HUMILIATION AND THIRD-PARTY AGGRESSION

By JOSLYN BARNHART*

ON April 28, 1881, France embarked upon its first new imperial mission in nearly two decades, sending twenty-eight thousand troops to invade the shores of Tunisia. By May, France had established an official protectorate over Tunisia, incurring no casualties in the process. What explains this case of territorial conquest?[1] I argue that this case and many others like it cannot be understood without acknowledging their direct link to the past. The French foreign minister explicitly acknowledged, for instance, an important relationship between French territorial aggression in the 1880s and the loss of the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine roughly ten years prior, stating that "the reverses of some ten or twelve years ago have rendered it necessary for France to make her influence felt among distant populations."[2] The loss of the provinces to Prussia, which prompted Prime Minister Leon Gambetta to say that the French should "think of [the loss] always, but speak of it never," led France to engage in expansionary acts against a relatively weak third-party actor almost a decade later.[3] These reactions prompt the question: Why would a state respond to territorial loss with such acts of aggression? I argue that existing theories of territorial aggression cannot explain this relationship. Rather, the evidence presented in this article suggests that the answer resides in concerns about status.

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[1] Had French policy been driven by security concerns, France would have gathered its resources to protect itself from the increasing German threat. Instead, France turned south, conquering a bankrupt country with few natural resources even though they had concluded that the "only thing plentiful in the [neighboring Algerian] desert was air." Roberts 1963, 177.

[2] Stated by Minister of Foreign Affairs M. Challemel-Lacour. Quoted in *The Times from London*, March 14, 1883: 7.

[3] The British Lord Salisbury recognized that the loss would have a lasting impact on the French, stating in 1871 that the "ceded [French] territory would be a constant memorial of humiliation." Quoted in Kennedy 1953, 71.

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The article presents a novel theory of status threat, arguing that states—and great powers in particular—are more likely to engage in status-seeking acts, such as territorial aggression against weaker states, when they have experienced a humiliating event in which they fail to live up to international expectations. Such events threaten a state's image in the eyes of others, and those states with the capabilities to do so will respond by engaging in acts that define their desired international stratum. States seeking to reassert themselves as great powers, for instance, will be more likely to engage in acts that define great power status, such as the projection of power abroad through the use of force, than will established great powers whose status has not been called into question. Such status-affirming demonstrates that the state has the requisite capabilities, influence, and far-reaching interests to support its claim to high status. Far from isolated in their effect, acts of status assertion prompted by humiliating events can have significant implications for international stability. French expansion into Tunisia, for example, played a significant role in triggering the Scramble for Africa, an expansionary fray that encompassed 95 percent of the African continent.[4]

As a test of this theory, I assess the effect of one potential cause of international humiliation—involuntary territorial loss—on one particular means of status assertion: territorial aggression. The loss of territory through involuntary means, such as conquest or annexation, threatens a state's image in the eyes of others. But territory may also be lost through voluntary means, such as mutual agreement and mutual secession. Though the loss of territory through voluntary means on average generates similar strategic and material costs for the losing state, it is unlikely to threaten state status and therefore, according to the present theory, should not correlate with a change in future behavior. To investigate the differential impact of voluntary and involuntary territorial loss on territorial aggression, I use an expanded and recoded data set of all instances of territorial change from 1816 to 2000. The study demonstrates that although future territorial aggression does not correlate with past voluntary loss, states that have recently experienced an involuntary territorial loss are more likely to attempt territorial conquest in the future. Among great powers, the likelihood of territorial aggression is 84 percent higher among those states that have recently experienced a coercive territorial loss.[5] The vast majority of these acts of aggression

[4] See Barnhart 2016; Sanderson 1974.

[5] The magnitude of these effects equals or exceeds that of other key determinants of conflict behavior in the international relations literature, such as the effects of joint democracy (50 percent) and having an offensive ally (47 percent). See Leeds, Long, and Mitchell 2000.

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(90 percent) target third-party states not involved in the original territorial loss. These effects do not result from generally heightened activity in certain regions at certain times or from enduring territorial disputes, and they are robust to a wide range of controls for economic, security, and domestic political influences on state behavior. Further, the increased probability of attempted conquest holds not only for the few years immediately following a territorial loss, but also persists for decades into the future.

The article makes three important contributions. First, it contributes to our understanding of how states respond to humiliating events. Prior studies have hypothesized that humiliation leads to a desire for revenge. This article demonstrates further that the behavioral implications of humiliating events often involve aggression directed at third-party states rather than at the original perpetrator of the humiliating offense. Humiliated states engage in third-party aggression to demonstrate their intentions and abilities to pursue a vigorous foreign policy abroad, such as defines a high-status state. Second, the article contributes to our understanding of when state concerns about international status are likely to be most salient in shaping state behavior. Although states may value high status, they do not seek to augment their status to the same degree at all times. The article argues that states that have experienced an event that calls their existing status into question will be more likely to engage in status-seeking behavior. Third, the article sheds light on state motivations for territorial aggression. Economic, domestic, and security rationales are those most frequently cited when explaining territorial expansion.[6] The evidence presented here suggests that status concerns are also significant drivers of conquest.

The article proceeds as follows. It first presents a review of the relevant literatures and then presents a theory of how past events, in particular those that may result in a downgrade in status, lead states to behave differently in the future. The article then applies this theoretical framework to the realm of territory, generating novel hypotheses about the relationship between past coerced losses and future coercive gains. It next presents a new data set on territorial change in the international system, describes the research design, and presents the results. The article concludes with a discussion of possible alternative explanations and a consideration of how these results apply to state behavior in the current era.

[6] On these respective motivations, for example, see Mearsheimer 2003; Snyder 1991; Tir 2010; and Waltz 1979.

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Existing Literature on Status Seeking

The importance states place on international status has recently been the subject of renewed attention.[7] According to Allan Dafoe, Jonathan Renshon, and Paul Huth,[8] "status" refers to one's position vis-à-vis a comparison group. It resides in the perceptions of others and informs patterns of deference and expectations of behavior and rights. A state may hold status as a member of a group, for example, the club of great powers, or within relevant status hierarchies, whether international or community specific.[9]

Though states may value high status at all times, they do not always engage in status-seeking behavior. Scholars have posited various explanations for this variation. Richard Lebow argues that willingness to act out of concern for status reflects different cultural emphases on concepts such as honor and standing.[10] William Wohlforth argues that status concerns are more likely to lead to conflict in multipolar systems in which status hierarchies are more ambiguous.[11] Social identity theory argues that individuals' positive self-concept is dependent upon association with high-status groups.[12] Unfavorable comparisons of one's group with a reference group lead states to engage in status seeking as the group seeks more favorable social comparisons.[13]

The growing literature on status inconsistency argues that a state is more likely to engage in conflict when it perceives that its attributed status is lower than the level of status it believes it deserves.[14] Quantitative work in this area has primarily analyzed the disparity in rank between military capabilities and diplomatic representation as a predictor of international conflict.[15] This approach assumes that status expectations are based on objective measures of relative material capabilities, an approach that may fail to accurately represent states' status expectations for the following reasons. First, it omits other objective factors, such as economic strength, cultural influence, and demography, which

[7] See, among others, Clunan 2009; Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014; Freedman 2016; Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006; Larson and Shevchenko 2010; Lebow 2008; Markey 1999; Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth 2014; Renshon 2015; Renshon 2016; Volgy et al. 2011; Wohlforth 2009.

[8] Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014.

[9] Renshon 2016.

[10] Lebow 2008. See also Dafoe and Caughey 2016. In social psychology, see Mosquera, Manstead, and Fischer 2000.

[11] Wohlforth 2009.

[12] Tajfel 2010.

[13] Larson and Shevchenko 2010; Mercer 1995.

[14] On status inconsistency, see Galtung 1964; Renshon 2016.

[15] See Midlarsky 1975; Wallace 1971. East 1972 and Volgy and Mayhall 1995 rely on economic position and total military expenditures as two measures of expected status.

