Democratic Transitions, Institutional Strength, and War

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The centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s was the claim that promoting democracy would foster peace. Noting that no two democracies have ever fought a war against each other, President Bill Clinton argued that support for democratization would be an antidote to international war and civil strife.[1] Yet the 1990s turned out to be a decade of both democratization and chronic nationalist conflict, both within and between some transitional states.

While the world would probably be more peaceful if all states were mature democracies, Clinton's conventional wisdom failed to anticipate the dangers of getting from here to there. Prominent critics have pointed out that newly democratizing states are often neither liberal nor peaceful.[2] Since the French Revolution, the earliest phases of democratization have triggered some of the world's bloodiest nationalist struggles. Similarly, during the 1990s, intense armed violence broke out in a number of regions that had just begun to experiment with electoral democracy and more pluralist public discourse. In some cases, such as the former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus, and Indonesia, transitions from dictatorship to more pluralistic political systems coincided with the rise of national independence movements, spurring separatist warfare that often spilled across international borders.[3] In other

1. See transcript of Clinton's 1994 State of the Union address, *New York Times,* 26 January 1994, A17.
2. Zakaria 1997.
3. Snyder 2000.

cases, transitional regimes clashed in interstate warfare. Ethiopia and Eritrea, both moving toward more pluralistic forms of government in the 1990s, fought a bloody border war from 1998 to 2000.[4] The elected regimes of India and Pakistan battled during 1999 in the mountainous borderlands of Kashmir. Peru and Ecuador, democratizing in fits and starts during the 1980s and 1990s, culminated a series of armed clashes with a small war in the upper Amazon in 1995.[5]

In previous research, we reported that states undergoing democratic transitions were substantially more likely to participate in external wars than were states whose regimes remained unchanged or changed in an autocratic direction.[6] We argued that elites in newly democratizing states often use nationalist appeals to attract mass support without submitting to full democratic accountability and that the institutional weakness of transitional states creates the opportunity for such war-causing strategies to succeed. However, these earlier studies did not fully address the circumstances under which transitions are most likely to precipitate war, and they did not take into account various important causes of war. Equally, some critics worried that the time periods over which we measured the effects of democratization were sometimes so long that events occurring at the beginning of a period would be unlikely to influence foreign policy at its end.[7]

Employing a more refined research design than in our prior work, we aim here to identify more precisely the conditions under which democratization stimulates hostilities. We find that the heightened danger of war grows primarily out of the transition from an autocratic regime to one that is partly democratic. The specter of war during this phase of democratization looms especially large when governmental institutions, including those regulating political participation, are especially weak. Under these conditions, elites commonly employ nationalist rhetoric to mobilize mass support but then become drawn into the belligerent foreign policies unleashed by this process. We find, in contrast, that transitions that quickly culminate in a fully coherent democracy are much less perilous.[8] Further, our results refute the view that transitional democracies are simply inviting targets of attack because of their temporary weakness. In fact, they tend to be the initiators of war. We also refute the view that any regime change is likely to precipitate the outbreak of war. We find that transitions toward democracy are significantly more likely to generate hostilities than transitions toward autocracy.

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4. Gurr codes Ethiopia as making a transition to a regime with both democratic and autocratic characteristics in 1994. Gurr 2000, 293. Eritrea adopted a democratic constitution in 1997 in a process involving nationwide grassroots meetings, but the war precluded holding elections. Tronvoll argues that the war reflected the Eritrean regime's need to use a violent policy of border demarcation to solidify its territorial form of popular nationalism in a multiethnic state. See Iyob 1997; and Tronvoll 1999.
5. Mares 2001.
6. Mansfield and Snyder 1995a,b.
7. On the latter point, see Maoz 1998.
8. Similarly, Gurr finds that since the late 1980s, the likelihood of ethnic conflict has increased in the initial phase of transitions to democracy, especially in new states, but that democratic consolidation reduced this likelihood. Gurr 2000, 153–54.

Weak Institutions, Incomplete Democratic Transitions, and War

The early stages of democratization unleash intense competition among myriad social groups and interests. Many transitional democracies lack state institutions that are sufficiently strong and coherent to effectively regulate this mass political competition. To use Samuel Huntington's terminology, such countries frequently suffer from a gap between high levels of political participation and weak political institutions.[9] The weaker these institutions, the greater the likelihood that war-provoking nationalism will emerge in democratizing countries.[10]

Belligerent nationalism is likely to arise in this setting for two related reasons. The first and more general reason is that political leaders try to use nationalism as an ideological motivator of national collective action in the absence of effective political institutions. Leaders of various stripes find that appeals to national sentiment are essential for mobilizing popular support when more routine instruments of legitimacy and governance—parties, legislatures, courts, and independent news media—are in their infancy. Both old and new elites share this incentive to play the nationalist card. Often such appeals depend for their success on exaggerating foreign threats. Allegations that internal foes have treasonous ties to these external enemies of the nation help the regime hold on to power despite the weakness of governmental institutions. At the outset of the French Revolution, for example, mass nationalism was weak, but soon the leaders of various republican factions found that the rhetoric of war and treason was indispensable to their political survival in the revolutionary institutional wasteland.[11] Newspapers tied to political factions inflamed public opinion with the paired themes of war and treason.

A second reason democratization often fosters belligerent nationalism is that the breakup of authoritarian regimes threatens powerful interests, including military bureaucracies and economic actors that derive a parochial benefit from war and empire. To salvage their position, threatened interests frequently try to recruit mass support, typically by resorting to nationalist appeals that allow them to claim to rule in the name of the people, but without instituting full democratic accountability to the average voter. Exploiting what remains of their governmental, economic, and media power, these elites may succeed in establishing terms of inclusion in politics that force opposition groups to accept nationalism as the common currency of public discourse. For example, Bismarck and his successors in Prussia and Germany used nationalist, military, and colonial issues to rally middle class and rural voters against the working classes while perpetuating a system of rule that kept the power to name

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9. Huntington 1968.

10. We define nationalism as the doctrine that a people who see themselves as distinctive in their culture, history, institutions, or principles should rule themselves in a political system that expresses and protects those distinctive characteristics.

11. Furet 1981.

government ministers in the hands of the hereditary Kaiser rather than the elected legislature.[12]

Competition to rally popular support around elite interests has different consequences when democratic institutions are weak and highly imperfect than when they are better developed. In mature democracies, the average voter who would suffer from reckless, nationalist policies has more chance to obtain accurate information about those risks and punish reckless politicians through the ballot box. This greater accountability and better information helps to explain not only the absence of war between mature democracies but also their more prudent policies toward states of any regime type. Although democracies are about as likely as nondemocractic regimes to become embroiled in wars,[13] democracies choose their wars more wisely,[14] tend to win them and suffer fewer casualties,[15] are less likely to initiate crises,[16] rarely fight preventive wars,[17] and are more adept at signaling the credibility of their commitments.[18] Moreover, democratic great powers pull back more astutely from imperial overstretch than their nondemocratic counterparts.[19]

On the whole, it seems plausible that these monadic effects are caused by a mutually reinforcing set of institutional, informational, and normative characteristics distinctive to mature democracies, such as accountability to cost-conscious voters, greater transparency of facts and preferences in policy debates, and respect for the civil liberties that make democracy possible. In relations between mature democracies, these characteristics of each party interact in ways that make war very unlikely.[20] The dyadic properties of such relationships may include the effects of common democratic norms and identities on the legitimacy of conflict,[21] as well as the greater efficiency of interdemocratic bargaining and dispute resolution.[22] It seems likely that these dyadic properties emerge in large part because democracies are already different in their strategic propensities at the monadic level. For this reason, we see no conceptual mismatch between our monadic argument and the dyadic and monadic democratic peace literatures.[23]

The happy outcomes of the democratic peace, however, emerge only after a transition to democracy is well consolidated. Establishing effective democratic institutions takes time. Where powerful groups feel threatened by democracy, they

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12. See Fairbairn 1997; and Wehler 1985.
13. Russett and Oneal 2001, 47–50. However, some observers challenge this claim and argue that, in monadic terms, democracies are less prone to conflict than nondemocracies. See, for example, Ray 2000.
14. Reiter and Stam 1998.
15. See Bennett and Stam 1998; Lake 1992; and Siverson 1995.
16. Rousseau et al. 1996.
17. Schweller 1992.
18. Fearon 1994.
19. Snyder 1991.
20. Russett and Oneal 2001, 47–79.
21. Owen 1994.
22. See Dixon 1994; and Schultz 1999.
23. For analyses of democratization and conflict that are cast at the dyadic level, control for factors emphasized in studies of the democratic peace, and arrive at the same conclusion we do in this article, see Mansfield and Snyder 2002 and forthcoming.

seek to keep its institutions weak and malleable. Thus the practices of many newly democratizing states are only loose approximations of those that characterize mature democracies. Limited suffrage, unfair constraints on electoral competition, disorganized political parties, corrupt bureaucracies, or partial media monopolies may skew political outcomes in newly democratizing states away from the patterns that coherent democracies generally produce. Although elites in newly democratizing states need to solicit mass support, the weakness of democratic institutions allows them to avoid full public accountability. Nationalist ideas help perpetuate this semidemocratic condition by justifying the exclusion of opponents from political participation on the grounds that they are enemies of the nation. Such claims are harder to refute in newly democratizing states, where partial media monopolies prevent a complete airing of evidence and argument. In Weimar Germany, for example, the monopoly wire-service feeding nationalist-slanted news to most smaller cities and towns was owned by a former director of Krupp Steel who was the head of the largest nationalist party. These readers became a central part of the constituency that voted for Hitler.[24]

Moreover, while federalism may generate certain benefits for mature democracies, the decentralization and fragmentation of power in newly democratizing regimes is likely to exacerbate the problems attendant to democratic transitions. As the bloody breakups of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union show, divisive nationalism is especially likely when the state's power is dispersed among ethnically defined federal regions. Hence, none of the mechanisms that produce the democratic peace among mature democracies operate in the same fashion in newly democratizing states. Indeed, in their imperfect condition, these mechanisms have the opposite effect.

In short, newly democratizing countries often experience a weakening of central state institutions because their old institutions have eroded and their new ones are only partially developed. Autocratic power is in decline vis-à-vis both elite interest groups and mass groups, and democratic institutions lack the strength to integrate these contending interests and views. Not all newly democratizing states suffer from institutional weakness, but for those that do the resulting political dynamic creates conditions that encourage hostilities. In the face of this institutional deficit, political leaders rely on expedient strategies to cope with the political impasse of democratization. Such tactics, which often include the appeasement of nationalist veto groups or competition among factions in nationalist bidding wars (or both), can breed reckless foreign policies and the resort to war.

Nationalist Veto Groups and Logrolling

The power of central authorities is typically reduced in newly democratizing states. The old authoritarian state has broken up, leaving behind the vestiges of its ruling

24. Eksteins 1975, 78–81.

class as still-powerful interest groups. Some of these groups, including the military bureaucracy and dominant economic interests, may have self-serving reasons to lobby for military expansion or the exclusion of foreign economic competition, policies that could cause tensions with other states. At the same time, dissatisfied ethnic elites or rising proponents of commercial expansion may press their demands on the weakened state. These elite groups and the political parties aligned with them may become even further committed to nationalism, foreign expansion, or economic protectionism as a result of their rhetorical appeals for popular support. Consequently, political coalitions in newly democratizing states are especially likely to be beholden to veto groups, at least some of which have a stake in assertive foreign policies and nationalist political rhetoric.

