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Why Do Crises Not Escalate?

Causes of Dyadic Interstate Conflict Deescalation

by

Carina Schmidt M.A.



Thesis presented to the
Department of Social Sciences
Bundeswehr University Munich

to attain the Degree of
Doctor rerum politicarum

Advisers:

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Index of Abbreviations

ANAP Motherland Party

APC armored personnel carriers

ATOP Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions Project

C3 Command Control Communication

CENTO Central Treaty Organization

CHP Republican People`s Party

CINC Composite Index of National Capabilities

COW Correlated of War Project

DSP Democratic Left Party

DYP True Path Party

EAM National Liberation Front

EC European Community

EU European Union

FIR Flight Information Region

GNP Gross National Product

HA Hypothesis Alliance

HD Hypothesis Democracy

HI Hypothesis Institution

HM Hypothesis Mediation

HP Hypothesis Power

HPer Hypothesis Perception

HPol Hypothesis Polarity

ICAO International Civil Aviation Organization

ICB International Court of Justice

ICBP International Crisis Behavior Project

IFV infantry fighting vehicles

IR International Relations

KYSEA Governmental Council on Foreign Policy and National Defense

MHP Nationalist Action Party

MID Militarized Interstate Dispute

MOD Ministry of Defense

NAM Non-Alignment Movement
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NMC National Material Capabilities
nmi Nautical Miles
NOTAM Note to Airman
NSC National Security Council
OEEC Organization for European Economic Cooperation
SEATO Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
UAR United Arab Republic
UK United Kingdom
UN United Nations
UNCIP United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan
UNCLOS I Convention on the Continental Shelf
UNCLOS III Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNIPOM United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission
UNMOGIP United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
US United States of America
USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WW II World War II
X sub-variables

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1. Introduction

Why do militarized crises between states not escalate to war?

This is the central question which I address in the underlying thesis. Conflict is a persisting problem for mankind and war is a major determinant in the relations between states. Understanding war and being able to avoid it has likewise been a political and scientific aim for centuries. Yet this task is still on the agenda. “If the central imperative of our times is the avoidance of war, the primary dilemma of our times is how to achieve this” (Cashman 1993: 1).

To understand the emergence of war, one has to investigate its roots. Wars do not just appear from nowhere. States disagree over an issue, followed by sub-crisis maneuvering, as political, economic and diplomatic gestures and finally, the states involved fail to stick to the negotiation table and fall back to the show of force and mobilizations, followed by military confrontations.¹

So before war, there is already a conflict which gets militarized. From this point of view, war is the outcome when the conflicting states fail to deescalate in time. But cases of interstate conflicts short of war, which against expectation deescalated instead of escalating to war, are numerous in history. Comparing the quantity of cases of war to cases of (highly militarized) conflict without war, one can see that war is actually an exception. The Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) data sets of the Correlated of War Project (COW) give an extensive overview about conflicts between 1816 and 2001. Within this time period scholars counted 5000 conflicts, only 731 of which escalated to war.²

“[...] In that most conflicts do de-escalate; that is, they move toward states of decreased intensity” (Wall/Callister 1995: 532). Nonetheless, highly militarized crises with the risk of war have the potential of “destabilization of bilateral security, provocation of ethnic tensions in contested territories, posing threat to regional and international security” (Wilkenfeld et al. 2003: 279).

So what leads to the deescalation of such a conflict? The puzzle is: what drives states to refrain from war after the inducement of several escalatory steps? Did the states never want war and just play the chicken game³ and, refrain, short of crashing into each other, from the ultimate outbreak of violence?

¹ For the course of crisis escalation see Kahn ((1965) 2010: 39).

² Conflict is measured by COW through a 5-step-grid, increasing in intensity of violence from 1 (low violence) to 5 (war). For a closer look at the definitions see Jones et al. (1996: 163 – 215). Quantitative data sets about conflict (and probably any other issue) have to be used carefully. Researchers should not rely on them without questioning what is measured and how transparent the methods of measurement are. Quantitative studies have to draw lines of measurement which might be senseless in an individual case. Nonetheless I consider it as most useful to read general tendencies, for example the fact that there are much more highly militarized conflicts than wars.

³ The chicken game is a model about conflicts between two actors in game theory. It shows that, although both players do not want to yield, the worst possible outcome happens if both do not yield. The model refers to a game where two players drive their cars at each other on a collision course and if no one yields and changes the course, they crash. But the one who yields is the coward and called “chicken”. For more detail on chickens in International Relations (IR) see Glenn Snyder (1971).

Did internal or external conditions make them change their mind about going to war? The analytical effort is to explain the conditions which foster deescalation in a crisis between states.

The study of the causes of war and the reasons for its absence is of indisputable importance and has drawn scholarly attention ever since Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* in 431 B.C. Correspondingly, there is an enormous range of scientific contributions from all sorts of scientific disciplines. Historians, political scientists, sociologists, economists and anthropologists have created countless theoretical and methodological approaches. However, consensus about the origin of war and its dynamics of escalation and deescalation fails to appear (Levy/Thompson 2010: 4). The study of deescalation of interstate conflict is a major contribution to the scientific discourse of war and peace in international relations. The deescalation of crises is related to the avoidance of war and the maintenance of peace. To understand what makes states refrain from war, one has to investigate instances where dyads have come to the brink of war without going over it.

1.1 State of Deescalation

To study conflict deescalation effectively, first one has to narrow the focus of the study, the explanandum: deescalation. This requires a closer look at the terms war, conflict and escalation.

Here war is considered as a subcategory of conflict. Generally war is defined as a large-scale organized violence between political units (Malinowski 1941: 523; Bull 1977: 184; Levy 1983b: 50 – 53; Vasquez 1993: 21 – 29). To discriminate war from other forms of conflict with a more limited magnitude or impact, a line has to be drawn between war and disputes with lower violence.

Conflict as the umbrella term for these phenomena has to involve a state of tensions between at least two actors. To avoid a too general definition of conflict which encompasses almost any interaction, one has to combine the conflicting positions of the actors and a situation of a high degree of tensions:

“For the purpose of this inquiry I propose to define conflict as a critical state of tension occasioned by the presence of mutually incompatible tendencies within an organismic whole the functional continuity or structural integrity of which is thereby threatened.” (Singer 1949b: 230)

It is important that tensions have to be high enough to have the potential to lead to a destabilization of the structure. Translated into interstate disputes this means that when a conflict between two (or more) states emerges and deteriorates, it has the potential to escalate to war. This definition does not include every dispute between states. Disputes have to trespass a certain degree of tension to become a conflict. This view of conflict as a continuum is supported by the definition of escalation as an

increase in tensions. Through escalation disputes evolve into conflicts, which can further escalate to war. Deescalation in turn is the reduction of tensions. The underlying study focuses on the deescalation of conflicts between states short of war.

Theories of International Relation offer a wide range of approaches to study conflict. Theorists of Realism, Liberalism, Institutionalism, Constructivism and Critical Theories have contributed approaches to investigate the emergence of war and also its absence. This has brought about a large pool of ideas of what might be essential for states to engage in war or to avoid it.

In the upcoming pages, all theoretical approaches of International Relations (IR) to conflict deescalation will be considered and evaluated regarding their explanatory power. Instead of ascribing the different explanations to their schools-of-thought, I sort them according to their independent variables so that conflict deescalation is explained through the investigation of uni-, bi- and multilateral measures which are undertaken to bring about deescalation, the ripeness of a conflict, the relations between the adversaries, domestic structures and the international system structure. From these, mediation through third states, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and international system polarity have drawn the most scholarly attention and provide the most reliable statements on deescalation. However, these approaches also have pitfalls and in the end poor explanatory power. The two case studies which will be presented in the empirical part of the thesis support that neither mediation nor institutions, domestic democratic structures or polarity can offer explanations for deescalation. When investigating the various IR explanations for deescalation, especially in empirical tests, one can see that they produce very mixed results. Sometimes, deescalation seems to be brought about by mediation through a third state or through talks, fostered by international institutions, and sometimes these approaches have no effect or even an escalating one as deterrence or domestic democratic structures. This indicates that there has to be some basic variables which influence the success or failure of the other explanations for deescalation.

This hallmarks a gap in the research about conflict deescalation. The widely discussed causes of deescalation do not only have tremendous gaps in logic and applicability, but the study of deescalation lacks a comprehensive overview of deescalation as a course of conflict, deescalation as measures to manage tension reduction and underlying conditions which make deescalation a favorable option. These conditions can be manipulated by some measures and in turn the impact of deescalation measures depends on the underlying conditions. Chapter two will offer more thoughts on that. In short, to study deescalation effectively, I introduce the primary and secondary causes of deescalation. The primary causes are in focus of the study and are characterized by influencing the actors' willingness to deescalate. All conflicting parties involved have to desire to avoid war in order to deescalate a crisis. Mediation by third states accounts as a measure of deescalation. Institutions can

also induce measures, but create conditions which make deescalation more likely as well. The same accounts for domestic democratic structures, which can bring about conditions for a reduction of tensions in an ongoing conflict. The polarity of the international system can create conditions which make the conflicting parties opt for deescalation.

What we can learn from this discrimination is that there is a ranking of causes for deescalation. There are primary and secondary causes of deescalation; some are called “secondary” because they can contribute to deescalation but do not bring it about on their own. Measures such as mediation for example are secondary causes because their impact on the course of conflict depends on further factors. Variation, absence or presence of these factors determine if mediation can be successful. The determining factors are the primary causes of deescalation. These factors have the potential to cause conflict deescalation and are in focus of this study.

From evaluating the research on deescalation, I deduce that deescalation happens when it is a favorable option for the conflicting actors. This means the states in an ongoing conflict have to desire deescalation over escalation to war. But what makes them want to deescalate and avoid war? To answer this question, inferences are drawn from the reasons why states go to war. Causes of war can shed light on the causes why states refrain from war.

As a first step, theories of the causes of war from all schools-of-thought are discussed. Realism, the balance of power theory, hegemonic theories, the bargaining model of war, the steps to war, imperialism, coalitional models, the diversionary theory, the clash of civilizations, the bureaucratic politics and the organizational process models, the group-think theory, perception, the prospect theory, the poliheuristic model of decision-making, crisis decision-making, and expected utility provide the basis for considerations of what makes states to go to war. I identify power, alliances and perceptions as the most often discussed variables in the diverse theories of war causation. These variables are important for theories independent of levels-of-analysis⁴ and schools-of thought.

The second step consists of the application of power, alliances and perceptions to deescalation. How do these variables have to be defined and shaped to be relevant for conflict deescalation? In chapter four I identify power relations, alliance commitments and the actors` perception of those two variables as potentially influential on the willingness to deescalate. In order to prove the relevance of these variables for conflict deescalation, I perform two case studies of the Rann of Kutch crisis between India and Pakistan in 1965 and the Imia/Kardak crisis in 1995/96. Both cases are crises between two long-term rivals which were engaged in several wars against each other. However, the selected cases were situations at the brink of war but then suddenly deescalated. The disputed issues - in both cases

⁴ For more details on the levels-of-analysis see chapter 3.

questions about the affiliation of territory - were not solved but large scale fighting was averted. I postulate that the deescalation is causally connected to the power relations, more precisely the military capabilities and geostrategic settings, the presence of formal or informal allies and the actors' perceptions of power and alliances.

1.2 The Answers of the Thesis

As mentioned above, this thesis provides an overview of deescalation in interstate conflict. For this purpose, first I define war, conflict, crisis, escalation and finally deescalation with regard to interstate interactions. After clarifying the central terms, IR explanations for deescalation are collected and evaluated, which reveals analytical and explanatory gaps. Based on these gaps, I discriminate measures and conditions fostering deescalation and establish a ranking of causes of deescalation. In order to deduct primary causes of deescalation, theories of the causes of war are discussed and their most prominent variables, power, alliances and perception, are extracted. Test hypotheses are designed to connect power, alliances and perception with deescalation and two cases of crises which brought the states to the brink of war but not over it help to identify potential effects of power, alliances and perceptions.

The Rann of Kutch crisis and the Imia/Kardak crisis are found to be suitable as will be further elaborated below. The case studies offer various outcomes. First of all, the variables which I draw from the studies of the causes of war and related to the deescalation of conflict offer excellent explanations for the reduction of tensions between states. Power relations in terms of military capabilities and geostrategic vulnerabilities are important determinants when states decide to escalate or deescalate a crisis. To opt for deescalation, one adversary has to have an advantage in terms of military capabilities and geostrategy. If one state in a conflicting dyad is militarily superior to the other, deescalation will emerge. And further, if one state in a conflicting dyad has geostrategic vulnerabilities, deescalation will emerge.

The next factor which influences the conflict behavior of states are alliances. A deescalation promoting alliance means that the external ally has to be politically relevant and formally or informally defensive. If these conditions are fulfilled, the state facing an adversary with such an alliance will yield and avoid further militarized dispute.

Finally the perceptions of power and alliances influence the willingness of states to deescalate. Deescalation can be stipulated if states perceive themselves as inferior in capabilities and geostrategy. Likewise if a state perceives that a politically relevant third state will intervene on the adversarial side, it will behave in a deescalating way. On the other hand, the influences of mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and international system polarity are found to have no

effect or on the contrary an escalating one.

1.3 Competing Explanations

Mediation is a prominent explanation for the deescalation of conflicts. The cases of crisis deescalation which were selected for this study are both explained by mediation. According to Sumit Ganguly (1986), Alastair Lamb (1991) and Tinaz Pavri (1997), the Rann of Kutch crisis between India and Pakistan was deescalated through mediation by Britain. The deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis between Greece and Turkey is explained by mediation by Stephen Larrabee and Ian Lesser (2003) and Alexis Heraclides (2010). Further, James Wall and Ronda Callister (1995) and Louis Kriesberg (2001) provide studies about the various mediatory measures for conflict management. But Saadia Touval (1982) states that mediation requires the acceptance of the adversaries to be mediated. Mediation is a secondary cause of deescalation, since it can only be successful when the conflicting parties favor deescalation. The case studies show that during crisis escalation, the conflicting parties refuse or ignore mediatory attempts by third parties. It is not before other factors make them want to deescalate that they accept mediation.

Another competing explanation for interstate conflict deescalation is the involvement of institutions. Institutions can undertake mediatory attempts (Fawcett 2008), constrain their members' behavior (Keohane 1988) or create a regional or international surrounding which promotes stability and prevents states from going to war in a crisis (Wendt 1999; Morgan 2006). But the underlying case studies show that institutions were neither capable of creating a stable environment nor did they get involved in the crises and therefore cannot be considered as cause of deescalation.

Switching from international and regional actors to the state level explanation for deescalation, domestic democratic structures are another possible explanation for crisis deescalation. The International Crisis Behavior Project (ICBP)⁵ supports the connection between democratic structures and the turning away from violent conflict resolution (Brecher/Wilkenfeld 1997: 874 – 877). Michael Doyle (1983), Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett (1993), Russett et al. (1995), Maoz (1997), Spencer Weart (1998), John Oneal and Russett (2001), and Oneal et al. (2003) identify normative reasons, domestic structures, economic reasons and transparency as causes of crisis deescalation. However, the cases tested in this thesis reject these assumptions. Neither the domestic structures in the democratic dyad Greece and Turkey nor the mixed dyad of democracy and anocracy in India and Pakistan could be found to have a deescalating effect. In fact, in both cases, rather escalating incentives could be identified.

⁵ For more details on the project see <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/icb/>.

Finally, international system polarity is discussed to make interstate conflict deescalation more probable. Scholars disagree how static uni-, bi-, and multipolarity are connected to war and peace. Bipolarity in the international system is the most peaceful structure (Waltz 1979), while unbalanced multipolarity is the most risky structure (Mearsheimer 2001). But there are also scholars who favor unipolarity as the most peaceful structure (Wohlfort 1999). Others consider a transition to multipolarity as the path to peace in the international system (Deutsch/Singer 1964; Kegley/Raymond 1992; Kupchan 2002). The selected crises of the case studies happened in a bipolar (1965) and a multipolar (1995/96) surrounding. However, both structures could not be found to have an impact on the deescalation of the crises. Unipolarity was not tested due to the absence of a period of international unipolarity in modern history.

These are the four independent variables I tested as null-hypotheses in the case studies. There are some more concepts explaining deescalation which I did not integrate in the tests, as some are a priori not capable of providing a logical comprehensive explanation or are umbrella terms for a mixed bag of various variables which need many intervening variables to operate. I aim for clear tests of different single variables in order to be able to identify the effect of each variable on the willingness of the states to deescalate.

For this reason, I distinguished power from alliance in the test hypotheses. For analytical accuracy, I neglect the definition of power which has already integrated alliance as sub-variable as popular for several IR studies.⁶ Here power and alliances are analytically divided and the underlying concept of power encompasses geostrategic factors.

This study questions the traditional explanations of crisis deescalation and refines the analytical grasp of interstate crisis deescalation. It connects the research of the causes of war to the study of non-violent conflict resolution. It reinforces the importance of power and alliance structures for studying interstate conflicts and extends them by adding perceptions of power and alliances.

I examine which conditions might drive the states to opt for deescalation. The study provides a collection of the various approaches of explaining deescalation and evaluates their explanatory power. I reevaluate the relevance of prominent peace promoting variables as mediation, institutional involvement, domestic structures and international order. By transferring hypotheses of the causes of war to study deescalation, two related but separate sub-fields of research, the studies on the causes of war and the studies of conflict deescalation, will be connected. The study sheds light on how much explanatory power for deescalation lies in theories of the causes of war.

⁶ For more power definitions see fn. 68.

1.4 Cases and Methodology

I argue that there are important conditions for states which influence the decision to further increase hostilities or opt for a non-violent resolution of the dispute. Therefore I examine theories of the causes of war to find out important conditions which are related to the emergence of war as postulated in many theories. Power, alliances and perceptions play an important role in the emergence of war since they are integrated in various theories. I assume that a variance of these factors might lead to deescalation instead of war. Therefore I construct hypotheses which link the variables originally related to the emergence of war with the deescalation of conflict.

The hypotheses will be tested by y-orientated process-tracing of small-N case studies. The independent variables are heterogeneous. As drawn from the hypotheses of the causes of war theories, they are power, alliance, and perception. The dependent variable is deescalation.

Cases of conflict short of war will serve as case studies. Cases are selected according to wide temporal and geographic distribution. This provides varying influences of the international system order, international institutions, mediation and domestic structures. The influence of these variables will be discussed as well. The study examines the causes of interstate crisis deescalation among two conflictual dyads: the Rann of Kutch crisis between India and Pakistan in 1965 and the Imia/Kardak crisis between Greece and Turkey in 1995/96.

The more recent case study, Imia/Kardak crisis, was a dispute at the brink of war over an islet in the Aegean Sea. The dispute is embedded in the greater Aegean conflict between Turkey and Greece. Both countries have democratic domestic structures and both are North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members. Despite a long-lasting rivalry, the relationship has been relatively stable for over a decade now. The crisis emerged five years after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, changing the international system from bipolarity to multipolarity. The pacification of the Imia/Kardak crisis is generally explained by mediation through the United States of America (US). The case is suitable for the test because information about the crisis was provided by media and there are several scientific studies about the crisis. Further, the access to diplomatic papers through governmental webpages is assured.

The second case study, the Rann of Kutch crisis also happened between two long-term adversaries. India and Pakistan have been disputing over their common borders ever since the partition of British India in 1947. The Rann of Kutch is a barren region in the south of the Indo-Pakistan border. The dispute between the democratic India and the autocratic Pakistan emerged short before they started the second Kashmir War in the same year. During the bipolar international system, Pakistan was aligned with the United States by several agreements and India sought military support from the

Soviet Union. In other words, both conflicting parties had a stronger brother behind them.⁷ Further there were several regional institutions which could have had an influence on the course of conflict. The dispute settlement is explained with British mediation. The case is adequate for a case study since the Indo-Pakistani rivalry has received a lot of attention by historians and IR scholars and generates a considerable amount of secondary literature. Further, the access to primary sources is provided since the conflict happened over 50 years ago.

Therefore, both cases are suitable for the study as they are historically processed and sufficiently data rich. This allows the in-depth studies which are necessary to distinguish causal relevant variables from the alleged causes of deescalation. Both crises are supposed to be ended through mediation by third states. This seems to prove that mediation is a successful undertaking to bring about deescalation. However, careful test design and performance show that mediation is only a secondary cause of the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis and the Imia/Kardak crisis. What is more important are further variables which have to be met before mediation is possible at all. More precisely, this means that one conflicting actor has to be inferior in power, or one of the actors has an ally. Further one actor has to perceive its own power inferiority or the lack of an ally, respectively perceive that the adversary has an ally. If those conditions are met, the crisis tends to deescalate. Mediation, domestic democratic structures, international system polarity and institutional involvement are not the causes of deescalation. Process-tracing of both cases confirms my statement about the superior explanatory power of power, alliances and perceptions to the common explanations related to mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and polarity.

1.5 Content

In the following I will examine the phenomenon of conflict deescalation, the broad field of theories of the causes of war, methodological constraints and stumbling blocks and introduce the cases. Firstly, the grasp of deescalation will be narrowed and defined in a suitable way for interstate conflict. Then I will browse the various possible IR explanations for deescalation and evaluate their explanatory power. The explanations are grouped into measures, including uni- and bilateral actions as well as third party intervention by a state or an institution. Further, the concepts of ripeness, adversarial relations, domestic democratic structures and international system polarity, which can be accounted to the underlying conditions of deescalation, will be examined. Measures and conditions of deescalation are often interrelated, but for the sake of analytical accuracy, they will be subdivided

⁷ But the superpowers themselves were racing for influence in South East Asia and therefore in 1965, India received military aid from the US and Soviet Union and the actual western ally Pakistan received technical support from the Soviet Union.

here. Studying these various potential causes of deescalation, one can learn that there is an order of causes of deescalation. I will identify variables which influence the states' willingness to deescalate as the most important ones, since all other potential causes of deescalation depend on the actors' willingness to avoid war. To determine the variables which have influence on the actors' will, I will study the IR theories of the causes of war. As this field is extensive, I will use the levels-of-analysis concept to group them and select the most prominent variables of all levels. This procedure will result in the three variables power, alliance and perception.

The next step will be the setup of the research design. I will clarify my grasp of causality and introduce the suitable method for this task. The process-tracing of two cases will serve as test for the different explanations for deescalation. I will set up mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and international system polarity as null-hypotheses and power, alliance and perception as test-hypotheses. Deescalation will serve as dependent variable. Additionally I will address the case selection and its constraints.

After establishing the important components for the tests, I will introduce the two test cases. I will start with a general introduction, followed by the historical background and the history of previous conflicts. Then I will turn to the actual conflict under investigation. I will shed light on the legal controversy on the disputed issue and retrace the course of the crisis, starting with pre-crisis events to its peak and its deescalation and the aftermath. After that I start the tests by employing the four null-hypotheses, followed by the three test hypotheses. In the end a conclusion on the whole thesis will be provided.

2. The Deescalation of Conflict

Deescalation is an important outcome of the interactions of states. It leads to wars being ended or prevented. While it had been the most frequent form of conflict for decades, now its presence has diminished.⁸ This means that disputes between states occur less frequently or/and states managed to resolve their disputes in a non-violent manner. Although the number of issues between states might have decreased, the number of disputes which are solved without war has to play a prominent role in international relations. Non-violent dispute resolution can occur before any militarized action has happened, during threats or demonstration of force and finally during the use of force. When the dispute has escalated to the use of force, one might expect that the disputants are ready to go to war. But even at that stage of conflict, short of war, a reduction of tensions can happen and the danger of war can be averted. How does deescalation of such a situation come about? The involved states have not only threatened each other with their willingness to fight but have demonstrated that with some hostilities. Then the conflict deescalates and is even resolved or at least in a stalemate. The willingness to fight gives way to the willingness to negotiate. What changes the mind of the conflicting dyad in this situation? How is deescalation brought about? Which conditions shape the decisions of states of not going to war but looking for other possible (non-violent) resolutions?

Interactions between states happen in a highly complex surrounding and it is challenging to identify factors which might influence the deescalation. Which impact do measures of the involved states and of third states have? Do institutions promote a peaceful conflict resolution? Do democracies tend to resolve their disputes without war? Are there external conditions which influence a reduction of hostilities?

At first, one has to differentiate the terms war, conflict, escalation and deescalation and look for their interconnections. War has a prelude and does not seem to appear from nowhere. States have conflicts of interest, which can lead to a rivalry. (Diplomatic) disputes can follow and lead to crisis, and crisis can escalate to war.⁹ In this escalatory ladder I inquire just the factors which lead to the deescalation of a highly violent conflict short of war.

Escalation is an intensification of tensions between states. It is a “quantitative increase in the intensity of the conflict by doing more of what one is already doing” (Kahn (1965) 2010: 4). Dean Pruitt and Jeffrey Rubin (1986) specify the intensity with a shift in tactics, the increase of issues dissidence and goal shifts from defense to offense. Political, diplomatic and military issues interact with the ascending levels of violence and ultimately lead to war (Kahn (1965) 2010: 6). Hermann Kahn

⁸ For example, Joshua Goldstein (2011: 275) diagnoses the complete absence of interstate war in 2011.

⁹ Bremer and Cusack (1995) investigate this process.

conceptualized escalation as a ladder with 44 rungs leading to war. The level of violence of the interactions of states describes the underlying sort of conflict. Similarly, the Correlates of War Project describes war as highest level of hostile interaction between states with various escalatory steps before, from no militarized action to the threat of using force, the display of force, the use of force and ultimately war (Jones et al. 1996). Within this process of escalation, deescalation can occur and prevent an outbreak of war. Generally, deescalation can be considered as the reduction of tensions. It transforms an actually violent conflict into a non-violent one. Deescalation and escalation are closely related to conflict. Most conflicts do escalate and deescalate, which means the level of tensions between the adversaries increases and very often also decreases again.

Depending on the definition each researcher uses for the term deescalation, the study foci vary. Deescalation is a multidimensional phenomenon. The term can describe the intensity of conflict behavior between two adversaries, or measures and actions which are taken by actors to reduce the tensions. Further deescalation can occur before war has emerged or during war to terminate it. The study of deescalation is necessary to manage crises and resolve them in a peaceful manner.

“While we have done a credible job in analyzing interstate war, not nearly enough effort has been devoted to understand the vast number of disputes in which militarized behavior occurs without escalation to war” (Jones et al. 1996: 164).

To understand what makes state peaceful, one has to investigate instances where dyads have come to the brink of war without going over it. I am especially interested in deescalation at a high level of violent conflict. The puzzle is: what drives states to refrain from war after the inducement of several escalatory steps? Disputes between states emerge all the time. How these disputes are handled determines if states negotiate a solution or resolve a conflict through war, which is, although counter-intuitive, also a sort of conflict resolution. In crises, it seems initially that the conflict cannot be resolved through non-violent interactions. States insist on their point of view and threaten their adversary. The threats escalate and the conflict approaches war. Short of war, states suddenly change their minds and find a (peaceful) solution to their issue. What enables states to deescalate a conflict after taking several escalatory steps? Why did they escalate the conflict so far that regression is so difficult? Some factors which made the states favor escalation before must have changed and now rather drive them to deescalate.

As will be elaborated below, IR studies deal with various factors relevant for the deescalation of conflict. These include internal and external conditions and measures which can be undertaken to promote deescalation. Measures can be executed by one or several involved states or by third parties.

Conditions relevant for deescalation can induce fighting fatigue (ripeness). Further, the former and present relations between the conflicting parties, their regime types and the structure of the international system are theorized to influence the course of a crisis.

The measures and conditions which are investigated by IR scholars to explain deescalation have weaknesses in explanatory power. Measures which are undertaken by one party may finally lead to conflict deescalation, but the reaction of the adversary has to be integrated into the explanation; it takes two to deescalate. Bilateral measures can explain deescalation by considering action and reaction, but not the stimuli which made the parties willing to deescalate. Similarly, mediation through third parties may stimulate negotiations between the conflicting states, but if states are unwilling to do so, mediation has no effect. If third states or institutions act as an ally of one side, they may be able to create conditions which convince the conflict parties to deescalate. Measures of deescalation have to be investigated to find out which actions in an ongoing conflict might lead to reconciliation. But apparently there are conditions which influence the success of these measures. The ripeness of a conflict may be one of these conditions. Disagreements over the events which lead to the ripeness of a conflict dominate the scientific discourse.

Obviously, the interactions of states are influenced by their relationship. The relationship between two states has various branches, not all of which are relevant for their conflict behavior. What might be relevant are the kind of interactions they had before the present conflict. Were they rather friendly and cooperative or did the states have several, even violent conflicts before? Another kind of relation is relevant in the present conflict: power. But the relationship between power and deescalation is not linear.

A prominent and appealing normative approach is democratic peace. Disputes between democratic states are rather solved in a non-violent manner. Therefore domestic democratic structures may promote deescalation. But explanations for deescalation due to democratic structures are strongly debated. Finally the structure of the international system might influence the willingness of states to deescalate. But scholars disagree whether uni-, bi- or multipolarity promotes peace or war and if the polarity has an impact at all.

Consequently explanations for the cause of deescalation are various but none illuminates the process convincingly. Primary causes of deescalation have to influence the involved states' willingness to refrain from war. Measures of deescalation cannot operate until this point is reached. But what are relevant factors for states when they decide about the next step in an ongoing conflict short of war? In the following passage, I will define and narrow the meanings of escalation, deescalation and their framework requirement, conflict. Then I will show how scholars of international relations explain the deescalation of conflict and evaluate the available theses in terms of their explanatory power. Finally

I suggest to use approaches from the theories of causes of war to fill in explanatory shortcomings of deescalation theories.

2.1 Definition

The deescalation of a conflict is a multilayer phenomenon. Conflicts and their (de)escalation can happen in interpersonal, intergroup, interorganizational, and international settings. The decision to promote the escalation or deescalation of a conflict through correspondent measures is a strategic decision. There is a stage in the conflict when neither side has yet committed itself and its resources fully, therefore (de)escalation is still possible (Smoke 1977: 4f).

Before investigating deescalation, one has to approach the term conflict. Conflict is a recurrent pattern in dyadic interaction. Due to the anarchic conditions of the international system, states have to ensure their own security and act in a self-help system. Through these actions, states create a competitive environment with escalatory potential. Conflict is an elementary part of these interactions. When investigating processes and dynamics related to conflict, one has to narrow its broad meaning. “Depending on perspective and definition, one may see conflict absolutely everywhere and almost nowhere” (Waltz 1971: 19).

Talking about conflict between states, one has to clarify the term war to be able to define conflict. War is a species of the concept of conflict (Wright 1951: 193). Generally war is defined as large-scale organized violence between political units (Malinowski 1941: 523; Bull 1977: 184; Levy 1983b: 50 – 53; Vasquez 1993: 21 – 29). To discriminate war from other forms of conflict with a more limited magnitude or impact, a line has to be drawn between war and disputes with lower violence. The term war is preserved for incidents that escalate and cross a certain threshold of violence (Levy/Thompson 2010: 10). Measuring quantitatively, it includes an annual minimum of 1000 battle-related fatalities (Singer/Small 1972). Therefore, war can be considered as the end of a continuum of the escalation of violence. Issues between states lead to disputes which escalate and finally end up in war. The COW MID Data Sets use the indicator Hostility Level to design a five stage model from low-level violence in conflict to its highest form (war).¹⁰

Other data banks, such as Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) and Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), focus on the other side of the continuum and give a minimum definition of conflict. In addition to the need for force involvement between two parties, there have to be at least 25 battle-related deaths a year (Harborm et al. 2008: 700).

Leaving quantitative definition behind, I turn to more qualitative descriptions of conflict. Apart from

¹⁰ See for example the MIDA_3.10 Data Set of Correlates of War Data Bank, <http://correlatesofwar.org/>.

my need for a qualitative definition due to a qualitative investigation of conflicts in the second part of the thesis, a qualitative definition is able to catch important factors of conflict which give a better insight into its scope.

The COW project works with a very general definition: conflict is a sharp disagreement or collision in interests between two or more actors (Jones et al. 1996: 168). This concept of conflict is too general because it includes cases where there is no tension between states. A disagreement in interests the most common incident between states.

In the beginning of the chapter, conflict has been explained as a recurring pattern between states due to a competitive environment. Therefore a competitive component should be integrated into a definition of conflict. Kenneth Boulding takes conflict as a specialization of competition (Link 1988: 35). Competition is a situation when “any potential positions of two behavior units are mutually incompatible” (Boulding 1962: 4). This is a broad concept which also integrates conflict. Conflict is defined by Boulding as a “situation of competition in which the parties are *aware* of the incompatibility of potential future position and in which each party *wishes* to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the others” (Boulding 1967: 5, original emphasis). The emphasis is, as marked in the citation, on each actor’s awareness of incompatible tendencies and the intention to implement its position.

However, the consciousness and determination of actions of conflicting interests is not a sufficient indicator to differentiate conflict from others forms of competition (Link 1988: 37f). The seriousness of using violence to enforce interests should be integrated. David Wood’s definition of conflict already has an emphasis on interstate relations and their resort to/the exertion of violence. Conflict is defined as a situation where the regular armed forces of a country or community are involved (either both sides or on one side only) and where weapons of war are used by them with intent to kill or wound over a period of at least one hour (Wood 1968:1). This definition concentrates on actual fighting and ignores cases of mere threats of using violence and their potential to escalate.

To combine the positions of conflicting states with a situation of a certain degree of tensions, the conflict definition of Kurt Singer is suitable:

“For the purpose of this inquiry I propose to define conflict as a critical state of tension occasioned by the presence of mutually incompatible tendencies within an organismic whole the functional continuity or structural integrity of which is thereby threatened.” (Singer 1949b: 230)

Singer examines conflict in a comprehensive approach. He deals with all forms of conflict “from

psychic disturbance to war among states” (Waltz 1971: 23). The definition is wide enough to include conflicts at all organizational levels and all temporal phases from “the first stage of ultimate urges to the last chapter of restored peace and order” (Singer 1949a: 170). Like Boulding, Singer emphasizes the incompatible tendencies which determine actions¹¹ but integrates the aspect of tensions of certain degree. He “reserve[s] the term conflict for cases in which the collision threatens the stability and viability of the integrated unit” (Singer 1949a: 169). Tensions have to be critical to threaten the structure of relations. They have the potential to lead to a crisis of the structure, especially to destabilize or change the organizational structure of the acting units. Translated into interstate disputes, when a conflict between two (or more) states emerges and deteriorates, it has the potential to escalate to war, which means a threat or change in regional or international structure depending on the role of the involved states in the state system. As the structure of the international system is anarchic¹², the change of structure happens within the anarchic order. The structure per se is not changed from anarchy to another form of order.

Conflict solution on the other hand means, according to Singer, reducing the exertion in order to prevent the critical intensity or prevent the jeopardy of breaking down relations after that intensity is overstepped (Singer 1949a: 170). Singer`s idea of conflict enables to distinguish between subjective and objective dimensions of conflict. The subjective dimension refers to perception and cost-benefit calculations that the actors take into account. On the other hand, there is a real structure of relations between the actors which can be perceived in different ways by different actors but is independent from cognitive processing (Link 1988: 39).

With a definition of conflict which emphasizes the critical state of tensions, one can proceed to examine the two possible events which can occur in this situation: escalation or deescalation.

Escalation can be seen as a dysfunctional process of deterrence failure. Escalation can be identified and measured as any enlargement of coercive conflict area, when unarmed conflict generates to armed conflict or any intensification of conflict (in terms of troops and material commitment) (Brodie 1966). Escalation and deescalation are intertwined processes (Winnefeld 1990: 3), but de-escalation is not the reverse of escalation.

“That is, de-escalation does not return the disputants, issues, or situation to their former states any more than dousing a raging campfire returns the heat, gases, smoke, flame, and charcoal to wood and the initial flame” (Wall/Callister 1995: 532).

¹¹ Singer uses the term „hormic incompatibilities“(Singer 1949a: 170).

¹² Anarchy is defined as the absence of a world government.

David Last identifies escalation when a conflict increases in intensity or when incidents associated with the conflict occur more frequently, interactions become more serious, the disputed issues multiply and the number of parties involved in the conflict rises (Last 1997: 21).

Deescalation, in turn, is defined as a lessening of hostilities between adversaries and a transformation of conditions whereby a peaceful environment can emerge, a turn to nonviolence in an otherwise unstable relationship in which the conflict dynamics have been escalatory (Yamin 2010a: 542). Deescalation can occur in interstate and intrastate dimensions. It can occur after war has already emerged or in a crisis before an outbreak of war. Deescalation is a bilateral process of interaction. Deescalation requires the desire of both parties to avoid war. In contrast, escalation in a conflict can be brought about by one aggressive party. Deescalation, related to two opposing parties, requires “accurate communication and shared understanding” (Schelling 1965: 231). Both sides have to have the same interpretation of the processes that are happening.

When studying deescalation, one has to differentiate between focusing on deescalation as event in a conflict and deescalation measures taken by actors in a conflict. The focus of study strongly influences the definition of (de)escalation, as for example Thomas Bonoma employs a measure-oriented definition of (de)escalation: controlled¹³ and specified application of sanctions in a fashion of increasing (or decreasing) magnitude over time (Bonoma 1975: 37). Deescalation as an event refers to the mitigation of the hostility and extent of the conflict. Deescalation as a set of measures refers to efforts which are taken by involved parties to promote the settlement of conflict or at least a renunciation from war. Studying deescalation as an event means to investigate bilateral tension reduction in a conflict. Studying deescalation as measures means to focus on uni- or bilateral measures which are taken by states to reduce the tensions in a conflict. Of course these two foci are strongly interrelated since the measures should bring about the event. But for scientific accuracy the researcher should specify the exact topic under investigation.

Finally, the term crisis will be used very frequently in the upcoming pages. Here the conception of crisis follows Glenn Snyder and Paul Diesing: “The centerpiece of [the] definition is `the perception of a dangerously high probability of war` by the governments involved” (Snyder/Diesing 1977: 7). This definition meets the needs of the underlying study as it identifies a conflictual situation short of war. Further, it involves a dyadic component because the involved governments have to perceive a situation with a high risk of war. Other definitions, as for example by Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, rather focus on foreign policy crises, which means “perception and behavior of one state” (Brecher/Wilkenfeld 1997: 4).

¹³ The term „controlled“ refers to existence of rational correspondence between the influence mode which a source to employ and the escalatory and deescalatory tactics.

2.2 Explanations for Deescalation

Explanations for deescalation provided by IR scholars can be organized into deescalation measures and conditions leading to deescalation. The deescalation measures can be differentiated by number and quality of the actors who conduct them. Measures differ in action and impact depending on if they are taken uni- or bilaterally or by a third party.

Relevant conditions leading to conflict deescalation seem to be the timing of deescalation, the adversarial relations, domestic structures and system polarity. The concept of the timing of deescalation or the ripeness of a conflict states that an ongoing conflict has to come to a certain stage, induced by events or changes of conditions, to be ripe to be ended. The corporate history of the conflicting states seems to influence the course of conflict and might increase the probability of deescalation. Domestic democratic structures of the conflicting parties may boost a deescalation before war. And finally, the overall polarity of the international system could influence the probability of deescalation.

2.2.1 Measures

At first, various approaches of deescalation dynamics through conciliatory actions are examined. Yamin (2010b: 546 – 548) provides a first overview about methods of deescalation: crisis diffusion, prevention through bilateral negotiations, solicited or unsolicited interventions by neutral third parties (foreign governments, professionals, eminent international figures, multilateral institutions, special communication forms), nuclear and/or military confidence building measures, back-channel¹⁴ and preventive diplomacy by multilateral institutions.

Following Jacob Bercovich, Paul Diehl and Gary Goertz (1997) I sort the various measures for deescalation into uni-, bi-, and multilateral measures. This list consists of unilateral actions by involved parties, bilateral actions by involved parties and third party intervention. Unilateral actions can be deescalation gestures as the reversal of previous escalation moves, settling of an extraneous dispute, the freeing of prisoners, conciliatory statements, the replacement of a hard key official by a softer or more flexible individual, or waiting for time to have a releasing effect (Schelling 1965: 232). But a unilateral action by one state does not bring about the deescalation of tensions. The reaction of the other state has to be taken into consideration. Bilateral actions can explain the interactions between states which lead to deescalation. Nonetheless there has to be a first move by one state in the direction of deescalation. Since this move is often feared to be perceived as weakness and the fact

¹⁴ Backchannel diplomacy is defined as secret negotiations conducted by governments in preparation for fundamental departure from officially stated positions.

that several escalatory steps have been carried out before, produce a high inhibition threshold. The GRIT model (Osgood 1962) makes the first conciliatory move more probable since a concession that does not weaken the initiator's security should be announced without requesting reciprocation. These concessions should be consistently made so that reciprocation could follow (gradual reciprocal initiatives in tension reduction). Further, there are various models of mixtures of persuasion and of positive and negative sanctions (combination and frequency of carrots and stick). Robert Axelrod ((1984) 2006) designed a model of coercion and concession: carrots and sticks on tit-for-tat strategy. This means that one party seeks a cooperative relationship by initiating a conciliatory move but thereafter only reciprocates what its adversary does (coercive or conciliatory).

Related to the idea of confronting the adversary with carrots and sticks is to deter him. Deterrence is a strategy of employing threats to dissuade an adversary from undertaking an unwanted act (Freedman/Raghavan 2008: 217). Deterrence and its theoretical supplement compellence form the strategy of coercion. Most of the analyses use the analogy of the "chicken game". It explains situations where the first choice of the actors is not to back down, but both prefer to concede and forebear from winning to a confrontation with fatal outcome. Each actor tries to confirm his intransigence. This highly deductive model is most useful for grasping actions in international politics (Jervis 1979: 291f). Deterrence works when expected costs of challenging the *status quo* are greater than those of accepting it (Jervis 1982). Wars occur when deterrence fails. Theorists assume a predatory behavior as primary path to war. Military build-ups and coercion reinforce deterrence and therefore peace (Levy/Thompson 2010: 30 - 31). An important part of the deterrence debate are nuclear weapons. They are an intensively discussed reason for the absence of war in the 20th century. Due to their highly deterring effect of absolute destruction, they are said to prevent states from going to war and deescalate conflicts. Even an increase in the number of nuclear states is no reason that this deterrence mechanism will fail (Masala 2010: 59).¹⁵

Third party intervention can happen by a state or an institution. Intervening measures are various and a lot of them can be carried out by states and institutions. Generally interventions by third parties can be grouped into different categories: increase or reduction of communication channels, mediation, the installation of buffer zones, or support of one party.¹⁶ Third states can engage in a conflict to

¹⁵ For a good overview about the arguments and the discussion see Sagan/Waltz ((1995) 2003).

¹⁶ Wall and Callister provide a comprehensive list of measures which can be subsumed as above: adopt appropriate leadership styles, structure organization to avoid conflict, address causes, diagnose and correct, group discussions, T-groups, workshops, encourage a negotiation, arbitrate or mediate, enforce a truce, eliminate one adversary, expand group boundaries, reduce interaction between disputants, reduce communication between disputants, transfer a disputant, create buffer positions, set up formalized appeal systems, establish rules that disputes are to be directed to HRM group, force contact between disputants, redirect disputants' behaviors, reallocate resources, reframe disputants' perspectives, realign the underlying forces, guide communications between disputants, have third parties reframe the dispute and its episodes, attain knowledge of the conflict issues, establish a working relationship with

promote deescalation by mediation or one-sided support (Brzoska/Pearson 1994: 15). Mediation services include arranging an agenda, selecting negotiation partners, providing safe meeting space, conveying information from one side to another, increasing resources, suggesting options and supporting the implementation of agreements (Kriesberg 2001: 378). Mediation is a benign form of intervention. It requires the acceptance and cooperation of the adversaries (Touval 1982).

While the capabilities of states to intervene are limited, institutions have the ability to intervene in multiple forms, like setting up buffer zones, providing communication and mediating. Institutions are considered to promote stability and peace.¹⁷

A major change in international relations can be seen in the emergence of multilateral institutions. The effect of multilateral institutions on war and peace is widely discussed. Prior to World War II there were few formal institutions (except the League of Nations). Since then a number of regional organizations has been founded. The range of their activities varies from peacekeeping to foreign policy coordination and they have become involved in collaborative security ventures (Fawcett 2008: 308).

Institutions can mark a general pattern or categorization of activity or a particular man-made arrangement. They are formally or informally organized and have a broad and persistent set of formal and informal rules. They prescribe behavioral rules, constrain activity and shape expectations of their members. They can be discrete entities, identifiable in space and time (Keohane 1988: 383). Institutionalists agree with realists over the fact that main actors in world politics are states, that they can be analyzed as being rational and that states are self-interested (Keohane 2002: 154f). Institutions determine acceptable and unacceptable forms of state behavior and formalize these rules in international arrangements. However, states can choose to join an institution and obey its rules. Institutions, in short, call for the "decentralized cooperation of individual sovereign states, without any effective mechanism of command" (Mearsheimer 1994/95: 8). Apart from intervening measures, institutions can promote deescalation by creating conditions for conflict deescalation, for installing communities in which the willingness to use violence decreases (Morgan 2006: 181). Problems of dyadic interaction, implied by models like the Prisoners` Dilemma, are reduced by measures which alleviate communication and bargaining between states.¹⁸ The spread of international security communities reduces uncertainty induced by the anarchy of the international system by advancing a multilateral international society and mitigating competition among states (Wendt 1999: 297 – 308).

the disputants, install a cooperative, problem-solving attitude between the disputants, facilitate creative group processes, act as decision makers, overlook problems, offer incentives (Wall/Callister 1995: 540).

¹⁷ Liberal Institutionalism, collective security and critical theory employ institutions as core concepts.

¹⁸ For a discussion of the impact of the Prisoners` Dilemma on security and non-security issues see Jervis (1982: 358 – 360).

Multilateral regimes¹⁹ influence policies employed by states by establishing normative standards, communication channels and institutional practices. This promotes new norms, transparency and interdependence between the members of an institution.

2.2.2 Explanatory Power of Measures

When investigating unilateral actions, the researcher can draw only limited conclusions concerning their impact on deescalation. The deescalation of a conflict is an interaction between (at least) two states. Therefore, unilateral actions cannot lead to deescalation on their own, they have to be answered by the adversarial state. Focusing on unilateral actions, one can only investigate actions by one state which might motivate the adversarial state to apply a deescalation measure as well. The deescalation of a conflict cannot be explained in a theoretically consistent way. To make an explanation for deescalation complete, one has to investigate the interactions between the states. Any first move by one state is answered by the opponent. It depends on various circumstances if the opponent reacts in a comparable deescalating way or views the conciliatory move by the other state as sign of weakness and answers in a hostile manner.

Bilateral models of interaction can explain actions and reactions of conflicting states leading to deescalation. They capture the bilateral dynamic of deescalation. What they cannot explain is the factors which make states deescalate. Applying conciliatory measures is a strategic decision of a state. But what makes the state interested in the deescalation, especially when it implemented escalatory moves before?

Deterrence can be considered as one factor that makes a state seize deescalating measures. If one state can successfully deter the adversary through threats, the adversary will refrain from further escalatory steps and seek deescalation. Critics of the deterrence approach question the assumed rationality of the actors and call for the consideration of the high relevance of the actor's perceptions of the adversary and the situation.²⁰ Although it is a popular variable when making statements about the absence of war²¹, their impact on conflicts between states is strongly debated. John Mueller (1988, 1989, 2006) does not believe that nuclear weapons provide an explanation for the "long peace" after 1945, a position which is supported by other scholars (for example John Vasquez 1991). In theory, nuclear weapons as a guardian of peace cannot account for all interstate wars. This hypothesis is only debatable for states which hold nuclear weapons. Further, it cannot explain attacks of non-nuclear

¹⁹ Regimes are part of the concept of international institutions. These also include broader frameworks such as international orders, while international regimes focus on defined activities and areas (Duffield 1994: 375).

²⁰ Although it is not the most recent article on deterrence, Robert Jervis (1979) provides a good introduction about the evolution of deterrence theory and its criticisms.

²¹ See for example John Gaddis (1987, 1997).

states against nuclear states, for example Argentina and Great Britain during the Falkland War in 1982. If deterrence is successful, the deescalation of conflict is possible; if deterrence fails, it can set off a conflict spiral and lead to further escalation and war. This leads to the assumption that there must be further (external) conditions which influence the success or failure of deterrence.

Mediation is a prominent measure to deescalate a conflict. Through various mechanisms, mediation may bring about deescalation. But the conflicting parties have to accept mediating measures by a third party. There have to be further factors which make the states in a dispute accept mediation to achieve successful deescalation.

Institutions have diverse possibilities to try to promote conflict deescalation. They can apply measures of deescalation but also create conditions which facilitate deescalation. Institutions establish normative standards, communication channels and institutional practices which might influence the behavior of states and therefore the decision of going to war or solving the dispute in peaceful manners.

However, realists tend to disclaim the effectiveness of institutions due to the decentralized international system. In an anarchic international system, states have the sovereignty to make decisions over war and peace on their own. Institutions cannot influence national policies or prevent aggressive behavior (Väyrynen 2006: 19). They cannot command and expect to be obeyed when it comes to preventing conflict (Morgan 2006: 162). Institutions only work if member states let them to do so.

Institutions cannot deter from war and enforce rules and norms against violence. They would need a suitable capability of action and concentration of power. Both have to be provided by the member states, which in turn tend to be careful about assigning sovereignty and power to an institution since they act in self-interest. Consequently an institution is only as powerful as its members allow it. In addition to that, the institutional need for consensus in decision-making makes them slow on the one hand and incapable of action in case of dissent on the other.

Scholars disagree whether institutions can make the world more peaceful or if the world has become more peaceful and institutions are an expression of that. The main criticism of the “institutions cause peace” approach is of causal logic. Institutions are not so much the cause of peace as the result. Scholars argue that peace between states is an initial condition and not the outcome of institutions (Betts 1992: 23f; Schweller 2001: 183).

While the United Nations (UN) has been unable to provide peace in many cases, regional institutions seem to have more influence on the deescalation of conflict (Väyrynen 2006: 19). “Regional institutions are regimes and formal organizations comprising a membership which is limited to a particular geographical region, or perhaps to two or more proximate regions [...]” (Fawcett 2008:

311). These may have a more direct impact on the behavior of states in their region.

