Foreign Policy Analysis (2016) **12**, 489–511

Information, Commitment, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905[1]

Philip Streich
Pomona College

and

Jack S. Levy
Rutgers University

We apply a modified version of the bargaining model of war to the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. We conceptualize the informational path to war as a two-step process, the first identifying the sources of informational asymmetries, and the second specifying the causal linkages between informational asymmetries and war. The sources of informational asymmetries include not only private information and incentives to misrepresent that information, but also individual, societal, and governmental-level factors. We argue that the primary causes of the Russo-Japanese War involved a combination of the commitment problem and preventive logic arising from Russia's growing power relative to that of Japan, and informational problems arising from disagreements about relative power and resolve. These disagreements arose almost exclusively from Russian political and military leaders' underestimation of Japanese capabilities and resolve, and they generated highly intransigent Russian bargaining behavior. Russia misperceptions can be traced primarily to racial and cultural stereotypes and psychological biases, and to competition between rival domestic and bureaucratic factions that distorted information flows, created an incoherent decision-making process, and sent confusing signals to Japan.

Russia's humiliating defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 had profound effects. Domestically, it accelerated revolutionary discontent in Russia and enhanced Japan's national image as a modern state. Internationally, it shattered long-standing beliefs in European military dominance, triggered a major loss of prestige for Russia, removed any doubts about Japan's status as the newest great power, and redefined the balance of power in the Far East. By encouraging a major reorientation of Russian foreign policy, away from the Far East toward the Balkans and Europe, it also marked a significant step on the road to the First World War. For these reasons and others, the war has attracted considerable attention from historians.

[1] *Authors' note*: We are grateful to a number of scholars for their useful comments on the historical and theoretical issues involved in the paper. They include Dale Copeland, Michael McKoy, Bruce Menning, Paul Poast, Joshua Shifrinson, Zachary Shirkey, Jitsuo Tsuchiyama, Alex Vacca, and Alex Weisiger. We give special thanks to an anonymous reviewer whose comments led us in some unexpected directions.

Streich, Philip and Jack S. Levy. (2016) Information, Commitment, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, doi: 10.1111/fpa.12058
© 2014 International Studies Association

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

The primary debate regarding the causes of the war is between those who argue that the war was the inevitable result of a conflict of irreconcilable interests between two expansionist states, and those who argue the war resulted from misperceptions and other factors leading to the breakdown of negotiations that could have succeeded in diffusing the crisis.[2] The first view is represented by Langer (1969:3), who argued that the war was a "classic example of a conflict waged for purely imperialistic motives," a rivalry for control of Korea and Manchuria and indeed for the mastery of the Far East and China. Similarly, Schimmelpenninck van der Oye (2005:44) states that "the war resulted from the irreconcilable ambitions of two aggressive states in an age of great power rivalry . . . " Others reject this argument about the inevitable clash of underlying interests and argue that war resulted from Russian military overconfidence and consequent intransigent negotiating behavior (Warner and Warner 1974; Nish 1985; Richardson 1994; Vasquez 2008). They trace these misperceptions to Russian racial and cultural stereotypes of Asian military inferiority and to bureaucratic and organizational factors creating confusion in the Russian chain of command (Warner and Warner 1974:159–160; Nish 1985:196–204, 241; Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 1996; Menning 2006; Sergeev 2007).

Each of these interpretations recognizes that Russia and Japan engaged in serious negotiations in 1903–1904. They disagree on why bargaining broke down and whether that breakdown was structurally determined and basically inevitable, or a failure of crisis management.[3] The "bargaining model of war" (Fearon 1995; Wagner 2000; Powell 2006) helps to clarify the distinction between these two perspectives and provides a useful framework for analyzing the breakdown in bargaining and the onset of war. It posits that because war is costly, there exists in principle a negotiated settlement that rational unitary actors each prefers to war, so that an essential question that any theory of war must answer is why adversaries cannot reach such a settlement. The model identifies two primary paths through with rational unitary actors might end up in violent conflict. One involves private information and incentives to misrepresent that information, which leads at least one actor to conclude that it can get more from war than from a negotiated settlement. A second path to war involves the "commitment problem," which often arises from shifting power and the inability of the rising state to credibly commit to honor any agreement in the future, when it is stronger. This sometimes leads the declining state to adopt a preventive war strategy, with the aim of defeating the adversary while the opportunity is still available.

We use the bargaining framework, and its key concepts of informational problems and commitment problems, to analyze the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. We begin with a brief summary of the bargaining model of war, but emphasize that informational problems can have cultural, psychological, and domestic political as well as rationalist roots. We then assess the role of commitment problems and informational problems in the processes leading to war in 1904.

[2]A third set of arguments emphasizes domestic political sources of the war on the Russian side. Lebow (1981:74–79) argues that infighting and maneuvering among competing domestic factors fueled Russian expansion and persuaded the Tsar to adopt a hard-line negotiating strategy during the resulting crisis. Some suggest a diversionary interpretation. This is reflected in the statement of Vyacheslav von Plehve, the Russian interior minister: "What this country needs is a short, victorious war to stem the tide of revolution" (White 1964:38; Lebow 1981:66; Esthus 1988), although some question the source and validity of this statement (Blainey 1973:76–77). A recent explanation emphasizes how prospect-theoretic framing by different business interests in Japan contributed to the Japanese decision for war (Rothman 2011). On diversionary theory and prospect theory see Levy (1989) and Kahneman (2011), respectively. For useful bibliographies see Nish (1985) and Kowner (2006:471–535).

[3]The inevitability view is reinforced by the argument that the rising power of Russia created incentives for Japan to adopt a preventive war strategy. On crisis management see George (1991).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

The Bargaining Model of War

War is an inefficient means of settling disputes between states because it destroys resources that might otherwise be distributed among adversaries. There nearly always exists in principle some negotiated settlement that each side prefers to war. The bargaining model of war poses the key theoretical question of why adversaries sometimes fail to reach such a settlement and instead end up at war. The model posits that there are three distinct paths to war between rational unitary actors: the presence of private information and incentives to misrepresent that information, commitment problems, and indivisible issues (Fearon 1995).[4]

The private information path to war is a refinement of Blainey's (1973) conceptualization of war as fundamentally a dispute about relative power. Assuming that the best predictor of war outcomes is the distribution of power between adversaries, Blainey argued that if actors disagree about relative power, they will disagree about the outcome of war, and at least one actor might think it can gain more from war than from a negotiated settlement. If actors have similar expectations about the consequences of war, they should be able to agree on a settlement that gives each party the same payoffs that it would expect to receive from war, but without the economic and human costs of war. For Fearon and other rationalists, the source of disagreements about relative power, and consequently of the different incentives that actors have to fight or reach a negotiated settlement, is private information.[5]

States could eliminate private information and facilitate a peaceful settlement of disputes by sharing information. The problem is that states have incentives to misrepresent their military capabililties and resolve. They sometimes exaggerate those capabilities, with the aim of extracting greater concessions from the adversary and deterring future challenges. Or, they may conceal their capabilities, for fear that revealing information about new weapons systems or secret alliances might alert the adversary and give it the opportunity to overcome its weaknesses by searching for allies, altering its military strategy, or initiating a preemptive strike (Slantchev 2010). Moreover, even when states reveal genuine information, their adversaries may not believe them, given incentives for misrepresentation. Thus, it is not private information alone, but private information and the incentives to misrepresent that information, that increases the likelihood of a bargaining breakdown and the resort to violence.[6]

An analytically distinct path to war involves the "commitment problem," which can arise even in the absence of private information. Sources of commitment problems include offensive military advantages, shifting power, and objects of dispute (such as strategic territory) that themselves shape future bargaining power (Fearon 1995:398–400; Powell 2006). Each shares the same underlying causal mechanism, which can significantly complicate adversaries' efforts to reach a negotiated settlement that each prefers to war. With respect to shifting power, the declining state may want to reach a settlement that freezes the current status quo, but it cannot be sure that its rising adversary will honor the agreement in the future, when the adversary is stronger. The adversary's growing strength will give it greater bargaining leverage in the future, and there

[4]Fearon (1995:379) acknowledges analytically distinct psychological and domestic political paths to war.

[5]Private information is not technically equivalent to uncertainty. If each side is uncertain about the outcome of war, but shares the same expected probability *or* probability distribution of outcomes, information is shared rather than private.

[6]The only information taken seriously is that which is not easily manipulated or that which is costly for the adversary to send. This leads states to send "costly signals" (such as troop movements or mobilizations) to credibly communicate their resolve. To be informative, the signal must be sufficiently costly, relative to the issues at stake, that a state that is unwilling to follow through will be unwilling to bear the costs of sending the signal (Fearon 1995:390–401; 1997).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

would be nothing to stop it from making new demands to overturn the earlier settlement. The rising state, which understands that it would probably lose any war fought now and that it will be in a stronger bargaining position later, presumably wants to avoid war. It might promise to abide by any current settlement, and it might even intend to do so, but in an anarchic system without an enforcement mechanism, the rising state cannot credibly commit to honor the agreement.[7] The declining state might agree to a settlement that restricted the rising state's bargaining power, but the rising state is unlikely to accept such a solution, especially if it limited economic growth, which affects social welfare as well as military potential (Chadefaux 2011:228–253). The commitment problem lowers the likelihood of a negotiated settlement and increases the probability of war by creating incentives for the declining state to adopt a strategy of preventive war. Driven by better-now-than-later logic, it prefers war now to defeat the adversary, or at least retard its growing capabilities, while the opportunity is still available (Levy 2008, 2014).

