

HAWKS AND DOVES

DEMOCRATIC PEACE THEORY REVISITED

FEMKE E. BAKKER



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Hawks and Doves

Democratic Peace Theory Revisited

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Not another research of the democratic peace?!

Many political scientists and Western political decision-makers believe that liberal democracies do not go to war with one another because liberal democracies are different from any other regime. This belief is often called the 'democratic peace'. Liberal democracies are, from the perspective of these scholars and politicians, different because they have a particular influence on the individuals within these regimes. The expectation is that this influence causes peace, either by democratic institutions or by socialization processes based on liberal norms. That peace would not occur if at least one of the states in conflict would be non-democratic. Thus, proponents of the democratic peace have high expectations of the effect liberal democracy has on its people: they expect that this particular regime-type reduces the probability that conflicts escalate into war. There might be just as many political scientists and policymakers who do not share that belief and claim it is all wrong. The skeptics believe that there is no relationship between regime-type and the degree of war and peace within a country, rather they think it is all about the power a country holds and whether or not a country has enough power to counter the threat of the other country they conflict with. The adversaries of the democratic peace do not expect that liberal democracy can influence its people to decide for an attack on the opposing country. It holds true for both groups that their beliefs are rooted in a particular perspective on international relations. Though the core assumptions of these perspectives involve humans and not states, both groups of scientists generally study the democratic peace from a state-level perspective and not from an individual (or sometimes called: micro) level perspective.

This research takes a road less traveled within the field of international relations and focuses on a more fundamental aspect of the democratic peace puzzle: it investigates the assumptions about individuals that democratic peace theory builds on. The core assumption that constitutes two of the most important explanations generated by democratic peace theory¹ is that living in a liberal democracy has an effect on individuals that influences their willingness to go to war with other democracies. Democratic peace theory is therefore relying on processes that occur within the black box of the state. States do not make decisions, individuals within the state do. Individual decision-makers are the ones who disagree, the ones who decide, and the ones who fight. Even if democratic peace theory is accurate in the assumption that structures, such as democratic institutions and liberal norms, are solely responsible for the direction a decision-making process takes, these structures would still only affect individuals. Consequently, to understand whether or not liberal

¹ This study focuses mainly on the so-called normative explanation and the so-called institutional explanation of the democratic peace. The overarching phrase 'democratic peace theory' used in this study refers to these two theoretical explanations.

democracy has this particular effect on individuals, this dissertation studies individual decision-makers² within states of different regime-types.

This research deepens the understanding of democratic peace theory by studying what lies at the heart of every decision of war and peace: the individuals behind the steering wheel of the state, decision-makers. The main theoretical concern of this dissertation is to test several microfoundations of democratic peace theory. It does so by asking the research question *What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when they are on the brink of war?* With this more abstract phrased research question, not only the micro-level assumptions on which democratic peace theory are built can be tested. This question also allows for a simultaneous test of the influence of other and also actor-specific factors on this decision-making process, including the influence of individually based hawkishness. In this way, this dissertation aims to contribute to the studies into the democratic peace from a more comprehensive perspective that also captures alternative hypotheses within the same theoretical framework.

1.2 War or no war? That is the question.

There is a small body of empirical work into the micro-level foundations of democratic peace theory (Bakker, 2017; Geva, DeRouen, & Mintz, 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013). This research extends on this previous research innovatively.

Most of these studies (except Bakker (2017)) have focused on what happens within liberal democracies only. Within liberal democracies, they have studied whether or not there is a difference in the willingness of individuals to go to war when the opposing state has a different regime-type; democracy versus autocracy. However, these studies have not conducted similar empirical tests among individuals that live in non-democracies. Still, the explicit assumption of democratic peace theory is that living in a democracy significantly alters individuals' attitudes and behavior compared to individuals who live under other regimes. These studies have thus not tested whether the by democratic peace theory assumed variance in the behavior of individuals caused by the type of regime could find support empirically. This dissertation, therefore, studies not only decision-makers within liberal democracies but also decision-makers within different regime-types. A comparison between these individuals can show whether or not the assumed differences are indeed present.

According to democratic peace theory, one of the differences between liberal democracies and other regime-types is that only the individuals of liberal democracies have liberal norms. Norms that are subsequently assumed to be of influence on the willingness to go to war. However, to substantiate this claim, it is crucial to test if liberal norms indeed vary significantly between individuals of liberal democracies and individuals of other regimes types, and, moreover, whether or not these levels of liberal norms affect the willingness of individuals to go to war. In

² Decision-makers and individuals will be used interchangeably in this research.

previous studies there was a sole focus on liberal democracies, and the assumed absence of liberal norms in other types of regimes remained unverified.

Moreover, whether or not liberal norms indeed exist within liberal democracies was not measured. Most of these studies only assumed that liberal norms would be present among individuals in liberal democracies and subsequently be of influence, without empirically testing whether or not that would be true. This research measures the presence and variance of liberal norms within different regime-types and tests whether or not there is indeed a relationship between a certain level of liberal norms and the willingness to go to war.

This research does more than only empirically test the micro-level assumptions of democratic peace theory. Other theories of international relations and political psychology have formulated relevant factors that might influence decision-makers in their decision-making process during severe interstate conflicts. Therefore, this research is not only focused on the effect of regime-type on the willingness to go to war. It also studies the effect of structural influences such as the nature of the conflict and the nature of the behavior of the opposing country, power politics, economic influence, and agent-based influences such as decision-makers' beliefs about conflict-resolution (hawkishness), gender, and the influence of the level of liberal norms.

Hereby, this study focuses beyond the concept of liberal democracy and investigates the assumed differences between individuals of different regime-types. Moreover, by examining the individual level, the research design allows for the testing of alternative hypotheses at the same time. Thereby, this dissertation contributes to a better understanding of what influences decision-makers to decide for war in a more comprehensive way than democratic peace studies have done so far. In other words: this research does take democratic peace theory seriously, including its foundations. Additionally, it considers other theoretical perspectives that argue there might be more going on than an assumed effect of liberal democracy only.

1.3 How is this research conducted?

To come to a clear understanding of what influences decision-makers of different regime-types to decide for an attack on another country, we need to distinguish between different regime-types. Democratic peace theory uses a binary concept of regime-type: democracy versus non-democracy. The concept of democracy constitutes a full-fledged liberal democracy in the conceptual tradition of Dahl (1971, 2000), while the concept of non-democracy constitutes all other regimes that do not live up to all aspects of liberal democracy. Democratic peace theorists thereby ignore more refined conceptualizations of regime-types that we can find within the field of comparative politics. Different regime-types, ranging from new democracy (Collier & Levitsky, 1997; Linz & Stepan, 1996) via hybrid regimes (Bogaards, 2009; Morlino, 2009) to authoritarian regimes (Linz, 2000; Schedler, 2006), are contained in one concept: non-democracy. This study chooses to refine that concept, at least for the assumed variance between decision-makers of different regime-types. It distinguishes between three different types of regime: liberal democracy, a mixed (or

hybrid) regime-type, and an autocracy. Chapter 3 will discuss these concepts in more detail.

The main aim of this study is to detect if there is a causal mechanism underlying the decision to attack another country when on the brink of war, and whether or not this mechanism differs between regime-types. It investigates whether or not regime-type, the nature of the conflict, the power used, and individual characteristics and beliefs of decision-makers matter in this decision. The core analytical instrument is a decision-making experiment. One reason for that choice is that earlier studies into the mechanism of democratic peace at the individual level also used experiments (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013). Moreover, an experimental setting allows for control over the relevant independent variables, so that a causal mechanism can be identified more clearly than with 'real-world' data (Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, & Lupia, 2011b, pp. 15-17; Iyengar, 2011, p. 75).

By using experiments as the core instrument, and then control for its results using other methodology (such as a comparison of the results with observational data), we can come to a higher understanding of cause and effect (Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, & Lupia, 2011a, p. 5). For this reason, this dissertation uses the increasingly used 'mixed-method' design (Lieberman, 2005; Tarrow, 2004, pp. 15-17) to connect the experimental data with 'real-world' data. Thus, the research strategy is at the core an experimental approach, supported by large-N observational data on the one hand, and a case study on the other hand.

The dissertation begins with a study of the liberal norms within three different regime-types: the United States of America (hereafter the US) as a full-fledged liberal democracy, the Russian Federation (hereafter Russia) as a hybrid regime, and the Peoples Republic of China (hereafter China) as a full-fledged autocracy. Observational large-N data of the World Values Survey is used to measure the level of liberal norms present in the representative samples of these three countries. The study then proceeds with a decision-making experiment conducted within the US, Russia, and China. The experiments use student samples as a proxy for decision-makers. Chapter 3 will explain in more detail why and how these student samples are used. A real-world case study triangulates the other two studies and uses the decision-making process of prime-minister Margaret Thatcher during the Falkland conflict as a real world illustration of the experimental results.

1.4 Scientific and societal relevance

Scientific

The literature on democratic peace theory has been 'stuck' for quite some time, and still is. The debate is a polarized one between realists on the one hand and liberals and constructivists on the other. At the heart of this normative debate lie opposing perspectives on human kind and the world that surrounds us. These opposing perspectives are grounded in particular assumptions, assumptions that have not yet been tested empirically. This theoretical debate compares apples and oranges, and

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without some clarity on what the core foundations of theory are, the research into democratic peace will remain stuck (see also: Hayes, 2012; Ungerer, 2012). This research, in the first place, articulates and tests the core assumptions that underpin democratic peace theory, a necessary exercise that is long overdue. Moreover, this research brings together different (and sometimes opposing) hypotheses around the empirical regularity that is democratic peace, within one theoretical framework and one methodological design. It thereby contributes to a better understanding of the mechanisms that underlie several theoretical arguments, and it offers the possibility to assess their value in relation to each other. This assessment can lead to new theory building and a way forward in the democratic peace research. In that way, the results of this research contribute to democratic peace theory in particular, and to studies of war and peace in general.

Also, the focus on decision-makers contributes to the understanding of the relationship between the individual level and the aggregated level of analysis. The research has an agent-based approach, and thereby follows the actor-centric studies of the field of foreign policy analysis. This field has made apparent that the individual level matters within foreign policy decision-making and how the individual level affects studies of international relations (Beasley, Kaarbo, Hermann, & Hermann, 2001; Cantir & Kaarbo, 2012; Goldstein, 1993; Hudson, 2005). Within that tradition, this research contributes to the understanding of an actor-centric approach. It does, however, also incorporate the possible influence of structures on these agents, and the possible interactions between structures and actors. In that respect, this study contributes to the studies of foreign policy decision-making, in that it promotes a deeper understanding of what is the influence of contextual factors as well as personal beliefs and characteristics of individuals during the decision-making process of these individuals.

Last but not least, this research has allowed for a unique data collection conducted within non-Western and non-democratic regimes, something that is rarely done. This data offers new insights into the presence of individual's attitudes toward society and towards conflict resolution in international settings. It provides a better understanding of the micro foundations underpinning the willingness to go to war. Moreover, it also offers a better view on the dynamics between norms and the willingness to go to war within other regime-types. Lastly, most studies use individuals of Western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic (WEIRD) societies as participants and assign characteristics of human nature to the results based on these studies. However, at the same time, it is shown that these WEIRD participants are actually "among the least representative populations one could find for generalizing about human behavior" (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010, p. 61). This research contributes to a better understanding of non-WEIRD individuals.

Societal relevance

The democratic peace is a well-ingrained belief among Western policy-makers. President Clinton voiced it most clearly in the State of the Union address of 1994: "Democracies do not attack each other". Historically, the democratic peace traces its

pedigree from Abbe de St-Pierre and Immanuel Kant through to President Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations. More recent influences are visible in successive National Security Strategies of the United States since the 1990s (Bush-Administration, 2002, pp. 3-4,6-7; Clinton-Administration, 1998, pp. 33-35, 36-56; Obama-Administration, 2010, pp. 5-7,10,17,35-39). Also, the authors of the European Security Strategy have taken this notion to heart: “The best protection for our security is a world of well-governed states. Spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, [...] and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order” (Europe, 2003, p. 10). The belief of Western policymakers in the democratic peace is closely related to the way proponents discuss their research, namely ‘the closest thing political science has to an empirical law’ (Levy, 1988, p. 662). Scholars are, however, aware that the results of scientific research are tentative and should be considered with care. This awareness is not always present amongst many Western policymakers. They use democratic peace theory as a prescription to promote democracy around the globe, with or without force, in an attempt to bring peace (Burgos, 2008, pp. 222-223; Geis, Brock, & Müller, 2007; Ish-Shalom, 2006; Walt, 1998, p. 39). Peacebuilding missions aim to create a liberal democratic political culture to foster domestic and international peace (Paris, 2010). Paradoxically, the democratic peace is also invoked as a rationale for war, such as for the Iraq war in 2003 (Avtalyon-Bakker, 2013; Burgos, 2008). Thus, Western policymakers and therefore their audiences believe that socializing people into liberal norms is what a democratizing country needs to transform into a peaceful society and a peaceful player in world politics (Ish-Shalom, 2006). However, within the current literature on the democratic peace, there is insufficient evidence to support that belief veritably. Considering the enormous influence democratic peace theory has on policy (Burgos, 2008, pp. 222-223; Ish-Shalom, 2006), the neglecting of evidence from other regime-types is a cause for concern. The results of this study will shed some light on how useful it is for policymakers to employ theories as a means to strengthen their argument.

1.5 The chapters that follow

To get to the empirical analyses, chapter 2 explains why this research focuses on the individual level of analysis and why that is relevant to democratic peace studies. It furthermore argues why the perception of threat is at the core of bringing different belief systems together, including the democratic peace assumptions, when studying the individual level. In chapter 3, the relevant theoretical literature on democratic peace, causes of war, and psychological aspects are brought together in one theoretical framework. Based on this framework, this chapter formulates the hypotheses that underlie the empirical tests. Moreover, the independent and dependent variables of this research are conceptualized. Chapter 4 conceptualizes and operationalizes liberal norms as postulated by democratic peace theorists in a more profound way than was ever done in previous work on the democratic peace. The chapter then proceeds to operationalize the independent variable of liberal

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norms. This operationalization is used to measure the level of liberal norms within the US, Russia, and China, thereby using data from the World Value Survey, and the data collection among student populations of these countries. Chapter 5 operationalizes the other independent and dependent variables through a decision-making experiment that uses student-populations in the USA, China, and Russia. The used experimental data is an original data collection. In chapter 6, it is then tested within the same experimental setting whether the same factors have an influence on the decision for several different foreign policy options, short of war. In chapter 7, the focus lies on a case study; the decision-making process of premier Margaret Thatcher during the Falklands War. This case study illustrates the mechanism that is detected by the experiments. In the concluding chapter 8, all results are brought together to answer the research question. Moreover, this final chapter revisits the debate on the democratic peace, and discusses the relevance of the results of this study in the light of that debate. The dissertation ends with an exploration of these implications and suggests directions for new research.

Chapter 2 Individuals under Threat

2.1 At the roots of democratic peace theory

Democratic peace research usually starts with the question: why do democracies not go to war with each other? This question underlies a spectacular massive research project that has emerged since the beginning of the 1990s. This project aims at understanding why the so-called ‘democratic peace’ exists. This chapter sets out the core of current explanations and introduces the perception of threat as an overarching concept to study the mechanism of the democratic peace at the individual level of decision-makers.

The democratic peace is an empirical regularity (Babst, 1964; Doyle, 1997; Z. Maoz & Abdolali, 1989; Rummel, 1983) that shows that from the 95 interstate wars that have occurred between 1800 and 2010, none of these wars were between democratic states. Democracies did go to war, 41 times even, but these wars were waged only with non-democratic regimes (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Wars between 1800-2010*

Regimes	Wars		
	1800-1939	1945-2010	Total
Democracy – Democracy	0	0	0
Democracy – Non-democracy	20	21	41
Non-democracy – Non-democracy	34	20	54
Total	54	41	95

* *List of wars based the Correlates of War project (Sarkees & Wayman, 2010), Categorization of regime-type based on work of Doyle (1997) and Polity IV project for 1800-2012.*

Although criticism has been raised about the statistical validity of this regularity (Beck, Katz, & Tucker, 1998; Farber & Gowa, 1995; Gartzke, 1998; Green, Kim, & Yoon, 2001; Spiro, 1994), and the pitfall of conceptualizing democracy and war in a specific way has been discussed (Farber & Gowa, 1997; Gowa, 1999; Kegley & Hermann, 1997; Kegley Jr & Hermann, 1995; Layne, 1994; Oren, 1995), political scientists generally accept the apparent existence of a peace between liberal democracies (Chernoff, 2004; Hayes, 2012; Ungerer, 2012). This dissertation follows that consensus: it does not challenge the democratic peace and assumes it to be an empirical regularity.

An empirical regularity, however, that still needs a convincing explanation. In contrast to the above, there is little scholarly consensus of an explanation why democracies tend not to fight with one another. The lack of a convincing explanation has to do with the nature of the observation. The democratic peace as an empirical regularity is an *ex-post* assessment. A possible explanation why this regularity can occur, however, is by definition *ex-ante*: explanations for the democratic peace aim to

find out what particularities have ultimately led to the outcome of the democratic peace.

A complication is that the field of research is heavily divided. On the one side, there are proponents of democratic peace theory (generally coming from the liberal or constructivist school of international relations) who believe that specific features of democracy offer the key explanation. On the other side, there are adversaries (generally coming from the realist school of international relations) who believe there is a different explanatory factor that is collinear with democracy. Due to ontological and epistemological differences, both camps are unable to offer the arguments or empirical results to convince the other side. The studies are often unrelated, if not in contradiction, and therefore do not build on or supplement each other. One of the main reasons is that scholars commonly depart from very different and opposing perspectives on international relations that offer, separately, sound explanations for the democratic peace but are at the same time characterized by underlying dynamics that are inherently normative. Each perspective is rooted in a specific set of beliefs about human kind and its surrounding world. The beliefs differ intrinsically. However, each perspective postulates their specific beliefs as truths by using these as assumptions that underpin their explanations.

The differing belief systems affect the research designs of several studies that empirically test explanations of the democratic peace, including the derived hypotheses, levels of analysis, case selection, and conceptualization and operationalization of independent variables. As a result, the differing research designs do not speak to each other. Thus, despite the efforts of last decades, our scientific knowledge about the possible causes for the democratic peace is still quite weak.

A way forward would be to test the different hypotheses, generated by differing perspectives, within the same research design. This dissertation argues that this is possible, by formulating a common denominator that can direct the necessary empirical tests. Therefore, the remainder of this chapter discusses the different perspectives on the empirical regularity of the democratic peace through the eyes of liberalism, constructivism, and realism, to formulate this common denominator.

2.2 What you believe is what you see

The key controversy is between, roughly speaking, two groups of authors that have different views on the role of (liberal) democracy in explaining the democratic peace. One group builds its explanations on the postulate that there is something intrinsically different about liberal democracy and its citizens that causes peace between democratic states, but this group's perspective is opposed to the perspective of the other group that explicitly rejects that notion. Ontological and epistemological differences between the studies hamper possibilities for scholars to assess the explanatory value of these different explanations. Progress in democratic peace research requires not only empirical evidence for one explanation, but it also requires

empirical tests that differentiate between competing causal mechanisms within one coherent framework (Hayes, 2012, p. 783).

2.2.1 Liberal and Constructivist explanations

Liberal and constructivist scholars, in general, argue that the democratic peace exists; they believe that there is something special about liberal democracy that creates peace between states that are of this regime-type. There is, of course, an intrinsic difference between the liberal and constructivist perspective on international relations. Constructivists challenge the assumption made by liberal and realists that the international system is inherently anarchic and argue that if this anarchy exists, it is because states (and their agents) have constructed it by social practice. They argue that the nature of human kind or the state is not a given, but shaped by culture, identities, and interests of actors (Wendt, 1999). Constructivists argue that, if we want to understand empirical phenomena in the field of international relations, we will have to look at the influence of states' identities, cultures and interests (as formed by, e.g., discourse, language, rhetoric, and perceptions of leaders). In their perspective, these set norms for collectives, which subsequently shape the expectations of actors involved (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 5). Constructivist studies are, therefore, not per se rooted within a fixed set of assumptions about human kind but in a set of assumptions on how social practice defines the behavior of states.

When it comes to democratic peace theory, constructivists agree that the liberal perspective has shaped international relations. The liberal school of international relations has given birth to the democratic peace program by arguing that liberal democracies do not fight with each other because they are liberal democratic. Constructivists claim that this dominant discourse has created a convincing liberal identity, which has shaped individuals in liberal democracies differently from individuals of other regime-types.

Constructivists offer thus a perspective on a more abstract level in which they argue that liberal ideology has shaped Western liberal democracies. In their view, states' identities are created based on a liberal democratic discourse rather than intrinsically being liberal democratic states. The constructivist argument is that liberal democracies tend to divide the world into 'us' and 'them', based on information about the domestic structure, and norms of other actors. A shared identity, for instance, based on liberal democratic norms, would reduce the perception of threat between democracies (Kahl, 1998; Risse-Kappen, 1995).

Theoretically, constructivism overarches the liberal ideas on a more abstract level. Practically this means that constructivists use the liberal framework for their research into the democratic peace. Not per se because they believe that liberal democracy indeed has a particular material effect on individuals, but basically because the liberal belief system is dominant in the Western world. In that sense, despite the ontological differences of these perspectives, the constructivist argument, then, aligns with the liberal argument when it comes to a particular expectation about the effect liberal democracy has on its citizens. Based on the assumption that

liberalism has shaped the identities of democratic nations, constructivism argues, in line with liberalism, that the peoples of those liberal democracies have created a separate liberal peace. Moreover, there are more liberal scholars than constructivist scholars who are studying the democratic peace. Therefore, the section below discusses liberal and constructivist explanations together.

Liberals claim that their theories are universal and applicable to all human beings. Just like realists, they see the international system as inherently anarchic with states that are in survival mode. They have, however, an optimistic view of human nature and the surrounding world. Liberals believe that cooperation is possible and even preferred over competition. They believe this is in particular applicable to the relationship between liberal democracies. In the liberal perspective, liberal democracies rely on the freedom of the individual (Doyle, 1986; 1997, pp. 206-207) which existence is expected to make liberal democracies intrinsically different from any other regime. The liberal beliefs originate from the work of Kant, whom democratic peace proponents refer to a lot (e.g. Doyle, 1983a, 1983b, 1986, 1997; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Rawls, 1999; Russett & Oneal, 2001, to name a few).

Although hardly ever made explicit to which parts exactly they refer, most democratic peace theorists mention *Zum Ewigen Frieden* (Kant, 1795/2013a) (or Perpetual Peace in English) written by Kant in 1795. It is a –compared to his other works- surprisingly thin booklet written in accessible language. It cannot be read, however, without a basic understanding of Kant's philosophy. Kant was a system thinker, which means that his argumentation fits into a specific philosophical logic that can explain the world (Storig, 2010, p. 75; Wood, 1999, pp. 4-5). It goes beyond the scope of this study to even briefly discuss Kant's complete system of thinking, let alone in detail. It is important to understand the core of his philosophy, however, since it is the underpinning of Perpetual Peace.

Kant, based on his core arguments of how human kind can know his world and by defining the borders of human reason, argues that only human reason could provide the guidelines for ethical behavior, and, moreover, should be found internally, not externally (Storig, 2010, p. 67; Wood, 1999, pp. 20, 302-303, 305-306; 2008, pp. 3, 28-29, 251-252). As most liberal thinkers, he places the individual central. Kant argues that the a priori laws of nature would help individuals to determine, based on pure reason, what would be the best behavior, in particular concerning others (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 19-27; Wood, 1999, pp. 296-298). First of all, Kant's necessary condition would be freedom for all individuals so that they could think, feel, and act as they please. He believes that only when truly free, individuals could be rational, another necessary condition to Kant (Kant, 1797/2013b, p. 1; Wood, 1999, pp. 300, 319-320). Although Kant acknowledges that individuals have the free will to choose whatever behavior they like (even if it would harm others), he also expects that the same free will would (eventually) guide individuals to conclude that behaving morally would be best. If everybody would be free to do whatever they want, they would quickly experience that the freedom of others might interfere with their own, and vice versa. Thus, based on reason, individuals could not otherwise

than conclude that it would be in the interest of all, and themselves in particular, to behave in a way that would not harm others. Subsequently, also others would start to act like that. Kant thus expects that reason and experience would first create a maxim (personal law for behavior) that would more and more be shared by others and thereby lead to a categorical imperative (a general law for behavior) (Storig, 2010, pp. 66-72; Wood, 1999, pp. 302-303; 2008, pp. 58-59). By experience, he therefore believes, individuals would come to understand the difference between right and wrong and develop an 'inner moral law' (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 21-29). This inner moral law would establish a general rule of rational *and* moral behavior. The act of rational behavior guided by the wish to take others into account would, later on, be called reasonability by Kantian liberal John Rawls (e.g. 1999, p. 28).

In line with his philosophy, in *Perpetual Peace* Kant formulates a theory about international relations. This theory is based on Kant's premise that every individual is able to reason purely. Therefore, each individual will always act in the own interests. Kant acknowledges the violence and aggressiveness that looking out for your own interests might generate between individuals or groups of individuals (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 31-34; Wood, 1999, pp. 286-289). He, however, argues that those animosities could be changed by individual freedom. Every individual has the ability to use pure reason to come to an inner knowledge about what is right and wrong, the above-mentioned inner moral law. Kant therefore posited that, in order for individuals to act autonomously and rationally, they need to feel free. Free from the need to survive that might cloud their pure reason, and free from oppression by others. Kant argues that through pure reason, individuals will start to understand that it is in their own interest to not harm others, as long as they prefer others not to harm themselves. That way, an inner moral law would become a general rule of rational *and* moral behavior (Wood, 1999, pp. 171-172, 187-190). This act of rational behavior guided by the wish to take others into account would later on be called reasonability, by Kantian liberal John Rawls (e.g. 1999, p. 28).

In *Perpetual Peace*, Kant formulates a theory about international relations, which is in line with his philosophy. Kant's premise that free individuals can reason purely and thus will become – over time- morally more evolved, underpins the theory laid out in *Perpetual Peace*. Kant argues that for individuals to feel free from others and for them to feel like they can act autonomously, they would have to establish a republic based on these principles. The republic would then enable the freedom of all individuals so that they can act autonomously based on reasonability. Kant assumes that republican individuals would, over time, be socialized with the tolerant, free and equal practices of the republic and would thereby internalize the act of reciprocity. He sees it as a process of 'moral learning', a process enabling individuals to become 'better people' (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 41-45). The process of moral learning is the core expectation on which democratic peace theory builds (Doyle, 1983a, 1983b, 1986; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Rawls, 1999, p. 44).

Kant transposes his ideas about individuals to states in the international system, in *Perpetual Peace*. He suggests an institutional setting that discusses how states should behave with the aim to decrease the chance of war enormously. One

could easily read the behavioral rules of this institutional setting as a top-down institutional framework to bring republics to perpetual peace, as is often done by scholars and policy makers (Cederman, 2001; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Paris, 2010; Siverson, 1995). By doing so, however, it is easy to miss out on what Kant believes about individuals who live under these republics. For Kant these institutions were not so much a top-down exercise, but rather an ideal-type possible output of a bottom-up process, created by free feeling and autonomously acting individuals (Kant, 1797/2013b, pp. 22-27; Wood, 1999, pp. 319-320). Kant's institutional setting expresses the by him expected results of more and more individuals following their inner moral law and thereby creating a categorical imperative. It should, therefore, be understood as a guideline for that process rather than as a rigid prescription.

Kant's institutional setting prescribes six behavioral rules for states to diminish the rational incentives to want to go to war. First, peace agreements should be eternal, with no secret plans to ever attack again. Second, territories could never be acquired in an exchange, as a gift or even as a purchase. Third, standing armies should be abolished and replaced by volunteer armies consisting entirely of citizens. This way, Kant believes, citizens would be responsible themselves for the material and physical costs of war. Subsequently, they would refrain from war, since it is easier to pay others to fight than take that fighting upon yourself. Fourth, no state would be allowed to borrow money for foreign affairs. Fifth, states should never interfere with the governments of other states, and last, no acts of hostility should be allowed (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 2-11).

After articulating these basic ground rules, Kant gives body to the formal institutions in what he calls definite articles. In the first article, he specifies that states should be republics³ that protect and guarantee the freedom and equality for all citizens. The same citizens would have to formulate the conditions that would create freedom and equality. The institutions are therefore built bottom-up, as a product of reasonable thinking. He proposes a republic in which the executive and legislative powers are separated. Kant is convinced that the separation of powers is a better way to ensure the equality and freedom of all citizens, while in the democracy as Rousseau defines it, popular vote could overturn the rights of one individual and could thereby become despotic. In this first definite article, Kant builds the republic on the notion of free and autonomous individuals who set rules to ensure that all citizens will be treated according to these jointly formulated rules (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 11-17). The building blocks of these Kantian republics are, therefore, not the institutions but the individuals that create these institutions based on reasonability, something that resonates with his ethical thought (Wood, 1999, pp. 319-320).

Kant suggests in his second definite article (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 17-24) that states will create a *foedus pacificum* together, a league of nations that together will protect and guarantee the freedom of every state. Kant thereby transposes his ideas

³ As a republic Kant did not conceptualize democracy in the same way as Rousseau. Kant wanted a republic to be based on a constitution that separated between executive and legislative powers, governed by representatives of the people. Generally this is understood by other liberals as closely related to contemporary liberal-democracies.

about the individual reasonability to the aggregate level of the state. He assumes that if most individuals would be reasonable, it would lead to states that would also behave reasonably. Subsequently, the reasonability that would be present among citizens of a republic could also exist among these republics. Also here, the initial building blocks of every republic start with the individuals within the states.

Lastly, in the third definite article (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 24-27), Kant articulates that a cosmopolitan law would have to apply to all republics, and should respect all other peoples and their autonomy. Stated differently: tolerance and reciprocity should be universal. Also in this article, Kant transposes the notion of an individual moral law to an assumed moral republican law within every republic that has been built by these moral law abiding individuals. As individuals become tolerant and trusting towards others through the use of pure reason, so would these republics, as externalized by their political republican leaders.

In the latter part of the booklet, Kant constructs (what he calls secret) articles in which he explains how the laws of nature will (willingly or not) force free and autonomous individuals to use their moral law (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 28-39). Furthermore, he discusses the ethics of politicians in relation to reasonability within this same framework (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 43-63). It seems that in these last pages, Kant tries to explain in a more simplified way his core reasoning how he sees the determined future of individuals that reach rationality through freedom, which in the end can lead to reasonability (Wood, 1999, pp. 295-296).

In *Perpetual Peace*, it seems that Kant attempts to formulate a shortcut for the moral learning process that, in his view, can result in a perpetual peace. Although in his core writings Kant emphasizes that moral learning is an inner and incremental process, the simplicity of this booklet tempts to speculate that Kant might have hoped that things could get speeded up. He does discuss how the notion of freedom and free will cannot guarantee reasonability, after all, when one is free it is possible to choose to ignore the moral law inside. However, Kant (and liberalism with him) is deterministic of nature. He states:

Perpetual peace is guaranteed by no less an authority than the great artist Nature herself (*natura daedala rerum*). The mechanical process of nature vividly exhibits the purposive plan of producing concord among men, even against their will and indeed by means of their very discord (Kant, 1795/2013a, p. 28).

When democratic peace theorists refer to Kant, they tend not to get into the details of Kant's work, nor do they theorize their arguments clearly in connection to Kant's philosophy. After all, these ideas have been, like constructivists argue, deeply engrained within the Western culture since Enlightenment. Many Westerners believe, on some level, that liberal democracy (as a form of the Kantian republic) is a superior form of government in which individuals do become 'better people'.

Explanations for the democratic peace, democratic peace theory, are often implicitly but firmly rooted in this Kantian belief system. The theories base themselves on the assumption that specific regimes will affect individuals in their

beliefs and practices so that their behavior will alter over time. The theories build on the assumed expectation that individuals, who live in a liberal society where the rules of the game enable them to be free and autonomous, will be enforced to be tolerant, to trust and to reciprocate that tolerance and trust until it becomes a natural inclination. The expectation is that most, if not all, individuals will be socialized within this process and thereby reinforce a society that is inherently based on freedom, autonomy, tolerance, trust, and reciprocity of those values and norms. Democratic peace theory also assume that within other regime-types individuals are unable to escape their more primal impulses to survive: they still feel the need to fight and kill for their benefit. This assumed expectation originates from the notion that non-democratic regimes do not support their citizens to live free and autonomous lives, but rather support the primal impulses of their citizens because these governments engage themselves in zero-sum politics, and suppress or kill political opponents.

These assumptions underpin democratic peace theory inherently. Democratic peace scholars argue that democracies do not fight with other democracies because these regimes share similar socialization processes and therefore practices. With a reversed logic these scholars claim that liberal democracies sometimes have to go to war with other regime-types: liberal democracies will have to defend themselves against regimes that lack this socialization process and therefore practice. They believe that liberal democracy produces a genuinely different society than any other regime, and expect that liberal democracy has such an influence on its citizens that it can affect the outcome of an interstate conflict that otherwise would escalate into war.

This liberal belief system underpins most studies that argue that liberal democracy, in general, is causing the democratic peace. However, to get to a more precise and also empirically testable explanation, it is important to define what specific feature(s) of liberal democracy can explain the apparent difference in expected behavior. Liberal democracy is not tangible; it is a construction embedded in a complex network of formal and informal practices. There is little consensus among liberal researchers on what specific feature(s) of liberal democracy can explain the observed peace. Largely, there are two kinds of explanations: the institutional (or sometimes called structural) explanation and the normative (sometimes called cultural) explanation. The latter explanation overlaps with the constructivist explanation because the notion of liberal norms shaping behavior is also part of the constructivist argument, as will be discussed below.

Democratic Institutions

Proponents of the institutional explanation argue that individuals will be more peaceful when they have to bear the (material and physical) costs of war themselves. When they live in a liberal democracy, so the argument goes, they have, through the use of democratic institutions, actual power to constrain political leaders that might want to go to war. Democratic leaders, who need to be (re-)elected, will take the wishes of the public into account and this way democratic citizens can control their

leaders. This latter mechanism is also called audience costs. However, how this mechanism precisely works, and through which institutions it works, is unclear. Many authors have hypothesized different institutional mechanisms, however based on the same assumption. Table 2.2 gives an overview of the indicators that are used to back up these explanations.

Firstly, some scholars argue that, because two liberal democracies in conflict will both rely on the existence of a peaceful audience that has democratic institutions to control their leaders, the result of that conflict will be an “amelioration of the security dilemma” (Fearon, 1994, p. 578).

Table 2.2 Explanations related to institutions

Indicators institutional explanation	Authors (year)
Mutual democratic institutional constraints	Huth & Allee (2002) Maoz & Russett (1993) Reiter & Tillman (2002) Rousseau (2005) Morgan & Campbell (1991)
Incomplete information	Bueno de Mesquita & Lalman (1992) Fearon (1994) Schultz (1999) Maoz & Russett (1993)
Audience costs	Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson & Smith (1999) Gelpi & Griesdorf (2001) Grieco & Gelpi (2011) Huth (2000) Huth & Allee (2002)
Large selectorate	Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson & Smith (2004)
Small/no coalition cabinet	Kaarbo (2012)

Fearon (1994) argues that in an interstate conflict, states try to assess the threat posed by other countries. Due to imperfect information, leaders will try to understand the behavior of other leaders to comprehend their intentions. He assumes that democratic leaders will be more careful to threaten other countries with war because their audience costs are higher than in other types of regimes. If democratic leaders make a threat, they will be held accountable. They will, therefore, be less likely to express a threat than autocratic leaders who have less to lose because they do not have similar audience costs. This notion is not only assumed to restrain the actual

behavior of democracies but also to provide other states with information about conflict behavior. If leaders want to mobilize support from the opposition or the public for a possible war, they will need time, which can be guaranteed by institutions. If two democracies are on the brink of war, the leaders of both democracies will know from each other that they are constrained. This knowledge buys the leaders extra time to try to solve the issues, which results in peaceful conflict resolution (Huth & Allee, 2002; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 626; Reiter & Tillman, 2002; Rousseau, 2005, pp. 20-21). These scholars expect that liberal democracies will only feel the need to go to war with non-democracies because they want to make sure that the other party will not take advantage of their peacefulness (Bueno de Mesquita & Lalman, 1992; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 626). In other words: democracies only fight if aggressive (read: non-democratic) states force them.

These ideas are reflected in most studies into the institutional explanation for the democratic peace, although the ideas about which particular institution creates which particular mechanism vary. Schultz (1999) focuses on the transparency of information within democracies and has argued, in line with Fearon, that democracies are more careful in starting wars because they try to avoid misunderstandings about their intentions. Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith (1999) argue that democratic leaders are more selective when it comes to picking wars. Because of the audience costs, they will only start a war if their victory is ensured. The political costs that come from going to war and a failure to win a war will cost democratic leaders the support of the democratic audience. Therefore, these leaders will avoid war as much as possible, an argument that was supported by many authors (e.g. Gelpi & Griesdorf, 2001; Grieco & Gelpi, 2011; Huth, 2000; Huth & Allee, 2002; Morgan & Schwebach, 1992; Reiter & Tillman, 2002; Rousseau, 2005). The selectorate theory of Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith (2004) claims that when a state has a large winning coalition (such as in a democracy where many votes are needed to come to political power), the leaders will have to produce public goods to reward their supporters. But when a state has a small winning coalition (such as in an autocracy), the leaders can reward supporters with private goods. That will make the supporters from the latter coalition less critical and more loyal: it is important for them to support the powers that be for their benefit. In a large winning coalition, this works differently: because these supporters are more likely to defect they will be more critical of the leaders. The result is that in a country in which the selectorate relies on a large willing coalition, the leaders will be more careful.

These studies focus indeed on the presence of the mentioned different democratic institutions. However, the instrumentally used assumption is that individuals do not want war because they have to bear the physical and material costs of war themselves, and their political leaders do not. When they indeed have the power to decide over these matters, like in a democracy, they will become peaceful, whether or not this is due to the socialized liberal democratic norms. This assumption is, however, not tested by studying the institutions; an actual presence of an institution does not, by definition, capture the proposed causal mechanism. An

institution is expected to function in a certain way and whether or not this is the case is an empirical question.

Empirical evidence shows that this assumption does not find support: several studies show that individuals, also those living in democracies, are prepared to go to war when they believe the cause is right (see e.g. DeRouen, 2000; Gartner & Segura, 1998; Morgan & Anderson, 1999; Tir, 2010). More recent empirical findings show that the logic underlying theories of audience costs does not find support within democracies (Kertzer & Brutger, 2016).

Moreover, the logic of this assumption is weak. Why would political leaders be so much more war prone than their citizens? If that would be the case, then the normative argument (see in more detail below) that claims that most, if not all, individuals within a liberal democracy strongly endorse liberal norms would be invalid. After all, also politicians must have been socialized with these norms. Moreover, even when there would be such a pattern of war prone politicians versus peaceful citizens, empirical studies show that autocratic audiences are also of influence on foreign policy decision-making of the autocratic elite (Weeks, 2012). Another, but in this regard also relevant, empirical finding is that autocratic regimes cannot be 'black boxed' in their war proneness; different types of autocratic regimes vary in their conflict initiation (Peceny, Beer, & Sanchez-Terry, 2002; Weeks, 2008, 2012). A lot more research should be done to see if there are indeed differences between autocratic and democratic leaders.

The institutional explanation argues that leaders of liberal democracies are different from leaders of other regime-types because of the restraining institutions. As elaborated above, the assumption that underpins this explanation is empirically unsupported. It is thus insufficient to conclude without empirical testing that existing institutions fulfill their assumed task. We need to study leaders in relation to institutions, instead of studying institutions and assume that these evidently function as prescribed by normative theories.

A small body of work nuances the expectations of the institutional explanation, and focuses on the effect institutions might have on political leaders. Morgan and Campbell (1991) do not find support for the argument that democratic structures are responsible for a decrease in the probability of war between states. Their results show that the higher the decisional constraint is on leaders of major powers, the less likely these leaders will opt for war. However, when states are minor powers, a reverse effect is noticeable. Based on their results that there is more variation between democracies than expected, and the expectation that this variation is probably caused by interactions of different factors that influence these democratic leaders, Morgan and Campbell reject the structural explanation. They suggest that the political culture of democracies must be of greater influence on the peace between democracies, and that, moreover, the composition of the administration might also matter.

That latter insight is taken up by Kaarbo (2012) who investigates how coalition politics affects foreign policy decision-making. She finds that the expectation that coalition cabinets (due to multiple restraints) create more moderate foreign policies does not find support. Coalition cabinets turn out to be more extreme in their policy

outcomes: the higher the number of parties in a coalition, the riskier and more threatening the behavior of the coalition is. Kaarbo offers empirical evidence that attributes this behavior to the diffusion of responsibility and accountability that comes with such largely based coalitions (Kaarbo, 2012, pp. 236-241). Elman (2000) tries to unpack the different kinds of democratic regimes based on the institutional buildup for decision-making and finds that the institutional package of a democracy does not influence the decision-making process of the elite, but rather the preferences and interests of the decision-making elites. Her suggestion⁴, therefore, is to study elite behavior to understand a bit more about possible domestic influences on foreign policy. Elman's suggestion points to a neo-classical realist notion: the influence of the interests and preferences of individuals. What these studies show is that within institutions individuals decide, often differently than theoretically expected. To investigate the institutional explanation of the democratic peace, we need to study the behavior of the decision-makers, and their interaction with these institutions, rather than the institutions themselves.

Liberal norms

The core argument of the so-called 'normative explanation' is that liberal democracies have a practice of liberal norms, which leads to trust and compromise within these regimes. Because liberal democracies share these norms with other liberal democracies, the theory also assumes that trust and compromise exist *between* liberal democracies (Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1994; Dixon & Senese, 2002, p. 549; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Jakobsen, Jakobsen, & Ekevoid, 2016; Johns & Davies, 2012; Kahl, 1998; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Owen, 1994; Rawls, 1999; Ray, 1995; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Rousseau, 2005, pp. 27-28; Rummel, 1983; Tomz & Weeks, 2013; Van Belle, 1997; Weart, 1998, pp. 75-93). The practices within all other regime-types (by democratic peace scholars referred to as non-democracies) are intrinsically more violent, due to the lack of these liberal norms, so the theory assumes. In the words of the most cited proponents of this explanation:

Political conflicts in democracies are resolved through compromise rather than through elimination of opponents. This norm allows for an atmosphere of "live and let live" that results in a fundamental sense of stability at the personal, communal, and national level [.....] Political conflicts in nondemocratic regimes are more likely to be conducted and resolved through violence and coercion. This norm creates an atmosphere of mistrust and fear within and outside the government. (Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625)

Thus, following the normative explanation, liberal democracies are 'forced' to fight with non-democracies because of the lack of liberal norms of the latter. Liberal democracies will, therefore, have to adapt to the more violent norms of the non-democratic states (Kahl, 1998, pp. 125-129; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Rousseau, 2005, pp. 27-28; Russett, 1993b, pp. 32-33).

⁴ Elman is therefore included in table 2.5 and not in table 2.2

The theoretical justification for this assumed mechanism remains mostly unexplained in depth by Maoz and Russett (and many scholars with them, see e.g. Choi, 2010; Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Doyle, 1983a, 1983b, 1986, 1997, 2005; Oneal, Oneal, Maoz, & Russett, 1996; Owen, 1994; Risse-Kappen, 1991, 1995; Russett, 1993b; Russett & Oneal, 2001; Van Belle, 1997; Ward, Siverson, & Cao, 2007), besides a reference to the work of Kant. Although these studies refer to Kant, the theory sections do not clearly discuss what liberal Kantian norms precisely are, they do not theoretically elaborate how these norms relate causally to the observed peace, and they do not conceptualize liberal norms. Most immediately proceed to the operationalization. However, as will be explained more thoroughly below, the indicators these studies use to operationalize liberal norms do not measure liberal norms but rely on the expectation that the hypothesized liberal norms are present within liberal democracies.

Table 2.3 Explanations related to liberal democratic norms

Indicators normative explanation	Authors (year)
Regime stability & Political deaths	Maoz & Russett (1993)
Freedom house ratings	Dixon (1994) Dixon & Senese (2002) Mousseau (1997)
Press freedom	Van Belle (1997) Danilovic & Clare (2007)
Trust based on shared institutions and norms	Owen (1994)
Shared liberal identity	Kahl (1998) Risse-Kappen (1991, 1995) Weart (1998)
Shared liberal norms	Mintz & Geva (1993) Geva & Hanson (1999) Rousseau (2005) Johns & Davies (2012) Tomz & Weeks (2013) Jakobsen et al. (2016)

Maoz and Russett's (1993) measure for liberal norms is seen as "the best measure of political norms used to date" (Rousseau, 2005, p. 208). They operationalize the thinly defined concept of liberal norms by measuring the stability of a regime, combined with the number of political deaths in a regime. However plausible that measure might seem, it does not actually measure the presence of liberal norms; it only

assumes that the presence of liberal norms will create higher stability in a regime and will decrease political deaths. It is a proxy that seems tautological: their measure is an assumed effect of norms, which are assumed present. It does not measure liberal norms directly.

Others authors use proxies that are just as distant from an actual measure of liberal norms. For instance, they use institutional arrangements that are expected to breed liberal norms as proxies; freedom of press, civil rights, and legal equality (whether or not as measured by Freedom House) to name a few (Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1993; Dixon & Senese, 2002; Jakobsen et al., 2016; Mousseau, 1997; Van Belle, 1997). The proxies are also problematic; the presence of the norms are assumed and not measured, so we still do not know whether or not norms are of effect. Jakobsen et al. (2016) attempted to measure the norm of tolerance, and study its influence on the bellicosity of individuals. However, they do not investigate whether or not tolerance interacts with regime-type, as expected by the normative explanation. Therefore, their argument that individuals within democracies are more bellicose than individuals within other regime-types remains empirically unsupported.

Others use anecdotal evidence to show that liberal norms are applied by the leaders of liberal democracies during interstate conflicts. These scholars argue that mutual democratic institutions and shared liberal norms create a shared identity which would function as a token of trust that they can work out any conflict peacefully (Kahl, 1998; Owen, 1994; Risse-Kappen, 1991, 1995; Weart, 1998). These studies also aggregate an assumed effect of institutions and norms as the evidence that liberal norms (in the form of a liberal identity) exist, which affect the war-proneness of political leaders and subsequently their behavior.

The studies above can convincingly show that a correlation exists between the absence of war and liberal democracies. However, the evidence does not demonstrate convincingly that liberal norms exist at large among individuals – including the political elite- within liberal democracies, and are of the assumed effect. The aggregation of an assumed effect is problematic because the theoretical justification rests on a socialization process that is assumed to create liberal norms at the individual level first and foremost.

A small body of empirical work does that exactly. It studies the mechanism of the democratic peace at the individual level with the use of experiments. Mintz and Geva (1993) conduct experiments among US students, US nonstudents, and Israeli students to investigate if there is a different response to an invasion by a neighboring state (of their own country) when participants know that the foreign invasion is initiated either by democratic demand or by a dictator. They find that the opposing state is in any case perceived as a 'bad guy', irrespective of the regime-type. Moreover, the results show that the participants are more willing to attack the opponent if led by a dictator. Moreover, the participants would see an attack on another democracy as a policy failure. Based on these results, Mintz and Geva argue that leaders within democracies would have little incentives to start a war with another democracy, which might explain the democratic peace. They also found that regime-type does not

affect the participants to opt for a different policy option, such as a blockade or to take no action at all. Their results, moreover, show no significant difference between student samples and nonstudent (non-representative) samples.

Geva and Hanson (1999) conduct a somewhat similar experiment among US students and use a hypothetical scenario with hypothetical countries (instead of the real countries from which participants originate) in an interstate conflict. They do not measure democracy and autocracy directly; they use the perception of the other state based on socio-cultural characteristics. They find that a perception of cultural similarity leads citizens to assign their adversary a democratic status, similar to their own. On top of that, these participants are less likely to support an attack if they perceive the other country as a democracy. In their conclusion, Geva and Hanson thus indicate that the democratic peace could very well be less associated to regime-type, and more to the notion of in-group and out-group, based on socio-cultural similarities.

Using an experimental approach among US students, Rousseau (2005) also tests whether democratic individuals are more inclined to work out a severe interstate conflict peacefully if the opponent has a democratically elected president instead of a military dictator. He also measures the effect of a larger and a smaller military capacity in comparison to the opponent. His findings show that the participants are more inclined to use force towards the dictator than towards the democratic president. Moreover, he finds that relying on a higher military capacity than the opponent would also have a significant influence on the willingness to use force.

Tomz and Weeks (2013) conduct a similar experiment among representative samples of US and British citizens. They test the impact of regime-type, alliances and military capacity to assess whether the participants are more willing to attack an autocracy over a democracy during a conflict over nuclear capabilities. Their findings indicate that the threat perception of the respondents is much higher when the other state is autocratic and that they are therefore significantly more willing to attack a nuclear installation of that state. They moreover find that the participants would find it more immoral to attack a democracy than an autocracy.

Johns and Davies (2012) also use survey experiments in the US and Britain and show that these citizens are, in a similar conflict situation, significantly more willing to attack a dictatorship than a democratic state. They furthermore find that participants are more willing to attack an Islamic state than a Christian state. Besides the experimental treatments, they also inquire whether different levels of nationalism, authoritarianism, and social dominance influence the willingness to attack and find that these actor-based factors had a significant influence.

These studies seem to, more or less, support the theoretical claim that individuals who live in a liberal democracy are less willing to go to war with another liberal democracy. All participants are living in liberal-democracies, and therefore it might seem that individuals within liberal democracies are indeed more peaceful towards other liberal democracies than towards autocracies. It might indicate that these responses could, on an aggregate level, explain the democratic peace.

The question is, however, whether or not these empirical tests have indeed tested for the causal mechanism of the democratic peace. At the core of the normative explanation lies the assumption that the specific regime-type of liberal democracy socializes its individual members (mass and elite alike) with liberal democratic norms. Norms that inspire them to resolve political conflicts peacefully. At the core of that explanation also lies the specific assumption that individual members of non-democracies (basically all other regime-types) lack this socialization process. This logic is also assumed applicable on an aggregated level. If a conflict between two democracies reaches the brink of war, liberal norms are assumed to guide the behavior of these states. The two democracies will not fight, even when the conflict is serious and severe (Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1994; Dixon & Senese, 2002, p. 549; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Jakobsen et al., 2016; Johns & Davies, 2012; Kahl, 1998; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Owen, 1994; Rawls, 1999; Ray, 1995; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Rousseau, 2005, pp. 27-28; Rummel, 1983; Tomz & Weeks, 2013; Van Belle, 1997; Weart, 1998, pp. 75-93).

Maoz & Russett (1993) refer to Kant to justify the mechanism they hypothesize. Although they mention Kant explicitly, they do not refer to specific pages in Kant's collection of work but to the work of Michael Doyle (Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625). Doyle has translated the work of Kant for the field of international relations into a plea for liberal democracies to come to perpetual peace (Doyle, 1983a, 1983b, 1986; 1997, p. 300; 2005). However, also Doyle does not specify the concept of liberal norms, nor does he specify a specific mechanism. He only describes an assumed functioning of norms of peaceful behavior:

We can speculate that the process might work something like this: The leaders and publics of domestically just republics, which rest on consent, presume foreign republics to be also consensual, just and therefore deserving of accommodation. The experience of cooperation helps engender further cooperative behavior when the consequences of state policy are unclear but (potentially) mutually beneficial. At the same time, Liberal states assume that non Liberal governments are perceived to be in a state of aggression with their own people, their foreign relations become for Liberal governments deeply suspect (Doyle, 1997, p. 282).

