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ALLIANCE COHESION: CONNECTING THE DISCONNECT IN ALLIANCE
RELIABILITY

by

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A THESIS

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ALLIANCE COHESION: CONNECTING THE DISCONNECT IN ALLIANCE
RELIABILITY

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University of Nebraska, 2020

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Alliances are important to understanding international peace and conflict, but disagreement exists among scholars regarding alliance reliability with findings of allies fulfilling alliance obligations 25-75% of the time (Sabrosky, 1980; Leeds, et al., 2000; Berkemeier and Fuhrmann, 2018). What mechanism ultimately lies at the center of this puzzle? I argue that alliance cohesion, specifically differences in cohesion relating to internal dynamics of alliance structure and power distribution, lie at the center of this empirical disconnect. I define alliance cohesion as the ability of allies to agree on security preferences and appropriate methods to meet these ends. In this study I ask how alliance cohesion varies between bilateral and multilateral alliances. I hypothesize that bilateral alliances with asymmetric power distribution between allies increase cohesion, whereas multilateral alliances with symmetric power distribution between allies decrease cohesion. Findings support these hypotheses and suggest that more cohesive allies are more reliable allies.

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Chapter 1: Laying Out the Puzzle

“The problem is that not only does the world public opinion not know what you might undertake tomorrow, but also we, your allies do not know.”

--Discussion between Nikita Khrushchev and Mao Zedong following the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis, 1959

Introduction

Why do alliances that seem perfect on paper fail to effectively address security threats? For example, the mutual defense alliance formed between the Soviet Union and China in 1950 was presented as a communist bulwark against Western expansionism during the Cold War era (Shen and Xia, 2011). Previous research addresses this question by studying variance in alliance reliability, which measures the likelihood of allies following through on treaty commitments, but scholars have failed to achieve a consensus. For example, Sabrosky (1980) finds that states only come to the aid of an ally 25% of the time, with 23.1% of allies responding to opportunities to fulfill commitments by joining an ally in war (Siverson and King, 1980). However, with an extended time period (1816-2003), allies fulfill their obligations on average 50% of the time. When further examining these trends, prior to 1945, states honored alliance commitments 66% percent of the time, although this figure drops to 22% compliance after World War II (Berkemeier and Fuhrmann, 2018). What ultimately explains this empirical disconnect?

I argue that previous work only addresses half of the equation. Studies of alliance reliability capture the external behaviors of actors following their decision to aid an ally. However, very little scholarship attempts to address the internal dynamics between allies which influences both the decision to provide aid and the extent to which aid is given. This puzzle is

best highlighted by Nikita Khrushchev's reprimand of Mao Zedong's second failed attempt to retake Taiwan in 1959 as noted in the quote above (Gurtov, 1976).

Despite forming a defensive alliance in 1950 to protect against American expansionism, both the Soviet Union and China were unable to agree on a security preference and methods to best achieve this end (Heinzig, 2015). For example, Mao criticized Khrushchev's rebuke of Stalin and his policy of coexistence with the West. Mao instead wanted the Soviet Union to continue funding communist revolutions to further destabilize Western democracies. This disconnect led to the Soviet Union rescinding offers to assist in the development of a Chinese nuclear program and for China to refer to the Soviet Communist Party as "revisionist traitors (Memorandum, 1967; Garver, 1993; Luthi, 2010)." Previous research would exclude this alliance from analysis because the collective defense obligation of the alliance treaty was never invoked. However, this exclusion is problematic for empirical accuracy. Measures of alliance reliability suffer from selection bias, as they select on alliances in which the defensive or offensive obligations of alliance treaties were enacted.

Alliances which fall short of this are excluded from analysis. Therefore, cases including the Sino-Soviet alliance, which suffered from serious challenges in their partnership are not examined. It then becomes unclear in previous work if these alliances should be considered as reliable by default or if they are considered irrelevant in understanding alliance reliability. I argue that this selection bias has led to empirical ambiguity. Further, these analyses fail to capture behavior that falls short of abiding by explicit defensive or offensive commitments such as information sharing and the provision of military and economic aid. For example, the collective defense article of the Sino-Soviet alliance treaty states that allies will "consult with each other in regard to important international problems" relating to their common interests"

(Central Intelligence Agency, 1950). As indicated in the quote above, Khrushchev had no idea what actions Mao would take next. The likelihood of reliable communication between allies likely influences the extent to which allies will rely on alliances to achieve security preferences. Allies who do not trust one another are unlikely to rely on each other. Therefore, I argue that in addition to considering external measures of reliability, scholars must consider the internal dynamics which influence the relations between allies. I present a theory of alliance cohesion to address this theoretical gap.

Argument in Brief

I define alliance cohesion as the ability of allies to agree on a security preference and means to reach this end. Cohesion between allies is influenced by two primary variables. First, alliance structure influences the efficiency of decision-making between allies and the number of preferences allies must consider when establishing a single preference. I differentiate between two structures which include *bilateral* and *multilateral* alliances. Specifically, *bilateral* alliance structures increase cohesion between allies because this structure reduces the number of preferences between allies and increases the efficiency of decision-making toward a security preference. Conversely, *multilateral* alliance structures decrease the propensity for cohesion between allies as this structure increases the number of preferences among allies and therefore increases the likelihood that these preferences will conflict. Following alliance structure, the relative distribution of power between allies also influences the level of cohesion between allies.

I characterize the power distribution between allies as *asymmetrical* or *symmetrical*. *Asymmetrical* power distribution provides a clear hierarchy between allies. High *asymmetry* allows the dominant actor to dictate the status quo with limited ability of weaker allies to challenge these decisions, therefore increasing cohesion. Regardless of the number of

competing preferences between allies, *asymmetrical* power distribution implies that the dominant actor's preference becomes the one that matters the most. The dominant actor is able to dictate the status quo, set terms for negotiation, and can deny alliance membership benefits to weaker allies to coerce them into compliance. In total, my theory establishes four different types of alliances which include (from most cohesive to least cohesive): *bilateral asymmetric*, *bilateral symmetric*, *multilateral asymmetric*, and *multilateral symmetric*. I argue that *bilateral asymmetric* alliances increase cohesion between allies, whereas *multilateral symmetric* alliances decrease cohesion.

Thesis Overview

I test this theory of alliance cohesion with the use of four different case studies which each represent one of these alliance categories. I find support for my theory in that bilateral asymmetric alliances, such as the US-ROK alliance, increase the propensity for cohesion between allies. This logic follows that bilateral asymmetric alliances decrease the number of preferences between allies and enable a dominant ally to coerce the weaker ally to comply with a security preference. For example, following the ratification of the Mutual Defense Treaty in 1954, the United States was able to credibly threaten to withhold economic and military from South Korea if the Rhee administration attempted to provoke hostilities with North Korea (Cha, 2016). Further, the United States actually assumed control of the South Korean military in Article 4, effectively ensuring an American hegemony over South Korean military decision-making, which the US still maintains today (Mutual Defense Treaty, 1953). Conversely, multilateral symmetrical alliances, such as the League of Arab States, decrease the propensity for cohesion between allies.

The institutional framework of the Arab League gives equal weight to the preferences of all 22 members (Pact of the League of Arab States, 1945). Therefore, the alliance lacks a hegemon capable of enforcing a security objective among all allies. Instead, allies regularly form unofficial coalitions and even attack each other as demonstrated in Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Rather than addressing this crisis through the League framework, allies solicited help from international actors such as the United States and NATO to effectively address the crisis (Kifner, 1990; Lensch, 1991). Thus, to get at these dynamics, I first review previous literature relating to the concepts of alliance formation and reliability along with discussing alliance structure and collective action problems which often take the form of "alliance security dilemmas" (Snyder, 1984).

I highlight areas of notable contribution and further build on the work of previous scholars by presenting my theory of alliance cohesion. Following this overview, I test this argument with the use of four case studies which are representative of the four alliance types that I identify in my theory. These cases include the US-ROK alliance (bilateral asymmetric), the Sino-Soviet alliance (bilateral symmetric), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (multilateral asymmetric), and the League of Arab States (multilateral symmetric). I find support for my theory and present these findings as a means to better understand the empirical ambiguity surrounding alliance reliability. Above all, my findings suggest that more cohesive allies are more reliable allies.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Alliance Formation

Actors weigh potential costs and benefits when pursuing agreements based on attributes unique to each actor. In regard to alliance formation, scholars generally fall into one of two camps. First, some scholars hold that that alliance formation based on a primal trade-off for actors between security and autonomy, which implies significant costs (Morrow, 1987; Morrow, 1993; Altfeld, 1984). Essentially, states form alliances because the benefits of increased security exceed the costs of lost autonomy. However, others note the importance of aggregated capabilities in motivating the decision to form alliance. These scholars argue that the primary purpose of establishing formal alliances is to signal strength and deter collective threats (Snyder and Diesing, 1977; Smith, 1995; Morrow, 1994).

Alliance formation signals resolve to adversaries, but varies in the ability to reduce uncertainty of intent between members and on the likelihood of conflict (Powell, 1999; Fearon, 1997; Schroeder, 2004; Morrow, 2000; Levy, 1981; Kim, 1989; Gibler and Vasquez, 1998; Krause and Singer, 2001). The circumstances surrounding the formation of a particular alliance in regard to external threats has implications for the durability and cohesion of that alliance (Russett, 1968; Jervis, 1976). Despite systemic changes, alliance formation is not random. Alliance formation takes a universal and definite pattern: alliances that fail to increase all actors' level of security are almost never established (Altfeld, 1984). Although alliance formation displays a clear pattern, the empirical findings of alliance reliability are ambiguous.

Alliance Reliability

Alliance reliability is influenced by each member's belief in an ally's willingness and capability to address threats and is measured based on the actions of states. Previous research finds that states only come to the aid of an ally 25% of the time (Sabrosky, 1980), with 23.1% of allies responding to opportunities to fulfill commitments by joining an ally in war (Siverson and King, 1980). However, with an extended time period (1816-2003), allies fulfill their obligations on average 50% of the time. When further examining these trends, prior to 1945, states honored alliance commitments 66% percent of the time, although this figure drops to 22% compliance after World War II (Berkemeier and Fuhrmann, 2018). The disconnect in these findings implies that additional variables are needed to explain the likelihood of states following through on alliance agreements. Scholars have attempted to fill this gap by noting the importance of agreement conditionality and alliance structure.

Entrapment, Free-Riding, & Moral Hazards

In regard to agreement conditionality, states design security agreements to enhance the flexibility of their commitments, particularly when deciding to intervene on an ally's behalf. This is done to avoid an "alliance security dilemma" created from entrapment in conflict by allies (Snyder, 1984; Christensen and Snyder, 1990; Snyder, 1997; Leeds, et al., 2002; Benson, et al., 2012; Smith, 1995). Along with agreement conditionality, alliance structure plays an important role in understanding how and why states form alliances, and if they actually follow through on their commitments. Scholars are theoretically divided in understanding the effects of alliance structure in mitigating the alliance security dilemma posed by unreliable allies, with some arguing in favor of bilateral structures (Cha, 2010; 2016), while others claim multilateral alliances are better mechanisms of restraint (Narang and LeVeck, 2019).

This disagreement is centered on the access of individual allies to the security produced by the alliance. All alliance members are able to benefit from the collective security produced by the group despite variations in state capacity and willingness to contribute. Collective action problems can occur as the pool of actors who have access to these public goods increases, which therefore decreases their incentive to contribute (Olson, 1965). Further, this highlights a moral hazard present in alliance formation. For example, the steps an actor takes to increase their security (i.e., lost autonomy or aggregating their capabilities with other actors) through alliance formation may never materialize as allies prove to be unreliable or unwilling to accept the burdens of alliance membership. Further, this moral hazard highlights the costs associated with alliance partnership. The costs an actor assumes to increase the alliance's collective security may far outweigh the benefits which can be achieved from that partnership as a result of entrapment, free-riding, and collective action problems (Johnson, 2015; Johnson, 2017). I build on these assumptions of collective action problems in constructing a theory of alliance cohesion to address the empirical and theoretical disconnects in alliance reliability literature.

Chapter 3

Theory of Alliance Cohesion

I contribute to previous literature by providing alliance cohesion as a mechanism that addresses the empirical ambiguity surrounding alliance reliability. I argue that the structure of alliances and power distribution between members impacts the propensity for cohesion among partners. Specifically, I argue that *bilateral* alliance structures with *asymmetric* power distribution increase cohesion between allies, as this structure reduces the number of preferences between allies relating to security decisions and allows the dominant actor to dictate the status quo. On the other hand, *multilateral* alliance structures with *symmetric* power distribution between allies can decrease alliance cohesion, as the number of members and preferences between allies increases, and the ability of the dominant actor to restrain provocative allies decreases.

To begin, I lay out some key definitions and assumptions for clarity. Alliance cohesion is defined as the ability of allies to agree on security preferences and appropriate methods to meet these ends. Further, I assume that states are rational utility maximizers operating under anarchy and seek to increase gains of alliance membership in the form of security, while reducing costs including lost autonomy in decision making, entrapment, and collective action problems. The costs and benefits of alliance membership are weighed relatively, in that allies are ultimately interested in furthering their individual interests regardless of their responsibility to contribute to the collective benefits of fellow allies. This assumption does not disregard the importance of absolute gains in understanding alliance politics. Rather, it specifies that actors are self-interested. This self-interest will take precedence in decision-making and influence the value that actors associate with security received through alliance membership. Self-interested actors will

inevitably have competing preferences, as their primary focus is their own security. States are incentivized to reduce responsibility to fellow allies while increasing their relative membership benefits, which therefore influences alliance cohesion.

Thus, to get at these dynamics, I examine alliances both dyadically and collectively. The logic behind this is two-fold. First this allows for better clarity in understanding the complexity of alliance interactions, particularly for multilateral alliances. The collective consultation of allies for all issues relating to security is unlikely. Interactions are most efficient when they are between two actors, as this reduces the number of agreements which must be reached. Second, there is likely an endogenous relationship between the cohesion of ally dyads and collective alliances when examining cohesion among multilateral allies. This logic follows that poor relations among one dyad of allies can influence the cohesion of the entire multilateral alliance structure and vice versa. I therefore consider both the collective and dyadic relations of allies to control for potential spuriousness.

Two explanatory variables are relevant in explaining variance in the cohesion between allies, which are ranked in order of precedence and listed in Table 1.

Table 1

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1st Condition: Alliance Structure | Bilateral Multilateral |
| 2nd Condition: Relative Power Distribution | Asymmetrical Symmetrical |

The first and most important condition is the type of alliance structure, being bilateral or multilateral. Bilaterally, states are isolated in a single dyadic relationship where challenges to

cohesion between these actors can be mitigated within this channel. This results in the first testable hypothesis:

H1: Bilateral alliance structures reduce the number of competing preferences between allies, increasing cohesion.

Multilaterally, each individual dyadic relationship within the alliance is a component of the collective relationship of the entire alliance group. Rather than reaching a single equilibrium, actors must coordinate around multiple equilibria. A lack of cohesion between one dyad can lead to challenges in other dyadic relations, and therefore the overall cohesion of the alliance system.

Thus, we can expect that:

H2: Multilateral alliance structures increase the number of competing preferences between allies, decreasing cohesion.

The extent to which states are able to manipulate alliance structures to their advantage is influenced by the second condition, relative power distribution between allies. Dominant states are willing to provide security to weaker states in return for increased authority to dictate the preferences of weaker alliances and coerce their compliance. Weaker states are willing to trade sovereignty in exchange for increased security against a primary threat and assign greater weight to the benefits of increased security received through an alliance partnership compared to the cost of lost autonomy to a dominant state. I characterize the power distribution between allies as asymmetrical or symmetrical. Asymmetrical power distribution provides a clear hierarchy between allies. High asymmetry allows the dominant actor to dictate the status quo with limited ability of weaker allies to challenge these decisions, therefore increasing cohesion. Regardless of the number of competing preferences between allies, asymmetrical power distribution implies that dominant actor's preference becomes the one that matters the most. The dominant actor is

able to dictate the status quo, set terms for negotiation, and can deny alliance membership benefits to weaker allies to coerce them into compliance. It is therefore expected that:

H3: Asymmetric power distribution among allies increases the dominant actor's ability to dictate the status quo and expect compliance from weaker allies, increasing cohesion.

Symmetrical power distribution implies a lack of hierarchy between allies, which decreases cohesion. Allies relatively matched in power will seek to set the alliance agenda to suit their self-interest. However, their individual preferences are not likely to be complementary. Without a dominant actor capable of coercing compliance among weaker allies, the differences in individual preferences undermines the ability of allies to agree on a single, collective preference and a strategy to work toward this end. Disagreement among the heterogeneous preferences of allies without a clear dominant actor to dictate the status quo results in an inability to agree on a stable course of action, which negatively influences alliance cohesion. This leads to my final hypothesis:

H4: Symmetric power distribution among allies decreases the dominant actor's ability to dictate the status quo and expect compliance from weaker allies, decreasing cohesion.

Table 2

| | Asymmetric Power Distribution | Symmetric Power Distribution |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bilateral Alliance | 1 | 2 |
| Multilateral Alliance | 3 | 4 |

Table 2 ranks the possible combinations of alliance structure and distribution of power among allies from most cohesive (1) to least cohesive (4). The most cohesive alliances have bilateral structures with asymmetric power distribution between allies, as this reduces the

number of preferences among allies because relations are locked within a single dyad. Bilateral asymmetric alliances also have a clear power hierarchy, which ultimately allows the dominant actor to dictate the status quo and expect compliance from weaker allies. Consistent with previous assumptions that alliance structure takes precedence over power distribution among allies in explaining cohesion, bilateral alliances with symmetric power distribution between allies are the second most cohesive form of alliance. Bilateral alliances reduce the number of preferences between allies, simplifying the bargaining process between them in determining the status quo, however symmetric power distribution implies that there is not a clear dominant actor among these two allies. This complicates cohesion as either actor is able to challenge the other to dictate the status quo. The third most cohesive form of alliance is a multilateral alliance with asymmetric power distribution between allies.

Multilateral alliance structures challenge cohesion as the number of actors, and therefore preferences, increase collectively. Dyadically, poor relations between one dyad can negatively influence the relations of other dyads and the collective alliance itself. However asymmetric power distribution implies a hierarchy among actors, allowing the dominant actor to dictate the status quo and expect compliance among weaker allies through coercion. Asymmetric power distribution can mediate challenges to cohesion within a multilateral alliance structure. The least cohesive form of alliance is a multilateral alliance with symmetric power distribution between allies, as the number of preferences between states becomes unmanageable without a dominant actor to dictate the status quo. Consistent with the hypotheses listed above, Table 2 indicates that asymmetric bilateral alliances are expected to be the most cohesive, whereas symmetric multilateral alliances are expected to be the least cohesive.

Chapter 4

Methodology & Case Selection

Thus, to get at the dynamics of these conditions, I first identify cases that display variance on both alliance structure and relative power distribution between allies. I then use these cases to create vignettes intended to demonstrate how alliance cohesion, meaning the ability of allies to agree on security preferences and means to reach these ends, varies as a function of alliance structure and power distribution. These case studies highlight how both of these variables influence the propensity of cohesion between allies. The cases examined include: the US-ROK Alliance (1954-present) as a bilateral asymmetric alliance, the Sino-Soviet Alliance (1950-1979) as a bilateral symmetric alliance, NATO (1945-present) as a multilateral asymmetric alliance, and the Arab League (1945-present) as a multilateral symmetric alliance as displayed in Table 3. Alliances possessing high cohesion should demonstrate characteristics of information transparency between actors, regular consultation, and agreement in preferences and action. I expect alliances weak in cohesion to lack these traits and are more likely to feature information asymmetries. Before examining each alliance in turn, I first discuss the method of case selection along with implications of this process.

All cases used in this analysis were selected from the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions Project (ATOP) with several required conditions. First, alliances selected are defensive alliances, meaning that alliance treaties explicitly state that allies are expected to provide active military support to fellow allies should they be attacked. Defensive alliances are costly, in that they require actors to credibly commit military and monetary support in support of their allies should they be attacked. Second, all alliances selected existed for at least ten years to rule out alliances most likely to be labeled as “marriages of convenience” and therefore provide a

tougher test of my theory. Third, the temporal domain of cases was limited to the twentieth and twenty-first century.

One may be concerned that this era is an inappropriate period for analysis as alliance dynamics may be confounded by the bipolar nature of the international system during the Cold War, particularly the power disparities present between regional and international powers. I instead argue that this period is ideal for analysis primarily because of the alliances that it created. While some alliances may be judged as superficial, this period highlighted the need for states to seriously consider security concerns and weigh the cost of alliance membership against unalignment.¹ Economic and ideological disparities between allies may also skew findings. I control for these concerns by factoring them into my discussion of relative power distribution between allies, and further emphasize the divide between the capacity to contribute to an alliance and the willingness to (Russett, 1968; Crescenzi, et al., 2012). In doing so, I identify conditions under which severe economic and/or ideological disparities between allies exist and highlight the effects that my theory predicts under these conditions. Should outcomes follow the logic of my theory, I view this as support for the existence of the mechanisms that I theorize to influence alliance cohesion.

Additionally, one might wonder if the variance among regime types examined confounds the analysis. I control for this concern with an extended temporal period of analysis, with a 29 year period being the shortest alliance examined. This logic follows that regime type effects will be largely washed from the analysis as allies experience periods of regime or leadership change

¹ Identifying appropriate cases for analysis based on my listed criteria was more difficult for some alliance types than others. Bilateral symmetric and multilateral symmetric alliances were particularly challenging, as most alliances that met this criterion did not last long enough to meet the 10 year requirement. This likely indicates a relationship between alliance cohesion and alliance survival, as allies who cannot agree on security preferences are unlikely to stay together in light of the costs of alliance membership. This implication provides additional support for testing my theory of alliance cohesion.

and still remain together, as allies' factor in previous state behavior into the decision to follow through on current and future alliance commitments (Gibler, 2008). While leadership change may influence cohesion, I argue that it is alliance structure and relative power distribution between allies that act as the mechanisms for challenges to cohesion to arise through.

Furthermore, I demonstrate below that the effects of the Cold War, power, economic, and ideological disparities, regime type, and leadership change, on alliance cohesion vary as a function of alliance structure and relative power distribution between allies in the cases below.