An important variation of the commitment problem concerns strategic territory. If the disputed territory contains economic resources that can enhance future power, or if it is strategically located, enhancing the future military prospects of whoever controls it, it may be more difficult to reach a negotiated settlement. A state that gains some strategic territory as part of a settlement cannot guarantee that it will not use that strategic position for offensive purposes in the future. Rather than accept a negotiated settlement that transfers territory or resources that might enhance the adversary's future military power, a state might prefer an escalation of hostilities (Fearon 1995:408–409).

A third rationalist path to war involves "indivisible issues." For a negotiated settlement to be acceptable to both sides, it requires a division of goods that reflects shared expectations of the likely outcome of war and thus the distribution of power between two states. A proportionate division of the spoils of war is theoretically possible if and only if the issues in dispute are infinitely divisible. Although material goods are often easily divisible, the same is not true for ideological and religious values or "sacred space" (Toft 2006:34–69; Hassner 2009). Side payments, issue linkages, or alternation of control over disputed space may facilitate divisibility, although the latter is often infeasible because of domestic constraints or because of commitment problems. These considerations lead Fearon (1995:381–382), Powell (2006), and other bargaining theorists to conclude that issue indivisibility is not an analytically distinct path to war, and to focus on information problems and commitment problems. We do the same.

The causal mechanisms involved are fairly clear with regard to the commitment problem, but less so with regard to informational problems. To see this, consider Fearon's (1995:398–400) brief illustration of the workings of the informational mechanism in the case of the Russo-Japanese war. Fearon demonstrates the existence of informational asymmetries by noting that "Russian leaders believed that their military could almost certainly defeat Japan ... [while] the Japanese chief of staff estimated a fifty–fifty chance of prevailing, if their attack began immediately." Fearon refers to historical accounts documenting that this disagreement about relative power was a "major cause of the war." Despite repeated compromises offered by the Japanese, and despite that fact that neither the Tsar nor his key advisors wanted war, Russian leaders refused to compromise largely because of "their belief that Japan would not dare attack them," and that "Japan would have to settle for less, given its relative military weakness" (Fearon 1995:398). Fearon traces this disagreement about relative power and hence the likely outcome of war to the fact that Japan had better intelligence

[7]In addition, there is no guarantee that the government committing to the agreement will be in power in the future, and that a new government will not renounce the agreement (Powell 2006:189).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

about Russia than Russia had about Japan, and that Japan could not reveal its information without reducing the likelihood that they would win the war. He concludes that "the combination of private information about relative power or will and the strategic incentive to misrepresent these afford a tenable rationalist explanation for war."

We agree with Fearon (1995:398–399) that Japanese assessments of Russian capabilities were more accurate than were Russian assessments of Japanese capabilities, that Japan had incentives not to reveal its private information (particularly about its military strategy), that as a result there was a disagreement about relative power and resolve, and that this was a major cause of the war. We disagree, however, about the sources of the dispute about relative power. Fearon emphasizes Japan's relatively accurate estimates but says nothing about the sources of Russia's inaccurate estimates of Japanese military capabilities and resolve, which are critical for a complete explanation of the war.

Moreover, when Fearon mentions the 50/50 odds of victory made by the Japanese chief of staff, he overlooks the fact that the words "if their attack began immediately" (in the passage cited above) refer to Japanese calculations that the odds of winning would decline over time because of the rising power of Russia. Thus, buried in Fearon's illustration of informational problems is evidence of a commitment problem and the preventive logic associated with it. This is important because it creates a time pressure for action sooner rather than later. Protracted negotiations are not an option for the state in relative decline. In the absence of this time pressure, it is not clear why disagreements about relative power and resolve should lead to a decision for war rather than to continued negotiations, costly signaling, and an attempt to secure a settlement that is preferred to a costly war. By imposing a deadline on negotiations, preventive logic helps explain the final link between informational asymmetries and war. Thus the interaction effects between informational and commitment problems are often critical.

In the rationalist informational path to war, war occurs because adversaries have different expectations about the outcome of war and therefore different incentives to reach a settlement. Fearon and other rationalists emphasize that the source of those informational asymmetries is private information combined with incentives to misrepresent one's military capabilities, resolve, and their society's ability to tolerate the costs of war. This by itself is an incomplete explanation for war. First, in nearly any bargaining, there are *some* informational asymmetries. In addition, in any anarchic system without an enforcement mechanism, there is *always* an incentive to misrepresent information, regardless of whether one side deliberately misrepresents its capabilities or resolve. The argument about incentives to misrepresent information explains why states often decline to reveal private information, but it cannot explain when asymmetric information leads to war and when it does not.

Second, bargaining theorists generally neglect the sources of informational asymmetries. Fearon (1995:392) is an exception. He mentions three sources of disagreements about relative power: emotional commitments; the inherent complexity of the world; and private information. He argues that only private information fits a rational bargaining model. Most bargaining theorists implicitly accept Fearon's argument, but are not always clear what it entails.[8] In our view, the implication of rational bargaining theory is that the processes leading to informational asymmetries should be consistent with a rational theory of information processing. This is a complex issue, but a minimum set of criteria requires that actors engage in Bayesian updating of their prior beliefs in response to new

[8]Lake (2010/11:28) argues that the sources of prior beliefs are important and that they include cognitive delusions and distortions.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

information,[9] and that actors independently assess the probabilities and utilities of various outcomes.

Although rationalist sources of informational asymmetries, and hence of disagreements about relative power and resolve that can lead to war, are undoubtedly important, there are other sources of informational asymmetries that break from the unitary rational actor assumptions of the bargaining model. These can be psychological, as illustrated by Blainey's (1973) analysis of the sources of disagreements about relative power. They can also be cultural, domestic, political, and organizational.

This raises a conceptual issue. Whereas most bargaining theorists use the terms private information and informational asymmetries interchangeably, it is useful to distinguish between them. Asymmetric information refers to disagreements about relative power and resolve, but says nothing about the source of those disagreements. We interpret Fearon as implicitly suggesting that private information refers both to the existence of asymmetric information and to a particular source of informational asymmetries. Fearon (1995:379, 392) classifies Blainey's argument about disagreements about relative power and war as "irrational," and distinct from the rationalist information path to war, because Blainey emphasizes the role of mutual optimism and other psychologically generated misperceptions.[10] We prefer to think in terms of a two-step model or causal chain and distinguish the sources of asymmetric information from its consequences.[11] We characterize Blainey's (1973) argument as involving a nonrationalist explanation of informational asymmetries and a rational explanation of the link between informational asymmetries (not private information) and war.

We now briefly mention some nonrationalist sources of information asymmetries, before turning to an analysis of the breakdown in bargaining in the Russo-Japanese crisis of 1903–1904.

Nonrationalist Influences on Information Failures

Political psychologists have identified a large set of cognitive and emotional factors that lead to distorted images of the enemy, flawed probability judgments, and significant deviations from rational decision making (Jervis 1976; McDermott 2004; Stein 2013). Political and cultural factors can also lead to information distortions. Evidence that states go to war because of asymmetric information in calculations of relative power is not sufficient to support a rational explanation for war, because those asymmetries may come from nonrational as well as rational processes. As David Lake argues in his application of bargaining theory to the Iraq War, "the key information failures were rooted in cognitive biases in decision-making, not intentional misrepresentations by the opponent" (Lake 2010/11:9).

This is not the place for a systematic review of the sources of the psychological, societal, and organizational sources of deviations from rational information processing and decision making, but highlighting a few themes will help guide our case study.[12] Recall that what is critical for our purposes are not just the sources of initial judgments about the adversary, but the sources of failures to update those judgments properly in response to new information.

First, there are a number of cognitive biases or heuristics (decisional short-cuts) that lead to distortions in judgment. Information processing tends to be theory

[9] Prior beliefs themselves are exogenous in the bargaining model (Lake 2010/11:27).

[10] Fey and Ramsay (2007) show that there is no coherent rationalist theory linking mutual optimism and war.

[11] On causal chains see Goertz and Levy (2007).