Just like the quote of Maoz and Russett above (1993, p. 625), this quote also shows an expectation about the norms of liberal democracy, i.e. the norms of peaceful conflict resolution: these are expected to grow among individuals who are raised within a liberal democracy, but not among individuals that grow up in another kind of regime. These authors base their expectations on the belief that something special happens only within a liberal democracy; individuals learn to be morally better people. This belief in the 'moral learning' process is also reflected in the work of contemporary Kantian philosopher John Rawls. He argues that if individuals live long enough under the rules of a self-established reasonably just constitutional democracy, they will internalize these rules as intrinsic norms (Rawls, 1999, pp. 12-14). These rules rely on freedom and equality for each citizen, tolerance of each other and reciprocity of these rules. Living under these rules over the years will then also create interpersonal trust

between these citizens (Rawls, 1999, pp. 13-16, 22-23), something he calls a necessary psychological process (Rawls, 1999, p. 44). The same Rawls expects to occur between peoples of reasonably just constitutional democracies when they make similar rules that reflect freedom and equality for every citizen, tolerance, and reciprocity, but now applied to the relations between the peoples:

Thus, when the Law of Peoples is honored by peoples over a certain period of time [.....] these peoples tend to develop mutual trust and confidence in one another. Moreover, these peoples see those norms as advantageous for themselves and for those they care for, and therefore as time goes on they tend to accept that law as an ideal of conduct. (Rawls, 1999, p. 44)

And:

Liberal peoples are not inflamed by what Rousseau diagnosed as arrogant or wounded pride or by lack of due self-respect. Their self-respect rests on the freedom and integrity of their citizens and the justice and decency of their domestic political and social institutions. It rests also on the achievements of their public and civic culture. All these things are rooted in their civic society [.....] when liberal peoples do go to war, it is only with unsatisfied societies or outlaw states. (Rawls, 1999, p. 48)

The bottom line is: liberal norms are assumed to be present within liberal democracies and absent in countries with other regime-types. Although it might seem plausible to assume liberal norms to be present among individuals in liberal democracies, to argue that these norms are functioning as 'a law of nature' (Hayes, 2012, p. 775) seems to be at least tautological. This assumption, therefore, should be treated as an empirical question (Hermann & Kegley, 1995, p. 19), rather than an instrumental assumption that black-boxes a whole population into a homogenous mass. As studies of political norms and values show, norms, values and attitudes vary significantly within and between societies (see e.g. Almond & Verba, 1963, pp. 22-33; Chilton, 1987; Ronald Inglehart, 1988, 2003; Ronald Inglehart & Welzel, 2003; Jackman & Miller, 1996; Putnam, 1993; Pye, 1972; Seligson, 2002; Sheaffer & Shenhav, 2013; Widmaier, 2005).

The experimental studies discussed above do not test this mechanism. First of all, these studies are conducted within liberal democracies (mainly the US and the UK), so there is still evidence lacking from other regime-types. While the democratic peace theory implies that there must be a difference between individuals growing up in liberal democracies and other regimes, there is no evidence to suggest that this is indeed the case. It might be possible that these results would be the same for samples of nondemocratic populations as well, but this remains an empirical question until the results of democracies will be compared with similar experiments conducted on individuals that have grown up in nondemocratic settings. Secondly, in none of the cases, it is measured whether the liberal norms, which are so intrinsically part of the normative explanation, are indeed present. In each of these studies is assumed that citizens of liberal democracies differ from others because of the expected presence of liberal norms. It is impossible to argue that the normative explanation is backed by empirical evidence because the empirical tests are only conducted within liberal democracies.

In a previous study (Bakker, 2017), I considered these points of criticism. In an experimental setting, I tested the effect of regime-type on the support for war, and compared the results of individuals socialized within an autocratic regime (the People's Republic of China) and individuals socialized within a liberal democracy (The Netherlands). Moreover, I measured the level of liberal norms of these individuals and tested for the assumed influence of these norms on the support for war. The comparison between samples of different regime-types shows to be valuable. First of all, the results show that liberal norms are not exclusively present within a liberal democracy. Although there is a slight significant difference, on average, between the Chinese and the Dutch participants, the Chinese participants in this study show similarly varying patterns of levels of liberal norms as the Dutch participants. More importantly, the liberal norms do not have any influence on the support for war of both samples. When the most important factor, regime-type, is investigated without the consideration of the other factors, it shows that indeed it has a significant influence on the Dutch participants: they are more likely to want to go to war with an autocracy than with a democracy. However, in comparison with the Chinese group, it shows that the Chinese participants' support for war is comparable to the support for war of the Dutch participants *with democracies*. In other words: because the Chinese participants are more peaceful toward all regime-types, the comparison shows that the Dutch participants are not more peaceful toward other democracies, but rather more war-prone toward autocracies. However, within a multivariate analysis, the effect of regime-type fades out and shows to have no significant influence. The multivariate analysis also considers the threat of the conflict, and personal characteristics of the participants and shows that the hawkishness of an individual can explain why they support war. Moreover, it indicates that the threat of the conflict is the key indicator for the support for war.

This latter study confirms the arguments above: it is important it is to follow the logic of the normative explanation and test its assumptions first. Furthermore, it indicates that the threat of a conflict needs examination as a possible explanatory factor. Earlier experimental work has not varied for the threat of the conflict, nor the possible interaction with other factors. Instead, the threat of the conflict was held constant without checking the perception of threat and its potential influence on the outcomes of the study. By keeping threat constant, it is hard to entangle the actual effect of regime-type without understanding the relationship between the regime-type and the perception of threat.

Based on these insights, an empirical test of the normative explanation would have to measure the actual presence or absence of liberal norms within liberal democracies and within non-democracies, and then test whether these norms influence the willingness of individuals to go to war. Moreover, a comparison should be made between samples of different regime-types to see whether or not there is a different effect on this willingness depending on the regime-type of the opposing country. Furthermore, the perception of threat should be considered more systematically in relation to the factors that do construct threat.

2.2.2. Realist and other system-level explanations

On the other side of the debate stand scholars that argue that the democratic peace can be explained by a factor collinear with democracy. These scholars are often, however not always, of the realist school of international relations. Realists often claim their theories to be explanatory and describe the world by the 'objective laws that have their roots in human nature' (Morgenthau, 1978, pp. 1-2) and are therefore not normative (see Bell, 2002, pp. 221-222). However, recent literature has argued that realism can be considered to be a belief system and that it is not free of ideological bias (Bell, 2002; Kertzer & McGraw, 2012; Oren, 2009).

Realists belong to a large but closely related family of scholars, that ranges from classical realists (e.g. Morgenthau, 1978), neo- (or structural) realists (e.g. Jervis, 1976; Mearsheimer, 2001; Waltz, 1967) to neo-classical realists (Lobell, Ripsman, & Taliaferro, 2009; Rose, 1998; Schweller, 2010). Although their ideas vary, they share three core assumptions (Gilpin, 1986). They all have a pessimistic view of human nature and believe the world we live in to be full of conflict. They, moreover, all consider states to be the central actors within an anarchic international system, and as a consequence of that anarchy, they lastly believe actors to have to rely on self-help to survive, which creates an enduring struggle for power between actors (Gilpin, 1986, pp. 304-305). This set of assumptions forms a framework that resonates with the classical realist belief in a Hobbesian world, in which the state of nature causes *bellum omnium contra omnes* (the war of all against all). In the state of nature, people can and will take whatever they want unless their passions are tamed by a sovereign (Hobbes, 1651/2006, pp. 161-166). Everybody is a threat. For neo-realists, these ideas about human nature are transposed to the behavior of states that, as unitary actors, have to deal with each other in the state of nature: the anarchic international system. States struggle for power, and until a state is powerful enough, it perceives other states as threatening. The most recent strand of neo-classical realists, also, emphasizes the importance of domestic politics as an intervening variable on foreign policy decisions within the dominant influence of the international system. Influences of domestic politics (such as public opinion, interest groups, and industry) can alter a perception of threat between states (Lobell et al., 2009). When studying the democratic peace from a realist perspective, the relative power position between states is more important than regime-type. In other words: realists expect an imbalance in state capacities will have a bigger influence on the outcome of an interstate conflict than regime-type.

The realist belief system underpins a body of studies into an explanation for the democratic peace. This particular group of studies does not deny the empirical regularity, but they do contend that the relationship between democracy and peace is spurious, due to collinearity of democracy with other explanatory factors. Many of them (besides neo-classical realists) argue that an explanation cannot be found within the domestic regimes of states, but can be found at a higher level of analysis. The theoretical argument is that all states need to survive in the anarchic international system, whether they are democratic or not (Waltz, 1967, 2000). States are constantly under the threat of other states becoming stronger: they are forced to

play the game of power politics that is blind to the regime-types of these states because only survival counts (Mearsheimer, 2001). Neo-classical realists do not specifically differ from this line of thinking but do consider domestic processes in their studies to explain why states behave in a certain way in response to threats (Taliaferro, Lobell, & Ripsman, 2009).

Empirical work, based on this theoretical reasoning, tries to bring to light the validity of those arguments and show what system-level explanatory factor might be responsible for the democratic peace. These studies state that factors, collinear with democracy, might be responsible for the empirical regularity, such as common interests, military alliances, strategic interests, geographical proximity, economic interdependence, the Cold War, capitalism, modernization, power politics (e.g. Elman, 1997, 2000; Farber & Gowa, 1995, 1997; Gat, 2005; Geis, Brock, & Müller, 2006; Geis & Wagner, 2011; Gowa, 1999, 2011; Layne, 1994; Rosato, 2003; Waltz, 2000). Most of these scholars argue that the regime-type of a state is irrelevant. Instead, they focus on system-level explanations.

The notion of the balance of power is conceptualized and empirically tested by several authors. Farber and Gowa (1995, 1997; 1999) argue that common interests between Western states during the Cold War have caused peace between these states instead of their common polities. These shared interests, developed during the Cold War, have tied befriended allies together, resulting in a long-term interest-based peace between these states (Gowa, 2011).

For these authors, the Cold War was the condition that forced states to cooperate or not. Common interests decreased the perception of threat between states. Rosato (2003) argues, in line with Farber and Gowa, that the dominance of the US over the Americas and Europe since the end of the WW II is of great importance; the efforts of the US to maintain an European peace through the encouragement of economic and military alliances during the Cold War remains until today. Rosato thereby echoes the neo-realist thought of Waltz (2000), who argues that states conduct power politics within an anarchic international system. Within the unipolar system that rose since the end of the Cold War, the US dictates all relations between Western states, thereby reducing the threat due to the balance of power.

Layne (1994) argues, through the example of four case studies in which democratic states stand on the brink of war with other democracies, that it was not the common democratic norms that withheld these states from attacking each other, but matters of prudence in the light of national interests that were at stake. Judgment calls on the military capacity of the other party or the realization that others could take advantage from an occurring war withheld these democratic states from war, not their shared set of norms. Layne furthermore argued that the democratic peace thesis does not consider important factors in matters of war and peace such as military strength, country size, population size, and region. These are all factors that can influence the threat from one state to another. He, therefore, poses the question whether or not a reversed causality might be at work: states that have to exist in a less threatening external environment might more easily develop into a democracy than countries that live under constant external threat (Layne, 1994, pp. 44-45).

Table 2.4 Explanations related to system-level factors

Indicators for system-level effects	Authors (year)
Common interests during Cold war	Farber & Gowa (1995, 1997) Gowa (1999, 2011)
Hegemonic position of USA	Rosato (2003)
Power politics	Waltz (2000)
Strategic interests	Layne (1994)
Geographical proximity	Thompson (1996) Gibler (2007) Kacowitz (1995) Henderson (2004) James, Park & Choi (2006)
Modernity	Gat (2005)
Capitalism	Mousseau, Hegre & Oneal (2003) Hegre (2000) Gartzke (2007) Gartzke & Weisiger (2014) Gleditsch (2008)
Trade networks	Dorussen & Ward (2010)

The influence of geopolitical pressures is often brought up as a relevant explanatory factor (Thompson, 1996) to mediate the perception of threat between states. Others argue that proximity, for instance, or geographical distance plays a role. They claim that states are conservative powers and like the status quo that subsequently leads to a zone of peace (but not necessarily constituted of democracies) (Gibler, 2007; Kacowicz, 1995). A related argument is that experience with the neighboring countries in a region explains the lack of conflict between neighboring states (Henderson, 2004; James, Park, & Choi, 2006).

There are also non-realist scholars who argue that system-level factors are the dominant explanation for the observed peace instead of state-level or individual level factors. These explanations take specific structures at system-level as the core of their explanation. One of those comes from Gat (2005), who contends that the expansion of industrial and technological power in the Western world has initiated economic growth, which subsequently created interdependent and therefore peaceful relationships. He argues that this process affects democracies as well as other regime-types. He acknowledges that countries often stand on the path of democratization, but argues that this path exists of a complex interaction of industrialization,

technological innovation, and economic growth, or said differently: modernization. Similarly, Hegre (2000), and Mousseau, Hegre and Oneal (2003) argue that it is the wealth of countries rather than the nature of the regime that causes the democratic peace, an argument that was echoed by Gartzke (2007; Gartzke & Weisiger, 2014). He contends that the interdependent capitalistic economic structure has caused peace, independent of regime-types. Gartzke's argument is supported by a study of Gleditsch (2008), with the difference that the latter author argues that economic liberalism is the driving force. Where Gartzke argues that capitalist peace is not the same as democratic peace, Gleditsch argues that it is indeed a liberal peace. Dorussen and Ward (2010) support that argument and show that trade networks are a pacifying power between democratic states since WWII. Although the details differ, the main argument of these studies is that economic interdependence between states mediates the perception of threat between these states.

The common denominator from these studies and the realist explanations is that they expect that a particular structural effect on the aggregated system-level affects the behavior of states. However, as argued above, to see whether these structures influence the willingness to go to war, we need to study the influence of these structures on the decision-makers.

2.3 Individuals matter

Within social sciences, we often use assumptions instrumentally to test our theories. Due to the nature of social reality, it is almost inevitable not to do so. However, these assumptions need to be stated and used explicitly and need to be disentangled from the actual theoretical explanation. In the case of democratic peace research, the assumptions used have created a tautological effect: the assumptions are part of the explanation although these are empirical questions (Gates, Knutsen, & Moses, 1996; Kegley & Hermann, 1995, p. 19; Kertzer, 2017). Democratic peace theory is in the first place founded on assumptions about individuals who are affected by the liberal democratic regime they live in, in contrast to individuals who have not have lived in a democracy. It is important to test these assumptions first, before we build our theories on them.

Political psychologists argue that the dynamics of international relations can (partly) be explained by theories of political psychology. They claim that the personal psychology of individuals (e.g. decision-makers and political leaders), and psychological processes between individuals (e.g. group dynamics or the forming of public opinion) and/or groups of individuals need studying in order to come to a comprehensive understanding of events and phenomena in international relations (see e.g. Hermann, 1980, 2005; Hermann & Hagan, 1998; Hermann & Hermann, 1989; Hermann & Kegley, 1995; Hermann, Preston, Korany, & Shaw, 2001; Herrmann, 2013; Herrmann, Voss, Schooler, & Ciarrochi, 1997; Holsti, 1962, 1970; Holsti & Rosenau, 1988; Janis, 1982; Jervis, 1976, 2006, 2017; Kaarbo & Hermann,

1998; Kegley & Hermann, 1995; Kowert & Hermann, 1997; Lebow, 1981; McDermott, 2004).

The current research builds on that argument. It takes an agency-based position and studies the decision-making process of individuals during an interstate conflict. It, moreover, tests which factors (structure-based or not) are of influence on the decision-making of these individuals. The main reason for this approach is that the decision to go to war or not, “the locus of decision-making” lies at the individual level (Kegley & Hermann, 1995, p. 10). That does not imply we should study only psychological factors that can influence decision-making, nor does it imply that various system-level and state-level factors can and do not influence decision-making. The point is: all factors are in the first place perceived and assessed by individuals (Hermann, 2001, p. 48; Horowitz, Stam, & Ellis, 2015). States are often assumed to act as if they are a unitary actor and although that assumption can help to simplify explanatory theories, it does no justice to the complexity of what a state empirically entails. The state does not notice shifts in power relations, or perceive similar identities or specific threat, nor does the state decide how to respond to these shifts, identities or threats. The individuals who direct the state do: they notice, perceive and decide. The bottom line is that at the helm of every state stands a captain (or a team of steersmen and a captain): individuals decide about the course of the state. The state’s assessment of an interstate conflict thereby lies in the threat perception of individual decision-makers, who might be sensitive to different moderating⁵ factors. Therefore, the process of threat perception must be analyzed at the individual level, before the output of that decision-making can be explained at an aggregate level.

Furthermore, as elaborated above, democratic peace theory is rooted in liberal belief systems about individuals and, in particular, the effect liberal democracy has on them. These assumed effects of liberal democracy on its citizens (mass and elite alike) and their subsequent behavior thus explicitly support the notion that individuals perceive, behave and decide as a homogeneous mass and that liberal society can be considered to be a black box. However, from the field of comparative politics, we learn that societies, also not liberal ones, are a black box. Studies of political culture show that individuals vary significantly within societies in predispositions, personal characteristics and internalized norms (See for instance Almond & Verba, 1963, pp. 22-33; Chilton, 1987; Ronald Inglehart, 1988, 2003; Ronald Inglehart & Welzel, 2003; Jackman & Miller, 1996; Putnam, 1993; Pye, 1972; Seligson, 2002; Sheafer & Shenhav, 2013). Thus, specific assumptions about individuals in relation to their political regimes are empirical questions first and only. If we want to understand how decision-makers assess the threat of an interstate conflict, we need to investigate the influence of contextual factors and the influence of personal beliefs and characteristics in one research design.

⁵ Please note that the word moderator (or verb: to moderate) is used in a methodological sense, it means: a factor that increases or decreases the effect/influence of another factor.

2.3.1 Individual level explanations

Only a few scholars study the democratic peace from a political psychological perspective. As discussed above, Elman (2000) argues that the interests and preferences of decision-makers play a major role in their decision-making process. This argument resonates with Hermann and Kegley (1995), who argue that the perceived threat of opposing countries, alongside with the leadership style of democratic elites might moderate decision-making processes. They, therefore, argue that democratic peace research should take these factors also into account when assessing elite responses to the assumed restrictions of liberal norms and democratic structures. Farnham (2003) argues that the perceived threat of a conflict is of most influence on the decision-making process. She shows, through a study of the leaders involved in the Munich Crisis, that different leaders perceive threat differently, and that also regime-type is perceived differently by democratic leaders. She argues for more research at the individual level, in which the personal characteristics of leaders are also taken into account, in particular in interaction with other factors (2003, pp. 412-413).

Table 2.5 Explanations related to decision-makers/political leaders

Leaders are influenced by	Authors (year)
Own preferences and interests	Elman (2000)
Leadership style	Hermann & Kegley (1995)
Own threat perception	Farnham (2003) Owen (1994)
Leadership Style	Keller (2005)
Belief systems	Schafer & Walker (2006) Bakker (2017)

Keller (2005), who seconds that finding, also builds on the framework of Hermann and Kegley and tests the impact of leadership style, and its interaction with regime-type. He finds that the perceptions and beliefs of democratic leaders are of significant influence on conflict situations. Leaders vary significantly, depending on leadership style, threat perception, and belief system, in the way they respond to constraints. They also differ in their response to regime-types. He concludes that the influence of regime-type is thus contingent on leadership style. Schafer and Walker (2006) study the operational codes of US President Clinton and British Prime Minister Blair in relation to the Kosovo conflict. They find that the belief systems of these leaders are affecting their cooperative behavior differently, in particular towards non-democracies. Toward other democracies it seemed that their beliefs had less impact;

they both showed similar cooperative behavior. The results of a study by Johns and Davies (2012) shows that images based on religion and culture have a significant effect on the willingness to attack an opponent. Regime-type turns out to have a much smaller, however significant, effect. It is of importance to note that Johns and Davies control for individually based beliefs (Johns & Davies, 2012, pp. 1044-1045). Although the authors do not highlight or discuss the results; nationalism, authoritarianism, and social dominance show to be of highly significant effect on the willingness to attack. Individually based beliefs and characteristics seem to matter. These finding resonates with my study (Bakker, 2017) that shows that decision-makers who have more hawkish beliefs are significantly more willing to use force than decision-makers that are more dovish.

2.4 Individuals under threat

This dissertation studies individual decision-makers who are socialized within different regime-types and investigates what factors influence their decision to attack the opposing country during an interstate conflict. The research centers on the perceived threat of an interstate conflict of decision-makers with as leading research question: *What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when they are on the brink of war?* This study considers the possible influence of democratic institutions and liberal norms. Moreover, it expands the focus to other possible influential factors by using the perception of threat of decision-makers as an overarching concept.

After all, democratic peace theory posits that liberal democracy in some way affects decision-makers to behave more peaceful towards other democracies. The empirical finding of the democratic peace is an *ex-post* ascertainment. Explanations that claim that liberal democracy is the explanatory factor for the democratic peace search for a mechanism prior to the occurrence of peace. They thus argue that something *ex-ante* of a possible war must have happened to avoid that war. Their argument implies that there must have been a conflict to begin with that could have led to war, but it did not because both states were democratic. Their argument can not be that there was no war to begin with (because both states were democratic). Such an argument would seriously undermine the causal logic of their explanation: if there was no conflict severe enough to start a war, why would the democratic peace differ from any other peace between states? Wars, after all, do not occur that frequently and need a severe conflict between states before they break loose, if at all.

Proponents of the democratic peace, in conclusion, do not posit an argument about peace; they posit an argument about the moderation of the factor liberal democracy on the threat of war in an interstate conflict. Just like adversaries of the democratic peace thesis argue that another factor moderates the threat of war in an interstate conflict.

If the democratic peace indeed exists because states are democratic, the evidence is needed to explain which and how particular aspects of democracy moderate a conflict from the brink of war towards peace. Similarly, if the democratic

peace does not exist, but is caused by other factors that are collinear with democracy, the evidence is also needed to explain how these factors moderate the severe conflict from the brink of war to peace. Thus, any explanation that argues that the democratic peace can be explained by a (set of) specific factor(s) (whether or not that factor is democracy) argues that there must be a mechanism that moderates the perception of threat between states in severe conflict. The overarching focus should, therefore, lie on what factors moderate the perception of threat of an interstate conflict.

Within IR theories in general, threat perception is considered a core concept. For realists, threat is associated with (military) power and shifts in the power of states. Simply put, if two states perceive their relative powers to be about equal, there is a balance. If a state increases its military power, it is perceived a bigger threat than before and vice versa if the military power decreases. Liberals also agree upon this power shift mechanism, with the important difference that they believe there are also other moderating factors that possibly decrease the perception of threat between states, namely the rise of liberal norms and institutions. To them, if a democratic state increases its military power it is not perceived a bigger threat than before because it is democratic. Constructivists turn the perception of threat around: they argue that power shifts do not matter; as long as the identity of both states is perceived to be similar there is no real threat. Other explanatory theories that are related to the democratic peace also rely on the perception of threat as a central part of their explanation. Theories of war, for instance. In these theories, the focus lies either on the unable (or unwilling) sender of a threat who cannot credibly communicate its capacities, or on factors that create ambiguity of threat in the environment (such as security and status dilemma, institutional and political-cultural factors) (Gross Stein, 2013, p. 368). Within the democratic peace literature, however, the perception of threat is usually implicitly assumed, and not understood as a key part of the explanation.

This research, therefore, starts from the perception of threat. It argues that if we want to understand how decision-makers decide to go to war or not, we have to start with the presence of a conflict on the brink of war, after which several factors can be researched to see whether or not these factors influence that decision. This study investigates individual decision-makers. Based on the research above, it investigates what constitutes the perception of threat of decision-makers. It does so by investigating the possible influence of 1) The nature of the conflict, 2) The behavior of the other state, 3) The regime-type, 4) Liberal norms, 5) Personal beliefs about conflict resolution, 6) Gender, and 7) The balance of power, within one research design. It furthermore compares the results of decision-makers that were socialized within a liberal democracy with decision-makers that were socialized within a hybrid regime and an autocracy.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed why it is important to study individual decision-makers if we want to understand why states go to war with each other. Furthermore, it has argued why the perception of threat of decision-makers can serve as an umbrella to study this mechanism. The next chapter explains how the perception of threat over-arches the different strands of literature that have tried to explain or refute the notion of democratic peace theory, namely that liberal democracy causes peace between pairs of democracies. It links these different studies into the causes of war and peace under one theoretical framework from a micro-level perspective. It does include macro-level explanations, and translates these to the individual level perspective of decision-makers. It furthermore conceptualizes the independent and dependent variables and ends with a discussion of the methodology.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework, Concepts & Methods

3.1 Threat perception

The research question of this dissertation is: what influences decision-makers to attack another country when they are on the brink of war? This question brings together different explanations for the empirically observed democratic peace within one theoretical framework. The unit of analysis is the individual decision-maker. The focus of this research lies on how individual decision-makers perceive the threat of a severe interstate conflict and, moreover, how different factors influence their perception of threat.

Threat and perception

The Oxford dictionary⁶ defines threat as *a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action on someone in retribution for something done or not done*. Threats are expressed verbally or non-verbally (Gross Stein, 2013). When expressed verbally, there is often a stress on a conditional part of the threat: comply, or else there will be consequences. A verbal threat can, therefore, be quite clear. Within international relations, a threat is often expressed by nonverbal signals. Non-verbal threats are, however, problematic because it is not always clear to other parties what such a signal means. This diffusion can easily be misperceived (Jervis, 1976). If for instance, a state builds up military power this might unintentionally create an acute sense of threat among other states although this state might have meant it less threatening, or vice versa. In other words, it is hard to measure a threat objectively.

The Oxford dictionary defines perception as *the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses and the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted*. Threat perception is, by definition, dialectical. It is a process of information exchange between sender and receiver. Incongruence between the sent information and the received message about the threat is called a misperception of threat, which is often theoretically posited as a cause of war. On the side of the sender, the threat must be credible; the sender should make credible that he has the willingness and capacity to execute the threat, if necessary. On the side of the receiver, the threat must be understood in the way the sender intended. That understanding, however, is not inherently clear. Rather, it is influenced by the perception of the receiver. That process of individual perception is generated by emotions, processes of information and patterns of inference and attribution (Gross Stein, 2013, p. 365).

⁶ http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/american_english/threat

Assumptions about threat

The concepts of threat and threat perception are quite intangible. This research investigates the underlying assumptions of democratic peace theory and uses the perception of threat of an interstate conflict as the overarching concept to investigate these assumptions. To do so, it builds explicitly on an instrumental assumption; if decision-makers perceive the threat of a conflict as very high, most of them will decide to attack the state that creates the threat. The rationale behind that choice is as follows. Although many of us have neither been nor will ever be in the position where we stand across our opponent and realize it is either them or us, most of us feel (before any moral sense kicks in) that in some kind of biological sense we would attack the other in self-defense if were necessary to survive (Pinker, 2011; Sherman & Cohen, 2006). Of course, it is possible to criticize that assumption. Indeed there might be inherently peaceful people who would rather be killed by others than kill them. However, democratic peace theory relies on that notion of survival: the assumption is that regime-type will affect the threat of a conflict. These theories expect that a threat cannot be reduced if at least one of the countries is a non-democracy, and essentially state the same: if the threat of a conflict is so high that war is likely, only the condition that the countries are both democratic will reduce the threat. In the words of the most outspoken proponents of the democratic peace:

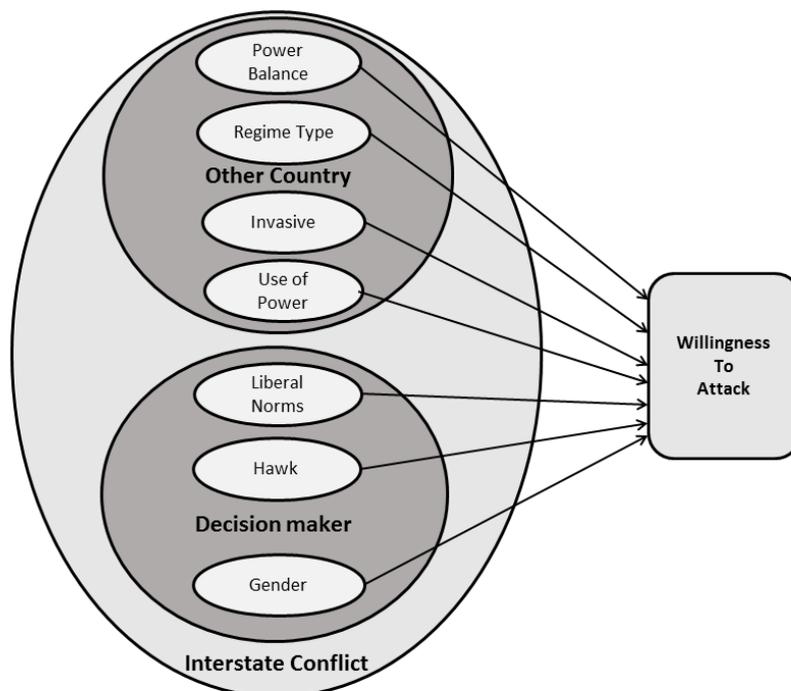
The anarchic nature of international politics implies that a clash between democratic and nondemocratic norms is dominated by the latter, rather than by the former [...] when a democratic state confronts a nondemocratic one, it may be forced to adapt to the norms of international conduct of the latter lest it be exploited or eliminated by the nondemocratic state that takes advantage of the inherent moderation of democracies. A conflict between non-democracies would be dominated by the norm of forceful conduct and by both parties' efforts to resolve the conflict through a decisive outcome and elimination of the opponent. Thus, conflicts between non-democracies are more likely to escalate into war than are conflicts between a democratic and non-democratic state. (Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625)

So, for this research, it is instrumentally and explicitly assumed that the perception of a relatively severe threat is more likely to motivate individuals to attack the opposing country during an interstate conflict than the perception of a relatively mild threat. The decision to attack is associated with the perception of a severe threat.

The second explicit assumption used for this research is that the threat of an interstate conflict comprises several factors that might influence the perception of the threat by decision-makers. In other words, the threat of conflict perceived by decision-makers consists of all possible factors involved that inform the decision-maker about the threat. The core starting point is a conflict poised on the brink of war. A conflict as it is perceived by an individual, the decision-maker. The threat perception of the conflict can be influenced by several factors that are either contextual (system-level factors that inform about the positions of states in the international system, state-level factors that inform about the internal makeup of the states, and the actual behavior of the opposing state) or based on the individual traits (personal beliefs and characteristics) of decision-makers. Thus, decision-makers

assess a threat, based on the initial threat of the conflict, namely a conflict on the brink of war, and the moderation of different factors, and then decide – based on that assessment – how to respond to the threat. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the theoretical framework. The sections below discuss each identified factor.

Figure 3.1 Threat of an interstate conflict as perceived by decision-maker



3.2 The interstate conflict

The theoretical framework, as shown in figure 3.1, starts with an interstate conflict on the brink of war. The threat of that conflict is, *ceteris paribus*, severe enough to expect that war is likely to occur. Consequently, the severity of that conflict must also be perceived by the other party as a real threat of which should be taken care. The conflict must generate a threat perception of such nature that, aside from any possible moderating factor, a decision to defend is highly likely: ‘if we do not act now to defend ourselves, we might suffer severely or even die’.

The communication between the sender and the receiver of the threat is not flawless. The exchanged information is crucial for both parties to estimate the severity of the threat, and subsequently make their decisions. The literature considers incomplete information often to be a problem in this process. On the side of the sender, incomplete or incorrect information can (deliberately or not) be distributed

in an attempt to convince the other to relinquish. On the side of receiver, the incomplete information (whether misperceived or misguided) can ignite a battle in defense (Fearon, 1995; Jervis, 1976). However, which specific factors guide these perceptions is not clear-cut. An outbreak of war can be linked to different necessary and sufficient conditions, and it is, therefore, hard to pinpoint exact causes of war. If studies of the causes of war show anything, it is that there is no such thing as a simple cause-and-effect relationship between factors (Fearon, 1995; Goertz & Levy, 2007; Mahoney, 2007; Sobek, 2009; Vasquez, 2000). Different factors can play a role in this informational process. The literature distinguishes between systemic factors (e.g. status- and security dilemmas (Fearon, 2011; Jervis, 1978; Lebow, 2010; Vasquez, 2000) or the anticipation of a rise of power from the other party leading to a decision to act before it is too late (Fearon, 1995, pp. 402-408; Mearsheimer, 2001; Sobek, 2009, pp. 151-171)), domestic factors (e.g. domestic politics that are shaped by procedural habits (Redd & Mintz, 2013) or domestic identities (Allison et al., 1971; Rousseau, 2006)), and individual factors (e.g. leaders that misperceive due to individual characteristics (Goertz & Levy, 2007, pp. 32-34) or to predispositions towards other countries (Herrmann, 2013)).

Similar to the democratic peace literature, the literature on the causes of war discusses several competing explanations without being able to pin down a specific explanatory factor. Both fields of study seemingly argue the inverted view of the other one. The democratic peace literature discusses the moderating factors that are believed to reduce the risk of war, whereas the literature on the causes of war discusses the moderating factors that can increase the risk of war. Therefore, to come to a clear understanding of the influence of several factors, a theoretical separation between the core reasons of the conflict, on the one hand, and the moderating factors, on the other hand, is in order.

An interstate conflict in this research is a conflict between states based on a disagreement over an issue that leads to a serious threat between these states. That conflict could revolve around all kinds of issues, but commonly the list boils down to material and/or ideational reasons. Material reasons often involve territory or resources, such as indivisible goods or disagreements over common resources (Fearon, 1995, pp. 385, 389-390, 391-393; Sobek, 2009, pp. 151-171). Ideational reasons are often related to the state's political ideology, culture and/or religion which is rejected (Geis et al., 2006; Ish-Shalom, 2006), or to a need for honor (e.g. after a history of humiliation between states) (Lebow, 2008). Whatever the inducement of the conflict, it is up to the parties involved to resolve it. If that does not work out, the conflict can remain (or reoccur) and eventually lead to war. The latter outcome is more likely if an enduring conflict between states leads parties to the conviction that negotiations will not lead to a preferable outcome and war might be the better and safer way out. Theoretically, the outbreak of war is thereby not per se understood as a result of a rational cost-benefit calculation where the expected benefits of war at least compensate the expected costs of war (Fearon, 1995; Huth, 2000), but rather as a process internal to the individual decision-makers that is

related to the threat of the conflict. In other words, more factors than costs and benefits alone determine the threat perception.

The theoretical framework aims to disentangle different factors that together might create the threat of an interstate conflict (as perceived by decision-makers). To do so, it is theoretically assumed that for decision-makers, an interstate conflict consists of two parts: 1) the core issue of conflict between the states, and 2) the behavior of the opposing state during the conflict. The separation of these aspects makes it theoretically possible to distinguish between the necessary and sufficient conditions to cause a war. An interstate dispute might be necessary to cause a war, but might not be a sufficient condition. A specific action forthcoming from the conflict might be a necessary condition for war, but not a sufficient one. However, when combined, these two factors might offer the sufficient and necessary conditions to cause a war. This theoretical distinction between the issue and the actions to conceptualize the conflict helps to examine the different aspects of a conflict that might influence threat perception, separately from any moderating factor.

Existing experimental studies do not consider these two aspects of an interstate conflict together. The other state is depicted as an aggressor that is either building a nuclear weapon or invading the other country (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013), thereby creating a conflict that is perceived as highly threatening. However, keeping the severity of the conflict constant (namely high) while not distinguishing between the issue and the behavior of the opponent will not help to understand the respective effects, nor the possible interactions with potential moderating factors. By making a distinction between the issue of a conflict and the actions the state takes in relation to that issue, this continuum can be created.

The issue of the conflict needs to be as 'morally neutral' as possible, which means: a conflict in which both of the states seem to have a legitimate claim. For instance, a territorial dispute in the classic sense – one state comes and takes control over a piece of territory – could create, based on the principles of just war, a 'bad state-good state' atmosphere.⁷ If the core of the conflict is basically about the opponent invading sovereign territory, it is quite hard to distinguish between the threat of the issue and the threat of the behavior of the opponent, let alone other moderating factors. When the other state is already perceived as a 'bad guy' it would seem to no longer matter whether that state is democratic or not. That said, the core issue needs to be sufficiently threatening. If the issue in itself is non-threatening, then possible moderating factors will not matter much. Therefore, the starting point must be an issue that is threatening enough to lead to war, but morally neutral enough to distinguish between the actual conflict and the behavior of the opponent. Accordingly, the selected core issue is a dispute over resources. Indivisible goods are often considered as a cause for war (Fearon, 1995, p. 382) if one of the parties feels that they need full control over the resources to be safe. It follows that an issue over an

⁷ Also the UN Charter, Chapter VII, subscribes to this notion. Art. 51 of this chapter states: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security."

indivisible good is sufficiently threatening in itself, but is not necessarily connected to the behavior of the other state.

3.3 Possible moderating factors

Contextual factors: invasion and use of power

The threat of the conflict thus starts with an issue over resources, an issue that has escalated into a serious conflict. The choice for this issue makes it theoretically possible to understand the influence of the behavior of the opponent in relation to the threat perception of decision-makers. If bargaining over the issue fails, decision-makers might decide to take actions to put pressure on the other state to force a resolution. The longer the bargaining takes, the more likely it is that the conflict remains and will reoccur in the future, which is considered to increase the probability of war (Vasquez, 2000, p. 367). The behavior of the opponent (or: the actions of the opponent) to settle the issue is supposed to moderate the severity of the threat of the conflict. The behavior of the opponent is a contextual factor that is used to define the conflict. The theoretical distinction between the issue of the conflict, on the one hand, and the behavior of the other state, on the other hand, allows studying the impact the behavior of an opposing state can have on an ongoing conflict, separate from the issue of that same conflict. Similarly, it is important to distinguish between the behavior of the opponent and other characteristics of the opponent that might also influence the perception of threat. In other words, the behavior of the opponent needs to be conceptualized in such a way that other possible influential factors (such as material factors that are related to the distribution of power (realist in nature), and/or ideational factors that are related to the specific characteristics of political regimes (liberal in nature), and to existing images of identities (constructivist in nature)) are not part of that concept. These factors need to be considered theoretically separate from the behavior of the state. This approach is taken below.

The behavior of the other state is, within this theoretical framework, divided into two behavioral actions: invasiveness (hereafter: invasion) and the use of power. The choice for invasion stems from the earlier experiments which do not control for the invasiveness of the opponent, but equate an invasion (or other aggressive behavior) as the severe conflict. To consider an invasion as an instrument of the opponent (and thus a separate element of the conflict) rather than an intrinsic part of the conflict will provide more insights into the threat perception of decision-makers, in particular in relation to other explanatory factors. The same logic underlies the choice for conceptualizing the use of power as a separate part of the conflict. Invasion is conceptualized as the willingness of states to invade properties (territory or resources) of the other state with the purpose of annexing it. The use of power is conceptualized through a continuum that ranges from the use of soft power (e.g. using diplomacy) to the use of hard power (aggressive: e.g. using the military) of the other state (Nye, 1990).

To summarize, the expectation is that if states find themselves in a severe interstate conflict about an indivisible good, the threat of this conflict will increase if

one of the actors shows invades territory of the other state and/or uses hard power. This is formulated within the following hypotheses:

H1: During a severe interstate conflict, decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state that invades their territory over the opposing state that does not invade their territory.

H2: During a severe interstate conflict, decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state that uses hard power over the opposing state that uses soft power.

Liberal Democracy

Within the democratic peace literature, as produced by the liberal and constructivist schools, regime-type is postulated as the main moderating factor. Liberal theories base themselves on the assumption that the international system is anarchic and states rely on self-help. Thus, logically, it is acknowledged that severe threats will need a defense. However, liberal theories also see a way out of this Hobbesian system where the logic of consequences dictates their actions. Liberal scholars argue that the regime-type liberal democracy can moderate the threat, as long as both⁸ states are liberal democracies. In other words, democratic peace theory expects that if two states are in a severe conflict which, according to the logic of expected consequences, is very likely to end in war, the probability of that outcome is strongly reduced if both states are liberal democracies. This expectation makes regime-type by far the most important moderating factor within the liberal theories to explain the democratic peace: liberal democracy is expected to breed a different sort of human beings.

The concept of regime-type is a spectrum with liberal democracy on the one side and autocracy on the other. The justification for this spectrum lies in the democratic peace literature, which understands democracy as a liberal democracy in the sense that Dahl (1971, 2000) used it: a regime with institutions that guarantee equality and freedom. Democratic peace theory makes a rather 'black and white' distinction between democracy and non-democracy. With democracy they denote a liberal society that enables its citizens to be free and autonomous, or in other words, a full-fledged liberal democracy in which, next to the democratic institutions, universal human rights and civic liberties are ensured (Dahl, 1971, 2000; Merkel, 2004, pp. 38-42; Møller & Skaaning, 2010, p. 263; Sartori, 1987). In contrast, what democratic peace theorists call non-democracy essentially comprises every regime that is not liberal democratic. For many years already, scholars of comparative politics have

⁸ There is also a modest strand of research into the so-called monadic version of the democratic peace, in which liberal-democracies are considered to be intrinsically more peaceful than other regime-types, in other words, it is then not about dyads of democracies, but democracies standing on their own being peaceful (see e.g. Benoit, 1996; Pickering, 2002; Rousseau, 2005). However, this assumption is very difficult to sustain in the light of the wars that have been fought by liberal-democracies in last decades. Therefore, the democratic peace factors are considered from the dyadic point of view, thereby following the mainstream literature on democratic peace.

highlighted substantial variation in non-democratic regimes (Collier & Levitsky, 1997; Levitsky & Way, 2010; Sartori, 1987). However, many IR studies do see autocracies, dictatorships, single-party regimes, theocracies and military juntas as fitting into just one category: autocracy. They thus use non-democracy as a container concept. Also, a competitive authoritarian regime that lies somewhere between autocracy and democracy (this is often called a hybrid regime because it combines democratic and autocratic features and is often quite stable in its prevailing powers (Bogaards, 2009; Morlino, 2009), seems a likely candidate to be conceptualized as a non-democracy. Also, new democracies are contained within the same concept of non-democracy, based on the assumption that liberal norms need time to be instilled among the members of a newly founded liberal democracy (Booth & Bayer Richard, 1996; Gibson & Duch, 1993). Russett briefly discusses the 'young democracy' in which norms could not have developed well enough to apply to international relations, which might lead to war (Russett, 1993a, p. 34). Thereby, Russett indicates there is more to regime-type than the dichotomy he sketches. If we follow democratic peace theory that focuses on the notion of liberal democracy as one pole and autocracy (being the complete opposite of liberal democracy) as the other pole, we can also see that spectrum as a continuum.

This dissertation follows the regime-type categorization of Levitsky and Way (2010, pp. 6-7) who categorize regime-types along the spectrum described above. To conceptualize an authoritarian regime, as well as a hybrid regime, they use Dahl's conceptualization of democracy. Following that line of thought, for the concept of liberal democracy this research uses a regime in which democratic institutions guarantee equality of the law and individual autonomy and freedom. The concept of democratic institutions is based on the work of Dahl (1971, 2000). The normative notion of democracy rests on the assumption that all citizens are equal in the sense that every citizen can have an equal say in decision-making. Citizens are ensured equality by three main formal institutional arrangements: competition between elites, participation of citizens, and civil rights (Dahl, 2000). Free, fair and frequent elections to choose government officials guarantee the competition between elites. Active and passive electoral rights guarantee the participation of citizens. The civil rights, which concretize these arrangements, include the freedom to assembly, the right to free speech and the right to alternative information to ensure that competition and participation can be combined. Levitsky and Way (2010) add another characteristic to this concept by arguing that the level playing field between incumbents and the opposition is often an implicit dimension within democratic theory but needs to be conceptualized as well. The opposition might have constitutional rights and thereby, on paper, all means available to oppose incumbents, but if the playing field is skewed, that might violate their potential actions in such a severe way that the actual practice of democracy is not guaranteed (2010, p. 6). Their concept of a hybrid regime depicts a state in which all constitutional arrangements necessary to ensure democratic practice are in place but in which the incumbents abuse these arrangements in such a way that either free elections are impossible and/or there is no de facto protection of civil liberties and/or

there is no reasonably level playing field for the opposition (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 7). Based on this notion, Levitsky and Way argue that within an authoritarian regime, there are “no viable channels to legally contest for the opposition” and “civil liberties are systematically repressed by the government” (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 7). Following Russett’s logic that norms will start to develop within countries that are in transition, or seem to be able to transit, to democracy, we might expect a certain level of liberal norms, although not as high as within fully fledged liberal democracies. The presence of those norms should have a lesser but moderating effect on the support for military action. That also applies to the concept of the hybrid regime, which is a regime-type that lies between the two poles – it is worthwhile to see whether democratic peace theory is right to consider all regimes that are not liberal democratic as autocracies, or whether there is variance among different categories of regime-type.

However, the liberal explanations are less straightforward than simply arguing that the regime-type liberal democracy causes the democratic peace, as is often seen in the literature. Two possible causal mechanisms are put forward in different strands of the liberal literature. On the one hand, there is the argument that democratic institutions are responsible for the democratic peace; on the other hand, the argument goes that the liberal political culture (where liberal norms prevail) is the most important moderating factor. Both explanations rest on a complex constellation of 1) assumptions about individuals, and 2) the expected behavior that emerges from those assumptions. The assumptions are not the same for these two explanations, which leads to the conceptual difficulty that regime-type cannot be used as such, but needs to be broken down to distinguish clearly between democratic institutions and liberal norms. Of course, it could be argued that institutions and culture are interdependent. However, the academic debate over what came first, institutions or culture, and the direction of influence is still going strong (see e.g. Almond & Verba, 1963; Chilton, 1987; Easton, 1990; Ronald Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Putnam, 1993) and does not point conclusively to an answer in favor of one of these features. For this research, however, this answer is of lesser importance. Within liberal explanations of the democratic peace, both moderating factors rest on different assumptions about human kind, and subsequently different causal mechanisms. Thus, conceptually, a distinction is made between both factors to achieve theoretical clarity. This research does not contend that institutions do not breed political culture, nor does it argue that a specific political culture has helped to create institutions. Rather, it examines if both of these factors are possibly moderating the perception of threat by individuals independently or conjointly.

Democratic institutions (structural or institutional explanation)

The institutional explanation postulates that if two states are in a severe conflict that stands on the brink of war, their respective decision-makers will not go to war if both states have democratic institutions. The logic behind this explanation is that democratic audiences have institutions to control their leaders, whereas audiences of other regime-types do not. Thus, it is expected that if both states possess democratic

institutions they can constrain their leaders and war will not occur. Moreover, mutual knowledge about those institutional restraints is assumed to 'buy more time', which subsequently is used to come to a peaceful conflict resolution. However, if at least one of these states does not have democratic institutions, war is expected to be more likely, because at least one of the states in the conflict cannot be constrained.

H3: If at least one of the states in an interstate conflict does not have democratic institutions, its decision-makers will be more likely to take military action against the other state, but if both of the states have democratic institutions, decision-makers will be less likely to take military action against the other state.

The conceptualization of the institutions utilizes Dahl's concept as described above (Dahl, 1971, 2000).

Liberal norms (the normative or cultural explanation)

To recap the logic of the normative explanation: when states involved in an interstate conflict both have liberal-democratic regimes, they will be able to work out a nonviolent solution because they share the same norms. In contrast, when at least one of the states does not have a liberal democratic regime, and the states, therefore, do not share liberal norms, war will be a more likely outcome. Thus, if states do not share a political culture of liberal norms, decision-makers will be more likely to support military action against the other state than when states do share such a political culture. As detailed above, the normative explanation rests on three assumptions about individuals within liberal democracies. The first is that these individuals are socialized with liberal norms. The second is that during an interstate conflict these liberal-norm-imbued individuals will be less war-prone if the other state has a liberal political culture. Subsequently, the third assumption is that if the other state does not have a liberal democratic political culture, these individuals will be more war-prone. Conversely, these assumptions dictate assumptions about individuals that are raised within another type of regime, often called non-democracies. The first assumption is that these individuals do not have internalized liberal norms. The second assumption is that these non-liberal-norm-imbued individuals will be war-prone in a severe interstate conflict. These assumptions lead to the following hypotheses:

H4: Decision-makers, born and raised in a consolidated liberal democracy, have internalized liberal norms in contrast to decision-makers who are not born and raised in a liberal democracy.

H5: A higher level of liberal norms will make it less likely for decision-makers to take military action against a state with a liberal political culture; however, a lower level of liberal norms will make it more likely for decision-makers to take military action against any opposing state, regardless of their political culture.

As explained above, most previous studies operationalize liberal norms based on the expectations of what liberal norms in a society can accomplish, and not on a theoretically established concept based on the liberal theory that was underlying these expectations (see e.g. Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1993; Dixon & Senese, 2002; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Owen, 1994; Weart, 1998). In this dissertation, political and societal norms are conceptually understood as an informal institution that socializes individuals to behave appropriately within a particular situation (March & Olsen, 1989, pp. 23, 160-162). This socialization process leads to habitualized behavior, a routine, which helps individuals to behave according to knowledge and beliefs which they are not always consciously aware of (Scott, 2001, pp. 67, 80). The concept of liberal norms in this dissertation relies on the liberal theory of Immanuel Kant. As discussed in chapter 2, Kant's deontological expectations of the free and autonomous individual have been elevated to empirical 'truths' by proponents of the liberal norms explanation who have argued that individuals socialized in a liberal society will behave as Kant theorized. To empirically test for the ideal type, the concept of liberal norms for this research is following the Kantian notion of liberal norms. The following chapter discusses the used concept of liberal norms extensively discussed; a short description suffices here.

Kant's premises for the perpetual peace he envisaged are built on the rational individual. Kant assumes that individuals can only be rational if they are free from oppression by others. That freedom could be realized, in his vision, by the bottom-up creation of republican institutions by all individuals within a society. When that freedom is secured, and individuals could accordingly be rational, a socialization process would initiate and create rationality based on reasonability among the members of the society. In other words: the process would create liberal norms. These liberal norms would consist of a feeling of freedom from the state, a feeling of autonomy over actions in life, trust of others, tolerance towards others to act as free as they like, and the willingness to reciprocate all these norms towards others.

Liberal norms are constituted by different and dialectical dimensions that are seemingly entangled, and all expected to exist within the overarching concept of liberal norms. An individual, who is socialized with liberal norms, is rational, feels free from and by the state and government, feels the autonomy to decide over life, tolerates and trusts others, and reciprocates the rights of others to live by these norms as well. Feeling free from the government also enhances the ability to make autonomous decisions in life, a necessity to reach reasonability: if one feels free to decide about anything in their lives, one can choose to consider others as well. Deciding autonomously over life can generate decisions that are built on trust, tolerance and reciprocity. When one trusts, one dares to reciprocate trust. When one

experiences tolerance and freedom from others who choose autonomously to trust and tolerate, the wish to reciprocate can flourish. The presence of tolerance alone is not sufficient to assume that liberal norms exist. Instead, this tolerance needs to be reciprocated by others who trust that others will also reciprocate tolerance. Also, the existence of reciprocity alone is not enough, because the expectation of reciprocity should be associated with specific norms.

Therefore, liberal norms in this dissertation are based on five dimensions: freedom, autonomy, tolerance, interpersonal trust, and reciprocity, which are all required to be present for liberal norms to be considered to exist. Liberal norms need to be present at the individual level, ideally for every person within a liberal society, but at least for the decisive bulk of the society. Therefore, to capture the essence of liberal norms within a society, individuals need to be examined on the existence of these norms within themselves, but consequently also how the norms of their society are reflected onto them. Thus, all five dimensions need to be present to approximate the existence of liberal norms as closely as possible.

System-level factors

The system-level factors that are hypothesized by most realist scholars to influence the perception of threat by decision-makers are conceptualized as information about the capacities of the states involved in the interstate conflict. When an individual perceives the threat of an interstate conflict, information about the other state can be an important moderating factor for the perception of threat. This information is not limited to the presence or absence of liberal democratic features, such as institutions and norms, but it can just as well be the information about the role that the involved states play within the international system. Knowing the power and identity of the other state can, therefore, be important for threat perception and subsequently the support for war.

According to realist theories, the international system is anarchic and states rely on self-help to survive. If a balance of power exists between states, it is possible for the system to be conflict-free. However, a change in the status quo, such as increases or decreases of the military and/or economic powers of states can disrupt the balance of power between states. Based on the realist strand of literature, a balance of power exists between two states if they do not have any relative military or economic advantage over each other. A balance of power, therefore, means a status quo based on relative equal powers (whether or not forthcoming from alliances). That leads to the following hypothesis:

H6: During a severe interstate conflict without a balance of power between states, decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state than during a severe interstate conflict with a balance of power between states.

Conceptually, this hypothesis implies that if two states are similar in military power, economic power, and have approximately the same size of territory and population,

there is a balance of power between them. In that case, a conflict over a resource is not expected to lead to war as long as these factors do not divert from the status quo. The same applies to the expectations that follow from the system-level argument posed by Gartzke, which posits that if states are economically interdependent they will not go to war with each other. A war would damage economic agreements, and trade would stop, which would affect the economy of both states. Individuals, whose jobs and ability to take care of their families rest on a healthy economy, would therefore not support a war that would jeopardize their incomes. Thus, if two states are in a severe conflict that would logically lead to a high probability of war, this war will be less likely if there are economic trade agreements. Economic ties are conceptualized as two states being tightly economically connected, for instance, by having trade agreements that aim at long-term economic relationships. These agreements would not include ad hoc contracts or single trade deals, but rather entail a commitment from all parties involved to cooperate economically for an extended period of time. Free trade agreements, which eliminate tariffs and stimulate economic cooperation, are a good example.