Chapter 5

Bilateral Asymmetric Alliance: US-ROK (1953-Present)

Introduction

In this section, discuss the US-ROK alliance, which I classify as a bilateral asymmetric alliance. I argue that *bilateral asymmetric* alliances are the most cohesive form of alliance relative to other structures. This argument is premised on two scope conditions. First, is the size of the membership body. Bilateral alliances decrease the number of preferences as a result of their small membership size and therefore the probability that these preferences will conflict. Second, the asymmetrical distribution of power between actors implies the presence of a hegemon capable of coercing compliance of its fellow ally toward a particular security objective. Further, the weaker ally is unable to challenge the preference of the dominant ally which in turn increases the propensity for cohesion. Both of these conditions increase the likelihood for cohesion between allies as their ability to agree on a security preference and means to reach this end increase. I demonstrate that the US-ROK alliance includes both conditions associated with high cohesion.

Prior to the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), the Rhee regime engaged in a series of provocative actions designed to prolong the Korean War and undermine American efforts to establish an armistice. Rhee's actions toward this end not only increased the possibility for continued war, but also threatened to widen it by bringing the United States and Soviet Union to closer blows over Korea. This is best demonstrated by Rhee's unilateral release of North Korean prisoners of war in 1953. Although South Korean military forces were under the authority of American command, Rhee ordered the release of POWs to

stop the armistice negotiations and draw out the war. Further, the United States was so concerned with Rhee's belligerence that they created a plan to both overthrow the Rhee regime and establish martial law in South Korea, known as plan "EVERREADY." Through the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., the treatment), the US was able to leverage its provision of security to South Korea in exchange for Korean compliance to American security objectives. For example, through the Mutual Defense Treaty, the United States assumed the authority of the South Korean military and maintains this authority today. It is through this control that the United States is able to ensure South Korean compliance (i.e., post treatment), which has positively influenced cohesion between allies. In addition to demonstrating these dynamics, this case is ideal for analysis based on two main reasons.

First, the close partnership between the US and ROK in the early years of the Korean War enables me to examine the ability of allies to agree on security preferences and means to reach these ends prior to the establishment of a formal alliance between them. Therefore, I am capable of analyzing the working dynamics between the US and ROK in their early military partnership which lacked a formal alliance agreement between them. I am then able to compare this early period with US-ROK relations following the establishment of the Mutual Defense Treaty which established a bilateral asymmetric alliance between them to determine how cohesion between allies varies as a function of treaty establishment. Second, the actors and the distribution of power between them remains fixed throughout the scope of the analysis. The US-ROK alliance has been a bilateral alliance since its inception which enables me to examine the influence of relative power distribution between them both before and after treaty establishment. I demonstrate that the alliance treaty institutionalized American hegemony over security preferences, which in turn positively influenced cohesion. This logic follows that the United

States as the dominant actor had the ability to set collective security preferences and expect credible South Korean compliance. The United States was additionally able to include treaty language designed to leave the US an exit strategy and cut off alliance membership benefits should the South Koreans engage in unilateral military action. Although the US-ROK relationship continues to evolve, South Korea continues to regularly defer to the United States on matters of domestic and regional security as stipulated in the terms of their bilateral asymmetric alliance treaty. I divide my analysis into three components which considers relations between the US and ROK prior to alliance formation (i.e., pre-treatment), the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., the treatment), and the influence of alliance structure and relative power distribution between allies on alliance cohesion (i.e., post treatment).

I. Pre-Treatment: Post World War II

Overview

Prior to the formation of a formal alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), South Korea attempted to leverage American support to pursue the unlikely achievement of Rhee's preference for Korean unification. This American support was primarily a function of Truman's containment policy to stop the spread of communism in East Asia. Containment resulted in a moral hazard as American participation in the Korean "police action," in turn encouraged Rhee to demand greater American assistance. Despite American pushback, Rhee was able to consistently undermine American security objectives to prolong the war and attempt to entrap the United States to continue fighting. Further, Rhee was inflexible in his demands. Rhee would accept nothing less than Korean unification. I demonstrate the costs of unaligned American partnership with South Korea and show that the early years of the Korean War were pivotal in influencing the establishment of

a bilateral asymmetrical alliance (i.e., the treatment) to ensure American control over South Korean security preferences.

Post-World War II Relations

Prior to formally establishing alliance ties with South Korea, the US sought to minimize its role in Asia as much as possible. American strategic interest post World War II placed greater emphasis on rebuilding Europe to protect against the threat of communist expansionism. Post war agreements divided the Korean Peninsula at the 38th parallel, effectively allowing these states to become spheres of influence for superpower exploitation with Kim Il-Sung's Soviet backed regime in the North and Syngman Rhee's American backed government in the South (Stueck, 1995a; Barry, 2012). While the United States did provide limited levels of economic and military support to the Rhee government prior to the outbreak of the Korean War, American military consensus held that "South Korea was not regarded as of any particular value to the overall American strategic position in the Far East," with reports from the Mutual Defense Assistance Program² stating, "there is no military justification for military assistance to Korea (FRUS, Feb. 10, 1950; Lowe, 1997)." In addition to a perceived lack of strategic value, American officials noted that the Rhee government's "own incompetence" rendered it largely incapable in addressing the severe financial and political challenges facing Korea in the post war period (FRUS, March 15, 1950).

Moreover, the United States was largely concerned with containing the spread of communism while protecting against entrapment by a South Korean government bent on national

² Established under the Truman Administration after passing the 1949 Mutual Defense Act. This program enabled the United States to provide military and economic assistance to states for enhancing their defensive capabilities against the Soviet Union and its allies. It was eventually succeeded by the Mutual Security Act and the Mutual Security Administration in 1951 (Connery and David, 1951).

unification. Rhee's policy of "pukchi'in t'ongil" (unification by marching north) (Gaddis, 1982; Cha, 2016) legitimized conflict initiation as a viable means to achieve unification. Reports from the State Department note significant American entrapment fears early on in the US-ROK relationship stating, "President Rhee's strongest weapon is his knowledge that the US could not let the Republic of Korea fall without incurring the gravest political repercussions," and that, "the time might come when the lesser of the two evils would be to cut loose and run the risk of incurring such consequences (FRUS, Mar.15, 1950)." Rather than become bogged down in a country with low strategic value, the United States sought to minimize its role in Korea as much as possible (Cummings, 1998). However, this was complicated by North Korea's military superiority relative to the South. Shortly before the outbreak of war, US Central Intelligence estimates suggest,

"Although Communist operations against the Republic of Korea have not thus far produced decisive results, the Republic has been forced to make serious political and economic sacrifices in order to counter the ever-present Communist threat. At the same time, the cost to the Communists has been relatively slight, and their ability to continue the campaign far exceeds the Republic's capability to continue effective resistance without US aid (FRUS, Jun.19, 1950)."

The Korean War

Although South Korea was not a desired regional partner, it was likely that it would fall to communist forces without continued American assistance. From a political, economic, and military perspective, South Korea was a risky partner in furthering American strategic goals

(Foot, 1985). This theme is best noted in Secretary of State Dean Acheson's lack of reference to the Korean Peninsula when defining the US defense perimeter in Asia in 1950. Instead stating,

“The defensive perimeter [of the United States] runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus... So far as the military security of other areas in the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no person can guarantee these areas against a military attack. But it must also be clear that such a guarantee is hardly sensible or necessary within the realm of practical relationship (Central Intelligence Agency, 1950).”

This statement is attributed with providing Kim Il-Sung's Soviet-backed government with the confidence to launch an invasion into the South without concern of a significant American response and effectively starting the Korean War on June 25, 1950. Initial North Korean attacks pushed South Korean forces to a small Pusan perimeter. In response to the North Korean invasion, the United States led a United Nations coalition force in a “police action” to push back the invasion (Fisher, 1995). Most notably, General MacArthur launched the successful invasion of Incheon to cut off North Korean supply lines and retake Seoul. By late 1950, the Chinese became increasingly concerned that the American drive north would not stop at the Yalu. After Soviet consultation, the Chinese entered the war in mid-October at North Korean request (Yufan and Zhuhai, 1990; Jian, 1994; Daily, 1999). Under the American led coalition, Rhee released control of the South Korean military to the commander of the United Nations Command.³

Although the US and ROK did not share a formal alliance at this time, the United States entered

³ General MacArthur was removed as the Commander in Chief of United Nations Command by President Truman on April 11, 1951. Truman immediately installed General Ridgway who left May 12, 1951. General Clark succeeded General Ridgway and remained in command until the signing of the Korean armistice in 1953 (Park, 1975; Boose, 2000).

the war and accepted the responsibility of South Korea's military defense out of two primary concerns.

First, failure to respond in Korea would lead to future communist adventurism which would undermine American influence (Stueck, 1995b). Second, to stop Rhee from engaging in a risky unification campaign with the expectation of American support that would most certainly be suicide (Hong, 2000). It was therefore necessary for the United States to ensure control of ROK forces to prevent risky military action. Contentious fighting continued through 1951 with little ground being gained by either side. Early armistice talks began with intermittent periods of fighting resulting from stalled negotiations (Robin, 2001). Two large sticking points in negotiations were the repatriation of prisoners and the ability of foreign military forces to remain on the Korean Peninsula. The United States was adamant that all POW repatriations should be voluntary rather than forcing POWs back to their respective sides as preferred by the Communists. Additionally, the Rhee government refused to accept the presence of the Chinese military in Korea. However, any attempts to negotiate this fell over Communist frustration with the potential for continued presence in Korea by the United Nations, and more particularly the United States (Keefer, 1986; Boose, 2000; Matray, 2012).

As the United States became desperate for a truce, Rhee's quest for unification led him to engage in increasingly provocative actions designed to undermine the potential for an armistice and to force continued American support. Rhee proved to be unmanageable as he continuously threatened to remove his forces from UN Command authority to launch the push north himself if the United States did not comply. In an exchange with the Commander in Chief of United Nations Command, General Clark, regarding armistice talks, Rhee dismissed attempts for compromise. Instead arguing, "Through suicide Korea would at least go down in the history as a

nation of great honor,” and that the United States did not have the will to confront communism (Clark, 1954). More specifically, Rhee took issue with two primary components of the armistice talks. First, Rhee viewed any political agreement that accepted the continued division of Korea as unacceptable and designed to weaken the Korean state. Second, Rhee would not allow for Chinese forces to remain in Korea, viewing it as an attempt at future invasion (Hong, 2000).

The Armistice and Rhee’s Resentment

Rhee’s inflexibility toward American demands became most pronounced by 1953. In response to the political concern in Washington regarding Rhee’s public remarks, General Clark stated, “I told him [Rhee] of my grave concern as the United Nations Commander... should he resort to unilateral, hostile, and disastrous steps with no possibility of success... which would divide UN Command and leave us embarrassed before the world, encourage the Communists to action which might have cause us to lose all we had gained.” Moreover, Clark concludes, “Rhee has been bluffing in spite of his repeated statement that he hoped we would not consider his actions as blackmail (FRUS, Apr. 28, 1953).” There was additional concern that if the ROK should act unilaterally, the United States would have to defend itself against communist armies and “for a short time the ROK Army (FRUS, Apr. 26, 1953).” By April 1953, Rhee finally revealed his hand and hinted at the possibility of a mutual defense pact between the United States and ROK in return for potentially accepting an armistice (FRUS, Apr 30, 1953). In response to Rhee’s proposal, the American Ambassador in Korea Ellis Ormsbee Briggs stated,

“There is nothing inherently repugnant in the ideal of a bilateral security pact... Specific terms proposed by Rhee are largely unsatisfactory since they would commit US to a

variety of dangerous gambits while leaving Rhee free to take whatever action he might see fit in [North Korea] under shelter of US defense guarantee (FRUS, May 3, 1953)...”

While the US did not view Rhee as a particularly reliable ally, broader strategic considerations implied the likelihood that continued American presence would be required in Korea to prevent communist expansionism (Mercer, 2013). Although alliance commitments are costly, states who ally with a single, weaker ally hold greater ability to coerce compliance of the weaker ally in adherence to the dominant ally’s security preferences. Alliance partnership with the ROK would enable the United States to maintain a position in Korea and create terms designed to restrict South Korea’s ability to engage in behavior likely to bring unwanted consequences. Ambassador Briggs’ statement best highlights this American recognition early in the discussions of alliance partnership with South Korea that any defense pact created would need to clearly define the extent of American involvement and restrain the ROK from entrapping the US in conflict. Furthermore, this alliance could be presented as a carrot to Rhee’s government in return for their compliance to armistice arrangements and additionally reduce the probability of Rhee engaging in unilateral action (Bernstein, 1978).

American concern over Rhee’s unreliability led to the circulation of plan “EVERREADY” by General Taylor, Commander of the United States Eighth Army in Korea. This plan outlined conditions under which the United States would overthrow President Rhee and his government. These conditions included unresponsiveness or defiance by the South Korean army to UN Command directives, South Korean unilateral military actions, and even the possibility of ROK military hostility toward UN Command. Should these conditions be sufficiently met, EVERREADY called for actions to cut off all aid and assistance to South

Korea, cutting off key ports and supply lines for the ROK military, and potentially declaring martial law under the authority of the United Nations (FRUS, May 4, 1953). Despite direct American involvement in the Korean War, the Eisenhower government viewed Rhee's intransigence to be so costly to American interests that overthrow could be more preferable to a continued partnership (Park, 2000).

Although this plan was shelved, Rhee's continued hostility to armistice proceedings led him to push the limits of American patience. The release of POWs was a particularly contentious issue in moving forward in armistice discussions with the Communists and General Clark reported to the Joint Chiefs his concern with the ROK army guarding the majority of POW camps stating, "Rhee queried me this afternoon as to the possibility of his security troops releasing Koreans without involving me. While I forcibly reminded him that his troops are in my command, this does emphasize the seriousness of the ROK attitude (FRUS, May 12, 1953)..." Clark further hinted at the possibility of coercing Rhee with the offer of a security pact in the hope he would cease attempts to undermine armistice proceedings in reporting,

"Rhee made it clear to me that he strongly desires a mutual security pact...

Although I made no commitments to Rhee on this point. I personally see no reason why such a guarantee should not be given as soon as possible. I feel that if this were done, many of the problems which confront us now would probably fall into line (FRUS, May 13, 1953)."

Despite Clark's requests, feelings in Washington favored a hard line against Rhee's push for unification. Secretary Dulles ordered the Embassy in Korea to remain firm despite Rhee's

demands for greater American involvement, stating, “[the] US is not prepared to engage in a mutual security treaty with ROK under present circumstances.” Eisenhower viewed Rhee’s acts as designed to maximize his bargaining position with the US and refused to engage in discussions regarding increased assistance to the ROK until given firm assurance by Rhee that he would fully cooperate with UN Command (Immerman, 1990). Necessary conditions of cooperation included that the ROK would cease attempts to unilaterally undermine the armistice, the ROK would fully cooperate in implementing an armistice agreement, and that ROK military forces would remain under the operational control of UN Command until “governments of US and ROK mutually agree such arrangement is no longer necessary (FRUS, May 15, 1953).”

Beyond political considerations, American military factions remained skeptical toward any attempts at offering Rhee greater assistance as, “from a military perspective there are real disadvantages to a security pact with the Koreans (FRUS, May 18, 1953).” The primary concern was that Rhee would hedge any formal alliance with the United States as a means to achieve total unification. However, this fear was soon outweighed by the concern of Rhee engaging in unilateral action designed to undermine the armistice as negotiations with the Communists were reaching a difficult impasse. Robert Murphy, the American political advisor for armistice negotiations, reported to the Department of State his concern that Rhee would continue his inflexible position without an American commitment that could be “conditioned on cessation of ROK agitation and serve as quid pro quo for cooperative attitude (May 18, 1953).”

Further American attempts to sway Rhee into accepting an armistice for unspecified American aid guarantees proved unsuccessful. Upon being presented with these conditions, Rhee told Ambassador Briggs that “Korea may publicly denounce US/UN armistice proposals,” and that “the ROK will not be bound by them, and may offer an alternative solution based on

simultaneous withdrawal of Chinese Communists and UN forces, leaving Koreans to settle Korean problems (FRUS, May 26, 1953).” Rhee followed up with his threat of unilateral action in a discussion with General Clark, stating that, “we [ROK] are at a point where we cannot drag any longer...Now is the time, do not turn back and be weak. Democracy is going backwards. Someday the United States will fight alone. Do not wait for that day.” In addition to requests for increased American support, Rhee rejected any American aid short of his demands for complete unification under his government stating, “We [ROK] will die, we will go alone, one way or the other,” further requesting that Clark report to Eisenhower, “Please let the Koreans fight on alone. It is the only way they can survive. This is my solemn request to President Eisenhower... I cannot promise the President my military cooperation without the unification of Korea... We made our mistake perhaps in the beginning in relying upon democracy to assist us. (FRUS, May 26, 1953)”

Rhee viewed the United States as a partner who possessed the necessary military capability but lacked a political will to keep fighting. His unyielding statements were designed to pressure the US into action and to provide additional security benefits to prevent him from continuing the war. Rhee was unable to comprehend how or why the United States would not take a stand in Korea as a representation of the greater ideological struggle between capitalism and communism (Stueck, 2002). In response to Rhee’s refusal, plan EVERREADY was again debated in Washington against the option of offering Rhee a security pact. Discussions from a meeting between the Department of State and Joint Chiefs of Staff note the tradeoff considered in deciding a stable course of action:

Mr. Robertson: [in response to potentially initiating plan EVERREADY] “Under what authority should we take over the Korean Government? Wouldn’t we really be putting ourselves in a position of being the aggressors?”

General Collins: “The authority for taking action against Rhee and the Korean Government would have to be purely of that military necessity... Another question... we should look into, is whether or not it would be useful to give Rhee the promise of a security pact in order to forestall the actions he might otherwise take.

Admiral Duncan: It seems to me that if Rhee is not brought into line we will be faced with the possibility of a disastrous military defeat. If the final issue between Rhee and ourselves appears to be whether or not we would give him a security pact it might well be worth giving Rhee such a pact in order to keep him in line (FRUS, May 29, 1953).”

Eisenhower was finally convinced that American interests in Korea would be best served by offering a bilateral security pact with the ROK rather than overthrowing the Rhee government (Divine, 1981; Jackson, 2005). This logic follows that an alliance could be offered as a means for the ROK to cease hostilities to armistice negotiations and furthermore allow the United States to establish treaty conditions that would greatly inhibit Rhee’s ability to launch unilateral hostilities in the threat of being cut off from alliance benefits. In contrast to allying with South Korea, overthrowing the Rhee government presented significant short- and long-term challenges to American interests. In the short term, it would require the US to instill a new government immediately following the fall of Rhee’s. South Korea lacked the institutional and political capacity necessary for establishing a new stable government on its own, likely indicating that the

⁴ Walter S. Robertson, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs from 1953-1959 (New York Times, 1970).

US would need to implement martial law in the name of the United Nations. In the long term, the American takeover would likely invite future communist aggression as a means to capitalize off the political chaos in the South. Additionally, the United States was less assured that political and military factions still loyal to Rhee would not take steps unilaterally to widen the war despite the institution of martial law (Millet, 2001). Therefore, allying with South Korea presented itself as the most viable mechanism for American institution of control.

American Sunk Costs: Containing Communism & Allying with Rhee

Eisenhower authorized Ambassador Briggs and General Clark to report to Rhee that the United States was willing to immediately begin negotiations for a mutual bilateral defense treaty subject to South Korea agreeing to uphold conditions of an armistice and that the ROK military would remain under the operational control of UN Command. Eisenhower additionally leveraged the treaty's need for Senate ratification as a means to further coerce Rhee into compliance. General Clark was told to make clear that, "The ROK must understand that [the] conclusion of a treaty is subject to US constitutional processes requiring the advice and consent of the Senate. ROK cooperation with the UNC will undoubtedly be a major factor in the attitude of the Senate toward ratification of any such treaty (FRUS, May 30, 1953)." The use of this leverage was designed to ensure that Rhee understood the extent to which the United States could legally pledge to his government in support. Although the US viewed the conflict in Korea to have limited strategic value, the Eisenhower government felt the need for Senate ratification would be a more persuasive hand tying mechanism to demonstrate the limits of their ability to commit (Putnam, 1988). Further, the establishment of an alliance with South Korea would increase American presence in East Asia to deter continued communist expansion (Keefer, 1986).

Upon receipt of this offer, Rhee wrote to Eisenhower in hesitant agreement to pursue a bilateral security treaty. Although the survival of his government depended upon a US security guarantee, Rhee recognized that he could be severely limited in his ability to pursue security objectives under conditions required of a treaty. More specifically, he was unwilling to accept any pact that required the ROK to accept division rather than unification as “that would be a death warrant (FRUS, Jun. 19, 1953).” In recognition of this, he further stated,

“Our first choice, if we are still allowed to make it, is to have our allies by our side to actively help us fight our common issue. But, if that is no longer possible, we would rather wish to have the right of self-determination to decide the issues ourselves concisely one way or the other. Anyway, it is beyond question that we cannot any longer survive a stalemate of division... Actions not words, will deter the world aggressor (FRUS, May 30, 1953).”

Despite Rhee’s objections to Eisenhower, later meetings between President Rhee and Ambassador Briggs indicate that Rhee recognized the likelihood of his government falling without American support. Briggs reported, “Rhee clearly understands... that unless he collaborates, he cannot expect to receive US support-- military, economic or otherwise-- which if he collaborated, American people would be glad to extend (FRUS, Jun. 5, 1953).” However, Rhee still attempted to hedge his emotional pleas against what he deemed to be largely unacceptable American offers of assistance. Upon meeting with Rhee on June 7, 1953 to negotiate the potential for a security pact, General Clark reported that, “I made absolutely no progress in my effort to persuade Rhee to take a reasonable approach to armistice terms. I have

never seen him more distracted, wrought up, and emotional.” Rhee argued that that US policy was weak and amounted to appeasement, further stating, “The ROK Government would never accept the present terms of the armistice, that the ROKs would fight on, even if it meant suicide, and that he would lead them,” and “That from anytime hereafter he would feel free to take such steps that he deems appropriate.” Clark reported to the Joint Chiefs,

“I asked Rhee if his statements meant withdrawing his troops from UN Command. He said not today or tomorrow, but he would feel free to take any action from now on. I told him how futile it would be for him to attempt to attack alone, for he would be unsuccessful and does not have the necessary logistical support, and that it would result in destruction of himself and his country, and urged him that he show the strong leadership he has displayed in the past and the kind his country expects of him now in an emergency. He indicated that Korea would become another China; it is inevitable, and he and his people may as well die now as later... To summarize Rhee was completely unreasonable and gave no ground whatsoever. He himself is the only one who knows how far he will go but undoubtedly he will bluff right up to the last (FRUS, Jun. 7, 1953).”