One form that such veto-group politics may take is "logrolling," that is, mutual back-scratching among narrowly self-serving interests. In forging a logrolled bargain, each group in the coalition agrees to support the others on the issue that each cares about most. For example, the ruling coalition in Germany before World War I was the nationalist "marriage of iron and rye," in which aristocratic landowners supported a fleet-building program that industrial interests desired; in exchange, big business supported high agricultural tariffs.[25]

To some degree, logrolling and other forms of veto-group politics occur in all political systems; but they tend to be especially pervasive in partially democratized states, such as pre-1914 Germany. Since mature democracies have strong mechanisms of accountability to the average voter, logrolls that impose huge costs and risks on the citizenry are likely to provoke strong and effective opposition. Democracy, when it works correctly, confers power on the taxpayers, consumers, and military conscripts who would have to pay the diffuse costs that are side effects of the logroll. In newly democratizing states, however, the power of elite groups is likely to be strengthened vis-à-vis the weakened autocratic center, though the power of mass groups is not yet institutionalized in the manner of a mature democracy. Thus democratizing states are especially at risk for unchecked logrolling among elite interest groups, and this can fuel violent nationalist conflicts.

Furthermore, partially democratizing countries with weak political institutions often lack the governmental coherence and predictability to send clear and credible signals of commitment to allies and enemies alike. With multiple centers of authority and uncertain tenure of office, leaders in transitional states may have difficulty making credible deterrent commitments or believable promises to refrain from attacking in the future. One faction may signal willingness to compromise, whereas another may signal an inclination for preventive war. As the puzzled Austrian chief of staff asked about strategic authority in semidemocratic Germany in July 1914, "Who rules in Berlin, [Chancellor] Bethmann or [Chief of Staff] Moltke?"[26] Whereas the superior signaling and bargaining ability of mature democ-

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25. Snyder 1991.
26. Quoted in Ritter 1969, 257–63. See also Davis 2000.

racies may be a factor underpinning the democratic peace,[27] the signaling handicaps of newly democratizing states may hinder their ability to negotiate the settlement of disputes.

Popular Nationalist Bidding Wars

Even if elite coalitions worry that the costs and risks of their belligerent foreign policies are beginning to get out of hand, they can find themselves locked into these policies by the tactics they have used to recruit mass support. To survive in an era of democratization, these elite interests must attract a degree of popular support, often through the use of nationalist rhetoric. Elite control over a dependent, unprofessional news media may provide a ready vehicle for this campaign of persuasion. However, rising alternative elites may seize on this rhetoric and try to turn it against the old elites, triggering a nationalist bidding war. Prior to World War I, for instance, German middle-class nationalist groups such as the Navy League argued that if Germany was really encircled by national enemies, as the ruling elites claimed, then the government's ineffectual policies were endangering the nation. The old elite should step aside, they argued, and let the more vigorous middle classes reform Germany's army, toughen its foreign policy, and use coercion to break up the encircling alliance of France, Russia, and England. The "iron and rye" government felt compelled to outbid these nationalist critics. In an attempt to gain nationalist prestige in the eyes of the domestic audience, the German government trumped up a series of international crises, such as the showdowns with France over control of Morocco in 1905 and 1911. This reckless and counterproductive strategy served only to tighten the noose around the neck of the German elites and pushed them toward a decision to launch a preventive war in 1914.[28]

   This argument has some points in common with so-called diversionary theories of war, which contend that regimes sometimes attempt to use rivalry abroad to strengthen their shaky position at home. Such theories invoke two rather different causal mechanisms. The first asserts a psychological propensity for out-group conflict to increase in-group cohesion. If such a mechanism exists, however, research shows that it is likely to come into play only if the group demonstrates considerable cohesion before the conflict breaks out, the external threat is seen as endangering the in-group as a whole, and the instigators of the conflict are seen to be the outsiders rather than the leadership of the in-group.[29] Our argument suggests how these conditions might be created in newly democratizing states through the development of a nationalist ideology, which constitutes a set of ideas for interpreting conflict with out-groups.

27. Schultz 1998.
28. See Eley 1980; and Retallack 1993.
29. See Levy 1989; and Stein 1976.

A second set of causal mechanisms is rationalistic. Alastair Smith speculates that international assertiveness helps domestically hard-pressed regimes to demonstrate their competence by achieving foreign policy successes.[30] Unlike mature democracies, however, newly democratizing states are not particularly good at choosing wars that are easy to win and cheap to fight. A more plausible rationalistic argument for their wars is that elites in transitional states are "gambling for resurrection," that is, taking a risk at long odds that foreign policy confrontations will help them avoid losing power. Deductive arguments of this type propose that elites' informational advantages relative to their mass audience help them carry out such gambles.[31] Empirical research suggests that the strength of the incentive for downwardly mobile elites to gamble depends on the regime type and on the elites' ability to use their influence over the media to make the reckless strategy seem plausible to their constituents.[32] Our argument explains why the motive and opportunity to use this strategy are especially likely to be present when incomplete transitions to democracy occur in states with weak institutions.

In short, elites in newly democratizing states typically face the difficult political task of cobbling together a heterogeneous coalition of elite and popular supporters in a context of weakly developed democratic institutions. Many of the expedients that they adopt, such as logrolled overcommitments and nationalist outbidding strategies, heighten the risk of external conflict. These outcomes are most likely when threatened elites' interests cannot be easily adapted to a fully democratic setting and when mass political participation increases before the basic foundation for democratic institutions is firmly in place. Under such conditions, political entrepreneurs have both the incentive and the opportunity to promote conflict-causing nationalist myths.

Phases and Sequences of Democratization

We focus on two distinct phases in the process of democratization: the transition from autocracy to a partially democratic regime and the shift to a fully institutionalized democracy. As we explain further below, these phases are measured using several indicators of regime type derived from the Polity III database developed by Keith Jaggers and Ted Robert Gurr.[33]

Incomplete Democratization: Transition from Autocracy to a Mixed Regime

We expect the likelihood of war to be particularly pronounced in the first phase of democratization, during which old elites threatened by the transition still tend to be

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30. Smith 1996.
31. See Downs and Rocke 1993; and Smith 1996.
32. See Goemans 2000; Levy 1989, 277–79; Levy and Vakili 1992; and Snyder 2000.
33. Jaggers and Gurr 1995.

powerful and the institutions needed to regulate mass political participation are often very weak. As in prior research on the initial stages of democratic transitions, we include in this category cases in which elites conclude bargains involving limited political liberalization and cases in which most elites consider voting to be only a temporary expedient.[34] In many of these cases, the rhetoric of popular sovereignty is grandiloquent, but the power of voters to control government policy is weak. Some examples of war-prone countries making a transition from autocracy to a mixed (or "anocratic") regime are Prussia/Germany under Bismarck, France under Napoleon III, Chile shortly before the War of the Pacific in 1879, Serbia's multiparty constitutional monarchy before the Balkan Wars, Pakistan's military-guided pseudo-democracy before its 1965 war with India, and the regime that assumed power in Islamabad before the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war.[35]

In certain instances (for example, Argentina just before the Falklands War), Jaggers and Gurr's Polity data indicate that a transition to a mixed regime occurred before elections were held, based on such developments as increased press freedom and the legalization of political parties in the expectation of impending elections.[36] While some of these regime changes may not correspond to how other studies have defined democratization, all of them are valid for our purposes insofar as they reflect the causal mechanisms highlighted in our theory, such as the use of nationalist rhetoric to cement a heterogeneous domestic coalition or elite gambling for resurrection in the face of popular demands. Further, in those types of cases where shifts from autocracy to a mixed regime based on the Polity codings may not reflect the mechanisms of our theory—especially instances involving communist countries and those associated with involvement in world wars—we check to ensure that the statistical findings presented below are robust with respect to the inclusion of such cases.[37] We offer a brief sketch of the War of the Pacific to illustrate how incomplete democratization increases the risk of war, especially when governmental institutions are very weak.

Complete Democratization: Transition to Coherent Democracy

The second distinct phase of democratization occurs when the regime adopts a system of unfettered political competition and full governmental accountability to a broad electorate. On the one hand, this phase can create incentives for elites who fear the consequences of democratic consolidation to play the nationalist card in public debates or gamble for resurrection in a foreign crisis. Such elites may not foresee another chance to grab the reins of power. On the other hand, at this more

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34. See O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; and Przeworski 1991, 52.
35. On anocratic regimes, see Gurr 1974.
36. On the links between impending democratization and the Falklands War, see Mares 2001, 155–58.
37. As we later explain, there are instances of shifts in communist regimes from autocracy to anocracy that may not be valid instances of incomplete democratic transitions, so we confirmed that our statistical results are unchanged when these cases were dropped from the analysis.

advanced stage of the transition, proponents of democracy wield stronger institutional resources to combat such maneuvers. Moreover, democrats' commitments may look more credible both to potential backers and to elite skeptics than in earlier phases of the transition. Movement toward democracy no longer looks like a leap into the void. For these reasons, it seems reasonable to expect that there may be a modest increase in the risk of war at the time of the transition to coherent democracy but that this risk should decline rapidly once the consolidation of democracy begins.[38]

Based on the Polity codings, the two most recent regimes to initiate war after a transition to full democracy are Turkey in the 1974 Cyprus War and Pakistan in the 1999 Kargil War.[39] Both of these countries are marked by a history of alternating between military regimes and multiparty electoral politics. Over time they have developed many of the outward trappings of full democracy, yet the ever-present threat of military intervention prevents democracy from becoming consolidated. In this situation, military elites have an incentive to show that they rule on behalf of the popular will, whereas civilians have an incentive to show that they stand firm on behalf of national security concerns. Consequently, both play the game of populist nationalist politics and become embroiled in military rivalries with neighboring states. We expect that transitions to coherent democracy will be most dangerous for states with these characteristics. We offer a brief sketch of the Cyprus War as an exemplary case study of this kind.

Illustrative Cases

Our previous studies presented case studies showing how the early phase of democratization promoted war throughout the nineteenth century by altering the constellation of domestic coalitions in the major powers.[40] However, the causal dynamics outlined in our theory are not peculiar to the major powers, to the nineteenth century, or to European states. Included among the democratizing countries that launched wars are also small states and developing countries in various regions and time periods. Moreover, the causal dynamics of these cases frequently correspond closely to those guiding the nineteenth-century European cases, as the following accounts of Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus and Chile's initiation of the War of the Pacific illustrate.

The Turkish Invasion of Cyprus

During the 1960s, rapid but uneven economic growth widened the range of interest groups clamoring to participate in Turkish political life. The party system became

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38. On the distinction between transition and consolidation, see Linz and Stepan 1996.
39. Kargil is not included in our analysis because the data on war used here ends in 1992. See Singer and Small 1994. However, see also the discussion of this war in Russett and Oneal 2001, 48.
40. Mansfield and Snyder 1995a,b.

increasingly fragmented, and in 1971 a military junta temporarily seized power. Electoral democracy was restored in 1973. Jaggers and Gurr code this as a transition to coherent democracy, based on a number of indexes described later.[41]

Throughout this episode of democratization, institutionalized domestic authority in Turkey was relatively fragmented, a condition we anticipate will increase the risk of war during some kinds of democratic transitions.[42] Indeed, the fragile institutions of Turkish democracy struggled to hold together the highly fragmented political mosaic. The improbable ruling coalition that emerged from the 1973 elections was forged between Bulent Ecevit's social-democratic party and Necmettin Erbakan's Islamicist party. The still-influential military distrusted both of these parties, the socialists for opposing the 1971 coup and the Islamicists for challenging the secular principles that underpinned the military's position in the Turkish state.