Finally, institutions might contribute to the prevention of war. They can enable negotiations about conflict issues and put pressure on parties to join them. They make communication and fact-finding easy and threaten or initiate interventions. In the long term they can push norms of non-violent dispute resolution. Thus institutions can play a role concerning the overall prevention of a militarized conflict before it has occurred or in the aftermath of the deescalation by securing demilitarization or promoting further negotiations.

This leads to the question if institutions also contribute to the diffusion of a militarized crisis. What should we observe if institutions play an effective role in short term crisis deescalation? First of all, they have to react rapidly. Most crises escalate within a couple of days or weeks. Consequently, any kind of reaction from an institutions should happen within this time frame. An institution can act as a mediator, as a neutral power or as an alliance. A successful mediation of an institution requires the acceptance of the parties involved and therefore further incentives for the parties to be interested in a conflict deescalation. The probability of an acceptance of mediation by the involved parties is higher when all of them are members of the institution. Institutions might have the highest impact on state behavior and therefore contribute to deescalation when they serve as an ally. If one party involved in a conflict is member of an institution while the adversary is not, then an institution can serve as an alliance and can have a deterring effect. A case of collective defense of the NATO is deterring to an aggressive non-member adversary.

2.2.3 Timing/Ripeness

Scholars discuss that successful conflict deescalation is a question of timing, which means the right time to undertake deescalating strategies (Zartman 1989; Kriesberg/Thorson 1991). “The polemical use of the concept of timing, or ripeness, is based on preferences and also on conventional beliefs about when deescalation efforts are likely to be effective” (Kriesberg 1991b: 1). Successful deescalation efforts depend on a conflict situation which is ripe. Theory and practice suggest that timing is crucial for effective deescalation (Last 1997: 14). Deescalation depends on background conditions which encourage actors to aspire to settlement. To achieve a reduction of hostilities, “windows of opportunity” have to occur which make a settlement realistic. These windows promote opportunities for decision-makers to pursue alternative strategies in a conflict. These windows can be created by episodes of increasingly intense hostility (Kriesberg 1991; Bercovitch 1984; Stein 1989) or a mutually hurting stalemate (Zartman/Touval 1985). Otomar Bartos and Paul Wehr assume that deescalation tends to happen when a conflict was in equilibrium for some time (Bartos/Wehr 2002: 113). Karen Rasler (2000) suggests that shocks, third party-pressure, new policy entrepreneurs and

reciprocity have provided a fruitful basis for deescalation.

Kriesberg summarizes three different sets of conditions which are conducive to deescalation: relations between adversaries, domestic circumstances and the international context (Kriesberg 1991b: 5). When it comes to adversarial relations, effective deescalation is most probable when the adversaries have a common history of cooperation. "It is easier to restore a mutually accommodative relationship than to create it" (Kriesberg 1991b: 6). This argument also includes the deescalatory effect of the prospect of benefits from cooperative exchanges (Kriesberg 1991b: 7).

Further, relative strength seems to influence deescalation. Johannes Aurik and William Zartman state that in case of power parity "the cost of the current escalation [...] led to an internal evaluation to halt the conflict spiral not the feared response from the other side and not the self-imposed norms of international relations" (Aurik/Zartman 1991: 176). The escalating actor learns that the adversary is able to hold out.

Domestic circumstances can create incentives for governments to opt for deescalation. These may be public opinion, constituencies to governmental representatives such as ethnic groups, business organizations and military bureaucracies (Kriesberg 1991b: 8). Further, changes in the governmental leadership can be incentives to deescalatory moves. New leaders can be motivated to start over or interpret the situation in a different way (Kriesberg 1991b: 9). This argument is linked to the assumption that shifts in interpretations of the adversary or the conflict can contribute to the willingness of decision-makers to pursue alternative strategies (Adler 1991).

When it comes to the international context, Kriesberg concludes that "one fundamental way in which the international context affects the appropriateness of de-escalation efforts is the relative salience of the conflict among the many others in which the adversaries are engaged" (Kriesberg 1991b: 9). This means that within a range of parallel conflicts, some become more prone to deescalate if one escalates at the same time. Another international factor fostering deescalation is the willingness of international governmental or non-governmental actors to initiate or facilitate deescalation efforts (Kriesberg 1991b: 10).

2.2.4 Explanatory Power of the Timing Approach

The timing approach states that certain events in a conflict lead to a change of conditions which in turn encourage decision-makers to switch from a violent conflict resolution strategy to a non-violent one. It subsumes various variables which are also tackled in other sections of this chapter. All these variables are theorized to create a situation in the ongoing conflict which allows a reduction of tensions. This situation is labeled as the right time for deescalation. Therefore I consider the concept of timing as an umbrella term for a heterogeneous collection of variables which have to be studied by

themselves.

Timing variables influencing deescalation are grouped into adversarial relations, domestic circumstances and international context. Adversarial relations can foster deescalation in case of rather friendly prior relations between the conflicting actors. This does not offer an explanation for deescalation between adversaries with a common hostile history, which happens to be quite often. Further, power parity is considered as a cause of deescalation. But power preponderance also offers explanations for deescalation. This is discussed in detail in the next section (2.2.5).

Domestic circumstances, above identified as public opinion, interest groups and the shift of leadership, can create incentives for deescalation. Kriesberg himself admits that “[w]ether domestic circumstances are generally conducive to de-escalation initiative moves is not clear” (Kriesberg 1991b: 7). For the study at hand, the impact of public opinion and interest groups will be discussed in section 2.2.7, which tackles democratic domestic structures. The impact of public opinion and interest groups is related to domestic democratic structures while autocratic structures weaken their effect. If these variables have an impact on deescalation, they cannot explain an autocratic state`s will to deescalate. A change of the perceiving actors, i.e. decision-makers, may lead to a reduction of tensions. On the other hand, the new decision-maker might perceive the conflict situation in the same way or even more radical than the former one. This could bring about rather escalation than deescalation.

The international context of the timing approach involves the development of other conflicts, the actors that are involved and third party intervention. The third party intervention was already discussed in section 2.2.1, as I assigned it to measures which can be undertaken to foster deescalation. The argument that states tend to deescalate one conflict while another one they are involved in escalates presupposes that at least one state of the conflicting dyad is involved in further conflicts and one of these conflicts escalates. This explanation does not serve the case of the absence of further conflicts which escalate.

2.2.5 Relations between Adversaries

The relation between adversaries seems to have an impact on the possibility of deescalation. The nature of relations between the conflicting parties affects the choice of strategies. For deescalation, a peaceful corporate history and the power relations between the adversaries are relevant.

A history of previous disputes is a good predictor for future conflict resolution strategies (Diehl et al. 1996). Scholars of the rivalry concept claim that a corporate dispute past can easily lead to an escalation of the present conflict (Goertz/Diehl 1993: 148), while threatening gestures get out of control when displayed against a hereditary enemy. Rivalry in a dyad is present when

“two states disagree over the resolution of some issue(s) for an extended period of time, leading them to commit substantial resources (military, economic, or diplomatic) toward opposing each other, and in which relatively frequent diplomatic or military challenges to the disputed status quo are made by one or both states” (Bennett 1997: 229).

If the adversaries in the present conflict have a history of cooperation instead of disputes, then deescalation is more probable (Bercovitch 1984). However, deescalation is also possible during an intense, long-term rivalry: if the rivalry is very long and paved with many disputes, it can lead to a ritualization of conflict, which regularly deescalates just short of war.

In addition to rival relations between states, Paul Hensel (1995) found out that the balance of the (military, industrial, demographic and economic) capabilities of a state has an important influence on the likelihood of militarized conflict. Power preponderance between adversaries is less conflict prone than power parity (Weede 1976; Garnham 1976; Organski/Kugler 1980; Geller 1993). Aurik and Zartmann on the other hand come to the conclusion that rather power parity contributes to deescalation than a power preponderance of one actor (Aurik/Zartmann 1991). Further, shifts of capabilities between states enhance the probability of militarized conflict. The power-gaining side considers itself better able to achieve its objectives, while the declining side considers its opponent's gains to be threatening (Hensel 1995: 8). Even the prospect of a power shift can have an impact on the deescalation of conflict: each side is more likely to deescalate when it believes that it is stronger than its adversary compared to when it believes that it is relatively weak but expects to gain strength in future (prospective power balance vs current power balance) (Zartman 1977; Touval 1982).²²

2.2.6 Explanatory Power of Adversarial Relations

The rivalry approach produces mixed results. On the one hand, the absence of a rivalry, i.e. cooperative relations make deescalation more likely. But not all rival dyads escalate to war and an intense rivalry even tends to regularly deescalate conflicts before war. This indicates that there are further conditions which determine whether a rival dyad escalates or deescalates a conflict.

Power seems to be a basic determinant for dyadic interaction. It might be a cause of conflict and also influences the reduction of conflict. But it is unclear which aggregation of power promotes deescalation. Scholars dispute whether power parity or preponderance leads to deescalation. Christopher Mitchell (1995) investigates the influence of power imbalance inter alia on the reduction

²² This argument is strongly related to the importance of perceptions. Not the actual power relation but the perceived one has an influence on the decision of which strategy to follow.

of conflicts and comes to the conclusion that there is no linear relationship between relative coercive capacities and conflict termination. High as well as low coercive inequality may lead to a reduction of tensions. Coercive inequality implies that the weaker party is willing to end its efforts and the stronger one is more willing to make a generous offer to avoid more trouble later. Almost coercive equality may lead to mitigation due to the will of both parties to avoid high costs of conflict, the prospect of further escalation and a stalemate (Mitchell 1995: 37). It seems to be certain that a shift in power leads to an increase of tensions, but the prospect of a certain shift might lead to conciliatory behavior as well.

2.2.7 Domestic Democratic Structures

Domestic conditions are also theorized to influence the deescalation of conflict but it is not clear if they are generally conducive to deescalation. Domestic democratic structures might promote a non-violent conflict resolution. Based on Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace* ((1775) 2007), Woodrow Wilson made the approach prominent in the twentieth century.²³

Extensive empirical work has shown that democracies rarely fight with each other. Domestic democratic structures have a positive effect on relations between states (Hensel 1995). Democracies are characterized by norms of nonviolent behavior. The customary methods of dispute resolution are negotiations and compromise. This leads to a lower probability of an escalation to militarized actions between two democratic states. Extensive empirical work has shown that democratic states statistically rarely fight each other and detailed theoretical work has hypothesized about possible causal relations between democracies and peace. This can be traced back to normative reasons (shared identity and values), democratic state structures (domestic institutional constraints), economic reasons (interdependency between states) and transparency (eased communication, free media) (Doyle 1983; Maoz/Russett 1993; Russett et al. 1995; Maoz 1997; Weart 1998; Oneal/Russett 2001; Oneal et al. 2003). Jeremy Black (1998: 225f) supports the normative argument by arguing that western societies shift away from bellicosity. This results from a demilitarization of civil society. According to Thompson, there are ten complexes which might lead democracies to a more peaceful behavior: community norm building, civil society, electoral punishment, transparency/signaling, economic growth, economic interdependence, external threat, external *status quo* satisfaction, external institutional support and systemic leadership (Thompson 2006: 215). The International Crisis Behavior Project (ICBP) supports the assumption of the positive relation of democratic systems and the implementation of violence in a crisis (Brecher/Wilkenfeld 1997: 874 – 877).

²³ See, for example, his Fourteen Points speech which he gave in 1918 to the joint session of Congress and the War Message to Congress in 1917.

2.2.8 Explanatory Power of Domestic Democratic Structures

The relationship between democracy and deescalation is ambiguous. William Dixon (1993: 64) concludes an overall positive influence of democratic structures on conflict management. However, statistically democracies get involved in violent conflict with non-democracies as often as non-democracies (Levy 1988: 660). Paul Senese (1997) comes to the conclusion that once a democratic dyad has entered a militarized conflict, it is as likely as a non-democratic dyad to escalate the conflict. Again it is difficult to reach reliable results since few militarized conflicts between democracies emerge, which causes a lack of quantitative support (Layne 1994: 39).

There are further problems from a theoretical point of view. The theory of democratic peace tries to explain a systemic outcome (war or peace) with state-level variables (domestic politics). An integration of systemic variables would be necessary to reach a fully integrated explanation of the process of states going to war. Its deductive logic manages to state a correlation between domestic democratic structures but a convincing causal chain is absent (Layne 1994: 38). Empirically the democratic peace thesis seems to be convincing (Levy 1988: 662), but is based on a small number of cases because before 1945 there were few democracies according to our present definition (Layne 1994: 39). There is also a continuing dispute between scholars how broadly a democracy should be defined for the tests.²⁴ Moreover, as stated above, war is an exception in international politics, so getting involved in a war is of low probability for any state, democratic or not (Spiro 1994: 50 – 86). Finally the option of going to war has to be taken seriously in consideration by the state. The deescalation of a crisis cannot be accounted to democratic structures if the causes of deescalation lie elsewhere (Layne 1994: 39).

Further, domestic conditions may account for deescalation also in non-democratic states. Domestic conditions may generate pressure on governments to initiate efforts of deescalation. This can also be influenced through the domestic conditions of the adversary. Public pressure may also encourage governments to assert demands that handicap deescalation and domestic support for reducing antagonism may facilitate official deescalation initiatives. Governments may also appeal for support of adversaries' populations (Kriesberg 1991).

2.2.9 International System Structure

“The most common structural approaches to accounting for the causes of major wars, or for that matter, of peace, focus on the structure of the international system and on conventional

²⁴ Layne gives a good short overview of the debate (Layne 1994: 40 – 44).

and nuclear weapons” (Väyrynen 2006: 16).

A certain structure of the international system can encourage conflicting states to avoid war. Each primary adversary's cooperative pattern and conflicts with other parties and network of governmental and nongovernmental international organizations may influence decisions about the appropriateness of war. The Realist school argues that the distribution of power in the international system is the most valid argument to explain the (non-)occurrence of war (Waltz 1964). The distribution of power, which shapes the polarity of the system, is a key determinant of the frequency and intensity of interstate war. Different forms of polarity have an impact on the behavior of states. Polarity denotes the number of power and decision centers in the international system. Scholars disagree how statically uni-, bi-, and multipolarity are connected to war and peace. The influence of dynamic processes on these structures is also disputed. Bipolarity in the international system is the most peaceful structure (Waltz (1979) 2010), while unbalanced multipolarity is the most risky structure (Mearsheimer 2001: 334 – 347). However, there are also scholars who favor unipolarity as the most peaceful structure (Wohlfort 1999).

Unipolarity describes the concentration of military and political power in one object. This entity has the ability to dominate the actions of the other members of the system and define the rules. Unipolarity has never existed in pure form. The present international system can be considered as quasi-unipolar with the US as hegemon, but this angle is debated (see below).

Some scholars favor unipolarity as a source of peace.²⁵ William Wohlfort argues that the current system with the US as hegemon is particularly peaceful because hegemonic rivalry over leadership of the international community is absent. Under unipolarity, states will prefer to bandwagon with the hegemon instead of risky balancing. This reduces the security competition of the great powers (Wohlfort 1999: 7). A shift to bi- or multipolarity would raise the likelihood of war.

Bipolarity implies two poles of military and political power in the international system. These poles can be individual actors or coalitions. They determine the rules of the system, the conditions of stability and the area of actions of the pole members.²⁶ Bipolarity provides relatively secure assumptions about the future behavior of the adversary. The most prominent bipolar system was between the US and the Soviet Union after World War II. Waltzian neorealism recommends a bipolar system with a balance of power between the actors as the most peaceful version. Unbalanced power violates the stability by creating an insecure environment for other actors. Therefore they start counterbalancing. Violence between states is reduced in a bipolar world due to three factors: the

²⁵ For an overview of the current discussion see Ikenberry et al. (2009).

²⁶ For a closer examination of the different system types see Kaplan ((1957) 2005).

absence of peripheries, the range and intensity of competition between the two major powers and the recurrence of crisis and pressure. Additionally, bipolarity is strengthened by power preponderance due to nuclear weapons (Waltz 1964: 100 – 103; Masala 2005: 69 – 71).

Multipolarity refers to the diffusion of power between several poles in the system. This can lead to insecurity about the behavior of the other poles and fuel conflicts due to uncertainty. The inter-war period of the 20th century was a multipolar system with several more or less equal powers. Critics of the unipolarity assumption of the present international system consider the hegemony of the US as hollow. A transition to multipolarity is the path to peace in the international system (Kupchan 2002). Multipolarity may be more unsettled than bi- and unipolarity but not necessarily prone to escalate to war (Kegley/Raymond 1992: 580). Regional power centers in a multipolar system have the ability to promote peace and stability in their peripheries due to their proximity and culture (Kupchan 2003: 231). Karl Deutsch and David Singer (1964) argue that multipolarity is more prone to peace since it can stay in a more stable and peaceful state than bipolarity. In a multipolar world, interaction patterns increase complexity and variety. The higher the number of poles in the system, the more actors have to share out their attention between more poles. This shared attention makes escalations less likely (Deutsch/Singer 1964: 399).

2.2.10 Explanatory Power of the System

Unipolarity, as well as bi- and multipolarity can be connected to escalation and deescalation as seen above. The polarity of the system critically affects decision-making and therefore questions of war and peace. A certain polarity of the system may encourage a state to opt for the deescalation of a conflict it is involved in.

But results are not robust. There is no consensus about the impact of polarity on peace or war (Väyrynen 2006: 16). Jack Levy raises serious doubts about the relationship between polarity and system stability (Levy 1985b: 59).

“Structural factors do not cause or explain outcomes themselves. In anarchy, any structure can lead either to peace or to war; it depends on the domestic characteristics of the main actors, on their preferences and goals, as well as on the relations and links among them“ (Hoffman et al. 1990: 192).

Therefore, if polarity has an impact on the deescalation of an interstate conflict, other factors have to operate as well. These factors, combined with a certain polarity, may promote war avoidance of the conflicting dyad. Most probably there is a cluster of variables which influence the outcome of armed

conflict with uncertain influence of polarity.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter provided a thorough analysis of deescalation. Initially, a concept for conflict was outlined and in a second step extended with definitions of escalation and deescalation. Escalation as well as deescalation are core components of conflict. Conflict as a state of tensions caused by incompatible tendencies threatens the structure of the organismic whole within which the conflict happens. An escalation of this process might lead to war, which would disturb or even change the structure. A deescalation of this process reduces tensions and might even lead to a resolution of the conflict.

Escalation can be brought about by one party, while deescalation, in turn, is a bilateral process. It takes two to deescalate a conflict. If one party seizes deescalating measures and the other party does not, a deescalation of the conflict between them cannot follow. Therefore one has to differentiate between the examination of measures of deescalation and deescalation as an event in the conflict. Although both are strongly interrelated, a heuristic division between them is useful for analysis. Deescalation measures should bring about a deescalation of the conflict, but an overall deescalation of the situation requires further internal and external conditions. These conditions can affect the impact of measures, but also be responsible for the willingness of a state to apply deescalating measures.

When investigating unilateral measures, one has to keep in mind that they have only very limited explanatory power for deescalation and one must also consider the reaction of the other state. This leads to the investigation of bilateral measures. Models of interaction can explain the process of conflict escalation. Where unilateral measures lack of explanatory power, bilateral measures explain action and reaction of states leading to deescalation. But they cannot make statements about the stimuli which lead states to conduct deescalating measures. Deterrence models may also explain deescalation, but due to the fact that sometimes deterrence works and sometimes fails, there have to be further conditions which support a deterring effect to an adversary.

States can play a prominent role in deescalation through mediation. What theories of mediation cannot explain is the conflicting states' acceptance of mediating measures. If a mediator promotes negotiations, what convinces conflicting states to join negotiations although they were both involved in rather escalatory than conciliatory actions before? A state which has already taken some escalatory steps requires further factors to initially accept mediation. As soon as the involved parties are willing to communicate in a constructive manner, mediation can promote deescalation.

Institutions can provide the same service as states, concerning mediation and further measures. More elementarily, they also can create conditions which may have impact on the decision of states to go

for deescalation. Scholars of liberal institutionalism argue that institutions promote cooperation through the suppression of cheating and the provision of information. Collective security scholars state that war will become unlikely if states commit themselves to defend victims of aggression and critical theorists argue that the risk of war, induced by international anarchy, is reduced by the adoption of new norms and ideas (Lynn-Jones 2001: xxvii). On the other hand, the independent effect of institutions on state behavior can be found. Institutions sometimes do matter: they can ease cooperation among states by helping to overcome collective security dilemma (Mearsheimer 1995: 82 - 85), but there is little empirical evidence or logical support “that institutions can alter state behavior and cause peace” (Mearsheimer 1995: 93).

When investigating the impact of institutions on state behavior, one should differentiate the diverse roles institutions can play. An institution can act as mediator, as neutral power or as an alliance. A successful mediation of an institution requires the acceptance of the involved parties and therefore further incentives for the parties to be interested in a conflict deescalation. The probability of an acceptance of mediation by the involved parties is higher when all involved parties are members of the institution. Institutions may have the highest impact on state behavior and therefore contribute to deescalation when they serve as an ally. If one party involved in a conflict is a member of an institution and the adversary is not, then an institution serves as an alliance and has a deterring effect. A case of collective defense of the NATO has a deterring effect and an aggressive non-member adversary will be more willing to deescalate.

The approach of the timing of deescalation focuses on various factors in a conflict, which might lead to successful deescalation. Especially the success of measures of deescalation is dependent on further (time-related) factors. The role of coercive and non-coercive inducements differs at certain stages of conflict (Kriesberg 1987a: 418). For example, in an initial phase of conflict, non-coercive measures have a negative effect since the actor is generally perceived as naïve which might encourage the adversary to further coercive behavior as he expects the other to yield soon. Previous events in the conflict increase or decrease of tensions. Change of actors and perceptions and third party involvement are discussed to influence the ripeness of a conflict for deescalation. The approach of timing is actually an umbrella term for measures and conditions which promote deescalation with an emphasis on temporal effects. Furthermore, timing is less relevant in short conflicts. In the study of crises, the span of time of the conflict is too short so that stalemates and fighting fatigue have no impact on the situation.

The relations between two states seems to have an impact on their conflict behavior. This includes the relations they had before the outbreak of the actual conflict and the relations during the conflict. A continuum between former rival and cooperative relations is theorized to influence the probability

of a deescalation in a present conflict. Rivals rather seem to risk a war than formerly cooperating states and with increasing duration of the rivalry the probability of war rises. On the other hand, a ritualization of conflict without escalation to war is possible within long-term rivalries. Further, former cooperative relations seem to be a predictor of the absence of war.

In addition to the prior relations between the adversaries, the present relative capabilities might have an impact on the course of conflict. Power relations are theorized by many scholars to influence the evolution of conflict to war or peace. Discrepancy exists between preponderance and parity; it is unclear if power preponderance or parity leads to deescalation. Furthermore, power shifts might lead to deescalation but certain shifts also seem to stimulate deescalation. Further investigation of different power relations and their possible impact needs to be conducted to make more precise statements about the relationship between power and deescalation.

The responsibility of domestic democratic structures for the absence of war is a prominent hypothesis in international relations studies. A democratic dyad tends to go for non-violent resolutions in conflict. There is a strong statistical correlation between democracies and the absence of war. On the other hand, scholars argue that the number of wars between democracies is not statistically different from what random chance would predict, due to the fact that war and democracies are an exception²⁷. Further, when states make a transformation to democratic structures, they enter a phase “where they become more aggressive and war-prone, not less, and they do fight wars with democratic states” (Mansfield/Snyder 1995: 5). As soon as a democratic dyad has entered a militarized dispute, the probability of war seems to be as high as in non-democratic or mixed dyads. Christopher Layne (1994) argues that when it comes to crises between democratic states, the liberal logic of accommodation is replaced by the logic of power. Again, Maoz states that democracies never engage in a full-scale war with each other, and rarely clash with each other in militarized interstate disputes short of war (Maoz 1997: 162). In the end the impact of democratic domestic structures is highly debated. Further studies are necessary, especially case studies which enlighten the influence of democratic structures on the deescalation of a crisis.

The polarity of the international system is one of the most investigated impacts on war and peace by international relation scholars. There is no consensus whether uni-, bi- or multipolarity are responsible for rather deescalating or escalating behavior of conflicting states. In a unipolar system, one entity possesses the majority of military and political power and can dominate the interactions in the system. Due to the predominance of one power, other states will refrain from challenging it and rather bandwagon than balance. Bipolarity may also promise stability since there are two opposing powers

²⁷ The controversy about democratic peace can be followed in Russett et al. (1995: 164 – 184).

which create a balance of power and minor states aggregate to one or the other party. No third party will challenge one of the dominant powers, and disputes between minor powers will not escalate to war because of the danger of great power involvement in the war. In a multipolar system, power is diffused among several poles. Regional powers can provide stability in their peripheries. The complexity of actions in multipolarity is high and actors share their attention between several poles. This leads to rather deescalatory behavior in conflicts since states tend not to risk wars. Advocates for each form of polarity find arguments for conflict deescalation under the correspondent conditions while other scholars doubt the influence of polarity on state behavior in general. Most probably polarity alone cannot be responsible for deescalation of conflict but rather needs to be combined with other factors to promote the avoidance of war.

From the different causes of deescalation which were discussed above, some describe measures which are conducted to deescalate a conflict and some describe external and internal conditions which might promote the deescalation of a conflict. The conditions seem to be the factors with wider explanatory power because they also influence the success of measures. Mediation and institutional involvement can be grouped as measures, democratic peace and system polarity are internal and external conditions fostering deescalation. The discussed conditions for deescalation produce mixed results concerning their characteristics in tests and are even questioned to have an influence at all. It is difficult to establish a causal relationship between the behavior of states in a conflict and the various conditions which are present in the situation. The influence of conditions on the willingness of states to deescalate is very difficult to evaluate.

Conditions which can be theorized to be responsible for deescalation have to have an influence on both states' willingness to deescalate in a dyadic conflict. Both states have to prefer a non-violent conflict resolution over war. The incentives for these preferences are especially interesting in cases of former escalation. What encourages adversaries in a conflict to change their interaction patterns from escalation to deescalation?

Leaving the framework of measures and conditions aside for a moment, one has to take into account that the most necessary factor for deescalation is that all conflicting parties prefer deescalation over waging war.

I argue that one has to look for these causes in the underlying conditions which have an impact on actors' interests concerning war or peace and which might have changed during the ongoing conflict. One has to search for causes which influence the decision of a state to risk war. These also influence a state's decision to refrain from war.

For this purpose, deescalation is designed as a two-level concept. First, there are initial conditions influencing the state's willingness to deescalate (primary causes of deescalation), and measures and

conditions which are induced by actors (secondary causes of deescalation). The impact of the secondary causes depends on the primary causes.

So in the end, apart from investigating successful deescalation measures, one has to examine the circumstances which make a deescalation a favorable option for the actors. The analytical effort is not to explain the moment in which conflicts end but rather the conditions which might influence a process of deescalation.

Most of the deescalating variables above seem to have some influence under some special circumstances. It is important to investigate the international and dyadic setting to draw conclusions about a potential deescalation process. Certain circumstances may allow deescalation right away, others might need to be transformed in certain ways to enable a deescalation process. It is important to investigate the impact of deescalation measures but obviously their success depends on further conflict settings (especially between the disputing actors). These settings seem to determine if the deescalation measures are successful, have no impact at all or are even followed by escalation. If these settings can also be connected to escalation and emergence of war, then causes of war studies might be useful to provide insights into deescalation as well.

Some scholars doubt that factors which influence the initiation of war are also responsible for the termination of conflict (Rasler 2000: 701 fn. 1; Levy/Thompson 2010: 170). Paul Huth (1996: 183f) draws the conclusion from his study about territorial conflicts that domestic factors encourage the initiation and endurance of disputes while international factors explain the dispute settlement.

But there is a set of conditions which are considered by states when they decide how to behave in an ongoing conflict. The deescalation of conflict means a reduction in tensions before a war emerges. If the tensions are not reduced but even rise further, war follows. While there are certain conditions which trigger an escalation, there are others triggering a deescalation. As various factors are responsible for the escalation of a conflict to war, a variation of these variables should influence a deescalation of the conflict before the emergence of war. This connection between war and peace is also a result of Geoffrey Blainey's study *The Causes of War* (1988):

“War and peace appear to share the same framework of causes. The same set of factors should appear in explanations of the outbreak of war [...]. Wars usually begin when two nations disagree on their relative strength, and wars usually cease when the fighting nations agree on their relative strength. Agreement or disagreement emerges from the shuffling of the same set of factors. Thus each factor is capable of promoting war or peace” (Blainey 1988: 293).

In the following chapter I will investigate factors which are responsible for the outbreak of war.

Causes of war which have a preferably wide explanatory power for the emergence of conflict will be evaluated and their explanatory power for deescalation will be tested. Through the examination the connection of variables which are usually related to the origin of war to deescalation

3. Theory Selection

The deescalation of conflict means a reduction in tensions before war emerges. How can these tensions be reduced in order to avoid war? Thinking about conditions of the non-occurrence of war leads to the question which conditions lead to war. How can the outbreak of war be explained and might those explanations provide insights when investigating the non-occurrence of war, or more precisely the deescalation of conflict. If a crisis turns into war or is solved by a non-militarized conflict, resolution depends on specific variations of factors. As there are factors which are responsible for escalation of a conflict to war, a variation of these variables should influence a deescalation of the conflict before the emergence of war. Thus I will investigate theories of the causes of war to deduce causes of deescalation. Factors which lead to the escalation of conflict also influence the deescalation of conflict. I focus on the most prominent variables of war causation. These are variables which have influenced many theoretical considerations and appear in hypotheses of different theories. Tackled by as many theories, these variables are most promising to have an impact on the course of a crisis to escalation or deescalation. The fact that the connection between war and these variables enjoys so much scholarly attention suggests that they most probably influence if a crisis escalates to war or tensions are relieved.

Up to now, the research on the causes of war has had various research foci but there are prominent variables which are mentioned in several theories. If these variables can be integrated in different approaches, they are flexible in application, which means that they can provide explanations for the emergence of war apart from space and time. These factors are present in any conflict independent of decade or continent with all the conditions related to these two determinants. If the variables influence the deescalation of conflict, they have been doing so in conflicts since the establishment of the modern state system with the Peace of Westphalia.

In the following chapter, the extensive field of theories of the causes of war will be analyzed and variables which appear most often will be emphasized. Generally when investigating theories of international relations, the levels-of-analysis framework is applied to provide an order for the theories. The taxonomy brings some application difficulties but is still compelling.

3.1 The Levels-of-Analysis

As mentioned in the introduction, the theories of the causes of war are not ranked by their schools-of thought but by the levels-of-analysis. When it comes to organizing theories of international relations, the levels-of-analysis concept is the most useful tool for providing a categorized overview. In *Man, the State and War* ((1959) 2001), Kenneth Waltz introduces and explains the different levels, referred to as „images“. He divides international politics into an individual, a state, and a systemic

image. The concept refers to war causation connected to individuals, the state and the international system. It is used for ranking different causal factors which influence actions taken by the actors. This can be used to identify the dependent or independent variable, but it is important to clarify which variable is to be identified, otherwise the reader will be confused.²⁸ Classifying theories by this grid is difficult and not elaborate while it is most useful for ranking the different variables (Levy/Thompson 2010:18). Nonetheless a careful application of the levels is useful for grouping theories. Various scholars decided to employ the levels for organizing theories of causes of war in their compilations.²⁹ “Levels-of-analysis frameworks are analytic constructions to help us make sense of the world, and they are best evaluated in terms of their theoretical utility rather than seen as a direct reflection of `reality`”(Levy/Thompson 2010: 15).

Theories associated with the individual level explain the decisions by individual actors. These hypotheses follow the thought that another individual in the same situation would have made another decision. This is related to factors which vary along the different individuals such as belief systems, personal bias and psychological processes. State level variables deal with factors related to society and government. Societal variables focus on factors like public opinion, influence of interest groups and political culture. Governmental variables deal with the character of the political system and policy processes. The prominent theory of democratic peace hypothesizes that the democratic state structures lead to a different behavior of the state than autocratic structures would. Other theories state that interest groups could push for more aggressive behavior of states due to their own interests. Theories ranked on the system level focus on factors such as the polarity of the system, its anarchic structure³⁰, the distribution of strategic, military and economic power. Institutions, norms and ideologies, as they have system wide influence, are also factors which are taken into account when it comes to explaining state behavior. The system level variables cause conditions and needs which can force a state to adopt a violent way of conflict resolution (Levy/Thompson 2010: 14f).

Waltz`s three-part levels-of-analysis framework has been modified in different ways.³¹ The most common modification is the extension of the three levels with a fourth one, the dyadic level.

“One of the major problems with Waltz`s (1959) three images and the way the levels-of-

²⁸ Scott Bennett and Allan Stam criticize the inaccuracies in many research designs (Bennett/Stam 2004: 6).

²⁹ For example see Greg Cashman (1993), Manus Midlarsky (ed. 2000), Bennett/Stam (2004), David Sobek (2009) and Levy/Thompson (2010).

³⁰ IR scholars are used to define anarchy as the absence of authority in the international system. Within a state, the government is in charge of resolving conflicts between groups. This kind of government does not exist in the international system. This means states have to resolve disputes among each other on their own. If they cannot handle a conflict in a peaceful way, they have to rely on their power to implement their will or protect themselves against others.

³¹ For more details see for example James Rosenau (1967) and Jervis (1976: chap. 1).

analysis problem has been generally conceptualized (Singer 1961) is that they leave out what is turning out to be the most important level (Coplin 1974) or what Burton et al. (1974) called more humanistically the study of relationships. [...] Working at the dyadic level, i.e. examining the relations between pairs of states – what they actually do to each other – has been much more productive [...] in the analysis of foreign policy and in retrodicting the onset of war [...]” (Vasquez 1999: 194).

The dyadic level is arranged between the system and the state level and deals with variables which influence the interactions between states. Focusing on the interactions provides analyses with “more interpretable findings and better evidence of patterns if they are structured in such a way as to keep track of who does what to whom” (Ray 2001: 384).

For analytical accuracy, it is useful to distinguish between causes concerning the “entire international system (polarity for example) and those that reflect the relationship and interactions within a particular pair of states within that system” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 16).

Applying the levels-of-analysis framework does also bring up difficulties. In fact, the levels-of-analysis framework is faced with some obstacles when it comes to ordering theories of international relations. It works well with monocausal theories focusing on one variable, but more often theories tend to encompass more than one variable and often these variables are on different levels. For these theories, the framework can also be applied. Grouping theories in one level does not mean that the theories solely include variables from this level, but that the most important independent variable is associated to the level. The framework is helpful for organizing the theories but this does not mean that theories in a certain level solely deal with variables on this level. When grouping theories along the levels-of-analysis, it is useful to regard their most important independent variable and arrange them on the level this variable is associated to.

Since war is an extremely complex phenomenon, there are several criteria to be kept in mind when using the levels to analyze theories of war causation. It cannot be assumed that results can be transferred from one level to the other. Furthermore, variables from the individual and the state levels can be primary causes of war, but may not be logically consistent because they cannot explain how individual decisions transfer into state action or state actions interact and lead to war as dyadic and systemic events (Levy 1998: 143f). Further, there are various conditions which influence the variables on the different levels-of-analysis. Variations of policy issues have a different impact on actors responsible for war decisions in a state. A leader has more leverage in foreign policy issues while societal and bureaucratic factors have a stake in security issues. Different types of war have different causes. State-level factors might influence a civil war more than a major power war, while polarity

seems to be influential on major power wars. The regime type and the level of economic development can affect the impact of variables from the level-of-analysis. An individual political leader has more influence on foreign policy in an autocratic regime in a developing country than one in a democratic regime in a highly industrialized country. Furthermore, there are variations of the mutual influence of the different variables. The impact of polarity on war, for example, a variable on the systemic level, is influenced by variables of the individual or state level concerning the behavior towards uncertainty. The outcome of the variables can vary depending on the historical period. Variables have a different influence on the different stages of the escalatory ladder in a conflict. An arms build-up at the beginning of a conflict can kick off an arms race while at a later stage of the escalatory ladder, it might have a deterring effect for the adversary (Levy/Thompson 2010: 206 – 213).

These limitations have to be considered when applying the levels-of-analysis framework. Apart from its difficulties, the levels are a useful tool to group theories. Alternatively, one can group theories along paradigms, mainly between realists and liberals, but this misses significant variation within the paradigms. In addition, the paradigm debate forestalls the central components of different approaches that are integrated in a wider theory (Levy 1998: 144). Finally, it should be said that “[...] the levels-of-analysis framework still generates fewer problems of classification than do alternative frameworks” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 182).

In the following passage I will group various theories on the causes of war along the levels-of-analysis. Proceeding from top to bottom, I will start with third image theories which deal with the system level. Then I will turn to the second image in which theories are ranked from the dyadic level to the state level. In the first image, there are on the one hand the theories which deal with group decisions and on the other the theories focusing on individual decisions. Within the three images there is a declining arrangement from system to dyadic, state, group and individual level.

3.3 Third Image Theories of the Causes of War

Theories which are ranked on the system level deal with conditions of the international environment in which the states act. System level theories describe an order of the system. The behavior of the nations in the system is marked by a standardized set of interaction patterns (Cashman 1993: 224). The system consists of interacting units as well as rules, norms, organization and structure. The central assumption is that the structure of the system determines the behavior of states. The nature of the state and its leader is relatively unimportant. The behavior is shaped by the states` positions in the system or subsystem. War is generally linked to the kind of system which is shaped by the distribution of goods (economic, military or political capabilities) and the position the state has in the system.

3.3.1 Realism

The major theory of international relations which deals with third image factors is realism. It is a school-of-thought and a “constellation of theories” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 31, 28) with different bough. Key assumptions of most realist theories are that sovereign states are the main actors in international politics, they aspire to security, power and wealth and act in an anarchic environment, which is defined as the absence of a world government. Further, states will use threat or military force to secure their objectives, the distribution of power is a main determinant of international outcomes and wars occur through deliberate and inadverted processes (Levy/Thompson 2010: 31; Lynn-Jones/Miller 1995: ix). There are several variations and advancements of realism. One can distinguish between classical realism, structural realism, which includes defensive and offensive realism, and neoclassical realism (Levy/Thompson 2010).

Classical realism was established as school of thought in the 20th century but realist tradition started with Thucydides and was continued by Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Baruch de Spinoza and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Forde 1993: 62 – 84, 1995). The study of international relations can be divided into three phases: the idealist phase, the realist tradition and the behavioral revolt (Bull 1972: 33). The inability to prevent World War II led to criticism of the idealist paradigm and it was required to take into account how things really are and not only how they should be (Carr (1939) 2001: 8).³² Realists are skeptical about moral implications in the relations between states. Human nature is considered as the source of conflict. Hans Morgenthau`s *Politics among Nations* ((1948) 1963) was the most influential work on realism. He established basic assumptions for realism, for example that politics are a struggle for power, nations strive to protect their national interests and a nation`s power can best be limited by the power of another nation (balance of power) (Morgenthau (1948) 1963: chp. 1, 11). He managed to shift the scientific focus of realism from normativity to empirical analysis (Masala 2005: 29). The realists` influence on the study of international relations is that it has to be empirical and theoretical, not normative and narrowly historical, and that it has to provide an image of the world which enables the field to develop a research agenda and follow it systematically (Vasquez 1998: 39).

Morgenthau argues that “politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature” (Morgenthau (1948) 1963: 4). The states` struggle for power which can cause war is traced back to the individual, which could lead to the conclusion that realism is actually a first image theory. But he also tackles the second image as “he regards the state as a collective reflection

³² Leading writers of the development of realism are Frederik Schuman (1937), Harold Nicolson (1939), Georg Schwarzenberg (1941), Quincy Wright (1946), Sir Herbert Butterfield (1953), Morgenthau ((1948) 1963), Reinhold Niebur (1969), George Kennan ((1951)1985) Nicolas Spykman ((1942) 2007) (Vasquez 1998: 36).

of political man's lust for power and the unit which carries out its impulses at the international stage" (Pashakhanlou 2009). States strive for power because men do. Finally the anarchic structure of the international system allows states to pursue their desire for power. "In a hierarchic order however, the pursuit of power would be abolished as the animus domandi would be constrained by a global leviathan" (Pashakhanlou 2009). Morgenthau uses all three images to explain the behavior states. As stated above, most theories encompass variables from at least two images, which makes it difficult to assign a theory to one image. Here, I assign classical realism to the third image. As elaborated in the section about the application of the levels-of-analysis, the ranking of the theories is based on the outstanding variables. For classical realism, I treat international anarchy as the relevant variable for the allocation to the third image as anarchy shapes the interaction of states independent of their desire for power.

Waltzian neorealism, an advancement of realism, turned out as one of the most influential theories of international relations. What is particularly important for Waltz is international anarchy and the distribution of power, which includes the most explanatory power of neorealism. Neorealism is part of the theory of balance of power (see below). Waltz makes use of Morgenthau's inductive assumptions and advances them scientifically (Masala 2005: 73). Central assumptions in neorealism are that rational states are the main actors in international relations, they do not pursue power but security, power is an instrument for gaining security. The actions of states are determined by the structure of the international system, which leads to repeating behavior, more precisely, balancing of power. With the strategy of balancing, states prevent the rise of a hegemon by building alliances with other states to balance the power of the stronger state. The aim is to maintain the distribution of power in the system. States try to gain power to increase their security. Due to uncertainty, these power aggregations are perceived by other states as threat. In the anarchic structure, these struggles for power can lead to conflict. The polarity of the international system can enlarge or minimize the uncertainty. Bipolarity is considered as the most stable arrangement due to the reduction of uncertainty (Levy/Thompson 2010: 31 – 33). The jeopardy of war can be minimized by balancing behavior against a powerful state (Masala 2005: 76).

A recent development within the realist school is the division between offensive and defensive realism and neoclassical realism³³. The theoretical directions of offensive and defensive realism assume international politics as conflictual and that outcomes of tensions mirror the distribution of power among states. But they disagree whether the international system produces conditions which pressure the states to aggressive behavior.

³³ For more overviews see, John Mearsheimer (1994/95), Michael Brown et al. (1995), Chares Glaser (1996), Benjamin Frankel (1996), Colin Elman (1996), Stephen Brooks (1997), Jervis (1999) and Jeffrey Taliaferro (2001).

“It could be argued that there are two cross-cutting dichotomies: classical realism versus neorealism, and offensive realism versus defensive realism. From that perspective, Mearsheimer and Waltz are both neorealists, the former offensive, the latter defensive“(Snyder 2002: fn. 4).

In offensive realism, states are forced to behave aggressively due to the international system structure. Anarchy-induced uncertainty is strong enough to shape state behavior, independent from domestic variables. Expansion and ultimately hegemony is perceived as the best way of gaining security (Mearsheimer 2001: 35). In contrast to defensive realists, offensive realists argue that balancing often fails due to buck-passing-behavior of the states and therefore regional hegemony is possible and sought by the states (Levy/Thomson 2010: 36). States have a choice between balancing and buck-passing. Buck-passing is the strategy to refrain from any action and shift the charge of resistance onto an ally or some other state. For Mearsheimer, it is the preferred strategy (Mearsheimer 2001: 160). As a further contrast to defensive realists, offensive realists do not distinguish between defensive and offensive weapons or capabilities. For offensive realists, any weapon can serve an offensive purpose (Levy 1989b; Lynn-Jones et al. 1995; Mearsheimer 2001; Betts 1999; Lieber 2005). Offensive realism is a structure-minted theory which emphasizes the role of military power in uncertainty and anarchy. The international system fosters conflict. Rational states are often forced to adopt offensive strategies to gain security.³⁴

Defensive realism accepts that the anarchic structure of the international system creates security threats. But war is not unavoidable. The anarchic structure of the international system does not drive states into war. Anarchy produces a security dilemma which is modified by structural factors such as the offense-defense balance, geographic proximity and access to materials (Taliaferro 2000/1: 131). It provides only limited incentives for expansion and aggression. Security can often be achieved by moderate foreign policies (Taliaferro 2000/1: 159). If states seek security and have no predatory incentives, there is no pressure for war. Defensive strategies are the best way to obtain security. War occurs mainly due to perceptions of intentions. Furthermore, states do not balance against the most powerful in the system but against the greatest threat to their interests. The realist concept of power is refined in defensive realism by observing the “fine-grained structure of power” (van Evera 1999: 7). Threat assessment has to incorporate geography and technology (Boulding 1962: 262; van Evera 1999: 160-163). Defensive realists favor power balancing as effective behavior to eliminate

³⁴ Mearsheimer`s *Back to the Future* (1990) explains this logic of action.

aggression and allow cooperation under anarchy (Jervis 1988: 675 – 700). A state's aggression is explained by complementing systemic variables with domestic variables. War is caused by perceptions and intentions of domestic decision makers (van Evera 1999: 6; Levy/Thompson 2010: 34f). Under certain conditions, nondemocratic dyads can avoid war. They can cooperate without the help of international institutions and develop norms of the non-use of weapons of mass destruction (Glaser 1996; Jervis 1999; Waltz 2000; Taliaferro 2001). Critics blame the defensive realists for washing realism out by denying realism's core assumptions through the integration of domestic variables (Legro/Moravcsik 1999). Offensive realists criticize that defensive realism cannot explain expansionist behavior since it argues that there is never an international motivation for expansion (Zakaria 1992; Schweller 1996).

Neoclassical realism frames a theory of foreign policy behavior taking into consideration domestic structures (Levy/Thomson 2010: 37).³⁵ In contrast to neorealism as a theory of international relations, neoclassical realism is a foreign policy theory. Further, neoclassical realism also has a defensive and an offensive variant. The focus is on anarchy, relative material capabilities and system structure. William Wohlford (1993), Thomas Christensen (1996), Randall Schweller (1998) and Fareed Zakaria (1999) have performed case studies about great power behavior in times of changes of capabilities. The foreign policy of a country is driven by its place in the international system and its relative power capabilities, but the impact of capabilities is complex due to the need to translate systemic pressure through intervening variables on the unit level. Power and policy are linked to the context within which foreign policy is made (Rose 1998: 146). Neoclassical realism incorporates decision-makers' perceptions as intervening variable in the process from systemic pressure to foreign policies (Rose 1998: 157). It combines external and internal variables, "updating and systematizing certain insights drawn from classical realist thought" (Rose 1998: 146). Neoclassical realism shares Waltz's assumption that the distribution of power is a dominant determinate in international system but, as defensive realism, they emphasize the importance of perceptions of relative material capabilities. Furthermore they question if security is the prime goal of a state. Security is more an expandable concept which can be pursued in different ways (Lynn-Jones/Miller 1995: xii). Critics of neoclassical realism highlight the missing theoretical connection between decision-makers' perceptions and the state's foreign policy. "Precise theoretical development in this area would be helpful, explicating just how various psychological, ideational, and cultural factors may affect how political actors perceive their own and others' capabilities and how such perceptions are translated into foreign policy" (Rose 1998: 168). Offensive and defensive realism both miss a further development of the motivation for

³⁵ For further introductions to neoclassical realism see Gideon Rose (1998), Schweller (2006), and Steven Lobell et al. (2009).

expansionist behavior, greed (offensive) or security (defensive) (Glaser 1997). Other scholars demand an incorporation of insights from cognitive and social psychology (Goldgeier 1997).

3.3.2 Balance of Power Theory

All realist theories consider power relations as an important factor in the international system. There are merely variations in the degree of importance within the various theories. The balance of power theory focuses on the distribution of power in the international system (Levy/Thompson 2010: 38). Balance of power generally refers to the distribution of power in the international system. This can mean an outcome, a strategy, or a theory.³⁶ The balance of power theory connects the variables power and alliances. Alliances are made in line with in dependence to power ratios. The various balance of power theories share the core assumptions with realism: the anarchic system and states as rational key actors who aim at maximizing security or power. Further assumptions are added by different balance of power theorists. This causes scholarly debates, e.g. whether a bipolar system structure is more peaceful (Waltz (1979) 2010), or a multipolar structure (Kegley/Raymond 1992, 1994; Kupchan 2003). Some balance of power theorists claim that alliances foster peace while others conclude that alliances rise the danger of war. Alliances can deter war by making threats of attacks and interventions more credible (Gulick 1955; Holsti et al. 1973). On the other hand, alliances can provoke counter alliances and fuel a conflict spiral as in World War I. The primary goals for states are their survival and the avoidance of hegemony, in which a state gains enough power to dominate the others. Peace is also considered as a goal, but inferior to other interests. States try to keep the distribution of power equal by forming coalitions against more powerful states. Balancing is the favored mechanism to avoid hegemony. Alliance building, so-called external balancing, is the preferred action to avoid hegemony in multipolar systems. It is cheaper than the mobilization of capabilities (internal balancing), which is preferred in bipolar systems (Waltz 1979; Levy 1985b; Barnett/Levy 1991). Therefore hegemony rarely exists in international relations. There is disagreement between scholars about which other threats states balance (Levy/Thompson 2010: 42). Balance of power theory deals with system level outcomes of war and peace, and cannot be automatically applied to the dyadic level.³⁷

³⁶ Following Levy/Thompson (2010) the balance of power is treated as a theory here.

³⁷ The power preponderance hypothesis, for example, operates on the dyadic level. The powerful states are satisfied with the *status-quo* and have no interests in war and the weak states lack the capabilities for war. According to this logic, power parity would lead to war on the dyadic level, but this does not mean that power parity on a system level would lead to war.