This disturbing meeting with Rhee implied that Rhee was willing to risk widening a war that he would surely lose alone and was willing to drag the United States down with him. The meeting prompted General Clark to send out an updated outline of the plan EVERREADY in the increasing likelihood that Rhee may act alone to undermine armistice proceedings despite the offer of an American alliance (FRUS, Jun. 8, 1953). Without the constraints of an alliance, Rhee was able to leverage the American policy of containment to preserve his unification ambitions.

Rhee was able to engage in provocative military actions because he was not bound to the commitments of an alliance treaty that solidified American hegemony. The United States was entrapped in a domestic war because of broad international considerations and was desperately seeking an out (Foot, 1985). In response to Rhee's threats, Secretary Dulles invited Rhee to meet with him and President Eisenhower in Washington to further discuss the potential for establishing an alliance between them. Rhee responded that he was unable to attend due to domestic unrest regarding the armistice discussions. In discussions with President Eisenhower, Dulles advised, "The importance of getting Rhee to accept the armistice can hardly be overestimated (FRUS, Jun. 14, 1953)," and therefore sent Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Walter Robertson to force Rhee into a position of agreement. However, prior to Robertson's arrival, President Rhee deliberately attempted to undermine armistice negotiations in one of his most defiant acts against the United States by releasing unilaterally releasing 27,000 prisoners of war held in the South under UN Command authority on June 18, 1953 (Bernstein, 1978; New York Times, 1956; Cha, 2016).

The POW camps under UN Command were primarily guarded by members of the ROK army who were ordered to simultaneously open the gates of the prison camps and release the prisoners. American forces guarding these camps were largely outnumbered by their South Korean counterparts and were met with violent opposition in their attempts to stop the release. Civilians were instructed to house prisoners and local police forces were ordered to inform civilians of American attempts to recapture these prisoners (Hong, 1999). Rather than concerns relating to the domestic security of the South by releasing these POWs into the population, US frustration was tied to their lost bargaining position with the Communists in the armistice talks. The United States had consistently pushed for voluntary repatriations to which the Communists

had finally agreed (Cha, 2016). Now that Rhee had circumvented American authority in releasing these POWS, the American bargaining position was significantly weakened. In response to the release, President Eisenhower stated, “We seemed to have acquired another enemy instead of a friend (FRUS, Jun. 18, 1953).” Publicly, as justification for his unilateral actions Rhee made a statement to the press stating, “In order to avoid the grave consequences which may result [from an armistice], I have ordered on my own responsibility the release of the anti-communist Korean prisoners... The reason why I did this without full consultation with the United Nations Command and other authorities concerned is too obvious to explain (ROK Office of Public Information, Jun. 18, 1953).” Rhee was able to engage in this behavior because he lacked credible constraints. Without an alliance treaty that codified the obligations of allies and American hegemony, the US was largely unable to coerce Rhee to comply with American security objectives. Privately, Rhee wrote to General Clark detailing why he chose to act alone, stating, “If I had revealed to you in advance my idea of setting them [POWs] free, it would have only embarrassed you. Furthermore, the plan would have been completely spoiled... I felt I had to take this final action.” When referencing the armistice, Rhee wrote,

“According to the terms, the armies on both sides shall drop back two kilometers, within a specified number of hours after signing the armistice. The ROKA may not be allowed to draw back along their friendly forces and that is where the question comes in. While I still hope that such may never be the case, we must see what we should do in case we have to take a stand. Personally I hate it like a poison to tell you that I shall have to withdraw the ROKA from your command, but things standing where they are now, there seems to be no alternative (FRUS, Jun. 18, 1953).”

This deliberate and unilateral action taken by Rhee represented his unconstrained ability to entrap the United States in a broader conflict. The United States saw through Rhee's actions, as Secretary Dulles, stated, "President Rhee had chosen to plot secretly behind our backs and defy the authority of the [UN] Command... It was clear that his purpose was not so much the release of the prisoners as to frustrate and overturn the possibility of an armistice (FRUS, Jun. 18, 1953)." Despite Rhee's reliance on the United States for military and economic aid needed to maintain his government, he hedged that the US was too involved in the current conflict and could not walk away and surrender Korea to communist forces. In a National Security Council meeting directly following Rhee's actions, Vice President Nixon confirmed Rhee's gamble in arguing, "That the United States must find some way to remain in Korea. If we got out, he insisted, it would constitute a great Communist victory, no matter what we said in our explanation of withdrawal." Essentially, the United States had significant sunk costs in Korea as a result of its containment policy. The United States could not walk away from Korea as it would amount to a communist victory over East Asia despite the challenge of partnering with Rhee. This logic also provides an explanation as to why the US did not enact plan EVERREADY to overthrow Rhee after his clear defiance of UN Command authority. The US could not leave Korea and as challenging of a partner Rhee was, the South lacked a clear replacement (Stueck, 2002). President Eisenhower decided that "There seemed to be no clear alternative to trusting Rhee." The continued pursuit of a bilateral alliance was deemed as the least costly option of controlling a belligerent South Korean partner. In designing this treaty, Secretary Dulles stated, "Nevertheless, we must take the strongest possible line with Rhee so that he will not imagine that he can actually run the show (FRUS, Jun. 18, 1953)."

II. Treatment: Establishment of a Bilateral Asymmetric Alliance

Overview

Through the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., the treatment), the United States was able to establish a security preference and effectively coerce South Korea into compliance. South Korean compliance was achieved through specific clauses of the Mutual Defense Treaty (signed in 1953 and ratified in 1954) which first, established American control over South Korean military forces and second, legitimized American refusal to assist South Korea should they fail to comply with American security preferences. Ultimately, the establishment of a formal treaty met both actors' immediate preferences. South Korea received a formalized American defense commitment to deter future North Korean invasion. The United States gained a foothold in East Asia through an alliance partnership which enabled them to credibly constrain their fellow ally. I discuss both the formal treaty negotiations and the actual ratification of the Mutual Defense Treaty to demonstrate the beginning dynamics of American control over South Korean preferences and how this was officially solidified through treaty establishment. Above all, I demonstrate that the limited membership body and the establishment of American dominance within the alliance positively influenced cohesion.

Coercion and the Promise of a Mutual Defense Treaty

Upon further attempts in the summer of 1953 to coerce Rhee into compliance with the armistice by again offering the immediate start of security pact negotiations with Ambassador Briggs, Rhee asked him to "Please inform the President that I cannot change my position. Signing of an armistice will automatically mean withdrawal of ROK Forces from UNC... Even if it is suicide, that is our privilege" (FRUS, Jun. 19, 1953). Rhee's actions also negatively affected the armistice talks, as the Communists responded by continuing attacks on UN divisions

and all attempts in negotiation came to a standstill. General Clark received the following question from the Communists in response to American attempts to deescalate the crisis, “Is the UNC able to control the South Korean Gov and Army (FRUS, Jun. 20, 1953)?” According to General Clark, “The overriding principle involved in the sit[uation] in which we find ourselves is that we are being blackmailed by Rhee into continuation of a war which the United States Government apparently does not intend to prolong (FRUS, Jun. 21, 1953).” Rhee had effectively undermined the American position in Korea and furthermore was able to exploit American strategic objectives to his personal advantage. The American response was quick in deciding to lock Rhee into alliance commitments to stop his provocative behavior by increasing his dependency on American assistance.

General Clark again met with Rhee to offer the potential for a security pact on June 22, 1953 shortly following the POW release. Clark noted Rhee’s change in demeanor, concluding “that perhaps the impact of world reaction to his unilateral action is having an effect on him (FRUS, Jun. 22, 1953).” Although still unwilling to sign an armistice, Rhee stated that he could support it in exchange for an alliance with the United States. Rhee’s sudden change in position is representative of his sobering understanding of the South’s inability to survive without American military and economic aid. Essentially, the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance was effective in curbing Rhee’s ability to unilaterally engage in provocative action and undermine American security preferences. Furthermore, Rhee had gambled on an American acquiesce that was not materializing. In addition to discussions with General Clark, Secretary Dulles wrote to Rhee in sharp rebuke of his actions writing that by accepting an armistice,

“Your Republic can share with us a mutual security pact and enjoy a program of economic aid which of itself will set up a powerful attraction upon the North Koreans... It is at this moment that you are apparently considering rejection of the principle of unity. Because fighting has not given you all that you had hoped, you seem to be on the verge of wrecking allied unity. You have already taken unilateral action in defiance of the authority of the United Nations Command, and I hear reports that you have even suggested attempting to withdraw the Republic of Korea forces from United Nations Command. Do you have the right to take this action? It is you who invoked the principle of unity and asked us to pay the price. We have paid it in blood and suffering. Can you honorably reject the principle, which, in your hour of need, you asked us to defend at so high a price (FRUS, Jun. 22, 1953)?

Upon the receipt of this rebuke from Secretary Dulles, Rhee reported to General Clark that he would accept an armistice so long as the United States entered into a mutual security pact with the ROK prior to signing the armistice and that the US would continue to provide the South with economic and military assistance (FRUS, Jun. 23, 1953). In later discussions with Assistant Secretary Robertson, Rhee’s desperation for continued American aid and security guarantee became increasingly apparent as Rhee stated, “You are like a hand extended to a drowning man. Please help us find a way out (FRUS, Jun. 27, 1953).” However, as Rhee received greater assurances from Washington that aid would continue to flow to the ROK and that the US was willing to establish a formal alliance partnership, Rhee again attempted to hedge against constraints by backtracking on his previous assurances of accepting an armistice. Ultimately, Rhee was unhappy that American promises of a security pact would not include a pledge to

continue fighting and therefore argued that he could not comply with any armistice arrangements until this assurance was given (FRUS, Jul. 1, 1953). Rhee's backtrack concerned Washington that Rhee would again seek to act unilaterally to entrap the United States in the war.

Constitutionally, Eisenhower was unable to pledge American support for Rhee's war for unification without congressional approval which was unlikely given Rhee's previous actions. Robertson reported to the State Department, "Rhee in addition to being a shrewd, resourceful trader is also a highly emotional, irrational, illogical fanatic fully capable of attempting to lead his country into national suicide (FRUS, Jul. 1, 1953)."

Forcing Rhee's Hand: Obligations Required to Commit

Rhee's ability to consistently maneuver his position to maximize the benefits that he could extract from the United States represents the lack of constraint that he was operating under relative to the US (Lowe, 1997). Although his government's survival depended upon American aid, he knew that strategically the Americans could not let Korea fall to communism. Although the US attempted to suggest the possibility of completely pulling out, Eisenhower argued, "the truth of the matter was, of course, that we couldn't actually leave (FRUS, Jul. 2, 1953)." Along with being constrained in their ability to leave Korea, Eisenhower was constitutionally constrained in that he could not provide Rhee unilaterally with a promise to continue the war. These constraints led the United States to continue to push Rhee into a position to accept the armistice by both threatening to cut off aid and by offering an alliance. The United States was able to credibly threaten Rhee with abandonment to ensure that he complied with American security preferences. Further, in the attempt to bargain with Rhee, General Clark reported, "Rhee will continue to bluff, to delay, to embarrass and impede the conclusion of an armistice by all

means at his disposal until it is made firmly and irrevocably clear to him that my government has made maximum concessions (FRUS, Jul. 2, 1953).” By engaging in an alliance partnership with the ROK, the US would be able to place greater constraints on the ROK by requiring that the ROK accept the armistice and cede military control to UN Command led by the United States. As Robertson reported to the State Department, “From his [Rhee’s] standpoint he considers his present position stronger than it could possibly be without the pact (FRUS, Jul. 6, 1953).” Rhee’s ability to monopolize on American willingness to offer a security pact without actually being constrained by one put him in a strong bargaining position. However, his gamble on American willingness to tolerate his intransigence continued to decrease as the US escalated threats to cut off aid.

In early July 1953 Rhee gave his explicit agreement to accept an armistice in return for an alliance with the US, stating to Robertson, “You have come to Korea and it is you have conquered. I am left in a ditch. Please go back to Washington and tell the President, the Secretary of State, and the Senate leaders the things we have discussed. Tell them I want to work with the United States (FRUS, Jul. 11, 1953).” In following letters to Eisenhower, Rhee provided additional assurances, writing “We shall not develop any policy which is antithetical to the peace-structure which you are planning for the Pacific Area (FRUS, Jul. 11, 1953).” Upon pressure from the United States that a security pact would be pursued, the ROK agreed to accept the armistice agreement signed July 27, 1953 although they would not sign it. In determining steps forward in pursuing the alliance, Secretary Dulles emphasized that, “We [the US] must do everything we can both of a military character and economic character to gain and hold control of as many aspects of the situation [in the ROK] as possible (FRUS, Jul. 29 1953).”

The US recognized that an alliance treaty between itself and the ROK would provide it with a mechanism of control that would allow it to deter provocative behavior by being able to credibly cut off alliance membership benefits, namely military and economic aid. Establishing alliance terms along these lines would significantly constrain the ability of Rhee and future South Korean administrations to act unilaterally in ways that would harm American strategic interests (Cha, 2011). Although this alliance partnership was costly, Secretary Dulles stated, “We [the US] had set aside our own preferences and agreed to such a treaty with the ROK,” and although this treaty was not inherently desirable, “we accepted it as one of the prices that we thought were justified in paying in order to get the armistice (FRUS, Aug. 1, 1953).” Although the alliance treaty was signed October 1, 1953, significant concern remained in Washington regarding Rhee’s ongoing ability to comply with the armistice agreement. To address this concern and to ensure that Rhee understood clearly the limits of the United States, President Eisenhower wrote to Rhee in late 1953 in an attempt to leverage constitutional constraints prohibiting Eisenhower from aiding Rhee in restarting the war along with the potential for the US to cease all military and economic aid to the ROK, writing,

“If I should be forced to conclude that after the coming into force of the Treaty, you might unilaterally touch off a resumption of war in Korea, I could not recommend its ratification and I am certain the Senate would not ratify it. When I formally submit the Treaty to the Senate next January, I must be in a position personally to give clear assurance on this point... From a military standpoint... if you should decide to attack alone, I am convinced that you would expose the ROK forces to a disastrous defeat and they might well be permanently destroyed as an effective military force... To turn now to

economic matters, we are making plans for the future which will require me to ask for further appropriations from the Congress during the next session... If I believed that those funds would merely create new targets in a war renewed by you, I could not, consistently with my duty, request Congress to authorize this appropriation (FRUS, Nov. 4, 1953).”

Eisenhower sent Vice President Nixon to meet with Rhee to obtain Rhee’s explicit guarantee that he would not undertake action unilaterally and would respect the terms of the armistice prior to sending the Treaty to the Senate (Cha, 2016). Rhee responded with a letter to President Eisenhower which he requested the contents be disclosed only to the President. While a copy of the letter does not exist in government archives, Nixon confirmed the contents of the letter when writing to Secretary Dulles shortly after his visit stating, “His [Rhee’s] letter confirmed in express terms the personal assurances which he made in my first conversation with him (FRUS, Nov. 19, 1953).” Dulles also referenced the content of the letter in a National Security Council meeting in late November 1953 noting, “We have very largely increased the likelihood that Rhee will not act unilaterally, or at least will not do so without prior consultation with President Eisenhower (FRUS, Nov. 23, 1953).” These assurances from Rhee were sufficient enough for Eisenhower to send the Treaty to be considered for ratification in January 1954. The Treaty was officially ratified by both actors as of February 1, 1954.

III. Post Treatment: Changes in Behavioral Constraints

Overview

Following the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance, (i.e., post-treatment), I demonstrate that the US-ROK is highly cohesive as a result of the small membership body and institutionalization of American dominance within the alliance framework. Above all, the United States was able to consistently establish security objectives and coerce South Korea into compliance. This effectively reduced the American risk of alignment with South Korea and Rhee's inflexibility toward American security preferences, positively influencing cohesion. However, South Korea has risen in parity relative to the United States following its democratization in the late 1980s and sharp increase in economic development. I demonstrate that these changes have not altered the institutionalized components of the alliance and therefore have not undermined cohesion. For example, the United States still retains control of South Korean military forces. Additionally, South Korean and American security preferences are increasingly aligned as a result of shared regional adversaries, which include China and North Korea.

Institutionalized Constraint

Through Treaty ratification, the United States was able to credibly constrain Rhee by threatening to cut off alliance membership benefits as stipulated in their defense pact (Cha, 2016). The ROK became significantly limited in its ability to pursue risky military and economic policies as a result of their formal alliance. Treaty language demonstrates the ability of the dominant actor in a bilateral asymmetric alliance to set the collective security preferences and expect credible compliance from the weaker actor, which increases cohesion between allies. Article 3 establishes the defensive obligations for both actors stating, "Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on either Parties in territories now under their respective

administrative control... would be dangerous to its own peace and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes (Department of State).” This clause indicates that each actor would remain united in addressing common threats to their security, however it leaves the United States as the dominant actor an exit strategy. The United States is constitutionally constrained in that only Congress can declare war and therefore American presidents would not be obligated to follow the ROK into conflict based on South Korean unilateral actions. The United States would be sufficiently protected by its constitutional processes to avoid entrapment while still upholding alliance commitments (Putnam, 1988).

Article 4 legitimizes American authority over South Korean military forces stating, “The Republic of Korea grants, and the United States of America accepts, the right to dispose United States land, air, and sea force in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea (Department of State).” Additionally, the United States stipulated with the ROK that all South Korean military forces would remain under the operational authority of UN Command led by the United States until both actors deemed South Korea should accept command of its military. This clause effectively enables the US to restrict the ROK’s ability to engage in proactive behavior that could have the potential for entrapping the United States in escalatory conflict. The ROK ceded its sovereign right over its military to ensure the continued flow of alliance membership benefits from the US. Finally, the Treaty includes an additional “Understanding of the United States” stating,

“It is the understanding of the United States that neither party is obligated, under Article III of the above Treaty, to come to the aid of the other except in the case of an external armed attack against such party; nor shall anything in the present Treaty be construed as

requiring the United States to give assistance to Korea except in the event of an armed attack against territory which has been recognized by the United States as lawfully brought under the administrative control of the Republic of Korea (Department of State).”

This clause is significant in that the US was sufficiently concerned by South Korean entrapment that it chose to include additional treaty language to clearly define the conditions under which it would comply with the requirements of the Treaty. South Korea again was coerced into compliance due to regional and domestic constraints as the Rhee government would have fallen without continued American assistance. Despite challenging relations early in Treaty establishment, characteristics associated with a bilateral asymmetric alliance enabled these actors to remain cohesive. The US accepted the costly commitment to the Korean Peninsula in exchange for Treaty language that constrained South Korea’s ability to engage in provocative behavior. Whereas the ROK accepted this Treaty as a means of survival as the US security guarantee would protect it from the potential for another North Korean invasion and due to the continued flow of American economic aid.

As US-ROK relations progressed, the understanding of Article 4 was modified several times throughout the 1960s and 1970s to reflect an increased trust in the South Korean government to provide for its own security and to reduce the cost of US commitment. Most notably, in 1978, the US and ROK established the Combined Forces Command (CFC) to institute a mechanism for the United States to further transfer military authority to their South Korean counterparts. Additionally, peacetime operational control of the Korean military was transferred to the ROK in 1994. While the operational control transfer was originally planned for

2006, it has been consistently postponed to 2006, 2012, and 2015 due to regional security concerns primarily emanating from North Korea (Klinger, 2008; Cha, 2016). Although both the US and ROK have attempted to decrease the extent of American authority, it is notable that South Korea is the only American ally to hold this type of alliance partnership indicating the extent of American anxiety surrounding entrapment.

Conclusion & Implications

To summarize, prior to the institution of a bilateral asymmetric alliance, South Korea was an unreliable partner who undermined American security preferences during the Korean War (i.e., pre-treatment). It was through the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance that the United States was able to ensure dominance over South Korea in establishing a security preference and coercing South Korea to comply (i.e., the treatment). Additionally, the limited membership size reduced the number of preferences relating to alliance objectives and therefore increased the efficiency of interactions between allies. Both the limited number of actors and asymmetric distribution of power between them increased the propensity for cohesion between allies. Above all, this increased cohesion has important implications for the efficacy of the United States and South Korea to address regional security threats (i.e., post-treatment). Allies who are able to identify a security preference and appropriate means to reach that end are more likely to reliably commit to these agreements and consistently uphold defense commitments.

Chapter 6

Bilateral Symmetric Alliance: Sino-Soviet (1950-1979)

Introduction

In this section, I discuss the Sino-Soviet alliance which I classify as a bilateral symmetric alliance. I argue that bilateral symmetric alliances are less cohesive than bilateral asymmetric alliances but more cohesive compared to multilateral asymmetric alliances. This logic is based on two primary variables. First relates to alliance structure. Bilateral alliances reduce the number of preferences between allies and increases the efficiency of decision-making between allies. Rather than debating over a wide variety of preferences, bilateral alliances reduce negotiations to two actors. Second is the distribution of power between allies.

The Sino-Soviet alliance is characterized by a symmetrical distribution of power for the majority of its history, which negatively influences cohesion. This results from the lack of a hegemon within the alliance who is capable of coercing the weaker ally to comply with a security preference. In alliances characterized by symmetric distribution of power, allies are more likely to challenge the preferences of the other because they have a greater likelihood of winning when facing an actor that is their equal. Although the bilateral structure reduces the number of preferences within the alliance framework, cohesion between the Sino-Soviet alliance suffers as a result of symmetric distribution of power between allies. I demonstrate that the Sino-Soviet alliance was most cohesive when it possessed characteristics of alliance structure and power distribution (i.e., the early treatment) associated with a bilateral asymmetric alliance, as the Soviet Union was able to dictate the status quo and coerce China into compliance by threatening to cut off alliance membership benefits.