Virtually the only points that this coalition-of-opposites held in common were a firmly nationalist stance on Cyprus and a desire to stand up to U.S. pressure on that issue. To the socialists, the Greeks were not only an ethnic rival but also pawns of U.S. capitalist hegemony, a central theme of their electoral campaign. To the Islamicists, the Greeks represented Christendom. The military had been on the lookout for an opportune moment to take action on Cyprus ever since Prime Minister Suleiman Demirel was deterred by U.S. pressure from invading Cyprus in 1967. Demirel had fallen from power largely as a consequence of that decision, so both Ecevit and Erbakan were well-primed to avoid repeating his mistake.

As the situation in Cyprus heated up to a crisis level again in 1974, the increasingly free press of newly democratic Turkey—a press often allied with political parties—gave vent to steady outpourings of nationalist sentiment. Under these conditions, Erbakan and Ecevit each knew that to soft-pedal the crisis would be to hand power to the other, or to the military. Hence, when Greek nationalists mounted a coup against the elected Cypriot regime as preparation for the island's unification with Greece, the leaders of the new Turkish democracy had little choice but to defy world opinion by invading and occupying part of Cyprus, including its Turkish-inhabited areas. This case, then, illustrates virtually all the themes that we stressed earlier: the widening and fragmentation of the political spectrum through democratization, the gap between participation and institutions, the autonomy of the military veto group, the truculence of the popular press, and the use of nationalist prestige strategies to integrate highly diverse coalitions.[43]

Notwithstanding these problematic domestic politics, Turkey might still have responded to the Greek nationalist coup by invading Cyprus even had it had a different type of regime. However, it is also possible that a different type of Turkish

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41. Jaggers and Gurr 1995.
42. As we describe further later, Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore have developed a measure of the concentration of domestic authority that varies from zero to 10. Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989. Based on our sample, the mean value of this variable is 5.6. During this episode, the level of domestic concentration in Turkey was only 4.
43. Our account of this episode draws on Adamson 2001.

regime might have pursued diplomatic avenues to redress its grievance or might have headed off the coup through a different diplomatic strategy. In any event, it is worth considering the domestic politics underlying Greek calculations as well as those of the Turks. In 1967 the military in Greece mounted a coup to forestall the impending consolidation of Greek democracy. By 1973, the junta was dividing into a hard-line faction and a group that favored a constitutional republic. Facing the danger of a possible return to democracy, the hard-liners gambled for resurrection by pressing for *enosis* (union) with Cyprus, arguing that this urgent national question justified the continuation of military rule.[44] This was therefore a conflict triggered in part by the anticipation of democratization.

The War of the Pacific

Chile's role as an instigator of the War of the Pacific against Peru and Bolivia in 1879, fought over nitrate deposits, demonstrates the dangerous role of coalition politics in weakly institutionalized states undergoing an incomplete democratic transition. Following the establishment of male suffrage for all property owners in 1874, "well-defined political parties began to press their divergent views upon the executive branch and to seek the support of a larger electorate. The Chilean leadership had to be more responsive to Congress, and had to defend its policies in a broader public arena. . . . The debates produced heated and often intemperate expressions of opinion, expressions that the government found it difficult to ignore."[45] Based on the data used in this article and described later, these political developments yielded a transition from autocracy to an anocratic regime; that is, a regime with both autocratic and democratic characteristics.[46] Furthermore, this transition occurred in the face of relatively weak governmental institutions and fragmented political power.[47]

In 1879, a severe economic downturn, which led to a surge of unemployed workers entering the capital, coincided with a diplomatic dispute between Chile and Argentina over control of the Straits of Magellan. Mobs protested against truculent public statements by the Argentine negotiator. Members of the Conservative opposition party referred to Chilean president Aníbal Pinto's foreign policy as craven. Meanwhile, the Bolivians decided that Chile's preoccupation with its dispute against Argentina would give them a free hand to sharply increase the taxes they levied on Chilean nitrate firms operating in the Bolivian-owned Atacama Desert, further heightening the politically motivated war fever in Santiago. At the same time, nitrate mining interests were planting pro-war stories in the press. As William F. Sater observes, "With Congressional elections scheduled for 1879, the

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44. Diamandouros 1986.
45. Burr 1965, 115. See also Sater 1986.
46. Jaggers and Gurr 1995.
47. During this episode, the level of domestic concentration in Chile was only 3 on Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore's eleven-point scale. See Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989; and footnote 42.

various parties desperately needed an issue to use against the Pinto regime. Earlier these elements had manipulated the Argentine crisis to discredit Pinto's Liberal Party and to galvanize public opinion against the government. Unfortunately for Pinto, the Bolivian crisis overlapped the Argentine situation and many Chileans feared that Santiago would humble itself as shamelessly before La Paz as it had groveled before Buenos Aires."[48] Pinto hoped to avoid war with Bolivia and its ally, Peru, just as he had with Argentina, but "driven by an inflamed public, [he] had no choice but to declare war if he wished to remain president."[49]

Devising Appropriate Tests of the Argument

The preceding cases help to illustrate the causal mechanisms in our theory. Yet it is important to subject our argument to a more systematic set of tests, a task we turn to in this section. To begin, we explain how these tests are devised and how they differ from previous empirical studies of the relationship between democratization and hostilities.

The argument that democratization raises the specter of war has sparked a lively debate. An initial set of studies found considerable support for this claim,[50] but some subsequent analyses have challenged it.[51] The latter analyses have provided various insights into the effects of domestic political change on external conflict; however, they are based on different implicit hypotheses about the kind of political change that causes war, and they address different aspects of armed conflict than the argument we advance.

As explained earlier, our theory pertains to the consequences of two fundamental aspects of democratization: change from autocracy to an anocratic regime and change culminating in a coherent democracy. To test the theory properly, analysis must focus on the following distinct phases: first, when mass groups are initially being mobilized into politics, and later when the impending completion of the democratization process may foreclose options for threatened elites. Our argument is that these dynamic points of transition are likely to generate incentives for belligerent, nationalist political mobilization. In addition, appropriate tests should take into account the strength of political institutions during these transitions. They should also be sensitive to the time it may take to carry out a campaign of nationalist mobilization and for such a campaign to promote belligerence abroad.

By contrast, several recent studies have analyzed the influence on hostilities of other facets of domestic political change. Some, for example, have examined whether *any* shift in a democratic direction (including shifts *within* autocratic

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48. Sater 1986, 15.
49. Ibid., 16, 9.
50. Mansfield and Snyder 1995a,b, 1996, and 1997.
51. See Enterline 1996; Oneal and Russett 1997; Thompson and Tucker 1997; and Ward and Gleditsch 1998.

regimes, anocratic regimes, and democratic regimes) affects the likelihood of war.[52] These studies do not bear directly on our theory, which is silent on the implications of changes in political openness within a given regime type. Others have focused on the most pronounced type of democratic transition, where an autocracy is replaced by a coherent democracy.[53] But for present purposes, that focus is too restrictive, since the argument we advanced earlier indicates that transitions from autocracy that fail to produce coherent democratic institutions can be an especially potent impetus to war. In short, none of these studies have used a definition and a measure of democratization that fully captures the institutional changes highlighted in our theory.

Moreover, although our original formulation centered on democratization's effect on the onset of war, various subsequent studies have instead addressed the influence of democratic transitions on militarized interstate disputes (MIDs), a broad class of conflicts ranging in intensity from wars to disputes involving threats to use force but no actual fatalities.[54] Disputes that do not escalate to war constitute the vast majority of MIDs.[55] States' propensity to engage in low-level disputes cannot be directly extrapolated from their propensity to fight wars. Even pairs of mature democracies, which rarely (if ever) have fought wars against each other, have engaged in various MIDs.[56] Since our argument emphasizes the links between democratization and war, we focus on explaining wars rather than MIDs in the following analysis. Nonetheless, there is reason to expect the belligerence of democratizing states to yield a higher rate of involvement in nonviolent conflicts and violent disputes that are resolved prior to war's onset, as well as to war itself. We have examined this issue in a separate study.[57] Consistent with the results presented below, we found that incomplete democratization significantly increases the likelihood of involvement in MIDs, whereas transition to complete democracy poses little additional risk of hostilities.

Several scholars have argued that tests of the relationship between democratization and war should consider whether states experiencing a democratic transition tend to initiate the fighting.[58] Indeed, if democratizing states were almost always the targets of aggression and virtually never the instigators, then one might conclude that democratization promotes war because it undermines a country's political-military capacity rather than because it increases nationalism or belligerence. To address this concern, we will examine the relationship between democratization and the initiation of war later in this article.

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52. See Enterline 1996; Oneal and Russett 1997; and Ward and Gleditsch 1998.
53. Oneal and Russett 1997.
54. See Enterline 1996; and Oneal and Russett 1997.
55. See Gochman and Maoz 1984; and Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996.
56. See Dixon 1994; and Gowa 1999.
57. Mansfield and Snyder 2002.
58. For example, Enterline 1996, 185.

The Research Design

The sample used in the following statistical analysis includes all states coded by the Correlates of War (COW) Project as members of the interstate system during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[59] Since our argument pertains to the effects of democratization on the onset of external war, regardless of whether a democratizing state's opponent is also sovereign, we analyze all external wars identified by the COW Project.[60] These include wars among at least two sovereign states, as well as wars by a state against a nonstate actor (for example, imperial and colonial wars). For each year, t, we therefore assess whether every state, i, that was a member of the interstate system became involved in an external war. In addition to all external wars, various studies have addressed the effects of democratic transitions on interstate wars.[61] It should be noted that the results for interstate wars are very similar to those presented below.

Consistent with much existing research, each state's regime type is measured using the Polity III data, as well as indexes developed by Gurr and his colleagues.[62] Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore combine annual measures of the competitiveness of the process through which a country's chief executive is selected, the openness of this process, the extent to which institutional constraints exist on a chief executive's decision-making authority, the competitiveness of political participation within a country, and the degree to which binding rules govern political participation within it to create eleven-point indexes of each state's democratic (*Democ*) and autocratic (*Autoc*) characteristics.[63] The difference between them ($Reg = Democ - Autoc$) provides a summary measure of regime type that takes on values ranging from -10 to 10. Jaggers and Gurr define "coherent" democracies as states where $Reg > 6$, "coherent" autocracies as states where $Reg < -6$, and all remaining states as incoherent or anocracies.[64]

Besides Jaggers and Gurr's summary measure of regime type, which we refer to as the composite index, we are also interested in isolating the effects of democratization occurring along some of the specific institutional dimensions that make it up. Particularly important are the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and the extent of the constraints placed on the chief executive. Changes in these institutional factors are central to our argument and have been emphasized in previous studies of the relationship between democratization and war.[65] Another reason to assess their effects separately is that they

59. See Singer and Small 1994; and Small and Singer 1982.
60. See the sources in footnote 59.
61. See Mansfield and Snyder 1995a, 1996, 1997; Oneal and Russett 1997; and Thompson and Tucker 1997.
62. See Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989; and Jaggers and Gurr 1995.
63. Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989, 36–39.
64. Jaggers and Gurr 1995.
65. See Mansfield and Snyder 1995a,b; Thompson and Tucker 1997; and Ward and Gleditsch 1998.

exert different degrees of influence on the value of the composite index.[66] We do not analyze separately the remaining variables used to measure *Democ* and *Autoc*, because they are coded in such a way that it is very difficult to sharply distinguish democracies from autocracies. For each of the three institutional factors we analyze separately, a state's regime type is assessed using the following coding rules.

