only tested Britain’s new entente with France, but also the Franco-Russian alliance and the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. This case allows for a comparison of the different levels of support that Germany and France received from their allies, and whether those relationships changed in the aftermath of the crisis.

Although my first case focuses on the negotiations for an alliance and then the behavior of those allies in war, the remaining three cases focus on the behavior of allies when faced with crises short of war. One reason for this is that the number of wars in which an alliance obligation is tested is relatively small, particularly when focusing only on the major powers. By examining conflicts short of war as well, I expand the number of potential tests that can be conducted. In addition, wars are not the only test of a state’s reliability. The level of support a state provides to its allies during near-wars should also
influence its reliability, since a state that does not support its allies in a dispute could be considered even less reliable if the dispute were to escalate. Although state expectations of their allies may differ between conflicts and wars, I can hypothesize that a lack of support during a crisis will have a similar effect on a state’s reputation as failing to honor an obligation to go to war.

Chapter Five looks at the other two crises used by Mercer, both of which take place closer to the outbreak of the First World War: the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis (1908-1909) and the Agadir Crisis (1911). In particular, I focus on how each of these crises contributed to the evolution of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. Both crises involved the same six European powers, but the primary belligerents change. The main disputants in the Bosnia crisis were Austria-Hungary and Russia, so this allows me to examine the degree to which Britain and France support their Russian ally, as well as the amount of support that Italy and Germany provide to their Austro-Hungarian ally. Then, during the Agadir Crisis, France and Germany emerge once again as the primary belligerents. This not only allows for a test of Russian and British support for France, and Italian and Austro-Hungarian support for Germany, but also allows me to test whether reputations are influential only as they pertain to specific situations – tension between France and Germany over Morocco – or if reputations have more widespread influence, including a state's behavior in other crises or with respect to other allies.

Chapter Six, the concluding chapter, is divided into two main parts. First is a brief review of my results, including some of the unexpected findings. Although I summarize my cases at the end of each chapter it is useful to perform one final review to determine the success of my overall arguments, as well as my specific hypotheses. Then,
I address some unanswered questions from my own research and provide some analyses on the direction that research on reputation should go in the future. In some ways, this project creates more questions than it answers. However, my objective here is to simply suggest some ways in which reputation may influence the behavior of states, to challenge those who claim that leaders should not be concerned about their state’s reputation, and provide a first step towards improving our understanding of the connection between reputation and alliance choices. The most important thing at this stage is to identify ways in which reputation affects state behavior, and also to identify some of the conditions under which it has the greatest influence. If successful, then it will be necessary to address these other questions about reputation in the future.

For one thing, this project does not directly deal with the question of whether reputations are assigned to states or to individual leaders. I assume for the sake of simplicity that both have reputations, although I find a great deal of evidence that perceptions of a state’s reputation do change as a result of new leadership. Therefore, further examination of this possibility may be warranted if I can show that a state’s alliance choices are influenced by reputation. In addition, this project focuses on military alliances because they provide a difficult test of reputation. States joining an alliance may have to give up a great deal of sovereignty and also risk their very survival. Therefore, if reputation influences the behavior of states within alliances, then it would be worthwhile to expand the scope of this project to include other types of international institutions that may be less threatening to a state’s sovereignty, such as trade pacts, environmental treaties, and arms control agreements. Finally, if a reputation for reliability influences a state’s ability to attract allies, or if it affects a state’s autonomy,
then reputation may also contribute to our understanding of non-state violence, such as
terrorism and civil wars. If a sub-state actor’s reputation influences the behavior of other
actors, then actors with positive reputations may have more success ending civil wars
than those that are perceived to be unreliable. Similarly, groups within a state may have
reputations for honoring or failing to honor commitments.

Before getting to these and other possible implications of reputation for
international politics, I will discuss where our understanding of alliances is, and where
our understanding of reputation is going. I turn first to a review of the existing literature
on both alliances and reputations.
CHAPTER 2

REPUTATION, ALLIANCES, AND IR THEORY

*A good name is more valuable than money.*

--- Publius Cyrus, 42 B.C.

2.1 Studies of Reputation

A variety of studies already exist dealing with the influence that reputation has on the behavior of actors. Research from disciplines as diverse as anthropology, economics, and political science have dealt with the role of reputation. In this chapter, I will discuss how scholars from within these disciplines have dealt with the concept of reputation. I begin with an examination of the business literature, in which firms often put great effort into the development and maintenance of their reputations.

2.1.1 Reputations in Business

The business literature already recognizes the value of a good reputation; economic actors profit for having positive reputations, and suffer for negative ones. Adam Smith is one early scholar who discussed reputation. Most noteworthy is his argument that cooperation occurs because of repeated interactions. Smith suggests that actors in the market must be concerned that dishonest behavior will translate into a loss of future profits. Any cheating that is detected or even perceived will have negative
effects on business.\textsuperscript{19} Therefore, actors will do all they can to maintain the appearance of honesty. For instance, Douglas Diamond and Steven Sharpe both examine how reputations enforce nonbonding contracts in debt markets.\textsuperscript{20} Similarly, B. Klein and K. Leffler focus on the importance of reputation for assuring product quality. According to their study, a reputation for high product quality allows firms to earn rents on their reputation, enabling them to charge higher prices.\textsuperscript{21}

Perhaps the best example of reputation at the microeconomic level is a person’s credit report. Though not a measure of a person’s true character, credit reports are used by banks, employers, and landlords to determine who is a worthy applicant for a loan, job, or apartment. In other words, credit reports are used to gauge a person’s economic reputation. They show the prior economic behavior of an individual and are then used to predict that person’s future reliability. Individuals with good credit are more likely to get the loan, the job, and the apartment than those with poor credit. Investors and consumers use similar concepts to rate corporations and their products.

One such measure of reputation at the corporate level is the stock market. Stock portfolios exist to provide investors with information about how a stock performed in the past. Companies with a steady history, or with rising value, are preferred investments;


they are more likely to have secure futures, and thus attract greater levels of capital. Similarly, companies with falling stock value lose money in the market, often because of prior actions. Since 1983, Fortune magazine has conducted an annual “Corporate Reputation Survey” ranking the reputations of companies across forty-nine groups. One analysis of the stock market, taking into consideration a company’s placement in either the top ten or the bottom ten of Fortune’s rankings, indicates that stocks provide a higher rate of return for those companies in the top ten than for the market average. In addition, stocks for companies in the bottom ten tend to return lower rates than the market average (and in many cases lose value).  

Moreover, while corporate reputation is difficult to quantify, companies gain numerous benefits for having a positive reputation. Charles Fombrun outlines seven benefits, what he refers to as reputational capital, that firms receive for having a good reputation. He finds that well-regarded companies generally:

- Entice top recruits to apply for positions;
- Experience greater loyalty from consumers and employers;
- Face fewer risks of crisis;
- Are given greater latitude to act by their constituents.
- Command premium prices for their products;
- Pay lower prices for purchases; and
- Have more stable revenues.


Other benefits of a favorable reputation include enhanced access to capital markets and greater attraction for investors. In fact, firms gain so many benefits from positive reputations that many in business now use the concept of reputation management as a substitute for public relations.

The real question is whether or not these economic findings about reputation hold true for the international political system. I contend that each of Fombrun’s benefits of a positive corporate reputation has a parallel in international politics. The first can clearly be translated into the ability of a state to attract loyal allies, which improves as a state’s reputation improves. The next three parallel the behavior of states already aligned with one another; reliable states may be given greater freedom of action by their allies, while unreliable states will have much less autonomy. The last three deal with the purely economic costs and benefits of a reputation – if a firm with a good reputation can pay lower prices for purchases, then it would follow that a state with a reliable reputation should be able to attract allies for less cost.

A large component of the business literature is also concerned with how firms develop a positive reputation, so that they may obtain some of these benefits. For some products, quality is impossible to determine before purchase and consumption, and may be difficult even after consumption. As a result, firms with low quality products have an incentive to misrepresent their product as being high quality, to charge high-quality

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prices. However, these firms will not have repeat customers; only those high priced products that are in fact high quality will attract repeat customers. William Rogerson, for example, finds that firms with a high quality product will be more profitable because reputation ensures that misrepresentation of quality is not possible over the long run.25

Therefore, one way to signal high quality, according to the literature, is through advertising. The logic is that only firms with high-quality products will spend a great deal of money up-front, because they know they will profit from repeat customers. Consumers can assess the quality of a product by the amount of money that is spent on publicity or advertising, or for example the furnishing of a doctor’s office. As Franklin Allen suggests, “[F]or firms producing high quality and maintaining their reputation, revenue is raised in every period.”26

A parallel exists here with alliances in international politics. Unreliable states have an incentive to misrepresent their reliability and gain the benefits of an alliance. One way to distinguish between an unreliable and a reliable state may be in the amount of up-front costs the state is willing to pay to participate in the alliance. A state that intends to honor its commitment will be more willing to pay up-front costs that will be lost if it reneges on the commitment. Another way to think about this is that states that are believed to be unreliable will be asked to pay more up-front costs, either as a signal of their true intentions, or as payment to offset the potential abandonment.


Based on the works I have discussed here, it is clear that scholars in business follow the conventional wisdom that reputation matters. The question, then, is whether the same conventional wisdom is applicable to international relations. A number of studies apply economic analogies to international politics. According to Kenneth Waltz, the domains of states and markets are structurally similar, and therefore allow for the application of analogy.27 Those in business have also not shied away from drawing comparisons to war.28 However, there are a number of potential problems applying economic analogies to international relations, particularly in dealing with the concept of reputation. For one thing, there is nothing in international politics comparable to a credit report. States cannot evaluate the past behavior of other actors as easily as economic actors can.

In addition, economic transactions occur much more frequently than political actions. A company interacts with its customers every time a product is purchased, and this occurs more often than states interacting with each other over alliance issues. As such, a firm’s reputation is valuable. One could also argue that if a company has thousands of customers, it can afford to alienate one or two. But, if a state loses one or two allies because of bad practices, that could be extremely damaging. Each move


should be very important because the number of actors and interactions are limited in international politics. Therefore, if reputation matters at all, it should visibly influence the behavior of states.

Other problems are the differences between firms and states as each operates within their structure. Duncan Snidal points out that while firms can be eliminated by competition in the market, elimination of a state is unlikely. In addition, he suggests that outcomes in the market are evaluated according to systemic properties while, “international systems are evaluated fundamentally in terms of the impact they have on individual states.”29 In addition, Bruce Russett suggests that, “To compare a certain kind of market situation . . . with a particular real-world international system is sure to involve major simplifications and even distortions.” But then goes on to say that, “no comparison of two situations is ever strictly comparable; no man steps twice into the same river. The European balance of power in 1890 was not the same as in 1905, though that fact has not prevented historians and political scientists from drawing or applying some general principles to both.”30

Whether or not the analogy is appropriate should depend, as with all uses of analogy, on the question being asked. For my purposes, I have shown that a firm’s reputation has value, even in a realm where contracts are legally binding and actors have legal recourse for inappropriate action. Reputations are important not just because of


repeated interaction, but because information about an actor’s preferences and intentions is often incomplete. As Keith Weigelt and Colin Camerer contend, it is because of this condition of incomplete information that reputation matters in business.31

Similar conditions of uncertainty exist in the anarchic international political system. Furthermore, Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal suggest that, “In domestic societies, legal commitments are credible because aggrieved parties can enforce them, with the power of the state if necessary. Even ‘hard’ international law falls short of this standard. . . .”32 Similarly, Hans Morgenthau claimed that the, “rules of international law embodied in general treaties must often be vague and ambiguous, allowing all the signatories to read the recognition of their own national interests into the legal text agreed upon.”33 It is logical to presume, then, that reputation should matter at least as much in international politics, if not more than it does in the market.

If reputation does matter in international relations, then we should see certain behavior when a state is perceived to be a disloyal ally that we would not see when it is perceived to be reliable. Under conditions of anarchy and uncertainty, which define international politics, the best way to predict an actor’s future behavior is based on its past actions. If a state has a reputation for always coming to the aid of an ally, its guarantees will be more credible than the state that has failed to honor its prior commitments. As such, it should have an easier time attracting and keeping allies. On


the other hand, states that have reneged on past commitments may have difficulty finding allies, or at least they will have to make considerable concessions to make themselves more appealing as an ally.

2.1.2 Reputation and International Relations

The connection between reputation and politics is not new. Many classical thinkers like Thucydides and Machiavelli, believed that reputation was a crucial element of leadership. Machiavelli dealt directly with the benefits of a good reputation and the consequences of a bad one, illustrating two different types of reputation – resolve and reliability. In *The Discourses*, he discusses resolve writing that, “[I]f you yield to a threat, you do so in order to avoid war, and more often than not, you do not avoid war. . . On the other hand, you will find your supporters growing cooler towards you, since they will look upon you as weak and pusillanimous.” In this, he implies that appearing resolute is beneficial, not only because it is more likely to deter war, but also because it reassures one’s allies.

In *The Prince*, he further contends that reliability is important for the sake of both allies and adversaries:

A prince is also respected when he is a true friend and a true enemy; that is, when he declares himself to the side of one prince against another without any reservation. . . If you do not declare your intentions, you will always be the prey of the victor . . . because whoever wins does not want reluctant allies who would not assist him in times of adversity; and whoever loses will not give you refuge since you were unwilling to run the risk of coming to his aid.\(^35\)


He seems to imply here that it is better for a state to honor its commitments and lose a war than to stand on the sidelines, and lose its reputation. More recently, reputation has been a necessary component of many political science studies. James Alt, Randall Calvert, and Brian Humes discuss the importance of a hegemon maintaining its reputation, Richard Neustadt argues that professional reputation is one of the three requirements of a successful President, and David Romero discusses the benefits of a politician’s reputation during elections.36 The early regimes work by Robert Keohane also accepted reputation as an important component of the development and maintenance of international institutions. He writes:

The dilemmas of collective action are partially solved through the device of reputation. . . . As long as a continuing series of issues is expected to arise in the future, and as long as actors monitor each other’s behavior and discount the value of agreements on the basis of past compliance, having a good reputation is valuable even to the egoist whose role in collective activity is so small that she would bear few of the costs of her own malefactions.37

However, the one area of the political science literature in which reputation has played the largest role is in the study of deterrence.

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2.1.3 Deterrence and Reputations for Resolve

There are three common elements throughout much of the deterrence literature: communication, credibility, and the interdependence of commitments.\(^\text{38}\) Deterrence depends on the defender signaling to another state that the cost of attacking outweighs any potential benefits. Sending a signal to an adversary is a means of communicating the state’s intention to retaliate for an attack, and thus raise the costs of attacking. The range of possible commitments a state can make run from the relatively costless commitment of a leader’s statement, to the more costly forms of signing a formal agreement or even positioning military forces in a way that makes one’s commitments obvious. States need not always honor their commitments,\(^\text{39}\) but for deterrence to exist, much less be effective, a commitment must be communicated. Moreover, Robert Jervis and James Fearon both make the argument that costly signals reveal more about a state’s intentions than do cheap signals.\(^\text{40}\)


Signaling is also a means of tying one’s reputation to a commitment. By signaling one’s interest to honor a commitment, a state risks losing its reputation by backing down. According to Thomas Schelling, “A potent means of commitment, and sometimes the only means, is the pledge of one’s reputation.” Signaling a commitment is a necessary but not sufficient condition for deterrence to work. A second requirement of deterrence is that the commitment must be credible. Much of deterrence theory is predicated upon the fact that states need to develop a strong reputation in order to deter a future attack. As Barry Nalebuff suggests, “One primary component of communication is the use of reputation. . . . [T]he cost-benefit calculation that leads to certain behavior in the present reflects on how one will act in future cases.” Therefore, the defender must convince the other side that it has not only the ability, but also the will to punish aggression. This is often referred to as resolve. If a state fails to punish an aggressor, deterrence scholars argue that the state’s reputation will suffer. As a result, future deterrent threats will be less believable, since that state’s irresolute reputation will make its commitments appear less credible.

The third component of deterrence is the belief that commitments are interdependent. As Franklin Weinstein states, “That the deterrence theorists think of commitments in terms of the maintenance of the principle that all commitments must be


kept is manifest from their position on the interdependence of commitments.”\textsuperscript{43} This implies that deterrence depends upon the previous behavior of the state. If it stood its ground in past crises, having that reputation for resolve will increase the credibility of its future deterrent threats. However, the concept goes beyond that, to suggest that a state’s actions in one case will signal its resolve in all future cases, regardless of any differences that may exist from one case to the next. This is evident in Jervis’ claim that, “Deterrence theory . . . assumes that states are – and should be – terribly concerned about their reputations for living up to their commitments. . . . If a state defaults on one commitment, other states will be less likely to believe it in the future.”\textsuperscript{44}

This was a critical component of US foreign policy during the Cold War, and is an important assumption of reputation. As Thomas Schelling asserted, “The main reason why we are committed in many of these places is that our threats are interdependent. Essentially we tell the Soviets that we have to react here because, if we did not, they would not believe us when we say that we will react there.”\textsuperscript{45}

Some scholars have tried to evaluate the validity of this assumption. For instance, Paul Huth, Christopher Gelpi, and Scott Bennett claim that, “previous capitulation by either the challenger or defender appears to be a sign of general weakness on their part.”\textsuperscript{46}


\textsuperscript{45} Schelling, \textit{Arms and Influence}, p. 55.

While this general weakness may or may not affect the behavior of other states, deterrence scholars and policy-makers alike have traditionally feared the negative effects that accompany such a reputation. However, the empirical evidence does not provide clear evidence to either support or refute the interdependence of commitments. As I will discuss in greater detail in section 2.1.5 below, Jonathan Mercer in particular denies that commitments are interdependent, suggesting instead that they are independent of one another. If so, then this would mean that one’s willingness to back down in a particular situation does not necessarily signal a similar willingness to back down elsewhere.

As a result of these three components of deterrence – communication, credibility, and the interdependence of commitments – the conventional wisdom among the majority of deterrence scholars has been that one’s reputation is worth fighting for. The argument is that if a state threatens war to defend itself or others, it must follow through on its threat or else its resolve will be called into question when it makes future threats. The implication of this thinking was that states might have to wage war to prevent war in the future.47

A reputation for being a reliable ally is related to deterrence theory because all three of the above concepts are also crucial for alliances to be effective. As in deterrence, communication can take many forms. The signing of an alliance is in itself a strong signal, but states can do other things to signal their intentions to defend an ally, such as

positioning troops on the ally’s territory. A state’s reputation is also important, and I attempt to show in this project some of the ways in which reputation influences alliances. To distinguish between the different reputations that states possess, I refer to alliance reputations as reliability. Finally, all four areas of alliance behavior I examine in this project are based on the assumption that commitments are interdependent. If, for example, a state’s failure to honor one commitment makes it difficult for the state to find allies in the future, then there is clearly a connection. The effect of interdependence may be especially pertinent for alliance duration. If a state’s failure to honor one commitment causes its other allies to abrogate their commitments, then those commitments would clearly be interdependent. On the other hand, if reputation does not effect the formation or duration of alliances, then that may provide a valid criticism of the interdependent commitments assumption.

2.1.4 Reputation and Game Theory

One area that deserves some attention at this stage is game theory, because it incorporates reputation into many of its models. One problem with the game-theoretic use of reputation, as Mercer points out, is that it makes the same mistakes as the deterrence scholars by treating reputation as a given, rather than testing the concept itself.48 Despite this failing, the logic behind the game-theoretic view of reputation is important for the development of any study in which reputation is a central theme.

Every repeated game assumes that actors develop reputations over time, and more importantly that these reputations influence the behavior of other actors. Game theorists often refer to this as an actor’s type, and players often have an incentive to misrepresent their type. For example, in the “Chicken” game actors have an interest in not backing down, so that others will be forced to back down.49

Two games in particular are relevant for studying reputation in international politics: the prisoners’ dilemma (PD) and the chain-store paradox. The PD is one of the most frequently used games in international relations, and like many games it simply assumes that reputation matters. In the traditional version of the game (illustrated in Figure 2.1), players have an individual incentive to defect, which usually results in mutual defection even though that is the worst possible outcome for both players.50

The PD provides a solid analogy to the point when an ally must decide whether or not to honor a commitment. Within an alliance, the information flowing between the partners is imperfect and asymmetric. There is a mutual benefit to cooperation, but there is also an incentive to defect because honoring a commitment is potentially costly; it may

49 The “Chicken” game is described as follows: “Two drivers race down the center of a road from opposite directions. If one swerves and the other does not, then the first will suffer the stigma of being known as a chicken (CD) while the second will enjoy being known as the hero (DC). If neither swerves, both will suffer grievously in the ensuing collision (DD). If both swerve, damage to the reputation of each will be limited (CC).” Kenneth Oye, “Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies,” cited at p. 8 in Kenneth Oye, ed. Cooperation Under Anarchy (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986).

50 The “Prisoners’ Dilemma” is described as follows: “Two prisoners are suspected of a major crime. The authorities possess evidence to secure conviction on only a minor charge. If neither prisoner squeals, both draw a light sentence on the minor charge (CC). If one prisoner squeals and the other stonewalls, the rat will go free (DC) and the sucker will draw a very heavy sentence (CD). If both squeal, both will draw a moderate sentence (DD).” Oye, “Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies,” p. 7).
mean getting involved in a war that costs lives and money.\textsuperscript{51} Therefore, there must be some advantage or benefit to honoring a commitment. In a game with multiple turns, the benefit of a cooperative strategy comes from the development of a trustworthy reputation, and how that reputation influences the behavior of other players.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Player 1} & \textbf{C} & \textbf{D} \\
\hline
\textbf{C} & 3,3 & 0,4 \\
\hline
\textbf{D} & 4,0 & 1,1 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\underline{Figure 2.1: The Traditional Prisoner’s Dilemma}

As we know from studies on the PD, players who have a long shadow of the future – that expect to repeatedly interact with each other – are more likely to cooperate because the repeated interaction allows both sides to generate expectations about how one another is likely to behave in the future.\textsuperscript{52} Charles Lipson suggest that, “Not only does repetition permit players to make threats and commitments, it also makes reputation

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{51} Glenn Snyder, \textit{Alliance Politics} (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).}

important – all the more so since there is no external guarantee that promises will be kept. 53 Therefore, the “shadow of the future” is important for cooperation to emerge. However, while iteration is a necessary condition for cooperation to emerge, it is not a sufficient condition – one can imagine a game in which both players are aware that the game will be played an infinite number of times. By itself, this will not produce cooperation unless information is public. In fact, infinitely-played games in which one’s actions will not be made public may promote greater levels of defection, since there is no danger of other actor’s being made aware of defections, which means that punishment is unlikely. As such, information is another necessary condition for cooperation, because when information is public, one can be held accountable for past actions. Therefore, reputation also influences behavior; in fact, this “shadow of the past” may help states mitigate some of the effects of uncertainty by developing expectations about the behavior of one another based on previous actions.

A variation of the PD helps explain reputation further by altering the payoffs to make mutual cooperation more likely. In the story of the prisoner’s dilemma, the two suspects are held and questioned separately. If both suspects are virtual strangers having no shadow of the past, or expecting little interaction in the future, then they are unlikely to cooperate with one another, and both will suffer from mutual defection. However, if hypothetically speaking, both suspects are members of an organized crime family, where defection is costly (death is often the punishment for being a “rat”) and where cooperation has added benefits within the organization, then the prisoners are more likely

to cooperate with one another and stay quiet. In other words, the criminal’s behavior will create a reputation for being either a rat, or a stand-up guy. The point is that both reputations have consequences.

We can model this increased likelihood of mutual cooperation by altering the payoffs of the game, which changes it from a PD to a collusion game (illustrated in Figure 2.2). One way to do that is for each player to receive a secondary payoff for mutual cooperation (representing the benefits of establishing or preserving a reputation for reliability). Second, is to reduce the benefits of obtaining the sucker’s payoff (defecting when the other player cooperates – akin to abandoning an ally in war). The possibility of defection still exists, especially if both actors are concerned about relative gains. However, the likelihood of mutual cooperation increases when there are secondary payoffs for cooperation, and when one reduces the risk of being suckered. Therefore, when a game’s time horizon is sufficiently long enough to allow reputations to form, and when the incentives to defect are offset by either the costs of losing one’s reputation or by the advantages of mutual cooperation, then cooperation is more likely to occur.

In one experiment, Gordon Tullock complicated the PD, by allowing subjects to choose their partners and communicate their results. He found that, “If some individual player did . . . play a noncooperative strategy he would find it very difficult to get people to play with him in the future. Almost certainly, he would have to offer some side-payments until he had established something in the way of reputation.”\textsuperscript{55} In other words, players who developed poor reputations lost their partners. This fits perfectly with two arguments that I test in this project. First, that an unreliable state will have difficulty attracting allies. Second, that states with bad reputations will have to make side payments to attract allies.

Another game, which deals more directly with reputation, is the chain-store paradox. In this game (illustrated in Figure 2.3), an established chain-store, the incumbent, faces new entrants into a market, with each new competitor taking away business. Whenever a new competitor emerges, the chain-store has the choice of cooperating (doing nothing) or fighting (undercutting the new competitor).

According to the deductive logic of the game, when faced with a challenge, the chain-store will always cooperate. However, a chain-store receives the greatest profit when no challengers exist. The key is that if the chain-store acts aggressively it will lose in the short-term, but it will develop a tough reputation and prevent future competitors from entering the market. On the other hand, if the chain-store acts cooperatively it gains a soft reputation, which invites more competition to enter the market, further reducing its profits. Therefore, the chain-store will accept short-term losses to deter future competitors, because a tough reputation will provide it with greater profits in the long-run. As Basil Yamey shows, firms adopt predatory pricing to eliminate existing rivals and also to signal their reaction to future entries, thus influencing the behavior of potential rivals.

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Although this game is more about earning a reputation for acting tough, comparable to resolve in the deterrence literature, the lessons learned from the game are applicable to many other situations involving reputation. The most important lesson from this game (and the reason for the name “paradox”) is that the psychological effect that one actor’s reputation has on the behavior of other actors negates the logic of the game. In a one-shot game, the chain-store would have no reason to undercut a competitor, because it would gain more by cooperating. However, if reputation is relevant, the chain-store will accept – in fact, prefer – short-term losses to gain more in the long-run.\textsuperscript{58} A comparable argument applied to international politics is that states may accept the short-term costs of honoring an alliance commitment, if there are long-term benefits associated with a reputation for reliability; namely, greater freedom of action in making alliance decisions.

\textsuperscript{58} One study that has attempted to use this concept in the political realm is James’ application of the chain-store paradox to Canadian politics. Patrick James, “The Chain Store Paradox and Constitutional Politics in Canada,” \textit{Journal of Theoretical Politics}, Vol. 11, No. 1 (January 1999), pp. 5-36.
2.1.5 Mercer’s Critique of Reputation

More recently, scholars have begun to study reputation as a concept itself rather than taking it as a given. In doing so, they sometimes question the wisdom of a state taking actions to preserve or develop its reputation. Jonathan Mercer criticizes not only the deterrence scholars’ assumptions about the importance of reputation and the notion that commitments are interdependent but also the value of basing decisions on reputation concerns.\(^5^9\) Mercer’s focus on socio-psychological factors is an important addition to the growing literature on reputation. Mercer challenges the conventional wisdom and the assumptions of the deterrence scholars, largely on the bases that different actors assign different reputations during the same event and that decision-makers, state motivations, and international structure all have a tendency to change. He also argues that commitments are independent rather than interdependent. The implication of this is that the actions a state takes in one situation give little indication of how it will act in the future. In other words, for Mercer, a state’s behavior is often explained better by the situation than by its disposition or character.

By examining three crises from the early part of the twentieth century, Mercer finds that states cannot change their reputations – allies will always perceive each other to be irresolute while adversaries will always view each other as resolute. Therefore, he

concludes that states should never go to war out of a concern for reputation. Not only does this invalidate many of the arguments made by deterrence theorists, but it flies in the face of what policymakers have historically thought about reputation.

While Mercer’s critiques are a valuable first step towards improving our understanding of reputation, his analysis is incomplete. According to Mercer, failing to honor a commitment does not create a reputation for being unreliable unless such behavior causes other states to refuse alignment based on that unreliability. “Evidence that an observer believes a state behaved irresolutely . . . is not evidence that a reputation has formed. Only if the observer then expects the state to be irresolute in the future should we say that a reputation has formed.”60 This is an important point that Mercer makes. However, based upon his three case studies from the turn of the century, Mercer then contends that reputations are not worth fighting for. But, if we focus on the nature of the alliances that form (rather than just whether or not they form), as well as how alliance change, we may find that states do alter their behavior based upon another state’s reputation.

Mercer points out that not only do actors possess a number of different types of reputations, but that perceptions of these reputations vary from one actor to another. He suggests that, “Because different people think differently about me, I can have different, even competing, reputations.”61 He is correct that a reputation can be gained in a number of different ways, and there are a variety of different types of reputation. The irony is

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that Mercer fails to take this into account within his own work. His study is focused exclusively on a state’s reputation for being resolute or irresolute. From this, he concludes that reputations are not worth fighting for. However, if states do have multiple reputations, then it is conceivable that there may be other types of reputations that are worth fighting for, even if we accept Mercer’s findings about the irrelevance of being resolute. I contend that a reputation for reliability is one of these reputations worth fighting for, and this project is a test of that contention.

Mercer also makes the distinction between the threats made to an adversary and the promises made to allies. This helps us take the three concepts from deterrence theory discussed above and use them to better understand alliances. While a credible commitment is the reputation that a state has for carrying out its threats to an adversary, one could talk about a reliable commitment as the reputation states earn for honoring their promises to other states. Just as deterrence theorists rely on the interdependence of commitments to explain why reputation is important, I contend that alliance commitments are also interdependent – if a state reneges on one obligation, its current partners may begin to question its reliability and possibly opt out of the alliance. Moreover, if a potential ally is influenced by a state’s reputation, then failing to honor previous commitments should make it more difficult for a state to attract new allies.

Mercer also claims that, “Victory in war does not guarantee a reputation for resolve – especially among those who are strongly motivated to view a state as irresolute.” However, this misses the point. Whether victorious or not, a reputation for

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62 Ibid.

63 Ibid., p. 220.
reliability should form when a state goes to war to honor a commitment to its ally. And, if commitments are interdependent, then states that have honored prior commitments, and therefore have a reputation for being reliable, should be more attractive as an ally.

Understandably, Mercer’s critique of the conventional wisdom has itself come under fire from different scholars. In Dale Copeland’s review of Mercer’s book, he suggests that by distinguishing between allies and adversaries, Mercer assumes reputations to reject them, and fails to explain why states are labeled as an ally or adversary in the first place. In Mercer’s response, he dismisses this criticism arguing that, “Unless one chooses an ally or an adversary on the basis of its reputation for resolve . . . then the designation of ally or of adversary is unrelated to its reputation for resolve.” This very issue lies at the heart of my puzzle. Do states choose allies on the basis of their reputation? Nobody has addressed this question yet, and I suggest that if reputation matters, it should have some bearing on a state’s alliance choices.

Paul Huth also reviewed Mercer’s book, and makes a number of important points in his analysis of the deterrence and reputation literature. First, he suggests that states can develop reputations for both a willingness to use force or for having an effective military. The majority of existing works concentrate only on the first type. Focusing on the reliability of an ally is one way of incorporating both of these forms of reputation, because a state may be a better ally if it has an effective military as well as the will to use it. Huth also addresses the level of analysis problem in studies of reputation. The

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question is whether reputations get assigned to states or to leaders.\textsuperscript{67} This is important because reputations assigned to states could conceivably be more durable than those given to leaders. The answer is probably that both states and leaders get reputations, and I discuss the implications of this in my concluding chapter.

Finally, Huth asks how generalizable reputations are.\textsuperscript{68} There are two issues here. First, whether reputations are based on the most recent case or on a pattern of behavior across time. Mercer bases his analysis only on the most recent situation. However, evidence from sociology suggests that, “[R]eputations are . . . based on accumulating patterns of evidence which societies constantly process and reprocess.”\textsuperscript{69} And the business literature on reputation generally confirms that view.

The second issue is whether a state’s reputation is applied dyadically, regionally, or globally. I address this issue within my cases, because it is important to determine the degree to which reputations matter if we hope to develop the concept further. However, the business literature might be useful here as a starting point. For example, Chauvin and Guthrie’s examination of how a firm’s reputation for human resource management reduces the cost of labor turnover suggests that reputations are “global” because they send signals not only to those currently interacting with a firm, but also to anyone who


\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., pp. 78-80.

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., pp. 80-82.

may interact in the future.\textsuperscript{70} Likewise, as Stewart Macaulay puts it, “not only do the particular business units in a given exchange want to deal with each other again, they also want to deal with other business units in the future. And the way one behaves in a particular transaction, or a series of transactions, will color his general business reputation.”\textsuperscript{71} Before going any further and addressing how a better understanding of reputation will improve our insight into alliances, it is important to define reputation.

2.2 Defining Reputation

One of the problems with using a concept like reputation is that it is difficult to develop a working definition. Simply defining it is relatively simple: Webster’s defines reputation as, “the character attributed to a person, thing, or action.”\textsuperscript{72} Synonyms include credit, repute, and regard. However, defining the concept in a way that is useful for a study of how reputation relates to international relations is more complicated. In addition, there are numerous definitions that have been applied across disciplines. From anthropology, John Hutson contends that, “A man’s reputation is what is said about him. It is the overall response of people to both actor and role performance; an assessment not

\textsuperscript{70} Chauvin and Guthrie, “Labor Market Reputation and the Value of the Firm.”


\textsuperscript{72} Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary, 1996.
only of the results achieved but also of the manner in which they were achieved.”73 One study from the business literature defines reputation as “information about an agent that develops over time from observed behavior about some characteristic of the agent.”74

Despite the many differences between disciplines, definitions of reputation are obviously quite similar. As such, Mercer’s definition is an appropriate starting point: “Reputation is a judgment of someone’s character (or disposition) that is then used to predict or explain future behavior.”75 However, I make some changes because I contend that his definition biases his study against reputation. For one thing, Mercer argues that reputations only form out of an actor’s character (disposition), and not from situations. He claims that, “Because a reputation is a judgment about another’s character, only dispositional attributions can generate a reputation.”76 Although he uses this as part of his definition, it is more realistically an assumption, and one that may not be valid. In fact, there are both logical and empirical reasons to relax this assumption and believe that reputations may form out of situations. First of all, actors may be unaware of the situational constraints that influence another actor’s behavior. Consequently, a lack of information might lead actions to be attributed to character. In addition, actors may simply choose to ignore situation. The fundamental attribution error asserts that people often “underestimate the extent to which behavior is shaped by the constraints of the situation and overestimate the extent to which it is shaped by people’s underlying


75 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 6.

76 Ibid.
dispositions.” If true, then decision-makers could also make the mistake of
underestimating the power of a situation. Therefore, leaders may attribute a reputation to
a state even if they are aware of the situational constraints.

One can also think of practical reasons for relaxing this assumption. Because
interactions occur less frequently in international politics than in other areas, each action
should provide relatively more information to other actors. Two actors that frequently
interact will have an easier time distinguishing between situation and disposition.
However, as the frequency of contact decreases, the ability to make that distinction also
declines. Mercer states that, “Because a situational attribution does not have cross-
situational validity, it cannot be used to predict behavior in a different situation and so
cannot generate a reputation.” But, in the absence of other information, an actor may
ignore the importance of a situation and assign a reputation anyway. Therefore, even
situational attributions may be relevant for the creation of a reputation in international
politics.

Mercer also assumes that reputation varies from one state to the next. While this
helps us to understand that reputations are neither fixed nor consistently applied, it is not
enough for one state to assign a reputation to another. For a reputation to exist, a number
of states must assign the same reputation to a state. We can draw from anthropology and
sociology to see that a community must agree on a reputation for it to form. Nicholas
Emler notes that, “[R]eputations are social constructions, created collectively through


78 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 6.
processes of social communication, and are not to be confused with one individual’s perception of another.” 79 One actor’s belief about another actor’s character is an opinion, not a reputation. However, when multiple actors have the same opinion about the person’s character, then a reputation forms. Emler, for example, defines reputation as a “set of judgments a community makes about the personal qualities of one of its members.” 80 What I add to Mercer’s definition, then, is that multiple actors must share the judgment of someone’s character. In the simplest case, at least one observer of a state’s behavior must communicate to at least one other actor, thereby creating a shared judgment.

To summarize, I have three components for my definition of reputation. For my purposes, a reputation is a judgment about another actor’s character that develops either through direct observation or communication/gossip, which is then shared by multiple actors. I do not distinguish between situation and disposition because the evidence suggests that those who assign reputations frequently do not or cannot make that distinction.

A simple anecdote will illustrate how my definition differs from Mercer’s. If I leave a restaurant without tipping the server, according to Mercer’s definition I would develop a reputation for being cheap only if someone witnessed my failure to leave a tip and then used that information to expect me to not leave a tip the next time I eat out. Also, Mercer would expect the observer to take into account any situation that may have caused me to not leave a tip – for instance, if the service was bad or if I am a poor


80 Ibid., 171, emphasis added. See also Bailey, Gifts and Poison.
academic that cannot afford to leave a tip. If in that situation the average person would do the same thing, then for Mercer a reputation would not form. Finally, because reputations are based on perception, Mercer would expect others in the restaurant to assign different reputations to me – perhaps one of absentmindedness. While all of these contingencies are conceptually useful, I argue that they do not capture the definition of reputation, and are therefore not usable in a study of reputation in international politics.

For my purposes, to gain a reputation for being cheap in the above story would require at least one person witnessing my failure to tip, and then communicating that to at least one other person, so that at least two people share the same judgment. While the situation (poverty, bad service) may explain my behavior better than my character would, an observer may not be aware of the circumstances, or may choose to ignore them. Finally, the observer will use my actions to predict that I will not leave a tip the next time. Therefore, reputation for me is simply a shared perception about one’s prior behavior that is used to predict future behavior. The empirical question is whether that person’s behavior towards me would change because of my reputation, and that is what I test in this project.

To do that, it is important to first discuss the literature on alliances, focusing on where there are gaps in our understanding that can be filled by incorporating reputation into our theories of alliance formation, duration, and variation.
2.3 The Study of Alliances

Within the alliance literature, there are four main topics of study. For example, a number of theories attempt to explain why alliances form; yet despite the amount of literature on this topic, our understanding of alliances is incomplete because we do not have a sufficient explanation for how states choose their partners.

Another topic of interest in the alliance literature has to do with the duration of alliances. While this part of the literature is not nearly as large as that which focuses on alliance formation, it is growing, and we can apply many of the same theories of alliance formation to alliance duration; if something causes an alliance to form, then it is likely to fall apart when that particular condition no longer exists. However, there are a number of cases that defy the logic of the traditional theories, the most glaring of which is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which not only continues to exist more than a decade after the end of the Cold War, but which is growing in both membership and in mission.