[12] For a survey of psychological and organizational influences on judgment and decision making see Huddy, Sears, and Levy (2013) and Allison and Zelikow (1999), respectively.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

driven, with prior assumptions and belief systems significantly shaping how people perceive the outside world. To a significant extent, people see what they *expect* to see based on their mindsets. They are slower to accept information that runs contrary to their prior beliefs than information that reinforces those beliefs. Rather than combine prior beliefs with new information based on a rational Bayesian model of information updating, people unconsciously allow initial beliefs to serve as a cognitive "anchor" and give insufficient weight to new information.[13] Another source of misperception is the common reliance on singular "lessons of history" that are often taken out of context, rather than on broader patterns of behavior (Jervis 1976:chapter 6). One of the most common forms of misperception is military overconfidence—the belief that war will be victorious, short, and relatively low cost (Levy 1983; Johnson 2004). This seriously distorts actors' cost-benefit calculations and can lead a state to reject a negotiated settlement on the erroneous assumption that it can get more from fighting than from negotiating.

Also influential are "motivated biases" that are driven by peoples' policy interests and state of emotional well-being. People see what they *want* to see. If an actor prefers a particular policy option, either for reasons of state interests or their own domestic political interests, they may unconsciously exaggerate the benefits of that policy and the probability that it will lead to the predicted outcome. Consequently, assessments of the probability of outcomes are sometimes shaped by assessments of the utility of outcomes, contrary to the fundamental rationalist assumption that probabilities and utilities are judged independently.

Leaders' policy preferences can shape their assessments of intelligence through a political mechanism as well as this psychological mechanism—the politicization of intelligence (Rovner 2011). Top-level leaders sometimes put pressure on intelligence agencies to provide the intelligence they need to gain support for their existing policies. Leaders can also staff intelligence agencies with loyalists, who have a greater commitment to supporting their patron's policies than to arrive at an objective intelligence assessment. Many of these pathologies of individual decision making are exacerbated by small group dynamics, as Irving Janis (1982) emphasized in his influential study of groupthink.

Bureaucratic and organizational factors can also contribute to the distortion of information and hence to informational asymmetries between adversaries. One theme in the theoretical literature on bureaucratic politics and organization processes is the role of organizational autonomy and parochial interests in inhibiting the sharing of information across intelligence organizations. Another is an agency's use of its control over information to limit or distort the flow of information to top decision makers, as a means of advancing its parochial interests. Distinct organizational cultures also shape receptivity to information, including the free flow of information within an agency and the incentives for analysts to "think outside the box." The policy preferences, personality, and management style of the leader of an intelligence unit may compound the problem (Bar-Joseph and Levy 2009).

Societal factors can also affect information processing by intelligence analysts and military and political leaders. Cultural attitudes help shape stereotyped images of the enemy, which serve as a prism through which adversary capabilities and intentions are evaluated, and which generate biases that exacerbate informational asymmetries. Cultural and racial stereotypes can lead to contempt for an adversary's capabilities, which in turn affect assessments of adversary intentions (Lebow 2008). Bellicose publics can lead to more hawkish state preferences or prevent leaders from making compromises they might otherwise prefer to make. If political leaders come to believe that their domestic political fortunes would

[13]This is the "anchoring and adjustment" heuristic (Kahneman 2011).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

benefit from more hardline foreign policies or even war, they may prefer fighting to negotiating, regardless of the costs to state and societal interests. This may result in the narrowing or elimination of the range of bargaining outcomes that are mutually preferred to war in a rational unitary actor model (Tarar 2006). Shifts in public opinion or in the power of domestic groups with conflicting interests may lead to unstable state preferences and send mixed signals to the adversary.

Having discussed both the information and commitment mechanisms associated with the bargaining model of war, and some of the behavioral factors that must also be taken into account in the analysis of informational problems, we now turn to a case study of the causes of the Russo-Japanese War. We begin with a discussion of the background to the conflict. We explain how the rising Russian military presence in Manchuria and Korea led Japanese leaders to fear that power was shifting away and to adopt preventive better-now-than-later logic. But incentives for preventive war driven by the commitment problem did not make war inevitable (Nish 1985:208; Richardson 1994:117). We show how cultural stereotypes, psychological biases, and domestic and bureaucratic politics combined to generate Russian military overconfidence and a hard-line Russian bargaining strategy that put a settlement out of reach.

The Russo-Japanese War: Historical Background

The Russo-Japanese crisis of 1903–1904 emerged from a clash of rival territorial imperialisms. Russian expansion into East Asia, which began in the mid-1800s, focused initially on the economic development and protection of its Eastern settlements. Russia acquired the port of Vladivostok and the surrounding area from China in 1858–1860 and, under the direction of Finance Minister Sergei Witte, launched construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad in 1891. Witte's motivations were primarily economic, but the railroad would contribute significantly to Russia's power projection capabilities in the Far East (Malozemoff 1958:34–39; Geyer 1987).

Japanese officials believed that their nation's security depended on keeping Korea out of foreign hands (Nish 1977:36; Paine 2003:104). Korea was inside Japan's "line of advantage," a buffer zone needed to protect the home islands and enhance Japanese power in the future. Control over Korea would also provide a toehold for Japan's economic penetration of the continent, but economic concerns overall were secondary (Conroy 1960:485, 491; Duus 1984:129; Peattie 1988:222). Manchuria was secondary. As Langer (1969:44) states, "the war was at bottom a war for Korea, not for Manchuria." Japan was divided internally, however, as to whether the aim was to prevent Russian hegemony in Korea or to go beyond that and impose a Japanese hegemony over Korea (Nish 1985:241–242).

A key step in the road to a Russo-Japanese conflict was the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895. In the Treaty of Shimonoseki ending the war, Japan forced China to cede Taiwan and the strategic Liaodong Peninsula, which included Port Arthur in southwestern Manchuria. Russia, with an eye on extending the Trans-Siberian Railroad across Manchuria to its key port at Vladivostok, denounced the treaty, arguing that it would provide an obstacle to fair access to China and to peace in the Far East. In the Triple Intervention of 1895, Russia, along with Germany and France, interceded on China's behalf and demanded that Japan return Liaodong to China in exchange for a larger indemnity payment. Japan, which had expected to be treated as an equal after its dramatic victory over China, had no choice but to acquiesce.

Emboldened by that outcome, Russia continued to expand its influence. It secured the rights to a railway line across Manchuria; pressured China into a lease for a naval base at Port Arthur, thus securing a warm water port; exploited the

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Boxer rebellion to seize military control of all of Manchuria; and made inroads into Korea by gaining a timber concession along the Yalu River and sending army officers to train the Korean army. Russia promised to withdraw from Manchuria in an April 1902 agreement, but then failed to implement the second stage of the withdrawal in April 1903. Japan initiated several negotiations with Russia, beginning in 1898 and most prominently from August 1903 to January 1904. However, negotiations broke down and Japan launched a successful surprise attack against the Russian naval base at Port Arthur on February 8, 1904.

Power Shifts, Preventive Logic, and the Commitment Problem

Japanese leaders, already concerned that the dyadic balance of power was shifting in St. Petersburg's favor despite their own arms build-up since 1895, perceived Russian actions in Manchuria as providing concrete evidence of Russia's expansionist intentions.[14] Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō stated that "Korea was like a dagger pointing at Japan's heart and she could never endure its possession by a foreign power. Russia's activities in Manchuria and Korea are leading eventually to her domination over Korea" (Nish 1985:159). Prime Minister Katsura Tarō feared that Russia would try to move into Korea; that if it agreed to a settlement it would not honor it, leaving Japan to confront Russia on less favorable terms later; and that the only way to block Russian control over Korea was to form a Japanese protectorate (Okamoto 1970:70). Katsura understood that Russia would feel threatened by Japanese troops in Korea and concluded that security dilemma dynamics made war highly likely (Okamoto 1970:69–71).

One obstacle to finding a negotiated settlement that both sides preferred to peace was the strategic nature of the disputed territories. Whoever controlled Korea and/or Manchuria would gain a strategic foothold that would enhance its military power and leverage in the future. Consistent with the logic of the commitment problem, neither side could trust the other not to exploit any territorial acquisition to augment its future military power.

Japanese fears of the growing power of Russia, combined with its belief that the intractable territorial conflict over Korea made a future war highly likely, created pressure in Japan for a strategy of preventive war driven by better-now-than-later logic. This theme is central to a memo circulated in advance of a June 8, 1903 meeting of the General Staff by General Iguchi Shōgō. Iguchi argued that Japan should work together with Britain and the United States if possible, and alone if necessary, to negotiate the withdrawal of Russian forces from Manchuria. However,

> If by any chance these discussions break down and Russia does not respond to our demands as a means of [safeguarding the] peace, Japan should achieve her objectives by armed force.... *The present is the most favourable time for this purpose,* bearing in mind the superiority of our forces over Russia, the fact that the Trans-Siberian is incomplete, the existence of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the hostility of the Chinese people, etc. *If we let today's favourable opportunity slip by, it will never come again.* (Nish 1985:157, emphasis added)

Two weeks later, Chief of the General Staff Ōyama Iwao repeated the argument that time was slipping away and that Japan needed to take action. He was responding in part to new information that Russia was purchasing Korean lands at the mouth of Yalu River and placing forces at the upper reaches of the Yalu and at other strategic places, which reinforced fears of Russia's aggressive intentions and

[14]Those actions were also humiliating, given that Japan had been forced to withdraw from Manchuria by the Triple Intervention in 1895.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

a possible invasion of Korea. This contributed to the start of the 1903–1904 negotiations with Russia (Kurono 2004:93–94).[15]

Although some in the military and foreign ministry dissented from this better-now-than-later thinking (Okamoto 1970:57–75, 81–90), arguments underlying that dissent were undercut by subsequent Russian actions. By January 1904, even those like the Russophile Itō Hirobumi,[16] who had argued for three years that Russia would agree to a settlement, conceded that negotiations with Russia had come to a dead end. Itō stated that "Russia's aim was from the start to increase her military and naval forces and then reject Japan's demands . . . if Japan does not now go to war and defend her threatened interests, she will eventually have to kowtow to the Russian governor of one of her frontier provinces" (Nish 1985:207).