Competitiveness of Political Participation. The competitiveness of political participation is measured using a five-point scale in the Polity III data set. We code as autocratic those states characterized by what Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore refer to as "suppressed competition," a category that includes totalitarian dictatorships, despotic monarchies, and military dictatorships in which no significant political activity is allowed outside of the ruling regime.[67] We code states characterized by "competitive competition" as democratic.[68] In such states, competitive political groupings (usually political parties) are stable and enduring, and their competition rarely leads to violence or widespread disruption. We code as anocratic those countries falling into any of Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore's three intermediate categories of the competitiveness of political participation (restricted/transitional, factional, and transitional competition). They claim that "transitions to Competitive [that is, full democracy] are not complete until a national election is held on a fully competitive basis."[69] Based on this variable, distinguishing among autocracies, anocracies, and democracies is fairly straightforward. Since these regime types are characterized by qualitatively different kinds and degrees of political competition, transitions in a democratic direction from one type to another require substantial domestic adjustments that, in turn, are likely to stimulate turbulence in foreign policy. In this sense, Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore's classifications truly mirror the concepts lying at the heart of our argument. Thus the results based on the competitiveness of political participation will bear especially heavily on its merits.

Openness of Executive Recruitment. The openness of executive recruitment is measured using a four-point scale in the Polity III data set. We code as autocratic those regimes with hereditary absolute rulers or with rulers who seized power by force. We code as anocratic those regimes with dual executives, in which a hereditary ruler shares authority with an appointed or elected governing minister. We code as democratic those regimes that Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore classify as having an open system of executive recruitment, regardless of whether the executive is popularly elected or selected through some other regularized process. Note that certain anomalies exist between the scheme used to code the openness of executive recruitment and our theoretical concepts; for example, Victorian Britain's dual executive system is an anocracy, whereas Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore consider the

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66. Gleditsch and Ward 1997.
67. Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989, 18.
68. Ibid., 19.
69. Ibid., 19.

Soviet Union in the post-Stalin era an open system. To assess the robustness of our findings, we ran all of the following tests both with and without the communist countries in the sample. The results are quite similar.

Constraints on the Chief Executive. Institutional constraints on the chief executive are measured using a seven-point scale in the Polity III data set. We classify regimes as autocratic if the chief executive has unlimited authority or if the executive's authority falls in an intermediate category whereby the institutional constraints faced by this individual are less than "slight to moderate."[70] We classify regimes as democratic if "accountability groups [such as legislatures] have effective authority equal to or greater than the executive in most areas of activity" or if the constraints on the executive are more than "substantial," based on the Polity III scale.[71] Substantial constraints exist when the executive has more effective authority than the legislature, but the legislature can block appointments, funds, or bills proposed by the executive. Regimes in which executive constraints lie in the range that includes "slight" and "substantial" are classified as anocratic.

Measuring Regime Change. Analyzing the separate effects of the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and executive constraints is important for several reasons. Doing so facilitates focused tests of the specific institutional features that are most pertinent to our theory and helps to assess the robustness of results that are based on the composite index of regime type. Equally, these three component indexes provide conceptually clearer divisions between autocracy and anocracy, and between anocracy and democracy, than the composite index.

Although the composite index has been widely employed in studies of the links between regime type and war, it has various limitations. For instance, Jaggers and Gurr offer little theoretical justification for the particular values of *Reg* that they propose to distinguish democracies, anocracies, and autocracies.[72] Whereas the thresholds for regime change as measured by the three component indexes correspond closely to the logic of our theory, the thresholds for regime change as measured by the composite index are conceptually more arbitrary. Also, as the composite index approaches the value demarcating between regime types (for example, if this value is –7, which corresponds to an autocracy but is very close to the lowest value corresponding to an anocracy), a relatively small change in any institutional factor making it up can lead this index to cross the threshold from one type of regime to another. One way to ensure that such changes do not bear significantly on our results is by varying the values of *Reg* that distinguish between regime types. We did so and found that setting the thresholds for democracy and autocracy at 5 and –5 and then at 4 and –4, rather than at 6 and –6, produces only

70. Ibid., 14–16.
71. Ibid., 16.
72. Jaggers and Gurr 1995.

modest differences in the following results. Another way is to compare our findings based on the composite index to those based on the three component indexes, since in terms of the logic of our theory each of the latter indexes distinguishes between regime types with greater validity than the composite index.

For each measure of regime type (the composite index and the three component indexes), we measure democratization over five-year intervals. More specifically, we code each state, i, as democratic, autocratic, or anocratic in every year, $t - 1$. We then measure i's regime type in year $t - 6$. Democratization is defined as any change of regime type in a democratic direction between $t - 6$ and $t - 1$.[73] Three types of regime change thereby constitute a democratic transition: from an autocracy to either a democracy or an anocracy, or from an anocracy to a democracy.

To examine whether the effects of democratization on war depend on the coherence of a country's democratic institutions during and soon after the end of this process, we define two variables. The first, *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, equals 1 if state i changes from either an autocracy or an anocracy to a coherent democracy during the period from $t - 6$ to $t - 1$ and zero otherwise. The second, *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, equals 1 if i changes from an autocracy to an anocracy during this period and zero otherwise.

Evaluating democratic transitions over five-year periods has a number of theoretical and methodological advantages. The danger of war is not necessarily greatest at the first moment of a transition. It may take time for the political dynamics touched off by democratization to stimulate the logrolled coalitions and nationalist ideologies that heighten the likelihood of war or for the political crisis to intensify. Furthermore, in various cases, the data needed to code a state's regime type are missing for years immediately surrounding a regime change. As such, certain instances of democratization are omitted from the sample when very short intervals are analyzed, a problem that is ameliorated by considering the effects of transitions occurring over longer periods. Equally, five-year periods are not so long that events at the beginning of an interval would be unlikely to influence foreign policy decisions at the interval's end.[74]

Some studies have concluded that all regime transitions, not just those in a democratic direction, may heighten the likelihood of international conflict.[75] Consequently, we also assess whether transitions toward autocracy precipitate war. As in our analysis of democratization, we distinguish between autocratic transitions that

73. Lagging the effects of regime change on war (which, recall, is measured in t) by one year reduces the possibility of a simultaneity bias. War's onset, for example, may lead participants to behave in a more autocratic manner or centralize national authority to more effectively prosecute the conflict. See Gurr 1988; Mansfield and Snyder 1996; and Stein and Russett 1980.

74. In our earlier studies, we also assessed the effects of transitions over much longer periods. We argued, for example, that Great Britain's 1832 Reform Bill set the stage for a rising middle-class nationalism that came to fruition only in the Crimean War, which was fueled by adamant public opinion in 1854. These longer periods are certainly valid for some cases, but they are too imprecise for use in systematic tests.

75. See Enterline 1996; Mansfield and Snyder 1995a; Maoz 1998; and Ward and Gleditsch 1998.

yield coherent autocracies and those that produce anocracies. Doing so will help indicate whether any observed effect of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ reflects a general tendency for transitions generating an anocracy to promote war or whether the influence of transitions from autocracy to anocracy is distinctive. We do not expect autocratization to increase the prospects of war. When popular participation in politics is curtailed, elites gain less from using nationalist rhetoric to maintain their rule and are less likely to become trapped in nationalist bidding wars. Our analysis of autocratization centers on two variables. First, *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ equals 1 if state *i* undergoes a transition from either democracy or anocracy to autocracy during the period from $t - 6$ to $t - 1$ and zero otherwise. Second, *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ equals 1 if *i* changes from a democracy to an anocracy during that period and zero otherwise.

Measuring the Concentration of Domestic Authority. We argue that the effects of democratization on war should be stronger and more pronounced in countries having less institutional strength and centralization. Our analysis of these institutional features centers on *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$, an eleven-point index of the degree to which domestic authority is concentrated in state *i*'s central government in year $t - 1$. Developed by Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore, *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ rises in countries where: (1) political participation is regulated or restricted in accordance with institutionalized procedures, (2) executive recruitment is regulated, (3) the chief executive is either designated in accordance with institutionalized procedures or chosen through competitive elections, (4) the chief executive faces few constraints on his or her authority, (5) this executive does not depend on some group (like a junta or cabinet) for his or her authority, and (6) authority is concentrated in the central government, and local and regional governments have little independent authority.[76] Thus this index measures several institutional features that we expect will affect a regime's ability to manage the foreign-policy consequences of rising political participation.

As the value of *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ increases, a regime has more clearly established rules regulating political competition and it enjoys a more centralized grip on the reigns of domestic power. Under these conditions, the regime should be better able to manage the rivalry of elite factions and minimize the adverse consequences of interest-group logrolling. Moreover, with the stronger institutional resources of a more centralized and better-regulated state at its disposal, the regime is likely to have less reason to rely on reckless appeals to nationalism to consolidate its authority. The argument we advanced earlier therefore suggests that stalled democratic transitions are more likely to stimulate involvement in war when states are marked by a low value of *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$. To test this hypothesis, we include *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ and its interaction with each of the two variables pertaining to democratic transitions. Furthermore, we include the interactions

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76. Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989, 39–40.

between $DomConcentration_{i(t-1)}$ and each of the two measures of autocratic transitions to determine whether the effects of autocratization on war also depend on the concentration of domestic authority.[77]

The Statistical Model

Initially, we estimate the following model for the period from 1816–1992, the years (t) that the datasets used to measure regime type and war have in common.[78]

$$War_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Complete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)} \tag{1}$$
$$+ \beta_2 Incomplete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)} + \beta_3 Complete\ Auttransition_{i(t-1)}$$
$$+ \beta_4 Incomplete\ Auttransition_{i(t-1)} + \beta_5 DomConcentration_{i(t-1)}$$
$$+ \beta_6 (Complete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)} \times DomConcentration_{i(t-1)})$$
$$+ \beta_7 (Incomplete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)} \times DomConcentration_{i(t-1)})$$
$$+ \beta_8 (Complete\ Auttransition_{i(t-1)} \times DomConcentration_{i(t-1)})$$
$$+ \beta_9 (Incomplete\ Auttransition_{i(t-1)} \times DomConcentration_{i(t-1)})$$
$$+ \beta_{10} Majpower_{i(t-1)} + \beta_{11} Civwar_{i(t-1)} + \beta_{12} Concap_t + e_{it}.$$

The dependent variable is the log of the odds that state i experiences the outbreak of an external war in year t, where we observe 1 if i enters a war in t and zero otherwise. As discussed earlier, $Complete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)}$, $Incomplete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)}$, $Complete\ Auttransition_{i(t-1)}$, and $Incomplete\ Auttransition_{i(t-1)}$ are dummy variables indicating whether i engages in a democratic or an autocratic transition between years $t - 6$ and $t - 1$; and $DomConcentration_{i(t-1)}$ measures the

77. While we treat domestic concentration and democratization as independent, it is obviously possible that they are related. It is beyond the scope of this article to conduct a detailed analysis of the links between these factors, but preliminary analyses indicate that the relationship between them is weak. For each measure of regime type analyzed here, the bivariate correlation between $DomConcentra$-$tion_{i(t-1)}$, on the one hand, and both $Complete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)}$ and $Incomplete\ Demtransition_{i(t-1)}$, on the other, rarely exceeds .10 and usually is much lower.

78. The Polity III dataset covers the period from 1800 to 1994, and the COW dataset covers the period from 1816 to 1992. The years that are common to these compilations are 1816–1992. As mentioned earlier, for each year, t, we include in our sample only those countries listed by the COW Project as members of the interstate system. But for any country listed as a member of the system in t, we use all available information on its regime type and changes in this type during the period from $t - 6$ to $t - 1$, even if it was not a member of the system during all or a part of this interval (including, for example, data prior to 1816).