Psychological factors

With Elman and other political psychologists (Elman, 2000; Farnham, 2003; Hermann & Hagan, 1998; Hermann & Hermann, 1989; Hermann & Kegley, 1995; Holsti, 1962, 1970; Holsti & Rosenau, 1988; Horowitz, McDermott, & Stam, 2005; Johnson et al., 2006; Keller, 2005; Keller & Yang, 2008; McDermott, 2004, 2011; McDermott & Cowden, 2001; McIntyre et al., 2007; Owen, 1994), I argue that there is an inherent need to study the individual characteristics of decision-makers in relation to the decision to go to war or not. As argued in chapter 2, individuals matter when it comes to the perception of threat of an interstate conflict. When individuals have to make a decision that will determine the outcome of an interstate conflict, all kind of factors might influence their decision, including factors that are more personal than contextual.

When following the logic of the democratic peace explanations, the socialization process within liberal democracies would overtake all other socialization processes, as well as all personal factors that might be of influence on decision-making. In other words, democratic peace theorists posit that the issue of whether or not an individual has specific beliefs about conflict resolution would be wiped out by the 'moral learning process' that is expected to occur within liberal democracies simply because people are born and raised within a liberal democracy. Moreover, these theorists posit that such a process would not occur within different regime-types. Therefore, other possible factors such as personal belief systems and personal characteristics of individuals will have to be considered when studying the decision-making process about going to war or not. The empirical question is whether the influence of regime-type is indeed as strong as expected such that most individuals and political leaders within liberal democracies have liberal norms imbued and other possible factors have no effect whatsoever on their conflict resolution decision-

making process. Moreover, of course, the contrasting question is whether such a mechanism is indeed absent among decision-makers within other regime-types.

Researchers of decision-making processes show that individual characteristics, such as belief systems about conflict resolution, leadership styles, gender and emotions can matter when it comes to decision-making, including in liberal democracies (see e.g. the work of Bakker, 2017; Druckman & McDermott, 2008; Hermann, 1980; Hermann, 2005; Hermann & Hermann, 1989; Hermann & Kegley, 1995; Hermann et al., 2001; Hetherington & Suhay, 2011; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998; Kegley & Hermann, 1995; McDermott, Cowden, & Koopman, 2002; Mintz, 2004, 2007; Post, 2004).

There are many individual-centric factors that could be considered. This study builds on earlier work of political and social psychologists that shows that belief systems about the nature of conflict resolution have an influence on the perception of threat in international relations and therefore on decision-making.

Hawkish or Dovish belief system

Just like the belief in the democratic peace can guide foreign policy decisions of Western decision-makers (Avtalyon-Bakker, 2013; Burgos, 2008; Ish-Shalom, 2006, 2015), a hawkish or dovish belief system can affect the decision to fight or not with another country (Bakker, 2017). There has been little research into the hawk-dove belief system in relation to democratic peace theory. Braumoeller (1997) follows the logic of the moral learning process of liberal norms and tests whether or not this process could be detected in former Soviet countries during the end of the 1990s. He finds that liberal norms indeed started to develop by the end of the century in these countries. However, the norms were then not (yet) of sufficient influence to moderate hawkish behavior. It might be that, in line with the expectations posited by the normative explanation, liberal norms need some time to develop and be internalized. However, this expectation also dictates that the moment the norms are consolidated these should overrule other possible explanatory factors at the micro-level. In a previous study (Bakker, 2017), I measured the level of hawkishness and tested the hypothesis whether or not hawkish beliefs affect individuals within democracies and autocracies in their support for war. The results show that for individuals of both regime-types hawkishness is an important explanatory factor to explain the willingness to go to war. No matter the regime-type individuals are socialized in; the more hawkish they are, the more likely they are willing to go to war. Accordingly, there is good cause to consider hawkishness within this research design.

The term *hawk* was introduced by Smith and Price (1973), who studied the logic of animal conflict: a hawk would always decide to injure the other party to make sure that there would not be retaliation. This metaphor held. It became the one pole on the so-called hawk-dove continuum. On this continuum the hawk is considered to be the aggressive, offensive party, and the dove is considered the one that seeks cooperation and peaceful reconciliation of conflicts (Bar-Tal, Raviv, & Freund, 1994; Braumoeller, 1997; D'Agostino, 1995; Kahneman & Renshon, 2007, 2009; Klugman, 1985; I. Maoz, 2003). Kahneman and Renshon (2007, 2009) understand a hawkish

belief system as a cognitive bias that affects the way individuals interpret information and make decisions. Being hawkish means that hawkish individuals rely on a belief system that hinges towards 'suspicion, hostility and aggression in the conduct of conflict' (Kahneman & Renshon, 2009, p. 79). Hawks see relationships as competitive, feeling the need to win relative to others, and have a fierce belief in controlling by force and action (Klugman, 1985, pp. 579-580). Being dovish means that individuals hinge towards over-cooperation, or unreciprocated cooperation with an opponent (Colaresi, 2004). Doves consider relationships as cooperative and stress the importance of seeing different sides to conflicts. Doves tend to refuse to categorize individuals into groups, and therefore possible opponents, but feel that all individuals are part of a universal people. This view leads to a feeling of responsibility that is larger than the self or the direct surroundings of the self, namely a responsibility towards the whole world (Klugman, 1985, pp. 581-582). Earlier research of hawkish positions is often related to the position a participant could take in an actual conflict, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (I. Maoz, 2003); however, the continuum is often used as a way to categorize the foreign policy behavior outcomes of leaders or states (Colaresi, 2004) or as a conventional framework within the media about political leaders.

Several studies argue that it is unlikely that hawkish and dovish belief systems can alter by events. A more hawkish individual is considered likely to use force to resolve conflicts, whereas a more dovish individual is considered to be less likely to use force in a similar case, no matter the context (D'Agostino, 1995; Kahneman & Renshon, 2007; Klugman, 1985; Liebes, 1992; I. Maoz, 2003; Rathbun, Kertzer, Reifler, Goren, & Scotto, 2016; Schultz, 2005). Testing whether or not hawkishness or dovishness, respectively, is of influence on the willingness to take military action might seem close to being tautological, or at least too plausible. However, theories of international relations are structure-specific and thereby assume that agents are affected by structures, such as regime-type as posited in democratic peace theory. Following the logic of democratic peace theory, it would not matter whether decision-makers are hawkish or dovish, their behavior would not be guided by those beliefs. Therefore, the following hypothesis needs to be tested and understood in the whole theoretical framework of all hypotheses:

H7: During a severe interstate conflict, more hawkish decision-makers are more likely to take military action than more dovish decision-makers.

Gender

Whoever looks around on social media is likely to run into the argument that the world would be peaceful if women ran it. It seems like conventional wisdom that women are more peace-loving than men, but that idea is not per se supported by empirical evidence. When we look at the few women who have become political leaders, their records do not seem to support this notion. For example, Israeli prime minister Golda Meir was involved in seven interstate conflicts and British prime minister Margaret Thatcher in one interstate conflict. Since there have not been

enough female leaders to conclusively study their behavior during conflicts on the brink of war (Caprioli & Boyer, 2001), it is hard to verify the gender claim. Several studies have, however, shown that gender does matter: women are more peaceful than men (Bendyna, Finucane, Kirby, O'Donnell, & Wilcox, 1996; McDermott & Cowden, 2001; Shapiro & Mahajan, 1986). Moreover, studies have shown a relationship between gender equality and the absence of interstate conflict (Caprioli, 2000), as well as between gender inequality and intrastate conflict (Caprioli, 2005). On the other hand, some evidence suggests that within particular conflicts, women do not differ from men in their support for war (Tessler & Robbins, 2007; Tessler & Warriner, 1997). However, these studies are about mass support for violence in the Middle East. This insight connects to the notion that the threat of a conflict is created by the information decision-makers have about a conflict and all factors involved. Therefore, this research controls for gender as a possible moderating factor with the following hypothesis:

H8: During a severe interstate conflict, male decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state over female decision-makers.

3.4 Concept of military action

Within the democratic peace literature, the dependent variable is war. The concept of war is often defined differently. For instance, the Oxford Dictionary⁹ defines it as “hostile contention by means of armed forces, carried on between nations, states, or rulers, or between parties in the same nation or state; the employment of armed forces against a foreign power, or against an opposing party in the state”. This definition describes war as an observational concept. From a different angle, Von Clausewitz argues that “war is only a part of political intercourse, therefore by no means an independent thing in itself”. (Clausewitz, 1832/2014, p. 396). Here, war is an ideational concept. In this latter conceptualization, war is an outcome of a deliberate policy choice made in an attempt to get the other party to act in a particular way.

Most democratic peace studies have conceptualized and operationalized war based on the Correlates of War project¹⁰ (COW), which defines war as ‘sustained combat involving regular armed forces between two or more independent states and a minimum of 1.000 fatalities in total’. That concept is based on observational principles, which brings it closer to an operationalization than a conceptualization. Moreover, the parameters are defined quite sharply and create a polarity between war and peace based on an operationalization that is rooted in observation. This concept does not do justice to interstate conflicts that have been quite destructive and deadly but fall short of these parameters (Gochman & Maoz, 1984; Jones, Bremer, & Singer,

⁹ <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/225589?rskey=nfENSy&result=1#eid>

¹⁰ <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/>

1996; Z. Maoz, 1993; Z. Maoz & Abdolali, 1989; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993). In more recent studies of democratic peace a broader concept of war has therefore been used: the military interstate dispute (MID) (see for the birth of this: Gochman & Maoz, 1984). “Militarized interstate disputes are united historical cases of conflict in which the threat, display or use of military force short of war by one member state is explicitly directed towards the government, official representatives, official forces, property, or territory of another state. Disputes are composed of incidents that range in intensity from threats to use force to actual combat short of war” (Jones et al., 1996). This conceptualization captures the observational aspect of violent clashes between parties and also includes the more ideational aspect by theoretically linking a scale of threat to the concept.

There is, however, an apparent problem with testing a possible explanation for the democratic peace: war or MID and peace are *ex-post* assessments and do not inform us in any way about how these outcomes are created. In other words, to empirically test whether regime-type (or any other factor) influences the behavior of decision-makers in such a way that a war is prevented or not, we have to study that mechanism before a war has even started. When, for instance, a preventive strike starts, it is then unclear what will be the result of that decision, just like the scope of the conflict is not yet known. Explanations of the democratic peace rely on an *ex-ante* predicted mechanism: these theories argue that wars are avoided because individuals within liberal democracies respond differently than within other regimes to the threats of opposing countries. To test whether that mechanism indeed functions as such during a conflict, the focus of research must be at the moment before a war: what influences decision-makers to be willing to use military force? This question closely connects with the conceptualization of war by Von Clausewitz, since it considers the step towards the use of force, and possibly the outbreak of war, as a policy option, as a means to a political end.

The MID concept suits this research. It gets at the willingness to use military action that has the potential to escalate into a full-blown war as conceptualized by the COW. However, at the same time, it is not limited to that aspect and leaves room for the use of military force, which is by definition almost always deadly for at least a few, if not many, people involved, on a spectrum of different intensities of war. In this research, the willingness to use military action is considered as the first step towards war, thereby assuming that decision-makers are well aware of the likelihood that their action can lead to a full-blown war.

The choice for using the spectrum of the MID as a concept of war, in particular when understood as means to a political end, opens up the possibility that decision-makers can opt for another policy decision than one that leads most likely to war. When two states are in a severe interstate conflict, the decision of how to deal with the conflict is not likely to be a binary choice between fight or negotiate. If the choice for a military action is considered to be the most likely road to war, and the choice for an attempt to negotiate is considered the most likely way to peace, then it is plausible that decision-makers might opt for a policy that lies in between these options. Stated differently: the strict dichotomy of war and peace as often used by democratic peace

theory is conceptually insufficient. When we consider an interstate conflict on the brink of war, there are more options to resolve the conflict than to negotiate or to attack. The idea of conflict resolution is to bring conflicting parties together to forge a solution with which both can and will agree. If a resolution to the conflict cannot be reached by negotiating, there are many possible actions a state can take to try to deter or compel the other party into the desired behavior. Practically speaking, decision-makers might have all kinds of reasonable arguments for wanting to try an option less threatening than an attack but at the same time more threatening than negotiations. Whether or not these options indeed lead to the desired outcome is the question. In theory, the decision to continue negotiations might still lead in the end to a full-blown war, but logically it is less likely.

Besides the conceptualization of military action as a proxy of the willingness to go to war, it is also wise to conceptualize a spectrum between negotiate on the 'peace pole' and attack on the 'war pole', leaving room for other policy options that fall in between these two endpoints. To put it in Von Clausewitz's terminology, there are different means to the end that decision-makers seek. There needs to be a rationale for assigning these policy options a place on this spectrum, and that rationale can be based on the threatening nature of the option, in relation to the two poles and the other options lying between them. More concretely, along with this spectrum from most threatening to least threatening option, there could be several options in decreasing nature of threat (or decreasing likelihood to lead to war). The MID definition is helpful when we consider the increasingly threatening nature of the policy options that lie on the spectrum between the absence of force (to negotiate) – which is the most likely of all options to lead to peace – and the use of full military force – which is the option most likely to lead to full-blown war. This conceptualization also leaves room for other policy options that lie on this spectrum. The freezing of economic and diplomatic relations is more threatening than to negotiate but less threatening than to block a port or to attack the other state. In this way, it is possible to understand foreign policy options as a result of threat in a more refined sense.

3.5 Methodology

Research strategy

This research aims to ascertain which factors influence decision-makers to attack another country during an interstate conflict. The level of analysis is the individual level of decision-makers. The assumption is that several system level, state level, and individual level factors can influence the threat perception of decision-makers, which can subsequently lead to the decision to go to war. The focus of this study is on the detection of a mechanism that underlies the choice of decision-makers to attack another country when on the brink of war. The goal is to achieve theoretical clarification that will benefit democratic peace theory in particular and theories of conflict resolution in general. When testing theories with the purpose to develop theories, it is prudent to have maximal control over the independent variables. With

the use of observational (real-world) data, it is impossible to control for independent variables systematically and randomly.

The core analytical instrument is, therefore, a decision-making experiment. This dissertation, accordingly, follows earlier experimental studies on the micro-level mechanisms of the democratic peace (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013). Moreover, an experimental approach is well suited to study the micro-level and also offers the best and transparent control over independent variables in such a way that they can be considered within the analytical design (Druckman & Kam, 2011, p. 44). Of course, experiments alone cannot provide all the evidence. The power of an experiment is to detect a mechanism, after which other methodology can be used to study the same mechanism. A comparison of the experimental results with results collected using observational data, for instance, can help to arrive at a better understanding of cause and effect (Druckman et al. 2011: 5).

Therefore, this dissertation uses the increasingly advised 'mixed-method' design to connect the experimental data with 'real-world' data (Lieberman, 2005; Munck & Snyder, 2007; Tarrow, 1995, 2004). The core analytical instrument is an experiment, which is supported, on the one hand, by a study of large-N observational data to see whether the samples of respondents used within the experiments show similarity with representative samples from their countries, based on well-established datasets. This observational data is analyzed with the commonly used statistical methodology. On the other hand, a case study is used to illustrate the found mechanism in a real-world interstate conflict with process tracing methodology. Process tracing is a helpful approach to investigate a within-case mechanism (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 145). The aim of this methodology is not to find patterns that indicate a likelihood of independent variables affecting the dependent variable. Rather, it opens the black box of the mechanism and checks whether all the steps of the process are there. In other words, step-by-step it shows how one variable can relate to the other (Collier, 2011, p. 824; George & Bennett, 2005). Therefore, this methodology lends itself well to mixed methods, in which a causal mechanism established by large-N and experimental methods can be illustrated, or not (Lieberman, 2005). The power of the combination of these different methodologies lies in the individual strengths of each method. The value of the experimental methodology is that it is particularly suited to detect a very 'clean' causal mechanism. The large-N study allows for a comparison between the student samples and representative samples of their populations, respectively. Moreover, the value of the process tracing method is that the within-case study can show how experimental results can 'come to life', and offer a narrative of why one factor influences the other.

Case selection

The difference that democratic peace theory assumes regarding the socialization of individuals by their regime-type dictates the case selection. So, by studying individuals who are supposedly influenced by a specific regime-type, it is important to distinguish between individuals who are socialized within different regime-types.

This dissertation re-conceptualizes non-democracy into different regime-types, as discussed above. For this study, it selects two types: a hybrid regime and a full-fledged autocracy with a single party. Consequently, this study focuses on samples of decision-makers from three different regime-types: liberal democracy, hybrid regime, and an autocracy.

The samples of decision-makers come from three different regime-types: the United States of America (hereafter US) as a full-fledged liberal democracy, the Russian Federation (hereafter Russia) as a hybrid regime, and the People's Republic of China (hereafter China) as a full-fledged autocracy. The selection of these countries is based on two parameters. First of all, the aim is to study individuals who are socialized within a particular regime-type. The US is one of the oldest full-fledged, bottom-up liberal democracies, and it furthermore occupies a central position in most democratic peace studies. China, with its one-party system and low adherence to human rights, has been a clear example of an autocratic regime for many years. Since Russia blossomed out of the former Soviet Union, it has been traveling from the autocratic regime it once was toward democracy and back and forth, thereby making it an example of a hybrid regime. That indication of the regime-type for these countries is supported by the results of Freedom House 2014¹¹ and Polity IV 2014.¹²

Secondly, since the US, Russia, and China are all powerful players on the world stage, it can be expected that individuals coming from these states subconsciously have their unique perceptions about the role of their own country in the world. All three countries have massive populations, large territories and standing armies that rely on impressive defense budgets. All three countries are involved in conflict zones, and each has a seat on the Security Council of the United Nations. It can thus be expected that in samples from the US, Russia, and China it will be less likely that individuals will be affected by perceptions of the power of the world of their home-country, its size, or its population. To give an example: Sweden would be, theoretically, a good example of a liberal democracy, but individuals from Sweden might have a different perception of their country's world power than individuals from China. Although the experiments are built on scenarios about hypothetical conflicts, the chance that participants will be affected by different perceptions about the place of their home country in the world is minimized by this case selection.

Samples of respondents

Three student samples, one from each of the three countries, are used as a proxy for decision-makers, just as in most earlier experimental studies on the democratic peace (Bakker, 2017; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005). Moreover, the use of student samples offers the best and most convenient opportunity at this point to come to produce comparable results. It would be impossible to reach large enough samples of decision-makers in all three countries, as decision-makers are too busy making real-world decisions. Also, conducting an experiment about the political system can be a sensitive topic in China. Using

¹¹ Freedom House (2014); US: free (democracy), Russia: not free (hybrid), China: not free (Autocracy).

¹² Polity IV (2014); US: 10 (democracy), Russia: 4 (anocracy), China: -7 (autocracy).

students is one of the more accessible options. Another aspect of the use of students samples is the notion that, in particular within Russia and China, students can be considered to be the new elite. Political elites are generally university-educated. The student sample used in Russia, for example, comprises students from the Higher School of Economics, which has been shown to produce the new political elite of Russia (Mickiewicz, 2014).

Although the use of convenience samples is often the reason for debate among political scientists, theoretically this approach does make sense. Concerns are often related to the external validity of these samples. However, external validity does not only from a representative sample of a population, particularly not when a study aims at theoretical clarification. When experiments are used to provide theoretical clarity, their value lies in teaching us about the theory much more than the replication of real life (Druckman & Kam, 2011, p. 44). Druckman and Kam effectively show that the use of students does not 'intrinsically pose a problem for a study's external validity' (2011, p. 41) unless the 'size of an experimental treatment effect depends on a characteristic on which the convenience sample has virtually no variance' (2011, p. 41). These authors, who support their argument with convincing results (Druckman & Kam, 2011, pp. 45-52), contend that when an experiment aims at learning about a theory and studying its mechanisms, and thereby adds to an existing research agenda, as most experiments are, the generalizability of the participants should be weighed against the generalizability of many other factors involved, such as setting, timing, context, conceptual operationalizations (Druckman & Kam, 2011, pp. 44, 53). A few studies also show that when an experiment is replicated on a non-student sample (Mintz & Geva, 1993), or on political leaders (Yarhi-Milo, Kertzer, & Renshon, 2016), the results are similar.

This study uses student populations for theoretical and practical reasons and has gone to great lengths to ensure internal validity. The primary aim of this study is to produce theoretical clarification; it empirically tests implicit and untested assumptions that are used as part of the explanatory power of democratic peace theory. This theory assumes that there is a particular effect of growing up in a liberal democratic society on all, or at least the bulk of, its citizens that is completely lacking within other regime-types. Therefore, a homogeneous sample could suffice for such a test (Morton & Williams, 2010, pp. 331-347) because the effect is assumed to be present among all citizens. Taking into account that in non-democratic settings it would be extremely difficult to achieve representative samples, or even other homogeneous samples aside from student populations, the *first test* of a theoretical argument among convenience samples is therefore warranted for this study.

The experiment is designed carefully. It relies, as mentioned above, on examples of earlier work (Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Mintz & Geva, 1993). Moreover, it is tested¹³ thoroughly to make sure that the treatments are conceived as anticipated. Lastly, as elaborated in chapter 5, all efforts are made to create an experimental reality for the participants.

¹³ Several tests were conducted on Dutch student samples

Observational Large-N data

The measure of liberal norms is conducted on representative samples of the populations of the US, Russia, and China, through the use of established and observational large-N data of the World Values Survey. The World Values Survey is a cooperative global network of social scientists who work together to measure changing values and beliefs of individuals. The data collection started in 1981 and since then has regularly measured (in a total now of six waves) the values and beliefs of about 400.000 respondents in about 100 countries all over the world. The values and beliefs are measured among nationally representative samples through one common questionnaire, which lends itself to comparative purposes. Of course, criticism can be raised about the traveling of concepts and the influence of language and culture on the results. However, the World Values Survey is by far the most comprehensive data set available when it comes to individual level values, between countries as well as over time. The fact that the same measure of liberal norms is used on representative samples of the US, Russia, and China allows for comparison with the student samples used in the experiments.

Case study

Besides the results of the experiments and the results of the large-N observational data, a real-world case study is used to triangulate the results. That case study is the decision-making process of the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher during the escalation of the Falklands conflict between the UK and Argentina. The decision-making process led to the 1982 Falklands War between Argentina and Great Britain. This case is well suited to this research project for several reasons. Firstly, it entails an interstate conflict between a liberal democracy and an autocracy over a territory that is disputed by both, which approximates the conceptual interstate conflict. Secondly, based on democratic peace theory, it would make perfect sense that a conflict between a liberal democracy (UK) and an autocracy (Argentina) would lead to war. That makes it a perfect example to study the results generated by the experiments within a real-world case. Thirdly, other factors conceptualized above are also present, such as invasiveness, use of power, and Margaret Thatcher as an (often considered) hawkish leader. Lastly, the Falklands War is well documented by respected scholars and journalists with access to classified materials (Freedman, 2004; Hastings & Jenkins, 1987). Most of these classified materials were moreover released in 2012 and published through the library of the Margaret Thatcher Foundation (1991-2016). Also the work, life and personality of the main decision-maker of this conflict, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, is not only well researched by scholars, but also documented thoroughly by journalists and Thatcher herself (Aitken, 2013; Crichlow, 2006; Dyson, 2008; Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 1991-2016; Moore, 2013; Steinberg, 2008; Thatcher, 1995).

3.6 Conclusion

Democratic peace theorists believe that individuals, whether they belong to the masses or the elite, are socialized within the superstructure of their political system's regime-type. However, the emphasis within this literature lies on one particular regime-type, namely liberal democracy. A lot of explicit and implicit assumptions are made about the effect liberal democracy has and how this effect overshadows other potentially relevant factors that might influence decision-making regarding the use of force. Although a lot is assumed about decision-makers in the democratic peace literature (especially as a result of all non-liberal democracies being lumped together into one category), these assumptions are hardly ever tested empirically (or compared with the evidence from liberal democracies). This chapter brought the literature review of the preceding chapter together into a coherent theoretical framework that can be tested. It, furthermore, formulated the concepts used within this research and discussed the research strategy and the data used.

The theoretical framework brings together the different components of democratic peace theory, psychological insights of decision-making studies and the possible influence of system-level factors as posited by the realist paradigm of international relations. This framework connects these different explanations under the concept of the threat of a conflict and argues that an interstate conflict on the brink of war inherently presents a threat. The threat can be moderated by several factors which can be contextual (information about the other state and its behavior) and personal (belief systems and characteristics) to the decision-makers. The dissertation proceeds by performing several empirical tests of the formulated hypotheses in this chapter. In the next chapter, a clear conceptualization of liberal norms is presented, more thoroughly than has been done thus far within democratic peace theory. Chapter 4 then proceeds to a discussion of the operationalization of this concept, after which the level of liberal norms is measured among representative samples of the US, Russia, and China, as well as among student samples of these three world powers.

Chapter 4 Liberal Norms in the US, Russia & China

4.1 Liberal norms for democratic peace studies

The so-called normative explanation claims that liberal norms, imbued within individuals living in liberal democracies, are responsible for the democratic peace (Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1994; Dixon & Senese, 2002, p. 549; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Jakobsen et al., 2016; Johns & Davies, 2012; Kahl, 1998; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Owen, 1994; Rawls, 1999; Ray, 1995; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Rousseau, 2005, pp. 27-28; Rummel, 1983; Tomz & Weeks, 2013; Van Belle, 1997; Weart, 1998, pp. 75-93). These studies argue that liberal norms are the crucial factor that creates peace between liberal democracies but, as explained in chapter 2, their empirical results are not based on a clear conceptualization of what liberal norms entail, nor is the expected mechanism clearly theorized. Even more, these studies have not measured liberal norms to study their presence and hypothesized influence but only assumed these norms to be present and influencing.

This chapter aims to investigate this assumption and see to what extent liberal norms are present or absent among individuals of different regime-types. It tests hypothesis 4: *Decision-makers, born and raised in a consolidated liberal democracy, have internalized liberal norms in contrast to decision-makers who are not born and raised in a liberal democracy.* To test this hypothesis, liberal norms need to be conceptualized based on the theoretical arguments of these studies. Since, as discussed above, their theoretical justification rests on the liberal philosophy of Kant (see e.g. Maoz & Russett 1993, p. 625), this study conceptualizes liberal norms accordingly. This concept is used to operationalize liberal norms and subsequently measure the level of liberal norms among representative samples of the US, China, and Russia. Moreover, the level of liberal norms among the student samples of these three countries are also measured.

4.2 Conceptualization of liberal norms

Norms

A norm is, generally speaking, a standard of behavior within a particular group or society. Everybody within that society knows the norm and understands how to behave according to that norm. That shared knowledge offers a control within the society on the individual actors to comply with that norm. Said differently, a “norm concerning a specific action exists when the socially defined right to control the action is held not by the actor but by others” (Coleman, 1990, p. 243). The control of others does not have to be obviously present, after some time the norm can become internalized and actions of an actor will be less consciously which will make the actor himself able to control his actions according to the norm (Coleman, 1990, p. 243).

However, without the control of other members of the society, the norm would not have come into existence nor become internalized. That makes a norm the product of a social system and thus a concept that exists at macro-level. A norm can exist at macro-level, however, because it is constituted by individuals who act in a specific way under the influence of their society (Coleman, 1990, pp. 13, 241).

A norm is constituted when individuals within a group behave in a way that is in their right but affects other individuals within the same group (negatively), and when the effects of this behavior (also called externalities) “cannot be overcome by simple transactions that would put control in the hands of those experiencing the externalities” (Coleman, 1990, p. 251). Thus, a norm arises when individuals within a society have to work out an arrangement to overcome possible problems coming forth of the behavior of a sub-group of society. The norms inform individuals how to behave appropriately in a particular situation (March & Olsen, 1989, pp. 23, 160-162). Norms thereby differ not that much from legal norms (laws) with the difference that legal norms are formal institutions, whereas social norms are informal institutions. The informal institution furthermore socializes the individuals into habitualized behavior, a routine, which helps individuals to behave according to beliefs and values from which they are not always consciously aware (Scott, 2001, pp. 67, 80). In other words, a norm firstly dictates what should be believed, but after being exposed to such a norm for a longer period, it is expected to become a belief. Which notion resonates with the expectations of democratic peace theory about liberal norms. Therefore the expectation is that a social norm reflects the beliefs and values of the society. These beliefs and values also can also be formed by political institutions that were established with the intention to create these beliefs and values. Consequently, the presence of norms within a society must be observable in the behavior of individuals.

Liberalism

Although liberalism might be considered an ideology, it would be better to argue that liberalism is a family of related ideologies that share an emphasis on the freedom of the individual. Liberals assume individuals to be rational, self-interested, and competitive, and therefore capable of determining what is in their own best interest and live accordingly as long as they do not interfere with the freedom of other individuals. Liberals believe that all individuals should be free, and equal opportunities to live their lives as they please.

A liberal society is a society of free, rational and self-serving individuals whom all have the right to be completely free as long as they do not harm others. The genesis of these societies is explained with social contract theory. Social contract theory is based on the premise that individuals who are freely pursuing their interests will unavoidably get into conflicts with others. To overcome potentially violent conflicts, a mutual agreement between individuals is made to establish a common authority that enforces common rules to protect all in the society. Those common rules should guarantee the liberties of all individuals equally and protect the basic rights of life, liberty, and property. Within liberal theory, we can make a rough

distinction between two strands of liberalism, one that emphasizes the absolute value of liberal principles and the other that emphasizes the relative value of liberal principles.

The latter strand argues that liberal principles should be understood from a utilitarian perspective and make these principles contingent on the ends one wants to achieve. The end is individual freedom, and sometimes the means to that end might be less according to liberal principles. This strand of work is rooted in the work of J.S. Mill, and Adam Smith. Mill argues that with the arrival of representative democracy the state is no longer the enemy of individual freedom, but the majority is. He, therefore, argues in favor of “one very simple principle” (Mill, 1859/2001, p. 13), the harm principle. This principle entails that individuals should be completely free to behave as they like unless they harm others. The single role of the government is, therefore, to safeguard that no harm will be done, but leaves individuals further free, laissez-faire, which recalls the liberal economic ideas of Smith (A. Smith, 1776/2005). Formal institutions play in this strand a much smaller role, and also the moral component is of lesser importance.

The other strand, deontological liberalism, on which most democratic peace theorists rely, argues that liberal principles are independent of context and consequences, and are unnegotiable: even when the cause might be just, the measures need to be just as well. This deontological vision on liberalism is rooted in the ideas of the Enlightenment, in particular in the work of Immanuel Kant, and contemporary philosopher John Rawls. Within democratic peace studies, Kant’s work is central to the argument, many scholars refer to him (e.g. Bakker, 2017; Bennett, 2006; Benoit, 1996; Braumoeller, 1997; Bremer, 1992, 1993; Bueno de Mesquita et al., 1999; Cederman, 2001; Chan, 1993; Chernoff, 2004; Choi, 2010; Dafoe, 2011; Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1994; Dixon & Senese, 2002; Dorussen & Ward, 2010; Doyle, 1983a, 1983b, 1986, 1997, 2005; Farnham, 2003; Gartzke, 1998; Geis, Brock, & Müller, 2011; Geis & Wagner, 2011; Harrison, 2010; Hayes, 2012; Ronald Inglehart & Welzel, 2003; Ish-Shalom, 2015; Jakobsen et al., 2016; Johns & Davies, 2012; Kinsella, 2005; Levy, 1988; Z. Maoz, 1997; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Morgan & Campbell, 1991; Mousseau, 1997; Rawls, 1999; Ray, 1998; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Russett, 1993b, 2005; Russett & Oneal, 2001; Ungerer, 2012; Weart, 1998; Widmaier, 2005; Williams, 2001).

Kant (1789/2013c) argues that individuals who are enabled by their self-established republic to be free and autonomous will not only be able to pursue their interests rationally but also learn to listen to the ‘the moral law inside’: the categorical imperative. That means that people can take other people and their needs, wishes, and freedom, into account. Said differently, people would start to act towards others as they would like these others to treat them. That can only be achieved when people start to tolerate others in the broadest sense and trust them to reciprocate that tolerance (see also Wood, 1999, pp. 284-285, 295-296). These ideas are quite vivid in the work of John Rawls, who describes the process of being rational and reciprocal as reasonable (Rawls, 1999).

Kant realizes that the freedom to follow one's internal moral law is paradoxical; there is no guarantee that people would indeed choose to do so (Kant, 1795/2013a, p. 34; Wood, 1999, p. 283). Kant, therefore, sees a solution in the formal institutions of the republic that could guarantee the rights of individual freedom for everybody in the republic. Institutions, however, that would come forth from these individuals themselves in an attempt to enforce individuals within the republic to behave according to these self-established rights (Wood, 1999, p. 316). Subsequently, he expected that these institutions would cause a socialization process with the practices of tolerance, trust, and reciprocity. Kant sees it as a process of 'moral learning' that would enable people to become 'better people' (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 21-29; Wood, 1999, pp. 295-296). The emphasis on institutional arrangements within this strand of liberalism is therefore understandable, although the highest expectation is centering around the liberal norms.

Liberal norms

As explained above, earlier studies into the effect of liberal norms on the support for war has taken the presence of norms for granted. It does not suffice to argue that if liberal institutions are present liberal norms will exist (see e.g. Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1993; Dixon & Senese, 2002; Mousseau, 1997; Van Belle, 1997). Nor does it suffice to argue that stability is an expected effect of liberal norms and can, therefore, be equated to liberal norms (see e.g. Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Putnam, 1993). Liberal norms are expected to be a product of a liberal society. So, following Kant's more abstract ideas, what norms can we expect to be present among individuals that are socialized in a liberal society?

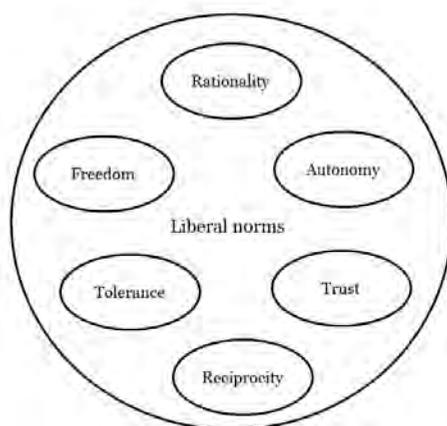
Kant expects that individuals could be purely rational they would follow their self-interests firstly and shape their lives as they pleased (Wood, 1999, p. 283). He also expects that over time, while living rationally and autonomously, the experience would teach these rational individuals that it would be in their self-interest to provide the space for others to live autonomously and rationally. Kant trusts that nature would enforce that insight: *fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt*¹⁴, or in other words: he believes that in the end, people preferred peace amongst each other over conflict and survival battles (Wood, 1999, pp. 297-298). This insight would create tolerance towards others to be different, to trust each other despite differences, and a norm of reciprocity of tolerance, trust, and autonomy among the members of the society (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 22-28; Wood, 1999, p. 315). He also believes, that for individuals to be able to be rational and reasonable, they should be free from state oppression, and free from each other oppression. Kant expects that a republic with institutions, which reflect and guarantee these processes between members of the republic, will create the freedom necessary for this process (Wood, 1999, p. 316). Thus, following Kant, a liberal society exists of rational individuals that are free from oppression by rulers, that are living their lives autonomously, and foster tolerant and trusting feelings towards others in their society, and moreover expect to have that

¹⁴ Fate guides the willing and drags the unwilling along (free translation)

tolerance, trust, and respect for their autonomy and freedom reciprocated by these others.

Liberal norms exist of six different dimensions, freedom of the state, autonomy of life, tolerance, trust and reciprocity towards others. These six dimensions that are inherently intertwined and connected, and theoretically they might seem to overlap. However, each of them has a distinct core attribute that justifies the distinction between these six dimensions. Rationality, for instance, is necessary to be able to become reciprocal of tolerance, however, without feeling free from the state, that tolerance is not possible. Together, these dimensions are expected to create liberal norms that individuals of that liberal society will follow and later on internalize. If enough people within such a society have internalized these norms, they start to believe this is the proper way to act and over time will behave according to that logic of liberal appropriateness. Liberal norms are, therefore, conceptualized by six dimensions: freedom of the state, autonomy of life, tolerance, interpersonal trust, and reciprocity. Figure 4.1 gives an overview of these dimensions.

Figure 4.1 Concept of liberal norms



Rationality is generally understood as individuals acting to pursue their interests to gain maximized utility based on perfect cost-benefit calculations. However, it is convincingly shown that individuals cannot be considered to be fully rational actors because even when they have the intention to act rationally, they are bounded by cognitive limitations and psychological factors (Kahneman, 2003; Simon, 1972; Tversky, 1972). In this study, individuals are understood as bounded rational actors, meaning that their ability to maximize utility based on complete and transitive information is bounded by their capabilities and limitations, and psychological influences.

Freedom is a largely discussed and sometimes even contested concept (see a tip of the iceberg: Berlin, 1969; Mill, 1859/2001). Kant, however, has a specific notion of freedom in relation to the creation of liberal norms. He argued that one of the necessary conditions for individuals to be able to be rational is freedom from oppression by a ruler or the state (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 9-12). To guarantee this freedom (and thereby the necessary rationality), the state should be a republic and guarantee the freedom of all members of the society, by rights of equality and a rule of law applicable to all (Kant, 1795/2013a, p. 9). Moreover, in a republic by representation, the members of society will have to give their consent to decisions of the state, which also enables them to be rational and free. Kant prefers the republican state form over the democratic state form because in a republic the executive and legislative power would be separated. This separation is necessary, in Kant's view, to make sure that laws of equality are followed, while a truly democratic form could become despotic in nature by a majority stepping on the rights of a minority (Kant, 1795/2013a, p. 11). In the republic, the equality is guaranteed, while at the same time all members have a saying. In other words, to be free of the state in this conceptualization means that individuals are part of the state and its decisions.

Autonomy as a generic concept might seem closely related to freedom, since feeling free and feeling autonomous seems at first sight almost the same. Within studies of individual modernity (Welzel, 2007), for instance, the concept of autonomy is used to describe the individual perception of freedom, which comes down to the feeling of control over life, finances, and freedom of choice. The conceptualization of this study, however, distinguishes between the freedom of the state and the autonomy to define personal life. A necessary distinction because it theoretically hooks into two different aspects of freedom: the freedom of a structure surrounding the agent (the state), and the inherent freedom of an agent (the autonomous life). Individuals can be truly free because they live in a liberal democracy with institutions to guarantee their freedom, but that does not imply that they perceive themselves to be autonomous in life. Of course, it is possible to argue that the better institutions guarantee freedom of the state, the more individuals will have a sense of control over their lives and choices. This argument stresses the need for this distinction. According to Kant, individuals can be rational if they feel free. If they are rational and free, they can act in their self-interest, or: decide autonomously over their lives. Ergo, feeling free from a structure is not the same as the autonomy to decide over personal life. To know whether both intrinsic dimensions of liberal norms are present, we need to distinguish theoretically between these different norms. For this study, autonomy is conceptualized as living an autonomous life.

Tolerance is conceptualized as the willingness to accept the existence of opinions or behavior that are considered objectionable by these citizens (Gibson, 2007). Tolerance is often used as *the* concept of liberal norms, in particular in studies about democratization (Gibson, 2007; Gibson & Duch, 1993; Schedler & Sarsfield, 2007). Tolerance represents in democratic theory one of the main elements of democracy because it facilitates the equal opportunity of all citizens to let their voices be heard. Democratic institutions that guarantee the positive liberties (Berlin, 1969,

p. 125) are in that sense created to safeguard tolerance. However, the existence of such institutions does not mean per se that tolerance is present within a society. It is therefore not enough to look at formal institutions to understand whether tolerance exists among individuals. Individuals must embrace tolerant behavioral patterns, “an atmosphere of ‘live and let live’” (Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625) to make sure tolerance exists within a society, it is the presence of tolerant beliefs and values that constitute the concept of tolerance.

The concept of *trust* is quite controversial, due to a close similarity with other concepts, such as confidence, empathy, reciprocity, and respect to name a few (Newton, 2007). As a working definition trust can be conceptualized as “the belief that others will not deliberately or knowingly do us harm if they can avoid it, and will look after our interests if this is possible” (Newton, 2007, p. 343). Thereby it is distinguished from political trust, which is conceptualized as confidence in politicians and institutions (Newton, 2007, p. 344; Seligman, 2000). Interpersonal trust (sometimes also referred to as moralistic trust (Uslaner, 2002, pp. 4, 17-19)) deals with the trust of strange people that enter their society. Interpersonal trust is therefore not based on personal experiences with friends that create an expectation of trust, or what Uslaner calls ‘strategic trust’ (2002, pp. 4,17), but is more general. Interpersonal trust comes forth from an optimistic view on the world, often paired with the belief that one is in control of its own life (Uslaner, 2002, p. 12). This definition connects with the Kantian belief that the combination of freedom, rationality, and autonomy can create levels of trust, tolerance, and reciprocity. Said differently, although it is very well possible that some people are intrinsically more trusting of strangers (Uslaner, 2002, pp. 12,33), experience with the way a liberal society works (Newton, 2007, p. 344) seems to be able to create interpersonal trust as well.

Reciprocity is closely related to the concept of trust, yet conceptually a distinction can be made between reciprocity and trust. Where trust is a belief that is only part of the individual that feels the trust, is reciprocity dialectical. Reciprocity is defined as the “motivation to repay generous or helpful actions or another individual by adopting actions that are generous or helpful to the other” (Cox, 2004, p. 262), indicating that the behavior of an individual depends on the behavior of others. Axelrod shows that a repeated occurrence of particular behavior can lead to reciprocity of that behavior (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981). In other words, experience with the particular behavior of others sets an expected norm, which echoes the notion of the seminal concept of the logic of appropriateness by March and Olsen (March & Olsen, 1989). However, the general notion that reciprocity is a strategy to reward the nice behavior of others and to punish the bad behavior of others does not capture less strategic aspects of reciprocity that also occur. Empirical research shows that people also reciprocate when it is not in their self-interest, neither materially nor through social approval (Perugini, Gallucci, Presaghi, & Ercolani, 2003, p. 253). Gouldner (1960, p. 171) convincingly argues that reciprocity is a universal norm that can be applied within every society rather than a mere strategic vehicle to guide behavior. The application of the norm is not unconditionally, however, but contingent on the

culture of a society (Gouldner, 1960, p. 171). In a society that emphasizes brotherhood, for instance, the norm will be to reciprocate behavior that supports that notion of brotherhood.

Considering reciprocity as a universal norm implies that it is a personally internalized norm (Perugini et al., 2003, p. 253) that subsequently can show variation among individuals. Perugini et al. (2003) distinguish between 1) the *beliefs* one can have in the reciprocity-based behavior of people, and 2) the actual reciprocal *behavior* that can be either positive (as in rewarding) or negative (as in punishing). Reciprocity as an internalized personal norm consists therefore of three dimensions that are related but distinct from each other. The benefit from this concept is that reciprocity can be understood as a personally driven motivation that can explain not only strategic self-interest based behavior but also other reciprocal behavior that might seem irrational or inefficient. For this study, the dimension of belief in reciprocity is essential, whereas the actual (lack of) reciprocal behavior is contingent on the specific action to which it relates. The specific action would be to reciprocate tolerance and trust. Because tolerance and trust are separate dimensions of liberal norms, the belief in reciprocity is necessary, because it allows individuals to connect their beliefs in reciprocity with the belief in tolerance and the belief in trust.

To sum up, the concept of liberal norms is constituted based on six dimensions; (bounded) rationality, freedom, autonomy, tolerance, interpersonal trust, and reciprocity, which are not mutually exclusive but all required to construct liberal norms. The six conceptually different dimensions are dialectical. Although liberal norms is a macro-level concept, the core existence lies at micro-level. Therefore, liberal norms need to be present at the individual level in order to argue that a liberal society exists. Institutional freedom and perceived autonomy are necessary for a rational individual to form beliefs of tolerance, trust, and reciprocity. Yet, one individual is not enough to constitute liberal norms. Within a society, more free, autonomous and rational need to reciprocate tolerance and trust. Thus, liberal norms need the conditions of freedom and autonomy, and sufficient beliefs in tolerance, trust and reciprocity, and enough individuals to share these norms to argue that these beliefs and values have become the standard behavior for the society, namely liberal norms.

4.3 Operationalization of liberal norms

A social norm is supposed to reflect, when socialized by individuals involved over time, particular beliefs and values of the liberal society. Consequently, the presence of norms within a society must be observable in the attitudes of individuals (Fiske & Taylor, 1991, p. 8). The expectation that within liberal democracies most, if not all, members of the liberal democratic society are behaving according to liberal norms underlies democratic peace theory, including the expectation the subsequent expected effect of peacefulness between liberal democracies. This study measures the level of liberal norms of individuals of different political systems and uses the above-developed concept to formulate indicators. It thereby relies on empirical insights that

internalized social norms can be observed through the behavior of individuals (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991, p. 226).

Within the social sciences, it is common to measure attitudes through the use of a questionnaire with either questions or statements (Finkel, Sigelman, & Humphries, 1999). These statements measure on a rating scale how strong an individual agrees or disagrees with such a statement. Also in this research, survey data is used to measure the liberal norms according to the indicators as formulated in table 4.1, except the dimension of reciprocity (which will be explained below).

Table 4.1 Indicators of liberal norms

Aspect	Indicator
Freedom	Perceived freedom by institutional arrangement
Autonomy	Perceived control over life, finances & freedom of choice
Tolerance	Willingness to accept (also objectionable) behavior or views of others
Trust	Believe that others will not harm you and will look out for your interests
Reciprocity	Belief that taking responsibility for wellbeing of others will repay

This study does not measure the dimension of *Rationality*. It, instead, assumes that individuals are bounded rational actors. Bounded rational individuals aim to maximize, based on a cost-benefit calculation, their interests, however, this calculation is based on incomplete information. The instrumental use of this assumption is backed by sufficient empirical evidence that shows individuals to be bounded rational actors (see for an overview of the existing literature: Conlisk, 1996).

The operationalization of the five remaining dimensions reflects the indicators in table 4.1 but also relies on already existing measures of these dimensions as used in other studies (*Measures of Political Attitudes*, 1999; *World Value Survey 2010-2014*). The aim is to develop a measure of liberal norms to use on existing data of representative samples (of the US, Russia, and China), but also to use on the student samples of the experiments. The comparison of the results between the representative samples and the student samples will be informative to understand how the student samples can be compared to representative samples of their respective countries. The measurement, therefore, rests on existing items within the World Values Survey, to make this comparison possible.

Ideally, a construct including several items should be used to measure each dimension. However, the World Values Survey does not include sufficient items for every dimension to create meaningful scales. Therefore, a single item is used to measure each dimension. These items together, each representing one dimension of liberal norms, are then used as a scale to indicate the measured level of liberal norms for every participant. The choice for a scale based on single items per dimension is

sufficient; a separate analysis shows that the use of multiple items does not necessarily lead to more reliable dimensions.

Data: World Values Survey 2010-2014

The 6th wave (2010-2014) of the World Values Survey is used to operationalize the dimensions freedom, autonomy, tolerance, and trust for representative samples of the US (N = 2232), Russia (N = 2500), and China (N = 2300). Each dimension is operationalized through an item that is most representative for that dimension. The five items together, each representing a dimension of liberal norms, are combined in one construct to measure the level of liberal norms among individuals within the three countries. All items are, if applicable, reversed in the same direction (having the highest score for feeling free, autonomous, trusting and tolerant in the same direction, and vice versa). Most of the items are measured on a 10-point rating scale (ranging from 0-9). Some items are measured on a different scale; these are recalculated to a similar 10-point scale. The choice for the use of single items is based on the availability of items to create scales, as discussed above.

Freedom, for this study, is the feeling of freedom of the state that individuals have. In democratic regimes, individuals can be active members of the political system, which makes them feel empowered and free. In other words, individuals feel that they can influence their political system. This dimension is operationalized by responses to the statement: *"People choose their leaders in free elections"*. Autonomy is understood as the feeling of control over the personal life and finances, which is operationalized by responses to the question *"How much freedom and control you have over your life"*.

Tolerance can be operationalized through statements that probe the willingness to put up with different views and behavior. These differences can be reflected in several aspects of life, such as different lifestyle, religion, ethnic background. Moreover, it is also possible to measure tolerance by probing the willingness to teach children to be tolerant. However, the way most questions within the World Values Survey measure tolerance makes it harder to use these items for this study. For instance, there is a question about what qualities respondents would like to teach their children, with tolerance and respect for others being one of the options. However, this option is not mentioned by the interviewer, but only noted as a binary measure: did respondent mention this quality or not. This item, however informative in different research settings, cannot be used in this research setting. The most straightforward question about tolerance is: *"Do you feel that homosexuality is justifiable?"*. The respondents can answer on a 10-point rating scale to what degree they agree with this statement. However, homosexuality measures only one specific notion of tolerance. To use such an item might bias the measurement more towards progressiveness than that it measures tolerance, while the aim is to measure tolerance as a more broadly conceived concept.

To create such a measure, a new variable is constructed based on an existing question. There is a question whether or not the respondents are willing to live next door to people of other race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and lifestyle. The

interviewer suggests nine different groups, and notes binary if the respondents agree or not. The new variable is calculated based on the number of groups respondents exclude, with nine being the most intolerant and zero the most tolerant. After reversing the direction of the scale, the new variable tolerance indicates the level of tolerance with zero being least tolerant and nine being most tolerant. A correlation check shows that the new variable is significantly correlated ($r = .33, p \leq .000$) with the question about homosexuality, which shows that the new measure for tolerance is usable.

Trust can be operationalized through statements that probe the feeling of trust of people within a neighborhood. There are several questions in the World Values Survey that probe this attitude, however, these question measure different aspects of trust. The concept of trust as laid out above is best reflected by the idea of interpersonal trust, sometimes also called moralistic trust. This conceptualization of trust reflects the attitude to trust strangers that come into personal life even though they might not have shown any reason to trust or distrust them (Uslaner, 2002, pp. 4, 17-19). The question *“How much do you trust people you meet for the first time?”* reflects that concept well.

Reciprocity can be operationalized through statements that probe the willingness to be part of a society in the broadest sense. For instance could be measured whether someone is willing to help others, or willing to contribute to the community and to comply with the norms of the society. However, the World Values Survey does not include any question that can even approximate this attitude. Therefore the dimension of reciprocity is, unfortunately, left out of the analysis of representative samples of the US, Russia, and China.

The measure for liberal norms is created by taking the average of the scores of all four dimensions so that for every participant a new variable of liberal norms indicates their level of liberal norms on a rating scale of 0 (lowest level) to 9 (highest level).

Data: Student Populations in China, Russia, and the US

During the years 2014 and 2015, student samples in the US, Russia, and China were used to measure the level of liberal norms through the utilization of a questionnaire, attached to the survey experiment that was conducted on these populations (see chapter 5: Experiments in the US, Russia, and China). The participants were 251 undergraduate students from Binghamton University, Binghamton (NY) in the US, 250 undergraduate students from the Higher School of Economics in St Petersburg, Russia, and 280 undergraduate students of the Chinese University for Political Science and Law in Beijing, China. The questionnaire contained several questions related to the experiment, questions to measure control factors, and furthermore questions to measure the positions on the five dimensions of liberal norms, and the positions on the hawk-dove dimension. The items were distributed in a mixed order so that participants would not see a clear or immediate relation between questions. Some items were asked in a different direction than other questions to avoid acquiescence (Krosnick, 1999, pp. 38-39).

All questions are measured on a 7-point rating scale. Also for this data, single¹⁵ items are used to build a construct of liberal norms. This way the results of the student samples can be more easily be compared with the results of the World Values Survey data. The measures for the dimensions freedom, autonomy, and interpersonal trust are similar to the measure in the World Value Survey, but tolerance and reciprocity differ slightly. First of all, reciprocity could not be measured with the World Values Survey data. This dimension is, however, measured among the student samples. As explained above, an indication of reciprocity is the willingness to be part of a society in the broadest sense. That could be operationalized by probing the willingness to help others, the willingness to contribute to the community, and the willingness to comply with the norms of the society based on an imbued consciousness about how one should behave towards others. To measure reciprocity the statement: *“My consciousness guides my decisions about how to behave towards others”* is used.

Secondly, tolerance is measured differently in the student samples. The measure used in the World Values Survey is created out of different answers to one question. To measure tolerance in the student samples, a statement about tolerance is used: *“It is necessary that everyone, regardless of whether I like their views or not, can express themselves freely.”*. This item captures a similarly broad sense of tolerance, just like the measure for the representative samples does. Moreover, when tested whether this item correlates with a tolerance question about homosexuality (like tested in the World Values Survey data) the analysis shows a significant correlation ($r=.18$, $p<.001$).

The other dimensions are measured with items similar to the World Values Survey data. Freedom is operationalized by the responses to the statement: *“People choose their leaders in free elections.* Autonomy is operationalized by the responses to the statement: *“I feel that I have completely free choice and control over my life”*. The dimension of trust is operationalized by the statement: *“In general, I trust other people when I first meet them.”*.

For every participant, the average score of all five items constitutes the measure for the level of liberal norms; every participant scores for the level of liberal norms on a scale of 1 (lowest level) to 7 (highest level).