3.3.3 Hegemonic Theories

So far, all theories discussed were static. There is also a school of thought which explains international relations with dynamic models: hegemonic theories. They state that international politics are shaped by the rise and decline of states. Hegemony has a stabilizing effect on the international system. War is very likely in times of hegemonic transition. Main actors are states and power is the main variable determining action. Power is not solely dependent on military capabilities but on population increase, economic wealth and technological (military) progress. Power transition theory focuses on changes in power. “[...] the sources of strength and power just mentioned are not constant. They vary in slow, intricate, and, in the long run, largely predictable ways” (Organski/Kugler 1980: 8). Power transition theory states that a dominant state in the system creates political and economic structures and norms which allow security and system stability. Other satisfied states ally with the hegemon and benefit from that; unsatisfied states are too weak to challenge the hegemon (Organski 1958; Organski/Kugler 1980; Kugler/Lemke 1996, 2000; Tammen et al. 2000). “[...] A change in the balance of power between states is the ultimate source of war” (Sobek 2009: 153). Contrary to balance of power theorists, power transition theorists do not only focus on military capabilities when assessing power but also take into account population, economics and a state`s capability to mobilize resources. The rise and fall of a state is determined by these fluctuating factors. Therefore power transition theory is dynamic, contrary to the static theory of balance of power. War is likely when there are power shifts, equality of power and dissatisfaction with the *status quo* (Levy/Thompson 2010: 44). A rising state which is dissatisfied with the international order comes close to the leading state in power and seems to surpass it. The challenger will initiate a war to soar up to hegemony and take advantage of its new position. Scholars do not agree on the exact point when wars break out. They disagree over the question whether war is used to accelerate the power transition by the challenger (Organski 1958), or whether the challenger waits until the transition is terminated to be powerful enough to attack (Kugler/Lemke 2000; Tammen et al. 2000).

Power transition theory assumes that the rise of a dissatisfied, major power provokes a hegemonic war, while/whereas in long-cycle theory, the inability of the dominate power to maintain control provokes war. Studying long cycles attempts to explain patterns of regularity in international relations, which means the rise and decline of a succession of world powers. These cycles are closely related to wars, which are contests between the great powers. The waxing and waning of the risk of war is connected to the hegemon`s relative power. Changes in the distribution of power erode the foundation of the international system (Gilpin 1981). These processes of the rise and decline of world powers follow long term patterns of regularities (long cycles) (Modelski 2002: 2). Within one cycle

there are four phases: (global) war – world power – delegitimation – deconcentration (Modelski/Morgan 1985: 401; Rosencrance 1987: 289). The rise and decline of global powers leads to the questioning of leadership, which is answered by global wars.³⁸ In contrast to the balance of power theory, which considers bipolarity as most peaceful and multipolarity as most dangerous arrangement, the long cycle theory favors unipolarity as most peaceful although they agree on multipolarity (Thompson 1986).

3.3.4 Conclusion of the Third Image

So far I have examined realism, Waltzian neorealism, offensive realism, defensive realism, neoclassical realism, balance of power theory, power transition theory and long-cycle theory. These theories are related to the third image since they highlight the influence of the structure of the international system on state behavior and outcomes, although some theories such as classical realism, neoclassical realism and defensive realism also integrate variables from other levels for their explanations.

Apart from a common highlighting the international system, all theories employ power in their assumptions. Classical realism detects power aggregation as major interest of states. Power is supposed to enable the state to follow its interests and limit another state`s power (balancing). Balancing through alliance building is a central part of managing power relations. Neorealism and the balance of power theory consider power as most important for states to gain security. The distribution of power in the international system leads states to balancing behavior in order to limit another state`s power. Offensive and defensive realism both view the distribution of power as an important determinant of international outcomes. While offensive realism defines power mainly in military terms, defensive realism introduces “a fine-grained structure” (van Evera 1999: 7). Offensive realism favors buck-passing over balancing, since the latter often fails. Defensive realism integrates balancing as tool to limit a perceived threat. The perception of a threat is an important factor for the outbreak of war. Neoclassical realism deduces foreign policy behavior inter alia from relative power capabilities and decision-makers` perceptions. The dynamic theories of power distribution and long-cycle assume that changes in relative power influence the probability of war. Power is not solely defined in military terms but also in terms of population, economic wealth and technological progress. Alliances are built in these theories not by allying with other states to limit a stronger state`s power but by following the strongest state. After highlighting the dominate variables (power, alliances, perceptions) in the theories related to the third image, now the question arises if the same variables

³⁸ Global war is considered as „lengthy periods of crisis and conflict, generally lasting between 20 and 30 years, that draw in most major powers of the era on opposing sites“ (Levy/Thompson 2010: 49).

appear in the second image.

3.4 Second Image Theories of the Causes of War

Under the category of the second image, one can summarize theories of the dyadic level and the state and societal level. Before turning to state related theories, theories which explain interactions between states are under examination.

3.4.1 Dyadic Level

Dyadic-level theories focus on these interactions. This helps identifying “additional patterns that had previously obscured” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 55). Scholars ascribe the turn on the dyadic level to the research on democratic peace and rivalries (Levy/Thompson 2010: 55; Ray 2001). These research foci deal with interactions between states rather than the system as a whole.

3.4.1.1 The Bargaining Model of War

The first dyadic theory provides an explanation for the path from system structure to war. Game-theoretic models about economic and social behavior state that humans act rationally and strategically. Behavior is explained by preferences and beliefs of actors and the constraints posed on the actions by system structure, and the available information (Levy/Thompson 2010: 63). It posits that war is costly and risky and that rational unitary actors prefer a negotiated solution for their conflict instead of a gamble for war as long as the negotiated outcome is the same as after war but without its costs.³⁹ The models can be applied to conflicts with all kinds of actors from ethnic groups to states. According to Fearon (1995), the path to war depends on bargaining spaces which are shaped by private information, commitment problems and indivisible issues. If none of these conditions are present, a negotiated outcome is preferred to war by a risk averse or a risk neutral actor. The bargaining model provides an explanation under consideration of the inability of the adversaries to reach a conciliation. Rational considerations can be taken as basis and combined with irrational and domestic factors to provide a complete explanation for war (Fearon 1995: 409).

There is also a liberal explanation of war related to bargaining interactions between states. The liberal trade-promotes-peace argument has a long tradition.⁴⁰ Contrary to the mercantilist view that international economic relations are a zero-sum game, trade based on specialization can provide gains for all states. Instead of promoting a state`s wealth by war, gains can be acquired by trade more

³⁹ This economic argument was applied to international relations by Geoffrey Blainey (1988: chp. 8) and elaborated by rational choice theorists like James Fearon (1995), Harrison Wagner (2000) and Robert Powell (2002).

⁴⁰ Already recognized by Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, it is an answer to the 17th and 18th century mercantilist economic ideology.

effectively for economically advanced states (Rosecrance 1986, Brooks 2005, Gratzke 2007).

World War II and the Cold War buried the scientific study of the trade argument in oblivion but it was adopted again after 1990. The democratic peace approach rose the question of the relationship between trade and peace again and more specific causal arguments were developed (Levy/Thompson 2010: 72). Trade generates gains for both parties and political leaders try to maintain the economic relations and avoid conflict (Rogowski 1989, Solingen 1998, McDonald 2009). Capitalist states become strong due to their gains and dedicated to more trade, thus they advocate a peaceful international order (Lake 1992). This argument runs contrary to imperialist theories of war where capitalist states are theorized to behave imperialistically due to the hunger for more of the capitalist elite.

3.4.1.2 The Steps to War Model

While the bargaining model concentrates on economic incentives, the steps to war model focuses on security related aspects of state interactions. The theory is an advancement of the issue paradigm⁴¹. Senese and Vasquez (2008) combine issues with traditional realist variables and develop and test the steps to war model. They concentrate on conflicting states which are equal in power and both conduct a series of steps leading to war. Senese and Vasquez combine factors which have emerged in previous studies and combine them. They designed a model consisting of the variables territory, arms race, rivalry and alliance.

First of all, disputes which erupt because of territorial claims escalate to war more often than disputes about other issues (Vasquez/Henehan 2001: 123 – 138). Disputes about territory are connected with the research about the theory of geographical contiguity. Neighboring states have the capabilities to fight in their surroundings as military power decreases with distance (Bueno de Mesquita 1981b; Maoz/Russett 1993) and are more likely to have territorial issues (Vasquez 1996). The research focuses on the phenomenon of rivalry since the correlation between conflict and rivalries was realized. „Most wars are related to protracted, ongoing conflicts between long-term adversaries and rivals“ (Colaesi et al. 2007: 3). The term rivalry refers to regularly emerging conflicts between the same two states within a given time period.⁴² A state can be perceived as a rival by another state when decision-makers of foreign policy identify the other state as most likely adversary. This usually happens due to conflicting interests of territory or resources for example. Once the rivalry is present, it is persistent and fuels further conflicts between the adversaries. A corporate dispute past can easily

⁴¹ The issue paradigm, developed by Mansbach/Vasquez (1981), concentrates on the issues of dispute between states instead of power relationships.

⁴² For a closer definition see Diehl/Goertz (2000: 45).

lead to an escalation of the present conflict (Goertz/Diehl 1993: 148) when threatening gestures get out of control when displayed against a hereditary enemy. There are two leading concepts of the investigation of rivalries: enduring rivalry⁴³ and strategic rivalry⁴⁴. The first concept concentrates on conflict patterns between states. Multiple militarized disputes are indicators for a rivalry. This causes a measurement problem when it comes to conflicting states but without a militarized dispute. The second approach to rivalry integrates the problem and identifies rivalries due to foreign policy histories. The states have to be competitors, which means that they possess similar capabilities. Alliances, already tackled by third image theories, are treated as a step on the ladder to war here. Alliance building contributes to producing a security dilemma in which alliances lead to counter alliances. The same mechanism works with arms races. Arms races occur when a state builds its military armaments in response to the military mobilization of the adversary. Jervis (1976) connects the arms race with a higher probability of war in his spiral model of hostility. Back to the steps to war model, if, in a territorial dispute, a state adopts realpolitik strategies (coercive threats, military build-ups, alliances), the probability of escalation is even higher.⁴⁵ If the states are also involved in a rivalry, the escalation is even higher. The steps are mutually reinforcing and cumulative (Levy/Thompson 2010: 61).

“Not too much emphasis should be placed on the order of these steps, however. The key claim is that each practice increases threat perception and therefore the probability of war. As these threatening practices accumulate, they make it more likely that eventually a crisis or militarized dispute will occur that escalates to war“(Senese/Vasquez 2005: 608).

The propositions were tested in extensive large-N analysis, where the model performs well but with a “twist in the Cold War” (James 2009: 636).⁴⁶ There are several criticisms related to methodology, such as endogeneity problems and the lack of including agency (Slantchev 2009: 387). Further, they lump together all realist theories by stating that realists tend to hold power politics as the road to peace. This may be true for some, especially deterrence theorists, but others clearly consider war as a structure induced outcome (Levy/Thompson 2010: 62). Nonetheless the steps to war model is a valuable contribution to the studies of war initiation. It integrates research outcomes from several approaches. It combines hypotheses about issue related conflicts with statements about escalation and

⁴³ The enduring rivalry concept is elaborated by Diehl (1998), Diehl/Goertz (2000), and Klein et al. (2006).

⁴⁴ The concept of strategic rivalry is framed by Thompson (2001), Colaresi et al. (2007).

⁴⁵ Senese and Vasquez call this the „realist road to war“(2008: 31).

⁴⁶ The variables territory and rivalry perform well, but arms race and alliance perform poorly. Senese and Vasquez explain this with a special condition during the Cold War.

rivalry, alliance formation and arms race. Further, the extensive tests provide a good plausibility of the variables.

3.4.2 State and Societal Level

On the state and societal level theories are grouped which look into the state's black box. The causes of war lie in structures, conditions and processes within the states. This is analytically distinct from dyadic theories, which do not explain the behavior of a single state but the interactions between more states. But domestic level theories, which only include state internal variables, cannot provide a theoretically complete explanation for the outbreak of war as systemic outcome. On the state level of analysis, the underlying supposition is that certain circumstances of the state influence its conflict behavior. Some states engage more often in conflict than others.⁴⁷ International relation scholars have investigated various factors which may account for the behavior of states in a conflict, such as government type, type of economic system, demographic, cultural and geographical factors.

3.4.2.1 Regime Type

A simplification of the liberal argument assumes that democratic states are peaceful and authoritarian states are aggressive. The theory of democratic peace emphasizes the influence of the people. Democratic governments represent the will of the peaceful population and people are (generally) peaceful since they are directly affected mostly negatively when their government chooses to engage in war. Democratic state structures can prevent war under some conditions. The assumption of democratic peace is an "extraordinarily strong empirical regularity" but with the "absence of a good theoretical explanation" (Levy/Thompson 2010: 108). States with representative institutions are less likely to wage war because the actors with political power are those who also suffer from war. Strong empirical confirmation of this approach caused high scholarly attention⁴⁸ and led to optimism about the preventability of war in world politics, which also served as basis for foreign policy decisions⁴⁹. The democratic culture and norms model (Owen 1997; Russett/Oneal 2001) suggests that a democratic consensus is necessary to go to war and the population who will suffer from it will refrain from war. Furthermore, there is an inhibition threshold to attack a society that has the same (democratic) values. Another state with the same values is perceived as less hostile than a state with values which are considered as inferior to one's own values. The institutional constraints model

⁴⁷ James Singer and Melvin Small found out in the COW project that „most of the war in the system has been accounted for by a small fraction of nations" (Singer/Small 1972: 287).

⁴⁸ For example see Wright (1983), Maoz/Russett (1993), James Ray (1995), Maoz (1997), Russett/Starr (2000), Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003), Oneal/Russett (2001) and Rasler/Thomson (2005).

⁴⁹ On democratization as US foreign policy focus see John Harbeson (1998).

(Morgan/Campbell 1991; Siverson 1995) argues that the system of checks and balances, the diffusion of power and free media make leaders act in consensus with the voting public, which is assumed to be risk averse against war. The selectorate model (Buono de Mesquita et al. 2003) focuses on the selectorate and the winning coalition in a system. The selectorate is everybody who has influence on politics, the winning coalition are those who are necessary for a leader to maintain his power. The bigger the winning coalition is compared to the selectorate coalition, the easier it is for a leader to impose policies which are not supported by the public. They will refrain from going to war more often than authoritarian leaders, who are supported by a big winning coalition compared to the selectorate. Kenneth Schultz (2001) developed a model of democratic bargaining in crises based on information. Free press in a democratic system creates transparency, and the behavior of the opposition reduces the danger of perceptions of exaggerated hostile intentions. All models deal with the consequences of democratic state structures for the state's tendency to go to war. Although there is a rich pool of theoretical models, they all focus on the same variable: democratic structures. The relationship between democracy and conflict escalation to war is ambiguous. William Dixon (1993: 64) concludes an overall positive influence of democratic structures on conflict management. Senese (1997), on the other hand, comes to the conclusion that once a democratic dyad has entered a militarized conflict, it is as likely as a nondemocratic dyad to escalate the conflict. Again it is difficult to reach reliable results since few conflicts between democracies emerge. The explanatory power of the democratic peace approach is questionable. It tries to explain a systemic outcome (war or peace) with state-level variables (domestic politics). An integration of systemic variables would be necessary to reach a fully integrated explanation of the process of states going to war. Its deductive logic manages to state a correlation between domestic democratic structures but a convincing causal chain is absent (Layne 1994: 38). Empirically the democratic peace thesis seems to be convincing (Levy 1988: 662), but it is based on a small number of cases because before 1945 there were few democracies according to our present definition (Layne 1994: 39). There is also a constant dispute between scholars how broadly a democracy should be defined for the tests.⁵⁰ Further as stated above, war is an exception in international politics, so getting involved in a war is of low probability for any state, democratic or not (Spiro 1994: 50 – 86). Finally the option of going to war has to be taken seriously into consideration by the state. Scholars should omit dyads, for which escalation to war during a conflict was not an option due to other factors than the democratic structures (Layne 1994: 39). Despite the scholarly attention which the democratic peace assumption has received its explanatory limitation of conflict deescalation of nondemocratic dyads makes it unsuitable for a test

⁵⁰ Layne gives a good short overview of the debate (Layne 1994: 40 – 44).

of cases of deescalation independent of regime type. Moreover, not too much faith should be put into a conclusion drawn from a theory focusing on one explanatory variable.

3.4.2.2 Imperialism

Since the argument of the peacefulness of democratic states is not fully convincing, the focus changes from political causes of war to economical ones. Theories of imperialism and war argue that aggressive imperialist behavior of a state is driven by the interests of the capitalist class. The focus is on economic rather than political factors. War is considered as too costly to justify potential benefits from it. If war occurs, it arises from economic imperatives of the capitalist elite in the state, who are powerful enough to pursue their interests through state actions. A socialist state with a classless society is not war-prone. Karl Marx considered all social and political relations as an outcome of economic structures and relationships, especially between the capitalists and the proletariat (Marx (1867) 2011). While Marx concentrated on domestic politics, Vladimir Lenin focused on the international level (Lenin 1946). Capitalist states must constantly expand, which leads to imperialist behavior. Furthermore, economic competition leads to the exploitation of the economically weaker state by the more powerful capitalist state. Imperialism results from the maladjustment in the capitalist system. Due to overproduction and the uneven distribution of economical wealth, the capitalist elite holds surplus capital, which is invested abroad. The contact to foreign markets drives governments to imperialist behavior (Hobson 1965: 71 – 93). Marxist-Leninist theory suggests diverse mechanisms of capitalist states adopting aggressive behavior (Levy/Thompson 2010: 87) and theoretical followers applied the assumptions and variations of it to more recent state behaviors.⁵¹ Marxist-Leninist theories focus on economic factors and describe them as compulsion to act in political terms. This is over-simplified and has been criticized at length.⁵² The emergence of war cannot solely be explained with economic interests of one group. Furthermore, it is questionable if a capitalist elite is strong enough to gain so much power over the state that it can use it for its own interest. The theoretical linkage between imperialist motivations and war is underdeveloped. Expansion does not necessarily lead to war. Imperialist behavior and war have already emerged before capitalism⁵³ and socialist states have displayed aggressive behavior themselves.⁵⁴ Considering the range of applicability of the

⁵¹ For a Marxist-Leninist explanation of the Cold War and US behavior see William Williams (1962) and Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy (1966).

⁵² Levy and Thompson (2010: 89 - 93) give a short summary of the critic on Marxist-Leninist theory and refer to earlier works: Raymond Aron (1968), Benjamin Cohen (1973), Stephen Krasner (1978: chp. 1), Anthony Brewer (1980) and Waltz ((1979) 2010).

⁵³ „Surely it is odd to learn that the cause (capitalism) is much younger than the effect it produces (imperialism)“ (Waltz (1979) 2010: 25).

⁵⁴ The Soviet Union invaded the Baltic countries and Finland in 1939, Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1979. China attacked Tibet in 1956, India in 1962 and Vietnam in 1979. Vietnam in turn attacked

assumptions of Marxist-Leninist theory on case studies, the theory does not provide a wide explanatory power. It is reduced by focusing on capitalist states.

3.4.2.3 Coalitional Models

Similar to capitalist elites ruling a state, coalitional models advance the idea of interest groups which control the state. Within the state, there are several interest groups which bargain for the state's strategy. Grand strategies of states are the outcome of bargaining interactions between adversarial coalitions of domestic groups which are economically self-serving. Various mechanisms within this approach can lead a state to go to war. Jack Snyder (1991) investigates how interest groups can lead a state to expansionist behavior which causes higher costs than gains (overexpansion). But if this strategy ends up in war depends on the behavior of the adversary. Unanswered, one-sided aggression cannot be labeled as war, it takes at least two states which interact in a hostile manner. Kevin Narizny (2007) comes to the conclusion that conservative, labor and leftist governments handle external threats in a different manner and therefore the probability of the occurrence of war varies with the ideological background of the present government. Steven Lobell (2006) identifies an internationalist coalition and a nationalist coalition as the two main domestic groups in a state. These groups behave differently in the tension between economic interests and external threats.

3.4.2.4 Diversionary Theory

Shifting the emphasis from interest groups to government, the diversionary theory of war provides an explanation for domestic causes leading decision-makers to initiate war. The diversionary theory of war explains a situation where different, actually competing actors in a state unite against a common enemy, the so called "rally 'round the flag" (Levy/Thompson 2010:100) effect. Domestic problems drive a state's leader to distract the electorate from these problems by launching an international crisis. When an external threat emerges, domestic support for political leader rises. This mechanism can be explained by the "conflict cohesion" or "in-group/out-group" effect (Simmel 1898, Coser 1956).⁵⁵ Leaders try to increase their support within their group by provoking hostility with an outside group. There are numerous examples of states sliding into war due to the leaders' need of domestic support (Levy/Thompson 2010: 101). But this mechanism does not always occur, which implies that there are further conditions necessary to cause war by scapegoating. Further, if war emerges also depends on the behavior of the target state and other states in the system. The diversionary theory of

Cambodia in 1975. China and the Soviet Union had border clashes and North Korea attacked South Korea. All in all, socialist states participated in approximately 25 per cent of conflicts from 1945 and 1967 (Cashman 1993: 133).

⁵⁵ Moreover the mechanism is vividly demonstrated in the movie *Wag the Dog* (1997), where the US government initiates a fake war against Albania to deflect public attention from a presidential sex scandal.

war tries to explain the occurrence of war with leaders` incentive to draw off the attention from internal problems by creating an outside threat. Qualitative tests seem to support the theory, while quantitative tests do not (Levy/Thompson 2010: 101). The main explanatory variable focuses on policies implied by leaders facing decreasing support. The theoretical focus is not encompassing enough to provide explanatory power for all wars.

3.4.2.5 Clash of Civilizations

After examining various theories which provide explanations based on political structures within a state there is finally a culture-based explanation for war left: the clash of civilizations approach by Samuel Huntington. Tracing back patterns of international conflict to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Huntington argues that the conflicts of Western civilization can be divided into several phases. After phases of conflicts between princes, nations and ideologies, they are now about culture and religion. Huntington defines civilization by language, history, religion, customs, institutions and self-identification of peoples. This results in Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and African civilizations (Huntington 1993: 22 – 25). Differences between the civilizations have “generated the most prolonged and most violent conflicts” (Huntington 1993: 25). More contentious points between civilizations caused by more contact between them, rising fundamentalism, the De-Westernization in Non-Western countries, the immutability of cultural and religious characteristics and increasing economic regionalism (Huntington 1993: 25 – 29) will increase the number of conflicts in the future. The clash of civilizations thesis has been widely debated. In addition to political criticism, scholars criticized the vague classifications of civilization and questioned the higher frequency of conflict between civilizations than within civilizations. Empirical cases “run diametrically opposed to Huntington`s thesis” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 120). Again the reliability of conclusions from theories with one explanatory variable are questionable.

3.4.3 Implications of the Second Image

When discussing the second image I highlighted the dyadic theories about bargaining and the steps to war and state-level theories about regime type, imperialism, coalitional models, the diversionary theory and the clash of civilizations.

The bargaining model of war explains the emergence of war with the inability of adversaries to reach conciliation through bargaining. Behavior is explained through a combination of actors` preferences, beliefs, and information and constraints from the international system. Gaining wealth through trade is understood as incentive to avoid a costly war. The steps to war model explains the outbreak of war as a multiple-steps process. The combination of territorial issues, rivalry, arms races and alliance

building lead to war. According to the steps to war model, alliances and power, in this context a bilateral attempt to increase power by arms buildup, play an important part when it comes to conflict escalation. The theory of democratic peace relates the regime type of the state to its conflictual behavior. It suggests that democratic domestic structures have a mitigating effect in conflicts through various mechanisms. One is that two conflicting democracies refrain from going to war since they perceive each other as less hostile compared to an autocratic/democratic dyad. Marxist-Leninist theory explains the occurrence of war with a capitalist elite which enforces its interests. Any political action is due to an economic compulsion. The main variable is a capitalist economic structure of the state. The coalitional models also emphasize the influence of interest groups (but not necessarily capitalist). If a state goes to war depends on bargaining outcomes between different groups, which in turn differ in (ideological) orientation. The divisionary theory of war on the other hand does not focus on interest groups but on interests of leaders. Decreasing domestic support can lead to a leader's ambition to provoke hostilities with another state in order to increase his domestic support. Finally the clash of civilizations approach provides an explanation for war based on cultural differences. Differences between civilizations and more boundary points due to proceeding globalization cause hostilities between states.

The theories which are examined in the second image are divided into a dyadic level and a state level. Generally the dyadic theories tend to include more variables since they seek to explain interactions which can be influenced by various factors. This leads to the construction of rather processional models about the path to war. The state level theories on the other hand tend to define special domestic attributes within a state which lead the state to enter war. This generates explanations which focus on one independent variable and require many antecedent conditions, which leads to explanations for only a few cases of war. From the dominant variables from the 3rd image (power, perception and alliance), perception and alliance can be found in theories directly and the relevance of power is integrated indirectly. After dyadic and state factors which are theorized to cause war I finally turn to the first image.

3.5 First Image Theories of War

Foreign policy decision-making is in the center of attention when investigating the relevance of the first image to war. From an individual point of view, it is interesting to explore why a certain decision was made. To explain foreign policy actions, one needs to understand the processes how leaders make their choices. Theorists of the decision-making approach acknowledge the influence of system and domestic factors but put more causal weight on individual variables.

3.5.1 Group Decisions

The decision-making approach focuses on worldviews, perceptions, governmental roles and intergovernmental politics to explain why a certain foreign policy is implied. First I will investigate the models which deal with group decision-making and afterwards turn to theories of individual decision-making.

3.5.1.1 The Bureaucratic Politics and Organizational Process Models

Graham Allison (1971) designed a governmental politics model and an organizational model which he contrasts both with a rational model, and applied all three models to the Cuban missile crisis. The bureaucratic politics model defines foreign policy decision-making as a political process which incorporates bargaining among actors with different interests and unequal power. The organizational model adds routinized forms of behavior within the organizations to the bargaining interactions. The models minimize the social aspects of group decision-making (Levy/Thompson 2010: 179). The governmental politics model deals with decisions which are made in the executive branch. To understand foreign policy decisions, one has to take a look at the decision-makers. How much power and which interests do they have? The preferences and recommendations of each these decision-makers vary due to different perceptions and interests. Furthermore, each decision-maker represents another organization within the state and has to act for it. Thus, each recommendation is a mixture of “perception of the national interest, organizational interest, and occasionally domestic political or personal interests” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 164). The model illustrates that organizational interests dominate. Foreign policy is an outcome of an internal political process of conflict, bargaining and consensus finding between the different decision-makers. The actors are rational, so the model is a non-unitary rational actor model. Bureaucratic compromises are found driven by internal politics rather than the primary concern for national security. The organizational process model focuses not only on foreign policy agencies but on standard procedures of all organizations. Organizational decisions are strongly influenced by the procedures of the organization. When facing a foreign policy problem, the organization selects a pre-existing procedure which fits best and implements it. This provides incrementalism. The organizational processes follow satisfying instead of a rational decision rule. They do not accomplish intensive information search about all possible options. Rather they consider the options step by step until they find the fitting one for an already determined target. Furthermore, problems are not viewed as a whole but as factored problems. Each organization deals with an aspect of the problem in which it has the authority. This includes the problems of lacking coordination between the organizations.

Both models are not theories of the causes of war but about decision-making. The decision-making

process can explain why a state favors to go to war. An implication of the organizational model is that the military tends to push the state into more escalating actions in a conflict.⁵⁶ Military organization may not advocate war but strategies which more probably end up in war. Organizations frame information through their interests and can therefore also contribute to war. Information about the adversary can be incomplete due to organizational structures which dilute information. But to explain war, at least one has to investigate the decision-making in all involved states since one state alone cannot go to war.

3.5.1.2 Group-Think Theory

The bureaucratic politics and organizational process models explain group decision-making within state groups from bargaining and a bureaucratic perspective. Social aspects are not considered in these models. But since group decision-making also has a social component, I examine a theory which incorporates this aspect in political decision-making as well. Group-think theory (Janis 1982) explains small-group decision-making. Group-think is defined as “a psychological drive for consensus at any cost that suppresses dissent and appraisal of alternatives in cohesive decision-making groups” (Janis 1972: 8). Group-think refers to the tendency to conform to the group and influences the quality of decision-making not through political pressure but social pressure. The group is highly valued by its members, which raises the social pressure to conform to the group. Norms developed by the group pressure the group members further to consensus. This leads to the execution of policies although they seem to fail (Janis 1997). Group-think dynamics can be applied to explain foreign policy decisions, as illustrated by Irving Janis` analysis of the decision of the Kennedy administration to invade the Bay of Pigs, the escalation of the Korean War and the Vietnam War, the attack on Pearl Harbor (Janis 1982).

Decision-making of individuals can be divided in psychological and rational approaches (Levy/Thompson 2010). When calculating the causal weight of decisions of individuals in a state, one has to consider that the regime type constrains the decision of the individual. While in states with democratic structures a single decision-maker has less impact, in an authoritarian regime his decision will not be restricted by other interest groups or institutions. If international conflict is traced back to decisions of individuals, one has to take into account factors which are specific to each individual. The assumption of rational action is applicable to all actors. In contrast to that, belief systems, psychological processes and personalities are important personal factors under which decisions are made. These conditions vary from each decision-maker, which leads to different decisions of different

⁵⁶ This hypothesis has already been discussed by Joseph Schumpeter ((1919, 1927) 2007).

actors in the same situation. Individuals' perceptions of situations can differ strongly and are obvious to influence the decisions about further actions. How which perceptions influence the tide of events is widely debated among scholars. The prospect theory on the other hand explains why an actor may favor one event over another one. In the poliheuristic theory of decision-making the process is described how a decision-maker might come to a choice. The theory of crisis decision-making takes into account the special circumstances which are present in decision-making in a crisis situation.

3.5.2 Individual Level

After examining the theories which explain the outbreak of war with group decisions on the first image, now the focus is on the individual level. Various factors are tackled which influence individual decision-makers to favor war over peace.

3.5.2.1 Perception

“There are countless historical cases in which misperceptions are so blatant and consequential that it is easy to conclude that war would not have occurred in their absence, so that misperceptions were a necessary cause of the war” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 134).⁵⁷

Two parties in a conflict have the same information and should assess the outcome of a war similarly. When expecting the same outcome of war, the two parties should manage to reach a negotiated settlement and avoid the cost of war. Different perceptions can lead to different expectations about the outcome of war on each side. If one side expects a better outcome from fighting, a non-violent settlement will be difficult to reach (Jervis 1976). One has to cautiously differ between perceptions and risk propensity. Perceptions help to define threats while risk propensity influences the reaction of actors to threats. Empirically it is hard to make a difference between overconfidence and the willingness to take risks. Scholars suggest that the Japanese attack against the US in 1941 was based on risk-taking willingness, rather than on an overestimation of the own capabilities or an underestimation of the American capabilities (Iriye 1987).

To explain what leads to certain perceptions, one has to investigate belief systems and images. Scholars try to classify individual beliefs. Alexander George (1969) reformulated an operational code concept which was originally designed by Nathan Leites (1951). It states that individual beliefs about

⁵⁷ Following Woosang Kim and Bueno de Mesquita (1995: 52) I do not employ the term misperception. The expression interferes that the researcher or the decision-maker knows the real circumstances and then makes wrong assumptions. In fact decision-makers cannot know whether they perceive a situation correctly. When two decision-makers perceive a situation differently, one cannot say that one is wrong. The decision-makers act on what they believe the situation is due to the available information and individual framing of realities.

the political world are hierarchically organized around a set of master beliefs that define the operational code. It includes philosophical beliefs (nature of politics and conflict) and instrumental beliefs (optimal strategies for achieving goals and risk perception). The operational code was applied to various political leaders.⁵⁸ Images influence the way the intentions of the adversary are interpreted. The mediated stimulus-response model (Holsti et al. 1968) assumes that whatever stimuli the actor receives from the environment, is mediated through the perceptions and images of those stimuli. The decision made on this basis responds to the perception of the stimuli and not the stimuli themselves. The last factor related to the way we perceive the world is threat perception. This is influenced by a range of factors. Uncertainty leads to incorrect assessments of intentions and capabilities. Bureaucracy and organizational processes shape the information which is passed to decision-makers. Culture and ideology operate as filters when processing information. Individuals in decision-making groups judge threat and therefore come to decisions of war and peace. The biases which influence the threat perception can be distinguished as cognitive and motivated biases. A cognitive or unmotivated bias corresponds to how the brain processes information beyond emotions. People have limited mental capabilities to understand a very complex world. Therefore they make simplified heuristics (which provide a source of mistake themselves) to make the reality tangible (Tversky/Kahneman 1974). Motivated biases correspond to the emotions, psychological needs, fears, guilt and desires (Janis/Mann 1977). They influence decisions with high stakes and value-tradeoffs. Each bias can lead to over- or underestimation of a threat. Leaders tend to overestimate external threats, which can lead to conflict escalation. Conditions trigger the processes which lead to the over- or underestimation of threats. When events are uncertain and conflict seems to be avoidable, leaders adopt more balanced thinking. When conflict appears to be inevitable, people seem to get overconfident. Perceptions, beliefs and images and threat perception are strongly interrelated. Perceptions are shaped by images and belief systems of individual persons. Threat perception is dependent on these factors as well. Further, it is related to uncertainty, which is shaped by the international system among other things. Conditions for the way a person perceives the environment change with time and differ between cultures and countries, but perceptions as an influence on decisions of war is applicable independent of space and time. However, there is no complete theory of “perception causes war”. Perception is rather a single concept which is theorized to influence decisions, but is theoretically underdeveloped.

⁵⁸ For a summary see Levy/Thompson (2010: 139).

3.5.2.2 Prospect Theory

In contrast to theorizing perception, prospect theory is a more encompassing approach which tries to explain non-rational decision making. It is an attempt to apply a model of psychological behavior that contains rational choice elements to international relations. The theory was developed to explain decisions under risk by the economists David Kahnemann and Amos Tversky (1979). People make decisions about gains or losses through a reference point and tend to overestimate the negative utility of losses compared to positive utility of gains. They also overweight certain outcomes to probable ones or value what they already possess over goods they seek for. Additionally, people exhibit risk-averse behavior with regard to gains and risk acceptance with regard to losses. This flexibility in choice behavior distinguishes prospect theory from expected utility theory (see below) (Levy 2003: 215). Accordingly, states tend to go to war when they expect a loss of resources, territory or reputation in case of inactivity. But they also hesitate to engage in militarized disputes for the prospect of gains. According to prospect theory, the expectation of a threat is the most probable way for a state to go to war.

3.5.2.3 Poliheuristic Theory of Decision-Making

As prospect theory, the poliheuristic theory of decision-making deals with a combination of rational decision methods with non-rational steps. In the poliheuristic theory of decision-making, the actor eliminates all options which lead to unwanted domestic costs and adopts a rational, compensatory evaluation of the remaining strategy. He then selects the option with the overall highest expected utility (Mintz 1993, 2004; Mintz et al. 1997). This two stage model combines a non-compensatory decision rule with loss-aversion in the first stage and a compensatory expected-utility decision rule in the second stage. Levy and Thompson find it “particularly well suited to types of situations in which a particular value or dimension cannot be compromised, whether it be the domestic political security of a political leader or the national security of the country (Levy/Thompson 2010: 155).

3.5.2.4 Crisis Decision-Making

Crisis decision-making is studied because the decision-making process is strongly related to the issue it is about. A crisis leads to a flow of information and tasks and implements time pressure. These factors increase stress which lowers the quality of the decision-making. Crisis decisions that are made under a high quality process have the most favorable outcomes for the decision-maker without increasing the conflict (Herek et al. 1987: 206). A high-quality process of decision-making is characterized by the absence of gross omissions in surveying alternatives, gross omissions in

surveying objectives, the failure to examine major costs and risks of the preferred choice, a poor information search, a selective bias in processing information in hand, the failure to reconsider originally objected alternatives, and the failure to work out detailed implementation, monitoring, and contingency plans. Irving Janis and Leon Mann (1977) have identified these criteria as defecting decision-making.

3.5.2.5 Expected Utility

In contrast to psychological decision-making, I finally examine rational decision-making. The model explains how decisions are actually made but also has a normative component of how decisions ought to be made.

Rationality of the actor is a central assumption in this model. Rationality is defined as the “maximization of values under constraints” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 130). It is not important which goals the actor pursues, as long as he identifies his goals and implements actions which will maximize these goals. Further, theorists have to integrate the fact that actors have more than one goal. These goals have different priorities and maximizing one goal might cause a trade-off for another goal. In order to advance one’s goals, one has to evaluate possible strategies to archive these goals. Further, one has to estimate the consequences (costs and benefits) of each strategy. The estimation of consequences is a complex process and happens under uncertainty.⁵⁹ Certainty is rarely present in international relations. In a conflict the actor does not only have to evaluate the likely consequences of his action but also how the adversary or a third party will perceive this action and react to it. Generally all these decisions are made without sufficient information. To come to a decision, the actor needs a decision-rule. Most scholars use some kind of expected-utility calculations as basis for decision-making. The actor makes estimates about all consequences of possible actions, assesses the probability of occurrence of each consequence, evaluates the utility⁶⁰ of each outcome, weights each utility by its probability of occurrence and calculates the weighted sum. This is the expected utility (Levy/Thompson 2010: 132). In conflict, each party makes a series of these decision and decision-makers integrate learning experience of former decisions into their later decisions. The model is applicable to individual or collective decision-making.⁶¹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita (1981a) has

⁵⁹ Uncertainty refers to situations where the decision-maker lacks information about possible outcomes and the probability distribution of their occurrence. In short, uncertainty connotes a state of incomplete information (Morrow 1994: 28–33).

⁶⁰ Utility is the outcome of the net benefits minus the costs.

⁶¹ Collective decision-making raises some analytical problems. A state has to be treated as a single actor with a single set of goals. There has to be consensus about these goals within the state. In reality these conditions are only met in a state with great consensus within the decision-maker elite or there is a single strong decision-maker. The coalitional approaches also emanate from rational decision-making but reject the unitary actor model and integrate a plurality of goals of different actors within the state.

designed an expected-utility approach especially to explain the occurrence of war. The war trap is a model of decision-making under conditions of rationality. Utilities are rationally measured and the choice with the highest utility is taken. The war trap revisited⁶² is a general expected-utility model of necessary but not sufficient conditions involved in bi- and multilateral interstate conflicts. The decision to initiate a war is supposed to be made by a single, rational decision maker who tries to maximize his utility. The indicators for the utilities between the states are measured as the degree of similarity in their military agreements with other nations (structural equivalence measure) (Knoke 1983: 776). Bueno de Mesquita's principal assumptions are: the decision to initiate war can be viewed as if it was the outcome of calculations of a single, all-important decision-maker, the decision-makers are rational expected-utility maximizers, differences in leaders' orientations towards risk influence their decision-making, uncertainty about the probable behavior of other states in a potential conflict affects the decision-making and national power decays over distance (Bueno de Mesquita 1980: 917). The utility of the consequences of going to war is each multiplied by the probability of their occurrence and added up. The expected utility consists of two separate components: utility per se and the probability of occurrence. The decision-maker chooses the option which promises the highest expected utility. In the war trap the decision-maker goes to war when the expected utility of winning a war is greater than the expected loss when losing the war. The theory is enlarged by integrating potential allies on both sides. The actors have to embed the behavior of their own and the adversary's allies into their expected utility calculations. Further, the power of each state is taken into account. So the hypotheses make statements about state behavior in cases of tensions under conditions of power ratios and alignments. In the article *War Trap Revisited* (1985a) Bueno de Mesquita corrects some deficiencies of his former model and deduces new propositions that identify important limitations on conflict initiation, and relationships resulting from differences in perceptions. Hypotheses are grouped in two clusters: escalation under shared perception and escalation when perception differs (Bueno de Mesquita 1985a). The hypotheses make statements about war initiation under conditions of actors' perceptions about the outcome and costs of war. The model is criticized for developing only necessary but not sufficient conditions and its deficient applicability to reality because of its normative implication of rational decisions in conflicts (Guetzkow 1982: 627). Further, the utilization of mathematics for the study of international relations seems to be controversial to some:

“No student of international politics should have to suffer pages of mathematics at the level

⁶² *The War Trap* (1981a) is the monography where Bueno de Mesquita introduced his approach, in 1985 he published the article *The War Trap Revisited* (1985a) where he corrected some deficiencies and extended his model.

of 'ninth-grade algebra' (p. x) [Bueno de Mesquita (1982) editor`s note] only to be made aware of such banalities, tautologies, and glimpses of the blindingly obvious” (Booth 1984: 296).

However, expected utility theories are usually most thoughtfully developed and “come closest to achieving a fully specified theory of war” (Bennett/Stam 2004: 85). Bueno de Mesquita manages to provide extensive empirical tests where the model performs well and provides explanations for conflict initiation and escalation independent of temporal, regional and cultural parameters (Zagare 1982: 739, Knoke 1983: 776 – 777). The theory explains rational decision-making under the risk and uncertainty induced by flexible behavior of allies and estimated power relations and is a most useful “contribution to the scientific understanding of interstate conflict” (Zagare 1982: 739).

3.5.3 Implications of the First Image

The first image can be divided into two subcategories. War is explained on the basis of decisions of individuals or groups. Further, individual decision-making can be divided into rational and psychological approaches. Depending on whether an individual or a group is responsible for the decision to go to war, the mechanisms of decision-making differ. I examined the bureaucratic politics and organizational process model, group-think theory, perception, prospect theory, the poliheuristic theory of decision-making, crisis decision-making and the expected utility approach.

Group decision making, which leads a state to enter war, is described by the bureaucratic politics and organizational process model through bargaining processes between actors with different interests, perceptions and power. Further, organizational structures can disturb the processing of information about the adversary. Here social aspects of group decision-making are not in focus. Group-think theory on the other hand argues that not political but internal social pressure leads a group to take a decision.

Psychological aspects of individual decision-making are non-rational influences on single decision-makers. Perceptions, as learned above also relevant to many other theories, are a complex phenomenon which is difficult to theorize. Nonetheless it is a promising aspect of investigating the causes of war.

Prospect theory, the poliheuristic theory of decision-making and crisis-decision making are all theories which reconstruct individual processes of decision-making under the influence of various factors which lead to non-rational evaluations. According to prospect theory, a leader can, due to a certain reference point, perceive a potential loss as more severe than a comparable potential gain and therefore irrationally favor war in an ongoing interstate conflict. Loss-aversion is also integrated in the poliheuristic theory of decision-making. These two theories can be applied to all situations of

decision-making. Scholars of crisis decision-making concentrate on the processes during political crises. Crises impose pressure upon actors, who, due to stress, make different decisions than they would under circumstances of no stress. The rational approach of expected utility stands in contrast to that. The war trap provides an explanation for rational decision-making about war or peace. The actors make utility calculations about the consequences of different actions. These calculations include the influence of alliance structures, relative power and perceptions.

Within the first image, analytical differences can be made between rational and psychological and group and individual decisions. The fact that perceptions play a major role in theories of the causes of war in the first image is noticeable. Perceptions are integrated in group and individual models and even in a rational approach. Further, power relations and alliances have proved to be important for rational models of war.

3.6 Conclusion on the Causes of War

This chapter is a summary of what we know about the causes of war. The scientific field of war causation is wide, all schools-of-thought contributed ideas. Although these theories should rather be recognized as complementary than competing, consensus about what causes wars is limited to few variables which are employed repeatedly in different theories. The aim of this chapter was to extract these variables.

Generally speaking, theories which focus too much on a single aspect are weak in providing (theoretically) coherent explanations (Cashman 1993: 179, Rasler/Thompson 2001: 680). Interstate conflict is a multicausal event that demands the consideration of various factors. War is an equifinal event, so there are “multiple paths to war” (Levy/Thompson 2010: 213). Theories which combine several independent variables are more probable to provide reliable results of war causation. Although parsimony is a desirable key component for constructing theories, many theories with few or only one variable correspondingly lack explanatory power. So researchers should employ as few variables as possible but focus on valid explanations.

Many theories have opposing hypotheses. Imperialist theories of war link a capitalist economic system with war while liberal trade theories link capitalism with peace. Following Waltzian neorealism, bipolarity in the international system is the most peaceful order (Waltz 1964), while hegemonic theories favor unipolarity as most peaceful. Factors which are related to peace under some circumstances and related to war under other circumstances require further investigation of the conditions under which these factors appear.

Employing an order for an overview of the causes of war is difficult. I chose the levels-of-analysis framework because it has proven its applicability in previous studies and is, with careful use, the best

ordering tool we have. Many third image theories fall within the realist paradigm. These static theories are contrasted with dynamic hegemonic theories. Within the second image, the theories of the causes of war are much more diverse. While on the third image all theories under investigation center on power, theories on the second image have various foci. Many state level theories concentrate on just one main variable: regime type, political elite, scapegoating, trade, and culture. These theories open up the state black box and investigate internal processes and characteristics of states. They are connected by the assumption that different states behave differently, especially when a conflict is emerging. But the advantage of these theories is also their disadvantage since they only provide limited explanatory power. They focus on single aspects within a state. If these factors are not present in a case, the theories cannot be applied. Imperialist theories of war cannot explain war before the emergence of capitalism. Democratic peace theory cannot explain peace between autocracies. The divisionary theory of war explains war with policies implied by leaders facing decreasing support. The explanatory power is limited to states where a political leader need support of the population (democratic or at least semi-democratic structures) in an ongoing internal political crisis which produces the need to create support for the leader. "That is, the divisionary theory of war is not really a theory of war. It is a theory (also an incomplete one) of the foreign policy behavior of an individual state with respect to one particular issue" (Levy 1989: 282). The coalitional theories focus on domestic groups which have different (economic) interests and how they implement their interests. The assumptions of these models are strongly economically based. Aggressive behavior of a state driven by economic imperatives of interests groups does not make war. An explanation for the interaction with another state is needed.

The aspect of interactions between states and systemic factors must not be overlooked since war is a systemic outcome of interactions of at least two states. These aspects are caught by dyadic theories of war. The bargaining model of war focuses on interactions between conflicting states. It states that both states prefer a negotiated outcome to a more costly war. War only occurs when negotiations have failed. In combination with the liberal trade argument, it can be concluded (opposed to the imperialist argument) that strong capitalist states are the warrantors of peace.

A security-related approach is provided by the steps to war model. It takes on the variables territorial issue, rivalry, military capabilities, alliances and combines them to a cumulative model. The model is processual and interactive. Dyadic theories deal with the interactions of states and how war can emerge from these. In contrast to state level theories, they do not investigate what leads to the action of the single state.

The first image theories deal with inner state factors once again. These theories make statements about how decisions are made by groups or individuals. They cannot theoretically comprehensively

explain war. They can explain the application of aggressive foreign policies if they manage the theoretical transition from an individual decision to the execution of a foreign policy.

When overlooking the various theories on the causes of war on the different images, one can find some factors which appear in many theories. Power, alliances and perceptions seem to play an important role when investigating war causation. A lot of theories employ these variables and mechanisms are supplemented by them. The variables can be relevant in any war independent of space and time and obviously have an influence on the origin of war. These factors supplement different theories, especially those which contain multiple variables.

Table 1: *Overview of the Theories of the Causes of War and their Major Variables*

levels	theories/approaches	major variables
international level	realism balance of power theory hegemonic theories	anarchy, (military) power, alliance (balancing), security, polarity, uncertainty, perceptions
dyadic level	bargaining model of war the steps to war	preferences and beliefs, bargaining, trade, rivalry, territory, power (arms race), alliances, perception
state level	regime type, imperialism coalitional models diversionary theory clash of civilizations	democratic structures, economy, bargaining of interest groups, ideology, domestic tensions, culture and religion
group level	bureaucratic politics and organizational process models, group think theory,	status of decision-makers and bargainers, conformity with group
individual level	perception, prospect theory, poliheuristic model of decision-making, crisis decision-making expected utility	perception, preferences, risk, loss of resources, expectation of threat, rationality, loss-aversion, time pressure, uncertainty, power, expectation of winning, alliance

3.6.1 Power

All mentioned third image theories deal with power. The study of power in connection with war is independent of geographical areas and centuries. Realism and its variations employ assumptions which are mainly determined by the integration of power into the analysis of state behavior. Classical realism assigns power a central role in its hypotheses, as states pursue the allocation of power. Neorealism incorporates power more indirectly as a tool for managing security. Offensive and defensive realists consider power as most important factor shaping international outcomes of state interactions. Neoclassical realists focus on power as important factor of a state's foreign policy. Balance of power theory states that the main determinate of state behavior (balancing) is power. Hegemonic theories differ from the other third image theories by introducing dynamic processes into the study of international relations but still power, or strictly speaking changes in power, are the center of investigation, as changes in power lead to war. Power is a major variable in the studies of the causes of war. Whether power is solely considered as military capabilities or is also measured in economic, industrial or demographic terms, all system level theories have hypotheses which relate power to the outbreak of war.

On the second image, only the dyadic model of the steps to war encompasses power in military terms. States rise the probability of war when they engage in an arms race during a conflict. Arms races are attempts by states to change the relative power in their favor.

Further, power is an important variable within the war trap. Decision are made under expected utility calculations which are influenced by considerations of the power of each state. Estimations of each state's power are part of the calculations of the utility of an escalation to war. Bueno de Mesquita makes some counterintuitive statements: states sometimes attack the more powerful adversary and if there are two adversaries, it is possible that the state attacks which is the more powerful of those two. Disagreement exist between the different scholars about the measurement of power and it has to be adjusted to the time period under investigation, as the factors determining the power of a state underlie some variation during the centuries, but nonetheless power is the central variable of interest. The concept of power influencing decisions of states between war and peace is common to various theories, although these have opposing assumptions in other topics. Which influence does power have on the avoidance of war? An investigation of the impact of power on the deescalation of conflict is obvious.

3.6.2 Alliances

Alliances play an important role in several theories. Further, investigating alliances in a conflict is independent of space and time since they are potentially present in conflicts over the centuries and

alliance building is known in any geographical area. As balancing is tackled by all realist theories, alliances play a role in every realist theory. In some theories, alliances are not the focus of analysis (neoclassical realism), in some they are a major theoretical determinant (balance of power theory). Alliance building is a central variable in the theoretical assumptions of neorealism and balance of power theory. Alliances are built by states to increase their power to oppose another state's superior power. Balancing of power through alliance building is the reaction of states against an uprising hegemon and lowers the probability of war.

Offensive realism identifies two possible strategies for states to react to a stronger state: balancing and buck-passing. Although buck-passing is identified as the preferred strategy, balancing through alliance building is an important option in state interactions. In contrast to offensive realism, defensive realists consider balancing as preferred strategy against aggression. Further, alliance building is a mechanism which allows cooperation under anarchy.