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likely play a role in determining the status a state expects to occupy in the international system and therefore, how much influence it expects to exercise. Second, status expectations are often affected by the past. Not only do estimations of expected status stem from comparisons with other relevant states, they also arise through temporal comparisons with a state's own prior level of status.[16] Unfavorable comparisons with one's own past can engender feelings of status threat. States will be reluctant, therefore, to adopt lowered status expectations, even when confronted with military failure that suggests that their relative military capabilities are lower than they once might have been.[17]

Theoretical Argument

Rather than relying on proxy measures of expected status, I focus on highly visible, humiliating international events in which states fail to live up to international expectations as sources of status threat. Humiliating events are those that pose a threat to one's image or lower it in one's own estimation and in the eyes of others.[18] In that humiliating events have direct implications for perceptions of a state's social position, humiliation and status are directly related. Although humiliating events often involve intentional degradation, humiliation can also be the unintended consequence of outcomes that a state perceives to be unjust.[19] Because perceptions of status are formed not only through assessments of states' material characteristics, but also through the performance and actions of states on the world stage, the failure of a state to perform as it is expected to in terms of its existing status increases the likelihood that others will question its claims of high status. Losing a war to a weaker state, for instance, will likely call into question the standing of the defeated state: the more rapid the defeat and the weaker the opponent, the more grave the status threat.[20] Losing territory through involuntary means is likely to call into question the status of great powers in particular, because they are expected to be able

[16] See Freedman 2105 on this point. See also Clunan 2009. On temporal comparison theory in psychology, see Albert 1977; and Zell and Alicke 2009.

[17] Repeated military failures may eventually lead to lowered status expectations as those within the state lose confidence in the state's abilities.

[18] On this definition, see Statman 2000, 523.

[19] Humiliation differs from shame in that those experiencing humiliation believe that an outcome was unjust and undeserved, and those experiencing shame believe that an outcome is deserved. The perception of injustice generates anger and associated aggressive tendencies, while the perception of guilt generates avoidance. See Klein 1991, 14, 22; and Leidner, Sheikh, and Ginges 2012, 1. On international acts of humiliation by superior groups, see Hartling et al. 2013; Lindner 2002; Lindner 2006; Saurette 2006; and Wolf 2011.

[20] See Schivelbusch 2003.

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to maintain their territorial integrity.[21] Furthermore, if the territory has long been perceived as integral to a state's great power status, as is true of Alsace and Lorraine for France or Ukraine for Russia, its loss may generate an even greater threat to status. Such unexpected events create the belief among those within the defeated state that the state's position has been lowered in the eyes of others.[22]

How exactly should we expect states that have experienced a humiliating event to behave? To date, we have very few specific answers to this question. The literature on status inconsistency has focused on the impact of status discrepancies on the broad propensity for military conflict, but it has left largely unexplored the exact targets and types of aggression. Social identity theory suggests that status-seeking states turn to competitive strategies when elite group boundaries are perceived to be impermeable by new members, though the conditions under which states will pursue particular competitive acts have also gone unexplored.[23] In addition, prior research on international humiliation has focused almost completely on the subsequent drive for revenge against the state responsible for the humiliation.[24] We have no reason to expect, however, that revenge is the sole response to humiliating events. I argue that the manner in which states respond to status-threatening events depends upon the exact nature of the threat, as well as upon the current status and capabilities of the state. The most effective reassertion of status might involve the successful pursuit of revenge against one's humiliator in the manner in which one was humiliated. The defeated would desire foremost, therefore, to handily defeat its aggressor. Those who lost territory would above all desire to retrieve it. But as will be shown, humiliated states are relatively risk averse.[25] Effective reassertions of status require success; repeated failure only increases the likelihood that one's decline is solidified in the eyes of others. Humiliated states therefore seek ways to effectively reassert their status that involve more certain probabilities of success. This may

[21] Ranke [1833] 1950 includes the ability to maintain territorial integrity against all other skills as a basic military requirement of great power status.

[22] The event need not actually lead to a decline in the state's status; it needs only to foster the belief within the state that its status has been threatened.

[23] See Larson and Shevchenko 2010.

[24] See Lebow 2010; Lowenheim and Heimann 2008; Harkavy 2000; Scheff 1994. On revenge, see also Stein 2015.

[25] Renshon 2015 shows that threats to status lead low-power individuals to throw more good money after bad. This seemingly risk-acceptant action is not at odds with the predicted risk-averse effects of status threat proposed here. A state may be risk acceptant if defeat in a current crisis could solidify its status decline, but it may remain relatively risk averse when choosing how to reassert its status following a humiliating event.

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suggest the targeting of one's humiliator if that state is relatively weak, has no significant allies, and does not reside within another state's sphere of influence.[26] But if the likelihood of successful revenge is perceived to be relatively low, humiliated states will likely turn toward another, less risky, status-affirming strategy, such as engaging in acts that are perceived to be a requirement for a state to achieve its desired status.[27] By engaging in these acts, humiliated states signal their status expectations while also demonstrating the unique capabilities that distinguish them from lesser states.

How do states know which acts define their desired status? Certain behaviors, rooted in common knowledge about how states of a particular status typically behave, have long defined different strata of the international status hierarchy. Great powers, for example, have long been defined by their ability to project military power abroad in pursuit of more globalized interests.[28] Those states that possess substantial material capabilities but have not demonstrated a willingness to act as a great power by projecting power abroad are usually not considered to possess great power status.[29] Great powers have traditionally pursued vigorous and expansive foreign policies—maintaining broad spheres of influence, acquiring long-standing client states and protectorates, and generally influencing the politics of other, often weaker, states through the use of force. With these acts, great powers distinguish themselves from states of lesser standing that cannot project power abroad to the same degree. These specific status-affirming acts are not limited to great powers, as Jack Levy notes, since lesser or regional powers may also be able to pursue elements of an expansive foreign policy.[30] By contrast, however, lesser powers are expected to do so to a far lesser degree and for less sustained periods of time.[31]

What specifically do humiliated states seek to accomplish by engaging in status-defining acts? The goals may be both instrumental and

[26] Attempted revanchist gains may be motivated by a desire to reclaim lost status, but it may also be motivated by other domestic and security considerations.

[27] This hypothesized impact of status decline diverges, therefore, from the prediction of prospect theory that actors in the realm of losses will become risk acceptant. The truly risk-acceptant act would be to target the rival state responsible for its original humiliation.

[28] This definition of great power status comes from Levy 1983, 14. It is in keeping with definitions offered by, among others, Wight 2002; Howard 1971; Buzan and Waever 2003.

[29] See Volgy et al. 2011, chap. 1.

[30] Levy 1983.

[31] Because status resides in social perception, expectations of high-status behavior are subject to change over time. The normative acceptability of unbridled conquest, for example, declined following World War II. See Zacher 2001; Fazal 2007. But as addressed in the discussion section, there is evidence that certain states in the international system are again turning to the projection of power abroad as a means of status reassertion following humiliating events.

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psychological in nature. First, states value the increased influence and respect that comes with high status. A decline in status is likely accompanied by a decline in the deference that a state is accorded. To avoid a permanent decline of the state's international influence, leaders of the humiliated state therefore have an instrumental incentive to engage in acts that shore up their state's image in the eyes of others. Status is rooted in higher-order beliefs—beliefs about others' beliefs—about which states possess the requisite capabilities and admirable qualities to rightfully claim high status.[32] A state holds high status not merely when other states believe it does, but also when states believe that other states believe the state holds high status. Because status resides in social perceptions, states seeking to shore up their image in the eyes of others will seek to engage in highly visible actions that define their desired international strata. In successfully doing so, the humiliated state establishes common knowledge that (1) it meets the qualifications of high status, (2) it currently possesses sufficient international influence to pursue expansive and aggressive policies without being stymied by other high-status states, and (3) it intends to maintain high status. If others allow the state to exercise the prerogatives associated with its desired status, it serves as a signal that those other states must perceive the state as deserving of high status. In this way, highly visible status-reasserting acts promise to shape higher-order beliefs about a state's status, and therefore to augment the existing influence of the state.[33]

Second, research has shown that actors value status as an end in itself and that they are more willing to pay higher costs to avoid status loss than they are to achieve status gain, even in experimental settings in which high status has no instrumental implications.[34] Because self-esteem is dependent in part upon the social favorability of one's group, threats to the image and status of one's group can engender significant negative psychological repercussions, particularly among those who strongly identify with the group.[35] Demonstrations of anger and successful reas-

[32] On second-order beliefs, reputation, and status, see O'Neill 2006. And see also Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014.