4.4 Results

The aim of this chapter is to test hypothesis 4: *Decision-makers, born and raised in a consolidated liberal democracy, have internalized liberal norms in contrast to decision-makers who are not born and raised in a liberal democracy.* Table 4.2 shows an overview per dataset of the means of all five dimensions and the resulting level of liberal norms for each country. The range for the levels of liberal norms of the

¹⁵ Also here shows that although all measured items per dimension correlate significantly, they do not necessarily form scales with a high reliability. Therefore is chosen to opt for the single item approach, whereas it does enhance comparative purposes with the World Values Survey data.

World Values Survey data is 0 to 9, the range for the data of the student samples is 1 to 7. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Below the means are discussed.

Table 4.2 Overview means liberal norms*

	WVS (SD)			Students (SD)		
	<i>China</i>	<i>Russia</i>	<i>US</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>Russia</i>	<i>US</i>
Freedom	6.52 (2.42)	7.28 (2.31)	7.31 (2.38)	4.87 (1.71)	4.22 (1.61)	4.87 (1.43)
Autonomy	6.13 (2.00)	4.95 (2.25)	6.73 (1.81)	4.48 (1.69)	4.41 (1.62)	4.82 (1.52)
Tolerance**	5.51 (1.60)	5.11 (1.78)	6.67 (1.42)	6.26 (.96)	6.14 (1.12)	6.30 (.89)
Trust	2.75 (1.83)	2.68 (2.31)	3.60 (2.13)	3.62 (1.63)	3.17 (1.61)	3.81 (1.62)
Reciprocity	-	-	-	5.79 (1.12)	5.92 (1.37)	5.91 (1.18)
Liberal Norms	5.27 (1.01)	5.00 (1.13)	6.16 (1.10)	5.00 (.83)	4.78 (.73)	5.14 (.71)
N (range)	1725-2300	2166-2479	2143-2232	276-277	235-242	224-226

*Please note that the WVS data is measured on a 10-point scale, the student sample data is measured on a 7-point scale.

**Please note different items are used to measure tolerance in the respective datasets

The midpoint of the scale (in the case of the World Values Survey data: 4.5, in case of the data of the student samples: 4) is used to distinguish between those who endorse liberal norms and those that don't. Although the midpoint is an arbitrary point, since it divides the dimension of liberal norms in two equal halves it seems therefore the most appropriate indication to distinguish between positive and negative liberal norms. Thus: if participants score above the midpoint, they are considered to have a positive level of liberal norms. Subsequently, if they score below the midpoint, they are regarded as having a negative level of liberal norms, meaning: not endorsing liberal norms.

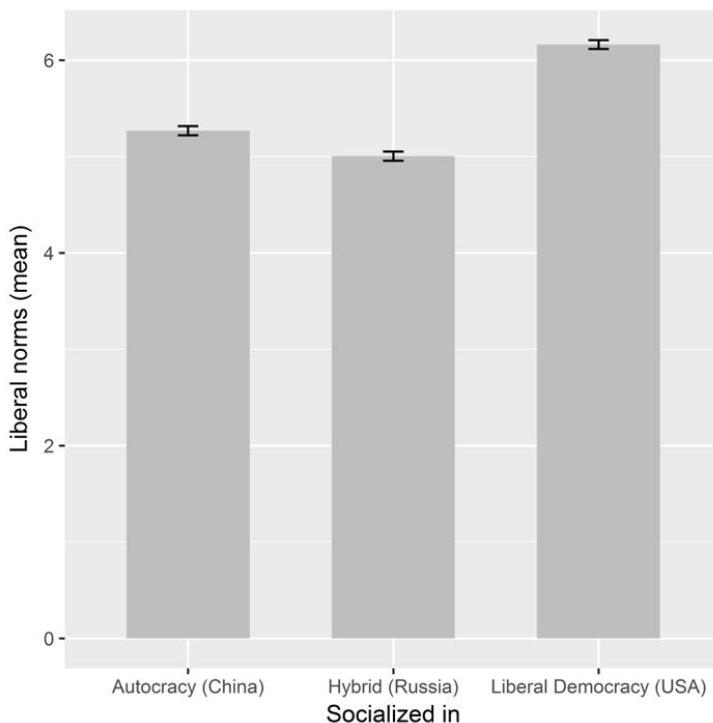
Liberal norms in the World Values Survey study

Based on representative samples of China, Russia, and the US respectively, table 4.2 shows the means of the dimensions freedom, autonomy, tolerance, and trust, followed by the mean level of liberal norms.

The first noticeable result is that the US sample scores with 6.16 on average positive on liberal norms. Moreover, the US sample scores on average the highest on liberal norms in general, and on every separate dimension as well. With the midpoint of 4.5 in mind, however, the average levels of China (M = 5.27, SD = 1.01) and Russia (M = 5.00, SD = 1.13) do not differ that much from the US (M = 6.16, SD = 1.10) score. The differences in the means are significant, though, and that effect is rather large (F(2, 6006.15) = 676.55, p < .001, r = .43), as also visible in figure 4.2. Thus,

there is a significant and substantive difference between the means of each country. The question is, does hypothesis 4, generated by the expectations of democratic peace theory regarding the presence of liberal norms, find support?

Figure 4.2 WVS: Liberal norms (mean) by country



Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

At first sight, the results indicate that the by democratic peace posited assumption that liberal democracy US would imbue liberal norms among its citizens finds support. The assumption that individuals within other regime-types do not have liberal norms imbued, however, is not. The US representative sample indeed scores higher than the representative samples of Russia and China, and it scores above the midpoint on the level of liberal norms. Although a mean of 6.16 is not the highest score as might be expected when 9 is the highest level, the score is positive and thus can be regarded as anticipated by theory.

However, the second part of the hypothesis posits that decision-makers who are not born and raised within liberal democracies are lacking these liberal norms does not find support. Although there is a significant and substantive difference on average between the three representative samples, the level of liberal norms in China and Russia is not much lower than the level in the US. More importantly, the levels of Russia and China are not that low to conclude that liberal norms are absent within

these countries. Both samples of individuals born and raised within non-liberal democratic regimes show to score on average well above the midpoint of 4.5, the point that distinguishes between liberal and illiberal norms. Thus, liberal norms are present in all three representative samples, and all on a level that indicates that liberal norms cannot be an outcome of a socialization process that exists only in liberal democracies.

Furthermore, the US, Russia, and China alike, the levels of liberal norms show to be varying strongly amongst individuals in a similar fashion. All three representative samples show to approximate a normally distributed variation (see figure 4.4), which indicates that levels of liberal norms are individually based and differing amongst individuals rather than indicating a homogenous effect of exposure to liberal norms within a specific regime-type. Moreover, the standard deviations are quite similar. Resulting from these findings among representative samples of the US, Russia, and China, liberal norms do exist within liberal democracies, but also within regime-types different from liberal democracy.

The average level of liberal norms shows to be the lowest in the Russia sample. Based on the theoretical expectations of democratic peace theory, liberal norms are socialized within liberal democracies over time, and therefore could be expected that within the mixed nature of a hybrid regime a particular level of liberal norms could have been imbued already that should show significantly higher than individuals from an autocratic regime. The Russian sample scores significantly lower than the Chinese sample ($F(2, 6006.15) = 676.55, p < .001, r = .43$) who supposedly have never been exposed to these liberal norms, and thereby these results support the finding above that the level of liberal norms is not related to regime-type.

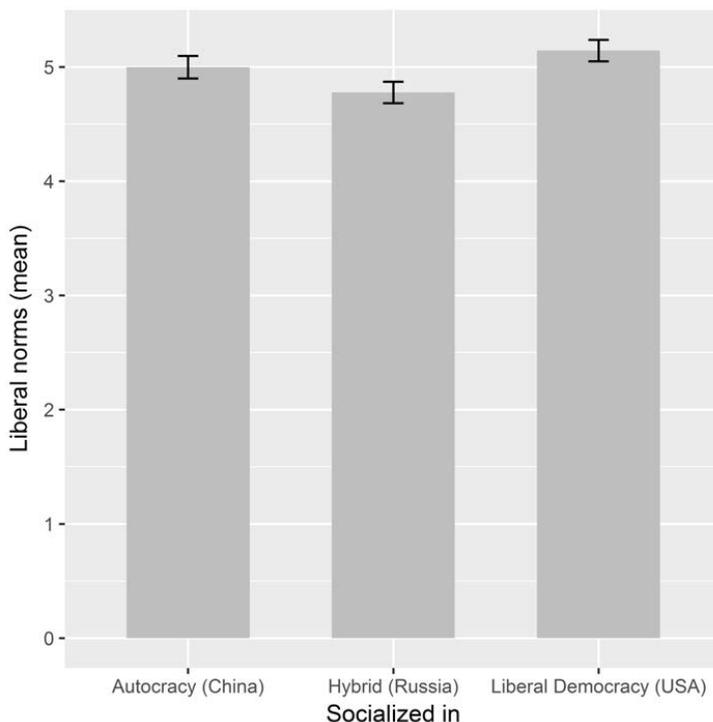
In other words, liberal norms exist indeed, but not as a result of a socialization process by a political regime and neither only in liberal democracies. Liberal norms seem to be more individually based and individually varying, separate from any super-structure such as a political regime.

Liberal norms in the student populations

Based on student samples of China, Russia and the US respectively, table 4.2 shows the means of the dimensions freedom, autonomy, tolerance, trust, and reciprocity, followed by the mean of the level of liberal norms. Also here the US sample scores with 5.14 on average the highest in liberal norms and above the midpoint between liberal and illiberal norms of 4. Moreover, the US sample scores on average the highest on liberal norms in general, and on every separate dimension as well (except reciprocity on which the Russian student sample scores the same as the US student sample).

The average levels of China ($M=5.00, SD=.83$) and Russia ($M = 4.78, SD=.73$) differ slightly (but significantly) from the US ($M= 5.14, SD=.71$) score when we consider the midpoint of 4. There is a significant difference between the average scores, but only between the US sample and China sample on the one hand and Russian sample on the other hand ($F(2, 734) = 13.2, p \leq .001, r = .18$). The effect size is small.

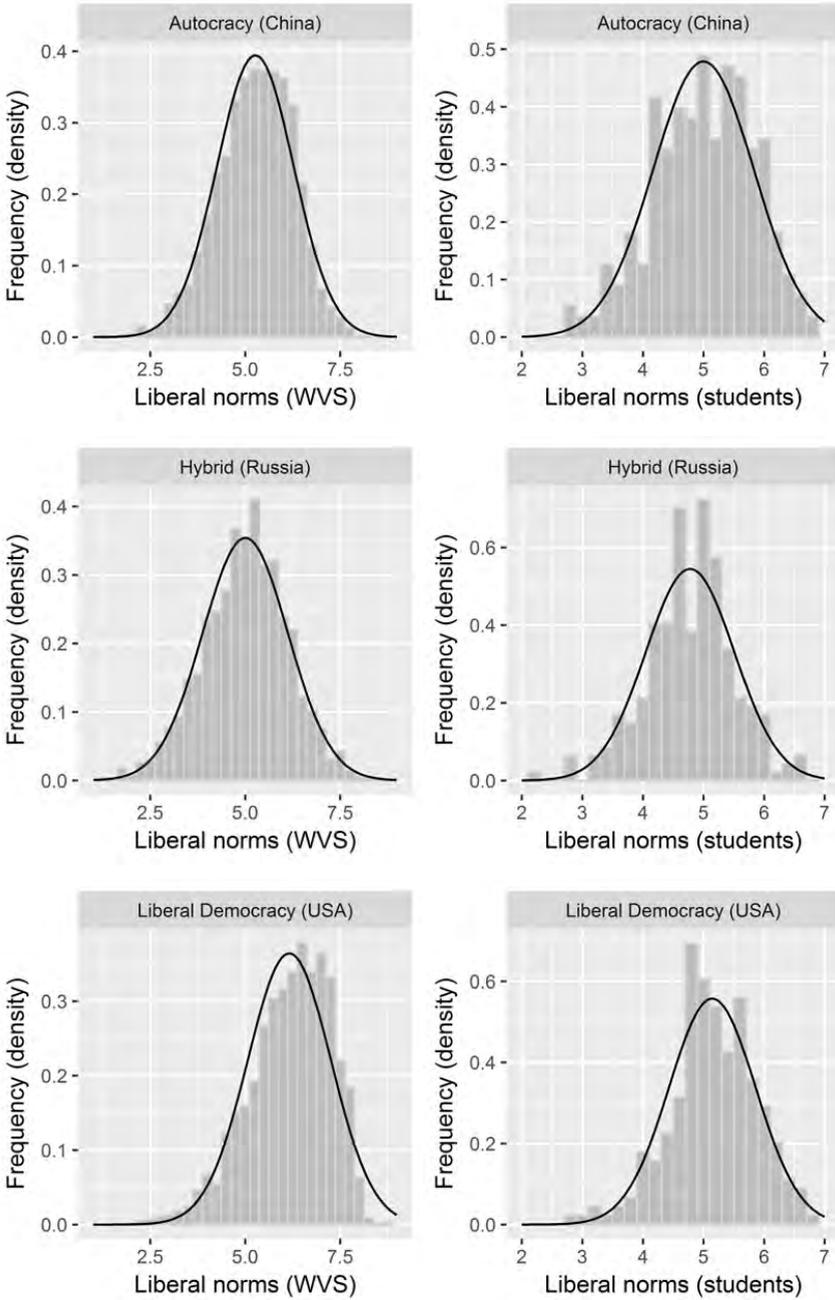
Figure 4.3 Students: Liberal norms (mean) by country



Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

The findings of the student samples show us the same results as the representative samples: liberal norms are present in all three samples, and all samples score on average on a level well above the midpoint. Furthermore, the levels of liberal norms are varying strongly within each sample; in every sample, participants range between both poles of the scales. Moreover, all samples show to approximate a normally distributed variation and an average that lies above the midpoint. Also here, the standard deviations are fairly similar. This pattern of variation is moreover similar to the patterns of the representative samples in all three countries. Thus, also the student samples of the US, Russia, and China show variation of liberal norms instead of the expected homogeneous effect of exposure to liberal norms by a specific regime-type. That variation shows to be similar to the representative samples. This finding indicates that the level of liberal norms cannot be a result of a socialization process by liberal democracy.

Figure 4.4 Levels of liberal norms in the US, Russia, and China



When we look at the patterns between the representative samples and the student samples of the three countries, as shown in figure 4.4, we can see the similarity in patterns between samples within the countries. Indeed, the US student sample scores a bit lower on liberal norms than the representative sample, and the Chinese student sample scores a bit higher than the representative sample, which seems to be due to a difference in the scores on tolerance between the representative samples and the student samples. The US student sample shows on average to be less tolerant than the representative sample, and the Russian and Chinese students show to be more tolerant than their representative samples. Moreover, the dimension of reciprocity could only be measured among the students. Having that said, a similar pattern is detectable. A pattern that shows that liberal norms are present in all samples, and varying in a similar vein over the populations, student sample and representative samples alike. Although it would lead too far to extrapolate the finding of similar patterns of liberal norms among representative and student samples to indicate that the students might be similar in all aspects of this study, these patterns do give some indication that the results of these student samples have explanatory power that might stretch beyond their own samples.

4.5 Conclusion

Democratic peace theory roots in the assumption that liberal democracy imbues liberal norms among its members by a socialization process that is lacking within other regimes. These theories thereby posit that liberal norms are only prevalent in liberal democracies and are absent within other regime-types. The hypothesis derived from these theoretical expectations is hypothesis 4, *Decision-makers, born and raised in a consolidated liberal democracy, have internalized liberal norms in contrast to decision-makers who are not born and raised in a liberal democracy*. In this chapter, liberal norms are measured among representative samples of the US, Russia, and China to test hypothesis 4. The results show that this hypothesis finds only limited support.

Democratic peace theory is partly right. Liberal norms indeed exist within a liberal democracy, such as the US. Also, the level of liberal norms in the US is, on average, significantly higher than in other regime-types. These findings thus support hypothesis 4. However, the results show that also within other non-democratic regime-types, such as the hybrid regime in Russia and the autocratic regime in China, liberal norms exist. There are differences, on average, but the averages of all three samples show to have positive scores on liberal norms. Thus, it can be concluded that liberal norms also prevail within non-democratic regimes. Moreover, the representative samples of all three countries, the US included, show similar patterns of more or less normally distributed varying levels of liberal norms within all three regime-types. Also the standard deviations, respectively, show to be fairly similar. The general conclusion is thus that whether or not individuals adhere to liberal norms is individually based rather than imposed and socialized by a super-structure

of a political regime. The results show that the assumption of democratic peace theory that liberal norms only exist within liberal democracies cannot be used as such.

This insight is important for democratic peace theory, which are built on the assumption that liberal norms are a direct outcome of being born and raised within liberal democracies. As argued above, this assumption is founded in normative expectations about the role liberal democracy plays in the process of moral learning: over time individuals living in liberal democracies will increasingly adhere to liberal norms. Liberal scholars take that socialization process for a fact rather than an empirical question, and therefore they do not measure but assume the actual presence and absence of liberal norms among democratic and autocratic populations.

The results of this chapter show that liberal norms are present to a similarly varying degree within different kinds of regime-type. Moreover, the results show that there is no empirical ground to argue that there must be a socialization process of moral learning within liberal democracies. Firstly, the US is one of the oldest and most consistently bottom-up built liberal democracies of the world, and although the representative sample of the US scored on average higher than the comparable samples in Russia and China, the average score of the US was not in the higher part of the measurement scale. Secondly, the Russian sample, whose hybrid regime might expect to generate a higher level of liberal norms than any autocratic regime (see e.g. Braumoeller, 1997) because the members of the political system in Russia would have been exposed to a limited extent to some liberal norms, does not score higher but scores lower than the individuals in the Chinese sample who are expected not to have been socialized with liberal norms. The fact that liberal norms are present in general, even when liberal democratic institutions are absent, and supposedly a liberal political culture as well, might indicate that these values are not per se connected to a particular regime-type that imbues these norms, but that these norms exist among human beings, with different levels even. The most important indication in that respect is that democratic peace theorists might be putting too much emphasis on the philosophical idea that liberal democracy raises people to be morally better people, and thereby ignore the strengths that might be present among individuals on their own to be 'morally better'. The results indicate that it might be simply human to feel free, autonomous, tolerant, trusting and reciprocal by, from and towards others, and in varying degrees, without needing a liberal democracy to create those norms.

Whatever that may be, the next step in this research is to study in what way the level of liberal norms, among other theoretically important factors, are of influence on decision-makers in the willingness to go to war. If these norms indeed seem to have an influence, also within Russia and China, it might be that indeed the institutions of democracy have a function in translating preferences forthcoming of these liberal norms towards the decision to go to war or not. However, to get more insight into that mechanism, more data needs to be considered.

In the next chapter, the same student samples are used to study what factors influence decision-makers to decide to go to war with another state. As mentioned in chapter 3, for several theoretical and practical reasons students are used here as

proxies for decision-makers. The results of the current chapter show that there is another legitimate reason for the use of student samples: similar patterns of variation are visible between the representative samples and the student samples of each country. It would lead too far to extrapolate the finding of similar patterns of liberal norms among representative and student samples to indicate that the students might be similar in all aspects of this study. However, these patterns do give some indication that the results of these student samples might have explanatory power that might stretch beyond their own samples. The next chapter will study the influence of several factors on the willingness of decision-makers to go to war.

Chapter 5 Experiments in the US, Russia & China

5.1 Research question and hypotheses

What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when they are on the brink of war? The theoretical framework, as discussed in chapter 3, offers several factors that might be of influence. The core underlying assumption of that framework is: if the threat of a severe interstate conflict is perceived as very high, decision-makers will decide to attack the opposing country to resolve the conflict. The perception of that threat is expected not to be constituted only by the ongoing conflict itself, but also by factors contextual to the conflict, and factors intrinsic to the decision-makers.

This chapter aims to test the remaining hypotheses. To investigate hypothesis 3, the chapter studies whether the from democratic peace theory derived contextual factors (the regime-type of the opposing state, the regime-type in which decision-makers are socialized, and in particular the interaction between these two factors) are of influence on decision-makers that try to resolve a severe interstate conflict. Democratic peace theory expects that if decision-makers of liberal democracies know that the opposing country is also a liberal democracy, the perception of the threat of the conflict will decrease in such way that an attack is significantly less likely. This, in contrast, to having an autocratic opponent, which would increase the perceived threat and subsequently lead to a higher likeliness of an attack. Moreover, if the decision-maker is not socialized within a liberal democracy but another regime-type, the regime-type of the other state will not increase or decrease the threat in such a way that it will affect the willingness to attack.

Another hypothesized contextual factor derived from democratic peace theory is the expectation that liberal norms influence decision-makers to be less likely to attack another state that shares a similar political culture of liberal norms, as formulated in hypothesis 5. Democratic peace theory assumes that liberal norms are only present (and thus of effect) within liberal democracies, and not in other regime-types. In chapter 4, however, it is established that this assumption finds only limited empirical support. An analysis of nationally representative survey data of individuals of the US, Russia, and China shows that liberal norms are indeed present among individuals of a liberal democracy, but also among individuals of other regime-types. Moreover, although the US representative sample scored on average higher than the Chinese and the Russian representative samples respectively, the difference was marginal and more importantly, all average scores were on the positive side of the liberal norms spectrum. The three samples were also varying in a similar and a close to normally distributed pattern and ranging within each country between the lowest and highest level. In other words, liberal norms exist irrespective of the political regime and seem to be more individually based. Democratic peace theory has high expectations of the pacifying effect of liberal norms, in particular when a decision-maker feels that their liberal norms are shared. Therefore is also hypothesized that

liberal norms affect decision-makers to be less willing to attack a liberal democratic opponent, one with a liberal political culture.

Other hypotheses (hypothesis 1 and 2), unrelated to democratic peace theory, lead the investigation into other contextual factors. These factors relate to the behavior of the opponent regarding the conflict: an invasion and the use of power. The initial conflict deals with a disputed resource between both parties, and the expectation is that when the opponent invades the territory of the other, the perception of threat will increase in such manner that decision-makers will be more willing to attack the opponent than when the opponent does not invade. The same goes for the use of power. The expectation is that if the opponent uses hard power over soft power, decision-makers will be more willing to attack their opponent and vice versa.

Another contextual factor, hypothesized based on realist theories in hypothesis 6, is the balance of power between the opposing states. The expectation is that if there is a balance of power between both states, there will be a status quo. In other words, there will be no increase or decrease in the perception of threat and thus no more willingness to attack.

Separate from the contextual factors, the theoretical framework also offers expectations based on factors that are actor-centric. Based on the insights that belief systems can influence the decision-making process of individuals, in this research, a particular belief system is tested that relates to beliefs about conflict resolution, the hawk-dove continuum. The expectation, as formulated in hypothesis 7, is that the more hawkish decision-makers are, the more likely they will be to attack the opposing state, despite the influence of structural factors. Moreover, reversed, the more dovish decision-makers are, the less willing they will be to attack the opponent, also despite the influence of structures.

The results of chapter 4 have given rise to a new expectation. The results indicated that liberal norms are more individually based, and thus not created by a socialization process of a political system. Considering the argument of this study that individual-centric factors such as beliefs might influence decision-makers, it seems worthwhile to investigate whether these individually based liberal norms are of effect on the decision-making of individuals about war. Democratic peace theory has posited that liberal norms do pacify decision-makers in relation to shared liberal norms, and this research will thus also test whether liberal norms influence decision-makers, in general, to be less willing to attack the opponent, no matter the regime. From this follows hypothesis 9: *Decision-makers with higher levels of liberal norms will be less willing to take military action against an opposing state during a severe interstate conflict than decision-makers with lower levels of liberal norms.* Lastly, gender is considered as an actor-centric factor, based on the expectation that female decision-makers will be less likely to attack the opponent than male decision-makers, as is formulated in hypothesis 8.

5.2 The instrument

A decision-making experiment is used as the research instrument to test the hypotheses and thereby study the possible influence of these factors on decision-makers. The experiment consists of a written scenario about a conflict in which the factors regime-type, the balance of power, invasion, and use of power are operationalized as randomized experimental treatments (see below). These factors are operationalized as described information within the experiment. A questionnaire follows the experiment that measures the dependent variable (the willingness to attack the opponent), and the factors liberal norms, hawkishness, and gender.

The scenario narrates a fictitious story about a continuous and severe conflict between two hypothetical states: *My Country* and *Other Country*, a conflict that is now on the brink of war. The choice for hypothetical countries on both sides is deliberate. With this choice this research distinguishes itself from earlier experimental studies that used the real-world countries from the participants as a reference (Geva et al., 1993; Johns & Davies, 2012; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013), but follows the studies of Geva and Hanson (1999) and myself (Bakker, 2017). The use of hypothetical countries within a non-existent conflict aims deliberately to avoid any similarity with real-world countries and real-world conflicts. To measure as clearly as possible the effect factors have on decision-makers, the description of a real-world conflict of real countries might hinder that while participants might think of outcomes of those conflicts rather than purely deciding based on the information provided. However, to create experimental reality, the hypothetical conflict must 'feel as real as possible' to get participants to take their tasks seriously. In other words, participants must go along with the possible existence of this conflict and the threat that it poses to measure their responses rightfully.

The experiment starts by asking participants to imagine to be living their whole life *My Country*, one of the hypothetical countries. Furthermore, they have to imagine that they are the advisor of their government and have to advice how to deal with this particular conflict. They get to see a map about the geographic situation (see figure 5.1). The use of this map is twofold. The use of a graphic illustration can support the textual information, and moreover, a map can make the experiment look more authentic and help the participants to feel as if the hypothetical countries actually exist.

The scenario continues with a description of both countries, which provides information about the countries and how they relate to each other and the world. After that, it describes the interstate conflict and its history. Below follows a description about the operationalization of all relevant factors within the experiment. The description discusses the factors according to the proceeding line of the story.

Balance of power

Both countries are defined as neighboring states that together form a large island. Both countries rely on large and sufficient quantities of natural resources (such as sweet water, oil, and uranium). To establish a balance of power between both states, the countries are described as similar as possible when it comes to power factors on

system-level: size of population, territory, and industrial, economic and military strengths: both are prosperous, well-doing countries that are about equal in those respects. Also, the economic relationship between the countries is not specifically defined, there is no mentioning of economic interdependence and thereby kept constant. Both countries have an obligatory military service of 2 years, everybody in both countries needs to serve time in the army and is therefore meant to fight in case of military action. In other words, the scenario describes the two countries in a way that all possible system-level power factors are equal and therefore create the notion of a balance of power. This part of the scenario is the same for all participants.

Decision-makers socialized regime-type

To operationalize the regime-type in which decision-makers are socialized, the experiment as a whole will be conducted within three different regime-types: a liberal democracy (the US), a hybrid regime (Russia), and an autocracy (China). To measure the possible effect of being socialized within a specific regime-type, participants are asked to imagine to have lived all their lives in *My Country* without getting any specific information about the regime-type of *My Country*. The aim is to have participants assume implicitly that *My Country* is more or less like their own (real) country and thus regime-type. This way they are more likely to act accordingly to the practices with which their political regimes have socialized them. Another reason for not providing the regime-type of *Own Country* is to avoid the possibility that the participants might understand that regime-type is a treatment, while that realization might obstruct the correct measurement of the instrument. This factor is called 'socialized' in the analyses below.

Regime-type opponent

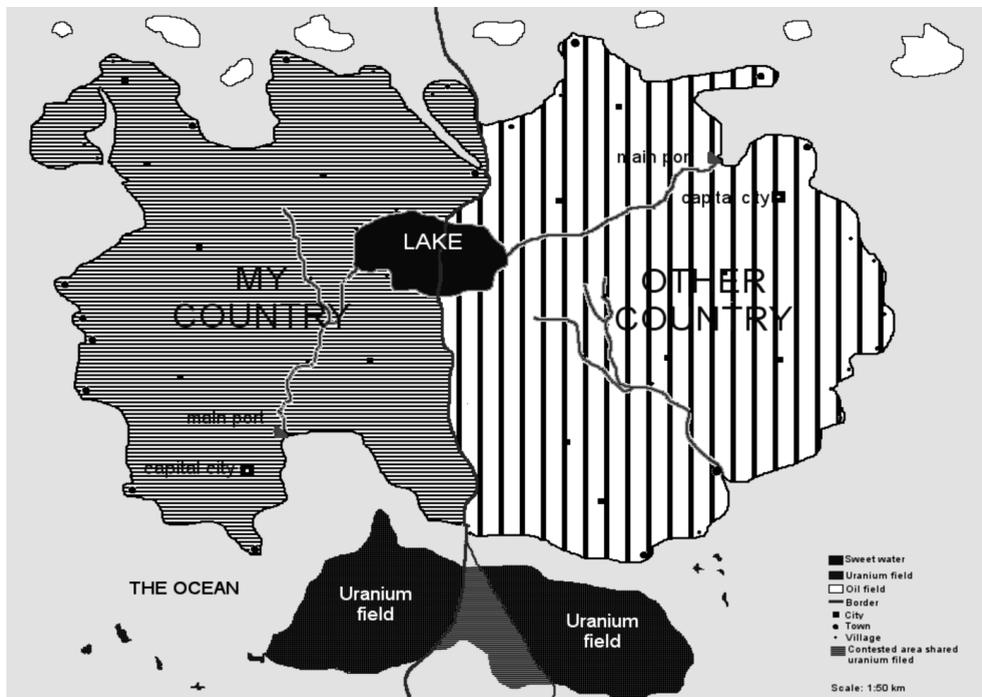
A randomized experimental treatment operationalizes the regime-type of the opponent. The treatment exists of a description of the regime-type of *Other Country*. The regime-type description is offered in two different treatments, each to about half of the participants. The treatments are, respectively, liberal democracy and autocracy. The first treatment is the description of a liberal democracy.

The actual word 'liberal democracy' is not mentioned because the word democracy often has a different meaning for different people and might trigger a varying definition among participants. Earlier experimental studies have been quite explicit in the measure for regime-type; they have either described the other state to be a democracy or described it to be an autocracy (Tomz & Weeks, 2013), or they have mentioned an elected president or government versus a (military) dictator (Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005). Geva and Hanson (1999) have not described the regime-type, but let the participants decide upon that perception based on similarity of socio-cultural factors.

The perception of the words such as democracy, autocracy, and dictator can have a strong connotation for people. The word democracy can be seen as 'something good', but the concept is multi-interpretable. Political scientists already can rely on many different conceptualizations about democracy (Schedler & Sarsfield, 2007), let

alone what non-political scientist might perceive when they hear the word democracy. For example: a Chinese citizen might perceive the word democracy completely different than a US citizen (T. W. Smith, 2003). With that same logic, the words dictator, or autocracy, are heavily loaded words, and although there is little research to rely on, it is plausible to argue that these words have a negative connotation. Chinese citizens might not even perceive their own country to be an autocracy, while a political scientist would do so. If participants would perceive the word autocracy or dictator as a negative connotation, it might be that they would respond more to that notion than towards what such a concept actually entails. This is in particular important because we want to measure the assumed influence of liberal norms and democratic institutions, and with an unclear perception of these concepts, we might measure something else, something that is unrelated to the actual mechanism that is under scrutiny.

Figure 5.1 Map of the experimental setting



Thus, to avoid conceptual misperception, and to make sure that the core understanding - of what regime-type according to democratic peace theory entails-, is measured as accurately as possible, the practices of liberal democracy are described to measure the effect of democracy. The core concept of Dahl is used to describe these practices: the presence of fair, secret and regular elections, alternatives for information via media, citizens' rights to protest and trust that they will be treated

equally. Moreover, it is described that the citizens of Other Country feel free to say and be whomever they want to be without feeling any repercussions from the state or society. The second treatment of autocracy, based on the same logic, describes the practices of an autocracy, in which elections would be present, but irregular, with little options to choose for, and with a restriction of information and uncertainty about how free one is to say and be whoever one is. The autocratic practices are, however, described as neutral as possible, without any negative connotation or judgment. This treatment of regime-type is the factor 'regime' in the analyses below.

The interstate conflict

The scenario then proceeds with a description of the interstate conflict. As discussed in chapter 3, the issue of the conflict should be separated from the actions of the states and should be as neutral as possible, however threatening enough in itself. The concept of the issue was, therefore, an issue of resources that would suggest that both states would have the right to own these. Therefore, it is first described that both states possess uranium fields that are of great importance to the world, thereby aiming to create a condition that urges the participants to feel the pressure of this conflict. The choice for uranium fields bases itself on several pre-tests of several threatening scenarios on Dutch student populations. The pre-tests showed that a conflict over uranium is perceived as a more likely condition that might lead to war than conflicts over other natural resources (such as sweet water or oil).

With the choice for uranium, the issue in and of itself should have a realistic threat level. Secondly, the scenario describes a particular area with uranium fields that has been contested over by both states. Up to now, both states have been in conflict over this contested area, and no solution was reached. The aim is to indicate that both states could be the rightful owners of the resources, and no one is automatically perceived as the 'bad guy'. So, the issue is operationalized as an ongoing issue between both countries about a particular uranium field that has disputed borders. The status quo of the conflict, before any information about the actions of the opposing country is given, is that negotiations have been going on for a long time and have led to no results what so ever. This description indicates clearly that the conflict is serious. This part of the scenario is the same for all participants.

Invasion and Use of Power

The aim is to test the influence of two contextual factors, namely the behavior of the opposing state: an invasion and the use of power. Two randomized experimental treatments operationalize these behavioral factors by describing the behavior of *Other Country* in regard to an invasion and the use of power, respectively. Each factor is offered in two different treatments, from which each is offered to about half of the participants.

The first factor, invasion, is operationalized by a description of how invasive the behavior of *Other Country* is. One treatment remains close to the initial 'neutral sense' of the conflict (as in both states seem right nor wrong), the other treatment depicts *Other Country* as invasive, or 'the bad guy'. The first treatment describes how

Other Country secretly exploits the contested area without consent, but without claiming the territory. It, moreover, describes that *Other Country* builds a nuclear program but claims it is for peaceful purposes only. The second treatment describes how *Other Country* officially confiscates the whole uranium field, positions warships around it and declares the field theirs. On top of that, the treatment describes that *Other Country* has secretly initiated a nuclear weapons program. Moreover, it mentions that *Other Country* counters a request from *My Country* to stop the program with the threat to use military force. In other words: *Other Country* is behaving more obviously as the 'bad guy' in this treatment. This factor is called 'invasion' in the analyses below.

The second factor, use of power, is operationalized by a description the way *Other Country* uses power to deter *My Country* from using military force to resolve their conflict. One treatment describes a soft use of power by *Other Country*, the other treatment describes a hard use of power. In the first treatment, *Other Country* uses rhetoric, expels the ambassador and diplomatic staff, and threatens to (but does not) freeze all payments. The threat is explicitly described as relatively low. In the second treatment, *Other Country* closes all borders, freezes payments, blocks the ports of *My Country*, holds military exercises along the border and gets all troops ready for combat. The threat is explicitly described as very high. This factor is called 'use of power' in the analyses below.

Decision-making: Willingness to Attack

The scenario ends by stating that after weeks of ongoing negotiations none of the countries have altered their position and that *My Country* needs to decide whether to attack *Other Country* or not. A questionnaire follows the experiment to measure, amongst other variables, the dependent variable: approval for an attack on the opponent. The first question is a binary option: attack or negotiate. After that, the participants are asked to indicate their approval for the foreign policy option to attack *Other Country* with a preventive strike on a 7 point rating scale that ranges from very strongly disapprove (1) to very strongly approve (7). The approval for other policy options is also measured on a 7-point scale, which will be discussed in the following chapter 6.

Liberal Norms

The questionnaire measures to which degree participants agree with several statements on a 7-point rating scale. The variable 'liberal norms' is measured as discussed in chapter 4. To recap briefly, the operationalization of these five dimensions roots in statements of existing measures of these concepts (*Measures of Political Attitudes*, 1999; *World Value Survey 2010-2014*), table 5.1 provides an overview of the single items used to measure freedom, autonomy, tolerance, interpersonal trust, and reciprocity. The sixth dimension, bounded rationality, is (just like in chapter 4) assumed. Participants indicate on a 7 point rating scale the degree to which they agree with the statements. The average of the sum of these five items constitutes the variable 'liberal norms' that is used in the analyses below.

Table 5.1 Liberal norms

Dimension	Items
Freedom	People choose their leaders in free elections
Autonomy	I feel that I have completely free choice and control over my life
Tolerance	It is necessary that everyone, regardless of whether I like their views or not, can express themselves freely
Trust	In general, I trust other people when I first meet them
Reciprocity	My consciousness guides my decisions about how to behave towards others

Hawkishness

The position participants take on the continuum hawkishness-dovishness is measured through the use of several statements that relate to the beliefs about conflict resolution. These statements are not just about conflict resolution on interstate-level, but also probe positions on conflict resolution on the personal level. The statements rely on an existing measure of beliefs about the nature of conflict resolution that range from support for cooperative behavior to offensive behavior to solve interstate conflicts (Rousseau & Garcia-Retamero, 2007), and on measures that relate to a more personal belief about how conflict should be resolved that range from using physical force or not to protect oneself (*World Value Survey* 2010-2014). Below follows a discussion of the used statements. The questionnaire measures the degree with which participants agree or disagree with the statements on a 7-point scale.

5.3 Procedure and Data Collection

Samples and execution

The experiment was conducted on 250 undergraduate students from the Higher School of Economics in St Petersburg, Russia in November 2014, on 251 undergraduate students from Binghamton University, Binghamton (NY) in the US in February 2015, and on 280 undergraduate students of the Chinese University for Political Science and Law in Beijing, China in April 2015. The research protocol was approved of by Binghamton University's Human Subject Committee, after the required review.

The experiments were conducted in regular university classrooms, after lectures. The scenario and following questionnaire was presented as a paper-and-pencil experiment and introduced as a survey about conflict resolution. The experiments were executed by either myself or one of my native research assistants. In China, I was not present in the classroom during the experiment, to ensure not to

introduce any bias (by the presence of a foreign investigator). In all instances, the research assistants were instructed very carefully about the protocol and, in particular, about ensuring randomization. In order to ensure that the participants would feel safe to participate in the experiment, they were explicitly told that their participation was voluntary, that their responses were treated confidential, that no details regarding identity were registered (such as student number or name), and that students were free to leave whenever they wanted. The instructions about the experiment were read out loud to the participants prior to the execution of the experiment. After completing the survey-experiment, a debriefing followed about the real purpose of the experiment. I entered all data myself during the fieldwork, except a small part (about 50 questionnaires) of the Chinese data that were entered by one of the Chinese research assistants.

Preparing the Data: Checks

The questionnaire checks for several issues. First of all, it checks whether participants are born and raised within the country they are tested. All participants who are not born and raised in the designated country (or left the answer open) are excluded from the dataset (China: 3 participants, Russia: 7 participants, US: 24 participants). A few participants, however, show to be born and raised in a regime-type similar¹⁶ to the designated regime-type and are therefore included in the samples. The remaining participants are then categorized in a new variable (*Socialized*) based on the regime-type of their country: autocracy, hybrid, liberal democracy.

Secondly, the questionnaire checks whether the experimental treatments are perceived as intended. An inspection of these checks shows that all three treatments are perceived as intended. The question to indicate how democratic *Other Country* is shows that participants in the autocratic regime-type treatment find the target country on a 7-point scale significantly ($t(770) = -24.49, p < .001$) less democratic ($M = 1.97, SD = 1.24$) than participants in the democratic treatment ($M = 4.48, SD = 1.59$)¹⁷. Therefore, the measure of the treatment regime-type is included as a binary variable in the analysis called *Regime*. The question to indicate how violating participants consider the behavior of *Other Country* of *My Country's* territory shows that participants in the non-invasion treatment find the actions of target state on a 7-point scale significantly ($t(768) = -7.861, p < .005$) less violating ($M = 4.54, SD = 1.63$) than the participants in the invasion treatment ($M = 5.43, SD = 1.48$)¹⁸. Thus, the measure of the treatment invasion is included in the analysis as a binary variable called *Invasion*. The question to indicate how likely participants consider *Other Country* to attack *My Country* shows that participants in the hard power treatment find the target country on a 7-point scale significantly ($t(771) = -7.73, p < .001$) more likely to attack ($M = 4.96, SD = 1.55$) than the participants in the soft power

¹⁶ The similarity and long time duration of the regime-type is based on Polity IV and Freedom House measures.

¹⁷ Treatment checks of regime-type also differed significantly per country.

¹⁸ Treatment checks of invasiveness also differed significantly per country.

treatment ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 1.35$)¹⁹. Hence, the measure of the treatment Use of Power is considered in the analysis as a binary variable called *Use of power*.

Lastly, the questionnaire checks whether or not the scenario reminds participants of a real-world scenario. This question controls for the possibility that respondents might have been triggered to use a real-world scenario to lead their answers rather than the perception of threat induced by the experimental setting. A total of 781 participants answers this question, from which 51,3% say they are reminded of a real-world conflict. When asked in an open question what specific conflict they think of, the answers show a strong variation, as well within as between the student samples. About 20 different conflicts are mentioned, such as the Cold War, Cuban Missile Crisis, Iraq and Iran, Israel and Palestine, North and South Korea, China and Japan over the South Chinese Sea, the Crimea conflict, India and Pakistan, the Gulf war, Middle Eastern oil conflicts, and more general nuclear conflicts. Based on these results, it is concluded that the hypothetical scenario is perceived as a realistic conflict situation, without reminding participants to one specific conflict that might have biased the results in a particular direction.

Previewing the Data: Liberal Norms

In chapter 4, the levels of liberal norms were measured for all three student samples. To recap the results briefly: the US sample scores highest on average ($M = 5.14$, $SD = .71$), together with the Chinese sample that scores about the same level ($M = 5.00$, $SD = .83$) of liberal norms. There is no significant difference between these two groups. The Russian samples ($M = 4.78$, $SD = .73$) scores on average significantly lower ($F(2, 734) = 13.2$, $p < .001$, $r = .18$) than the other two samples. All samples score on average well on the positive side of the midpoint (4) of the scale, and all three samples show a similar and about normally divided variation pattern. The individual scores of the participants are considered within the analysis as an independent variable.

Preparing the data: Hawkishness measure

To measure hawkishness, the questionnaire asks the participants to indicate on a 7-point scale to what degree they agree or disagree with statements about conflict resolution. The statements are about interstate conflict resolution, but also about interpersonal conflict resolution. The answers to six of these statements, the items, are used to build a construct. Table 5.2 gives an overview of these six items.

As table 5.2 also indicates, the items together do not form a strongly reliable scale²⁰. However, although the reliability of the scale with a Cronbach alpha of .489 is low, the items correlate significantly together. Moreover, there is a level of coherence while deleting items would decrease the reliability of the scale. Having this said, there is a more important reason to use a construct rather than a single item to measure hawkishness. As indicated in chapter 3, hawkishness is not yet theoretically sharply

¹⁹ Treatment checks of use of power also differed significantly per country.

²⁰ A principal component analysis suggests more dimensions, however, it is inconclusive because there are no clear differences between items that indicate clearly defined factors.

developed within the literature and is generally connected to positions towards specific interstate conflicts. This study aims to measure hawkishness as a more general concept that probes the willingness to use force during any conflict resolution, even when it is an interpersonal conflict. Therefore a measure should include different items that relate to different aspects of this more general concept. The used scale might not be the strongest; the items do correlate and, moreover, relate conceptually to each other in a meaningful way.

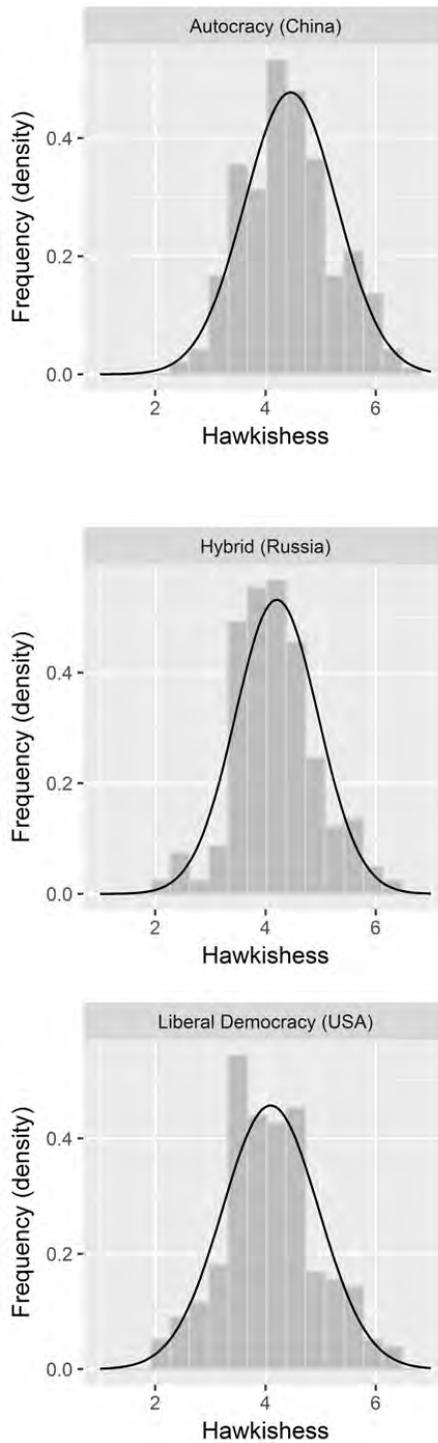
Table 5.2 Items used for the Hawkishness scale

<i>Items</i>	<i>α if item deleted</i>
States are generally not trustworthy: they will attempt to expand their territory if they have the chance.	.479
In general, international organizations are ineffective because they lack the power necessary to change the behavior of powerful states.	.447
The use or threat of nuclear weapons is a necessary instrument for states in order to survive as a state.	.366
It is important to teach children to defend themselves physically if necessary.	.450
Everybody thinks of themselves first, so I will have to protect myself and my family before I consider others.	.440
The worst way for us to keep peace is by trying to work out agreements at the bargaining table rather than by having a very strong military so other countries won't attack us. (<i>scale reversed</i>)	.469
	$\alpha = .489$

Thus, the variable hawkishness exists of the average scores of the sum of these six items. The individual scores of participants are considered in the analysis as an independent variable. Is created by taking the average of the sum of these six items. Absolute doves score a 1, absolute hawks score a 7, and the midpoint of 4 differentiates between more hawkish and more dovish.

The level of hawkishness on the sample as a whole shows that on average the participants are a bit more leaning towards hawkishness than dovishness ($M= 4.27$, $SD=.84$) when the midpoint of 4 is considered as point where hawks become doves, and vice versa. The Chinese samples scores on average the highest on hawkishness ($M=4.45$, $SD=.84$), followed by the Russian sample ($M=4.21$, $SD=.75$) and then the US sample ($M=4.12$, $SD=.88$). Those seemingly slight differences are significant ($F(2,698.7) = 12.64$, $p \leq .001$, $r = .18$), but have a small effect. These results indicate that on average the Chinese participants are significantly more hawkish than the Russians, and the US students are significantly less hawkish than the Russian and the Chinese samples.

Figure 5.2 Levels of hawkishness in China, Russia, and the US



The patterns within the three samples show, again just like liberal norms, a variation that approximate a normal distribution, as evidenced in figure 5.2. The patterns indicate that being a hawk or a dove can be considered to be an actor-centric belief.

Gender

The variable of gender is binary and shows that 39% of the sample is male and 61% is female.

Willingness to attack

The binary question that follows immediately upon the scenario ask respondents whether they would like to continue to negotiate or to attack. From all respondents (N=745) 79.5% answers to prefer to negotiate, while only 18.4% answers to want to attack. The results show an extremely uneven distribution of this variable. Therefore, instead of this variable, a more nuanced measure is used. The question to indicate their level of agreement with an attack on *Other Country* on a 7-point rating scale shows to be skewed (skew=.739). This indicates that most participants lean towards disagreeing with an attack. However, there is sufficient variation (M=2.99, Var = 2.83, SD=1.68) to use this variable as the dependent variable in the following analyses.

5.4 Results

This study uses an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to study the influence of the factors regime-type, invasive behavior and the use of power of the opponent, the influence of liberal norms in interaction with regime-type and socialization, liberal norms as an individual-based factor, the influence of hawkishness, and the influence of gender. Table 5.3 shows the results. Model 1 shows the results of the ANOVA that bring together the treatments regime, invasiveness, use of power, socialization, and all possible interaction effects of these treatments and analyses the influence of these factors on the willingness to attack. Model 2 shows the results of the ANCOVA in which the same treatments and interactions are combined with the continuous variables liberal norms, hawkishness, the hypothesized interaction effects of liberal norms with socialization and regime-type, and controls for gender. The results of Model 2 offer the evidence to find support for the hypotheses. Model 1 is merely included to provide clarity of how the treatments might affect the willingness to attack of decision-makers. Below follows a discussion of the results.

Table 5-3 Explanatory factors for the willingness to attack

<i>Treatments</i>	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	F	η^2	F	η^2	F	η^2
Regime	.39	.00	.27	.00	.25	.00
Invasion	2.80	.00	1.58	.00	1.39	.00
Use of power	8.38 **	.01	6.75 **	.01	6.67 **	.01
Socialization	29.56 ****	.08	2.53 †	.01	.28	.00
Regime*Invasion	.57	.00	2.05	.00	1.93	.00
Regime*Use of power	.00	.00	.00	.00	.02	.00
Regime*Societalization	.30	.00	.20	.00	.19	.00
Invasion*Use of power	.05	.00	.36	.00	.51	.00
Invasion*Societalization	.80	.00	.23	.00	.43	.00
Use of power*Societalization	.82	.00	1.52	.01	1.33	.00
Regime*Invasion*Use of power	2.21	.00	1.67	.00	1.70	.00
Regime*Invasion*Societalization	.07	.00	.38	.00	.28	.00
Regime*Use of power*Societalization	.52	.00	.59	.00	.72	.00
Invasion*Use of power*Societalization	.33	.00	1.96	.01	1.83	.01
Regime*Invasion*Use of power*Societalization	.41	.00	.50	.00	.42	.00
Other factors						
Liberal norms			.03	.00	.01	.00
Hawkishness			104.12 ****	.13	101.35 ****	.13
Gender			.44	.00	.07	.00
Liberal Norms*Societalization			.54	.00	.33	.00
Liberal Norms*Regime			.37	.00	.35	.00
Liberal Norms*Societalization*Regime			.16	.00	.13	.00
Hawkishness*Societalization					5.26 ***	.02
R ²	.10		.23		.24	
N	744		715		715	

† = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p \leq .01$, *** = $p < .005$, **** = $p < .001$

Democratic peace theory

Democratic peace theory assumes a significant difference between decision-makers of liberal democracies and decision-makers of other regime-types in their willingness to attack liberal democracies. To find support for these theories, decision-makers of a liberal democracy would have to be significantly less willing to attack a liberal democracy over an autocracy, while their willingness to attack an autocracy would be similar to the willingness of decision-makers of non-democratic regimes to attack an opponent with any regime-type.

The analyses below investigate these expectations. To find support for hypothesis 3: *If at least one of the states in an interstate conflict does not have democratic institutions, its decision-makers will be more likely to use military action against the other state, but if both of the states have democratic institutions, decision-makers will be less likely to take military action against the other state*, there should be a significant influence from the interaction regime-type and socialization on the willingness to attack. Such interaction would be US decision-makers who respond differently towards a democracy than towards an autocracy, in contrast to the Russian and Chinese decision-makers who would not distinguish between a democratic or autocratic opponent.

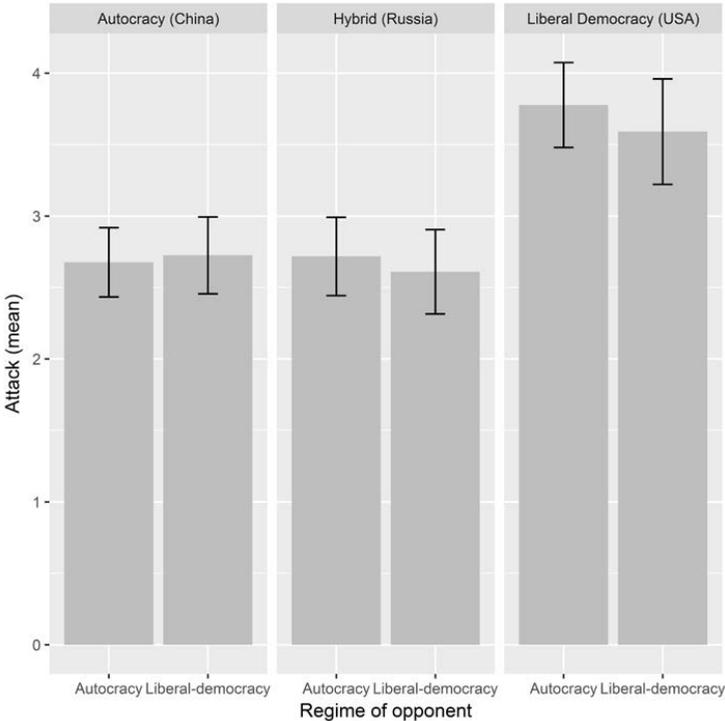
Table 5.3 shows that this interaction effect does not have any influence ($F_{model2} = .20, \eta^2 = .00$). Figure 5.3 portrays the willingness to attack of decision-makers on average per country and shows that regime-type²¹ is not of influence on the decision to attack. This result is alike cross-regime²²: nor the US decision-makers, neither the Russian and Chinese decision-makers differentiate between a democratic of an autocratic opponent. The expectation that decision-makers of liberal democracies respond differently to different regime-types than decision-makers of non-democratic regimes does not find empirical support.