However, this cohesion weakens as China reaches relative parity with the Soviet Union, which therefore altered the power distribution between these actors, resulting in a bilateral symmetric alliance that characterized the majority of their relationship (i.e., the late treatment). Due to the costs associated with formal alliances, actors take steps to mitigate the potential for lost investment. Bilateral alliance structures increase the efficiency of consultation and decision-making between allies as the number of preferences is reduced. However, the Sino-Soviet alliance demonstrates the importance of relative power distribution within alliance structure. This alliance was most cohesive when it possessed characteristics associated with bilateral asymmetric alliances, as China frequently consulted with the Soviet Union prior to engaging in military acts and the Soviet Union was able to effectively coerce China with aid and expect credible compliance (Sheng, 1993; Zhihua and Zhihua, 2012). By the late 1950s, this alliance shifted to a bilateral symmetric alliance structure.

While still including only two actors, relative power distribution between them equalized. This significantly limited the Soviet Union's ability to restrain an aggressive China, and furthermore enticed China to challenge the status quo set by the Soviet Union (Shen and Yafeng, 2009). China increasingly challenged the Soviet Union's ideological dominance in the socialist system. This ideological competition translated into increasingly rogue acts by China and caution from the Soviet Union (Heinzig, 2015). Although the Soviet Union attempted to reign in the demands of an aggressive China, Mao continuously challenged Khrushchev's authority, leading to weakening cohesion and several international crises (i.e., post-treatment). Additionally, this case is ideal for analysis because it holds alliance structure constant while demonstrating variance in the relative power distribution between allies. From this analysis it is possible to examine changes in alliance cohesion as the hierarchical relationship associated with bilateral

asymmetric alliances disintegrated between the Soviet Union and China, resulting in these allies reaching relative power parity. I discuss this relationship further, illustrating variance in the power distribution between these allies and its influence on alliance cohesion.

I. Treatment: Early and Late Phases

Overview

I divide the treatment phase of the analysis into two stages which include the early treatment and the late treatment.⁵ The early treatment phase consists of the alliance when it demonstrated characteristics more closely associated with bilateral asymmetric alliances. This era begins just after alliance formation and continues until the mid-1950's. The late treatment phase begins shortly after the death of Josef Stalin and is characterized by Nikita Khrushchev's policy of coexistence with the West. Further, the late treatment phase demonstrates characteristics associated with a bilateral symmetric alliance, which had consequential effects on cohesion. For example, Mao Zedong launched a series of two unauthorized strikes on Taiwan without consulting the Soviet Union despite the clear repercussions the attacks had on Soviet national security. Further, China sought to challenge the Soviet Union's dominance in dictating appropriate tenets of Marxist ideology. I demonstrate these characteristics below, noting the change in cohesion resulting from the changed power distribution between allies.

Early Treatment: Alliance Formation, the Korean War, & Relative Cohesion

Sino-Soviet relations were officially established post World War II in 1950 with the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance Between the People's Republic of China

⁵ Future iterations of this paper will identify a pre-treatment phase of analysis for this which specifies the relations between the Soviet Union and China prior to the formation of their alliance and early dynamics relevant to cohesion.

and the Soviet Union. This treaty states that “the consolidation of good neighborly relations and friendship between the People’s Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics meets the vital needs” of both states. Furthermore, Article 1 establishes the defensive obligations for both members, stating, “jointly to adopt all necessary measures” necessary to secure their collective defense, and that “the other contracting party shall immediately render military and other assistance by all means at its disposal” should either be attacked by Japan or any other state allied with it. This defense clause additionally indicates that shared security preferences relating to potential aggressors was vital to their partnership, which is furthered by Article 4, which states that both parties will “consult with each other in regard to important international problems” relating to their common interests (Central Intelligence Agency, 1950). Treaty obligations include joint consultation in regard to the international actions and the costly commitment of collective defense.

I assess these mechanisms in practice and indicate that the Sino-Soviet Alliance was most cohesive between 1950 and 1955 when the Soviet Union was capable of reining in Chinese aggressive military preferences and could expect credible Chinese compliance. This period was characterized by the Korean War and significant Soviet military and economic aid to Mao’s new communist government along with Stalin’s approval of China’s entrance into the war (Conquest, 1986; Yufan and Zhai, 1990). Mao frequently sought Stalin’s advice regarding the integration of Korean troops into the Chinese army along with appropriate responses to American attack and the potential of China establishing non-aggression pacts with outside states (Telegram, Oct. 14, 1950; Telegram, Jan. 16, 1951). Despite Stalin’s adamance to remain out of the war, he consistently consoled Mao’s paranoia of an American attack, stating,

“Your observations regarding the probability of an attack by the Americans in the spring of 1953 reflect the plans of the present American command in Korea, who are operating under the leadership of the Truman government. It is fully possible that these plans will be changed by the Eisenhower government in the direction of less tension on the front of Korea. Nevertheless, you are acting correctly when you count on the worst and proceed from the probability of an attack by the Americans (Telegram, Dec. 27, 1952).”

Despite the potential blowback of increased Soviet involvement in the Korean War, Stalin sought to ease Mao’s concern and furthermore, encouraged his hostile position toward the United States which ultimately widened the war. Upon the request of Mexico to discuss a ceasefire on the Korean Peninsula at the United Nations General Assembly in 1952, Mao advised his Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai to consult with Stalin stating, “We intend to express opposition to such a variant. I ask you to consult with comrade [Stalin] about what our position should be on this question... I ask also that you consult with comrade [Stalin] about whether it is advisable for China to conclude such [non-aggression] pacts with India and Burma (Telegram, September 17, 1952).”

Mao sought assurance from Stalin regarding the alignment of their security preferences, and furthermore was willing to alter China’s diplomatic and military position to suit the requests of the Soviet Union (Korzell, 1995). Stalin’s response to Mao’s request best illustrates the cohesive dynamic between these partners, stating, “We agree with you that the proposal of the Mexicans is unacceptable, since it reflects the position of the USA in the negotiations in Korea...If the Mexicans advance their proposal in the UN, the delegation of the USSR will reject

this proposal as not corresponding to the interests of the cessation of the war in Korea.”

Regarding China’s proposed non-aggression pacts, Stalin stated, “...we completely share your point of view (Telegram, September 17, 1952).” Mao consulted with Stalin prior to participating in hostilities on the Korean Peninsula and was given permission in return for accepting Soviet neutrality. International trade restrictions pushed China to become highly dependent on the Soviet Union for economic assistance, which in turn allowed the Soviet Union to dictate security preferences of the alliance, primarily by limiting overt Chinese conflict with American allies (Hoffding, 1963). Stalin instituted mechanisms designed to restrain Mao in return for Soviet aid to prop up the Chinese economy, primarily by sending military and technical advisors to advise Chinese economic growth and by establishing military bases within China to weaken their ability to act unilaterally (Garthoff, 1963).

Late Treatment: Khrushchev’s Peaceful Coexistence & Declining Cohesion

However, Stalin’s death in 1953 sent a shock through Sino-Soviet relations. Mao’s military risks were no longer tolerated by an increasingly cautious Soviet Union under Khrushchev. A series of challenges to cohesion arose early in Khrushchev’s tenure, most notably the 1954 shelling of the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan known as the First Taiwan Strait Crisis (Scobell, 2000). Not only was this a Chinese attempt to remove the Americans from Taiwan, but it was a step that Mao took unilaterally. He did not warn or consult the Soviet Union, which was a shocking shift in position compared to Mao’s previous consultations with Stalin during the Korean War (Qimao, 1996). Rather than encouraging Mao’s aggression, Khrushchev made attempts to ease relations with the United States by ushering in policies of peaceful coexistence and de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union.

In his “Secret Speech” before a closed session of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he sharply opposed what he deemed to be “negative characteristics [of Stalin that] developed steadily and during the last years acquired an absolutely insufferable character” and “which caused untold harm to our Party (Khrushchev, 1956; Lipson, 1964).” Further stating,

“We have to consider seriously and analyze correctly this matter in order that we may preclude a possibility of a repetition in any form whatever of what took place during the life of Stalin, who absolutely did not tolerate collegiality in leadership and in work, who practiced brutal violence, not only toward everything which opposed him, but also toward that which seemed, to his capricious and despotic character, contrary to his concepts (Khrushchev, 1956).”

This speech ushered in a new era of Soviet communism, implying new security preferences and the means used to achieve these ends. Rather than accepting this change, Mao and the Chinese Communist Party issued sharp rebukes of not only Khrushchev’s speech, but of the ability of the Soviet Union to lead the international communist movement (Schecter, 1963). The Chinese Communist Party first hinted at this ideological divide that would come to characterize the majority of their alliance partnership with the Soviet Union stating,

“Sometimes, it is possible that classes [PRC and USSR] whose interests are in fundamental conflict unite to cope with their common enemy [US]. On the other hand, under specific circumstances, a certain contradiction among the people may be gradually transformed into an agnostic contradiction when one side gradually goes over to the

enemy.... Stalin's mistakes did not originate in the socialist system; it therefore follows that it is not necessary to "correct" the socialist system in order to correct these mistakes (Renmin Ribao, 1956) ..."

Rather than advance a new era of socialism, China sought to uphold the status quo under Stalin and refused to alter their policies to reflect the Soviet Union's revisionist demands. This was best demonstrated through Mao's Great Leap Forward in 1958, an economic policy closely following Stalin's failed attempt at forced collectivization in the early 1930s. Both Mao and Stalin's attempts at rapid industrialization failed and resulted in massive famines (Dikotter, 2010; Shen and Xia, 2011). As the Soviet had first experienced the failure of these policies, they openly rejected the Chinese push for policies that required what the Soviet Union deemed to be "unreal, fantastic, unfeasible tasks, to justify adventurist policy (Novosti Press Agency, 1964)," and that through these initiatives, "the Chinese splitters best show their true colors and expose themselves (Novosti Press Agency, 1964)." In addition to Mao's new economic policy, and de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union. Khrushchev ushered in policies such as peaceful coexistence with the United States which directly contradicted the expansionist movement pushed forward by the Chinese Communist Party (Khrushchev, 1959). Rather than accept the United States as a legitimate global power, China advocated for a more aggressive stance to spark international socialist revolutions by force if necessary. Following Mao's economic policy failure, he unilaterally launched the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1958, following the same tactics as in the previous crisis (Sheng, 2008).

II. Post Treatment: Symmetrical Power Distribution, Decreasing Cohesion

Overview

Through the transition to a bilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., the late treatment), the Soviet Union and China increasingly clashed over appropriate security objectives and the best methods to achieve them. For example, China unilaterally launched a series of two attacks on Taiwan in attempts to unify the Chinese people. Khrushchev repeatedly rebuked Mao for failing to consult with the Soviet Union prior to staging these attacks and for Mao's disregard for the negative implications China's actions had on the Soviet Union. Further, I demonstrate the ways in which the Soviet Union attempted to assert dominance over but failed consistently as China increasingly challenged the Soviet Union's status as the dominant ally. I discuss these events in turn and highlight notable implications for cohesion.

The Taiwan Strait Crisis: Low Cohesion

As relative power distribution shifted and China came into closer parity with the Soviet Union in 1958, China was increasingly able to challenge the Soviet Union's preferred security objective. This power parity was primarily reached through ideological means and is what led to conditions associated with a bilateral symmetrical alliance (Li, 2011). China viewed the Soviet Union as no longer capable of leading the international communist movement, and therefore challenged the Soviet Union despite the levels of economic power disparity between them. This led to decreased cohesion best illustrated in a conversation between Mao and Khrushchev regarding the status of the international system and the legitimacy of China's claim over Taiwan following the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis. Khrushchev viewed Mao's military tactics to be needlessly reckless and irresponsible considering the potential for nuclear exchange with the

United States as a result of these actions (Qimao, 1996). Khrushchev viewed the maintenance of international stability with the United States to be of greater importance relative to the question of Chinese unification, which prompted both leaders to discuss the tension between their parties after Khrushchev's meeting with Eisenhower in 1959. Mao challenged Khrushchev's position on two grounds.

First, the Taiwan question was considered to be solely a domestic issue by Mao. Therefore, attempts by Khrushchev to challenge Mao's method of unification were overturned. Furthermore, Taiwan would be handled at Chinese discretion with Chinese preferred tactics, as Mao stated, "Taiwan is an internal PRC issue. We say that we will definitely liberate Taiwan. But the roads to liberation may be different... As far as Taiwan is concerned, there was no decision at any international conference (Discussion between Khrushchev and Mao, 1959)." Attempts to discuss this issue with other international actors by Khrushchev were unsuccessful, leading to China viewing the Soviet Union as a superpower in capability, but one that lacked ideological zeal.

Mao: "...I would like to clarify right away that we did not intend to undertake any large-scale military actions in the area of Taiwan... And we believe our campaign was successful."

Khrushchev: "We hold a different opinion on this question."

Mao: "Although we fire at the off-shore islands, we will not make attempts to liberate them. We also think that the United States will not go to war because of the off-shore islands and Taiwan."

Khrushchev: "...As for the off-shore islands, if you shoot, then you ought to capture these islands, and if you do not consider necessary capturing these islands, then there is no use in firing. I do not understand this policy of yours. Frankly speaking, I thought you would take the islands and was upset when I learned that you did not take them (Discussion between Khrushchev and Mao, 1959)."

Second, Mao viewed Soviet attempts to discuss the Taiwan Strait Crises with the United States as complete betrayal and signals of Soviet hegemonic decline and therefore chose to act unilaterally. Rather than consulting and seeking approval from the Soviet Union prior to acting, China acted alone (Gurtov, 1976). This led to a sharp increase in the levels of uncertainty and therefore decrease in cohesion between allies. This logic follows as these allies could no longer identify a unified security preference, and because the Soviet Union was no longer capable of reigning in an aggressive China. When speaking on the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis, Khrushchev had no idea that Mao was currently holding five American prisoners of war still in captivity until after his meeting with President Eisenhower.

Khrushchev: "I did not even know that the PRC holds five Americans in captivity. Is this true? In the conversation with Eisenhower I only said that, as a matter of friendly advice, I could touch on the question in Beijing."

Enlai: "...All of them are spies, and, according to the Chinese law, they are subject to imprisonment. We believe that we, Chinese, let too many Americans go."

Khrushchev: “This is the first time I am hearing about this. But if you want my opinion, we, if we were you, would have acted differently... In a word, in our opinion, the Americans that you hold in prison should better be set free.”

Mao: “Of course, one can set them free or not, and we will not release Americans now, but we will do it at a more appropriate time.”

Khrushchev: “Good. This is your internal affair. We do not interfere. But your attitude and the fact that you probably took offense at us complicates the exchange of opinions. I would like to emphasize that I am not a representative of the US and not a mediator on behalf of the Americans... If I touched on this issue, I did it only because I wanted to sort it out and to lay before you our point of view, since this issue stirs up the international situation.

Mao: “That means it complicates life for the Americans.”

Khrushchev: “This issue also complicates our life (Discussion between Khrushchev and Mao, 1959).”

The lack of transparency between these allies led to disconnect in cohesion as they were unable to agree on security preferences because of asymmetrical information. China’s refusal to provide the Soviet Union with information pertaining to American captives is representative of a broader trend in Sino-Soviet relations. The Soviet Union was attempting to balance its role as an international superpower while also working to appease an aggressive China to avoid conflict within the socialist state system and the United States (Goldstein, 1991). In regard to establishing stability within East Asia, Khrushchev reprimanded Mao’s inability to stick to a consistent policy

position which then created problems for the Soviet Union internationally. Khrushchev stated to Mao in regard to Taiwan,

“You always refuse to work out a policy on this question that we can understand. You might think that we interfere in your internal affairs, but we only express our considerations. In this regard, I would remark that we do not know what policy you will have on this issue tomorrow.... The problem is that not only does the world public opinion not know what you might undertake tomorrow, but also we, your allies do not know (Discussion between Khrushchev and Mao, 1959).”

The Soviet Union’s inability to understand the foreign policy position of their ally is highly problematic for cohesion, even more so from the position of a bilateral symmetric alliance structure. Although the number of actors was limited, which increases the efficiency of interactions and decision-making, the inability of the Soviet Union to reign in the aggressive security preferences of China weakened cohesion. China viewed itself to be the superior communist power ideologically, and therefore refused to acquiesce to the Soviet Union’s policy of peaceful coexistence (Li, 2011). The Soviet Union was pushed into a difficult position because of the nature of the bipolar international system during this period as it was more difficult to punish the rogue behavior of their ally. Rather than signal division within the international communist movement, Khrushchev attempted to coerce Mao as an equal. Khrushchev lost additional leverage with Mao as he ended Soviet assistance to fund Chinese nuclear development that had begun in the 1950s (Chang, 1988; Gobarev, 1999). Khrushchev’s policy of peaceful coexistence, arms control talks with the West, and Mao’s recklessness led to

him ending Soviet nuclear assistance by the mid 1960s. Alliance cohesion weakened between these allies as relative power parity between them implies the ability of allies to challenge the status quo if it is unsatisfactory to their immediate security preferences, regardless of the collective preferences of the alliance. Relations between these allies hit an all time low at a border clash along the Amur River, where both sides engaged in a series of skirmishes over the course of a seven month period (Kuisong, 2000). Sino-Soviet alliance cohesion continued to weaken throughout the 1960s and 1970s as bilateral relations with the United States began to thaw for both states.

Conclusion

China characterized the Soviet Union as “revisionist traitors (Memorandum, 1967)” as the Soviet Union took greater steps to ease relations with the United States including the signing of the Test Ban Treaty (1963), Nonproliferation Treaty (1968), and Salt I Treaty (1972). The spirit of these agreements to limit arms and therefore reduce the potential for nuclear conflict was contrary to the militaristic spirit of socialism advanced by the Chinese Communist Party (Schwelb, 1964; Joyner, 2011; Chaimpan, 2018). As the Soviet Union fell into economic decline and hardship, the United States offered itself as a viable future economic partner for China. President Nixon visited China in 1972 to discuss the possibility of formal diplomatic relations with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. China signed the Shanghai Communique with the United States in 1972 as a step toward formal relations (Bernkopf, 2005). The document does not explicitly discuss Taiwanese sovereignty, but states, “The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China (Shanghai Communique, 1972).” This statement allowed relations between the US

and China to progress bilaterally, reducing China's need to rely on the Soviet Union for economic assistance. Formal relations were established between the US and China in 1979, which furthered their economic partnership (Lardy, 1995). Additionally, Sino-Soviet relations were terminated in 1979 after their alliance treaty expiration date. Rather than seek a treaty renewal, both allies sought the improvement of outside relations with the United States rather than extending their costly alliance commitments.

To summarize, early alliance relations are characterized by conditions associated with bilateral asymmetric alliances. During this era, the Soviet Union was effective in dictating a security preference and ensuring that China complied with this end. For example, Mao consistently deferred to Stalin's judgement during China's participation in the Korean War. However, this relationship changes following the death of Stalin and Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence with the West. Rather than accepting the new Soviet policy, China challenged the ability of the Soviet Union to assume authority within the alliance, especially in regard to ideology. This in turn, negatively influenced cohesion as allies were unable to agree on a security preference and means to this end, rendering the later relations of the Sino-Soviet alliance as incohesive.

Chapter 7

Multilateral Asymmetric Alliance: NATO (1949-Present)

Introduction

I classify the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a multilateral asymmetric alliance. Multilateral alliances are less cohesive than bilateral alliances because of the relationship between membership size and the efficiency of interactions. Organizations with large membership bodies imply an increased likelihood that individual member preferences will conflict, decreasing the propensity for cohesion and increasing the likelihood for collective action problems as allies are unable to agree on a single preference and strategy to meet this end. Despite challenges associated with multilateral alliances, asymmetric power distribution between allies can moderate some of these effects as a dominant ally can set a security preference and coerce other allies to comply. Although, weaker allies have an increased ability to challenge the dominant ally through bandwagoning as membership size increases. Additionally, as relative power parity decreases between allies, weaker allies are further able to challenge the dominant ally in setting the security preference, entailing American entrapment the provision of aid to allies. I discuss these further dynamics below.

Prior to alliance formation (i.e., pre-treatment) the United States was unable to persuade European states to collectively mobilize against the Soviet Union due to a lack of European economic and military capacity and differing preferences as to what mobilization against the Soviet Union should look like. Through the establishment of NATO (i.e., treatment), the United States was able to rely on coercion rather than persuasion by threatening to cut off membership benefits including the distribution of military and economic aid to its European allies.

Ultimately, through the institution of a multilateral asymmetric alliance, the United States established itself as the dominant ally based on its relative economic and military strength and was therefore able to set the collective security preference of the alliance. However, as the United States continued to devote resources to rebuilding Europe after World War II to protect against the threat of communist expansionism, European states became increasingly capable of challenging the United States in dictating the collective security preference of the alliance, therefore attempting to entrap the United States further into regional conflicts such as the dispute between the United Kingdom and France over post-war European hegemony (Ellison, 2006).

While the United States still maintains the upper hand in managing alliance preferences, the increased ability of weaker allies to challenge these preferences weakens cohesion (i.e., post treatment). These dynamics are demonstrated regularly in NATO's history as European allies formed coalitions to leverage additional alliance membership benefits from the United States in the form of military and economic aid, such as early European refusal to expand the scope of NATO to states outside West Europe as a means to ensure an uninterrupted flow of American military and economic aid (Hatzivassiliou, 2014). However, as the United States continued to devote resources to rebuilding Europe after World War II to protect against the threat of communist expansionism, European states became increasingly capable of challenging the United States in dictating the collective security preference of the alliance, implying a moral hazard. For example, the United Kingdom and France resented American "abandonment" following their forced withdrawal from the Middle East during the 1956 Suez Crisis (Gorst and Johnman, 1997). Although the US led efforts to drive the European powers out of the Middle East, both allies challenged American action as a means to ensure continued American hegemony within the alliance structure at the expense of allied well-being (Richardson, 1992).

Additionally, de Gaulle withdrew from NATO's integrated military command structure in 1966 over American refusal to support French aspirations for a nuclear naval fleet (Wenger, 2004). Along with demonstrating these dynamics, this case is ideal for analysis based on two primary reasons.