[33] On the importance of visibility in generating common knowledge, see Chwe 2003; and O'Neill 2006.

[34] Huberman, Loch, and Önçüler 2004. As Pettit, Yong, and Spataro 2010 show, actors are more willing to pay higher costs to avoid status loss than to achieve status gain. Of all negative emotional states, social threat and humiliation can have some of the most deleterious physiological effects. See Kemeny 2009; Scheepers and Ellemers 2005.

[35] Tajfel and Turner 1979. On the existence of group-based emotions relating to the fate and actions of one's group, including group-based humiliation, see Fontan 2006; Ginges and Atran 2008; Shepherd, Spears, and Manstead 2013; and Smith and Kessler 2004. On group identification and group-based emotions, see Kessler and Hollbach 2005; Mackie, Smith, and Ray 2008; and Leidner, Sheikh, and Ginges 2012.

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sertions of status following humiliating events therefore promise psychological catharsis for group members. The notion that psychological benefits can be gained from targeting third-party actors following humiliating events is not a new one. This pattern of redirected aggression is so prevalent among vertebrate species that biologists have deemed it "a near-universal tendency."[36] Researchers have found evidence that aggression redirected toward third parties is associated with reductions in the psychological strain engendered by humiliating events.[37] As one biologist put it, the ability to signal that one "may be down, but not out" through acts of redirected aggression can offer psychological solace.[38]

Humiliated states may be driven predominantly by either of two concerns: instrumental or psychological. The analysis offered below does not distinguish between their relative impact for two reasons. The first is empirical: the two motivations predict similar responses to status threat, that is, state aggression at the expense of third-party states. The second reason is theoretical: as Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth note, disentangling the relative impact of these two mechanisms is extremely difficult because the two motivations are so deeply intertwined.[39] Emotional reactions to status threat likely evolved precisely because of the instrumental repercussions that such threats entail.[40]

Though the impact of status threat is not limited to great powers, we should expect to see the largest increase in status-affirming behaviors, such as territorial aggression, among great powers that have experienced humiliating events. This proposition rests on a number of factors. First, great powers are expected to pursue an expansive foreign policy abroad, and they are the states with the greatest resources and military capabilities to do so. Second, great powers are the primary holders of status and influence in the international system. They have the most to lose from status-threatening events that might cause them to be downgraded within the club of great powers or pushed out of it, thereby rendering them far less influential in the international system. Humiliated great powers may therefore have the greatest incentive to engage, if they are able, in such status-affirming acts as the projection of power abroad. Third, the psychological effects of humiliating events may also be more

[36] Redirected aggression has been witnessed among cichlid fish, baboons, macaque monkeys, humans, and many other species. See Barash and Lipton 2011.

[37] Pedersen et al. 2008; Marcus-Newhall et al. 2000.

[38] Barash and Lipton 2011, 33–35.

[39] See Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014, 382–83.

[40] See also Henrich and Gil-White 2001, who argue that the psychological drive to protect and enhance one's status evolved because of the instrumental benefits that stable status hierarchies provided for both high-status actors and those who defer.

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severe for great powers because they pose the most significant challenge to the identity of the state, which in great power is often significantly defined by the state's high status. This point has support within social psychological research showing that those with high self-regard are more likely than those with low self-regard to act aggressively when confronted with challenges to their self-image.[41]

When exactly should we expect states to respond to humiliating events? Given that redirected aggression promises immediate psychological and instrumental benefits, we would expect humiliated actors to respond as soon as possible after a humiliating event. But researchers note that this is often not the case. Animals and human groups often delay assertive responses following humiliating events. As David Barash and Judith Lipton observe, the effects of humiliation can even grow more intense over time through a process by which past failures and humiliations become incorporated into and commemorated within individual or national narratives.[42] Chinese calendars, for instance, mark a National Humiliation Day commemorating Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931. The loss of Alsace and Lorraine was an essential component of postwar French identity up to the eve of war in 1914.[43] Why might states choose to delay status-affirming actions, especially when those actions involve aggression against weaker states? Although it arguably requires fewer capabilities than targeting neighbors of equal size, the projection of force abroad, even at the expense of weaker states, is not easy. That is in part why this capability distinguishes great powers from lower-status powers. Territorial loss is often accompanied by the significant loss of military personnel, resources, and capabilities that then constrains the state in its ability to assert itself immediately in a convincing manner. Moreover, humiliating events affect not only the perceptions of others, but also the state's perception of itself. International failure often prompts a period of national reflection and military overhaul as the state attempts to regain the confidence to project its power abroad in a convincing and sustainable way.[44] For example, following the incapacitation of roughly 30 percent of French forces during the Franco-Prussian War, French leaders confronted not only significant civil unrest and violence at home, but also the need to redress the weaknesses in military planning and administration that were deemed

[41] See Baumeister, Bushman, and Campbell 2000.

[42] Barash and Lipton 2011, 96. See also Miller et al. 2003.

[43] Psychologists have found that humiliation is more persistent than other negative emotions. According to Coleman, Goldman, and Kugler 2009, 120, pain and fear can be remembered without feeling them again. "With humiliation, however, the more it is remembered, the more keenly it is felt."

[44] On the relationship between humiliation and confidence, see Lacey 2011. See also Brogi 2002.

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responsible for the surprising and humiliating loss.[45] Following its defeat in the Crimean War, Russia cut the number of its military personnel in half as it underwent a massive program of modernization to catch up with the industrial capacity of its European rivals. Thus, we can expect that states will bide their time and reassert themselves on the world stage only once they have successfully recovered their lost economic and military capabilities and, thereby, national confidence in the abilities of the state.[46] In fact, Paul MacDonald and Joseph Parent show that states that temporarily retrench following defeat are far more likely to eventually regain their military capabilities and their status, while those states that go down fighting are far less likely to return to their original position.[47] As I show below, the recovery process, if it occurs, can take decades. In the meantime, however, the psychological and social effects of humiliation are likely to persist.

Finally, in that status-affirming acts sometimes involve aggression against weaker third parties, these acts can be distinguished from those motivated by reputational concerns about strength and credibility.[48] Although much of the literature on reputation has focused on the effect that looking weak has on the behavior of potential rivals, the few studies that have focused on how it affects a state's own behavior argue that such states will be more likely to initiate or escalate conflict in the future as the number of its rivals increases.[49] Joe Clare and Vesna Danilovic argue, for example, that a state's experience with equal or roughly equal adversaries will be most salient for potential rivals drawing inferences about the state's likely resolve or relative strength in future encounters.[50] Weak-looking states would need to engage in events of sufficient scale and cost to force rivals to reassess their beliefs about how they would fare in direct competition against them.[51] The targeting of weaker states, intended to demonstrate existing influence or to distin-

[45] On temporary withdrawal following defeat, see Zarakol 2011; and Schivelbusch 2003.

[46] Trager 2012 describes the Russian desire to regain status after its humiliation following the Crimean War and the decision by the Russians to "wait for their time to come."

[47] MacDonald and Parent 2011.

[48] For example, Huth 1988; Jervis 1989; Jervis 2002. For a good review of this literature, see Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014. As laid out by O'Neill 2001, status differs from reputation in that it is held at the level of second-order beliefs. A reputation for honesty or strength meanwhile can exist at the level of first-order beliefs. This distinction is significant in that it allows for symbols of status and the qualities deemed prestigious to be social artifacts that can change as the social consensus shifts.

[49] In this conception, a state that has backed down in the past will be vulnerable to increased challenges by rivals. See Huth 1988; Huth 1997.

[50] Clare and Danilovic 2010. See also Sechser, forthcoming; Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo 2015.

[51] For other arguments focusing on how backing down affects the state's future behavior, see Leng 1983, which notes that states that failed to obtain their objectives in past rounds of bargaining will be more aggressive when bargaining with the same state in the future.

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guish one's abilities from those of lesser states, would therefore serve as a far less informative signal about a state's relative strength.