Although the regime-type of the opponent does not significantly influence the decision-makers of all three countries, there is a different noteworthy result regarding the regime-type of the decision-makers (the factor socialization). Figure 5.3 also shows that the US decision-makers ($M = 3.69, SD=1.78$) are on average significantly more willing to attack any opponent ($F(2, 742) = 29.9, p<.001, r=.28$) than the Russian ($M = 2.67, SD=1.50$) or the Chinese decision-makers ($M = 2.70, SD=1.53$). Democratic peace theory would indeed expect such results for the Russian and Chinese decision-makers, however, not for the US decision-makers. The US decision-makers would be expected to be less war-prone, at least towards other democracies, but would not be expected to be more war-prone overall.

²¹ From the analysis of the treatment check we know the treatment regime-type was perceived by participants as intended, which means that the participants were well aware of the difference in regime-type.

²² Also when all decision-makers are considered as one sample, there is no significant influence of regime-type ($t(774) = .42$)

Figure 5.3 Attack by regime and socialized



Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

Within a multivariate analysis, this difference between the US decision-makers, on the one hand, and Russian and Chinese decision-makers, on the other hand, remains to be of significant influence ($F_{model1}=29.53, p<.001, \eta^2 = .08; F_{model2}= 2.53, p < .1, \eta^2 = .01$). The significance of the factor socialization indicates that there is indeed a socialization effect visible. However, it is unclear what kind of socialization effect this is, at this point in the analysis. In model 1, only the influence of the experimental treatments are tested. Model 2, then, introduces liberal norms, hawkishness, gender, and interaction effects of these factors with the treatment factors. The explanatory power of the factor socialization decreases strongly in model 2, compared to its influence in model 1. This finding indicates that one of the newly introduced factors in model 2 might be responsible, something that will be explored below.

For now, the conclusion is that regime-type does not seem to be of influence on the socialization effect. These results, therefore, show that the assumptions of democratic peace theory that posit that there must be an interaction between the regime-type of the decision-makers and the regime-type of the opposing state when trying to resolve a severe interstate conflict do not find support. Hypothesis 3, thus, does not find support.

Democratic peace theory also assumes that liberal norms are of influence on the willingness to attack. To recap briefly, there are two expectations about the effect of liberal norms. In chapter 4 was established that contrary to the expectations of democratic peace theory, liberal norms are not only present in liberal democracies but also present within different regime-types. Therefore, the assumptions of democratic peace theory that high levels of liberal norms exist only within liberal democracies do not find support. These findings, however, do not show the possible influence these norms can have on decision-makers, in particular in relation to the regime-type of the opponent. In other words, although liberal norms are present among decision-makers of all regime-types, democratic peace theory could still be right that these norms only influence decision-makers within liberal-democracies, as hypothesis 5 posited: *A higher level of liberal norms will make it less likely for decision-makers to use military action against a state with a liberal political culture; however, a lower level of liberal norms will make it more likely for decision-makers to take military action against any opposing state, regardless of their political culture.*

These expectations do not find support. Table 5.3 shows that the interaction between liberal norms, socialization and regime-type has no significant influence on the willingness to go to war ($F_{model2} = .37, \eta^2 = .00$). Also interactions of liberal norms with regime-type only ($F_{model2} = .37, \eta^2 = .00$) or socialization only ($F_{model2} = .54, \eta^2 = .00$) are not of significant influence. With these results, also hypothesis 5 does not find support.

Chapter 4 showed that liberal norms vary similarly among decision-makers of different regimes. With democratic peace theory in mind, it led to the speculation that liberal norms could influence decision-makers, in general, to be more peaceful. This speculation resulted in hypothesis 9: *Decision-makers with higher levels of liberal norms will be less willing to take military action against an opposing state during a severe interstate conflict than decision-makers with lower levels of liberal norms.*

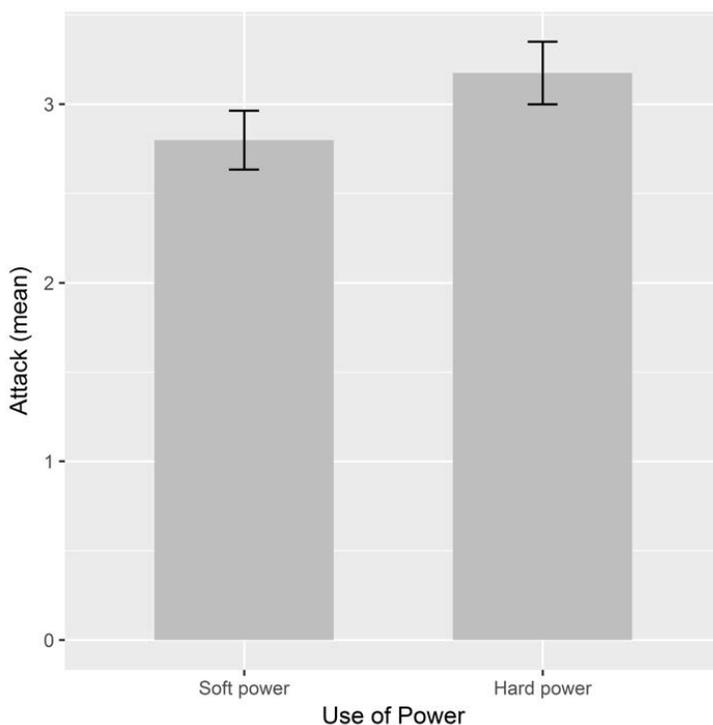
Also this expectation does not find support as table 5.3 shows ($F_{model2} = .03, \eta^2 = .00$). Individual liberal norms do not influence the willingness to take military action. Therefore, the conclusion based on these results is that the core assumptions of the democratic peace theory do not find support.

Behavior of opponent

An alternative explanation for the willingness to attack another state during a severe interstate conflict is the behavior of the opponent. This behavior is operationalized in two other treatments of the experiment: whether or not the opponent invades territory of the opponent, and the opponent's use of power. From the treatment check, we know that 'invasion' as a treatment is perceived as intended: the participants see the invasive treatment as significantly more violating the territory of their own country than the non-invasive treatment. However, that perceived difference in invasive behavior of *Other Country* does not show to have a significant relationship with their willingness to go to war. Whether or not the opponent invaded

the disputed area does not have a significant influence on the willingness to attack ($F_{model1} = 2.8, \eta^2 = .00$; $F_{model2} = 1.58, \eta^2 = .00$). These results are alike for all three samples; cross-regime, the invasion of the opponent did not show a significant relationship with the willingness to attack. Also when an invasion is considered to interact with other treatments such as regime-type, and use of power, there is no significant influence. Thereby hypothesis 1: *During a severe interstate conflict, decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state that invades their territory over the opposing state that does not invade their territory*, is unsupported.

Figure 5.4 Attack by use of power

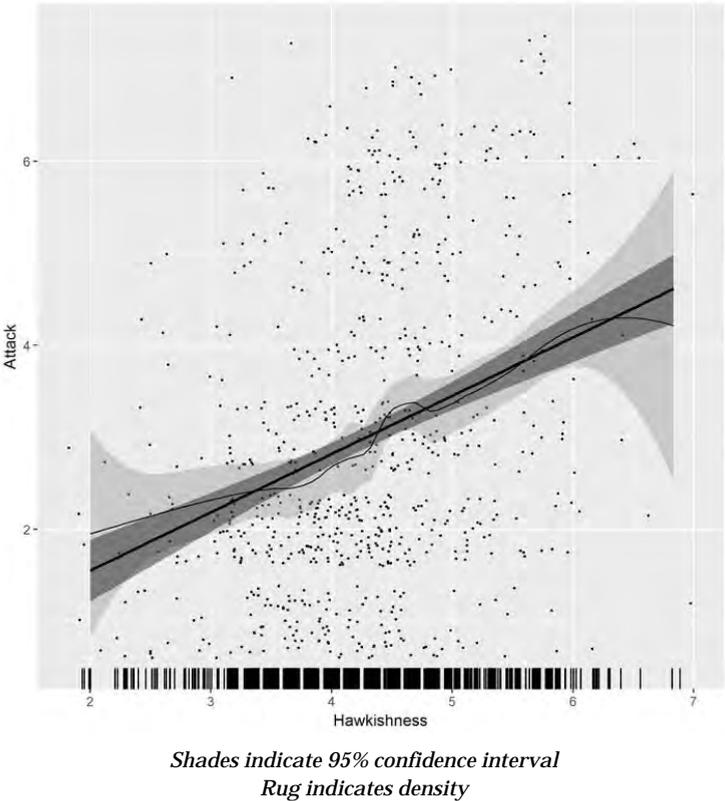


Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

The treatment 'use of power' was perceived as intended, and this factor shows to have a significant relationship with the willingness to attack. Figure 5.4 shows a significant difference ($t(741,14) = -3.07, p < .01$) in the willingness to attack between the different treatments of the use of power: decision-makers that experience the use of hard power ($M=3.20, SD=1.73$) by the opponent show to be significantly more willing to attack than decision-makers that experience the use of soft power ($M=2.82, SD=1.64$). This influence remains within a multivariate analysis: that the use of hard power increases the willingness to go to war significantly ($F_{model1} = 8.38, p < .01$,

$\eta^2=.01$; $F_{model2} = 6.75$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2=.01$). Thereby hypothesis 2: *During a severe interstate conflict, decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state that uses hard power over the opposing state that uses soft power*, finds support.

Figure 5.5 Relationship between hawkishness and attack²³



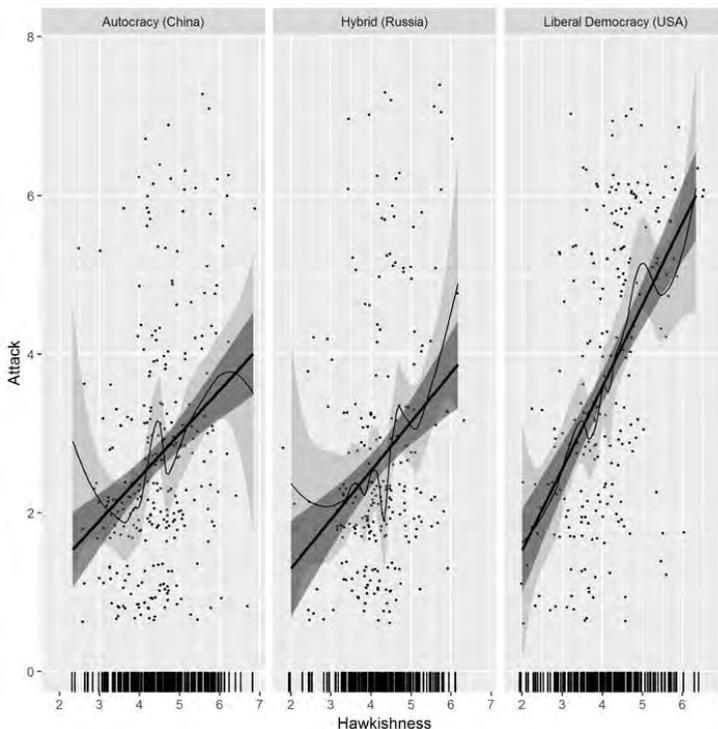
The relative explanatory power of hawkishness might shed light on the decreasing effect of socialization in model 2. Socialization, when tested in model 1 only along with the other treatments, shows to be of significant influence ($F_{modell}=29.56$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$). The conclusion of analyzing model 1 is that there is a significant difference in the willingness to attack from US decision-makers in comparison with Russian and Chinese decision-makers. With the introduction of the factors liberal norms and hawkishness in model 2 the effect and significance of the explanatory

²³ The scatterplot shows the relation between the level of hawkishness and the willingness to attack. The straight line is the regression line that represents the linear relationship. The curved line is the LOESS regression estimate that gives closer observations more weight and is therefore better able to detect non-linear patterns (if existing). The shades belonging to the lines represent the 95% confidence intervals. The rug, drawn on the horizontal axis, indicates the density.

power of socialization decreases strongly ($F_{model1} = 29.53$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$; $F_{model2} = 2.53$, $p < .1$, $\eta^2 = .01$). The best explanation for that decrease is the introduction of the individually-based explanatory factors. The factor hawkishness is the only factor that has a significant and substantial influence on the willingness to attack, which finding results in the question if the socialization effect is created by the factor hawkishness. It might be that the hawks of one specific country are more willing to attack than hawks of other countries.

To test for this inductively discovered interaction, model 3 also includes the interaction effect between socialization and hawkishness. Table 5.3 shows that this interaction is indeed the explanation for the socialization effect. The results show that the interaction between hawkishness and socialization has a small but substantial effect ($F_{model3} = 5.26$, $p < .005$, $\eta^2 = .02$). The factor socialization, which was a strong explanatory factor in model 1, a weak explanatory factor in model 2, loses all significant and substantial explanatory in model 3 ($F_{model1} = 29.56$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$; $F_{model2} = 2.53$, $p < .1$, $\eta^2 = .01$; $F_{model3} = .28$, $p > .005$, $\eta^2 = .00$).

Figure 5.6 Relationship between hawkishness, socialization, and attack



*Shades indicate 95% confidence interval
Rug indicates density*

Hawkishness, as an independent factor, remains its strong and substantial explanatory power, also in model 3 ($F_{model2} = 104.12$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$; $F_{model3} = 101.35$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$). Thus, hawkishness is indeed the main explanatory factor of the willingness of decision-makers to attack. These results are very clear: hawkishness explains for all decision-makers best the willingness to attack, and most strongly for US decision-makers²⁴. A quick inspection of the other significant factors in the model shows that there are no substantial changes, the use of power remains constant and substantial in its effect on the willingness to attack ($F_{model1} = 8.38$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .01$; $F_{model2} = 6.75$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .01$; $F_{model3} = 6.67$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .01$).

Gender

Unlike some previous studies, whether decision-makers are male or female shows to be of no influence on their willingness to attack. Thereby hypothesis 8: *During a severe interstate conflict, male decision-makers will be more likely to take military action towards the opposing state over female decision-makers*, does not find support.

5.5 Conclusion

What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when on the brink of war? The theoretical framework in chapter 3 formulates several hypotheses. Each hypothesis offers a factor that can explain why decision-makers are willing to go to war. These hypotheses build on the premise that decision-makers who are trying to resolve an interstate conflict on the brink of war will need information what factors are involved in making up their mind. The explicit assumption used in this research is that if decision-makers perceive the threat of a conflict as very high, they prefer to attack the opposing country to end the conflict. The question is what factors influence the increase (or decrease) of this threat perception.

This research tested several factors and studied the influence these have on the willingness to attack. First of all, democratic peace theory posits that the factor regime-type functions as a moderating factor that will decrease the willingness to go to attack, in particular among decision-makers that are themselves socialized within a liberal democratic regime. If decision-makers of liberal democracies know that the opponent is also a liberal democracy, the expectation is that the threat of the conflict decreases significantly so that these decision-makers will be less likely to attack. If they know, however, that the opponent is an autocracy, the threat is expected to increase significantly which will make their willingness to attack more likely.

Secondly, democratic peace theory also claims that individuals (and therefore also decision-makers) in liberal democracies are socialized with liberal norms, in contrast to individuals in other regime-types, and furthermore that these norms are of influence on the willingness to go to war with other liberal democracies. In chapter 4, it was established that liberal norms are prevailing within all types of regimes, and

²⁴ A test showed that hawkishness did not have an interaction effect with any of the other treatments.

moreover varying similarly within different types of regime. This finding shows that the assumption of democratic peace about the presence and absence of liberal norms in liberal democracies and autocracies respectively does not find empirical support. In this chapter, it is, however, tested whether the level of liberal norms does influence decision-makers of liberal democracies when they encounter other democracies during interstate conflicts, as is expected by democratic peace theory. Additionally, it also tested whether the level of liberal norms affects decision-makers in general, regardless their regime-type thereby understanding liberal norms as an actor-centric factor rather than a structurally-based factor as democratic peace theory does.

Thirdly, the behavior of the opposing state is considered as possibly influencing decision-makers to be willing to attack. This study tests whether an invasion by the opponent significantly increases the willingness to attack. Moreover, it tests if the use of hard power of the opponent increases the willingness to attack. Fourthly, besides the influence of actor-centric liberal norms as discussed above, other actor-centric factors are considered. This study tests if the level of hawkishness of decision-makers influences their willingness to go to war. Moreover, the study controls for gender as a possible influencer on the willingness to go to war. The analyses also included all relevant interactions. The study tested the hypotheses on decision-makers that were born and raised within three different regime-types: the US (liberal democracy), Russia (hybrid regime), and China (autocracy). Student samples were used as a proxy for decision-makers.

The results of this chapter show that the hypotheses generated by democratic peace theory does not find support. Regime-type did not influence the willingness to attack, also not for liberal-democratic decision-makers. Also when tested in interaction with the behavior of the other state, such as the use of power or an invasion, the results showed that regime-type did not influence decision-makers to be more willing to attack. Regarding the influence of liberal norms in interaction with the regime-type of the decision-makers (socialized) and the regime-type of the opponent, there was no significant influence on the willingness to attack. Moreover, also on the individual level liberal norms showed to be of no significant influence. Although it is assumed throughout the democratic peace literature (Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1994; Dixon & Senese, 2002, p. 549; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Jakobsen et al., 2016; Johns & Davies, 2012; Kahl, 1998; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Owen, 1994; Rawls, 1999; Ray, 1995; Risse-Kappen, 1995; Rousseau, 2005, pp. 27-28; Rummel, 1983; Tomz & Weeks, 2013; Van Belle, 1997; Weart, 1998, pp. 75-93) that liberal norms are of influence on the willingness to use force, in particular among decision-makers of liberal democracies, this research shows that there is no evidence to support that assumption. The assumptions that liberal democracy does something special with its citizens that makes them 'morally more advanced' (Doyle, 1983a, 1983b, 1986; Kant, 1795/2013a; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Rawls, 1999) and that would make them subsequently more peace prone, is empirically simply not supported.

Thus, decision-makers of liberal democracy and other regime-types alike showed not to be influenced by the regime-type of the opponent, nor their own

regime-type, or by the level of liberal norms. The conclusion is thus that democratic peace theory that aim to explain why decision-makers of liberal democracies tend not to fight with other liberal democracies do not find support empirically. The core assumptions of democratic peace, the essential building blocks of democratic peace theory that are used untested as empirical facts, do not find any support when tested along with alternative hypotheses in a comparative framework. These are important findings for democratic peace theory.

As argued above, previous experimental studies into the mechanisms of democratic peace theory (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013) focused mainly on the influence regime-type could have on the decision-making process. These studies have (except Bakker (2017)) not controlled for the assumed difference between decision-makers of different regime-types, nor have they measured or tested for the influence of liberal norms. What this study shows is how important it is to consider that assumed variance of socialization processes within different regimes (since these processes turn out to have a different output than assumed), and moreover, how important it is to introduce other relevant factors that might influence decision-makers to decide to attack.

The introduction of behavioral factors of the opposing state into the current study shows to provide intriguing new insights. Whether or not the opposing state invaded territory, showed to be of no significant influence. This result surprises; an invasion would seem to increase the threat of a conflict significantly, but it did not. A look at the scenario might clarify. In the used scenario *Other Country* does not invade the actual country but a more distant and uninhabited territory of *My Country*. The invaded territory is indeed richly filled with important resources, but the fact that it is uninhabited might have caused a less threatening situation for decision-makers then when it would have been *My Country* itself. This lesser threat perception might not lead to a significantly greater willingness to attack.

The use of hard power, however, shows to have a significant effect. The use of hard power over soft power shows to be of significant influence, and separate from other possibly influential factors (no interaction effect was detected). Its power also remains consistent over the three different models. Concluding, the hard use of power by the opponent during a severe interstate conflict significantly influences the willingness of decision-makers to attack them.

The introduction of actor-centric factors shows to be of value for the study of the decision-making processes during severe interstate conflicts, and in particular in relation to the democratic peace, something that was already raised by myself and others (Bakker, 2017, pp. 538-539; Farnham, 2003; Hermann & Kegley, 1995). The results of the current study show that what decision-makers already believe personally about conflict resolution is the most dominant explanatory factor: the more hawkish decision-makers are, the more likely they are to attack the opponent. The factor 'hawkishness' is unrelated to the conflict at hand and relies solely on the personal beliefs of decision-makers. Beliefs that must have been formed prior in their lives and are therefore not closely connected to the actual information that the

decision-makers have about the conflict and the opponent. This finding indicates that decisions to go to war might be less influenced by the conflict itself and have more to do with the way decision-makers already believe they should act to solve severe and threatening conflicts. This is an important insight, not only for democratic peace theory in particular but just as well for theories of conflict resolution and decision-making in general. Generally, these studies focus strongly on system-level and state-level structures and the assumed impact these have on decision-makers. The results of this study, however, show that beliefs held by individual decision-makers are of importance. It might be rather life itself that has socialized decision-makers individually with specific beliefs than structural circumstances. How to perceive a situation might be less triggered by what you see, but more by what you believe to be true. A finding that falls in line with work of other scholars that have argued that decision-makers tend to assess a situation or opponent based on what they expect to see (see e.g. Jervis, 1976, pp. pp. 356-381).

Hawkishness explains best and strongest the willingness to attack of all decision-makers of all three countries. However, the results show there was also an interaction effect of hawkishness and socialization. Although the average level of hawkishness is significantly lower among US decision-makers than among Russian and Chinese decision-makers, hawkish US decision-makers showed to be significantly more willing to attack. Hawks are in general more likely to attack, that goes for all decision-makers. Moreover, although on average there are less US hawks, if US decision-makers are hawkish, they are more willing to attack, even more than their counterparts in Russia and China. These findings show that although there seemed to be a socialization effect, it has nothing to do with liberal norms or regime-type, as democratic peace theory claims. The outcome was solely based on the level of hawkishness of the US sample. This finding raises the question if these results can be generalized for other US raised individuals. This question cannot be answered in this study but is surely reason for further investigation. These implications will be addressed in the concluding chapter 8.

To sum up, from the possible factors that decision-makers could be influenced by to opt for war to resolve an interstate conflict, there are two clear ones: first of all, the hawkishness of decision-makers, and secondly the use of power of the opposing state. Considering the relative strength of these two factors, it is obvious that hawkishness seems to explain best why decision-makers attack. Hawkishness is, however, a factor that has no direct relationship with the actual interstate conflict. An inspection of a possible interaction between hawkishness and the use of power shows that there is none. Which means that even though one contextual factor, the use of power in relation to the conflict, influences decision-makers to be more willing to attack, the influence of the use of power is unrelated to the hawkishness of decision-makers. Whether or not the behavior of the opponent will influence decision-makers during an interstate conflict, their hawkishness will do so in any case.

A few questions in relation to the influence of these factors remain. Based on these results, it seems that the foundations of democratic peace theory are empirically unsupported. That is a rather strong statement that can only be

postulated carefully. Therefore, a robustness check might be prudent. Such check might be to test the influence of the same factors on different foreign policy options that might be decided for during a severe interstate conflict. As discussed in chapter 3, the black and white conceptualization of war and peace –as used by democratic peace theory- is problematic. This problem shows itself, in particular, when testing possible explanations for the democratic peace because these try to capture the decision-making before the actual outcome of war and peace. Following earlier micro-level studies, this study has operationalized the willingness to attack as a proxy of a decision-maker willing to go to war. Simply because, from all foreign policy options available, an attack seems to be most threatening and therefore most likely to escalate eventually into a full-blown war. There are, however, scholars that might argue that the democratic peace exists not so much because liberal democracies are less willing to fight with other liberal democracies, but because they are more willing to continue to negotiate with them (an argument that might resonate with the argument of Risse-Kappen (1995)). Until now, it has been assumed by the body of earlier work, and by myself, that when measuring the willingness to attack, the *unwillingness* to attack would more or less equate a willingness to *negotiate*. Whether or not that is true, is an empirical question.

Therefore, the next chapter executes a robustness test in which the same experiment is used among the same samples to see whether these factors influence the willingness to negotiate, and moreover, whether the found influence is also valid when other policy options that range between to negotiate and to attack are decided for.

Chapter 6 Beyond the Dichotomy of War & Peace

6.1 What lies between war and peace?

Democratic peace theory aims to explain why decision-makers do not go to war with other liberal democracies. The argument is that the empirical finding of the democratic peace is caused by a mechanism prior to that peace: decision-makers of liberal democracies will perceive other liberal democracies as a lesser threat than other regime-types, and thus will they be less willing to go to war with them. The concept of war is, as discussed above, an ex-post assessment. Tests of this mechanism use the willingness (or support for) to attack as a measure of the concept of war (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013). This measure seems a plausible proxy because the willingness to attack is understood as the most threatening option of all options to resolve an interstate conflict. An attack always involves the use of military force and a crossing of sovereign borders. These characteristics makes an attack quite offensive and therefore most likely to escalate into a full-blown war, relative to other policy options.

With the same logic, the willingness to negotiate is implicitly used as a proxy for peace. The option to negotiate does not involve the use of military force, and the means are most peaceful, compared to other policy options. At the least, to negotiate indicates a negative peace: the absence of military force between states means an absence of war, and thus: democratic peace. Therefore, the willingness to negotiate is a reliable measure for to test for the mechanism that might lead to the democratic peace.

Within most studies (including the previous chapter), however, only the willingness to attack is used as a measure for war, based on the (implicit) assumptions that if decision-makers are unwilling to attack, they must favor peace and thus negotiations. The question is if that is a valid assumption. Does being unwilling to attack indeed equate with being willing to negotiate? Chapter 5 concluded with the remark that this question is an empirical one. Before arguing that the foundations of democratic peace theory need to be rejected, it should be tested whether or not regime-type, socialization by a regime, and liberal norms have the same (lack of) influence on the willingness to negotiate. If the results are similar to the willingness to attack, but in the reversed direction, it would show to be an important robustness check in support of the results of chapter 5. If not, the results might lead to more theoretical clarification regarding democratic peace theory. It might be possible that liberal democratic decision-makers are more willing to negotiate with other liberal democracies, in comparison with autocracies. The willingness to negotiate might turn out to be the actual mechanism that explains the democratic peace rather than the unwillingness to attack.

Moreover, as discussed in chapter 3, when states aim to resolve an interstate conflict, it is seldom a matter of war and peace. There are many more policy options

possible, all with the aim to resolve the conflict into the best possible and sustainable outcome for their own state. Between to negotiate and to attack lies a much wider range of options that differ in threat and thus deterring power. Conflict resolution aims to bring opponents together into a solution to which both can agree. If negotiation fails, there are several possible actions decision-makers can take to try to deter or compel the other party towards the wanted behavior. It might be more practical and less expensive for decision-makers to want to try an option less threatening than an attack but at the same time more threatening than to negotiate, to come to a resolution. For this chapter, a continuum of increasing threat is used with to negotiate on the 'peace pole' and to attack on the 'war pole'. It is assumed that several policy options lie between these two poles, which range in their level of threat in relation to these poles and each other. A range of four options is used, each of them of a lesser threat than an attack on the opponent. In order of decreasing threat; the next option short of attack is one that is still quite threatening and uses military power without attacking. This option is followed by a less threatening option that still poses a military threat, however less immediate and more into the future. The next in row could be a softer power option, which does pose a threat but not by military power, followed by the other pole of the spectrum in which there is no threat posed: negotiations. This rather abstract notion of policy options ranging on this spectrum will become more clear in the operationalization below.

The theoretical framework as used earlier is now applied for this empirical test. In the preceding chapter, it was studied what factors influence decision-makers when they have to decide how to resolve a severe interstate conflict on the brink of war. The results showed that the hawkishness of decision-makers was the strongest explanatory factor for their willingness to attack the opponent and that the use of hard power by the opposing state was also of modest but significant influence. Moreover, the results showed that the hypotheses generated from democratic peace theory did not find support. Following the logic of democratic peace theory, the option to negotiate seems to be the opposite option of an attack. Thus, if the results of chapter 5 are valid the same factors should be of influence on the willingness of decision-makers to negotiate, but in the reversed direction. The use of soft power by the opponent would influence decision-makers to be more willing to negotiate, and more dovish decision-makers would also be more willing to negotiate. If the findings of this chapter can corroborate the findings of chapter 5, then the implication would be that indeed the foundations of democratic peace theory have to be revisited.

It could also be possible, however, that the expectations of democratic peace theory –namely that the regime-type of the opponent, and/or the regime-type of the decision-maker (socialization), and/or liberal norms are of influence on conflict resolution during a severe interstate conflict- do find support when these democratic peace factors are tested for the willingness to negotiate. Democratic peace theory aims to explain why democracies do not end up fighting with one another, and possibly it might not be so much that democracies are unwilling to attack each other but rather willing to negotiate with each other. Geva and Hanson (1999) used their experiments to also measure the effect of a by democratic participants perceived

regime-type on the willingness to use a blockade or an isolationist approach and found the influence to be negligible. It is in that respect interesting to see whether or not liberal norms (either as an individual-centric factor or in interaction with regime-type) are of influence on the willingness to negotiate. Democratic peace theory relies heavily on the expectation that liberal norms socialize people into more benign individuals, if that influence is indeed anywhere to be expected it must be reflected in their willingness to negotiate.

The theoretical expectations for the other policy options are less clear-cut, but the leading logic is that the lesser a threat decision-makers experience, the lesser a threat they will want to use to deter the opponent. If hawkishness shows to be of influence as suggested by the results of chapter 5, the expectation is that hawkishness as an explanatory factor decreases in explanatory power for lesser threatening options. Being a hawk is probably of stronger influence on the option of a blockade or a nuclear missile program, and doves will be more likely to be willing to freeze relations and to negotiate. The same goes for the use of power. The hard use of power is expected to influence the decision for the more threatening options such as the blockade and the nuclear missile program, and the use of soft power is more likely to influence the decision for freezing the relations. Based on the results of chapter 5, it is expected that the other factors are not of influence.

6.2 Operationalization of policy options

The dependent variables, the different policy options in decreasing threat, are measured in a questionnaire that follows the scenario with the treatments. The continuum of decreasing threat, as described above, is underlying the operationalization of the different policy options. The first policy option just short of an attack is a blockade of the main port of the opposing country. It is a lesser threat than attack because there is no actual crossing of borders, but still, military force is used to create the blockade. The next option is to start a nuclear missile program in *Own Country*. The threat of possession of nuclear weapons is of enormous power, however, that power of threat is more diffused. It takes years to build such a program -if not decades- and many costs are involved. The threat of such a program is therefore imminent and lies more into the future than the present. At the same time, however, all parties involved can understand that once this option is chosen, it cannot be retracted quite easily without high costs, thereby posing a serious threat. The option of building nuclear missile programs belongs to policies of deterrence, in which decision-makers aim to balance nuclear power between states. The next option is the freezing of economic and diplomatic relations between the conflicting countries. This option is a lesser threat because such decisions can be reversed quite easily, after which the damage done will peter out soon enough to be able to reconcile relations. At the same time, it is considered to be more of a threat than to negotiate while such an option does affect the populations and economy of the opposing country. The last option is to negotiate, the least threatening option.

Table 6.1 Explanatory factors for different foreign policy options

	Block Port		Start NMP		Freeze relations		Negotiate	
	F	η^2	F	η^2	F	η^2	F	η^2
Treatments								
Regime	.38	.00	.05	.00	.31	.00	.31	.00
Invasion	1.16	.00	10.46	**	1.75	.00	.26	.00
Power	10.70	**	.54	.00	15.88	***	2.97	.00
Socialization	3.73	*	.65	.00	3.38	*	2.85	.01
Regime*Invasion	5.48	*	.95	.00	2.30	.00	1.21	.00
Regime*Power	.61	.00	.25	.00	.38	.00	.33	.00
Regime*Socialization	1.30	.00	1.23	.00	3.01	*	1.22	.00
Invasion*Power	.83	.00	.01	.00	.46	.00	.83	.00
Invasion*Socialization	4.33	*	.40	.00	.99	.00	.08	.00
Power*Socialization	1.63	.00	.59	.00	5.68	**	.49	.00
Regime*Invasion*Power	12.48	***	.33	.00	5.74	*	1.13	.00
Regime*Invasion*Socialization	.87	.00	1.41	.00	.38	.00	.74	.00
Regime*Power*Socialization	1.41	.00	.10	.00	.70	.00	.00	.00
Invasion*Power*Socialization	3.95	*	.22	.00	.46	.00	1.02	.00
Regime*Invasion*Power*Socialization	.07	.01	1.48	.00	1.04	.00	.23	.00
Other factors								
Liberal norms	3.92	*	.06	.00	.07	.00	5.37	*
Hawkishness	31.15	***	97.87	***	10.34	***	43.85	***
Gender	.08	.00	1.53	.00	2.93	.00	.78	.00
Liberal Norms*Socialization	3.81	*	.09	.00	1.77	.00	1.80	.00
Liberal Norms*Regime	.32	.00	.18	.00	.49	.00	.24	.00
Liberal Norms*Socialization*Regime	1.02	.00	1.73	.00	3.29	*	1.16	.00
Summary Statistics								
R ²	.18		.25		.14		.14	
N	714		713		714		715	

* = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

To account for this logic of decreasing threat, the real world offers a good example through the Cuban Missile Crisis. The moment the US detected the nuclear missiles on Cuba, the US perceived an increased threat from the USSR. President Kennedy decided to block Cuba in an attempt to resolve the conflict. The blockade of Cuba was a more direct threat than building more nuclear missiles, and a less direct threat than attacking Cuba with the US army. The blockade did, however, send a clear message towards Cuba (and the USSR) which could also have escalated into war. Therefore, the blockade could be called an act just short of war, in particular in relation to the used threat of nuclear missiles.

Each policy option is measured as a separate dependent variable by asking the participants to indicate how much they would approve of their country taking such an option on a rating scale between 1 (disapprove strongly) and 7 (approve strongly). To empirically test the effect of these factors on the different policy options, the same experiment is used among the same student samples of the US, Russia, and China as used in chapter 4 and 5.

6.3 Results

Option: to negotiate

The least threatening policy option of the used continuum is to negotiate. The participants indicate on a rating scale between 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree) how much they approve of continuing negotiations. The distribution is rather skewed (skew=-1.60) but there is still sufficient variation (M=5.88, Var = 1.70, SD=1.3) to use this variable as the dependent variable in the following analyses. The skewed nature of the willingness to negotiate mirrors more or less the skew of the willingness to attack.

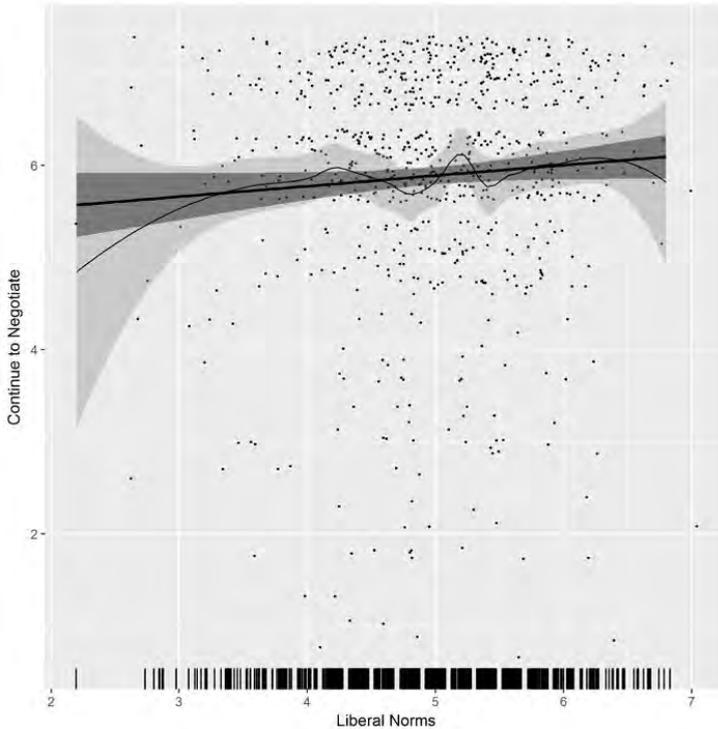
The reversed skew might be a first indication that the willingness to negotiate is indeed the other end of the spectrum opposite willingness to attack. If this is so, then a similar influence of the factors that explained the willingness to attack could be expected to influence the willingness to negotiate. Table 6.1, however, shows that this expectation does not find support. The use of power does not influence the willingness to negotiate. Neither are any of the other factors that surround the conflict.

Regime-type (neither of the opponent, nor of the decision-makers) does not influence the willingness to negotiate. If democratic peace theory would have been right that regime-type influences liberal democracies in their willingness to negotiate with each other then it should have been shown here. However, that is not the case.

There is one aspect of democratic peace theory that does find support. Liberal norms, considered on an individual level, shows to be influence on the willingness to negotiate ($F = 5.37, p < .05, \eta^2 = .01$). This influence is significant, however, the effect size is rather small. Still, this is an important finding. Liberal norms seem to matter indeed when it comes to the willingness to negotiate. Figure 6.1 shows that the

more decision-makers endorse liberal norms, the more willing they are to negotiate. That effect is similar for all decision-makers, and not only for decision-makers of a liberal-democracy (as democratic peace theory expect). That makes this finding intriguing, and it seems to support the conclusion of chapter 4: liberal norms seem to be a more individually based factor that affects individuals, irrespective of the regime from which they come.

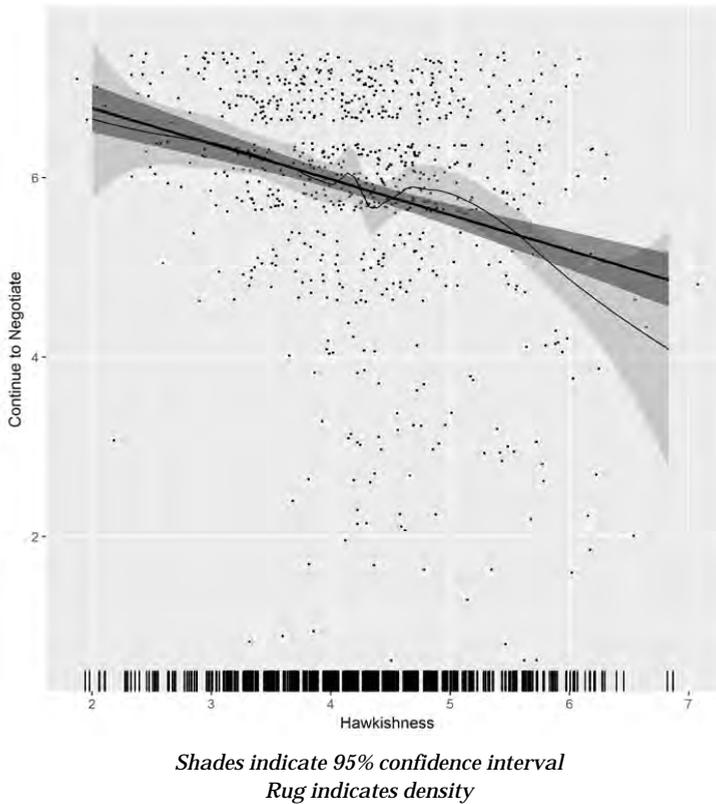
Figure 6.1 Relationship between liberal norms and negotiate



*Shades indicate 95% confidence interval
Rug indicates density*

The strongest explanatory factor for the willingness to negotiate, however, is hawkishness. Doves are significantly more willing to negotiate than hawks ($F = 43.85$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .06$), as figure 6.2 shows. This finding is in line with the expectations described above. The results for the willingness to negotiate support the conclusions of chapter 5 in which was argued that the foundations of democratic peace theory do not find support. Those findings are confirmed here. If the democratic peace could be explained by decision-makers of liberal democracies behaving more peacefully towards other liberal democracies, it would have been visible here.

Figure 6.2 Relationship between hawkishness and negotiate



Another notable finding is that none of the contextual factors have influenced the decision-makers; only actor-centric factors have been of influence. Whether or not decision-makers decide to negotiate is less connected to the actual conflict and seems to have more to do with their personal beliefs (being a dove, in this case) and to a lesser extent personal liberal norms. The willingness to negotiate shows to be more intrinsically tied to individual decision-makers' selves and not the actual conflict. A test of the interaction between hawkishness and socialization showed the reversed effect of the willingness to attack. American doves are significantly more willing to negotiate than American hawks ($f= 7.95, p < .001, \eta^2 = .2$), which means that the influence of hawkishness on decision-makers to negotiate is even stronger present for the American decision-makers.²⁵

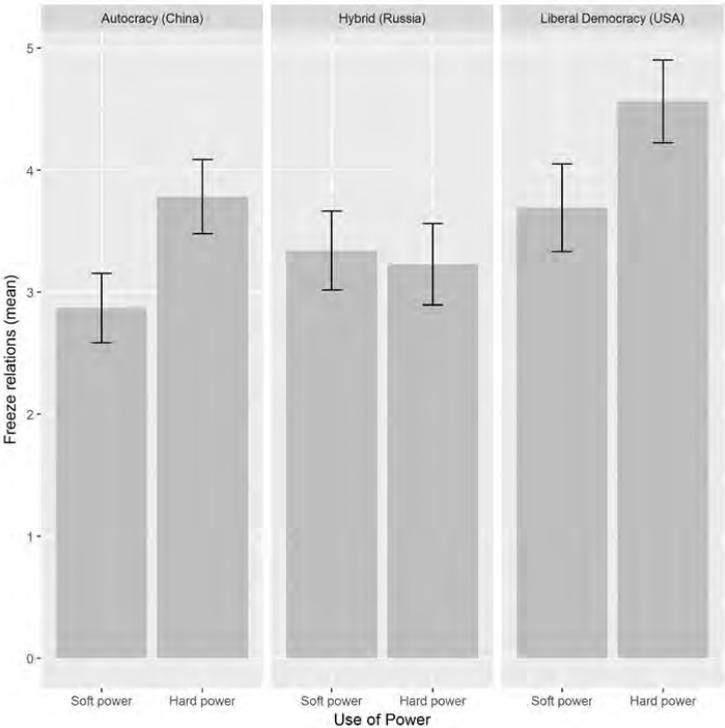
Option: freeze economic and diplomatic relations

A policy option that is a bit more threatening than to negotiate, but still relatively peaceful because it does not require military force, is the freezing of diplomatic and

²⁵ There was no significant interaction effect of hawkishness with socialization for all other measured policy options.

economic relations between opponents. The factors that influence the willingness to negotiate show, in the analysis above, to be quite straightforward. An investigation what factors influence the willingness to freeze all relations shows to be more ambiguous. Table 6.1 shows that many factors have a small but significant influence and, moreover, it shows in particular that these factors interact with other factors. A closer inspection learns that the strongest explanatory factors for the willingness to freeze relations are the same factors that explained the willingness to attack: are the use of power ($F = 15.88, p < .001, \eta^2 = .02$) and the hawkishness of decision-makers ($F = 10.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = .02$). Both factors, however, have a rather small effect size in particular in comparison with their explanatory power for the willingness to attack.

Figure 6.3 Freeze all relations by use of power and socialized



Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

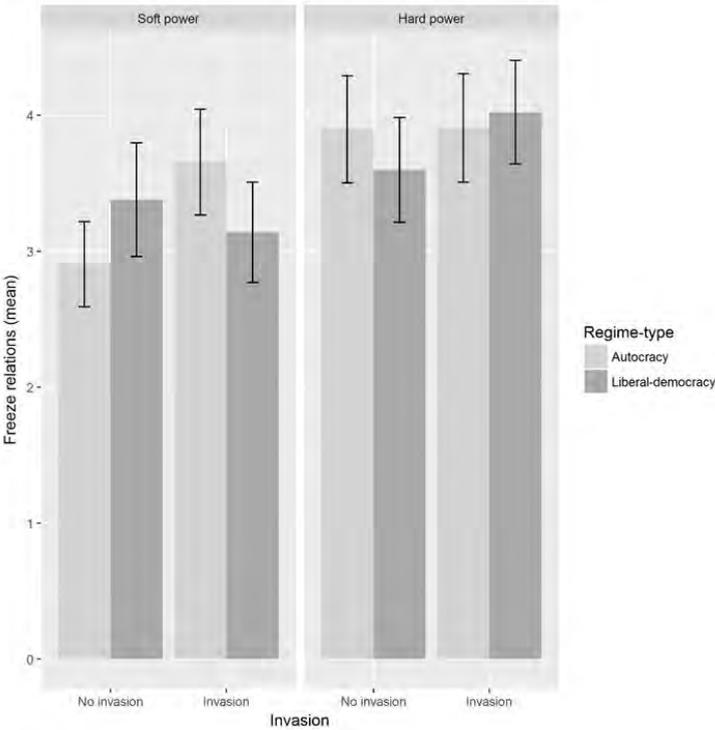
Moreover, the use of power has also two higher order interactions which could explain why the use of power is of such influence. The first interaction is the use of power and socialization ($F = 5.68, p < .01, \eta^2 = .02$), an interaction that has the same (small but substantial) effect size as the use of power on its own. Figure 6.3²⁶ shows why that is: the use of hard power indeed influences the willingness to freeze all

26 This effect explains also why the factor socialization shows to be of significant influence in table 6.1.

relations, however, this effect is only influencing the US and Chinese decision-makers. For the Russian decision-makers, the use of power turns out to be of no significant influence. The other interaction is the use of power with regime-type and invasiveness ($F = 5.74, p < .05, \eta^2 = .01$), as shown in figure 6.4.

At first sight, there seems to be no clear pattern. A closer inspection of the graph shows that there is actually one difference that explains this interaction: only when the opponent is a non-invasive autocracy that uses soft power, decision-makers are less likely to freeze all relations. In all other combinations, there is no significant difference in their willingness to freeze relations that relates to the significant influence that the factor use of power holds. Based on these interaction effects, the use of power has some influence on the willingness to freeze relations. However, this is not a straightforward pattern that can be generalized for all three samples of decision-makers. Furthermore, the influence of the use of power is contingent on a combination of factors, in other words: it depends on the context if it has an effect.

Figure 6.4 Freeze all relations by use of power, invasion, and regime

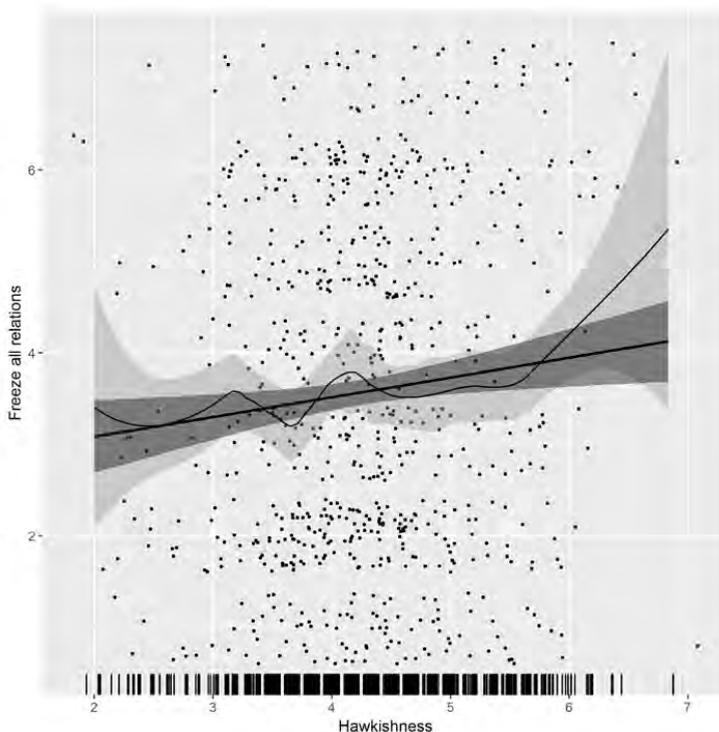


Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

Thus, hawkishness remains as the clearest and most straightforward explanatory factor. Although the influence of this factor shows a weaker effect size than its influence for the option to attack, the fact that hawkishness is also for this option the

strongest explanatory factor indicates that hawkishness is quite robust in its influence.

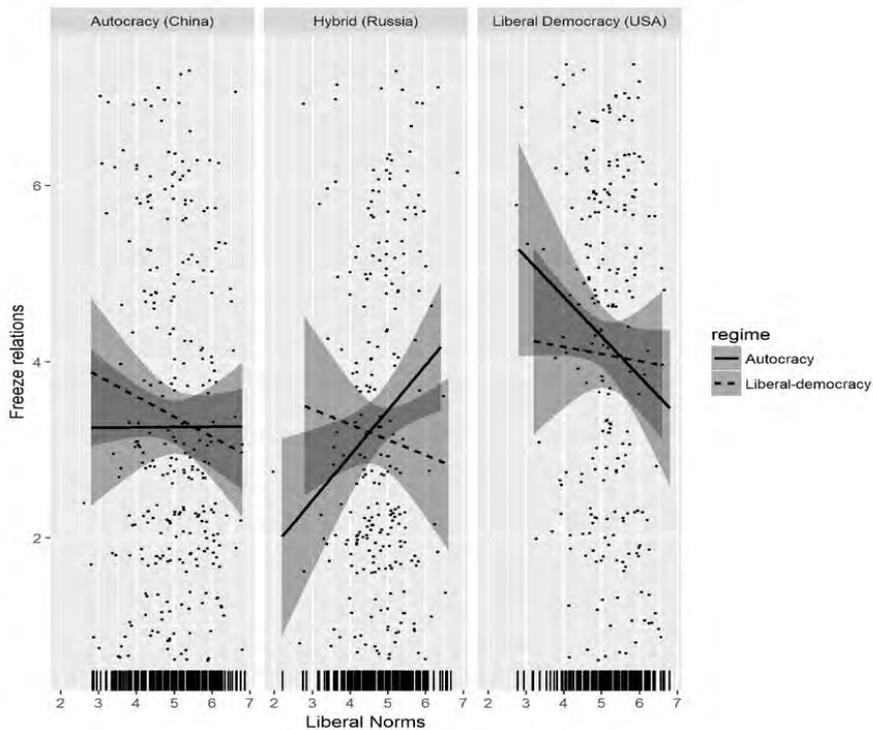
Figure 6.5 Relationship between hawkishness and freeze all relations



*Shades indicate 95% confidence interval
Rug indicates density*

An intriguing aspect of this influence is the direction of the influence. Above was assumed that the freezing of relations is a rather benign policy option since it does not involve the use of military force. It was, therefore, expected that if there would be an influence it would be doves that would favor this option over hawks. Figure 6.5, however, contradicts this expectation and shows that hawks tend to be more willing to freeze relations than doves. If these results hold out for the more threatening options, it would be an indication that doves only favor negotiations and that hawks favor other policy options as long as there is a threat involved, even if that threat is not of a military nature but an economic or diplomatic nature. The relative strength of the explanatory power of hawkishness in relation to the threat of the policy option makes a lot of sense then. Also the fact that contextual, however more diffused due to the interacting nature, factors can have some influence, next to a modest but significant effect of hawkishness.

Figure 6.6 Relationship between liberal norms, regime, socialization and freeze all relations



*Shades indicate 95% confidence interval
Rug indicates density*

Table 6.1 also shows a small but significant effect of the combined factors liberal norms, regime-type, and socialization. This interaction effect intrigues since democratic peace theory would expect such an interaction to have an effect on the willingness to attack, or on the willingness to negotiate. The logic of democratic peace theory would expect that the US decision-makers would be more willing to use peaceful means (such as freezing of relations because no military force is involved) than the Russian and Chinese decision-makers. Moreover, the expectation would also be that US decision-makers with high levels of liberal norms are more willing to freeze relations towards democracies and less willing towards autocracies than US decision-makers with lower levels of liberal norms. An examination of figure 6.6, however, shows that these expectations do not find support. Overall, figure 6.6 shows that that the lower the level of liberal norms, the more willing decision-makers are to freeze relations. There is one exception: when Russian decision-makers with low levels of liberal norms encounter autocracies, they are less willing to freeze relations. For all three samples of decision-makers, it goes that there is a difference based on the regime-type. These differences, however, do not show a clear and therefore

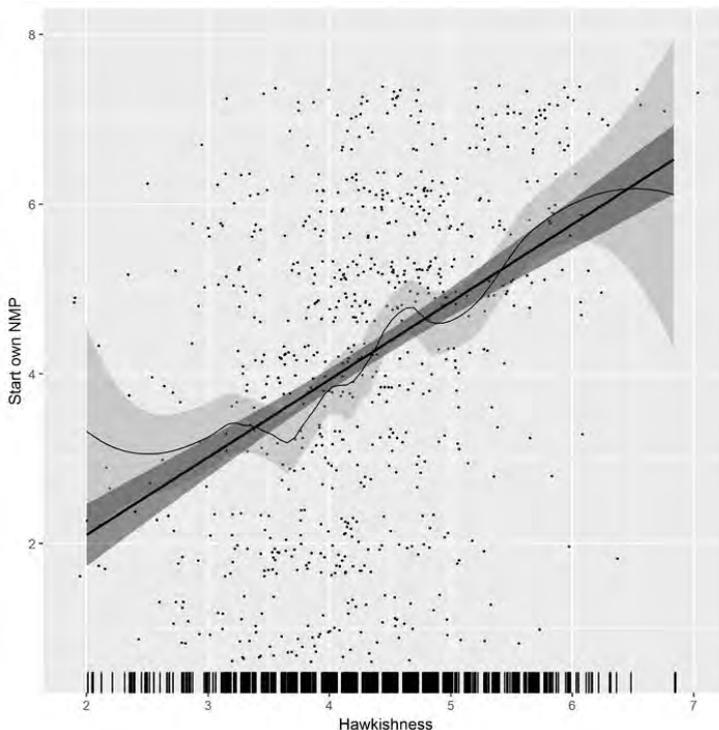
generalizable pattern. The conclusion is that the influence of the liberal norms, regime-type and socialization is not working as democratic peace studies expect.