Moreover, alliances are considered as an important step towards war by the steps to war model. Senese and Vasquez regard alliance building as a realpolitik strategy which leads - together with other variables - to the escalation of a conflict to war. Bueno de Mesquita, on the other hand, tests the deterring effects of alliances in a conflict. Alliance as central variable in the propositions of the war trap is theoretically linked to deescalation if the constellation of alliance is asymmetric. States have to evaluate the probable behavior of third states (support for themselves or the adversary) before deciding to wage a war against the adversary.

3.6.3 Perception

Perceptions, strongly disputed over decades, are part of many theories. The central assumption when dealing with perceptions is the distinction between a real world and a perceived world. In 1965, Margaret Sprout and Harold Sprout already made the distinction between the psychological milieu and the operational milieu. The psychological milieu is the world as perceived by the actor while the operational milieu is the world as it really is. Decision-makers define their situation independent of their psychological milieu. The behavior of an individual is not only determined by objective environmental factors as state size, regime type, and geography. Environmental factors can only indirectly influence the decision if the decision-maker actually perceives these factors.⁶³

If one is directly geared to this logic, "theories of conflict on the nation state level must be seen in a different light" (Cashman 1993: 158). National levels matter but the perception of individuals of these national factors matters more. Capitalist states are not really more aggressive than socialist

⁶³ Further environmental factors can directly influence the outcomes of decisions made by actors.

states. It is just that capitalist leaders perceive an expansionist need in the economy. Democratic states are not more peaceful than authoritarian states, but they are perceived as more peaceful by other democracies. Further, the power of a state is a less important factor in the decision to go to war than the perceived power. van Evera comes to the same conclusion when he expands his argument by stating that all his hypotheses about the outbreak of war receive their full explanatory power when they are “recast as hypotheses on the effects of false *perceptions* of the dangers they frame” (van Evera 1999: 6). Scholars of neoclassical realism also emphasize the fact that leaders’ perceptions influence the foreign policy of a state. They regard the influence of the perception of capabilities as more important for a decision of war and peace than the real capabilities.

In the steps to war model, Senese and Vasquez come to the conclusion that there is an increased probability of war if threat perceptions are induced by rivalry, territorial disputes and arms races. The democratic culture and norms model identifies a lower tendency of democracies going to war with other democracies since these ideologically similar states consider themselves as less hostile. The process of crisis decision-making can be interrupted by wrong or little information and time pressure. This can lead to the perception that the adversary is more hostile than he is in reality. Although studies of crisis decision-making focus on patterns how decisions are made, criteria for defecting decisions making can lead to perceptions which lead to the certain decisions.

The governmental politics model integrates perceptions as factors which shape the decisions of the executive branch. Prospect theory does not integrate perception in their considerations but the mechanisms which are explained lead to perceptions of what is the most desirable good. The reference point leads to the perception that losses weigh more than comparable gains. Although expected utility is a rational approach, Bueno de Mesquita has integrated perceptions in his war trap models. He emphasizes the importance of shared and different perceptions of the states in a conflict situation (Bueno de Mesquita 1985a). A non-rational variable as perception can influence a rational calculation about which policy to pursue in a conflict.

These three important factors of the study of escalation to war are now investigated in their relation to the deescalation of conflict. I conceptualize the selected variables power, alliances and perceptions on the dyadic level. They are employed as conditions influencing the interactions between two states in a conflict situation. They are not bound to structures of a single state (state level), neither are they shaped by the international system (system level). Certainly dyadic variables are influenced by variables from the other levels, understanding that conflicts require a multilevel explanation. Nonetheless I restrict my study to the dyad level as the main point of interest are factors influencing the interaction of states in a crisis. How these variables are determined by other factors and how they can be manipulated is not the focus of my study.

4. Research Design

The research design will give insight into the method and case selection which is applied in order to investigate the outlined puzzle. A y-orientated process tracing of a small-N case study will serve as preferred method of investigation. Within this methodological approach, I will describe the range of causality in international relations, the need for case studies and the preferred method of process tracing of historical cases. In order to conduct the tracing of processes leading to deescalation, I will establish the dependent variable 'deescalation' as defined in chapter two and outline the design of the independent variables deducted from the causes of war theories. I will establish hypotheses about the connection between the independent variables drawn from the causes of war theories and the deescalation of a crisis. Additionally I will introduce the general explanations for deescalation, also outlined in chapter two, as null-hypotheses. These will improve the liability of the following tests. The next step is to select cases for conducting the case studies. Therefore I will establish case selection criteria and discuss problems of selection bias. Finally I will introduce the cases which I will investigate in the next chapter: the Rann of Kutch crisis and the Imia/Kardak crisis.

4.1 Method

The phenomenon under investigation, deescalation, is complex. Empirical tests require a careful research design in order to be able to retrace processes which brought about the reduction of tensions in an interstate crisis. "The analyst explores a small number of cases [...] in detail, to see whether events unfold in the manner predicted [...]" (van Evera 1997: 29). Historical explanations intend to illustrate past events. The goal is to give a precise explanation of what happened why. "Indeed, historical explanation is a standard approach for case study and small-N research in general" (Mahoney et al. 2009: 117).

4.1.1 Causality

The research of the underlying study is designed to investigate causal links between independent variables and the dependent variable of deescalation. The concept of causation in the study of international relations is controversial. "Deep philosophical rifts have come to divide the discipline of IR between *causal* and *non-causal* forms of theorizing" (Kurki 2008: 2). Rationalist or positivist scholars accomplish studies of causal linkages between observable variables in international relations. Reflectivist⁶⁴ approaches on the other hand reject the view of analyzing causal linkages and prefer a

⁶⁴ Rationalism (also Positivism) and Reflectivism (also Postpositivism) are terms characterized by Keohane (1988). Rationalists favor the scientific approach to the study of international relations, while reflective approaches reject the procedure of rationalism and favor historical and sociological studies (Keohane 1988: 384).

study of world politics in social, normative and discursive terms. Based on Martin Hollis and Steve Smith (1990), one can make a philosophical distinction between these two approaches to the study of international relations. One can explain world politics through causal analysis which detects patterns in processes; or understand actions by examining the creation of meaning. The second is considered as a non-causal approach while the explanation aims at finding causes (Hollis/Smith 1990: 3). These two forms are “fundamentally different [...], embedded in fundamentally different views on the nature of the social world” (Hollis/Smith 1990: 1).

In the underlying study, a positivist research design is applied. I will observe various independent variables and their impact on crisis deescalation. The method is a y-orientated process tracing of a small-N case study. Y-centered research designs explain events by taking all relevant variables in consideration. The strategy is up to find out which independent variable explains the (variation of the) dependent variable (Ganghof 2005:77).

4.1.2 Case Study

Case studies, formerly considered as a weak testing method (van Evera 1997: 51), have become methodologically more elaborated (Levy 1998: 161f).⁶⁵ van Evera shows the advantages of case studies for international relations: “The case study method has two strengths [...]: First, tests performed with case studies are often strong. [...] Second, inferring and testing explanations that define how the independent causes the dependent variable are often easier with case-study than large-n methods” (van Evera 1997: 54). Through case studies, researchers are able to uncover “previously unnoticed factors and historical patterns [...] because they are simultaneously sensitive to data and theory” (Achen/Snidal 1989: 167,168). “The great advantage of the case study is that by focusing on a single (or on a small number of) case(s), (these) case(s) can be intensively examined even when the research resources at the investigator’s disposal are relatively limited” (Lijphart 1971: 691).

To understand past events one needs the “fine-grained information” (Bennett/Stam 2004: 221) of the process. The in-depth focus on a small number of cases provides detailed knowledge and puts effort in including contextual conditions. This method provides information to make statements about causal relations between different aspects of dyadic interaction and the non-escalation of conflict possible. While a large-N analysis provides more security about the hypothesis validity through having a greater amount of test cases, qualitative analysis can provide an in-depth examination of particular events and tell how the hypothesis works/the hypotheses work. Quantitative studies improve the comparability of the research but detailed analysis helps making progress in identifying

⁶⁵ Progress in developing case study methods was made by George (1982), Gary King et al. (1994), Stephen van Evera (1997) and Andrew Bennett and Alexander George (2005).

causal mechanisms.⁶⁶ To be sure of causal coherence, a detailed examination of it is necessary before the validity of the statement can be strengthened by quantitative tests. Consequently, qualitative and quantitative analysis should be considered as complementary to compensate each other's limitations (Levy 2007: 200).

A case study as a detailed examination of aspects of historical events is useful for developing or testing explanations that might be generalizable to other events (George/Bennett 2005: 17; Levy/Thompson 2010: 216). It is an adjuvant first step in the process of theory development. Like most case study researchers I consider cases as instruments for constructing and evaluating broader theoretical assumptions (Levy 2008: 14) and as useful tool for the ongoing dialogue between theory and evidence. The method of process tracing will enable me to infer antecedent conditions that enable the hypotheses to operate. By tracing back the causal processes which lead to the outcome, at each stage antecedent conditions will be inferred from the context (van Evera 1997: 72).

4.1.2.1 Process-Tracing

Here, process-tracing means the tracing of causal processes by which an initial position turns into the outcome.⁶⁷ This includes any causal mechanisms, not only processes of decision making, as limited by Alexander George and Timothy McKeown (1985). Process tracing is the suitable method to “identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between the independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable” (van Evera 1997: 64). Process-tracing is efficient in identifying causal mechanisms and the evaluation of hypotheses through tracing causal processes. It can help exposing intervening causal mechanisms and exploring reciprocal and complex causation and endogeneity. The use of historical process tracing makes it unlikely that a spurious association will be mistaken for a valid causal relationship.

“More generally, process-tracing can identify single or different paths to an outcome, point out variables that were otherwise left out in the initial comparison of cases, check for spuriousness, and permit causal inference on the basis of a few cases or even a single case” (Bennett/George 2005: 215).

The method of process-tracing involves an intense analysis of certain sequences of events. This enables the researcher to gain insights in the causal mechanisms between the independent and

⁶⁶ One can enhance the comparability of case studies by choosing some with uniform background conditions. This creates a semi-controlled environment and limits the effect of third variables by keeping them constant (van Evera 1997: 52).

⁶⁷ This broad definition is introduced by van Evera (1997: 70).

dependent variables. Process tracing can produce a lot of with-in case observations. This requires an intense information processing by the researcher. The documentation of the process which converts the input into the output requires lots of evidence. Case study tests ought to identify the variables which are needed to establish hypotheses about the process of deescalation, therefore data richness of the cases is of high importance (van Evera 1997: 64; George/Bennett 2005: 206).

Process-tracing allows numerous with-in case observations but these observations must be linked through causal logic to be able to offer an explanation for the case (Bennett/George 2005: 207). In order to establish these causal links, one has to “(1) state the theory, (2) state expectations about what we should observe in the case if the theory is valid, and what we should observe if it is false; and (3) explore [...] cases looking for congruence or incongruity between expectations and observation” (van Evera 1997: 56).

Although I do not perform a theory test as described above but investigate alternative explanations for deescalation by establishing new hypotheses which I deduced from theories of the causes of war, I will follow the suggested process to uncover causal mechanisms. First, I will set up the dependent variable “deescalation”, then I will introduce the null-hypotheses. These are drawn from the various explanations discussed in chapter 2. Mediation, institutional involvement, democratic domestic structures and system polarity serve as independent variables, which are linked to the dependent variable deescalation. Next, I will establish the test hypotheses. I will employ power, alliance and perception as independent variables and connect them to the dependent variable deescalation through causal logic.

4.1.2.2 Dependent Variable Deescalation

In the previous chapter I made several explanatory notes on the phenomenon of deescalation. In the underlying research design, deescalation serves as the dependent variable in the case studies. Deescalation is the outcome of certain processes in an interstate crisis. Here deescalation is not treated as measures which are undertaken to promote the reduction of tensions but as an event. This means that deescalation is a phenomenon of tension reduction through the lessening of hostilities, a change from violent behavior to a non-violent one. Historical cases of interstate conflicts will be selected which meet the criterion of deescalation short of the emergence of war.

4.1.2.3 Null-Hypotheses

Null-hypotheses refer to the common view of the research question while the research or test hypotheses are about the actual point of the researcher`s interest. The researcher`s aim is to reject the null-hypotheses and verify the test hypotheses. The null-hypotheses are supposed to contrast the test-

hypotheses.

In the underlying study, the secondary causes of deescalation as elaborated in chapter two will serve as independent variables for the null-hypotheses while deescalation is again the dependent variable. In chapter two I gave an overview about the state of research considering the causes of deescalation. I identified measures of deescalation, conflict ripeness, adversarial relations, domestic democratic structures and system polarity.

For the elaboration of the null-hypotheses I use mediation by third parties and institutional involvement from the cluster of measures for deescalation. I do not test for unilateral measures as they cannot provide a logically complete explanation of an outcome of interactions. I do not test for bilateral measures as they try to explain the process leading to the reduction of tensions but not what makes the adversaries want to deescalate. Deterrence will not be included in the null-hypotheses as it is a superordinate concept for interactions in a crisis which lead to escalation or deescalation. Deescalation through deterrence has to be brought about by superiority of power of one party and the impression of the willingness to use force of the other party. These factors will be tested in the test-hypotheses (see below). The same argument accounts for rivalry, as rival adversarial relations can lead to deescalation depending on mutual perceptions of the adversaries concerning hostility and willingness to employ force. Further, I will not have a null-hypothesis on conflict ripeness. Even more than deterrence and rivalry, the ripeness of a conflict is a superordinate concept for various time-related factors. Additionally, the concept of timing of deescalation is more suitable for long-term conflicts. Short-term linearly escalating crises, which are the cases of interest here, are less suitable for tests of the ripeness approach. Finally, conflict ripeness also encompasses intervening variables such as perception and institutional involvement, which will be tested in the case study.

Thus, null-hypotheses are formed for mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and the polarity of the international system. These are the most promising null-hypotheses for contrasting with the test-hypotheses. Mediation by third parties is theorized to bring about deescalation through providing direct and indirect communication and promoting ceasefire negotiations. Apart from their mediatory function, institutions are able to foster deescalation by establishing an international surrounding which makes the setback from violence easier. They provide information, norms and ideas and finally they are able to deter an aggressor through collective defense commitment. Further, domestic democratic structures are strongly debated to promote deescalation. This can happen through norms, bureaucratic and political restraints and the public opinion. The last null-hypothesis related deescalation to the international system polarity. Scholar disagree whether uni-, bi-, or multipolarity is most powerful for promoting deescalation. Unipolarity reduces the incentives to fight through the absence of hegemonic rivalry. Bipolarity can lead to deescalation due

to its promotion of international stability, which can be fostered by states through balancing behavior. If there are not two poles but several in the international system, multipolarity can bring about conflict deescalation as regional power centers promote peaceful conflict resolution in their area. Additionally, the interaction patterns are very complex for states, which makes conflict escalation and war an even more unpredictable undertaking.

By designing these null-hypotheses for testing in the case studies I intend to reject the general explanations for deescalation. First of all, process-tracing of cases of deescalation enables me to investigate the impact of the secondary explanations for deescalation in detail. I will be able to evaluate the impact of mediation, institutions, democratic structures and polarity on crisis deescalation and disprove their benefit for deescalation. Afterwards I will test the applicability of the actual cause of deescalation: variations of the causes of war. Therefore I have to define the independent variable.

4.1.2.4 Independent Variables

After taking a closer look at the state-of-the-art of the causes of war, I filtered the three most often discussed causes. Power, alliance and perceptions are employed by several theories on the emergence of war from different levels of analysis. I will use these variables as independent variables for the test hypotheses and investigate their impact on deescalation. I will define the meaning of power, alliance and perceptions against the background of interstate conflict as these variables can be defined and tested with different foci. Following that, the hypotheses about power, alliances and perceptions leading to deescalation will be established.

4.1.2.4.1 Power

HP: Unequal relative power between two adversaries fosters deescalation.

This assumption seems to be self-evident. But the explanatory power of this hypothesis will appear when it is further elaborated. First I will define power in an applicable manner for the underlying study and its relation to conflict. Power is a central grid in international relations. "Power, in the tradition of Realpolitik, is thought of as the currency of politics among nations; and international conflict is the normal outgrowth of power relations" (Kadera 1999: 150). Definitions of power are various. "[P]ower operates in various forms and has various expressions that cannot be captured by a single formulation" (Barnett/Duvall 2005: 41). Here the realist concept of power is favored, which is a very general definition: "an actor controlling another to do what that other would not otherwise do"

(Barnett/Duvall 2005: 39).⁶⁸ “Measuring the power of states or coalitions is complicated and difficult” (Walt 1985: 34).⁶⁹ An adequate definition of power for this research seems to be on the basis of capabilities which are useful to deter. For studying power as a cause of deescalation, one has to define power in a way that allows to investigate variables which are considered by states in their decision to escalate or deescalate.

Power is based on the material capabilities that a state has (Mearsheimer 2003: 55), so power will be measured in military terms. “The supreme importance of the military instrument lies in the fact that the *ultima ratio* of power in international relations is war” (Carr (1939) 2001: 109).

4.1.2.4.1.1 Absolute vs. Relative Power

Power and conflict seem to have a close relationship. “Most powerful predictors of war are primarily associated with the concentration of power in the international system” (Bennett/Stam 2004: 147). To assess a state`s power, the researcher first addresses absolute power, which means the capabilities of each state involved in the conflict. But as absolute power has few informative value when dealing with conflict on a dyadic level, the researcher has to proceed with the assessment of the relative power. One state`s power has more explanatory value when it is put into perspective to the power of another state. Explanations of behavior integrating relative power are independent of the actual, absolute power of a state. It makes no difference if the observed dyad is major-major, minor-minor or major-minor. As the focus of this study is on interactions of states, the explanatory value of relative power seems to be more promising. This will permit an evaluation of the military balance in the conflicting dyad and allow to make predictions about the relative power and deescalation.

4.1.2.4.1.2 Relative Capabilities

HP1: If one state in a conflicting dyad is militarily superior to the other, deescalation will emerge.

For deescalation, the assessment of the relative capabilities is a first important step since relative power assessments strongly influence the states` decision to escalate or deescalate. “[T]hey care about

⁶⁸ Other possible distinctions are between compulsory power, institutional power, structural power, productive power (Barnett/Duvall 2005). Singer et al. (1972) keep it simple as well: the ability of a nation to exercise and resist influence. Edward Carr ((1939)2001) divided power in military power, economic power and power over opinion. Bertrand Russell (1975) defines power as the production of intended effects. Mearsheimer (2003) differentiates between actual power (army and air and naval forces) and potential power (size of population and level of wealth).

⁶⁹ On the problems of national power measurement see for example Morgenthau ((1948) 1963: part 3) and Klaus Knorr (1975: chap. 3, 4).

relative power, not absolute power. [...] States that maximize relative power are concerned primarily with the distribution of material capabilities” (Mearsheimer 2003: 36). A clear superiority in terms of military capabilities drives the weaker state to refrain from further escalating steps in a conflict. The militarily superior state has more resources to deploy in case of a militarization of the conflict and can defeat the adversary. Although this does not always deter the weaker state from provocations, it will deter the weaker state from further escalating steps the closer the crisis comes to the brink of war. The weaker state can predict the outcome of war with the stronger state and is expected not to risk a war it will lose.

The decision what factors are suitable for the measurement of the power of a state is influenced by the Correlates of War Project. The COW collects facts about national material capabilities (NMC) and calculates the Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) from that.⁷⁰ Leaving the CINC aside, the author examines the NMC. It consists of demographic, industrial and military indicators. The industrial indicators “energy consumption” and “iron and steel production” are considered as archaic for warfare in the second half of the 20th century as states do not need a own steel and metal industry for the production of military equipment. The same argument counts for the demographic indicators “total population” and “urban population” as it is less important how many people one state has at its disposal for military use due to the existence of military personnel. This in turn is a valid measurement for power here. The left-over of the NMC is the military element, according to COW consisting of “military personnel” and “military expenditures”. In the case studies I will investigate the size of the military apparatus with the expenses and personnel of each adversary to assess the militarily superior state.

4.1.2.4.1.3 Geostrategy

HP2: If one state in a conflicting dyad has geostrategic vulnerabilities, deescalation will emerge.

Relative power in terms of capabilities is an important component for the assessment of the distribution of power between two states and its impact on their conflict behavior. But to fully grasp the power in crises, one has to consider the geostrategic power each state has. This accounts for the case of the actual crisis and of general war. Geostrategy means the combination of strategic planning under geographical considerations. It is “the extent to which geographical opportunities will be exploited depend[ing] on strategy” (Gray 1999: 2). Geostrategic power means the vulnerability and

⁷⁰ For data and codebooks see <http://correlatesofwar.org>.

advantages each state has when one assesses the impact of military capabilities in the environment the crisis takes place. This influences the deployability and effect of the military capabilities and therefore has to be assessed for power evaluations. Further, the concept of geostrategic power incorporates tactical settings of troops in the actual crisis. Depending on the tactics each military applies, they can gain an advantage or maneuver themselves in a bad position. This is, of course, fluent as troops are deployed in a crisis and move within the conflicting area. For the case studies, the tactical settings short of deescalation are relevant. This has to be incorporated in the concept of power since it strongly influences the outcome of armed hostilities. If, during a deployment, one side manages to reach a tactically superior position, this can deter the adversary from further escalating measures.

Finally one has to take into account the geostrategic power in case of an escalation to general war. Apart from the region where the actual crisis is fought out, the general geostrategic setting has to be considered. This is also relevant for a state`s decision to risk war by further escalation or to take deescalating steps to reduce the tensions and avoid a war. The geostrategic setting in case of general war is shaped by the strategic depths of each country. Strategic depth incorporates “distances between the frontlines or battle sectors and the combatant`s capital cities, industrial core areas, military installations, heartlands and population centers [...]”, and the assessment “[...] how vulnerable all these are to an offensive and whether the military can withdraw into own territory, absorbing the thrust and enabling own counter offensive” (Katoch 2014).

So to decide about further actions in a crisis, a state has to consider potential advantages or vulnerabilities caused by geographical conditions and military tactics in the actual crisis and further the strategic depth of both countries for general war. States will foster deescalation if they are vulnerable in the actual crisis and in case of general war. But they might also refrain from war if they have an advantage in the crisis but are vulnerable in case of war.

4.1.2.4.2 Alliance

HA: An alliance of military support has a deescalating effect in a conflict.

The relationship between alliance and conflict is complex and uncertain.

“The evidence clearly contradicts the hypothesis that alliance formation is generally associated with high levels of war. To the contrary it is more often associated with peace, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.” (Levy 1981: 581)

“From this perspective, alliances are pernicious because they have the unanticipated consequence of bringing about the necessary conditions of world war” (Vasquez 1992: xxvii).

“It is impossible to speak of international relations without referring to alliances; the two often merge in all but name. For the same reason, it is difficult to say much that is peculiar to alliances on the plane of general analysis” (Liska 1962: 3).

The alliances` function in conflict is like Janus. Alliances can have an escalating and a deescalating effect, depending on their structure. Definitions of alliances are various but often share the security aspect. The preferred one for this research is Walt`s from *Origin of Alliances*: “a formal or informal arrangement for security cooperation between two or more sovereign states” (Walt 1990: 12). Alliances are one of the main instruments of managing national security. They are commonly viewed as a response to threat and allow a state to extend its power beyond its national resources. Alliances are supposed to work through deterrence and as a vehicle for building capabilities which should ensure victory in case of a war. In contrast to institutions, alliances aim at states outside their own membership. Joining an alliance means some loss of autonomy for a state because it is supposed to use or prohibited from using its power under specific circumstances. Motivation for states to build alliances is either balancing or bandwagoning.⁷¹

The connection between alliances and the deescalation of conflict is unclear. “Military alliances have long been considered as key factor in international politics” (Leeds 2003: 427) but how which form of alliance influences the course of conflict is still unanswered. Theoretically, alliances tend to be followed by war rather than peace⁷². They increase threat perception, make the adversary build counter-alliances and enter an arms race (Wright 1965: 774; Holsti et al. 1973: 33; Christensen/Snyder 1990; Siverson/Starr 1991; Vasquez 1993; Kaplan (1957) 2005: 24). Others argue that military alliances are useful to build up coalitions and deter aggression (Gulick 1955; Morgenthau (1948) 1963; Waltz (1979) 2010). Christopher Gelpi (1999) argues that alliances are effective mediators in conflicts because of their ability to exercise power over their allied states. Further, alliances should reduce uncertainty in the international system, reduce the initiation of war because of miscalculation and misperception (Singer et al. 1972: 23) and alliances are supposed to deter war by clarifying

⁷¹ For an overview of alliance research see Maoz (2000) and Douglas Gibler (2000), both in Vasquez (ed. 2000); and more current Carlo Masala (2010) in Burgess (ed. 2010). George Liska (1962), Stephen Walt (1990) and Jack Snyder (1997) wrote the most extensive works on alliance, but with different research foci.

⁷² This view is evaluated by Singer/Small (1966b, 1968), Levy (1981), John Bremer (1992: 309 - 341), Vasquez (1994: chp. 5), Gibler/Vasquez (1998: 785 – 807) and Gibler (2000: 145 – 164).

possible military intervention or coalition (Levy 1981: 582).

Obviously alliance commitments influence the decision to escalate or deescalate a conflict. This holds for the directly involved adverse states and their allies. Some alliances serve a deterring effect while other alliances encourage a state to enter war. So which alliance effects a deescalation of an ongoing conflict? Different commitments of alliances seem to influence the different outcomes of conflict. Alliances influence the process of conflict by providing potential challengers with information about commitments. The challenger can assess if the conflict will remain bilateral or involve further parties (Leeds 2005: 119). Offensive alliances and alliances of non-intervention to an aggressor may encourage the state to enhance escalation. If the aggressor has allies that might intervene in his favor in a potential conflict, an escalation is more probable. An alliance of neutrality might encourage an aggressor to escalate the conflict, as he can be sure of the non-intervention of (the) other state(s) (Leeds 2003: 430). Defensive alliances to a target state have a deterrent effect. An aggressor may refrain from war if the adversary has allies which will intervene on the adversary's side in case of an attack. If the target state has allies who commit themselves to assistance in a conflict, a challenger can expect a multilateral conflict with lower probability to win. On the other hand, if the challenger can count on allies who assist the challenger or remain neutral, the challenger can outmatch (Leeds 2005: 119). Besides, when evaluating the impact of an alliance in a conflict, one has to take into consideration if the ally is politically relevant.⁷³

The tests to be carried out should reassess if there exists an alliance during the underlying conflict and offer valuable clues to the structure of a potential alliance. Dealing with alliances is mostly in reference to conflict. "When they are sufficiently intense, and security is the chief concern, conflicts are the primary determinants of alignments" (Liska 1962: 12). The alliance structure in an ongoing conflict is analyzed and the conflict outcome is compared to my predictions about deescalating effects of defensive alliance constellations. In order to test the existence of alliances between states, variables are inspired by the Correlates of War Project.⁷⁴ The variables deal with the character of the alliance members, the alliance type and its duration.

⁷³ A politically relevant ally is described in connection with the dyadic relationship. Political relevance is defined as any major-major or minor-major relationships, and minor-minor or major-minor relationships in which the allying parties are in the same region as a potential target state. For example, a US - Great Britain alliance is always relevant since they are both major powers, but a United States - Canada alliance is only relevant to Canadian and U.S. dyads if the other member of the dyad is in the same region. Regions and alliances are determined by the Correlates of War categorizations (Small/Singer 1982: 44 – 45; Levy 1983b: 24 – 43; Senese/Vasquez 2003).

⁷⁴ The early article *Formal Alliances: 1815 – 1939* by Singer/Small (1966a) was basis for establishing the variables.

4.1.2.4.2.1 System Membership

HA1: An ally has to be a state to be relevant for deescalation.

At least two of the alliance partners have to be qualified as independent nations and members of the international system. Nowadays this is easy to conduct by checking if the parties in question are members of the United Nations (UN).⁷⁵ This is an adequate measurement because most states have the membership and the non-members are “break-away” states or autonomous regions and protectorates with informal diplomatic agency. According to the research design they can be disregarded.

4.1.2.4.2.2 Alliance Commitment

HA2: An alliance has to be formally or informally defensive to foster deescalation.

Alliance commitments can aim at different state behavior and not everyone is relevant in a crisis. Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions Project (ATOP)⁷⁶ differentiates between pacts of neutrality, non-aggression, consultation and defense. In order to deter an adversary from further escalating steps in a crisis, defense pacts are of potential significance. Allies who sign a defense pact “promise one another active military support in the event one or more is attacked” (Leeds 2003: 430). An aggressor can suppose that in case of an attack on the target state, there will be a third state who will assist the target state militarily. This would escalate a bilateral war, as intended by the challenger, to a multilateral war which is less probable to be won by the attacker. So the challenger should be deterred by a defense agreement (Leeds 2003: 430). For the analysis of deescalation processes, a defensive alliance is relevant. These alliances can be formal or informal. Formal alliances mean signing a formal treaty with the ally defining the state’s behavior in case of displayed aggression from outside. They have a greater impact on the international system than informal ones. They promise to be more deterrent. In addition to signing official documents about behavior in case of conflict there is another form of alliance in international politics. Informal alliances are characterized mainly by political support of one state for his ally. This can be in official forms as well, for example in a treaty of friendship, where states do not codify their solidarity in case of conflict but make rather vague statements about the relation between the states. Further there can be alliance without any form of

⁷⁵ Singer/Small (1966a) suggest the following conditions to define the political status of the signatories: all marks of nationhood, a population exceeding 0.5 million and de facto diplomatic recognition by those that come closest to be international communities legitimizers. The author restricts herself to the diplomatic recognition through the UN, which is considered as easy and fruitful measurement.

⁷⁶ For more details see <http://atop.rice.edu/home>.

treaty. These are difficult to define and measure. Walt suggests “changes in behavior” and “verbal statements” as indicators for informal alliances (Walt 1990: 12). Furthermore, he also discusses the problems of a strict typology of alliances. In addition to examining historical proof of any form of alliance, an interpretation of the specific alliance is necessary to evaluate its actual political impact.⁷⁷ Like Walt I do not “seek to explain the precise arrangement the parties ultimately choose” (Walt 1990: 13), but look for the sole existence of any commitment and its broad intention.

4.1.2.4.2.3 Alliance Duration

HA3: The impact of the alliance is intensified, the longer it exists.

This is the third variable for the measurement of alliances. Again defining the duration of formal alliances is easier than informal ones. The date of the formal signing or writing down the treaty is considered as the start point of a formal alliance. The termination date is a bit more complicated to collect. First of all, the termination date of the treaty can be used but it has to be confirmed that no formal abrogation has occurred before. Typical events which cause an abrogation of a treaty are an explicitly recognized violation of commitment through intense crisis, wars, or regime changes. Further, the treaty can be formally renewed or extended (Singer/Small 1966: 6).

The measurement of the duration of informal alliances is difficult and the author will rely on similar indicators as of the identification of the alliance type. The dates of changes in states behavior and verbal statements are taken as beginning and termination dates. I am aware of problems that may result from missing information and questions of interpretation of information but, in fact, exact dates of alliances are not as important as the rough distinction between long and short alliances. This can be a reason for speculations about the difference in deterrence against outsiders between long term and short term?

4.1.2.4.3 Perception

HPer: If a state perceives its adversary as superior in terms of power and allies, deescalation will emerge.

As evaluated in chapter 3, perception is strongly related to the decision of war and peace. It locates the decision to go to war on how states perceive each other. Leaving aside the questions about who the perceiving persons and decision-makers are, there are official political statements from states`

⁷⁷ For narrative examples see Walt (1990: 12).

representatives which can be taken as an expression of the state's perception of the situation and as a basis for decisions. These mutual perceptions of the conflicting parties are conditions of interactions between states. "There are countless historical cases in which misperceptions are so blatant and so consequential that it is easy to conclude that war would not have occurred in their absence, so that misperceptions were a necessary cause of war"(Levy/Thompson 2010: 135).

4.1.2.4.3.1 Definition of Perception and Misperception

The central definition of the perception concept is that misperception means that there is a gap between image and reality, so perception means that image conforms to reality. Misperception includes inaccurate inferences, miscalculations of consequences, and misjudgments of another state's intentions (Jervis 1988: 101).⁷⁸ One must discern between primary and secondary misperception. While secondary misperception deals with the inaccurate perception of the perception of the adversary and the misunderstanding of the character of the decision-making process of the other, primary misperception is the central concern in the following analysis concept. It includes the perception of the adversary's capabilities and intentions and the intentions and capabilities of third states (Levy 1983a: 80). As already elaborated in footnote 57 I will not employ the term misperception in the following.

Causal coherence can be drawn between perception and the escalation of conflict. This depends mainly on the form of perception and not on the real circumstances. If a state perceives the adversary in a strategically better position or as stronger, it will refrain from war. Vice versa if the state considers itself in a better position, it will take the first-move advantage and attack. In many cases, a state goes to war because it is convinced of its own strength, the weakness of the adversary, and the positive outcome of the war. In many cases, these assumptions have turned out to be incorrect. According to deterrence theory, war occurs if the aggressor underestimates the willingness of the adversary to fight. The spiral model predicts that war occurs if two states exaggerate each other's hostility⁷⁹. In fact, war is often accompanied by perceptions which do not correspond to reality. Winter comes to the conclusion that "power motive imaginary" (Winter 2003) is consistently related to war. But, like in a lot of other research, this insight results only from correlation, not causation (Winter 2004: 395f). White states that misperception⁸⁰ is not always crucial for war. But it often comes together with other

⁷⁸ For more typologies of misperception see for example Ralph White (1968) and John Stoessinger ((1974) 1997). The distinction between the misperception of a state's motives and goals and the misperception of the reality is important, further misperception can be conceptualized as differences between the perception of parties of the same issues. Noel Kaplowitz considers the assessment of the perception gaps as the central focus of research. (Kaplowitz 1990: 19)

⁷⁹ For closer examination of misperception, deterrence theory and the spiral model see Jervis (1976 chap. 3).

⁸⁰ As stated before, I do not want to employ the term misperception. However, White uses it in his study and I am

problems of war (White 2004: 408). A theoretical and empirical relationship can be drawn between perceptual differences and the occurrence of war (Stoessinger (1974) 1997; Jervis 1976, 1989; Kim/Bueno de Mesquita 1995). One can assume that perception may cause war if the assessment of states differs from each other or from reality. The bargaining model approves the importance of perception in the process leading to war. If the actors are rational and the adversaries have the same information about military capabilities, they will have similar assessments of the outcome of war. If states have perceptions which lead to different expectations of the outcome, especially if one side expects more gains from war than from peace, war is inevitable (Levy/Thompson 2010: 135).

4.1.2.4.3.2 Relevant Objects of Perception

Assuming that a state which goes to war seriously expects to win, the question is: what does a state have to perceive to go to war? And, vice versa, which perception can lead to a deescalation of the conflict? “For the purpose of a meaningful conceptualization, it is necessary to identify what it is that is [mis]perceived, for it is through these phenomena that the linkages to war must be drawn”(Levy 1983a: 79).

First it has to be distinguished what kinds of perception are relevant for the decision to escalate or deescalate. One must differentiate between primary and secondary perception. While secondary perception deals with the perception of the perception of the adversary and the understanding of the character of the decision-making process of the other, primary perception is the central concern in the following analysis concept. It includes the perception of the adversary’s capabilities and intentions and the intentions and capabilities of third states (Levy 1983a: 80). The perception of capabilities and intentions are the two crucial factors relevant for conflict (Richardson 1994: 331). These are also the major concerns of intelligence analysis (Levy 1983a: 80). The second step is to hypothesize what has a state to perceive to decide not to escalate the conflict.

4.1.2.4.3.3 Perception of Intentions

HPer1: Deescalation can be stipulated if the conflicting states do not perceive war plans from the adversary.

Intentions are difficult to assess. What plays a central role thereby is the definition of threat of the decision-maker. The assumption of a very hostile adversary implies the expectation of an attack and leads to a higher probability to decide to fight. A state responds to the other’s hostility by increasing

indirectly citing him here. The same counts for following citations where the term misperception appears.

its military capabilities for deterrence and war preparation. That can initiate a conflict spiral. Escalations of conflict spirals are very likely if the initial perception is faulty because the adversary most probably perceives the accouterments as aggressive intention. The overestimation of hostility is the most common form of perception. It generates the feeling of inevitability of war and triggers preemptive strikes and preventive war (Levy 1983a: 89 – 91). Hostility in this case can be identified as the perception that the adversary has greater plans of aggression. The actual crisis is perceived as a foreplay to further aggressive expansive actions and leads to the assumption that the state has to prepare for conflict escalation. If the state considers his adversary as little hostile, it believes that the probability of the adversary's attack is low and therefore does not prepare for war itself. War is considered as avoidable. Documents and speeches will be used to evaluate the states' opinions of each other. Generally "there is an overall tendency for decision makers to see other states more hostile than they are" (Jervis 1968: 475).

4.1.2.4.3.4 Perception of Power

HPer2: If states perceive themselves as inferior in capabilities and geostrategy, they behave in a deescalating way.

The perception of the adversary's power can lead to the opinion that the enemy is either in an inferior position or outplays. If the state considers itself in an advantageous position, it will most probably attack. In reverse, if the state comes to the conclusion that the enemy is stronger, it will not engage in war. As elaborated in the section above, I will not only employ military capabilities for assessing power but also geostrategic factors. Diplomatic documents, public political statements and speeches will serve to evaluate the opinion one state has about the capabilities of the adversary relative to its own.

4.1.2.4.3.5 Perception of Alliances

HPer3: If a state perceives that a politically relevant third state will intervene on the adversary's side it will behave in a deescalatory way.

Apart from the perceptions of power and intentions, I will add the perception of alliances for the underlying study. These also seem to influence the behavior of states in a conflict. States are deterred from escalation if they perceive a strong ally on the adversary's side. States decide about their further behavior in a crisis on the basis of their expectations about third state interventions. If a state assumes that a politically relevant ally will engage militarily on the adversary's side in a crisis, the state tends

to behave in a deescalatory way. Statements of states' officials will serve to evaluate if an active military alliance is expected.

4.1.2.4.4 General Evaluations of the Test Hypotheses

In the preceding section, I made some elaborations about power, alliances and perceptions and their connection to conflict and especially deescalation. All independent variables are drawn from theories about the causes of war and are very often related to the outbreak of war. This implies that power, alliances and perceptions are relevant factors when it comes to the emergence of conflict and war. This fact suggests to investigate the relation between power, alliance and perceptions and the avoidance of war, i.e. deescalation. First I defined each independent variable in appropriate terms for studying conflict. Here, one can emphasize that power and alliance are carefully distinguished. When it comes to power in terms of war and conflict, it is often closely related to alliances. Based on Waltz's assumption that alliance and armament are related to external and internal balancing (Waltz (1979) 2010: 118), alliance is often analyzed as an element of power. The underlying analysis here is more differentiated: power is biased in terms of military capabilities and geostrategic advantages while alliance is analyzed separately. This makes sense since the emphasis of the underlying study is to identify the impact of each variable on the deescalation of a crisis. Differentiating between power in military terms and alliances allows a more precise analysis of the effect of each of these variables. Further I devoted some considerations to the definition of perceptions. Based on extensive research on perceptions and conflict, I framed the nature of perceptions of states and what a relevant object is to perceive in a conflict. The mutual perceptions of intentions, power and alliances are central for the assessment of the *status quo* in a crisis.

Since the central objectives of perception which are relevant for the decision of war or peace are alliance and power, this raises the importance of the objective variables alliance and power even more. An intermediary result of my study is that states in a militarized crisis mainly consider their power and alliances and assess the power and alliances of the adversary.

I conceptualize the selected variables on the dyadic level. They are employed as conditions influencing the interactions between two states in a conflict situation. They are not bound to structures of a single state (state level), neither are they shaped by the international system (system level). Certainly, dyadic variables are influenced by variables from the other levels, understanding that conflicts needs a multilevel explanation. Nonetheless I restrict my study to the dyad level in order to find out if the variables have an influence on the deescalation of conflict. How these variables are determined by other factors and how they can be manipulated is not the focus of my study.

4.1.2.5 Case Selection

After elaborating the independent variables power, alliances and perceptions and making statements about their connection to conflict deescalation, I will now turn to the empirical part. The hypotheses developed on deescalation shall be tested on cases of deescalation of militarized interstate conflicts at the brink of war because “the primary criterion for case selection should be relevance to the research objective of the study [...]” (Bennett/George 2005: 83). I chose to investigate crises short of war because I expect the mechanisms which lead to deescalation after a longer spiral of escalation especially with the use of force to be more obvious than in low level crisis. I aim for crises which were expected to evolve to war but instead, rather surprisingly, deescalated overnight. The central aim is not to provide historical or political analysis of certain cases of the absence of war but to use an explanation of a small set of individual cases as a useful first step in the theory building process.

4.1.2.5.1 Selection Bias

Selecting the test cases confronts the researcher with the problem of selection bias. This is a case of systemic error in the conclusion of a study, added up by the selection process in the research design of the study or the real circumstances under investigation (Collier/Mahoney 1996: 58). This results in an over-representation of cases, particularly cases with extreme values on the dependent variable, which underestimates the causal effects (King et al. 1994: 128 – 139).

According to the method of process tracing in a small-N analysis, I will need a small number of cases. I will select cases of crises ended through deescalation. This means that the case selection will be sampled on the dependent variable. This can be methodologically criticized since “selection should allow for the possibility of at least some variation on the dependent variable. [...] How can we explain variations on the dependent variable if it does not vary?”(King et al. 1994: 129).

But testing cases selected on the dependent variable can be viewed more mildly:

“They are ideal for digging into the details of how the phenomena come about and for developing insights. They identify plausible causal variables. They bring to light anomalies that current theories cannot accommodate. In so doing, they contribute to building and revising theories” (Geddis 1990: 149).

Process-tracing and within-case analysis are less prone to the problems of selection bias than large-N studies and small-N cross case studies based on Mill’s method of comparison⁸¹ and “intuitive

⁸¹ John Stuard Mill developed the method of difference and the method of agreement in *A System of Logic* (1843).

regression” (Levy 2007: 2001). In contrast to quantitative methods, the case selection for process tracing on the dependent variable is not problematic as long as the study does not involve comparison and has a different inferential logic (Bennett/George 2005: 22 – 25; Levy 2008: 8). Especially in early stages of a research program this strategy “can serve the heuristic purpose of identifying the potential causal paths and variables leading to the dependent variable of interest” (Bennett/George 2005: 23). A non-variance design through selecting on the dependent variable can occur in studies with outcomes of one value, a dichotomous variable or an extreme value of a continuous variable. With this strict focus one can gain better insight into the mechanism and advance previous, insufficient explanations. A carefully conceptualized analysis of some cases with the same outcome can provide more information than a comparison of cases with extreme values on the dependent variable (Collier/Mahoney 1996: 72). A study of several cases with no variance on the dependent variable is useful “if they pose ‘though tests’ for theories or identify alternative causal paths to similar outcomes when equifinality is present” (Bennett/George 2005: 76).⁸²

Although the non-variance causes causal problems and is frowned upon by some scholars⁸³, researchers adopt this strategy when analyzing an outcome of particular interest. According to van Evera, case selection on the dependent variable is appropriate if the conditions of selected cases are comparable to a known average situation, if the cases have a large within-case variance on the study variable and if the cases are data-rich enough to conduct process-tracing (van Evera 1997: 46f).

4.1.2.5.2 Generalization

In the underlying study I aim to identify general causes of deescalation which are applicable to as many cases as possible. The only necessary condition is that the conflicting actors are sovereign states. Causes of intrastate deescalation are not included in this study. This is due to the fact that interstate and intrastate conflicts such as civil wars are dealt with completely separately by scholars. Research on the causes, processes and ending of intrastate conflicts is a separate field of study. The actors, mechanisms and measurement of those conflicts are different from those of conflicts between states and conclusions of one study field cannot be transferred to the other. Further, the independent variables power, alliance and perception can be applied to any conflict across space and time as they are not bound to a period of time or geographical setting.

The established causal relationships between the independent variables power, alliance and perception and the dependent variable deescalation are investigated through process-tracing. “[...]”

Lijphart (1971) elaborated an application of the two methods for social sciences. For a close discussion see Bennett/George (2004: chap. 8, 11).

⁸² As already mentioned above, war is an equifinal event.

⁸³ As discussed above, King et al. strongly reject the non-variance design (King et al. 1994: 128 – 132).

process-tracing and other subunit analyses are useful for finding plausible hypotheses about causal mechanisms which can, in turn, promote descriptive generalizations and prepare the way for causal inference” (King et al. 1995: 228).

By selecting independent variables which are not bound to space or time and a thoughtful analysis through process tracing, mechanisms of deescalation in interstate crisis are discovered which can be applied to other cases than the test cases. The research design does not focus on explaining certain cases – here the Rann of Kutch and the Imia/Kardak crisis – but on discovering general patterns of crisis deescalation. Corresponding to that, the case selection is theory induced. The research design of the underlying study enables the researchers to apply the design on any further cases which meet the condition of a crisis between states which deescalated. This opens the door for further studies investigating the connection between the independent variables and the dependent variables in order to validate the test hypotheses.

Finally one has to mention that both selected cases are crises which emerged because of territorial issues between neighbors. The cases were not selected intentionally on territorial conflicts but on variation of space, time and the independent variables of the null-hypotheses.

On the one hand, the territorial issues of the cases reduces the level of generalization, as not all conflicts are rooted in a territorial dispute. On the other hand, Senese and Vasquez study the reasons why states go to war and detect that “territorial issues are posited as more war prone than other types of issues [I]t is the case that neighbors account for most interstate wars, and it is assumed that their wars grow out of territorial disputes” (Senese/Vasquez 2008: 9). According to this, findings on crisis deescalation of interstate territorial conflicts will have a broad applicability, as territorial conflicts emerge relatively often compared to other issues of dispute.

4.1.2.5.3 Selection on the Dependent Variable

In the following, I will select cases of militarized crises which deescalated in order to explain what brought about deescalation. I will start by selecting conflicts with a high level of militarization. The COW data bank provides a suitable and extensive pool for picking such cases. The MID 4.1 Data Set⁸⁴ contains every conflict between 1816 and 2010. I sample cases with a “Hostility Level” of four. The variable “Hostility Level” divides the conflicts by intensity, from one, for lowest intensity, to five, for war. Level four means conflicts that are just short of war. These include blockades, seizures, attacks, clashes, declarations of war and the use of chemical, biological, or radiological (CBR) weapons (Ghosn/Palmer 2004: 3). With this tool I can guarantee that the cases are highly militarized

⁸⁴ For details on the data set see <http://correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/MIDs>.

and therefore most threatening to escalate to war.

4.1.2.5.4 Selection on the Independent Variables of the Null-Hypotheses

As shown in chapter 2 there are various explanations for conflict deescalation. In order to classify them, I will integrate the alternative explanations for deescalation in the case studies as null-hypotheses and select cases with a variation of the independent variables of the null-hypotheses.

Employing different values of the independent variables serves the purpose of testing all possible versions of explanation given by scholars for deescalation. Considering international system polarity, multi-, bi- as well as unipolarity are discussed as the most peaceful settings of the international system. Correspondingly I strive to select test cases in all three settings.

The Cold War shaped the international system by establishing the only bipolar system up to now. “Although the Cold War was a historical anomaly because of its intensity, duration, as well as bipolarity, it offers for those very reasons unique insights into the ways conflict can be avoided or mitigated despite formidable odds”(Mastny 2006: 11). After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the international system evolved to a multipolar system. So I can choose cases in a multi- and a bipolar setting, while unipolarity is not testable. Up to now, there has not been a unipolar international system. Between 1816⁸⁵ and the end of WWII in 1945 which led to the bipolar system, there was multipolarity in the international relations. This restricts my case selection to a crisis in bipolarity and a crisis in multipolarity.

The next independent variable of the null-hypotheses are domestic democratic structures. Possible variations of democratic structures on dyad level are two democracies in conflict, a mixed dyad with one democratic and one non-democratic state and two non-democratic states in conflict.

In the following case studies, a democratic dyad and a mixed dyad will be tested. Testing a non-democratic dyad can be omitted as there are no democratic domestic structures which can be analyzed.

The remaining two independent variables of the null-hypotheses are mediation and institutional involvement. For both null-hypotheses I will select cases which include mediatory attempts and institutional involvement, as, no analysis of their potential impact is possible in cases of absence of mediation and institutional involvement.

4.1.2.5.5 Excursion to Nuclear Weapons

Some scholar consider nuclear weapons as a reason for war avoidance in the second half of the 20th century. A war fought with nuclear capabilities has the potential to erase mankind, which is not aspired

⁸⁵ That is the start year of the Correlates of War Data sets, which collect the information about conflicts.

by any leader. Nuclear weapons will not be considered scientifically in this study. They have indisputable influence on conflict dynamics by making war to a disastrous destructive outcome which at least one of the conflicting sides will want to avoid. But there have been pre-nuclear crises in which war was also considered as most avoidable outcome. Ned Lebow observes several cases of crises where an escalation to war was considered as “end of civilization” (Lebow 1981: 16). He comes to the conclusion that “the discontinuity between conventional and nuclear crises is not as sharp as might be supposed” (Lebow 1981: 16). As the study seeks to identify factors which have an impact in any conflict, the factor “nuclear capabilities” will not be investigated.

4.1.2.5.6 Further Consideration about the Case Selection

For studies applying the method of process-tracing, cases with an extensive data richness are needed. The data richness has to be provided because a lot of details of the crisis under investigation have to be processed to be able to judge the viability of the test hypotheses and the null-hypotheses. Not until the researcher has gathered enough information to retrace the events of crisis deescalation, can he make statements about the various approaches of explanations.

When selecting cases of interstate crises, the researcher has to learn that crises between states are less clear than cases of war in terms of collected and provided information. Interstate war has gained more scientific attention and is studied with more intensity than conflicts with lower levels of hostility. From the viewpoint of researchers, crises have been less interesting to study as their outcomes had less impact on the course of history, produced less costs and a lower mortality rate than wars. On the surface, crises are less important for international relations than wars. But studying low-level conflicts is essential to improve the understanding when nations go to war and when do they refrain from war in a dispute.