Hypotheses about Territorial Expansion

This section lays out a set of hypotheses drawn directly from the preceding theoretical framework. These hypotheses address the following questions: What is the relationship between past territorial loss and future territorial gains, and in particular, what is the relationship between past involuntary territorial losses and future attempts at coercive territorial gains? Is this relationship consistent across all time periods and types of state? When should we expect states to attempt a coercive gain following an involuntary loss? Although scholars have offered numerous explanations for territorial conquest, the specific impact that territorial loss has on the losing state's attitude toward future conquest, especially against third-party states, has not been studied systematically.[52] According to the theory above, the way in which territory is lost likely has a significant impact on attitudes toward territorial expansion in the future. Territorial loss resulting from conquest, annexation, or wars of independence is likely to present a greater threat to status than territorial loss resulting from mutual agreement or peaceful secession.[53] This prediction therefore differs from that of prospect theory in that future changes in behavior depend not only on the fact of loss, but also on the manner in which the loss occurred. States experiencing involuntary territorial loss should reassert their status not only by seeking revenge against the state responsible for the original loss, but also more generally by seeking coercive gains at the expense of third-party states in the system. This logic leads to the following hypotheses:

> —H1. Experiencing a coerced territorial loss raises the probability that the losing state will attempt coercive territorial gains in the near future.
>
> —H2. The increased probability of attempted gains will come at the expense not only of the states responsible for the recent territorial loss, but also of third-party states.
>
> —H3. Experiencing a voluntary territorial loss will have no significant impact on the future probability of attempted territorial gains.

[52] States are more likely to use force in attempts to acquire territory than they are to use it for other purposes, and fights over territory tend to be more deadly than other conflicts. See Holsti 1991; Vasquez 1993; Hensel 1996; Senese and Vasquez 2008. We know less about the impact of territorial loss on future policies toward territorial aggression. Gibler and Tir 2010; Owsiak and Rider 2013; and Schultz 2013 focus on the generally pacifying effects of voluntary territorial agreement. But this literature does not explain the relationship between past territorial loss and attempted gains against third-party states.

[53] Annexation differs from conquest in that force is threatened rather than used.

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Contrary to standard realist thinking, states often willingly cede territory, as was the case with the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993 and Britain and Hong Kong in 1998.[54] France, for example, was not threatened with force when it decided to transfer its territories in Newfoundland to the British in 1904. Nor was China coerced when it willingly ceded numerous territorial tracts to both weaker and stronger neighbors in the postwar period.[55] Far from eroding China's status, these acts of voluntary cession have continued into more recent decades, even as China's power and international status have continued to increase.

The theory also offers predictions about which states will be most likely to pursue status-seeking gains and about what types of states they will target. Great powers are those states most likely to possess the distinctive capabilities that enable them to reassert their status. Because humiliated great powers are relatively risk averse, they will often reassert their status by projecting power abroad, often at the expense of weaker, third-party states. This logic generates the following hypotheses:

> —H4. The increased probability of attempted territorial gains will be largest among great powers.
>
> —H5. Great powers will be more likely than lesser powers to pursue discontiguous, third-party gains following coerced loss.
>
> —H6. Great powers will be more likely to target states over which they hold a significant military advantage.

A state that has involuntarily lost territory will not always be ready or able to engage in territorial aggression in the following year. In fact, some states may take many years to regain sufficient capabilities and confidence to reassert their status. Given states' relative risk aversion, we should expect them to wait until they have made significant gains toward returning to their prior levels of military capability. Thus, I hypothesize the following:

> —H7. States responding to coerced territorial loss with territorial aggression will be most likely to do so once they have restored their preloss capabilities.

In addition, given recent scholarship that has found evidence for the emergence of a norm of territorial integrity since 1945 that stigmatizes territorial expansion in the international community,[56] it is necessary to examine the impact of territorial loss across different time periods. It is

[54] On peaceful territorial transfers, see Kacowicz 1994.
[55] Fravel 2005.
[56] See, for example, Zacher 2001; Fazal 2007.

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possible that in the current era states are less likely both to experience territorial loss and to reassert their status through territorial coercion. I therefore test the following hypothesis:

> —H8. The correlation between past coerced loss and future coercive gains will be stronger in the pre-1945 period.

If, as the post-1945 norm has solidified, territorial conquest has become less of a status symbol over time, then states experiencing involuntary territorial loss will have likely sought to assert their status in more internationally accepted ways.

Research Design and Data

To analyze the effect of coerced territorial loss on future acquisition behavior, I use a recoded and expanded data set of territorial change. The territorial change data set builds on the data collected by Jaroslav Tir and colleagues; it includes sixty-five new cases and recodes all cases according to nine mechanisms of territorial change.[57] This allows us to draw clearer distinctions between voluntary changes achieved through mutual agreement and involuntary cession of territory resulting from the threat or use of coercion. The section below presents results on the impact of territorial loss within all politically relevant, directed-dyad years from 1816 to 2000. The effects of territorial loss on attempted territorial gains were also examined using two different within-country designs, including one that employs fixed effects. The results of these within-country models, which are substantively and statistically similar to those presented below, are outlined in the supplementary material.[58]

Dependent Variables

The variable *coercive attempted gain* was coded 1 if a state either acquired or attempted to acquire territory through coercive means in that country-year, and 0 if no coercive territorial gain was achieved or attempted. Coercive means are those involving the use of force ("conquest") or the recent threat of force ("annexation"). Attempted coercive gains were coded from the militarized interstate disputes data set, and are those in which the highest act of hostility listed for the country within a militarized interstate dispute (MID) was either the occupation of territory, even if temporary, or the threat to take territory and

[57] Tir et al. 1998. For more information about the data set and the codebook, see Barnhart 2017, pt. A.

[58] Barnhart 2017, pt. B, sec. 1.

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in which no subsequent transfer of territory took place.[59] Cases of *voluntary gain* were coded 1 if a successful territorial acquisition took place as a result of mutual agreement or voluntary secession.[60] In total, there were 507 cases of coercive attempted gains and 205 cases of voluntary territorial gain.[61]

Independent Variables

The variable *coerced loss* was coded 1 in the country-year in which a state lost territory through conquest, annexation, or a war of independence, and 0 otherwise. Because states are often not able to engage in military activity abroad immediately after an involuntary territorial loss, we must assess the impact of territorial loss over a broader period of time. Thus, an additional variable was coded 1 if a state had experienced a coerced loss in the prior twenty-year period. The period of twenty years was selected because it best enabled a test of the theoretical framework discussed above, which predicts that states will often delay their responses to humiliating events, such as a territorial loss, until they have recovered their capabilities and confidence. As Figure 3 illustrates below, full recovery of lost capabilities associated with a territorial loss takes fifteen to sixteen years on average. The twenty-year time period, therefore, enables a test of hypothesis 7, which predicts that states will wait until they have returned at least to their level of preloss capabilities before engaging in territorial aggression. Models analyzing shorter time spans are presented in the supplementary material.[62]

The variable *voluntary loss* was coded 1 in the country-year in which a state lost territory though mutual agreement or exchange or voluntary secession and 0 otherwise or when a case of coerced loss occurred within the same period.[63] To mirror the test of involuntary loss, an additional variable was coded 1 if the state had experienced a voluntary loss in the prior twenty years. Possible cases of *revanchism* were coded 1

[59] This approach does not account for disputes in which the objective of one party was to take territory but in which the highest level of hostility surpassed the occupation of territory.

[60] But gains are coded as voluntary when the primary mechanism of change is diplomacy. One could argue that whether or not force is used, and therefore whether a gain is coercive, depends on the response of the target. To account for this, the model was run using pooled voluntary and coercive attempted gains. The results were not significantly altered. Cases of attempted voluntary gains were not included because of the difficulty of coding all failed attempts to negotiate over territorial outcomes.

[61] Of the 507 cases, 184 were attempted gains and 323 were successful. More cross-tabulation appears in Barnhart 2017, pt. A.

[62] Barnhart 2017, Figure 1, Table 7.

[63] Kacowicz 1994 codes and analyzes cases of peaceful territorial change. The codings of voluntary change here correspond with the Kacowicz data in all but a few cases in which there was perceived to be an active threat of force.