To recap briefly; what influences the willingness to freeze economic and diplomatic relations is, in the first place, the hawkishness of decision-makers. Furthermore, the contextual factors that offer information about the conflict do have influence, however, not in a clear generalizable way, but more contingent (or possibly even strategically) on the behavior of the opponent.

Option: Start own nuclear missile program

More threatening than freezing relations is to opt for the building of a nuclear missiles program. This option involves nuclear missiles, which are very dangerous and threatening weapons, which makes the option a threatening one. However, the threat of these missiles lies in the future, because the building of such a programme will take quite some time.

Figure 6.7 Relationship between hawkishness and start NMP



*Shades indicate 95% confidence interval
Rug indicates density*

This aspect makes that this option is of a lesser threat than more direct policy options that involve immediate action by the army. What factors influence the willingness to

start a nuclear missile program is quite clear. The hawkishness of the decision-makers ($F = 97.87$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$) is also for this policy option the strongest explanatory factor. Based on the effect size, the strength of hawkishness shows to have a similar explanatory strength as its influence for the willingness to attack, as also evidenced in figure 6.7. These results also indicate that actor-centric beliefs about conflict resolution are the most important explanation of why decision-makers opt for building a nuclear missile program. There is, however, one contextual factor: if the opponent invades, decision-makers at large are significantly more willing to start a nuclear missile program within their country ($F = 10.46$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .02$) than when the opponent does not invade.

A closer look at the scenario used for the experiments explains this finding. The conflict was about a disputed area of uranium fields. Uranium provides the basis for nuclear weapons. In the invasion treatment, the opponent invaded these resources with the intent to exploit these resources in a nuclear missile program. It is not unlikely that the particularities of the conflict have triggered the decision-makers to wish to start a nuclear missiles program in their country as a response. This finding is an indication that the influence of a contextual factor, such as invasion in this case, is contingent on the context of the conflict. Moreover, it might be an indication that such a policy option comes close to being a strategy in response to the contextual behavior of the opposing state.

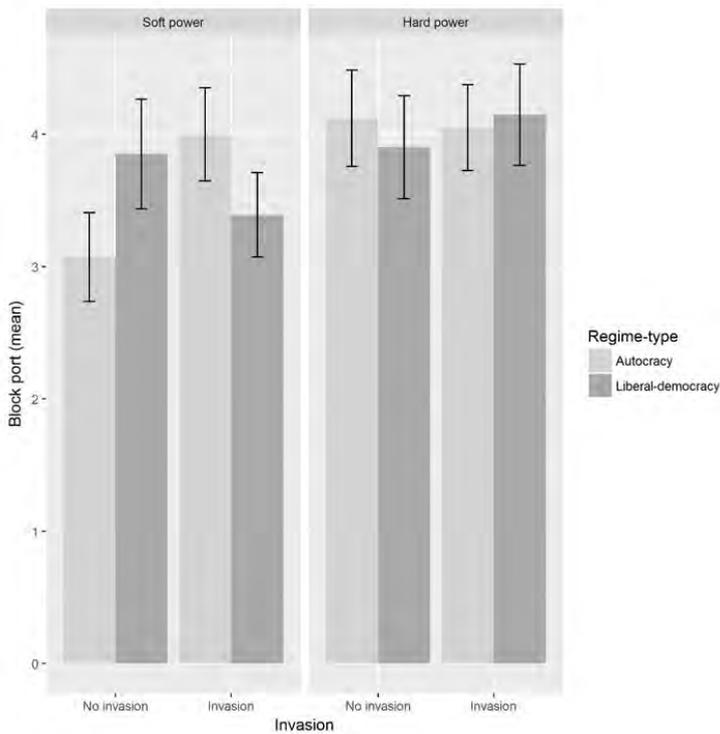
Option: blockade of opponent's main port

The last policy option on the continuum used for this research is the willingness to block the main port of the opposing country. This option is the most threatening from the previous options because it directly involves military action and uses military threat. However, it does not involve the crossing of the borders or a physical encounter with the military forces of the opponent, which makes the threat of a lesser nature than an actual military attack. What factors influence the willingness to block the main port of the opponent? This policy option is a rather threatening one. Military troops are necessary to do so, and although the actual use of military force is not necessary, it is not unlikely that it will be used. In other words, decision-makers that opt for a blockade indicate that they are not shy to use force, if necessary.

The results in table 6.1 show that the willingness to use a blockade does not show clearcut and generalizable patterns, except for the influence of the factor hawkishness ($F = 31.15$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$). The use of power is of influence ($F = 10.70$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .02$), however, just like with the freezing of relations, the use of power is interacting with other factors. These interactions are not in all instances similar to the interactions that explained the willingness to freeze relations, however.

The first interaction is between the use of power, regime-type and invasion ($f = 12.48$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$). This interaction shows the same pattern as these factors showed together for the willingness to freeze relations. Only if the opponent is a non-invasive soft power using autocracy, decision-makers are less willing to block the port than when any regime with any invasive behavior uses hard power. The relationship is visible in figure 6.8.

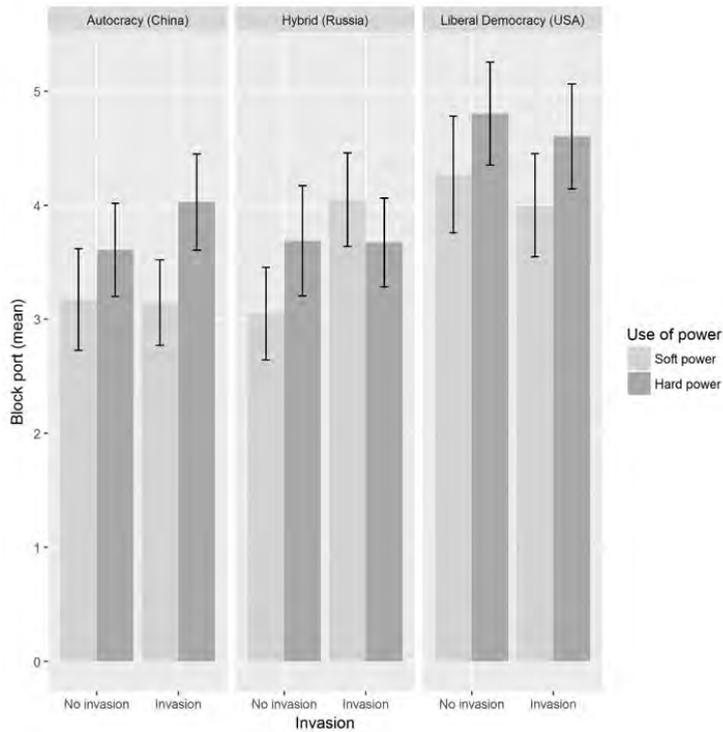
Figure 6.8 Blockade by use of power, invasion, and regime



Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

The use of power also interacts with invasion and socialization, which is, up to now, an unfamiliar pattern. Figure 6.9 shows that this pattern can also not easily be generalized. The Chinese decision-makers are more willing to block the port of an opponent who invaded their territory, but only if the opponent also uses hard power over soft power. The Russian decision-makers show a different pattern: they are more willing to use a blockade if a soft power opponent invades their territory. The US decision-makers do not differentiate between an invasion or the use of power in their willingness to use a blockade but show to be, overall, most willing to use a blockade. In other words, the interaction of use of power, invasion, and socialization in relation to the willingness to block the main port of the opponent shows at best that the behavior of the opponent has different consequences, depending on the different countries that perceive this behavior.

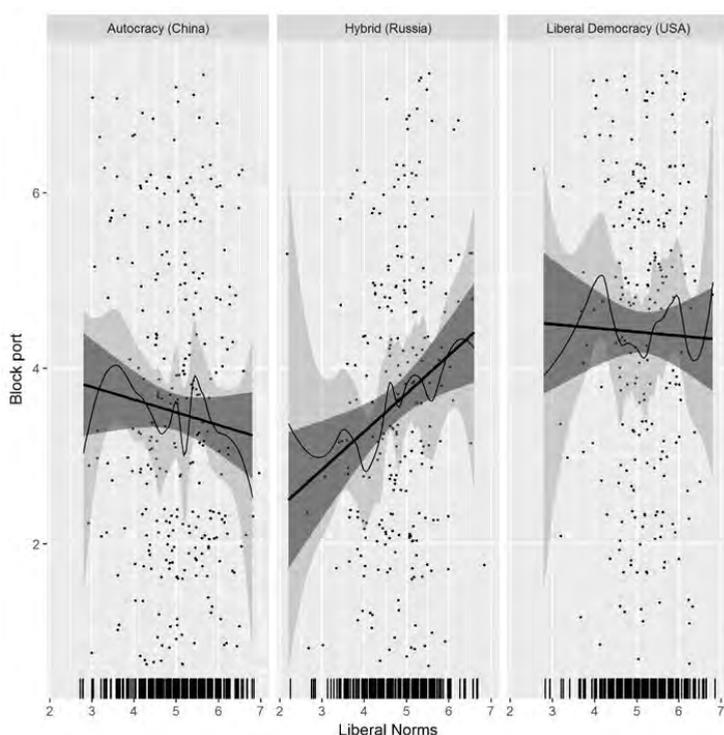
Figure 6.9 Blockade by use of power, invasion, and socialization



Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval

Another interaction remains, the one between liberal norms and socialization ($f = 3.81$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .01$). Figure 6.10 shows this interaction to be mainly driven by the Russian sample. Russian decision-makers with low levels of liberal norms are less willing to block the port, whereas there is no relation between liberal norms and the willingness to block for the US and Chinese decision-makers. The effect size of this interaction is also very small ($\eta^2 = .01$). However, the finding is important to note because the liberal norms are in play, the norms that are leading democratic peace theory. These results show that liberal norms have a small impact but only on the Russian decision-makers, a group that according to democratic peace theory would not be affected by liberal norms.

Figure 6.10 Relationship between liberal norms, socialization and blockade



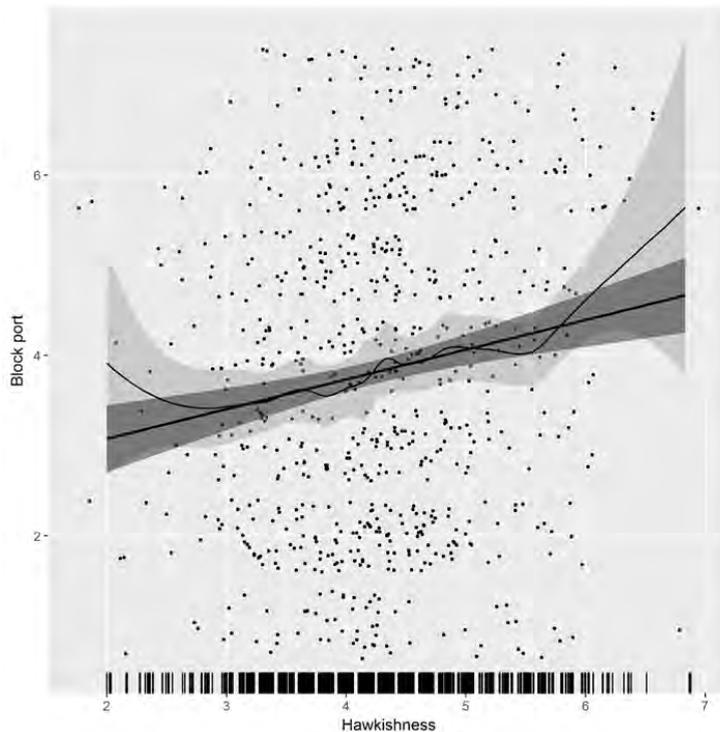
Shades indicate 95% confidence interval

Rug indicates density

The main explanatory factor²⁷, as indicated above already, and the one that is quite straightforward, relative to the other factors, is the hawkishness of the decision-makers ($F = 31.15$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$). Hawkishness is of significant and substantial influence. Figure 6.11 shows that the more hawkish decision-makers are, the more likely they are to block the main port. That goes for all decision-makers and is not related to one of the samples in particular.

²⁷ Table 6.1 also shows a significant influence of the interaction of invasion and socialization ($F = 4.33$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .00$), however, its effect size is extremely low, in particular in relation to the other significant factors. Therefore this interaction is not discussed.

Figure 6.11 Relationship between hawkishness and blockade



*Shades indicate 95% confidence interval
Rug indicates density*

Concluding, also for the willingness to block the main port of the opponent during a severe interstate conflict, it shows that the actor-centric factor of hawkishness offers the strongest explanation. Based on the more threatening nature of the policy option, it was expected that hawkishness would explain this option best. This expectation indeed finds support. The contextual factors show, also for this option, to not follow generalizable patterns. Just like the other policy options; if contextual factors play a role, their influence seems to be more ad hoc and in relation to situation at hand by decision-makers.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter investigated what influences decision-makers to decide for policy options –differing in the level of threat they pose- to resolve a severe interstate conflict. In chapter 5 it was established that the use of hard power by the opponent, and in particular the hawkishness of decision-makers themselves explain their willingness to attack best. The aim of chapter 5 was to test the assumptions of democratic peace theory that posit that decision-makers of liberal democracies would

not be willing to attack other liberal democracies, assumptions that did not find empirical support. The current chapter investigated if those results also hold true for the willingness to negotiate.

The policy option of negotiating is considered by many democratic peace studies as the opposite of the willingness to attack, and thereby understood a proxy for peace. The results of this chapter could, therefore, provide different insights. If the results turn out to be similar to the preceding chapter, but in the reversed direction, it would show the robustness of the empirical results of chapter 5. In that case, however, the robust results would also strengthen the argument of chapter 5 that democratic peace theory did not find support. Another possibility could be that democratic peace theory would find support. Even though regime-type did not affect liberal democratic decision-makers in their willingness to attack, it could be true that these decision-makers would be more willing to negotiate with other liberal democracies over autocracies. If this result would be visible, it might shed more light on democratic peace theory, and provide new evidence.

However, the results of the current chapter show, again, that democratic peace theory do not find empirical support. Neither the regime-type of the opponent nor the regime-type decision-makers are socialized in are of influence on the willingness to negotiate. Also, liberal norms, which are expected by democratic peace theory to have a significant influence on the willingness to negotiate of liberal democratic decision-makers with liberal democracies, did not show to have the expected effect. There was a small and significant effect of liberal norms on the willingness to negotiate, however, that effect showed to be individually based: decision-makers with higher levels of liberal norms showed to be more willing to negotiate than decision-makers that scored lower on liberal norms. This effect was, however, not for liberal-democratic decision-makers only, it was a general cross-regime effect. That result supports the earlier conclusions that if liberal norms are of any influence on decision-making processes, this influence is individually based rather than structure-based.

The strongest explanatory factor for decision-makers to be willing to negotiate was their hawkishness: doves showed to be significantly more willing to negotiate than hawks. This result is in line with the results of the preceding chapter, which showed that hawkishness is the most significant and strongest explanatory factor for the willingness to attack. The use of power, however, a factor that mattered for the willingness to attack, was not of significant influence on the willingness to negotiate. These results show that the willingness to negotiate is not exactly the opposite from the willingness to attack since the use of power turned out to be of no influence. Even more, none of the contextual factors influenced the decision-making, the only influential factors were actor-specific. This is an important insight that shows that the nuances of different policy options can be triggered by different factors.

This notion is supported when we take a look at the results for the other policy options. The actor-based factor hawkishness explains, in all cases, best the decision-making process, actor-based liberal norms have only in a few instances a small effect, and the contextual factors matter ad hoc. To start with the latter factors; there is no general pattern for the contextual factors regime-type, socialization, invasiveness,

and use of power. Whether or not a contextual factor is of influence seems to depend on the actual situation. Moreover, the actual situation turns out to be assessed differently by decision-makers of the different countries. It rather seems as if decision-makers are thinking more strategically when they opt for policy options that lie between the poles of attack and negotiate, and that this strategy can differ between countries. The use of power shows to be of influence on the willingness to freeze relations and to block the main port, however, this factor was often interacting with other contextual factors. The most common pattern was the autocracy that used soft power and did not invade; if decision-makers of all three countries encountered such an opponent, they were less willing to freeze relations or block the port over all other combinations of factors. Thus, these results indicate that a specific 'package' of information triggers the need to opt for a specific pressure by a policy option.

Another example is the use of power, which showed to be of influence on the willingness to freeze relations, however, not for the Russian decision-makers. All in all, for the options of freezing relations and the blockade, no clear pattern was visible. The results rather suggested that decision-makers might think more strategically in their efforts to deter or compel the opponent, based on the actions of the opponent. What is important to note is that the regime-type of the opponent hardly ever mattered.

There is another indication that might support the suggestion that decision-makers think more strategically when opting for policy options short of war, and that is the fact that of all contextual factors that might influence decision-makers to opt for the start of a nuclear missile program, only an invasion by the opponent showed to be of influence. As discussed above, the scenario of the experiment dealt explicitly with uranium fields. In the treatment invasion, the opponent would confiscate the uranium field and start working more actively but secretly on a nuclear missile program. The results show that the more invasive behavior of the opponent led to a greater willingness to build a nuclear missile program seems not only plausible but also a very strategic decision. It could well have been that the invasion by the opponent triggered a tit for tat reaction, which can explain the willingness to build a nuclear missile program. It is a great example of how context is very relevant for decision-making, as is often posited by qualitative scholars that argue that the context of every case can differ and can determine outcomes. To conclude in brief, contextual factors matter, however, not in a generalizable pattern. The influence is rather ad hoc and specific to the context of the conflict and the environment of the decision-makers.

Liberal norms were, in a few instances, of very modest influence, and as an actor-based factor. In other words, there was no specific interaction effect between liberal norms and regime-type of the opponent, or between liberal norm and socialization with regime-type, as posited by democratic peace theory. There was one exception: Russian decision-makers with low levels of liberal norms showed to be less willing to freeze all relations with autocracies. This influence had only a small effect, and moreover, a very unclear pattern. The conclusion is that liberal norms seem to be of some influence, it is, however, unclear how they affect decision-makers exactly.

What is clear is that liberal norms do not function as democratic peace theory suggests. Moreover, liberal norms are actor-based, but hardly generalizable in their influence when it comes to policy options. The only clear influence of high levels of liberal norms was on the willingness to negotiate.

What stands out throughout the whole analysis is the actor-based factor hawkishness that is in all cases the most influential factor. The level of hawkishness can convincingly explain a decision for each and all of the policy options. As expected, hawkishness can explain the decision for the more threatening options, such as the blockade and the start-up of a nuclear missile program, but also – to a lesser but still significant and substantial extent- the decision to freeze all relations. Moreover, the other end of the hawkishness spectrum shows to be also of influence: doves tend to be significantly more willing to negotiate than hawks. That goes for all decision-makers of all three countries. When it comes to the option to attack or to negotiate, the two poles of the continuum of policy options or in other words: the two roads that most likely lead to war or peace respectively, there is an even stronger effect of hawkishness among the US decision-makers. American hawks tend to be even more willing to attack and less willing to negotiate. These results show therefore that the findings of chapter 5 regarding hawkishness are quite robust, while hawkishness also explains best other threatening policy options.

The results of this chapter show, just like in the preceding chapter, that the individual level matters in interstate conflict resolution. Not only as an assessor of all factors surrounding the conflict but in particular for what beliefs they bring to the decision-making table. The results show, moreover, that the emphasis on regime-type as posited by democratic peace theory up to now is at least a bit exaggerated. The micro-foundations of democratic peace theory do not find any support in this research. What the implications for democratic peace theory are and how these results relate to earlier studies into the micro-foundations of democratic peace theory will be discussed in chapter 8.

In the next chapter, the findings that hawkishness of the decision-makers and the use of power explain best why decision-makers opt for an attack, and, thus, war, will be studied within a case study. Using process tracing methodology, the decision-making process of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher that led to the Falklands war is used to illustrate how the experimental results above would work out in a real world case.

Chapter 7 A Case Study: Thatcher the Hawk

7.1 An interpretative case study

The experiments from the preceding chapters show that hawkish decision-makers are more war-prone than dovish decision-makers during severe interstate conflicts. These results stand in contrast with democratic peace theory that argues that shared liberal democratic norms and institutions can decrease war-proneness of decision-makers and that the absence of those norms and institutions within at least one of both states during an interstate conflict on the brink of war will increase their war-proneness. This chapter aims to take the experimental results of chapter 5 and compare these with evidence of a case to illustrate how the experimental results work out in the real world.

For this purpose, the decision-making process of British prime minister Margaret Thatcher leading to the Falklands War with Argentina is selected for an interpretative case study, to use Lijphart's categorization (1975, p. 692). The aim is thus not to build a new theory, but to use the general pattern that was found to 'throw light on a case' (Lijphart, 1975, p. 692) and come to a better understanding of what these patterns might mean. The theoretical value of this case study is therefore neglectable, but the case does serve the purpose of illustrating the soundness of the experimental results. The research question of this chapter is thus can the hawkishness of Thatcher explain the outcome of the conflict between the UK²⁸ and Argentina, the Falklands War?

The case is thus selected on the parameters that are informed by the results of the earlier chapters. The core argument for selecting the Falklands War as a case is that many factors are relevant to the experimental study. Most importantly, regarding the aim of this chapter, the main decision-maker of Britain, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (hereafter Thatcher), was a pre-dominant leader (Heffernan, 2003, p. 366) with a hawkish stance, as will be elaborated more in depth below. Moreover, democratic peace theorists would argue that the escalation of the interstate conflict between the UK and Argentina into a war would be evident. The UK was (and still is) a consolidated liberal democracy²⁹ (Kesselman et al., 2006, pp. 135-150), and Argentina was at the time an autocracy³⁰ (Linz & Stepan, 1996, pp. 190-200). It will, therefore, be a less-likely case to expect hawkishness to be the main explanatory factor for the decision to go to war and will thus be informative in what respect the hawkishness of Thatcher played a role in her decision to start a war with Argentina in relation to the regime-type. Also, being the result of an ongoing interstate conflict, the Falklands War fits the described interstate conflict of the experiments quite well.

²⁸ The names UK and Britain will be used interchangeably.

²⁹ Established sources confirm this classification. Britain is ranked in 1982 a 10 (=democracy) within the Polity IV project

³⁰ Established sources confirm this classification. Argentina in 1982 ranked an -8 (=autocracy) within the Polity IV project.

A more practical reason for the case selection is the availability of the data. The Falklands War is well documented, scholars have captured the conflict between Britain and Argentina based on all materials available including all classified government materials (Freedman, 2004; Hastings & Jenkins, 1987). Also, the history leading up to the conflict is well documented from both sides. In 2012 most classified governmental documents of the Brits were unclassified, which gives the opportunity to have access to some primary sources about the decision-making process (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 1991-2016). Moreover, last but not least, Margaret Thatcher is a well documented and researched political leader (Aitken, 2013; Crichlow, 2006; Dyson, 2008; Moore, 2013; Steinberg, 2008). Not in the least because Thatcher herself published memoirs (Thatcher, 1995), including a chapter about the Falklands War which she also published separately in 2012 under the title *Thatcher's War* (Thatcher, 1995, pp. 173-235).

7.2 Tracing the mechanisms

Process tracing methodology is used to illustrate the relationship between the hawkishness of decision-makers and their willingness to attack. Process tracing is “an analytical tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from diagnostic pieces of evidence” (Collier, 2011, p. 824) that focuses on specific moments in time and links these together to show how an independent variable has influenced the dependent variable (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 4; Collier, 2011, p. 824; George & Bennett, 2005, p. 206). In other words, by studying a case in depth but focused on particular theoretically determined crucial elements -rather than all elements-, a rich illustration of the process underlying a mechanism can be described.

Process tracing can be used in several ways (see: Beach & Pedersen, 2013, pp. 13-14; Collier, 2011, pp. 826-827) depending on the research question at hand. Although this chapter will merely illustrate how the mechanism could be detected within the case, it will use the logic of theory-testing process tracing. This type of process tracing can be used if the independent and dependent variable are known, and there is at least an ‘existing conjecture about a plausible causal mechanism’ between these variables (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 14), for which the experiments have provided. To do so, the causal mechanism needs to be conceptualized, including the specifics surrounding the hypothesized mechanism. After that, case-specific predictions are made to operationalize the mechanism, after which the empirical evidence is used to trace if the hypothesized process indeed occurred as expected (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, pp. 56-58).

This chapter will study the mechanisms suggested by the robust results of the experiments among decision-makers: 1) The influence of hawkishness on the willingness of decision-makers to attack the opponent during a severe interstate conflict, and 2) the influence of the use of power by the opponent on the willingness of decision-makers to attack the opponent during a severe interstate conflict. Regarding the first mechanism: the experimental results show that individually held beliefs mainly guide decision-makers during conflict resolution. The more hawkish

beliefs they hold, the more willing they are to go to war. Regardless of the regime they are socialized in and regardless of the regime-type of their opponents. These results lead to the expectation that a hawkish decision-maker will be more likely to attack the opponent during a severe interstate conflict than a dovish decision-maker.

Regarding the second mechanism: the experimental results show, however less strongly than the first mechanism, that the use of power by the opponent also influenced decision-makers. If the opponent used hard power over soft power, decision-makers were more likely to attack than when the opponent used soft power. The factor hawkishness and use of power of the opponent showed to be of independent influence on decision-makers, the empirical results did not indicate an interaction effect. Thus, both factors will be studied for their separate influence on decision-makers during a severe interstate conflict.

7.3 Conceptualization

The conceptualization of the mechanisms, the independent variables, and the dependent variable, as well as the specifics surrounding the expected mechanisms, relies on the empirical results of chapter 5. The logic below thus follows in its conceptualization the specifics of the experiment that led to the empirically detected causal mechanism.

Decision-makers during a severe interstate conflict with other states need information about all factors surrounding the conflict before they can decide how to proceed. The information they gather will create a perception of threat. This threat perception leads their decisions regarding conflict resolution. When the interstate conflict is enduring and severe (meaning: a military confrontation can seriously be expected), the question is what influences decision-makers to decide to attack the opponent. In other words: what heightens the threat of the conflict as perceived by decision-makers that the option to attack is a likely decision? Following chapter 5, the proposition is that decision-makers, just like all individuals, hold specific beliefs. Also beliefs regarding the best way to resolve interstate conflicts. Often, it is assumed that contextual factors or the nature of the conflict guide decision-makers to want to use military force towards the opponent; how the opponent behaves creates the threat.

The interstate conflict deals with an issue over territory to which both parties feel they have a legitimate claim. The conflict has been going on for quite some time, and there have been many attempts to come to a resolution. However, every time both parties have failed to come to an agreement. The main decision-makers have to decide now what to do to resolve the conflict in the by them desired direction.

Based on the experimental results, this chapter expects that decision-makers hold beliefs about conflict resolution that can be placed on a continuum of hawkishness and dovishness (Braumoeller, 1997; Kahneman & Renshon, 2007; Klugman, 1985). On one side of the continuum, we find the doves, individuals who believe that conflicts should be solved by cooperation, negotiation and peaceful behavior. Doves believe that violence will bring about more violence and therefore one should behave as we want others to behave. To decrease the threat of an

opponent during a conflict, one needs to take a non-threatening position (Colaresi, 2004). On the opposite side of the continuum, we find the hawks. These individuals believe that conflicts should be resolved with the use of force, by threatening others with our strengths and capabilities to force the other party to surrender to us and diminish the threat of the opponent in that way. Hawks typically see the use of force and power as a legitimate option, whereas doves intrinsically prefer to continue to speak and not use any force (Klugman, 1985, pp. 579-580). Hawks perceive the threat of a severe conflict independently of contextual factors, in contrast to the expectations of other theories such as democratic peace theory. The belief seems to be more intrinsic to the decision-maker and less influenced by the (assessment of the) structure around the decision-makers.

During a severe and stalled interstate conflict, hawkish beliefs held by decision-makers can explain why they opt for an attack on the opponent and thereby might start what later be called a war. A hawkish leader, guided by a belief that force is the best way to respond to threats to diminish that threat, will, whatever information about the conflict is provided, lean towards an attack. All information is weighted by the beliefs of the decision-maker rather than by contextual factors, such as the behavior or the regime-type of the opposing state, and these beliefs shape the perception of the hawkish decision-maker. Other factors do not seem to matter but are rather moments in time in which the hawkishness is iterated, however not influenced or inflamed by these factors. In other words, a hawkish leader would have come to the same decision to attack during a severe interstate conflict, independently of the behavior and regime-type of the other state. Specifically, hawkish decision-makers will not refer to the regime-type of the opponent to justify their decision to attack, but rather to the general belief that force is intrinsically necessary to resolve a conflict with another state during a deadlock and severe conflict.

One contextual factor seems to be of independent influence on the decision-making process, and that is the use of power by the opponent. When the decision-maker understands that the other party is using hard power to resolve the conflict, this is a likely trigger for the decision-makers to want to use force. This is alike for all decision-makers, not particularly for hawkish decision-makers. The use of hard power is basically a state that prepares for war. Troops are mobilized, ships are prepared for battle, military exercises are conducted, preferably close to the borders of the opponent. An opponent preparing for war triggers a reaction to get into war.

7.4 Data

To study Thatcher's decision-making process during the interstate conflict with Argentina over the Falklands leading up to the decision to go to war with Argentina, primary and secondary sources are used. The primary data serves to reconstruct the decision-making process, supported by secondary sources. The primary data comes from the Margaret Thatcher Foundation (1991-2016), which has archived all documents of the public life and work of the former Prime Minister. The collection, online published, contains all documents that are relevant to the Falklands' War,

including the in 2012 unclassified and declassified materials of the Falklands War and the Franks Report³¹. Also, the transcripts of speeches, interviews, comments, and Thatcher's answers to the House of Commons³², and foreign (of the US and France) official documents relevant to the case can be traced in the archive of the Thatcher Foundation. The analysis rests on specific documentation, selected with the help of the search function of the archive. The main source is the (top) secret Prime Minister files (PM19/614 through PM19/621) from the period 1-26 April 1982. In addition, all documents archived under 'Falklands' in the period of 1 January 1982 until 15 June 1982 and coded as 'key' and 'major' documents, are used.

The secondary literature about the Falklands War comprises of two comprehensive studies of the Falklands War, which extensively discuss the path leading up to the war, the war itself and its aftermath. These authoritative studies are: "The Battle for the Falklands" by Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins (1987), and "The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 1: The Origins of the Falklands War" by Lawrence Freedman (2004). The latter bases itself on full access to all, including the in 2004 still all classified, government documents and materials.

The main secondary source to study Thatchers' beliefs is a personality study of Thatcher executed by Blema Steinberg (2008), supplemented by other studies in which Thatcher was (partly) topic of research (Crichlow, 2006; Dyson, 2008). To thicken the understanding and knowledge of Thatcher, biographical materials are consulted. Thatchers' memoirs "The Downing Street Years" (Thatcher, 1995), an authorized biography "Margaret Thatcher, the Authorized Biography" by Charles Moore (2013), and "Margaret Thatcher, Power and Personality" by Jonathan Aitken (2013). The latter biography serves mainly as supplemental information. It was written after Thatcher's death in 2013 and bases itself on the personal recollection of Aitken, someone who has been close to Thatcher during her years in office. His accounts are personal and based on personal observations and judgments. Therefore, this biography assists in getting deeper insights into the personality and beliefs of Thatcher because it was written by a person who has been in proximity to Thatcher during the Falklands War. It is, due to the personal character of the recollection, never used as single standing evidence but only as support for more official and reliable sources.

7.5 Operationalization & background information

The section below discusses how the factors hawkishness of the decision-maker, severe conflict on the brink of war, and the behavior of the opposing state are operationalized within the case of the Falklands War. Above was already discussed that the UK is operationalized as the liberal democracy, and Argentina at the time as an autocracy.

³¹ After the Falklands' war Thatcher installed Committee of Privy Counselors with Lord Oliver Franks as chairman to study the crisis and war. The results are generally known as the Franks Report.

³² The documents referred to the House of Commons as 'H of C'

Thatcher, the hawkish decision-maker

Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013) became the leader of the British Conservative Party in 1975. After managing the shadow cabinet for four years, she was elected Prime Minister of the UK in 1979. Her election made of Thatcher the very first woman ever to have held the office of Prime Minister in Britain. She was often called 'The Iron Lady', a nickname -once given to her by a Soviet journalist- that she lovingly embraced herself (Thatcher, 1995, p. 184). The rest of the world quickly followed, and the nickname persisted, no doubt due to her firm hand of ruling. Under her premiership, many political and economic changes were implemented, such as major changes in taxation and public spending, and the privatization of many national industries and utilities. It led to protests and strikes within the UK, however, despite the fierce and enduring strikes Thatcher held strong to her beliefs in what was serving Britain and what not. In this sense, she was described as an activist more than anything else, a leader that wanted to do things and not just deliberate to come to a consensus (Steinberg, 2008, pp. 273-274).

Margaret Thatcher was a typical 'conviction' politician. One with clear goals and indefeasible convictions (Steinberg, 2008, p. 8), thereby relying on a rather 'black-and-white' thinking based on few key political beliefs (in particular during the Falklands' crisis) (Dyson, 2008, p. 14). Thatcher was a fighter, someone "to whom beckoning disaster was cause only to double her faith" (Steinberg, 2008, p. 219). She strongly followed her convictions on how the government should function and could react surprised if others had a different view. "Conviction was in her bones and in her mind: to take any step backward would be "absolutely fatal"" (Steinberg, 2008, p. 219). She preferred that the people surrounding her would be on the same page and at the beginning of 1981, she started to move cabinet members around to find herself within a cabinet more of her liking (Steinberg, 2008, pp. 219-220). Thatcher did not like challenges of her power which led her to centralize powers of civil services and local government to her office (Steinberg, 2008, p. 270). She was determined to have everybody in line and follow her political beliefs, thereby ruthlessly 'extinguish any internal or external rivals' (Steinberg, 2008, p. 270).

She held strong control over her cabinet members, by being the active leader and also not hesitating to avoid cabinet discussion of issues or to exclude important cabinet members from important meetings (Steinberg, 2008, p. 271). One of her famous quotes is: "I don't mind how much my ministers talk – as long as they do what I say" (Steinberg, 2008, p. 270). She also kept control by working very hard: she read with scrutiny every word written in documents. Moreover, she personally revised all writings (by herself and others) over and over again until she was satisfied with every detail in it. She was eager to get all information possible, preferably from external sources, and would be involved in all steps of decision-making processes (Steinberg, 2008, pp. 280-283).

Thatcher was not too concerned with being popular, as long as she could control the political settings around her she was content. The only validation Thatcher would seek was that of character: being courageous and brave, something she often emphasized as a character trait about herself (Steinberg, 2008, p. 273).

Thatcher's strong personality and her willingness to stay true to her personal beliefs is considered to have been the leading influence on the actions that the UK took during the conflict with Argentina (Crichlow, 2006, p. 89).

Based on the personality profiling and leadership assessment of Steinberg (Steinberg, 2008, pp. 239-300) Thatcher's main and most influential personality trait was being dominant, directly followed by being contentious and ambitious. Already since childhood, Thatcher knew what she wanted, and why, and would fight to get it. Although she was the second daughter in her family, her politically involved father raised her as if she was his firstborn son. Like her father, politics came naturally to her (Steinberg, 2008, pp. 240-241). Already quite young she had her convictions and would defend them with fierce power, so much even that discussion was almost impossible. Already at a very young age, Thatcher would aim at convincing others rather than discussing ideas with them (Steinberg, 2008, pp. 240-241). Steinberg (2008, pp. 266-270) translates the personality traits of dominance, contentiousness, and ambition into a leadership style that is characterized by ideology and a strong taste for power. Thatcher had a dominant personality with the strong need to survive the world by dominating and controlling that world (Steinberg, 2008, p. 243).

Regarding foreign policy, in Thatcher's early years as Prime Minister she lacked experience and knowledge. This lack stood, however, not in her way to hold firmly to her own beliefs and opinions. She took a powerful role in decision-making, thereby led by her personal beliefs and convictions (Dyson, 2008, p. 81). Dyson (2008) used operational coding of comments made by Thatcher during her interactions with the House of Commons to establish a typology of her basic beliefs of the political world and preferred types of behavior. Based on that he assessed that Thatcher would think of herself as favoring a conditional cooperation strategy of deterrence while predicting that the enemy would use a conditional conflict strategy of compellence (Dyson, 2008, p. 85). Dyson assessed Thatcher as someone who sees herself using threat to deter the opponent and using force if other means are not possible. At the same time, according to Dyson, Thatcher would blame her enemy for being the invoker of her using force.

Based on the different accounts of Thatcher being a politician of conviction and holding headstrong to her own beliefs, and her tendency to react to threats with determination to control the threat, if necessary by force, it can be concluded that Thatcher can be categorized as a hawkish decision-maker. Moreover, although Thatcher was a leader that informed herself also by sources outside of her circles, it was also very clear that if she had made up her mind, she would stick to it and expect everybody else to support her. Something that often also happened. The question is now whether or not the hawkishness of Margaret Thatcher had such an influence that it caused her to decide to go to war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands.

*Enduring interstate conflict*³³

The conflict between Britain and Argentina over the Falkland Islands (hereafter Falklands) a group of 2 larger islands surrounded by about 780 small islands in the South Atlantic, was already quite old. The discovery has been claimed by the Spaniards, the Dutch and the Britons. Who is right remains unclear while several explorers of these countries have documented their discovery of the islands during the 16th century. The first one to set actual foot on the islands was British Captain John Strong, who named the islands after the first Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Falkland. He then left the islands, after documenting the presence of fresh water, geese and ducks and no wood what so ever. During the 18th century, the ownership of the Falklands became the subject of conflict. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 had formally recognized the territorial rights in South America to Spain, leading Spain to conclude that the Falklands belonged to them. However, the Treaty did not withhold the French in 1764 and the British in 1765 to claim the islands as theirs. The French, being allies of Spain in those days, ceded the ownership to the latter in 1767 which left Spain and Great Britain to dispute over the Falklands for decades. After the independence of Argentina in 1816, the dispute continued, now between Argentina and Great Britain with both states believing in the legitimacy of their claim.

The claims are rooted firmly in different perspectives on narratives of discovery and history. Argentina relies her claim on the ceding of Spanish territories to Argentina, including the Falklands, which would effectively mean that what once belonged to Spain was now theirs. Britain's claim rests on two pillars: the discovery of the Falklands and the Falkland being up for grabs when Spain withdrew: thereby not acknowledging the ownership of the Falklands automatically being transferred to Argentina. Britain argues that it took control over the Falklands legitimately on January 3rd 1833. The conflict over the Falklands between Argentina and the United Kingdom dates back to that point in time. Although the strategic significance of the islands is limited, with no economic benefits forthcoming and the islands are inhabited by a mere 2000 people, both states position themselves fiercely as owners of the territory. Kids in Argentina are raised with the sentence – which even became a song- “The Malvinas are Argentine” (Hastings & Jenkins, 1987, p. 11), thereby resonating the Argentine feeling that the islands are not and will never be British. On the other end of the world, the British are shoring up their imperial ego: while almost all colonies are retracting themselves from British rule, the Falklanders desperately ask the British to stay. Both Argentina and Britain seemingly have their identities invested in the islands, which makes them continue the conflicts again and again during the 20th century. Britain has considered taking the matter to the International Court of Justice, but never went through while also Argentina preferred to keep the matter out of court.

While in Argentina citizens felt very strong about the identity of the Falklands, in Britain, the Falklands were not on the political agenda let alone under the scrutiny of the public eye. This was also a side effect of the bureaucratic arrangements made.

³³ General description of conflict is based on the work of Freedman (2004) and Hastings and Jenkins (1987)

Once, the Falklands were the responsibility of the Colonial Office, but during the decline of the colonial empire, this responsibility was transferred to different and several bureaucratic organizations to end up at the Foreign Office finally. Moreover, while the secrecy of the Foreign Office was common practice, also the Falklands were kept out of sight, including the (over)sight of parliament. Only a few people were in charge to decide on the Falklands. The UK was not per se keen to keep the Falklands, but the fact that the Falklanders considered themselves British and strongly rejected the idea of ever being Argentine forced the UK to maintain their claim. The UK needed to support the wishes and rights of this small group of British' citizens, in particular, because the Falklanders could rely on a small but influential group of support back in Britain. For Argentine decision-makers, it was clear-cut: the British claim to the Falklands was imperialist and therefore illegitimate and illegal.

The conflict between Argentina and the UK was longstanding and over disputed territory when it climaxed in 1982. Based on the claims of both countries it would be hard to pinpoint exactly the rightful owner of the islands. That makes this conflict suited for the purposes of this research. The Falklands conflict is an enduring interstate conflict over property to which both states might have a legitimate claim, which is an excellent beginning point for analyzing the decision-making process when the conflict reached the brink of war.

To the Brink of War³⁴

Over the years the dispute over the Falklands remained a hot issue for both parties. During the 1950s naval forces were used to settle a quarrel over a scientific post on Antarctic shores (that drew in the Falklands) before the international scientific community agreed to freeze sovereignty over Antarctica. The UK thereby assumed this would lead to a similar treaty over the Falklands, while the Argentinians assumed that this treaty would safeguard them against similar treaties about other disputed territories. In the 1960s, Argentina threw their efforts seriously behind their wish to get the islands under their sovereignty by instituting a 'Malvinas Day', building a national museum about the islands, and by supporting propaganda films and public protests. When Argentina played soccer against the UK during the 1966 World Cup in England and lost, the Argentinians believed that 'the game was rigged and the World Cup stolen from them, just like the Britons did with the Malvinas' (Freedman, 2004, p. 16).

In 1965, the Argentine leaders, who realized that a more multilateral approach would benefit them, asked the UN to push for negotiations between both parties. The UN followed up and the negotiations started one year later. The negotiations would continue on and off over the years until the conflict escalated in 1982. For the UK, believing in the principle of self-determination, it was important that Falklanders would themselves reach a feeling over time that they would like to join Argentina. The UK, therefore, created proposals that could support that process regarding the interests of the islanders. During the early 1970s Argentina seemed open for such

³⁴ General description of conflict is based on the work of Freedman (2004) and Hastings and Jenkins (1987)

proposals. However, the Falklanders who had the actual power of a veto did not trust Argentina to keep their promises to them. They activated their strong support in Britain to rise to their interests, something in which they succeeded. London advised Argentina to start a 'hearts and minds' campaign to sooth the Falklanders over, to which end both parties signed the 1971 Communications Agreement. In the course of this agreement, Argentina started to connect with the Falklands. Tourism from Argentina to the Falklands and vice versa was encouraged, islanders could travel by air and visit hospitals and schools in Argentina and fresh products from Argentina could be imported to the Falklands. The Franks' report shows that the UK Labour government of 1977 was even willing to put sovereignty on the table as an issue for negotiations if it could be combined a leaseback similar to the Hong Kong arrangements. The British government, however, never informed Argentina, they felt that first, the Falklanders would need to agree to such a proposal (Franks, 1983, p. 8).

The relations between the UK and Argentina slightly improved. However, the Argentine leaders did not care too much about the self-determination of the Falklanders. To them, after all, the Falklanders were colonizers. When Peron came back to power in 1973, Argentina returned to a strong sense of nationalism. The 'hearts and minds' approach was off the table. The result was that Argentina gained more power over the Falklanders, while the latter wanted to resist Argentina even more and lost their trust in the British rule. During the Peron years, some military incidents occurred, mobilizing some military forces on both sides but never leading to real clashes or severe incidents. However, it did not improve the feeling of trust, in particular not among the Falklanders.

When Peron³⁵ was overthrown by a military coup of Videla in March 1976, the threat of an Argentine invasion of the Falklands seemed more than ever to become a real threat. The fear was that Argentina might start a more aggressive course to claim the territory, in particular, because Argentina was now lead by a military junta. Indeed, the military threat of Argentina increased in the first years after the coup. Although the actions of the Argentine navy varied based on to the course negotiations would take, they were hard to neglect. By the time Thatcher became Prime Minister of the UK, there was a range of policy options she could decide for. A military defense of the Falklands was one of these options. The new minister of State of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Nicholas Ridley, traveled to the Falklands and Argentina in July 1979. He returned with an understanding that the Falklanders wanted the dispute to be frozen at least and solved at best, but without handing over sovereignty to Argentina. Ridley agreed with the Argentine leaders that ambassadors in Buenos Aires and London respectively would be reinstated. However, after leaving Argentina, he received a document with a strongly articulated position of Argentina. The Argentine leaders wanted to continue negotiations about sovereignty as soon as possible, however, the Falklanders could never be brought in as a third party in during negotiations. It brought Lord Carrington, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, to advise Thatcher to continue negotiations that would steer towards a leaseback option. He anticipated that such negotiations would pacify the

³⁵ Isabella Peron, Juan Peron's widow and successor

unpredictable and possibly aggressive behavior of the Argentine leaders, but saw at the same time the need for support for such a road by the Falklanders and British parliament. Thatcher decided to discuss the matter first with the Defense committee. The committee suggested other possible options. One of those was the so-called 'Fortress Falklands': negotiations would cease, and Britain would be prepared to defend the Falklands against whatever action Argentina would take. Intelligence showed that Argentina would likely use military means if they would conclude that Britain was unwilling to negotiate sovereignty and, moreover, that they were capable to do so. Thatcher postponed the decision until she would have settled another issue (in Rhodesia). Later that year Argentina invited the UK to exchange views, Ridley had to decline the invitation since there was no decision made yet.

The negotiations in 1980 and 1981 did not bring both parties closer. Argentina grew more impatient to find a solution that would include sovereignty over the Falklands, while the UK delayed the negotiations to buy more time. For Britain, the consent of the Falklanders was paramount and trying to align views turned out to be quite difficult. The unwillingness of the Falklanders to lean towards an Argentine solution, even not in the distant future, made the British position difficult while Britain refused to come to a solution to which the Falklanders would not agree. Meanwhile, the UK was aware that Argentina's impatience might be sparked by their need to solve domestic troubles. The conflict with Britain could very well be used as a distraction by the Argentine leaders.

The British Ministry of Defense started military contingency planning, which is preparing possible scenarios in response to possible actions Argentina could take, thereby calculating risks, costs, and chances of success. This planning concluded that a response to a possible Argentine invasion of the Falklands would require substantial naval and land forces, and ingenious logistical support. Something that would be very problematic to arrange. When Britain decided to withdraw the naval battleship HMS Endurance (as was earlier planned due to budgetary reasons), it was considered by the Falklanders as a sign of giving up on them. The Argentine press worsened that feeling when they explained the withdrawal as a British gesture towards Argentina.

By the end of 1981 general Galtieri, already Commander-in-Chief of the Argentine army, became President of Argentina. His focus was on the relations with the US, which were improving at the time. Around the same time, the British ambassador in Buenos Aires concluded that the relations of the Falklanders with both Britain and Argentina had waned seriously. The islanders now were in strong favor of the 'Fortress Falklands' option, which would mean a full stop to all talks and negotiations between the UK and Argentina. The ambassador foresaw a rather pessimistic scenario in which the dispute would escalate. The formal British answer was that there would always be support for the defense of the Falklanders. However, they also made clear that it would be quite difficult to do so. After several rounds and decades of negotiations, the conflict escalated by the time 1982 started.

*Behavior of Argentina: invasion & hard use of power*³⁶

On 20 December 1981 Argentine vessels landed on South Georgia, British territory south of the Falklands. The British warned them, and they left. The Argentine leaders claimed that they did not know about the landing. Thatcher wrote in her memoirs that this incident would not have been so unsettling if Argentina would have left it at that (Thatcher, 1995, p. 177). However, on 27 January 1982, the British Ambassador received a document outlining the Argentine position in the dispute: it claimed sovereignty over the Falklands, and pushed for negotiations that would lead to a rapid, peaceful, and definite British recognition of that claim. The document also discussed the Argentine view of the voice of the Falklanders and stipulated that even the UN only referred to the British and Argentine claims and that therefore the dispute was confined to those states only³⁷.

The UK responded that it also wished to come to a quick and peaceful solution that would take all interests, including the Falklanders' wishes and interests to heart. These communications led to the agreement to talk in New York by the end of February. In the weeks up to the talks, the Argentine press kept iterating how the Falklands would finally return to Argentina and that the government would be willing to use force to achieve that goal if the talks would lead to nothing. The Argentine press also expressed the expectation that the US would come to the aid of Argentina in their legitimacy of the territorial claim of the Falklands. One of the issues discussed at the New York talks was the request of the UK to act more from a mutual trust position. The British negotiator, Richard Luce, indicated that the behavior of Argentina was not helpful to achieve such trust. Unauthorized overflights of the islands and dependencies, an offer of the Magellanes Este blockade, speculation in the Argentine press that military action was imminent, a few of the examples that Luce mentioned³⁸.

During the talks, it came apparent that Argentina was pushing for a fast timetable, while the UK, wishing to bring about all parties involved, preferred to take time. The talks, however, proceeded and openings on both sides were welcomed. Agreed upon was to keep all details from the audience until both governments would have considered all information. At the end of the talks, they issued a joined communiqué that stated that both countries had expressed their wish to settle the dispute peacefully. However, on the same day, a unilateral communiqué was issued by the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This communiqué exposed all details of the negotiations and expressed the Argentine confidence that an important step to settle the dispute as soon as possible was set. Moreover, Argentina voiced her right to take other measures if a solution would turn out to be against Argentina's interests.

36 General description of conflict is based on the work of Freedman (2004) and Hastings and Jenkins (1987)

37 Fern minute to Ure in response to Argentine Bout de Papier (<http://fc95d419f4478b3b6e5f-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.r87.cf1.rackcdn.com/23B5271DE17F4CBEB36613796CC3BFC9.pdf>)

38 Anglo-Argentine ministerial talks on the Falkland Islands, New York, 26/27 February 1982; second day, third session. (<http://fc95d419f4478b3b6e5f-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.r87.cf1.rackcdn.com/50960EB93361449F9271C726EDC269F4.pdf>)

Britain took this unilateral communique as an implicit threat by Argentina. The Argentine press also felt this way and started to speculate about what actions Argentina could take. Argentina, however, denied that its government had wanted to threaten Britain in any way. Later intelligence reports showed that the communiqué was issued on the orders of the president (Franks, 1983, paragraph 159).

Argentina, however, started to shore up the use of power and decided that if there was no response by the British government concerning their wishes to speed up the timeline, they would stop all air and sea services to the Falklands (Franks, 1983, paragraph 159). Britain issued a statement that the UK was willing to continue the negotiations as agreed upon in New York if Argentina would stop threatening, and publicly agree with the course of friendly negotiations (Franks, 1983, paragraph 187). New intelligence showed that Argentina was hardening her position (Franks, 1983, paragraph 190). Again there was a landing of metal scrapers in South Georgia. The UK decided to send the HMS Endurance, which was stationed in the area, to evacuate the Argentinians off South Georgia. Argentine warships were deployed to the area of HMS Endurance. Close to the Endurance, an Argentine scientific vessel was detected, which seemed a bit suspicious. The Argentine movements led the Britons to believe that if the HMS Endurance evacuated the Argentine metal scrapers, a naval reaction of Argentina would follow (Franks, 1983, paragraph 194). Because HMS Endurance was a lightly armed patrol vessel, its instructions were withdrawn. On 31 March 1982, intelligence reached Thatcher, stating that an Argentine fleet was at sea, seemingly on their way to invade the Falklands, which indeed occurred on 2 April 1982. Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands³⁹.