For the purpose of the underlying study, it is useful to select crises which offer extensive information. This means one selects cases which are “famous” and already sufficiently studied. This enables the researcher to collect enough information for testing the hypotheses and to offer alternative explanations for the deescalation of conflicts short of war.

4.2 Cases

After establishing the case selection criteria which have to be fulfilled to conduct the case studies, I now turn to the selected cases. The following cases represent the study’s case sample: the Rann of Kutch crisis and the Imia/Kardak crisis.

Both crises between two states escalated quickly and in both cases the apple of discord was a rather meaningless parcel of land. One could assume that the crises did not escalate to war because the

conflicting states did not consider the disputed territories as worth fighting for. But this cannot be considered as a general cause for deescalation as there are crises about small pieces of territory which made states to go to war such as Argentina and Great Britain in the Falklands War in 1982. The selected cases are suitable for the study as both are historically processed and sufficiently data rich. Therefore I will be able to conduct in-depth process studies and uncover which factors really influence deescalation. Further, both crises are explained with mediation: through the US in the Imia/Kardak case and Britain in the Kutch case. This leads to the assumption that mediation is a fruitful course of action for third parties to foster peaceful conflict resolutions. But I tend to prove that mediation is only successful if other conditions are met and therefore has to be labeled as secondary cause of deescalation. The primary causes of deescalation create the following conditions: one conflicting actor has to be inferior in power (HP), or one of the actors has an ally (HA). Further, one actor has to perceive its own power inferiority or the lack of an ally, respectively perceive that the adversary has an ally (HPer). If these conditions are met, the crisis tends to deescalate.

4.2.1 The Rann of Kutch Crisis

The Rann of Kutch crisis was a clash between India and Pakistan in spring 1965. In the COW MID data set the crisis is coded with hostility level four, which means that India and Pakistan were at the brink of war. But instead of further escalation, the conflict deescalated in summer 1965. Considering the null-hypotheses, the Rann of Kutch crisis happened in an international bipolar environment. Further, the conflicting parties were a mixed dyad. India had democratic domestic structures in 1965 while Pakistan was, after a *coup d'état*, under military rule. Great Britain undertook mediatory attempts and scholars explain the deescalation of the crisis with the British mediation (Pavir 1997; Lamb 1991; Ganguly 1986; Blinkenberg 1972). The underlying study will provide an alternative explanation for the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis by taking a closer look at primary factors for deescalation apart from mediation. When it comes to institutional involvement, there were international (UN) and regional institutions (Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)) which could have potentially get involved in the crisis.

Finally the Rann of Kutch crisis covers a turbulent time period between India and Pakistan marked by repeating hostilities and a permanent threat of war between them. “[...] the Rann of Kutch crisis is meaningful for its greater impact on the stability of the region. It had the potential to cause serious instability in South Asia” (Colemann 2009: 466). A deeper look in the mechanisms of its deescalation is worthwhile and a contribution of the underlying study to the understanding of South East Asian politics in the 1960s.

Map 1: *The Rann of Kutch between India and Pakistan*

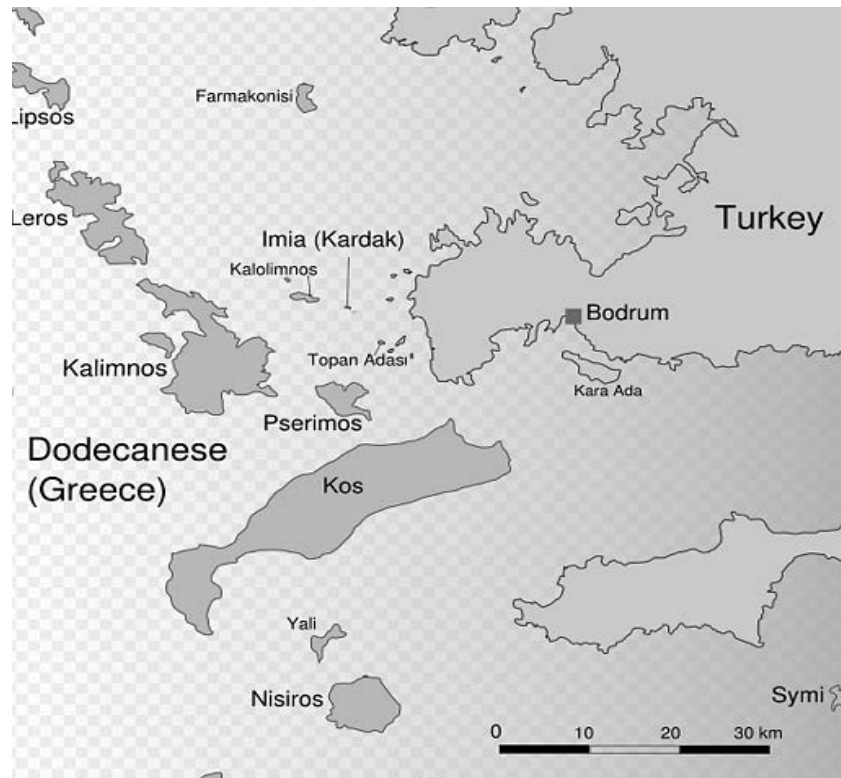


4.2.2 The Imia/Kardak Crisis

The second conflict which serves as case study for the factors of interstate crisis deescalation is the Imia/Kardak crisis. It took place in 1995/96 between Turkey and Greece. As the Rann of Kutch crisis, the Imia/Kardak crisis was of hostility level four in the COW data set and short of war. It deescalated in the end of January 1996. It fulfills the case selection criteria: the Imia/Kardak crisis happened in an international multipolar system and the conflicting parties were both democracies. Scholars explain the deescalation with US mediation (Larrabee/Lesser 2003; Heraclides 2010), which is questioned by the underlying study. Further, there were international (UN) and regional organizations (NATO, European Union (EU)) which could have got involved.

Apart from the case selection criteria, the Imia/Kardak crisis is an interesting study object. It almost caused the first war in the Mediterranean Sea between two democracies after the end of the east-west conflict. For studying the impact of the NATO it is interesting to see how the NATO reacts if two member states are at the brink of war.

Map 2: *Imia/Kardak in the Aegean Sea*



4.3 Parenthesis: Systemic Presentation of the Null- and the Test Hypotheses

In the next section, I will present a summary the elaborated null- and test hypotheses. To begin with the test hypotheses, they are presented as arrow diagram with the sub-variables (Xs). The sub-variables are further elaborated in sub-hypotheses below. The operationalization is introduced in Table 2.

Power

HP: Unequal relative power between two adversaries fosters deescalation.

Power → Relative Capabilities, Geostrategy → Deescalation

X1: Relative Capabilities

HP1: If one state in a conflicting dyad is militarily superior to the other, deescalation will emerge.

X2: Geostrategy

HP2: If one state in a conflicting dyad has geostrategic vulnerabilities, deescalation will emerge.

Alliance

HA: An alliance of military support has a deescalating effect in a conflict.

Alliance → System Membership, Commitment, Duration → Deescalation

X1: System Membership

HA1: An ally has to be a state to be relevant for deescalation.

X2: Alliance Type and Commitment

HA2: An alliance has to be formally or informally defensive to foster deescalation.

X3: Alliance Duration

HA3: The impact of the alliance is intensified, the longer it exists

Perception

HPer: If a state perceives its adversary as militarily superior or allied to a third state, deescalation will emerge.

Perception → Perception of Intentions, Power, Alliances → Deescalation

X1: Perception of Intentions

HPer1: Deescalation can be stipulated if the conflicting states do not perceive war plans from the adversary.

X2: Perception of Power

HPer2: If states perceive themselves as inferior in capabilities and geostrategy, they behave in a deescalating way.

X3: Perception of Alliance

HPer3: If a state perceives that a politically relevant third state will intervene on the adversary's side, it will behave in a deescalatory way.

Table 2: *Overview of the Operationalization of the Test Hypotheses*

independent variable	Xs	indicators
POWER	absolute power	military expenditures, personnel
	relative power	comparison both states` absolute power
	geostrategic power	strategical depth in general war, military tactics in crisis
ALLIANCE	politically relevant ally	major-major, minor-major relationships, and minor-minor or major-minor relationships in which the allying parties are in the same region as a potential target state
	state	member of UN
	duration	rather short/long
PERCEPTION	adversary`s intentions	willingness to go to war
	adversary`s capabilities	adversarial superiority
	third state`s intentions	intervene on adversary`s side
	third state`s capabilities	politically relevant (see alliance)

As outlined above I will use existing explanations of crisis deescalation and design them as null-hypotheses in order to test alternative factors for deescalation.

Mediation

HM: Mediation by third parties promotes deescalation in an interstate crisis.

Mediation → Direct/Indirect Communication Channels, Cease Fire Negotiations → Deescalation

Institutions

HI: Institutional involvement in an interstate crisis fosters deescalation.

Institutions → International Surrounding (Information, Norms, Ideas, Deterrence) → Deescalation

Democratic Structures

HD: Domestic democratic structures in both conflicting states promote crisis deescalation.

Democratic Structures → Norms, Bureaucratic/Political Restraints, Public Opinion → Deescalation

Polarity

HPol: International system polarity promotes deescalation of interstate crisis.

Unipolarity → Absence of Hegemonic Rivalry → Deescalation

Bipolarity → Stability through Balancing → Deescalation

Multipolarity → Regional Power Centers, Complex Interaction Patterns → Deescalation

5. The Rann of Kutch Crisis between India and Pakistan

The Indo-Pakistani relations are shaped by oscillating tension between the two countries for centuries. Since the end of the British colonial rule in India, there have been four wars and countless minor disputes between India and Pakistan. Latest major incidents were in 1999 when Indian and Pakistani troops clashed over the territories of Kashmir and the Rann of Kutch. Military aircrafts were shot down and territories occupied (Correlates of War 2014).

The dispute about the Rann of Kutch and the neighboring Kashmir had already erupted decades ago with the independence and the partition of Pakistan and India. The Rann of Kutch, located on the Western border of India to Pakistan, has been disputed since 1947 although it is of rather low strategic importance compared to Kashmir. There are small oil reserves in the Rann but for both states they are of minor interest. Pakistan and India's common border extends over approximately 3,000 kilometers. It ranges from the Karakorum Mountain range through the lowlands of Punjab and Rajasthan and then through the desert area of Sind and before it ends in the Arabian Sea, it leads through the Rann of Kutch. Before the dryness, the Rann was a gulf of the Arabian Sea, but at present times it is a salt clay desert in dry season and in rain season (June to September) a salty marsh, covering about 27,971 square kilometers. The Rann's hilly landscape is at its highest upland about 250 meters above sea level in the center; in the north and the south are lowlands. The Rann is divided into the Great Rann of Kutch and the Little Rann of Kutch. The Great Rann of Kutch is located in the north-northwest, on the Indian-Pakistan border. The Little Rann of Kutch forms the northern border for the Gulf of Kutch and Kathiawar to the south. The area of the Rann of Kutch crisis lies in the northern part of the Rann (Global Security 2000 - 2006).

The fighting between India and Pakistan for this barren swamp has to be considered against the background of the Indian-Pakistani history of conflict. Although the Rann of Kutch is not of strategic value, in their broader territorial conflict India and Pakistan strives to defend every rock against its adversary. The conflict between India and Pakistan are rooted in the centuries-lasting tensions between Hindus and Muslims on the Asian subcontinent and deteriorated further after the independence and partition of colonial India. The communal conflict between Muslims and Hindus can be traced back to the Muslim invasion centuries ago, but more recently, the Muslims have raised concerns about political suppression by the Hindu majority after the end of colonial rule. Further, the Rann of Kutch crisis is important because of its greater impact on the stability of the region. It had the potential to "cause serious instability in South Asia" (Colemann 2009: 466), extending to other disputed border territories and igniting a war between the region's main antagonists, India and Pakistan.

5.1 Historical Background

The Indo-Pakistani rivalry dates back to the link between Mughal India and British India (1526 – 1947). The roots of the conflict lie in the different intentions about the statehood of the Indian subcontinent. The Indian National Congress sought a unified country shaped by the principles of secularism and democracy. Muslim rulers feared the majority rule as the guarantee of the Hindu rule and demanded separate electorates. To exert more pressure on the colonial rulers for their demands, the Muslim League Party was formed in 1906. In 1909 the demand for separate electorates was accepted by the British colonial rule in the Indian Councils Act, also known as the Minto-Morley Reforms⁸⁶. The British expected a weakening of the Indian national movement, spearheaded by the Congress Party, by authorizing two different constituencies. This was the basis for later Muslim League's demands for a separate Muslim state. The following years, the Muslim separatist nationalism rose further and the Muslim League under Mohammed Ali Jinnah prepared to contest the 1937 elections for limited self-governing provincial governments. After the electoral victory of the Congress Party and its refusal to build a coalition with the Muslim League, Jinnah preached for a two-nation construction. During the following years this idea evolved to the demand for a separate homeland for Indian Muslims, which widened the political gap between the interim Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of the Congress Party and Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League. In parallel, clashes between Muslims and Hindus rose all over India and Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last British viceroy, realized that the founding of Pakistan was inevitable. In the final throes of WWII, Great Britain already signaled its plans to withdraw from Indian colonization (Paul 2006: 6f).

5.1.1 First Indian-Pakistani War 1947

On August 15th, 1947, British India achieved its independence from Great Britain. This was followed by regional outbreaks of violence which ended in the partition into the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The provinces of Punjab, the Northwest Frontier, Sind and East Bengal formed Pakistan. The partition of British India into the secular India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan led to social unrest, including violence and massive migration. Hindus and Sikhs left Pakistani soil and Muslims emigrated from the new Indian territory. In August 1947, there were ten million refugees and 600,000 dead due to the communal violence (Leng 2000: 196).

5.1.2 Conflict over Kashmir

Further conflict rose between Pakistan and India when disagreement occurred about the statehood of

⁸⁶ For details on the Minto-Morey Reforms see <https://archive.org/stream/governmentindia00sirgoog#page/n6/mode/2up>.

princely states which opted for independence. Three princely states decided to stay independent: northerly Kashmir/Jammu (close to the Rann of Kutch), Hyderabad in the South and Junagadh in the West. Hyderabad and Junagadh later joined the Indian Union but Kashmir posed difficulties, as it had a Muslim majority but a Hindu ruler. Pakistan considered the political status of Kashmir as unfinished business of the partition in 1947 and the Muslim-dominated Kashmiri population would join Pakistan if they had free choice. For India, at the other hand, Kashmir is an integral part of India and part of the nation's identity. India wanted the ruler to decide about the accession and Pakistan preferred a decision made by the population. In October 1947, Pakistani tribesmen from northwest Pakistan invaded Kashmir, which prompted the Hindu ruler to call India for assistance. India dispatched troops, the leader of Kashmir decided to accede to India, which induced Pakistan to fight for its reversal and war emerged between the two states. Lord Mountbatten considered the newly founded United Nations as a useful mediatory and transferred the Kashmir dispute to the UN. In the beginning of 1948 the issue was debated in the Security Council and the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was established. In the following months UNCIP outlined arrangements of the ending of hostilities and demanded a decision by the people about the accession to India or Pakistan. In December 1948, the war reached a stalemate and a ceasefire agreement was reached with UN support. A ceasefire line was established, splitting Kashmir into two-third under Indian control and the rest under Pakistani control. The United Nations Observer Group (UNMOGIP) monitored the ceasefire line until 1972 but could not prevent further conflict over Kashmir.

The status of Kashmir dominated the conflictual Indo-Pakistani relations in the years following their first war. Kashmir's status remained unsettled between Pakistan, India and its own independence. After further political quarrels between India and Pakistan, the states of Kashmir and Jammu adopted their own constitution in 1957. It was modeled along the Indian constitution, which caused protests by the Muslim political elite in Kashmir. The Kashmir conflict went on causing international concerns.

5.1.3 India's War with China

In the meantime, a Himalayan border conflict erupted between China and India in 1962. India showed a massive lack in high altitude fighting and the Chinese declared a unilateral ceasefire. Thereupon India revealed his prior policy of international non-alignment and made security agreements with the West, especially the US. The US supported India to contain (Chinese) communism in South-East Asia. Pakistan, the former favorite ally of the US, was angered by the outlook that India would receive weapons and strove to join the two western military alliances CENTO and SEATO. In the meantime, India and Pakistan again opened talks about the status of Kashmir in 1962. Due to India's weakened

position after the Chinese defeat, India stated for the first time that the status of Kashmir might be in doubt. Nonetheless the talks failed in 1963 and one year later, the Kashmir issue was debated in the Security Council for the 110th time in 15 years (Schofield 2003: 102). In 1965, the territorial dispute intensified, this time in the Rann of Kutch and led to fights between the Indian and Pakistani military for a couple of weeks. Only some months later, in August, the situation in Kashmir deteriorated again and led to the Second Kashmir war.

5.2 The Rann of Kutch Crisis 1965

The Rann adjoins on the north and north-west to the Pakistani Sind on the east to the Indian Gujarat. The south and the southwest are adjacent to the Gulf of Cutch and the Arabian Sea. The territory is divided into the Great Rann in the north and the Little Rann in the south-east. In dry season the Rann is marked by dust and scrub, during monsoon it is flooded except for some hills which then turn into islands. During the dry season, there are some passable tracks but during monsoon the area is largely impassible. Rann means `desolate place` and is mainly inhabited by flamingoes and donkeys. The dispute involves some 9,000 square kilometer of territory. Already during British rule, Sind and the Princely State of Kutch were disputing about the affiliation of the Rann. The British decided to ascribe the Rann to Kutch State, the border between Kutch and Sind following the southern edge of the Thar Desert. The area of the Rann of Kutch is strategically and economically useless. There is some salt production in the area. But “the Rann of Kutch is theorized to be an example of symbolic stake. It has increased importance, as it stands for Kashmir” (Leng: 215f). Apart from that “[...] it may be that this minor affair was a mutually conducted experiment in nerve-testing, in which each side was trying to determine how far the other would go in confrontation of troops across the international border“(Feldman 1972: 134).

5.2.1 Legal Controversy on the Rann of Kutch

India and Pakistan are born in disagreement about their common border. During the partition of India and Pakistan, the Radcliff Commission missed to rule the boundary in the Rann of Kutch. In 1947, the provinces of Sind and Kutch had both claimed the right to levy dues on the use of the Rann, and no definitive boundary between the two had been established beyond a 40 to 50 mile coastal section (Coleman 2009: 467). Already in June 1948, after the independence and partition, Pakistan challenged the existing affiliation and claimed that the Rann has to be considered as a dead sea and the border line should be drawn in the middle on the 24th parallel while India neglected a dispute about border lines at all. The border which was settled by the British between Sind and Kutch State was reasonable during the British Indian Empire since both regions lay in the larger political unit. As

an international boundary between India and Pakistan it is less suitable (Lamb 1966: 255). India denied the existence of any dispute about the border line in the Rann and therefore the need for a Joint Boundary Commission as suggested by Pakistan. Pakistan then dropped the subject but brought it up again in September 1954. Another time, India rejected any need for reconsidering the border lines. In 1956, both parties claimed that the other had unlawfully occupied the Chhad Bet in the northern part of the Rann, which was followed by a “minor shooting episode” (Blinkenberg 1972: 245). In 1959, India pledged to subordinate to arbitration concerning all non-negotiable border disputes. This led to the solutions of some minor border problems between India and Pakistan. In 1960, India admitted for the first time that there was a dispute about the Sind-Kutch border and that further discussions were necessary. Although the location of the India-West Pakistan frontier was settled during talks in 1960, planned discussions over the Rann of Kutch did not take place, resulting in the fact that the issue remained unsettled (Coleman 2009: 467) until the rise of open hostilities in 1965.

In January 1965, tensions rose after India claimed, that Pakistani border patrols had violated the border repeatedly. Thereupon, India put up outposts to secure their border. In April 1965, the Pakistani military argued that they had been attacked by Indian forces near Kanjarkot. Pakistan answered the attack with regular troops and their new Patton tanks (Ganguly 1968: 83).

5.2.2 Pre-Crisis

India claimed that at first Pakistani forces patrolled and established posts on Indian territory in the Rann. Pakistan claimed that Indian troops suddenly started invading Pakistani territory. In January 1965, India's Gujarat border police discovered that Pakistani forces used a track in the northern part of the Rann on Indian territory. India protested but Pakistan set up posts near the old fort of Kanjarkot. When Indian patrols discovered Pakistani posts, India accused Pakistan of expansive behavior in the Rann. Pakistan claimed that in January 1965 Indian troops had hindered Pakistani troops to patrol their usual area. Further, Pakistan stated that India undertook a build-up in the disputed region and that Indian troops had infiltrated Pakistani posts in the Rann. In mid-February, Pakistani forces occupied Kanjarkot - previously probably unoccupied - but claimed by Pakistan as long-term Pakistani territory. This led to a mutual build-up of forces in the area, including the establishing of manned posts and the shift from border police to armed forces.

In March 1965, Ayub Kahn visited Moscow and received notice from Islamabad that Indian forces had entered the Rann of Kutch (Schofield 2000: 140). At the same time, the Indian Minister for External Affairs informed the Parliament that Pakistan had violated the *status quo* of 1960, and affirmed that the government would continue to take measures against intrusions. Pakistan on the other hand affirmed its motivation to take measures to remove the intruders. Thereupon India

proposed meetings but Pakistan did not react to that. Neither India nor Pakistan took responsibility of starting the conflict over the Rann. Both parties have asserted that the adversary commenced hostilities with an expansionist aim and reacted on that.

5.2.3 Course of the Crisis

Until the end of March India mobilized its forces to the territory in dispute and established military posts. Additionally it held land, sea and air maneuvers near the Rann of Kutch, challenging the *status quo*. This put the situation under further tension and a few days later, on April 8th 1965, there were sporadic attacks on Indian and Pakistani police posts in the Rann. On April 9th Pakistani 51 Para Brigade attacked Sadar Post. This post was manned by two companies of the Indian Central Reserve Police Force. They offered resistance but had to leave the post soon (Ahlawat 2013: 84). Indian forces attacked a Pakistan post at Ding, with the objective of taking over the territory and confront Pakistan with a *fait accompli* (Global Security 2000 – 2006). But Indian forces were overwhelmed by the superior Pakistani military forces. “This engagement was [...] the first time that forces of brigade strength, with artillery support, were engaged on either side [...] since the Kashmir cease-fire of January 1948” (Coleman 2009: 467). This was followed by a series of militarized clashes, involving tanks, armored cars and formations up to brigade strength. Further skirmishes took place throughout April but war did not emerge. Casualties were reported by both sides and the shooting continued between patrols and strong points. Pakistan employed armor such as Patton tanks, which it had received from the US within a Military Assistance Program. The equipment was promised not to be used against India, Pakistan denied its use and the US repeated its demand not to use any American armor in the Rann. Pakistan denied but India published photographs showing Patton tanks in the Rann. On April 15th, India accepted a Pakistani ceasefire offer. But the ceasefire was not implemented and fighting went on. The Pakistani precondition for negotiations was the demilitarization of the area and while India demanded the return to the *status quo ante*, in particular a Pakistani withdrawal from Kanjarkot. Pakistan in turn claimed that Kanjarkot was not disputed area and India refused to withdraw its troops to the 24th parallel. On April 24th, fighting intensified a last time when a Pakistani infantry division attacked Indian posts east of Kanjarkot. The two posts resisted successfully and Pakistani forces launched a preemptive attack at Biar Bet North of Dhara Lana (Ahlawat 2013: 84). Now Pakistani forces were in a favorable tactical situation since they were able to cut through the Indian forces on the 24th parallel and attack the two Indian brigades which were located in the Rann. But Pakistan did not make use of the tactical advantage and on April 30th, Pakistani forces were even ordered to refrain from escalatory actions (Global Security 2000 – 2006), which actually ended the fighting.

The Indian Army had mostly acted defensively but also set up posts in Pakistani territory and built an airstrip (Read 1965). Nonetheless the Indian army performed very badly in the Rann of Kutch crisis, which brought the Indian leadership to think about a very escalating preemptive attack. The Indian Foreign Secretary Chandra Sekhar Jha told the US Deputy Chief of Mission that “the country is in no mood to take any more pushing in the Rann of Kutch and the Government of India may be constrained to retaliate elsewhere, where conditions are more favorable to Indian forces” (Global Security 2000 - 2016).

On April 29th 1965, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India stated in the parliament: “[if the fighting goes on (editor’s note)], the Army will decide its own strategy and deploy its manpower and equipment in the way it deems best” (Pradhan 2007: 32). This statement can be read as the threat to attack Lahore, the capital city in Pakistan, close to the Indian border (Burke 1973: 324). But instead of igniting a war, the situation deescalated and by the mid of May both sides were ready for a ceasefire.

5.2.4 Deescalation of the Rann of Kutch Crisis and the Kashmir War

In June 1965, Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistani President Ayub Khan met at the Commonwealth Premiers` Conference in London and came to an agreement about a ceasefire (Pavri 1997: 374). On June 30th 1965, a ceasefire agreement was signed by Shastri and Khan, ending the Rann of Kutch crisis. The *status quo ante* of January 1st 1965 was restored and both sides withdrew to their former positions. The agreement enabled India to reoccupy some posts and permitted Pakistan to continue patrolling in the disputed border area. A settlement for the final demarcation should be reached first by bilateral negotiations at Indian and Pakistani Minister`s level and, in case of their failure, by a tribunal. Indian and Pakistani officials met to discuss a concluding adjustment for the border line but failed to agree.

So the tribunal which was intended by the ceasefire agreement in case of a breakup of the bilateral negotiations was set up. An arbitral tribunal was established with the cooperation of the U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations. India appointed a Yugoslav arbitrator to the tribunal, Pakistan an Iranian arbitrator, and UN Secretary-General chose a Swede as the chairman. It took the tribunal until February 1968 to reach an agreement on the Rann of Kutch. The tribunal awarded about 350 square miles of the northern part of the Rann to Pakistan, which was approximately 10 per cent of the disputed territory, including much of the high ground where the heaviest fighting took place. The remaining 90 per cent of the Rann were given to India. Although India received the lion`s share of the disputed territory, it heavily resented the award as it felt entitled to gain sovereignty over the whole territory of the Rann of Kutch. Pakistan reluctantly accepted the apportionment (Hughes 1968).

On July 4th 1969, India and Pakistan signed the last documents on the Rann of Kutch and ended the dispute. Several years later, in the Indo-Pakistani War in December 1971, Pakistan was defeated and the Army surrendered to India at the Dacca race course. In addition to the 94,000 prisoners of war whom India had retained, it had also occupied about 5000 square miles of territory in the Rann of Kutch which had been given to Pakistan before in the arbitration of the Rann of Kutch crisis (Schofield 2003: 117).

The casualties for India and Pakistan in militarized disputes of the Rann of Kutch crisis were unequally distributed. On the Indian side, about 90 soldiers and policemen were killed, wounded or gone missing while on Pakistani side about 350 people were dead and wounded (Feldman 1972: 135; Mankekar 1967: 33, quoted by Brines 1968: 288; Blinkenberg 1972: 248). Although Pakistan only gained ten per cent of the disputed territory and its casualties were more than three times higher than India's, the Rann of Kutch crisis ended in favor for Pakistan. In spite of the Indian military predominance, the Rann of Kutch crisis ended as a military success for Pakistan (Sprecher/Park 2003: 162). In its perspective, the crisis about the Rann could be considered as a marker for India's willingness and ability to fight. "It was a terrain for demonstrations rather than invasions. In the Rann of Kutch affair one has the distinct impression of a reconnaissance in force by both sides, each trying to feel out the other's weaknesses" (Lamb 1966: 116). This combined with the lessons which Pakistan had learned from India's massive military defeat by China in 1962 fed Pakistan's self-confidence about its military competitiveness and led Ayub Khan to the conclusion "that the Hindu has no stomach for a fight" (Leng 2000: 227). This self-confidence of Pakistan and the general destabilization of the Indo-Pakistani border regions through the Rann of Kutch crisis seduced Pakistan to challenge India over Kashmir only weeks later. The Kashmir war of 1965 emerged shortly after the Rann of Kutch crisis. Until the end of August, both parties had made some territorial progress in Kashmir. The conflict escalated further in September when Pakistan launched an attack with a superiority of troops and tanks which caused heavy losses of Indian troops. Thereupon, India called its airpower into play which, in turn, led to Pakistani air strikes. In the end of September, India and Pakistan reached a stalemate. The UN Security Council passed a resolution, demanding a cease-fire which was accepted by Pakistan and India days later. The cease-fire negotiations were hosted by Soviet leader Kosygin in Tashkent and the parties agreed on the *status quo ante*. After this brief overview of the Indian-Pakistani relations up to the crisis under investigation, the Rann of Kutch crisis will be pictured and later analyzed for its causes of deescalation.

5.3 General Explanations for the Deescalation of the Rann of Kutch Crisis

In the following chapter, the circumstances of the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis will

undergo a closer examination in the light of various theoretical approaches of deescalation. First, I will evaluate the potential impact of mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and the international system polarity as common explanations for deescalation. Secondly, I will assess the potential mitigating consequences of power relations, alliance structures and perceptions of the conflicting parties.

5.3.1 Mediation

In the beginning of the Rann of Kutch crisis, the conflict between India and Pakistan was already ongoing for two decades. During this time, Great Britain and the United States had already pushed India and Pakistan to resolve their territorial disputes, but without success. Especially because of the Kashmir dispute, India and Pakistan were repeatedly pressed to the negotiation table by Britain and the US. They hoped that bilateral negotiations would bring a solution to the ongoing territorial disagreements. In 1962, a minor success seemed to be achieved when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President Ayub Khan gave a joint statement about a compromise. But the next day, Nehru angered Pakistan with a public statement and the compromise was invalid again. In the following, the US and Britain found it useless to foster further negotiations (Blinkenberg 1972: 366). Nonetheless, when the Rann of Kutch crisis loomed, the US and Britain undertook efforts to mediate.

In the past, the US used to provide support for Pakistan, as it orientated towards the West after its independence. But when India was defeated by China in 1962, the US among other states provided India with military equipment⁸⁷. This led to a fading trust of both Pakistan and India in the US as both countries learned that the US does not only support them but the adversary as well. So in 1965, the US did not have the status of a neutral power and felt therefore impotent to act as a mediator between India and Pakistan. Its credibility concerning mediation efforts was weak due to its support for both sides of the conflict. US President Johnson even cancelled visits of Shastri and Ayub to Washington but the US was diplomatically not able to press the parties to stop fighting (Burke 1973: 325). In the Rann of Kutch crisis, the US left mediatory involvement to Britain as can be read in the memorandum from Robert Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy:

“We're hesitant to weigh in too hard because neither Paks nor Indians are very friendly to us at the moment. Ergo, I'm plugging for UK, Commonwealth, and UN admonitory noises with us in a supporting role. If things take a turn for the worse, however, we may have to buy a

⁸⁷ India received military equipment worth US \$ 80 million between November 1962 and September 1965 (Blinkenberg 1972: 241, fn. 12; 343)

share” (Komer 1965).

Britain made a formal mediation offer on April 27th. Communication channels and the elaboration of compromises were participated by the British High Commissioners to India and Pakistan, John Freeman and Mortice James. They took part in several meetings with the leaders and foreign ministers of both countries during April and May 1965. Further, the ceasefire agreement concerning the Rann of Kutch was signed in London at the Commonwealth Premiers` Conference.

Pavri (1997) is convinced that Britain promoted the deescalation of the Rann crisis as it provided direct communication channels, helped to exchange the positions and perceptions. “It does appear that in the cases of settlement, third parties played non-directive roles that fostered communication and interaction, [...]” (Pavri 1997: 385). Further authors follow this assessment:

“British mediation, mainly through Prime Minister Harold Wilson, made the cease-fire possible” (Lamb 1991: 256).

“The conflict could be mediated by Britain at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers` Conference” (Ganguly 1986: 83).

“[...] Shastri and his advisers, however, chose to accept mediation as a way out” (Blinkenberg 1972: 149).

Thus, several analysts of the Rann of Kutch crisis agree on a deescalation of the crisis due to British mediation in terms of providing communication between India and Pakistan. First of all, this does not offer an explanation why India and Pakistan were willing to be mediated in the first place. Further, there had already been direct communication between India and Pakistan before Britain set up channels and meetings. From the beginning of the crisis, India and Pakistan employed direct channels of communication. For example, Pakistan sent messages to India concerning the crisis on April 8th 1965 and India sent messages to Pakistan a few days later (Asian Recorder 1965: 6424; cited in Pavri 2009: 478). The Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Gopalapuram Parthasarathi was summoned to the Pakistan Foreign Office on April 17th to seek clarification on statements made by Prime Minister Shastri on the Kutch (Pavri 2009: 474). This was ten days before Great Britain offered mediation. With the emergence of the crisis, Pakistan suggested formal talks to the Indian Foreign Office and Indian Foreign Secretary Chandra Shekhar Jha. In the end of April, Pakistan again suggested formal talks and a troop withdrawal before those would take place. India rejected both

invitations (Pavri 2009: 478). Further, British mediation did not necessarily foster deescalation since India had already signaled by April 24th to be willing for a ceasefire (Read 1965) and Pakistan had made several requests for formal talks through April 1965.

Communication, especially the bilateral communication between the opponents, was important in the Rann of Kutch crisis. Britain became engaged as a mediator and incepted communication channels and talks between representatives of Pakistan and India and the British commissioners for both countries. But the sole presence of these actions does not prove that mediation through providing communication did contribute to the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis. India and Pakistan kept direct communication even before the British involvement.

5.3.2 Institutional Involvement

Apart from states as mediatory actors in conflicts, institutions can get involved. In the case of the Rann of Kutch crisis, the United Nations and regional institutions are potential actors.

The United Nations were established in June 1945 as a universal international organization “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” (Preamble of the United Nations). The UN Charter expresses the main purpose of the institution, the maintenance of peace and security, the limitation of the use of force to solely self-defense and the sovereignty of the member states as foundation. There are currently 192 members. These member states constitute the organization and direct its activities. The Security Council is the UN organ which deals with the security related decisions. It consists of the permanent members China, Russia, France, United Kingdom (UK) and US with veto rights to the resolutions and ten rotating members without veto right. The powers of the Security Council are codified in the Chapter VI to VIII of the UN Charter. The Council can call for peaceful resolution of conflict through fact-finding, good offices, negotiation, arbitration and judicial settlement. The Council has the right to investigate disputes that might endanger international peace. Chapter VII grants coercive authority to the Security Council. It can impose diplomatic or economic sanctions on belligerents or authorize military force.

The UN was involved in the Indo-Pakistani conflicts since 1948, when India brought the Kashmir question to the Security Council. The Security Council passed resolution 39 and established the UNCIP in order to support the two countries in resolving their issues and observe the ceasefire in Kashmir and Jammu. After the termination of UNCIP, the Security Council passed another resolution (no. 91), establishing the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). After the Rann of Kutch crisis and the Second Kashmir War, the UN deployed the United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission (UNIPOM) in September 1965 to augment UNMOGIP by monitoring the India-Pakistan border outside the state of Jammu-Kashmir. In March

1966, after the withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani troops, UNIPOM was terminated (Fiedler 2000: 8; United Nations 2003).

In addition to the UN there were regional institutions which could have played a role in the Kutch crisis. The SEATO was a collective defense treaty in South East Asia. Its members were Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan (including East Pakistan, now Bangladesh), the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States. The SEATO was formally established in 1955 and dissolved in 1977. SEATO had the potential to act in the crisis since it was laid out as collective defense organization and Pakistan was member of SEATO, while India was not. Further, SEATO was designed to contain Communism in South East Asia and India was sympathizer of the Soviet Union. Theoretically, SEATO could have acted as an ally of Pakistan and thereby deterred India from further aggression. But in 1965, the SEATO members made clear to Pakistani Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that they would not get involved in the Indo-Pakistani conflict.

Another regional organization which could have played a role was the CENTO, aka Baghdad Pact, or its founding name Middle East Treaty Organization. CENTO was founded in 1955 and dissolved in 1979. Its members were the United Kingdom, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan. CENTO was designed to provide mutual cooperation and protection and non-intervention in domestic affairs. Further, it should secure the containment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) along its southwestern front. Concerning the Indo-Pakistani conflict, CENTO can also be characterized as rather inactive. In the second Kashmir war, later the same year in which the Rann crisis happened, Iran and Turkey were openly sympathetic with Pakistan and delivered weapons. But apart from that, CENTO did not get involved in further crises and did not provide military assistance against India, arguing that CENTO was founded to contain the USSR and is not willing to fight India (Dimitrakis 2009).

5.3.3 Domestic Democratic Structures

Whether the conflicting states are democratic and to which extent democratic structures exist can be measured and it is further relevant if the domestic structures of democracies are able to influence deescalation.

India and Pakistan emerged both from British India in 1947, which had about one century of colonial rule. After independence both countries gave themselves new institutions but the following years, the political systems of India and Pakistan evolved in different directions.

Starting with Pakistan, first the presence of democratic structures will be assessed and then their effect on deescalation. Generally the hypotheses of Democratic Peace would suggest that India's democratic institutions and the public opinion should foster a crisis deescalation. At least for the Rann of Kutch

crisis, none of the states opted for war.

The first constituent assembly of Pakistan passed the Objectives Resolution in 1949, proclaiming that the future Pakistani constitution would be based on the ideology of Islam. Pakistan's constitution making process was malfunctioning through recurring conflict and the delay of elections. The inability to create stable political processes led to the outwear of several national administrations within some years (Tudor 2013: 1). Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated in 1951, which was followed by a period of further political instability. In 1958, movement occurred in the political landscape of Pakistan. Prime Minister Ibrahim Ismail Chundiragar lost confidence running the government and resigned. This led immediately to the collapse of the national cabinet. Feroz Noon, with the support of various political parties, appointed a new cabinet. This coalition was politically opposed by the President Iskander Mirza, who thereupon called for a mobilization of the Pakistan Armed Forces and abrogated the constitution. The political institutions in Pakistan were dissolved and Ayub Khan was appointed as chief martial law administrator. In October 1958, Khan's rise to power was accelerated by a bloodless coup d'état, which led to the exile of President Mirza. In 1960, Ayub Khan held a referendum to indirectly reassure himself in power. The referendum consisted of about 80,000 councilmen who were to vote on the question: "Have you confidence in the President, Field Marshal Mohammed Ayub Khan?" (Smith 1986: 803). He gained an exceeding majority of 96 per cent.

In 1962, a new constitution of indirect military rule was set up for Pakistan. Presidential vote was laid down through the vote of 80,000 so called Basic Democrats, who were de facto under Khan's control. The President had the right to veto any decision by the single-chamber parliament. The National Assembly was under Khan's control and the press experienced massive censorship (Jaffrelot 2004: 72). In 1963, Ayub Khan became President.

In 1964, the government started to prepare presidential elections. Khan was confident about his backing in the Pakistani population and was convinced that the divided weak opposition would not be able to announce a candidate. But the opposition announced Fatima Jinnah, daughter of the founder of Pakistan, Muhammed Ali Jinnah. Elections were held in January 1965 and the Basic Democrats elected Khan with 65 per cent (Jaffrelot 2004: 72).

"As early as 1959, I introduced the System of Basic Democracies, a comprehensive structure of local councils composed largely of elected members. Then, after a referendum which gave me a mandate to give my country a new constitution, with the advice of a constitution commission, I promulgated a system of government which follows the presidential pattern, and which rests upon indirect suffrage. Our political system perhaps does not conform in all

its details to the Western pattern of democracy” (Khan 1965: 109 abstract).

According to the data of the Polity VI Project, Pakistan held a score of 1 in 1965, which indicates an anocracy (-5 to +5)⁸⁸. Anocracy is “loosely defined as part democracy and part dictatorship” (Gandhi/Vreeland 2004: 1) and marked by weak institutions and political elites. They are not able to perform fundamental tasks and are characterized by ineffectiveness. Further, they are unstable when it comes to conflict or unexpected changes in leadership. Anocratic governments are neither autocratic nor democratic (Marshall/Cole 2014: 22).

After its independence, India rapidly ratified “the world longest constitution in the early 1950s” (Tudor 2013: 1). India installed a federal parliamentary republic with a president as head of state and the Prime Minister as head of government. There are the central government and federal governments, whose powers and limits are defined by the constitution. The legislature consists of the Upper House (Rajya Sabha), seated by the represents of the Indian states and a Lower House (Lok Sabha), representing the Indian population as a whole. The judiciary is independent and headed by a Supreme Court. Elections are held every five years. India’s first election in 1952 was won by the National Congress and the party could preserve the majority or the leadership of coalitions in the following elections until 1977. The first Prime Minister was Jawaharlal Nehru, who stayed in office until 1964. Then Lal Bahadur Shastri followed Nehru. Shastri died in 1966, only some days after signing the Tashkent agreement, which ended the Kashmir war and was succeed by Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi.

According to the Polity IV Index, India covers a nine on the Authority Index in 1965, which indicates a high grade of democracy. India’s democracy possesses legitimacy but also has some dark spots. The state institutions are weak. Domestic politics are dominated by elite power struggles and the foreign policy decisions are made by a small manipulable elite (Kapur 2006: 135). The Lok Sabha, which represents India’s population, plays a minor role in security and foreign policy. The politicians have little oversight or expertise on defense policy and budget debates were rather pro forma than energetic (Hoyt 2003: 151). Apart from India’s good grades in democratization, these are barriers to the expression of the majority’s will.

When it came to the Rann of Kutch crisis, democratic institutions did not facilitate deescalation. When Indian Prime Minister Shastri bargained about a ceasefire agreement, he did not get parliamentary

⁸⁸ The “Polity Score” captures this regime authority spectrum on a 21-point scale ranging from -10 (hereditary monarchy) to +10 (consolidated democracy). The Polity scores can also be converted into regime categories in a suggested three part categorization of “autocracies” (-10 to -6), “anocracies” (-5 to +5 and three special values: -66, -77 and -88), and “democracies” (+6 to +10) (Polity IV Index).

support for the agreement at once. Some members of the parliament had hard-liners` positions. In fact they hindered deescalation and kept on warning Pakistan that another crisis would be followed by an Indian invasion of Lahore and Karachi (Lamb 1966: 117). Ministers in parliamentary debates employed offensive language: Indian Minister of Home Affairs Gulzarilal Nada told the parliament on April 10th that people must rise as one man and Minister of Education Mahommedali Currim Chagla said on April 16th that there were people and countries who only understood the language of strength and toughness (Gupta 1969: 195, quoted in Blinkenberg 1972: 248).

Following the democratic peace theory, India should have less normative restrictions to enter a war with Pakistan because Pakistan is not democratic. This runs counter to the actual deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis.

The history of Pakistani-Indian relations is shaped by hostilities. The founding of Islamic Republic of Pakistan is based on nation-wide outbreaks of violence after the independence of British India in 1947. Since then, they fought wars and smaller clashes and established relations which are shaped by mutual threat perception. Each antagonist expects expansionist intentions of the other. “[...] Pakistani identity has largely evolved not in terms of any indigenous cultural or civilizational values but in contradiction to the idea of India” (Nasr 2006: 179).

Both states have few normative restrictions to go to war with each other, but this is due to their common history of rivalry and the decade long establishment of bogeyman out of the adversary, rather than the absence of normative barriers of domestic democratic structures.

Since the population has very limited opportunities to express their will in political terms in an anocracy, the public opinion is of limited meaning when it comes to the question of crisis deescalation. Further, as the press was censored, media could not fulfill its duty to provide the population with neutral information. Guided media spread the propaganda of the government and secured the support for policies in the population.

When it comes to territorial disputes between two countries, nationalism is a driving power for the opinion of the population. In this case the populations tend to opt for a more aggressive policy of not letting oneself to be bullied by the adversary. In the case of India and Pakistan, the decade long conflict concerns their joint borders and the affiliations of territories. In the presidential elections in 1965, Khan rallied his campaign as “defender of Kashmir” (Schofield 2003: 106). Therefore he stood for relentlessness in the territorial questions with India. This led to offensive behavior in the Rann of Kutch crisis and the Kashmir war later the same year.

Theories about the peace-promoting attributes of democracies state that decision-makers are influenced by the public opinion, which tends to be peaceful. When the Indian government chose to accept mediation, the leading press in India had also favored the country to act in a conciliatory way

(Blinkenberg 1972: 249).

Newspapers in India speculated about Pakistan's interests in provoking border clashes in the Rann: Pakistan spread propaganda that India was bullying its smaller, weaker neighbor and if India received "further assistance from other countries, she would become even more aggressive and dangerous to her neighbors" (The Hindu: Editorial Sep 20th 1963, cited in Jha 1967: 233). Further, the provocation in the Rann was due to the Presidential elections in Pakistan and Ayub Khan wanted to increase its support in Pakistan by propaganda about "the trouble on the border, presented with suitable exaggerations of an imminent threat of aggression by India" (The Hindustan Times: Editorial Mar 23th 1965, cited in Jha 1967: 233).

Apart from that, when Ayub Khan and Lal Bahadur Shastri were invited to Tashkent by the Soviet Union to negotiate a settlement of the second Kashmir war in January 1966, they both had to cope with domestic restrictions. In both countries, the majority of the populations preferred to continue the war instead of a negotiated settlement (Lamb 1966: 133). As it is not directly temporally related to the Rann of Kutch crisis but a couple of month later, after the Kashmir War, the fact cannot fully account as argument against pacifying effects of the democratic peace in the Rann of Kutch crisis. But still, it illustrates that the public opinion both in a democratic country as in an anocratic country can support rather a military solution to a conflict than negotiations.

5.3.4 Polarity of the International System

At the time of the Rann of Kutch crisis, the international system was shaped by the East-West conflict. After the end of World War II (WWII), the political world was divided into two blocs: the Western Bloc (United States and its NATO allies) and the Eastern Bloc (Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact) with political, economic and cultural differences. The two superpowers did not engage in war against each other themselves but undertook grave arms build ups, leading to an arms race lasting for decades. Each side feared the opponent's expansion and their foreign policies were dominated by mutual containment. Bloc building spread all around the world and only few states built a neutral non-alignment movement founded by India, Indonesia, Egypt and Yugoslavia.

The struggle for dominance presented itself through conventional and nuclear deterrence and the ongoing fostering of bloc building. Potential allies and the enemy's enemies received support all around the world. This fueled crises and proxy wars. The bipolar world of the East-West conflict also influenced politics in South-East Asia. Alliance structures will be evaluated later on in this study, but, in short, mutual containment was the central premise of action for the superpowers in South-East Asia as well. The Cold War shaped a correlation between Pakistani, American and British interests. On the other hand, India, the Soviet Union and China formed a block. But these formations were very fluent

as interests and coalitions shifted in the course of the decades. When China and the Soviet Union diverted politically in the second half of the 1950s, it led to an inter-communist competition and eased the strict two-bloc division. Nonetheless the competition for political dominance around the globe persisted.

Can a bipolar international system influence the deescalation of a crisis? Bipolarity is theorized to promote international stability. Bipolarity means that there are two dominate actors who aim at balancing the power of the adversary and determine the rules of behavior, including all members of one side. Unbalanced power promotes instability and insecurity.

A bipolar international system promotes balancing behavior of states in order to avoid unbalanced power and an unstable international environment. Both India and Pakistan showed balancing behavior during the bipolar world of the East-West conflict.

The emerging Cold War and the coupled block building was answered by Nehru`s Indian foreign policy with non-alignment. India strove to lead the non-alignment movement (NAM) under the principles of panchsheel⁸⁹. The Bandung Conference in 1955, led by India, Yugoslavia, Indonesia, China and Egypt, articulated commitments to panchsheel for the first time. But at that time, Indonesia, China and Egypt had already drifted to the communist block and India and China were slowly moving towards a conflict about their joint border (Hoyt 2003: 145). First, relations between the Soviet Union and India were sympathetic but reserved as Stalin considered India as still strongly influenced by imperialist powers. When the relations between China and India worsened in the end of the 1950s, the US began improving the relations to India.

The Sino-Indian war in 1962 demonstrated India`s poor military abilities and both sides of the East-West blocks invested in economic and military aid for India to balance China. Walt (1988) identifies Indian balancing behavior anytime it confronts a threat. "Indeed, the tacit alignment between India and the Soviet Union is precisely what balance-of-threat theory would predict, given that geography and history have placed Pakistan and China at odds with both" (Walt 1988: 303).

Pakistan`s foreign policy, as the weaker of the two states, was primarily driven by the need to balance the stronger opponent India. Pakistan strove for allying with the West and gained military aid from the US.⁹⁰ For the US, Pakistan served as a tool to contain the Soviet Union in South-East Asia. It played an important geostrategic role. Pakistan worked as a "gateway for policies of the US and China in relation to the USSR and India" (Kapur 2006: 135). When the American support for Pakistan declined in the beginning of the 1960s, Pakistan approached China. China offered Pakistan economic

⁸⁹ The five principles of panchsheel are mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in internal affairs of other states, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence (Nehru 1961:99).

⁹⁰ Between 1953 and 1958 Pakistan received US \$ 120 million of economic and military aid (Walt 1988: 304).

assistance and political support in its claims on Kashmir. China supplied insurgents in India's northeast with small arms and Pakistan with modern arms but did not fight on Pakistan's side in the Kashmir war in 1965. After the war, Pakistan decided to adopt a "policy of 'bilateralism'" (Walt 1988: 305), approaching China and the Soviet Union.

Bipolarity led to balancing behavior in order to enhance security for the actors and stabilize the South-East Asian structure. Inflexibility is considered as promoting stability. „The inflexibility of a bipolar world, with the appetite for power of each major competitor at once whetted and checked by the other, may promote a greater stability than flexible balances of power among a larger number of states“(Waltz 1964: 112).

But in fact, the major powers on the one hand and India and Pakistan on the other hand were so anxious to balance the opponent that the inflexibility of the system turned out very flexible, which actually promoted instability. Both India and Pakistan were supported by the United States or the Soviet Union, depending on interests and politics. Although balancing behavior due to bipolarity can be identified in the India-Pakistan relations, a constant shuffling of alliances happened, which is considered as dangerous for stability and peace (Waltz 1964: 113).