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when a state had lost territory to the other state in the dyad within the prior twenty years and 0 when the state had not experienced a loss to its dyad partner in that time frame. Because the effects of coercive and voluntary losses were assessed over a twenty-year period, an additional variable was included to capture whether an attempted gain targeted a state responsible for one's own territorial loss in the prior twenty years.

A number of alternative explanations that relate specifically to the connection between past territorial losses and future territorial gains are controlled for within the empirical analysis. In contrast to the logic of hypothesis 7, one could hypothesize that states that have experienced a recent loss of capabilities will engage in territorial expansion to acquire material goods to make up for the loss, rather than waiting until such capabilities are restored through other measures. In such a case, we would expect a state to be more likely to attempt territorial aggression before it has recovered the military and economic losses associated with the recent conquest of its territory. Given this alternate hypothesis, we would expect the likelihood of attempted gains to vary inversely with the ratio of current capabilities relative to those the state held immediately before losing territory. As their capabilities are restored to pre–territorial loss levels, states should become less likely to engage in conquest. To test the capability-loss hypothesis, I include the variable *relative capabilities after loss*, which measures the percentage of a state's absolute capabilities in each of the twenty years following a coercive loss relative to its capabilities in the year before the loss.[64]

Variables aimed at capturing the impact of reputational concerns are also included in the analysis. A state's response to territorial loss may stem from the reputation for weakness established as a result of defeat rather than from the territorial loss itself.[65] According to Clare and Danilovic, states that have backed down in their most recent international dispute will gain a reputation for weakness, leading that state to initiate aggression with other states in an attempt to proactively shore up its reputation for resolve.[66] Given this model, we would expect the probability of territorial aggression following territorial loss to be equivalent to the probability of territorial aggression following disputes

[64] The variable was coded 1 in the case of no capability loss and in year twenty-one after a capability loss. The measure of absolute capabilities was obtained by adding the six components that comprise Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) scores.

[65] According to the theory above, defeat in war can also be considered a humiliating event. But we would not necessarily expect the response to a humiliating defeat without territorial loss to involve future conquest.

[66] Clare and Danilovic 2010.

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in which a state backed down or was defeated but did not lose territory. In accordance with past research on reputation,[67] I include a dichotomous variable, *reputation for weakness,* that captures whether or not a state gave in to an opponent's demands or backed down after issuing a threat during its last militarized interstate dispute. States that yielded to an opponent without fighting were coded as having backed down. In keeping with prior research that assumes that the impact of a reputation for weakness declines over time, outcomes were included if they took place within the prior ten years.[68]

The analysis also tests hypotheses about why states engage in territorial gains, even though the hypotheses do not explicitly link one's past territorial loss with future territorial gains. Some realist scholars hypothesize that a state will seek to balance territorial gains made by potential rivals with territorial gains of its own to maintain the relative proportion of capabilities.[69] To control for the possibility that states engage in territorial gains to keep up with the gains of their neighbors, I include three variables that capture the logic. The count variables *total gains in region, prior 10 yrs.* and *total gains in region, prior 11–20 yrs.* code, as they suggest, the number of attempted territorial gains made by other states in one's region in the prior ten- or eleven-to-twenty-year periods, respectively. Although this hypothesis does not specifically offer an explanation for why losses would significantly correlate with future aggressive gains by the same state, it does suggest that losses and subsequent gains could come in waves defined by peaks of heightened territorial change within the international system more broadly. Thus, a number of additional controls were included to account for periods of heightened activity in the system and for particularly expansionary states. *Total activity in the system, prior 5 yrs.*, is a count of the total number of successful and attempted gains in the system made by other states over the last five-year period, divided by ten. *Coercive attempted gains in prior 5 yrs.* and *coercive attempted gains in prior 11–20 yrs.* are binary variables capturing whether or not the state itself engaged in other recent gains of its own in the prior five- or eleven-to-twenty-year periods.[70]

[67] For example, Fearon 1994; Clare and Danilovic 2010.

[68] The variable is coded as 0 if the state exhibited resolve within a dispute in the period following the instance of backing down. Alternative models of reputation were also analyzed, including those that consider the number of potential opponents. See Barnhart 2017, pt. B.7. In none of the models did the main results reported here differ significantly.

[69] See Grieco 1988; Mastanduno 1991.

[70] Barnhart 2017, pt. B.2, presents extensive analysis of past activity in the system. These particular variables accounting for past activity were selected because they best report the particular periods of heightened activity in the past.

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John Mearsheimer argues that states pursue territorial expansion when they have sufficient relative advantage in capabilities over a potential target, regardless of the expansionary policies of potential rivals.[71] To control for this, I include a variable, *relative capability*, that measures the proportion of total capabilities in the dyad possessed by one side using the Composite Index of National Capability scores as taken from the Correlates of War data set.[72]

The models below do not include measurements of the economic or strategic value of the territory. Although states may be motivated to acquire territory simply for its material benefits, estimating the strength of this motivation would require data on the perceived resources associated with all potential targets of aggression.[73] We have no reason to expect, however, that the economic value of a potential target of expansion would be correlated with a previous territorial loss. Therefore, the omission of a variable describing the economic value of the territory is not expected to bias the estimate of the effect of a past loss. The same can be said of the strategic value or the national and ethnic salience of a given territory. While a state might desire a piece of territory for the strategic advantages it provides, there is no reason to think that this desire would be correlated with a past status-threatening loss, or that as a result it would bias the relationship between a past involuntary territorial loss and the probability of future action.[74]

Results

Impact of the Past on the Present: Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3

Three models were estimated to analyze the effect of a past loss on future attempted gains.[75] As stated above, the models reported here were run on all politically relevant directed-dyad years from 1816 to 2000. The coefficients in all models were estimated using logit, employing cubic polynomials, as suggested by David Carter and Curtis Signorino, to control for temporal dependence between observations of the

[71] Mearsheimer 2003.

[72] See Singer 1988. They were not available for any of the nonstate actors that often served as targets of expansionary policies. Capability in these cases was coded 0.

[73] The Correlates of War (COW) Territorial Claims Data Set offers a wealth of information about the potential material, strategic, and ethnic value of particular territories under dispute. See Hensel et al. 2008.

[74] The same is true for domestic variables. See Snyder 1991; Tir 2010. Although domestic variables likely explain some instances of state expansion, they are unlikely to explain a pattern between past losses and future gains.

[75] A list of cases can be found in Barnhart 2017, pt. A, Table 4.

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TABLE 1
INFLUENCE OF COERCIVE LOSS ON ATTEMPTED TERRITORIAL GAINS

Variables	*Model 1*	*Model 2*	*Model 3*
Coerced territorial loss in prior 20 yrs.	.925***	.870***	.489*
	(.20)	(.21)	(.21)
Voluntary territorial loss in prior 20 yrs.	.097	.078	−.185
	(.22)	(.23)	(.24)
Revanchist gain		.851**	.844*
		(.31)	(.33)
Relative capability after loss	3.35***	4.25***	3.79**
	(.86)	(.85)	(1.19)
Dyadic relative capability	1.31***	1.37***	.759**
	(.26)	(.27)	(.26)
Total gains in my region in prior 10 yrs.	.038***	.038**	.029***
	(.01)	(.00)	(.00)
Total gains in my region in prior 11–20 yrs.	−.006	.007	−.054
	(.05)	(.05)	(.06)
Total systemic gains in prior 5 yrs.	.052	.042	.005
	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)
Coercive attempted gain in prior 10 yrs.			1.09***
			(.15)
Coercive attempted gain in prior 11–20 yrs.			.572*
			(.22)
Joint democracy			−1.65***
			(.37)
Backed down in last MID			−.091
			(.22)
Border			4.75***
			(.49)
Time since coercive gain	−.068***	−.069***	−.072***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Time since coercive gain ^ 2	.000**	.000**	.000**
	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)
Time since coercive gain ^ 3	−.000*	−.000*	−.000*
	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)

*** coefficients significant at the .000 level; N = 174,874; robust standard errors, clustered by dyad, in parentheses

dependent variable.[76] Table 1 lists the variables included in the first set of models and the coefficient estimates.