In addition, although there are few studies of the institutional variation between alliances, we can expand our understanding of this topic by drawing from the regimes literature. Doing so is practical, since some specifically focus on explaining how and why institutions differ from one another. It is also valid because alliances are one type of institution, so if a variable is purported to explain why variation exists between
institutions, then it should also explain the variation between alliances. Moreover, if reputation can improve our understanding of alliances, then it should also be generalizable to institutions that exist outside of the security realm.81

Finally, some scholars have suggested a correlation between the existence of alliances and the outbreak of wars. There have been some attempts at explaining this connection, but few are satisfactory and suggest that the relationship may be spurious, or that some third factor (e.g., shifting power) may be simultaneously causing both alliances and wars. I review these four components of the alliance literature in greater detail in the sections below.

2.3.1 Alliance Formation

There are two fundamental issues regarding alliance formation. The first is to understand what causes states to form an alliance. The second is to understand how states choose their partners. The majority of work on alliance formation focuses on the former, while the latter issue has been mostly overlooked. A closer examination of the literature will reveal some of these weaknesses, and also show where reputation can improve our understanding of both the decision to form an alliance and the choice of allies. Richard Li and William Thompson argue that alliance formation is random, at least during multipolar periods.82 However, a number of other scholars have attempted to explain the conditions under which alliances form. To make better sense of the literature

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81 It is conceivable that such generalization is not appropriate, since the dangers of being abandoned in other issues – trade, the environment – are not as costly as being abandoned by an ally while involved in a conflict. In other words, if reputation matters anywhere in international politics, it should matter in the security realm. For a discussion of the differences between security and economics in this sense, see Lipson, “International Cooperation in Economic and Security Affairs.”

and how it has evolved, I divide it into four major theoretical perspectives using Scott Bennett’s categorization: capability-aggregation, security-autonomy tradeoffs, domestic politics, and institutionalization.83

2.3.1.1 Capability-Aggregation

This model relies on a predominantly realist view of the international system, in which states form alliances to increase their military capabilities. The basic premise behind theories in this category is that alliances combine the military capabilities of states, thus making them more secure – even if the sum of the whole is less than the sum of the parts, each member of an alliance is better off for having an ally. As Alexander Groth and Richard Randall suggest, “States enter alliances in order to be stronger, safer, and generally better off presumably than they would be alone.”84

The classic theory fitting this perspective is the balance of power, in which states form alliances to offset the capabilities of the most powerful state in the system.85

Another theory based on a similar principle is Stephan Walt’s balance of threat, in which states align against the most threatening state in the system rather than against the most powerful.86

83 Bennett uses these categories to study alliance duration, but they are also an appropriate way to categorize theories of alliance formation. D. Scott Bennet, “Testing Alternative Models of Alliance Duration, 1816-1984,” American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 41, No. 3 (July 1997), pp. 846-878.


Balancing theories in general have come under a great deal of criticism for a variety of problems. For one thing, as a number of scholars have pointed out, states often align *with* the most powerful state in the system,\textsuperscript{87} or they align *with* threatening states to manage the threat.\textsuperscript{88} Sometimes states even choose not to align at all, either buckpassing or distancing themselves from a potential threat.\textsuperscript{89} Yet another criticism of these works is in the conceptualization of the terms “power” and “threat”. Although both have been measured and used in a variety of studies, there is little agreement on appropriate measures for either term. For example, Walt outlines the factors that contribute to a state being considered a threat. Among these variables are the state’s aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions.\textsuperscript{90} While power and geography can be calculated to some extent, intentions are much more difficult to measure. A bigger puzzle that is not answered by balancing or bandwagoning theories is how we determine which states will align with each other; balancing theories tell us who states will align against, but not which states will ultimately make up the balancing coalition.


William Riker’s size principle says that players will form a grouping that makes up the smallest winning coalition, containing enough power to gain the decision, but no more than is necessary (to avoid having to spread the spoils too thin). One criticism of this is that in a deterrence situation, very large coalitions such as NATO are more likely to decrease the probability of having to fight at all. Moreover, according to Emerson Niou and Peter Ordeshook, alliances need not even have a winning coalition for them to be stable. Deterrence may work, even if the deterring alliance does not have enough power to win, since successful deterrence requires merely enough power to inflict unacceptable costs on an attacker.

Riker also contends that if states have enough power on their own, they will not take on any more allies because they would then have to share the spoils of victory. However, we know that bandwagoning occurs, essentially violating the size principle. In addition, because uncertainty is such a major force in international politics, states will not know when they have “enough” power to win. When there is doubt, they may take on an ally. Such calculations are even more difficult in a multipolar world, because the number of possible alignments increases as the number of major powers rises. Therefore, our understanding of alliance choices is not vastly improved by acceptance of the size principle.

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A final puzzle that is not addressed by this literature is that if states bandwagon, then it is important to understand how states choose between balancing, bandwagoning, and buckpassing. Randall Schweller suggests that states will bandwagon either to reap the profits of victory or because states have a common interest in either protecting or overturning the status quo. However, states sometimes prefer not to align at all, and theories within the capability-aggregation model have particular difficulty explaining neutrality. One way this problem has been addressed is by incorporating the value that states assign to their autonomy.

2.3.1.2 Security-Autonomy Tradeoffs

Arguments within this category accept the fact that states are interested in security, but add that a state’s interest in preserving its autonomy affects whether or not an alliance forms. Michael Altfeld points out that states form alliances at the expense of autonomy. Morrow builds on this to show that states sometimes value autonomy over security, and this helps explain why some states prefer not to align – presumably because they value their autonomy more than any security gains they might receive from an alliance.


The major problem with these arguments is that it is difficult to determine how each state assesses the relative value of security and autonomy and then goes about choosing an optimum level of both. For one thing, it is not easy to identify how much autonomy states desire, nor can leaders always know how much autonomy their public will demand. In addition, states cannot be certain about the amount of security they will gain from an alliance. Therefore, while the logic explains why states may in some cases prefer neutrality to alliance, it cannot provide specific explanations either for alliance formation or for the selection of a particular ally.

Some scholars point out that domestic variables may influence a state’s alliance choices. While not inconsistent with the security-autonomy view (since autonomy may be important for domestic reasons), the domestic politics approach may help explain the particular partner choices of some states.

2.3.1.3 Domestic Politics

It is a virtual law of politics that leaders want to stay in power. As such, if a domestic public has strong opinions about an alliance, leaders will consider those opinions when making alliance choices. Michael Barnett and Jack Levy argue that domestic preferences for isolationism may prevent states from forming an alliance, and factors like ideology, religion, and economics may cause a state to reject an alliance with certain states.96 For instance, prior to the Second World War, US isolationism, and its

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unwillingness to commit to formal agreements, was a function of domestic attitudes towards European power politics. It was only when communism was perceived to be a threat at home that the US began to form alliances.

The conventional wisdom has been that states tend to ally with states of similar government types. Walt refers to this as “ideological solidarity” and hypothesizes that the more similar two states are ideologically, the more likely they are to ally.97 There are a number of reasons why this might be true. For one thing, it is a way of defending those ideological principles. In addition, similar states are less likely to fear each other. Finally, an alliance may lend legitimacy to a weak regime. This idea is supported in some empirical tests.98 However, there are also some who question whether a state’s regime type affects its choice of partners. Michael Simon and Erik Gartzke find that states prefer to align with states of other regime types, since this provides a sort of comparative advantage.99

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99 According to them, each government type has different advantages and disadvantages – autocracies can mobilize faster than democracies, but democracies can sustain support for a conflict much longer – and states prefer a good mix. Michael Simon and Erik Gartzke, “Political System Similarity and the Choice of Allies,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (December 1996), pp. 617-635.
2.3.1.4 Institutionalization

This perspective sees alliances as a means of solving problems that individual states might have trouble dealing with on their own. The main theory that falls within this category is referred to as either the “economic theory” or the “collective theory” of alliances. This view perceives alliances as a way of solving the collective action problem that states might otherwise face in the security realm.\(^\text{100}\)

The major problem with this line of inquiry is that a collective goods approach is much better at explaining the behavior of states within already existing alliances than explaining why an alliance would form in the first place. This approach might help explain some aspects of partner choice, since states would generally prefer to align with at least one stronger state, so that it can freeride off the efforts of that state. However, while that argument fails to improve our understanding of alliance choice, it may provide a strong case for explaining alliance duration, which I will address below.

In contrast, Theodore Caplow argues that players want to control others, so they will always prefer to ally with a weaker actor.\textsuperscript{101} Although logically plausible at the individual level, it violates the empirical reality of bandwagoning in the international system. It also contradicts the logic behind the economic theory of alliances, since it would mean that states seek out potential freeriders as allies.

The one theory from the economic realm that might provide some insight into the nature of alliance formation is hegemonic stability theory. This is directly related to the collective theory of alliances because, as Charles Kindleberger suggests, public goods can be provided, despite incentives to free-ride, if a hegemon exists and is willing to pay the costs.\textsuperscript{102} Because defense is a public good, and because there are a large number of states in the international system, states generally will not provide that good, because they have individual incentives to free-ride.\textsuperscript{103} According to hegemonic stability theory, though, if a hegemon exists, it will provide defense and simply extract payments from other states so that it is not taking the entire burden upon itself. This could be useful for understanding alliance formation, because if a large state is willing to provide for the defense of a region, then that would explain why smaller states would be willing to align with it – they receive the benefits of a security alliance, without having to give up much autonomy.


\textsuperscript{103} Defense of an alliance is, for the most part, both non-excludable and non-rival, although there could be exceptions. One place that addresses this issue is William Gates and Katsuaki Terasawa, “Commitment,
2.3.1.5 Reputation and Alliance Formation

Even though each perspective on alliance formation adds to our knowledge of alliances, there are still a number of gaps. Primarily, we still cannot explain how states choose their alliance partners. However, incorporating reputation into many of the theories discussed above may add some explanatory power to those theories, improving our understanding of both how states decide whether or not to ally, and how they choose their allies.

For example, if states balance to improve their security, they would logically prefer to ally with a state that could be trusted to honor its commitments. If state “A” has multiple potential allies, all else being equal, it should prefer to ally with the state that is most likely to support it in a conflict, and that is least likely to drag it into an unwanted conflict. In other words, if given a choice, states will prefer to ally with the most reliable state. If no states are perceived to be reliable, then state “A” may prefer to bandwagon. But even this decision is subject to reputation, because state “A” will bandwagon to avoid being attacked only if the threatening state is likely to keep its word. If the threatening state is not reliable, then state “A” may prefer neutrality rather than incur any of the costs of forming an alliance.

Moreover, reputation enriches security-autonomy theories if it improves our ability to determine how much autonomy a state gives up by joining an alliance. Alliances potentially reduce a state’s freedom of action through either entrapment or

abandonment. Entrapment refers to a state’s fear of being dragged into an unwanted conflict, and reputation can influence these fears; if a potential ally has behaved aggressively in the past (that is, dragging an ally into an unwanted war), then concerns about entrapment should be higher.

The other problem states have with alliances is the possibility of being abandoned. One state may fail to honor its commitment, leaving its ally in a dangerous position. Fears of abandonment should be higher if an ally historically failed to honor its alliance obligations. And having a reputation for reneging may prevent states from allying altogether, or is at least grounds for creating a more binding alliance to ensure compliance. In the former case, reputation helps explain whether or not alliances form. In the latter, it helps explain why some alliances are more restrictive than others.

A domestic approach may tell us more about when states will prefer to arm internally rather than form an alliance, but even if we knew how regime type affected alliance choices, that still would not explain specific partnerships. For example, it is beneficial to know if democracies “prefer” to align with other democracies, but we need more information to identify the particular democracy with which a state will choose to ally, and why, in some cases, that state might go against its preferences and align with a non-democratic state. On the other hand, if we accept Simon and Gartzke’s argument, that democracies prefers to align with non-democratic states because of the comparative advantages they provide, then we would have to question why the United States puts so much pressure on states to become democratic before being eligible for membership in

NATO? Reputation may help explain cases like this. Peter Cowhey and Kurt Gaubatz both argue that commitments between democracies last longer because they are more credible.\textsuperscript{105} If true, then we should see democratic states forming alliances with each other. Although they may also align with non-democratic states, they may only consider doing so with states that have a reputation for honoring their commitments. Therefore, Simon and Gartzke’s results may be capturing those instances where democracies align with non-democratic states that have reliable reputations.

Reputation also increases the power of institutional theories to explain both when states form alliances and how states choose their partners. In fact, reputation has already been used to supplement hegemonic stability theory. Alt, Calvert, and Humes find that a hegemon’s reputation is crucial for keeping the partner states in line, and that this is true for two reasons. First, the hegemon’s reliability influences whether or not the smaller states give up their autonomy to join the larger state (as opposed to balancing against it). Second, the hegemon chooses partners based on which states have pulled their weight in the past. Although it can coerce payments out of smaller states, it is less costly if all states honor their commitments.\textsuperscript{106}

Clearly, a better understanding of how states use reputation to make alliance choices will improve our ability to explain why alliances form, as well as which states will ally with each other. But, reputation can also improve our understanding of why alliances end when they do.

2.3.2 Alliances Duration

There are relatively few theories on alliance termination. Most of the work in this area has focused on variables that affect an alliance’s stability. For the most part, arguments about the conditions under which alliances end can be inferred from the same arguments discussed above about alliance formation. Logic dictates that if one knows the origins of an alliance, then the removal of that condition will bring the alliance to an end. As such, I will use the same four categories to examine how reputation improves our understanding of alliance duration. I focus here on the inability of many of these theories to explain the end of some alliances and the continuation of others, beginning with balancing theories.

2.3.2.1 Capability-Aggregation

Theories that expect alliances to form in response to imbalances of power or threats to state security should expect alliances to end with improvements in either of those conditions. If a threatening state is defeated, most of these theories expect the alliance to end. Bennett tests three propositions related to this perspective. Bennett tests three propositions related to this perspective. First, that alliances are more likely to end as the allies’ security improves. Second, that the more security benefits that are given to members of an alliance, the less likely the alliance will end. Third, that when mutual threats to members of an alliance are reduced, the more likely it is that the alliance will end.

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106 Alt, Calvert, and Humes, “Reputation and Hegemonic Stability.”

107 Bennett, “Testing Alternative Models of Alliance Duration.”
Another way of thinking about this is that as a state’s capabilities increase relative to a potential adversary, it values its alliances less. Using this logic, many expected the demise of NATO once the Soviet Union collapsed.\textsuperscript{108} That the organization continues to exist despite the absence of a military competitor cannot easily be explained by balancing theories alone.

\textbf{2.3.2.2 Security-Autonomy Tradeoffs}

Morrow also suggests that any change in a state’s capabilities will influence the duration of an alliance. His argument is that as a state increases its capabilities, it will require less security from its allies, and will demand more autonomy. In contrast, a state with diminishing capabilities will demand greater security from the alliance. In either case, a state’s partner may be unable or unwilling to provide for the change in demands, increasing the probability that the alliance will end.\textsuperscript{109} Again we can use NATO as a test of the theory’s plausibility. When Europe narrowed the power gap with the United States, many European states demanded more autonomy. For instance, in 1966 France withdrew from NATO’s integrated military command. This decision was made largely on the basis of its ability to produce nuclear weapons, the result of which was a French demand for greater autonomy, as Morrow would suggest. The theory, however, cannot explain why NATO persists after the Cold War. For the alliance to continue (in fact


\textsuperscript{109} Morrow, “Alliances and Asymmetry.” He also contends that asymmetric alliances, in which one state gains security and another gains autonomy, are likely to last longer than symmetric alliances, in which both states gain the same thing.
grow), the allies would have to be experiencing diminished capabilities. If anything, however, NATO capabilities have increased since the end of the Cold War, but this has not led to greater demands for autonomy.

2.3.2.3 Domestic Politics

One argument from the domestic perspective is that alliances end as a result of regime change, such as the transfer of power to a new leader who does not want to maintain the same commitments.\textsuperscript{110} Gaubatz and William Reed both find that alliances between liberal democracies tend to last longer than alliances between other forms of government even though power changes hands more frequently in democracies than in nondemocratic states. The basis for their argument lies in the domestic institutions and norms that exist in democratic societies. According to Gaubatz, democracies are more likely than non-democracies to maintain their alliance commitments over time.\textsuperscript{111} In other words, many alliances may end because of one actor’s failure to honor its commitments, but that commitments from democratic states are more likely to be honored, and therefore endure longer on average. If alliances between democratic states last longer because their commitments are more reliable, then this may explain NATO’s continued existence. The domestic politics approach, however, still cannot explain NATO expansion.


\textsuperscript{111} Gaubatz, “Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations”; William Reed, “Alliance Duration and Democracy: An Extension and Cross-Validation of ‘Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations’,” \textit{American Journal of Political Science}, Vol. 41, No. 3 (July 1997), pp. 1072-1078.
2.3.2.4 Institutionalization

Another argument is that alliances become institutionalized over time and are difficult to destroy. As such, the longer an alliance lasts, the longer it is likely to continue to exist. Economic theories of alliances might also be useful for explaining alliance failures. If small states free-ride too much, the alliance may fall apart from an inability to provide the necessary resources. Generally one large state will pick up the largest burden of an alliance, but its willingness to do so may change over time, especially if its capabilities decline.

Building off of that point, we can use hegemonic stability theory to show that an alliance is likely to end as a result of the largest state’s inability or unwillingness to pay the majority of the burden. The most likely cause of this change is a shift in the state’s capabilities. Unlike balancing and security-autonomy tradeoff theories, though, in which the shift in capabilities occurs relative to an adversary, this shift in capabilities exists vis-à-vis the other members of the alliance. As the US’ position in the world economy has diminished relative to many of its allies, the US has put pressure on Europe to bear more of the NATO burden. So far, Europe has been reluctantly willing to do this, but this also explains the decision to expand the alliance, with the new states paying some of the difference. However, this view suggests that in spite of its institutionalization, NATO could fall apart if this collective action problem becomes too great.

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There is one other factor that may influence alliance duration, but which does not fit neatly into one of the above categories. The number of states in an alliance may affect its duration. The problem is that there are logical ways to explain long-lasting alliances, both large and small. On one hand is the argument that large alliances are unlikely to last as long as small alliances because collective action problems become more pronounced as the number of actors increases (so burden sharing becomes more of a problem). Also, large alliances are more likely to violate Riker’s size principle. This view predicts that NATO’s demise is increasingly likely as it continues to expand.

On the other hand, one could take the opposite position and argue that large alliances are likely to last longer. I have already provided a number of critiques of Riker’s argument and its applicability towards international politics. Moreover, in spite of the collective action problem, larger alliances may have an easier time diffusing blame. Todd Sandler suggests that size and free-riding are not as problematic for alliances as was once believed.\textsuperscript{114} Therefore, the result of NATO expansion is that the alliance will continue to endure. Clearly, the effect of numbers on alliance duration is indeterminate since a case can be made for either argument.

\textbf{2.3.2.5 Reputation and Alliance Duration}

I have already discussed ways in which scholars incorporate reputation into studies of domestic politics and hegemonic stability. But, focusing on reputation can also supplement other explanations for alliance duration. If we accept that alliances are costly to create, then it is plausible that as long as a state is a reliable partner, remaining in the alliance is much less costly than creating a new alliance. In particular, supplementing the

\textsuperscript{114} Sandler, “The Economic Theory of Alliances.”
institutional approach with reputation shows that not every organization will continue to persist indefinitely. However, as long as the members are reliable, and as long as the organization itself is perceived to be reliable, then it will continue, even long after its initial purpose is satisfied. As Geoffrey Blainey states, “The alliance or friendship might have existed for ten or twenty years of peace and survived much strain, but the ultimate test of an alliance is action rather than promises.”\textsuperscript{115} Therefore, the fact that NATO members proved themselves to be reliable during the Cold War may help explain why the alliance did not fall apart after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Reputation can also address the importance of size on the stability of an alliance. For the most part, a reputation argument would expect smaller alliances to be more durable. For one thing, as the size of an alliance grows, the statistical probability that one member will fail to honor an agreement will naturally rise. Moreover, states may be less likely to renege in a smaller alliance, since doing so will be more obvious. This has important implications for not only understanding alliance duration, but also for developing the most stable regimes.

In addition to the size of the institution, there are a number of other ways in which the institutional design of alliances can vary. I address some of these differences below, as well as elaborate upon how reputation can be useful for explaining the causes of these variations.

2.3.3 Alliance Variation

In spite of the large amount of literature on alliances, few works deal with the institutional variation that exists across alliances. There have been a number of attempts to create typologies of characteristics that distinguish alliances from one another. For example, Alexander George and Richard Smoke mention three ways in which defense obligations vary: the nature of the threat; the scope of the commitment; and the circumstances in which the commitment will be fulfilled.116 Earlier works addressing the same issue include Morgenthau’s characterization of alliances along five dimensions: 1) multilateral vs. unilateral; 2) temporary vs. permanent; 3) operative vs. inoperative; 4) general vs. limited distribution of benefits; and 5) complementary vs. identical vs. ideological scope of interest.117 Kalevi Holsti reduces this to only four dimensions: 1) the situation in which commitments are to become operational; 2) the type of commitments undertaken; 3) the degree of military cooperation or integration; and 4) the geographic scope of the treaty.118 Singer and Small distinguish between ententes, neutrality and non-aggression pacts, and defense pacts as variations in the character and strength of a commitment.119 Perhaps the most comprehensive attempt to distinguish between

116 George and Smoke, “Deterrence in American Foreign Policy,” p. 554.

117 Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, pp. 197-209.


alliances is Russett’s coding of forty-four alliance characteristics. His purpose was to use these variables to better explain alliance duration, but they are obviously useful for explaining alliance variation as well.

Similar attempts have been made by regime scholars to address differences in institutional design. Stephan Haggard and Beth Simmons, for example, define four ways in which regimes vary: 1) strength, meaning the degree of compliance with regime injunctions; 2) form, based on the level of administration as well as how the members are represented; 3) scope, referring to the range of issues covered; and 4) allocation mode, or whether resources are market-oriented or authoritative.

Regime scholars have also made attempts to explain the causes of these variations. For instance, Charles Lipson explores the distinction between formal and informal agreements, suggesting that states may sometimes prefer informal agreements for a number of reasons. First of all, it is a way to avoid the ratification process, which can be politically costly to a democratic leader. Second, informal agreements are easier to modify as situations change. They are also easier to negotiate, so they are formed more quickly. Ultimately, what this implies is that states prefer informal agreements when they do not want to have to commit their national reputation to the agreement.

Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal claim that, “By using hard law . . . actors reduce transactions costs, strengthen the credibility of their commitments, expand their available

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political strategies, and resolve problems of incomplete contracting. Doing so, however, also entails significant costs: hard law restricts actors’ behavior and even their sovereignty.”

Although it is impossible to assess how reputation influences all of the ways in which alliances vary, we can explore the affect that reputation has on some of the more relevant aspects of alliance institutions. In particular, Abbott et al. focus on three dimensions in which institutions vary: obligation, precision, and delegation, which they define in the following way:

*Obligation* means that states or other actors are bound by a rule or commitment or by a set of rules or commitments. . . . *Precision* means that rules unambiguously define the conduct they require, authorize, or proscribe. *Delegation* means that third parties have been granted authority to implement, interpret, and apply the rules; to resolve disputes; and (possibly) to make further rules.

According to Abbott and Snidal, actors enter the realm of soft law when any of these three factors are weakened.

I apply these same terms to alliance design, but conceptualize them slightly differently specifically drawing upon Russett’s work on alliance differences. For instance, three of Russett’s variables – the nature of the commitment, whether provisions for the length of the treaty exist, and whether the treaty refers to a specific state as the target of the alliance – refer to the level of explicitness in the treaty’s language. This

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corresponds with Abbott et al.’s concept of precision. Military or economic aid and the granting of basing rights are examples of the up-front costs states may pay to attract an ally, and equate to obligation. Finally, an integrated military command and one side being military subordinated by another, are two ways in which a state can be integrated into an alliance, and these correspond with delegation. I will expand further on each of these three dimensions in Chapter Three, when I discuss my hypotheses.

2.3.4 Alliances and War

A number of scholars have found that there is a correlation between the presence of an alliance and the likelihood of war. One explanation for this may be that states are more likely to seek out allies when they expect conflict in the near future. Alliances, in other words, are simply a signal of a likely conflict. Another possible explanation is that the formation of an alliance creates a security dilemma that compels other states to act, either building up their own military capabilities, or creating counterbalancing coalitions. As a result, with the increased likelihood of escalation that results from security dilemmas, one might expect a higher incidence of war. In addition, it could also be that this is a perfect example of correlation without causation; this connection between alliances and war may be the result of some third variable that causes them both.

In this project, I explore an alternative explanation for the connection between alliances and war that incorporates reputation, and suggests that a reputation for reliability may not always be beneficial for states. What I contend is that the scholars

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who find a connection between alliances and war may be capturing a moral hazard problem associated with being a reliable ally. Moral hazard problems exist when an actor that is insured is more likely to take risks. It is conceivable then, that if an alliance with a reliable state is analogous to an insurance policy, then that state’s allies may be willing to take greater risks than they would if it had a less reliable reputation.

### 2.4 Review

In this chapter, I addressed the literature on reputation, both within and outside international relations. It is clear that reputations are crucial in markets, but there is disagreement over the importance of reputation in international politics. I also examined four major aspects of the alliance literature, discussing some of the ways in which reputation might improve our understanding of alliances by filling the gaps in the literature. In Chapter Three, I outline the research design of this project, providing greater detail about my assumptions and the hypotheses that build upon my discussions of reputation and alliances in this chapter.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

Worry more about your character than your reputation. Character is what you are, reputation merely what others think you are.

--- Dale Carnegie/John Wooden

3.1 Assumptions

The previous two chapters detailed how scholars have dealt with reputation, and explored some of the major theories of alliance behavior. They also explained how the business literature treats the effects of a firm’s reputation on its success and suggested that the influence of a firm’s reputation on the market is comparable to the effect that a state’s reputation has on the international political system. Specifically, I contend that a state’s reputation affects its ability to attract new allies and keep existing allies, and can also influence the types of alliances it is able to form. In this chapter, I discuss the hypotheses that I will use to test these claims as well as case selection. First, however, it is appropriate to explain some of my assumptions in pursuing this project.

To develop my hypotheses from the market analogy, I have five basic assumptions that should hold true for reputations across academic disciplines. For one thing, actors have a variety of reputations simultaneously. Moreover, these reputations
change over time, for good or for bad. Third, perceptions of an actor’s character will vary from one observer to the next, but some consensus or agreement must exist for a reputation to form. Fourth, reputations exist at different levels of analysis, including the group (e.g., the firm or the state) and the group’s leader (e.g., the CEO or the Prime Minister). Finally, I assume that observers are skeptical about the ability of others to learn from their mistakes. I shall discuss each of these in turn.

3.1.1 Assumption I: Actors Possess a Variety of Reputations

All actors, be they individuals, firms, or states, possess a variety of different reputations. Sometimes these complement each other, such as when a firm has positive reputations for both customer service and the treatment of its employees. Other times reputations may be incongruous, for instance, if a firm has a reputation for innovation but also for poor management. The implication of this is that it is impossible to conduct a study that accounts for all the different types of reputations. Instead, we must be content to focus on a specific type of reputation, but then also recognize that overgeneralizations about reputation are dangerous.

Jonathan Mercer agrees that states have a variety of reputations, but then focuses almost exclusively on resolve. More importantly, once he concludes that states cannot change their reputation for resolve, he posits that no reputations are worth fighting for.127 His findings may be correct in that states may not be able to change their reputations for resolve, but his conclusion ignores a number of other reputations that are worthy of attention. I too focus on only one type of reputation, but a state’s reliability as an ally is a

fair reputation to judge, and I make no broader claims about reputation. Furthermore, because there is already a good deal of work on corporate reliability, it is logical to presume that the consequences of a firm’s reputation are analogous to those of a state.

3.1.2 Assumption II: Reputations Change

One of Mercer’s main points is that a state cannot change its reputation – allies will always be viewed as irresolute while enemies will always be seen as resolute.\(^ {128}\) In some respects, this is an empirical question that I will test in this project – if alliances are affected by a state’s behavior during a conflict or war, then the state’s reputation may have changed. However, Mercer’s assumption that reputations do not change is also a function of his definition of reputation, which requires that the source of the reputation be an actor’s character or disposition.\(^ {129}\) In contrast, my definition of reputation accepts that reputations can be situational.

As I mentioned in Chapter Two, there is already a consensus among firms that reputations matter. The emphasis now is on how they can develop and preserve positive reputations. Sociology also focuses on how reputations can be maintained. As Nicholas Emler suggests, “We . . . have constantly to work to defend and repair reputations, both by providing visible behavioral evidence that is consistent with the qualities and identities we wish to claim and by explaining away apparent inconsistencies.”\(^ {130}\) There also seems to be an understanding that it is easier to destroy a positive reputation than it is to create

\(^{128}\) Ibid., pp. 67, 212-213.

\(^{129}\) Ibid., p. 6.

one. If applicable to states, then their reputation will suffer more by failing to honor a commitment than they will gain by honoring the commitment. The point is that a state can behave in a way that will change other states’ perception of its reputation.

3.1.3 Assumption III: Opinions Must be Shared For a Reputation to Exist

Mercer assumes that perceptions of a state’s reputation vary from one observer to the next. While this helps us understand that reputations are not consistently applied, it is not enough for one state to assign a reputation to another because one actor’s belief about another actor’s character is an opinion, not a reputation. For example, works in both anthropology and sociology suggest that there must be agreement for a reputation to exist. Emler, for instance, argues that reputations, “are social, not individual judgments. . . . [that are] created collectively through processes of social communication, and are not to be confused with one individual’s perception of another.” Therefore, a reputation forms when multiple actors have the same opinion about the person’s character. In the simplest case, at least one observer must share a judgment with at least one other actor (either by both making the same judgment from observing the behavior, or else by one observer communicating their judgment to a third party).

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3.1.4 Assumption IV: Reputations Exist on More than One Level of Analysis

It is obvious who is responsible for an individual’s reputation. However, the task of assigning a reputation grows more difficult when dealing with groups of individuals, such as firms or states. For example, is Microsoft’s reputation for innovation a function of the performance of its employees, or is it based solely on the company’s leader, Bill Gates? For the most part, a firm’s reputations are assigned to both the group and to the leader. A change in management sometimes alters a firm’s reputation; in fact, changing CEOs is a common business strategy for minimizing the reputational costs of a mistake.\textsuperscript{135} However, there are also some reputations that cannot be altered by a change in leadership.\textsuperscript{136}

It is logical to assume then, that in international politics, reputations are assigned to both the state and its leaders. A change in leadership may have some effect on the state’s reputation (as with Gorbachev taking over the Soviet Union), but some reputations will persist, even after a change in leadership (Iran and North Korea continue to hold the status of “Rogue States”).

One related point is that I assume reputations are more diffused in a democratic state. What this means is that the reputation of a non-democratic state is more interconnected with its leader, while the reputation of a democratic state is less connected

\textsuperscript{135} Tyco International is one recent case in which a firm hired a new CEO with a positive image to improve the firm’s reputation. On July 26, 2002 Tyco’s stock gained almost 46% ($3.78) only one day after announcing the replacement of its former CEO who was indicted in June on charges of tax evasion.

\textsuperscript{136} Because of its involvement in the Vietnam War, DOW Chemicals continues to suffer from reputation costs even though it is cited as being one of the most environmentally conscious companies.
to its leader. There are two reasons for this. First, non-democratic leaders are generally in power longer than democratically elected leaders. As a result, there is more opportunity for the non-democratic leader’s reputation to become a substitute for the state’s reputation. Second, because democratic leaders must ultimately answer to public opinion, their reputation is more likely to fluctuate.

Furthermore, reputations may be assigned to sub-state actors, such as a political party, or a legislative body. If reputations are assigned to political parties then a change in leadership will have less effect on the state’s reputation as long as the same party maintains control. Similarly, certain national legislatures may have a reputation that influences the behavior of other states. As much as possible I will control for these various reputations because a better understanding of how reputations differ between regime types is not only important for this project, but is useful in its own right.

3.1.5 Assumption V: Observers are Skeptical that States Learn from Mistakes

While the concepts of reputation and learning are similar, there is an important distinction between them. According to Dan Reiter, states learn from their past behavior and from the behavior of others, and act accordingly in the future. An example of learning would be if the Clinton administration chose not to intervene in Rwanda because of the United States’ experience in Somalia the year before. This is similar to the idea of

137 Louis XIV’s claim “l’etat c’est moi” (I am the state) is an example of how the reputations of states and individuals are interconnected, especially in a non-democratic state.

138 Examples of dominant political parties, in which a change in leader may have had little effect on the state’s reputation, include the KMT in Taiwan and the PRI in Mexico (which controlled the presidency for seventy-one years).

reputation in that expectations about future behavior are based upon historical experiences (information becomes more complete as states learn more about the behavior of others).

However, there is an important distinction between reputation and learning. Learning implies that states are able to alter their behavior based on previous experiences, and therefore avoid repeating mistakes. In other words, if Britain learned from its mistakes at the Munich Conference, then other states should have been willing to align with Britain believing that it was an attractive ally because it learned its lesson and would never again appease aggression. Robert Jervis suggests that, “damage to a state’s reputation in one instance need not weaken its attempts at deterrence, indeed, it may even enhance them.”140

In contrast, reputation implies that whether or not actors learn from their mistakes, others will act as if an actor is likely to repeat his or her previous behavior, regardless of whether it was successful or not. As such, states should be less likely to align with Britain after the Second World War since it developed a reputation for being unreliable at Munich (regardless of what lessons it may have learned). For this project, I assume that a state may alter its behavior through learning, but that the behavior of other states will be a function of reputation rather than of lessons that may have been learned.

Economic analogies are again useful to illustrate this point. If a person defaults on a loan, banks will not give that person another loan believing that he will act more responsibly in the future. Instead, banks will refuse the loan, acting according to the

person’s reputation. Even if the previous loan was through a different bank, such behavior will negatively affect one’s credit report. Likewise, investors do not easily forgive struggling companies, under the assumption that the firm learned its lesson and will turn things around. Instead, companies with problems suffer penalties based on their reputation. Recent examples include the cases of Enron and WorldCom. Investors will not forgive mistakes on the assumption that the leadership learned its lesson.\textsuperscript{141} In the end, this is an empirical question that will be addressed in the tests of my hypotheses.

Having refined my conception of reputation by outlining my assumptions, I will next explain how I will test my hypotheses on whether a state’s reputation influences the behavior of other actors and reduces its autonomy. I begin by discussing my key variables.

3.2 Variables

My independent variable is a state’s reputation for reliability. In the absence of perfect information, reputation may be a state’s best tool for gauging the sincerity of another state’s commitments. If I am testing the correct hypotheses, then states should behave differently towards those with reliable reputations than they do towards those that are perceived to be unreliable.

Measurement is one problematic feature of any study of reputation. While a number of scholars have begun to address the issue of measuring reputation,\textsuperscript{142} the problem with quantitative models of reputation is that any given measurement can only

\textsuperscript{141} And returning to a previous assumption, even replacing those who caused the problems will not immediately improve the firms’ reputation.

\textsuperscript{142} Jean-Sebastian Rioux. \textit{The Reputation-building Behavior of States, 1918-1988}. PhD dissertation (Florida State University, 1996).
deal with one specific type of reputation. The business literature has gotten around this problem by publicizing surveys of people familiar with particular business sectors. For instance, the reputations of MBA program are largely based on nationwide surveys of people who run MBA programs. A survey, however, is unlikely to provide useful information for international politics.

Most scholars have chosen a shortcut to measure reputation that emphasizes a state’s most recent actions, based on the recognition in psychology that actors tend to remember recent events more readily than older events. Mercer suggests that “a state that yields should be viewed as irresolute and a state that stands firm should be viewed as resolute; however a state behaved in the last crisis should govern others’ expectations of that state.” In particular, he claims that the French continued to doubt British reliability even after the British opposed Germany at the 1906 Algeciras conference. Mercer then uses this example to support his argument that states cannot change their reputation. Although this is a compelling shortcut to take because it allows for an objective measurement, it fails to assess an actor’s true reputation.

Reputations develop over time, not from a single act. What the business literature shows us is that a positive reputation is costly and difficult to build. Therefore, we should not expect the French to suddenly trust the British, with whom they had almost gone to war only seven years earlier. In addition, measuring reputation according to a

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single prior act creates a dichotomous variable: either the state honored its commitment (reliable) or it failed to do so (unreliable). However, it is more accurate to view reputation as a continuum from perfectly reliable to perfectly unreliable. For this reason I use a more subjective measurement, an analysis of statements and writings by key decision-makers, that I contend is appropriate to assess how one state’s behavior is influenced by its perceptions of another government’s reputation.

One potential problem with the use of decisionmakers’ statements as my measure of reputation is that some leaders may use reputation as a cover for other arguments that would be less popular. One solution to this problem is to pay attention to the intended audience. Comments from a leader’s personal papers are less likely to be misleading than statements made to a reporter, for example. Another response is to accept that even if someone is using a reputation argument for political purposes, the state must have done something to earn that reputation – if a state has always acted reliably then its reputation cannot be used against it, even for political purposes. As a result, it may be that the intention behind the use of reputation is less important than the fact that it is referred to at all.

The next issue is to identify what constitutes an unreliable state. There are, in fact, few instances in which states renege on their formal obligations; one recent study using the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) dataset finds that states honor their alliance commitments about seventy-five percent of the time.145 The ATOP

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dataset includes cases where a state fails to fight when it is obligated to do so, as well as cases where a state signs a separate agreement with an enemy. The data do not, however, include two other instances in which a state may prove unreliable: if it drags its ally into an unwanted conflict, or if it fails to support an ally during a crisis short of war. Although such actions may not damage a state’s reputation as much as those represented in the ATOP dataset, they should nevertheless be included in any study of reputation and alliances because they can effect the perception of a state’s reliability.  

My dependent variable is state behavior, specifically the behavior of states in or considering an alliance. In defining alliances, I use Glenn Snyder’s designation that, “Alliances are formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership.” I also incorporate all three types of formal alliances identified by David Singer and Melvin Small – defense pacts, neutrality and nonaggression pacts, and ententes – especially since doing so is necessary to test my hypothesis that the type of alliance depends upon the reputation of the states. In terms of alliance formation, either a state is able to form an alliance or not. In terms of alliance duration, I focus on whether alliances end or are renewed, and even whether one state threatens to withdraw from the alliance. Finally, the behavior I am concerned with regarding alliance variation is the design of the institution,  

146 I use these four measures because they seem to be the most common reasons a state’s reputation for reliability is lost. Since reputation is subjective, however, a state could cite a variety of actions as evidence of another state’s unreliability.  


specifically regarding the precision, obligation, and delegation of the alliance. This includes either a new alliance that is being negotiated, or alterations to an existing alliance because of perceived changes in an ally’s reliability.