The actions of Argentina in these last months leading up to their invasion of the Falklands is characterized by a build-up of the use of hard power. After the strong threats through diplomatic means, the Argentine leaders took more and more action. The unauthorized overflights, the landings on South Georgia, the battleships in reaction to the movements of the HMS Endurance showed that the use of hard power was effective. The actual invasion on 2 April 1982 was indeed of the highest invasive nature. Thereby the behavior of Argentina can be categorized as an invasion, and by the use of hard power.

7.6 Results

Hawkishness & the use of hard power

Does this case illustrate how Thatcher's hawkishness influenced her decision to go to war with Argentina? Moreover, does it illustrate how the use of hard power by Argentina also influenced Thatcher's decision? The results below focus on a few specific moments in time in which hawkishness and the use of power mattered in the decision-making process. The question that rings in mind for every instance is, would the outcome have been different if Thatcher would have been a dove? Alternatively, in

³⁹ Restricted document FCO note, 2 April 1982 (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122845>)

case of the use of power, would the decision have been different if Argentina would not have used hard power?

First of all, regarding the Falklands conflict Thatcher had made up her mind, seemingly based on specific beliefs of how to deal with the conflict. From different records becomes clear that her stance towards the conflict was hawkish. When Thatcher was just installed as Prime Minister in 1979, she invited two of her most senior cabinet members and their wives over for dinner. Lord Carrington, Foreign Secretary under Thatcher, was one of them and came to speak about the Falklands. He remarked that the best possible way out of the conflict might be the leaseback option. This remark triggered a reaction of Thatcher in outrage, supposedly banging on the table while loud-voiced arguing that Britain would never have to give up her territories, and thereby denouncing the attitude of the Foreign Office (Aitken, 2013, p. 321). This reaction seems to be reflected in her reaction to the letter Carrington send her on 20 September 1979 about the possible solutions and arguing for the leaseback option: "I cannot possibly agree to the line the Foreign Secretary is proposing. Nor would it get through the H of C⁴⁰ - let alone the Parliamentary Party" (Moore, 2013, p. 658). She further emphasized the right of the islanders to not agree, and the problems she would foresee in the leaseback option – "As in Hong Kong – the 99 yr lease comes to an end & causes problems" (Moore, 2013, p. 658). When Carrington still pursued the leaseback option and wrote amongst other things that the Argentine claim was also a matter of national honor and machismo, Thatcher reacted: "According to the Foreign Office our national honour doesn't seem to matter!?" (Moore, 2013, p. 658), after which she urged him not to take any action in the direction of negotiating a leaseback or any other form in which sovereignty would be transferred to Argentina.

These records, which show events that took place before the conflict reached the brink of war, show the clear opinion Thatcher held about the Falklands: these were British and should stay British. These records also show that she was unwilling to negotiate anything different than what she believed to be right, which is an indication that Thatcher indeed was a leader that held strong to what she believed. Dyson argues that his analysis of Thatcher's operational coding scheme during the Falkland crisis shows that from the moment that Thatcher decided to use military force she was unwilling to go back to the negotiation table (Dyson, 2008, p. 88). This can also be read as a hawkish position: the unwillingness to alter the dynamics between the two countries by other means than military force points in the direction of hawkishness affecting decision-making. The analysis below aims to illustrate that hawkishness played a significant role in Thatcher's decision-making, and moreover how the use of hard power by Argentina also played a role in that process.

The New York negotiations between Britain and Argentina on 26/27 February 1982 are the starting point for the analysis of the decision-making process during the Falkland crisis. For Thatcher, the unilateral communiqué issued by the Argentinians in February after the New York talks was the signal that Britain needed to make

⁴⁰ Thatcher means the House of Commons with H of C.

contingency⁴¹ plans (Franks, 1983, paragraph 152; Hastings & Jenkins, 1987, p. 67; Thatcher, 1995, p. 177). This decision indicates that Thatcher felt threatened by the discrepancy between the amicable words of Argentina during the talks, and the threats Argentina later exposed in the unilateral communiqué. Although in retrospect Thatcher claimed that she did not yet expect a full-blown invasion by Argentina until it actually happened (Thatcher, 1995, p. 179), the decision to prepare for the possible use of military force shows at least that Thatcher felt threatened and that she responded from her hawkish belief that a threat must be countered with force. And thus, she prepared.

After the second Argentine landing⁴² of metal scrapers on South Georgia on 20 March 1982, Thatcher decided to send a nuclear-powered submarine to the area. Plans were made to send another one soon, and in her memoirs Thatcher reveals that she was “not too displeased when the news of the decision leaked” (Thatcher, 1995, p. 178) because she thought “my instinct was that the time had come to show the Argentines that we meant business” (Thatcher, 1995, p. 178). This latter remark indicates that Thatcher wanted to show British teeth in response to the threatening words of Argentina: the sending of a nuclear-powered submarine was not simply a measure of precaution; it was a clear message of threat to Argentina. Thatcher’s reaction is another indication of a hawkish stance. Would Thatcher have been a dove; she might have responded differently. Thatcher’s response to the minute⁴³ she received on 25 March 1982 from Carrington stresses that notion. In this minute Carrington articulated that the aim must be to negotiate and that a message to Argentina must encompass the conditions necessary for Britain to be able to resume negotiations, a course of action that Carrington favored. The minute continued with a contingency planning in case Argentina would stop all services to the islands. Thatcher responded with an authorization⁴⁴ to carry forward with the contingency planning, without mentioning anything about the conditions to resume negotiations. The minutes of the meeting⁴⁵ of the Defense Operations Executive on 30 March 1982 show that intelligence about naval movements of the Argentine fleet was available. Britain needed to send a task force in the direction of the South Atlantic. The briefing prepared for Thatcher⁴⁶ by Armstrong confirmed that assessment. This example shows that Carrington favored a peaceful outcome and pleaded for negotiations. Would Thatcher have been a dove, it would have been more plausible that she would have at least responded to that suggestion by her Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, and probably discussed what conditions would be appropriate. The fact that she ignored that point completely shows her hawkish stance.

⁴¹ Contingency plans are scenarios to prepare for possible (military) actions during interstate conflicts

⁴² FCO to Port Stanley: illegal landing, 20 March 1982
(<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122486>)

⁴³ Carrington minute to Thatcher, 24 March 1982.
(<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118382>)

⁴⁴ Answer Thatcher to minute, 25 March 1982. (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118536>)

⁴⁵ Minutes of meeting Defense Operations Executive, 30 March 1982.

(<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118539>)

⁴⁶ Armstrong briefing, 31 March 1982. (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122494>)

The next day, 31 March 1982, intelligence reached Thatcher stating that an Argentine fleet was at sea, seemingly on the way to invade the Falklands (Freedman, 2004, p. 84). That evening the Chief of the Naval Staff, Henry Leach, arrived at the Ministry of Defense. He called it a 'stroke of luck' that Thatcher was also there, while he expected that Defense Minister John Nott 'wouldn't move' (Aitken, 2013, p. 666). Leach told them that he could assemble and deploy a task force within 48 hours (Freedman, 2004, p. 184). Thatcher describes in her memoirs how her outrage and determination to do something were supported by the calm demeanor of Leach and that his presence gave her relief and the confidence that Britain could get back the islands (Thatcher, 1995, p. 179). Aitken, who was present at the meeting, describes how the confident answers of Leach seemed to be exactly what Thatcher wanted to hear, as he interpreters a 'half smile' of Thatcher as such (Aitken, 2013, p. 667). During this meeting, Thatcher agreed immediately with the composition of a task force that would be able to deploy in 48 hours. She decided to be ready for a possible military dispute with Argentina.

Thatcher also sent a message⁴⁷ to US President Reagan, with the urgent request⁴⁸ to speak to General Galtieri and get him off the brink, to which Reagan agreed (Thatcher, 1995, pp. 179-180). Despite Reagans⁴⁹ efforts, Galtieri was unwilling to listen. Thatcher wrote in her memoirs that Galtieri did not answer Reagan until the invasion could not be stopped anymore (Thatcher, 1995, p. 180). On 2 April 1982, a British Antarctic Survey vessel intercepted Falkland Island radio broadcasts saying that Argentines had landed and concluded: "We must accept this as confirmation of an Argentine landing"⁵⁰. In a cabinet meeting⁵¹ ⁵² later that day Thatcher got her cabinet behind her decision to send out the task force to the South Atlantic and ordered the first part of the fleet to be deployed. In the course of these events, Thatcher was led by hawkish beliefs that determined the steps she took. If she had believed that negotiations would be able to decrease the hostilities, there would have been an option to make that attempt at this point. Whether it would have been successful or not, a dove would have wanted to try at least.

The records above show that Argentina was building up threat, first by words, then by actions, and even military actions. That was an increase in the use of hard power. Thatcher reacted to that with a clear awareness that she had to get ready for the use of force. The possibility of negotiations, or use diplomatic means, other than a request to Reagan to talk some sense into Galtieri, was not used or suggested. All British action was aiming at the use of force, which indicates that the perception of threat was very high. These records show that the use of hard power by Argentina created a high sense of threat by Thatcher. Moreover, her hawkish beliefs that conflicts should be solved by showing strength and force created the type of actions

⁴⁷ Letter of Thatcher to Ronald Reagan, 31 March 1982. (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122493>)

⁴⁸ FCO to UKMIS New York, 31 March 1982. (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118431>)

⁴⁹ Diary of Jim Rentschler, 1 April 1982. (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/114319>)

⁵⁰ Restricted document FCO note, 2 April 1982 (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122845>)

⁵¹ Restricted document FCO note, 2 April 1982 (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122268>)

⁵² Minutes of full Cabinet meeting, 2 April 1982. (<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122269>)

for which she decided. The decisions made by Thatcher were, therefore, also in response to the use of hard power by Argentina.

Thatcher was convinced that the UN should not be too deeply involved. Due to the Cold War, she feared that the UN "Security Council might attempt to force unsatisfactory terms upon us" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 182). Thatcher and British UN ambassador Anthony Parsons decided to try to get a UNSC resolution. After several calls with the heads of state of France and Jordan⁵³ (Thatcher, 1995, pp. 182-183) they managed to get resolution UNSCR 502⁵⁴ that stated that Argentina should immediately and unconditionally withdraw from the Falklands. That same day Thatcher also debated in the House of Commons. She was very aware of the fact that she would have to convince the members of parliament that the British response would be of force and effect, she even called it the "most difficult task I ever had to face" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 183). She knew that the House was divided over the issue and she wanted to gain their support as long as possible, and moreover show unity towards the world and Argentina. She wanted to get support for the task force, and the possibility to use military force: "I felt in my bones that the Argentinians would never withdraw without a fight and anything less than a withdrawal was unacceptable to the country and certainly to me" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 184). Her speech shows an inclination to defend her hawkish stance towards the conflict; Thatcher aims to convey that a forceful solution is the most plausible option:

"By late afternoon yesterday it became clear that an Argentine invasion had taken place and that the lawful British Government of the islands had been usurped. I am sure that the whole House will join me in condemning totally this unprovoked aggression by the Government of Argentina against British territory. [Hon. Members: "Hear, hear" .] It has not a shred of justification and not a scrap of legality. [...] That is the background against which we have to make decisions and to consider what action we can best take. [...] The Government have now decided that a large task force will sail as soon as all preparations are complete. [...] I stress that I cannot foretell what orders the task force will receive as it proceeds. That will depend on the situation at the time. [...] The United Nations Security Council met again yesterday and will continue its discussions today. [Laughter.] Opposition Members laugh. They would have been the first to urge a meeting of the Security Council if we had not called one. They would have been the first to urge restraint and to urge a solution to the problem by diplomatic means. They would have been the first to accuse us of saber rattling and war mongering. [...] We shall be reviewing the situation and be ready to take further steps that we deem appropriate and we shall, of course, report to the House. [...] The people of the Falkland Islands, like the people of the United Kingdom, are an island race. Their way of life is British; their allegiance is to the Crown. They are few in number, but they have the right to live in peace, to choose their own way of life and to determine their own allegiance. Their way of life is British; their allegiance is to the Crown. It is the wish of the British people and the duty of Her Majesty's Government to do everything that we can to uphold that right. That will be our

⁵³ See also Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614 , p. 158, 145

⁵⁴ UNSCR 502, 3 April 1982. (<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NRO/435/26/IMG/NR043526.pdf?OpenElement>)

hope and our endeavor and, I believe, the resolve of every Member of the House.”⁵⁵

Thatcher managed to get the support from the parliament. The comment in Thatcher autobiography that she expected a fight from the Argentines is a strong indication of Thatcher's hawkish beliefs. She seemed to believe that there was no other option than to fight with Argentina. Separate from the actual actions that were occurring at that moment in time, Thatcher held to her beliefs and described these as an intuitive knowledge.

The (in 2012 unclassified) top secret file⁵⁶ of the Prime Minister's office of the period of 1-5 April 1982 shows that immediately after the knowledge of the Argentine invasion all diplomatic relations with Argentina were terminated. Moreover, all ships under British flag were advised to stay clear from Argentine ports and seas, in particular the Falklands area⁵⁷. Messages were sent to the countries in the Common Wealth⁵⁸ to ask for their condemnation of the invasion, and their support to urge also other countries to condemn the action of Argentina. Meanwhile, a hostile encounter between an Argentine vessel and HMS Endurance had taken place, in which the Argentines demanded surrender from the Endurance⁵⁹. The commander of the Endurance had refused. On 5 April⁶⁰, Thatcher was informed that 7 British marines were captured and that by now Argentina had installed 3000 troops into the Falklands, which was almost double the number of inhabitants of the islands. Thatcher received support from several heads of state who condemned the actions of Argentina, although some of them only privately⁶¹. Besides the support, however, the documents also show that Thatcher was pressured to resolve the conflict with Argentina peacefully and to not use military force^{62 63} (Thatcher, 1995, pp. 190-192). Through the PM office, all countries in the Common Wealth were suggested⁶⁴ heartily to end all economic and diplomatic relations with Argentina, as far as they did not yet already. A similar request⁶⁵ was sent to all allies. These records show that Thatcher was, on the one hand, proceeding with using Britain's teeth, and, on the other hand, collecting support for that pathway domestically as well as internationally. It indicates that Thatcher was on a hawkish path, willing to use force towards Argentina, and seeking support to make that pathway as clear and easy as possible.

On 6 April, a War Cabinet was installed (Freedman, 2004, pp. 21-22) to monitor all political and military actions. Carrington had resigned, thereby taking full

⁵⁵ House of Common Speech 3 April 1982: <http://www.margareththatcher.org/document/104910>

⁵⁶ Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614
(http://www.margareththatcher.org/archive/PREM19_list7984.asp)

⁵⁷ Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614, p. 214
(http://www.margareththatcher.org/archive/PREM19_list7984.asp)

⁵⁸ Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614, p. 186
(http://www.margareththatcher.org/archive/PREM19_list7984.asp)

⁵⁹ Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614, p. 144

⁶⁰ Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614, p. 14

⁶¹ Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614, p. 52

⁶² Top secret PM file 1-5 April 1982: PREM19/614, see e.g. pp. 8-12, 15-16, 33-36, 41,142

⁶³ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 150-174

⁶⁴ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 214-221

⁶⁵ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, p. 205

responsibility for the unpreparedness of the British army, and Thatcher replaced him with Francis Pym (Thatcher, 1995, pp. 185-187). Nott's request to resign was refused by Thatcher because she believed that it would stand in the way of the only thing that mattered at that moment: "victory" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 186). The nuclear-powered submarine (SSN) was expected to arrive at the Falklands on 11 April. The task force was well on its way and could arrive at earliest on 24 April. The question was now: what would their instructions be?⁶⁶ Communications⁶⁷ with the US shows that Britain was strongly pressured to resolve the conflict peacefully. The same records show that Thatcher repeatedly stated the unwillingness to return to the negotiation table without Argentina's withdrawal of the Falklands. Meanwhile, the US press was perceived⁶⁸ by Britain in their favor, which was seen as a strong aspect of support despite the appeasing words of US Secretary of State Alexander Haig who was urging for returning to the negotiation table.

A briefing on 6 April showed that, although the British army was unprepared (because far away from the Southern Atlantic), the naval forces had the capacity to respond with military force⁶⁹. Through Germany, information arrived that showed that Argentine rear-admiral Girling had requested to speak with a German military attaché⁷⁰ in Rio de Janeiro. The admiral told him that Argentina was considering cutting the ties with the US because it seemed that the US was leaning towards Britain. If that turned out to be true, Argentina would seek support from the Soviet Union. The Argentine admiral also stated that Argentina would be willing to negotiate and even withdraw from the Falklands, if Argentine sovereignty would not be a part of negotiations, but a given. He also stressed that Argentina was willing and capable of using force. At the same time, intelligence showed that within Argentina it seemed that the Argentine leaders were using the conflict to look strong, while there were a lot of domestic problems⁷¹. On 8 April Haig visited London and discussed the Falklands conflict with Thatcher. The minutes⁷² show that he was pressing for a peaceful solution by returning to the negotiation table, but Thatcher kept strong and argued that Argentina would have to leave the Falklands firstly before the topic of negotiations could even be suggested (Thatcher, 1995, p. 193). Haig left for Argentina and returned to Thatcher on 12 April, attempting to come to a solution in which negotiations would guide instead of military force. Thatcher maintained her stance towards Argentina: First, leave the islands. She did listen, however, patiently to the proposals of Haig, even when she thought they were "full of holes" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 195). Haig, who was in contact with Argentina, was sent back and forth by Argentina and 'infuriating him with their uncooperativeness and changing moods' (Hastings & Jenkins, 1987, p. 140). For Thatcher this period was not one of real negotiations, in her opinion, it was used by the Argentinians to give themselves a military advantage

⁶⁶ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 227-231 (http://www.margaretthatcher.org/archive/PREM19_list7984.asp)

⁶⁷ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 189-201

⁶⁸ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 71-75

⁶⁹ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 148-149

⁷⁰ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 113-115

⁷¹ Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 55-56

⁷² Secret PM file 6-8 April 1982: PREM19/615, pp. 32-41

(Thatcher, 1995, p. 203). On 20 April Haig sent a message to Thatcher that showed his hopelessness to come to an accord. He wrote: "It is imperative that you maintain military pressure. I see no other way of bringing the Argentines to a position satisfactory to you."⁷³ He repeated this message during a meeting in New York with Pym⁷⁴.

These records show that Thatcher held strong to her convictions, however, she was also willing to give Haig a chance to follow a dovish⁷⁵ pathway. This willingness does not indicate that Thatcher herself followed a more dovish path. She kept her line and conviction and was sure that Argentina played with Haig to prepare more strongly for war. However, of course, Thatcher felt the need to show courtesy to her closest ally to take their efforts seriously. Thereby, many other countries next to the US had urged for peaceful solutions, so she had to appear at least willing to solve the conflict peacefully. Moreover, she had the time, while Britain could not get into any battle with Argentina before the task force would have arrived. Based on these insights, it rather seemed that her patient but steady course finally led the dovish Haig to the camp of more hawkish inclinations.

Meanwhile, the task force had arrived at Ascension, an island close by the Falklands. Battle groups were sent from there to South Georgia, in case action would be required (Hastings & Jenkins, 1987, p. 154). On 20 April, after the reception of the junta that they would never give up their sovereignty claim the War Cabinet decided that South Georgia would be recovered by Britain and subsequently informed Haig with a telegram (Thatcher, 1995, p. 204). In the telegram with the orders to inform Haig, it was advised to emphasize that this decision was in line with Haig's advice to keep the military pressure on Argentina.

On 24 April Pym, who just returned from meetings with Haig in Washington DC, brought new proposals to Thatcher for negotiations. Pym felt that Britain should agree. Thatcher was outraged by the proposals and insisted that every word would be examined carefully. For five hours she sat on the proposal, together with Attorney-General. However, in discussion with Pym, they could not agree. When the War Cabinet assembled, Pym still advised them to agree with the proposals. Thatcher simply repeated her efforts and took them step by step through the proposal, thereby showing them every bit of objections she had. She argued that self-determination of the Falklanders was the guiding directive, that Britain was giving in too much if they would agree with these terms. One important issue bothered her. The agreement dictated that at the moment the agreement would be signed, the British task force would have to turn around immediately, a demand that she did not trust (Moore, 2013, p. 691; Thatcher, 1995, p. 207). She wanted to break off the negotiations that the US was favoring. The War Cabinet agreed with her. Since Argentina had already declared that Argentina and Britain were 'technically at war'⁷⁶, there would be war until Argentina would leave the islands. In her memoirs she stated: 'I could not have stayed as Prime Minister had the War Cabinet accepted Francis Pym's proposals. I

⁷³ Top secret PM file 20-22 April 1982: PREM19/620, pp. 235-237

⁷⁴ Top secret PM file 20-22 April 1982: PREM19/620, p. 38

⁷⁵ Interestingly, Hastings and Jenkins (1987) call the chapter discussing this process 'Haig's doves'

⁷⁶ Secret PM file 23-26 April 1982: PREM19/621, p. 76

would have resigned.” (Thatcher, 1995, p. 208). They immediately informed Haig⁷⁷ that unless Argentina withdrew from the Falklands, Britain would continue. The latter statement of Thatcher is typical for her hawkish and determined stance during the Falklands conflict.

On 25 April, South Georgia was recovered, and the landed battle group started operations against Argentine forces (Hastings & Jenkins, 1987, p. 165). They thought that Argentina might be more willing to withdraw from the Falklands⁷⁸. After John Nott reading the press statement, Thatcher did not take any questions from the press and simply stated: “Rejoice”⁷⁹. The next day, the War Cabinet declared a Total Exclusion Zone of 200 nautical miles radius, in which the rules of engagement would apply (Thatcher, 1995, p. 209). A few days later, on 30 April, the task force arrived in the zone, and the next day the battle began with an Argentine attack on the task force (Thatcher, 1995, p. 212). The Falklands War was an empirical fact.

The records above show that Thatcher was a determined, consequent leader, from the beginning on she had the strong conviction that the only way out of this conflict was through the use of force. She refused to start any negotiations before her most paramount condition was met: Argentina must withdraw. Since Argentina never did, it seems that she was supported in her belief that the use of force would lead to a settlement of the conflict. In that sense she was right. The war went on until on 14 June 1982 Argentine troops surrendered to Britain. Britain had won the war. In total 907 people died during the war, from which 258 British (from which three civilians) and 649 Argentinians (from which 16 civilians).

During the war, Thatcher also held publicly strong to her demand: Argentina had to leave the Falkland Islands because these were British soil. She left no room for any negotiations or compromises: Argentina had to leave. In her public speeches and interviews, she made this crystal clear. Just after the invasion of the Falklands, in a radio interview⁸⁰ for ITN regarding the stepping back of the Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington, she expressed her strong belief in a successful outcome by the use of military force:

“I am not talking about failure, I am talking about my supreme confidence in the British fleet ... superlative ships, excellent equipment, the most highly trained professional group of men, the most honourable and brave members of her majesty's service. Failure? Do you remember what Queen Victoria once said? "Failure—the possibilities do not exist". That is the way we must look at it, with all our professionalism, all our flair and every single bit of native cunning, every single bit of professionalism and all our equipment and we must go out calmly, quietly, to succeed.”

In an interview⁸¹ for the BBC radio on 19 May 1982 she made that very clear:

⁷⁷ Secret PM file 23-26 April 1982: PREM19/621, p. 62-63

⁷⁸ Secret PM file 23-26 April 1982: PREM19/621, p. 10

⁷⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGxsLbK9FOA>

⁸⁰ Interview with ITN, 5 April 1982. (<http://www.margareththatcher.org/document/104913>)

⁸¹ Interview with BBC Radio, Jimmy Young Programme, 19 May 1982.

(<http://www.margareththatcher.org/document/104784>)

“I think first the Argentine troops have to leave the Islands. They were the invaders. If they are allowed to stay, there will be many other countries who will look and say “Ah, Ah, look you can take someone else's territory by force and it doesn't matter what United Nations Resolutions there are, no-one will actually put the invader off.” I entirely agree. Invasion must not be seen to pay. Otherwise we shall have all sorts of boundaries changed by force and you'll get a kind of international anarchy.”

Moreover, in response to a question whether the British would push Argentina into the hands of the Soviets due to the aggressive behavior of the UK and that negotiations could be seen as a better option:

“The idea that we have absolutely no military activity unless negotiations fail is patently wrong. The raid on Pebble Island was a tremendous success. A Commando raid on Pebble Island—a colossal success. We haven't just been sitting back waiting for negotiations, that would be only too easy a ploy for the Argentinians, and there are signs that that's what they're trying to do: saying, “All right brothers, don't you do anything while we negotiate and then you can rely on us to carry on the negotiations while your people are having a pretty difficult time of it in the South Atlantic”. So we're not going to be trapped by that one. So his suggestion that you can't do anything while there are negotiations is patently wrong. We've been carrying on doing what we believe is best and you've seen many of the results. Now what was the second one—shall we throw the whole of Latin America into the arms of the Soviets? What, merely by standing up for the rights of British people? Do you know Jimmy, I believe that we eventually shall succeed and the Argentines will leave.”

This latter remark shows the decisiveness of Thatcher, based on her belief that negotiations were not an option and the only way out of the conflict and a definite settlement was to use force. This point was also emphasized in this remark during the same interview: “I doubt very much whether there will be another rapid invasion if we succeed in dealing with this one properly, with the Argentinians leaving the Islands.” In a speech to the Conservative Women's Conference on 26 May 1982, Thatcher accounted for the war in a way that shows her hawkish stance:

“It would be a betrayal of our fighting men and of the Islanders if we had continued merely to talk, when talk alone was getting nowhere. And so, seven weeks to the day after the invasion, we moved to recover by force what was taken from us by force”⁸²,

And: “Surely we, of all people, have learned the lesson of history: that to appease an aggressor is to invite aggression elsewhere, and on an ever-increasing scale?”. Her words indicate the belief that negotiations are futile in the case of a large threat, and that attempts to make peace with a large threat lead to more violence. Even more than expressing her hawkish belief, she also indicates from where this belief might (partly) stem. With the explicit rejection of appeasement of aggressors, she seems to refer to the appeasement policy towards Hitler in the 1930s by the British

⁸² Speech for the Conservative Women's Conference 26 May 1982.
(<http://www.margareththatcher.org/document/104948>)

government and indicates that she, as leader of the present government believes that aggression needs to be countered with aggression.

The importance of her public expressions is that there is the notion of accountability. Public appearances of political leaders in any form are specifically meant to inform the public and to account for the actions taken. In doing so, Thatcher accounts for the decision to use military force on her beliefs that interstate conflicts on the brink of war need to be solved with the use of force because she believes that negotiations will make things only worse. In other words, Thatcher accounts for her decisions, based on a hawkish belief, thereby assuming that her belief is the right way to look at the matter.

What was the role of the use of power during this conflict? As described above, Argentina increased the use of power in the weeks leading up to the escalation. Also in the period after the invasion of the Falklands and before the war started, Argentina continued to use hard power. The unofficially approved landing of Argentine metal scrapers on South Georgia, the unilateral communiqué after explicit agreement to release a mutual press statement, And in particular the wording of this communiqué, the sending of vessels to the HMS *Endurance*, the Argentine fleet on its way to Falkland. All examples discussed above show a steep increase in the use of power.

It seems that the effect of the use of power influenced the perception of threat of Thatcher. When Argentina, just after the New York talks, issued a unilateral communiqué seems the moment that Thatcher's perception of threat was triggered, since that was the moment she instructed the beginning of contingency plans. From that moment on, Thatcher held a firm hand on the conflict and showed doubts about negotiations and a greater emphasis on the British sovereignty.

However, Britain also used hard power. Thatcher deployed already quite early in the conflict a nuclear-powered submarine. Moreover, when that news leaked, Thatcher was secretly welcoming that leak because she wanted to send the Argentinians a clear message, as she revealed in her memoirs. It goes beyond the scope of this research, but it could be argued that if the use of power has affected Thatcher, it also might have affected the Argentine leaders. This understanding puts the use of power in the same light as was discovered in the preceding chapters: contextual factors seem to be part of strategies in response to actions of the other more than an overall generalizable factor.

Is it possible to distinguish between the effect of the use of power and the effect of hawkishness? The results of chapter 5 established that hawkishness and the use of power both influence the decision-making process, but do not interact. In this real-world case, it is hard to disentangle these factors. Due to the actions and words of Argentina, it was likely that a hawkish leader would react with the wish to prepare for a possible military encounter. On the other hand, a dovish leader could also have concluded that it was paramount to at least prepare for different scenario's, maybe even with an option for the use of force. The most important notion arising from this case is that both factors played a significant role. The use of power did trigger a perception of threat that influenced decision-making. Likewise, in a much stronger sense, did the hawkishness from Thatcher. The case of decision-making process

leading to the Falklands War is therefore a good illustration of the mechanisms that were detected by the experimental approach.

7.7 Possible challenges

This chapter aimed to illustrate how the hawkishness of a decision-maker can influence the decision-making process during a severe interstate conflict and thereby illustrate how the mechanism found through the use of experiments might play out in a real-world case. However, this dissertation also aimed at investigating the assumptions of democratic peace theory. A liberal challenge to the results of this real-world case study could be that the regime-type of Argentina, which was authoritarian, had affected the threat perception of Thatcher and that therefore the war started. Thus, although regime-type as an influencing factor was not explicitly investigated as an independent variable, the analysis did 'cast the net widely for an alternative explanation' (Checkel & Bennett, 2015, p. 261). In other words: the possibility that the regime-types of Argentina and Britain mattered for the decision-making process was not ruled out, and any remark about regime-type was noted.

During the analysis became, however, clear that the regime-type of Argentina was hardly ever mentioned as a reason to go to war with Argentina. The focus was more on the actual behavior of Argentina, and on how to interpret that behavior. The materials show that the hawkish lens of Thatcher interpreted Argentina's behavior as very threatening. In Thatcher's memoirs, written many years later, she briefly refers to regime-type: "We knew that they were unpredictable and unstable and that a dictatorship might not behave in ways we would consider rational" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 179). This remark shows that the Argentine regime-type played a role in her perception of the opponent. However, it is only one of few remark in her memoirs and are aimed at a justification of her decision in retrospect. Within the classified documents that capture the decision-making process the mentioning of regime-type is practically absent. This absence indicates that regime-type did not trigger Thatcher's decision to go to war at that time. So, if regime-type mattered at all, it must have been to a limited extent, and without a strong focus.

Although the official records show hardly any mentioning of regime-type, the analysis of Thatcher's public statements showed something different. In particular, the statements that Thatcher aimed at the public during the crisis and the war in an attempt to justify the war refer relatively more to the fact that Argentina was a dictatorship. Moreover, the regime-type of Argentina was suggested as a reason for the war. Earlier research shows that the democratic peace is often used within publicly aimed rhetoric of Western leaders in an attempt to get the public opinion behind them (Avtalyon-Bakker, 2013; Burgos, 2008; Ish-Shalom, 2006, 2015; Russett, 2005). These studies show how leaders justify going to war by emphasizing the nondemocratic nature of the opponent, thereby implying that this nondemocratic nature equals aggressiveness. As discussed in the theoretical chapters, the aggressiveness of nondemocracies is merely an assumption made by democratic peace theory that has become conventional wisdom (Ish-Shalom, 2006). Thatcher

also used this assumption of the aggressive dictatorships as a justification for the war with Argentina. In an interview on BBC 2 Radio, she said on 19 May 1982:

“We are a democratic country. We believe that power and strength comes from the people. They are a dictatorship. And of course this is a tremendous gap. I mean, they say “look, who determines the interests of the people, the Government determines the interests of the people.” We say “but don't you think the people ought to have some say in their future?”⁸³

However, in that same interview, she also stressed many other reasons for the war. The fact that the Falkland Islands are British:

“I think first the Argentine troops have to leave the Islands. They were the invaders. [...] Also those Falkland Islanders are British people. You know there are only forty Argentinians in that Island and not all of them permanent residents. They are British people—some of them have been there far longer than some of their counter-parts in Argentina. The families have been there far longer.”

Also the wish of the Falklanders to remain under British rule she connects to democracy:

“If the Falkland Islanders said “look, we want an arrangement with Argentina” and that was the wishes of the Falkland Islanders, that also we would have to consider, that again is what self-determination and consulting the people is. I mean, here, all the power which I have, comes from the people. If they were to say that. I personally think that after they have had this terrible experience of invasion the last thing they will want to do is to have close association with the Argentinians. It's just like the Channel Islands during the last war. They wouldn't easily have invited the Germans back.”

Just like the danger of Argentina collaborating with the Soviet Block:

“Well, if you look at Argentina, Argentines have already done quite a bit of tucking up with the Soviets as far as trade is concerned. You know full well that after Afghanistan the Americans put a grain embargo on sales to Soviet Union. What happened? The wheat was sold to the Soviet Union by the Argentines. Wheat and beef and 80 per cent of their food exports now go to the Soviet Union. So they have already got a very considerable relationship with the Soviet Union in food and that gives them a terrific balance of payments as far as the Russians are concerned. And what can the Russians supply then with? Not very much save arms, so they have already got that. There already is, and the United States is very much aware of, the Peronistas, whose whole thesis is very similar to that of the Soviet Union and who use similar tactics. That is there already, but I do not believe that if you talk about the whole of Latin America, what Britain is doing by standing up for British people in the Falklands, and by standing up for international law, will throw South America into the hands of the Soviets. Rather they will see Britain, and the Western world too, stands up for her own democracies; and they will see it as a strengthening of democracy.”

⁸³ <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104784>

On the Conference for Conservative Women on 26 May 1982, Thatcher used her speech to provide a full account of all reasons to go to war with Argentina. At that time, there were already casualties, which probably made the need for a sound explanation important. Her full speech included a timeline of events and a detailed description of all efforts Britain made to remain peaceful. Within that context, Thatcher said:

“For decades, the peoples of the Falkland Islands had enjoyed peace—with freedom,—peace with justice, peace with democracy. They are our people and let no one doubt our profound longing for peace. But that peace was shattered by a wanton act of armed aggression by Argentina in blatant violation of international law. And everything that has happened since has stemmed from the invasion by the military dictatorship of Argentina. And sometimes I feel people need reminding of that fact more often. We want peace restored. But we want it with the same freedom, justice and democracy that the Islanders previously enjoyed.”

During this speech, Thatcher referred again to the aggression of Argentina, the unwillingness of the Falklanders to belong to another country than Britain, and the fear of Argentina being incorporated into the Soviet block.

It seems that the referral to the regime-type of Argentina occurred mainly within public speeches, and with a clear aim to get public support. Also noteworthy is that Thatcher connects the mentioning of the regime-types to the Cold War, in which all democracies balance with a few non-democratic allies against the non-democratic and dangerous Soviet Union. In that sense, the references to democracy and non-democracy are more in line with realist arguments, who state that during the Cold War, all interstate conflicts should be understood from a system-level perspective.

Besides to the liberal challenge, another challenge to this illustration is possible. The invasion of the Falklands by Argentina did play an important role in the Falkland War, while an invasion showed to be a factor of no significant influence in the experiments. The analysis above indicates that Thatcher, hawkish or not, almost certainly would not have attacked Argentina if this country would have stayed clear from the Falklands, or any other British territory. This challenge does not mean that the results and conclusions above are invalid. The analysis of Thatcher's decision-making process shows that it was her hawkishness that strongly influenced her decision to attack. The question in this respect would be: would Thatcher have attacked after the Argentine invasion if she would have been a dove? The answer to this question might be, based on the analysis above, a careful 'no'. Moreover, the invasion of the Falklands by Argentina might be not similar enough to match the invasion by *Other Country* in the experiment. The experiment described an enduring conflict over a disputed area of resources, to which both parties seemed to have a legitimate claim. An area that was, however, uninhabited. The enduring conflict over the Falklands was indeed over disputed territory, with both parties feeling that their claim was legitimate. However, the Falklands do not have any resources that might be valuable to either country, but the territory is inhabited. The inhabitants are not only mostly British but also explicitly did not want to become Argentinians. This latter

aspect differs from the hypothetical scenario in the experimental setting, and might, therefore, explain this aspect of the decision-making process that led to the Falklands War. This insight strengthens the conclusion of chapter 6 that contextual factors matter but rather ad hoc and specific to the context of the conflict and the environment of the decision-makers than in a generalizable pattern.

7.8 Conclusion

This case illustrates how the findings of the experiments in chapter 5 can play out in the real world. The experimental results in chapter 5 showed that when decision-makers are in an enduring and severe interstate conflict that seems to be stuck and dangerous for already some time, hawkish beliefs of the decision-makers will be the factor that can explain why decision-makers opt for an attack. Moreover, based on the same experimental results, it was expected that when the opponent uses hard power, decision-makers will also be more likely to opt for an attack.

The crisis between Argentina and Britain over the Falkland Islands was selected as an interpretative case study. The analysis focused on the decision-making process of Prime Minister Thatcher to illustrate the mechanisms. Based on secondary studies, Thatcher showed to be a hawk. An analysis of the most important government documents of that period shows that Thatcher was the main decision-maker and that her hawkishness guided her decisions about the course to take during the conflict with Argentina. So were her interactions with the War Cabinet and other actors. Also the use of power, in experimental results found to be a contextual factor, shows in the example of the Falklands War to have been of influence on the decision-making process of Thatcher when Argentina used hard power.

Regarding the regime-type, from which democratic peace theory argues that opponents sharing democratic regimes can decrease the threat of war and opponents not sharing democratic regimes can increase the threat of war, there are no clear instances that show that the regime-type of Argentina played a significant role in Thatcher's threat perception. She did mention Argentina's regime-type for the eyes and ears of the public, such as use in speeches, interviews, and memoirs. However, behind the scenes, the regime-type was not mentioned in significant meaning or frequency, nor by Thatcher, neither by her advisors.

With this illustration, the experimental finding that the hawkishness of decision-makers influences their decisions during the resolution of an interstate conflict finds more credibility. Based on the results, it could be argued that the conflict over the Falklands might have ended differently if Thatcher would have been a dove. It is not to say that the war would not have occurred, but it might have been plausible that negotiations could have prevented or at least postponed the use of military force.

This illustration of the experimental results through the use of a real-world case supports the argument of this study that the individual level matters in international relations, as well as the argument that theories of international relations need to incorporate the individual level. More often than not these theories

rely on structural explanations that play out on an aggregated level, thereby assuming the individual decision-makers as within a black box. The case study in this chapter shows the relevance of studying the individual level more systematically. It moreover shows how relevant experimental results can be: without the understanding that hawkish beliefs might have affected Thatcher's decision-making process, the realist conclusion could have been that the Cold War had dictated the decisions, or the liberal conclusion could have been that the regime-type of Argentina had blocked any peaceful outcome.

The illustration how important Thatcher's personal beliefs were for here decision-making process increase the credibility of the experimental results increase. In her memoirs Thatcher describes how she felt at the beginning of the escalation: "I felt in my bones that the Argentinians would never withdraw without a fight" (Thatcher, 1995, p. 184). She had initially a very strong belief that she needed to fight, and that belief seems to have been guided more by her personal beliefs than about any structure or context outside of her. Like Jervis (among others) has argued: what you believe (expect) is what you get (Jervis, 1976). Hawkish beliefs affect decision-making. Of course, hawkishness alone will not likely cause a war when there are no other factors involved. A hawk must be triggered first before the wish to retaliate will occur.

The case study did illustrate that the contextual factors of the behavior of Argentina mattered, however, not necessarily while interacting with hawkishness. The use of hard power by Argentina indeed affected Thatcher to want to prepare for war. Just like the fact that Argentina invaded the Falklands did: the invasion was the driving force of the whole conflict: Thatcher wanted to throw Argentina off the Islands. It seems probable to state that Thatcher perceived the invasion as such a high threat that she prepared for war, and that without Argentina invading the Falklands, it would have been different. However, turning this insight around: if Thatcher would have been a dove, it is not immediately evident that she would have attacked. She might have lent her ear more to the doves around her, in particular Alexander Haig, the secretary of State of Thatcher's main and strongest ally, who made many dovish attempts to settle the conflict without a fight.

This case study offers illustrative supports to the experimental findings that the hawkishness of decision-makers is a rather stable factor of influence, whereas contextual factors play a different role. How these factors relate to each other and might enhance each other, is reason for further research.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Another research into the democratic peace

Democratic peace theory, in its quest to explain a phenomenon at system-level - democracies tend not to fight with other democracies-, are built on assumptions about individuals within democratic and non-democratic states. Democratic peace theory assumes that individuals – mass and elites alike (Russett, 1993b, p. 35)- who grow up within liberal democracies are intrinsically different from individuals that grow up within other regime-types because only the former are socialized with liberal norms and democratic practices, which would change them intrinsically into ‘morally better people” (see for the core of these ideas e.g.: Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 21-29; Rawls, 1999, p. 44). This socialization process would affect their willingness to go to war with another democracy because liberal democratic decision-makers would expect the same socialization effects to be present within the other state, which would subsequently decrease the threat of the conflict significantly. Conversely, it is assumed that individuals of other regimes could not adhere to liberal norms because they would have been socialized with the more violent and zero-sum norms that are common within non-democracies (Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993, p. 625; Russett, 1993b, pp. 31-32). These fundamental assumptions are used instrumentally by democratic peace theory and are thus not empirically tested.

Empirical testing is, however, crucial. These assumptions are an intrinsic part of the explanation for the democratic peace. If democratic peace theory would be right that decision-makers of liberal democracies are socialized with liberal norms – in contrast with decision-makers of other regime-types- and that socialization process would decrease the threat of a severe interstate conflict between two liberal democracies, then an empirical test would have to show significant differences between decision-makers of liberal democracies and decision-makers of other regime-types. In that case, a significant difference should be at least visible in 1) The level of liberal norms, and 2) The willingness to attack a liberal-democracy.

The research question of this research was: *What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when on the brink of war?* Based on the logic of democratic peace theory, it was assumed that the perception of threat is decreased among decision-makers of liberal democracies when they are in conflict with other liberal democracies. If these decision-makers are, however, in conflict with a non-democratic opponent that threat was assumed to increase. This logic dictates that the factor democracy has a decreasing effect on the perception of threat of liberal democratic decision-makers and thus their willingness to attack. With the same logic, it could be expected that other factors might also influence decision-makers during their decision-making process. Thus, alongside the empirical testing of democratic peace theory, also alternative hypotheses were considered in the same theoretical framework. The overarching concept was the perception of threat of decision-makers during a long-lasting interstate conflict on the brink of war. The instrumental

assumption, used for the theoretical framework, was that a higher perceived threat would make decision-makers more likely to attack the opposing country during a severe interstate conflict.

Based on this theoretical framework, the following factors were expected to influence the perception of threat of decision-makers: the regime-type of the decision-makers, the regime-type of the opponent, the invasiveness of the opponent's behavior, the use of power the opponent would rely on, the balance of power between opponents, the level of liberal norms of the decision-makers, the hawkishness of the decision-makers and their gender.

A mixed method research design was used to test the hypotheses. The research design relied mainly on an experimental study, which was triangulated with a large-N survey study, and an interpretative case study. The core instrument of this research was a decision-making experiment, conducted on student samples of the liberal democracy US, hybrid regime Russia, and autocracy China. The experiment tested whether the willingness of decision-makers to attack the opponent (and several other foreign policy options) during a severe interstate conflict was influenced by the regime-type they were socialized in, the regime-type of the opponent, the invasive behavior and the use of power of the opponent, and the balance of power. Moreover, it was tested whether decision-makers were influenced by their level of liberal norms, their hawkishness, and their gender. The measurements for hawkishness and liberal norms were conducted through the use of a questionnaire that followed the experiment.

The large-N study used existing survey data from the World Values Survey (Wave 6: 2010-2014) to measure the level of liberal norms among representative samples of the US, Russia, and China. The aim of this study was to 1) Test the assumption whether liberal norms are only prevalent within liberal democracies, and 2) To see how the levels of liberal norms measured among the student samples would relate to the largely same measurement of liberal norms among representative samples of the same countries.

The case study analyzed the decision-making process of Margaret Thatcher during the conflict between the UK and Argentina that led to the Falklands War to illustrate the experimental findings.

8.2 Findings of this research

The overall results show that the actor-specific factor hawkishness is by far the strongest and most robust explanatory factor of why decision-makers decide to attack their opponent during a severe interstate conflict. The use of power by the opponents shows to be a less robust but significant factor of influence. The other hypothesized factors, including those that are posited by democratic peace theory, turn out to have no significant influence on the decision-making process when the option was to attack. Below, after a brief overview of the results a section follows that discusses the implications of these findings and how these relate to earlier studies.

Democratic peace theory

The core assumption of democratic peace theory that liberal norms are only present among individuals in liberal democracies does not find empirical support. The large-N study investigated the levels of liberal norms among representative samples of the US, Russia, and China. The study showed liberal norms are not absent within non-democratic political systems. The US sample scored on average, as expected by democratic peace theory, significantly higher than the Russian and Chinese samples. However, also the Russian and Chinese samples scored, on average, well above the midpoint of the liberal norms scale. In other words: on average, liberal norms prevailed in all three regime-types. Furthermore, all three representative samples showed to have similar patterns of variation, which in all three countries approached more or less normally distributed varying levels of liberal norms. The results indicate that the assumptions about liberal norms, as used by democratic peace theory, should not be used as has been done so far. Moreover, the results show that levels of liberal norms are individually based, rather than socialized by the super-structure of a political regime.

Democratic peace theory also assumes that liberal norms and democratic institutions affect liberal democratic decision-makers in such a way that they will be less willing to attack another liberal democracy over an autocracy. It is, moreover, assumed that this difference in willingness would show when liberal democratic decision-makers are compared with decision-makers of other regime-types. The latter decision-makers would be in any case be more willing to attack any state, no matter the regime, or so the assumption goes. These assumptions also do not find empirical support in this study. The experimental results show that the regime-type of the opponent does not influence the willingness to attack in any significant way. Neither the US decision-makers nor the Chinese and Russian decision-makers were affected by the regime-type of the opponent. A test whether the levels of liberal norms of liberal democratic decision-makers influences their willingness to attack another liberal democracy showed that there is no empirical evidence to support such a claim.

The experimental results, when tested for other policy options, showed to be robust. The influence of these factors on the willingness to negotiate was also measured. The willingness to negotiate is an outcome often considered as the diametrical opposite of the willingness to attack and thus a good robustness check. Regarding the influence of regime-type of the opponent and the regime-type decision-makers were socialized in, that held true: these factors were of no influence on the willingness to negotiate. Also, an interaction between liberal norms and regime-type was of no influence. Liberal norms did affect the willingness to negotiate on an individual-based level, but this was unrelated to the regime-type of any of the states.

The case-study illustrated that regime-type did not play an important role during Thatcher's decision-making process regarding the Falklands War. Regime-type did play a role differently though. Thatcher mentioned the regime-type of

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opponent Argentina extensively while aiming to justify the war to the general public, a finding that is discussed more in depth below.

The results of this dissertation show that the hypotheses, generated from democratic peace theory, did not find support empirically. It indicates that the assumptions of democratic peace theory, which are used by other scholars as if these were empirical facts, should not be used instrumentally as such.

Hawkishness

The strongest and most influential factor that influenced decision-makers to attack the opponent was the level of their hawkishness. The more hawkish decision-makers were, the willing they were to attack the opposing state. That effect was alike for all decision-makers, it was by far the best explanation for the willingness to attack. The effect was indeed even stronger within the US sample: the US decision-makers – although scoring lower on hawkishness on average- were significantly more influenced by hawkishness than the Russian and Chinese decision-makers. Hawkishness showed to be a robust factor when tested for other, less threatening, policy options. In every instance, it showed that being a hawk (or a dove when decision-makers preferred to negotiate) mattered significantly for the willingness to resolve the interstate conflict. The strength of the explanatory power, as measured by the effect size, decreased for options that were of lesser threat, and increased for options with a higher threat. The case-study illustrated this relationship. It showed that the hawkishness of Thatcher had plausibly influenced her decision-making process that led to the Falklands War. All in all, hawkishness showed to be a clear and generalizable factor for the decision-making process during a severe interstate conflict.

Behavior of opposing state

The behavior of the other state, the use of an invasion and the use of power, was hypothesized to influence the willingness of decision-makers to attack the opponent. The results showed that only the use of power turned out to be of small but significant influence on the decision-making process. If the opponent used hard power over soft power, decision-makers were significantly more willing to attack. However, when tested for other, less threatening, foreign policy options, the influence of the use of power did not show a clear and easily generalizable pattern. It rather seemed as if contextual factors were used to inform the decision for more strategic options. The case-study illustrated this finding as well: Thatcher perceived a higher threat by the behavior of opponent Argentina.

8.3 Understanding the findings

Democratic peace theory

The findings of this study contribute in several ways to our understanding of democratic peace theory, the theory that lies at the core of this study. These theories assume that specific political structures, the formal and informal structures of liberal

democracy, influence decision-makers significantly and subsequently alter their behavior. However, these assumptions are normative and guided by a specific political philosophy rather than by empirical facts. Still, democratic peace theory uses these assumptions as if these are empirical facts and thereby explain why democracies do not fight with other democracies. This explanation is thus founded on normative pillars. This dissertation tested these assumptions, the actual foundations of democratic peace theory, and shows that these are empirically unsupported.

First of all, liberal norms exist not only in liberal democracies but also within other regime-types. The liberal democratic samples showed to have the highest level of liberal norms on average, as is expected by democratic peace theory, but the other regime-types also show to have, on average, positive levels of liberal norms. Liberal norms are thus not absent within other regime-types. The distribution of liberal norms within all three samples show to be varying in similar patterns which indicates that, within different regime-types, liberal norms fluctuate similarly. Furthermore, liberal norms do neither influence the willingness to attack of decision-makers of liberal democracies nor decision-makers of other regime-types. The only, rather small but significant, influence of higher levels of liberal norms (in all three countries alike) was on the willingness to *negotiate*.

These results indicate that the philosophical idea (Kant, 1795/2013a, pp. 21-29; Rawls, 1999, p. 44) that liberal democracy morally teaches its citizens to become better people does not find support in the empirical world. Liberal norms can exist and foster within people irrespective of the regime-type and its socialization processes. Liberal norms seem to be human norms that are open to growing among all people of all regime-types. The results indicate that it is the agent's self that internalizes liberal norms, rather than the structure of a political regime that imposes these on individuals. Therefore, liberal norms could better be called liberal values.

Earlier experimental studies of the democratic peace (Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Johns & Davies, 2012; Z. Maoz & Russett, 1993; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013) have instrumentally assumed liberal norms to be present and of influence within liberal democracies. They did not measure whether these were actually present, and they did not test whether they indeed influenced as hypothesized. Neither have they compared the levels and influence of liberal norms of liberal democracies with evidence from autocracies. If the results of the current study can suggest anything, it would be that the theoretical underpinnings of these earlier studies need a revisitation.

Secondly, regime-type showed to be of no influence on the willingness to attack, or the willingness for other relevant policy options, of decision-makers in all three samples alike. Regime-type did thus not influence decision-makers of liberal democracies significantly, as is expected by democratic peace theory. This non-finding is not in line with earlier micro-level studies. These studies showed that regime-type did influence the willingness to attack: individuals of liberal democracies were more willing to attack autocracies over democracies (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013).

The question is how the findings of this study relate to the previous studies. An investigation of the results showed that the non-influence of regime-type was not an artifact of the research design. Participants received the treatment of regime-type as intended, which indicates that they incorporated the information about the regime-type of the opponent in their decision-making process. A comparison between the research designs of previous studies and this study shows to be more informative.

Four aspects might explain the differences in outcomes. Firstly, this study disconnected regime-type from the perception of threat by providing the information about the regime-type separate from other factors surrounding the conflict. Factors that might, in themselves, trigger a threat. As the studies of Johns and Davies (2012) and Geva and Hanson (1999) showed, it is hard to pinpoint the exact effect of regime-type when socio-cultural factors are part of the mix and might interact implicitly with regime-type. By separating between the behavior of the opponent (in this case: invasion and the use of power) from regime-type, the findings of this study might be showing that it was not regime-type that triggered participants in earlier studies, but another threat from the conflict itself.

Secondly, and related to the former point, is the measurement of regime-type. This study used a hypothetical scenario about hypothetical countries, to make sure that participants would not be influenced by their specific precognitions about real-world scenarios and countries. Most of the earlier studies (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013) used non-hypothetical countries and, moreover, relied (to a higher or lesser degree) on plausible real-world conflicts in their scenarios. Their scenarios might have triggered responses based on real-world perceptions, not only about the regime-type of the countries but possibly also about other features of these countries.

Thirdly, another point of measurement. In this study, the regime-types were indicated by a neutral description of the practices of a liberal democracy and an autocracy, rather than by explicitly naming the regimes. No negative words were used to describe their practices to make sure that no possible bias was triggered that might enhance the threat. The participants showed to have perceived the regime-types as intended, which means that they got what type of regime was meant, although no negative wording or connotation was used. Most studies (Bakker, 2017; Geva et al., 1993; Geva & Hanson, 1999; Johns & Davies, 2012; Mintz & Geva, 1993; Rousseau, 2005; Tomz & Weeks, 2013) measured the regime-type of the opponent by explicit mentioning of the regime-type: democratic and autocratic/dictator, respectively. These words have strong and possibly negative connotations that might have triggered threat responses that are less connected with what a specific regime-type entails.