First, the United States has maintained its status as the dominant ally since NATO's formation in 1949 based on its military, economic, and political strength relative to its European allies. This allows for variance in alliance cohesion to be assessed as membership grew throughout its history while holding the dominant ally constant. Second, NATO was negotiated against the backdrop of two multilateral symmetric alliances in Europe, including the Brussels Treaty (1948-1954) which eventually became irrelevant, and the Scandinavian Pact (1949) which failed to come to fruition (Wigforss, 1949; Baylis, 1984). I show that these multilateral symmetric alliances included allies equally matched in relative power distribution, which therefore weakened their ability to agree on security preferences and appropriate means to reach these ends (i.e., alliance cohesion). Cohesion weakened as a result of two main reasons. First, alliances such as the Brussels Treaty and Scandinavian Pact featured a large membership size, which in turn implied an increase in preferences among allies and an increase in the likelihood that these preferences would conflict. Second, these alliances lacked a hegemon capable of establishing a security preference and coercing allies to comply. Therefore, these alliances were largely ineffectual and were absorbed into NATO's multilateral asymmetric framework which is comparatively more cohesive. I divide the analysis into three parts considering relations between the United States and Europe prior to alliance formation (pre-treatment), the establishment of a formal alliance between these actors (treatment), and the influence of alliance structure and relative power distribution between allies on alliance cohesion (post treatment).

I. Pre-Treatment: Post World War II and Rebuilding Europe

Overview

Prior to the formation of a formal alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), both the United States and Europe were adapting to a post-World War II reality. Following WWII, all actors sought to deter Soviet expansionism, however they varied significantly in how they wanted to achieve this preference. I demonstrate that this era is pivotal in establishing American hegemony to ensure European economic and military recovery and an early framework for the alliance. Most importantly, the United States would not pursue an alliance agreement with Western Europe without the institutionalization of American authority as a means to streamline the efficiency of decision-making and to ensure an American ability to dictate a collective security preference.

Post-World War II: Varying Preferences for Alignment

Following World War II, the United States was attempting to rebuild Europe politically, economically, and militarily. The United States' primary security concern was to limit Soviet expansion, whereas Western Europe was concerned with rebuilding their lost state capacity (Giovanni, 1996; Gaddis, 1982). While Europe recognized the threat of communism to the success of democracy and market revival, they were unable to face this threat with broken states. Rather, economic and military aid were essential to European recovery which placed the United States at the center of alliance negotiations, as it was capable of widely distributing aid and upholding multiple commitments simultaneously (Hogan, 1987; Kunz, 1997). American interest in European recovery was furthered by the passing of the Vandenberg Resolution in 1948, which allowed for "progressive development and other collective arrangements for individual and

collective self defense in accordance with the purposes, principles, and provisions of the [United Nations] Charter (S. Res. 239, 1948).”

Therefore, early NATO relations were centered on the United States as the dominant actor working to compel Western European states to join a mutual defense agreement that reflected American interests in return for significant membership benefits (Hudson, 1977). Although alliance formation is costly, reports from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Forrestal) emphasized that “the idea of collective defense embodied in the proposed North Atlantic Pact is an essential feature of a United States policy directed toward preservation of our national security,” indicating that American security was tied to European stability (FRUS, January 6, 1949). Despite clear strategic objectives, the United States was cautious in revealing the gravity of this connection to European states out of fear that they would drive a tougher bargain in an attempt to extract more favorable agreement terms. In addition to concerns over alliance cost, the United States was working to unite a divided Europe (Hitchcock, 1998). Previous European alliance commitments had been problematic for establishing a regional defense agreement.

A proposed Scandinavian Pact (Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland) and the Brussels Treaty (United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) included small coalitions of European states, furthering the division within post war Europe. Both pacts were multilateral symmetric alliances designed for collective defense as they included multiple actors equally matched in relative power distribution, leading to weakened cohesion. The United States successfully coerced both groups to commit to NATO membership by refusing to provide economic and military aid unless they became NATO members (Gordon, 1956; Kaplan, 1984). The Scandinavian Pact never came into fruition as actors were unable to agree on appropriate

defense obligations of members and the right of members to join outside collective defense agreements (i.e., NATO) to further their security. Sweden was the primary proponent for a Scandinavian defense pact and insisted on complete member neutrality, with Danish reports to the US stating that the “Swedes would not agree to joining the North Atlantic Pact and all Swedish obligations under under regional pact, if it comes into force, would be dissolved if any member joined North Atlantic Pact. In short, 100 percent Swedish neutrality (FRUS, Jan. 10, 1949).” Norway and Denmark furthered the division within the Scandinavian bloc by making their membership contingent upon the pact receiving military assistance from the United States (FRUS, Jan. 28, 1949). The United States cut off the prospect for military aid unless these states committed to NATO, stating, “There was little hope of [the] US undertaking to supply arms to such a neutral arrangement (FRUS, Jan. 10, 1949).” Further, the United States questioned the viability of any Scandinavian defense agreement in confronting the Soviet Union that did not include the US, with a report from the American Ambassador in Sweden to the Secretary of State (Acheson) stating,

“All western military observers here are agreed that Sweden’s ability to defend itself, let alone Denmark and Norway, against any Russian attack is at best limited to a period of weeks. It is fantastic to conceive that a Swedish commitment to defend Norway and Denmark has any basis of reality unless coordinated with the west. Surely the realists in the Kremlin would never consider a Swedish commitment to defend Norway and Denmark as any serious deterrent for any plans in that regard the Soviet may have. Whatever treaty commitment Sweden might make to defend Denmark, I am certain that

Sweden would have neither the ability nor the will to make such commitment really effective (FRUS, Jan. 14, 1949).”

The concern over lack of American aid and Swedish refusal to compromise encouraged Denmark, Norway, and Finland to abandon prospects for a Scandinavian pact and to pursue negotiations to join the North Atlantic Treaty (Zartman, 1954; Petersen, 1982). Along with the failure of a Scandinavian pact, other alliance agreements including the Brussels Treaty, became largely irrelevant under the greater protections provided through NATO membership. In a letter to Secretary Acheson regarding the relationship among Brussels Treaty members, the American Ambassador in Belgium wrote,

“Spaak [Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs] says London meeting [of] Foreign Ministers [in the] Brussels Pact very satisfactory as to climate and general progress. In confidence, he says he is very disturbed [regarding the] lack [of] real forward movement on military matters. After ten months existence, he considers little accomplished to increase actual military strength [of the] Western Union... Although plans have been drawn for defense on Rhine and several high command staffs and headquarters established, there still seem to be too many generals and no armies whatever (FRUS, Feb. 2, 1949).”

Although members of the Brussels Pact were able to establish an alliance, they were unable to organize and advance their collective security as they lacked a hegemon capable of enforcing a security objective. Additionally, membership with the Brussels Pact lacked the

military and economic benefits that could be achieved through partnership with the United States (Baylis, 1984; Baylis, 1993). Rather than continue an inefficient defense agreement, members of the Brussels Pact agreed to pursue negotiations with the US relating to a larger defense agreement encompassing Western Europe (FRUS, Mar. 1, 1949). The benefits provided to members of the Brussels Pact became largely irrelevant as their membership in NATO promised them more, encouraging them to abandon previous pact in favor of a united Europe solidified through a multilateral asymmetric alliance.

Early Alliance Negotiations: Qualifications for Membership

Early alliance negotiations centered around themes of burden sharing, qualifications for membership, and appropriate time lengths for alliance commitments (Heiss and Papacosma, 2008). Discussions between foreign officials charged with negotiating a deal highlight a series of mixed motives. First, Europe desired to extract as many benefits as possible from the United States while also recognizing the importance of improving regional defense. Second, while the US sought to control the cost of its security provisions, American security was tied to the defense of Western Europe (Kaplan, 1984; Oneal, 1990; Hartley and Sandler, 1999). To alleviate concerns relating to the cost of alliance commitments, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom sought to limit the number of potential members to the pact in recognition that a “small group would make for better efficiency or the military planning more effective (FRUS, Jan. 3, 1949).” To ensure progress toward this goal the United States was willing to form a multilateral alliance with select European states assumed to be most immediately threatened by the possibility of a Soviet invasion. These states included Western and Northern Europe, and Scandinavian membership was considered to be vital in deterring Soviet invasion (Stoler, 1975;

Lundestad, 1986). American estimates placed Finland and Denmark as likely first targets by the Soviets if they attempted to invade Western Europe due to their close physical proximity and lack of military capacity to fend off an invasion (FRUS, Jan.6, 1949). Additionally, the ability to convince Scandinavian states to join the alliance would encourage other states of strategic value to join the partnership as well. However, the exclusion of Mediterranean, Eurasian, and Middle Eastern States became a point of contention (McGhee, 1990; Calandri, 1992).

Italy pushed hard for membership during alliance negotiations, arguing that its domestic security was ultimately tied with Western European defense. Italy's push for membership led to opposing coalitions forming within the Atlantic bloc prior to NATO's establishment (FRUS, Jan. 5, 1949). France supported Italian membership in the pact because of its shared frontier with Italy. Should France be threatened with a land invasion by the Soviet Union, Italy would act as a tripwire for collective defense initiation prior to France being attacked (FRUS, Mar. 2, 1949). The primary opponents of Italian membership included the United Kingdom and Belgium based on two factors. First, Italian inclusion in the pact would widen the scope beyond West Europe, implying that states outside of the European bloc could lobby for membership, expanding the geographic scope of the alliance and in turn the distribution of American aid (FRUS, Jan. 7, 1949). Both the United States and Western Europe were concerned about the cost of American commitment. The United States was concerned with Europeans becoming overly dependent upon American aid, whereas Europe feared that an increase in American obligations elsewhere would restrict the flow of military and economic aid for their own recovery (Hogan, 1987).

Second, admitting Italy to the pact would weaken the position of refusing the possibility of Turkish, Greek, and Iranian membership who had all expressed interest in joining the alliance (FRUS, Jan. 14, 1949). Essentially, this logic is based on the finite nature of American

commitment. An expansion in membership into regions beyond Western Europe would encourage a larger number of actors to join the pact. As alliance membership grew, so too would American defense commitments and the need for American aid. Given that American military and economic aid is finite, an increased membership size beyond Western Europe would result in smaller individual allocations, defense commitments and aid from the United States. Ultimately, Western Europe was unwilling to share American security. In addition to concerns over aid distribution, many membership requests were viewed as trivial. For example, the Joint Chiefs of Staff reported that Italian membership in the pact would be purely political and that, “There is no military necessity for Italy to be included in the North Atlantic pact (FRUS, Jan. 6, 1949).” Defining the scope of where, under what conditions, and how security would be provided to allies created early coalitions that left lasting fragments in the eventual alliance structure.

Early Alliance Negotiations: Burden Sharing & Length of Commitments

The US explicitly linked military and economic aid not only to NATO membership, but to continued adherence to American preferences even after joining, as the Acting Secretary of State (Lovett) wrote,

“...should any member of the North Atlantic Pact be uncooperative in implementing measures recommended for the assurance of the security of the North Atlantic area, this would undoubtedly be a factor taken into account by this Government in responding to any request for military assistance which that member might have advanced (FRUS, Jan. 17, 1949).”

The United States was concerned that continued aid distribution to European allies after alliance establishment would enable them to challenge American objectives. Therefore, the US explicitly linked military and economic benefits to both joining the alliance and continuing to adhere to American preferences (Leffler, 1988). This dynamic is best demonstrated in negotiations pertaining to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty regarding collective defense obligations and the treaty language relating to military assistance. Early drafts proposed by Europeans insisted on stating in Article 5, “that an attack on one would be considered an attack on all,” creating problems in the American Senate. In meetings with Secretary Acheson, senators were concerned over the cost of American commitment and ensuring that American defense would not be provided *carte blanche* to European allies. American senators instead proposed Article 5 revisions that read, “an attack on one would be regarded as a threat to the peace of all.” To appease European allies to ratify the treaty, the United States accepted their proposed language for Article 5 under the condition that, “the determination of the type of action should be a matter for individual determination (FRUS, Feb. 14, 1949).”

This understanding effectively left the United States an out should European allies engage in behavior not in line with American objectives. Further, it signaled to European members that any unilateral action without American approval risked losing aid and support from the United States (Kaplan, 1984). However, this understanding also weakens the cohesion of the alliance as it encourages collective action problems by enabling allies to contribute to the security of the group at their individual discretion. This understanding therefore increases the incentive to renege on alliance obligations. In addition to challenges associated with defining the collective defense obligations, treaty language regarding the type of aid distributed through the alliance agreement was also a point of contention.

The United States insisted that assistance provided under the alliance be termed as “reciprocal aid” implying that Europeans would be expected to bear costs consistent with their abilities to contribute. In outlining the provisions for continued American aid to European states, the Secretary Acheson wrote,

“We would expect reciprocal assistance from them [Europeans] to the greatest extent practicable; and legislation would be necessary to provide significant amounts of military equipment but the President would not be prepared to recommend it unless the forgoing conditions had been met... Both the likelihood of such legislation being passed and the size of appropriations for its implementation will be materially influenced by the reaction in Congress to such information as it may be available concerning the willingness and ability of the recipient nations to help not only themselves but also each other in order to reduce a minimum the supplemental assistance that they may find it necessary to request from us. It has constantly been made clear to them, and must constantly be reiterated, that US assistance can only supplement and can in no sense replace the maximum efforts of the recipients to help themselves and each other (FRUS, Feb. 16, 1949).”

Consistent with this message, European allies were told explicitly that the “US would expect WU [Western Union⁶] with close cooperation from US to work out [the] most effective use of US dollars with US having final say (FRUS, Mar. 11, 1949).” American insistence on controlling aid distribution to European allies created friction within the bloc. Meetings between the

⁶ Also known as Brussels Treaty Organization.

American Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Douglas) and the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Bevin) indicate European anxiety regarding American expectations of “reciprocal aid.” In reports to Secretary Acheson describing the lack of reference to ‘reciprocal aid’ in proposed British drafts of the treaty, Douglas wrote, “From the standpoint [of the] US, principle was not identical of that of mutual aid. Bevin said that they had difficulty on this point because they could not be sure what US means by ‘reciprocal aid’ and also could not anticipate signing the Atlantic Pact (FRUS, Mar. 16, 1949).” Bevin further argued that the United States overemphasized its role in alliance negotiations and in the future of European security. Instead of including references to “reciprocal aid,” Europeans lobbied for terminology along the lines of “mutual aid,” reflecting that despite significant American assistance, “WU [Western Union] powers were in the front line and were accepting grave risks (FRUS, Mar. 16, 1949).”

In recognition of the division created within the North Atlantic bloc because of the debate over stating reciprocal or mutual aid, the United States again gave into European demands because of its need for a strategic foothold in Europe to address the growing threat of the Soviet Union (Kaplan, 1984). Essentially, from the American perspective, the ends justified the means. Although the United States could again threaten to cut off needed aid to Europe, the long-term consequences of not establishing an alliance system in Europe risked future Soviet expansion which was deemed more detrimental to American interests. American acquiescence represents the lack of control the US had in dictating security objectives without a formal alliance framework. Europe was able to credibly challenge the United States and derail negotiations, undermining American security preferences. The US therefore gave into European demands as a way to speed up alliance negotiations that would put in place a mechanism for American hegemony through the establishment of NATO. Once this alliance was officially established, the

United States could funnel aid to European allies and coerce allies to fall in line with American objectives with the threat of cutting off aid. However, the inability to agree on member obligations in carrying out objectives relating to European security is problematic for alliance cohesion. Allies who are unable to agree on what their responsibilities are unlikely to agree on best methods for combating threats to their common security. While the initiation of a multilateral asymmetric alliance moderated some of these effects, allies were still able to challenge the preferences of the United States and became increasingly able to do so as European economies grew along with the addition of new members, increasing the potential for collective action problems. I discuss these dynamics further in the treatment (alliance establishment) and post treatment (period after alliance established) phases of the analysis.

II. Treatment: Treaty Ratification

Overview

Through the establishment of a multilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., the treatment), Western Europe was assured American protection from Soviet expansionism while the United States was able to establish itself as the dominant protector of democratic and capitalist states. Having a foothold in Western Europe enabled the United States to expand its military reach to the Soviet frontier and therefore increase its ability to deter Soviet aggression. American hegemony with the alliance was codified through the North Atlantic Treaty and in the establishment of NATO's bureaucratic structure. The United States used this institutionalized dominance as a means to ensure compliance among allies toward American security objectives. I discuss the alliance treaty and bureaucratic structure of NATO in turn, and therefore highlight notable components which influence the propensity for cohesion between allies.

The North Atlantic Treaty

NATO was officially ratified April 4, 1949 in Washington D.C. by the twelve original members which include: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Article 5 establishes the collective defense responsibilities of allies' party to the treaty, stating, "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against all," reflecting European insistence on this language (North Atlantic Treaty, 1949). In addition, Europeans were able to ensure the inclusion of Article 3, which promises "continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid," to member states (North Atlantic Treaty, 1949). This article again reflects European preferences as the American desired term of "reciprocal aid" was dropped for the European favored "mutual aid." The use of "mutual aid" implies that actors are contributing to the benefit of each other simultaneously according to their individual abilities, whereas "reciprocal aid" implies a binding obligation for repaying aid in the same amount or method in which it was originally distributed.

The discrepancy over this terminology reflects challenges in identifying appropriate methods of burden sharing and is a theme that remains constant throughout NATO's history despite the establishment of a formal alliance enabling the United States to operate within a framework that legitimized their decision-making authority over European and North Atlantic security. Despite American concessions in regard to treaty language, the United States was able to ensure the establishment of a mechanism to legitimize their authority over the pact in Article 9, which establishes a Council to "recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5 (North Atlantic Treaty, 1949)." Additionally, the Supreme Allied Commander is always an

American who is supported by a European second in command, furthering the American control over alliance security preferences.

The North Atlantic Council & NATO's Bureaucratic Structure

The North Atlantic Council is the principal decision-making body in NATO and includes subsidiary bodies including the Defense Committee, Military Committee, and Regional Planning committees⁷. It is important to note that the United States was the first chairman for all committees, effectively implementing an American monopoly on control over NATO decision-making from the start of the alliance.⁸ In addition, the Regional Planning Committees were composed of small groups of states who shared immediate physical borders and who were most directly linked in their immediate security. The United States is the only member to be part of all Regional Planning Committees, effectively ensuring that the US has decision-making power in all matters of European security (FRUS, Document 188; Gallis, 2003). This furthered the United States' ability to use NATO as a mechanism through which to institute control, and this influence was especially pronounced due to the severe disparity between American military and economic power relative to its European allies. This power disparity indicates that while Europeans may not have been in complete agreement with American objectives, their ability to challenge this dominance was quite limited. European attempts to challenge the United States under the alliance framework risked their ability to continue their receipt of alliance member benefits,

⁷ The bureaucratic arm of NATO has grown since 1949. The current command structure is divided into two main components: Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation. See North Atlantic Treaty Organization for further bureaucratic breakdown (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49608.htm).

⁸ The Chairmanship of the Defense, Military, and Regional Planning Committees rotate annually. All states hold membership status in the Defense and Military Committees. Regional Committees are composed of smaller groups of states who generally share contiguous borders or are representative of a particular area within Europe, such as Scandinavia or the Mediterranean (FRUS, Document 188).

namely military and economic aid. The small size of initial members relative to NATO's current membership body which includes a total of 29 states also implied a greater efficiency in interactions among allies and decision-making procedures. In addition to American dominance in NATO bureaucracy, the United States was initially assigned and still maintains its position as "depository government," placing the US in charge of extending membership offers to outside states and coordination responsibilities for all committees. Despite American prominence early in NATO relations, its position has been challenged by three primary factors, leading to weakened overall alliance cohesion.

Implications of Alliance Structure on Power Asymmetry and Cohesion

First, multilateral asymmetric alliances are the most cohesive when the power asymmetry between actors is most severe. The United States was at a clear economic and military advantage relative to Europe following World War II, enabling it to set security preferences and coerce compliance among allies through threats to cut off membership benefits. However, the American distribution of aid consistent with Article 3 of the NATO treaty enabled European allies to increase their political, economic, and military capacities, enabling them to more directly challenge the United States in setting common security preferences and means to reach those ends, entailing a moral hazard in aid distribution. Second, the continued addition of new members to NATO decreased the efficiency of interactions and decision-making between allies despite bureaucratic structures designed to avoid these issues. An increase in the number of actors implies an increased likelihood of collective action problems resulting in attempts to carry out objectives related to collective defense. Third, the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 signified an end to the primary security threat NATO was created to protect against and allies varied in

how they identified new security concerns (Asmus, et al., 1993) along with the level of threat they attached to these concerns, despite continued American hegemony within the alliance. I discuss these dynamics further in the post-treatment phase of the analysis.

III. Post-Treatment: The Cold War and The Post-Soviet Era

Overview

Following the establishment of a multilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., post-treatment), I demonstrate that cohesion between allies suffers as a result of the increasingly large size of the membership body within the scope of analysis. However, the asymmetric power distribution between allies moderates some of these challenges. The United States as the dominant ally within the alliance is able to set security objectives and coerce weaker allies to comply with this end. I demonstrate that even when provocative allies challenge the United States, such as France removing itself from NATO's integrated military command structure in 1966, they continue to remain within the scope of the alliance framework. Further, these acts of defiance are not permanent, as France rejoined the integrated command structure in 2009.

Early Challenges: Aid Conditionality & American Dominance

Immediately following the treaty ratification in 1949, challenges relating to the conditionality of aid provided to allies under Article 3 arose. Members of the Brussels Treaty directly requested aid in the spirit of "self-help and mutual aid," consistent with the treaty, from the United States (FRUS, Apr. 5, 1949). In response, the United States agreed to provide this aid while emphasizing the importance that "Pact members will extend to each other such reciprocal assistance (FRUS, Apr. 6, 1949)." Although the US agreed to provide this aid, it did so with

strings attached. The United States expected that Europeans would comply with their security preferences in return for the receipt of this aid. However, European states still challenged American leadership and ultimately threatened the unity of the North Atlantic bloc. In particular, the mistrust between the British and French was leveraged by both actors in an attempt to extract more aid from the United States, especially at the other's expense. Ambassador Douglas wrote to Secretary Acheson that American failure to pass legislation authorizing the distribution of aid to the British government,

“Would come as a real shock to the British, for it would again give rise to the grave doubts as to consistency and reliability of US in international affairs... The British ‘will to resist’ Russia is so strong that it would take much more than one shock to affect it. But the British do not have the same confidence in France, where such a shock may have serious psychological consequences (FRUS, Apr. 26, 1949).”