3.3 Hypotheses

One of the underlying questions in addressing my puzzle is whether reputation is rational or psychological. Mercer suggests that it is psychological (and in fact suggests that it is irrational for states to be concerned with their reputations). In contrast, I contend that reputation can be both rational and psychological. Reputations are psychological because they are based on the perceptions of others and because they influence one’s expectations about future events. However, a concern about reputation is rational if, as I attempt to test here, actors receive benefits for having a good reputation and suffer costs for a bad one.

In essence, I suggest that a state’s reputation influences alliances in two general ways. As a state is perceived to be more reliable, not only will it have to give up less autonomy to attract an ally, but its allies will give up more of their own autonomy. Alternatively, as a state becomes less reliable, its allies will wish to retain more autonomy while demanding that more constraints are placed on the unreliable state. Breaking these arguments down into smaller components provides a number of testable hypotheses to deal with the four primary aspects of alliances: formation, duration, variation, and the connection between alliances and war.
3.3.1 Alliance Formation

There are two fundamental questions regarding alliance formation: why do states form alliances, and how do states choose their partners? To date, the majority of work on alliance formation focuses on the first issue, the classic theory of which is balance of power.\textsuperscript{149} Balancing theories in general have come under a great deal of criticism. For one thing, states often bandwagon, aligning \textit{with} the most powerful or most threatening state in the system. Sometimes states even choose not to align at all, either buckpassing or distancing themselves from a potential threat.\textsuperscript{150} A bigger issue is that balancing theories tell us against whom states will align, but not which states will ultimately make up the coalition. In addition, if states do not always balance, then we must ask how states choose between balancing, bandwagoning, and buckpassing. Randall Schweller suggests that states bandwagon either to reap the profits of victory or because states have a common interest in either protecting or overturning the status quo.\textsuperscript{151} States, however, sometimes prefer not to align at all, and these theories have difficulty explaining


neutrality. In addition, as Paul Schroeder suggests, states sometimes form alliances not to increase their power or to directly increase security, but to manage the behavior of other states.\textsuperscript{152}

To address these gaps in the alliance formation literature, I generate hypotheses that incorporate reputation into our existing theories. To do so, I draw from the literature on corporate reputation. Among other things, a company’s reputation will affect the quality of employees it can attract. According to Charles Fombrun, “Just as a top school’s reputation draws the brightest students, so do esteemed companies more easily recruit the finest candidates for their jobs.”\textsuperscript{153} Similarly, products with a reputation for high quality attract more consumers, and firms with a reputation for effective management attract more investors. On the other hand, banks refuse loans to individuals with poor credit, and firms that mistreat employees have trouble finding high quality applicants.

If reputation matters in international relations, then we should see certain behavior when a state is perceived to be an unreliable ally that we would not see when it is perceived to be reliable. For example, if states balance to improve their security, they would logically prefer to ally with states that can be trusted to honor their commitments. If a state has multiple potential allies, all else being equal, it should prefer to ally with the


\textsuperscript{153} Fombrun, Reputation, 76. See also Chauvin and Guthrie, “Labor Market Reputation and the Value of the Firm,” 544.
state that is most likely to support it in a conflict. If no states are perceived to be reliable, then it may prefer neutrality. Therefore, my first hypothesis is that unreliable states will not be able to attract new allies.

*Hypothesis 1: An unreliable state will be unable to attract new allies.*

The institutions literature already assumes that this is true, as Keohane suggests: “International regimes alter the information available to governments and the opportunities open to them; commitments made to support such institutions can only be broken at a cost to reputation.”¹⁵⁴ Since alliances are a specific type of institution, reputation contributes to our understanding of alliances by helping to explain how states choose their partners. At minimum, incorporating reputation into our theories of alliance formation should clarify why some states are perceived to be less attractive allies.

A fundamental reason for creating an alliance is to improve security; states will not enter into alliances that make them worse off. It is especially dangerous to ally with a state that will not honor its commitments, because doing so could provoke an adversary without having improved one’s own security. As Michael Altfeld argues, “It can never be rational for a government to form an alliance which does not increase its security since some increase is always necessary to offset the loss in autonomy which is assumed to occur.”¹⁵⁵ There is asymmetric information to every agreement, however, because one actor cannot know if the other will honor its commitment. In fact, an alliance is

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¹⁵⁴ Keohane, After Hegemony, 26.

¹⁵⁵ Altfeld, “The Decision to Ally,” 529. See also Smith, “Alliance Formation and War,” 415; Morgenthau Politics Among Nations, 197.
unnecessary if a state is certain that it will receive support.₁⁵⁶ A state’s reputation is useful, then, because it provides information to other states so they can determine the probability that a state will honor its commitments. A state that has consistently reneged on its commitments will add little to an ally’s security because of the high likelihood that it will defect. On the other hand, a state that repeatedly honors its commitments will be a reliable and valuable ally. As a result, it is logical to expect reliable states to be able to find willing partners while unreliable states will have a more difficult time doing so.

While this first hypothesis is logical, especially based upon findings in the business literature, there are numerous examples in which unreliable states have been able to find willing allies. For example, Italy was undoubtedly perceived as one of the most unreliable states in Europe during the interwar period, but was courted by everyone prior to the Second World War, including Germany, which it had abandoned during the First World War. Because of the number of states in the international system, and because states are often forced to ally out of strategic necessity (perhaps disregarding reputation under certain circumstances), this first hypothesis may not hold true. Nevertheless, because it is a basic argument regarding the connection between reputation and alliance formation, it is worthy of an empirical test.

Even if unreliable states are able to find allies, however, it is plausible that their reputation will reduce the number of states willing to form an alliance. In particular, one way in which autonomy can be reduced through alliance formation is that unreliable states may be stuck allying with other unreliable states. This assumes that reliable states tend to ally with each other, but it is a logical assumption based upon work from the

₁⁵⁶ Unless of course the sole purpose of the alliance is to threaten or deter others.
business literature; reputable firms interact with other reputable firms or risk damaging their reputation. For example, top department stores sell only high quality products, because failing to do so hurts the store’s reputation. As a result, firms that produce low quality products are forced to sell their goods through less respected vendors. Wujin Chu and Woosik Chu show that, “reputable retailers have an incentive to correctly represent the quality of the products they sell in order to protect their investment in reputation. Discounters who have no reputation to lose, have no such incentive.”¹⁵⁷ Applying this logic to international relations may improve our understanding of alliance formation by suggesting that reliable states will ally with each other, leaving unreliable states to ally with each other. Therefore, even if the first hypothesis does not hold true, Hypothesis Two is based on the similar premise that an unreliable reputation reduces a state’s autonomy by limiting its choices in forming an alliance.

_Hypothesis 2: In general, states will tend to ally with states of similar reliability._

Clearly, a better understanding of how states use reputation to make their alliance decisions will improve our ability to explain why alliances form, as well as how states choose their allies. Another important question within the alliance literature has to do with alliance duration, and I contend that reputation can improve our understanding of this aspect of alliances by helping to explain why alliances end when they do.

3.3.2 Alliance Duration

According to the business literature, a company that develops a bad reputation will lose profits. As William Rogerson found, “[O]wing to the effect of reputation, high quality firms have more customers, because they have fewer dissatisfied customers who leave, and word-of-mouth advertising results in more arrivals.”158 Not only do reputable firms attract more customers, top job seekers, and investors, but a positive reputation also helps firms gain repeat customers and maintain employee loyalty. Fombrun claims that, “A good reputation builds employee loyalty by increasing the willingness of employees to cooperate with unusual requests and by fostering teamwork and a sense of shared destiny.”159

Although a number of variables have been used in international relations to explain the downfall of an alliance, neorealists have the most basic prediction: alliances end when the geostrategic circumstances that led to their creation disappear. In other words, if a threatening state is defeated, the alliance formed to counter that threat should end. However, if reputation influences the behavior of states the same way it affects economic actors, then we should also see alliances ending when states perceive a decline in their ally’s reliability.

159 Fombrun, Reputation, 77.
In fact, there are two possibilities in which a change in reputation affects the duration of a state’s alliances. The first is a dyadic explanation of reputation, suggesting simply that if one state fails to honor its commitment to another (or drags the other into an unwanted war), that particular alliance is more likely to end. This, then, provides me with my third hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: An unreliable state will tend to lose the ally or allies that it abandoned.

A more difficult test for reputation is whether a state’s reliability affects alliance duration more generally. If reputation is generalizable beyond the dyad, then any decline in a state’s reputation should affect the stability of all of its alliances. As a result, it is conceivable that if state A is in separate alliances with states B and C, and A fails to honor a commitment to state B, then not only should the alliance between A and B end (as suggested by Hypothesis Three), but its alliance with state C would also be more likely to end.160 This, then, is the second hypothesis using reputation to help explain alliance duration.

Hypothesis 4: An unreliable state will lose allies generally.

These two hypotheses on alliance duration are useful not only because they pose different tests for reputation, but also because they parallel the debate in the deterrence literature concerning whether a state’s credibility deters only those directly affected by the state’s resolve, or else deters states more generally.161 Empirically, I expect there to

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160 Except for on those occasions when C wanted A to abandon B; in such cases state A’s reliability would increase in the eyes of state C. I thank Kevin Sweeney for this insight.

be less support for the more general hypothesis on alliance duration, both in international politics and in the corporate world. Even the least reputable products get purchased, and firms that treat their employees poorly do still have employees. The catch is that unreliable actors will have to give up more to keep others interested. States that are increasingly perceived to be unreliable, for instance, will have to make concessions to their allies to prevent an alliance from ending.

My first four hypotheses all assumed the condition of *ceteris paribus*, or that all else was equal. That is not always a valid assumption in international politics, however, because states have some control over the amount of autonomy that they can sacrifice to attract an ally. Moreover, because states often ally for strategic reasons, such as power aggregation or geography, reputation will not always influence the formation or duration of alliances. Even when a state is willing to ally with an unreliable state because of the strategic advantages of doing so, however, I posit that reputation will still affect autonomy by influencing the institutional design of the alliance that is created. In the next section, I discuss a number of hypotheses that illustrate how reputation can influence some of the variation that exists across alliances.

3.3.3 Alliance Variation

In spite of the large literature on alliances, few works deal with the variation that exists between alliance institutions. Some scholars have created typologies of characteristics that distinguish alliances from one another.162 Attempts have been also been made by regime scholars to address differences in institutional design, with some making cursory attempts to explain the causes of certain types of institutional variation.163 There are, however, few explanations for the variation that exists across military alliances and reputation may help fill this gap.

Many scholars suggest that a commitment to work together decreases the autonomy of all the states involved. Morrow in particular, argues that states choose between autonomy and security when forming alliances.164 I contend, however, that the degree to which a state’s autonomy is reduced by an alliance depends upon its reputation. Reliable states can gain allies and still maintain their autonomy, while unreliable states have to give up autonomy to attract allies. There are two reasons why an unreliable state’s autonomy is reduced. On the one hand, a state may demand greater control over an unreliable ally to offset the higher risk of being dragged into an unwanted conflict. On


the other hand an unreliable state can impose costs on itself to signal its interest in honoring a commitment, because giving power to other actors is one way in which commitments can be made more reliable.\textsuperscript{165}

Fombrun finds that, “Companies that are well regarded can benefit from charging premium prices for their products and so reimburse themselves over the long term for the front-end costs of building good reputations.”\textsuperscript{166} This means that firms with high-quality products are able to charge more because consumers are often willing to pay for assurances of quality. A positive reputation also:

Provides leverage in many negotiations, particularly with suppliers, creditors, and distributors. Suppliers would prefer to negotiate supply contracts with credible companies, companies unlikely to renege on orders. Likewise, before lending money, creditors want to believe that the company is good for it, that their money won’t go down the drain. Studies show that a good reputation can reduce a company’s cost of capital by improving its ability to raise money in the credit market.\textsuperscript{167}

In contrast, firms with poor reputations incur greater costs because of the higher risks they pose for consumers and investors. Similarly, a person with bad credit who is seeking a loan may be able to find a willing lender, but greater control will be placed on the loan because of the higher risk: the loan may come with a higher rate, require more

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\expandafter\ifx\csname natexlab\endcsname\relax\def\natexlab#1{#1}\fi

\bibitem{morrow99}

\bibitem{fombrun}
Fombrun, \textit{Reputation}, 75.

\bibitem{fombrun2}
Ibid., 75–76.
\end{thebibliography}
collateral, or allow for shorter repayment time. As a result, if states are willing to ally with an unreliable state, I expect the alliance itself to reduce the unreliable state’s freedom of action (increasing the likelihood that it will have to honor its commitments).

Barbara Koremenos, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal assert that states construct and shape institutions to advance their goals. According to them, differences between institutions “are the result of rational, purposive interactions among states and other international actors to solve specific problems”¹⁶⁸ (such as having an unreliable ally). Although it is impossible here to evaluate all of the ways in which alliances vary, I can explore the affect that reputation has on some of the more relevant aspects of alliance design.

One common way scholars have used to distinguish between alliances involves the distinction between defense pacts, neutrality and nonaggression pacts, and ententes.¹⁶⁹ One possible factor contributing to how states decide which type of alliance they will consider may have to do with the reputation of the other state. Of the various types, defense pacts are the most binding, while ententes are the least restrictive. This may suggest that states are likely to form defense pacts only with those states that they perceive to be reliable. Because ententes impose fewer constraints on a state, they are


more likely to be acceptable for an alliance with an unreliable state. This then provides us with one hypothesis for how reputation influences the institutional design of an alliance.

_Hypothesis 5: The type of alliance formed depends upon the reliability of the states._

One could push this line of reasoning further to suggest that reputation not only influences the type of alliance states are willing to form, but also produces variation between alliances of the same type. If, as I suggest, one advantage of being reliable is having more autonomy, then it would logically follow that reliable states will have a freer hand within their alliances while unreliable states will be restrained by the institutional design of an alliance. This design variation may take several forms, but the regimes literature provides some possibilities.

Abbott et al. focus on three dimensions in which institutions vary: obligation, precision, and delegation. 170 I apply these same terms to alliance design, but conceptualize them slightly differently. For my purposes, obligation involves the costs that a state must pay to convince a potential ally that a commitment exists. I define precision as the level of explicitness in a treaty’s language. Finally, delegation is the degree to which one state gives authority over its military to an ally. In general, the hypotheses I test suggest that the institutional design of an alliance will be more constraining for unreliable states than for reliable states. 171

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171 I expect these three measures to be interchangeable—some alliances stress obligation, others emphasize precision, etc.—although I expect the most unreliable states to be bound by more than one type of constraint. The form of institutional variation that will be used in a given situation is contingent upon the context and the needs of the states. An interesting research question if all three measures prove to be
3.3.3.1 Obligation

A large component of the business literature is concerned with how firms develop a positive reputation, so that they may obtain some benefits. For many products, quality is impossible to determine before consumption. As a result, firms with low quality products have an incentive to misrepresent their product as being high quality, to charge higher prices. These firms, however, will not have repeat customers; only those high priced products that are in fact high quality will attract repeat customers. In other words, reputation ensures that misrepresentation of quality is not possible over the long run. Similarly, only firms with high quality products will spend a lot up-front, because they know they will profit from repeat customers. Therefore, consumers can assess the quality of a product by the amount of money that is spent on publicity or advertising.\(^{172}\)

For an obligation to exist, an actor must incur a cost if the commitment is broken. If a state is perceived to be unreliable, one way it can potentially strengthen its commitments is to accept costs that will be imposed if the state fails to honor its agreements. Similarly, one way to distinguish between unreliable and reliable states may be in the amount of up-front costs a state is willing to pay to participate in the alliance. A state that intends to honor its commitment will be willing to pay up-front costs that will be lost if it reneges on the commitment. These costs can be self-imposed, as a state attempts to signal its trustworthiness to its allies, or they could be demanded from a potential ally as a way to offset the risks of allying with an unreliable state. Among other

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\(^{172}\)significant factors in alliance variation, would be to ascertain the circumstances under which one measure is more suitable than others.
things, these costs may be economic, as in the promise to provide trade or financial aid, they may consist of a transfer of technology, or they could include a state’s willingness to increase its military capabilities.

Regardless of the nature of the payment, cost is a strong signal of commitment, and the greater the up-front costs paid by a state, the stronger the signal of its commitment to the alliance.\textsuperscript{173} On the other hand, states perceived to be reliable will not have to make these types of commitments, partly because they will have already paid the costs of honoring previous commitments. Therefore, one way alliance design can differ is that unreliable states may have to pay more up-front costs than reliable states.

\textit{Hypothesis 6: In an alliance, unreliable states will have higher levels of obligation than reliable states.}

\subsection*{3.3.3.2 Precision}

In business, agreements made between parties that distrust one another (or that know very little about one another) are often spelled out very carefully. In contrast, an oral promise is sometimes enough of a commitment between trusting parties. Likewise, there is a great deal of variation between military alliances concerning their level of precision. On one end of the spectrum are those that are specific about their nature, purpose, and target.\textsuperscript{174} At the other end are vague alliances that leave much open to


\footnote{173 This insight draw heavily from Fearon, “Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes,” 579–81; Fearon, “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests”; Kydd, “Trust, Reassurance, and Cooperation,” 326.}

\footnote{174 The Dual Alliance of Russia and France (1894) specifically outlined when one state would provide support to the other (article 1), discussed the terms in which both states would mobilize (article 2), provided for specific numbers of troops to engage Germany (article 3), called for cooperation between Army General}
interpretation.175 Most alliances fall somewhere between these two extremes.176 As Glenn Snyder suggests, however, “The more explicit and precise the verbal commitment, the greater the cost in nonfulfillment and the lower the credibility of the threat of nonfulfillment.”177 Therefore, allies of unreliable states should demand greater precision to alleviate fears of abandonment and entrapment. In particular, the nature of the commitment, whether there are provisions for the length of the treaty, and the target of the alliance may all be more explicit when at least one of the signatories is perceived to be unreliable. On the other hand, alliances among reliable states are more likely to have vague language, implying greater levels of trust, and providing greater autonomy to the allies.

Hypothesis 7: An alliance formed with an unreliable state will have greater precision than an alliance formed between reliable states.

Staffs (article 4), ensured no conclusion of a separate peace (article 5), and set the duration of the alliance for as long as the Triple Alliance existed (article 6). J. A. S. Grenville and Bernard Wasserstein, eds., The Major International Treaties of the Twentieth Century: A History and Guide with Texts, (London: Routledge, 2001), 39.

175 The Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy (1882) promised mutual support “within the limits of their own interests.” Cited in Grenville and Wasserstein, The Major International Treaties of the Twentieth Century, 38.

176 The Brussels Treaty (1948) explicitly named Germany as the target of the alliance between France, Great Britain, and the Benelux countries and was designed to last for at least fifty years. The language, however, was ambiguous about what actions were to be taken. “To take such steps as may be held to be necessary in the event of a renewal by Germany of a policy of aggression.” Treaty text available on the NATO website, www.nato.int/docu/basic-txt/b480317a.htm.

177 Snyder, Alliance Politics, 169.
3.3.3.3 Delegation

While Abbott et al. use delegation to focus on the role of third parties to “implement, interpret, and apply the rules”\textsuperscript{178} I emphasize military integration, because that is one way in which military alliances have historically been implemented. Though states may sometimes be unwilling to delegate authority to an international institution or to a third party, they often allow themselves to become dependent on another actor if it means improving their security. As a result, a state that is perceived to be unreliable may have to delegate authority over its military to an ally. In particular, there are two primary types of military integration: 1) the creation of a unified military command in which states have joint authority over each other’s military; and 2) subordination, in which one state’s military is under the command of its ally. Military integration should be more prevalent when an ally is perceived to be unreliable because military integration reduces fears of abandonment by helping to ensure that an unreliable ally will fight when war occurs, since it is more difficult for a state to withdraw from battle when another state’s commanders control its forces.

\textit{Hypothesis 8: An alliance formed with an unreliable state will have higher levels of delegation (integration) than an alliance between reliable states.}

One caveat is that if a state is unreliable because it has previously dragged its allies into war, then high levels of military integration can be disadvantageous to the ally because the same forces that make it more difficult for an unreliable state to abandon its allies also make it more difficult for a reliable state to avoid entrapment. As a result,

\textsuperscript{178} Abbott et al., “The Concept of Legalization.”
Hypothesis Eight applies only when a state is unreliable because it has abandoned allies in the past. A separate test is more appropriate when a state is considered unreliable because it has entrapped allies in the past.

_Hypothesis 8a: An alliance formed with an unreliable state will have lower levels of delegation (integration) than an alliance formed between reliable states, when the reason for the unreliable reputation is entrapment._

I do not expect the other aspects of alliance variation to exhibit the same characteristic. Greater costs and greater precision are likely to be demanded of an unreliable state, regardless of the reason for its reputation. And with respect to alliance type, Glenn Snyder suggests that because ententes are less of a commitment than defense pacts, they minimize the risks of entrapment but increase the risks of abandonment.\(^{179}\) For the same reason, I suggest that unreliable state will have more difficulty forming defense pacts. However, fears of abandonment and entrapment exist regardless of the state’s reputation, and even though allying with an unreliable state will exacerbate these fears, they should have little bearing on the connection between reputation and alliance type. Therefore, I do not control for abandonment/entrapment concerns for any of the hypotheses except the one dealing with delegation.

### 3.3.4 Alliances and War

The common thread between all of the above hypotheses in which a state’s reputation affects its alliances is the importance that states place on their autonomy. The value of a reputation for reliability is an increase in a state’s freedom of action. On the other hand, the cost of a reputation for being unreliable is less autonomy; an unreliable state has fewer options for selecting an ally, has more difficulty keeping allies, and is

\(^{179}\) Snyder, _Alliance Politics_, 346–47.
more constrained by the design of any alliances that it is able to form. Although I have suggested a number of ways in which having a reputation for reliability improves a state’s freedom of action, the flip side to reliability is that it might embroil states in conflicts they would otherwise prefer to avoid. As a result, it is necessary to address one way in which a reliable reputation can be a liability.

A moral hazard problem exists when an actor that is insured is more likely to take risks, which means the insurer will receive more claims than it bargained for. As an example, individuals with healthcare are more likely to visit a physician for a minor malady than those that are uninsured. However, when this occurs, the insurance company’s costs increase. The parallel to this in international politics is that when a state has reliable allies, it may display a greater willingness to challenge its rivals or escalate a conflict than it would if it were alone or if it could not count on its allies. Therefore, my last hypothesis tests whether or not a reliable reputation creates a moral hazard problem.

*Hypothesis 9: A state with reliable allies is more likely to challenge its adversaries than a state with unreliable allies (or without any allies).*

If a reliable reputation encourages a state’s allies to wage war, then it is conceivable that some states will assign less value to their reputation, particularly if they are most concerned about entrapment. If this hypothesis receives support from my tests, it might also help to explain the findings of some scholars that the presence of an alliance is associated with an increase in the likelihood of war.\(^{180}\) Figure 3.1 below provides a summary of all ten of my hypotheses.

Alliance Formation

Hypothesis 1  An unreliable state will be unable to attract new allies.

Hypothesis 2  In general, states will tend to ally with states of similar reliability.

Alliance Duration

Hypothesis 3  An unreliable state will tend to lose the ally or allies that it abandoned.

Hypothesis 4  An unreliable state will lose allies generally (not just the ally it abandoned).

Alliance Variation

Hypothesis 5  The type of alliance formed depends upon the reliability of the states.

Hypothesis 6  In an alliance, unreliable states will have higher levels of obligation than reliable states.

Hypothesis 7  An alliance formed with an unreliable state will have greater precision than an alliance formed between reliable states.

Hypothesis 8  An alliance formed with an unreliable state will have higher levels of delegation (integration) than an alliance between reliable states.

Hypothesis 8a  An alliance formed with an unreliable state will have lower levels of delegation than an alliance formed between reliable states, when the reason for the unreliable reputation is entrapment.

Alliances and War

Hypothesis 9  A state with reliable allies is more likely to challenge its adversaries than a state with unreliable allies (or without any allies).

Figure 3.1: Summary of Hypotheses

3.3.5 The Null Hypothesis

Mercer’s arguments (discussed in Chapter Two) make up the null hypothesis against which I test my hypotheses. Mercer claims that a state should not go to war out of concern for its reputation because states cannot change their reputation – a state’s allies will always see it as irresolute while its adversaries will always see it as resolute. As he states, “Even when observers used an ally’s irresolution to explain its behavior, they did not expect their ally to be similarly irresolute in the future.”

While Mercer’s focus is on resolve, he does make claims about how a state’s reputation influences its alliances. For example, he writes that, “Although the Algeciras defeat influenced German policy-makers in many ways, it did not lead them to put more faith in their Austrian ally. Because they made situational explanations for Austrian support in 1906, they should not – and did not – credit the Austrians as reliable allies in 1908. This reaction . . . illustrates one of my four propositions: allies rarely get reputations for having resolve.” This passage also shows that Mercer uses the reputations of resolve and reliability interchangeably, even though they refer to fundamentally different types of reputation. The fact that he claims to address the effect of reputation on the behavior of allies allows me to make inferences on his behalf about a state’s reliability. For one thing, Mercer would argue that a state’s reputation has no effect on its ability to form new alliances or to preserve existing agreements. Moreover, he would not expect any correlation between a state’s reputation and the design of the alliances it forms.

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181 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 228.

182 Ibid., p. 124.
In contrast, my argument is that states will be wary of forming or maintaining an alliance with an unreliable state. Moreover, if an unreliable state is able to form an alliance, we should see its freedom of action limited by the conditions of the alliance agreement, through the language of the alliance (precision), the costs of forming the alliance (obligation), or through greater military integration (delegation). Finally, if reputation does not influence state behavior, then states with reliable allies should be no more likely to challenge their adversaries than states with unreliable allies (A summary of these competing arguments is given in Figure 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Alliance Formation</th>
<th>Alliance Termination</th>
<th>Alliance Variation</th>
<th>Alliances and War</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View</td>
<td>States will not refuse an alliance based on another’s reputation</td>
<td>States will not end an alliance based on an ally’s reputation</td>
<td>No variation across alliances based on a member’s reputation</td>
<td>Reputation should have no influence on the likelihood of conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer (H₀)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>Unreliable states will find fewer allies</td>
<td>Unreliable states will lose allies</td>
<td>Unreliable states will have less autonomy in their alliances</td>
<td>States with reliable allies are more likely to challenge their adversaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.2: Competing Views**
3.4 Case Selection

There are a couple of different ways I could test my hypotheses. On the one hand, I could select cases based on alliances and work backwards to evaluate how members of the alliance behaved in the last test of their reputation. Alternatively, I could select conflicts and wars to determine how the behavior of states in those events influences future alliance behavior. The problem with the former strategy is that it fails to account for alliances that never form. As a result, it would not provide answers about alliance formation. Therefore, I select my cases from a mixture of conflicts and wars.

Furthermore, I am interested primarily in the behavior of the major powers. I do not ignore minor states, but to reduce the population of potential cases, I restrict my sample to conflicts and wars that involve at least one major power, and where at least one alliance exists.

It is possible that my argument is most applicable to bilateral alliances, because when two states form an alliance, each puts a great deal of trust in the other. As the number of members increases, the importance of each state’s reputation may diminish because trust is more diffused as more states are able to free-ride.\footnote{This is similar to the arguments made by Mancur Olson and Charles Kindleberger regarding the increased difficulty of providing public goods as the number of actors increases. Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965); Charles Kindleberger, “Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy: Exploitation, Public Goods, and Free Rides,” International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 25, No. 2 (June 1981), pp. 242-254.} In bilateral agreements, however, if one state “free-rides” or reneges on its commitment, the alliance becomes less relevant. I do not argue that reputation is irrelevant for multilateral alliances. On the contrary, the reputation of the alliance as a whole may become very
important. But a state’s reliability may have less influence on the formation or structure of a multilateral alliance than it has on bilateral agreements. To test whether or not this is true, I examine alliances of different sizes.

Since my cases all take place during the period leading up to the First World War, I focus on the same three cases that Mercer uses in his analysis of reputation: The First Moroccan Crisis (1905), the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis (1908-1909), and the Agadir Crisis (1911). In addition to Mercer’s three crises, I begin with a case that focuses on the British decision to abandon its traditional policy of splendid isolation at the beginning of the twentieth century. Having discussed my assumptions, variables, hypotheses, and cases, I now turn to the empirical chapters.
CHAPTER 4

THE DRIFT FROM SPLENDID ISOLATION, 1900-1907:
THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE AND THE ENTENTE CORDIALE

*The reputation of a thousand years may be determined by the conduct of one hour.*

-- Japanese Proverb

TIMELINE

11 October 1899 – 31 May 1902  Boer War
16 October 1900                Yangtze Agreement
18 March 1901 – 19 December 1901 Anglo-German Alliance Negotiations
6 November 1901 – 30 January 1902 Anglo-Japanese Alliance Negotiations
28 June 1902                   Triple Alliance Renewed
8 February 1904 – 5 September 1905 Russo-Japanese War
8 April 1904                   Anglo-French Entente (Entente Cordiale)
21 October 1904                Dogger Bank Incident
27 October 1904 – 10 February 1905 Russo-German Alliance Negotiations
31 March 1905 – 7 April 1906   First Moroccan Crisis
30 April 1905                  Anglo-French Military Conversations
6 June 1905 Dismissal of French Foreign Minister Théophile Delcassé
23 July 1905 - 24 July 1905 Treaty of Björko Negotiations Between Germany and Russia
12 August 1905 Anglo-Japanese Alliance Renewed
31 January 1906 Anglo-French Joint Military Planning
8 July 1907 Triple Alliance Renewed (Tacitly)
31 August 1907 Anglo-Russian Entente/Triple Entente

4.1 Introduction

Britain’s position in Europe leading up to the twentieth century is often described as one of “splendid isolation.” This is an unfortunate term, because it mischaracterizes British foreign policy during this time. Rather than avoiding involvement in European power politics – which is how U.S. isolation is often described – Britain instead avoided any formal defense commitments, thus giving it a free hand to maintain the balance of power on the continent. However, a number of events toward the end of the nineteenth century contributed to a change in British policy. For one thing, there was a growing competition for colonies, which brought with it a rising level of threat from foreign navies, particularly of France and Russia after the completion of their 1894 alliance. In addition, the Boer War (1899-1902) convinced many in the British government of the limited resources available for maintaining the empire.184 As a result, Britain initially looked to Germany for increased cooperation. Nevertheless, within a year, the British

government abandoned negotiations for an alliance with Germany and turned to Japan instead. Then, during the Russo-Japanese War, Britain signed the Entente Cordiale with France, which not only influenced the outcome of the First Moroccan Crisis in 1905, but also helped define the divisions in Europe prior to the First World War.

In examining Britain’s shift from isolation, I focus on two separate but related cases, each of which illustrates the importance of understanding the influence of reputation on alliances. The first case examines the failure of the Anglo-German alliance negotiations, which led to an Anglo-Japanese alliance. In the second case, I examine how the behavior of the major powers during the First Moroccan Crisis influenced their relationships in the aftermath of the crisis. The two cases are slightly different in form because the first focuses primarily on a single state searching for an alliance, while the second case – as well as both cases in Chapter Five – focuses more on the consequences of major power behavior during a crisis.

4.2 The End of British Isolation

This first case is divided into three separate observations to illustrate the importance of a state’s reliability on different types of alliance choices. First I look at the British attempt to ally with Germany, which ultimately failed, in part because of Germany’s lack of reliability. Next is the British decision to pursue an alliance with Japan, which led to a binding but vague agreement, consistent with my hypotheses on alliance variation, and also emboldened the Japanese. Finally, I examine the effects of British behavior during the Russo-Japanese War; specifically how Britain’s actions
influenced the nature of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, but also created an opportunity to improve its relations with France. To begin with, I focus on the initial British decision to seek an alliance with Germany.

4.2.1 The Anglo-German Alliance Negotiations

On 16 October 1900, Britain and Germany signed the Yangtze Agreement, by which the two governments (and later the Japanese) sought to uphold freedom of trade for China. The agreement was specifically designed to prevent Russian expansion, but it brought England and Germany closer to what Joseph Chamberlain, the British secretary of state for the colonies, referred to as a “natural alliance.”185 In part, alliance with Germany was considered natural because the British did not have many options. William Selborne, who became First Lord of the Admiralty on 24 October 1900, wrote, “I can see only one possible alternative [to a general suspension of armaments] and that is a formal alliance with Germany.”186

The first hint of Germany’s interest in an alliance was a statement by William II during his January 1901 trip to London, to be with his dying grandmother. Before returning to Berlin, he told a British audience that, “We ought to form an Anglo-German alliance, you to keep the seas while we would be responsible for the land.”187 German public opinion, however, was strongly anti-British, primarily on account of the Boer War,


186 Monger, The End of Isolation, p. 12.

and Bernhard von Bülow, appointed Chancellor on 16 October 1900, made every effort to assure the German public that his government was not contemplating an alliance with England.

Despite von Bülow’s promises, Baron Hermann von Eckardstein, the German Ambassador in London, unofficially proposed a defensive alliance between England and Germany on 18 March 1901.\(^{188}\) In principle, many in the British government concurred that an alliance with Germany would be welcomed. As a growing commercial power, Germany shared British interests in preserving the “open door,” and thus also feared Russian expansion in China. In addition, while Germany had begun to build up its naval power, at that time the German navy posed less of a threat to British interests than did the combined French and Russian navies. Moreover, an alliance would make the German naval buildup useful to the British.\(^{189}\)

Notwithstanding the strategic interests in cooperating with Germany, the negotiations broke down by the end of 1901.\(^{190}\) The first question in testing my argument is to determine how the British perceived Germany’s reliability. To explain Britain’s decision to not ally with Germany using reputation, we must first identify whether or not the British perceived Germany to be unreliable and/or if Germany behaved during the negotiations in a way that suggested it was unreliable. If the British believed that

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\(^{188}\) There is some debate over which government made the formal alliance proposal first, but most evidence points to von Eckardstein as having made the first move. G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, eds., *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914*, vol. 2 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1927), no. 77 (18 May 1901), pp. 60–61.

\(^{189}\) Gooch, *Before the War*, p. 9; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 63.

Germany was unreliable, then according to my hypotheses, I would expect the British to be unwilling to form an alliance, or at the very least to demand an alliance that would bind Germany to England without sacrificing British autonomy.

4.2.1.1 The Role of Reputation

Initially, the British Cabinet was split between those who saw the value of an alliance with Germany and those who favored rapprochement with France and Russia. However, a memorandum circulated by Francis Bertie, Assistant Undersecretary of Far Eastern Affairs, provides a clear indication that Germany’s past behavior was used in the alliance discussions. The following is just a small part:

It would be a great relief to be able to feel that we had secured a powerful and sure ally for the contingency of an attack on the British Empire…but in considering offers of alliance from Germany it is necessary to remember the history of Prussia as regards alliances and the conduct of the Bismarck Government in making a treaty with Russia concerning and behind the back of Austria the ally of Germany….She has beaten and robbed Denmark, and for that purpose she took as partner Austria and then turned round on her confederate and drove her out of Germany.\(^{191}\)

Obviously, Bertie referred to past German actions – even Prussian actions – to make his case that an alliance with Germany would be dangerous because of its reputation. In addition, as Prime Minister, the Marquis of Salisbury wrote, “She [Germany] will…never stand by us against Russia; but is always rather inclined to curry favor with Russia by throwing us over.”\(^{192}\) Salisbury’s comment appears in a personal correspondence to George Curzon, who was at the time the Viceroy of India, but who had been Salisbury’s private secretary in 1895. As a result, even if Bertie employed a

\(^{191}\) Gooch and Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, vol. 2, no. 91 (9 November 1901), pp. 73–76, emphasis in original.

\(^{192}\) Cited in Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 17.
reputation argument simply because of his preference for an alliance with any state other than Germany. Salisbury’s letter to a friend can be seen as a credible expression of his perception of German reliability.

Even more relevant is the fact that Germany’s behavior during the negotiations provided the British with evidence of its unreliability. At the end of January 1901, Russia received concessions from China that the Japanese and British felt were in violation of the Yangtze Agreement. The Germans, however, did not regard this as a threat to Chinese sovereignty or to the Open Door policy, and thus declined to act. In response to Germany’s position, Bertie claimed that, “The Germans want to push us into the water and then steal our clothes.” Bertie and other opponents of an alliance believed that Germany was reluctant to oppose Russia, and that it had not provided England and Japan with adequate support, particularly after it had encouraged Britain to stand up to the Russians. As a result, British distrust of Germany increased.

According to Hypothesis One, then, the British should have abandoned the alliance negotiations. The fact that the British continued to negotiate an alliance may be a function of the split Cabinet, or more likely the strategic belief that Germany was the only possible alliance choice to counter the growing Franco-Russian threat. While this fails to fully support my hypothesis on alliance formation, it does not invalidate it because the negotiations did eventually break down and Germany’s reputation had a great

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deal to do with the British decision to look elsewhere. Despite the fact that the alliance never materialized, it is still useful to examine the British position during the negotiations, to determine the validity of my hypotheses on institutional variation. Hypotheses Six and Seven suggest that we should see the British pushing for high levels of obligation and precision to constrain German actions and avoid being abandoned. Likewise, since the primary British fears involved abandonment by Germany, Hypothesis Eight would expect the British to demand high levels of integration.

While the negotiations did not progress far enough for either side to address issues of obligation or delegation, the British did demand high levels of precision. Landsdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, wanted German cooperation in the Far East, but was reticent enough about any type of commitment to Germany to have interest in a more general alliance.\(^{196}\) On 29 March 1901, Landsdowne wrote a letter to Francis Lascelles, the British Ambassador in Berlin, saying that, “they [his British colleagues] regard with a certain amount of apprehension the idea of an international arrangement of the somewhat indefinite but very far-reaching character….suggested to me. If the matter was to be advanced we ought to endeavor to form a more precise conception of the contingencies for which we desired to provide.”\(^{197}\)


In contrast, the German offer was for the British to join the Triple Alliance, by which England would make a commitment not only to Germany, but to Austria-Hungary and Italy as well.\(^{198}\) This proposal created a couple of potential problems for the British. First, the articles of the Triple Alliance were secret (for the text of the treaty, see Appendix A). Therefore, the Germans were asking the British to join an alliance without first knowing its terms. The second problem with the German proposal is that such an agreement would not only expand British fears of being abandoned by Germany in the Far East, but also of being dragged into a general European conflict over a commitment to Italy or Austria-Hungary. In such a case, Hypothesis Eight may be indeterminate because the fears of abandonment and entrapment cancel each other out, and one could surmise that negotiations might fall apart under such circumstances. The British might have been willing to look past Germany’s reputation if an alliance was formed that constrained Germany, thus enhancing its reliability. However, adding states to the agreement that were themselves likely to entrap England into an unwanted conflict intensified the problems inherent in any type of alliance with Germany. Nevertheless, the Germans were unwavering in their demands for a “Quadruple Alliance.” Germany’s intransigence seems to have been based largely on its belief that the British had no other possible allies, and would eventually realize they needed Germany. At that point, Germany’s terms would have to be acceptable to the British.\(^{199}\)


Alliance negotiations with Germany finally fell apart in December 1901 for two main reasons. First, Germany asked too high of a price for an alliance with England, including British commitment to the defense of Germany’s other allies. Second, many in the British government did not trust Germany from the beginning, and German inaction during the 1901 China crisis brought the rest of the British decision-makers into agreement with that position.

