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THE CONFLICT OVER THE MALVINAS/FALKLANDS

Perspectives for a renewed confrontation or a negotiated settlement

Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

“When does the fighting stop, how long does the effects of a war last? Until the guns cool down? Until the wounds, even the most horrible mutilations, heal? Until combatants are just a word, muttered like a prayer?” (Lorenz 2022; 1).

Beyond the occasional parade or commemorative song, the lessons of the Falklands War seem to come down to the present day to remind us of an alarming possibility: armed hostilities exist as an alternative on the worlds dashboard. Far from being a problem of the past, the Malvinas/ Falklands War and territorial dispute as a broad compels us to rethink how (and if it’s possible) to prevent conflict. If crisis prevention requires a causal analysis, this paper advances on the hypothesis that there exist combinations of conditions –domestic, international and territorial- that could lead to a military confrontation on the islands. In order to test it, it develops a csQCA to identify the configurations that have led to military conflicts and negotiated settlements in the region and through a process tracing identifies how these evolved during the war of 1982. Finally, it resumes the main challenges that the Malvinas/ Falklands dispute is facing in our century and from a scientific approach what can one expect in the future. Given a context of globalization and multipolarity, the role of alliances becomes an interesting variable for other scholars to incorporate in subsequent analysis and the research as a whole an important step for policy makers to advance at the decision-making process.

Keywords: Malvinas/ Falklands, Territorial Disputes, Rational Choice, Militarized Interstate Dispute, Negotiated Settlement, Crisis Prevention, Multipolarity.

THE CONFLICT OVER THE MALVINAS/ FALKLANDS

Perspectives for a renewed confrontation or a negotiated settlement

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction.

In 2022 Queen Elizabeth II died and a very Argentinean debate was reborn: what will happen now with the Malvinas/Falklands Islands? Not that anyone fervently believed that such a milestone would trigger another deafening war, but to the eyes of the world the end of an era seemed to be approaching. The truth is that new generations –like our owns– have tended to question this event sporadically: in school classes, popular songs and the imposition of a historical date to reinforce memory. And while the general and constant interest in the youth has been scarce, the territorial dispute has remained open.

The question of the Malvinas/ Falklands Islands, understood as the sovereignty dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom over the Malvinas/ Falklands Islands, Georgia's del Sur, Sandwich del Sur and the surrounding maritime space, had its widely accepted origin on January 3rd 1883. The United Kingdom, breaking the Argentine territorial integrity, occupied the islands and expelled the Argentine authorities, preventing their return as well as the settlement of Argentines from the mainland. Since then, Argentina has regularly protested the British occupation ratifying its sovereignty and affirming its recovery (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto Argentina, 2023).

By 1995, what appeared to be a *de facto* interest in recovering the islands became an objective *de jure* as it was incorporated to the Argentinean National Constitution. In the

First Transitory Provision, the country ratified its sovereignty over the former territories, even if it made clear that any movement ought to be carried “in respect with the way of life of its inhabitants, and in accordance with the principles of International Law”. By this, Argentina established a “permanent and inalienable objective” that twenty-eight years later will remain unaltered (CDLN 1994).

Accordingly, an event that for some was part of a historical past, continues to present considerable relevance in the international developments of our century. In fact, the Malvinas/ Falklands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands persist as a recognized strategic enclave. The control of the islands allows to dominate the growing maritime traffic through the bioceanic passage that links the Atlantic with the Pacific (via Strait of Magellan, Beagle and Drake channels). At the same time, they constitute a point of projection towards the Antarctica, reservoir of 80% of the world’s fresh water, fishery resources, hydrocarbons, minerals and metalliferous (Formento, Bilmes, Del Negro & Barrenengoa 2017; 1).

On top of that, the aforementioned territories are becoming one of the most militarized of the planet in an ever-increasing process. Mount Pleasant has become one of the largest military bases in Great Britain. In the South Atlantic Islands, the British have deployed the Type 45 destroyer HMS Dauntless, one of the most powerful ships in the British fleet, as well as several patrol ships. Long range naval guns, Tomahawk cruise missiles and other modern missile and radar systems are therefore some of the military capabilities available nowadays in the region. Into the bargain, the military base installed has a nuclear weapons deployment capability (Schulz, Dupuy & Patronelli 2022; 278).

This makes of Malvinas/ Falklands a challenge that in present times inevitably exceeds Latin America or the long story of a dyadic conflict, and “invites” the involvement of other powers that are disputing the world order configuration (Formento, Bilmes, Del

Negro & Barrenengoa 2017; 1). Thereof, we find the main actors of the international system become part of the dispute for the South Atlantic in general and its islands in particular. By way of explanation, what appears to be a new age in England, the termination of the Antarctic Treaty and the increasing advance of the Asia's Giant over South America grow into an active part of this uncertainty reality.

Brexit represented a major event in world geopolitics, read as the first serious resistance to the process of globalization. This anti-European British nationalism sustained in the idea of *English exceptionalism* was not new, but in the face of the wave of “Euroscepticism” that swept through the European Union in the heat of the impact of the global financial crisis between 2009 and 2012 and the suffocation deployed by the German-French leadership on the European peripheries in the face of debt crisis, Brexiteers saw their chance. Since then, the question of whether Brexit poses a threat or an opportunity for South American and Argentine positions has been debated (Bilmes 2021; 14).