Lastly, the relevance of taking other explanatory factors within the design. This study built on a previous study (Bakker, 2017) in which the willingness to attack an autocracy over a democracy was tested and compared between the results of individuals of a liberal democracy with the results of individuals of an autocracy. This comparison showed to be fruitful:

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The democratic experimental group showed to be more peaceful towards other democracies, just like previous studies showed. However, the comparative perspective brought a new insight: because the autocratic citizens were overall more peaceful towards all regime-types the comparison showed that actually the democratic participants were not more peaceful towards other democracies, but rather more war-prone towards autocracies. These findings are important in the light of theoretical refinement, and show that we cannot simply assume autocratic individuals to be war-prone, as democratic peace theory does. (Bakker, 2017, p. 538)

However, multivariate analysis showed that the significant influence of regime-type on the liberal democratic individuals disappeared and did not have any explanatory value when it controlled for other factors. In other words: the influence of regime-type lost its salience and showed to be marginal and not significant because the multivariate analysis showed that the perception of threat of the conflict mattered, as well as actor-centric factors such as hawkishness (2017, p. 539).

Earlier micro-level studies did not compare the results of liberal democracies with the results of autocracies. They measured regime-type in several explicit ways that might have triggered different threat responses for which no control was implemented. Moreover, they did not disentangle regime-type from other potential threatening factors. Although these studies are valuable for our understanding of democratic peace theory, all in all, this dissertation shows that the factor regime-type as a reason for war should be reconsidered more carefully.

The data for this study were collected through the use of students samples. Besides practical arguments about the availability of convenience samples, and the feasibility of using real world (and autocratic) decision-makers within experiments, this study aims for theoretical clarification in the first place. Based on democratic peace theory, which assume an overall socialization effect within regime-types, the use of homogenous samples does not jeopardize the empirical test. Moreover, although the experimental results generated by student samples cannot be extrapolated to representative samples of their countries, a comparison between the levels of liberal norms of the student samples and the representative samples of their countries respectively showed, however, similar patterns of variation. That similarity could cautiously suggest that the student samples do not differ much from the representative population samples, which also reflects on the experimental results. A recent experimental study by Yarhi-Milo et al. (2016) investigated if there was a difference between foreign policy predispositions of political leaders and those of a representative sample of citizens supports this argument: they showed that there was no difference.

Also, the case study of this dissertation illustrated quite plausible that the by experiments detected mechanism of hawkishness was also underlying the decision-making process of a real-world decision-maker during a real-world severe interstate conflict, and that regime-type did not matter. It is prudent to take experimental results at their true value and understand them as a help for theoretical clarification. Having that said, if the findings of this study can bring anything, it is the suggestion

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that democratic peace theory should be revisited. The assumptions of democratic peace theory about liberal norms do not find support in this study, nor does the expected influence of the factor regime-type. How the findings of this study relate to the empirical regularity of the democratic peace and how it can inform new research avenues will be discussed in the concluding section.

Hawkishness

This study found that the actor-centric factor hawkishness is a robust and strong explanatory factor. Most theories of international relations reject the influence of individual decision-makers. Democratic peace theory, e.g., and most other theories of international relations have a structure-based perspective. These theories assume that structures influence agents in their decisions. Their assumptions leave no room for the possibility that actors might influence structures, or for the possibility that an even more complex relationship between structure and agent might exist (see e.g. Archer, 1995; Giddens, 1984; Hay, 1995; Hay & Wincott, 1998). Theories of international relations, therefore, do not often acknowledge or incorporate theoretical insights of the individual level and work with the assumption that specific structures have a profound effect on leaders, who will subsequently respond to these structures homogeneously as anticipated. Of course, these scholars do not discard leaders as a factor of importance, but the influence of their personalities and beliefs is often understood as ad hoc rather than systematic and generalizable factors. For instance, scholars of international relations will admit that Hitler is of influence for the study of the Second World War, or Saddam Hussein for both Gulf Wars, however, they will also argue that these individuals were unique in their influence. However plausible that argument might sound, it is at the same time the best argument of why leaders should also be studied and considered. In all these 'unique' instances, leaders have mattered significantly; it was not the structures that steered them. Decision-makers in conflict situations should be studied more systematically, to come to clarification of how individual characteristics of leaders relate to structural theories.

This study shows that the role of the agents, the decision-makers, and the intrinsic beliefs they hold are of important influence. Hawkish beliefs are a stable indicator of foreign policy decisions. Hawkishness explains best the most threatening foreign policy options during a severe interstate conflict, and its influence shows to be very stable. Also, dovishness or reversed hawkishness, explains best why decision-makers are willing to negotiate. Doves, being the opposite of hawks, explain best why decision-makers are willing to negotiate. To understand what drives decision-makers to opt for war, structures matter less than has been theoretically assumed up to now, at least initially. The results of this study suggest that during a severe interstate conflict, the beliefs of decision-makers are the main directive for them to assess the threat and decide subsequently.

This research resonates with recent studies that show that the systematic study of leaders within international relations matters. Saunders (2009, 2011) shows that causal beliefs leaders hold about the origin of a threat influence foreign policy outcomes. Moreover, she finds that these beliefs are quite stable over time. The

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stability implies that when leaders in office interpret events through the lens of their beliefs. She distinguishes in her research between leaders who are more internally and externally focused and finds that the former are more likely than the latter to take military actions to resolve problems (Saunders, 2011, p. 223). Saunders also stresses that although structural factors such as the balance of power or domestic political institutions can be of importance for the decisions of leaders to go to war, these factors are not sufficient conditions to decide. Leaders' beliefs are the strongest explanatory factor (2011, p. 223). Saunders' findings are in line with Horowitz et al. (2015). They show that the beliefs, backgrounds, and upbringing of leaders matter significantly for the outcomes of their decisions because these have shaped their propensity to take risks or not, which has a subsequent effect on their willingness to use force. They conclude their research:

Where systemic and institutional theories fail, we find rich explanations in the detail of biographies, and primary source documents. Individual leaders do matter; heads of state are not simply interchangeable or continuously overwhelmed by exogenous factors (p. 179).

Just like Saunders, Horowitz et al. acknowledge that leaders do not act in a vacuum and that contexts and surroundings have an influence. However, also they conclude that it seems that factors external to leaders are viewed through the lens of their individually held beliefs (2015, pp. 179-180). Dyson and Preston (2006) resonate with these findings. They showed that individual characteristics of leaders coincide with their reading of historical events, which subsequently influences their decisions.

Of course, many scholars have contended for years that leaders matter and need consideration within theories of international relations (see e.g. Barber, 1992; Beasley et al., 2001; Greenstein, 1967, 1992; Hermann, 1980, 2005; Hermann & Hagan, 1998; Hermann & Hermann, 1989; Hermann & Kegley, 1995; Hermann et al., 2001; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998; Kegley & Hermann, 1995; Kowert & Hermann, 1997; Post, 2004; Walker & Schafer, 2006). In the words of one of the leading scholars in this field, Margaret Hermann (with Charles Kegley):

Whereas scholars have made a case for building explanations for the democratic peace parsimoniously by treating the leaders who make decisions exogenously, there is widespread consensus that the resulting explanations are not yet compelling. We believe that researchers may more meaningfully uncover the reasons for democracies' peaceful interactions with one another if they include in the explanatory equation the psychological forces that shape leaders' decisions. In effect, we need to confront the unassailable fact that it is leaders who make the final decisions about war and peace. In accounting for why governments go to war, we need to consider, alongside the impact of the institutional and cultural attributes of political systems, how leaders perceive, interpret, and respond to developments in their domestic environments and to other actors in their international environments (Hermann & Kegley, 1995, p. 529).

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This dissertation powerfully reinforces Hermann c.s. and argues with them that the individual level needs to be considered systematically and more inclusive within conflict studies.

The results of this study offer a new research avenue. What is hawkishness? Is it a belief, or could it be a personality trait? What would be a theory of hawkishness? The latter question is initially of importance. At the start of this research, the anticipation was not that hawkishness would have such a strong and generalizable influence that would overrule most other factors. The study conceptualized hawkishness as the tendency to resolve conflict with the use of force, and dovishness as the tendency to resolve conflicts by peaceful means. To measure the concept of hawkishness, participants placed themselves in a position on (dis)agreeing with general statements about personal and interstate conflict resolution. This measure created a continuum hawks and doves. Although the conceptualization and measurement worked well for this study, the development of a clear and general theory of hawkishness is highly recommended.

Such a theory does not yet exist. The words “hawk” and “dove” are commonly used, often by media, and there is a common wisdom about what these words approximately mean. The media describe political leaders as hawks and doves in relation to (sometimes particular) policies. “Hillary the Hawk”⁸⁴, “Bill is a Dove, but Hillary is a Hawk”⁸⁵, “Reality Check: Yes, Obama is a Hawk”⁸⁶, “Why do liberals keep calling Trump a Dove?”⁸⁷, “Can France be a Hawk with a Dove budget?”⁸⁸, are a few media titles that relate to this common sense understanding. An aggressive position towards a specific policy is seen as hawkish; a cooperative, softer position would be dovish. However, the terminology is just as easily used to describe an economic position⁸⁹ or a position towards climate policies⁹⁰.

Within political science research, hawkishness is often examined within the context of a specific issue. Most of the research into hawkishness has focused upon beliefs about the resolution of specific conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestine conflict (Bar-Tal et al., 1994; Liebes, 1992; I. Maoz, 2003; I. Maoz & McCauley, 2005), or public support for the Vietnam War (Lau, Brown, & Sears, 1978; Verba & Brody, 1970). Measures of hawkishness in these studies are relying on positions on statements in relation to the specific conflict.

As a more general concept, game theory used hawkishness to describe the positions of participants within a game, based on cooperation (see e.g. Morikawa, Hanley, & Orbell, 2002; Schultz, 2005). However, game theory is not very helpful for understanding this research. This research has a political psychological perspective

⁸⁴ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/07/27/hillary-the-hawk-a-history-clinton-2016-military-intervention-libya-iraq-syria/>

⁸⁵ <http://rare.us/story/bill-may-have-been-a-dove-but-hillary-is-a-hawk/>

⁸⁶ <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/05/reality-check-yes-president-obama-is-a-hawk/256674/>

⁸⁷ <https://newrepublic.com/article/135775/liberals-keep-calling-donald-trump-dove>

⁸⁸ http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_world_/2013/08/22/france_suggests_intervention_in_syria_can_it_still_afford_its_hawkish_foreign.html

⁸⁹ <http://www.marketplace.org/2013/11/13/economy/economic-shorthand-hawks-and-doves>

⁹⁰ <https://thinkprogress.org/the-phrasing-of-the-year-climate-hawk-2d3e252fff95#.snmog6fpb>

that investigates individuals, while rational choice posits being a dove or a hawk as a strategic position, a deliberate and rational choice. This research argues that hawkishness is a belief system, something intrinsically tied to the decision-maker. In other words, being a hawk is not something a decision-maker opts for deliberately, the beliefs are much deeper entrenched in the decision-makers psyche. Even if he or she would want to be a dove, they could not if they do not believe in it.

The closest attempt to come to some kind of theory was by Kahneman and Renshon (2007, 2009). They argued that decision-makers who score high on several biases (such as positive illusions, the fundamental attribution error, risk seeking in losses, pseudo-certainty, the illusion of transparency) would be more hawkish. They do not develop a theory of hawkishness, nor conceptualize hawkishness (or dovishness), but rather argue that existing theories of psychology together form a category of hawkishness. In other words, they use existing theories and empirical results of psychological studies into individual decision-making processes to 'fill in' the media notion of hawkishness. They argue that understanding how decision-makers who score high on these biases might have the proclivity to take a more hawkish approach is the best they can do and that moreover, no theory of psychology could explain interstate conflict resolution (Kahneman & Renshon, 2009, p. 92). Their arguments are prudent, and they are right to argue that a theory of hawkishness could never explain all decision-making during interstate conflicts. Having that said, several studies show how beliefs affect decision-makers (Farnham, 2000, 2001, 2003; George, 1969; Holsti, 1970; Jervis, 1976, 2006; Kaarbo, 2003). Hermann (2005) has convincingly argued that the influence of the leadership style traits of leaders, including their beliefs, has to be studied in relation to their responsiveness to their environment. Some leaders are more receptive to external information, which might diffuse their individual beliefs and dispositions when they make decisions, where other leaders remain unshakably steady in their own beliefs (see e.g. Hermann, 2005, pp. 183-184; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998). She has also argued that the context of the decision-making unit matters: how many people decide, just the leader or are there more leaders involved, and what is their role (Hermann, 2001; Hermann & Preston, 1994)?

In other words: it is necessary to come to a better and general theory hawkishness, including a theoretically informed conceptualization. A theory that can answer many more questions, such as: What constitutes hawkishness? Is hawkishness a belief system, as is assumed in this study, or is it rather a personality trait? Moreover, if hawkishness rests on beliefs, how are these created? How do hawkish beliefs relate to other belief systems (such as developed by George, 1969; Holsti, 1962; Holsti & Rosenau, 1988)? Can hawkish beliefs be transformed, and if yes, how? Alternatively, if hawkishness is a personality trait, can we expect it to be stable? How does the hawkish trait relate to other traits, such as leadership traits and style (see: Hermann, 2005; Hermann et al., 2001; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998)? What triggers a hawk? What is the interaction between the structural factors of a conflict and hawkish beliefs, do these enforce each other or can structures constraint

hawkishness? How do hawks hold up face to face with other decision-makers and within group dynamics (Janis, 1982; Jervis, 1976)?

Thus, a new research avenue is to build a general theory of hawkishness. A theory that inspires and clarifies theories of interstate conflict resolutions. A theory that speaks to structure-based theories of conflict resolution. A theory that connects with micro-level theories, as well as structural theories of international relations. The first step is to clarify the concept of hawks and doves. The second step is to connect to the work on personality traits and the work on belief systems and distinguish to which field hawkishness relates best. When a clear understanding of hawkishness is developed theoretically, an investigation can start about its relationship to structural factors and decision-making processes.

8.4 What about the democratic peace?

An important remaining question is: how do the results of this research relate to the democratic peace? If the results of this study are correct and the core foundations of democratic peace theory do not hold up, does the democratic peace even exist? The answer is yes. The democratic peace, as an empirical regularity, exists. Democratic states tend not to fight with one another. This is a, by most political scientists generally accepted, empirical fact. The question that remains, though, is why? This study tested the theory that aim to explain the democratic peace, and the findings show that the theory do not find support and should thus be revisited.

What would, in the light of these findings, be a good way to go about revisiting democratic peace theory? A leading research question that incorporates these empirical findings could be: if we accept that leaders of both democracies and non-democracies are mainly influenced by their beliefs during deciding how to resolve a severe interstate conflict, how can we explain that democracies are unlikely to go to war with each other? The findings show that hawkish beliefs are unrelated to regime-type: the levels of hawkishness variate similarly in all three countries and show moreover an about normally distributed pattern of variation. Thus, we can not argue that individuals tend to be more hawkish within specific regime-types. If we accept that hawkishness is an actor-centric factor of significant and dominant influence on decision-making in general, and if we accept that democracies have not ended up at war with other democracies, the question arises: what constraints the hawks in democracies? The findings show that the (mutual) regime-type was not of influence; knowing that the other state was a democracy did not decrease the willingness to attack. What was it then? It might be that there is an interaction between the actor-specific hawkishness and a –to be specified- structure that causes the democratic peace. In other words, it might be that hawks find themselves more heavily constraint within liberal democracies than in non-democratic regimes.

A new research avenue into the democratic peace project might very well have a renewed focus on institutional processes. This study did not find support for the commonly used institutional explanation of the democratic peace that posits that restraints on decision-making lie within larger and general elective and legal

processes. As elaborated in chapter 2, this particular explanation rests, just like the other explanations, on assumptions that are exaggerated. Earlier empirical tests only focused on the presence of institutions, but did not test for the actual mechanism: 1) Did the institutions function as expected, and 2) Were the foundational assumptions of audience costs empirically supported? Regarding the first point, it is a myth that formal institutions function as they should since they are incrementally influenced and changed by the complexity of networks of social organization and exchange (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, pp. 342-346). Regarding the second point, there is simply not enough empirical evidence to support the assumptions of audience costs that argue that the mass is peaceful and the elite not in a generalizable fashion (Kertzer & Brutger, 2016). Moreover, this study found that the regime-type did not affect decision-makers in their decision, so separate from the mechanism that is posited by the institutional explanation, the institutional explanation does not find support in this study.

The findings of this research, however, do not rule out an alternative institutional explanation. Speculating along the theoretical lines of neo-institutionalism; an alternative institutional explanation might lie deeper within the specific and less formal institutional and organizational processes of liberal-democracies. Liberal democracies rely on a large variety of bureaucratic organizations and inherent decision-making processes. These organizations are often less centralized, in comparison to non-democratic institutional settings, and exist of multiple layers and bureaucratic processes. In that way, informal institutions are created, which are less visible and therefore harder to detect than formal institutions. The literature of neo-institutionalism argues that formal institutions do often not function as intended, due to the dynamics underlying the organizational processes of these formal institutions (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 1998; March & Olsen, 1989; Scott, 2001). The organizational processes within the formal institutions create new, however informal, institutions. These informal institutions start to 'live a life of their own', which means that informal practices (partly) take over the formal practices (Powell, 1991, pp. 194-200). The norms of an institutional or bureaucratic environment can create a 'logic of appropriateness' (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 23) in which the actors behave according to specific expectations. Expectations inherently connected to the informal institution.

The informal institutions can be the result of a (maybe even dialectical) interaction between the structure of the institutions and the individual actors within these institutions. Such an interaction might be the mechanism by which a possible alternative institutional explanation for the democratic peace takes place. The different strands in the neo-institutionalist literature (see the seminal article of Hall & Taylor, 1996) are all, however diverse their views on the agent-structure debate might be, concerned with how individual preferences aggregate to collective decisions. Their focus lies, in particular, on how this process is influenced by the institutional settings that aim to facilitate these processes (Immergut, 1998, p. 25).

The neo-institutional take on decision-making processes connects with the field of foreign policy analysis. The work mentioned above by Margaret Hermann c.s.

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(see e.g. Hermann, 1980, 2001, 2005; Hermann & Hagan, 1998; Hermann & Hermann, 1989; Hermann & Kegley, 1995; Hermann & Preston, 1994; Hermann et al., 2001; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998) offers a clear theoretical framework of how hawks could be constraint by institutional arrangements, in relation to their receptivity to context. The relationship between regime-type and leadership style or beliefs has not yet been explored extensively (Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998; Keller, 2005; Schafer & Walker, 2006; Walker & Schafer, 2006) and to contribute to these studies might show to be productive. Likewise, bureaucratic politics model and the organizational process model (Allison et al., 1971) might be fruitful to explore based on the insights of this study.

The bureaucratic politics model (Allison et al., 1971; Allison & Halperin, 1972) argues that the power dynamics within bureaucracies that play between different bureaucratic agents with different interests and objectives are determining policy outcomes (Allison & Halperin, 1972). The decisions that are made often reflect compromises between the different actors that play a role before the decision-making process starts. Actors who are not per se the actual decision-makers. Also, these bureaucratic actors process the executive orders of decision-makers, a process that effectively can cause different outcomes (Allison & Halperin, 1972). The organizational process model rests on the notion that multiple organizations within a state are related to decision-making, and each of those has their own rules, defined in standard operating procedures, that can affect the outcomes of a decision (Allison, 1968, p. 186).

All regimes rely on bureaucratic processes, also the non-democratic ones. Although there is little evidence from the bureaucratic practices of non-democratic regimes, it is reasonable to expect that similar dynamics can take place. What then would distinguish institutional influences on liberal democratic hawks compared to non-democratic hawks? The answer lies in the aims of these processes and institutions. Institutions and bureaucratic processes are created to coordinate and control complex relational networks and are founded on the principles of their state. Liberal democracies aim to build bureaucracies based on Weberian principles that strive for a rationalized best outcome that ensures equality for all clients. The bureaucratic processes aim for the creation of a public good. The bureaucratic structures that arise from liberal democratic principles encourage fairness among all members of the society. The organizational structures reflect these principles. Autocracies' bureaucracies, however, do not necessarily strive for the rationalized best outcome. The leaders of autocracies are less willing to invest higher costs to ensure the equality that leads democracies and are therefore more likely to implement policies that do not aim at the public good (Dixit, 2010).

Civil servants are often climbing a slow but steady career path. They can only climb this career ladder if they conform to the strict norms of these bureaucratic principles. Since civil servants often spend a lifetime within these strict and binding structures, their behavior might alter: they instill these norms (Merton, 1940) or at the least adhere strictly to these norms.

The question is whether or not liberal democratic bureaucratic processes might enhance specific norms of compromise among its members, thereby transforming hawkish beliefs into more dovish ones. Beliefs that then ultimately affect the decisions. Vice versa, the question is whether the bureaucratic processes of non-democracies are inherently different types of norms. Of course, these suggestions are mere speculations at this point. However, the speculations are informed by the empirical findings and inspired by a different strand of theories to formulate a direction for a research avenue into the explanations for the democratic peace.

Another, however completely different, research avenue suggested by the results of chapter 7 would be a study of the use of democratic peace theory by decision-makers as a justification for their foreign policy decisions. The case study showed that Thatcher was not affected by the regime-type of the opponent Argentina during the Falklands crisis. Within public statements that were aiming at finding public support, Thatcher used the regime-type of Argentina as a justification for the war. The finding is, however, anecdotal. It was beyond the scope of this study to investigate this finding systematically. This finding does resonate with earlier research that shows that politicians use democratic peace as conventional wisdom to please the crowd and get public support (Avtalyon-Bakker, 2013; Geis & Wagner, 2011; Hobson, Smith, Owen, Geis, & Ish-Shalom, 2011; Ish-Shalom, 2006, 2015; Ish-Shalom, 2008). The democratic peace is often called ‘the closest thing political science has to an iron law’ (Levy, 1988) and people seemingly believe that often. The politicization of a theory, which lacks empirical support for any of the explanations, creates a conventional wisdom (Hobson et al., 2011; Ish-Shalom, 2006, 2015; Ish-Shalom, 2008) that is used to get public support for wars. Western liberal democratic leaders try to ‘sell’ wars or conflicts from the ideological view on regime-types and use this as propaganda for their own means that might be different than what they argue (Morelli & De Neuter, 2003, pp. 94-96). The Falklands War case is a good example because it showed how the regime-type only played a role in the justification by Thatcher to go to war. With that understanding, it is indeed not so weird to suggest to investigate this mechanism more.

8.5 Conclusion

This study shows that while the democratic peace as an empirical regularity might still be valid, the theoretical arguments to explain why democracies do not fight with each other turn out to have been built on empirically unsupported foundations. The assumptions on which democratic peace theory rest, assumptions about the socialization with liberal norms and democratic practices from which democratic citizens were expected to morally learn and subsequently change their behavior towards other liberal democracies, cannot be used instrumentally as has been done up to now. Without empirical support for these assumptions, democratic peace

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theory as these are formulated now simply cannot explain the empirical regularity of the democratic peace.

Moreover, this study shows that an actor-based approach towards decision-making processes within international relations will have to be considered and to be supplemented to the more structured-based approaches that are currently leading the way of international relations scholars. In other words: the individual matters! It is thereby not implied that only actors should be studied. In this study, also contextual factors showed to matter significantly. As the discussion above indicates, it is very plausible to expect interactions between structure and agency. The most important insight that this dissertation wants to convey is that the individual needs to be considered within theoretical frameworks that aim to explain outcomes in international relations.

The question with which this study started, *why do democracies not fight with each other*, has not been answered, yet. The insights of this study, however, do bring a bit closer to light what possible answers might be available to answer this important question that underlies the enormous research project of the democratic peace. Because the leading research question of this dissertation - *What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when they are on the brink of war* - is answered. The answer of this study shows that democratic peace theory, theory that aim to explain why democracies do not fight with each other, cannot be used as they have been up to now and should be revised. This insight brings scholars that are interested in the democratic peace a bit closer to a deeper understanding. And thereby, this study delivers a modest but important contribution to the growth of knowledge as Popper intended (1959/1992), a growth that is never-ending and ever expanding.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval

The research project was reviewed by the Human Subjects Research Review Office (HSRRC) of Bingham University under Protocol Number: 3389-14 and Protocol title: Liberal norms and support for war in comparative cross-regime perspective: evaluating the presence and influence of liberal norms.

The project has received an expedited approval pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations, 45 CFR 46.110(7) .

Experiments were conducted, in all countries, following the above mentioned regulations.

Appendix 2: Experimental scenarios (in English)

Number of experimental group written here

Dear participant,

This survey is part of a study run by Femke Avtalyon-Bakker, a PhD candidate from Leiden University in the Netherlands. This survey is for academic purposes only. This is not a marketing study; nor is it a test of your knowledge. There are no right or wrong answers. Your answers will be registered without using identifiable information and cannot be connected to your identity in any way. Completing the study should take about 10-15 minutes.

What do you have to do?

The survey consists of two parts:

1. On the next page you will find a story about two countries. These countries are completely fictitious, but you are asked to imagine that you have lived your whole life in one of these countries—simply called “My Country.” Imagine then that you are an advisor to the government of My Country. After carefully reading the story, please answer the questions that follow the story. Please make your judgment on the basis of the information provided in the story and remember that it is a fictional story. If needed, you can look back at the story when answering the questions.
2. The second section poses a series of questions about your personal views on a few different topics. Please answer honestly about your personal opinions and preferences. Again, your answers will not be linked to your identity in any way.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Femke Avtalyon-Bakker at f.e.avtalyon@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

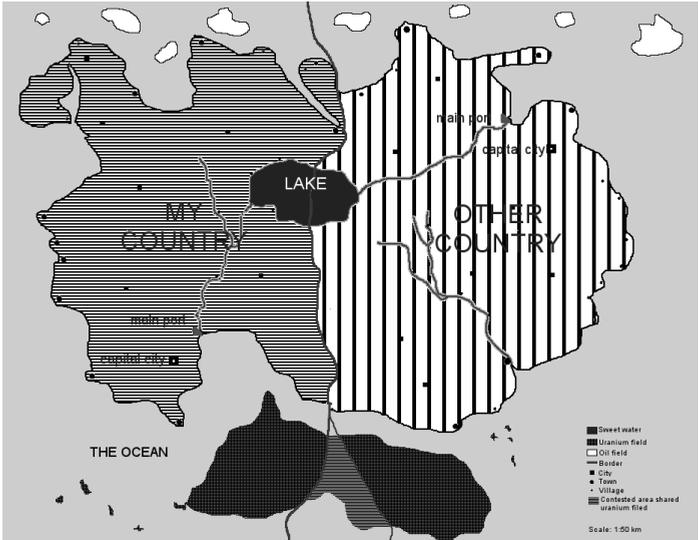
Thank you for your participation!

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Imagine that you have lived your entire life in My Country, a neighboring state of Other Country. My Country and Other Country together form a large island in the Island region of The Ocean, about 130 miles off the continent. The countries are **very similar** to each other in population and territory size, economic and military power and rely on their own resources, as evidenced below:

	My Country	Other Country
Population (people)	50.102.307	49.987.432
Territory size (m²)	86.354	86.012
Economy (GPD/capita)	\$ 31.448	\$ 31.977
Industry	High-tech Tourism	High-tech Tourism
Resources	Oil fields Uranium fields Sweet (drinking) water	Oil fields Uranium fields Sweet (drinking) water
Military	2 year obligatory military service	2 year obligatory military service

This area is of great importance to the world because one of the world's largest concentrations of uranium (which forms the basis for nuclear power) is located near the shores of these countries. Both countries own several uranium fields and have agreed to exploit these fields only for peaceful purposes (such as nuclear energy and medical use). There is, however, one large uranium field with contested borders (please see the map) that is the source of disputes between My Country and Other Country.



Treatment Regime-type	
(Group I : liberal-democracy)	(Group II: autocracy)
<i>In Other Country there are several political parties. Since 1919, democratic elections have</i>	<i>In Other Country only 1 political party exists. Since 1919, elections have been held on an</i>

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<p><i>been held every 4 years, and all adult citizens may choose their representatives for the national government. The citizens of Other Country feel that they are able to hold their representatives responsible for their policies and actions.</i></p> <p><i>The state of Other Country does not have control over the media outlets (public and commercial TV & radio, newspapers, the internet) and does not monitor the internet and social media.</i></p> <p><i>If citizens have concerns about public matters, they have the right to voice them publicly and may come together in groups to protest. Large-scale protests are allowed, as long as these are peaceful.</i></p> <p><i>The citizens of Other Country also feel that they can say whatever and be whomever they want, without fearing repercussions from the state or society.</i></p>	<p><i>irregular basis, but the composition of the national government does not really change. The citizens of Other Country do not feel that they can hold their representatives responsible for their policies and actions.</i></p> <p><i>The state of Other Country controls all media outlets (TV & Radio, two newspapers, the internet) and monitors the internet and social media when representatives of the state believe it is in the best interest of the country to do so.</i></p> <p><i>If citizens have concerns about public matters, they have to report to the National Security Offices to get permission to protest, which is granted only sporadically. Large-scale protests usually lead to numerous arrests.</i></p> <p><i>The citizens of Other Country do not feel free to say whatever or be whomever they want without fear of repercussions from the state or society.</i></p>
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At the moment, the country you live in (My Country) is caught up in a heated conflict with Other Country. The conflict is about these issues:

Treatment Aggressor	
(Group III: Invasive)	(Group IV: Non-invasive)
<p><i>1. Other Country officially declared that the entire large uranium field belongs to them and started to exploit the area that is located in My Country's territorial waters.</i></p> <p><i>2. Other Country has strategically positioned several of its war ships and a submarine around the uranium field.</i></p> <p><i>3. New intelligence evidence shows that Other Country has possessed secret nuclear weapons capabilities for several years.</i></p> <p><i>My Country has condemned the actions of Other Country and has demanded that Other Country immediately return the invaded area to My Country and pay compensation for the invasion.</i></p> <p><i>Other Country refuses to do so and has threatened to use military force if My Country does not back off.</i></p> <p><i>My Country has also insisted that Other Country immediately shut down their nuclear weapons program, but Other Country denies it has such a program and maintains that the uranium will be</i></p>	<p><i>1. Other Country has started to exploit the uranium field in the contested area, despite recognizing the contested status of the area.</i></p> <p><i>2. Intelligence evidence shows that Other Country is secretly considering starting a nuclear weapons program.</i></p> <p><i>My Country has condemned the actions of Other Country and has demanded that Other Country cease exploiting the uranium field in the contested area.</i></p> <p><i>Other Country refuses to do so and told My Country to back off.</i></p> <p><i>My Country has also insisted that Other Country immediately terminate all plans to begin building a nuclear weapons program, but Other Country</i></p>

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<i>used for peaceful purposes only.</i>	<i>denies such plans exist and maintains that the uranium will be used for peaceful purposes only.</i>
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Treatment Threat	
(Group V: Hard power)	(Group VI: Soft power)
<p><i>The governments of My Country and Other Country have already held negotiations for several weeks to resolve these issues, but they have not reached a resolution yet. The tensions between both states remain high.</i></p> <p><i>Two days ago, the political leaders of Other Country publicly accused My Country of delivering false evidence about nuclear weapons, expelled My Country's ambassador, and pulled back their own diplomatic staff. Other Country also unilaterally closed the border to all traffic between the two countries and stopped all trade payments to My Country. Other Country is also preventing trade vessels from entering the port of My Country. Other Country has openly held military exercises near the border with My Country, and intelligence evidence shows that Other Country has started to mobilize its military troops; its navy, air, and land forces are now ready to attack My Country. The threat to My Country seems very high.</i></p>	<p><i>The governments of My Country and Other Country have already held negotiations for several weeks to resolve these issues, but they have not reached a resolution yet. The tensions between both states remain high.</i></p> <p><i>Two days ago, the political leaders of Other Country publicly accused My Country of delivering false evidence about nuclear weapons plans, expelled My Country's ambassador, and pulled back their own diplomatic staff. Other Country has threatened to stop all trade payments. However, the borders remain open to all traffic, and trade vessels continue to reach the port of My Country without restrictions. Intelligence evidence shows that Other Country has not made any attempts to mobilize its army and has refrained from holding military exercises. The threat to My Country still seems relatively low.</i></p>

Yesterday was the last meeting in which an attempt was made to negotiate a settlement between My Country and Other Country. However, they have been unable to settle their differences. The negotiators for My Country left yesterday's negotiations with the strong impression that Other Country is not going to alter its position and informed the leaders of My Country that Other Country might pose a serious danger to the safety of My Country.

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The leaders of My Country have been discussing the matter over the last 24 hours and have called you in to give advise. The government sees two possible courses of action:

A. Force: To attack Other Country in defense of My Country with a pre-emptive strike that will seize the Capital city and the main port of Other Country in order to force Other Country to resolve the conflict.

B. Diplomacy: To return and continue the negotiations with Other Country until the conflict is resolved.

At the request of My Country's leaders, please answer the questions below, choosing the answer that fits best with your personal views regarding how the conflict should be handled.

Question 1:

What do you advise the government of My Country to do?

Attack (pre-emptive strike) Negotiate further

Question 2:

Based on the story you just read, how much would you approve or disapprove of the following actions that My Country might take?

		Strongly disapprove	Disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Neither approve, nor disapprove	Somewhat approve	Approve	Strongly approve
2a	Continue to negotiate with Other Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2b	Attack Other Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2c	Start a nuclear missiles program in My Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2d	Freeze all diplomatic and economic relations with Other Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2e	Block the main port of Other Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 3:

If you had known that My Country and Other Country have strong economic ties that affect both populations (many jobs in My Country depend upon good economic relations between the two countries), what would have been your answer to question 1?

[] Attack (pre-emptive strike)

[] Negotiate further

Question 4:

Based on the story you just read, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:

		Fully disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Fully agree
4a	The conflict with Other Country is very threatening.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4b	Other Country is very likely to attack My Country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4c	Other Country is very similar to My Country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4d	Other Country is very democratic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4e	The actions of Other Country are violating the territory of My Country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4f	The uranium conflict with Other Country frightens me as a citizen of My Country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4g	If the political leaders of My Country decided to go to war with Other Country, they would have my full support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4h	If My Country went to war with Other Country over the uranium conflict, I would be willing to fight as a soldier for My Country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4i	I like Other Country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4j	Other Country is very similar to the real country I live in.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 5:

Did the conflict between My Country and Your Country remind you of a real-world conflict? If so, please name or describe the conflict below.

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	Questions 6-38	Fully disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree, nor	Somewhat agree	Agree	Fully agree
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:							
6.	It is important to teach children that they are in control of their own future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I trust people that I know from my neighborhood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	If someone does me a favor, I am ready to return it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	It is necessary that everyone, regardless of whether I like their views or not, can express themselves freely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	To help somebody is the best policy to be certain that s/he will help you in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	States are generally not trustworthy: they will attempt to expand their territory if they have the chance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	I feel that I have completely free choice and control over my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Women have the same rights as men.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	It is the best interest of the world if the USA maintains its position as one of the worlds most powerful nations, even if it means going to the brink of war.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Civil rights protect people from state oppression.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	In general, I trust other people when I first meet them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	I would never permit a person to say things on television that contradict my way of thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	In general, international organizations are ineffective because they lack the power necessary to change the behavior of powerful states.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	People choose their leaders in free elections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	I believe there are many sides to most issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	I think that all will be well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	It is important to teach children tolerance and respect for others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	Gay people should be able to participate openly in a society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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25.	I do not believe that others have good intentions.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
26.	The use or threat of nuclear weapons is a necessary instrument for states in order to survive as a state.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
27.	It is important to teach children to defend themselves physically if necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
28.	People obey their rulers.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
29.	Everybody thinks of themselves first, so I will have to protect myself and my family before I consider others.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
30.	I believe that when I behave properly, others will also behave properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
31.	I believe that events in my life are determined by myself only.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
32.	It is not important to behave according to the expectations of your society.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
33.	I trust what other people say.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
34.	I don't have the feeling that I decide upon life goals by myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
35.	People from a minority group should be free to live their lives as they wish, even if I do not like them.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
36.	I believe people are basically moral.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
37.	The army takes over when government is incompetent.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
38.	The best way for us to keep peace is by trying to work out agreements at the bargaining table rather than by having a very strong military so other countries won't attack us.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
39.	My conscience guides my decisions about how to behave towards others.	<input type="checkbox"/>						

40. **What is your age?**

.....years old

41. **I am:**

a. Male

b. Female

42. **In which country are you born?**

a. USA b. Other country, namely

43. **Have you lived most of your life in:**

a. USA b. Other country, namely

Dutch Summary

Haviken en Duiven. Democratische Vrede Theorie Herzien.

De term 'democratische vrede' verwijst naar een empirisch patroon dat aan lijkt te geven dat democratieën zelden tot nooit met elkaar in oorlog raken (Babst, 1964; Doyle, 1997; Maoz & Abdolali, 1989; Rummel, 1983). Een flink aantal politicologen en veel westerse politieke leiders verwijzen naar de democratische vrede als ware het een 'ijzeren wet' (Levy, 1988, p. 662). Met name politici zien in deze veronderstelde wet reden om het wereldwijd verspreiden van de liberale democratie te promoten (zie e.g., Bush-Administration, 2002, pp. 3-4,6-7; Clinton-Administration, 1998, pp. 33-35, 36-56; Obama-Administration, 2010, pp. 5-7,10,17,35-39; European Security Strategy, 2003, p. 10) en baseren hun, soms zelfs paradoxaal oorlogszuchtig, buitenlands beleid op de onwrikbaar veronderstelde democratische vrede (Burgos, 2008, pp. 222-223; Geis, Brock, & Müller, 2007; Ish-Shalom, 2006; Walt, 1998, p. 39).

Hoewel de empirische bevinding van de democratische vrede door weinigen wordt verworpen, is er echter nog geen consensus over een mogelijke verklaring voor die bevinding. Kortweg, aan de zijde van de tegenstanders van de democratische vrede beargumenteren de realisten dat de liberale democratie niet de verklarende factor is (zie e.g., Elman, 1997, 2000; Farber & Gowa, 1995, 1997; Gat, 2005; Geis, Brock, & Müller, 2006; Geis & Wagner, 2011; Gowa, 1999, 2011; Layne, 1994; Rosato, 2003; Waltz, 2000) maar dat deze simpelweg correleert met een andere verklarende factor in het internationale statensysteem, zoals e.g. de interstatelijke machtsbalans, de koude oorlog, moderniteit, militaire allianties of economische banden. Aan de zijde van de voorstanders beargumenteren liberalen en constructivisten dat het specifiek de liberale democratie is die vrede veroorzaakt, maar binnen deze groep is er ook nog geen consensus over welk specifieke kenmerken van de liberale democratie deze bewuste vrede zou kunnen bepalen. Er zijn binnen deze laatste groep twee belangrijke onderzoeklijnen. De zogenoemde 'institutionele verklaring' stelt dat wederzijdse democratische instituties de verklaring geven voor de democratische vrede, omdat het (doorgaans als vredelievend veronderstelde) publiek de (doorgaans als oorlogszuchtig veronderstelde) politieke elite zou beperken. De zogenoemde 'normatieve verklaring', welke in deze studie de meeste aandacht krijgt, stelt dat wederzijdse liberale normen een mogelijke oorlog tussen liberale democratieën kunnen voorkomen, omdat de burgers van deze democratieën met liberale normen worden gesocialiseerd. Deze liberale normen worden vervolgens verondersteld meer vreedzame betrekkingen te kunnen bewerkstelligen. Dit socialisatieproces zou binnen niet-democratische regimes ontbreken, met als gevolg dat de inwoners van deze regimes minder vredelievend zouden zijn.

Daarnaast is een van de lastigste aspecten van het onderzoek naar een mogelijke verklaring dat de bevonden democratische vrede *ex-post* vastgesteld is, en dat een mogelijke verklaring naar een *ex-ante* mechanisme zoekt. Met andere woorden: wat is er gedurende een serieus interstatelijk conflict tussen democratieën

anders verlopen in vergelijking met conflicten tussen democratieën en andersoortige regimes of alleen andersoortige regimes dat het conflict niet uit de hand is gelopen? De mogelijke verklaringen die door verschillende theorieën worden opgeworpen wortelen in de intrinsiek verschillende basisaannamen van de *grand theories* der internationale betrekkingen; realisme, liberalisme en constructivisme. Deze aannamen hangen samen met de verschillende mens- en wereldbeelden van deze grote perspectieven. Omdat elk perspectief een specifiek mensbeeld heeft dat als constant verondersteld wordt, worden de theoretische verklaringen voor de democratische vrede gebouwd op de aanname dat alle individuen hetzelfde zijn en hetzelfde gedrag zullen vertonen. Omdat deze mensbeelden per perspectief verschillen, kunnen deze verklaringen ontologisch en epistemologisch simpelweg niet met elkaar 'spreken'.

Dit proefschrift stelt dat de aannamen over het individu, de zogenoemde microfundamenten, waarop de democratische vrede theorie stoelt, eerst empirisch onderzocht moeten worden voordat ze kunnen dienen als bouwstenen voor studies op geaggregeerd niveau, zoals deze gebruikelijk worden uitgevoerd (zie e.g. Babst, 1964; Bennett, 2006; Benoit, 1996; Bremer, 1992, 1993; Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, & Smith, 1999, 2004; Choi, 2010; Dafoe, 2011; Danilovic & Clare, 2007; Dixon, 1993, 1994; Dixon & Moon, 1993; Dixon & Senese, 2002; Dorussen & Ward, 2010; Doyle, 1986; Gleditsch, 1995; Henderson, 2004; Maoz & Abdolali, 1989; Maoz & Russett, 1993; Mousseau, 1997; Rummel, 1983; Russett, 1993; Russett & Oneal, 2001; Van Belle, 1997; Ward, Siverson, & Cao, 2007; Weart, 1998).

Deze studie vertrekt vanuit de stellingname dat de democratische vrede wellicht een empirische bevinding is, maar dat de theoretische onderbouwing van een verklaring voor deze vrede is gebouwd op ongefundeerde aannamen op het microniveau. De hoofddoelstelling van het onderzoek is het in kaart brengen van deze aannamen en deze aan een empirische toets te onderwerpen. Door op het microniveau van besluitvormers gedurende een escalerend interstatelijk conflict te onderzoeken welke factoren op systeemniveau, staatsniveau én individueel niveau de besluitvormers doen besluiten de andere staat aan te vallen, kunnen niet alleen de microfundamenten van de democratische vrede theorie getoetst worden, maar tevens alternatieve theorieën. Zo wordt er tevens gekeken naar de invloed van de machtsbalans van staten in conflict, het gedrag van de tegenstander, en hoe de overtuigingen die besluitvormers zelf hebben (hoe havikachtig of duifachtig zij zijn) over hoe conflicten op te lossen van invloed kunnen zijn.

De onderzoeksvraag, welke factoren beïnvloeden besluitvormers om gedurende een escalerend interstatelijk conflict te besluiten de aanval op de tegenstander in te zetten, leidt het onderzoek en toetst de invloed van regime-type (zowel van de van de tegenstander als van de eigen staat), het gedrag van de opponent, de interstatelijke machtsbalans, en de havikachtige c.q. duifachtige overtuigingen van besluitvormers. De microfundamenten van de democratische vrede theorie die in deze studie getoetst worden zijn: 1) individuen die in een liberale democratie zijn opgegroeid zijn met liberale normen gesocialiseerd, in tegenstelling tot individuen die in andere regimetypen zijn opgegroeid, 2) liberale normen

beïnvloeden de bereidwilligheid van individuen negatief om met de tegenstander ten oorlog te gaan, mits de tegenstander een democratie is, 3) individuen in een democratie zijn minder bereid een andere democratie aan te vallen dan wanneer de tegenstander een niet-democratie is.

Deze studie gebruikt een *mixed-method* onderzoeksopzet. Als kern van het onderzoek wordt een besluitvormingsexperiment gebruikt om een unieke dataverzameling uit te voeren onder studenten door middel van steekproeven in de Verenigde Staten, China en Rusland. De resultaten van deze experimenten worden getrianguleerd met een kwantitatieve studie enerzijds en een *case-study* anderzijds. Het experiment toetst welke factoren besluitvormers beïnvloeden om gedurende een uit de hand gelopen interstatelijk conflict te besluiten de tegenstander aan te vallen. De zesde golf van de *World Values Survey*, een bestaande kwantitatieve studie, bestudeert of de niveaus van liberale normen van de studenten steekproeven overeenkomst vertonen met representatieve steekproeven van de Verenigde Staten, China en Rusland. Tevens dient het besluitvormingsproces gedurende de Falklandoorlog van Brits minister-president Margaret Thatcher als *case-study* ter illustratie van het, door de experimenten aangetoonde, causale mechanisme.

De resultaten tonen aan dat de democratische vrede weliswaar een empirische bevinding is, maar dat de theoretische argumenten om uit te leggen waarom democratieën niet met elkaar in oorlog gaan zich baseren op empirisch ongefundeerde aannamen. Liberale normen komen, zowel onder studenten steekproeven als onder representatieve steekproeven, in de Verenigde Staten, China en Rusland voor en lijken niet samen te hangen met een socialisatieproces binnen het politieke regime van de liberale democratie. Binnen iedere steekproef benaderen de distributies een normaalverdeling en deze vertonen dezelfde patronen. Hoewel het gemiddelde niveau van de steekproeven in de Verenigde Staten significant hoger uitvalt dan de steekproeven in China en Rusland, zijn de verschillen tussen de gemiddelden marginaal. Belangrijker, de distributies binnen alle steekproeven vertonen een vergelijkbaar patroon en benaderen in alle gevallen een normaalverdeling. Met andere woorden, liberale normen zijn niet alleen aanwezig in liberale democratieën maar net zo goed in andere regimes en variëren zelfs op vergelijkbare wijze. Daarnaast blijken deze liberale normen niet van invloed te zijn op de beslissing om met de tegenstander ten oorlog te gaan, ongeacht het regime van deze tegenstander of het regime van de besluitvormer. Hiermee wordt aangetoond dat de aannamen over liberale normen die aan de democratische vrede theorie ten grondslag liggen niet instrumenteel gebruikt kunnen worden zoals zo vaak is gedaan. Ook het regime van de tegenstander blijkt in geen van de gevallen van invloed te zijn op het besluitvormingsproces, en dat geldt voor de alle drie de steekproeven. Zonder empirische ondersteuning voor deze aannamen, kan de democratische vrede theorie in zijn huidige vorm het empirische patroon van de democratische vrede niet verklaren.

Wat wel van invloed blijkt te zijn is wat de besluitvormer zelf over conflictoplossing gelooft. Hoe meer havikachtig de overtuigingen van besluitvormers met betrekking tot conflictoplossing zijn, hoe sterker deze besluitvormers bereid zijn

de tegenstander aan te vallen. En, vice versa, hoe duifachtiger besluitvormers zijn hoe minder ze geneigd zijn om aan te vallen. Dat lijkt wellicht een plausibele bevinding, maar het staat haaks op de democratische vrede theorie die verwacht dat de invloed van gesocialiseerde liberale normen en regimetype dit soort individueel gebaseerde overtuigingen zouden kunnen overschaduwen. Een besluitvormingsexperiment dat de invloed van dezelfde factoren op de besluitvorming om tot minder gewelddadige acties dan een aanval over te gaan toetst (zoals een blokkade, een nucleair wapenprogramma, het bevrozen van economische en diplomatieke betrekkingen, of het blijven onderhandelen), toont wederom dat de havikachtige c.q. duifachtige overtuigingen als sterkste verklarende factoren naar voren komen. Het gedrag van de andere staat blijkt, tot op zeker hoogte, van lichte invloed te zijn, maar echter niet op een generaliseerbare manier. De resultaten tonen dat de havikachtige overtuigingen in alle gevallen de sterkste verklaring kunnen bieden. De *case-study* van Thatcher's besluitvormingsproces in aanloop naar de Falklandoorlog met Argentinië dient als een voorbeeld van de experimentele resultaten. Het illustreert, aan de hand van een daadwerkelijk escalierend interstatelijk conflict hoe de havikachtige overtuigingen van Margaret Thatcher van invloed waren op haar beslissing met Argentinië in oorlog te gaan.

Dit proefschrift toont aan dat de democratische vrede theorie herzien zal moeten worden, omdat de microfundamenten van deze theorie empirisch niet ondersteund worden. Een van de mogelijkheden die aan het eind van dit proefschrift geopperd worden is dat de verklaring voor de democratische vrede wellicht binnen de werking van democratische instituties gevonden zou kunnen worden. Maar dan niet de grotere, democratie overkoepelende electorale en juridische processen die doorgaans als verklaring worden gesuggereerd, maar eerder de fijnere en specifiekere instituties die inherent met besluitvormingsprocessen binnen democratieën verbonden zijn. Een belangrijk inzicht dat dit proefschrift mee wil geven voor een herziening van de democratische vrede theorie is dat het individu er ook toe doet. Deze stellingname impliceert niet dat alleen individuele besluitvormers bestudeerd moeten worden, maar juist dat de interactie tussen structuur en agentschap bestudeerd zouden moeten worden.

Curriculum Vitae

Femke Elisabeth Bakker (30 January 1972, Bergen op Zoom) graduated from Fontys Hogescholen in 1995 as a professional actor and worked as such in theater and for Dutch television during the 1990s and early 2000s. During these years she also started to write for television and, later on, for weekly and monthly magazines. She started to study Political Science at the Institute of Political Science of Leiden University and graduated cum laude in 2010, after which she enrolled in the Research master of the same institute. She graduated in 2012 (cum laude) and her master thesis was awarded with several thesis awards, including the prestigious Daniel Heinsius Thesis Award from the Dutch Political Science Association (NKWP) and the Flemish Political Science Association (VVP) for Best Political Science Master Thesis of the Netherlands and Flanders. Between September 2013 and September 2017, she was employed as a PhD-researcher at the same institute that trained her. Currently, she works as an assistant professor in Political Science at her alma mater. Femke's research has been published in *Acta Politica*, *Perspectives on Political Science*, *Review of Middle East Economics and Finance*, and *Res Publica*. She is also an associate researcher of the Laboratory for Comparative Social Research (LCSR), a member of the Early Career Committee (ECC) of the International Society for Political Psychologists (ISPP), and book reviews editor of the international peer reviewed political science journal *Acta Politica*.

Stellingen

Stellingen

Behorende bij het proefschrift *Hawks and Doves. Democratic peace theory revisited* van Femke Elisabeth Bakker.

1. Democratic peace theory needs to be revised and take the individual level perspective into account. [this dissertation]
2. The micro-level assumptions on which democratic peace theory rests need to be tested empirically and cannot be used without such a test. [this dissertation]
3. It does not suffice to refer to Kant as a theoretical argument for democratic peace research without explaining the specific interpretation of Kant's work. [this dissertation]
4. Liberal norms are individually held values rather than norms instilled by the structure of a political regime. [this dissertation]
5. Hawkishness of decision-makers explains their decisions during conflict resolution best. [this dissertation]
6. Structure-centric theories of political science and international relations need political psychology to inform them about the validity of their assumptions. [subject area]
7. Whether the agent-structure relationship is one-directional, two-directional or dialectical, it is prudent to include the actor's perspective within theories of political science and international relations. [subject area]
8. Experiments are an excellent research instrument to test the microfoundations of International Relations theories. [subject area]
9. Research in the field of international relations could benefit from leaving the normative perspectives of its grand theories behind. [subject area]
10. Writing a dissertation, or any writing that takes up a lot of your time, should follow a path of inspiration rather than a path of motivation. [own choice]
11. Conducting research can benefit immensely from a daily meditation practice. [own choice]
12. Individuals are naturally born with an actor-centric perspective, after which life tends to convince them to submit to the surrounding structures. Those that manage to maintain (or regain) an actor-centric perspective are able to experience a genuine feeling of freedom. [own choice]
13. You create your own reality: what you believe is what you see. [own choice]

What influences decision-makers to decide to attack another country when they are on the brink of war? The main aim of this study is to detect if there is a causal mechanism underlying the decision to attack another country when on the brink of war, and whether or not this mechanism differs between regime-types. It investigates whether or not regime-type, the nature of the conflict, the power used, and hawkish beliefs of decision-makers matter in this decision.

By addressing this question from a political psychological and comparative perspective, this dissertation tests the microfoundations of democratic peace theory simultaneously with alternative theories of decision-making during conflict resolution. The core analytical instrument is a decision-making experiment, executed in the US, Russia, and China. The experimental results are triangulated with a large N study, and a case study.

The overall results show that although the democratic peace as an empirical regularity might still be valid, the theoretical arguments to explain why democracies do not fight with each other turn out to have been built on empirically unsupported foundations. This study argues that an actor-based approach towards decision-making processes within international relations offers important insights to the more structured-based theories of international relations. It thereby convincingly shows that the individual matters, also in international relations.