4.2.1.2 Review

In review, the hypotheses that are relevant for this first part of the case are those related to alliance formation and alliance design. Evidence suggests that despite the British government’s growing desire for an ally, they were unwilling to ally with Germany, partly because of its reputation for being unreliable, but also because of specific German behavior supporting that perception. My first hypothesis is that unreliable states will have difficulty finding new allies. I also hypothesize that unreliable states will be more constrained by the terms of their agreements.

While Germany’s unreliability did not initially preclude negotiations with England, it did contribute to the British desire for greater levels of precision. In particular, the British wanted the alliance language to clearly spell out the obligations of the two parties, and were unwilling to join a more general alliance that would greatly expand the scope of the British commitment. Ultimately, the British opt out of the negotiations in favor of an ally that was perceived to be more reliable. Germany then had to be satisfied with an alliance that included Austria-Hungary, a state that most observers
believed was ready for implosion, and Italy, which had already begun to move away from the Triple Alliance towards France. Therefore, this outcome also lends support to Hypothesis Two, that unreliable states will be forced to ally with other unreliable states.

In addition, Hypothesis Five suggests that a defense pact with Germany would be increasingly unattractive to the British because it required such a binding commitment, but that a less formal type of agreement might still be acceptable. Interestingly, even after the collapse of the negotiations, Landsdowne still desired some type of agreement with Germany. However, instead of an alliance that would commit England to definite action, he proposed a set of agreements that would declare common interests in certain areas. Therefore, the British were still willing to discuss a less formal type of agreement with Germany, even though an alliance had become unacceptable.

4.2.2 The Anglo-Japanese Alliance Negotiations

As a result of their inability to develop a satisfactory alliance with Germany, the British decided instead to pursue an alliance with Japan to balance the growing threat to its colonial and naval interests. While the alliance with Germany was meant to balance both France and Russia, the agreement with Japan was designed almost exclusively to prevent Russian encroachment into Asia. This suggests that the British were willing to sacrifice some of their European interests in exchange for a reliable partner.

200 Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p. 66.
Japan initially approached the British on 16 October 1901, while the government was still muddling through the negotiations with Germany. On 6 November 1901, less than one month later but still a month before the collapse of the talks with Germany, the British gave their draft version of an alliance to the Japanese. Over the next three months, the two sides exchanged a number of drafts.

The final text of the treaty was signed on 30 January 1902 and was laid out before the British Parliament on 11 February 1902 (for the text of the treaty, see Appendix B). The agreement obligated England and Japan to consult each other in crises and to aid one another in the event that either state was attacked by two other major powers. It also recognized the allies’ mutual interest in China, as well as Japan’s particular interest in Korea.\(^{201}\)

### 4.2.2.1 The Role of Reputation

The alliance clearly provided strategic advantages to both England and Japan. According to Lord Selborne, an alliance with Japan would help prevent Russian expansion in the East while simultaneously freeing up British naval vessels for redeployment to more vital areas.\(^{202}\) Japan’s primary gain from an alliance with Britain was that their combined naval forces would offset the French and Russian fleets in the Far East, particularly since Japanese finances would no longer permit enough naval construction to keep up with the competition. The Japanese also feared a Russian

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incursion towards Korea, and believed that an alliance with England would deter other European Powers from supporting Russia in a future conflict. I found no reason to believe that either state regarded the other as unreliable during the negotiation period. In fact, in what is perhaps the clearest example of reputation influencing alliance choices, the Japanese evaluated Britain’s history of honoring its commitments prior to their initial alliance offer.

When Komura Jutaro became foreign minister in September 1901 – just one month before the Japanese offer of alliance – one of his first acts was to have the Foreign Ministry determine whether Britain had ever violated her obligations under an alliance. The response was that there were occasions when Britain had violated international treaties, but that it had never abandoned an ally. The degree to which British reputation directly influenced Japanese decisionmakers is unclear, but the timing suggests that Komura gave his support to an alliance with Great Britain based heavily on British reliability.

On the British side, a number of Cabinet members expressed some concern about being dragged into a Russo-Japanese War. However, I found no evidence that these fears were based on past Japanese behavior, and therefore cannot be attributed to reputation. Nevertheless, these concerns were still dealt with through stipulations in the treaty that Britain would only be obligated to enter war if Japan faced two or more great power adversaries. Otherwise, Britain was expected only to maintain strict neutrality.

According to my hypotheses on alliance variation, because neither England nor Japan was perceived to be unreliable, both sides should be favorable to a formal defense pact, and both should be satisfied with low levels of obligation, precision, and delegation. In fact, neither state asked the other to pay up-front costs, nor did they desire precise language in the treaty. There were three contentious points in the negotiations: the geographic scope of the alliance, the extent of Japanese interests in Korea, and combined naval strength in the Far East. Ultimately, the final text of the treaty was geographically limited to the Far East, and while it recognized British interests in China, it admitted that Japan was interested “in a peculiar degree” in Korea. In addition, the two states settled the naval issue by exchanging vague notes in which they agreed that in time of peace their naval forces “should, so far as possible, act in concert”.  

A final point on this part of the case is worth discussing. Hypothesis Nine suggests that a state with reliable allies is more likely to be emboldened to challenge its adversaries. If true, and if the Japanese did perceive the British to be reliable as I suggest, then the alliance might have increased the likelihood of a Russo-Japanese war. Certainly, Landsdowne believed that this was true and made this very argument in a letter to King Edward VII: “The Anglo-Japanese Alliance . . . although not intended to encourage the Japanese Government to resort to extremities, had, and was sure to have,

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the effect of making Japan feel that she might try conclusions with her great rival in the Far East, free from all risk of a European coalition such as that which had on a previous occasion deprived her of the fruits of victory. 205

As I will discuss in the final part of this case, the Japanese were in fact emboldened by the alliance and relied on British neutrality in their decision to go to war with Russia. This illustrates an interesting dilemma facing decisionmakers, because if the British had been perceived to be a less reliable ally, the Japanese may have been more reluctant to engage the Russians. At the same time, if that had been the case, the alliance might never have been concluded in the first place and Britain might have been forced to ally with Germany after all.

4.2.2.2 Review

Like the first part of this case, the second part allows me to test my hypotheses on alliance formation and alliance variation. In addition, it allows for a test of my hypothesis that the allies of a reliable state will be emboldened to challenge their adversaries. While there were certainly strategic reasons on both sides for an Anglo-Japanese alliance, I show that Japanese decision-makers considered British reliability prior to their offer of alliance. If British reliability had been lower, the strategic interests may have been outweighed by the costs of either being dragged into war or being abandoned. But, because the British had such a reliable reputation, the new Japanese Foreign Minister gave his support to an offer of alliance. Therefore, this part of the case strongly supports Hypothesis One.

205 Gooch, *Before the War*, p. 75.
In addition, the terms of the Anglo-Japanese treaty support my hypotheses on alliance variation. These hypotheses collectively suggest that reliable states should be able to form a defense pact, but that the alliance would contain low levels of obligation, precision, and delegation. Not only were both states willing to join a formal alliance, but both were allowed to retain a great deal of autonomy through the vague precision and the low levels of obligation and integration within the treaty.

Finally, it is apparent that Japan was emboldened to challenge Russia, not just by the alliance itself, but specifically by British reliability. Evidence of this is that after the agreement was completed, the Japanese asked what the British position would be in a war, requesting merely neutrality.\textsuperscript{206} Even though the treaty only called for British neutrality, unless Russia was joined by another Power, it meant that if Russia were given assistance, Japan would have a strong naval ally. That the Japanese believed their ally would honor this obligation played a major role in their decision to attack the Russians on 8 February 1904.

\textbf{4.2.3 The Russo-Japanese War and the Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance.}

Further support for my general argument is illustrated by Britain’s actions during the Russo-Japanese War, and in Japanese and French reactions to British reliability. Specifically, this third part of the case study provides further tests of my hypotheses on alliance formation and alliance variation, particularly as it is based on the behavior of an ally during a war.

Russia’s expansion into North Korea, and its failure to withdraw troops from Manchuria in spite of its promises to do so, prompted the Japanese to push for negotiations that would divide the region into spheres of influence.\textsuperscript{207} However, Japan’s terms were one-sided and Russia was unwilling to compromise. As a result, the Japanese broke off negotiations on 6 February 1904. Two days later, Japan attacked the Russian fleet at Port Arthur.

According to the Anglo-Japanese alliance signed on 30 January 1902, Britain was not even required to honor its neutrality commitment since Japan was technically the aggressor in the war. However, not only did Britain maintain its neutrality, but it took a number of actions that contributed to Japan’s victory. For example, the British put pressure on Turkey to honor existing treaties and prevent Russia’s Black Sea Fleet from passing through the Dardanelle Straits to reinforce its Far East fleet. Britain also denied Russian ships transit through the Suez Canal, and refused coaling facilities to ships of the Russian Baltic Fleet on the grounds that neutral states could not supply belligerent vessels.\textsuperscript{208}

I suggest that these actions should have enhanced the Japanese government’s perception of British reliability. If so, then my general argument would expect that the Japanese would be willing to give up more of their autonomy, without demanding any additional constraints on Britain’s autonomy.


\textsuperscript{208} Monger, \textit{The End of Isolation}, p. 154; Nish, \textit{The Anglo-Japanese Alliance}, p. 289.
4.2.3.1 The Role of Reputation

Britain’s support during the war, through its “benevolent neutrality,” prompted the Japanese to ask for a treaty renewal in 1905 (a full two years prior to the end of the first alliance), in which they expressed a wish for an extension to the alliance, and agreed to an expanded geographic scope. A strategic reason for the early renewal was that Japan’s victory over Russia made certain aspects of the original alliance less relevant.209 Both parties also hoped that a renewed alliance would increase Russia’s willingness to compromise during the peace talks.210 However, this renewal also supports my general argument regarding the connection between reputation and alliances, because as Britain’s reliability increased, Japan became more accepting of a greater commitment.

The second alliance, signed on 12 August 1905, not only extended the duration of the agreement for ten years, but also expanded the geographic scope of the alliance to include India and “countries east of it” (for the full text of the second treaty, see Appendix D). In addition, the new alliance also called for military support in the event that either ally was attacked by a single state, instead of by two powers as in the 1902 version. Given Japan’s likely defeat of Russia, and the growing naval tension between England and Germany, this stipulation was much more likely to benefit the British. Despite the willingness of both states to bind themselves more closely together, both still were satisfied with fairly vague language, for example, concerning British naval

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210 This might suggest a belief by the British and Japanese that an alliance of reliable allies enhances deterrence. Although this is not a topic I directly address in this project, the notion surfaces again in the next chapter and I discuss its implications in the concluding chapter.
assistance and a general Japanese obligation to assist British interests in India. In addition, initial plans for secret notes to be exchanged concerning British naval and Japanese army obligations were cancelled. Instead, an article was drafted calling for consultation from time to time.\footnote{Nish, \textit{The Anglo-Japanese Alliance}, p. 325.}

Not only did British action in support of its ally contribute to a renewal of the alliance under more favorable terms to the British, but Britain’s reliability may have compelled the French to sign an entente with England rather than risk having to support Russia in a war against England. Tension between France and England had been steadily declining, and even though the French offer of entente was based on the strategic decision to avoid war with England, French fears of being dragged into a war were based on the belief that England would honor its obligation. Had British reliability been lower, it is unlikely the entente would have formed when it did. As a result, British reliability not only increased its advantages within its existing alliance, but it also created opportunities for new partnerships that were previously unavailable.

\subsection*{4.2.3.2 Review}

Britain’s turn away from splendid isolation is an important case for a couple of reasons. Had Britain and Germany successfully negotiated an alliance, Europe would have looked very different both before and after the First World War. In addition, the Anglo-Japanese alliance (combined with Japan’s victory over Russia) elevated Japan to great power status. Therefore, Germany’s reputation not only reduced its chance to form an alliance with Britain, but also had important implications for all of Europe. It is also a fairly difficult test of reputation because the British decision to abandon splendid isolation
isolation was predicated on the recognition that they faced a growing threat to their naval dominance and colonial interests. As a result of the strategic importance of alliances during this period, reputation might have been outweighed by other factors such as power, interests, and geography. Nevertheless, reputation played a significant part in the British decision to abandon the alliance negotiations with Germany, in Japan’s decision to pursue an alliance with Britain and then to wage war on Russia, in the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, and in the development of the Anglo-French Entente.

There is one important footnote that is particularly relevant for the next case. During the Russo-Japanese War, the perception arose in Russia that France had abandoned it. Between France’s lack of support in the war and its entente with England, Russian perceptions of French reliability dropped considerably. According to von Bülow, Germany’s attitude was, “even a shade more kindly [towards Russia] than that of France.”212 As a result, my hypotheses would expect relations between France and Russia to suffer. That Russia entered into negotiations for an alliance with Germany in October 1904 supports this argument. However, these negotiations ended without an agreement because the Russians were unwilling at that time to ally with Germany without French approval. However, after the Dogger Bank Incident, and once it was evident that Russia was going to be defeated by Japan, Tsar Nicholas began searching for the chance to seek revenge for France’s disloyalty. The opportunity came when a crisis arose between France and Germany over Morocco.

4.2.4 Case Summary

Dividing this case into three separate observations, I have tried to illustrate how reputation influenced a number of aspects of Britain’s move away from splendid isolation at the beginning of the twentieth century. What I have shown is that while England’s reliability increased its chances for forming an alliance with Japan, Germany’s reputation prevented it from forming a defense pact with the British, and instead forced the Germans to be content with Austria-Hungary and Italy as its allies. Even while an Anglo-German alliance was still being negotiated, the British demanded very high levels of precision, not only to protect against the likelihood of German abandonment, but also to protect against being dragged into a war by the other members of the Triple Alliance. In contrast, the Anglo-Japanese alliance contained low levels of obligation, precision, and delegation, and after the British again proved themselves to be a reliable ally during the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese were willing to give up more autonomy to expand the scope of the alliance in a manner favorable to England. On the other hand, it may have been Britain’s reputation for reliability that encouraged the Japanese to attack Russia in the first place.

Then, as we move between this case and the next, we also see that Britain’s reliability not only helped deter France from entering the war against Japan, but also helped in the creation of an entente between the French and British. As a result, this case provides strong support for each of the hypotheses that were tested within these observations. In the next section, I discuss some of the ways that we can more effectively explain alliance decisions by incorporating reputation into our existing theories.
4.2.5 Competing Theories

One way to illustrate how reputation can improve upon our existing alliance theories is to look at how some of those theories would have expected the British to behave in 1901. For example, Balance of Power has difficulty explaining Britain’s decision to abandon isolation and search for an ally, because according to the Correlates of War data, the Dual Alliance and Triple Alliance were already fairly balanced. As a result, the best way for Britain to maintain the balance of power would have been to remain neutral and preserve its flexibility in the event that one alliance surpassed the other. Therefore, this theory cannot explain the choice to ally, let alone the decision to first approach Germany.

Stephan Walt’s Balance of Threat theory might be more successful at explaining British decisionmaking, because Germany was a logical ally to balance against France and Russia, which were perceived to be the most dangerous threat to British interests. It cannot explain, however, why the negotiations were ultimately abandoned in favor of an alliance with Japan.

Some scholars suggest that states ally against their potential enemies in what Paul Schroeder refers to as managing the threat, or what Patricia Weitsman calls tethering. One can certainly make the argument that this was part of the British intention in pursuing an alliance with Germany, although I implied that at the time of the


negotiations, the combined forces of France and Russia were perceived to be a greater threat. The British did attempt to come to an agreement with Russia to manage the threat, but only after the German negotiations broke down, and this attempt was forgotten when the agreement with Japan was completed. In addition, the fact that Britain allied first with Japan, and then with France once Germany had become a perceptibly greater threat – with the defeat of the Russian navy – creates another problem for this theory.215

Domestic explanations do not help our understanding either, because if Britain was looking to ally with an ideologically similar state, it would have pursued both France and Japan prior to Germany, since both had Parliamentary systems. Therefore, none of our conventional alliance theories can fully explain the different aspects of this case. Nor can reputation explain everything, but it can complement our theories to increase our understanding of alliance behavior. For one thing, if we incorporate the influence that Germany’s reputation had on British decisionmakers, we get a better sense of why the negotiations failed. In addition, an understanding of reputation helps us gain insight into the nature and evolution of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, as well as why Japan decided to attack Russia in 1904.

In the second part of this chapter, I examine the First Moroccan Crisis and the effect that state behavior had on alliance choices in the aftermath of the crisis. As with the first case in this chapter, this case provides multiple observations, although rather than tracking a series of events from one state’s perspective, in this case each of the allies involved in the crisis provides an observable test of my hypotheses.

4.3 The First Moroccan Crisis

This crisis and the two that make up Chapter Five are the same ones that Jonathan Mercer uses to support his argument that states cannot change their reputations, and that therefore they should not act out of concern for their reputation: the First Moroccan Crisis (1905-1906), the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis (1908-1909), and the Agadir Crisis (1911).216 Mercer’s is the most critical analysis of reputation to date, so testing my hypotheses on his cases is a useful way to show how a state’s reliability can affect alliance behavior, even if one accepts his findings that resolve has little influence on the behavior of states. I have split up these crises to create symmetry between my two substantive chapters, but also because the Moroccan case is clearly connected to the Anglo-Japanese alliance through the Anglo-French Entente that emerged in April 1904. The Bosnia-Herzegovina and Agadir Crises are connected to one another through the existence of the Triple Entente, so I deal with those two cases in Chapter Five.

It is important to point out that the crises represent a difficult test for reputation. My original contention was that a state’s behavior in war is a significant factor in its future alliance autonomy. I do expect alliance behavior in crises to also influence reputation, but to a lesser degree. Therefore, an evaluation of reputation in these three cases may not provide the same strength of evidence as an analysis of alliance behavior in wars. However, there are still valid reasons to study these crises. As I mentioned already, since Mercer relies upon these cases to support his contention that concern for reputations should not influence a leader’s decisions, it is appropriate for me to evaluate

\[216\] Jonathan Mercer, Reputation and International Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), chapters 4, 5, and 6 respectively.
the same cases to establish the strength of my argument, as well as its place in the existing literature. Second, if I find that a state’s behavior during a crisis influences its reputation and therefore its autonomy, then it is even more likely that a state’s behavior in war would have similar consequences. Finally, these are historically important cases because they contributed to the outbreak of the First World War. I do not claim that they caused the war, but I suggest that the behavior of the allies helped create an environment in which a general war was more likely. These crises helped divide Europe into two armed camps, with Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy on one side and England, France, and Russia on the other. In addition, reputation provides explanations for the cause of the war that have been ignored, such as the differences in how a state perceives its allies’ reliability compared to that of its opponent.

The advantage of studying these particular cases is that all three crises involved the same six participants. In addition, the states in each case received different levels of support from their allies. This allows me to directly compare how relationships changed after the crises, as a result of the level of support the states gave to their ally. In the first case, for example, the Moroccan Crisis involved a dispute between France and Germany. On one side of the issue, France received more support from England than it did from Russia, which suggests that after the crisis, all things being equal, France should trust England more than Russia. If so, then I hypothesize that there should be observable differences between British and Russian autonomy after the crisis. Likewise, Austria-Hungary supported Germany, but Italy chose to side with France in the crisis, suggesting that after the crisis Germany should trust Austria-Hungary more than Italy. If so, then again we should see observable differences in Germany’s relations with its allies.
If reputation influences a state’s alliance autonomy as I theorize, then we should see states referring to their allies’ behavior and attempting to alter the relationships between the states accordingly. I begin this case study with a brief overview of the First Moroccan Crisis, and then focus on how each state’s actions influenced its relationship with its allies after the crisis.

4.3.1 Background

From 1900 to 1904, France negotiated with England, Italy, and Spain to increase its control over Morocco. For example, from 14 December 1900 to 1 November 1902, France agreed to accept Italian rights in Tripoli in exchange for French control over Morocco (and an Italian promise that the Triple Alliance did not pose a threat to France). Likewise, on 8 April 1904, Britain agreed to ensure French rights over Morocco, in return for British control over Egypt.\(^{217}\) This agreement on Morocco and Egypt was one of the three components that in combination made up the Entente Cordiale (for the full text of the agreement, see Appendix C).

However, France failed to negotiate any type of settlement with Germany, believing that German interests in Morocco were minimal. The German government viewed this as an affront to its status as a major power, and demanded some form of compensation for French control of Morocco. To emphasize German interests in Morocco, Kaiser William II sailed to Tangier, arriving on 31 March 1905. There, he made speeches regarding the autonomy of the Sultan: “The object of my visit to Tangier is to make it known that I am determined to do all that is in my power to safeguard

efficaciously the interests of Germany in Morocco, for I look upon the Sultan as an absolutely independent sovereign.”218 Germany also demanded the resignation of France’s Foreign Minister, Théophile Delcassé, since it was Delcassé who had orchestrated France’s Moroccan policy, but also because he was perceived to be hostile towards Germany.

Maurice Rouvier, the French Prime Minister, responded by forcing Delcassé’s resignation on 6 June 1905. Although this incident does not fit the scope conditions for this project because it is not directly connected to a state’s reliability as an ally, Mercer uses it as an important event that signals a lack of French resolve. A. J. P. Taylor supports Mercer’s argument, suggesting that the British blamed Delcasse’s dismissal on “French feebleness” and that Landsdowne concluded that the French were useless as a partner.219 However, it is conceivable that the British saw this move more favorably than Mercer and Taylor suggest. Since Delcassé’s resignation was perceived to decrease French hostility towards Germany, it may have reduced the likelihood that England would be dragged into a war against the Triple Alliance because of the entente. In other words, while French resolve might have been damaged by this affair as Mercer suggests, France’s reliability as an ally might also have increased by reducing the chance it would drag its allies into an unwanted war. Francis Bertie, now the British ambassador in Paris, provides some evidence of this perspective in his suggestion that Delcassé’s fall was brought about by his failure to disclose his plans as well as to carry out Cabinet decisions.

In a letter to Landsdowne on 15 June 1905, he wrote that, “It [Delcassé’s removal] has the appearance of being a sacrifice to a German menace, but it is not entirely so.” Therefore, at least the British Ambassador’s view of the situation was that a change in Foreign Ministers might have been less about a lack of French resolve than simply the need to improve French policy towards Germany.

Edward McCullough also supports this view. According to him, few in France approved of Delcassé’s decision to exclude Germany from the earlier discussions on Morocco, and this was illustrated in earlier attempts by Rouvier to remove the Foreign Minister. In addition, newspapers condemned his policies and then expressed satisfaction at his resignation. McCullough also suggests that rather than bowing to German pressure, Rouvier believed that removing Delcassé would encourage Germany to drop its demands for an international conference on Morocco, and come to a direct agreement with France. Therefore, the removal of the Foreign Minister may appear to have been solely about sacrificing one man to avoid war, but it was facilitated by the belief that it would be more beneficial to France than placing the decision in the hands of the international community. As such, if this action helped avoid war, then it would follow that the British government’s perception of French reliability would not be damaged, but might have even improved.


220 Letter from Bertie to Landsdowne, 15 June 1905, FO 800/127.

Despite Delcassé’s resignation, the Germans continued to press for an international conference on Morocco, believing that certain states – such as England and the United States – would oppose French control of Morocco in favor of the Open Door, just as they had opposed Russian expansion into China. The conference was held in Algeciras, Spain from 16 January to 7 April 1906. Thirteen states participated, including the six European great powers, Morocco, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, and the United States. The result was a confirmation of Morocco’s independence, which the Germans spun as a victory for the Open Door and for their interests in Morocco. However, the conference did reserve for France a privileged position in Morocco, which most analysts perceived to be a German defeat.

In the next sections, I discuss how the various European powers reacted to the crisis, and how their behavior at the Algeciras Conference altered their relationships with their allies. In particular, I examine whether my hypotheses accurately explain changes in these relationships based upon the different levels of support that France and Germany received from their allies (Figure 4.1 below illustrates the behavior of the major powers during the crisis). France received support from both England and Russia, but because Russia also negotiated with Germany during the crisis, France’s perception of Russian support was mixed. As a result, while both allies appear to lose some autonomy after the crisis, the British were able to preserve much more freedom of action than the Russians. In addition, British support for France changed the mood in Russia with respect to England, and opened up the possibility for an Anglo-Russian entente.222

I suggest that there are also observable differences in how Germany reacted to its two allies based upon their different levels of support. While Germany received support from Austria-Hungary, Italy sided with France. Although Italy was not cast out of the alliance, as one of my hypotheses might suggest, it was more closely bound to the Triple Alliance to offset its disloyalty. In the sections below, I discuss each ally in turn.
4.3.2 England

Britain and France, who at the turn of the century were almost at war because of colonial aspirations in Africa, signed an entente early in the Russo-Japanese War. This primarily commercial agreement was largely the result of French concerns about having to support Russia in a war against both England and Japan. Despite the fact that the agreement was nothing more than an expression of common economic interests, England was thereafter obligated to guarantee French rights in Morocco. As a result, when Germany threatened France over Morocco, the British government felt it necessary to support the French, and did so with all of its diplomatic influence.

Von Bülow contends that the entente with England gave France the courage to pursue a protectorate over Morocco.\(^{223}\) Because of the British reputation for reliability, enhanced by its benevolent neutrality in support of Japan, France believed that England would uphold the entente, if not for its own commercial interests, than for the sake of its reputation. In one sense, supporting France was an unusual position for Britain, given that just one year earlier it had supported Japan against Russia, largely in defense of the Open Door in China. Because of Britain’s history of protecting the Open Door, the British might have opposed French control of Morocco for commercial interests, as the Germans expected them to do. However, given Germany’s earlier unwillingness to defend the Open Door in China (as discussed in the first case of this chapter), German claims of wanting to protect the Open Door in Morocco rang disingenuous. Instead, Francis Bertie, who helped thwart the Anglo-German negotiations discussed earlier in this chapter, and who was now the British ambassador in Paris, handed Delcassé a note

\(^{223}\) Von Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, p. 95.
on 25 April 1905 in which the British government assured France of all possible support in handling the German request for a Moroccan port. According to L. W. Fuller, King Edward VII clearly gave France *carte blanche* with reference to Morocco. Sidney Lee provides evidence of this in a statement Edward made to Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London: “Tell us what you wish on each point, and we will support you without restriction or reserves.”

Besides the obligation to honor the entente, two strategic factors also convinced the British to support France in the crisis. First, if France was compelled to give up its rights to Morocco, the quid pro quo with England over Egypt might become nullified as well. In addition, contrary to just three year earlier when rising Franco-Russian naval power was perceived to be the greatest threat to British security, by 1905 German naval growth was a greater threat than either French dominance of Morocco or the defeated Russian navy. This would be an even greater problem if Germany was successful at gaining a port in Morocco. Therefore, the British honored their agreement to protect French control of Morocco, and as a result, French perceptions of British reliability should have increased. The question is whether this affected the Anglo-French relationship at all.

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To review from Chapter Three, my basic assertion about the connection between reputation and alliance choices is that as one state’s reliability rises, it will be able to preserve its autonomy while its allies will give up more of their autonomy. In contrast, as a state’s reliability declines, it will have less autonomy while its allies will demand to keep more of their own. Specifically, my hypotheses would expect the British to be able to form new alliances if they desired to do so, not to lose any existing allies, and to have its allies demand less obligation, precision, and delegation of England while expanding their own commitment. Based upon my last hypothesis, I would also expect Britain’s allies to be more emboldened in future crises, knowing that England would support its allies when needed.

As hypothesized, the British do not lose any of their allies, and do gain the opportunity to form new alliances. For one thing, the Germans approached England with another offer of alliance. Once again, though, the British were unwilling to discuss such formal commitments with Germany. In contrast, the British desired an agreement with Russia on Persia and Afghanistan, and Britain’s support for France may have been partly based on the belief that doing so was necessary to improve relations with Russia. According to a memorandum by Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, if Britain stayed out of a Franco-German war, “There would . . . be a general feeling in every country that we had behaved meanly and left France in the lurch. The United States would despise us, Russia would not think it worth while to make a friendly arrangement with us about Asia, Japan would prepare to re-insure herself elsewhere, [and] we should
be left without the power of making a friend.”

Clearly, Grey believed that abandoning Britain’s commitment to France would not only prevent an alliance with Russia, but would also cause Japan to look elsewhere for an alliance. There is also evidence that British support for France did increase the chances of an Anglo-Russian entente. André Tardieu, political editor of the newspaper *Temps*, and who later served as Prime Minister, wrote:

“During the negotiations that followed the crisis, before, at and after Algeciras, Great Britain supported us with a loyal energy to which the French owe grateful homage. The weight of English approval which our proposals constantly met with throughout, contributed to insure their success. And this visible unity has exercised an attraction so great that, in the next year, following the example of France, Russia concluded with Great Britain a pact of reconciliation . . .”

In fact, even before the Algeciras conference ended Count Lamsdorf, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, invited the British to resume talks on an Anglo-Russian agreement. As with all of Britain’s agreements, strategic interests were involved. Eugene Anderson writes, “Mistrust of the Central Power [Germany] was an important inducement for Great Britain and France to complete the Entente Cordiale by an entente between Great Britain and Russia.” However, such an agreement was made more likely once Britain proved its reliability to France during the crisis. In addition, only two

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229 White, *Transition to Global Rivalry*, pp. 308-313.

weeks after the Algeciras Act was signed, Russia and France agreed to drop the clauses in the Dual Alliance providing for military cooperation against Great Britain. Then, on 31 August 1907, Britain and Russia signed an agreement with one another, effectively creating the Triple Entente (for the text of the part of the agreement pertaining to Persia, see Appendix E).²³¹

The results of my hypotheses on alliance design are weaker, but still substantively significant. Again, I expect that because France should have perceived a rise in British reliability, they should have been more willing to expand the nature of their commitment to England. At the same time, because France almost dragged England into conflict with Germany, the British should have preferred to maintain low levels of obligation, precision, and delegation. In fact, the French did want to move towards a defense pact, while the British were unwilling to tie their hands to a formal agreement.²³²

In seeming contradiction to my hypotheses that a reliable ally should be able to preserve its autonomy, Britain and France did engage in joint military planning. Conversations existed between the French and British military staffs even before the first Moroccan crisis and informal discussion continued during 1905. However, these were authorized only by the French Premier, and were regarded as unofficial by England until 31 January 1906, when Lord Richard Haldane, the new British Minister of War,

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authorized their continuation.\textsuperscript{233} John White claims that as a result of the Algeciras Conference, “the Entente passed from a static to a dynamic state.”\textsuperscript{234} This suggests that even though the formal commitment itself did not change, British autonomy declined, at least through higher levels of delegation.

While this might appear to be a problem for my argument, Grey suggests that the talks were necessary to ensure British autonomy. Given the widespread belief that a general war would be over quickly, Grey recognized that the only way England would be able to offer assistance to France was if plans were already prepared. The talks in no way required the British to participate in a war, but ensured that they would be able to do so if they chose.\textsuperscript{235} Evidence of this is that the talks – combined with a series of agreements between Britain, France, and Spain in May 1907 – created higher levels of integration for France than for the British, given that they produced an agreement by which the French fleet would be concentrated in the Mediterranean, leaving the French coast completely dependent upon the British navy in the event of a German attack.\textsuperscript{236} These events also created the advantage of freeing up the British Mediterranean Fleet for operations elsewhere. This outcome is consistent with my argument, since British perceptions of French reliability would have declined as a result of the crisis (given that England was


\textsuperscript{234} White, \textit{Transition to Global Rivalry}, p. 203.


\textsuperscript{236} Lee, \textit{Europe’s Crucial Years}, pp. 165-168.
dragged into a conflict with Germany on account of the entente). It makes sense, then, that Britain would have desired greater autonomy for itself while decreasing French autonomy.

In addition, given that these talks were already underway during the crisis, this loss of British autonomy was a likely casualty of the confrontation with Germany in which Britain and France found themselves. But, when we compare the relationship between France and England to that of France and Russia, it is clear that British autonomy decreased much less than Russian autonomy, and this correlates nicely with the level of support France received from each of its allies, and with my general argument about reputation and alliance autonomy.

Exploring the counterfactual briefly, I also suggest that while the British may have lost some autonomy as a result of the joint military planning, they did preserve more freedom of action than they would have had they failed to support France at Algeciras. Failing to support France might have destroyed the Anglo-French entente (as Hypothesis Three would expect), would have made an Anglo-Russian entente less likely (Hypothesis One), and would have alarmed the Japanese (Hypothesis Four). According to Fuller, Grey did not believe England should stay aloof during the crisis: “We could not stay out of a war without losing our good name and our friends and wrecking our policy and position in the world.” Hardinge also believed that if England abandoned France, an alliance between France, German, and Russia would follow, leaving England isolated.237 While I cannot test this counterfactual, it does suggest that the decline in British

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autonomy was less than it would have been had British actions been different. This point is also supported by the more binding changes that occur within the Franco-Russian alliance.

4.3.3 Russia

Although both England and Russia supported France at the Algeciras conference, Britain lent its total support throughout the crisis, going beyond the requirements of its entente with France. In contrast, while Algeciras was underway, the Russians simultaneously negotiated a treaty with the Germans at Björko. Therefore, while my hypotheses expected Anglo-French relations to improve as a result of England’s reliability, it is more difficult to suggest specific changes to the Franco-Russian relationship, since Russia’s support was mixed. However, because of the different levels of support provided by France’s allies during the crisis, I expect France to trust Britain more than Russia after the conference.

The Dual Alliance between Russia and France was formed on 4 January 1894, but the partnership was strained even before the Moroccan Crisis. In December 1903, Cambon advocated a repudiation of the alliance, even though he understood that this might push Russia towards Germany.\(^{238}\) In addition, France had not supported Russia during the war with Japan. While this was not strictly a violation of their agreement, since assistance was only required in the event of an attack by Germany or Austria-

Hungary, this lack of support lowered Russian perceptions of French reliability. On the other hand, Russia was obligated to support France over Morocco, since the crisis was initiated by Germany.

Tardieu suggests that Russian “fidelity to the French Alliance was evinced in the most energetic way during the conference at Algeciras.” However, Russia’s behavior during the crisis is more complicated than that, because while the Russians did support France at the Algeciras Conference, Tsar Nicholas II also met with the German Kaiser at Björko, on 24 July 1905, to discuss the terms of a defense treaty.

The Björko incident is an interesting component of the case that Mercer glosses over. However, it is useful for understanding the effect of reputation on Franco-Russian relations. For one thing, Nicholas was angered at British “neutrality” and French inaction during the Russo-Japanese War. This is an interesting contrast to the Russo-German negotiations from October 1904 to February 1905, which ended because the Russians refused to ally with Germany without prior French approval. However, by July 1905, the Tsar’s attitude towards his ally seems to have changed, and because he blamed Russia’s impending defeat to Japan on French inaction, the Tsar felt compelled to look for other alliance options. Therefore, this incident fits nicely with Hypothesis Three, about unreliable states – in this case France – having trouble keeping their allies.

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239 Tardieu, *France and the Alliances*, p. 27.


On the surface, the treaty posed a minimal threat to France and England. However, when word of the meeting leaked, the French and British governments became especially uneasy. The incident increased French distrust of its Russian ally, even though Count Lamsdorf, Russia’s Foreign Minister, ultimately convinced the Tsar to drop the alliance with Germany. Curiously, rather than suggest that the alliance would hurt Russia’s relations with France, Lamsdorf used Germany’s unreliable reputation to convince the Tsar that the alliance might drag Russia into an Anglo-German War.

Rouvier also referred to Germany’s lack of reliability to convince the Russian ambassador in Paris that the French would never accept an alliance between themselves, Russia, and Germany. He claimed that, “The nation would not tolerate a closer rapprochement with Germany. It cannot forget what it has suffered from her, of which suffering it has just been reminded in a careless and purposeless way.” This, therefore, also provides support for Hypothesis One, that reputation affects the willingness and ability of states to form alliances.

Ultimately, Russia did support France at the Algeciras Conference, and according to White, this support was constant throughout the conference. However, it did not translate into increased reliability given the willingness of the Tsar to negotiate with Germany during the earlier part of the crisis. For one thing, Russia’s support was

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242 Article I was a promise to aid each other in the event of one being attacked by a European Power and Article IV even called for France to be invited into the accord. Fay, “The Kaiser’s Secret Negotiations with the Tsar,” pp. 67-68. See also Williams, “The Strategic Background to the Anglo-Russian Entente of August 1907,” p. 371.


244 Cited in Ibid., p. 302.

245 White, *Transition to Global Rivalry*, p. 191.
strategic, based on a desire to gain access to the straits and its need for French financial assistance, rather than any sense of obligation to an ally.\textsuperscript{246} In contrast, the British had strategic reasons for supporting France, but their commitment to France was the primary purpose for their support. As a result, I expect the French to perceive a decline in Russia’s reliability relative to British reliability, resulting in observable changes to the Franco-Russian alliance that were more binding than changes to the Anglo-French relationship.

The conventional view of the First Moroccan Crisis was that German actions, intended to drive a wedge between France and its allies, instead brought France, Russia, and England into a more intimate relationship. While this may be true, I suggest that France and Russia drew closer not only out of concern for the growing German threat, but also because of a declining sense of each other’s reliability. In particular, I contend that the increase in delegation that took place between Britain and France was surpassed by the degree with which France attempted to bind Russia after the crisis.

While the British and French held joint military talks, the French wanted even greater military delegation with Russia. According to Anderson, “On January 21, 1906, the Czar wrote to William II that in keeping with ‘the real sense of our Björko Treaty,’ he had accepted a proposal of [French] President Loubet’s to attach a French general to his person.”\textsuperscript{247} This not only shows Russia’s willingness to give up some of its autonomy to preserve the alliance with France, but more importantly is evidence that France requested

\textsuperscript{246} Mercer, \textit{Reputation and International Politics}, p. 106.

\textsuperscript{247} Anderson, \textit{The First Moroccan Crisis}, p. 304-5.
a higher level of military integration with Russia to the point of having a French military leader advising the Russian government. This increased delegation was intended to make it more difficult for Russia to abandon France in the next crisis.

In addition, on 21 April 1906, the Russian and French chiefs of General Staff met to develop a military protocol in Paris. According to White, “This reaffirmed the basic purpose of the 1892 accord as that of mutual protection against aggression by Germany.” This meeting was clearly meant to send a signal to the Germans about the strength of the Franco-Russian relationship, but perhaps more important was the assurance that it provided to France about Russian reliability.

Therefore, the mixed support that Russia provided to France during the crisis resulted in more binding changes than those between England and France. This suggests that a state’s reputation is an important element of its freedom of action because while the Russians were required to hold military talks and allow a French officer to advise the government, the British had only to participate in military conversations, which the British even viewed as increasing their freedom of action, since it provided a greater possibility of fighting with France if the British chose to do so.