While the British distrusted the French will to resist communism, the French did not trust British motives in attempting to extract aid from the United States. President De Gaulle's government viewed British lobbying efforts as a means to undermine France's recovery. The American Ambassador in France (Caffery) wrote to Secretary Acheson describing French anxiety, stating,

“This feeling of insecurity rests on a widespread realization of France's military weakness and of act that this weakness cannot be remedied without US help... While agreeing that the pact itself ‘was meritorious and salutary demonstration on part of US

toward French, De Gaulle went on to say that to have practical value it must be accompanied by commitments re American aid. This was coupled with his usual insistence on France's role as center of European defense and he repeated emphatically that France should 'for the moment reserve its overall judgement on Atlantic Pact (FRUS, Apr. 7, 1949)."

Early coalition formation led by the friction between the British and French impressed the importance of ensuring American control on the decision-making of the alliance as a means to ensure that minor divisions would not undermine the purpose of the agreement (Sandler, 1988). Although Western Europe was united by a collective defense agreement, historic feelings of distrust and animosity still threatened relations (Bull, 1983). The ability to credibly deny members alliance membership benefits was the most viable tool available to the United States to accomplish this objective. In conversations between the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) and Secretary Acheson, Kennan stated in regard to early issues associated with inefficient military planning,

“Here considerations of national pride and prestige are going to enter in, and we are going to have a hard time getting some of the others to accept realistic arrangements in which their own roles, and their own right to be informed on all aspects of strategic planning, must necessarily be limited. Our position in trying to negotiate such arrangements will be very seriously weakened if we find ourselves unable to promise military assistance to the other governments in question. Our whole position in argument must rest largely on the predominance of our contribution and on what we are being

asked to do for the others. If we have nothing to give, we can hardly expect the others to accede to our views (FRUS, Jun. 1, 1949).”

This American insistence on maintaining dominance within the alliance through threatening to cut off aid distribution alienated many European states relating to the level of inequality between them (Eznack, 2012). These early tensions laid the foundation for later problems to arise. Although European states lacked the capacity to credibly challenge the United States immediately following alliance formation, as relations progressed and their economic and military capacities increased, they lodged greater complaints toward the US. Most notably, France resented what they viewed to be American abandonment during the 1956 Suez Crisis⁹, as the United States coerced the United Kingdom and France to withdraw its military from the Suez Canal following conflict surrounding Egyptian nationalization attempts (Furniss, 1961; Jones, 2003).

In addition to threatening the continued distribution of aid, the United States was able to further leverage its military power against the UK and France through NATO’s Military Command Structure, of which the US effectively controlled. Although the British agreed to fall in line with American demands, French insubordination continued. Following the Suez Crisis, French Foreign Minister Pineau stated, “The main victim of the affair was the Atlantic alliance... If our allies have abandoned us in difficult, even dramatic circumstances, they would be capable of doing so again... (Kaplan, 1991).” In relation to abandonment concerns, in 1963 President De Gaulle’s anger surrounding American refusal to allow the French military to pursue a nuclear

⁹ Began October 29, 1956 after Israel, joined by French and British military forces, invaded Egypt following Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser’s nationalization of the Suez Canal. Contention primarily derived from the Canal’s value for transporting oil. Conflict ended in Egyptian victory with French and British withdrawal of their troops 1956-1957 (Gorst and Johnman, 1997).

fleet independent of the United States pushed NATO's integrated military structure to its breaking point (Ellison, 2006).

French Belligerence: Weakened Command Structure

French desire for an independent nuclear program was centered on De Gaulle's distrust toward the American policy of flexible response and of the nuclear umbrella provided to its NATO allies. He therefore announced French withdrawal from NATO's Military Command Structure in 1966¹⁰ (Tanner, 1966). Although still technically a member of the alliance, by removing itself from NATO Military Command, France had greater autonomy in its military decision-making despite threatening the continued flow of military aid from the United States (Bozo, 2001). This event highlights a lack of cohesion as allies were in agreement that the primary threat to their collective defense was the Soviet Union, but they were unable to agree on the best methods to address this threat. Despite American relative strength, the US was unable to stop France from leaving NATO's military structure, hurting American image as the dominant ally within NATO (Middleton, 1966). In response to French actions, President Johnson sent a letter to De Gaulle, writing,

“The course you propose will so seriously affect the security and well-being of citizens of all the allied states that I felt it imperative to seek the counsel of other Treaty members before replying in detail... Indeed we find it difficult to believe that France, which has made a unique contribution to Western security and development, will long remain withdrawn in the common

¹⁰ France later rejoined NATO's Integrated Military Command in 2009 under President Sarkozy based on the argument that France should have greater decision-making power in NATO military decision-making (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7937666.stm>).

affairs and responsibilities of the Atlantic. As our old friend and ally her place will await France whenever she decides to resume her leading role (FRUS, Mar. 22, 1966).”

Following French Departure from NATO Military Command, the bloc moved its headquarters from France to Belgium led by a push from the United States in rejection of French defiance (Wells, 1966). Additionally, the United States sought to assert tighter control over the alliance, most notably following the fall of the Soviet Union and the high influx of new NATO members from Eastern Europe (Asmus, et al., 1993). The fall of the Soviet Union eliminated the primary security concern that NATO was created to protect against. The United States worked to efficiently dictate the new security preferences of the alliance, most notably achieving Eastern European political stability. Ethnic tensions long suppressed by the Soviet Union eventually boiled over, leading to mass violence in the Balkans (Zagorcheva, 2012). The United States played a key role in providing air and military support for leading a series of air strikes in two separate instances, demonstrating the extent of American hegemony within the alliance framework following the end of the Cold War.

Post-Cold War: An Increase in Membership & Collective Action Problems

First in Bosnia and Herzegovina named Operation Deliberate Force in 1995, and second in Yugoslavia in March 1999, named Operation Allied Force. Both attacks were conducted in attempt to halt ethnic violence to lay foundations for the brokering of peace deals (Owen, 2001; Fenrick, 2001). However, NATO allies struggled to achieve consensus regarding what role the alliance should play in stopping the violence along with what individual member contributions should consist of for this effort. This division led to an inability to achieve the unanimous

consent of all members needed to engage in the conflict militarily (Jakobsen, 2008). Further, attempts by the United States to push the alliance toward engagement on humanitarian grounds were met with resistance. After the fall of the Soviet Union, many European states significantly reduced their defense spending, leaving the United States as the only ally capable of leading and carrying out the majority of these operations. While this power asymmetry was advantageous for the United States in dictating the security preference of the alliance, the number of actors now within the alliance left significant room for collective action problems.

This led to NATO becoming a “two-tiered” alliance, with the US engaging in military combat and Europeans following up with peacekeeping missions (Schmidt, 2007). It was eventually agreed to allow for air strikes with member contributions at individual discretion along with strict rules of engagement (Lambeth, 2001). Although these operations were successful, the lack of organization surrounding their implementation along with discrepancies in member contributions challenged the ability of NATO to cohesively define its objectives for these missions and identify appropriate methods for carrying them out. NATO membership had significantly grown¹¹ at the time of these operations, decreasing the efficiency of interactions and further challenging the ability of the United States to effectively coerce all states to defer to American security preferences. These organizational challenges along with closer inter-European integration continued to pose problems for the successful execution of NATO strategic objectives following the September 11 attacks and efforts in counterterrorism.

Collective action problems became more pronounced as NATO membership size continued to grow and Europe had little to contribute to collective defense. Despite Article 5

¹¹ NATO included 16 members in 1995 with the inclusion of Greece, Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955), and Spain (1982). In 1990, the unification of Germany incorporated the former Soviet satellite of East Germany into the alliance. In 1999, NATO membership grew to 20 with the addition of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm).

being invoked for the first time following 9/11, the cohesion of the alliance was challenged on two fronts (Axelrod and Borzutzky, 2006). First, the alliance was required to adapt to new security threats beyond European and North American borders. The lack of experience actors had in fighting non-state actors hindered alliance decision-making efficiency. Second, although the United States was clear in that counterterrorism should be the top preference of the alliance, it was met with European hesitance (Schmidt, 2007). Europe was concerned by an aggressive American push into the Middle East. Rather than outright defy American preferences, Europe dragged its feet. The assistance that Europe could contribute to American-led efforts was significantly less than what the United States could accomplish on its own. The high costs associated with European involvement in American efforts and the number of actors within the alliance¹² decreased European incentives to contribute to collective defense measures derived from American preferences. The United States bore the majority of the cost for counterterrorism efforts, further establishing a theme of burden-sharing concerns which presently are a significant point of contention.

Despite a 2014 commitment by NATO states to commit two percent of their GDP to defense spending, many allies continue to fall short of this pledge¹³. Despite the asymmetry in relative power distribution between allies favoring the United States, the extent of American commitment beyond Europe along with the increased number of NATO members created problems for cohesion. American exhaustion is best reflected in the 2018 letters written by

¹² As of 2020, the alliance has grown to 29 member states following the inclusion of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia (2004), Albania, Croatia (2009), and Montenegro (2017) (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm).

¹³ Issued under the Wales Declaration by NATO allies after the 2014 Wales Summit (https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).

President Trump to leaders of NATO allies, including a letter to German Chancellor Merkel, writing,

“The United States continues to devote more resources to the defense of Europe when the Continent’s economy, including Germany’s, are doing well and security challenges abound. This is no longer sustainable for the US (Davis, 2018).”

Conclusion & Implications

To summarize, although the United States has the capacity to continue to compensate for a lack of European contribution, its willingness to do so is wavering, highlighting the challenge overextension poses to alliance cohesion. Due to the security commitments beyond Europe, the United States is becoming increasingly limited in its ability to continuously justify significant amounts of defense spending on Europe, especially in light of European economic recovery. While the US maintains its position as the dominant ally within the pact, the management of 29 members is proving to be an increasingly challenging role. Prior to alliance formation (i.e., pre-treatment), the United States faced challenges in mobilizing European states to mobilize against the Soviet Union as it lacked a mechanism that enabled it to assert control. I show that it was through the establishment of NATO (i.e., treatment), the United States was able to coerce European allies to follow its security preferences through the threat of cutting off alliance membership benefits, namely military and economic aid. However, European economic recovery and the significant growth of the alliance decreased the efficiency of alliance interactions and increased the likelihood of collective action problems, highlighting a moral hazard in alliance relations. The more aid the US contributed toward European recovery, the greater the opportunity Europeans had to challenge American leadership.

Additionally, the United States has been challenged in effectively mobilizing Europe as the inclusion of 29 total members incentivizes allies to renege on alliance commitments, for example the 2014 pledge to contribute two percent of GDP to defense spending. Ultimately, I show that NATO was most cohesive when the relative power disparity between actors was most extreme, enabling the United States as the dominant actor to set the security preference of the alliance and coerce compliance from allies. However, cohesion weakens as a result of European economic recovery and NATO's significant growth in membership. Economic recovery enabled European allies to credibly challenge the security preferences of the United States while a large membership size increased the likelihood for collective action problems. This has significant implications for the efficacy of NATO in addressing future security challenges. Most notably, the United States is likely to face a continued resistance to its demands for greater monetary contributions from its European allies as a result of rising European parity with the United States. Although the current parity in member contributions between the United States and Europe remains large, my analysis suggests that it is this parity which will continue to ensure American hegemony within the alliance structure. Ultimately, NATO remains relatively cohesive because of American hegemony.

Chapter 8

Multilateral Symmetric Alliance: The Arab League (1945-Present)

Introduction

In this section, I discuss the League of Arab States, more commonly known as the “Arab League, which I classify as a multilateral symmetric alliance. I argue that multilateral symmetric alliances are the least cohesive form of alliance relative to other structures. This argument is premised on two scope conditions. First is the size of the membership body. Multilateral alliances increase the number of preferences as a result of a large membership size and therefore the probability that these preferences will conflict. Multilateral alliances increase the likelihood of collective action problems resulting from individual member incentives which discourage the pursuit of a collective goal. Second, symmetrical distribution of power between actors implies the lack of a hegemon capable of coercing compliance among members for the sake of unity. Further, allies who share similar amounts of power are better able to challenge the preferences of the other because they have a greater likelihood of winning when facing an actor that is their equal. Both of these conditions decrease the propensity for cohesion between allies as the likelihood of allies agreeing on a security preference and means to reach this end decreases. I demonstrate that the Arab League includes both conditions associated with low cohesion and outline these points below.

Prior to the institution of a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), Middle Eastern states lacked independence and a unified vision for Arab political advancement in international politics (Saud, 1954). Through the establishment of the Arab League (i.e., the treatment), Arab states created an institution centered on safeguarding their regional security,

economic development, and advancing Arab regional interests internationally. However, the institutional characteristics of this alliance were unfavorable to the achievement of these objectives. For example, early iterations of alliance objectives centered on designing an institution in which “all participating states would be represented on an equal footing” (Alexandria Protocol, 1944). The early emphasis placed on equal weight of member decisions has rendered the League largely inoperative in advancing its objectives as decisions often result in stalemate (Hassouna, 1975). Further, the membership body has grown significantly, from the original seven in 1945 to 22 today (Yee, 2019). These members vary in how they interpret these original objectives which has led to unofficial blocs forming within the alliance with varying states vying for dominance (i.e., post-treatment). This has influenced cohesion in the aftermath of the restructuring.

Early League dynamics were defined by the conflict between Egypt and Iraq in vying for hegemony within the alliance (Podeh, 1998). Iraq viewed objectives of regional security as implying the unification of ancient states formally broken up during the colonial era. Further, Iraq engaged in alliances outside of the Arab League as a means to increase its security networks. Egypt rejected both notions as violations of state sovereignty and further viewed defensive obligations of the Arab League as rejecting the potential for allies to engage in defensive commitments with outside states (Podeh, 1993). This inability to agree on appropriate interpretations of initial security objectives and means to achieve these ends has led to a lack of cohesion best demonstrated in the multiple military disputes between allies. For example, Iraq’s attempt to annex Kuwait were first advanced under the Kassim regime in 1961 only to be followed by an actual military invasion by Saddam Hussein in 1990 (Warbrick, 1991; Joyce, 1995). The League failed the Kuwait issue in two respects. First, the League failed to credibly tie

Iraq's hands from continuing the pursuit of its expansionist aims in 1961 (Walker, 1991). Second, and as a direct result of its first failure, the League was unable to prevent a provocative ally from attacking another ally. Today the Arab League is largely inoperative in achieving its original security objectives best characterized by Morocco's refusal to host the alliance's annual leaders' summit in 2016 arguing that it was "just another occasion [to] pronounce speeches that give a false impression of unity" (Yee, 2019). Alliances characterized by military conflict between members are not cohesive as acts of aggression against a fellow ally undermine the security incentives of actually pursuing these agreements. Along with demonstrating these dynamics, this case is ideal for analysis based on two primary reasons.

First, the Arab League has been characterized by a multilateral alliance structure since its inception in 1945 (Hourani, 1945). I am therefore able to hold alliance structure constant within the scope of analysis while also examining how an increase in membership size influences the propensity for cohesion among allies. Second, the primary components of the Arab League's institutional design, including the weight of membership votes or procedures for adjudicating conflict between members, have remained unchanged since alliance formation (MacDonald, 1965; Kirkpatrick and Landler, 2013). These characteristics enable me to hold relative power distribution within the alliance constant across member states despite variance in traditional or "de facto" power dynamics¹⁴ between members. The distinction between institutionally mandated power distribution and de facto distribution is an important one. In doing so, I demonstrate that the alliance treaty of the Arab League stipulated all members were equal in representation and decision-making, and that this institutional structure rendered the alliance

¹⁴ Although the concept of power is multidimensional, I focus primarily on military and economic capabilities within the scope of this analysis because I am interested in defensive alliances. Therefore, military and economic power are most relevant in identifying the strength of actors.

inoperative resulting from conflicting members who possessed equally weighted preferences. Further, the League lacked the means to establish a legitimate hegemon within the alliance framework capable of coercing compliance among provocative allies. Therefore, members of the Arab League often relied on de facto relative power distribution between themselves outside the scope of the alliance to make security decisions.

For example, the Arab League failed to establish a strategy capable of reigning in the provocative nature of Colonel Mummar Gaddafi in Libya for several decades (Ahmida, 2012). By 2011, tensions between Gaddafi's government and rebel forces hit an all-time high, creating a serious regional security concern. Attempts by the League to coordinate a no-fly zone over Libya failed to pass universally as both Syria and Algeria opposed this initiative, rendering institutional attempts to mediate conflict untenable (BBC, 2011). Therefore, allies in the majority who possessed greater de facto power relative to Syria and Algeria appealed to actors within the international community including the United States and its NATO allies who were capable of enforcing the no-fly zone while not being bound by alliance commitments to the offending state (Bronner and Sanger, 2011). I demonstrate that the institutional design of the Arab League renders it incohesive, therefore members operate outside the scope of the alliance framework to achieve security objectives. I divide my analysis into three components which consider relations between Arab states prior to alliance formation (i.e., pre-treatment), the establishment of a multilateral symmetric alliance between them (i.e., treatment), and the influence of alliance structure and relative power distribution between allies on alliance cohesion (i.e., post-treatment).

I. Pre-Treatment: The World Wars

Overview

Prior to the formation of a formal alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), many Arab states lacked independence from their imperial rulers. Following WWI, the Treaty of Versailles legitimizes European hegemony over Arab political affairs. However, this policy shifts after the end of World War II, when ambitions for an Arab alliance were supported by Europe. I demonstrate that that era following WWI was pivotal in influencing the creation of a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e, treatment) to ensure equality among members.

World War I: Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations

Early aspirations for an alliance of Arab States began after the end of World War I with the Treaty of Versailles and its establishment of the League of Nations (Seabury, 1949; Masters and Sergie, 2014). Although the League was premised on ending the former era of imperialization and large-scale conflict, it failed in both attempts. Rather than grant the right of self-determination to former German and Turkish holdings in the Middle East, the Treaty established a network of “patronships” through mandates among European victors, Article 22 per example, states,

“To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war ceased under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world... the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to nations who by reasons of their resources, their experience on their geographical position can best undertake this

responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League (Treaty of Versailles, 1919).”

Specifically, in regard to the former holdings of the Turkish and German Empires in the Middle East, Article 22 of the Treaty notes,

“...have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by the Mandatory until such time they are able to stand alone” (Treaty of Versailles, 1919).

These holdings were divided between the French and British Empires. Rather than establish “open, just and honorable relations between nations” (Covenant of the League of Nations, 1919), the Treaty of Versailles and consequential League of Nations legitimized imperialism in the Middle East by reshuffling former colonial holdings of the losers of WWI to the victors (Treaty of Versailles, 1919).¹⁵ Further, Zionist aspirations were formally recognized for the first time by the British government in 1917 through the Balfour Declaration¹⁶ and advanced in 1922 when the British were given the Mandate of Palestine. Article 2 of the Mandate states,

“The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish

¹⁵ See articles 118, 119, 134, 138, 142, and 147 of the Treaty of Versailles for breakdown of confiscated territory from the Central Powers.

¹⁶ Statement issued in 1917 by the British government indicating their support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland (Schneer, 2010).

national home, as laid down in the preamble, and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil & religious rights of all inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion (Palestine Mandate, 1922).”

This statement legitimized Jewish claims and added greater anxiety to Arabic states regarding the status of their independence. The British mandate solidified European hold on the Middle East and their ability to redesign the region to best suit their political preferences (Little, 1956). The new status quo established by the European victors left a lasting impression on the Arabic states who would later join the Arab League, and further influenced principles sought in the creation of their alliance in two primary ways.

First is the notion of equality among all Arab League members. All future members of the Arab League share a history defined by imperialism and subservience to a colonial master. Therefore, the Arab League is premised on the equality of all member states by virtue of being independent countries (MacDonald, 1965). Second, the classification of Arabic states by European victors as having reached “a stage of development” where their existence as independent states could only be “provisionally recognized” was demeaning and strategically undefined. Arab states recognized that the loose terminology used in the Treaty of Versailles surrounding the status of their independence had been drafted in a way that enabled European Mandatories to claim rights to their Middle Eastern holdings indefinitely (Khadduri, 1946b). Therefore, the Arab League was created with a principle emphasis on uniting an Arab community against imperialism and creating a defense agreement capable of ensuring regional independence (Khadduri, 1946a). Later political realities of WWII further facilitated the establishment of the Arab League.

World War II: European Support for the Arab League

Early years of the war are defined by Allied attempts to prevent Germany from annexing oil rich states in the Middle East and North Africa, and Iraq was particularly contested. A 1941 Iraqi coup¹⁷ forced Allied powers to reevaluate their roles as Mandatories charged with governing former colonial holdings of the Central Powers to ensure Middle Eastern states would remain opposed to Axis powers. Allied concern grew as many Arab states expressed an interest in fascism. This interest, however, was primarily strategic rather than ideologically based, as Arabic states witnessed the ability of fascist powers to damage European primacy. The political reality of the Iraqi coup, Germany military forces closing in on Egypt, and the Vichy government's hold on Syria and Lebanon led the British to spearhead the efforts for Arab independence and collective defense (Hourani, 1947; Hassouna, 1975). Most notably, the British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden announced this new policy stating,

“The Arab world has made many great strides since the settlement reached at the end of the last War [WWI], and many Arab thinkers desire for the Arab peoples a greater degree of unity than they now enjoy. In reaching out toward this unity, they hope for our support. No such appeal from our friends should go unanswered. It seems to me both natural and right that the cultural and economic ties between the Arab countries, and political ties too, should be strengthened. His Majesty's government for their part will give their full support to any scheme that commands general approval (Khadduri, 1946).”

¹⁷ Also known as the “Golden Square Coup,” which overthrew the British Regent in favor of a nationalist government (Marr and Al-Marashi, 2018).