Model 1 includes dummy variables for coerced and voluntary losses in the previous two decades. Model 2 includes the variable accounting for

[76] Carter and Signorino 2010. Inclusion of t, t^2, and t^3 produced very similar results as inclusion of cubic splines. The use of temporal controls is justified because it is highly possible that attempted territorial gains in the present may correlate with a greater probability of attempted gains in the future. See Dafoe 2013.

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revanchism. The *coerced loss* variable in this and all subsequent models represents the increase in attempted territorial gains against third parties because it holds constant the likelihood that state actions are aimed at retrieving lost territory. Model 3 includes additional controls for a state's gains in the last five and eleven-to-twenty years, backing down without territorial loss, whether or not the gain involved an ongoing border dispute, and joint democracy.[77] As the table shows, hypotheses 1 and 2 are strongly supported. A coerced loss in the last twenty years corresponds with a significant increase in the log odds of a coercive attempted gain.[78] More specifically, it also corresponds with a significant increase in the log odds of a coercive attempted gain against a third-party state. As models 2 and 3 show, the inclusion of the *revanchist gain* variable does not account for a significant portion of the increase in attempted gains that must then be directed at third-party states. Although the results find a strong relationship between past coerced losses and future attempts at coercive territorial gains, none of the models finds support for a relationship between past voluntary losses and future coercive territorial gains, suggesting strong support for hypothesis 3. In further support for the theory of status threat presented in this article, a statistical test of the coefficients for coerced loss and voluntary loss shows that their effects can be confidently distinguished from each other at the .0001 level.

There is also little evidence that reputational concerns are driving results. Having backed down in one's previous international dispute does not significantly correlate with future attempts at conquest. Perhaps unsurprisingly, states are more likely to attempt territorial gains if others in their region have recently taken territory and when they have significantly more power than their dyad partner. But most important, the relationship between past coerced losses and future coercive gains holds even when controlling for revanchist gains, a state's own recent gains, the total recent activity in the system and one's region, regime type, whether the attempted gain involved a border dispute, and structural imperatives.[79]

Figure 1 provides substantive interpretations of the results of model

[77] Joint democracy was coded from the Polity data, with the variable coded 1 if both states had a polity score of 6 or higher and coded 0 otherwise.

[78] Models involving shorter time spans presented in Barnhart 2017, Figure 1, p. 17, and Table 8, p. 22, show an increase in gains when states have experienced a loss in the last five-, ten-, and fifteen-year periods, as well.

[79] The same models were also run using voluntary attempted gains as the dependent variable. In no case did past coerced loss or past voluntary loss correspond with a statistically significant change in voluntary attempted gains.

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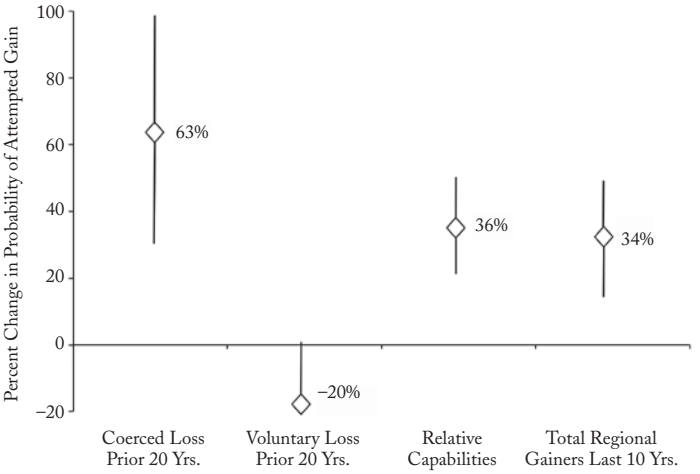


FIGURE 1
CHANGE IN PREDICTED PROBABILITY OF ATTEMPTED GAIN

3, Table 1. The figure displays percentage change in predicted probabilities, generated by varying only the variable of interest. The baseline probability of an attempted gain when holding all variables at 0 is .001. The probability that a state attempts a coercive territorial gain against a third-party state increases by 63 percent if the state has experienced a coerced territorial loss in the prior twenty-year period when controlling for capabilities and recent activity in the system. This compares with a change of −20 percent following a voluntary territorial loss, a decrease that cannot confidently be distinguished from the null hypotheses that voluntary losses have no effect at all. A one standard deviation increase in the ratio of relative capabilities of the states in each dyad increases the chance a state will attempt a gain by 36 percent.[80] A one standard deviation increase in the number of attempted gains in one's region in the last ten years increases the chance a state will attempt a gain by 34 percent.[81]

The finding that coerced loss generates a substantial increase in the probability of future territorial aggression is also supported by within-country analysis, as presented in the supplementary material, which shows that the probability of territorial aggression by a great power is 48 percent higher in the twenty years following a coerced territorial loss

[80] This equates to an increase from .5 relative dyadic capability to .915 relative dyadic capability.
[81] A one standard deviation increase in this variable equates to an increase from 7 to 17 gains.

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than in the twenty years leading up to the loss.[82] Removing cases of revenge from the set of observations, the rate of attempted gains against third parties is 43 percent higher in the postloss period.

Great Powers, Third-Party Targets, and Risk Aversion: Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6

According to the theory above, we should not expect all states to pursue gains to the same degree following a territorial loss. To assess the differential impact of territorial loss on major and nonmajor powers, the variable *coerced loss, last 20 yrs*. was interacted with a dummy variable capturing major powers in the system.[83] In support of hypothesis 4, the analysis demonstrates that great powers are more likely than nonmajor powers to seek territorial gains following an involuntary loss, although there is a significant increase in attempted gains among both groups (47 percent among nonmajor powers and 84 percent among major powers that have experienced coerced territorial losses).[84] The types of states the two groups target also differ. Although both types of states are more likely to target third-party states, great powers are far more likely to pursue discontiguous, third-party gains following coerced losses than are lesser powers, lending support to hypothesis 5. Great powers targeted discontiguous states in 80 percent of their coercive attempted gains following a coerced territorial loss, while nongreat powers targeted discontiguous states in only 34 percent of their postloss attempts to gain territory.[85] As further evidence, logistic analysis indicates that the predicted probability that a great power targets a discontiguous state following a coercive loss is 146 percent higher than it is for lesser powers. This significant difference provides support for the notion that the projection of power abroad distinguishes great powers from lesser states that are either unable or unwilling to pursue such expansive policies.

There is also evidence that great powers are less likely to engage in revanchism than they are to target third parties. The likelihood of third-party gains among major powers that have lost territory in the

[82] Barnhart 2017, pt. B.1.

[83] This measure of great power status was taken from the COW data set. The results of this model, as well as a table of predicted probabilities are presented in Barnhart 2017, pt. B.3, tables 7 and 8.

[84] A two-sample *t*-test indicates that major powers are in fact 131 percent more likely to pursue territorial gains following a coerced loss than are nonmajor powers. This difference is significant at the .0001 level.

[85] Cross-tabulations for major powers and nonmajor power targets can be found in Barnhart 2017, pt. A, tables 2a and 2b. The COW data on contiguity were used to assess these percentages. A two-sample *t*-test indicates that this difference is significant at the .0001 level.

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last twenty years is 80 percent higher than the baseline likelihood of attempted gains by great powers that have not lost territory. Conversely, the likelihood that great powers target the specific aggressor states responsible for a recent territorial loss is not significantly higher than the baseline likelihood of territorial aggression by a great power within politically relevant dyads.[86] Although the low number of cases of revanchism limits our ability to analyze target selection, evidence suggests that states are more likely to engage in revanchism as their relative capabilities within the dyad increase and when the humiliator does not possess a great power defensive ally.[87] Within the ten cases of revanchist gains attempted by great powers, in no case was the targeted state also a great power.