One aspect of this case that reputation may not explain is why the British were willing to sign an entente with Russia if its reliability was questionable. One could explain this agreement with strategic interests, since the British and Russians had a number of colonial issues in Asia that needed to be settled. Moreover, by 1907, it was clear that Germany posed the greatest threat to peace, not only because of its growing naval power, but also because of its behavior over Morocco. Therefore, conventional

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248 White, *Transition to Global Rivalry*, p. 185.
alignment theories, like Walt’s balance of threat, may explain the entente without reputation playing a role. Another possible explanation for the entente that supports a more specific version of reputation rather than the more general version I test is that because the Russian behavior violated its agreement with France, this may have had less influence on British perceptions of Russian reliability. In addition, it is important to remember that even if Russia’s reliability declined, Russia did end up supporting France during the all-important conference at Algeciras.

While these alternative theories may explain why Britain was willing to ally with Russia, incorporating reputation does increase our ability to explain the design of the agreement, including the development of an entente containing high levels of precision. For example, the British were unwilling to agree to anything more than an entente. According to Gordon Martel, the agreement between England and Russia, “provided for no political action, no military planning, and suggested no possible contingencies that might lead the two powers to consult on these matters in the future.”249 Moreover, while the entente contained no obligation or delegation, it was very precise, providing only for the resolution of tension between England and Russia in Persia, Tibet, and Afghanistan.

In addition, British interests may have outweighed reputation concerns in allying with Russia. It is curious, though, that the timing of the agreement coincided with Britain’s firm support for France. Therefore, just as Britain’s reliability created an incentive for France to come to an agreement with England rather than risk a war, British support for France created an incentive for the Russians to sign an entente to avoid being outmatched by the Central Powers. And similarly, the benefits of resolving the issues in

Asia outweighed British concerns of Russian reliability. As a result, I am satisfied that my hypotheses receive at least partial support from this part of the case. I turn my attention now to Germany’s allies, beginning with Austria-Hungary.

4.3.4 Austria-Hungary

Austria-Hungary was the only state, other than Morocco, to vote with Germany at Algeciras. Mercer suggests that because Germany perceived Austria’s support at the conference as favorable, such behavior would not change Austria’s reputation, and Germany would be no more trustful of its ally in future crises. In contrast, I hypothesize that Austria-Hungary will be able to form new alliances, not lose any existing allies, and preserve its existing levels of obligation, precision, and delegation. However, I also expect Germany to be more emboldened as a result of Austria’s support.

Because Austria-Hungary does not attempt to form any new alliances, I can make no claims about its ability to do so. However, it does not lose any allies, and the Triple Alliance was tacitly renewed on 8 July 1907 when none of the signatories to the treaty expressed an interest in withdrawing from the agreement one year before the 1908 deadline of the treaty. This conforms with my hypotheses on alliance duration, because a state that supports its ally should be able to renew its alliances, just as Britain was able to do with Japan. The crucial question is whether any changes occurred between Austria-Hungary and Germany as a result of the crisis.

No changes were made to the Triple alliance itself. However, as with the Anglo-French partnership, there was an increase in military coordination. And as with the case of France and its allies, the changes to Austria-Hungary’s autonomy are significantly less binding than those placed on Italy after it failed to support Germany at the conference.
This is relevant because it again confirms my basic contention that a state’s reliability is linked to its alliance autonomy even if my specific hypotheses are not fully supported. To explore this point further, I turn to the Italian case.

4.3.5 Italy

According to my hypotheses, because Italy failed to support Germany during the Algeciras Conference, Italy should have lost some of its reputation and therefore some of its autonomy. Italy was a member of the Triple Alliance and was expected to support Germany at the conference. While Austria-Hungary stood by its ally, Italy not only failed to support Germany but voted with France. As a result, my hypotheses expect Italy to have trouble finding new allies, as well as keeping its current allies, and would also be expected to give up greater levels of obligation, precision, and delegation in the partnerships it can maintain. I would also predict that Italy’s allies would be less bold when facing a future crisis, believing that they would be unlikely to expect support.

As with Austria-Hungary, I cannot test my hypotheses on alliance formation because Italy made no attempt to find new allies. However, it is clear that Italy’s actions at Algeciras created tension within the Triple Alliance. In the words of Anton Monts, Germany’s ambassador to Italy, “If Italy fails us in the relatively unimportant Morocco question, that is a foretaste of what we may expect in really serious times.”250 In addition, Germans feared that the French would call for a second conference on Morocco. On this point, Friedrich von Holstein, a political counselor in the Foreign Office (and the man responsible for the Kaiser’s trip to Tangier), claimed, “Such a Conference would be a certain second defeat for Germany. For, with the way the fleet question stands at

250 Gooch, Before the War, p. 258.
present, England would adhere to France more than ever. Russia needs a French loan of a billion. *We know how Italy and Spain behave.* And Austria is still angry with us about the ‘Seconding’ telegram.\(^\text{251}\) This not only illustrates German perceptions of Italy’s reputation, but also suggests a concern about future crises in which Italy could not be counted on to assist her allies. Even stronger language was used by General Moritz von Auffenberg, an Austrian army general and later Minister of War, who stated that, “In case of war Italy would explode against us like a keg of powder.”\(^\text{252}\)

Hypotheses Three and Four would expect Germany and Austria-Hungary to want out of the alliance with Italy. In fact, there was talk of dissolving the alliance within both the German and Austrian leadership. According to Alfred Pribram, “When Italy supported Germany’s adversaries in the Moroccan affair and during the course of the Algeciras conference, many were shaken in this belief [that Italy would support its allies in a war]. . . . Statesmen there were of no mean influence who urged a dissolution of the alliance with Italy and a new orientation of German policy in the direction of a revival of the League of Three Emporors . . .”\(^\text{253}\) Monts was one proponent of denouncing the alliance altogether. In May 1906, he “Confronted the Imperial Chancellor and the Secretary of State [in Berlin] with the question of whether, in view of Italy’s attitude, it

\(^{251}\) Cited in Norman Rich and M. H. Fisher, *The Holstein Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955-1963), Holstein to Bülow (25 August 1908), No. 1121, p. 556, emphasis added. The telegram to which Holstein refers was sent to Austria-Hungary after the Crisis, in which the German government thanked the Austrian government for its support in the crisis and for always supporting Germany. Many in the Austrian court took the telegram’s language as an affront to the power of the Austrian Empire.


would not be better to make use of the right of denunciation and dissolve an alliance which afforded disproportionately greater advantages to Italy than to the Central Powers." 254 He argued that the current treaty required heavy obligation from Germany without expecting similar commitments from Italy.

The puzzle for my hypotheses is why the alliance persisted when Austria-Hungary even had military plans, in which the government assumed a simultaneous war against Italy and Serbia-Montenegro. 255 One explanation based on strategic interests is that Germany was willing to renew the alliance despite its lack of faith in Italy, primarily to avoid being seen as completely dependent on Austria-Hungary. In other words, because Germany did not have a lot of options, its autonomy in this situation depended upon having more than one ally, even if those allies were unreliable. Likewise, Austria-Hungary preferred to maintain the alliance, despite Italy’s lack of reliability, because it feared invasion of its southern frontiers in a war with Russia. As long as Italy at least remained neutral in a war, that frontier would remain more secure than if Italy was pushed to the opposing camp. Pribram supports this view, contending that, “If the government leaders in Berlin and Vienna advocated the continuance of the Triple

254 Ibid., p. 139.

Alliance, and persisted in their willingness to make fresh sacrifices for the sake of holding their unreliable ally, they did so because they saw in this alliance the only safeguard against Italy’s open defection to the camp of the enemy.”  

However, the Italian case is more complicated than it seems. First of all, there is contradictory evidence about how the Germans perceived Italy’s reliability after the crisis. On one hand, William is claimed to have disapproved of Italy’s double-faced attitude. In a 10 April 1906 letter to Count Agenor Goluchowski, the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Austria-Hungary’s ambassador in Berlin wrote of a meeting with the emperor. According to Ladislas de Szögyény-Marich, William, “did not wish to waste many words over Italy, and would only give the assurance that if the opportunity should arise – and this was not impossible in view of the unreliable policy of that kingdom – it would give him great satisfaction to join us in administering a salutary lesson to Italy, perhaps even with arms in hand.”

In contrast, von Bülow suggested that, “the Italian representatives [at Algeciras] took their stand in certain secondary matters with the Western Powers, and against us. . . . In other more important questions, Italy supported and furthered our point of view.” It is unclear why von Bülow felt this way, given that the Italians voted with the French. Even Mercer would expect Italian reputation to suffer since Germany would explain

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Italy’s unfavorable behavior in dispositional terms. However, von Bülow seemed to understand that even if Italy were unreliable, it was better to have the Italians as allies than facing off against Austria-Hungary.\(^{259}\)

It is also possible that Germany may not have perceived the Italians as unreliable considering that they did not strictly violate the terms of the agreement. For one thing, Italy frequently informed its allies that it would not become involved in a war against France or England. And notably, the language of the Triple alliance did not require Italy to become involved in a conflict with France. This is the very argument made by the Italian government after the First World War to explain why Italy should not be viewed as having betrayed its allies.\(^{260}\) In addition, just as England signed the Entente Cordiale guaranteeing French rights in Morocco in exchange for British rights in Egypt, Italy signed a similar agreement with France on 14 December 1900, recognizing French rights in Morocco in exchange for a guarantee of Italian rights in Tripoli. Then, on 4 June 1902, the Italians made a secret promise that the Triple Alliance contained nothing hostile to France, and on 30 June 1902 the two states pledged neutrality in a war involving one of them.\(^{261}\)

Therefore, this observation does not adequately support my hypothesis on alliance duration, and suggests instead that the balance of threat might be a better explanation for Germany and Austria-Hungary not wanting to let the Triple Alliance fall apart.

\(^{259}\) Von Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, p. 72-73.


However, reputation is still important in this case because it is the best way to explain how the relationship between Italy and its allies grew more binding. In particular, consistent with my hypotheses on alliance variation, there were proposals to alter the relationship to extract more payments from Italy and to bind it more closely to its allies.

A Conference on Commerce and Navigation was held on 11 February 1906, at which Italy and Austria-Hungary settled a number of commercial problems. Another conference was held in Vienna in June 1906, where emphasis was placed on drawing Italy as close as possible to the Central Powers. Count Monts, who had earlier advocated dissolution of the alliance, proposed that Italy should be forced to lend diplomatic support to Germany’s economic policy in Asia Minor. This is relevant because it would have placed Italy in conflict with French and British interests. Therefore, consistent with Hypothesis Six on obligation, this is an example of a state having to pay higher costs to form – or in this case preserve – an alliance; the cost was a potential increase in tension between Italy and the entente states.

However, even if Italy’s lack of support was not perceived by its allies to be an abrogation of its commitments, I still expect Germany to have much less faith in Italy than in Austria-Hungary. As a result, relations between Germany and its two allies should reveal this different level of trust. While the alliance remained intact, the Austro-Hungarian government increased talk of invading Italy. Likewise, von Moltke claimed that the agreements made with Italy, “were made so clear and so binding that a doubt as

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to Italy’s faithfulness to the Alliance could scarcely arise.”263 Therefore, while Germany tried to bind both of its allies more closely to it after Algeciras, Austria-Hungary clearly had more autonomy within the alliance than did Italy.

Finally, my last hypothesis suggests that states with reliable allies are more likely to challenge their adversaries. Because France’s allies were more reliable at Algeciras than Germany’s, I would not expect Germany to challenge France again any time soon, at least not over Morocco (in fact, another crisis over Morocco does occur, but not until 1911, after France showed itself to be an unreliable ally during the Bosnia Crisis). Also, given that France failed to support Russia against Japan, it would be consistent with my argument if Germany felt emboldened to challenge Russia, which it did in 1908 in support of Austria-Hungary.

Since Italy had an agreement with France over Morocco, it is also worthwhile to see if any changes occurred in the Franco-Italian relationship as a result of Italy’s support at the conference. From the French perspective, Italy’s reliability should have risen, because even though Italy did abandon an ally, it also lived up to its agreement with France. Mercer might argue that because the French saw Italian behavior as favorable, they would use situation to explain away Italian support at the conference. More relevant for my hypotheses is whether relations between France and Italy improved after the conference. The truth is that evidence is mixed. Paul Cambon, for instance, believed that Italy was unreliable and liked Italy being a part of the Triple Alliance because it weakened Germany and Austria-Hungary, whereas if Italy were to abandon the alliance, Germany might attempt to reconcile with Russia. According to M. B. Hayne, “Cambon

263 Moltke, p. 9; Manhart, Alliance and Entente, p. 64.
correctly assessed that Italy would remain neutral in the event of a general war until it was possible to distinguish the victorious side.” 264 In contrast, Stephen Pichon, France’s Foreign Minister from 1906 to 1909, advocated a policy to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance, believing that France and Italy had common interests. 265 While Pichon’s argument was based more on interests than reputation, it is likely that his advocacy for such a policy would have declined had Italy not voted with France at the conference.

This brings up an important point regarding the degree to which states share a common perception of another state’s reputation. I test whether allies have similar perceptions by my two separate hypotheses on alliance duration – one for the abandoned ally and one for other allies. However, this is an example of a state having two different commitments and having to choose sides in a crisis. The question is whether it receives a different reputation based on one’s side in the crisis, or if it receives a more commonly accepted reputation based on what it was expected to do. 266


266 A more contemporary example of this dilemma is the US having to choose sides between Great Britain and Argentina during the Falklands War. Initially trying to maintain its neutrality, the US ended up supporting Britain. Whether or not Argentina’s perception of US reliability suffered as a result may depend on whether the US was expected to side with Britain. Given that it had stronger interests in supporting its NATO ally, US reputation was unlikely to suffer a general decline within the international community. Nevertheless, Argentina’s perception of US reliability was still likely to drop as a result of US actions during the war.
4.3.6 Case Summary

Based upon this case, my general propositions concerning reputation and alliance autonomy receive strong confirmation, even if my specific hypotheses receive only mixed support. Britain, having improved its reliability is able to add an ally while still preserving its autonomy within the entente. On the other hand, Italy’s loss of reputation contributed to a decline in its freedom of action within the Triple Alliance.

If we look first at alliance formation, neither Italy nor Austria-Hungary attempted to find new allies, so the test for this hypothesis is limited to the Anglo-Russian entente. We do see that Britain was able to form an entente with Russia, at least partly because of its support for France at Algeciras. This entente is a problem for my argument given Russia’s limited support for France during the Moroccan Crisis. However, this is a good example of strategic interests outweighing reputation concerns, because the British certainly felt they would benefit from an agreement with Russia. And, the fact that Russia did not, in the end, abandon France at the Algeciras Conference may have mitigated any initial concerns about Russia’s reputation. Moreover, dealing again with the possibility that different actors assign different reputations to the same behavior, it may be that because England was not itself abandoned, the British may have viewed Russian reliability differently from the French.

There is also mixed support for my hypotheses on alliance duration because the Triple Alliance was renewed despite Italy’s loss of reliability. However, both of its allies discussed the possibility of leaving the alliance (not to mention their discussions of attacking Italy). One can imagine that if Germany and Austria-Hungary had legitimate alternatives, they might have gone through with the threat to dissolve the alliance.
However, because they had so few alliance possibilities, they were unwilling to let Italy go, despite its poor reputation. On the other hand, none of the states that honored their obligations lost an ally. While this is not an exact test of my hypotheses, it is still a significant point that may be more relevant after evaluating the results of the entire project.

Next, there is strong support for my hypotheses on alliance variation. Mercer suggests that the French credited neither of its allies with being resolved: “Because they explained allied support in terms of the situation, both France and Germany questioned the support they would be given in the future.”267 What the French were uncertain about were its allies’ capabilities and competence – the speed with which England could put troops on the continent and the ability of Russia to recover from its defeat against Japan. However, the French did not question Britain’s reputation, or its willingness to send troops to support France. The real question for this project is whether the relationships between these states and their allies changed as a result of behavior during the crisis.

One thing I have tried to show in this case is that France’s relationships with England and Russia reflected the degree to which each state honored its commitment. Most relevant was the fact that the British were able to preserve a great deal of autonomy, even to the point of believing that the French had become dependent upon the British. In his Annual Report on France, Francis Bertie wrote: “I believe that France is now so

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dependent in matters of foreign policy on England that pressure might be used to bring the French Government to show a more accommodating spirit in some of the questions in which the two countries are at present not entirely agreed.”268

Similarly, Germany’s attitude towards Austria-Hungary and Italy illustrates the degree to which it perceived its allies to be reliable based on their behavior at Algeciras. For example, the Triple Alliance was renewed without any significant change in the language of the treaty or in its delegation. In fact, Austria-Hungary and Germany increased planning for war without Italian involvement. This signals a decline in Italian delegation, which contradicts my hypotheses on alliance variation with states having a reputation for abandonment. At the same time, Italy was asked to pay greater costs to Germany in the form of diplomatic and economic support, Austrian rhetoric about invading Italy increased after the crisis,269 and when the Austrian government annexed Bosnia in 1908, it did so without consulting the Italians, despite Italy having clearly expressed an interest in Balkan stability.

Therefore, while this case does not neatly conform to all of my hypotheses, it does lend strong support to my general proposition regarding the connection between reputation and alliance autonomy. Many of the hypotheses receive only mixed support because reputation is frequently outweighed by other factors like threat, geography, and power. Therefore, as I have suggested, reputation alone does not provide a clear explanation of all alliance choices. But failing to incorporate reputation ignores a

significant part of the equation. As such, these hypotheses are most useful when incorporated into other theories. And while I find that supporting an ally may not always increase a state’s autonomy, it is likely to come away with more freedom of action than states that failed to support their ally. Therefore, this case supports my contention that leaders who want to preserve their autonomy should be concerned about their state’s reliability.

One problem with Mercer’s argument becomes clear as he reviews the expectations of state behavior between the First Moroccan and Bosnian crises, in that he makes a number of faulty claims by conflating credibility and reliability. For instance, he suggests that the British would not view the French as reliable allies since their resolve at Algeciras was explained through situation rather than disposition.270 However, I have suggested many times already that resolve and reliability are two different reputations, and since France was one of the primary belligerents at Algeciras, its resolve was tested rather than its reliability.

Another problem is that Mercer relies entirely on expectations of behavior to test whether or not reputation matters, ignoring real behavior that may be influenced by reputation. For example, he might suggest that if reputation mattered, France would expect Britain’s support during the next crisis, while Germany would not expect Italian support. However, this is too simplistic because if Germany did in fact expect Italian support, then Mercer would label this a failure of the reputation hypothesis. Instead, I

269 Conrad, Austria’s Chief of the General Staff even referred to Italy as Austria’s principal opponent, and suggested that preventive war was an option. Manhart, Alliance and Entente, p. 64; Fay, The Origins of the World War, Vol. I, pp. 344-345.

270 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 111.
claim that Germany might expect Italian cooperation precisely because of the changes that Germany demanded after Italy failed to support its ally. Therefore, my argument provides a more nuanced and more realistic test of reputation. Moreover, I do not expect a state to rely solely on past behavior to determine the likelihood that it will honor its commitments. Instead, if a state has altered the relationship to adjust its ally’s autonomy, those constraints should also alter expectations about the ally’s reliability.

Curiously, alliance behavior in the Triple Entente seems to fit more closely with my expectations than does the Triple Alliance. One possible explanation may be rooted in Hypothesis Two, about states of similar reputation banding together. Namely, I posit that Germany and Austria-Hungary had few other alliance options. One can see evidence of this in a statement by Count Aloys von Aehrenthal, the Austrian Foreign Minister: “They [the Austrians] could be absolutely sure of Germany . . . for she could now depend on Austria alone.”271 The US was the only Great Power not already allied with a European Power, and the US was unlikely to have allied with Germany and Austria-Hungary, at least partly because of their prior behavior. Therefore, Germany and Austria-Hungary accepted a tenuous relationship with Italy because they had little choice, and doing so at least prevented Italy from allying against them and leaving Austria-Hungary’s southern border vulnerable.

In situations like this, where alliance options are already limited, I would expect reputation to play a less significant role in alliance choices. However, it is useful to remember that I suggested in the first case of this chapter that Germany was limited to an alliance with other unreliable states precisely because of its reputation for being

271 Gooch, Before the War, p. 394.
unreliable. Had an Anglo-German alliance formed in 1901, either despite Germany’s reputation or if Germany had been more reliable, then Germany and Austria-Hungary might have dealt with Italy more harshly since they would have had more options.

### 4.3.7 Competing Theories

If we briefly examine other explanations of alliance formation, we find mixed support for each. Balance of threat theory, for example, explains the British decision to ally with Russia and continue the entente with France, since it was clear that all three states saw Germany as a primary threat to their interests, though those interests were not necessarily the same. In contrast, if Austria-Hungary believed that its greatest threat was from Italy, the theory would not expect the Triple Alliance to continue.

On the other hand, the arguments by Schroeder and Weitsman that states sometimes ally to manage a threat receives solid support from the Triple Alliance, but only mixed support from the Triple Entente, since Britain and Russia did have disputes that the entente helped resolve, but they did not perceive each other to be the greatest threat. Therefore, while these two theories each explain part of the case, we have no explanation for why states sometimes balance against threats and other times ally to manage those threats. Nor is it clear in any of the alliance choices if one state is bandwagoning with another, either to avoid being attacked or to share in the spoils.

The value of reputation is that is may help identify how states choose particular alliance strategies. My assertion is that states will only balance threat if they have some faith that their fellow balancers will honor their commitment. If not, then attempting to balance will be dangerous, and states will prefer to buckpass, bandwagon, or manage the threat. Because of Germany’s unreliability, no reliable state was willing to ally with it to
manage the threat. So, Britain, France, and Russia allied with each other to balance the
growing German threat. As the reliability of any entente state declined, I would expect the others to consider leaving the alliance, since balancing would become more
dangerous. On the other hand, because Germany and Austria-Hungary were perceived to be unreliable, and had limited options for allies, they were compelled to stay allied with Italy and attempt to manage the threat. With an unreliable reputation of its own, Italy too was stuck trying to manage the threat from Austria-Hungary, since none of the other states were willing to ally with Italy.

4.4 Chapter Review

By examining Europe’s Great Power alliance choices from 1900 to 1907, I have found a significant level of support for the argument that one state’s reputation influences the behavior of other states (Figure 4.2 below illustrates my findings from this chapter).

The two cases in this chapter include nine separate observations: four from the first case (the failed Anglo-German alliance negotiations, the Anglo-Japanese alliance negotiations, England during the Russo-Japanese War, and France during the Russo-Japanese War), and five from the First Moroccan Crisis (one each for England, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, and two for Italy given that it had agreements with both France and Germany). Given that there are nine observations, and nine hypotheses, this creates eighty-one possible tests of my argument about the influence of reputation. Among these, seventeen are not applicable to these two cases. Of the sixty-four remaining tests, only six seem to completely contradict my expectations. In contrast, thirty-eight tests result in alliance decisions that are consistent with my hypotheses, while the remaining twenty provide mixed results (there are contradictory findings or other factors appear to
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<th>First Moroccan Crisis</th>
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<td>Reliability</td>
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<td>H9: Moral Hazard</td>
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* Refers to British perceptions of German Reliability.

Figure 4.2: Review of Chapter Findings

(Based on a table with a similar design and purpose. Kevin Sweeney, “A Dyadic Theory of Conflict: Power and Interests in World Politics” (Ph.D. diss., The Ohio State University, 2004), p. 298).
be responsible for the findings). This means that over ninety percent (90.63%) of the applicable tests provide some support for my argument, and over half (59.38%) of one state’s alliance decisions are strongly correlated with its ally’s reliability.

Reputation cannot explain the British government’s initial interest in a German alliance, nor do I suggest that reputation will always provide a better explanation for state behavior than strategic interests. Clearly, in 1901, the British felt that their best option for balancing the growing Franco-Russian threat was an alliance with Germany. However, Germany’s unreliable reputation contributed to Britain’s demands for a more precise commitment. Ultimately, Germany’s reputation and its unwillingness to defend the Yangtze Agreement caused the British to shift their focus towards an Anglo-Japanese agreement, leaving Germany to depend on its unreliable Triple Alliance partners.

England’s turn away from Germany supports the general theme that reputation influences alliance decisions. Furthermore, Britain’s reputation as an ally was a key piece of information that the Japanese government considered prior to negotiating an alliance. While it is not clear how Japanese behavior would have been different had Britain’s reputation been less stellar, what is clear is that reliability was at least part of the equation. Moreover, the agreement that was ultimately concluded is consistent with all four of my hypotheses on alliance variation: it is a defense pact, with low obligation, little precision, and no delegation. Moreover, while Japan had a number of strategic reasons for going to war with Russia, it avoided doing so until after it had a reliable ally, which supports Hypothesis Nine.
Finally, Britain’s benevolent neutrality during the Russo-Japanese War contributed to Japan’s willingness to expand both the duration and the geographic scope of the alliance, sacrificing some of its own autonomy to renew the alliance early. In addition, although the Japanese did go to war after signing the alliance, the British were not dragged into the war. As a result, the British were also willing to give up greater levels of autonomy to renew the alliance once assured of Japan’s status as a Great Power.

Britain’s reliability heading into the Russo-Japanese War also created an opportunity for an entente with France. France was fearful of being dragged into a war with England as a result of their alliances. The French clearly believed that England would honor its commitment to Japan and were unwilling to support Russia if it meant risking war with England. Not only is this consistent with my argument about reputation influencing alliance formation, but the form of the agreement also corresponds with my hypotheses. England was given a great deal of autonomy, and while the French wanted a defense pact, the British were unwilling to make such a commitment to France. Nevertheless, this Entente Cordiale proved valuable during the First Moroccan Crisis, in which Germany attempted to drive a wedge between England, France, and Russia. British support not only helped France emerge from the crisis on top, but also led to French offers for a more formal defense alliance.

In contrast, France’s unwillingness to support Russia during the war with Japan, even though it was not explicitly obligated to do so by the terms of the treaty, caused tension within the Dual Alliance. And while Russia did not withdraw from the alliance, the Russian government did negotiate treaties with Germany in 1904, and then again in
1905 in the midst of the Moroccan Crisis. Only through the promise of more French loans to Russia was this tension reduced in time to gain Russian support at the Algeciras Conference.

British reliability during the Moroccan Crisis also led to renewed talks for an entente with Russia. My hypotheses cannot directly explain why British autonomy decreased slightly after the crisis (specifically its delegation through the joint military talks), nor can they explain why the British considered allying with Russia after the Tsar seemed willing to abandon its ally for an agreement with Germany, other than the fact that Russia ultimately did side with France at the Algeciras Conference. A strategic explanation is that both sides recognized the growing German threat. Moreover, my basic argument remains valid when we compare England’s relative level of autonomy after the crisis to that of Russia, since the increase in Russian delegation and integration was greater than that required of the British.

As for the Triple Alliance, Germany received a great deal of support from Austria-Hungary, but Italy voted with France. Italy’s actions can be partially explained through its formal agreement to protect French interests in Morocco, and out of a concern for going to war with England and France. Therefore, while Italy abandoned one state with which it had an agreement, it honored its commitment to another state. Even though Italy was not thrown out of the Triple Alliance as my third hypothesis might expect, German and Austro-Hungarian leaders did discuss denunciation of the alliance, or even an invasion of Italy. Ultimately, strategic interests outweighed reputation, and despite its lack of reliability, Italy was perceived to be less dangerous within the alliance than partnered with France. And as my hypotheses would expect, Germany and Austria-
Hungary did try to bind Italy more closely to the alliance, specifically by demanding that Italy increase its obligation through diplomatic support for German and Austro-Hungarian interests.

On the other hand, my findings for Italy vis-à-vis France somewhat invalidate my hypotheses since Italy’s willingness to honor its agreement to France should have increased French perceptions of Italian reliability. But despite Italy’s actions at the Algeciras Conference, the entente states continued to perceive Italy as unreliable, and as a result preferred to have Italy remain a part of the Triple Alliance. While this test does not support my assumption about state behavior affecting its reliability, it does still support my general claim about one state’s reputation influencing the behavior of other states, since neither France nor England were willing to ally with a state perceived to be unreliable.

Clearly, I have gone beyond simply showing that reputation has some influence on alliance choices. Of course, there are instances in which strategic interests trump reputation, and I have tried to point these out as much as possible. However, that is consistent with my assumptions coming into this project and does not detract from my basic argument that a state’s reliability influences its alliance autonomy. In addition, I show that even if a state does not receive observable benefits from a reliable reputation, states that honor their commitments do gain or preserve more of their freedom of action than do unreliable states.

The most successful hypotheses in these two cases are those having to do with alliance variation, particularly Hypothesis Seven related to the influence of reputation on the precision of the treaty language. In contrast, my hypotheses on alliance duration are
the least successful, with the lowest level of support for Hypothesis Four, that unreliable states will lose their other allies beyond those that were abandoned. This is interesting, because it corresponds with Mercer’s argument that commitments are not interdependent, at least with respect to the loss of an ally. In other words, a state that reneges on its commitments may not need to fear the loss of its other allies. However, my findings also illustrate that a state’s reliability *does influence* its ability to find allies in the first place, and more importantly affects its freedom of action within those alliances.

In the next chapter, I examine two cases that occur closer to the beginning of the First World War – the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis (1908-9) and the Agadir Crisis (1911). These are difficult tests of reputation because of their timing, and the fact that the European alliances are much less flexible by 1908. Both of these factors suggest that strategic interests should outweigh reputation as a primary motivation for alliance decisions. Nevertheless, I will show that reputation still plays an important role in helping us understand the alliance choices of the Great Powers.

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272 This has potentially important policy implications; it suggests, for instance, that US arguments about needing to support South Vietnam to preserve NATO or the Souteast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) may not have been as critical as was believed.
CHAPTER 5

ROLLING TOWARDS WAR, 1907-1914:
BOSNIA, AGADIR, AND THE TIGHTENING OF EUROPE’S ALLIANCES

A reputation once broken may possibly be repaired,
but the world will always keep their eyes on the spot where the crack was.

-- Joseph Hall

TIMELINE

8 July 1907         Triple Alliance Renewed (Tacitly)
31 August 1907      Anglo-Russian Entente/Triple Entente
15-16 September 1908 Russo-Austrian Meeting at Buchlau
6 October 1908 – 22 March 1909 Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis
9 February 1909     Franco-German Agreement on Morocco
August 1909 – June 1911 Anglo-German Naval Conventions
24 October 1909     Russo-Italian Racconigi Agreement
4 November 1910 – 19 August 1911 Russo-German Potsdam Convention
21 May 1911 – 4 November 1911 Agadir (Second Moroccan) Crisis
20 July 1911        Dubail-Wilson Agreement
8 January 1912      British Naval War Staff Established
8-12 February 1912    Haldane Mission to Berlin
13 July 1912        Franco-Russian Military Protocol
16 July 1912        Franco-Russian Naval Convention
23 July 1912        Anglo-French Naval Agreement
November 1912       Repositioning of Anglo-French Navies
22 November 1912    Austro-German Military Conversations
5 December 1912     Triple Alliance Formally Renewed
2 August 1913       Naval Agreement Signed (Austria, Italy, and Germany)
May 1914            Anglo-Russian Naval Talks
28 June 1914        Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

5.1 Introduction

My two case studies in Chapter Four provided significant insight into the ways that a state’s reliability can influence its freedom of action with respect to its alliance choices. However, it is useful to examine additional cases in which alliances were tested to determine the extent to which state behavior resulted in the type of changes that I hypothesize. Since I already dealt with one of the cases that Jonathan Mercer uses to support his argument – the First Moroccan Crisis – this chapter will focus on his two other cases: the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis and the Agadir Crisis. As before, I will provide a brief discussion of the events, an analysis of the success of each of my hypotheses, and then identify ways in which a focus on reputation can help our existing theories perform more successfully. Before diving into these cases, it is worthwhile to
review some of the key events from the previous chapter, particularly since the actors are the same. In addition, if my claims about reputation are valid, then state behavior during that earlier period should continue to influence later alliance choices.

My first case focused on the initial British search for an ally. Recognizing the need to counter growing Franco-Russian naval power, Britain abandoned its policy of splendid isolation and negotiated an alliance with Germany. After failing to reach an agreement, at least partly because of Germany’s unreliable reputation and behavior, the British turned their attention to Japan. Shortly after the completion of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, Britain’s new ally attacked the Russian fleet at Portsmouth, initiating the Russo-Japanese War. Because of the terms of the alliance, England was only obligated to support Japan if a second European power joined the Russian side of the war. But, by honoring its neutrality in a way that benefitted Japan, Britain’s reliability increased, not only in the eyes of its ally – who agreed to renew the alliance with an expanded scope to include British interests in South Asia – but also among the French. Out of fear of having to fight England because of French commitments to Russia, France remained neutral and even sought to improve relations with England by agreeing to recognize British control of Egypt, in exchange for French control over Morocco.

This case supported my hypotheses about unreliable states having difficulty finding reliable allies, and showed how a reputation for reliability can preserve a state’s freedom of action in an alliance. It also suggested that Britain’s reliability, in addition to emboldening the Japanese to attack Russia, deterred France from getting involved in the war against Japan, and instead prompted a diplomatic agreement between England and
France. While the Anglo-French entente was initially based on common economic interests, British support for France at the Algeciras Conference further improved relations between the two and also contributed to an entente with Russia. The birth of the Triple Entente is one of the subjects of Chapter Five, along with the further evolution of the Triple Alliance of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy.

Although Austria-Hungary supported Germany during the crisis, Italy sided with France. As a result, while Austria-Hungary was able to preserve its autonomy, Italy became more constrained and was even considered as a target for possible attack by its allies. However, Italy was not dropped from the alliance. The best explanation for this is that Germany and Austria-Hungary did not have any other options for an alliance, which forced them to avoid dealing with an unreliable ally the way my argument would expect.

The hypotheses receiving the strongest support in Chapter Four are those related to alliance variation (especially the one dealing with precision) and the moral hazard problem of being reliable. The weakest findings were those associated with alliance duration, particularly for the allies of unreliable states that themselves had not been abandoned. In this chapter, I focus on two more crises to determine whether this pattern continues: The Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis and the Agadir Crisis (also known as the Second Moroccan Crisis).

273 French calculations were undoubtedly based on capabilities – not wanting to challenge the British navy – but the French necessarily assumed that the British would honor the agreement with Japan if another European state entered the war.
5.2 The Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis

A considerable amount of diplomatic activity took place between the First Moroccan Crisis and the Bosnian Crisis. The Triple Alliance was tacitly renewed, England and Russia signed an agreement that effectively created the Triple Entente, and England and France engaged in military discussions to deal with contingencies for war. In addition, Russia and Austria-Hungary began negotiating an agreement that would grant Austria-Hungary privileged rights in Bosnia in exchange for Austria’s support in reopening the Dardanelle Straits, which had been closed to shipping since the Crimean War. An unintended consequence of this negotiation was that it resulted in another crisis involving the six European powers. As with my previous case, I will provide the relevant details of the crisis, then focusing on each of the allies discuss their behavior, the effect it had on their reliability, and any resulting changes to their alliance autonomy. I will also spend more time in this chapter discussing state expectations of their allies’ behavior. It was difficult to do this with the First Moroccan Crisis, since expectations were unclear, but it is easier in this second crisis, and since this is Mercer’s method of testing reputation, it is the most effective way of comparing the relative effectiveness of our two arguments.

5.2.1 Background

On 15 September 1908, the Russian and Austrian Foreign Ministers met secretly at Buchlau to discuss Austria’s interest in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Russian minister, Alexander Izvolsky, agreed to support Austria’s plan to annex Bosnia, in exchange for
Count Aloys von Aehrenthal’s promise that Austria-Hungary would support an international proposal to reopen the Dardanelles to Russian warships. However, on 6 October, before Izvolsky could gain support from the other Great Powers for an opening of the Straits, Austria proceeded with the annexation of Bosnia. The Serbian army mobilized in response and requested Russian intervention.

The Russian government initially challenged the annexation for a number of reasons. First of all, Izvolsky felt betrayed by Aehrenthal, and so it was a matter of honor for him. The government also felt pressure to support its Slavic brothers in Serbia. In addition, while Russia was in no position to challenge Austria-Hungary and Germany on its own, Russian leaders believed that they could count on British and French support. And because the agreement at Buchlau had been secret, Russia’s allies were unaware that Izvolsky had been negotiating to give Bosnia away.

The crisis lasted for six months, during which Italy and France led the call for a Great Power conference. Germany and Austria-Hungary opposed a conference believing that they would once again be outnumbered. Britain also opposed a conference, until the issues to be addressed were clearly spelled out ahead of time. In addition, the British government told Izvolsky that while it could not support Russia’s desire to open the

\[\text{Footnotes:}\]

274 An excellent account of the crisis can be found in Bernadotte Schmitt, *The Annexation of Bosnia, 1908-1909* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).


 Straits at that time, it would consider discussing the matter at a later date. More important was the British promise that Izvolsky could count on their support against Austria-Hungary and Germany. In contrast, the French failed to back their ally, even signing another agreement with Germany over Morocco, in which German concessions were granted in exchange for French neutrality in the crisis.

In the other camp, Austria-Hungary proposed that Russia compel Serbia to accept the annexation without compensation. Germany stood by its ally, going so far as to give Austria assurances of German support regardless of how the crisis played out. This so-called “blank check” emboldened Austria to stand firm against Russia. On the other hand, Italy felt betrayed by the annexation, and thus gave little support to its ally. On 21 March, Izvolsky received an ultimatum from Germany demanding that he accept Austria’s proposal. In particular, Germany threatened to release documents from Buchlau that would have embarrassed Izvolsky because they pointed to his backroom dealings over Bosnia and the Dardanelles.

The next day, Izvolsky reversed his previously tough stance and gave in to Austrian demands. The conventional wisdom is that because Russia received little support from France and only diplomatic backing from England, Izvolsky felt the need to back down and accept a humiliating defeat. However, as I discuss in the section below, there is evidence that the Russian government viewed England’s behavior as loyal, and the difference between this and the perception of France’s behavior are reflected in Russian relations with its allies after the crisis.
The dominant view on pre-First World War Europe is that the Great Powers formed two inflexible alliances that divided Europe and increased the probability of war because realignment became unlikely. If true, then by 1908 any crises should be a fairly difficult test of reputation because when realignment is unlikely, a state’s reputation for reliability should have less influence on its allies. However, evidence from the Bosnian Crisis not only shows that reliability was influential, but also that fears of abandonment were significant even if the alliances were perceived to be inflexible. In other words, while realignment was unlikely, dealignment was enough of a concern for both the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente to suggest that reputation still mattered.