In summary the Cold War rather fueled than deescalated tensions between India and Pakistan. The over-balancing of the actors rather promoted instability and insecurity instead of security through stability. Further, Pakistan's external balancing brought the Cold War to South-East Asia in the first place (Rajagopalan 1999: 1533).⁹¹ Indian-Pakistani relations would have looked much different without the Cold War. Pakistan enjoyed the Western and Chinese support to balance India. The West and China were interested in establishing Pakistan as regional antagonist to India. With this support, Pakistan was able to challenge India and instead of being forced to yield in disputes with India. On the other hand, when India was defeated by China in the Sino-Indian war in 1962, the United States and the Soviet Union assisted India in terms of resources since both had interests to keep China in check. Especially the arms transfer by both blocs enabled India to pressure Pakistan militarily in the conflict of 1965.

5.4 Primary Causes for Deescalation

After discussing the influence of mediation, institutional involvement, democratic structures and international polarity on the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis, one can summarize that all of them have had no impact or even an escalating effect on the crisis. Now, I will turn to three more factors whose effect on the course of the crisis is deeper. I will evaluate the primary factors power

⁹¹ Even though one can expect that the Cold War would have come to South-East Asia anyway. In fact it had been already there since the Korean War (1950 – 1953).

relations, alliance structures and perceptions of the opponents in their impact of the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis.

5.4.1 Power

In the following chapter, the power relations between India and Pakistan at the time of the Kutch crisis will be investigated. It is expected that the relative power between India and Pakistan, military capabilities and geostrategic advantages in detail, influence the behavior of the conflicting dyad and can foster deescalation. First I will assess the military capabilities of both countries. The structure and political role of the military in India and Pakistan their military expenditures and military equipment will be evaluated.

5.4.1.1 Military Capabilities

The military and the intelligence played an important role in the building of Pakistan's national identity (Haqqani 2010: 3). The Pakistani military is considered as protector of the Pakistani nationhood. The dispute with India made the military's rise to power possible. Already shortly after gaining independence, Pakistani newspapers called for arms build-up to enable the military to protect Pakistani territory (Haqqani 2010: 14). At the partition of British India into Pakistan and India, Pakistan had received 30 per cent of the Army, 40 per cent of the navy and 20 per cent of the air force (Haqqani 2010: 26). With India as the neighboring threat, Pakistan devoted the lion's share of its budget to defense.⁹² This led to a huge military apparatus including an extensive intelligence. Pakistan used internal balancing by devoting domestic resources to defense and external balancing by allying with major powers as the US and China⁹³.

Pakistan's political history was shaken by military *coup d'états* (1958, 1977, 1999). Until 1958, the military slowly enhanced its share of power without colliding with the parliamentary democracy. But in 1958 Ayub Khan, at that point chief martial law administrator, ignited a military *coup d'état* and appointed himself as president, introducing military rule in Pakistan.

After this short evaluation of the political role of the military in Pakistan, its defense expenditures and armament in 1965 are in focus. In the 1950s Pakistan spent about four per cent of its Gross National Product (GNP) on defense. During the 1960s this number rose to 6 per cent of the GNP (Rajagopalan 1999: 1527). In 1965, Pakistan's population averaged about 101 million and the country had a voluntary military service. The defense expenditures in 1965/66 were 1,382 million rupees (US

⁹² In its first year in office, the Pakistani government spent 70 per cent of its estimated expenditures on defense (Haqqani 2010: 29).

⁹³ See next chapter „Alliances“.

\$ 289,000,000). The total armed forces accounted between 188,000 and 208,000. The Army had a strength of between 160,000 and 180,000 men. It consisted of six infantry divisions and one air defense brigade. The armed forces included about ten regiments with M47/48 Patton and M-4 Sherman medium tanks and two to three regiments with M-24 Chaffee light tanks. These formed one armored division of two brigades and a separate independent armored brigade. Apart from the official army there were para-military forces which had a total strength of 70,000 men. These consisted of 25,000 frontier corps (tribesmen), 10,000 West Pakistan Rangers, 10,000 East Pakistan Rifles and 25,000 Azad Kashmir troops. In the Navy there were 8,000 men. It had one light cruiser (cadet training ship), five destroyers, two ASW frigates, one submarine, eight minesweepers, four motor launches and eight other ships. Further, there were 1,500 naval coast guards and the naval air crafts included Albatrosses and some UH-19 helicopters for air-sea rescue. The Air Force consisted of 200 aircrafts and 20,000 men. These included two B-57B Canberra squadrons, four F-86F Sabre squadrons and one F-104A Starfighter squadron. Further, RT-33As were used for tactical reconnaissance purposes. Transportation was assured by four C-130B Hercules and ten Bristol Mark 21 and Mark 31 tactical freighters (International Institute for Strategic Studies 1965/66: 28).

During the time of the colonial rule, Britain paid attention that the oversea colony was safe from other states by securing the borders on land and at the sea, “[by] set [ting] up buffer states to secure the land periphery and help defend the core; sea control ensured that all other powers were denied the means to penetrate Indian waters [...]” (Tanham 1992: vi). After the independence, the armed forces of British India were split up between the new states India and Pakistan. The Indian armed forces are divided into the army, the navy, the air force and the coast guards. The president of India represents the Supreme Commander and the armed forces are organized by the Ministry of Defense. The Ministry of Defense is headed by the Union Cabinet Minister of Defense. Since the establishment of India`s armed forces, they have been strongly bound to civilian politics. In contrast to many other countries in South East Asia, India never fell victim to a military *coup d`état*. “On gaining independence the Indian political elite, which had a strong pacifist bent, was determined to keep the generals in their place. In this it has happily succeeded” (The Economist, March 30th 2013).

Although tensions with Pakistan emerged with the partition of the two countries in 1947, and Pakistan underwent an arms build-up through external military aid by the US, India focused on moderate defense spending and the policy of non-alignment. Not before the end of the 1950s India reached out for the Soviet Union (Tanham 1992: 33). India`s major arms build-up happened after its defeat in the war with China in 1962. In April 1963, India announced that it would double its forces the upcoming years. The Ministry of Defense stated that an expansion of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force would be assisted by the UK and the US (Schofield 2003: 106). India received military equipment

worth US \$ 80 million by the US and Britain between November 1962 and September 1965 (Blinkenberg 1972: 241, fn. 12). Additionally, India increased its own military expenses from 3,000 million rupees (US \$ 630 million) in 1962 to 8,000 rupees (US \$1,680 million) in 1965/66, doubling its armed forces (Blinkenberg 1972: 241). But also the Soviet Union equipped India secretly with military supply before 1962 and afterwards.

In 1965/66 defense estimates were 9,952 million rupees (US \$ 2,100 million). India's overall population accounted 470 million people. As Pakistan, it has a voluntary military service and the total armed forces consisted of 869,000 men. The Army had a total sanctioned strength of 825,000 men. These were divided into 16 divisions, including nine mountain divisions and the armored division and additionally four infantry divisions on a reduced establishment. In 1965, these were approved but it took further 18 months to set up these forces. Armored forces before September 1965 included one armored division equipped with Centurions, one armored brigade with Shermans, two light tank regiments with AMX-13 and two light tank regiments with Stuarts. The Territorial Army consisted of 47,000 men. The Navy had a total strength of 16,000 men. It was equipped with one 16,000-ton carrier, two cruisers, three destroyers, five anti-submarine frigates, three anti-aircraft frigates, six other escort ships, six minesweepers, 13 light coastal vessels, two amphibious warfare ships, five survey vessels and training ships. The naval aircraft included 24 Sea Hawk strike/interceptors and 15 Alize ASW aircraft. The Air Force had a total strength of 28,000 men. They were equipped with 12 MiG-21 jet fighters, four HF-24 Marut fighter-bombers, four interceptor squadrons with 25 Mystère IVs each and four interceptors squadrons with 25 Gnats each. Further, there were four bomber squadrons with 20 Canberras each, six fighter-bomber squadrons with 25 Hunters each, several Ouragan and Vampire fighter-bomber squadrons and one reconnaissance squadron with eight Canberras. The transport force included 80 C-119s, 24 An-12s, about 50 C-47s, two Il-14s and Otters and Viscounts 723 and 730 (International Institute for Strategic Studies 1965/66: 34).

“India is more powerful than Pakistan by almost any definition of material power” (Rajagopalan 1999: 1525). Comparing the material capabilities of India and Pakistan, Rajagopalan's analysis is convincing. India has all in all more resources which can be spent on defense. Although Pakistan received strong support through military aid by the US, in the long term it cannot compete militarily with India.

In the beginning of the Kutch crisis, India held military superiority. Soviet military support had increased Indian military capabilities beyond those of Pakistan (Sprecher/Park 2003: 162). Indian soldiers outnumbered the Pakistani side in army and air force. Further, due to the military support of the US, Britain and the Soviet Union since 1963, India was excellently equipped in number and quality of military equipment. In addition, the US prohibited the use of the weapons which had been

given to Pakistan before in the Rann of Kutch crisis against India. Pakistan had already made use of them during the fighting. India protested against that since Washington had made promises before that it would not allow Pakistan to use the weapons against India. Pakistan might have hoped to jam a wedge between the US and India but then it had a quarrel with the US because Pakistan considered the prohibition as unfair as almost all of its military equipment had been supplied by the US and ignored the order. But for all that, India behaved rather defensively in the Rann of Kutch crisis. This might be related to the geostrategic vulnerabilities.

5.4.1.2 Geostrategic Power

Here one has to consider on the one hand the geostrategic conditions in the Rann of Kutch crisis and on the other hand also the geostrategic conditions in case of an escalation to war between India and Pakistan. Geostrategic vulnerabilities are important for an evaluation of the options of action in a crisis. Actors in a conflict have to evaluate the potential consequences of geostrategic vulnerabilities in the actual crisis and, if things escalate, the consequences of a war.

In terms of geostrategy, Pakistan had an advantage in the Rann of Kutch. The area in the Rann which was occupied by Pakistan mostly consisted of higher drylands while Indian posts were mainly in the lower swamplands. This made it more easily accessible for Pakistani troops and military equipment. The deployment of Pakistani capabilities was faster and easier than that of the Indian capabilities. “The theater in which they would be operating also favored the Pakistanis, who would have the advantage of transporting their troops and weapons as well as maneuvering their armor on higher and drier terrain” (Leng 2000: 216). “Pakistan had a logistical advantage in the Rann because it held dry highlands while India’s territory was swampy and marshy” (Sprecher/Park 2003: 162), which resulted in the fact that India could not deploy its tanks to the area where hostilities escalated in May 1965 (Leng 1998: 225, fn. 14). Considering the logistical and military advantage for Pakistan, India did not have the prospect to gain the offensive in the Rann of Kutch. Although superior in terms of relative power, India was militarily inferior in the Rann as the geography of the Rann confronted India with problems of deployment. Ground forces had to cross the whole greater Rann to reach the disputed territory while Pakistan was able to launch surprise attacks on lonely Indian posts there. “In the Rann the logistic difficulties for the Indian army were too many as that it could gain the offensive” (Brines 1968: 288; quoted in Blinkenberg 1972: 246).

Nonetheless further escalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis did not happen although India did not yield. In fact, India let Pakistan and the public know that it would refrain from further combat operations in the Rann and attack Pakistan from a more favorable side. This was stated by Prime Minister Shastri in the Lok Shaba on April 29th: “If Pakistan continues to discard reasons and persists in its aggressive

activities, the Indian Army will decide its own strategy and the employment of its manpower and equipment in areas which it deems fit” (Ahlawat 2013: 84). As elaborated above, this foreshadowed India’s willingness to ignite a war with Pakistan by attacking Pakistan at positions which are more favorable for India. This is the geostrategic power in case of general war.

More favorable positions to India refer to the border regions northerly of the Rann of Kutch. There are four Indian states along the border to Pakistan: Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and the disputed Kashmir. In Punjab, there are mainly rice paddies at the border, Gujarat consists of marshlands and Kashmir is mountainous. Only Rajasthan with deserts and flat land offers a window for a Pakistani offensive. But because of this geographical composition, Rajasthan would also be the location where India would concentrate its troops. Potential strategic objects in India as cities and industry are several hundred kilometers away from the Indo-Pakistani border. Pakistan on the other hand geographically faces India along of the length of its long axis, therefore without strategic depth. Most of Pakistan’s population and infrastructure are located along the Indo-Pakistani border. In case of an Indian combat air craft or ballistic missile strike, the population centers and the Pakistani military assets are in range (Sathasivam/Shafqat 2002:128 – 129). “An Indian capture of about 40 kilometers along the border would immediately paralyze Pakistan’s communication, industry and population” (Tahir-Kheli 1984: 212). Therefore, an attack on Lahore, as indicated by Shastri on April 29th, would lead to a straight Pakistani defeat.

In summary, the findings of this chapter show the interaction of relative power in military capabilities and the geostrategic power. Although Pakistan was considerably inferior to India when it came to military capabilities, it attacked and captured Indian territory in the Rann. This was due to the geographical conditions which favored Pakistan in the Rann. India deployed military personnel and material. It further held ground, sea and air exercises near the Rann of Kutch. But it was not able to defend the posts, Pakistani troops attacked. India could assume that it would have a rather hard time to fight Pakistan in the Kutch and at the moment when Pakistan attacked Biar Bet it was tactically able to inflict a defeat upon India. This led India to the quite offensive statement that it would attack Pakistani territory on more favorable ground. This, in turn, led Pakistan to refrain from further offensive operations in the Rann because an escalation to general war with India would lead to Pakistan’s defeat as it was inferior in military terms and beyond the Rann also in geostrategic terms.

5.4.2 Alliances

The Indian-Pakistani conflict was strongly influenced by outside powers. Ashok Kapur claims that “without massive external assistance to Pakistan and external pressure against India in several crucial areas the Indo-Pakistani rivalry would not have been so prolonged” (Kapur 2006: 132). Alliance

building before and during the Rann of Kutch crisis was strongly dominated by the Cold War. The US and USSR both pursued their policies in South East Asia. Both states were mainly concerned about the enemy's expansion in this region and strove to contain the opponent. One possibility of containment was strategic alliance building.

5.4.2.1 India's Alliances

After independence India pursued a policy of nonalignment. It dreaded formal alignments and was critical about the West due to the colonial experience (Walt 1988: 297). Further, it did not want to get roped into the Cold War, but as Pakistan began orientating to the West and especially to the US in the need for economic and military help, India began approaching the Western antagonist Soviet Union. India sought particularly military support.

India's ambitions of establishing good relations with the USSR were initially considered as critical by the Soviets since India had signaled its dislike of Stalin's internal and external politics and its refusal to support India in the Kashmir conflict in the UN's Security Council. The USSR on the other hand showed little interest in India since former colonies were still considered as Western string puppets. After Stalin's death in 1953, the Indian-Soviet relationship became closer. In 1954, Russia started an economic aid program to India. The following year, Stalin's successor Khrushchev visited India and not only openly supported India's Kashmir policy but also offered extensive arms support (Blinkenberg 1972: 351 – 357). From a Soviet perspective, allying with India should keep Pakistan in check. The Soviet Union was concerned that Pakistan could pose a threat to its client regime in Afghanistan and sought to balance Pakistan by allying with India. In the following years, Russia was the most important ally, especially in terms of support with military resources. Nonetheless the Soviet Union limited itself to arms transfers to India and showed no sign of active military support in case of any threat to India. The USSR did not fight for India in any conflict with Pakistan and stayed neutral in the Sino-Indian war in 1962 (Leng 2000: 212 – 213).

Before the Sino-Indian relations deteriorated to war in 1962, affairs between India and China were rather good. Even before independence, the two countries maintained friendly contact. India was one of the first countries which recognized the new Communist leadership in Beijing. China had an actual potential to be an Indian rival but India was keen on good relations with the northern neighbor. It supported China's entry to the United Nations and the mediation between China and the West during the Korean War (Walt 1988: 298). When China followed its expansionist policy by occupying Tibet in 1950, India reacted with coolness and negotiated a conciliatory agreement (Walt 1988: 298). In 1954, Indian Prime Minister Nehru and Chinese Prime Minister and State Secretary Chou En-lai signed the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India. The

agreement regulated traffic, trade, and communications and assured mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence.⁹⁴

Nonetheless India and China had further border issues which led to a change for the worse in their relationship. The border conflict about the two regions Aksai Chin in the West and Arunachal Pradesh in the East smoldered for some years and peaked in a war in 1962. India performed disastrously in military terms and was defeated by China within weeks. After the cease-fire there were no further hostilities between India and China but relations did not improve anymore (Blinkenberg 1972: 327 – 344). After India's defeat, Britain, the Soviet Union and the US came to assist her. India received military equipment worth US \$ 80 million between November 1962 and September 1965 (Blinkenberg 1972: 241, fn. 12, 343).

Indo-American relations had a late start. As mentioned above, India did not follow the Western policy of containing communism. This alienated the US and besides that the US preferred to leave Indian politics to Great Britain, assuming that the former colonial ruler had better insights. For example the US followed the British policy of opposition towards India in the Kashmir conflict, assuming that Britain had more internal knowledge about the conflict. Apart from that, the US military supply and assistance to Pakistan repelled India (Blinkenberg 1972: 364 – 368). So first, relations to the US were cool and Indian Prime Minister Nehru at least sympathized partly with communist ideas. When the Indian policy of non-alignment faded in the mid-50s, India opted diplomatically for the Soviet Union. But as relations between China and India worsened, the US became interested in approaching India and the Kennedy administration made diplomatic and financial offers. This led to rapid American assistance following the Indian defeat against China in 1962. The US, the Soviet Union and Great Britain sent military equipment to India during and after the war with China to enable India to balance China, which had become the adversary of both superpowers in between (Walt 1988: 300). Although India risked alienating the Soviet Union, it approached the US after 1962. They executed joint exercises and started negotiating a military assistance pact. This cooperation came to a sudden end when Pakistan made use of US delivered Patton tanks in the Rann of Kutch crisis. India complained about that and the US advised Pakistan to refrain from using the Patton tanks against India but made no further effort to enforce that demand. As the US did not take sides in the Indo-Pakistani conflict, it posed sanctions on both countries and reduced its involvement in the region (Hoyt 2003: 145, Walt 1988: 301).

After its independence, India was about to establish good relations with Great Britain in spite of the

⁹⁴ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Trade and Inter-Course between Tibet Region of China and India, 1954.

long British colonial rule. But the British-Indian relationship was rather patchy. In the 1950s and in the beginning of the 60s, Britain was India's most important trading partner and supplier of military goods. Further, India received massive economic aid from Britain and political relations were good. Nonetheless there were several points of conflict between the two states. While India strove for a policy of non-alignment, Britain's ties to the US were very close and it joined CENTO and SEATO. Both were eyed critically by India (Coleman 2009: 466) since Pakistan was also a member of both organizations. Further, Britain opposed to India's policy on Kashmir in the UN Security Council (Blinkenberg 1972: 361 – 364). Britain also supported India during and after the Sino-Indian war in 1962 with arms supply, together with the US and the Soviet Union. When the Rann of Kutch crisis emerged in 1965, Britain was strongly concerned about the stability in South East Asia and made mediatory attempts between its co-members of the Commonwealth. Apart from that, an active British intervention on the side of India was not taken into consideration.

Further, India had friendly relations to Indonesia, the United Arab Republic (UAR) and Yugoslavia. They either directly supported India against Pakistan or signaled understanding. Egypt, despite being a Muslim country, supported India in the case of Kashmir (Blinkenberg 1972: 374f). But all of the support was in political terms and no country was expected to aid India with military actions against Pakistan.

5.4.2.2 Pakistan's Alliances

While India pursued a policy of nonalignment after the partition, Pakistan reached out towards the West in order to have access to economic and military aid. For the West, Pakistan served as a delimitation for communism. But in the 1960s, alliance structures changed and Pakistan and the Soviet Union approached each other.

After independence, Pakistan responded to the American goal of forming an anti-communist block in South East Asia. Pakistani Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan declared at a visit to the US the Pakistani pro-American and anti-communist policy (Tahir-Kheli 1997: 33). The US did not support Pakistan in the Kashmir case but delivered economic and military aid to Pakistan. By joining SEATO and CENTO, Pakistan had access to American military and economic aid. Between the mid-1950s and mid-1960s, Pakistan received US \$ 650 million of military aid, which made Pakistan one of the greatest beneficiaries of US aid (Tahir-Kheli 1997: 33). In 1954 Pakistan signed a mutual defense agreement with the US. It included the purchase of US military hardware and technical support. Another bilateral agreement of cooperation was signed in 1959 to "further reinforce the defensive purposes of SEATO" (Khan 1964: 195). The US had several strategic interests in Pakistan: oil politics, containing communism, establishing a moderate Muslim regime and countering the Indian strategy

of non-alignment (Kapur 2006:132). Pakistan on the other hand expected the US to guarantee for Pakistani territorial security (Haqqani 2010: 34). But the alliance was also problematic for Pakistan because of the close US-Israeli relations. It caused tensions between Pakistan and other Muslim countries such as Egypt.⁹⁵ Further, the US did not meet Pakistani expectations. Pakistan was alienated by the simultaneous US support for India, especially the military aid. As this aid increased in the Sino-Indian war in 1962, Pakistan's alienation rose at once. Pakistan expected US support also against India and not only in terms of containing communism. The US had some congruent interests with Pakistan but allying with Pakistan against India in terms of active military support was never an option.

In the Rann of Kutch crisis, the US left diplomatic intervention to Great Britain and made no move to intervene in any kind of way. When India complained about the Pakistani use of Patton tanks, the US approached Pakistan to prohibit the use, but when Pakistan disclaimed that, the US withdrew from the whole case and released an embargo for both states. In the Kashmir war some weeks after the Rann of Kutch crisis in 1965, the US stayed neutral, which finally snubbed Pakistan. In the following Pakistan closed American communication and intelligence facilities on its territory and did not extend the ten-year agreement of cooperation from 1959.

Generally Pakistan had good relations to Britain, which supported the founding of the Pakistani state. British-Pakistani relations had the same course as the US-Pakistani relations since the US and Great Britain had close ties at that time, especially in South East Asian politics. Pakistani-Western ties became closer after 1954 when Pakistan joined SEATO and CENTO as an anti-communist defense line in South East Asia. Britain opposed to India in the Kashmir question in the UN but it was not in favor of Pakistan. Britain did not negotiate for a Pakistani affiliation of Kashmir, which did not meet Pakistani needs (Blinkenberg 1972: 369). In the Rann of Kutch crisis, Britain was strongly involved in mediatory attempts but did not take one side. Neither did it show any approach of intervening militarily on Pakistan's side.

The Soviet Union did not favor the partition of British India in the beginning and therefore did not recognize Pakistan before 1948. Relations between the USSR and Pakistan were cool until the replacement of the democratic government by a military regime in Pakistan in 1958. The early 1960s were marked by a slow rapprochement. Russia's ties with Afghanistan were a stumbling block in the Soviet-Pakistani relations. Pakistan felt threatened by the Soviet arms support to Afghanistan. Nonetheless Pakistan tried to approach the USSR further and in 1961, both countries signed an agreement about economic cooperation. Concerning the Kashmir conflict, the USSR remained neutral

⁹⁵ After the Suez War, Egypt refused to have Pakistani troops as members of the United Nations Emergency Force and the reception the Pakistani Prime Minister (Rajagopalan 1999: 1582).

and referred to bilateral negotiations as best solution to it (Blinkenberg 1972: 357 – 361). By 1965 the Soviet Union and Pakistan had established stable relations. Favoring India before, now, under the successor of Khrushchev, the new Russian Prime Minister Alexey Kosygin pursued a more Pakistan-friendly policy. When Ayub Khan visited the Soviet Union in April 1965, Kosygin was open to the Kashmir question, surely against the background of reducing Chinese influence in Pakistan. Nonetheless the Soviet Union did not intervene in the Rann of Kutch crisis and “retained an attitude of neutrality” (Lamb 1966: 132, Hasan 1969). In September 1965, Kosygin also addressed both adversaries to come to an immediate ceasefire in the Kashmir war and offered Russian help for negotiations. This offer was initially turned down by Khan and Shastri, but accepted few weeks later. Until Ayub Khan came to power, relations between China and Pakistan were rather formal. China was neutral in the first Kashmir war and Pakistan opposed China’s intervention in Korea and its admission to the UN (Walt 1988: 304). When Sino-Indian relations worsened after the Tibet rebellion and the first clashes between India and China in 1959, Pakistan approached China.⁹⁶ During the talks in 1960, China accepted Pakistan’s occupation of Kashmir and both parties entered negotiations about border delimitation (Blinkenberg 1972: 345 – 350). Pakistan’s rapprochement to China produced a cleavage in the US-Pakistani relationship. On the other hand, India and the US began sharing interests, starting with a common fear of China (McMahon 1994: 324). Border agreements between Pakistan and China were signed: the 1963 Border Agreement and the Boundary Protocol in March 1965 (Khan 1965: 381). Further, China provided economic assistance to Pakistan and supported its Kashmir policy. Pakistan, in turn, supported China’s ambitions to join the United Nations (Walt 1988: 304). Shortly before the Rann of Kutch crisis emerged, Pakistani leader Ayub Khan visited China (Blinkenberg 1972: 242). Khan sought economic aid from China and several joint statements about nuclear weapons, colonialism, Afro-Asian solidarity and Kashmir were released. China made a declaration of support for Pakistan’s position in the Kashmir conflict (Lamb 1966: 114) and openly supported Khan in the Rann of Kutch issue (Jha 2014: 263). Although “China was clearly in a position to make a direct intervention against India” (Lamb 1966: 128), China and Pakistan did not have a defense agreement and China did not intervene on Pakistan’s side against India.

Further, Pakistan improved relations to Iran and Turkey during that time (Blinkenberg 1972: 242). Pakistan was on good terms with both countries and Turkey and Iran supported it in its conflict with India, but only to a minor extent. Relations with Indonesia were also improving to the same extent to which Indian-Indonesian relations worsened. During the 1965 Kashmir war, Indonesia supported Pakistan politically (Blinkenberg 1972: 374). The Pakistani relations with the neighbor Afghanistan

⁹⁶ Blinkenberg (1972: 346) assumes that the Pakistani rapprochement to China was influenced by the US turn to India in the same year.

were rather bad. Afghanistan opposed to Pakistan's admission to the UN in 1947. Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan had diplomatic abandonments in 1955 and 1961. Each time they were restored through mediatory interventions, 1956 through Turkey and 1963 through Iran.

The intermediary result for a potential deescalating effect of alliances can be summarized by stating that alliances do not seem to have had an effect on the deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis. Although there was a set of politically relevant actors such as the US, the USSR, China and Britain, none of the powers allied formally or informally with one side in the dispute in order to intervene and deter the adversary. As evaluated in this chapter, the alliances were very fluent in South East Asia in the 1960s. Some countries gave political support to India or Pakistan and some gave support in form of military equipment aid but none intervened in the conflict actively, which could have had a deterring effect and foster deescalation.

5.4.3 Perceptions

Relations between India and Pakistan were characterized by hostility from the very beginning on. Each side presumed that the other's actions and intentions were focused on harming the adversary. Apart from the perception of the adversary's intentions, the assessment of the others' capabilities has a major impact on the behavior of states in a conflict. "No less important, however, are each party's perceptions of the other, particularly perceptions of the other's intentions and capabilities, and of the most effective means of dealing with the other" (Leng 2006: 105). Finally, the probability of a military intervention of a third state determines the decision about the course of a crisis.

5.4.3.1 Perceptions of Intentions

Pakistan's threat perception centers entirely around Indian foreign policy. Pakistan assumes that India never really accepted the partition and still has expansionist intentions to reunite the countries under Indian rule. India is perceived to strive for regional domination and employ force to gain it (Sathasivam/Shafqat 2003: 125). Pakistan expected India to attempt to seize disputed territories. After independence, India had forced the accession of Hyderabad and Junagadh and had claims on Kashmir. Therefore the Pakistani leadership expected India to seize the Rann in a military fait accompli. On the other hand, India showed no signs of such intention. Ayub Khan gave several speeches, explaining India's military expansion as a foreplay to an attack on Pakistan (Gupta 1968: 301). Khan also evaluated the Indian threat to Pakistan in the article he published in Foreign Affairs in 1964:

"Our concern arose from the fact that the Indian military build-up was aimed solely against Pakistan. The pronouncements of Indian leaders and the continued massing of India's army

on Pakistan's borders clearly suggested this” (Khan 1964: 199).

“Since then, arms aid has been flowing into India continuously on a very substantial scale, not only from the United States but also in almost equal measure from Britain and, to a small extent, from some other members of the Commonwealth. We are profoundly concerned over this new development. We consider that this continued arming of India, in which the Soviet Union has also, for reasons of its own, joined, poses a serious threat to Pakistan's security” (Khan 1964: 200).

Decade-long hostile relations between India and Pakistan fueled the India`s perception of Pakistani ambitions to acquire Indian territory. Since Indo-Pakistani relations until 1965 were marked by countless border incidents and provocations and one territorial war for Kashmir, India was well aware that Pakistan might not refrain from escalating the Kutch crisis to war. Pakistan on the other hand held up its offensive communication and Khan warned India in a speech on April 26th, “that it had to face grave consequences if it failed to understand the language of reason and continues to pursue a policy of browbeating its neighbors” (Gupta 1969: 215, quoted in Blinkenberg 1972: 248). India noticed these provocations and signaled on its part that it was willing to fight if necessary. Reporting the Rann of Kutch affair in the Lok Sabha, Shastri emphasized that Pakistan was the aggressive provocateur and stated:

“In the utilization of our limited resources, we have always given primacy to plans and projects for economic development. It would, therefore, be obvious for anyone who is prepared to look at things objectively that India can have no possible interest in provoking border incidents or in building up an atmosphere of strife. [...] We would prefer to live in poverty for as long as necessary but we shall not allow our freedom to be subverted” (Indo-Pak War of 1965).

5.4.3.2 Perceptions of Relative Power

Each time Pakistan perceives itself in a military advantage, it provokes a territorial dispute (Paul 2005: 15). In the Rann of Kutch crisis Pakistan believed that it could compete with India militarily due to two factors: one is the poor military performance of India in the Sino-Indian war in 1962 and the other is the arms build-up, Pakistan underwent before 1965.

Pakistan had witnessed India`s military defeat in their border conflict with China and lost its respect

for India's military capabilities. India's poor performance in the war with China led Pakistan to perceive a definite superiority in Pakistan's troops over those of India (Feldman 1972: 149).

Apart from "India's disastrous defeat in the war with China" (Sprecher/Park 2003: 162), Pakistan had run through a military build-up before and was convinced that it could win a limited local war with India. The Pakistani leadership believed that Pakistan could compete with India militarily in a limited conflict due to the delivery of US hardware and technical assistance (Feldman 1972: 136).

Apart from that, Pakistan was aware that India ran through a massive military build-up so the perceived Pakistani superiority in the military balance between India and Pakistan might be of limited duration. "India was at the early stage of a military build-up against China, which prompted Pakistani military decision makers to exploit what they saw as a window of opportunity" (Schoefield 2000: 140).

India seemed not to have a perception of the relative power corresponding to Pakistan's perception. While Pakistan perceived itself as militarily competitive to India, "[t]he Indian government, however, did not share the Pakistani view of relative capabilities of the two sides" (Leng 1998: 207). India was aware that it was generally superior in military capabilities but also of its geostrategic disadvantage in the Rann. Therefore the Indian military strategy considering the Kutch crisis was defensive in the Rann. But in case of further Pakistani aggression, an attack on Pakistan in a region where India had the advantage was possible. Prime Minister Shastri stated in consultation with the Army Chief, General Chaudhri, and on April 29th in a Lok Sabha debate that whenever India gave battle it would be "at a time and place of its own choosing" (Burke 1973: 325).⁹⁷

5.4.3.3 Perceptions of Alliances

In the Rann of Kutch crisis, Pakistan expected "the support or intervention of China or the US in case of confrontations with India" (Paul 2005: 15). Although the US had started to support India with economic and military aid, Pakistan perceived the US as its long-term ally who might come to help Pakistan in case of an escalation of the militarized dispute with India. US Secretary of State Dean Rusk commented on the escalating Kutch crisis: "[W]e in effect shrugged our shoulders and said, 'Well, if you're going to fight, go ahead and fight, but we're not going to pay for it'" (Kux 1992: 239). The other potential ally was China, whose relations to Pakistan had undergone an enormous improvement before the Rann of Kutch crisis. Further, the relations between India and China were at the rock bottom at this time. "Though the exact commitments China made to Pakistan remain unclear, Pakistan's foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto claimed in parliament that any Indian attack on

⁹⁷ See also Indian Saga 2016.

Pakistan would involve India with `the territorial integrity and security of the largest state in Asia`, presumably China” (Sherwani 1980: 131, cited in Rajagopalan 1999: 1529).

Pakistan`s perceptions when it comes to Indian intentions, capabilities and the potential third party engagement corresponded to its aggressive behavior in the Rann of Kutch crisis. It felt pushed around by India and imputes expansionism to India. Further, in 1965, it felt militarily competitive to India and perceived a window of opportunity because India was in a massive arms build-up. Finally Pakistan seemed to have expected an American or Chinese intervention in the conflict favoring Pakistan. Not till Pakistan had changed its assessment of the capabilities and especially the probability of a Chinese intervention, it stopped fighting in the Rann of Kutch.

India observed the warming-up of Sino-Pakistani relations with concern. The Permanent Representative of India called the Boundary Protocol between Pakistan and China as “an act of flagrant aggression” (Khan 1965: 381). Parallel to the emerging friendship between China and Pakistan the relations between India and China had worsened and “[...] in February 1965 [...] the Chinese attitude to India [...] quickly stiffened.” (Gupta 1968: 5). So India had to make decisions in the Rann of Kutch crisis with the risk that China might enter a conflict between Pakistan and India. Shastri stated in a debate of the Lok Sabha that Pakistan and China “seem to have joined hands to act in concert against India” (Lok Sabha 1965: 11584). Considering the past military dispute and its outcome between China and India, the Indian government knew that it could cope with Pakistan alone but not in case of a Chinese intervention on Pakistan`s side. Shastri stated in an interview with the US magazine *LIFE*: “we can`t defend our borders against both China and Pakistan [...] so it`s best to settle it peacefully” (Kraar 1965: 37).

Assessing the perceptions of India and Pakistan about the others intentions, the relative power and potential allies provides insights in the evaluations of the situation of the two states. I showed that Pakistan felt permanently threatened by India: “The core Pakistani assumption was that India was the big fish which was likely to swallow the smaller Pakistani fish” (Kapur 2006: 142). Previous events suggested Pakistan that in 1965 it could compete with India in military terms. This assumption was not shared by India, which felt itself militarily superior and although threatened by Pakistan, acted rather stoically. This can be attributed inter alia to the shared perception of India and Pakistan that China might intervene on Pakistan`s side in the conflict. This led to Pakistani offensiveness and Indian restraint in terms of military actions.

5.5 Conclusion of the Rann of Kutch Crisis

The crisis in the Rann of Kutch illustrates a case of militarized dispute between India and Pakistan which, in contrast to several other occasions of conflict between these two states, did not escalate to

war. The relation between the two countries is characterized by tensions and multiple disputes, three of them ending up in wars. “The conflict has affected all key dimensions of inter-state and societal relations of the two antagonists” (Paul 2006: 3).

In 1965, tensions between India and Pakistan rose about the boundary line in the Rann of Kutch. The Rann is a swampy strip of land between Pakistan and India, whose demarcation line had been disputed since the independence of British India. The Kutch crisis was followed by the second Kashmir war some weeks later.

The Rann of Kutch crisis emerged between two countries which already had a decade-long rivalry, one of them the largest democratic country in the world and the other one ruled by a military regime. The dispute episode took place in the broader surrounding of the East-West conflict, which was taken to South-East Asia. The deescalation of the Rann of Kutch crisis is often attributed to British mediation (Ganguly 1986; Blinkenberg 1972; Lamb 1991).

“However it is clear that meetings of this nature between representatives of third parties, states, or organizations did not take place in the cases of the wars” (Pavri 1997: 383). Certainly, this is a correlation, but one can doubt if providing communication channels is a reason for conflict deescalation. Britain became involved as a third party mediator and incepted communication channels and talks between representatives of Pakistan and India and the British commissioners for both countries. But the intervening variables through which mediation should promote deescalation, communication and negotiation, had already taken place before British involvement between India and Pakistan. As shown above, there was constant communication and several attempts to bring about a ceasefire. Therefore British mediation did not prove to deescalate the crisis through communication and negotiation. Studying the Kutch crisis one can find communication between India and Pakistan before Britain became involved in the crisis. The reason why India and Pakistan stopped fighting in the Rann of Kutch has to be found somewhere else.

In the Rann of Kutch crisis, the UN did not take any measures of intervention. The United Nations generally have the problem of their incapacity to react on crisis due to their need of consensus.

„It is, indeed, unfortunate that the provision of Chapter VII which are among the most important provisions of the Charter, have, when confronted with political actualities, proved ineffective and have virtually paralyzed the Security Council“(Singh 1992: 5).

The United Nations was involved into the conflict between India and Pakistan from the beginning and had passed several resolutions and deployed diverse missions. UNMOGIP did not end fighting in the Rann or actually tried to do so and UNIPOM was deployed after the end of fighting in the

Rann. The UN took action in September to promote the end of fighting over Kashmir, but in April, during the fighting in the Rann, no intervention took place.

The both regional institutions, SEATO and CENTO did not get involved into the Rann crisis either. SEATO as a collective defense organization and CENTO one of mutual cooperation, protection and non-intervention would have been in the position to act as an ally of their member Pakistan against the non-member India. Both organizations were set up to contain the USSR and the decade before, India allied with the USSR while Pakistan was orientated towards the West. This might have been a legitimation for supporting Pakistan. But in 1965 the USSR underwent a behavioral change in the Indo-Pakistani conflict and converged to Pakistan to contain Chinese influence there. This in turn might be an explanation why SEATO and CENTO did not intervene in the Rann or get further involved into the Indo-Pakistani conflict.

If institutions act as initial cause of crisis deescalation, they have to create conditions which make deescalation favorable for the conflicting parties. The most direct way to do so would be to ally with one side and act as deterrent. But regional organizations tend to refuse to get involved in conflicts of their member states. One can hypothesize that especially regional organizations such as SEATO and CENTO with their defensive bias might be capable of acting as an ally on one side and fulfill a deterrence function. Theorists of conflict spirals might argue that this idleness prevents crises from escalating to war but idleness cannot be considered as the institutions' biggest achievement. In fact, institutions are strongly driven by the interests of their member states and these are generally not willing to be drawn into conflicts they are not directly affected of. Thus, institutions act in line with the course of action of their single, self-interested member states, and not as an institution.

Following democratic peace theorists, domestic structures and the public opinion should foster deescalation in a crisis due to bureaucratic restraints and a rather peaceful population. To evaluate the range of this argument for the Rann of Kutch crisis, I assessed the grade of democratization, the governmental structures and the public opinion of India and Pakistan. Pakistan's democratization "does not conform in all its details to the Western pattern of democracy", as Ayub Khan wrote (Khan 1965: 109, abstract). Applying a Western pattern of democracy, Ayub Khan was ruler of a single-chamber parliament with an absolute veto with weak and ineffective institutions and censored media. From an institutional perspective, in this anocracy there were no democratic barriers leading to deescalation. India on the other hand had already reached a high level of democratization in 1965. Nonetheless, Indian's institutions did not promote the deescalation of the Kutch crisis. Parliamentary support for a ceasefire was given only stagnantly and ministers often employed offensive language against Pakistan during parliamentary debates. India's press on the other hand seemed to be less offensive and welcomed the British mediation. Pakistani media was censored by the government and

the guided press supported Khan as the defender of Pakistan's territorial integrity. All in all, the assumption that democratic domestic structures foster peaceful conflict resolutions is only in a limited way applicable to the Rann of Kutch crisis. India's parliament did not support the ceasefire agreement at once although the public opinion preferred a meditated outcome. Pakistan's anocratic institutions were weak and although the government cannot fully ignore the public opinion due to public peace,⁹⁸ it can form the people's opinion through guided press. Finally, democratic peace theory states that in a mixed dyad with a democratic and a non-democratic state, the democratic one rather tempts to go to war with the non-democratic state than a democratic one. The episode of the Rann of Kutch crisis does not support this hypothesis/theory as the democratic actor India behaved defensively in the Rann and avoided escalation to war. Although normative restrictions of going to war with Pakistan were low, India did avoid a war. This indicates that there are other explications for the deescalation of the Kutch crisis.

The bipolarity of the East-West conflict influenced the Indo-Pakistani relations from the beginning on. Pakistan admitted itself immediately to the West in search for balancing. Although India first conducted a policy of non-alignment, it could avoid being drawn in the East-West conflict. Following the Indo-Pakistani relations from their beginning in 1947 until the Rann of Kutch crisis in 1965, one can learn that both countries, one after the other, strove to balance the adversary. This is supposed to promote stability and predictable behavior. But in fact, regional balancing behavior was so flexible that it rather promoted an environment of insecurity and non-predictable behavior. As for the superpowers, "[a]voiding an Indo-Pakistani war was a concern, but the concern was to avoid a regional war that could lead to a superpower confrontation rather than to reduce Indo-Pakistani polarity" (Kapur 2006: 148). The superpowers rather focused on containing each other in South-East Asia and in accordance with this aim, they rather fueled the conflict between India and Pakistan by massive arms transfers.

In the analysis of the Rann of Kutch crisis, power has proven to be a meaningful determinant in the course of a crisis to escalation or deescalation. Power, for this study defined as military capabilities and their effectiveness in the actual crisis in geostrategic terms, seems to be the most influential factor for deescalation in this study. A state's behavior is strongly influenced by its military capabilities and their value for the very conflict. Comparing both countries' military resources, one can see that India is militarily superior. Additionally it underwent a massive arms build-up after the defeat by China. This ongoing build-up led Pakistan to launch a preemptive attack in 1965 (Brines 1968: 267;

⁹⁸ As Lamb states in the case of Kashmir: "West Pakistani public opinion has been so aroused about Kashmir for so long that any Government attempt to bury the question would almost certainly have serious repercussions" (Lamb 1966: 113).

Blinkenberg 1972: 241; Tanham 1992: 33). The actual militarily inferior Pakistan felt the need for action before India gained even more power. Pakistan provoked the conflict in the Rann of Kutch and the more powerful India reacted defensively. This defensive behavior of India can be related to its geostrategic inferiority in the Rann. India had problems to deploy its resources to the areas of combat and was soon in a bad tactical position. But instead of yielding at this point, India indicated its willingness to refrain from fighting in the Rann and to attack Pakistan at another preferred point. This in turn led Pakistan to omit further escalatory steps in the Rann since it was in a general military disadvantage in case of an Indian attack. The deescalation of the Rann of Kutch conflict can be traced back to India's defensive behavior in the Rann and its willingness to fight a general war, which deterred Pakistan from further escalation in the Rann of Kutch.

The Rann of Kutch crisis emerged in an international environment that had just changed. In the 1950s, Pakistan had close relations to the US, which drove India, after its policy of non-alignment, to approach the Soviet Union and China. As relations between India and China worsened and peaked in a war in 1962, the US improved its relationship to India. Now the US supported both states and India and Pakistan had to reevaluate their alliance behavior. India and Pakistan both expected the US to restrain the other's aggression. In the Rann affair, the US failed in promoting conciliation and because of the US weapons which were used in the Rann and the prohibition of doing so, both countries lost confidence in the American ability to contain aggression in South Asia.

Pakistan, feeling compromised by the improving Indo-American relationship, turned to China and the USSR. Especially relations between China and Pakistan warmed in the mid-1960s and China openly supported Pakistan's policy concerning Kashmir and the Rann of Kutch. China was further the only potential ally for an intervention in the crisis. The US shrank back when the Rann of Kutch crisis deteriorated and the US became involved in the Patton tank affair. Washington left intervention to Britain, which did not consider military intervention either. Apart from ongoing arms transfers, the USSR did not interfere in the Rann of Kutch crisis. So none of the conflicting actors had a politically relevant ally who deterred the adversary through intervention from further escalation in the Rann of Kutch crisis and therefore promoted deescalation. Although China was the only potential politically relevant ally to Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch crisis, it did not intervene or signal its willingness to intervene. But empirical analysis indicates that India and Pakistan both perceived the opportunity for a Chinese military intervention on Pakistan's side.

This fact crystallized after examining the perceptions of both countries in terms of the others intentions and capabilities and the possibility of 3rd party intervention. Generally intentions in a decade-lasting rivalry tend to be hostile anyway. Especially if one or more past crises have escalated to war, each state tends to calculate the other's willingness to fight. In the case of the Rann of Kutch

crisis, Pakistan felt threatened by India through its arms buildup and its territorial demands. India in turn also feared Pakistan's territorial demands, its lust for provocations but also the domestic restraints for the Pakistani government to launch such provocations, in this case the presidential elections in the beginning of 1965. When it comes to the perception of the relative military power, Pakistan perceived its competitiveness to India in 1965. Additionally it probably perceived time pressure to act as both countries' military build-ups were going on and India would become stronger in the future. India on the other hand was convinced that it was generally militarily superior to Pakistan and also well aware of its geostrategic disadvantage in the Rann, which kept it from escalating the crisis. Another perception also prevented it from escalation – the perception of a Chinese intervention. Indian and Pakistani statements indicate that both countries anticipated a Chinese military intervention. First, this made Pakistan courageous, but when the fighting went on in the Rann and China made no statement about potential intervention,⁹⁹ Pakistan seemed to have learned that China had no interests in joining the Kutch crisis. India also perceived the danger of a Chinese intervention which would have exceeded India's forces. Additionally to India's geostrategic disadvantage in the Rann, this led to India's defensive behavior there.

The study of the Kutch crisis demonstrates the importance of power, alliances and the perceptions of these for the deescalation of conflicts. The Rann of Kutch crisis deescalated because both sides were aware about their capabilities, the geostrategic positioning and potential allies. Pakistan perceived an opportunity to fight India in 1965 although India was generally militarily superior. Then Pakistan was quite successful in the Rann and speculated for Chinese support. This made Pakistan offensive to a certain point. India knew about its general military superiority but also realized the losses in the Rann. Further, it also expected a Chinese intervention. This led to the very defensive behavior in the Rann. As fighting went on for weeks without a Chinese reaction, Pakistan and India had to learn that China might not intervene. Thereupon India signaled that it would attack Pakistan at a point where Pakistan had no strategic depth if Pakistan did not end its advance in the Rann. Pakistan was well aware that a general war with India was not to its favor and stopped the offensive actions in the Rann of Kutch. An interesting point in this episode is that both countries expected a third party to intervene on one side. This made the party with the potential ally more aggressive while the other party knew that a ceasefire and a bargaining agreement were/would be more favorable to them. One can speculate that if India had also perceived a potential ally comparable to China, it would not have been so patient but also have climbed the escalatory ladder. As both states realized that a Chinese intervention was not

⁹⁹ China did so some months later during the second Kashmir war. India received a letter from China, indicating that China would take military consequences if India did not pull down equipment which was near the Chinese border (India Info Line 2016).

probable, India could deter Pakistan with its superiority in terms of power.

6. The Imia/Kardak Crisis between Greece and Turkey

The Imia/Kardak crisis was one of various crisis between Greece and Turkey within their broader Aegean dispute, but the one which brought the two countries closest to war. The crisis refers to a territorial dispute between Greece and Turkey about two rocky islets in the Aegean Sea. The crisis brought to the surface “the depth of the old feud between the two NATO allies and highlighted the fragility of peace and stability in the Aegean” (Athanassopoulou 1997: 76). Imia/Kardak (Greek: Ίμια, Turkish: Kardak) is a pair of two small uninhabited islets in the Aegean Sea. They are located between the Greek islands of the Dodecanese and the southwestern mainland coast of Turkey. They lie 3.8 nautical miles (nmi) (7.0 km) west of the coast of the Bodrum peninsula, 5.5 nmi (10.2 km) east of the Greek island Kalymnos, and 2.5 nmi (4.6 km) southeast of the Greek islet, Kalolimnos. They expand over 10 acres (4.0 ha).

Greece and Turkey have various conflictual issues in the Aegean Sea. These include disputes about the sovereign rights over the Aegean continental shelf, the territorial waters limits within the Aegean Sea claimed by each side, the jurisdiction over airspace zones and the sovereignty over certain or unspecified (gray areas) Aegean islands. The fact that Greece and Turkey almost went to war over rival claims to an Aegean islet indicates the level of tension simmering just below the surface.

6.1 Historical Background

The relations between Greece and Turkey have been turbulent for centuries. Greece`s state-building and independence is closely related to an opposition against Turkey. The modern Greek state emerged from a struggle against the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the modern Turkish state is associated with the War of Independence against Greece. Therefore both states define their identity in part of an antagonism against the other.

Except from a relatively peaceful period of rapprochement between 1933 and 1955, the shared history of these two countries is marked by conflict. The conflict between Greece and Turkey has been a threat to stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.

After the Greek-Turkish War from 1919 to 1920, the 1932 Treaty of Lausanne was supposed to solve their territorial and minority issues. The treaty established a fragile balance between the conflicting countries and harmonized their interests and rights. The intention of the Lausanne Treaty was to distribute maritime jurisdiction of areas to the coastal states and leave the remaining parts of the Aegean to the common benefit of Turkey and Greece.

In June 1930, Greece and Turkey signed an additional agreement to settle further disputes, caused by the exchange of population and properties. Further, they signed a Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation, and Arbitration and a protocol about naval arms parity. Three years later, they inked a pact of

friendship guaranteeing their borders and consultation. Shortly after, both states joined the Balkan Entente with Yugoslavia and Romania. During the following years, Greece and Turkey felt strong pressure from Italy and Germany, both pursuing the control of the Balkans. When Greece was occupied by German troops in 1940, Turkey stayed neutral and disappointed Greece's expectations which were nourished by the promises of the Balkan Entente (Kalaitzaki 2005: 107 – 108).