The theory of status threat presented above predicts that humiliated states will generally be more risk averse than nonhumiliated states. There is significant evidence to support this proposition. First, we find strong support for hypothesis 6, which states that great powers that have involuntarily lost territory will be more likely to target states over which they hold a significant relative military advantage. Eighty-three percent of the cases of postloss territorial expansion by great powers occur within dramatically skewed dyads in which the gainer has at least 75 percent of the total dyadic capabilities.[88] Great powers experiencing recent territorial loss attempted gains within dyads in which their relative military advantage is on average 8 percent higher than it is for nonhumiliated great powers attempting territorial aggression. A two-sample *t*-test indicates that the difference in the relative capabilities of states targeted by great powers is significant at the .05 level. Second, the analysis underscores the importance of success to reaffirmation of status following humiliating events. Humiliated great powers are 12.9 percent more likely to be successful in their subsequent acts of attempted gain than are nonhumiliated states attempting to take territory.[89] Third,

[86] It is also possible that great powers seek revenge on past aggressors by engaging in nonterritorial acts of aggression. These acts would not be accounted for in the present models. Separate models that assessed the effect of coerced loss on all acts of aggression, including nonterritorial MIDs, were run. These results indicate a similar pattern: great powers that have recently experienced a coerced loss are 123 percent more likely to engage in aggression against third parties. The likelihood that they will target the specific aggressor state is not higher than the likelihood of acting aggressively within any other politically relevant dyad.

[87] For more, see Barnhart 2017, pt. B.4.

[88] In contrast, nonmajor powers were willing to seek revanchist gains against states that possessed on average 70 percent more capabilities than they had. For more analysis of the role of relative capabilities, see Barnhart 2017, pt. C.1.

[89] This difference is significant at the .05 level. For more detail on this analysis, see Barnhart 2017, pts. B.4, C.1.

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as further evidence that humiliated states direct subsequent aggression against less risky targets, states that have not recently lost territory are 131 percent more likely than a recently humiliated state to attempt a territorial gain against a state involved in a defensive alliance.[90]

When Should We Expect States to Engage in Conquest: Hypothesis 7

To analyze the dynamics of coercive attempted gains made by major powers against third parties following losses over time, model 3 was estimated with an additional count term for the twenty years following a loss along with the next three terms of its Taylor series.[91] Figure 2 plots the results as a function of time following a territorial loss.

The black line in the figure represents the probability of attempted gain against a third-party state by a major power over a twenty-year period following a coerced loss. The grey line along the bottom shows the probability of an attempted coercive gain for a state that has not experienced a loss (.001), a probability that is equivalent in all years. The probability of a gain in the few years following a loss is roughly 1.75 times the average probability of a gain for a state without a recent loss. This period is followed by a moderate decline after a loss in the probability of attempted gains from years six to ten and then a significant leap in the probability from years eleven through seventeen. In year fifteen, the estimated probability of an attempted gain is nearly four times the rate of attempted gain when no coerced loss was experienced.

What explains this pattern of conquest over time? The high probability of gains in years three through five following a territorial loss suggests that a few states that have the ability to attempt gains against third parties do so relatively soon after a loss. The decrease in probability after the fifth year is possibly accounted for by a decrease in military capabilities among states that must rebuild prior to engaging in expansion again.

As Figure 3 illustrates, the timing of the second peak of expansionary behavior closely corresponds with the average amount of time it takes states that have previously lost territory to recover their capabilities, excluding those states that lost more than 50 percent of their capabilities in conjunction with territorial loss. The figure shows that states experiencing a coerced territorial loss subsequently experience on average a

[90] This value was obtained through a *t*-test using the COW data on defensive alliances. The difference is significant at the .001 level.

[91] All observations of the count variable "time since coerced loss" that did not lie within a twenty-year period of a loss were coded as 21.

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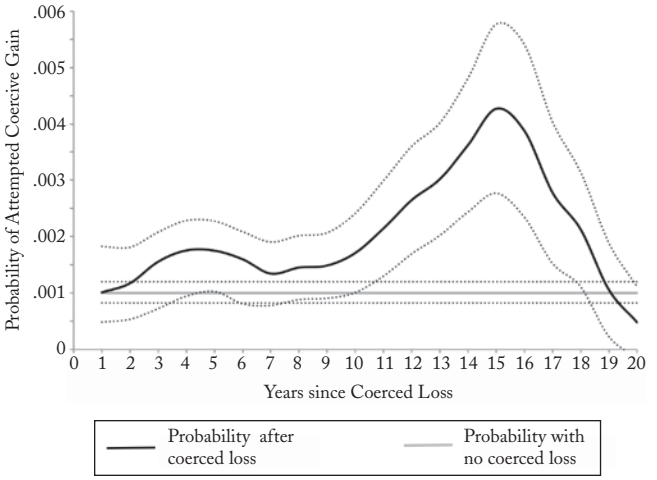


FIGURE 2
GAINS AGAINST THIRD PARTIES IN TWENTY YEARS AFTER LOSS

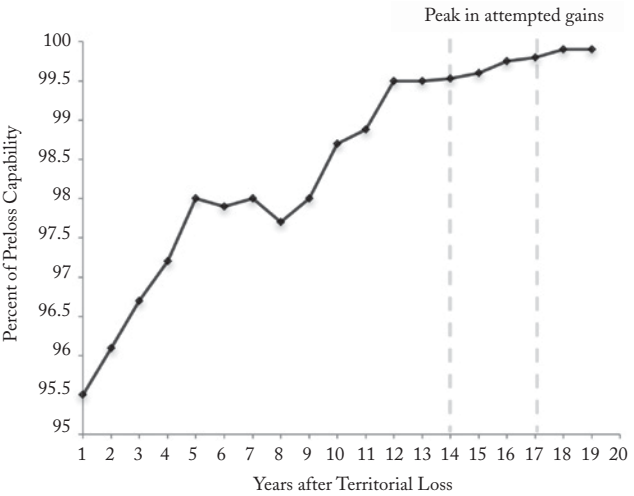


FIGURE 3
AVERAGE TIME TO RECOVER CAPABILITIES

5 percent decline in their military capabilities; it takes these states on average about twelve years to return to within 99 percent of their preloss capabilities and roughly sixteen years to fully recover the level of capabilities they possessed prior to the territorial loss. The scale of average loss is even larger for great powers, as illustrated in the supple-

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mentary material.[92] Great powers experience on average an initial 13 percent decline in their military capabilities following a territorial loss. By year fourteen after a loss, they have returned to 95 percent of their preloss capabilities. This pace of recovery coincides closely with the increased probability of attempted gains in years fourteen through seventeen after a loss.[93]

Conquest and Status Seeking over Time: Hypothesis 8

Recent scholarship arguing that a norm of territorial integrity solidified after World War II would lead us to expect that states that experienced a territorial loss in the post-1946 period would attempt coercive territorial gains at a lower rate than would those in the pre-1946 era. Statistical analysis indeed reflects the importance of time. The baseline likelihood of a coerced loss pre-1946 is six times higher than it is after 1946.[94] To test the impact of time, I created a binary variable, *post1946,* coded as 1 in every year after 1945 and 0 otherwise. I interacted this variable with the primary explanatory variable in model 3 above, *coerced loss, last 20 yrs.*[95] The results of this interaction are reported in the supplementary material.[96] The likelihood of a coercive attempted gain increased by 50 percent after a coerced loss before 1946; no significant correlation was found between losses and gains in the post-1945 era.[97]

Discussion: Possible Alternative Explanations

What other factors might explain the correlation we find between prior coerced loss and coercive attempted gains? As discussed above, while the material or strategic value of a territory may make it more attractive to expanding states, a desire for economic or strategic gains does not explain why past involuntary losses would correlate with increases in the probability of future attempted gains, especially given that states

[92] Barnhart 2017, Figure 3, p. 29.

[93] Further evidence and discussion of the role of recovery in establishing the timing of response is presented in Barnhart 2017, pt. C.2.

[94] The large majority of cases of aggressive and nonaggressive territorial change did occur in the pre-1946 period. Of the 507 cases of coercive attempted gains, only 90 occurred after 1945. Of these, twelve were preceded by a coerced loss. One hundred and sixty four of the 417 pre-1946 attempted gains were preceded by a coerced loss.

[95] The year 1945 was chosen as a cut point because of its precedence within the literature. To test for structural breakpoints in attitudes toward territorial expansion, Chow tests were conducted for a variety of cut points between 1910 and 1950. No statistically significant cut point was found, suggesting that change in attitudes toward territory arose gradually.

[96] Barnhart 2017, pt. B.4.