This complete reversal in British policy enabled the Allied powers to retain support or at least neutrality of Arab territories once removed from Axis hands. Further, it legitimized the aspirations of the League first advanced by Arabic States in the Alexandria Protocol (1944). This Protocol is essentially a “memorandum of understanding” between Arab states¹⁸ interested in pursuing an alliance agreement (MacDonald, 1965). It provides early goals of these actors in establishing an alliance framework built on ideals of equality, independence, and regional integrity, stating in Article 1,

“A League will be formed of the independent Arab States which consent to join the League. It will have a council which will be known as the ‘Council of the League of Arab States,’ in which all participating states will be represented on an equal footing. The object of the League will be to control the execution of agreements... and to protect their independence and sovereignty against every aggression by suitable means; and to supervise in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries (Alexandria Protocol, 1944).”

Three premises within Article 1 of the Protocol are important to note in influencing the eventual formation of the Arab League and are representative of early aspirations following the Treaty of Versailles. First, this alliance was meant to be multilateral from inception. This implies an increased number of preferences resulting from a large membership size (Dakhlallah, 2012). Further, this increase in preferences suggests a greater likelihood that these preferences will conflict. Second, is the idea of all states being “represented on equal footing,” essentially

¹⁸ These states include Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt (Alexandria Protocol, 1944).

eliminating the possibility for a hegemonic presence within the alliance capable of enforcing tactics toward security objectives. Third is the emphasis placed on the protection of Arabic sovereignty and independence (Little, 1956). This objective advanced the need for a collective defense agreement, however as stated previously, the lack of hegemon within the alliance framework capable of coercing compliance is problematic for cohesion. I discuss this further by analyzing the institutional design of the Arab League as a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., treatment) and the consequences of this structure on alliance cohesion (i.e., post-treatment).

II. Treatment: Establishment of a Multilateral Asymmetric Alliance

Overview

Through the establishment of a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., treatment), Arab states were able to establish regional security goals to ensure independence from foreign interference. The Pact of Arab States was signed and ratified on March 22, 1945 with seven original members which include: Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen. This initial treaty lays the groundwork for the formation of a pact and is followed by the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty in 1950 which provides additional specifications to the defensive and economic obligations of members. I discuss each treaty in turn, highlighting notable articles which influence the likelihood of cohesion between members resulting from the size of the membership body and the distribution of power between them.

The Pact of Arab States: 1945

Articles 1 and 2 introduce membership qualifications and overarching responsibilities of League members. The initial scope envisioned for League partnership goes far beyond collective

defense, including cooperation on economic, communications and infrastructure, cultural affairs and social wellbeing (Pact of the League of Arab States, Article 2, 1945). Although broad, these aims are in line with early Arab sentiment of regional unity discussed following World Wars I and II. This agenda is alarming given that it requires members to surrender sovereignty in areas beyond security. Consistent with theoretical expectations, however, an institutional hegemon is needed to ensure allies follow through in fulfilling these obligations. However, the bureaucratic structure and decision-making process advanced in Articles 3 through 9 refute the possibility for asymmetrical power distribution within the scope of the alliance framework. For example, Article 3 establishes the highest decision-making body within the League, known as the “League Council,” and emphasizes complete member equality, stating,

“The League shall possess a Council composed of the representatives of member states of the League; each state shall have a single vote irrespective of the number of its representatives. It shall be the task of the Council to achieve the realization of the objectives of the League and to supervise the execution of agreements which the member states have concluded (Pact of the League of Arab States, 1945) ...”

Article 3 sets the framework for equality among all members in making decisions related to regional security. Further, this article implies two factors which influence cohesion. First, all allies have an equal vote in the highest decision-making body in the League (Pogany, 1989). Therefore, allies are equal in dictating security preferences and further, the security preferences of all allies are equally valid. This is problematic for alliance cohesion as institutionally equal allies are able to lobby for their individual preferences and undermine the possibility of

consensus. Second, equality among members also indicates the lack of a hegemon capable of establishing a collective security preference and coercing provocative allies to comply with this end. Although Article 4 establishes specialized councils on topics of security, economic cooperation, and social wellbeing¹⁹, all specialized councils report back to the League Council.²⁰ Therefore, allies are equal in all areas of League decision-making. In addition to challenges associated with preference equality, the pact lacks strict enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance (MacDonald, 1965).

The League sets strict guidelines relating to member disputes but fails to establish universal enforcement mechanisms. For example, Article 5 forbids the use of force between allies stating,

“Any resort to force in order to resolve disputes arising between two or more member states of the League is prohibited. If there should arise among them a difference which does not concern a state’s independence, sovereignty, or territorial integrity, and if the parties to the dispute have recourse to the Council for settlement of this difference, the decision of the Council shall then be enforceable and obligatory (Pact of the League of Arab States, Article 5, 1945).”

Further, two problems arise which influence cohesion as a result of this stipulation. First, “recourse to the Council for settlement of this difference” indicates that the Council can only become involved if all parties to the dispute agree to invite the Council to adjudicate the conflict.

¹⁹ These include the Permanent Military Commission, Joint Defense Council, and Economic Council later established in the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty (1950) in Articles 5-8.

²⁰ Articles 12-15 establish the office of the Secretary General who manages bureaucratic affairs and reports to the League Council.

States who fear retaliation, poor ruling, or weak enforcement by the Council are unlikely to agree to this arrangement to begin with. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that these disputes will reach the Council for appropriate ruling, effectively undermining the dispute resolution mechanism. Second, Article 5 states that Council dispute rulings are “enforceable and obligatory.” However, both Articles 6 and 7 subvert the likelihood of universal enforcement across states.

Article 6 lays the foundation for collective defense and states that “the Council shall by unanimous decision determine the measures necessary to repulse the aggression (Pact of the League of Arab States, Article 6, 1945).” The likelihood of reaching unanimity in identifying an aggressor (especially if the offending state is party to the alliance) among allies with equally weighted security preferences is unlikely as national political preferences will override the collective interests of the alliance.²¹ Article 7 creates further problems for cohesion stating,

“Unanimous decisions of the Council shall be binding upon all member states of the League; majority decisions shall be binding only upon those states which have accepted them. In either case the decisions of the Council shall be enforced in each member state according to its respective basic laws (Pact of the League of Arab States, Article 7, 1945).”

The likelihood of reaching unanimous decisions across all allies with equally weighted preferences is unlikely. This likelihood further decreases as membership size increases.

²¹ Article 6 also indicates that “if the aggressor is a member state, his vote shall not be counted in determining unanimity.” As stated previously, the likelihood of reaching unanimity among members with equally weighted preferences in identifying an aggressor is low. Further, as stipulated by Article 5, all parties of the dispute (if members of the alliance) must first agree to submit their case to the Council for adjudication. Offending parties concerned with unfavorable rulings or weak enforcement are unlikely to submit cases to begin with.

Therefore, the League Council is unlikely to make binding rulings for member behavior. Additionally, majority decisions reached are only binding on states which chose to accept them (Pogany, 1989). Among the group of states who chose to accept them, the means through which a single decision is enforced can vary widely depending on each ally's "respective basic laws." Additionally, Article 19 enables allies to selectively adhere to future treaty amendments, stating that if a state refuses to accept an amendment, "it may withdraw at such a time as the amendment goes into effect, without being bound by the provisions of the preceding article (Pact of the League of Arab States, Article 19, 1945)." Article 19 implies that states party to the same alliance may actually be adhering to different rules and obligations, which further decreases the likelihood of cohesion. Ultimately, the Pact of the Arab States demonstrates the priority given to individual autonomy rather than collective defense. Later treaties attempt to better define member obligations, most notably, the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty in 1950.

The Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement: 1950

Article 2 of the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement solidifies the collective defense obligations of the alliance stating, "the Contracting States consider any [act of] armed aggression made against any one or more of them or their armed forces, to be directed against them all (Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, 1950)." To this end, this agreement also specifies the extent of allied cooperation required toward collective defense. Article 3 requires that "in the event of the threat of war or existence of an international emergency, the Contracting States shall immediately proceed to unify their plans and defensive measures (Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, 1950)." However, as discussed in the Pact of Arab States, the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement provides no

measures to ensure that all states will first agree that there is a credible threat of war or international emergency, and second, how states should “unify their plans and defensive measures.”

Although Article 4 attempts to describe how “to implement fully the above obligations and effectively carry them out Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, 1950),” it fails to provide legitimate means to achieve this outcome other than stating that allies “shall cooperate in consolidating and coordinating their armed forces.” Cooperation is unlikely among a large membership body with equally weighted preferences. Allies face little consequences in renegeing on commitments as enforcement of League Council decisions amounts to individual regulation. Article 6 attempts to clarify military coordination through the establishment of a Joint Defense Council composed of Foreign and Defense Ministers assisted by a Permanent Military Commission of bureaucratic agents. The Joint Defense Council is tasked with handling all matters related to regional defense, however, the Joint Defense Council is responsible to the League Council (Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, 1950; MacDonald, 1965; Hassouna, 1975). As previously discussed, the League Council includes all allies and provides them with equal decision-making power. Therefore, decisions relating to collective defense are determined by a large body of equally weighted allies, which decreases the likelihood of cohesion. I discuss this trend further in the post-treatment phase of the analysis.

III. Post-Treatment: Increasing Membership, Decreasing Cohesion

Overview

Following the establishment of a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., post-treatment), I demonstrate that the Arab League is not cohesive as a result of its institutional design. The

alliance treaty stipulates that all allies share equally weighted preferences in the decision-making process and also provides them with a wide latitude of autonomy in implementing League resolutions. Above all, it is only when individual member preferences are aligned that the League is able to be cohesive, with the likelihood of preference alignment of members decreasing over time. This logic follows that as the size of the membership body increased, so too did the number of preferences. Further, allies share a symmetric distribution of power within the scope of the alliance framework. Therefore, the League lacks a hegemon capable of coercing provocative allies to comply with a security objective.

Early Years: Problems in Palestine and Relative Cohesion

Early years of the Arab League are defined by the Palestinian Issue and is the era under which allies were most cohesive (Hassouna, 1975). This is a function of three components. First, Palestinian independence was a long-time goal of the Arab League with special provisions on Palestine included both in the Alexandria Protocol (1944) and the alliance treaty (1945). For example, the Alexandria Protocol denounces the British Mandate in stating that, “Palestine constitutes an important part of the Arab World and the rights of the Arabs in Palestine cannot be touched without prejudice to the peace and stability in the Arab World (Alexandria Protocol, 1944).” Further, in regard to Palestinian sovereignty, the alliance treaty states,

“Her international existence and independence cannot, therefore, be questioned, any more than could the independence of the Arab countries. Although the outward manifestations of the independence have remained obscured for reasons beyond her control, this should

not be allowed to interfere with her participation in the work of the Council of the League (Pact of the League of Arab States, 1945).”

This passage demonstrates the extent to which the League associated Palestinian independence with Arab regional security. Therefore, Palestine was the primary security concern during the early years of the alliance. Initial allies party to the treaty were able to agree in indicating early support for these initiatives in the Alexandria Protocol and codify them through the creation of the alliance treaty. All allies viewed Palestine to be of primary importance in Arab regional security as best indicated in the 1950 League Council Resolution which forbids allies “to negotiate the conclusion of a unilateral peace or any political, military, or economic agreement with Israel, or to conclude such a peace agreement (Arab League Resolution No. 312, 1950 in Hassouna, 1975)” taking steps toward these ends were grounds for expulsion from the alliance. Along with shared security preferences, the size of the membership body also supported relatively cohesive relations.

Second, membership size was small, with just seven members until 1953, relative to the membership size today which includes twenty-two. Although still large, the limited number of allies increased the efficiency of interactions between allies and their ability to make decisions. For example, within the first year of establishment, the League Council passed a sweeping boycott of Israeli goods. The League Council passed a resolution justifying the ban of Jewish goods because “their entry would contribute to the realization of Zionist political aims (Arab League Resolution No. 16, 1945 in Hassouna, 1975).” Allies were willing to both collectively forbid trade with Israel and establish a Central Boycott Office to ensure compliance among all actors and report those who failed to uphold the boycott. Allies even agreed to host special

regional offices to ensure strict oversight (Turck, 1977; CIA Intelligence Assessment, 1982). However, the third and most important factor contributing to cohesive relations during this era is that retaking Palestine was representative of Arab individual preferences (Smith, 2013). In other words, there was no need for a hegemon to coerce allies to comply with a strategy centered on Palestinian independence because it was in each ally's self-interest to achieve this end.

Importantly, the League purposely omitted the potential for asymmetric power distribution between allies as a means to ensure equality of all members. Therefore, alliance decisions were contingent upon the alignment of equally weighted member preferences. For example, many Arab allies engaged in armed clashes with the Israeli military over border disputes in 1948 following a 1947 resolution of the UN General Assembly to partition Palestine into a Jewish and Palestinian state (UNGA Res. 181 [II], 1947). Rather than engage in these actions unilaterally or invoking Article 2 of the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, all Arab states, including Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria, settled with Israel individually which resulted in a series of separate armistice agreements. Although all agreements established demarcation lines for military withdrawal, there are significant differences between them. These differences are especially pronounced given the limited temporal scope they were negotiated under, February through June of 1949, and that all Arab states made these agreements with a single actor, Israel. I attribute this variance in cease-fire agreement terms to varying preferences among Arab allies for the achievement of Palestinian independence and acceptance of Israeli presence within the region. For example, the Egyptian-Israeli armistice places additional emphasis on the legitimization of shared claims over Palestine, stating,

“It is emphasized that it is not the purpose of this Agreement to establish, to recognize, to strengthen, or to weaken or nullify, in any way, any territorial, custodial or other rights, claims or interests which may be asserted by either Party in the area of Palestine or any part or locality thereof covered by this Agreement (Israeli-Egyptian Armistice Agreement, Article 3, Clause 3, 1949)..”

Additionally, all agreements place emphasis on only allowing defensive forces to remain on armistice demarcation lines. However, the Lebanese-Israeli ceasefire agreement lacks additional annexes which specify the terms of “defensive forces,” which include military force withdrawal schedules and the weapon and troop levels permissible within varying ranges of demilitarized or demarcation zones (Israel-Jordan Armistice Agreement, 1949; Israel-Lebanon Armistice Agreement, 1949; Israel and Syria: General Armistice Agreement). These differences across armistice agreements highlight the varying individual preferences for achieving Palestinian independence. However, member preferences are weighted equally within the institutional framework of the alliance, leading to significant problems for cohesion present in the attempted Iraqi annexation of Kuwait in 1961 and later Arab-Israeli conflicts.

Cold War Era: Increased Membership Size, No Hegemon, Decreasing Cohesion

Notable differences are present between early regional conflicts and the following disputes of the Cold War era. The primary difference is the extent of military coordination between allies (Podeh, 1993). As demonstrated in the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1948, the League Council passed several resolutions which regulated allied economic and political behavior in regard to Israel. For example, allies agreed to enforce an economic boycott of all Israeli goods or

refuse transactions with firms who held suspected Israeli ties. Further, allies agreed to not only refuse Israel political recognition, but also to refuse to make any type of comprehensive peace agreement regarding the Palestinian Problem (Pact of the League of Arab States: Annex Regarding Palestine, 1945). However, when considering later disputes, the role of the Arab League in mediating conflict significantly deteriorated, which in turn decreased the cohesion of the alliance. This decrease in cohesion resulted from two key conditions.

First, membership size continued to increase since the League's formation, with a total of 13 allies by 1967.²² This growth in membership increased the number of individual security preferences related to the collective preference of the alliance. Second, all members and their preferences were institutionally equal, therefore members could freely exercise opinions, block unfavorable resolutions, and actually engage in military action targeting a fellow ally relatively unpunished within the framework of the Arab League. Resulting from the symmetric distribution of power between allies, Arab states attempted to lobby for hegemony outside of the constructs of the alliance framework and additionally attempted to leverage international support from the Western and Soviet blocs to further their hegemonic aspirations. Above all, these dynamics decreased the cohesion of the Arab League (Jasse, 1991). I demonstrate these dynamics below, tracing these circumstances to the 1955 Baghdad Pact and 1956 Suez Crisis.

Both events were pivotal in defining early coalitions within the Arab League as Iraq and Egypt battled for hegemony within the alliance. Two key features defined the alliance blocs formed within the Cold War era. First is the divide between traditional Arab monarchies such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Lebanon supported by the West and the "revolutionary" governments of Arab states such as Egypt and Syria which shared ties with the Soviet Union

²² These states include Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen (1945), Sudan (1956), Morocco, Tunisia (1958), Kuwait (1961), Algeria (1962), South Yemen (1967).

(Schoenberger and Reich, 1975; Lucas, 2004). These coalitions failed to agree on security preferences resulting from their allegiance to varying superpowers. Further, allies within the Arab League conspired with international hegemony to undermine domestic politics of fellow allies. For example, Syria experienced a series of coups throughout this era and actually uncovered a plot in the late 1950s orchestrated by the United States, Turkey, and Iraq to overthrow the “pro-Soviet” regime (Khadduri, 1951). Within this same era, Syria exploded three pumping stations along the Iraqi pipeline in line with the military and financial support from the Soviet Union, effectively stopping oil flow for six months and significantly damaging the Iraqi economy (Gu, 1983; Podeh, 1993). Both events violate both Articles 5 and 8 of the alliance treaty which forbid the “resort to force in order to resolve disputes,” or allies participating in “any action calculated to change established systems of government” in other member states (Pact of the League of Arab States, Article 8, 1945). However, neither event was successfully resolved within the institutional constructs of the Arab League. Instead, Arab allies relied on their regional coalition and international superpowers to address disputes outside of the alliance framework (Hahn, 1991).

Consequently, the cohesion of the alliance suffered, with Nasser’s closest political advisor, Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, stating, “in those days everybody in the Arab world was acting on his own initiative, any attempt to coordinate strategy or tactics would be impossible (Podeh, 1993).” Therefore, allies sought alliance agreements beyond the scope of the Arab League. Most notably, the 1955 Baghdad Pact²³ between the United Kingdom, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran with all parties “cooperating for their security and defense (Baghdad Pact,

²³ Also known as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) or Middle East Treaty Organization (METO). This was designed as a pro-West regional security framework similar to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This alliance dissolved in 1979 (Little, 2008; Panagiotis, 2009).

Article 2, 1955).” Nasser viewed Iraq’s participation in this Treaty as a violation of Article 10 of the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty which states that allies will, “conclude no international agreements which may be contradictory to the provisions of the Treaty.” Further, Article 5 of the Baghdad Pact actually invites “any member of the Arab League.” to participate in the agreement. This invitation is especially concerning in that Iraq took a leading role in creating an alliance beyond the scope of the Arab League in an attempt to institutionalize hierarchical relations between them. British support encouraged Iraq to take a leading role within the region through dominance in the Baghdad Pact, with British Prime Minister Eden writing that Iraq should rise “as the leader of the Arabs, a position in which we should like to see her (Podeh, 1993).” Despite British attempts to prop up Iraq for hegemonic leadership, the Suez Crisis of 1956 established Egypt as the unofficial hegemon of the Arab League.

The Suez Crisis was born out of collusion between the French, British, and Israelis to retake the Suez Canal after Egyptian President Nasser had nationalized it. The motivation behind the invasion was to ensure access to the Canal, however this plan backfired (Fitzsimons, 1957). Although pressure from international audiences forced the invading coalition to retreat, the conflict ended without a clear victor. Egypt suffered significant losses, but Nasser used European retreat to signify his dominance over imperialist and Israeli forces (Schupe, et al., 1980). Further, the institutional design of the Arab League rendered it unable to proactively address this clear violation of Egyptian sovereignty and threat to regional security (MacDonald, 1965). The large membership size and equally weighted preferences of allies led to the League passing weak resolutions declaring support for Egyptian policy of self-defense and noting the collusion of British, French, and Israeli forces. This is especially shocking given the anxiety shared by all allies regarding the possibility for Israeli regional expansion. Rather than collectively addressing

the Israeli invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, allies responsible to Western patrons blocked greater condemnation of Israeli and European actions. Even more problematic for the cohesion of the alliance is that the League Treaty enables each ally to take the political actions “it deemed necessary” when implementing resolutions. Essentially, each ally could act in accordance with its interests without taking steps toward a collective security preference. Therefore, the cohesion of the alliance continued to decrease throughout this era, with increased armed conflicts between allies resulting from a growing membership body and the lack of a hegemon to enforce a collective agenda.

Most notably, following the independence of Kuwait in 1961, the Iraqi government asserted their rights to Kuwaiti territory and oil fields with the Iraqi Premier, General Kassem, claiming Kuwait as an “integral part of Iraq (Hassouna, 1975).” The League was able to admit Kuwait to the alliance only because the Iraqi delegate left in protest prior to the official vote, therefore effectively ensuring unanimity among the members present. A following resolution was issued by the League Council requiring all allies to recognize this vote and requiring Iraq to stand down stating, “the Government of the Republic of Iraq undertakes not to use force in the annexation of Kuwait to Iraq (Session 35 of the League of Arab States, July 20, 1961 in Hassouna, 1975) . Rather than accepting the authority of the League, the Iraqi Foreign Minister claimed Kuwait’s admission to the alliance was “null and void” and that Iraq would not relinquish its right to Kuwait (Hassouna, 1975). This claim was only rescinded following the 1963 overthrow of the Kassem government in Iraq. Additional friction within the League arose resulting from a spike in Arab-Israeli conflict in events such as the Six-Day War (1967) and the Yom Kippur War (1973).

These events are interesting in that members of the Arab League circumvented the alliance entirely when participating in these conflicts or engaging in international diplomacy. For example, rather than rely on support from the Arab League, Egypt chose to establish a separate mutual defense treaty with Jordan during the Six Day War (New York Times, 1967). Further, Egypt signed a peace agreement with Israel under the terms of the Camp David Accords in 1979 (Smith, 2013). This agreement effectively returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egyptian hands and represents the first time any ally within the Arab League formally recognized Israel's right to exist (Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, 1979). Egypt took these steps unilaterally and was therefore expelled from the League for ten years for violating League agreements forbidding cooperation with Israel. This expulsion signifies an increasing breakdown of cohesion within the Arab League as an ally made peace with an adversary, indicating variance in security preferences (Wren, 1979). Beyond additional Arab-Israeli conflicts such as the 1982 Lebanon War, the domestic political problems of allies including Iraq, Libya, and Syria further hurt the potential for cohesive relations among allies.