Meanwhile, Japan's naval buildup following the war with China had come to fruition, and by 1903, Japan's naval strength was equal to that of Russia. At sea, Japan had six battleships, seven armored cruisers, 10 nonarmored cruisers, and 20 destroyers.[17] The Russian Pacific Fleet had seven battleships, one armored cruiser, five nonarmored cruisers, and 25 destroyers at Port Arthur, complemented by three armored and one nonarmored cruiser at Vladivostok (Evans and Peattie 1997:90–91).[18] On land, Japan's army numbered 180,000 men. With reserves, that number increased to 850,000. Although Russia had an overall active army of 1.1 million men (the largest in the world), which could be increased to over 3.8 million men with reserves, their manpower in the Far East was between 140,000 and 148,800 (Great Britain General Staff of the War Office 1906:20–21).

Japanese leaders recognized, however, that their recent gains in strength could not be sustained, that Japan's power had peaked relative to Russia's, and that the balance of power was starting to shift in Russia's favor, along several dimensions:

Land power: Russia's Trans-Siberian Railroad project, which would allow Russia to move vast numbers of troops to Manchuria fairly quickly, alarmed Japanese officials when it was first announced in 1890. Prime Minister Yamagata Aritomo warned that Russia's railroad expansion threatened Korea and pushed the "line of advantage" closer to Japan, endangering its security and sovereignty. Yamagata believed that time was running against Japan and that it should act sooner rather than later before its position deteriorated further (Nish 1985:45; Paine 2003:104). Japanese concerns greatly intensified as the railroad neared completion and full operating capacity by late 1903 (Papastratigakis 2011:249). Beginning early 1904, Japanese intelligence reported a substantial increase in traffic departing European Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railroad (Great Britain General Staff of the War Office 1906:27, Appendix A; Koda 2005:20). The impending completion of the railway, with its implications for Russian power projection capabilities in the Far East, was a key factor leading to the Japanese decision for war in 1904.[19]

Naval power. The Russian navy in the Far East nearly doubled in force from 1902 to 1903 (Great Britain General Staff of the War Office 1906:34–35). The reinforcement continued into 1904, as two battleships, one armored cruiser and

[15]We thank Jitsuo Tsuchiyama for bringing this point to our attention.

[16]Itō, along with Yamagata Aritomo, were two of the leading g*enrō*, a select group of elder statesmen and trusted advisors to the emperor (Okamoto 1970:14–21). Together they held the post of prime minister a total of six times (out of 11 cabinets) between 1885 and 1904.

[17]This only includes ships built in the preceding 10 years.

[18]Nish (1985:199) and Koda (2005:22) provide slightly different estimates.

[19]Nish (1985:18) argues, "The deteriorating Russo-Japanese relationship . . . has to be seen against the background of railway building."

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

three other cruisers left European Russia in 1903, although only one battleship and the armored cruiser had reached the Mediterranean by December (Nish 1985:198; Koda 2005:20). Russia had also been building up its port facilities at Port Arthur to accommodate an expanded fleet (Nish 1985:168). As a US War Department report (1907:147–148; cited in Vacca 2009, chapter 4) concluded, "Japan struck when she did because of the Russian naval situation . . . [recognizing] that the time was slipping by when she could make war with the balance of advantages on her side."

The weather also played a role in the particular timing of the war. By the end of 1903, Japan's navy was equal to the combined Russian Pacific Fleet at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, and superior if the Russian fleets were separated. The longer Japan waited into the spring, the less crippled Russia would be by the ice at Vladivostok. The Japanese naval strategy thus hinged on launching a surprise attack and blockading the Port Arthur fleet in their harbor to keep them from joining up with the Vladivostok cruisers and impeding the troop ferries (Koda 2005:23).[20] Moreover, late January–early February was the peak of a traffic bottleneck across Lake Baikal. Icebreakers running in front of the troop ferries could no longer break the ice and stopped operating on January 27, so troops had to march across the frozen lake (Warner and Warner 1974:137, 165–166).

Financial strength. Japan had relied heavily on new taxes and on borrowing against their indemnity payments from the Sino-Japanese War to finance their naval buildup (Cordonnier 1912:62). Such borrowing led to a soaring national debt while taxes caused domestic unrest. Military spending at the current level was unsustainable. In addition, Western observers believed that war was likely and that Japan would perform poorly, which resulted in high borrowing rates for Japan.[21] These financial constraints convinced Japanese leaders that they would not be able to keep up with Russia in an arms race or have the staying power to fight a long war with Russia (Koda 2005:23).[22]

In view of Japan's closing window of opportunity for war and their beliefs that war was growing more and more likely, Katsura and Komura met with the *genrō* Itō and Yamagata in the Muran'in conference starting April 21, 1903, a week after Russia failed to implement the second round of troop withdrawals from Manchuria. The four agreed that Japan should protest if Russia failed to honor its Manchurian Evacuation agreement; begin negotiations to secure recognition of her predominant rights in Korea but make no concessions on that issue; recognize Russia's predominant rights in Manchuria; and "settle Korea once and for all" (Nish 1985:153). This first Japanese proposal was presented to Russia in August 1903. Russia responded with the demand that Japan keep Korea north of the 38th parallel demilitarized. Japan refused, arguing that it was unacceptable for Russia to occupy the massive area of Manchuria while Japan was excluded from northern Korea.

In a second round of these negotiations beginning October 30, 1903, Japan offered a compromise based on the Manchurian-Korean exchange: a Russian sphere of influence in Manchuria, a Japanese sphere of influence in Korea, and a 50 km neutral zone on the Manchurian-Korean border to avoid any border incidents. Additionally, Japan would refrain from militarizing any part of the Korean coastline to avoid threatening Russian shipping lanes (White 1964:352–353).

[20]This strategy was private information that would have been potentially fatal to share.

[21]Japan's borrowing ability improved over the course of the war with each victory (Great Britain Committee of the Imperial Defence, Historical Section 1910:415; Vacca 2009:321).

[22]Drea (2009:102) asserts that the Japanese General Staff did not even make a plan for a second year of campaigning. Fears of the consequences of a long war led Japan to make arrangements to involve the United States in mediation efforts (Westwood 1986:22).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Russia simply reiterated its previous proposals. After a third round of bargaining ended unsatisfactorily, and with the perception that time was running out, Komura sent Russia a final proposal on January 13, 1904. The proposal, which reflected Japan's August 1903 position, required Russia to acknowledge that Korea lay outside its sphere of influence, and that Japan's preponderance in Korea gave it exclusive right to advise the Korean government and to send troops to Korea if needed. Japan also demanded that Russia respect China's territorial integrity and the rights of other powers to China under existing treaties. Japan would recognize that Russia had special interests in Manchuria and the right to protect those interests.

Russia's failure to respond positively to these overtures led to an imperial conference on February 4, 1904, where Japanese leaders made the decision for war. This was not a case of military overconfidence. General Ōyama conceded that Japan only had a 50/50 chance of victory. Although the Japanese navy believed that it could defeat the Russian Pacific squadron, they feared that they would lose at least half of their ships in the process. Everyone agreed that Russia's vast resources guaranteed it victory in any long war, so that any war had to be short. They concluded that "war was the only possible choice; negotiations were leading nowhere, the Russians seemed determined to have Korea sooner or later," and once Russia was established in Korea she would threaten Japan itself (Westwood 1986:22). Most important, Japan's power position continued to deteriorate, creating strong incentives for preventive war. A Japanese minister described the feeling in Tokyo, "We do not want war, for it would cost us much, and we have nothing to gain, even if we win, but by keeping the peace too long we may lose even our national existence" (Connaughton 2003:23).[23]

There is good reason to believe that any of the Japanese offers, if accepted, would have secured the peace, at least for a time. On January 24, 1904, PM Katsura informed the Emperor that if Russia accepted the last Japanese proposals, then "Japan need not start a war," and that he would respond to a complete rejection of his proposals with war and to a partial acceptance of his proposals with further deliberation (Nish 1985:208). The Emperor typically accepted the advice of his close advisors, such as the prime minister, Itō, and Yamagata (Okamoto 1970:13).