In addition, various countries were formed and others dissolved during the nineteenth and twentieth century. There is usually agreement between the Polity III and COW data about the occurrence and date of a state's formation and dissolution; however, a disagreement exists in four cases. Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore consider Sardinia and Italy, Prussia and Germany, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, and Serbia and Yugoslavia to be separate countries, whereas the COW Project views each pair as a single country. Like previous studies on this topic, we code each pair as two distinct polities. See Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore 1989; and Mansfield and Snyder 1995a.

degree to which authority is concentrated in the hands of i's national officials in year $t - 1$. Equation (1) is estimated separately using (1) the composite index, (2) the competitiveness of political participation, (3) the openness of executive recruitment, and (4) executive constraints to measure *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, and *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ (and their respective interactions with *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$).

In addition, we include three other variables that previous studies have linked to the onset of war. First, *Majpower*$_{i(t-1)}$ is a dummy variable that equals 1 if state i is a major power in year $t - 1$ and zero otherwise. There is evidence that major powers are more likely to become involved in wars than weaker states; and various cases in which democratization led to war involved a major power.[79] Including this variable helps to distinguish the propensity of states to enter wars because of their political-military strength from the propensity of states to do so because they are experiencing a democratic transition. Second, *Civwar*$_{i(t-1)}$ is a dummy variable that equals 1 if i is involved in a civil war in year $t - 1$ and zero otherwise. Since democratization can promote domestic, as well as international, violence and some studies have found that internal violence affects the onset of external wars, it is important to control for the effects of civil war.[80]

Third, while our primary focus is on the domestic influences on war, international factors have also contributed to the outbreak of hostilities. The concentration of capabilities has had a particularly potent effect on international war during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and is defined as follows:[81]

$$Concap_t = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N_t} (S_{it}^2) - 1/N_t}{1 - 1/N_t}} \tag{2}$$

In Equation (2), N_t is the number of major powers in the system in year t, and S_{it} is the proportion of the total capabilities possessed by the major powers in year t that major power i controls. As in many previous studies, S_{it} is an unweighted average of the proportion of major power i's national population, urban population (in cities having more than 20,000 residents), energy consumption, iron and steel production, military personnel, and military expenditures.[82] Since various scholars—particularly realists—claim that the distribution of power is a central influence on the outbreak of war, it is useful to directly compare its effect to that of democratization. Moreover, such scholars might be concerned that the existence of a highly concen-

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79. See Bremer 1980; and Mansfield and Snyder 1995a,b.
80. See Snyder 2000; and Stein and Russett 1980.
81. See Mansfield 1994; and Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972.
82. For the original derivation of this index, see Ray and Singer 1973. Data used to measure these variables are taken from Singer and Small 1993. Where data are missing for a major power, we interpolate between existing values of the variable for this country, if it is possible to do so.

trated system dominated by democratic states could affect both the likelihood of democratization and the prospects that these transitions will promote war. Including the concentration of capabilities helps to address these issues. Data compiled by the COW Project are used to code major powers and civil wars and to measure the concentration of capabilities.[83] Finally, e_{it} is a stochastic error term.

The parameters in Equation (1) are estimated using logistic regression. The tests of statistical significance reported below are based on robust (Huber) standard errors, which correct for any panel heteroskedasticity and account for the grouped nature of our data. In addition, to address any problems of temporal dependence in our model, we follow Nathaniel Beck, Jonathan N. Katz, and Richard Tucker in introducing for each country in every year a natural spline function (with three knots) of the number of years that have elapsed since that country last experienced the onset of war.[84]

The Statistical Results

Consistent with the hypothesis advanced earlier, our results—which are reported in the first columns of Tables 1, 3, 4, and 5—indicate that incomplete democratic transitions (that is, those from autocracy to anocracy) are especially likely to promote the outbreak of war. Furthermore, such transitions become an increasingly potent impetus to war as a state's institutional strength degrades. By contrast, there is only scattered evidence that transitions culminating in a coherent democracy influence war, and there is very little indication that autocratic transitions—either those from democracy to anocracy or those culminating in a coherent autocracy—precipitate hostilities.

In addition, major powers are more likely to become involved in hostilities than other states, since each estimate of $Majpower_{i(t-1)}$ is positive and statistically significant. Civil wars, however, have a weaker influence on external wars, since the estimate of $Civwar_{i(t-1)}$ is never significant.[85] Finally, a strong, inverse relationship exists between the concentration of capabilities and the likelihood of conflict. The estimate of $Concap_t$ is always negative and statistically significant, indicating that external wars are more likely to begin when there exists a relatively uniform distribution of capabilities among the major powers.[86] Equally important are the

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83. See Singer and Small 1993 and 1994; and Small and Singer 1982.

84. See Beck and Katz 1997; and Beck and Tucker 1996. To conserve space, we do not show the estimates of these parameters in the tables presented later.

85. Note, however, that many of these estimates would have been significant at the .10 level had we conducted one-tailed rather than two-tailed tests. Note also that civil wars appear to spur greater involvement in international wars than extra-systemic or colonial wars. Additional tests indicate that each estimate and t-statistic of $Civwar_{i(t-1)}$ is considerably larger when only interstate wars rather than all external wars are analyzed.

86. A recent study found evidence of a quadratic relationship between the concentration of capabilities and the frequency of all international wars during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Mansfield 1994,

quantitative effects of these factors. Holding constant the remaining variables in Equation (1), major powers are, on average, three to four times more likely to become involved in wars than other states. A change in the concentration of capabilities from its highest to its lowest observed level yields a similar increase in the likelihood of war. These effects are considerable, which accords with the views of realists and others. But so are the effects of incomplete democratic transitions, an issue that we now take up.

Results Based on the Composite Index of Regime Type

The results based on the composite index, which are presented in the first column of Table 1, indicate that transitions from autocracy to anocracy increase the likelihood of external war, especially if relatively little authority is concentrated in the hands of national government officials. The estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive, the estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ × *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is negative, and both estimates are statistically significant.

To illustrate the quantitative effects of transitions from autocracy to anocracy—and other regime changes—we calculate the predicted probability of war for each type of regime change analyzed here, using the logit estimates in the first column of Table 1. Note that for each type of regime change, the predicted probability of war is derived only for the range of values of domestic concentration over which a war actually began.[87] For the purpose of calculating these probabilities, we hold constant the concentration of capabilities at its mean and assume that state *i* is neither a major power nor experiencing a civil war.

As reported in Table 2, incomplete democratic transitions are much more likely to precipitate war when the level of domestic concentration is low. Indeed, the lower the level of domestic concentration, the higher the predicted probability of war following transitions from autocracy to anocracy. Moreover, an incomplete democratic transition coupled with the lowest observed value of concentration generates a greater predicted probability of war than any other set of conditions shown in Table 2.

In contrast to the effects of incomplete democratic transitions, transitions culminating in a coherent democracy have a far weaker and quantitatively smaller effect on war. The estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive, but it is not statistically significant. Also noteworthy is that the effect of transitions culminating in a coherent democracy does not seem to depend on the extent of domestic concentration. The estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ × *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is not statistically significant, and the predicted probability of war does

chap. 3. We found little evidence of this type of relationship, most likely because of differences in the dependent variable and the level of analysis between our study and this earlier analysis.

87. Thus, for example, we do not present the predicted probability of war for a transition from autocracy to anocracy when the level of concentration equals 1 because there is no case in the data where this type of transition occurred, concentration was equal to 1, and a war began.

TABLE 1. *Estimates of the parameters in Equation (1), based on the composite index of regime type*

Variable	Base model	Country-specific fixed effects[a]	Controlling for regime type		Excluding major wars[b]
Intercept	−1.383***	—	−0.918	−1.357**	−1.489***
	(0.507)		(0.613)	(0.546)	(0.573)
Complete Demtransition	0.445	1.111	0.105	0.427	−0.143
	(1.151)	(1.414)	(1.212)	(1.157)	(1.248)
Incomplete Demtransition	2.683**	2.090**	2.427**	2.644**	2.979**
	(1.343)	(1.050)	(1.210)	(1.270)	(1.326)
Complete Auttransition	−1.589	−0.965	−1.793	−1.659	−0.625
	(1.630)	(2.221)	(1.643)	(1.574)	(1.732)
Incomplete Auttransition	2.146	3.172	1.898	2.097	—[c]
	(1.330)	(2.522)	(1.296)	(1.400)	
DomConcentration	0.005	0.072	−0.051	−0.004	0.017
	(0.039)	(0.047)	(0.054)	(0.050)	(0.046)
Complete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−0.124	−0.325	−0.051	−0.115	−0.071
	(0.278)	(0.338)	(0.288)	(0.280)	(0.281)
Incomplete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−0.515**	−0.396*	−0.464**	−0.510**	−0.585**
	(0.259)	(0.210)	(0.234)	(0.250)	(0.256)
Complete Auttransition × DomConcentration	0.193	0.092	0.239	0.201	0.028
	(0.230)	(0.311)	(0.225)	(0.223)	(0.256)
Incomplete Auttransition × DomConcentration	−0.460**	−0.635	−0.406*	−0.450**	—[c]
	(0.201)	(0.519)	(0.209)	(0.216)	
Majpower	1.304***	1.315***	1.293***	1.309***	1.257***
	(0.216)	(0.392)	(0.219)	(0.211)	(0.224)
Civwar	0.312	0.264	0.355	0.306	0.394
	(0.250)	(0.309)	(0.258)	(0.254)	(0.247)
Concap	−4.766***	−5.596***	−5.489***	−4.690***	−4.385***
	(1.565)	(1.469)	(1.729)	(1.504)	(1.595)
Anocracy	—	—	−0.119	—	—
			(0.209)		
Autocracy	—	—	0.251	—	—
			(0.259)		
REG	—	—	—	−0.004	—
				(0.015)	
Log likelihood	−1,339.96	−1,092.73	−1,337.81	−1,339.89	−1,128.80
N	9,229	6,387	9,229	9,229	8,417

Notes: Entries are logistic regression estimates, with robust standard errors in parentheses. Each model is estimated after including a natural spline function with three knots.

[a]Entries are conditional (fixed-effects) logit estimates.

[b]Entries are derived after excluding the years during which World War I, World War II, and the Korean War took place.

[c]This parameter is not estimated because there is no case in which a transition from democracy to anocracy led to a war.

***$p \leq .01$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

**$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

*$p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

not change much because of variations in the level of domestic concentration (see Table 2).

Our results also provide some indication that incomplete autocratic transitions promote war, although these shifts have a weaker and smaller influence on hostilities

TABLE 2. *Predicted probabilities of war, based on the results in Table 1*

	Level of domestic concentration							
Type of transition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Incomplete Democratic	—	0.113	0.071	0.044	0.027	0.016	0.010	—
Complete Democratic	0.032	0.029	0.026	0.023	0.020	0.018	—	—
Incomplete Autocratic	—	—	—	0.032	0.021	—	—	—
Complete Autocratic	—	—	—	—	—	0.016	0.019	0.023

Note: Predicted probabilities are calculated using the estimates for the base model in Table 1 (and the estimates of the natural spline function, which are not shown). We assume that state i is neither experiencing a civil war in year $t - 1$ nor a major power and hold constant the concentration of capabilities at its mean value. For each type of transition, predicted probabilities are calculated only for the range of values of domestic concentration over which a war actually began.

than incomplete democratic transitions. The estimate of *Incomplete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* is positive, but it is not statistically significant, whereas the estimate of *Incomplete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* $\times$ *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$* is both negative and significant. Hence, like incomplete democratic transitions, the effects of incomplete autocratic transitions are heightened when authority is less highly concentrated in the hands of public officials. But unlike incomplete democratic transitions, very low levels of concentration do not foster wars in countries experiencing incomplete autocratic transitions. There is no case in which this type of transition leads to conflict for a country having a value of domestic concentration less than 4. In addition, as shown in Table 2, states with relatively low levels of concentration (that is, levels equal to 4 or 5) are more prone to war if they undergo an incomplete democratic transition than if they experience an incomplete autocratic transition.