The Post-Cold War Era: Provocative Allies, Large Membership Size, Weak Cohesion

By the early 1990s, the Arab League's membership body had grown dramatically²⁴ and the divisions between allies began to shift. Although the Soviet Union had not officially fallen, allies were largely defined by their level of support for the West (Hudson, 1996). These divisions rendered the League Council ineffective in dictating resolutions capable of constraining member behavior. Therefore, Arab allies consistently solicited support from outside states and coalitions as a means to achieve security objectives (Hudson, 2013). Reasons behind the solicitation of

²⁴ Allies who have joined the Arab League since 1967 include: Bahrain (1971), Oman (1971), Qatar (1971), the United Arab Emirates (1971), Mauritania (1973), Somalia (1974), Djibouti (1977), Comoros (1993).

international support are two-fold. First, membership size had grown to 21 by 1990 and reached its current 22 members by 1993. This increase in membership size led to an increase in the number of security preferences and the likelihood that these preferences would conflict. Second, the institutional structure of the Arab League ensured that all allies had equally weighted preferences. The symmetric distribution among allies implied that the alliance lacked a hegemon capable of coercing allies to follow through with strategies in line with a collective security preference. Rather, allies were able to act according to their individual security preferences, rendering the alliance as incohesive. The pursuit of individual security preferences encouraged Arab allies to attach themselves to powerful states outside the framework of the alliance, best indicated in the solicitation of international support to constrain Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Following the invasion, the Arab League held an emergency summit to address Iraq's intransigence, however, only 12 out of the total of 20 members actually attended the meeting (Kifner, 1990; Lensch, 1991). Although members in attendance condemned the Iraqi invasion, the poor attendance is especially concerning considering the agenda topic. Kuwait is a member of the Arab League who was attacked by a fellow ally within the Arab League. The limited attendance at the emergency summit demonstrates the extent to which cohesion had decreased between allies. Members either refused to address the issue or were not interested in reprimanding Iraq, despite clear signs of future aggression, including Iraqi attacks against the Kurds in northern Iraq and Shiite faction in the south. Some members of the Arab League, including Jordan, Algeria, Sudan, Yemen, and Tunisia even supported Iraq's invasion and

campaign against American coalition forces. In a speech following the cease-fire²⁵ of the first Gulf War, Hussein begrudgingly accepted Kuwaiti sovereignty, stating,

“We start by saying that on this day, our valiant armed forces will complete their withdrawal from Kuwait. And on this day our fight against aggression and the ranks of infidelity, joined an ugly coalition comprising 30 countries, which officially entered war against us under the leadership of the United States of America... Their repugnant siege has been led in evil and aggression by the machine and criminal entity of America and its major allies (from the New York Times, February 27, 1991).”

This statement references the support sought by Saudi Arabia and Egypt from outside actors including the United States, NATO, and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to intervene in the conflict as a way to restrain a provocative ally which the League itself was unable to do. Hussein further alluded to the shift in division between members of the League resulting from the relative era of detente between the US and USSR and support for the West among Arab allies, stating, “The conflict was exacerbated by the vacuum that was created by the weakness of one of the two poles that used to represent the two opposite lines in the world from the New York Times, February 27, 1991).” The vacancy left by the Soviet Union enabled the West, led by the United States, to seek closer ties with Arab states and further polarize the alliance. The solicitation of American assistance during the first Gulf War legitimized an American military presence in the Middle East and encouraged the George W. Bush

²⁵ Officially enacted under UNSC Resolution 687. Included the establishment of a UN peacekeeping force, the destruction of Iraq’s biological, chemical, and long-range missile weapons. Iraq was required to make reparation payments to Kuwait for damage suffered as a result of the invasion (Cowell, 1991).

administration to issue an ultimatum to Hussein to stop down or face war without UNSC authorization, effectively sparking the Iraq War in 2003 (Knowlton, 2003). Coalitions remained within the League regarding the extent of international action permitted in the conflict, with supporters of Iraq claiming a clear violation of sovereignty (Sachs, 2003). However, their arguments conflicted with League members who were supportive of American actions and were therefore nullified. Once again, the League was unable to identify a single security preference and means to reach this end. Failure of the alliance to constrain a provocative ally only to resort to mixed support for international interventions significantly decreased cohesion within this era. This trend continued and became most pronounced following the political violence of the Arab Spring in 2011.

The Arab Spring unleashed a wave of public outrage over repressive regimes and low standards of living (Beck, 2015). Both Libya and Syria engaged in severe crackdowns resulting from public protests in early 2011. The UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria reported the occurrence of war crimes including murder, torture, rape, and enforced disappearances (Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, 2018). In Libya, Gaddafi threatened to hunt down his political opponents “like rats,” further implying his willingness to use force indiscriminately to achieve this aim (MacFarquhar, 2011a). The Arab League addressed both cases of violence, however the strongest actions the alliance was able to take in condemning the offending states were suspending them from participating in League meetings indefinitely. In regard to the Libyan case, Arab League allies again sought outside assistance from the UNSC and NATO coalition forces (Leiby and Mansour, 2011). The League was able to directly appeal to international actors because only eleven allies were present at the vote. Similar to Libya, League allies agreed to suspend Syria from alliance membership in 2011

and further pushed for economic sanctions targeting the Assad government. However, the incentives for supporting these incentives were not immediately derived from punishing Syria, instead, they mimicked sanctions already issued by the European Union and United States (BBC News, 2011; MacFarquhar, 2011b).

Failure of League members to uphold sanctions against Syria could open them to punishment from large economic communities. However, allies including Iraq and Lebanon refused to comply with the League's economic policy toward Syria, therefore undermining the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. Allies who comply largely do so because it is in line with their individual economic interests, not out of a collective desire to punish Syria. Further, many Arab allies actually funded groups fighting against the Assad regime, highlighting the weak institutional framework of the Arab League and its detrimental effects on cohesion. Beyond the indefinite expulsion of provocative allies from the alliance, the greatest punishment the alliance was able to inflict was a warning from the League's Secretary General, Amr Moussa, who stated,

“The Arab citizen has entered a stage of anger that is unprecedented... It is on everyone's mind that the Arab self is broken by poverty, unemployment and a general slide in indicators... This is in addition to political problems that have not been resolved (from Saleh and El Madany, 2011).”

This warning indicates the failure of the League to address the regional problems plaguing the Middle East resulting from little to no cohesion between members. Any semblance of collective action taken by the League results from individual preferences aligning with a collective goal (Yee, 2019). As noted within this case, the chances of this alignment are

increasingly slim. Today, the Arab League is institutionally unable to address regional security challenges resulting from a large membership size and the lack of a hegemon capable of enforcing a collective security preference, decreasing cohesion. This decreased cohesion is present in the series of ongoing conflicts between allied states today. Currently, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates remain trapped in a proxy war against the Houthi supported government in Yemen. This conflict has not only led to severe human rights abuses, but has also toppled the domestic government in Yemen, effectively undermining Yemeni sovereignty (Fisher, 2016). Ultimately, the Arab League has been ineffectual in addressing the humanitarian concerns and providing concrete steps toward ending the violence.

For example, the Saudi-Emirati coalition along with Bahrain and Egypt are targeting Qatar with an economic boycott resulting from Qatari support for Islamic revolutionary groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Syria (Sly, 2018). The League is also faced with intense spill-over effects from the violence in Syria. Although the Assad regime has reclaimed a significant portion of its territory, the Syrian economy and infrastructure are shattered. At least five million refugees have fled the violence in Syria into neighboring allies such as Iraq and Lebanon (Yee, 2019). Ultimately, the Arab League has been incapable of addressing these regional security issues due to the weak cohesion between allies. Alliances characterized by military conflict between members are not cohesive as acts of aggression against a fellow ally undermine the security incentives of actually pursuing these agreements. The institutionalization of preference equality among allies along with the large membership size decreases the prospects for cohesion, as it is unlikely allies will agree on a security preference and appropriate means to achieve this end.

To summarize, Middle Eastern states lacked independence and a unified vision for Arab political advancement in international politics prior to the establishment of a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., pre-treatment) (Saud, 1954). Through the establishment of the Arab League (i.e., the treatment), Arab states created an institution centered on safeguarding their regional security, economic development, and advancing Arab regional interests internationally. However, the institutional characteristics of this alliance were unfavorable to the achievement of these objectives. For example, early iterations of alliance objectives centered on designing an institution in which “all participating states would be represented on an equal footing” (Alexandria Protocol, 1944). The early emphasis placed on equal weight of member decisions has rendered the League largely inoperative in advancing its objectives as decisions often result in stalemate (Hassouna, 1975). Further, the membership body has grown significantly, from the original seven in 1945 to 22 today (Yee, 2019). These members vary in how they interpret these original objectives which has led to unofficial blocs forming within the alliance with varying states vying for dominance (i.e., post-treatment). This has negatively influenced cohesion in the aftermath of the restructuring. Ultimately, members of the Arab League are better able to advance their security interests outside the scope of the alliance rather than within it, rendering the Arab League largely incohesive.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Final Remarks

Alliance cohesion is defined as the ability of allies to agree on security preferences and means to reach this end. I argue that cohesion between allies is influenced by two primary variables. First, alliance structure influences the efficiency of decision-making between allies and the number of preferences allies must consider when determining a single objective. I differentiate between two structures which include bilateral and multilateral alliances. Specifically, bilateral alliance structures increase cohesion between allies, whereas multilateral alliance structures decrease cohesion between allies. This logic relates to the efficiency of communication and decision-making between allies. Bilateral alliance structures streamline efficiency because communications are locked between two allies, reducing noise from additional allies. However, multilateral alliances structures decrease communication and decision-making efficiency as a result of the increased membership body and therefore number of preferences which must be adjudicated. The ability of allies to adjudicate issues is related to the second variable of interest, the distribution of power between allies.

I characterize power distribution between allies as being asymmetrical or symmetrical. Asymmetrical power distribution provides a clear hierarchy between allies. High power asymmetry enables the dominant ally to adjudicate conflict between the preferences of allies, establish a security objective based on those preferences, and coerce other allies to comply toward this end. Regardless of the number of competing preferences between allies, asymmetrical power distribution implies that the dominant actor's preference is the one that matters the most. Conversely, symmetrical distribution of power between allies decreases the

propensity for cohesion between allies. This results as alliances without a clear hegemon enable equally matched allies to challenge the preferences of each other. This challenge in preferences decreases both the likelihood of agreeing on a single security objective and coercing compliance of fellow allies toward this end. I present this theory as a means to correct previous empirical ambiguity surrounding alliance reliability.

I argue that previous work only addresses half of the equation. This is because studies of alliance reliability capture the external behaviors of actors following their decision to aid an ally. However, very little scholarship attempts to address the internal dynamics between allies which influences both the decision to provide aid and the extent to which aid is given. My theory of alliance cohesion fills these gaps and results in four categories of alliance types which include (from most to least cohesive): bilateral asymmetric, bilateral symmetric, multilateral asymmetric, and multilateral symmetric. Further, I employ a series of four case studies representative of each alliance type to test this theory. These cases include the US-ROK alliance (bilateral asymmetric), Sino-Soviet alliance (bilateral symmetric), NATO (multilateral asymmetric), and the Arab League (multilateral symmetric). Above all, I find support for my theory in that bilateral asymmetric alliances, such as the US-ROK alliance, increase the propensity for cohesion between allies. Conversely, multilateral symmetric alliances, such as the Arab League, decrease the propensity for cohesion between allies. I discuss the primary findings of each case below and demonstrate how cohesion between allies is influenced by alliance structure and the relative power distribution between allies.

Review of Main Findings

Bilateral Asymmetric Alliance: The US-ROK

The US-ROK alliance includes both conditions associated with high cohesion, as the alliance included only two members and the United States has remained the dominant actor within the alliance since its inception. Most notably, I demonstrate variance in the ability of the United States' ability to reign in the provocative actions of South Korea before and following the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance between them. Prior to the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), the Rhee regime engaged in a series of provocative actions designed to prolong the Korean War and undermine American efforts to establish an armistice. Rhee's actions toward this end not only increased the possibility for continued war, but also threatened to widen it by bringing the United States and Soviet Union closer to blows over Korea. It was through the establishment of a bilateral asymmetric alliance (i.e., the treatment), the US was able to leverage its provision of security to South Korea in exchange for Korean compliance to American security objectives.

For example, through the Mutual Defense Treaty, the United States assumed the authority of the South Korean military and maintains this authority today. It is through this control that the United States is able to ensure South Korean compliance (i.e., post treatment), which has positively influenced cohesion between allies. The alliance treaty institutionalized American hegemony over the security preference of the alliance, which in turn positively influenced cohesion. This logic follows that the United States as the dominant actor had the ability to set collective security preferences and expect credible South Korean compliance. The United States was additionally able to include treaty language designed to leave the US an exit strategy and cut off alliance membership benefits should the South Koreans engage in unilateral military action. For example, the alliance treaty includes an additional section titled "[The] Understanding of the United States," which states,

“It is the understanding of the United States that neither party is obligated, under Article III of the above Treaty, to come to the aid of the other except in the case of an external armed attack against such party; nor shall anything in the present Treaty be construed as requiring the United States to give assistance to Korea except in the event of an armed attack against territory which has been recognized by the United States as lawfully brought under the administrative control of the Republic of Korea (Department of State).”

This section is especially important considering the implications of this decision for cohesion, and by extension, alliance reliability. Essentially, this American exit strategy implied that the United States would not follow through on alliance commitments to South Korea without ensuring that South Korea was entirely adherent to American security preferences. However, this dynamic changes when considering the Sino-Soviet alliance which is representative of a bilateral symmetric alliance.

Bilateral Symmetric Alliance: Sino-Soviet

I demonstrate that bilateral symmetric alliances are less cohesive than bilateral asymmetric alliances but more cohesive compared to multilateral asymmetric alliances. This logic is based on two primary variables. First relates to alliance structure. Bilateral alliances reduce the number of preferences between allies and increases the efficiency of decision-making between allies. Rather than debating over a wide variety of preferences, bilateral alliances reduce negotiations to two actors. Second is the distribution of power between allies. The Sino-Soviet alliance is characterized by a symmetrical distribution of power for the majority of its history, which negatively influences cohesion. This results from the lack of a hegemon within the

alliance who is capable of coercing the weaker ally to comply with a security preference. In alliances characterized by symmetric distribution of power, allies are more likely to challenge the preferences of the other because they have a greater likelihood of winning when facing an actor that is their equal. Although the bilateral structure reduces the number of preferences within the alliance framework, cohesion between the Sino-Soviet alliance suffers as a result of symmetric distribution of power between allies.

I demonstrate that the Sino-Soviet alliance was most cohesive when it possessed characteristics of alliance structure and power distribution (i.e., the early treatment) associated with a bilateral asymmetric alliance, as the Soviet Union was able to dictate a security objective and coerce China into compliance by threatening to cut off alliance membership benefits. Early alliance relations are characterized by conditions associated with bilateral asymmetric alliances. During this era, the Soviet Union was effective in dictating a security preference and ensuring that China complied with this end. For example, Mao consistently deferred to Stalin's judgement during China's participation in the Korean War. However, this relationship changes following the death of Stalin and Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence with the West. Rather than accepting the new Soviet policy, China challenged the ability of the Soviet Union to assume authority within the alliance, especially in regard to ideology. This in turn, negatively influenced cohesion as allies were unable to agree on a security preference and means to this end, rendering the later relations of the Sino-Soviet alliance as incohesive, which further decreased the likelihood of these allies being reliable. This is especially present following the second Taiwan Strait Crisis. Although Mao shelled offshore islands of Taiwan, he launched these attacks without notifying Khrushchev. Specifically, Khrushchev stated,

“...As for the off-shore islands, if you shoot, then you ought to capture these islands, and if you do not consider necessary capturing these islands, then there is no use in firing. I do not understand this policy of yours. Frankly speaking, I thought you would take the islands and was upset when I learned that you did not take them (Discussion between Khrushchev and Mao, 1959).”

Essentially, Khrushchev’s reprimand of Mao included a refusal to support similar Chinese unification attempts regardless of the implications for China. I further demonstrate that the propensity for cohesion between allies further decreases when examining multilateral alliance structures.

Multilateral Asymmetric Alliance: NATO

I classify the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a multilateral asymmetric alliance. Multilateral alliances are less cohesive than bilateral alliances because of the relationship between membership size and the efficiency of interactions. Organizations with large membership bodies imply an increased likelihood that individual member preferences will conflict, decreasing the propensity for cohesion and increasing the likelihood for collective action problems as allies are unable to agree on a single preference and strategy to meet this end. Despite challenges associated with multilateral alliances, asymmetric power distribution between allies can moderate some of these effects as a dominant ally can set a security preference and coerce other allies to comply. Although, weaker allies have an increased ability to challenge the dominant ally through bandwagoning as membership size increases. Additionally, as relative power parity decreases between allies, weaker allies are further able to challenge the dominant ally in setting the security preference, entailing American entrapment the provision of aid to allies.

Prior to alliance formation (i.e., pre-treatment) the United States was unable to persuade European states to collectively mobilize against the Soviet Union due to a lack of European economic and military capacity and differing preferences as to what mobilization against the Soviet Union should look like. Through the establishment of NATO (i.e., treatment), the United States was able to rely on coercion rather than persuasion by threatening to cut off membership benefits including the distribution of military and economic aid to its European allies. Ultimately, through the institution of a multilateral asymmetric alliance, the United States established itself as the dominant ally based on its relative economic and military strength and was therefore able to set the collective security preference of the alliance. However, as the United States continued to devote resources to rebuilding Europe after World War II to protect against the threat of communist expansionism, European states became increasingly capable of challenging the United States in dictating the collective security preference of the alliance, therefore attempting to entrap the United States further into regional conflicts such as the dispute between the United Kingdom and France over post-war European hegemony (Ellison, 2006). While the United States still maintains the upper hand in managing alliance preferences, the increased ability of weaker allies to challenge these preferences weakens cohesion (i.e., post treatment). Essentially, the more aid the US contributed toward European recovery, the greater the opportunity Europeans had to challenge American leadership.

Additionally, the United States has been challenged in effectively mobilizing Europe as the inclusion of 29 total members incentivizes allies to renege on alliance commitments, for example the 2014 pledge to contribute two percent of GDP to defense spending. Ultimately, I show that NATO was most cohesive when the relative power disparity between actors was most extreme, enabling the United States as the dominant actor to set the security preference of the

alliance and coerce compliance from allies. However, cohesion weakens as a result of European economic recovery and NATO's significant growth in membership. Economic recovery enabled European allies to credibly challenge the security preferences of the United States while a large membership size increased the likelihood for collective action problems. This has significant implications for the efficacy of NATO and the reliability of its allies in addressing future security challenges. The relationship between cohesion and reliability is most present in the current state of affairs between NATO allies, with the United States as the dominant actor reprimanding fellow allies' discrepancies in burden sharing with President Trump writing to German Chancellor Angela Merkel,

“The United States continues to devote more resources to the defense of Europe when the Continent's economy, including Germany's, are doing well and security challenges abound. This is no longer sustainable for the US” (Davis, 2018).

This statement essentially implies that the United States is increasingly unable and/or unwilling to fulfill commitments (i.e., be as reliable) as it was in the Cold War era. Challenges associated with multilateral alliance structures become more problematic with the absence of a dominant ally, as indicated by the Arab League.

Multilateral Symmetric: The Arab League

I argue that multilateral symmetric alliances, such as the Arab League, are the least cohesive form of alliance relative to other structures. This argument is premised on two scope conditions. First is the size of the membership body. Multilateral alliances increase the number of preferences as a result of a large membership size and therefore the probability that these preferences will conflict. Multilateral alliances increase the likelihood of collective action

problems resulting from individual member incentives which discourage the pursuit of a collective goal. Second, symmetrical distribution of power between actors implies the lack of a hegemon capable of coercing compliance among members for the sake of unity. Further, allies who share similar amounts of power are better able to challenge the preferences of the other because they have a greater likelihood of winning when facing an actor that is their equal. Both of these conditions decrease the propensity for cohesion between allies as the likelihood of allies agreeing on a security preference and means to reach this end decreases. I demonstrate that the Arab League includes both conditions associated with low cohesion and outline these points below.

Prior to the institution of a multilateral symmetric alliance (i.e., pre-treatment), Middle Eastern states lacked independence and a unified vision for Arab political advancement in international politics (Saud, 1954). Through the establishment of the Arab League (i.e., the treatment), Arab states created an institution centered on safeguarding their regional security, economic development, and advancing Arab regional interests internationally. However, the institutional characteristics of this alliance were unfavorable to the achievement of these objectives. For example, early iterations of alliance objectives centered on designing an institution in which “all participating states would be represented on an equal footing” (Alexandria Protocol, 1944). The early emphasis placed on equal weight of member decisions has rendered the League largely inoperative in advancing its objectives as decisions often result in stalemate (Hassouna, 1975). Further, the membership body has grown significantly, from the original seven in 1945 to 22 today (Yee, 2019). These members vary in how they interpret these original objectives which has led to unofficial blocs forming within the alliance with varying

states vying for dominance (i.e., post-treatment). This has influenced cohesion in the aftermath of the restructuring with further implications for the reliability of allies.

Today the Arab League is largely inoperative in achieving its original security objectives best characterized by Morocco's refusal to host the alliance's annual leaders' summit in 2016 arguing that it was "just another occasion [to] pronounce speeches that give a false impression of unity" (Yee, 2019). Most notably, The symmetric distribution among allies implies that the alliance lacked a hegemon capable of coercing allies to follow through with strategies in line with a collective security preference. Rather, allies are able to act according to their individual security preferences, rendering the alliance as incohesive. The pursuit of individual security preferences encouraged Arab allies to attach themselves to powerful states outside the framework of the alliance, best indicated in the solicitation of international support to constrain Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Following the invasion, the Arab League held an emergency summit to address Iraq's intransigence, however, only 12 out of the total of 20 members actually attended the meeting (Kifner, 1990; Lensch, 1991). Although members in attendance condemned the Iraqi invasion, the poor attendance is especially concerning considering the agenda topic. Kuwait is a member of the Arab League who was attacked by a fellow ally within the Arab League. The limited attendance at the emergency summit demonstrates the extent to which cohesion had decreased between allies. Further, allies were not reliable, in that many states were unwilling to fulfill their obligations to protect Kuwait as a fellow ally from invasion. Above all, these findings indicate that more cohesive allies are more reliable allies.

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