This raises the question of why Russia's leaders did not accept any of the Japanese offers, or make a significant counter-offer. Instead, they remained intransigent throughout the negotiations until the very last minute.[24] One possible answer that most historians have rejected is that the Tsar wanted a war with Japan. Nish (1985:6, 253) notes the common contemporary view of "the emperor's innate love of peace," He argues that "the tsar and his ministers … were not at all lovers of war. They hoped they could secure their objectives by peace…" In October 1903, after the Viceroy of the Far East, Yevgeny Alexeev, began to plan countermeasures against possible Japanese military actions, the Tsar sent him the following order: "I do not want a war between Russia and

[23]This framing of the Japanese decision—as a choice between a costly and risky war and inaction that could lead to an existential threat—provides a nice fit with prospect theory. Actors will choose a risky gamble (war), hoping that it might eliminate their losses but recognizing that it might result in even greater losses, rather than accept the certain loss resulting from inaction and inevitable decline (Levy 2000).

[24]By late January, the Tsar had recognized the seriousness of the situation, and on February 2, approved new counterproposals in an attempt to head off a war. There is some debate as to the extent to which Nicholas accepted the last Japanese proposal, with Nish (1985:211) arguing that "the final Russian terms were rather unbending." In any case, his counterproposals did not reach Tokyo until after the Japanese decision for war on February 4. White (1964:129–130) and Nish (1985:253–255) each argue that war was inevitable by this point. Richardson (1994:117) concurs, but argues that seemingly irreconcilable differences could have been overcome if serious bargaining had begun earlier, in time to "modify the parties' misperceptions." Similarly, Nish (1985:241) argues that "Russia did not want war but by sheer dilatoriness over the negotiations let war occur." We interpret this to suggest that Russian leaders began realistic updating too late.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Japan and will not allow it. Take all measures so that war will not occur." The Tsar, after conferring with War Minister Alexei Kuropatkin, also stripped the Viceroy of the power to order mobilization (Malozemoff 1958:243; Nish 1985:190). When Alexeev reported Japanese mobilization in late January, the Tsar ordered him not to oppose a Japanese landing in southern Korea, and to only respond to a Japanese incursion north of the 38th parallel (Nish 1985:210; Sergeev 2007:48). The Tsar wrote in his diary on February 8, the day of the Japanese attack, that "we have decided not to commence war by ourselves" (Sergeev 2007:48).

The Tsar's preferences for peace over war were shared by Witte and Kuropatkin, as well as by Foreign Minister Vladimir Lamsdorf. Kuropatkin believed that the primary threat to Russia came from Germany and that the rivalry with Japan was diverting key resources and attention (Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2006:97). He wanted to maintain a strong presence in northern Manchuria, but to withdraw from the south.[25] He was a "cautious voice" in dealings with Japan and was associated with the "peace camp" (Nish 1985:251–252). As Kuropatkin (1909:194) later wrote, "We ourselves were not ready to fight, and resolved that it should not come to fighting. We made demands, but we had no intention of using weapons to enforce them—and . . . they were not worth going to war about."

Although the Tsar wanted peace, it was a peace on his own terms (Nish 1985:6). Nicholas had no clear conception about the tradeoffs he was willing to make between peace and other goals, and he had no clear strategy for achieving his objectives.[26] He vacillated between hardline and conciliatory bargaining strategies, and between accelerating preparations for war and refraining from them (Sergeev 2007:46, 48). This vacillation was exacerbated by conflicting pressures from competing "war" and "peace" camps within Russia, which we discuss in the next section.

A better explanation for Russia's intransigence in negotiations is the common belief that time was on their side (Nish 1985:118, 241; Sergeev 2007:48).[27] With more reinforcements arriving from European Russia and the railroad approaching full operating capacity, Russian leaders hoped to prolong negotiations with Japan until it had enough men in the region to maintain a permanent presence and provide leverage in negotiations (Nish 1985:196). Kuropatkin believed that Russia would be ready for war by May 1904 but not before (Warner and Warner 1974:158; Nish 1985:242). The Tsar stated that "war is unquestionably undesirable. Time is Russia's best ally. Every year strengthens us" (Malozemoff 1958:245).

Although the Tsar and others appeared to recognize that they had incentives to delay, that belief was somehow not translated into action.[28] Why? One answer is that the unquestioned Russian belief in their superiority over Japan and the deterrent effect of that superiority. To explain this critical belief, and to fully explain the failure of negotiations and the outbreak of war, we must turn to informational asymmetries, and particularly to Russian misperceptions of Japan's military capabilities and resolve.

[25]Alexeev and others wanted to maintain a presence in both northern and southern Manchuria.

[26]We are not convinced that Nicholas had a consistent and stable set of preferences over outcomes, but that is a question for another time.

[27]Thus, perceptions of future trends in power were shared between Russia and Japan, not private.

[28]Russian leaders believed that they had incentives to delay, but they did not strike a short-term deal with the intention of renegotiating later when they were stronger. This provides mixed support for one implication of commitment logic that has attracted relatively little attention. If the declining power has incentives to act sooner rather than later because it cannot trust the rising power to abide by any agreements once it is stronger, the rising power must have incentives to delay any confrontation. Exactly how actors' time horizons influence their current decisions is another important factor that has been undertheorized (Streich and Levy 2007).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Informational Asymmetries: Russian Underestimation of Japanese Capabilities and Resolve

There is little doubt that Russian military and political leaders significantly underestimated Japan's ability and willingness to fight or that the resulting informational asymmetries and disagreements about relative power were important causes of the Russo-Japanese War. Russian political and military leaders were convinced that they had indisputable military and naval superiority over Japan, that Japan would be deterred from initiating war against Russia, and that any Japanese recalcitrance in bargaining was merely "a game of bluff" (Langer 1969:39).

These attitudes go back many years. In 1896, Russian Foreign Minister Muraviev countered objections to the occupation of Port Arthur by saying, "One flag and one sentry, the prestige of Russia will do the rest" (quoted in Lebow 1981:245–246). This common view was reflected in the popular press. *Novoie Vremia*, a leading newspaper, stated in July 1903, "A war by Japan against us would be like committing suicide. It would be the shipwreck of all her hopes. The armies of Napoleon were of no avail against the power of the Russian giant, and after that experience no enemies hold any terror for Russia" (quoted in Langer 1969:39).

Such attitudes persisted throughout the negotiations until the outbreak of war. Ten days before the war, Baron Rosen, head of the Russian legation in Tokyo, said that "we had only to mobilize one Division and the Japanese will climb down" (Nish 1985:209). Right after the initiation of hostilities Kuropatkin assured the Tsar that after the Russian army drove the Japanese from Manchuria and then from Korea, there would be a "landing in Japan, annihilation of the Japanese territorial army, suppression of the national rising, capture of the Mikado." Another indicator of Russian military overconfidence is the fact that after Japan's surprise attack at Port Arthur, Nicholas took more than two months before ordering the Baltic fleet to leave for the Far East, and it was another six months before the fleet actually sailed (Paul 1994:47).

In his memoirs published four years after the war, Kuropatkin (1909:194) conceded that negotiations failed because of "our ignorance of Japan's readiness for war, and her determination to support her contentions with armed force." Kuropatkin (1909:199) went on to say that "we underestimated [Japan's] power, particularly her moral strength, and entered upon the war far too lightly." Equally important is Russian leaders' failure to understand the importance Japan attached to keeping Korea out of Russian hands. In Kuropatkin's (1909:214-215) words, "we attached no importance to the intense feeling of resentment that we aroused when we deprived the Japanese of the fruits of their victories in China. We never recognized how vital the Korean question was to them . . . ."

What accounts for the Russian elite's strong and unquestioned perceptions of military and naval superiority? Richardson (1994:125) follows many historians in emphasizing "nineteenth-century European historical experience and racial and cultural attitudes." Lebow (1981:245) points to Russian leaders' "racist delusions of superiority."[29] The Tsar often referred to the Japanese army as "little brown monkeys" (quoted in Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 1996:29).[30] Russian thinking on race and imperialism was rooted in the idea of a historic Russian *mission civilisatrice* in Central and East Asia. Witte and other proponents of a "peaceful penetration" through economic and financial domination invoked this image to gain support for the railroad expansion into Manchuria (Malozemoff 1958:42–43;

[29]Most Europeans shared these beliefs (Weeks 1996:197; Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2006:37), but Russian leaders were far slower than other Europeans to update their beliefs Japanese military capabilities as the negotiations began to break down. In fact, toward the end of the crisis most European leaders were expecting war (Richardson 1994:125).

[30]The Tsar's attitude was psychologically reinforced by a nearly successful assassination attempt against him by a fanatic in 1891 during his only visit to Japan (Walder 1973:48).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Geyer 1987:187–189; Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2006:24–41; Sergeev 2007:35).