If my hypotheses are correct, then I expect a number of things to happen as a result of allied behavior during the crisis (illustrated in Figure 5.1). I expect Russia to perceive the British as more reliable, thus giving up more autonomy without demanding much from the British. Similarly, Austria-Hungary should give up more autonomy to Germany because of its support. In contrast, both Britain and Russia should demand that France give up its autonomy if the alliance remains intact. Likewise, Italy should be required to give up more autonomy to preserve the Triple Alliance. However, if reputation does not influence alliance autonomy, then I expect little correlation between alliance behavior and changes to the alliance relations. In addition, changes in the relationships should be attributable to other factors, such as shifts in the balance of power or the balance of threat.
5.2.2 France

Before examining French behavior during the crisis, it is useful to focus on what the Russians expected of their ally, since Mercer’s test of reputation is based on expectations. Mercer’s argument focuses on Algeciras, and suggests that since French behavior was favorable, the Russians would have explained it away through situation and would not expect France to be resolved during the Bosnia crisis.\textsuperscript{277} For one thing,

Mercer’s focus on resolve is different than my emphasis on reliability, and France’s resolve is not as important in the Bosnia crisis as its willingness to support an ally. In addition, Russian expectations are more complicated than Mercer suggests, because changes to the Dual Alliance that I discussed in Chapter Four should have altered Russian perceptions of French reliability. If so, then contrary to Mercer’s claim that previous French behavior was explained through situation, I propose that Russia would expect to receive French support given the more binding alliance that evolved after the Russo-Japanese War and the First Moroccan Crisis.

Initial French reaction to the annexation was ambiguous. Like Russia during the First Moroccan Crisis, France was unwilling to abandon its ally, but at the same time feared antagonizing the Central Powers. As David Watson suggests, Clemenceau authorized the agreement with Germany because of “the exposed position in which France found herself, as a result of the weakness and unreliability of Russia and the British refusal to create a serious army that could be used at the outbreak of a Continental war.”\(^{278}\) The French government was wary of being dragged into a war between Austria and Russia or between England and Germany, and hoped to play the role of mediator in the crisis. So, France went along with Russia’s call for a Great Power conference, but informed its ally that it would not go to war over the Balkans and worked with Germany to propose an end to the crisis.\(^{279}\)


The Germans also believed that France would support its ally, unless the French were given an incentive to stay out of the crisis. Therefore, Germany offered France an agreement on Morocco in exchange for its neutrality on the Balkans issue. The deal was signed on 9 February 1909, giving France greater influence over Morocco, and temporarily decreasing the chance of war with Germany, but further damaging its reputation as a reliable ally. As Watson puts it, “The French attitude in the Bosnian crisis, together with the agreement [with Germany], revealed them to be unreliable partners.”280 As a result, despite Russian expectations, the French played a publicly neutral role in the crisis. According to Bernhard von Bülow, Germany’s Chancellor at the time, “France awaited events and assumed an attitude not unfriendly to Germany.” A. J. P. Taylor agrees, suggesting that the French, “were a good deal more alarmed than the British [about the crisis] and less high principled.”281

As one might expect, Russia held France largely responsible for its defeat over Bosnia. The question is whether or not this view influenced the relationship between Russia and France. The conventional view has been that with each crisis initiated by the Central Powers, the entente states drew closer together out of mutual recognition of the growing threat. Instead, my position is that the closeness we observe in the entente was a result of efforts to bind each other more closely together because of a lack of reliability.

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280 Watson, Georges Clemenceau, p. 230-231.

As a result of French behavior during the crisis, my general argument would expect France’s allies to demand France to give up more of its autonomy while being unwilling to give up much of their own autonomy.

Specifically, my hypotheses would expect France to lose its alliances with Russia (Hypothesis Three) and with Britain (Hypothesis Four). Alternatively, I expect France’s allies to be unwilling to expand the type of commitment (Hypothesis Five), and yet demand greater levels of obligation, precision, and delegation from France (Hypotheses Six through Eight). Finally, I would not expect France’s allies to be emboldened in future crises (Hypothesis Nine).

In contrast, theories regarding balance of power or balance of threat would not expect any of the alliances to fall apart, and make no predictions about changes to the institution. Instead, they might predict that because of the growing German threat, the Triple Entente would transform itself into a defense pact. On the other hand, theories that focus on alliances as tools to manage states might expect the entente powers to try to bring Germany or Austria-Hungary into the entente.

While Russia did not withdraw from its alliance with France, it did negotiate separate agreements with both Germany and Italy, partially supporting my hypothesis on alliance duration, but also providing some support for the theory about managing threats. Russia concluded an agreement with Italy on 24 October 1909, to secure cooperation in the Near East (more details on this agreement are given below in the section on Italy). In addition, Russia began negotiating with Germany in November 1910 over their interests in Persia and the Baghdad Railway, and these talks led to the Potsdam Accord of 19
Although Russia made an effort to assure its allies that the negotiations with Germany would not weaken the Triple Entente, Russia signed the agreement without consulting its allies.

Not only was the Potsdam Agreement partly a consequence of France’s failure to support Russia during the Bosnian crisis, but it is noteworthy to point out that French perceptions of Russian loyalty were also in decline. By the time of the Potsdam talks, France’s Foreign Minister, Stephen Pichon had become extremely concerned about Russia’s loyalty to the alliance. According to M. B. Hayne, “Had there not been a signed agreement between the two countries . . . one would hardly have known that Russia was France’s ally.” This point will be important for the second case in this chapter, in which France once again must count on its allies to defend its control over Morocco. And according to Watson, France’s indifference during the Bosnian Crisis will cause Russia to provide only lukewarm support to France during that crisis.

As expected, the Russians also demand that France give up some of its autonomy, and Dwight Lee refers to the tightening of the French alliance as a fundamental guideline of Russian policy, in sharp contrast to Russia’s desire to simply “foster the entente with Great Britain.” According to Winston Churchill, after the Annexation Crisis France

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and Russia, “closed their ranks, cemented their alliance, and set to work to construct with
Russian labour and French money the new strategic railway systems of which Russia’s
western frontier stood in need.”

Since France and Russia already had a defense pact, I might expect the Russians
to consider dropping the alliance in favor of something less formal, like an entente. What
the Russians do instead is press the British to convert the Triple Entente into a military
alliance. The Russian ambassador to Paris wrote to Izvolskly on 1 April 1909, saying,
“The cabinets of Paris and London have therefore drawn the conclusion that Russia,
France and England must pay more attention than ever to action in common and at the
same time must take the military measures necessary to convince their opponents that
they have to deal with a political combination which knows how to insure respect for
itself and will carry through its demands.”

This may be consistent with balance of
threat theory since Russia was looking elsewhere for reliable allies based on its
perception of declining French reliability, and was willing to give up some of its own
autonomy to secure a formal defense pact with the reliable British. However, despite the
growing threat from the Central Powers, the British were unwilling to alter the nature of
the entente and lose any of their autonomy. However, they were willing to place greater
constraints on both the French and the Russians, which is consistent with my argument
about the effects of reliability on alliance autonomy.


5.2.3 England

The Anglo-Russian entente did not even require British neutrality in the crisis since the agreement dealt solely with Central Asia. However, Russia probably expected British support considering its support for Japan during the Russo-Japanese War and for France during the First Moroccan Crisis. In contrast, Mercer claims that since British support for France was perceived as favorable behavior, it was explained away using situation rather than British reputation. Thus, he asserts that the Russians did not count on British support. The fact that Russia did expect British support is problematic for Mercer’s test of reputation.

Despite the limitations on British naval power to affect the outcome of a war in Central Europe, I contend that Britain was the deciding factor in Russia’s willingness to challenge Austria-Hungary. Had the Triple Entente not existed at the beginning of the crisis, and Russia had to rely on France, it may not have been so quick to challenge Austria. But the entente with England, together with Britain’s historical willingness to honor its obligations likely led Russia to expect British support. The next question is whether the British lived up to those expectations.

Analysis of Russia’s view of British behavior is mixed. Some claim that Russian opinion of Britain suffered as a result of the crisis. Tunstall attributes Russia’s being forced to back down as a function of French and British inaction. And certainly the

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British government’s unwillingness to support Russian proposals for opening the Straits – even though the British exhibited some encouraging signs on this front during the entente negotiations – affected Russia’s perception of British friendship.²⁹⁰

However, relative to France’s unwillingness to support its ally in any conflict that did not immediately threaten vital Russian interests, the British did support Russia’s opposition to the annexation. And as with British support to France at Morocco, it went beyond what was required by the terms of the entente. In fact, according to von Bülow’s assessment of the Bosnian Crisis, “England sided with Russia, and the language of the English Press was almost more impassioned than the utterances of the Russians.” In addition, British documents suggest that the Russians viewed the British as loyal, and even frequently mentioned the Russian desire to expand the entente into an alliance, which Hypotheses Five on alliance type would expect of a state with a reliable ally.²⁹¹

Mercer agrees that Britain supported Russia, but claims that Russia explained away Britain’s support during the crisis as a function of situation, specifically British interests, and as a result the Russian’s did not perceive British reliability to have improved.²⁹² The British did have a number of reasons for opposing the annexation. For one thing, Bulgaria’s declaration of independence from Turkey – made simultaneously with the annexation – was a blow to the pro-British “Young Turks” regime. In addition,


the annexation violated the terms of the 1878 Berlin Treaty, which all the Great Powers had signed and which the British felt obligated to defend.293 The most important reason was that the British feared German aggression, and believed that Germany was behind Austria’s actions. Even Mercer admits that British decision-makers learned from Algeciras to “beware the Germans for they are aggressive”294 while failing to acknowledge that a reputation for aggression can itself be the result of state behavior and can influence the behavior of allies and adversaries alike.

Regardless of the British government’s reasons for providing support, it clearly acted more reliably than France, and the Russians recognized this. As a result, changes to Anglo-Russian relations provide an interesting contrast to those in the Franco-Russian relationship. In particular, the British should have been able to preserve higher levels of autonomy than the French. Although Mercer claims that British decisionmakers saw French actions as partly favorable and partly unfavorable, many within the British government, including Nicolson, Grey, and Hardinge, blamed the outcome of the crisis on France’s lack of support and its unwillingness to support an ally.295 This suggests that


294 Mercer, Reputation in International Politics, p. 135.

not only would Russia have demanded more restraints on French autonomy, but that the British should have done the same, whereas Russia and France should have been willing to give up more of their autonomy to preserve their agreements with the British.

Consistent with my argument, the Russians and French both supported the creation of a more formal type of alliance as a result of British reliability. However, this behavior is also consistent with what balance of threat theory would expect of states facing a rising challenge. But, contrary to what traditional alliance theories would predict, the British did not attempt to alter the entente into a defense pact, nor did they attempt to manage the growing German threat by allying with the Central Powers.

While the British were uninterested in a formal alliance, they were willing to bind Russia and France more closely together, as a result of their perceived unreliability. For example, when the Anglo-French military talks resumed in 1910, the British were able to maintain a greater degree of autonomy than the French. These talks covered such topics as, “the size of the British force to be made available, where it was to be sent, and the details concerning its movement – ports, shipping, railway trains and timetables” but P. M. H. Bell contends that they had little effect on British autonomy. According to Bell, these were technical arrangements that did not commit the British to action, and “The government’s freedom of choice as to whether to intervene in a war, or to put the plans into effect, was to remain unimpaired.”

At the same time, consistent with Hypothesis

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Nine, I suggest that British support during the crisis helped embolden Russia to challenge Austria-Hungary again in 1914, particularly once Russian military capabilities had been rebuilt.

5.2.4 Germany

Despite Austria-Hungary’s support during the Algeciras conference, Mercer claims that the Germans doubted its ally’s resolve.297 There is some support for this claim. Von Bülow wrote to the Kaiser that, “We [Germany] must be exceedingly careful with all démarches and sounding in Petersburg. If the Russians allow the least bit to reach Vienna, the Austrians will promptly desert us and will join the Anglo-French camp with banners flying.”298 However, rather than fear Austrian irresolution, this suggests that the Germans feared Austrian abandonment if Austria began to doubt Germany’s reliability, particularly since the German government was concerned about being isolated in Europe and recognized that Austria had been its only ally at Algeciras.

While Austria’s resolve was at stake in this crisis, its reputation for resolve cannot be tied to its reliability in support of Germany during the First Moroccan Crisis. For my puzzle, the reputation that matters in this case is the reliability of Austria-Hungary’s allies, Germany and Italy. In addition to Germany’s fear of abandonment, von Bülow’s statement above also suggests that the Germans were aware of their own unreliable reputation, and of the effect that an agreement with Russia might have on Germany’s allies.

297 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 130.

I discussed Germany’s reputation in my first case, including its unwillingness to oppose Russia over the Open Door in Asia. Therefore, Austria-Hungary might not have expected German support in this case. In addition, it is important to recognize that Germany’s attempt to sign the Treaty of Björko with Russia contradicted Germany’s alliance with Austria-Hungary as much as it did Russia’s alliance with France. However, at a 19 August 1908 meeting of Austro-Hungarian ministers, the Chief of the Austrian General Staff, Franz Conrad, claimed that Germany was secure as an ally. At the time, he considered Italy to be the only potential threat to Austria-Hungary because no other state was prepared for war.²⁹⁹

Mercer even points out that von Bülow and Holstein, “feared that Austria might defect to the entente if not given sufficient support or if Vienna believed that Germany and Russia were becoming too close.”³⁰⁰ This supports my hypotheses, because the Germans believed that even with the inflexible alliance system in place, they would lose their ally if it did not receive enough support. Therefore, it was not Germany’s distrust of Austria-Hungary that influenced its behavior during the crisis, as Mercer suggests, but rather the recognition of its own reputation.


Although Germany did eventually support Austria-Hungary, the annexation initially displeased the German government since it had not been consulted beforehand and disliked the prospect of being dragged into a Balkan conflict.\textsuperscript{301} Bulgaria’s independence also posed a threat to German interests in Turkey. However, on 30 October 1908, von Bülow informed the British government that Germany would stand by its ally, and also gave a “blank check” to Austria-Hungary saying, “I shall regard any decision taken by you as imposed by circumstances.”\textsuperscript{302} Additionally, the crisis ended after Germany issued its ultimatum to Russia. Russia backed down, since it did not have the capabilities to challenge Germany and Austria-Hungary on its own, and believing that it did not have the full support of its allies.\textsuperscript{303}

As a result, since Germany’s support directly contributed to Austria’s victory in the crisis, I posit that Germany should be able to preserve its autonomy, while Austria-Hungary would be willing to give up autonomy to preserve the alliance. Specifically, if my argument is right, then Germany’s reliability should allow it to preserve its autonomy through low levels of obligation, precision, and delegation. On the other hand, German support might embolden Austria-Hungary to challenge Russia again.

\textsuperscript{301} Gooch and Temperley, \textit{British Documents}, vol. V, no. 346 (9 October 1908), p. 417.


Germany did not attempt to form any new alliances, so my first hypothesis cannot be tested. In addition, although Austria-Hungary and Germany did create closer military ties after the Bosnian Crisis, Austro-German relations for the most part reflected what my hypotheses would expect of an alliance between states that believed they had each other’s support. For example, the two states’ militaries held staff talks, but these resulted in only vague statements of support. According to Samuel Williamson, “the two army staffs never really exchanged precise information about each other’s war plans. Nor did they trade extensive data about their forces.”

Moltke specifically refrained from outlining specific details regarding German military plans, even though Conrad pressured him to do so. Norman Stone even faults the two states for having done such a poor job integrating their military plans, and thus failing to prepare for war. Finally, the fact that Austria-Hungary did challenge its adversaries again in 1914, fully expecting German assistance, supports my hypothesis regarding the moral hazard problem of reputation.

This observation concerning German actions during the crisis, and the changes to the alliance after the crisis, poses a particular challenge to conventional alliance theories. One could argue that Austria-Hungary was attempting to balance against the Russian threat, although Italy was still perceived to be the greater threat. In contrast, Germany’s negotiations with Russia at Potsdam could be seen as managing a threat. However, this is troublesome because Russia was still no match for Germany, not yet having regained the


power it lost in the war with Japan. Nor is it plausible to believe that Germany felt threatened by France or England. As a result, these traditional views have trouble explaining German support for Austria-Hungary and even more difficulty explaining the direction that the alliance took after the crisis.

5.2.5 Italy

Mercer barely mentions Italy in his analysis of the crisis, but its lack of involvement provides an important comparison to Germany’s high level of support. Even before the crisis, Aehrenthal viewed Italy with suspicion and believed that it would be an unreliable ally in war.306 Similarly, France’s ambassador to Italy, Camille Barrère, once described Italy and Austria-Hungary as “enemy-allies”, and William Askew suggests that the Italian and Austro-Hungarian militaries mistrusted each other.307 This time, however, Italy did not have an agreement with the other side, by which it could ignore its commitment to the Triple Alliance. Instead, the Italians blamed Austria-Hungary for not consulting with its allies prior to the annexation. As a result of this crisis, not only did Italian reputation suffer, but so did Italy’s perception of Austria-Hungary’s reliability.


Like Germany, Italy felt betrayed by Austria’s grab for territory without consultation and censured the annexation.\textsuperscript{308} Italy previously approved of Austria-Hungary’s administration of Bosnia, but objected to any action that might drag Italy into a war, especially once England bound itself to Russia in addition to France. Moreover, under the terms of the Triple Alliance, Italy felt entitled to some compensation for Austria’s actions. Unlike Germany, Italy never came around to support its ally. In fact, Italy’s reaction was to approach the British to determine their position on both the annexation and Bulgaria’s declaration of independence.\textsuperscript{309} Italy also went against its allies when it supported the call for a Great Power conference. In the end, Italy only accepted the annexation once France asserted its neutrality and Russia backed down.

Once again, Italy’s reliability suffered as a result of its failure to support its allies. And my hypotheses once again expect Austria-Hungary and Germany to dissolve the alliance or at least impose greater constraints on Italy. Conrad still favored preventive war against Italy, and Askew suggests that Britain was, “impressed with the fact in October, 1909, that the relations of Italy and Austria could not be worse.”\textsuperscript{310} However, Germany and Austria-Hungary continued to see some strategic benefit in an alliance rather than push Italy towards the Entente. In fact, relations between Italy and Austria actually improved once Italy accepted the annexation without pressing for compensation.


According to Askew, Aehrenthal even “expressed pleasure that Italo-Austrian relations had emerged undamaged.”\textsuperscript{311} This represents probably the biggest failing of my hypotheses, since reputation cannot account for the improved relations between Italy and Austria-Hungary.

However, given Germany and Austria-Hungary’s lack of alliance options, it is plausible that the effects of reputation were less than if other allies had been available. Therefore, while this observation fails to support most of my hypotheses, it does conform to my assumption about the lower relevance of reputation when alliance options are limited. The only other way to explain this is through the costs Germany and Austria-Hungary would incur by allowing Italy to ally with the Entente Powers, such as throwing off the balance of power.\textsuperscript{312}

One component of this observation that strongly supports my hypotheses on alliance variation is that Italy was asked to increase its obligation to the alliance. Specifically, this included demands for Italy to support German interests in Asia Minor (as Anton Monts, Germany’s ambassador to Italy, had recommended after the First


Moroccan Crisis (see Chapter Four)). In addition, Italian action after the crisis lends some support to my argument. I already suggested that Italy’s perception of Austria-Hungary suffered as a result of the annexation. As a result, we should expect to see Italy trying to preserve its autonomy or seek reliable partners elsewhere. Therefore, Italy signing the Racconigi agreement with Russia on 24 October 1909 (only six months after the resolution of the crisis) is consistent with what I expect of a state that was losing trust in its allies. This agreement promoted the status quo in the Balkans, and also secure Russia’s blessing for Italy to take Tripoli. This second point becomes especially important in 1911, when Italy declares war on Turkey, and receives greater support from Russia than from its Triple Alliance partners.\footnote{Gooch and Temperley, *British Documents*, vol. V, no. 336 (8 October 1908), p. 413; no. 354 (10 October 1908), p. 422; no. 401 (22 October 1908), p. 462; Tunstall, *Planning for War Against Russia and Serbia*, p. 79; Taylor, *Struggle for Mastery*, p. 463.}

### 5.2.6 Case Summary

The Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis provides an even more difficult test of my hypotheses than the cases in Chapter Four, because by 1908 the divisions in Europe were well established and thought to be highly inflexible. If so, then concerns about abandonment should have been low. However, much of the evidence suggests that while states were unlikely to realign with the opposing side, there were very real fears about states failing to honor their commitments. Therefore, reputations for reliability were still relevant because the relationships changed as a result of the varying levels of support provided by the allies during the crisis.
The Russians clearly recognized that they received greater support from England than from France. My hypotheses expect the Franco-Russian relationship to become strained and possibly dropped. But, if it is preserved it should become more binding than the Anglo-Russian relationship. At the same time, I hypothesize that England’s support should have prompted the Russians to push for a shift from an entente to an alliance without demanding any additional constraints on British autonomy. The result of the crisis for the entente powers was that France and Russia did request that the entente be transformed into an alliance.

In addition, I posit that the British supported a more binding commitment between the entente powers because they recognized France and Russia’s lack of reliability. When the British believed they could count on French and Russian hostility towards Germany, they were content with a vague agreement having little or no military obligation. However, as Anglo-German antagonisms rose, and as the French and Russians both appeared unwilling to support their allies, but were willing to negotiate with Germany, the British favored a more binding commitment. Moreover, while France and Russia wanted a defense pact with their reliable partner, Britain was content with an entente and therefore preserving its autonomy.

Taylor also argues that the British did not feel the French and Russians had repaid Britain’s loyalty, with respect to negotiations with Russia.314 Ensuring that France was dependent upon the British navy to protect its Atlantic Coast, for example, helped bind

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the French more closely to England through delegation without decreasing British
autonomy. In other words, the French government’s lack of reliability led to a loss of its
autonomy within the entente, but the British commitment remained comparatively vague
and flexible.

In the other camp, the Italians once again showed themselves to be an unreliable
member of the Triple Alliance, and even signed an agreement with Russia shortly after
the crisis. In contrast, Germany proved to be a reliable partner – though this is easily
explained because its alliance choices were admittedly minimal. In contrast, Italy could
afford to be unreliable because it might have had the option of allying with France or
Russia. Therefore, many of the changes that occurred after the crisis were made in the
opposite direction my hypotheses would predict. For one thing, tension between Austria
and Italy appeared to decline somewhat. Moreover, the increase in military commitment
that did take place occurred between Austria-Hungary and Germany, although these
military talks amounted to an insignificant loss of autonomy for both states.

Interestingly, though, certain changes to the Triple Alliance do support my
argument. For example, the Italians were asked to support German economic interests in
Asia Minor. Such an agreement amounted to an increase in Italian obligation
(Hypothesis Six). In addition, this crisis provides three observations that support my
claim about the moral hazard problem of reliability (Hypothesis Nine). The first is
Russia’s willingness to challenge Austria-Hungary once it was allied with a reliable
England. The second was Austria-Hungary’s willingness to threaten Russia once
provided with the German blank check. In contrast, Russia was unwilling to press the
Bosnia issue once it recognized that France would not support a war over the Balkans. As a result, I have shown that even in this difficult test of reputation, a state’s reliability did influence the nature of its alliances, and frequently in the manner that I hypothesize.

5.2.7 Competing Theories

As with my previous case, balance of threat continues to have trouble explaining why Italy and Austria-Hungary remained in an alliance, and has additional problems explaining why France would accept an agreement with Germany while abandoning an ally. While Weitsman’s tethering argument can explain these actions, it has difficulty explaining why England would not have tried to manage the German threat through an alliance. Moreover, none of these other arguments provide any type of explanation for the variation that occurs within the agreements, or for the moral hazard problem that is created by a reputation for reliability.

While none of the conventional theories can explain all of the alliance choices in this case, incorporating reputation provides additional insight into alliance behavior. For example, reputation helps explain the observation that cannot be explained by the tethering argument: the fact that Britain used Germany’s reputation as a reason to avoid an alliance in 1901 provides a valid reason for the British decision to balance Germany rather than try to manage the threat. Similarly, France might choose to manage the German threat rather than try to balance against it, if it did not believe it could count on its allies – the Russians because of their prior lack of support, and the British because of their inability to have much influence on a ground war in Europe.
My next case, the Agadir Crisis, provides another set of observations on the behavior of the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance states. While my hypotheses are even less successful in this last case, there is still evidence of the general influence of reputation on a state’s autonomy.

5.3 The Agadir Crisis

The Agadir Crisis – also known as the Second Moroccan Crisis – was a continuation of the tension between Germany and France that was only temporarily suspended by the Algeciras Conference (1906) and the Casablanca Agreement (1909). Despite these agreements, Morocco remained an unresolved issue because of French desires to create a protectorate there and Germany’s unwillingness to allow that to happen without compensation.

In May 1911, in response to French troop movements towards Morocco’s capital, the German government sent a gunboat to the port of Agadir. The British response was to offer complete support to France, consisting primarily of a strongly worded speech by Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Despite claims after the Bosnia Crisis that Russia would not back down to the Central Powers again, the Russian government lent only private support to France. Finally, Germany was more or less abandoned by both of its allies.

The Crisis was resolved in November 1911, with yet another agreement over Morocco. While both France and Germany claimed victory, public opinion in both states viewed each government as having given up too much. This attitude, combined with the further tightening of Europe’s alliances, helped push the major powers even closer to
war. Taylor claims that this case was the dividing line between the diplomatic crises that occurred before 1911 and the prewar crises that began with Agadir. If my previous assertion is accurate – that the availability of other alliance options affects the degree to which reputation matters – then this fourth and final case study may be the most difficult test of my hypotheses. However, even in this case I find support for the claim that a state’s reputation for reliability affects its alliance autonomy.

5.3.1 Background

Jonathan Mercer divides the Agadir Crisis into four stages, including: 1) the French march towards Fez which violated the terms of France’s earlier treaties with Germany; 2) the dispatch of the German gunboat Panther to the region; 3) Lloyd George’s Mansion House speech linking the outcome of the crisis to British prestige; and 4) the agreement between France and Germany that brought an end to the crisis. To simplify my analysis, I treat the crisis as a single case rather than deal with each stage as a discrete observation.

In January 1911, a rebellion began in Morocco, which threatened French political and commercial interests there. On 28 April, Jules Cambon, the French ambassador in Berlin, informed the German government that France might have to send troops to the Moroccan capital of Fez to maintain order, even though such an action technically violated the agreements signed at Algeciras and Casablanca. When the occupation of Fez occurred on 15 May, the French justified the move on the grounds that it was temporary but necessary to preserve stability in Morocco.

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315 Taylor, Struggle for Mastery, p. 473.
Germany responded by stating that it would consider the Algeciras and Casablanca Agreements void if French troops remained in Fez for an extended period of time (but failed to specify what they viewed as an “extended period”). Then on 1 July, the German government informed the European Powers that it had sent the gunboat *Panther* to the south Moroccan harbor of Agadir. The government claimed that the ship was deployed to protect its citizens, at the request of German firms.\(^{316}\)

According to Taylor, the Germans believed that Agadir was far enough south of Gibraltar not to alarm the British.\(^{317}\) However, on 4 July 1911, the British Cabinet authorized Grey, “to tell Germany that Britain must be involved in any discussions about Morocco, and to tell France that Britain would honour her obligations under the 1904 agreement, but expected the French to make some proposals for a settlement.”\(^{318}\) When the German government neglected to respond to British concerns over the incident, the door was opened for Lloyd George’s Mansion House speech. On 21 July, the Cabinet authorized Grey to remind Germany’s Ambassador that Britain had not received a reply concerning British interests in Morocco, and that the British government must participate in any settlement they were expected to accept.\(^{319}\) Grey relayed the message to the Ambassador that afternoon.

\(^{316}\) Ironically, no Germans were in Agadir, until the government ordered the nearest German to head to the port, where he was “rescued” by the *Panther*.


\(^{318}\) Bell, *France and Britain*, p. 44.

\(^{319}\) Ibid.
In addition, George gave a public speech that evening at the Mansion House. George claimed that British prestige was on the line. Below is a passage from that speech:

I conceive that nothing would justify a disturbance of international good will except questions of the gravest national moment. But if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated where her interests were vitally affected, as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure.\textsuperscript{320}

Not only was this statement a signal of British reliability directed at Germany to deter war, but it was also an assurance of Britain’s loyalty to her ally, not because France doubted British reliability, but to bolster France’s resolve.

Germany accepted French proposals for a negotiation in early August. Then, on 4 November 1911, a compromise was reached, in which France gave Germany part of its possessions in the Congo in exchange for Germany’s willingness to accept a French protectorate in Morocco and a claim that Germany had only economic interests there.\textsuperscript{321} For the sake of my puzzle, the main issue here is how the allies behaved during the crisis and whether their actions influenced the nature of the alliances afterwards. As with the First Moroccan Crisis, the principle disputants were Germany and France, so I am interested in the behavior of England and Russia, as well as Austria and Italy.


Although I suggest that Mercer’s approach of focusing on expectations is flawed, as with previous cases it is interesting to determine how accurately such an approach might be if we focus on reliability rather than resolve. It is also worthwhile because there may be some validity to Glenn Snyder’s argument that unexpected behavior is likely to cause the greatest change in perception.\footnote{Glenn Snyder, \textit{Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).} Therefore, it is plausible that a state perceived to be reliable that fails to support an ally may lose more autonomy than the state expected to abandon its commitments.

Based on my previous cases, I can make some claims about how France and Germany expect their allies to behave, and whether these expectations conform with my notion of reputation. For example, because Britain supported France in the First Moroccan Crisis, and gave support to Russia over the Balkans, France would expect British support. In contrast, because Russian support was mixed in 1905, I would not expect France to rely heavily on Russia. I also do not expect the British government to put much faith in either of its allies, considering they had both failed to fully support each other in crises, and had both negotiated with Germany without consulting one another or with England.

As for the Triple Alliance, Germany was unlikely to expect Italian support in the crisis, given that Italy repeatedly failed to support its allies in previous cases. On the other hand, Austria-Hungary showed its reliability at Algeciras, and Germany should continue to expect Austrian support. In the sections that follow, I examine whether these
expectations hold true. More importantly, I test whether the allies’ behavior during the Agadir Crisis influenced the nature of the alliances afterwards (Figure 5.2 below illustrates the behavior of the major powers during the crisis).

Key:
Solid lines indicate an alliance or entente prior to the crisis
Dashed lines indicate a negotiated agreement during the crisis
Solid arrows indicate full, public support
Narrow arrows indicate moderate or private support

Figure 5.2: Allied Behavior During the Agadir Crisis
5.3.2 England

For my purposes, two reputations within the Anglo-French relationship are relevant during the Agadir Crisis. First, Mercer argues that the British were concerned about French resolve in standing up to Germany. However, Britain’s real concern was not that France might back down to German pressure, but that France might abandon its allies and defect from the Entente. Second, is whether the French counted on British support against Germany. There are two questions to ask regarding these reputations: Are these reputations the product of previous behavior? And did the behavior of the two states during the crisis influence Anglo-French relations afterwards?

Mercer points out that throughout his three crises, the British never stop worrying about the possibility of France defecting to the Triple Alliance. He interprets this to mean that the British gave the French no credit for standing up to Germany during the First Moroccan Crisis. He also suggests that the British made no mention of France’s failure to support Russia in 1909. However, this simply illustrates the difference between resolve and reliability that Mercer never explores. I posit that it is the very lack of French support over Bosnia, as well as France’s willingness to sign an agreement with Germany during the crisis, that increased British concerns about a French defection from the Entente.

323 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 207.
324 Ibid., p. 167.
However, I contend that because France stood up to Germany at Algeciras, it should have a reputation for resolve – its allies would expect France to stand up to Germany again over Agadir. At the same time, because France failed to support Russia during the Bosnia crisis – even making an agreement with Germany – its allies should not expect France to be reliable in its confrontation with Germany. In other words, they did not expect France to back down to German threats, but did fear that France would be willing to weaken the entente to reach an accord with Germany, if it served French interests.

Even Mercer acknowledges that, “Because they neither trusted France, nor thought it capable of resisting Germany alone, Crowe, Nicolson, and Bertie all felt it imperative to give France unqualified support.”325 Therefore, British perceptions of French reliability are consistent with France’s past behavior. This not only suggests that reliability was an issue separate from resolve, but also provides contradictory evidence to the conventional wisdom that the pre-First World War alliances were inflexible, since fears of realignment were present.

This perception of France’s reputation clearly influenced British behavior during the crisis. In a note to Grey, Nicolson provided a specific argument in favor of giving full British support to France: “Were [France] to come to distrust us, she would probably try to make terms with Germany irrespective of us, while Germany who would soon detect our hesitation would be inclined to impose harder terms than may be the case at present. In any case, France would never forgive us for having failed her, and the whole

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325 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, p. 166.
The specific wording of this statement suggests that British leaders believed that France viewed England to be reliable, and the British concern was over actions that would destroy that reputation.

Nicolson clearly believed that a failure to support France would not only destroy that relationship, as well as the entente with Russia, but would push France into the German camp. In contrast, British actions that strengthened its reliability was perceived to be a means of both enhancing the deterrent power of the entente and strengthening France’s willingness to remain within the entente. Evidence of this appears in a 2 August 1911 letter to Nicolson where Hardinge states, “I suppose we can trust the French, but it will be a very difficult position for us if France and Germany come to some agreement together unbeknown to us which, in our opinion, is disadvantageous to our interests.”

To enhance French awareness of British support, Grey considered sending a ship to Agadir, or to the nearby port of Mogador. However, the Cabinet overruled this action on the grounds that it was too provocative. Instead, Lloyd George was granted approval by the Cabinet to deliver the Mansion House speech.

There is some debate regarding the purpose of the speech. While the conventional view sees Germany as the target, Taylor claims that it was directed at France. According to him, rather than a pledge to support France against Germany, the

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327 Hardinge-Nicolson, 2 August 1911: Hardinge MSS, vol. 92, cited in Wilson, “The Agadir Crisis,” p. 531. The trust referred to here was that the French would keep the British government informed of its intentions with regard to Morocco.
speech was a warning to Great Britain’s ally that she could not be left out of any new partition of Morocco. Richard Cosgrove refutes this interpretation, citing primary documents that suggest British leaders were completely engaged with the Triple Entente, and that Taylor’s claim would require a “complete reversal for Grey and the Foreign Office to have allowed Lloyd George’s language to be directed against French interests.” George himself gives no clear indication of the target of the speech, though the tone of his memoirs appears to focus on limiting German ambition.

However, I suggest that the speech was interpreted by Germany as an assurance of British resolve and by France as a signal of Britain’s reliability. The British were particularly concerned that the French would come to terms with Germany if there were any doubt about British support. According to Bell, “Early in 1911 Grey had tried to dissuade the French from military action in Morocco, and then he urged them to withdraw their troops from Fez. But he felt bound to offer France diplomatic support, partly because it was specified in the 1904 agreement, and even more because he dare not risk weakening the entente.”

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333 Bell, *France and Britain*, pp. 43-4.
Another problem in Mercer’s analysis is that he claims that the British did not see the Germans as irresolute, even though Germany had backed down during the First Moroccan Crisis. His argument is that because German behavior was favorable, the British explained it through situation, rather than German irresolution. However, many in the French and British governments believed that Germany would back down again, but only if it believed that France’s allies were reliable. In a 29 April 1911 letter to Nicolson, Edward Goschen, the British Ambassador in Berlin offered the following opinion:

Germany is watching (the attitude of England) very narrowly and that if she sees that France will at the present juncture receive the same support from the Powers as she did at Algeciras then she will hold her hand and not make trouble. If on the contrary she sees any likelihood of that support being withdrawn or given grudgingly she will at once proceed to make trouble and turn the situation to her own advantage.334

In correspondences with one another, Bertie, Nicolson, and Grey expressed similar views.335

Mercer also claims that the French did not count on British military support, despite the fact that England supported France at Algeciras, as well as Russia during the Bosnia crisis. Taylor seems to agree, suggesting “the French never acted on the confident assumption that Great Britain would support them in a continental war, whatever its


cause." However, the French should have been confident in British support, given that England went beyond its required commitments with both France in 1906 and Russia in 1909. In addition, Grey made it clear to the French that while the British would not unconditionally go to war with Germany over Morocco, they would support France at a conference, in accordance with the terms of the 1904 entente.

I contend that what Mercer and Taylor observe is French concern over the inability of British ground forces to alter the situation on the European continent, not an unwillingness by the British government to support its allies. Therefore, while France may not have counted on British support, this was a result of British capabilities not British reputation. For instance, in a 1913 military plan presented to the French Defence Council, General Joseph Joffre, the Chief of the French General Staff, made the assumption that France could not count on British land forces given the government’s unwillingness to make a formal commitment in writing. This seems to confirm Mercer’s claim. However, Joffre did assume that the French would receive British naval assistance. Therefore, France’s concern was about England’s ability to give assistance in areas where it was weak, namely its army. In contrast, where the British had the ability to influence events in Europe – through the use of its naval power – the French

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338 Bell, *France and Britain*, pp. 49.
fully expected to receive British support. I also posit that Britain’s loyalty had already been rewarded through the relative autonomy it was able to preserve within its relations with France and Russia.

Another factor that Mercer misses is the relevance of the new French government that took office on 1 July 1911. Joseph Caillaux, the new Prime Minister, was convinced that neither Russia nor Great Britain would support France, and rather than risk war, preferred to offer French cooperation on the Baghdad Railway in exchange for Germany dropping its interests in Morocco. However, it is relevant to point out that Caillaux was jailed near the end of the war for his radical pacifist stance. As a result, not only was French perceptions of Britain’s reliability influenced by those in power, but British perceptions of French reliability were also influenced by Caillaux’s personal unwillingness to risk war. This, then, also explains why the French government appears not to trust British loyalty. One counterfactual is that if Britain had not supported France at Algeciras or Russia during the Bosnian crisis, Caillaux might have had an even worse impression of British loyalty, and may have withdrawn from the entente altogether.

In addition, while I cannot explain how Caillaux developed his view of British reliability, the consequences of that perception are still consistent with my argument about the importance of a reputation for being reliable, because his belief that the British were unreliable led him to seek an agreement with Germany. In addition to pointing out one of the difficulties of studying reputation, this case also suggests a second counterfactual, that if another government had been in power at the time, it might have

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had a more favorable view of British reliability. This means that new governments may not necessarily subscribe to the same perceptions as previous governments. In other words, state A’s perception of state B’s reliability can be altered by a change in state B’s government, but also by a change in state A’s government (I address this point further in Chapter Six).

Mercer is also right to claim that the French assume British support is a function of its interests. The British government feared that if it did not support France, the Germans would gain a foothold in Morocco. However, as I have tried to emphasize throughout this project, one cannot dismiss reputation simply because strategic interests are involved. According to Sergei Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister in 1910, the preservation of the entente had become more important to the British than some of their economic interests. The relevant point is that if reputation matters, then part of a state’s strategic interest may become the preservation of that very reputation. In this case, Sazonov even believed that he could exploit this “weakness” of British concern for their reputation to play Britain and Germany off of each other, thus gaining more influence in Persia while preserving the entente.

Although I have spent a great deal of time focusing on French expectations of British behavior, the more important question for this section is whether French and British behavior during the crisis altered the Anglo-French relationship. The British

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publicly supported France with the Mansion House speech. France also proved its loyalty to the Entente by not giving away any part of Morocco, particularly since Grey intimated early in the crisis that granting Germany certain concessions in the French Congo would not be contrary to British interests. Therefore, I expect the Anglo-French agreement to remain vague, but both might seek to expand the entente into an alliance, given that both increased their reliability.