Finally, there is little evidence that regime changes culminating in a coherent autocracy influence the outbreak of hostilities. The estimate of *Complete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* is negative, and the estimate of *Complete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* $\times$ *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$* is positive. Both of them, however, are small and neither is statistically significant. Nor does the level of domestic concentration affect whether countries that are not experiencing a regime change become involved in hostilities. The estimate of *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$* is positive, but it is not statistically significant and it is quite small.

Results Based on the Component Measures of Regime Type

The results based on the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and executive constraints are shown in the first columns of Tables 3, 4, and 5, respectively. They provide even stronger evidence that transitions

TABLE 3. *Estimates of the parameters in Equation (1), based on the competitiveness of political participation*

Variable	Base model	Country-specific fixed effects[a]	Controlling for regime type		Excluding major wars[b]
Intercept	−1.498***	—	−1.529*	−1.376**	−1.633***
	(0.549)		(0.823)	(0.577)	(0.645)
Complete Demtransition	0.462	0.665	0.477	0.391	1.223
	(1.378)	(2.483)	(1.412)	(1.366)	(1.425)
Incomplete Demtransition	2.639**	2.071**	2.657**	2.571**	2.798**
	(1.280)	(1.008)	(1.117)	(1.213)	(1.277)
Complete Auttransition	−1.321	−0.478	−1.304	−1.504	−0.594
	(1.539)	(2.601)	(1.550)	(1.521)	(1.620)
Incomplete Auttransition	−0.094	0.772	−0.073	−0.078	0.051
	(1.408)	(1.935)	(1.422)	(1.359)	(1.091)
DomConcentration	0.015	0.071	0.001	−0.009	0.034
	(0.041)	(0.048)	(0.058)	(0.049)	(0.051)
Complete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−0.088	−0.152	−0.074	−0.060	−0.275
	(0.230)	(0.432)	(0.231)	(0.226)	(0.239)
Incomplete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−0.571**	−0.415**	−0.557***	−0.566**	−0.583**
	(0.239)	(0.212)	(0.214)	(0.231)	(0.237)
Complete Auttransition × DomConcentration	0.109	−0.003	0.123	0.128	−0.025
	(0.215)	(0.368)	(0.217)	(0.214)	(0.229)
Incomplete Auttransition × DomConcentration	0.148	−0.007	0.162	0.151	0.062
	(0.265)	(0.367)	(0.273)	(0.257)	(0.240)
Majpower	1.287***	1.346***	1.296***	1.274***	1.230***
	(0.211)	(0.393)	(0.229)	(0.206)	(0.225)
Civwar	0.275	0.277	0.264	0.246	0.345
	(0.251)	(0.312)	(0.247)	(0.253)	(0.256)
Concap	−4.609***	−5.631***	−4.582**	−4.388***	−4.284**
	(1.654)	(1.486)	(2.031)	(1.598)	(1.736)
Anocracy	—	—	0.089	—	—
			(0.197)		
Autocracy	—	—	0.170	—	—
			(0.261)		
Reg	—	—	—	−0.011	—
				(0.015)	
Log likelihood	−1,301.07	−1,060.42	−1,300.71	−1,297.24	−1,096.86
N	8,901	6,250	8,901	8,854	8,188

Note: Entries are logistic regression estimates, with robust standard errors in parentheses. Each model is estimated after including a natural spline function with three knots.
 [a]Entries are conditional (fixed-effects) logit estimates.
 [b]Entries are derived after excluding the years during which World War I, World War II, and the Korean War took place.
 ***$p \leq .01$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).
 **$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).
 *$p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

from autocracy to anocracy are a potent impetus to war, especially when the level of domestic concentration is low. In each case, the estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive, that of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ × *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is negative, and both are significant. Moreover, like our earlier results, the predicted probability of war usually is greater for states experiencing incomplete

TABLE 4. *Estimates of the parameters in Equation (1), based on the openness of executive recruitment*

Variable	Base model	Country-specific fixed effects[a]	Controlling for regime type		Excluding major wars[b]
Intercept	−1.406***	—	−1.476***	−1.319**	−1.507***
	(0.472)		(0.472)	(0.497)	(0.542)
Complete Demtransition	−1.132	−0.981	−1.118	−1.127	−0.627
	(0.933)	(1.242)	(0.874)	(0.928)	(0.886)
Incomplete Demtransition	5.388***	3.247**	5.409***	5.320***	5.522***
	(1.589)	(1.445)	(1.563)	(1.545)	(1.471)
Complete Auttransition	0.167	0.451	0.167	0.218	0.137
	(1.364)	(2.547)	(1.384)	(1.371)	(1.365)
Incomplete Auttransition	3.209	3.020	3.235	3.221	—[c]
	(2.621)	(3.257)	(2.570)	(2.604)	
DomConcentration	0.000	0.052	−0.001	−0.009	0.015
	(0.037)	(0.046)	(0.048)	(0.046)	(0.045)
Complete Demtransition × DomConcentration	0.292*	0.253	0.293**	0.288*	0.190
	(0.154)	(0.214)	(0.149)	(0.153)	(0.159)
Incomplete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−1.109**	−0.690**	−1.107**	−1.100**	−1.101**
	(0.469)	(0.337)	(0.462)	(0.463)	(0.440)
Complete Auttransition × DomConcentration	−0.105	−0.168	−0.102	−0.116	−0.070
	(0.231)	(0.432)	(0.235)	(0.233)	(0.228)
Incomplete Auttransition × DomConcentration	−0.731	−0.796	−0.729	−0.736	—[c]
	(0.479)	(0.753)	(0.477)	(0.477)	
Majpower	1.323***	1.344***	1.318***	1.297***	1.276***
	(0.211)	(0.393)	(0.229)	(0.206)	(0.219)
Civwar	0.285	0.286	0.288	0.263	0.348
	(0.256)	(0.310)	(0.256)	(0.258)	(0.259)
Concap	−4.689***	−5.995***	−4.474***	−4.612***	−4.437***
	(1.435)	(1.464)	(1.300)	(1.408)	(1.467)
Anocracy	—	—	0.079	—	—
			(0.268)		
Autocracy	—	—	0.049	—	—
			(0.217)		
Reg	—	—	—	−0.005	—
				(0.014)	
Log likelihood	−1,334.90	−1,090.51	−1,334.77	−1,331.46	−1,126.62
N	9,229	6,387	9,229	9,178	8,456

Note: Entries are logistic regression estimates, with robust standard errors in parentheses. Each model is estimated after including a natural spline function with three knots.

[a]Entries are conditional (fixed-effects) logit estimates.

[b]Entries are derived after excluding the years during which World War I, World War II, and the Korean War took place.

[c]This parameter is not estimated because there is no case in which a transition from democracy to anocracy led to a war.

***$p \leq .01$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

**$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

*$p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

democratic transitions in the face of low levels of domestic concentration than under any other set of circumstances examined here. And for lower levels of concentration (that is, levels less than 5), incomplete democratic transitions generally yield a greater predicted probability of war than other transitions.

TABLE 5. *Estimates of the parameters in Equation (1), based on the constraints on the chief executive*

Variable	Base model	Country-specific fixed effects[a]	Controlling for regime type		Excluding major wars[b]
Intercept	−1.319***	—	−0.907*	−1.250**	−1.474**
	(0.505)		(0.518)	(0.540)	(0.581)
Complete Demtransition	−6.191***	−7.664	−6.699***	−6.167***	−6.128***
	(1.426)	(4.947)	(1.409)	(1.426)	(1.509)
Incomplete Demtransition	2.384**	2.316**	1.935**	2.353**	2.841***
	(1.041)	(0.926)	(0.979)	(0.979)	(1.074)
Complete Auttransition	−0.056	0.377	−0.489	0.016	0.347
	(1.439)	(1.559)	(1.454)	(1.437)	(1.679)
Incomplete Auttransition	0.494	1.796	0.029	0.448	−1.243
	(1.674)	(2.300)	(1.703)	(1.781)	(1.609)
DomConcentration	−0.005	0.059	−0.073	−0.008	0.014
	(0.041)	(0.048)	(0.064)	(0.050)	(0.050)
Complete Demtransition × DomConcentration	1.130***	1.314	1.205***	1.127***	1.066***
	(0.275)	(0.826)	(0.272)	(0.274)	(0.278)
Incomplete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−0.389*	−0.362**	−0.323*	−0.386*	−0.470**
	(0.209)	(0.185)	(0.191)	(0.202)	(0.219)
Complete Auttransition × DomConcentration	0.044	−0.027	0.108	0.032	−0.028
	(0.214)	(0.227)	(0.217)	(0.213)	(0.259)
Incomplete Auttransition × DomConcentration	−0.137	−0.356	−0.069	−0.131	0.090
	(0.331)	(0.429)	(0.339)	(0.351)	(0.297)
Majpower	1.312***	1.316***	1.337***	1.282***	1.268***
	(0.216)	(0.390)	(0.190)	(0.209)	(0.226)
Civwar	0.246	0.248	0.217	0.229	0.297
	(0.272)	(0.310)	(0.282)	(0.276)	(0.278)
Concap	−5.007***	−5.914***	−5.043***	−4.983***	−4.621***
	(1.536)	(1.479)	(1.403)	(1.491)	(1.540)
Anocracy	—	—	−0.482**	—	—
			(0.189)		
Autocracy	—	—	0.196	—	—
			(0.291)		
Reg	—	—	—	−0.002	—
				(0.015)	
Log likelihood	−1,337.03	−1,089.38	−1,329.07	−1,333.70	−1,127.91
N	9,229	6,387	9,229	9,178	8,473

Note: Entries are logistic regression estimates, with robust standard errors in parentheses. Each model is estimated after including a natural spline function with three knots.

[a]Entries are conditional (fixed-effects) logit estimates.

[b]Entries are derived after excluding the years during which World War I, World War II, and the Korean War took place.

***$p \leq .01$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

**$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

*$p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

Unlike the results based on the composite index, our results provide some evidence that transitions culminating in a coherent democracy influence the likelihood of war when regime change is assessed using the constraints on the chief executive and the openness of executive recruitment. The estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is statistically significant if we focus on executive constraints

(see Table 5), and the estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ × *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is significant when we focus on these constraints or the openness of executive recruitment (see Tables 4 and 5). There is no indication, however, that transitions leading to a coherent democracy precipitate war based on the competitiveness of political participation. Taken as a whole, we find only scattered evidence that transitions yielding a coherent democracy heighten the prospect of conflict. But the evidence pointing in this direction suggests that these transitions are unlikely to foster armed conflict when the level of domestic concentration is low; they are more likely to yield hostilities as authority becomes more highly concentrated in the hands of national officials. This finding does not conform to our expectations, and we address it further in our analysis of the robustness of these results.

In contrast to the effects of democratization, there is no indication that autocratization affects the onset of war when the component measures of regime type are analyzed. None of the estimates of *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ × *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$, or *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ × *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ in Tables 3, 4, and 5 are statistically significant. Like our findings based on the composite index, we also find no evidence that the extent of domestic concentration in stable regimes influences war. The estimate of *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive in two cases, negative in one, and never significant.