Colonel Gleb Vannovskii, Russia's military attaché in Tokyo in 1900–1902, reflected similar cultural stereotypes when he argued (in 1900) that the Japanese military was still in the middle of the transition to the modern European military, a process that was "completely alien to Japanese cultural foundations." He stated that "decades, perhaps even hundreds of years will have passed before the Japanese army might assimilate the moral foundations that lie at the basis of any European army" (Menning 2006:150). Sergeev (2005:288) argues that most of the Russian officer corps viewed Japan as "a toy, mini-state, capable only of imitating some superficial features of Western civilization." The conventional wisdom among historians is that cultural stereotypes led to highly misleading intelligence reports (White 1964:142–145; Nish 1985:241; Richardson 1994:123). We need to distinguish, however, between assessments of intelligence agencies and the impact of those assessments on the views of political leaders. Research from archival material opened after the fall of the Soviet Union indicates that Russian military intelligence estimates of Japanese capabilities were more accurate than commonly believed (Menning 2006; Sergeev 2007).

Army Intelligence

The outcome of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 led Russian military analysts to recognize the modernization and strength of the Japanese army and to begin contingency planning for war with Japan (Sergeev 2005:290). Maj. Gen. Konstantin Vogak, the Russian military attaché in Tokyo at the time, wrote that the Japanese army was "strong and well organized and consisted of excellent, trained soldiers . . . I can only appreciate and esteem their way of fighting the adversary . . . I shall be not surprised if the Japanese army is regarded to rank as a first-class one in 10–15 years" (quoted in Sergeev 2007:36–37). His successor Maj. Gen. Nikolai Ianzhul proclaimed in 1896 that "[Japanese] units must be placed on a level with any European troops" (Menning 2006:150). These early intelligence reports coming after the Sino-Japanese War led the attendees of an imperial conference in St. Petersburg in 1895 to estimate that "Japanese ground and marine forces would be in stand-by position to launch war by 1904–1906" (Sergeev 2007:45).

Ianzhul's successor, Col. Vannovskii, was far more dismissive of the Japanese military, although he often offered no evidence and heavily leaned on cultural arguments in his assessments. Whereas the Russian naval attaché and the French army attachés estimated the mobilized Japanese army strength in wartime at 634,000, Vannovskii estimated 358,000 (Sergeev 2007:151–154).[31] Vannovskii was an outlier among the Russian attachés and officials who visited Japan (Menning 2006:149), but he had an enormous influence on the reports that framed Russian strategic calculations in the crucial year leading up to the war. His misleading estimates were accepted by Kuropatkin and printed in Russia's official "threat book" publications (Menning 2006:148–149). Other military officers in St. Petersburg held relatively accurate beliefs about Japanese capabilities and tried to alert the Tsar, but he ignored them. The Tsar's brother-in-law, Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich, who had lived in Japan for two years and participated in the naval war games as the winning Japanese commander, personally warned the Tsar not to underestimate Japan, but was rebuffed (Menning 2006:164, 169; Sergeev 2007:49).

[31]By the end of the war Japan had actually mobilized a total of 1,185,000 men and had deployed 442,000 total troops to the warzone (Menning 2006:154).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Vannovskii's influence was based in part on the fact that he was Kuropatkin's protégé and the nephew of his predecessor as war minister, Petr Vannovskii. In addition, Kuropatkin's concerns about diverting too many resources to the Far East may have led him, through motivated biases, to listen to those like Vannovskii, whose views he shared, and to discount reports with policy implications that ran contrary to his own preferences.[32] Finally, Vannovskii was politically savvy, and understood St. Petersburg and its relationship with the Far East (Menning 2006:152).

Naval Intelligence

Russian naval intelligence was reasonably accurate throughout the period leading up to the war, in part because it was easier to count ships than soldiers, especially with the international publicity that followed shipbuilding in the Mahanian era (Menning 2006:148). Analysts provided complete listings of Japan's existing ships and of those currently under construction in European naval yards. Viceroy Alexeev in Port Arthur and the Russian naval main staff in St. Petersburg were aware that the Japanese navy had a slight quantitative and qualitative edge over the Russian Pacific Fleet by 1903 (Papastratigakis 2011:246–247, 255). From mid-1903 to the start of the war, Alexeev received a steady stream of intelligence that the Japanese were making serious military preparations for war, including the commandeering of maritime transportation assets which were needed to transport the army to the continent (Menning 2006:166–167). In Russian war games conducted in 1902–1903, Japanese forces defeated the Russian forces and successfully landed troops near Port Arthur (Sergeev 2007:49). The navy concluded that they faced a difficult task defending against Japanese attack, even if naval forces were approximately equal, and that the situation was exacerbated by the separation of the fleet between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The report summarizing the results of the war games advised that "it is advantageous to avoid war for now, even paying with significant concessions" until Russian reinforcements arrived in the east (Papastratigakis 2011:250–255).

Despite their awareness of the new situation and the results of the war games, Alexeev and the naval main staff maintained a baseless confidence that the Pacific Fleet would be able to hold on long enough to prevent or significantly delay Japanese landings along the coastline of northwestern Korea (Papastratigakis 2011:251). Alexeev's confidence led Kuropatkin and the army to conclude that Russia had adequate forces to repel the Japanese. Although Kuropatkin took notice of increasing Japanese strength during his summer 1903 trip to Japan, he subsequently assured the Tsar that the Russian position was improving, given the continuing buildup of army and naval reinforcements and the nearing completion of the Trans-Siberian Railroad (Sergeev 2007:50). The Baltic Fleet Commander, Adm. Zinovy Rozhestvenskii, who had participated in the war games, reassured the Tsar and Kuropatkin just two days before the start of the war that the Pacific fleet would be able to resist a Japanese landing in northwestern Korea, stating that "now more than ever we are ready for war with Japan." The Tsar was confident that the Japanese navy could not defeat the Russian Pacific Fleet, and that if Japan dared to declare war, the Pacific Fleet "would teach the Japanese a lesson" (Papastratigakis 2011:251, 256–258).

It appears that Russian intelligence provided reasonably accurate assessments of the balance of forces on land and sea between Russia and Japan, but that senior military commanders and political leaders, including Nicholas and those surrounding him, failed to incorporate this intelligence into their own assessments and war planning. Instead, they substituted their own judgments of

[32]Further analysis would be necessary to confirm this inference.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Japanese capabilities and resolve, judgments that were based on entrenched cultural stereotypes and resistant to new information. As Schimmelpenninck van der Oye (1996:29) argues, "The intelligence débâcle was not due to structural shortcomings ... [but instead to] blind overconfidence born of complacency and racism." Similarly, Sergeev (2007:52) argues, despite analytic intelligence reports that detailed Japan's intensive preparations for war and the dangers that they posed for Russia, "Russian society and officer corps were obsessed with illusions of an easy, quick colonial expedition ... to punish 'yellow dwarfs,' 'ugly pigmies' or simply 'macaques' ..."[33]

These cultural and racial attitudes also led Russian political and military leaders to neglect what Clausewitz (18321976:183–186) called the "moral" dimension of strategy, including the "courage" and "patriotic spirit" of the troops. As Kuropatkin (1909:214) explains in his memoirs, "Though our information as to the material points of the enemy's strength can hardly be described as good, we very much underestimated—if we did not entirely overlook—its moral side. We paid no attention to the fact that for many years the education of the Japanese people had been carried out in a martial spirit and on patriotic lines." Kuropatkin went on to say that Russian military and political leaders neglected the "nation's belief in and deep respect for the army, the individual's willingness and pride in serving, the iron discipline ... and the influence of the *samurai* spirit."

Despite preferences for peace by the Tsar, his war minister, and others, they failed to translate those preferences into a suitable negotiating strategy. This failure is all the more striking given that underlying trends in relative power created incentives to maintain the peace and avoid confrontation until Russia was in a stronger position (Nish 1985:241–242). Russian leaders were aware of Japanese war preparations in January 1904, yet they made no significant movement away from their hardline stance in negotiations. Moreover, the Tsar and his leading advisors failed to recognize that their hardline bargaining tactics were alienating the Japanese and carried a risk of war (Richardson 1994:122). This is explained in part by the Tsar's belief that the decision for war was in his own hands, that if he did not initiate war it would not occur. As Kuropatkin (1909:194) wrote later, "We always thought ... that the question whether there should be war or peace depended upon us, and we wholly overlooked Japan's stubborn determination to enforce demands that had for her such vital importance."

The disconnect between Russian preferences and strategy is also explained by the existence of competing factions with different policy preferences competing for influence with the Tsar. As Richardson (1994:131) argues, "several decision makers had their preferred strategies, but the Russian government had none." Domestic and bureaucratic groups with their own expansionist agendas, along with the political infighting among them for influence with the Tsar, distorted the flow of intelligence to top Russian political leaders and put additional pressure on the Tsar to bypass formal intelligence reports.

This process also generated highly contradictory signals to the outside world, and to considerable confusion among the Japanese regarding Russia's negotiating position. As Langer (1969:44) writes, "the back-biting and intrigue" characterizing Russian decision making during the negotiations generated "conflicting views and statements" that gave Russia the reputation for being "wholly unreliable and totally dishonest." As a result, "the Japanese lost all confidence in what they said, and came to feel that the word of the Russians as worse than useless." As Nish

[33]Culturally driven complacency can lead to institutional weaknesses. As Kuropatkin (1909:216) wrote, "While [Japan] had hundreds of secret as well as avowed agents studying our military and naval forces in the Far East, we entrusted the collection of information to one officer of the General Staff, and unfortunately our selection was bad."