According to Stephen Lee, with the Mansion House Speech and a declaration to Parliament by Grey, the entente was tightening into something more closely resembling an alliance. Attention was renewed for military conversations, which had been only on the periphery since the end of 1905. Specifically, changes were made to the Anglo-French military plans in 1911 to broaden the scope of cooperation, including increasing the level of precision within the relationship while still preserving the high level of British autonomy.

The British also began naval reforms towards the end of the crisis. Winston Churchill, who became First Lord of the Admiralty in October 1911, introduced the concept of a naval war staff; this became a reality in January 1912. In addition, naval conversations between France and England, which began in 1908 but lapsed, resumed in

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342 Grey to Bertie telegram, 13 July 1909, referenced in Gooch, Before the War, p. 72.


August and September 1911. Then, “In November 1911 the Cabinet . . . accepted a ruling by Asquith that no communications between the British and French staffs would commit Britain, directly or indirectly, to military or naval intervention. . . . But Grey told the Prime Minister that while staff talks implied no commitment, to stop them would indicate a change in policy and so alienate the French.”\(^{346}\) From these talks came the understanding that in the event of war with Germany the French fleet would control operations in the Mediterranean. This understanding was formalized on 23 July 1912, when an agreement was reached that France would concentrate its fleet in the Mediterranean, while Britain concentrated on her home waters, including France’s Atlantic coastline.\(^{347}\) This naval understanding then expanded in early 1913 to include provisions for naval cooperation in the Straits of Dover and the English Channel. These measures helped increase obligation and delegation, thus lowering British autonomy.

While this does not fit my hypotheses since British reliability should not have led to a loss of its autonomy, compared to Russia, which provided less support to France, British autonomy remained relatively high. As a result, we should once again observe differences in British and Russian autonomy after the crisis.

5.3.3 Russia

As with the British case, there are two relevant reputations within the Franco-Russian relationship. One is France’s willingness to honor its commitments and not defect from the alliance. The other is Russia’s willingness to support France against

\(^{346}\) Bell, *France and Britain*, p. 46.

\(^{347}\) Ibid., p. 48; Taylor, *Struggle for Mastery*, pp. 480-481.
Germany. Mercer suggests that the Russians should expect France to be irresolute during the Agadir crisis, because France was irresolute during the Bosnian Crisis.\textsuperscript{348} However, the crisis over Bosnia was more a reflection of France’s unreliability as an ally than its resolve.

The next question is whether France expected Russian support. Unlike the high level of support Britain provided to its allies in Asia, Morocco, and Bosnia, Russia provided only mixed support for France during the First Moroccan Crisis, particularly with its negotiations for the Björko Treaty with Germany. Based on Mercer’s test of reputation, France would not expect Russia’s support against Germany because of its unwillingness to stand up to Austria-Hungary and Germany over Bosnia.\textsuperscript{349} I suggest instead that France perceived Russia to be more reliable than Mercer asserts. My argument is based on Russia’s mixed reliability during the First Moroccan Crisis, rather than its lack of resolve during the Bosnia Crisis. In addition, changes in the Franco-Russian relationship after the previous crises should have reduced Russian autonomy, making it more bound to honor its commitment.

The Russians do end up giving some support to France over Agadir, but avoid providing full public support. Support may have been intentionally low to prevent Austria-Hungary from siding with Germany, as Donald Mathieu suggests.\textsuperscript{350} In any event, it may have led all the great powers to believe that Russia was about to withdraw

\textsuperscript{348} Mercer, \textit{Reputation and International Politics}, p. 170.

\textsuperscript{349} Ibid., pp. 188-190.

\textsuperscript{350} Donald Mathieu, “The Role of Russia in French Foreign Policy, 1908-1914” (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1968), p. 56.

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from the entente. According to Taylor, “in view of her [Russia’s] equivocal policy during the Agadir crisis, no Power would oppose her [securing control of the Straits] – Great Britain and France from fear, Germany and Austria-Hungary from hope, that she was about to desert her present partners.”\(^{351}\) This provides still further evidence that the alliances were not perceived to be as inflexible as is commonly believed.

The real question is whether Russia’s low level of support resulted in any type of change to Franco-Russian relations. I expect France to demand greater constraints on Russia and to be unwilling to give up any more of its autonomy to Russia. However, not only was a naval convention concluded on 16 July 1912, which increased the level of delegation on both sides, but for the first time the French government indicated that France would support Russia against Germany, even if the conflict was begun by a Russian attack on Austria-Hungary.\(^{352}\) Raymond Poincaré, who became France’s Premier and Foreign Minister on 14 January 1912, told Izvolsky that “If Russia fights France will also because we know that in this question Germany is behind Austria.”\(^{353}\)

This lowered the French government’s freedom of action by increasing its obligations. Although this appears to contradict my hypotheses, there is one possible answer. It may be that this expanded commitment was a consequence of previous French actions rather than a result of Russian behavior. The French may have realized the

\(^{351}\) Taylor, *Struggle for Mastery*, p. 474.


\(^{353}\) Again we see reference to Germany’s aggressive reputation, this time from France. Fischer, *War of Illusions*, p. 425.
damage caused by their prior behavior (on both Russian and British perceptions of French reliability) and sought to impose constraints on themselves. Strictly speaking, this still fails to support my hypothesis for this observation, but over the course of the fourteen years studied in these two chapters, I would expect France to lose autonomy as a result of its frequently unreliable behavior.

At the same time, there is still support for my hypotheses because after the crisis the French placed two new conditions on their loans to Russia that effectively reduced Russian autonomy, as my hypotheses would expect. One demand was that Russia immediately begin construction of new strategic rail lines. In fact, from 1912 onward, the French put tremendous pressure on the Russian government to construct strategic railroads directed towards Germany. Specifically, this suggests that Russia’s low level of support resulted in an increased Russian obligation. Ironically, according to D. N. Collins, this attempt at improving Russian railways not only increased the possibility of war, but also diverted funds from other parts of the Russian economy, thus preventing Russia from growing as powerful as it otherwise might.354 The second French condition was for Russia to increase the strength of its peacetime army.355

Russia’s failure to fully support France also contributed to British concerns about Russian loyalty, which contrary to the conventional wisdom of the inflexibility of the alliances, almost led Britain to withdraw from the agreement. The Potsdam convention, which began on 4 November 1910, lasted until an agreement was reached on 19 August


1911. The result was an Open Door for German trade in Persia and recognition of Russia’s sphere of influence in North Persia. Sazanoff stated that the discussions did not threaten the stability of the Triple Entente, but the entente between England and Russia was weakened at least with regards to Persia. On 2 December 1911, Grey threatened to resign, allowing the entente with Russia to dissolve. This threat was based largely on declining Anglo-Russian relations as a result of Russian activities in Persia and the Russo-German agreement at Potsdam. Russia’s approach to Germany was especially offensive since Britain had avoided completion of an agreement with Germany out of concern for its allies.

The Russians also asked for an alliance with Great Britain and France in 1914. However, Grey was unwilling to join a formal alliance with Russia. This supports my hypothesis on alliance commitments, given England’s history of reliability and Russia’s reputation for unreliability. Grey did agree to hold Anglo-Russian naval talks in return for better Russian behavior in Persia. Sazonov even offered to surrender Persia’s neutral zone to the British, and to give a guarantee to India. This lends specific support to my

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356 Even this meeting illustrates the effects of German reputation, because built into the agreement was a Russian safeguard to protect against Germany going back on the commitment. Frank Anderson and Amos Hershey, *Handbook for the Diplomatic History of Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1870-1914* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), pp. 407-408.

357 Grey believed that his successor would sign an agreement with Germany on Persia, effectively ending England’s relationship with Russia. Taylor, *Struggle for Mastery*, p. 475.


hypothesis on alliance obligations since Britain’s reliability contributed to its continued autonomy, while Russia was forced to give up greater concessions to preserve its agreements with Britain.

5.3.4 Austria-Hungary

Mercer claims that Germany did not give Austria a reputation for resolve after Bosnia, and thus did not expect Austrian support during the Agadir crisis. In contrast, Germany should have expected support from its ally, based upon Austria-Hungary’s support of Germany during the First Moroccan Crisis, and Germany’s whole-hearted support of Austria-Hungary over the Annexation Crisis. I found no evidence one way or the other concerning Germany’s expectations. However, if Germany did not expect Austrian support, I posit that it would have been for a reason other than Austria’s reputation, such as domestic turmoil or its concerns about dragging Russia into a war over Morocco.

The reality is that Austria-Hungary remained relatively aloof during the crisis. According to Fritz Fischer, “Count Aehrenthal made no secret of his view that a Franco-German war over Morocco did not constitute a casus foederis. He thought that the Monarchy could render better service as a neutral power than as a military ally. Therefore, he told the French government right from the start that he sympathized with their stand.”

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360 Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, pp. 148-149 and 196-197.

361 Fischer, War of Illusions, p. 85.
Taylor suggests that Austria-Hungary’s behavior was at least partly a response to German concessions to Russia in the Potsdam Accord, which was already underway when the crisis began.362 Regardless of why Austria-Hungary failed to support Germany, the fact that Germany did not receive the level of support that it expected from its ally should have had an effect on the relationship between these two states. And we do see a clear shift in the German government’s perception of Austria-Hungary’s reliability after the crisis. Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, von Bülow’s successor as German Chancellor, said, “Let us hope that if there is a war the attack will be aimed against Austria which will then need our assistance and not against us so that it is not left to Austria to decide whether to be loyal to the alliance or not.”363 The fact that this lack of support over Agadir lowered German perceptions of Austria-Hungary’s reliability is further support that a state’s behavior influences its reputation. The question is whether this translated into German demands for greater constraints on Austria-Hungary’s autonomy.

Based on my hypotheses, I expect Germany to withdraw from the alliance, or to demand that Austria-Hungary give up more autonomy. In addition, I would expect Germany to be more restrained in opposing France and Britain, aware of the fact that its allies may not be as reliable as expected.

362 Taylor, Struggle for Mastery, p. 468.

363 Cited in Fischer, War of Illusions, p. 86. A slightly different version of this quote, but with the same sentiment regarding Austrian reliability is: “Should extreme things come to pass, it would be better if the first attack were directed against Austria, which will then need our help, and not against us, so that [the outcome] does not depend upon Austria’s [decision] if it wants to be loyal.” Konrad Jarausch, The Enigmatic Chancellor: Bethmann Hollweg and the Hubris of Imperial Germany (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 131, cited in Mercer, Reputation and International Politics, pp. 196-197.
Contrary to my hypotheses on alliance duration, not only was the alliance not terminated, but the Triple Alliance was formally renewed for a third time on 5 December 1912, for another six years.\textsuperscript{364} However, one of the major changes that occurred was the development of Austro-German military conversations on 22 November 1912, which could have increased the level of delegation and obligation required of Austria-Hungary. In addition, Bethmann-Hollweg ultimately got his wish because Austria-Hungary’s resolve was tested over the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, but its reliability as an ally was not tested again.

Interestingly, more changes occurred between Austria-Hungary and Germany than between Italy and Germany, even though Germany received little support from either of its allies. It may be that since Italy was not expected to support Germany, its failure to do so had little effect on Germany’s perception of Italian reliability. In contrast, because Austria-Hungary’s loyalty was expected, its lack of support may have had a more pronounced effect on its reliability. This would explain why Austria-Hungary’s autonomy suffered more than Italy’s. In addition, since Italy could conceivably align with the Triple Entente, it had to be dealt with carefully. In contrast, Austria-Hungary had few alliance options and could be treated more harshly for its abandonment of Germany.

\textsuperscript{364} Manhart, \textit{Alliance and Entente}, pp. 68.
5.3.5 Italy

As with his study of the First Moroccan Crisis, Mercer’s discussion of the Agadir Crisis also omits Italy. Yet, once again, as a member of the Triple Alliance, Italy was obligated to support its ally in the crisis. However, Italy’s agreement with France was also still valid. Therefore, nobody should have anticipated that Germany would receive Italian support, based on its record in previous crises and its other commitments.

As expected, Italy once again fails to support Germany during the crisis, and again the question becomes whether or not this affected Italy’s relationship with either Germany or Austria-Hungary after the crisis. My hypotheses would expect Italy to lose its allies, or at the very least to be more constrained by the alliance terms. In contrast, as I discussed above, the Triple Alliance was formally renewed for the third time. However, the German leadership did attempt to bind Italy more closely to the alliance. Two such examples are the August 1913 naval agreement between Germany and its two allies, and the 11 March 1914 meeting between German and Italian military leaders in which they outlined the precision and delegation of the Italian military commitment. Specifically, Italy’s Third Army was pledged to assist Germany, and would include 200,000 soldiers, including 150,000 combatants. And there was even the claim that Italy might send troops to help Austria.365 This suggests an increase in the precision of Italy’s commitment to the

Triple Alliance, but did not require Germany or Austria-Hungary to give up any of their autonomy, since they were unlikely to have counted on those troops when developing their war plans.

Nevertheless, Italy’s military promise amounted to nothing more than cheap talk, for it imposed no costs on Italy that would have prevented it from declaring neutrality at the outbreak of the First World War, then allying with the Entente Powers. Greater integration of Triple Alliance forces might have prevented Italy from abandoning its allies. However, such a demand might have pushed Italy out of the alliance earlier, and Germany was unwilling to do that given its lack of strategic alternatives to an alliance with unreliable Italy.

On the other hand, France might have expected to receive Italian support given its support for France during the Algeciras Conference. Consistent with my expectations concerning Italy, it fails to support its Triple Alliance partner once again, but does support French control over Morocco. In return, I expect the relationship between Italy and France to preserve low levels of obligation, precision, and delegation. However, I might also expect France to seek a more formal type of alliance with Italy.

However, this view is problematic, because even though Italy provided support to France, most of the evidence suggests that France still viewed Italy as unreliable.366 This seems to fit Mercer’s argument that allies will always be perceived as having a bad reputation. However, it merely suggests that states may understand the importance of

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being a reliable ally even if its produces unfavorable outcomes. For example, Russia
gave the British credit for honoring its commitment during the Russo-Japanese War, even
though British support to Japan hurt the Russians. Likewise, it is plausible that France
continued to see Italy as a state that abandons its allies, even if recent acts benefited the
French.

5.3.6 Case Summary

This fourth and final case study provides the most difficult test of my argument.
Yet, I continue to demonstrate a connection between a state’s behavior in a crisis and its
alliance autonomy after the crisis. Russian support, though not overly public, led to an
expanded French commitment, both in terms of obligation and delegation. In return,
perhaps because of French loyalty in not weakening the entente, the Russians also gave
up some delegation and obligation. In part, this greater French commitment was intended
to prevent Russia from abandoning France by more closely binding the two states
together. Ironically, while doing so may have further improved Russia’s perception of
French reliability, it may have ultimately encouraged Russia to begin the mobilization
against Austria-Hungary that eventually plunged Europe into general war.

In contrast, Germany’s perception was that France would continue to abandon its
allies if its meant achieving French interests. These competing images of French
reliability may have prompted Germany to push for war, whereas a better French
reputation might have deterred the July Crisis from escalating. In addition, Russian
negotiations with Germany over Central Asia were conducted without British knowledge,
whereas the British were themselves hamstrung by the Anglo-Russian Convention and
their unwillingness to violate the agreement. In November 1911, for example, Grey warned the Russian Minister in London that the government might be forced to disavow Russian activities that potentially destroyed the convention.367

Despite Austria-Hungary’s reputation for supporting its ally, Germany received little support during the Agadir Crisis. And consistent with my hypotheses, there were some minor changes to the alliance, including military conversations.

5.3.7 Competing Theories

Since I have suggested that reputation may become less important as alliances tighten and as war becomes more likely, it follows that other explanations of state behavior should become more important. The balance of threat explanation still finds is supported by the Triple Entente staying together to balance against the still growing German threat. However, the theory has trouble explaining each state’s willingness to negotiate with Germany. The argument that state’s ally to manage threat does a better job of explaining these negotiations, but not their timing, since they could have done so much earlier. Nor can this theory explain why the Triple Entente persisted. Moreover, neither theory can explain specific changes within the two alliance institutions.

However, if we incorporate reputation into our explanations of alliance choices, we not only improve our ability to explain why changes occurred to the alliance, but also some of the specific alliance choices. For example, Russia and France were willing to negotiate with Germany after having been abandoned by their ally. Even the British

367 The British government was also limited in its dealings with Russia, in terms of what could be negotiated, owing to its commitments to Japan. Klein, “The Anglo-Russian Convention,” p. 126-128.
ultimately signed an agreement with Germany, but only after its two allies had already
done so without consultation. Therefore, while reputation alone cannot explain some of
the alliance choices after the Agadir Crisis, incorporating reputation into our existing
alliance theories does increase our ability to explain state behavior.

5.4 From Agadir to World War

Although I already discussed some consequences of allied behavior during the
Agadir crisis, it is worth making some additional notes about the period between the
crisis and the outbreak of the First World War. The conventional wisdom has been that
the inflexibility of the alliances was one of the main causes of the First World War.
However, I suggest that while fears of an ally realigning with the other side may have
been low, there was certainly a great deal of concern that an ally might remain neutral.
As Taylor puts it, “The existing alliances were all precarious. Italy was only the extreme
example – renewing the Triple Alliance and making exaggerated promises of military
support to Germany on one side; seeking to negotiate a Mediterranean agreement with
France and Great Britain on the other.”368 Ironically, this fear caused the alliances to
become increasingly binding, and this ultimately dragged all of the states into a general
war.

Britain, as usual, supported France at Agadir, and was rewarded with a greater
French obligation while being able to preserve its autonomy. While “Poincaré proposed
to declare that England and France would ‘co-operate, if necessary, to maintain the

368 Taylor, Struggle for Mastery, p. 518.
European balance.’ Grey would only express a wish ‘to co-operate in maintaining European peace’.”369 At the same time, the British appeared much closer to France than to Russia, particularly once tensions reemerged over Persia.

On the other hand, while England supported Russia during the Bosnia crisis, France did not. This contributed to Russia’s willingness to negotiate with Germany, which created a slippery slope, because Russian agreements with Germany lowered English perception of Russia’s reliability. As a result, the German government hoped to take advantage of this, believing that as long as France was left alone, Great Britain could be turned away from Russia.370

According to Taylor, “The Triple Entente was far from being a perfect arrangement from the British point of view. They had to be loyal to France; yet Russia was not loyal to them. Improved relations with Germany would, it was hoped, lessen the tension between Germany and France; at the same time, they would make it easier to oppose Russia in Persia.”371 Therefore, because of French and Russian action in failing to fully support one another and negotiating with Germany, even the British sought to hedge their bets by pursuing an agreement with Germany.

Lord Chancellor Richard Haldane went to Germany from 8-12 February 1912, where he offered colonial concessions and a political agreement if the German naval program was not increased. However, the Germans wanted a promise of neutrality

369 Ibid., p. 478.
370 Ibid., p. 519.
371 Ibid., p. 477.
during a continental war, rather than a simple declaration of friendship. The French were alarmed by these talks, which may have been one objective. But, despite Britain’s willingness to negotiate with Germany, the British were unwilling to sign any agreement that was perceived to weaken the Entente. As a result, the negotiations with Germany ended in March with the British falling even more towards France. In contrast, the French reached an agreement with Germany over the Baghdad Railway in February 1914. Then, the British finally reached an agreement with Germany in June. From the German point-of-view, both seemed to be siding with Germany against Russia on the issue of Turkey. This appeared to weaken the entente and made a challenge by the Central Powers more likely.

In addition, perceived cleavages in the Triple Alliance appeared as an opportunity for the entente. Italy’s lack of reliability is well-established, and the failure of Austria-Hungary to support Germany at Agadir may have signaled to the entente that the Central Powers were growing farther apart. And while Germany’s dealings with all three of the entente powers may have been a result of Austria’s failure to support Germany during the Agadir Crisis, the effect was to lower Austria-Hungary’s perceptions of German reliability. For instance, E.C. Helmreich suggests that the Austrian foreign office was

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uncertain of German support throughout the 1912-1913 Balkan Crisis. Moreover, he argues that the military conversations that took place between the allies in November 1912 were not perceived as any type of extension to the treaty.\footnote{E.C. Helmreich, “An Unpublished Report on Austro-German Military Conversations of November, 1912,” \textit{The Journal of Modern History} Vol. 5, No. 2 (June 1933), p. 205.}

However, despite British perception of German unreliability, it is also clear that Austria-Hungary’s leaders believed that Germany was loyal to the alliance. Just prior to the outbreak of the First World War, Count Ladislaus Szögyény-Merich, the Austrian ambassador to Germany, suggested that “Even if it [Austrian action against Serbia] should come to war between Austria and Russia, we could be convinced that Germany would stand by our side with her accustomed faithfulness as an ally.”\footnote{Cited in Taylor, \textit{Struggle for Mastery}, p. 521.} This view was based primarily on German behavior in support of its ally.

As for Italy, its naval staff held formal conventions with Austria-Hungary in 1913, where an agreement was reached which provided for a union of the two fleets.\footnote{Halpern, “The Anglo-French-Italian Naval Convention of 1915,” p. 107.} However, by 2 August 1914, tension between Italy and Austria-Hungary once again dominated their relations. Austria’s prime minister, Karl Stürgkh, even suggested that rather than wait for Italy to betray Austria, it would be better, “to deceive her with a kind of secret agreement. . . . No diplomatic trick is too low in dealing with such brigands as the Italians now are.” And of course, Italy was already conducting negotiations with the entente powers to intervene against Austria-Hungary.\footnote{Valiani, “Italian-Austro-Hungarian Negotations,” pp. 119-120.} Paul Halpern suggests that while
France was aware of the tension between Italy and Austria-Hungary, the French
government was also suspicious of Italy’s reliability as an ally.\footnote{Halpern, “The Anglo-French-Italian Naval Convention of 1915,” p. 106.} In one sense, this
contradicts my hypotheses, because Italy supported France during both Moroccan crises,
honoring its commitment to support France’s control of Morocco as well as its promise to
remain neutral in a conflict against France. At the same time, French suspicion of Italy
confirms my broader argument, because Italy had a reputation for repeatedly failing to
support its allies. As a result, I would not have expected anyone to fully trust Italy.

Curiously, both of these perceptions of the other alliance were not shared, and
both sides believed they would receive support from their allies in war, either because of
their willingness to honor commitments (Britain), their lack of alternatives (Germany and
Austria-Hungary), or because of the institutional changes that were made (France, Russia,
and Italy). The interesting point is that Britain was perceived as having the most reliable
reputation, and also had the greatest flexibility to stay out of the coming war.

5.5 Chapter Review

By examining European alliance choices from 1907 to 1914, I have provided
additional support for the argument that a state’s reputation is one factor affecting the
alliance choices of other states (Figure 5.3 illustrates my findings from the two cases in
this chapter).
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<tr>
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<th>Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis</th>
<th>Agadir Crisis</th>
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<td>Russian Allies</td>
<td>French Allies</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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<td>Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>$H_1$: Alliance</td>
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<td>Formation</td>
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<td>$H_3$: Lose Abandoned</td>
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<td>Ally</td>
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<td>$H_4$: Lose Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allies</td>
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<td>$H_5$: Commitment</td>
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<td>$H_6$: Obligation</td>
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<td>$H_8$: Delegation</td>
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<td>$H_9$: Moral Hazard</td>
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Blank = Not Tested  
○ = No Support  
○○ = Mixed Findings  
● = Support

Figure 5.3: Review of Chapter Findings
The two cases in this chapter include nine separate observations: four from the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis (Russia’s two allies and Austria-Hungary’s two allies), and five from the Agadir Crisis (one each for England, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, and two for Italy given that it had agreements with both France and Germany). Considering that there are nine observations, and nine hypotheses, this creates eighty-one possible tests of my argument about the influence of reputation. Among these, twenty-four are not applicable to these two cases. Of the fifty-seven remaining tests, twenty-two seem to completely contradict my arguments. In contrast, fifteen tests result in alliance decisions that are consistent with my hypotheses, while the remaining twenty provide mixed findings (i.e., there are contradictory findings or other factors appear to be responsible for the findings). This means that even in these cases with supposedly tight alliances, over sixty percent (61.40%) of the applicable tests provide some support for my argument, and more than one quarter (26.32%) of the alliance decisions are strongly correlated with the reliability of a state’s allies.

Although the success rates are considerably lower here than in Chapter Four, I partly attribute this to the increased division of the two sides, and the inflexibility of the alliances.379 One curious observation that is evident when examining the table in Figure 5.3 is that while my hypotheses are fairly effective in cases where states honored their commitments, they are less successful at explaining the consequences of unreliable

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379 This may also be consistent with the argument that historical cycles influence international norms regarding the degree to which agreements will be honored; as war becomes more likely, norms for honoring commitments are less influential. Charles Kegley and Gregory Raymond, “The Long Cycle of Global War and the Transformation of Alliance Norms,” *Journal of Peace Research* 26:3 (August 1989), 265-284; Charles Kegley and Gregory Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down: Alliance Norms and World Politics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990).
behavior. On the face of it, this might strengthen Mercer’s claim that states should not be concerned about their reputation, if unreliable states suffer few consequences for their behavior. However, I have already suggested that reputation may become less relevant when states have limited options for realignment. Russia, for example, was unwilling to drop its alliance with France because doing so would have increased its vulnerability to Germany and Austria-Hungary. The same is true for Italy in the Triple Alliance. Therefore, as the alliance divisions tightened, it makes sense that my hypotheses might have more difficulty explaining instances where states failed to honor their commitments.

In addition, while the degree to which my hypotheses are successful in these cases is low, there are still substantively significant findings that support my general argument about reputation. For example, France is required to increase its level of delegation to Russia and Italy’s costs do increase as a result of the crisis. Likewise, changes to the Triple Alliance after the Second Moroccan Crisis further reduced Italy’s autonomy through both precision and delegation.

Finally, while the hypotheses on moral hazard do not seem to fit French or Italian unreliability, since Russia and Austria-Hungary do challenge each other again, it is possible that the reliability of England and Germany towards their respective allies was enough to make up for France and Italy. This also suggests that certain hypotheses may be less successful because of the multilateral nature of the alliances. In Chapter Four, most of the observations were related to bilateral agreements. In contrast, almost all of the cases in this chapter involved trilateral relationships. Given that such relationships are inherently more complicated, it is not unexpected that my hypotheses are less
successful. This suggests that some refinements of my argument may be necessary in the future to deal with multilateral agreements like NATO, such as specifying the ways in which a decline in one member’s reliability affects the autonomy of all the members.

The two cases discussed here do not allow me to test my hypothesis on alliance formation, given that no new alliances form between the great powers. However, the claim that states tend to ally with states of similar reliability receives strong support in two tests, and mixed support in the other eight, failing none. The reason for this is simply that in each crisis, the states tended to receive support from one ally but not the other. This means that states were consistently allied with a reliable ally as well as an unreliable one. Moreover, this hypothesis is difficult to test on crises, because the importance of reputation is more nuanced than suggested by my hypotheses. Therefore, while this hypothesis receives support from the cases, it turns out to be relatively uninteresting (although I suggest that the implications of its success may be more interesting for crises that do escalate to wars).

The least successful hypotheses, once again, are those concerning the role of reputation on alliance duration. These hypotheses are only tested ten times within these two cases, since there are only five instances of a state clearly not supporting its ally. However, seven of the ten observations completely fail to support my argument that unreliable states will lose the ally they abandon, as well as their other allies. Only three of the ten tests show even mixed success.
My hypotheses on alliance variation – specifically those focusing on obligation and precision – have the most observations receiving strong support (four out of ten for each). However, they each also fail to receive any support in three of the observations, and receive only mixed support in the remaining three. The other hypothesis on alliance variation, on delegation, receives some support on eight out of the ten observations, but receives only strong support on one of these.

Finally, the cases in this chapter provide interesting results for the hypothesis that when states are perceived to be reliable allies, the possibility of their being dragged into war is higher. The only case to test this hypothesis in this chapter is the Bosnian Crisis, since that situation is similar to the one that existed on the eve of the First World War. Curiously, Russia and Austria-Hungary each receive strong support from one ally and weak support from the other. As a result, my hypothesis is only supported in half of the tests, since both states do initiate war in 1914. It may be that having one reliable ally is enough to embolden a state; it need not believe that all of its allies are reliable. Therefore, even though this hypothesis receives support only half of the time, the findings are substantively important and suggest one puzzle for future research.

Moreover, even those cases where states had a poor record of providing support to allies, changes in the relationships that bound the states more closely together may have increased their reliability. In other words, since I find strong support for my hypotheses on alliance variation, Austria-Hungary and Russia may have been emboldened by changes to their relations with Italy and France respectively. These cases also suggest another relationship between reputation, alliances, and war. The most war-prone
situation may be one when a state believes that its allies are reliable (either because of their past behavior or because of institutional changes that bind them more closely together), and thus is more emboldened, while its opponent believes those same states are unreliable, and is therefore undeterred by the alliance.

Most accounts of the causes of the First World War involve some mention of Germany’s blank check, its guarantee to support Austria in 1914. Based on Germany’s prior behavior, and changes to their relationship, Austria clearly found this promise reliable and was therefore willing to go to the brink of war. In addition, the British have taken some of the blame for not issuing a stern enough warning to Germany. However, I suggest that Britain’s prior behavior was enough to convince the European Powers of its reliability. The real weakness in the Triple Entente was the perceived lack of support between France and Russia – Russia’s Björko Treaty negotiation with Germany during the First Moroccan Crisis, France’s lack of support during the Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis (including the Casablanca agreement with Germany over Morocco), and Russia’s agreement with Germany at Potsdam and mixed support for France during the Agadir Crisis.

This history created the belief in the German and Austrian government that France and Russia would not support each other in war. Changes to the Franco-Russian relationship may have increased the belief within the Entente that they could count on each other, but these changes were not as obvious to the Central Powers. As a result,
while Germany clearly deserves some blame for its “blank check”, Russia and France are not without fault, because had they been more reliable allies the Triple Entente might have been a more credible deterrent.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company.

-- George Washington

6.1 Project Review

The question I posed at the outset of this project was whether one state’s reputation influences the behavior of other states. I asserted that states with reputations for being reliable allies should have greater freedom of action in making their alliance choices than states with an unreliable reputation. To test this, I used a series of market analogies to develop my hypotheses, which I then applied to four cases in which state reputations were tested. Although some of my hypotheses are more successful than others, the cases I examine clearly show that a state’s reputation can influence its autonomy. This chapter is divided into two main parts. First, I review my earlier chapters, giving brief discussions of my hypotheses and how they fared in each of the case studies. I also discuss some of my findings, including some explanations for why the influence of reputation seems to change under certain conditions. The second part
provides a discussion of the various ways in which I intend to expand upon this work, and also how my findings from this project can contribute to other areas of international relations.

6.1.1 Hypotheses

To generate hypotheses for testing the role of reputation on state behavior, I drew heavily from the business literature, where positive reputations are believed to be crucial to the health of a firm, and where tests of this have supported the validity of that belief. The puzzle I posed is that if actors in the economic market are influenced by reputation, even though their commitments can be legally enforced, then states in the international political arena should also be influenced by reputation since commitments must be self-enforcing, and since prior behavior is frequently the best way to evaluate a state’s intentions under anarchy. As a result, I argue that there should be observable differences in a state’s behavior towards those with reliable reputations compared to those with unreliable reputations.

For this project, I chose to focus specifically on a state’s reputation for reliability. I do this for three reasons. First, Mercer’s test of reputation focused exclusively on credibility, or resolve. While he claims to test the effect of reputation on alliances, he ignores the importance of other types of reputations. The second reason is that reputations for reliability closely approximate the types of reputations desired by firms and therefore allow for the most appropriate test of my hypotheses. Finally, I contend that a better understanding of reputation can help us fill some of the gaps in our existing alliance theories.
My general argument is that as a state’s reliability is perceived to increase, it will have greater autonomy in its alliance choices while its allies will give up more of their autonomy. In contrast, as a state’s reliability is perceived to decline, it will be forced to give up autonomy while its allies will be less willing to part with their own. To test these general claims, I devise ten hypotheses, divided into four categories, based on the type of alliance choice that states make.

The first two hypotheses address gaps in our understanding of alliance formation; specifically, how states choose between different alliance strategies, such as balancing and bandwagoning, and also how they choose their alliance partners. Concepts like balance of power, balance of threat, and bandwagoning help us identify the strategies behind a state’s alliance choices, but cannot always explain when states prefer strategy over another, nor can they explain why states sometimes opt to not ally at all. In addition, even if we can explain why a state selects a particular strategy, it is often difficult to explain its choice of partners.

First, I hypothesized that states with an unreliable reputation will have more trouble finding allies than states with a reliable reputation. Ceteris paribus, if states have a choice in alliance partners, I suggest that they will prefer to ally with the more reliable state, since doing so has a greater chance of enhancing the state’s security. The market analogy behind this hypothesis is that firms with positive reputations have an easier time attracting employees, customers, and investors. Likewise, an individual with a good
credit score is more likely to be approved for a mortgage or car loan than someone with poor credit. If true, then states may balance against power or threat if a potential partner is reliable. If not, then bandwagoning or buckpassing might be safer moves.

My second hypothesis on alliance formation is based on the market observation that reputations are easily transferred from one actor to another. The implication of this in business is that reputable actors tend to interact only with other reputable actors, while those with lower reputations are forced to deal with one another. As a result, I hypothesize that reliable states are more likely to ally with other reliable states, leaving unreliable states to ally with each other. This hypothesis in particular may help explain how states select their alliance partners.

The second type of alliance choice focuses on the decision to end an alliance. As with alliance formation, we have a number of explanations for the duration of alliances, but still have trouble explaining specific cases of alliances falling apart. In business, firms that suffer a decline in their reputation lose customers, employees, and investors. If this translates into international relations, then states that fail to honor their commitments should have trouble keeping their allies. Therefore, Hypothesis Three suggests that states will lose the allies that they abandon. This is a dyadic argument, because it focuses only on two states – the ally and the state it abandons. However, it is also plausible that a loss of reliability will affect a state’s other alliances. As a result, Hypothesis Four tests the more general argument that unreliable states lose allies, beyond those that are abandoned. If I find support for either of these hypotheses, it may help us to explain why some alliances end when they do.
The third category focuses on the variation that exists between alliance institutions. The business literature identifies a number of ways in which firms with a positive reputation have greater freedom, not only to act, but also to ask more of their employees and consumers. As a result, reliable states may also have greater freedom of action within their alliances. I use four hypotheses to test this assertion. Hypothesis Five looks at the different types of alliance commitments that exist, ranging from ententes, to neutrality agreements, to defense pacts. Because a state must give up more autonomy as the alliance moves towards a defense pact, I posit that states are more likely to consider defense pacts with reliable states, while partnerships with unreliable states – if they occur at all – will be less binding ententes. This reflects the concerns a state will have in giving up autonomy to another state, something it would prefer to do only with a state that will honor its commitments.

The next three hypotheses in this category deal specifically with some of the variations that exist within the design of the alliance. The international institutions literature identifies three relevant aspects of alliance design that I adopt for my purposes: obligation, precision, and delegation.\textsuperscript{380} Obligation is defined as the up-front costs that a state must pay to assure its allies that it is reliable, or to make-up for past unreliability. These costs come in many forms, such as the payment of money, providing certain resources to an ally including the use of territory, or even the construction of a larger military. Precision has to do with the clarity of the treaty language. This refers

\textsuperscript{380} Although I define the terms slightly differently because of my focus on military alliances, the basic meanings are similar. See Kenneth Abbott, Robert Keohane, Andrew Moravcsik, Anne-Marie Slaughter, and Duncan Snidal, “The Concept of Legalization,” \textit{International Organization}, Vol. 54, No. 3 (Summer 2000), pp. 401-419.
specifically to whether the purpose, target, and duration of the alliance are kept vague or spelled-out very clearly. Lastly, delegation refers to the degree with which the allies’ militaries are integrated with one another, either under an integrated command or with one state’s forces under the control of the other state. For each hypothesis I expect reliable states to have greater autonomy than unreliable states. Therefore, Hypotheses Six through Eight test whether or not reliable states have less obligation, precision, and delegation than unreliable states. I also present a corollary for Hypothesis Eight, suggesting that fears of abandonment versus entrapment will influence whether or not reliable states want more or less delegation. If a state fears abandonment, it will prefer greater obligation, because higher levels of military integration make it more difficult for an ally to renege on its commitments. On the other hand, if the state fears entrapment, it will prefer low levels of obligation, to avoid being pulled into an unwanted conflict.

Finally, my last hypothesis focuses on the possibility that a reputation for reliability may have some disadvantages. I argue that states with a reliable reputation suffer from a moral hazard problem; specifically, states should be more likely to challenge adversaries if they believe they can count on their allies. As a result, the possibility of being dragged into a conflict may increase as a state’s reliability rises. Ironically, then, while a reputation for reliability may help deter adversaries, it may simultaneously embolden allies to initiate crises. If valid, then leaders face difficult decisions on how to handle their state’s reputation.
In Chapters Four and Five I tested these hypotheses against four case studies, each of which provided me with multiple observations. Because I spent considerable time in each chapter discussing the results of the cases, in the next section I only briefly discuss the relevant points of the cases, as well as how my hypotheses fared.

### 6.1.2 Case Studies

In Chapter Four, I tested my hypotheses on two cases. The first focused on the British search for an ally at the beginning of the twentieth century. The British government began to realize that its long-held policy of splendid isolation was dangerous as its global interests grew more vulnerable to European rivals. The British first approached Germany for an alliance, since they had a common interest in checking Russian expansion into Asia. However, the British ultimately abandoned hopes of an alliance with Germany, not only because German demands would have required that the British give up more autonomy than they cared to, but also because the German government proved itself unwilling to support the British against Russia. As a result, the talks broke down, and England opted for an alliance with Japan instead.

In one of the best examples of reputation influencing state behavior, the Japanese evaluated British reliability, and offered an alliance only after Britain’s reputation was confirmed. However, Britain’s reputation may have emboldened the Japanese to challenge Russia. When the Japanese attacked Russia, Britain’s “benevolent neutrality”, helped contribute to the Japanese victory. As a result, the British were rewarded with a
greater Japanese commitment. Another consequence of Britain’s reliability was that France feared being drawn into a war over its commitment to Russia, and thus pursued an entente with Britain.

Shortly after, British reputation was tested again when Germany and France clashed over Morocco. This Moroccan Crisis is the second case and it allowed me to examine how the behavior of allies during a crisis influences their relations with the belligerents. In this case, France received solid support from England, but only mixed support from Russia, since the Tsar also negotiated a treaty with the German Kaiser. Although the British did appear to lose some autonomy after the crisis, they preserved much more than Russia. While this does not perfectly conform to my hypotheses, it does still suggest that autonomy may be influenced by reliability.