Combining the Component Measures of Regime Type

The preceding analysis addressed the separate effects on war of changes in the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of the process for selecting a chief executive, and the institutional constraints on that executive. Now we examine such shifts in combination. Doing so is useful since changes in these three institutional features may not move in tandem. Moreover, democratic (and autocratic) transitions occurring over multiple institutional dimensions are likely to be more pronounced than those occurring over a single dimension. One implication of our argument is that countries experiencing a democratic transition should be more likely to go to war if the transition affects a wide range of institutional features than if it affects relatively few features.

To address this issue, we redefine *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ as the sum of the transitions occurring across the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and the constraints on the chief executive that culminate in a coherent democracy for each state, i, between years $t - 6$ and $t - 1$. Likewise, we redefine *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ as the sum of the transitions that i experiences from an autocracy to an anocracy based on these three institutional factors. Finally, *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ and *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ are the number of transitions culminating in a coherent autocracy and from a democracy to an anocracy, respectively, that i undergoes from $t - 6$ to $t - 1$.

Thus each variable pertaining to regime change takes on values ranging from zero to 3.[88]

The results based on these variables are reported in the first column of Table 6. Consistent with our earlier findings, the estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive, that of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ $\times$ *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is negative, and each one is statistically significant. There is strong evidence not only that incomplete democratic transitions raise the specter of war, but also that hostilities become increasingly likely as the number of such transitions increases. Consider, for example, the case where the level of domestic concentration is 3, the concentration of capabilities is evaluated at its mean, and state *i* is neither a major power nor involved in a civil war. The predicted probability of war is roughly 75 percent greater if this state undergoes a transition from autocracy to anocracy along two of the institutional dimensions mentioned earlier than if it undergoes such a transition along only one dimension. Countries are almost three times as likely to become embroiled in hostilities if an incomplete democratic transition occurs across all three features than if this type of transition occurs across just one feature. Furthermore, holding constant the number of incomplete democratic transitions, the likelihood of conflict increases steadily as the level of domestic concentration is reduced, which accords with our earlier findings. Equally important is that the combination of an incomplete democratic transition occurring across all three features and the lowest observed value of concentration yields a higher predicted probability of war than any other set of domestic political conditions analyzed here.

Our results also indicate that transitions culminating in a coherent democracy influence the outbreak of war. The estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is negative, the estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ $\times$ *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive, and both are statistically significant. Holding constant the level of concentration, the likelihood of conflict declines as the number of transitions to a coherent democracy increases. Indeed, based on our sample, there have been no instances of war when such transitions occurred across all three dimensions. Furthermore,

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88. By analyzing the sum of the transitions across these institutional features, we are assuming that the likelihood of war is a monotonic function of the number of such changes. An alternative would be to include a dummy variable corresponding to each number of institutional shifts for *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, for *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, for *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, and for *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$. However, our argument suggests that the relationship between the number of democratic transitions and war is likely to be monotonic and this alternative procedure yields results that are similar to those reported later.

Note that, for each type of regime change, we code the sum of the transitions as missing if data on any of the three institutional features used to derive this sum are missing. We do so because institutional shifts might occur during periods when data are missing. If so, summing the number of transitions across only those features where data exist could distort our findings. However, we also conducted a separate set of tests after defining each measure of regime change (*Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, and *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$) as the number of regime shifts that take place, treating missing data for any of the three institutional factors that make up this summary measure as though no transition took place. Again, the results based on this alternative coding procedure are similar to those discussed later.

TABLE 6. *Estimates of the parameters in Equation (1), based on the sum of the transitions occurring across the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and the constraints on the chief executive*

Variable	Base model	Country-specific fixed effects[a]	Controlling for regime type		Excluding major wars[b]
Intercept	−1.500***	—	−1.028	−1.383***	−1.657***
	(0.513)		(0.672)	(0.537)	(0.624)
Complete Demtransition	−1.973***	−1.593	−2.071***	−1.950***	−1.623**
	(0.738)	(1.054)	(0.730)	(0.715)	(0.787)
Incomplete Demtransition	1.772***	1.251***	1.710***	1.732***	1.823***
	(0.269)	(0.436)	(0.239)	(0.253)	(0.268)
Complete Auttransition	−0.101	0.310	−0.350	−0.135	0.177
	(0.591)	(0.826)	(0.632)	(0.586)	(0.644)
Incomplete Auttransition	1.070	2.296	0.933	0.997	0.708
	(1.105)	(1.425)	(1.152)	(1.131)	(1.221)
DomConcentration	0.014	0.076	−0.058	−0.007	0.033
	(0.041)	(0.050)	(0.079)	(0.051)	(0.052)
Complete Demtransition × DomConcentration	0.377***	0.293	0.399***	0.379***	0.293**
	(0.124)	(0.180)	(0.126)	(0.122)	(0.134)
Incomplete Demtransition × DomConcentration	−0.340***	−0.221**	−0.316***	−0.338***	−0.339***
	(0.060)	(0.092)	(0.062)	(0.060)	(0.059)
Complete Auttransition × DomConcentration	−0.101	−0.052	0.034	−0.135	−0.041
	(0.591)	(0.123)	(0.092)	(0.586)	(0.100)
Incomplete Auttransition × DomConcentration	−0.160	−0.406	−0.115	−0.145	−0.168
	(0.242)	(0.294)	(0.252)	(0.247)	(0.262)
Majpower	1.320***	1.358***	1.347***	1.303***	1.261***
	(0.203)	(0.393)	(0.194)	(0.201)	(0.218)
Civwar	0.317	0.298	0.312	0.288	0.366
	(0.249)	(0.314)	(0.256)	(0.253)	(0.250)
Concap	−4.746***	−5.825***	−5.116***	−4.581***	−4.347***
	(1.530)	(1.487)	(1.488)	(1.515)	(1.586)
Anocracy	—	—	−0.086	—	—
			(0.094)		
Autocracy	—	—	0.101	—	—
			(0.129)		
Reg	—	—	—	−0.009	—
				(0.015)	
Log likelihood	−1,297.05	−1,057.70	−1,294.99	−1,293.59	−1,093.96
N	8,901	6,250	8,900	8,854	8,188

Note: Entries are logistic regression estimates, with robust standard errors in parentheses. Each model is estimated after including a natural spline function with three knots.

[a]Entries are conditional (fixed-effects) logit estimates.

[b]Entries are derived after excluding the years during which World War I, World War II, and the Korean War took place.

***$p \leq .01$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

**$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

*$p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

holding constant the number of transitions to democracy, the likelihood of conflict increases as authority becomes more highly concentrated.

In contrast to democratic transitions, there is virtually no evidence that autocratic transitions affect the likelihood of war. The estimates of *Incomplete Auttransi-*

$tion_{i(t-1)}$, *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ $\times$ *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, and *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ $\times$ *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ are relatively small and are never significant.

Assessing the Robustness of the Results

The preceding results provide considerable support for our central argument: incomplete democratic transitions are especially likely to promote wars, and this effect grows more pronounced in countries with weak government institutions and where little power is concentrated in the hands of national officials. At this point, it is important to assess the robustness of these results.

First, there are various cultural, social, and historical factors specific to the countries in our sample and not included in Equation (1) that might influence the outbreak of war. A well-known way to account for any unmeasured heterogeneity across countries is to include country-specific fixed effects in the model.[89] However, various observers argue that this solution creates more problems than it resolves. They recommend eschewing fixed-effects specifications, especially in situations like ours where a dichotomous dependent variable is analyzed and the distribution of that variable is highly skewed.[90] Nonetheless, to assess the robustness of our results, we estimate Equation (1) using a conditional logit specification, a technique equivalent to including country-specific fixed effects in the model.[91] The results—shown in the second columns of Tables 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6—continue to indicate that incomplete democratic transitions precipitate war, especially in states marked by little institutional strength and centralization. Like before, each estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive, each estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ $\times$ *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is negative, and all of them are statistically significant. However, there is no evidence that any other type of regime transition influences war, including transitions culminating in a coherent democracy. Recall that our earlier analyses yielded some indication that transitions generating a coherent democracy are more likely to stimulate hostilities as authority becomes more highly concentrated domestically (see the first columns of Tables 4, 5, and 6). The results based on the conditional logit estimator suggest that this unexpected finding may be an outgrowth of heterogeneity in the data.

Second, our earlier analyses treated all stable regimes as homogeneous rather than distinguishing among stable autocracies, anocracies, and democracies. To determine whether making this distinction influences our results, we include two dummy variables: *Autocracy*$_{i(t-1)}$ equals 1 if state i is autocratic at both the beginning and end of the period from year $t-6$ to year $t-1$ and zero otherwise; *Anocracy*$_{i(t-1)}$ equals 1 if i is anocratic at both the beginning and end of this period and zero

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89. Green, Kim, and Yoon 2001.
90. See Beck and Katz 2001; and Beck and Tucker 1996. On this issue, see also King 2001.
91. Greene 1993, chap. 16.

otherwise. We arbitrarily establish stable democracy as the reference category in this analysis. As shown in the third columns of Tables 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6, the estimate of $Autocracy_{i(t-1)}$ is positive in each case but is never statistically significant. The estimate of $Anocracy_{i(t-1)}$ is negative in three cases, positive in two instances, and significant in only one. Moreover, including these variables in the model has virtually no bearing on the sign, size, or statistical significance of any of the variables in Equation (1). To further address this issue, we replace these two dummy variables with $Reg_{i(t-1)}$, which is Jaggers and Gurr's summary measure of state i's regime type in year $t - 1$ and takes on values ranging from -10 to 10. The estimates reported in the fourth columns of Tables 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 indicate that the estimate of $Reg_{i(t-1)}$ is never statistically significant and that including it in the model has very little influence on our other results. This continues to be the case if we replace $Reg_{i(t-1)}$ with dummy variables pertaining to the regime type of i in $t - 1$. In sum, then, we find no evidence that distinguishing among different types of stable regimes or controlling for regime type affects our findings.

Third, there are a number of cases in which states undergoing democratic transitions became involved in World War I, World War II, or the Korean War. Some of these states were only nominal participants in the hostilities, so it is important to ensure that they are not driving our results. To this end, we exclude all observations in the years during which World War I, World War II, and the Korean War took place. The results generated after doing so—shown in the last columns of Tables 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6—indicate that omitting these years has little effect on the observed relationship between democratization and the outbreak of armed conflict. Interestingly, however, there are no instances of an incomplete autocratic transition precipitating war based on both the composite index and the openness of executive recruitment once these years are excluded.

Fourth, we have measured regime change over five-year intervals thus far. There are sound theoretical and empirical reasons to do so, but it is useful to determine whether our results differ if both longer and shorter intervals are analyzed. We therefore measure *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$, and *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ over intervals ranging in length from one to ten years. More specifically, we measure these variables from year $t - n - 1$ to year $t - 1$, where n takes on values ranging from 1 to 10, inclusive. For each value of n, separate estimates are generated using (1) the composite index, (2) the competitiveness of political participation, (3) the openness of executive recruitment, (4) executive constraints, and (5) the sum of the transitions occurring across the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and the constraints on the chief executive. These results are much the same as those reported earlier. The estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive in each case, the estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ $\times$ *DomConcentration*$_{i(t-1)}$ is always negative, and both estimates are statistically significant in all but a small handful of cases.