After WWII Greece and Turkey were strong allies to the West and the bilateral disputes seemed to have cooled down. Both countries joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Council of Europe. Until 1954 relations were stabilized and harmonious and adversarial thoughts were directed against the communist bloc. In 1954 the Cyprus conflict erupted and the Greek-Turkish relation worsened again.

6.1.1 Conflict over Cyprus

Cyprus is located in the Eastern Mediterranean, 500 miles away from Greece and 40 miles away from Turkey. 80 per cent of the population is Orthodox Greek and 18 per cent are Muslim Turks. For centuries it was under Ottoman control and later given to Britain in 1878. Until the 1940s Cyprus was under British rule. Then the decolonization pressure concerning Cyprus fueled a dispute of interests between Greece, Turkey and Britain. During the 1950s, Greek Cypriots demanded the *enosis*¹⁰⁰ and the British government considered withdrawing from Cyprus. Turkey accepted the intention of independence of Cyprus although it would have preferred a partition. In 1960 Cyprus was declared independent in the Zürich and London Agreement between Britain, Greece and Turkey. Under the Treaty of Guarantee in the same year, Turkey, Greece and Britain became guarantor powers of the island's independence.

Short time after, tensions rose between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island. In 1964, after continuing violence, Turkey intervened to protect the Turkish Cypriotes. As the US refrained from further support for Turkey in case of a potential escalation with the Soviet Union caused by a Turkish landing on Cyprus, Turkey did refrain from sending troops to Cyprus. The Cyprus problem posed a threat to the south-eastern flank of NATO and the US was strongly interested in keeping the dispute low. But as the causes of the tensions were not solved, the situation on Cyprus escalated again in 1967. Once more the Turkish government threatened to send troops if Greece did not withdraw its troops which had infiltrated the island since 1964. After negotiations between Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and the US, the Greek troops were withdrawn.

In 1974, the change of the Greek government to a pro-*enosis* extremist led to a Greek military *coup d'*

¹⁰⁰ Union with Greece in Greek language.

état against the Cypriote President Archbishop Makarios to achieve the union with Greece. Thereupon Turkey invaded Cyprus and stationed troops in the northern part of the island. The invasion led to the division of the island into two autonomous administrations. Turkey started with air strikes on Greek positions on Cyprus and troops and military equipment were dropped by planes and ships. After three days, Turkey had landed 30,000 troops on Cyprus and captured the northern part of the island. Greece did not take the incident as a trigger for war with Turkey but withdrew its forces from the military wing of NATO to protest against NATO's inability to prevent Turkey from the Cyprus invasion.

“A NATO member, using NATO weapons, had taken 35,000 troops out of the NATO structure in order to occupy another democratic European country and effectively colonized another member of the Western community. It was the first time in post-War European history that the invasion, occupation and colonization of a Western European country by another had occurred. Turkey's invasion resulted in the occupation of 37 per cent of Cyprus, 52 per cent of the country's coastline, 70 per cent of its natural resources and 65 per cent of its tourist infrastructure“ (Moustakis/Sheenan 2000: 96).

In 1975, the US imposed an arms embargo on Turkey, which was strongly debated in the US policy as it was not only a sanction on Turkey but also a weakening of the southern NATO flank. As a reaction on the embargo, Turkey suspended US operations on Turkish ground. In 1978 the embargo was released again. The 1974 Cyprus incident was crucial to further relations between Greece and Turkey. Both countries were confirmed about the other's expansionist intentions and that these could also be pursued by military means. Further, both countries learned that neither the US nor NATO were able and willing to intervene.

6.1.2 Conflict in the Aegean Sea

After 1975, Cyprus was not the only disputed case between Greece and Turkey, further tensions rose about issues in the Aegean Sea. Greece and Turkey have repeating differences about various issues in the Aegean Sea. The disputes center on four main issues which are interrelated: the boundaries of the continental shelf, the extent of the territorial waters, control over the Aegean airspace and the militarization of Aegean islands.

6.1.2.1 Disputed Limitations of the Continental Shelf

The dispute about the continental shelf between Greece and Turkey centers on the shared boundaries

in the Aegean seabed. The dispute erupted in 1973, when Greece discovered oil off the coast of the northern Aegean island of Thassos. The relevance of the discovery was heightened by an oil crisis caused by an Arab oil embargo and the conflict intensified with the escalation of the conflict about Cyprus in 1974.

In the early 1960s, Greece granted oil exploration licenses to several foreign companies beyond the Greek territorial waters. It based this unilateral delimitation of the Aegean Sea on its interpretation of the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf (UNCLOS I). In the convention, a shelf is defined as

“[...] the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas adjacent to the coast but outside the area of the territorial sea, to a depth of 200 meters, or beyond that limit, to where the depth of the superjacent waters admits of the exploitation of the natural resource of the said areas; [...] the seabed and subsoil of similar areas adjacent to the coast of islands” (United Nations 1958: Art.1).

Greece assumed that all islands in the Aegean included a continental shelf to the same extent as mainland does and therefore the Aegean Sea west of its eastern islands was Greek. Turkey did not react to that until 1973 when, due to the Arab oil embargo, oil prices rose and the issue became relevant for Ankara. Further, until 1973 no noteworthy amount of oil had been found, but then Greece made some statements on huge deposits of oil found off the coast of the northern Aegean island of Thassos and Lemnos and that it would become self-sufficient of oil within some years (Braun 1983: 239). Turkey realized some urgency of reacting on the Greek claims and, in turn, claimed the territory as within their sovereignty and assigned licenses of mineral exploration to the Turkish State Petroleum Company. Greece protested and Turkey responded by suggesting negotiations which Greece accepted. Turkey argued on the basis of UNCLOS I that the Aegean islands were an exception and that the Law of the Sea cannot be applied to them. Turkey assumed that the Aegean is a prolongation of the Anatolian landmass. Further, eastern Aegean islands do not possess their own area of continental shelf. Greek islands are positioned on the Turkish continental shelf and are Greek enclaves; the division line runs in the middle of the Greek and the Turkish main land. Apart from that, Turkey sent the survey ship Candarli, accompanied by 32 war ships, to make studies along the western limits of the territory from May 29th to June 4th 1974. Greece reacted moderately, stating that Turkey violated the Geneva Convention and sent a naval squadron to cover the activities of the Turkish ships (Heraclides 2010: 81). The following months, despite moderating attempts by the two foreign ministers, the relations between Greece and Turkey worsened until the fall of the Greek military

regime in July 1974. The next year was characterized by several rounds of negotiation meetings about the continental shelf and the air space. Greece favored the option of bringing the continental shelf issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for resolution, but Turkey insisted on a resolution by bilateral negotiations.

The crisis of August 1976 emerged when Ankara sent another survey ship, the Sismek I, in the disputed territories to reassure Turkey's claims on the territory. This time, the vessel was only accompanied by one war ship.

Tension rose further when the head of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP), Alparslan Türkeş, stated that the Greek islands should be Turkish. Greece reacted by putting its armed forces on alert. Athens called for a dynamic response, the use of military force, threatened to sink the Turkish ship and suggested the extension of the Greek territorial sea to 12 miles. But soon the situation cooled down again and opted for a more peaceful option of appealing the UN Security Council and the International Court of Justice. In its Resolution 395, the Security Council admonished Greece and Turkey to reduce the tensions, negotiate bilaterally and eventually appeal the ICJ. Greece hoped for a condemnation of Turkey by the ICJ for violating Greek rights on the Aegean continental shelf and an adoption of interim measures for protecting Greece and involving Turkey in the process based on the 1975 Brussel Communiqué¹⁰¹ and an commitment in an international treaty of 1928 on dispute settlement by the ICJ. Both attempts were rejected by the ICJ.

In 1987 tension rose again seriously when the Turkish oceanographic vessel Piri-Reis, escorted by two war ships, entered the international waters of the northern Aegean Sea. Previously, Turkey and Greece had already engaged in a diplomatic dispute about oil drilling rights east of Thassos. Further, the Sismek I, already the stumbling block of the 1976 crisis, sailed the northern Aegis, where Turkey and Greece disputed about the islands of Lesbos and Samothraki. The Greek Prime Minister, Andreas Papandreu, declared this action *casus belli* (cause of war), and put the Greek armed forces at a high alert status. Greece conducted partial mobilization and put its navy on alert in order to protect Greek territorial rights through the threat of limited use of military violence. Greece also tried to gain support from Bulgaria but it preferred to stay away from the conflict. The crisis diffused after the US, NATO and the United Kingdom (UK) became involved and Turkey cancelled the survey (Heraclides 2010: 122). Greece insisted on a dispute resolution by appealing the International Court of Justice at The Hague. But Turkey refused to appeal The Hague since it preferred to resolve the issue with the help of bilateral negotiations.

¹⁰¹ The joint Greek and Turkish Brussels Communiqué 1975 emphasized the need to create a good atmosphere in their relations, stating/recommending that problems should be tackled through negotiations and the issue of the continental shelf should be resolved by the ICJ.

Both countries stay concerned about the sovereignty issue. Turkey insists on a demarcation line midway between the Turkish and Greek mainland. Greece considers this line as threat to the Greek islands east of it. Turkey would be able to establish an economic and security zone in the seas around the islands and therefore interfere with Greek internal sea and air communication (Moustakis 2003: 38).

6.1.2.2 Dispute on the Nautical Territories

Greece and Turkey both claim a territorial sea of six nautical miles. Tensions about nautical territories are again based on UNCLOS I and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III). It allows an extension of nautical sea miles rule from six to twelve miles, and states are allowed to have a continental shelf, which leads to the right of using the (nautical) resources in this area. Athens has ratified the convention but Ankara has not. Athens claims the 12 miles rule for all of its 2383 islands, which means that the Aegean Sea would turn into a Greece sea¹⁰². For Turkey, the access to its important harbors Istanbul and Izmir would be more difficult. An extension of Greek territory in the Aegean Sea would limit Turkey`s access to the Mediterranean Sea through the Dardanelles Straits because ships would have to pass through Greek waters. Therefore Turkey did not sign the UNCLOS III although it also utilizes the 12 nautical miles rule. But for the Aegean Sea, Turkey claims special circumstances which make the 12 miles not applicable for Greece. Turkey claims the 12 nautical miles rule in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, but considered an equivalent action of Greece in the Aegean Sea as *casus belli*. When Greece ratified UNCLOS III in 1995, the Turkish Parliament, in response, authorized the government to take any necessary (military) measures if Greece exercised the 12 nautical miles rule.

6.1.2.3 Sovereignty over Air Space: FIR and NATO Operational Control

In 1931 Greece claimed a ten nautical miles rule for national air space (Roach/Smith 2012: 346). In accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), there remained a Turkish national airspace along the Turkish coasts and the airspace over the Aegean was part of the Greek Flight Information Region (FIR). FIRs were set up after WWII in order to safeguard international aviation. Greece has the Athinai FIR, which covers the Aegean to the limits of the Turkish territorial sea. Turkey has the Istanbul FIR, covering the Turkish Aegean coastline and the eastern Turkish European and Asian territory and the Ankara FIR, which covers parts of the Black Sea and the Eastern

¹⁰² The Greek share would grow from 43.6 per cent to 71.5 per cent, Turkey`s share would grow from 7.4 per cent to 8.8per cent, and the international sea would shrink from 48.4 per cent to 19.7 per cent, which would limit international shipping (Strässle 2005: 356).

Mediterranean. This was consistent with the geographical needs, as otherwise, Greek planes would have to fly over Turkish zones. Until 1974 Turkey agreed to this regulation. After the Turkish invasion on Cyprus, Turkey demanded all aircrafts approaching Turkish airspace to communicate their position and flight plan when passing the Aegean median line NOTAM 714 (Note to Airman) and thereby violated the Greek FIR line (Platias 1991: 94). This should enable the Turkish radar to identify potential attackers. Greece rejected this demand since it violated the ICAO regulations and imputed expansionist interests to Turkey. Greece considered the NOTAM 714 as a Turkish attempt to change the FIR boundaries and by NOTAM 1018 and 1157 Greece declared the Aegean air space as unsafe (Moustakis 2003: 36), which led to flight suspension of all international airlines. In 1980 Turkey recalled NOTAM 714 and the air space was again accessible to civil aviation but Turkish military jets continued to fly regularly into disputed areas, which repeatedly led to air confrontations between Greece and Turkey. The Turkish aircrafts came close to the Greek coast and Greece considered these incidents as a violation of its territory and sent aircrafts to intercept the Turkish jets. This regularly made NATO worry about a potential incident or miscalculation which could lead to a larger confrontation between Greece and Turkey, like it nearly happened during the Imia/Kardak crisis (Larrabee/Lesser 2003: 74).

The dispute about the NATO operational control concerns the air and naval control. In 1974, Greece withdrew militarily from NATO as a result of its inaction in the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus. This led to an increased involvement of Turkey in NATO's south-eastern flank by taking over the Sixth Allied Tactical Force. Before this, the force was headed by the US, Greece and Turkey. When Greece reentered the military wing of NATO, it demanded the *status quo ante* but Turkey opposed to the claim. In 1980, the Rogers Plan established a Greek NATO headquarter in Larissa but did not specify the control limits between the Greek and Turkish Headquarters. Therefore NATO air control remains a dispute between Greece and Turkey.

6.1.2.4 Dispute about the Militarization of the Aegean Islands

Another source of irritation in Greek-Turkish relations is Greece's militarization of the Eastern Aegean and Dodecanese islands. Turkey claims that the islands were ceded to Greece by Art. 4 of the 1923 Lausanne Convention on the Straits and the 1947 Treaty of Paris, on the condition that they should be demilitarized. Athens on the other hand suspects an overall Turkish contest to Greek territorial sovereignty (Stivachtis 2001: 64). Turkey argues that this is a violation of the treaties while Greece states that its militarization is a preventive, defensive action against Turkey's creation of the Fourth Aegean Army. The Fourth Aegean Army was set up shortly after the invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and is stationed in Izmir, close to the Greek islands (Larrabee/Lesser 2003: 77).

The militarization of Lemnos and Samothrace is, according to Greece, covered by the Greek interpretation of the 1936 Montreux Convention on the Straits - the replacement of the Lausanne convention - while Turkey argues that the not namely mentioned territories in question of prohibiting militarization do not refer to the Aegean islands but the Straits, more precisely the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus. The islands Lesbos, Chios, Samos and Ikaria do not have to be completely demilitarized since they are under a partial demilitarization regime (Lausanne Peace Treaty of 1923, Art. 13). Naval bases, fortifications and military forces are permitted, police force is allowed. Greece started the militarization of these islands in the mid-1960s, but disavowed it when Turkey protested. After the Cyprus Crisis in 1974, Greece admitted the militarization and referred to purely defensive intentions and therefore legal militarization under the Article 51 of the UN Charter about the right of legitimate defense of territory. Greece argued for the necessity of this due to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Turkish hostile declarations against the Greek territorial integrity and the stationing of the Fourth Army in Izmir. Athens rejects Turkey's call for unilateral disarmament after threatening Greece with war (Stivachtis 2001: 65). Turkey, on the other hand, argues that the set-up of the Fourth Army was reaction to exactly this illegal Greek militarization of the islands. Essentially the same dispute exists between Greece and Turkey about the 14 Dodecanese islands, which were annexed to Greece by the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty. Greece conducted defensive militarization on these islands to preclude Soviet military presence in the region. Turkey insisted on the threat against it as the islands are very close to Turkish mainland. Considering the militarization of Aegean islands, Greece and Turkey are in a security dilemma in which defensive arms build-up is perceived as offensive action by the other side.

6.2 The Imia/Kardak Crisis 1995/96

The Imia/Kardak crisis is related to the disputes about the continental shelves and the nautical territories. The crisis evolved in December 1995 and peaked in the end of January 1996, followed by an overnight detente. The Imia/Kardak crisis was the third Aegean crisis between Greece and Turkey and brought the two countries closer to war than ever. It would have potentially led to a "major encounter involving the two navies" (Heraclides 2010: 134). It can be considered as the peak of a strategic disorientation, resulting from the post-Cold War international environment (Gundodgu 2001: 107). The crisis cannot be understood in materialistic terms since both countries were willing to risk a war over two small rocky islets inhabited by sheep. US Assistant Secretary of State Richard C. Holbrooke, who was involved in the US mediation attempts, confirmed the severity of the situation: „This was not a bluff“ (The New York Times, Feb 1st 1996). It can be read as both countries' efforts to prove that they are not uncertain, unstable or weak. This accounts for domestic and foreign

politics. At the time the crisis emerged, both countries were under new governments, and both of them did not want to show a sign of weakness.

6.2.1 Legal Controversy on Imia/Kardak

Articles 12 and 16 of the Lausanne Peace Treaty state that all islands beyond three nautical miles of the Turkish coastline are handed to Greece with the exception of Imvros/Gökçeada, Tenedos/Bozcaada and Lagousai/Rabbit Islands.

Greece argues that islets as Imia/Kardak are under Greek sovereignty. The Imia/Kardak islets are part of the Dodecanese islands, which were given to Italy by the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty. In 1932 Italy and Turkey agreed on the delimitation of the sea boundaries between the coasts of Anatolia and the island of Castellorizo. In addition to this agreement, the two countries signed a protocol referring to the boundary between Imia/Kardak and the Turkish island of Kato. After WWII the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty signed the Dodecanese islands and all adjacent islands over to Greece.

Turkey on the other hand argues that the Lausanne Peace Treaty refers to the delimitation of the Aegean Sea and not to islets. The adjacent islands which are meant to be Greek are named by the articles of the Lausanne Treaty. The Imia/Kardak rocks cannot be defined as adjacent islets as the adjacent islets of the nearest Dodecanese island Kalymnos is Kalolimnos. Imia/Kardak would be adjacent to the adjacent island of Kalolimnos, but the concept of adjacent islets of adjacent islands of islands does not exist in international law. Further, Imia/Kardak is 2.2 nautical miles away from the Turkish island of Cavus. Therefore Imia/Kardak is Turkish (Heraclides 2010: 210).

Greece pointed to the fact that it sought contact to Turkey for further clarification in form of a protocol, but Turkey's lack of reaction implied that it was not interested in clarifying the status of the islets. Further, Athens referred to some *notes verables* from Turkey between 1933 and 1936, in which Turkey expresses that Imia/Kardak belongs to Italy, which would mean that it is under Greek sovereignty now. In the past, Greece also set up a trigonometric marker on Imia/Kardak and integrated the islets into environmental programs (Heraclides 2010: 211).

6.2.2 Pre-Crisis Events

In early 1995 the relations between Greece and Turkey were tense. In May 1995 the Greek parliament ratified the signing of UNCLOS III. It gave Greece the right to expand its territorial waters from six to twelve miles. Simultaneously Turkey declared that it would consider any Greek territorial expansion, especially in the Aegean Sea, as *casus belli*. Admiral Christos Lymperis, the head of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff, denoted the Secretary of Defense that there was a more aggressive Turkish stance in the Aegean, and there was also pressure from the United States on Athens

to enter into negotiations with Turkey over their dispute (Dimitrakis 2008: 455). In November 1995, Greek political attention was distracted from the current tensions with Turkey as Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou was hospitalized and the race for his succession began. At the same time, the Hellenic Ministry of the Aegean and the Hellenic Ministry of Defense introduced a program for the development of uninhabited Aegean islands. It was supposed to protect the ecosystems of the islands and prohibit commercial use. Nonetheless the program included the building of small shelters, chapels, flagstaff, water and fuel tanks, harbor facilities and diverse repairs (Dimitrakis 2008: 456 and fn. 2). Turkey was suspicious about the Greek plans and assumed a Greek extension of their continental shelf. This intention was already labeled as *casus belli* by Turkey in May of the same year. In response to the Greek initiative, the Turkish Ministry of Defense planned to map all Aegean islands. At the same time, a struggle for political power within Turkey erupted between Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller and her True Path Party (DYP) and the rising Islamist leader Necümetin Erbakan within the Islamist Welfare Party. Elections in end of December reassured the conservative Çiller, but she needed to form a coalition government to balance the Islamist Welfare Party.

On 26th December 1995, the Turkish cargo ship Figen Akat grounded at Imia/Kardak. A Greek ship passed by and offered help, which was refused by the captain of the Figen Akat, stating that he had grounded on Turkish territory and was expecting Turkish help. The Greek captain insisted on helping since he wanted to collect the fee for the rescue. The Figen Akat was towed to the next Turkish port but the Turkish captain protested against the Greek rescue fee, claiming that he had grounded on Turkish territory and had been waiting for Turkish help. The dispute about the fee led to a request to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the affiliation of the Imia/Kardak islets.

On 29th December, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a *note verbale* to the Greek embassy in Ankara, stating that Imia/Kardak was part of the Turkish territory (Krateros 1997: 143). The title deed was registered to the province of Mugla, Bodrum prefecture, Karakaya village (Dimitrakis 2008: 459). On 9th January, the Greek embassy rejected the Turkish claims, stating that Turkey had accepted Imia/Kardak belonging to Italy due to a bilateral agreement from 1932. These islets were, together with the Dodecanese islands, given to Greece by the Paris Peace Treaty 1947.

At that time there were already allegations on Greek side that Turkey might induce a hot incident (Dimitrakis 2008: 458) and on the Turkish side that Greece will exploit the Turkish domestic struggle for power to advance its interests (Dimitrakis 2008: 457). Up to that point the case of Imia/Kardak was within the boundaries of diplomatic exchange. But then, the instance drew the attention of the Greek private TV channel Antenna, which made it a headline issue, labeling it as a Turkish provocation against Greek territorial sovereignty. On 25th January, the mayor of Kalymnos, the island near Imia, together with a police officer, a priest, a TV crew and the owner of a herd of sheep landed

on the greater of the two islets and raised the Greek flag to demonstrate Greek sovereignty. The popular Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* reported the flying Greek flag as provocative act of Greece against Turkish sovereignty. Thereupon, on 27th January, a group of Turkish reporters from the *Hurriyet* flew to Imia/Kardak by helicopter, removed the Greek flag and flew a Turkish one. This was also broadcasted on Turkish TV. Athens assumed that the Turkish landing had been an act ordered by the Turkish government. The council of the chiefs of General Staffs at the Ministry of Defense ordered that the Turkish flag be removed and that a Greek flag be raised in its place (Dimitrakis 2008: 461-462).

6.2.3 The Crisis unfolds

On 28th January, the larger one of the islets of Imia/Kardak was entered by Greek commandos, sent by on Admiral Lymperis` initiative, or ordered by Minister of National Defense Gerasimos Arsenis (Heraclides 2010: 135). They removed the Turkish flag and restored the Greek flag. Further, the commandos stayed on the islet to protect the national symbol. At the same time, an armed Turkish coast guard ship was seen close to the Greek ship.

On in the evening of 29th January, Greece placed its armed forces on high alert. The Greek Navy was sent to the Aegean and a task force of five patrol boats supported by larger vessels such as the destroyer *Themistocles* was established to control the area around Imia/Kardak.

Turkey responded to the Greek military build-up by sending the Turkish Navy to the Aegean. One MEKO-class frigate, two missile boats, and two patrol boats were cruising toward the islet. Another frigate was *en route* but still north of the immediate area (Hickok 1997: 44). The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave a verbal note to the Greek Ambassador in Ankara according to which the agreements that Turkey had signed with Italy for the demarcation of the Dodecanese in 1932 were not valid. On the same day, the new Greek Prime Minister Kostas Simits gave a statement in the newspaper *Eleftherotypia*, speaking of Turkey`s aggressive nationalism and guaranteeing that Greece would react forcefully to any threats against Greek sovereignty.

On the 30th January, Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller gave a statement in the daily *Hürriyet*, assuring that Turkey “was not prepared to give an inch of the motherland and would not permit a foreign flag to fly on Turkish soil” (Heraclides 2010: 135).

Both countries were convinced that the other would follow a strategy of expansion in the Aegean Sea. Turkey rose tensions further by integrating the Imia/Kardak crisis into the broader dispute of the *grey zones* in the Aegean. These zones are any islets and rocks which are not named in the territorial treaties between Greece and Turkey, and whose sovereignty is therefore undetermined.

In the meantime, Turkish armored units moved to the Green Line on Cyprus, which caused the alert

of Cypriot forces.

During the night, Turkish Special Forces landed undetected by Greek units on the islet and once again changed the flag. Hours later, after some calls of the US and Turkey informing Athens about the act, the Greek Navy launched a helicopter to verify the new situation. The helicopter reported and then went down in the Aegean Sea due to bad weather conditions.

6.2.4 Deescalation and the Aftermath of the Crisis

On the morning of the 31st, the crisis was quickly deescalated. At 6.00 am, Greece decided to withdraw its troops and both countries agreed on returning to the *status quo ante*. In the aftermath of the crisis, both the Turkish and the Greek government sold the outcome as victory for themselves. Athens interpreted the *status quo ante* as an international acceptance of Greek sovereignty over Imia/Kardak and Ankara interpreted the *status quo ante* as Imia/Kardak being either of disputed status or of Turkish sovereignty (Dimitrakis 2008: 486). Turkish Prime Minister Çiller said: “We expressed our decisiveness very clearly. [...] We said 'this flag will come down, these soldiers will go. There is no other solution,' and we got our result”. Greek Prime Minister Simitis, on the other hand, said that “Turkey failed in its effort to force Greece to negotiate the legal status of the islets. [...] The islets of Imia is [sic] and will remain Greek [...]” (The New York Times, Feb 1st 1996). Within both countries there were nationalistic voices which declared the pullback of troops and flag as a weakness and capitulation.

The Imia/Kardak crisis was not only a peak of tensions in the relations between Greece and Turkey but also a beginning of cooperation and positive identification (Gundodgu 2001: 110). In the aftermath of the crisis, Turkey and Greece at first accepted American mediation. Up to the Imia/Kardak crisis, both countries completely refused third party involvement due to the fear that their national interests might be compromised. American officials stated that during the night of the crisis, Greek Prime Minister Simitis showed willingness to open dialog with Turkey over all Aegean issues, but soon afterwards refused American mediation efforts again (Athanasopoulou 1997: 77). Athens could not accept US mediation in the case of the Aegean Sea due to domestic reasons. The Greek public was in a wave of Anti-Americanism as it perceived the American mediation attempts during the Imia/Kardak crisis in favor of Turkey (Heraclides 2010: 136).

Greece was still willing to transfer the case of the sovereignty over Imia/Kardak to the International Court of Justice. Greece considered the question of Imia/Kardak's affiliation as indisputable. In its opinion, Greek sovereignty had been established by the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947 when Italy transferred authority over islands which it had obtained from the Ottoman Empire before. Turkey doubts the validity of this act but refuses to appeal to the International Court of Justice.

During the ongoing crisis, the Turkish authorities came up with the concept of *grey zones*. These are rocks and islets of undetermined sovereignty due to the argument that they were neither explicitly retained under Turkish sovereignty in 1923, nor under another country's sovereignty. The dispute about the *grey zones* remained unresolved as Ankara did not further specify which islets were exactly in question of sovereignty and the whole dispute caused further suspicion within Greece about Turkish long-term expansionist intentions. It led to an increased Greek defense spending and new arms procurement programs for the Army, Navy and Air Force (Dimitrakis 2008: 487).¹⁰³

6.3 General Explanations for the Deescalation of the Imia/Kardak Crisis

In the following chapters, the general explanations for deescalation are discussed concerning their applicability on the Imia/Kardak crisis. Mediation, institutional involvement, democratic structures and the polarity of the international system are popular factors theorized to foster deescalation in interstate crises. Taking a closer look at the events of the crisis, especially before the deescalation on 31st January, one can determine that these factors have a minor impact on the deescalation.

6.3.1 Mediation

Scholars explain the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis through US mediation (Larrabee/Lesser 2003:71; Heraclides 2010: 135). Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, William Perry, the Defense Secretary, Richard Holbrooke, Under Secretary of State, and President Bill Clinton were involved in talks to Simitis and Çiller. The Greeks and Turks did not speak directly with one another, but accepted Washington's offer of informal mediation. The US tried to diffuse the tensions and restore the *status quo ante*.

In the aftermath of the crisis, Greek and Turkish leaders noted that they were involved in talks to high American officials on 30th January. Just the day before, both Athens and Ankara had still rejected third party mediation. Hickok attributed this behavior to the fact that both countries had the feeling of being militarily superior compared to the enemy (Hickok 1997: 46 – 50).

Although US representatives were able to speak to Ankara on 30th January and during that night from 30th to 31st, their impact on Turkish behavior had been limited. The American aim of mediation was a demilitarization of the conflict on Imia/Kardak and a return to the *status quo*. US mediation could not prevent the landing of the Turkish Special Forces in the early hours of 31st January. Obviously the US would have considered this as an action with non-predictable escalation potential. It could also have been another step in the escalation spiral between Greece and Turkey leading to an Aegean war.

¹⁰³ After the crisis, Greece purchased, among others, air-to-air missiles, two frigates MEKO 200 class, Patriot air defense missiles, about 130 Leopard A5 main battle tanks, and F-16 strike fighters (Hellenic Republic 2000).

“[Turkish] [editor’s note] opposition politicians accurately noted that it was not American intervention that resolved the crisis” (Hickok 1997: 50).

The US served as a monitor for the withdrawal of troops after the situation had eased. But it was not able to impose Greece and Turkey to deescalate through mediatory talks. It was the “Turkish military that imposed its will on the situation” (Hickok 1997: 50) by demonstrating its ability and will through the nocturnal invasion of the smaller islet of Imia/Kardak on 31st January. As long as both Greece and Turkey were convinced of their military superiority, they even refused to speak with mediators. So „ [...] whatever the Americans propose, it is the two governments that should have the political courage and will to decide and commit“ (Kalaitzaki 2005: 124). The quote demonstrates again that the essential, primary causes for deescalation in a crisis have to influence both actors’ willingness to deescalate.

6.3.2 Institutional Involvement

There are two regional institutions which were directly involved in the crisis. The European Union could have played a role in the conflict since Greece had been a member state since 1981. The second relevant institution is NATO. In this case both parties of the conflicting dyad had been NATO members since 1952, so NATO would be expected to be a relevant institutional actor in this conflict and especially serve as a deescalating force in the Imia/Kardak crisis. But “despite US and European diplomatic interventions to end the Imia/Kardak crisis in particular, it is hard to say that both regional organizations have helped solving the bilateral dispute” (Bertrand 2003: 2).

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was founded in 1949 with originally twelve members. It was a response to the growing threat of the ideology and military power of the Soviet Union. At the same time some members viewed NATO as warrantor, mainly secured through the USA, against a German resurrection. So the purpose of NATO was “to keep the Russians out, the American in and the Germans down”, NATO’s first Secretary General Lord Hastings Ismay pointed out (Duffield et al. 2008: 300). Over the decades, the organizational structures of NATO were developed.

Today it has 28 members¹⁰⁴ and its “core operational element” (Duffield et al. 2008: 301) is article V, which obliges members to provide assistance in case of one or more of them should be the object of an armed attack.

But instead of providing mediation between its two member states, NATO was unable to deescalate the crisis and seems to have rather caused further problems than ceased tensions between Athens and

¹⁰⁴ These were Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Ankara. A main Greek interest of joining the NATO was to balance the military superiority of Turkey (MacKenzie 1983: 117, Tsakonas/Tournikiotis 2003: 305). But in 1974, Greece withdrew its forces from NATO, protesting against NATO's inability to prevent the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. In 1975 Greece rejoined NATO's military structure and tensions between Greece and Turkey arose because Turkey did not want to give back the operational control over the Aegean Sea it had received after the Greek retraction. Until 1980 Turkey rejected the reintegration of Greece. The Turkish-Greek dispute over the sovereignty over Samothrace and Lemnos led to a Turkish rejection of the inclusion of the islands in the strategic planning and military exercises of NATO which, in turn, caused a Greek refusal to participate in Aegean NATO exercises (Stivachtis 2001: 67).

The threat through Turkey within NATO is central to the Greek foreign and defense policy and due to that, the role of Greece within the institution will continue to be problematic (Moustakis 2003: 43). Both countries consider NATO as not impartial, each believes that NATO favors the other party. Greece thinks that NATO favors Turkey because of its large population, military strength and borders with Russia and the Middle East. Turkey, in turn, believes that NATO favors Greece due to historic, cultural and religious reasons (Moustakis 2003: 44). NATO has not provided a mechanism for internal dispute settlement and especially the Imia/Kardak crisis showed NATO's inability to mediate between its member states (Tsakonas/Tournikiotis 2003: 305, 307). NATO has very limited course of action in the Greek-Turkish conflict. If it refrained from involvement (as it did), it may be considered as "impotent, indifferent or implicitly supportive of the stronger party in the conflict" (Moustakis/Sheenan 2000: 99). If it had mediated between the conflicting parties, "it [would have] risk[ed] [editor's note] incurring the displeasure of one or even both of its members" (Moustakis/Sheenan 2000: 99). Not only did the institutions not provide any mediatory function, NATO even indirectly contributed to the destabilization of the situation in mid-1995 and before.

"NATO, and mainly the US, played the 'pyromaniac fire-fighter' role, appeasing the dispute by diplomatic means on one hand, and, on the other hand, fueling the arms race by massive transfers of decommissioned arms from Central and Western Europe after the Treaty of Vienna on Conventional Forces in Europe (1990)" (Bertrand 2003: 2).

Further, the American sale of weapons to Turkey in 1995 was deemed to reassure Turkey of its military Western ties and its role as a NATO front-line state. The weapons were supposed to be placed along the borders with Iraq and Syria. Greece claimed that although these weapons were given to Turkey for NATO purpose they had been used to support air-violations over the Aegean (Athanasopoulou 1997: 78).

The second regional institution which was close to the crisis was the European Union. It is a political and economic association of, at present, 28 member states. It was founded in 1952 as the European Coal and Steel Community with the aim of preventing further wars between the member states by pooling the heavy industries. In 1996, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Finland and Sweden were member states.

Until the late 1990s, the EU failed to have a positive impact on the Greek-Turkish conflict (Rumelili 2008: 94). Greece's participation in the EC¹⁰⁵ was seen as a deterrent against Turkey and as means to forestall potential Greek-Turkish confrontation. After the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Greece realized the inability of NATO to protect it against Turkish aggression. Greece turned to the EU and WEU and applied to join them. After its admittance, Greece regularly spoke out for a stronger role of the EU in security politics. But the EU did not adopt a security guarantee in the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993 and the WEU states attached a protocol to the article of Greek accession declaring that the Article 5 defense guarantee would not apply in case of a conflict between a WEU member (e.g. Greece) and a NATO member (e.g. Turkey) (Moustakis/Sheenan 2000: 96, Stearns 1997: 69). As the WEU and the EU did not take action in supporting Greece in the crisis, the EU did not react in mediatory terms or promote transparency or communication (Dembinski 2006: 26). On 28th January 1996, the deputy of the Greek Foreign Minister Fangalos launched a meeting with the fifteen ambassadors of the EU and informed them about the ongoing dispute. All the signs are that the EU did not realize the explosive nature of the Imia/Kardak crisis. "Analysts of Washington and Europe noted later that although the military build-up around Imia/Kardak was evident by the 29th, diplomatic contacts and public announcements made the incident look no different than similar confrontations in the Aegean over the past decades" (Hichock 1997: 45). Moreover, Greece stated that it had briefed the USA, NATO, the EU and the UN but rejected any mediation (Hickock 1997: 46).

6.3.3 Democratic Structures

As explained above, domestic democratic structures are theorized to promote interstate conflict deescalation through various channels. Norms, bureaucratic and political restraints and the public opinion may provide incentives to refrain from war in a crisis. In the following I will discuss the democratic ties of both countries and analyze if domestic democratic structures had an impact on the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis.

Both Greece and Turkey have gone through non-democratic phases in the 20th century. After the

¹⁰⁵ Until 1993 the European Union (EU) was called European Community (EC).

Greco-Turkish War from 1919 to 1922 and an unstable two-year period, Alexandros Papanastasiou proclaimed the Second Hellenic Republic in 1924. Then the republic was shaken by several coups and counter-coups until in 1935 Georgios Kondylis, who had protected the republic against the overthrows, abolished the republic himself in a coup and declared the monarchy under the return of King George II. When WWII broke out in 1939, Greece remained neutral. After the short Greco-Italian War in 1940, Nazi Germany overran the country in support of the repulsed Mussolini. The King and the government escaped to Crete and from there to Egypt where an exile government was set up. In the meantime, Greece was divided into a German, Italian and Bulgarian part with a puppet regime in Athens and slowly, resistance groups formed. When Germany withdrew from Greece in 1944, the exile government returned but most of the country was under rule of the largest resistance group National Liberation Front (EAM). Tensions rose between the government and the EAM and escalated to a 4-year civil war. After the civil war, Greece sought to join the Western democracies and became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1952. But the democratic structures were weak as several governments were formed with very limited influence in the political arena. After years of unstable democracy, Greece descended into a political crisis in 1967 and on 21st April, a group of right-wing colonels led by George Papadopoulos seized power, establishing the Regime of Colonels. The military junta collapsed in 1974, which was followed by elections and the abolition of monarchy. Greece returned to democracy. The political system of Greece is defined as parliamentary, representative democratic republic. The Prime Minister is head of government within a multi-party system. The president as head of state is elected by the government and performs mainly ceremonial duties. The legislative power lies within the government and the Hellenic Parliament.

Considering the general insignia, Greece is considered as democratic with the necessary separation of power in the years of 1995 and 1996. Democracies are measured by Polity IV Data to exclude countries with a score of seven and below on the combined autocracy democracy scale. For 1995/96 Greece ranges on the scale of 10 (consolidated democracy).

In 1995/96 Turkey is labeled as a democracy with the necessary separation of power. On the Polity IV Data scale Turkey ranges on 9 for the time of the Imia/Kardak crisis. In 1922 the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet VI Vahdettin was overthrown and a new republican parliament was installed. In 1923 the Republic of Turkey was proclaimed by its new president Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). Various political and social reforms promoting secularization and westernization were conducted the following years: unification of education, closure of Islamic courts, replacement of Islamic law with civil code after Swiss ideal and penal code after Italian ideal, political rights for women, replacement of the Ottoman alphabet through a new Turkish alphabet. Nonetheless it took until 1946 to establish a multi-party system in the existing predominant rule of Atatürk and later İsmet İnönü. In 1946, the government

organized multi-party elections which were won by the ruling party of İnönü. Until 1950 he remained president. After a phase of economical decrease, a military *coup d'état* led by General Cemal Gürsel put Turkey under military rule for one year. After regaining civilian control, the political system was fractured and the following governmental coalitions were unstable. In 1971 the Army carried out another coup, putting down the actual right-wing government of Süleyman Demirel and establishing an interim government. The following years, the political fracturing and the poor economy led to ascending violence between communists and nationalists on the streets and the military conducted a third coup d'état in 1980 in an attempt to stabilize the country. After two years, the control was returned to civilian hands and a one-party system was established with the conservative, economically orientated Motherland Party (ANAP). The military slowly withdrew from the political scene but the state of emergency legislation stayed in power, in parts of the country until 2002. In 1995 elections brought about a short-lived coalition between the ANAP and the True Path Party under Tansu Çiller. In 1997, the military showed again its ability to control the country in a postmodern coup and requested Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan to resign. A new government was formed by the ANAP and the Democratic Left Party (DSP), supported by the Republican People's Party (CHP). The political system in Turkey is marked by a strictly secular parliamentary representative democratic republic. The prime minister is head of government in a multi-party system and the president is head of state with mainly ceremonial and reserve powers. The executive power lies within the Council of Ministers and the legislative power in the Grand Assembly. The current constitution was adopted in 1982. Since Atatürk's foundation of the Turkish Republic, the Army perceives itself as guardian of Atatürkçülük, the state ideology consisting of republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism, statism, and revolutionism. Apart from its political interventions in form of *coups d'état*, the military has influence on the Turkish politics through the National Security Council.

The common history of repeated conflicts between Greece and Turkey disproves the existence of a normative barrier of war between the two countries. Rather history has demonstrated that the norms of Greek-Turkish interactions have been shaped by hostility and enmity. The two countries have fought several wars¹⁰⁶ and the origin of their present states emerged from their last war against each other. The image of the enemy is strongly enrooted in the normative thinking of politics and society in Greece and Turkey. One cannot speak of a perception of an in-group with shared identity and values either (Owen 1994: 96) and the long-term armaments race (Moustakis 2003:85-86) is a clear sign for a persisting security dilemma. From a Greek perspective, Turkey is not seen as a trusted democracy because of Turkey's rejection to sign (and ratify) international conventions on the law of the seas such

¹⁰⁶ These were Greco-Turkish War (1897), the First Balkan War (1912 - 1913), the First World War (1914 - 1918) and the Turkish War of Independence (1919 - 1922).

as UNCLOS III.

Furthermore, the public opinion in both countries has a negative image of the other side. Generally the public opinion in Greece and Turkey limits the leaders' options and in turn, leaders do not hesitate to manipulate public opinion for their needs (Clogg 2000: 20). The Imia/Kardak crisis is famous for its escalation process, strongly encouraged by the aggressive provocations by both sides' popular media. An escalation to war could have brought about the "first media-triggered war in history" (Heraclides 2010: 134). Greek and Turkish media did not only intervene in the course of conflict by putting up flags but also created a hostile public opinion in both countries.¹⁰⁷ This was increased by the continual threat perception and the long-term conflict. Domestic politics and especially nationalistic factions in both countries hinder their governments to reach any agreements with the other side, which might include a loss of face (Stivachtis 2001:80). So in this case, domestic democratic structures could neither prevent the escalation of the dispute nor were they responsible for the deescalation of the crisis.

6.3.4 Polarity of the International System

According to Gundodgu, the "Imia/Kardak crisis can be considered as a peak of a strategic disorientation, resulting from the post-Cold War international environment" (Gundodgu 2001: 107). Did the structure of the international system influence the outcomes of crises in terms of escalation or deescalation between Greece and Turkey? In theory, the impact of the polarity of the international system on the course of a crisis is disputed.

Although Greece and Turkey were affected by the bipolarity of the Cold War early, it had a minor strategic meaning to them. Both countries joined NATO in 1952. So Greece and Turkey were allied to the West, opposing the Soviet Union.

For all actors in the Cold War, bipolarity "provided a structure interwoven with common meanings, experiences, and understandings which helped make sense of the world around them and define their identities and interests accordingly" (Gundodgu 2001: 107). Especially Turkey had a position of increased attention within NATO as it was its south-eastern flank in front of the Soviet Union. But Turkey's and Greece's strategic thinking was not dominated by the international bipolarity but their own regional bipolarity. Greece and Turkey had a „relationship of cold war-type“ (Adyin/Ifantis 2004:1) on their own. After the outbreak of the Cyprus conflict in 1955, Greece and Turkey adopted bipolar superpower behavior. They pursued power politics and acted in a realist manner. They entered an enduring arms race during the 1960s (Bertrand 2003: 1).

¹⁰⁷ For a close analysis of Greek and Turkish media during the Imia/Kardak crisis see Mariana Lenkova (1998).

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War led to a change from bipolarity of the international system to a multipolar structure with US predominance in the 1990s. But multipolarity cannot be proven to have influence on the conflict behavior of Greece and Turkey during the Imia/Kardak crisis. Kupchan's argument about the ability of regional power centers to promote peace (2003: 231) cannot be employed here. Regional hegemons are theorized to stipulate peace within their cluster due to their proximity and culture. They have the potential to block and mediate hostilities between minor powers in their region. They even might be more effective than an international hegemon since the cultural background in the region is the same. This offers the possibility to have a better understanding of the conflict and eased communication with the disputing actors. But in the Imia/Kardak crisis, the deescalation effects of a regional power center do not show an effect because there is a regional hegemon present indeed, but it is a conflict party itself. Turkey can be considered as the military and diplomatic regional power in the area (Larrabee/Lesser 2003: ix). But it is a directly involved conflict party. So it does not act as a regional peace promoter in its conflict with Greece. Further, Greece, as a minor regional power, is not deterred from entering conflicts with the regional power center Turkey. Neither balancing nor bandwaggoning can be detected within the region. Neighboring states generally preferred to have a hands-off approach concerning the Greek-Turkish rivalry in order to avoid being drawn into the dispute.

The argument developed by Singer and Small (1964) about a high interaction complexity leading to less conflict-prone state behavior can be partly verified here. "This structure's collapse deprived many actors on the world scene of this conceptual framework, producing a sense of disorientation" (Gundogdu 2001: 107). Greece actually perceived the post-Cold War period as of increased complexity:

"However, new risks appeared replacing the old ones. The international security system is in a state of flux. The old interrelations were not replaced by a new world order, but by a general confusion" (Hellenic Ministry of Defense 1997: chp 1:2.)

But in fact, the main issue of Greek threat perception did not change after the fall of the Soviet Union. The end of the Soviet Union made little difference in the Greek foreign policy as its security considerations are dominated by the relations to Turkey. Turkey has dominated Greece's security agenda since the 1970s (Dokos/Tsakonas 2003: 9). All Greek political parties have viewed Turkey as major threat to the Greek territorial integrity in the Aegean and Western Thrace.

Turkey was the main threat in Greek strategic planning before and after the end of the Cold War. Greece valued NATO more for its constraint of Turkey than for its contribution to collective security

against the Warsaw Pact (MacKenzie 1983). Greek military spending was rather influenced by Turkish military spending than by the Soviet one (Dokos/Tsakonas 2003: 18). A rise in military spending in one country led to an immediate rise in the other country triggering a spiral of arms-build-up. Greece strives for maintaining a military balance with Turkey (Moustakis 2003: 45). So multipolarity had an effect in the sense of increasing the complexity of interactions in 1995/96 but the central scenario of threat has remained unchanged for decades.

6.4 Primary Causes for Deescalation

After evaluating the popular explanations for conflict deescalation, the primary causes for deescalation, as established above, will be investigated in the Imia/Kardak crisis. The power relations between the two adversaries, their alliances and their perceptions will be evaluated. All three variables have substantial impact on the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis. Especially the power relations and the perception of these have shown to impose constraining force on the actors to opt for deescalation.

6.4.1 Power

In the following, the relations between each state's power and the behavior of Greece and Turkey in the Imia/Kardak crisis will be investigated. There is a connection between certain constellations of power and the deescalation of a crisis. Superiority in terms of military power and geostrategic advantages of one state foster the deescalation of a crisis. Firstly, the structure and political role of the military in Greece and Turkey and their military capabilities will be evaluated to assess the relative power. Secondly, geostrategic factors of the Imia/Kardak crisis and in case of war between Greece and Turkey will be discussed. These factors together with the relative power influence the outcome of crises.

6.4.1.1 Military Capabilities

The Turkish military has a special role within the domestic political structure in Turkey. It has an autonomic position which enables it to control politicians through constitutional mechanisms. It considers itself as guardian of Kemalism, the state ideology, and especially secularism of Turkey. The military has intervened in Turkish domestic politics through three *coups d'état* (1960, 1971, 1980) and in 1997 it initiated the resignation of the Islamic Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. Apart from its conspicuous coups, the military influences politics through the National Security Council (NSC), an advisory feature to the government. The NSC consists of the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, the Ministers of National Defense, Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs, the

Commanders in Chief of the Army, Navy and Air Force, the General Commander of the Gendarmerie and the President of the Republic. The NSC submits expertise to the government and the government is supposed to give primary consideration to the NSC's advice.

In contrast to that, the Greek military has less influence on the country's politics. After the fall of the military junta (1967 – 1974) and times of political unrest, the Third Hellenic Republic emerged marked by democratic structures and the armed forces integrated in the political structure of Greece. The Hellenic Armed Forces of Greece consist of the Hellenic Army, the Hellenic Air Force and the Hellenic Navy. Operations are managed by the Hellenic National Defense General Staff. The main decision-making institution for national defense issues is the Governmental Council on Foreign Policy and National Defense (KYSEA), whose president is the Prime Minister. The Ministry of Defense (MOD) is the governmental institution responsible for the organizational framework of the Armed Forces' administration. The political head of the Ministry of Defense, the Minister of Defense is responsible for the Armed Forces command and control and is accountable to the government (Hellenic Republic Ministry of National Defense: Ministry Structure).

Both countries devote a large share of the state's income to defense. Turkey is a major arms importer. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) data, between 1990 and 1994, Turkey ranked on the third place after Saudi Arabia and Japan in conventional weapon imports. The country devotes a reasonable amount of its national income to defense. In 1995, it had a military expenditure of US \$ 16,648 million, which is 4.1 per cent of its GDP. Between 1989 and 1997 it rose from 3.1 to 4.1 per cent. Generally, Turkey's defense burden, the ratio of military expenditures and GDP, is higher than the average NATO share of military spending to GDP (Kollias 1997:190). Turkey experienced an economic rise since the mid-1980s and was able to spend a higher amount of money on military expenditures. It started a reorganization and modernization for its military and enlarged its military industrial base. So in 1995, Turkey had undergone an arms build-up for ten years and had permanently increased its forces. The Turkish military spending was driven by deterring Syria, Iran and Iraq externally and the Kurdish rebellion internally and finally by the Greek-Turkish relations. The Greek-Turkish relations also determine the Greek defense budget. Greece spends a substantial part of its income on defense. In terms of resources, human and material, allocated to defense, Greece is the most highly militarized country of NATO and EU (Kollias 1995: 305).

“Greece consistently allocates a substantially higher share of GDP to its defense sector than other NATO countries. The average share of defense expenditures in GDP during the past four decades was 5% for Greece, as compared with 2.8% for Italy, 4.7% for Portugal and 4.0% for the whole of NATO” (Avramides 1997: 145).

After the end of WWII and the Greek Civil War, Greece was under Western influence and joined organizations such as Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), the Council of Europe and NATO. The US was strongly involved in the weapons supply of Greece through various military assistance programs and accounted for more than 80 per cent of imported weapons and equipment (Kollias 1995: 315). During the Greek military regime (1967 – 1974) the US influence diminished due to the arms embargoes imposed by the US Congress (Alifantis/Kollias: 2000: 43).