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

(1985:7) writes, “it was baffling to the diplomats who had to fathom which voice was speaking for Russia.”[34]

Policy incoherence in Russia is also explained by inconsistency in the beliefs and actions of particular individuals. We have already mentioned the Tsar’s vacillations. Kuropatkin provides another example, although it is not always clear how much this was due to individual level personality and how much was due to political gamesmanship and deference. Publicly and in his advice to the Tsar, Kuropatkin maintained confidence that “the Japanese army does not constitute a serious threat for us” (Menning 2006:164). Privately, however, Kuropatkin held more realistic beliefs about Japanese capabilities and the prospect of war, particularly after his own fact-finding trip to Japan in mid-1903 (Menning 2006:163–165). Yet, he did not impart these beliefs to Nicholas. When Kuropatkin advised withdrawing forces to northern Manchuria in late 1903, he also maintained that the military could handle the Japanese, and so the Tsar and Alexeev, both unwilling to give up the Russian investment and fortifications in the south, nixed the idea (Menning 2006:163). Despite being in the peace camp in St. Petersburg, Kuropatkin was among those most adamant that the Japanese maintain a neutral zone in northern Korea, the hard-line stance that was probably most responsible for the Japanese decision to end negotiations and attack (Richardson 1994:125). In one instance in the winter of 1903–1904, Kuropatkin requested data from his staffers on the Japanese steps leading up to the war against China in 1894. He asked whether Japan had mobilized before the war, and whether it had struck at the Chinese and landed troops in Korea before a declaration of war? Despite the affirmative answers, Kuropatkin did nothing further with this information (Menning 2006:168–169). Overall, Russian leaders as a whole did not possess clear and consistent goals (Nish 1985:242; Richardson 1994:122).

In contrast to a fractured and conflictual Russian decision-making process and its failure to produce anything even remotely resembling rational Bayesian updating in response to new information,[35] Japanese decision-making, in the words of Richardson (1994:106), “fully satisfied the criteria for procedural rationality.” Although decisions were made by a closed group, it was relatively open to competing views (Okamoto 1970; Lebow 1981:303–305) and engaged in careful calculations of whether Japanese interests would be better served by a negotiated settlement or by war.[36] It was also insulated from highly bellicose domestic pressures.[37] As a result, Japan’s decision for war was based on fairly accurate assessments of the balance of capabilities and resolve, while Russia’s decision was not.[38]

To conclude this section, it is clear that informational failures played a critical causal role in the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. The primary sources of the information asymmetries, however, were cultural, psychological, and domestic factors, not private information and incentives to misrepresent that information.

[34]Cultural differences exacerbated this mistrust. The summer holiday tradition of the Russian royal family created delays in negotiations, which the Japanese interpreted as indicating an attitude of condescension and lack of seriousness (Nish 1985:189).

[35]In one revealing example of rapid updating driven by battlefield outcomes, one Russian “Japanese expert,” as Kuropatkin (1909:216) sarcastically described him, moved from believing, before the war, that “one Russian soldier [was] as good as three Japanese,” to believing, after a few battles, that they were equal, to believing, a month later, that Russia “must put three men into the field for every Japanese.”

[36]As Nish (1985:253) states, Japanese decision makers were “cool and calculating, not bloodthirsty or emotional.”

[37]Langer (1969:40) describes public opinion in Japan as being “unanimous for war.”

[38]Japan also made reasonable efforts to signal their strength to their adversaries, beginning with their invitations to all the major powers after the Sino-Japanese war to send attachés to observe Japanese capabilities and maneuvers (Vacca 2009).

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Racial attitudes and cultural stereotypes led Russian military and political leaders to significantly underestimate Japanese military capabilities and resolve, and the same factors combined with psychological biases impeded the rational updating of those images in response to new information. The army's top officials ignored numerous reports from experienced army and navel attachés and their French counterparts that gave greater credibility to Japanese capabilities. The process was compounded by the role of competing domestic factions that distorted the information flow to top political leaders and made it easier to substitute their own biased judgments for the more accurate intelligence reports. Admittedly, inferences about deviations from Bayesian updating are often difficult to validate empirically as opposed to experimentally,[39] but the magnitude of distortions on the Russian side support this inference.

The Role of Third Parties

Thus far, we have focused on dyadic level interactions, consistent with the dyadic orientations of the bargaining model of war and its formal neglect of the role of third parties. In the processes leading to the Russo-Japanese War, however, system-level factors played an important causal role. In fact, Langer (1969:40, 45) argues that external powers were "largely responsible for the actual outbreak of the war." The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, in conjunction with the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia and confidence that England had secured French neutrality, gave Japanese leaders the confidence there would be no repeat of the Triple Intervention of 1895. England did nothing to prevent the conflict and may have actually encouraged Japan to fight in the hope of weakening Russia in the Far East. The United States stood firmly in the Japanese camp. Building on Dennett (1925), Langer (1969:45) argues that "if the United States had taken a still stronger stand the Russians would have backed down in time."[40] These considerations undoubtedly affected Russian and/or Japanese calculations as to whether war provided a more cost-effective means of achieving their objectives than a settlement. This role of third parties is perfectly consistent with a rationalist bargaining model, even if they have to be snuck in the theoretical back door. One task for theorizing is to develop a multilateral bargaining model of war.

Conclusion

We have organized this study of the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War around commitment problems and informational problems highlighted in the bargaining model of war. We argue that the informational model focuses primarily on the link between asymmetric information and war and fails to give enough attention to the sources of asymmetric information. Those sources include not only private information and incentives to misrepresent that information, as developed in rationalist bargaining model, but also psychological, societal, and governmental factors that can distort the assessment of relative capabilities and adversary intentions. We posit a two-step model or causal chain, with the first step or link explaining the sources of informational asymmetries and the second explaining the path from informational asymmetries to war. The first can be either rationalist or nonrationalist, and the second is primarily rationalist.[41]

[39]See Kaufman (1994) for a promising methodology.

[40]Soon after the outbreak of the war, US President Theodore Roosevelt warned Germany and France that he would not tolerate a repeat of the Triple Intervention against Japan in 1895, and that if either Germany or France sided with Russia the United States would intervene on behalf of Japan (Dennett 1925:2; Langer 1969:40).

[41]Lake's (2010/11) vision of a "behavioral model of war" includes nonrationalist or boundedly rationalist variables in both links in the chain.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

The Russo-Japanese imperial rivalry intersected in Korea and Manchuria and led to a major crisis in 1903. The crisis escalated to war primarily because of shifting power, commitment problems, and preventive logic. Japanese leaders believed that their relative power was declining across several important dimensions. On land, Russia's nearly completed Trans-Siberian Railroad would allow Russia to significantly increase its power projection capabilities to Manchuria, shift the balance of power in the region, pose a serious threat to Japanese interests in Korea, and, in doing so, pose a long-term threat to the Japanese homeland. At sea, Russia was rapidly expanding its Pacific Fleet and building up and fortifying its port facilities at Port Arthur to accommodate further expansion. Meanwhile, Japan faced increasingly severe financial constraints arising from the heavy borrowing and high taxation necessary to fund its recent naval expansion. Japanese leaders recognized that current levels of military spending could not be sustained, that their relative naval strength had reached its peak relative to Russia's, that any territorial concessions would add to Russia's future military power and bargaining strength, and that Japan would not be able to keep up in an arms race with Russia. They believed that Japan could fight a war on modestly favorable but still somewhat risky terms, but that this would be their last opportunity to do so. This set of factors associated with the commitment problem and preventive logic constituted a necessary condition for war, at least in early 1904. Under more static power conditions, Japanese leaders, who recognized the risks of war, would have continued to pursue negotiations.

Although necessary for war, these factors were not sufficient for war. Informational asymmetries also played an important role. Russian leaders' gross underestimation of Japanese military capabilities led to their unquestioned belief that Japan would never start a war but instead back down in the face of superior strength. That, along with the recognition that time was on their side, led to a highly intransigent Russian bargaining strategy and to war, through mechanisms delineated by the bargaining model. Contrary to standard interpretations of the model, however, the informational asymmetries were not the product of private information and incentives to misrepresent that information. Instead, Russia's military overconfidence was driven primarily by Russian cultural stereotypes of Asian inferiority and the failure to revise those images based on new information provided by military observers and revealed in negotiations with Japan. Russian intelligence produced reasonably accurate assessments, but higher level military officers and political leaders either ignored those reports or cherry-picked from them, substituting their own judgments. These distortions in information processing were exacerbated by bureaucratic rivalries and competition for influence among societal groups with their own agendas, which led to deliberate attempts to influence and distort the information reaching the Tsar. The Tsar's vacillations and the competition for influence in Russia also generated mixed signals and confusion among the Japanese regarding Russia's negotiating position, creating further impediments to a settlement.