Similarly, the Germans received full support from Austria-Hungary, but Italy voted against its ally at the Algeciras Conference. The Italian case does not fully support my hypotheses, since it was able to keep the alliance intact and did not suffer a tremendous loss of autonomy. But, this may be explained by the fact that Italy also had an agreement with France, and that it had made it clear to its allies well before the crisis that it would not join in a war against France. As a result, Germany may not have expected Italian support, and therefore did not perceive Italy’s behavior to be abandonment.

In summary, the strongest support for my hypotheses in Chapter Four were on alliance variation and the moral hazard problem of reliability. The least successful hypotheses were those having to do with alliance duration. In Chapter Five, I examined
two more cases involving Europe’s Great Powers before the First World War. The proximity of these crises to the First World War, as well as the conventional wisdom that the divisions were growing increasingly less flexible, both suggest that these were difficult tests of reputation. Nevertheless, while my hypotheses were less successful in Chapter Five, reputation continued to play a relevant role in certain alliance choices.

The first case in Chapter Five began with Austria-Hungary’s annexation of Bosnia, and the Russian attempt to reverse the move. The British once again supported their ally, but the French failed to support Russia and even signed an agreement with Germany over Morocco, in exchange for French neutrality in the crisis. As expected, the British were able to preserve more autonomy than the French. On the other side, Austria-Hungary received support from Germany, and in fact it was the German ultimatum that finally forced Russia to back down. In contrast, the Italians once again failed to support their ally. While Germany was able to preserve its autonomy as expected, Italo-Austrian relations somewhat improved after the crisis. While this disconfirms my hypotheses, the Italians were still asked to increase their obligation to the Triple Alliance. Moreover, Germany and especially Austria-Hungary continued to discuss fitting punishments for their unreliable Italian partner, and these often included invasion.

The final case focused on yet another clash between France and Germany over Morocco. This time, Germany was abandoned by both of its allies. While it did not impose greater constraints on Austria-Hungary, the Germans did require Italy to increase its precision and delegation. The French received very strong support from England, but little from the Russians. As a result, both France and England questioned Russian
reliability and negotiated commercial treaties with Germany. The French also demanded that Russia pay more to maintain the relationship, specifically accelerating the construction of its strategic railways, and increasing its military manpower.

While my hypotheses do not explain every alliance choice made by the Great Powers, they explain a number of actions that cannot be explained by conventional theories alone. One important point is that if we take the three crises together as a single case and focus on the overall reliability of each state, we get interesting results related to my hypotheses. Based only on the three crises, it is clear that the British should have had the best reputation since they supported their allies in all three crises, while Italy should have had the worst since it failed to do so in all three. In between, from most reliable to least reliable, are Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and France. If we apply the hypotheses on alliance variation to these states over the seven years that span the crises, Britain ended up with the highest level of autonomy. The states with the least autonomy were Russia, France, and Italy. Therefore, while my hypotheses are not completely successful if we break the crises up into separate tests, when taken together it is clear that the states that supported their allies preserved their autonomy while those that lost the most autonomy were the one who failed to live up to their allies’ expectations. In the next section, I review some of the unexpected results of my findings and how they are relevant for my argument.
6.1.3 Unexpected Findings

Throughout my four cases, the hypotheses on alliance variation and moral hazard received the strongest support. In addition, there is a clear decline in the validity of my hypotheses with each successive crisis. There are a couple plausible explanations for this that are important for our understanding of reputation. For one thing, it is possible that as a state’s alliance options decline, the influence of reputation may also fall. If a state has only one potential ally, that ally’s reputation will be a minor factor in the decision to ally, or remain allied. However, as a state’s options increase, it can afford to be more selective, which may include a preference for allying with the most reliable state that can help it attain its strategic goals. States with options can also afford to impose harsher punishments on their unreliable allies. This may explain why the Triple Alliance did not accord with my hypotheses as well as the Triple Entente. Once France and Russia allied, and once England abandoned its negotiations with Germany, the perception was that Germany’s only protection from isolation was Austria-Hungary. As a result, it makes sense that Germany would not want to be too harsh on its allies and risk alienating them. In contrast, the entente powers may have all felt that they had other options, and thus were more willing to assign importance to their allies’ reliability.

This finding has implications for other time periods. For example, some scholars suggest that fears of abandonment are considerably diminished during bipolar periods because the possibility of realignment is much lower.\textsuperscript{381} If true, then it would logically follow that reputation would be less important during, for example, the Cold War than in

\textsuperscript{381} Glenn Snyder, \textit{Alliance Politics} (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).
the multipolar period leading up to the First World War. Therefore, my future research will expand my case selection to include periods in which the international system was organized differently, such as the tripolar interwar years, the bipolar Cold War, and the unipolar post-Cold War world. James Alt, Randall Calvert, and Brian Humes contend that reputations are important for hegemons, but the unanswered question is whether hegemons care about the reliability of their allies.

The second unexpected finding may suggest a way to incorporate reputation into our understanding of the causes of war. Reputation has been a major feature of the deterrence literature, but primarily as a function of resolve. I posit that perceptions of reliability may lead to war, especially if two sides perceive reputation differently. A crucial note is that the causes of the First World War are highly over-determined, so I make no grand claims about this argument, other than to suggest that it is interesting enough to warrant future research.

Building on my finding that reliable states suffer moral hazard problems, it occurs to me that crises might arise if a state’s allies and adversaries have different perceptions of its reliability (Figure 6.1 illustrates the components of this argument). On the top is the ally’s perception of a state’s reputation, either reliable or unreliable. On the side is the state’s reputation from the point-of-view of a potential adversary. Not only does this argument suggest when crises are more or less likely, but also provides testable hypotheses on who is most likely to initiate the conflict.

The most dangerous situation is the one where a state believes its ally is reliable, and is therefore more emboldened, while the adversary does not believe the state’s ally is reliable, and is therefore unlikely to back down when challenged. In contrast, the safest situation is the one where a state is believed to be unreliable by its allies, who then are less likely to challenge, but reliable by its adversaries, who also will not challenge. Although this argument is best tested against wars, we can see it at work during the crises I examined here. For example, Austria-Hungary and Russia initiated a crisis over Bosnia, with both initially believing their allies were reliable. Once Russia realized that France was not, it backed down from the confrontation. On a broader scale, the behavior of the entente powers during the pre-war period convinced Germany that they would not
support each other in war. In contrast, changes within the entente may have created the impression that they would support each other (but many of these changes were unobservable by Germany and Austria-Hungary, so past behavior was the best indicator).

6.2 Unanswered Questions and Other Areas of Future Research

Although I have shown that reliability is a factor in state alliance choices, including in some unanticipated ways, this project has left a number of unanswered questions. I address some of those questions here, as well as discuss how my argument might be applicable to other areas of international relations scholarship. I begin with two questions that I do not address in this project, but which warrant further investigation now that I have identified some of the ways in which reputation can influence international relations.

6.2.1 Individual vs. National Reputations

The first puzzle has to do with the issue of whether reputations are assigned to states or to leaders. Some initial work has already been done on the differences between national and individual reputations, but more is warranted. Although I do not spend a lot of time in this project distinguishing between national and individual reputations, the pre-First World War period provides some interesting observations about the relative importance of individual vs. national reputations. The British fear prior to the First Moroccan Crisis was that Delcassé would lead France to war with Germany, thus entangling Britain in unwanted war. Mercer suggests that France’s forcing the

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resignation of Delcassé because of German requests was a sign of being unresolved. However, British fears of entrapment were decreased, which not only suggests that reputations of individuals are at least somewhat relevant for the state, but also that the British might have been more willing to bind itself to France after Morocco because of the different person in charge.

I discussed in Chapter Five the effect that the pacifist Caillaux had on Anglo-French relations. In a couple cases, I even found evidence to suggest that a political party was perceived to have its own reputation. According to L. W. Fuller, “The French Government had been somewhat concerned at the accession of the Liberals to power in England, knowing their traditionally pacifist views. Cambon, therefore, approached Grey with a view to the continuation of the military conversations and, if possible, the securing of a definite pledge of aid in case France were involved in war with Germany.”

Although this complicates a test of reputation if different parties hold specific reputations, it is still compatible with my hypotheses. When a potentially less reliable party came to power in England, the French sought a more binding commitment from that party. Similarly, each domestic group within Germany had a preferred enemy and adversary; this divide influenced their perception of the other’s reliability as an ally.

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In contrast, if we expand our focus to include other types of reputation, it is clear that the perceptions of England, France, and Russia concerning a growing German threat did not change when Bethmann-Hollweg took over as Chancellor for Bülow in 1909. Instead, this change had little influence on German reputation, or was at least overshadowed by the reputations of the other German leaders that remained in power.

In addition, the fact that individual or group reputations may outweigh the state’s reputation provides a possible explanation for the continued ability of Italy to find allies during the Interwar years. Despite Italy’s poor reputation leading up to the First World War, it was approached by numerous states seeking alliances between the war. This included Germany, which Italy had abandoned multiple times. Alliances during this period are also described as being much more flexible than those prior to the First World War, so my suggestion that the availability of other allies making reputation more important also has trouble explaining this case.

The obvious puzzle is why anyone, especially the Germans, would have wanted to ally with Italy. Not only did Italy abandon its allies repeatedly before the First World War, but it also exploited German preoccupation over Morocco to launch its own war against the Turks for Tripoli (which resulted in a weakening of the Ottoman Empire, allowing the Balkan states to begin their own wars). According to George Manhart, “In general, it is thought here that neither the Triple Entente nor the Triple Alliance can count on the loyalty of Italy.”

Nevertheless, the Italians were kept within the Triple Alliance,

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until they abandoned their allies yet again during the First World War. However, despite this obvious Italian unreliability, they were still courted by both sides prior to the Second World War. The Italian case raises two important issues regarding reputation.

At least part of the answer may lie in the fact that reputations can be assigned to individual leaders as well as to the states themselves. Therefore, while Italy as a state may have had an unreliable reputation, Mussolini as a leader is unlikely to have been perceived as unreliable, particularly by Hitler with whom he had common interests.

Another point highlighted by the Italian case is that nowhere do I suggest that reputation trumps other geo-strategic factors. Italy is a difficult case for my argument, but Italy is situated in a strategically important geographic position, and it therefore makes sense that it would be a desirable ally, regardless of its prior behavior. As a result, it is important to keep in mind that my claim is not that reputation is the most important factor in determining alliance behavior, simply that it is an often overlooked factor that is in need of further analysis. It also suggests that reliability and reputation are not necessarily synonymous with one another, but that reputation may simply be one factor that influences a state’s reliability. In the next section I expand upon this point.

### 6.2.2 Other Factors Contributing to Reliability

In this project, I use reputation and reliability interchangeably. However, upon further analysis, it is apparent that a state’s reliability is based on a number of factors, only one of which is its past behavior. Based on the cases discussed here, other factors that may contribute to a state’s reliability as an ally include, but are not limited to, its military capabilities and its domestic stability (illustrated in Figure 6.2 below).
For one thing, just as a state’s deterrent threats are more credible when it has the military capabilities to implement those threats, capabilities may also affect the degree to which a state is perceived to be a reliable ally. According to Mercer’s analysis of the First Moroccan Crisis, “Even if the French viewed the British as resolute allies at Algeciras, it does not appear they assumed similar support in the future. Nor did they feel certain of future Russian support.” He uses this point to conclude that even if states support their ally, they cannot get a reputation for resolve. Instead, Mercer posits

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387 These same factors – prior behavior, military capabilities, and domestic political forces – also contribute to a state’s credibility. However, credibility and reliability each depend on a different type of prior behavior. Specifically, reliability is based upon the degree to which a state honored its previous promises, while credibility is based upon a state’s prior willingness to follow through on its threats.

that allies will explain each other’s support through situation. His findings may be valid, but I contend that his explanation is incomplete. It is true that despite British support at Algeciras, France was reluctant to expand the entente. However, this was not because of British reputation, but rather because of Britain’s inability to field a worthwhile army able to provide military assistance in a European war. Therefore, when Mercer sees the French giving little credit to the British for their support, it is not because reputation does not matter, but because other factors like military capabilities may be more important under certain circumstances. In other words, some of the instances that Mercer claims are failures of reputation may simply be invalid tests of reputation.

Likewise, states that are suffering from domestic turmoil are less likely to be perceived as reliable, even if they have honored their commitments in the past. There are a number of reasons why domestic stability might affect a state’s reliability as an ally. For one thing, if a state erupts into full-fledged civil war, it will be unable to offer assistance to its allies. Even if the state is simply experiencing domestic turmoil – economic woes, riots, etc. – the government may feel the need to deal with those domestic issues before it can give any attention to the international arena. Therefore, having an ally with domestic problems can increase fears of abandonment. Similarly, Stephan Walt contends that states suffering from revolution are more likely to be threatened by external forces. If so, then having an ally that is experiencing revolution may increase the danger of entrapment, also hurting the state’s reliability.


Mercer dismisses the role that Austria and Russia played during the First Moroccan crisis, primarily because of the domestic problems facing both states. He suggests that neither state paid attention to Delcassé’s resignation, and both remained relatively passive during the Conference. Although Austria was considered the “sick man of Europe”, and was suffering serious domestic problems, an analysis of allied reputations should take into account domestic problems, and if one ally is having such serious problems that it cannot possibly aid its partners, then that should influence its allies’ actions.

The German ambassador to Austria wrote to Bülow, “Personally I have the impression that Austria-Hungary is with us; but we must not overlook the fact that the Dual Monarchy is not inclined or able to act in a military way. This is due to her sorry domestic situation and her reduced circumstances.”391 This is an interesting comment because it simultaneously suggests that Austria-Hungary’s reliability was low because of its domestic problem, but that for some reason, perhaps because of its pervious actions in support of Germany, the Germans still counted on its support.

One way to build upon the findings of this project would be to develop more sophisticated means of identifying the extent to which each of these factors – as well as others that I have not identified here – influence a state’s reliability, and thus explain the degree to which past behavior affects those perceptions.

6.2.3 Expanding the Project

There are a number of ways I plan to expand the scope of this project. I have already mentioned the desire to better understand the various factors that influence a state’s reliability, as well as improving our ability to identify reputation as a function of individuals or of the state. However, these are both conceptual improvements that need to occur for us to better understand reputation. There are also other ways in which expansion of this project would be worthwhile in more substantive ways. One would be to further explore the moral hazard problem of reputation. Testing the hypothesis that a reliable reputation helps embolden an ally is not only useful for confirming that reputation does influence state behavior, but is a worthy puzzle in its own right. My hope is to test whether states that initiate wars perceive their allies to be reliable more often than they are perceived to be unreliable, and also whether states consider their ally’s reliability when deciding whether to stand up to a challenge or back down.

An analysis of power relations might also be a beneficial complement to this project. It may be, for example, that power differences influence the relative importance of reputation. For example, as the power gap between allies increases, the stronger state may care less about its weaker ally’s reputation. A weak state that abandons its ally will be less of a problem than a strong state that does so. Therefore, one useful study would be to focus on alliances between strong and weak states and compare the importance of reputation with alliances between great powers. One such example from the period emphasized in this project is the alliance between Austria, Germany, and Romania.
Another way power may be a factor is in the balance between the adversaries. A state with preponderant power over its enemies may care less about its ally’s reputation than states that have power parity. One way to test this would be to determine if US concerns about its allies’ reputations decline at all with the end of the Cold War.

All these suggestions for expanding the project continue to emphasize military alliances between states. In the next two sections I focus on ways in which a better understanding of reputation can help fill gaps in other areas of the international relations literature.

6.2.4 Reputation and International Institutions

Like works on deterrence, much of the literature on international institutions traditionally assumed that a state’s reputation mattered, without ever testing that assumption. However, since my hypotheses on alliance variation are drawn from studies on the differences between international institutions, it would be interesting to test those hypotheses on other types of international institutions. One possibility would be to examine how a state’s willingness to honor its trade agreements influences its relations with other trade partners.

Organizations like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) seem to be mechanisms for evaluating state reputations. If so, then one would expect states with reputations for honoring their trade agreements to be treated differently from states that fail to do so. For example, the WTO frequently publishes reviews of state trade policies. Although violations of free trade are commonly the result of domestic political considerations, it would be interesting to see if
factors like obligation and precision in trade agreements are influenced by these trade reviews. Moreover, since the WTO provides an arena for dispute settlement between trade partners, this might provide further means for evaluating a state’s trade reputation, and determining whether that reputation affects the behavior of its trade partners.

Other types of international institutions that might be appropriate tests of state reputation include environmental agreements, particularly bilateral agreements since multilateral treaties like the Kyoto Accords face the same problems I encountered when dealing with multilateral alliances. Also, a state’s willingness to sign an arms control treaty may be influenced by the reputation of the other state to live up to its agreements. Such agreements may closely parallel alliances in the sense that failing to adequately understand the other actor’s intentions can threaten a state’s survival.

**6.2.5 Reputation and Non-State Violence**

Two other areas in which my hypotheses could be applied are those of civil wars and terrorism. Many international relations scholars have discussed the effect of security dilemmas on various aspects of internal conflict, including its origins and the difficulties surrounding its resolution.392 The problem with this is that it applies an explanation of

state behavior in the international system to domestic situations. As a result, the security dilemma may be an inappropriate analogy for civil wars for two reasons. First, domestic violence may not occur in a complete state of anarchy. For example, there are instances of effective states suffering from internal conflict (e.g., Sri Lanka, Israel). Likewise, there are failed states that did not experience such violence (e.g., the Czech Republic, former Soviet Republics). Instead, anarchy could be the result of internal conflict, rather than a necessary condition for it.  

Second, the actors may not be as uncertain about each other’s intentions as they often are in international politics. As a result, there may be other factors that contribute to civil wars. I suggest that reputation might be able to improve our understanding not only of why these conflicts occur in the first place, but also why they are frequently difficult to resolve.

Some scholars have already begun to look at the role of reputation to explain why those involved in internal conflicts have difficulty trusting one another to reach a negotiated settlement. For example, James Fearon has suggested that actors face a commitment problem when trying to resolve internal disputes. Since this is similar to the commitment problem facing states that have alliances, it may, in some cases, be exacerbated by problems of reputation. The advantage of using reputation is that, as I have already demonstrated, it is not exclusive to any particular domain because it appears

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to explain the behavior of actors in markets and political systems. In addition, one of the reasons internal conflicts are difficult to resolve is that the actors frequently come to distrust one another because of their previous interactions. For example, many now perceive Yassir Arafat as unreliable.\textsuperscript{395} As a result, Arafat may have greater difficulty negotiating a settlement than another Palestinian leader who is perceived by the Israeli government to be more willing and/or more capable of honoring his or her commitments.

The Troubles in Northern Ireland, offer another example of this, where attempted solutions, like the Good Friday Agreement or the Irish Republican Army’s (IRA) plan to unilaterally disarm, are unsuccessful because the history of the conflict has created so many opportunities for both sides to renege on promises. More work on how one side’s reputation influences the behavior of the other may help identify ways to alleviate some of the distrust that makes resolution so difficult. In addition, drawing on the business literature to examine ways that firms preserve and build their reputations may help domestic groups in conflict to do the same thing.

Another place in which reputation has been implied, without adequately being tested is with respect to state policies against terrorism. There is debate, both in the literature and among state leaders, regarding the most effective counterterrorism policies. Some suggest that states must develop a reputation for being tough on terrorism, as a way of deterring future acts, because they suggest that soft policies encourage more

violence.\textsuperscript{396} Israel’s policy of using military force to punish acts of terror is a perfect example of a state trying to create a reputation for being tough on terror. One illustrative example was the Israeli government’s mission to find and kill those members of Black September responsible for the killings of the Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics.

On the other hand, some suggest that tough policies only encourage terrorism, compel moderates to support terrorist activities, and help to create cycles of violence. This group suggests that conciliatory policies that ensure moderates are part of society are more likely to prevent people from engaging in terrorist acts.\textsuperscript{397} As a result, we have a clear puzzle regarding the best way for states to deal with terrorism, and reputation can play a useful role in evaluating the best counterterrorist policies. If states cannot change their reputations, as Mercer suggests, then policies designed to deter terrorism through harsh measures may be ineffective.

This puzzle also has real world implications considering the change in US counterterrorism policies after 9/11, and with many of the US’ allies (Spain, North Korea) pulling out of Iraq as a result of terrorist demands. A common problem is that the existing literature creates a dichotomous measure of state policies being either tough or


soft, even though states can employ a wide variety of counterterrorism measures. In addition, none of these works recognize that there are different types of terrorist groups, having a wide variety of motivations that may influence the relevance of a state’s reputation. Preliminary research on this puzzle suggests that domestic groups are less likely to be deterred through harsh policies, and that states that use violence against their own population frequently create cycles of violence. However, conciliatory policies become much less effective against terrorist groups that are more transnational, since their members are unlikely to benefit from concessions anyway. Moreover, early findings suggest that a state’s reputation for being tough has much greater influence on the behavior of groups with ideological motivations – such as the Red Army Factions, which operated in West Germany during the 1970s and 1980s, and the Ku Klux Klan – than against nationalist or religious groups, like the IRA, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, or al-Qa’ida. Clearly this is another area where a greater understanding of reputation is valuable, not only for scholars but for leaders as well.

APPENDIX A

FIRST TREATY OF ALLIANCE BETWEEN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY,
GERMANY, AND ITALY, 20 MAY 1882
Their majesties the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, etc., and Apostolic King of Hungary, the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, and the King of Italy, animated by the desire to increase the guaranties of the general peace, to fortify the monarchical principle and thereby to assure the unimpaired maintenance of the social and political order in Their respective States, have agreed to conclude a Treaty which, by its essentially conservative and defensive nature, pursues only the aim of forestalling the dangers which might threaten the security of Their States and the peace of Europe.

To this end Their Majesties have appointed, to wit, His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, etc., and Apostolic King of Hungary,

Count Gustavus Kálnoky, General, His Minister of the Imperial Household and of Foreign Affairs:

His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia,

Prince Henry VII of Reuss, Aide-de-Camp General, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty,

His Majesty the King of Italy,

Count Charles Felix Nicolis de Robilant, Lieutenant-General, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty,

Who, furnished with full powers, which have been found in good and due form, have agreed upon the following articles:

**ARTICLE I.**

The High Contracting Parties mutually promise peace and friendship, and will enter into no alliance or engagement directed against any one of their States.

They engage to proceed to an exchange of ideas on political and economic questions of a general nature which may arise, and they further promise one another mutual support within the limits of their own interests.

**ARTICLE II.**

In case Italy, without direct provocation on her part, should be attacked by France for any reason whatsoever, the two other Contracting Parties shall be bound to lend help and assistance with all their forces to the Party attacked.

This same obligation shall devolve upon Italy in case of any aggression without direct provocation by France against Germany.
ARTICLE III.

If one, or two, of the High Contracting Parties, without direct provocation on their part, should chance to be attacked and to be engaged in a war with two or more Great Powers non-signatory to the present Treaty, the *casus foederis* will arise simultaneously for all the High Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE IV.

In case a Great Power non-signatory to the present Treaty should threaten the security of the states of one of the High Contracting Parties, and the threatened Party should find itself forced on that account to make war against it, the two others bind themselves to observe towards their Ally a benevolent neutrality. Each of them reserves to itself, in this case, the right to take part in the war, if it should see fit, to make common cause with its Ally.

ARTICLE V.

If the peace of any of the High Contracting Parties should chance to be threatened under the circumstances foreseen by the preceding Articles, the High Contracting Parties shall take counsel together in ample time as to the military measures to be taken with a view to eventual cooperation.

They engage henceforward, in all cases of common participation in a war, to conclude neither armistice, nor peace, nor treaty, except by common agreement among themselves.

ARTICLE VI.

The High Contracting Parties mutually promise secrecy as to the contents and existence of the present Treaty.

ARTICLE VII.

The present Treaty shall remain in force during the space of five years, dating from the day of the exchange of ratifications.

ARTICLE VIII.

The ratifications of the present Treaty shall be exchanged at Vienna within three weeks, or sooner if may be.

In witness whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty and have annexed thereto the seal of their arms.

Done at Vienna, the twentieth day of the month of May of the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two.

Kálnoky   H. VII Of Reuss   C. Robilant
Additional declaration of Italy that the provisions of the Alliance could not be regarded as directed against England. Rome, May 22, 1882.

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

The Royal Italian Government declares that the provisions of the secret Treaty concluded May 20, 1882, between Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Germany, cannot, as has been previously agreed, in any case be regarded as being directed against England.

In witness whereof the present ministerial Declaration, which equally must remain secret, has been drawn up to be exchanged against identic Declarations of the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary and of the Imperial Government of Germany.


The Royal Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Mancini

APPENDIX B

THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE, 30 JANUARY 1902
The Governments of Great Britain and Japan, actuated solely by a desire to maintain the status quo and general peace in the extreme East, being, moreover, specially interested in maintaining the independence and territorial integrity of the Empire of China and the Empire of Corea, and in securing equal opportunities in those countries for the commerce and industry of all nations, hereby agree as follows:--

**ARTICLE I.**

The High Contracting parties having mutually recognized the independence of China and of Corea, declare themselves to be entirely uninfluenced by aggressive tendencies in either country. Having in view, however, their special interests, of which those of Great Britain relate principally to China, whilst Japan, in addition to the interests which she possesses in China, is interested in a peculiar degree politically as well as commercially and industrially in Corea, the High Contracting parties recognize that it will be admissible for either of them to take such measures as may be indispensable in order to safeguard those interests if threatened either by the aggressive action of any other Power, or by disturbances arising in China or Corea, and necessitating the intervention of either of the High Contracting parties for the protection of the lives and properties of its subjects.

**ARTICLE II.**

If either Great Britain or Japan, in the defence of their respective interests as above described, should become involved in war with another Power, the other High Contracting Party will maintain a strict neutrality, and use its efforts to prevent other Powers from joining in hostilities against its ally.

**ARTICLE III.**

If, in the above event, any other Power or Powers should join in hostilities against that ally, the other High Contracting Party will come to its assistance, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

**ARTICLE IV.**

The High Contracting Parties agree that neither of them will, without consulting the other, enter into separate arrangements with another Power to the prejudice of the interests above described.

**ARTICLE V.**

Whenever, in the opinion of either Great Britain or Japan, the above-mentioned interests are in jeopardy, the two Governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly.
ARTICLE VI.

The present Agreement shall come into effect immediately after the date of its signature, and remain in force for five years from that date.

In case neither of the High Contracting Parties should have notified twelve months before the expiration of the said five years the intention of terminating it, it shall remain binding until the expiration of one year from the day on which either of the High Contracting Parties shall have denounced it. But if, when the date fixed for its expiration arrive, either ally is actually engaged in war, the alliance shall, ipso facto, continue until peace is concluded.

Notes exchanged between the two Governments, 30 January 1902.

Sir,
M. le Marquis,

In reference to the Agreement concluded by us to-day on behalf of our respective Governments, I have the honour to inform you that the British/Japanese Government recognize that the naval forces of Great Britain/Japan should, so far as possible, act in concert with those of Japan/Great Britain in time of peace, and agrees that mutual facilities shall be given for the docking and coaling of vessels of war of one country in the ports of the other, as well as other advantages conducing to the welfare and efficacy of the respective navies of the two Powers.

At the present moment Japan and Great Britain are each of them maintaining in the Extreme East a naval force superior in strength to that of any third Power. Great Britain/Japan has no intention of relaxing her efforts to maintain, so far as may be possible, available for concentration in the waters of the Extreme East, a naval force superior to that of any third Power.400

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APPENDIX C

DECLARATION BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND FRANCE

RESPECTING EGYPT AND MOROCCO, 8 APRIL 1904
ARTICLE I.

His Britannic Majesty's Government declare that they have no intention of altering the political status of Egypt.

The Government of the French Republic, for their part, declare that they will not obstruct the action of Great Britain in that country by asking that a limit of time be fixed for the British occupation or in any other manner, and that they give their assent to the draft Khedivial Decree annexed to the present. Arrangement, containing the guarantees considered necessary for the protection of the interests of the Egyptian bondholders, on the condition that, after its promulgation, it cannot be modified in any way without the consent of the Powers Signatory of the Convention of London of 1885.

It is agreed that the post of Director-General of Antiquities in Egypt shall continue, as in the past, to be entrusted to a French savant.

The French schools in Egypt shall continue to enjoy the same liberty as in the past.

ARTICLE II.

The Government of the French Republic declare that they have no intention of altering the political status of Morocco.

His Britannic Majesty's Government, for their part, recognise that it appertains to France, more particularly as a Power whose dominions are conterminous for a great distance with those of Morocco, to preserve order in that country, and to provide assistance for the purpose of all administrative, economic, financial, and military reforms which it may require.

They declare that they will not obstruct the action taken by France for this purpose, provided that such action shall leave intact the rights which Great Britain, in virtue of treaties, conventions, and usage, enjoys in Morocco, including the right of coasting trade between the ports of Morocco, enjoyed by British vessels since 1901.

ARTICLE III.

His Britannic Majesty's Government for their part, will respect the rights which France, in virtue of treaties, conventions, and usage, enjoys in Egypt, including the right of coasting trade between Egyptian ports accorded to French vessels.

ARTICLE IV.

The two Governments, being equally attached to the principle of commercial liberty both in Egypt and Morocco, declare that they will not, in those countries,
countenance any inequality either in the imposition of customs duties or other taxes, or of
railway transport charges.

The trade of both nations with Morocco and with Egypt shall enjoy the same
treatment in transit through the French and British possessions in Africa. An agreement
between the two Governments shall settle the conditions of such transit and shall
determine the points of entry.

This mutual engagement shall be binding for a period of thirty years. Unless this
stipulation is expressly denounced at least one year in advance, the period shall be
extended for five years at a time.

Nevertheless the Government of the French Republic reserve to themselves in
Morocco, and His Britannic Majesty's Government reserve to themselves in Egypt, the
right to see that the concessions for roads, railways, ports, etc., are only granted on such
conditions as will maintain intact the authority of the State over these great undertakings
of public interest.

**ARTICLE V.**

His Britannic Majesty's Government declare that they will use their influence in
order that the French officials now in the Egyptian service may not be placed under
conditions less advantageous than those applying to the British officials in the service.

The Government of the French Republic, for their part, would make no objection
to the application of analogous conditions to British officials now in the Moorish service.

**ARTICLE VI.**

In order to ensure the free passage of the Suez Canal, His Britannic Majesty's
Government declare that they adhere to the treaty of the 29th October, 1888, and that
they agree to their being put in force. The free passage of the Canal being thus
guaranteed, the execution of the last sentence of paragraph I as well as of paragraph 2 of
Article VII of that treaty will remain in abeyance.

**ARTICLE VII.**

In order to secure the free passage of the Straits of Gibraltar, the two
Governments agree not to permit the erection of any fortifications or strategic works on
that portion of the coast of Morocco comprised between, but not including, Melilla and
the heights which command the right bank of the River Sebou.

This condition does not, however, apply to the places at present in the occupation
of Spain on the Moorish coast of the Mediterranean.

**ARTICLE VIII.**

The two Governments, inspired by their feeling of sincere friendship for Spain,
take into special consideration the interests which that country derives from her
geographical position and from her territorial possessions on the Moorish coast of the
Mediterranean. In regard to these interests the French Government will come to an understanding with the Spanish Government.

The agreement which may be come to on the subject between France and Spain shall be communicated to His Britannic Majesty's Government.

 ARTICLE IX.

The two Governments agree to afford to one another their diplomatic support, in order to obtain the execution of the clauses of the present Declaration regarding Egypt and Morocco.

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Secret Articles.

SECRET ARTICLE I.
In the event of either Government finding themselves constrained, by the force of circumstances, to modify their policy in respect to Egypt or Morocco, the engagements which they have undertaken towards each other by Articles 4, 6, and 7 of the Declaration of today's date would remain intact.

SECRET ARTICLE II.
His Britannic Majesty's Government have no present intention of proposing to the Powers any changes in the system of the Capitulations, or in the judicial organisation of Egypt.

In the event of their considering it desirable to introduce in Egypt reforms tending to assimilate the Egyptian legislative system to that in force in other civilised Countries, the Government of the French Republic will not refuse to entertain any such proposals, on the understanding that His Britannic Majesty's Government will agree to entertain the suggestions that the Government of the French Republic may have to make to them with a view of introducing similar reforms in Morocco.

SECRET ARTICLE III.
The two Governments agree that a certain extent of Moorish territory adjacent to Melilla, Ceuta, and other Présides should, whenever the Sultan ceases to exercise authority over it, come within the sphere of influence of Spain, and that the administration of the coast from Melilla as far as, but not including, the heights on the right bank of the Sebou shall be entrusted to Spain.

Nevertheless, Spain would previously have to give her formal assent to the provisions of Articles IV and VII of the Declaration of today's date, and undertake to carry them out.

She would also have to undertake not to alienate the whole, or a part, of the territories placed under her authority or in her sphere of influence.
Secret Article IV.

If Spain, when invited to assent to the provisions of the preceding article, should think proper to decline, the arrangement between France and Great Britain, as embodied in the Declaration of today's date, would be none the less at once applicable.

Secret Article V.

Should the consent of the other Powers to the draft Decree mentioned in Article I of the Declaration of today's date not be obtained, the Government of the French Republic will not oppose the repayment at par of the Guaranteed, Privileged, and Unified Debts after the 15th July, 1910.

Done at London, in duplicate, the 8th day of April, 1904.

LANSDOWNE

PAUL CAMBON\textsuperscript{401}

APPENDIX D

THE SECOND ANGLO-JAPANESE AGREEMENT, 12 AUGUST 1905.
The Governments of Great Britain and Japan, being desirous of replacing the Agreement concluded between them on the 30th January, 1902, by fresh stipulations, have agreed upon the following Articles, which have for their object: --

The consolidation and maintenance of general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and India;

The preservation of the common interests of all Powers in China by insuring the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China;

The maintenance of the territorial rights of the High Contracting Parties in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India, and the defence of their special interests in the said regions: --

Article I
It is agreed that whenever, in the opinion of either Great Britain or Japan, any of the rights and interests referred to in the preamble of this Agreement are in jeopardy, the two Governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly, and will consider in common the measures which should be taken to safeguard those menaced rights or interests.

Article II
If, by reason of an unprovoked attack or aggressive action, whenever arising, on the part of any other Power or Powers either Contracting Party should be involved in war in defence of its territorial rights or special interests mentioned in the preamble of this Agreement, the other Contracting Party will at once come to the assistance of its ally, and will conduct war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

Article III
Japan possessing paramount political, military and economic interests in Corea, Great Britain recognizes the right of Japan to take such measures of guidance, control and protection in Corea as she may deem proper and necessary to safeguard and advance those interests, provided always that such measures are not contrary to the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations.

Article IV
Great Britain having a special interest in all that concerns the security of the Indian frontier, Japan recognizes her right to take such measures in the proximity of that frontier as she may find necessary for safeguarding her Indian possessions.

Article V
The High Contracting Parties agree that neither of them will, without consulting the other, enter into separate arrangements with another Power to the prejudice of the objects described in the preamble of this Agreement.

**Article VI**

As regards the present war between Japan and Russia, Great Britain will continue to maintain strict neutrality unless some other Power or Powers should join in hostilities against Japan, in which case Great Britain will come to the assistance of Japan, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with Japan.

**Article VII**

The conditions under which armed assistance shall be afforded by either Power to the other in the circumstances mentioned in the present Agreement, and the means by which such assistance is to be made available, will be arranged by the Naval and Military authorities of the Contracting Parties, who will from time to time consult one another fully and freely upon all questions of mutual interest.

**Article VIII**

The present Agreement shall, subject to the provisions of Article VI, come into effect immediately after the date of its signature, and remain in force for ten years from that date.

In case neither of the High Contracting Parties should have notified twelve months before the expiration of the said ten years the intention of terminating it, it shall remain binding until the expiration of one year from the day on which either of the High Contracting Parties shall have denounced it. But if, when the date fixed for its expiration arrives, either ally is actually engaged in war, the alliance shall, *ipso facto*, continue until peace is concluded.

In faith whereof the Undersigned, duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement and have affixed thereto their Seals.

Done in duplicate at London, the 12th day of August, 1905.

LANDSDOWNE

*His Britannic Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.*

TADESU HAYASHI

*Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan at the Court of St. James*

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APPENDIX E

CONVENTIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

RELATING TO PERSIA, AFGHANISTAN AND TIBET, 31 AUGUST 1907.
The Governments of Great Britain and Russia having mutually engaged to respect
the integrity and independence of Persia, and sincerely desiring the preservation of order
throughout that country and its peaceful development, as well as the permanent
establishment of equal advantages for the trade and industry of all other nations;

Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economic reasons, a
special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain Provinces of Persia
adjoining, or in the neighborhood of, the Russian frontier on the one hand, and the
frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other hand; and being desirous of
avoiding all cause of conflict between their respective interests in the above-mentioned
Provinces of Persia;

Have agreed on the following terms: --

ARTICLE I.

Great Britain engages not to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of
British subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a
political or commercial nature – such as Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs,
roads, transport, insurance, etc. – beyond a line starting from Kasri-Shirin, passing
through Isfahan, Yazd, Kakhk, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier at the
intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly,
demands for similar Concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian
Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region
in which Great Britain engages not to seek the Concessions referred to.

ARTICLE II.

Russia, on her part, engages not to seek for herself and not to support, in favour of
Russian subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a
political or commercial nature – such as Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs,
roads, transport, insurance, etc. – beyond a line going from the Afghan frontier by way of
Gazik, Birjand, Kerman, and ending at Bunder Abbas, and not to oppose, directly or
indirectly, demands for similar Concessions in this region which are supported by the
British Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region
in which Russia engages not to seek the Concessions referred to.

ARTICLE III.

Russia, on her part, engages not to oppose, without previous arrangement with
Great Britain, the grant of any Concessions whatever to British subjects in the regions of
Persia situated between the lines mentioned in Articles I and II. Great Britain undertakes
a similar engagement as regards the grant of Concessions to Russian subjects in the same
regions of Persia. All Concessions existing at present in the regions indicated in Articles I and II are maintained.

 ARTICLE IV.

It is understood that the revenues of all the Persian customs, with the exception of those of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, revenues guaranteeing the amortization and the interest of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prits de Perse" up to the date of the signature of the present Arrangement, shall be devoted to the same purpose as in the past. It is equally understood that the revenues of the Persian customs of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, as well as those of the fisheries on the Persian shore of the Caspian Sea and those of the Posts and telegraphs, shall be devoted, as in the past, to the service of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Arrangement.

 ARTICLE V.

In the event of irregularities occurring in the amortization or payment of interest of the Persian loans concluded with the "Banque d'escompte et des Prits de Perse" and with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement, and in the event of the necessity arising for Russia to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the first-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article II of the present Agreement, or for Great Britain to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the second-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article I of the present Agreement, the British and Russian Governments undertake to enter beforehand into a friendly exchange of ideas with a view to determine, in agreement with each other, the measures of control in question and to avoid all interference which would not be in conformity with the principles governing the present Agreement.403

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