During the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, Greece was not in the position to deter Turkey militarily, therefore, in the aftermath, a shift in Greek defense strategy led to a focus on strengthening the Navy and the Air Force and an increase of defense expenditures. Greece had to renew its C3 systems (command, control and communication) and restructure the forces themselves, the strategy and the distribution of forces. The improvement of equipment and training of the Greek armed forces was supposed to counterbalance the military superiority of Turkey (Alifantis/Kollias: 2000: 44). The deterrence of the Turkish threat is in the focus of Greek military strategy.¹⁰⁸ In 1985 Greece declared a new defense doctrine, focusing on the deterrence of Turkey (Kollias 1995: 311). Greece spent a sizable share of its defense expenditures abroad but since the mid-1970s it also produced arms domestically (Kollias 1995: 315).

Thus, both countries' military planning is focused on the threat posed by the other and a security culture of *realpolitik*. Evidence suggests that the defense expenditure in each country is influenced by the military budget of the other country (Kollias 1995, 1996; Kollias/Makrydakis 1997; Avramides 1997). Greece considers Turkey as its most threatening adversary and due to its unequal capabilities, it strives for an enlargement of its strategic capabilities (Kollias 1995: 318). Apart from Turkey there were frictions with Albania and Macedonia, which have increased its security concerns (Veremis 1991).

Due to the uneven economic growth of Greece and Turkey since the mid-1980s, Turkey was able to devote more resources to military goods and to shift the relative military balance in its favor. Greece strives for balancing Turkey and the Greek military spending is primarily influenced by the Turkish arms build-up which led to a regional arms race (Wilson 1979; Clogg 1983, 1991; Conostas 1991; Larrabee 1992; Stivachtis 2001: 76 – 78). What is also worth mentioning is the fact that the Turkish-Greek arms race is not of simultaneous mutual causation. The Greek military expenditures are dependent on the Turkish ones, but the Turkish military build-up is caused by several other security concerns (Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Kurds) and to a lesser extent Greece. In the underlying case, it is a

¹⁰⁸ As emphasized in the White Paper for the Armed Forces 1996 – 1997 by the Greek Ministry of National Defence.

matter of a “one-way, unilateral rather than mutual simultaneous causation” (Bauer 2001: 5). Further, Bauer (2001: 14) comes to the conclusion that the arms race between Greece and Turkey ended in the end of the 1980s due to the economic exhaustion of Greece. Greece further speculated about a common European defense, but realized that this process was extremely slow and would not provide security in a foreseeable future and there continued to allocate resources on defense (Kollias 1995: 318).

In 1995, Turkey and Greece both increased their military expenditures and personnel.¹⁰⁹ In June 1995, the Turkish Ministry of Defense made plans to acquire 600 new tanks, increase the armored forces to over 6000 new main battle tanks with 120 artillery pieces, order new helicopters and upgrade existing armaments. The Air Force expanded its inventory of F-16s with the co-production in Turkey of the first 152 and the manufacturing of a second batch of 80 aircraft in 1996. Further, Ankara ordered 393 CBU-87 cluster bombs and 120 tactical ballistic missiles with a range of 165 km (Gerolymatos 2000: 53). Turkey deployed two armies directly facing Greece: the First Army in Thrace and the Fourth Army (aka Aegean Army), which is equipped with a large number of landing craft and not assigned to NATO¹¹⁰ on Turkey`s western border facing Greek Aegean islands.

According to SIPRI data, Greece was the sixth largest importer of major conventional weapons between 1994 and 1998. In the mid-1990s, imports covered about 80 per cent of the needs for military hardware, the rest was assured through domestic production including armored personnel carriers (APC) and infantry fighting vehicles (IFV), surface units such as the MEKO-200 frigates and missile boats, small infantry weapon, ammunition, jeeps, trucks and maintenance for battle tanks and fighter planes. Technological upgrades and retrofitting of planes (F-4) and Chinook helicopters was undertaken abroad (Kollias 1995: 315).

When it comes to the relation between Turkey and Greece in terms of (deployable) military capabilities, Turkey had been in a superior position ever since. Greece`s clear inferiority was relevant for the way crises between the two countries evolved. Greece did not risk going to war with Turkey in crises due to the foreseeable military defeat.

After the Cyprus crisis, Turkey further expanded its military superiority by restructuring its forces and increasing its military expenditures. That shook the military balance in the Aegean which had been stable since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus (Athanasopoulou 1997: 78, fn. 1). Greece also increased its expenditures, and for a decade both countries were trapped in an arms-race. However, due to its economic performance Greece was never able to draw level with Turkey, and Greece`s

¹⁰⁹ See the COW National Material Capabilities Index.

¹¹⁰ Assigned forces are those which have already been placed under the operational command of a NATO Commander. The Fourth Army is excluded from NATO command.

economic exhaustion finally ended the arms-race. Nonetheless, both countries went on increasing their military expenditures but to a lesser extent. In 1995, Greece spent about US \$ 4,000 million, almost 6 per cent of its GDP and Turkey spent over US \$ 6,000 million, about 4 per cent of its GDP (Dunne/Nikolaidou 2001: 5). In case of Turkey`s arms purchase in 1995, especially the upgrade of the Air Force and the mid-range ballistic air missiles might have contributed to a military escalation in the Aegean Sea. That could have ensured Greece`s perception of Turkey`s expansionist intentions in the forefront of and during the Imia/Kardak crisis and led to the deterioration of the crisis. When the crisis turned hot and became militarized, Greece kept up with Turkey in putting forces on alert and deploying military personnel and equipment to the islets of Imia/Kardak although, still, the military balance strongly favored Turkey. So which power-related issue drove Greece to yield on 31st January? Geostrategic aspects will answer this question.

6.4.1.2 Geostrategic Power

„Geography creates problems for Greece in all possible theaters of war with Turkey“ (Stivachtis 2001: 74). Geostrategic vulnerabilities of Greece include the need of increased numbers of forces to cover the Greek territory, the incompleteness of the channels of supply for forward command and the many beaches on the Greek coast which make it vulnerable for infiltration. Most of Greece`s Aegean islands are closer to Turkey than the Greek continental shelf. This makes defense in general problematic and air defense is also hindered due to the short warning time for the emergence of Turkish air crafts. Turkey, in turn, has no comparably easy invasion targets.

The second endangered area in addition to the Aegean islands, the common border with Turkey in Thrace, is far from the main Greek strategic centers, so in case of a Turkish ground attack, Greece has hindered access and supply in this region. Further, Turkey holds strategic dominance in Cyprus since it is in far distance to Greece and Turkey has already troops stationed in the northern part. This enables Turkey to pressure Greece in Aegean disputes by threatening to attack the remaining Greek-Cypriot territories. Therefore Greece faces several geostrategic disadvantages in case of a militarized dispute with Turkey (Stivachtis 2001: 74 – 76).

“[...] according to the Greek side, the Imia crisis has shown that Turkish governments can afford to commit acts of brinkmanship, without fear of risking strategic defeat in case of crisis escalation. Such brinkmanship, which may result in an uncontrolled conflict escalation, is usually more likely to be exhibited by Turkey which is the country that enjoys strategic superiority and has, therefore, less to fear from escalation” (Stivachtis 2001: 74 – 76).

Under these circumstances of a general Turkish military superiority, the conflict over the Imia/Kardak islets escalated. At the peak of the crisis, on 30th January, there were twelve Greek commandos and the Greek flag on the islet. Turkey considered this deployment as *fait accompli* and assured Greece of not accepting that. Since 29th January, both country`s navies were deployed to the sea near the islets. On 31st January, the new situation of Turkish Special Forces landing undetected by Greek troops next to them in combination with the repeated assurance of Washington that Turkey was militarily superior to Greece (Hickok 2007: 134) led to the Greek decision to yield and withdraw Greek forces and flag.

6.4.2 Alliances

Quantitatively, Turkey is in a better position than Greece when it comes to alliance formation. According to ATOP data Turkey counts twelve formal allies while Greece counts five in 1995/96. As discussed above, alliances are a motivator for states to choose deescalation over escalation in a crisis when they expect the adversary to have a relevant ally supporting it actively.

6.4.2.1 Greece`s Alliances

In the beginning of the 1990s, Greece made several pacts of neutrality, non-aggression and consultation. In 1991, Greece signed a pact of neutrality, non-aggression and consultation with Bulgaria and a pact of neutrality and consultation with Romania; in 1992 a consultation pact with Hungary followed and in 1993 a pact of consultation and neutrality with Russia. In 1995, Greece and Macedonia agreed over a non-aggression pact. In 1995/96 Greece had no defensive alliance.

6.4.2.2 Turkey`s Alliances

Turkey signed a non-aggression pact with the Philippines in 1949. Similar to Greece, Turkey agreed to several pacts of non-aggression, neutrality and consultation with former states of the Warsaw Pact in 1991 and 1992. Among those were Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, Albania, Poland and Ukraine. Further pacts of non-aggression, consultation and neutrality with Moldova, Croatia and Hungary were added in 1994.

Considering conflict deescalation, defense pacts are the most relevant determinants of state behavior in crises. In 1995, Turkey had a defense pact with Azerbaijan and the USA. While Azerbaijan is not considered as a politically relevant ally to Turkey, the USA is. There was no (politically relevant) ally expected to intervene on the side of Greece in case of a confrontation. Therefore, there was no deterring effect for Turkey in a potential militarized conflict with Greece. In the beginning of 1996,

Turkey had a long-term asymmetric¹¹¹ defense pact with the United States. The Turkish-American Agreement of Security Cooperation, signed in 1959, stated:

“The Government of Turkey is determined to resist aggression. In case of aggression against Turkey, the Government of the United States of America, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States of America, will take such appropriate action, including the use of armed forces, as may be mutually agreed upon and as is envisaged in the Joint Resolution to Promote Peace and Stability in the Middle East, in order to assist the Government of Turkey at its request” (Article I).

According to Leeds (2003), the deterring effect of an alliance which is already existent before the emergence of the dispute cannot account for deescalation due to a deterring effect. The target state of the defense alliance has to calculate in case of an attack that it will not only be involved in a bilateral war but a multilateral war with two adversaries. The target state may take the risk and step up the escalation ladder, but still may ultimately refrain from war in a crisis due to the alliance commitments of the adversary. This does not have to mean that the target state never had plans for war. In case of the Imia/Kardak crisis, Greece and Turkey employed a chicken game. Each state took the next step in the escalation ladder as long as it was convinced of the ability of deterring the other from war. Therefore, a defensive pact may deter the emerging hostilities from the beginning on, but also in a peak of a crisis when states switch from threatening gestures to potentially entering war.

On the other hand, the US did not show any intention to ally with Turkey against Greece in case of an escalation to war. There is no evidence that Greece expected to have the US as allied adversary in a conflict with Turkey. So in this case, a treaty about a formal politically relevant defensive alliance does not seem to have had an influence on the Greek decision to yield on 31st January. However, apart from the formal alliance, the US indirectly established an informal alliance. Washington made clear in the talks during the crisis that “the party that shoots the first bullet will find the United States against it” (Wilkinson 2000; Aksu 2001: 174; Kalaitzaki 2005: 121). Considering that, the alliance of the US had a deterring effect as it made clear that it would fight the aggressor. So for Greece and Turkey, a potential major-power defender’s ally should have had a deterring effect when it came to considerations of risking war. This accounts for Greece’s decision to refrain from further military escalation and to yield in the morning of 31st January.

¹¹¹ The US pledged to assist Turkey, but not vice versa.

6.4.3 Perceptions

“On both sides of the Aegean, perception is a dynamic element. In both countries there is strong belief that the other has been harbouring and pursuing revisionist policies. In this way, the security dilemma rests also on the inability both to know with certainty the intentions and abilities of the others, and to make credible commitments not to arm for offensive purposes that can drive the insecurity spiral” (Aydin/Ifantis 2004: 4).

Although both countries are allies within NATO and share geography and democratic values, the relations between them have been marked by “mistrust and animosity ever since 1974 and their differences spread from their common land, sea and air borders, to Cyprus” (Avramides 1997: 148). The mutual perceptions of Greek and Turkish intentions have to be viewed against the background of their common history. Both countries` sovereignty was achieved through wars of liberation they fought against each other. This historically hostile background is further nurtured by the establishment of enmity in history books and the media (Gundodgu 2001: 110).

6.4.3.1 Perceptions of Intentions

This prevailing hostile mood determines the perceptions of the intentions when it comes to the disputes about the sovereignty of territories in the Aegean Sea. Turkey argues that Greece regards the Aegean Sea as Greek sea in disregard of Turkey`s legitimate rights and interests. Greek policy would attempt to change the *status quo*, which was set up in the Lausanne Peace Treaty in 1923 (Stivachtis 2001: 41).

When it comes to the Imia/Kardak crisis, both countries consider the actions of the adversary as an unlawful, expansionist act. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs states:

”[...] this is yet another example of unfounded Greek claims to sovereignty even at 3.8 miles and results from long-standing bilateral disputes concerning the Aegean [...]. In creating a problem by extending its sovereignty to the islands beyond those ceded to Athens in 1947, Greece is acting irresponsibly by increasing tensions for domestic political consumption and by trying to involve others in the international community in the fray” (Republic of Turkey 2011).

Greek analysts, political elites and the public on the other side of the sea believe that Turkey has

adopted a revisionist foreign policy, striving to change the *status quo* created by the Treaty of Lausanne 1923, Montreux 1936 and Paris 1947. Turkey consistently challenges the territorial *status quo* in the Aegean and calls for bilateral renegotiations (Stivachtis 2001: 57).

As Turkey had intensified the violations of Greek air space and the Turkish government had passed a resolution in 1995 that authorized the government to use force if Greece extended its territorial water from six to twelve miles, Greek officials and analysts believed that a Turkish *fait accompli* was likely (Stivachtis 2001: 59). This mistrust was also triggered by the Greek picture of Turkish expansionism. This expectation was fulfilled by the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. Greece considers Turkish tactics as bullying and these will not be answered by cooperation, which would reward Turkey's tactics, but by deterrence (Lazarides 1997: 144 - 147). This is not only mirrored by public opinion but also political discourse and security planning. Greek policymakers see Turkey as backing its non-friendly intentions with a significant military build-up. Greek governments keep defense expenditures at a high level with the public's support although this is considered as responsible for the country's budget deficit (Tsakonas/Tournikiotis 2003: 303-304). Greece considered the behavior of Turkey during the crisis as "clearly escalating a tension strategy" and "as the most significant threat against Greek security" (Hellenic Republic 1997: chp1:3).

Greece and Turkey continue to view each other's actions as threats to their security and interests. There is a deep perception of each other as revisionist states, which leads to a power struggle and the design of particular military strategies to meet their security needs. This successively increased the threat perception and made cooperation and the resolution of disputable issues difficult (Stivachtis 2001: 72). Considering potential conflict deescalation, not only the Greek and Turkish perceptions of their intentions are relevant but also the perception of their own and the other's military capabilities.

6.4.3.2 Perceptions of Relative Power

Generally, Turkey considers itself as militarily superior to Greece while Greece knows about the Turkish military strength and invests in balancing it. Therefore it is convinced that it can keep up with Turkey in a militarized incident. In Greek view, events like the Second Gulf War, the breakdown of former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union allowed Turkey to strengthen its role in the Balkans and Central Asia and enhance its role as a dominant power in the region. Greece perceived the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean change in Turkey's favor, which was indicated by the investment of "economic resources in defense, arms, military-industrial base and infusion of modern military technology" (Stivachtis 2001: 60).

On the other hand, Ankara was aware of being militarily superior to Greece and that it had the military

capability to shape the situation as preferred (Hickok 1997: 47). Therefore, both Athens and Ankara had, due to their differing perceptions of the military balance, no rationale to yield and continued to assure that they were both ready to oppose the unlawful expansionist intentions with military means if necessary.

At the escalatory peak of the Imia/Kardak crisis, the perception of the military balance can be summarized as follows: Greek military leaders misjudged the Greek ability to militarily protect its interests against Turkey in the Aegean. This led to the refusal of the Greek civilian leaders to negotiate over the sovereignty of Imia/Kardak.

Nonetheless Greece withdrew its forces and flags in the morning of 31st January, so their perception of the military balance must have changed. There was an actual switch of the military balance as the Turkish commandos landed on Imia/Kardak during the night. First, Greek military and officials were not aware of that, but after calls from Washington informing about the new situation and persisting on the military superiority of Turkey Greece withdrew its forces. The fact that Turkish forces could land on Imia/Kardak without being detected by the Greek forces raised doubts the ability of Greece to persist Turkey in military terms (Hickok 1997: 49, 50).

6.4.3.3 Perceptions of Alliances

Another factor for calculating the performance in a militarized dispute is the behavior of third states. The conflicting parties have to evaluate if a third state would get involved on one side. As discussed in the chapter tackling both countries` alliances, Greece had no defensive alliance in 1995/96. Therefore, Greece and Turkey were aware that any state was obliged to intervene on the Greek side and did not have to calculate for a Greek ally. Turkey on the other hand had two allies, which were bound by contract to assist Turkey in case of a conflict. Azerbaijan gave no sights of getting involved in the crisis and Turkey probably did not involve it in its tactical planning since Azerbaijan is not politically relevant compared to Greece and Turkey. The second ally, the US, is politically relevant indeed and also got involved in the crisis. When tensions rose between Greece and Turkey, US officials strongly promoted a mediatory conflict solution. They acted on the conflicting parties to refrain from militarizing the dispute but did not make recognizable efforts to act militarily on Turkey`s side based on their defensive treaty. Turkey in turn did not show any considerations of counting on military US assistance, among other reasons because it considered itself as capable of steering the situation in any favored direction due to its military superiority. Apart from that both countries felt neglected by the US. “The common perception for Greece and Turkey is that both think that the United States is in favor of the other” (Kalaitzaki 2005: 124). Further, the American statement to

intervene militarily on the side which is attacked in the crisis assured both countries that it would not ally with Turkey from the outset on.

Greece's partners in the European Union approached the conflict from a neutral position since they had interests in both countries (Platias 2000: 71; Stivachtis 2001: 60). Turkey and especially Greece had learned at the latest in the Cyprus Crisis in 1974 that neither the European Union nor NATO would engage actively in a conflict between them. Therefore both countries did not expect an intervention from the EU or NATO during the Imia/Kardak crisis on their own side or the adversary's. Both organizations were not relevant for Greece and Turkey in calculating the next step in the Imia/Kardak crisis.

6.5 Conclusion of the Imia/Kardak Crisis

This case study shed light on the episode of the Turkish-Greek relations which almost led to a war in the Aegean Sea in 1996. The Imia/Kardak crisis is outstanding on multiple levels for examining the processes of crisis deescalation. In the Imia/Kardak crisis two democratic states which are members to the same institution(s) almost went to a territorial war after the end of the Cold War. Cursorily considered, mediation by the US seemed to have ignited deescalation but this explanation does not withstand a closer examination. Further, the democratic structures in both states did not have a cooling effect on the crisis but actually triggered escalation. The institutions which could have had a potential deescalating effect, NATO and the EU, proved both to be incapable of imposing deescalation on the conflicting parties. On the other hand, the variables which were established as primary causes of deescalation proved to be influential in the Imia/Kardak crisis. Power, alliances and perceptions imposed settings in the crisis which made deescalation a favorable option for the actors.

First of all, the Imia/Kardak crisis shows that traditional explanation patterns for deescalation are not valid here. The US tried to mediate between Greece and Turkey, but could not manage to contribute to a resolution of the conflict. The outcome of the crisis was the same as the *status quo* before the emergence of the crisis. The only relevant influence of the US was to ensure Greece during the night of 31st January, that Turkey was militarily superior to Greece. The American officials influenced the perception of Greece for the power ratio at the peak of the crisis.

To a certain degree, the US had the ability to pressure Greece and Turkey but not in terms of mediatory talks but through allying. Washington made clear in the talks that "the party that shoots the first bullet will find the United States against it" (Wilkinson 2000: 185 – 218; Aksu 2001: 174; Kalaitzaki 2005: 121).

Regional institutions could not intervene in a conciliatory manner either. NATO and EU were

incapable of acting towards deescalation. The Imia/Kardak case shows that relations between states can be tense although they are both members in the same regional institution. The pacifying effect of joining the same institution is thus questionable. Greece expected NATO to contain potential aggression from Turkey but had to experience that NATO did not want to alienate any of the conflicting actors and therefore refrained from any action. Greece also sought support against Turkey when joining the EU and WEU, but both institutions made clear that they would not get involved in a Greek-Turkish conflict. Further, the EU missed the chance to undertake mediatory measures in the Imia/Kardak crisis since it seems to have underestimated its conflict potential. The Greek-Turkish conflict was tense for decades although both countries are members or associated with two institutions which are said to be responsible for peace in Western Europe (Dembinski 2006: I). So even in the long term, institutions could not induce non-violent behavior between Greece and Turkey. The Imia/Kardak crisis demonstrates another obstacle for institutional conflict deescalation. Crisis dynamics overburden institutional capacity to react to them. The crisis deteriorated militarily within a few days. As mentioned above, institutions tend to react slowly to events due to their need of consensus-finding, bureaucratic infrastructure and resources. So it is obvious that institutions cannot launch prompt actions when a crisis turns hot.

First of all, both states were labeled as democratic at the time when the Imia/Kardak crisis rose.

But their common hostile history disempowers the claim that democratic norms foster peaceful relations between states. Further, the Imia/Kardak crisis is an example of a crisis strongly triggered by public opinion. The media, the population and various domestic groups in both countries were keen on escalating the dispute as long as necessary and made diplomatic solutions impossible. Thus, pacifying effects of the democratic peace theory could not be found in the case of the Imia/Kardak crisis.

A pacifying influence of multipolarity could not be verified as the state of the international system has very little influence on this regional level of Greece and Turkey, where they pose the greatest threat to each other. Polarity does not seem to have influenced the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis either. A multipolar international system offers the option for regional hegemons to stabilize their surrounding and promote peace. The peace promoting function of regional hegemons cannot be found in the case of Imia/Kardak since the regional hegemon, Turkey, is part of the conflict. Deescalation through high interaction complexity is not found in the case of Imia/Kardak either. Although Greece generally felt general confusion after the fall of the Iron Curtain, Greece and Turkey had established their own microcosm through the decades of rivalry so that the polarity of the international system had no influence on their conflict behavior.

Power in the sense of military capabilities seems to have influence the emergence and the deescalation

of the crisis. Turkey has always been superior to Greece in military capabilities and its arms purchase in June 1995 made Greece nervous. During the escalation process, the Greek military was convinced that it could take on with Turkey in case of a military confrontation. Turkey was sure of its own superiority in power. At the peak of the crisis, Greece had to face a surprising, new tactical situation and seemed to be more critical about its ability to fight Turkey in the Aegean, which led to a withdrawal of Greek troops. So subjective power estimations are relevant for the deescalation of conflict.

The military plays an important role in Turkey and it is a major arms importer. Economic rise in the 1980s and 90s led to an arms build-up. Greece felt threatened by the Turkish arms growth and ran through an expensive build-up as well. Both countries spent a major amount of their GDP on military expenditures. In 1995, both countries made significant arms purchases but still, in terms of relative power, Turkey outplayed Greece in arms and military staff. Turkey's obvious military superiority, in addition to its advantage of better deployability of the military capabilities, could be used to explain the Greek yielding in the Imia/Kardak crisis - but it is not as simple as that.

Initially, the Turkish arms build-up intensified the tensions about Imia/Kardak between the two countries and led to an escalation of the dispute. But there are two factors related to power which generated deescalation. The first is the Greek asymmetric geostrategic vulnerability. Greece has various tactical disadvantages originating from its geography. Turkey calculated those in its mobilization tactics during the crisis. In case of a war between them, Turkey would have been able to gain territorial advantages on Greek soil relatively easily while Greece would not have been able to do so. The second, and more striking factor for deescalation is the short-term power shift at the peak of the crisis. The landing of Turkish troops on Imia/Kardak caused a tactical shift in favor of Turkey. Turkey, as the militarily superior power, escalated the situation through this act of brinkmanship. Greece on the other hand was put in a situation of a constricted scope of actions. It was obvious that an escalation to war could be the consequence of the next act. At that point Greece decided not to risk a war due to its inferior military (tactical) and geostrategic setting.

When the Imia/Kardak crisis evolved, Turkey had a formal defensive pact with Azerbaijan and the US while Greece had none. Formal defensive pacts are the kind of material alliance commitments for calculations about war or peace. The most relevant potential ally in this situation was the US. But it did not act on the defensive pact with Turkey. The US assured Greece and Turkey that it would ally with the party which gets attacked and thereby established an informal alliance. This statement did not prevent the two states from climbing the escalation ladder further but was at least a retardation for them to start a war.

Comparing the potential impact of the military balance and alliance commitments, one can see that

the military balance has a much more immediate impact than the alliance commitments. Alliance commitments are considered by actors when calculating the next step but at least in the case of the Imia/Kardak crisis, alliances were no necessary condition for deescalation. The crisis did not deescalate after the establishment of the informal alliance but days later when the power relations between Greece and Turkey shifted. So an immediate impact of the alliance on deescalation cannot be theorized but it surely slowed the escalation process down.

From the same episode of the Imia/Kardak crisis, one can see which influence perceptions have on escalation and deescalation.

Considering the perceptions of intentions between Greece and Turkey one might expect crisis escalation. The two countries are hereditary enemies and allege each other that they pursue expansionist goals, which have to be resisted. They consider each other as greatest threat in the region. Turkey's military build-up until 1995 raised suspicion in Greece that a *fait accompli* by Turkey was likely in the next crisis. Turkey on the other hand was sure that Greece wanted to escalate the Imia/Kardak crisis.

But there are two other aspects of perceptions which promoted deescalation and had more impact on the course of the crisis than the perception of intentions. The perception of the military balance between the conflicting parties is of crucial importance for deescalation. Turkey assessed itself superior in terms of military capabilities and tactical setting. Greece was convinced that it was able to keep up with Turkey even in a war. So both actors climbed the escalation ladder until the Greek perception of the military balance and the geostrategic setting changed when it learned that Turkish commandos had landed on Imia/Kardak and that it could not outplay Turkey in a war. At that moment Greece yielded. Another perceptual factor for deescalation or at least for hesitation to escalate for both parties was the knowledge that the US would, in case of a military escalation, ally with the attacked one. For Greece and Turkey, the expectation to face the US as an ally of the adversary led to reservation in offensive behavior.

As long as Greece believed that it could resist Turkey in an Aegean fight, it refused to step back from its demands. When it reassessed its perception of the relative power in the crisis, it refrained from yielding. When it comes to the perception of intentions, there is no hint that some change has happened. Both countries considered the other as highly hostile and did not seem to doubt the willingness for confrontation.

When investigating the role of perceptions in the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis, it is validated that perceptions play a crucial role. Particular emphasis has to be put on the change of the Greek perception of the military balance in the crisis and the following change of Greek tactics from taking further escalatory steps to yielding and thereby imposing the deescalation of the crisis.

One can summarize that the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis did not happen through traditional factors such as positive influences of democratic structures, constraints from the overall system polarity or a pacifying effect of institutions. Although the US mediation is often employed as explanation for the deescalation, it cannot be proven to be the reason for the willingness of the actors to deescalate the situation. The crisis was resolved due to military and tactical superiority of one side and a change of the anticipation of these factors by Greece. Investigating the content of the American mediatory attempt gives a hint on the primary factors, which are relevant for decisions of escalation or deescalation. The US advised Greece against a military confrontation with Turkey because of the military inferiority of Greece. The power ratio of a conflicting dyad is a relevant variable which can either lead to escalation or deescalation. If one state is militarily inferior to the other, it will yield. Power shifts can alter the actual power ratio and change the outcome of the crisis. But not only military capabilities influence the power ratio but also the deployment of these capabilities and tactical advantages within the crisis. Another implication of the Imia/Kardak crisis, congruent with theory, is that objective factors matter, but what matters more is the perception of these factors. The perceptions of intentions of Greece and Turkey probably contributed to the escalation of the situation as they perceived themselves fully within their rights and demonized the other. Within the crisis, a change of the perceptions of intentions was not found. The perceptions of the capabilities had a crucial impact on the outcome of the crisis. As shown, Greece exaggerated its own military strength and therefore was willing to risk a confrontation with Turkey. A (US induced) reevaluation of the military power ratio by Greece led to its willingness to withdraw its troops from the islet. The Greek willingness to deescalate was further reinforced by the tactical shift of the situation when Turkey landed troops unnoticed by Greece on the islet.

The fact that Greece entered the escalation spiral in the beginning of the crisis although it was clear in mathematical terms that the military balance favored Turkey shakes the validity of the hypothesis about the military superiority leading to deescalation. On closer examination, I came to the conclusion that in the forefront of the Imia/Kardak crisis Greece military generals considered themselves as militarily even with Turkey and therefore took the risk of escalation.

From these episodes one can draw the conclusion that there are objective factors which influence the outcome of a conflict, but their subjective anticipation by the actors is equally relevant. Power ratios are anticipated and shifts of these ratios have to be incorporated into these anticipations. Therefore power shifts contribute to the confusion of a situation and increase the probability of war.

7. Conclusion

In the concluding chapter, I will recapitulate the individual steps of explaining interstate conflict deescalation. Afterwards I will explore the implications of the argument and offer an interpretation of the outcome. I will discuss some counterarguments and translate the outcome into policy prescriptions. I will tackle the arguments which are questioned by my study and the ones which are reinforced and finally suggest further research which can build upon the findings of the underlying study.

7.1 Recapitulation

This study has tried to explain interstate conflict deescalation with outcomes from the studies of the causes of war. This approach is fruitful since conflict is considered as a process of escalation and deescalation and the will of actors to refrain from war is influenced by different conflict settings. Some settings drive each actor to stick to escalating actions, other settings may convince actors to act in a conciliatory manner.

The scientific focus of the thesis is interstate conflict deescalation. To examine this event, I defined conflict, especially between states, and its management through tension reduction. Conflict as a state of tensions, caused by incompatible tendencies, threatens the structure of the organismic whole within which the conflict happens. An escalation of this process might lead to war, which would disturb or even change the structure. A deescalation of this process reduces tensions and might even lead to a resolution of the conflict.

Further, I outlined the diverse IB explanations for deescalation and judged their explanatory power in chapter two. I took a look at unilateral measures by the conflicting states and third parties, bilateral interaction models, the influence of international institutions, the timing of deescalation, adversarial relationships, the impact of domestic democratic structures and the influence of the international system polarity.

Browsing these diverse explanations for deescalation, one can set up a typology of different factors which are theorized to influence deescalation. On the one hand there are measures which are undertaken by any actor(s) to promote deescalation, such as mediation for example, on the other hand there are conditions which are present in the conflict which foster deescalation, for example the structure of the international system.

A lot of the IB explanations for deescalation produce mixed results. Sometimes the variables in focus lead to deescalation, sometimes they do not. This implicates that there are further factors which have an influence on the course of conflict. Assuming that deescalation is an expression of the will of all conflicting parties to avoid war, one has to look for variables which make the states want to deescalate.

These can be measures or conditions, but most importantly they have to convince the conflicting parties to reduce tensions instead of going to war. These are primary causes of deescalation. These also have influence on the deescalating effect of other causes of deescalation. Correspondingly, these are the secondary causes of deescalation. Here the focus lies on the primary causes. To identify them, I solely elaborated variables which influence the involved actors' willingness to deescalate.

So which conflict settings promote deescalation in a highly militarized conflict short of war? I have argued that one has to look for these causes in the underlying conditions which have an impact on actors' interests concerning war or peace and which might have changed during the ongoing conflict. One has to search for causes which influence the decision of a state to risk war. These also influence a state's decision to refrain from war. So one has to examine the circumstances which make deescalation a favorable option for the actors (primary cause of deescalation). These settings seem to determine if the deescalation measures are successful, have no impact at all or are even followed by escalation. If these settings can also be connected to escalation and emergence of war, then causes of war studies might be useful to provide insights into deescalation as well. Therefore I examined the Theories of the causes of war theories and elaborated those variables which have a preferably wide explanatory power for the outbreak of conflict. From the existing literature about the causes of war I extracted the variables power, alliances and perception, and deduced hypotheses which connect certain settings of power, alliance and perceptions with the deescalation of conflict.

When overlooking the various theories on the causes of war on the different images, one can find some factors which appear in many theories. Power, alliances and perceptions play an important role when investigating war causation.

I used these three variables and linked them to conflict deescalation. This resulted in the hypotheses:

HP: Unequal relative power between two adversaries fosters deescalation.

HA: An alliance of military support has a deescalating effect in a conflict.

HPer: If a state perceives its adversary as militarily superior or allied to a third state, deescalation will emerge.

Although these hypotheses seem to be obvious, one has to pay attention to the sub-hypotheses (see 4.1.2.4.1 – 4.1.2.4.4) which provide a more elaborated insight into the possible impact of the variables on deescalation.

Further, I employed null-hypotheses to test the several explanations for deescalation as already established by IR scholars. Deescalation is explained through mediation by third states, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and system polarity.

HM: Mediation by third parties promotes deescalation in an interstate crisis.

HI: Institutional involvement in an interstate crisis fosters deescalation.

HD: Domestic democratic structures in both conflicting states promote crisis deescalation.

HPol: International system polarity promotes deescalation of an interstate crisis.

The elaborated hypotheses allow some predictions about the causes of interstate deescalation. Power determines the behavior of states in a conflict. Military power relations in combination with geostrategic vulnerabilities provide an explanation for deescalation. To opt for deescalation, one adversary has to have an advantage in terms of military capabilities and geostrategy. If one state in a conflicting dyad is militarily superior to the other, deescalation will emerge. And further, if one state in a conflicting dyad has geostrategic vulnerabilities, deescalation will emerge.

I expected to find these factors in the case studies.

Alliances are another determinant of states' conflict behavior. Several criteria have to be met so that an alliance can foster deescalation: the external ally has to be politically relevant, it has to be formally or informally defensive and its impact must be reinforced by its endurance. If these conditions are fulfilled, the state facing an adversary with such an alliance will yield and avoid further militarized dispute.

The two preceding causes of deescalation tackle real circumstances, the following one deals with perceptions which influence the states' actions and analogically the course of the crisis. Objects of perceptions which are relevant for states to decide between war and peace are the other state's intentions, the relative power between them and the possibility of alliances. Deescalation can be stipulated if the conflicting states do not perceive war plans from the adversary. If states perceive themselves as inferior in capabilities and geostrategy, they behave in a deescalating way and if a state perceives that a politically relevant third state will intervene on the adversary's side, it will do so too. Following the IR scholars, mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures and the polarity of the international system bring about interstate crisis deescalation. Mediation leads to deescalation through direct and indirect communication channels and cease fire negotiations. Institutions are able to provide information, norms and ideas and in some cases can even deter adversaries. This is theorized to make the conflicting states want to deescalate. Domestic democratic structures make states choose deescalation through common norms, bureaucratic and political constraints and public opinion. Finally the international surrounding of the states has an impact on the states' decision between escalation and deescalation. Theoretically uni-, bi- and multipolarity can

bring about deescalation. Unipolarity leads to deescalation through the absence of hegemonic rivalry. Bipolarity has stabilizing effects through balancing and multipolarity fosters deescalation through regional power centers and complex interaction patterns.

After establishing the predictions for the test and the null-hypotheses, I performed two case studies to evaluate the viability of the hypotheses. For the tests, I selected two cases of interstate conflict short of war. The Rann of Kutch crisis between India and Pakistan in 1965 was selected for its militarized escalation followed by deescalation short of war. It happened in a bipolar world order between a democratic and a non-democratic dyad. There were mediation attempts and international institutions which could have got involved. Further, it took place in the pre-nuclear age of Indo-Pakistani relations.

The Imia/Kardak crisis between Greece and Turkey, on the other hand, happened in 1995/96 in a multipolar international environment. It was also highly militarized and short of war but in contrast to the Rann of Kutch crisis actual fighting did not happen. The conflicting parties were both democratic and there were mediation attempts and institutions which could have got involved.

I performed process-tracing to explore influences which led to the deescalation of both crises. I processed the test hypotheses with the null-hypotheses and evaluated their explanatory power.

The case studies supported the test hypotheses and rather rejected the null-hypotheses. In both cases, power was a liable factor in crisis deescalation. In the Imia/Kardak crisis, Turkey was superior militarily and in geostrategic terms while Greece had a short-term geostrategic advantage on Imia/Kardak. When the geostrategic situation changed in Turkey's favor, Greece immediately yielded. The deescalation of the Rann of Kutch conflict can be traced back to India's defensive behavior in the Rann and its willingness to fight a general war, which deterred Pakistan from further escalation in the Rann of Kutch. The militarily inferior Pakistan provoked the conflict in the Rann of Kutch and the more powerful India reacted defensively due to its geostrategic inferiority in the Rann. However, since India showed the ability and willingness to fight a war in which Pakistan would have been defeated, Pakistan preferred to refrain from further escalation. Power in terms of military capabilities and geostrategic vulnerabilities is an important issue when states choose escalatory or deescalatory actions in a militarized crisis.

Further alliances have proven to be relevant for states' willingness to deescalate. In the Imia/Kardak crisis the US established an informal alliance by clarifying that it would intervene militarily on the side of the attacked state.¹¹² Due to the course of the crisis, the next escalatory step and probably the entry to war would have been Greece's one, so it had to calculate the possibility of a major power

¹¹² Although Turkey had a long-term formal defensive alliance with the US, the US did not intervene on Turkey's side.

ally with Turkey if it further escalated the situation. Alliance duration did not prove to be relevant in the Imia/Kardak crisis. The long-term alliance between the US and Turkey had no impact, but the short-term promise of the US to ally with the attacked state did.

In the foreplay of the Rann of Kutch crisis there were a lot of alliance shifts in South East Asia. The major powers rather promoted destabilization than stabilization. None of them signaled an intention to intervene actively in the crisis on either side and therefore to deter the adversary from further escalation. Nonetheless alliances can be connected to the deescalation of the Kutch crisis since empirical analysis indicates that India and Pakistan both perceived the opportunity of a Chinese military intervention on Pakistan`s side.

Both studies proved the importance of power and alliances on the one hand and the importance of perceptions of these two factors on the other. As noted above, China did not signal an intention to intervene in the Rann of Kutch crisis, but Pakistan assumed such a move and acted accordingly offensive towards India while India acted defensively in order to avoid the risk of fighting Pakistan and China. In the Imia/Kardak crisis Greece and Turkey both felt that the US would favor the other one; none of them seemed to have expected an intervention. At the moment when the US made clear that it would intervene on the attacked side, there was no doubt for Greece and Turkey that further escalatory steps would bring about the intervention of a major power and both refrained from further escalatory steps to avoid being the one who provoked a war.

The perception of power can also be linked to the deescalation of the Imia/Kardak crisis. Due to its massive arms build-up, the Greek military perceived its own strength equal to Turkey while Turkey was sure of its military superiority. Greece immediately deescalated after realizing the geostrategic shift during the Imia/Kardak crisis and a reevaluation of the relative military capabilities.

In the Rann of Kutch crisis, Pakistan perceived its military competitiveness to India in 1965. Additionally it probably perceived time pressure to act as both countries military build-ups were continuing and India would become stronger in the future. India on the other hand was convinced that it was generally militarily superior to Pakistan and also well-aware of its geostrategic disadvantage in the Rann, which kept it from escalating the crisis.

The perception of adversary`s intentions does not prove to have an impact in the underlying tests. In both cases each conflict party expected hostile expansive actions from the adversary and nonetheless both crises deescalated.

As mentioned before the null-hypotheses performed rather badly in the case studies. The different variables which have been theorized to cause deescalation by IR scholars had either no impact or even an escalating impact on the crises.

Although the deescalation of both crises has been explained through mediation, the Rann of Kutch

crisis by British mediation and the Imia/Kardak crisis by US mediation, the outcome of process-tracing in both cases does not support this.

Institutions did not play a role in the deescalation of both crises either. In the Kutch crisis as well as in the Imia/Kardak crisis, neither international nor regional institutions did get involved at all.

Domestic democratic structures could not be linked to deescalation in the fully democratic dyad, Turkey and Greece. Also in the mixed dyad India and Pakistan, the domestic democratic structures of India could not be found mitigating.

Finally the pacifying effects of an international multipolar system did not come in operation in the Imia/Kardak crisis. The case study did not prove an effect and for the Rann of Kutch crisis, the very flexible balancing in the bipolar world order did actually not stabilize the environment but destabilized it by overbalancing¹¹³.

7.2 Interpretation of the Outcome

Now I will explore some implications of the outcome of the study. Firstly, the explanatory power of the test hypotheses is very good. Through process-tracing I could find the predicted effect of each independent variable. The perception of power and alliances and the real status of these two variables have proven to influence the willingness of conflicting states to deescalate a militarized crisis.

On the other hand the null-hypotheses turned out to be insignificant. Neither mediation, institutional involvement, domestic democratic structures nor system polarity could be identified as cause of deescalation in the crises studied. This indicates a need of a shift of attention from the general IR explanations to power alliance and perceptions.

The purpose of the study is not to reject current IR debate on the causes of deescalation but to refine its research. The underlying study showed that it is necessary to distinguish the different dimensions of deescalation: deescalation as outcome of a conflict, measures undertaken by third states to promote deescalation, actions undertaken by one or all involved parties to bring about deescalation and non-induced factors which can foster deescalation. As already stated, all these dimensions are interrelated but for the deliberate study of deescalation, the researcher has to distinguish between the different dimensions to be able to identify causal relations.

With careful distinction of these dimensions one comes to the conclusion that there is an order of priority of causes of deescalation. There are primary and secondary causes of deescalation. Measures which are taken by third states, institutions or the conflicting actors themselves are considered as secondary causes of deescalation. They can lead to deescalation but this outcome depends on further

¹¹³ Overbalancing is understood as the high frequency of alliance building, which causes rather destabilization than stabilization of the international environment.

conditions. I stated that these further conditions have to have an influence on the conflicting states' willingness to avoid war. Domestic democratic structures or constraints of the polarity of the international system could be of such nature. But sticking to the idea of the influencing the states' willingness not to fight, one can also change the perspective and look for reasons why states fight. This leads to the study of the causes of war. Causes which make states want to fight can also make them to refrain from fighting. These are primary causes of deescalation. The case studies support this argument.

7.3 Debilitated Arguments

What is rejected by the outcome study is the missing of a link between causes of war and causes of deescalation. As mentioned in chapter two, some scholars question that factors which influence the initiation of war are also responsible for the termination of conflict (Huth 1996: 183 – 184; Rasler 2000: 701 fn. 1; Levy/Thompson 2010: 170).

My study showed that causes of war can serve as causes of deescalation as they provide very good explanations for the deescalation of the selected crises. Power, alliances and the perceptions, prominent causes of war, play an important role when conflicting states evaluate whether to pursue a defensive or offensive strategy.

Further, the tests of the null-hypotheses call the traditional IR explanations for deescalation into question. Institutions, associated with deescalation by Institutional theories, did not show effects in the Rann of Kutch crisis and the Imia/Kardak crisis. Mediation served in both crises as explanation for the deescalation but in fact it was a side-effect of the actors' willingness to deescalate and not its cause. The cases clearly showed the impotence of mediation if the conflicting states reject it. In both crises there were mediatory attempts by third parties which were not made use of by the conflicting parties. Mediation is a conflict management tool which can help to settle disputes but in case of a highly militarized crisis, the conflicting parties have to accept bi- or multilateral talks before mediation can be implemented. The underlying study focuses on the incentives which make states accept mediation. The timing/ripeness approach follows actually the logic. A conflict has to be ripe before deescalation can happen, but the concept only tackles power as a relevant factor and misses the geostrategic aspect.

Domestic democratic structures, appointed as mitigating factors by theories of democratic peace, did not play a role in the turn from escalation to deescalation. Scholars of systemic theories assign the polarity of the international system as fostering deescalation. In both cases, the mitigating effects international system polarity predicts could not be found.

The outcome of the study implies that when studying deescalation, one has to be careful not to back

the wrong horse, which means assign events in a crisis responsible for deescalation which are at most correlatively connected to deescalation. Deescalation is a multi-level phenomenon including measures, interaction dynamics and reduction of tensions. To study its causation, one has to set up the tests carefully. A thoughtful discrimination of the different dimensions of deescalation is crucial. To identify and define the explanandum is necessary to study causal paths. Then the method of process-tracing has to be employed to be able to analyze potential impacts of various variables. This enables the researcher to distinguish between explanata with causal meaning to deescalation, and those which do not foster tension reduction.

7.4 Reinforced Arguments

After setting up and executing the tests as described above, one can learn that power and alliances, traditionally important variables in realist theories, still provide explanatory power.

The study revives the importance of power for conflict in IR. Here power consists of military capabilities and the geostrategic setting of the conflicts. Both sub-variables showed increased relevance in the crises under investigation. The setting of military capabilities and geostrategic advantages or vulnerabilities encourages states to escalate a disputed issue or behave defensively and changes in these settings,¹¹⁴ in turn, encourage states to deescalate. This clearly indicates that studies of deescalation should not omit the realist theories but rather combine them with variables from other theories.

This reinforces one of my statements in chapter three, that theories from the different schools-of-thought should not be employed competitively but in search for the most fruitful combination, which means the best explanatory power.

When studying interstate conflict, alliances, not in form of an organization but in form of third states which ally with one side and can have a deterring effect, cannot be neglected. As already mentioned above, power and alliance have been carefully distinguished in the underlying study. Although alliance can be integrated in the variable power, here, the differentiation between power and alliances allows a more precise analysis of the effect of each of these variables. The outcome of testing for alliances as pursued in this study supports the analytic differentiation between power and alliance. The case studies showed that formal alliances have less impact on the course of the crisis than expected. Third states did not behave according to their alliance commitment, but rather created new (informal) commitments in the ongoing crises.

Finally, I tested the impact of perceptions on the crisis behavior of states. First of all, although I

¹¹⁴ Or the perceptions of these settings, but this will be discussed a few lines further below.

studied the extensive literature on misperception, I decided that testing for perceptions promised to be more fruitful. It is less relevant if decision-makers of states perceive the situation wrongly - which cannot be judged afterwards anyway – but what (black boxed) states perceived when it comes to variables which are relevant for conflict and if that can be transferred into a deescalating action. Relevant variables were extracted from the literature on misperceptions and appeared to be the same variables as selected apart from perception: power and alliance. This reinforces the relevance of these two variables. From that, one can learn that when states choose between escalating and deescalating behavior in a crisis, power relations and alliances are substantial and of course the perception of power and alliance. These results correlate with defensive realism, which uses realist approaches and combines them with perception.¹¹⁵

Perceptions are a difficult variable to test and studies employing perception have received extensive criticism.¹¹⁶ The perception tests which I set up for the underlying study differ from other studies. Generally perceptions are studies on the individual level. Decision-makers` perceptions of certain situations are evaluated and hypotheses are constructed concerning what influences the decision-makers` perceptions and how these are transformed into foreign policy. Here I conceptualized perceptions on the dyad level. I do not study the individual decision-makers` perceptions or cognitive processes leading to the perception or the transition of the perception to foreign policy, but the mutual perceptions of conflicting states. Of course a state cannot perceive a situation, as it is not a person, rather there are official statements from government members which denote the reasons for the way the government deals with the underlying situation. It is less important to the study at hand who exactly perceived something in which manner and how this perception was transferred to the policy, but how governments perceive their status, their adversary`s status and their reaction to it.

The test further show that states as black boxes or respectively their decision-makers act rationally in terms of entering a war if one expects to win. The inferior state yields as soon as it perceives itself outgunned, having geostrategic vulnerabilities, perceives the adversary to have a relevant defensive alliance and perceives the other state`s willingness to go to war. Nonetheless one cannot neglect that in some cases states can also act irrationally in the sense of fighting a war which they are aware to lose.

7.5 Further Research

The underlying study suggests a whole string of further research. When it comes to the common IR explanations for deescalation, three approaches correlate with my variables as regards content. The

¹¹⁵ See chapter 3, theory selection third image.

¹¹⁶ See chapter 3, perception.

concept of deterrence attributes importance to power relations and perceptions. Following my study, one could advance research on bilateral deterrence models, integrating power alliances and perceptions, and look for successful deterrence.

The concept of timing or the ripeness tackles perceptions, more precisely the shift of perceptions through the shift of decision-makers in an ongoing conflict. This approach is limited to long-term crises and excludes the shift of perception without the shift of personnel. Here the importance of perception is recognized but the variable can be employed without changes of personnel.

There are already studies which connect power to deescalation, as elaborated in chapter 2, but these studies quarrel if power preponderance or parity leads to deescalation. Further, shifts in power are regarded as having a destabilizing effect. My study showed that (perceived) parity rather encourages states to escalate an issue as they consider themselves as being able to resist a militarized dispute. Preponderance leads to deescalation when the inferior state yields. But this result also depends on the operationalization of power in military capabilities and geostrategic vulnerabilities. Power shifts due to tactical shifts in the crisis which create geostrategic vulnerabilities can have a deescalating effect. In fact, these findings show that importance of power, alliance and perception for interstate conflict deescalation is not new. But these concepts need a modern and thoughtful operationalization especially for studying interstate conflict.

The study of crises deescalation could be pursued with process-tracing of further cases of conflict. If the outcomes support the findings of the underlying study, one can extend its range, design it as a quantitative study and integrate it in a broader data base for conflicts, such as the Correlates of War data.

Coming back to possible qualitative studies, further investigation of the interconnection of the various primary causes of deescalation could be pursued. Mutual effects of the variables were not explored here and could further enlighten the incentives to deescalate. Furthermore, and this is important to connect different approaches, one can inquire the interdependence between primary and secondary causes, which means to evaluate the underlying factors and analyze if they foster the success of deescalation measures .

What we learned from the underlying study is that before a third state or an institution decides to mediate a crisis, they should consider if the requirements are met so that mediation can be successful. Here power, alliances, and perceptions have been identified as relevant factors when it comes to the question of escalating a conflict to war or deescalating. As soon as further studies have assured the exact characteristics of these variables so that they foster deescalation, one can think about possibilities how the actors or third parties, states or institutions, can manipulate the variables power, alliances and perceptions in order to induce deescalation. But this requires further research on the

influence of power, alliances and perceptions on crisis deescalation.

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Maps

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