Based on the composite index, the estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive and quite large when regime type is evaluated over one-year and two-year

intervals, and it is statistically significant in the latter case. These results conform with the logic of our argument. It seems reasonable to expect that nationalist ideologies and movements would already be present in the pluralistic setting of an anocratic regime and therefore might quickly be energized by the opening to unfettered mass democracy. The case study of Turkey presented earlier helps to make this point. Furthermore, at longer intervals after a transition to democracy, the likelihood of democratic consolidation should increase, yielding a state that is more stable and less war-prone than one in the throes of democratization. Finally, there continues to be little evidence that autocratic transitions precipitate war.

Democratization and War Initiation

The preceding results demonstrate that states in the initial stages of democratization are especially prone to become involved in wars. Our theory leads us to expect that such states, spurred by rising nationalism and logrolled overcommitments, will be the initiators of a good number of these conflicts. If democratizing states were always the targets of attack and never the initiators of hostilities, we might suspect that the political or military weakness of democratizing states is the main reason for their war involvement. However, we do not expect that democratizing countries will always be the attackers. There may be many cases in which they are the target of an attack, yet the conditions precipitating the war accord with our theory. For example, a nationalistic democratizing state might provoke fears among status quo neighbors; these neighbors, in turn, may attempt to contain its power by forceful means. Moreover, the democratizing state might appear weakened in the short run yet dangerous in the long run, because of both its belligerency and the prospect that its power will rise once its popular energies are harnessed to its nationalist aims. If so, countries neighboring this state would have a strong motive for a preventive strike. As Stephen M. Walt shows, this is commonly the case with revolutionary states, like Iran in 1980 and Bolshevik Russia, which are among the instances in which states engaging in a transition from autocracy to anocracy were targets of attack.[92]

Thus not all cases of an attack on a democratizing state are at odds with our theory. Nor do all cases in which democratizing states initiate war confirm our theory, since such states may sometimes attack their neighbors for reasons of rational opportunism that have nothing to do with nationalism, prestige strategies, or logrolling. For these reasons, analyses of war initiation are not in themselves adequate tests of our theory. Nonetheless, such analyses do help to assess the argument that it is the military weakness of democratizers, not their turbulent domestic politics, that draws them into wars. With these caveats in mind, we now turn to a preliminary statistical treatment of the relationship between democratization and the initiation of war.

92. Walt 1996.

Here, we focus on explaining the initiation of interstate wars. We do so to directly address the possibility that democratization is associated with the outbreak of war because this process undermines states' political-military capacity, thereby rendering them especially susceptible to attack by rival countries. (Note, however, that the following results are much the same as those based on analyses of the initiation of all external wars.) To conduct the following tests, we therefore define War_{it} as the log of the odds that state i initiates an interstate war in year t, based on data compiled by the COW Project.[93] As in Table 6, we define each measure of regime change (*Complete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Incomplete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Complete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$*, and *Incomplete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$*) as the number of transitions i experiences in the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and the constraints on the chief executive during the period from year $t - 6$ to year $t - 1$. However, since there are significant differences in the results when we vary the length of time over which regime change is measured, we present the results for intervals ranging from one year to ten years long.[94] Further, since in contrast to our prior analyses, we find no evidence that the level of domestic concentration influences the relationship between either democratization or autocratization and war initiation, we omit *Complete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Incomplete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Complete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*, and *Incomplete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*.[95] And since there is no evidence that the terms in the natural spline function are either jointly or individually significant, they too are omitted.

The results, presented in Table 7, show that states tend to launch wars soon after transitions to a coherent democracy and some time after incomplete democratic transitions. The estimate of *Complete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* is positive and statistically significant when regime change is measured over one-year and two-year intervals. Indeed, the highly combustible short-term effects of transitions to a coherent democracy are illustrated well by the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, which we discussed earlier. However, such transitions have little bearing on war initiation over the longer run—as democratic institutions become consolidated—since none of the remaining estimates of *Complete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* are significant.

Moreover, there is evidence that states undergoing incomplete democratic transitions are disproportionately prone to initiate war, especially over the longer run. The estimate of *Incomplete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* is positive in nine out of ten cases,

93. See Singer and Small 1994; and Small and Singer 1982.

94. That is, like in the previous section, we measure *Complete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Incomplete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Complete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$*, and *Incomplete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* from year $t - n - 1$ to year $t - 1$, where n takes on values ranging from 1 to 10, inclusive. A separate set of estimates is then generated for each value of n.

95. More specifically, for each value of n, the results of a likelihood ratio test provide no indication that *Complete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Incomplete Demtransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*, *Complete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$*, and *Incomplete Auttransition$_{i(t-1)}$* × *DomConcentration$_{i(t-1)}$* should be included in our model of war initiation.

TABLE 7. *Effects of democratization and autocratization on the initiation of interstate war, based on the sum of the transitions occurring across the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and the constraints on the chief executive*

	Number of years (n) over which regime type is measured				
Variable	1	2	3	4	5
Intercept	−4.408***	−4.336***	−4.211***	−4.148***	−4.483***
	(0.932)	(0.931)	(0.886)	(0.898)	(0.902)
Complete Demtransition	1.258***	0.777**	0.190	−0.089	−0.245
	(0.333)	(0.344)	(0.425)	(0.442)	(0.433)
Incomplete Demtransition	−0.407	0.127	0.114	0.358	0.334
	(0.925)	(0.451)	(0.338)	(0.304)	(0.258)
Complete Auttransition	−0.201	−0.536	−0.371	−0.507	−0.611
	(0.539)	(0.609)	(0.423)	(0.444)	(0.456)
Incomplete Auttransition	—[a]	—[a]	—[a]	—[a]	—[a]
DomConcentration	0.014	0.013	0.003	0.007	0.015
	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.071)	(0.072)	(0.074)
Majpower	1.908***	1.932***	1.869***	1.872***	1.937***
	(0.262)	(0.278)	(0.272)	(0.273)	(0.273)
Civwar	0.265	−0.046	0.372	0.381	0.443
	(0.558)	(0.711)	(0.563)	(0.568)	(0.568)
Concap	−3.829	−4.306	−4.244	−4.609	−3.621
	(2.917)	(2.985)	(2.899)	(2.940)	(2.886)
Log likelihood	−399.00	−373.97	−384.63	−377.23	−365.78
N	9,420	9,217	9,049	8,894	8,747

	Number of years (n) over which regime type is measured				
Variable	6	7	8	9	10
Intercept	−4.234***	−4.207***	−4.093***	−4.199***	−4.061***
	(0.907)	(0.954)	(0.964)	(0.982)	(0.976)
Complete Demtransition	−0.428	−0.272	−0.030	0.135	−0.078
	(0.445)	(0.366)	(0.300)	(0.324)	(0.292)
Incomplete Demtransition	0.398	0.464**	0.565**	0.571***	0.534**
	(0.288)	(0.234)	(0.223)	(0.221)	(0.213)
Complete Auttransition	0.063	0.286	0.203	0.159	0.232
	(0.238)	(0.183)	(0.186)	(0.223)	(0.213)
Incomplete Auttransition	—[a]	—[a]	—[a]	0.502	0.410
				(0.403)	(0.420)
DomConcentration	0.003	−0.005	−0.001	0.009	−0.005
	(0.072)	(0.076)	(0.078)	(0.081)	(0.079)
Majpower	1.917***	1.905***	1.877***	1.873***	1.897***
	(0.274)	(0.277)	(0.275)	(0.269)	(0.270)
Civwar	0.411	0.390	0.344	0.319	0.343
	(0.571)	(0.572)	(0.584)	(0.575)	(0.568)
Concap	−4.328	−4.550	−5.136*	−5.148*	−5.260*
	(3.002)	(3.058)	(3.091)	(3.113)	(3.107)
Log likelihood	−370.11	−356.24	−354.11	−354.19	−357.28
N	8,599	8,466	8,342	8,444	8,330

Note: Entries are logistic regression estimates, with robust standard errors in parentheses.

[a]This parameter is not estimated because there are no cases in which a state undergoing an incomplete autocratic transition initiated a war.

***$p \leq .01$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

**$p \leq .05$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

*$p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests are conducted for all estimates).

and it is positive and statistically significant in four instances. (Furthermore, this estimate would be statistically significant in six instances if we conducted one-tailed rather than two-tailed significance tests.) States making the transition from autocracy to anocracy are more likely to initiate wars as the period over which regime type is measured grows longer. The lag between the demise of an authoritarian regime and the initiation of war by its anocratic successor may reflect the time needed for interest groups, coalition leaders, and politicians to promote and disseminate belligerent ideologies in reaction to the political dilemmas arising from the transition. If democratizing states were simply the weak prey of their exploitative neighbors, it would be more reasonable to expect attacks sooner after the transition.

A separate set of tests confirms that democratizing states are not especially likely to be the targets of attack. To address this issue, we follow Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam in coding as a target each participant in a given interstate war that did not initiate the war.[96] We then estimate the same model used to generate the results in Table 7, after restricting the sample to states participating in interstate wars. The results of this analysis, which are not shown to conserve space, indicate that the estimate of *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is positive and statistically significant when one-year and two-year periods are analyzed, but there is no other case in which the estimate of either *Complete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ or *Incomplete Demtransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is significant. These findings therefore provide no evidence that states undergoing transition toward democracy are disproportionately prone to being attacked.[97]

Also noteworthy is that autocratization has little bearing on the initiation of war. Neither the results in Table 7 nor the results of the tests focusing on states engaged in interstate wars (described in the previous paragraph) yield any case in which the estimate of *Complete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ or *Incomplete Auttransition*$_{i(t-1)}$ is statistically significant.

In sum, our results strongly suggest that states undergoing democratization are more likely to initiate wars than stable or autocratizing countries. Moreover, democratizing states that become involved in wars are not especially likely to become targets of attack. Consequently, a realist explanation focusing on the supposed military weakness of democratizing states cannot provide the main reason for their heightened risk of war.

Conclusion

The wide variety of democratic transitions occurring recently has been greeted with substantial enthusiasm. Many observers expect that democratization will promote

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96. Reiter and Stam 1998.
97. Furthermore, we continue to find virtually no case in which the estimate of any of these variables is statistically significant when we amend the COW Project's list of interstate war initiators in the ways recommended by Reiter and Stam and when we focus only on what they refer to as "core dyads," which are pairs involving the initiator of a war and its primary target(s). Reiter and Stam 1998.

peace, prosperity, and respect for civil liberties, among other desirable outcomes. But while stable democracies may foster these obviously worthy ends, transitions to democracy can be treacherous processes. Those that become stalled prior to the establishment of a coherent democracy present especially serious problems. Particularly in states where little authority is centralized in the hands of public officials, incomplete democratic transitions are often a potent impetus to external war.

From a policy perspective, the Clinton administration made promoting democracy a priority. But our results indicate the dangers of democratization efforts that fall short of their goal. Where attempts to promote democratic transitions contribute to or occur in the face of weakened central governmental institutions, there is a risk of adverse foreign-policy consequences. Put more positively, policies to foster democratic transitions should be accompanied by efforts to mold strong, centralized institutions that can withstand the intense demands on the state and political elites posed by high-energy mass politics. Before pressuring autocrats to hold fully competitive elections, the international community should first promote the rule of law, the formation of impartial courts and election commissions, the professionalization of independent journalists, and the training of competent bureaucrats. If mass politics arrives before the institutions that are needed to regulate it, hollow or failed democracy is likely to result. This outcome has often contributed to the onset of hostilities. The many benefits of establishing stable, liberal democracies are clear. Equally clear, however, is the need for countries encouraging democratization abroad to commit the resources needed to manage democratic transitions and avert their potentially dangerous foreign policy by-products.

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