[97] A likelihood ratio test of the effects of territorial loss in the pre- and post-1945 era confirmed that significantly different patterns existed within the two eras.

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appear to recoup their lost capabilities prior to engaging in expansion. Moreover, while a state may desire to incorporate the territory of those areas that are ethnically similar to itself, especially if they were once part of the state, this desire does not explain the increase in the targeting of third-party territories. Other possible explanations include individual or leader prestige as a motivator of expansionary behavior following an involuntary loss. Leader attempts at expansion might stem from a desire to raise their popularity ratings after an unpopular territorial loss. In this case, we would expect an attempted gain to occur while a given leader remains in office, that is, within a relatively short time frame following a loss. Given that a leader's tenure has been on average a little more than four years over almost the past two hundred years, the result, to the contrary, that a significant amount of expansion comes more than a decade following an involuntary loss calls into question the significance of leader prestige in motivating expansion after loss.[98] Additionally, examination of fifty randomly selected cases in which a coerced loss was followed by a coercive territorial gain finds that in less than one-third the same leader was in place for both the loss and the gain.

Another possibility is that following a coerced loss, a state is motivated to attempt coercive gains by a desire to regain its reputation for resolve or strength with enemies and allies alike. But the results above indicate that increased attempts at conquest do not correlate with past disputes in which states backed down but did not lose territory, suggesting that the loss of territory plays an essential role apart from simply signifying a lack of resolve. Moreover, the confirmatory evidence for hypothesis 6 indicates that the majority of cases involve great powers responding to territorial loss by seizing territory from weaker, nonrival states. Such acts of expansion, while involving direct coercion or the threat of coercion, likely do not require a display of strength on the part of the conqueror that would lead rivals of equal size to update their beliefs about the state's competitive abilities or their degree of resolve in battles against rivals. Instead, states engaged in acts of expansion against third-party, nonrival states are likely attempting to signal to international observers their expectation that they should be considered among those with high status both because they are capable of doing something that only other significant powers can do easily and because they have sufficient influence to engage in international expansion without being constrained by groupings of other powers.

[98] Data on leader tenure are taken from the Archigos data project. See Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009.

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It is also possible that the relationship between a past coerced loss and a future coercive gain is spurious and that this pattern is merely getting at "what great powers do." According to this hypothesis, the relationship between losses and gains can be explained by periods of heightened activity in the system or by particularly expansionary states. The empirical results presented above and within the supplementary material speak strongly against this possibility.[99] As is also shown in the supplementary material, the reported results hold even when excluding cases in which a state attempted a territorial gain in the ten years before an attempted gain in time t and when omitting data of a state attempting a gain in the ten years prior to a coerced loss.[100] Furthermore, as the outcomes of numerous placebo tests presented in the supplementary material indicate, coerced loss in the present does not significantly correlate with a state's own gains or the gains of others in the past.[101] Moreover, neither clustering by year or gainer nor including controls for the Scramble for Africa significantly alters the results presented above.

Although we expect the relationship between status threats and increased status seeking to hold across time and place in the international system, the way that states assert their status in response to status-threatening events may change over time as beliefs about admirable international behavior shift. The analysis above, in finding that status-threatened states responded to humiliating territorial loss by seeking territory from weaker states in the period prior to 1945, offers a compelling explanation for imperial expansion throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this way, this study complements others that have demonstrated through detailed case analysis the causal relationship between great power humiliation and the Scramble for Africa.[102] But in the period since World War II, the role that territorial expansion played in status enhancement may have been replaced to some degree by other methods of demonstrating great power intentions and capabilities. The development of nuclear weapons was perceived as a path to great power status in the decades immediately following the war.[103] In seeking great power status, states have also pursued blue water navies, the space race, and other advanced technologies.[104] The pursuit of territorial expansion as a means to signal a state's status expectations may also be making a comeback. For example, Vladimir Putin's recent acts of territorial aggression in the previous Soviet sphere

[99] Barnhart 2017, pt. B.2.
[100] Barnhart 2017, pt. B.2, Table 5.
[101] Barnhart 2017, pt. B.2, Figure 1 and Table 2.
[102] See Barnhart 2016. See also Pflanze 1990.
[103] See Sagan 1996; O'Neill 2006; Kinsella and Chima 2001.

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and in Syria appear to be motivated in large part by a desire to reassert Russian status following the humiliating and "disastrous" loss of the Soviet territories. This suggests that some states continue to view territorial expansion as an effective means of asserting high status.[105] So long as projecting power abroad symbolizes high status among some status communities within the international system, we can expect the relationship between past involuntary territorial loss and future attempts at conquest to hold.

Conclusion

This article presented and tested a theory of how status concerns affect the frequency and type of state aggression. It focused on one particular source of status threat—the involuntary loss of territory—and the impact that this source of status threat has had on the likelihood of conquest. The results provide strong evidence that state decisions, and in particular great power decisions, to engage in conquest have been significantly affected by the state's recent experiences with humiliating territorial loss. Great powers that have experienced a status-threatening, involuntary loss in the recent past are 80 percent more likely to attempt expansion at the expense of third-party states than are great powers that have not. By contrast, past voluntary loss does not correlate with an increase in future territorial gains in any of the analyses. These findings are highly robust to alterations of model specification, including the inclusion of fixed effects.[106] Although realist variables such as the presence of regional gainers or relative capability also significantly correlate with higher rates of attempted gains, coerced loss appears to have a significant impact on a state's decision to seek gains, regardless of these material and strategic variables.

Many important cases attest to the substantial impact that involuntary territorial loss has on future decisions to acquire territory. As suggested above, France's decision to conquer Tunisia in 1881 was motivated by the loss of Alsace and Lorraine ten years earlier. As France's Prime Minister Gambetta privately wrote upon the successful French aggression in Tunisia, "[T]here will be people everywhere who will not like it, but they will have to put up with it. France is becoming a Great Power again."[107] Similarly, Russia's decision to acquire exten-

[104] Gilady 2017; Nayar and Paul 2003; Scott 2008.
[105] Forsberg, Heller, and Wolf 2014; Guillory 2014; Stent 2014.
[106] See Barnhart 2017, pt. B.2.
[107] Quoted in de Constant 1891, 182. For more on this case, see Barnhart 2016.

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sive amounts of territory in Central Asia in the mid-nineteenth century was motivated in large part by its "humiliating" loss of territory in the Crimean War and its desire to reassert its status vis-à-vis Britain.[108] China's loss of sovereignty to Western powers at the beginning of its Century of Humiliation has been cited in contemporary territorial claims made by the Chinese throughout Asia, attesting to the lasting impact that past humiliation is likely to have on state behavior.[109] Similarly, Stalin had not forgotten the "treacherous" and humiliating territorial loss of Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands during the Russo-Japanese War when he demanded their return forty years later at Yalta. More recently, when speaking of a newly expanded NATO reaching into former Soviet territory, Russian president Dmitry Medvedev stated, "[Russia] will not tolerate any more humiliation and we are not joking."[110] He made this statement in September 2008, shortly following Russian aggression against Georgia.[111]

Although the majority of states in the international system may not currently view conquest as a means to status enhancement, we can safely assume that the mechanisms described in this article are currently active within the international system. Humiliated states may now seek to reassert status through other means; they may do so by projecting their power abroad with the intention of overthrowing foreign governments, throwing their weight around in international organizations, or developing sophisticated arms. Just as we assume that individuals' actions are shaped by their past experiences, the history of a state's violent interactions with other states shapes that state's present and future policies. Humiliated states will seek to reassert themselves in competitive ways, not only at the expense of the state responsible for the status threat, but likely as well at the expense of third-party states.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article can be found at https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887117000028.

[108] See Meyer and Brysac 2009; Tuminez 2000.

[109] Callahan 2004; Deng 2011; Scott 2008.

[110] Comment made to Andrew Kuchins from meeting with Medvedev at the Valdai Conference in September 2008. Cited in Georgie Anne Geyer, "Russia Is First to Test New President," *Chicago Tribune*, November 14, 2008.

[111] Russia scholars have gone so far as to declare that Russia since the end of the Cold War has been struck by a "humiliation syndrome" similar to that of Weimar Germany. See Shevtsova 2007; Malinova 2014.

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