We conclude that the Russo-Japanese war provides a strong fit with the commitment mechanism of the bargaining model of war and with the hypothesized link between asymmetric information and war. The primary sources of those informational asymmetries, however, were cultural stereotypes, psychological biases, and pressures from competing domestic factions, not private information and incentives to misrepresent that information. These patterns are consistent with Blainey's (1973) argument that psychologically driven misperceptions lead to disagreements about relative power, which lead to war—an argument that contains both nonrational and rational elements. They also demonstrate that a broadened conception of the bargaining model of war provides an extremely useful framework for analyzing the causes of the war.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

References

Allison, Graham, and Philip Zelikow. (1999) *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. New York: Longman.

Bar-Joseph, Uri, and Jack S. Levy. (2009) Conscious Action and Intelligence Failure. *Political Science Quarterly* 124 (3): 461–488.

Blainey, Geoffrey. (1973) *The Causes of War*. New York: Free Press.

Chadefaux, Thomas. (2011) Bargaining over Power: When Do Shifts in Power Lead to War? *International Theory* 3 (2): 228–253.

Clausewitz, Carl von. ([1832]1976) *On War*, eds. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Connaughton, Richard. (2003) *Rising Sun and Tumbling Bear*. London: Cassell.

Conroy, Hilary. (1960) *The Japanese Seizure of Korea*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Cordonnier, Emilien Louis Victor. (1912) *The Japanese in Manchuria 1904*, Vol. I. Translated by C.F. Atkinson. London: Hugh Rees.

Dennett, Tyler. (1925) *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Drea, Edward. (2009) *Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1853–1945*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Duus, Peter. (1984) The Economic Dimension of Meiji Imperialism: The Case of Korea, 1895–1910. In *The Japanese Colonial Empire*, edited by Ramon Myers and Mark Peattie. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Esthus, Raymond A. (1988) *Double Eagle and Rising Sun: The Russians and Japanese at Portsmouth in 1905*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Evans, David, and Mark Peattie. (1997) *Kaigun*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press.

Fearon, James. (1995) Rationalist Explanations for War. *International Organization* 49 (3): 379–414.

Fearon, James. (1997) Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41 (1): 68–90.

Fey, Mark, and Kristopher W. Ramsay. (2007) Mutual Optimism and War. *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (4): 738–754.

George, Alexander L., Ed. (1991) *Avoiding Inadvertent War: Problems of Crisis Management*. Boulder: Westview.

Geyer, Dietrich. (1987) *Russian Imperialism: The Interaction of Domestic and Foreign Policy, 1860–1914*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Goertz, Gary, and Jack S. Levy. (2007) Causal Explanation, Necessary Conditions, and Case Studies. In *Explaining War and Peace: Case Studies and Necessary Condition Counterfactuals*, edited by Gary Goertz and Jack S. Levy. New York: Routledge.

Great Britain Committee of the Imperial Defence, Historical Section. (1910) *Official History (Naval and Military) of the Russo-Japanese War Volume 1: To August 1904*. London: Hugh Rees.

Great Britain General Staff of the War Office. (1906) *The Russo-Japanese War, Part I*. London: Harrison and Sons.

Hassner, Ron E. (2009) *War on Sacred Grounds*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Huddy, Leonie, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy, Eds. (2013) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Janis, Irving L. (1982) *Groupthink*, 2nd revised edn. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Jervis, Robert. (1976) *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Johnson, Dominic. (2004) *Overconfidence and War: The Havoc and Glory of Positive Illusions*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kahneman, Daniel. (2011) *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Kaufman, Chaim. (1994) Out of the Lab and into the Archives: A Method for Testing Psychological Explanations of Political Decision-Making. *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (4): 557–586.

Koda, Yoji. (2005) The Russo-Japanese War: Primary Causes of Japanese Success. *Naval War College Review* 58 (2): 11–44.

Kowner, Rotem. (2006) *Historical Dictionary of the Russo-Japanese War*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Kurono, Taeru. (2004) *Dainihonteikoku no Seizonsenryaku (Survival Strategy of the Great Japanese Empire)*. Tokyo: Kodansha.

Kuropatkin, Aleksei. (1909) *The Russian Army and the Japanese War*. Trans. by Captain A.B. Lindsay. Westport: Hyperion Press.

Lake, David A. (2010/11) Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War. *International Security* 35 (3): 7–52.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Langer, William. (1969) The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War. In *Explorations in Crisis: Papers on International History*, edited by Carl E. Schorske and Elizabeth Schorske. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lebow, Richard Ned. (1981) *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lebow, Richard Ned. (2008) *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Levy, Jack S. (1983) Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems. *World Politics* 36 (1): 76–99.

Levy, Jack S. (1989) The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique. In *Handbook of War Studies*, edited by Manus I. Midlarsky. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Levy, Jack S. (2000) The Implications of Framing and Loss Aversion for International Conflict. In *Handbook of War Studies II*, edited by Manus I. Midlarsky. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Levy, Jack S. (2008) Preventive War and Democratic Politics. *International Studies Quarterly* 52 (1): 1–24.

Levy, Jack S. (2014) The Sources Preventive Logic in German Decision-making in 1914. In *The Outbreak of the First World War: Structure, Politics, and Decision-Making*, edited by Jack S. Levy and John A. Vasquez. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Malozemoff, Andrew. (1958) *Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881–1904*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

McDermott, Rose. (2004) *Political Psychology and International Relations*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Menning, Bruce. (2006) Miscalculating One's Enemies: Russian Military Intelligence Before the Russo-Japanese War. *War in History* 13 (2): 141–170.

Nish, Ian. (1977) *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869–1942*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Nish, Ian. (1985) *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War*. New York: Longman.

Okamoto, Shumpei. (1970) *The Japanese Oligarchy & the Russo-Japanese War*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Paine, Sarah C. M. (2003) *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895: Perceptions, Power, and Primacy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Papastratigakis, Nicholas. (2011) *Russian Imperialism and Naval Power*. New York: I.B. Tauris.

Paul, Thazha Varkey. (1994) *Asymmetric Conflicts: War Initiation by Weaker Powers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Peattie, Mark. (1988) The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945. In *The Cambridge History of Japan*, Vol. 6, edited by Peter Duus. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Powell, Robert. (2006) War as a Commitment Problem. *International Organization* 60 (1): 169–203.

Richardson, James. (1994) *Crisis Diplomacy: The Great Powers since the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rothman, Steven B. (2011) Domestic Politics and Prospect Theory in International Conflict: Explaining Japan's War Decision in the 1904 Russo-Japanese War. *Asia Pacific World* 2 (2): 66–84.

Rovner, Joshua. (2011) *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David. (1996) Russian Military Intelligence on the Manchurian Front, 1904-05. *Intelligence and National Security* 11 (1): 22–31.

Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David. (2005) The Immediate Origins of the War. In *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, edited by John W. Steinberg, Bruce W. Menning, David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David Wolff, and Shinji Yokote. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill.

Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David. (2006) *Toward the Rising Sun*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press.

Sergeev, Evgeny. (2005) Russian Military Intelligence. In *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, edited by John W. Steinberg, Bruce W. Menning, David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David Wolff, and Shinji Yokote. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill.

Sergeev, Evgeny. (2007) *Russian Military Intelligence in the War with Japan, 1904–05*. New York: Routledge.

Slantchev, Branislav L. (2010) Feigning weakness. *International Organization* 64 (3): 357–388.

Stein, Janice Gross. (2013) Threat Perception in International Relations. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd ed., edited by Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Streich, Philip, and Jack S. Levy. (2007) Time Horizons, Discounting, and Intertemporal Choice. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51 (2): 199–226.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016

Tarar, Ahmer. (2006) Diversionary Incentives and the Bargaining Approach to War. *International Studies Quarterly* 50 (1): 169–188.

Toft, Monica Duffy. (2006) Issue Divisibility and Time Horizons as Rationalist Explanations for War. *Security Studies* 15 (1): 34–69.

United States War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff (Military Information Division). (1907) *Reports of Military Observers Attached to the Armies in Manchuria During the Russo Japanese War*, Vol. 3, 1907. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Vacca, William Alexander. (2009) Learning about Military Effectiveness: Examining Theories of Learning During the Russo-Japanese War. Rutgers University, unpublished PhD dissertation.

Vasquez, John A. (2008) Putting Preventive Motivations in Perspective: The Cases of the First World War and the Russo-Japanese War. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, San Francisco, March 29.

Wagner, R. Harrison. (2000) Bargaining and War. *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (3): 469–484.

Walder, David. (1973) *The Short Victorious War: The Russo-Japanese Conflict, 1904–05*. New York: Harper & Row.

Warner, Denis, and Peggy Warner. (1974) *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905*. New York: Charterhouse.

Weeks, Theodore. (1996) *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863–1914*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press.

Westwood, John Norton. (1986) *Russia against Japan, 1904–05*. London: Macmillan.

White, John. (1964) *The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Downloaded from http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/ at International Studie Association on November 4, 2016