This prospect worsens in light of 2048, when the Protocol of Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (1998-2048) could be subject to revision. By then it would only take the initiative of one country and a modest coalition of seven governments to prevent the *Pax Antarctica* –as we have known it since 1959-61– from continuing to exist. And it is widely accepted that Russia, China, and India continue to show interest in the exploitation of Antarctic natural resources, the inclusion of the Antarctic in the list of the “new Cold War”, and the reaffirmation of territorial claims through the implementation of international law's normative rule on continental platforms (Guzmán 2022; 3).

The British media have specifically warned that China seeks a new conflict over the Malvinas/ Falklands as a means to approach the hemisphere and force American power out (Escenario Mundial 2022; Daily Mail 2023). They alert that “a war for the Malvinas/

Falklands, provoked by China, has nothing to do with Argentina or Great Britain, but rather with the Communist Party's quest for global hegemony, which threatens the prosperity and security of all democracies" (Escenario Mundial 2022). From the Argentine side, several statements appeared to be assisting on this alliance. "We should call ourselves *Argenchina*" declared the ex-minister of economy at a recent round of negotiations (Perfil 2023).

Following Tenenbaum (2012) "the problems are easy to identify" (Tenenbaum 2012; 2). Who would own the oil under a new agreement? Why should someone accept any formula that diminishes its own part of the possible profits to be accrued in the future? Why would Argentina accept a situation whereby legally it might have a foothold in the islands (even if a symbolic one), without being able to claim at least a share in their natural resources? Therefore, theoretically, a number of formulae could be created to resolve the conflict. However, practically, none of these would have any chance of being accepted by the parties involved as things stand (Tenenbaum 2012; 2).

As the threat of military force to overturn the status quo remains a distinct possibility in relations between states, this means that besides looking for conflict resolution, a strong focus should be on *crisis prevention* (Huth 2009; Tenenbaum 2012). Territorial disputes are said to have a greater probability to generate war than any other kind of disputes (Vasquez & Henehan 2001; Huth 2009; Valeriano & Marin 2010). But what are the possible factors that can lead to a renewed militarized conflict over the Malvinas/Falklands? The basic hypothesis is that there exist combinations of necessary and sufficient conditions domestic, international and territorial that could lead to this outcome.

In order to test it, the article proceeds as follows. The first chapter provides a theoretical background to address the status quo regarding scientific production. The second chapter

explores through a Qualitative Comparative Analysis how military conflicts (and by dichotomy negotiated settlements) arise in Latin America, which is complemented in the next section with a process tracing on the Malvinas/ Falklands War. Knowledge about the regional context, we believe, illuminates how this phenomenon developed and could evolve in the ongoing territorial dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom. The final chapter addresses the current process of globalization and internationalization of the conflict and how this era can lead to new uncertain scenarios.

1.2 Previous literature.

Any effective analysis for crisis prevention is intended to respond an apparent simple question: what are the proximate or direct causes that provoke it (Ackermann 2003; 342). In a realist framework, international conflict stems from the clashing national security interests of countries, and the military strength of states is the critical determinant of their relative influence and power. In this theoretical approach domestic political factors may not have a systematic or powerful effect on the security policy choices of state leaders (Huth 2009; 16).

A large body of theoretical and empirical work, however, has pointed out the weaknesses of a realist approach to explaining international conflict and the security policy choices of states. These works can be categorized as challenging realism from the perspective of the important role that international institutions or domestic politics play in shaping the foreign policy behavior of states. Domestic politics approach has presented quite convincing evidence of the weaknesses of strait realism. Nevertheless, critics of realism have not made a persuasive case that a purely domestic politics approach to theorizing is superior (Huth 2009; 16).

My contention is, as Huth (2009) puts forward, that powerful explanations of international conflict behavior cannot be derived from theoretical models that fail to consider the simultaneous impact of both domestic and international-level variables (Huth 2009; 7). Prior scholarship has demonstrated quite convincingly that either approach by itself can provide only partial explanations of the causes of international conflict and the security policy decisions of state leaders. And, as shown in **Table 1**, usually neglected triggering issues could also be considered of analytical relevance when it comes to territorial disputes (Huth 2009; 7).

Nevertheless, most studies on the causes of the Malvinas/ Falklands War have been autobiographical, deliberately fragmentary and devoid of any attempt of systematic analysis (Lebow 1983; Femenia 1996; McClure 2004; Oakes 2006; Zarza 2010; Levy & Vakili 2014). Simultaneously, the logic and assumptions underlying each of these have not been clearly articulated or fully developed, and, as a result, it has been quite difficult to assess their relative explanatory power.

Table 1. Causes and characterization (domestic, international and territorial)

Domestic factors	International context	Issues at stake
Prior militarized disputes	Balance of military forces	Strategic location of territory
Democratic norms of challenger	Challenger dispute involvement with others	Ties to bordering minority
	Stalemate in negotiations	Political unification

Target attempt to change status quo	Economic value of territory
Defeat in armed conflict for challenger	
Deterrent alliance ties of target	
Common security ties	

Source: Huth (2009; 104).

a. Hypothesis on the domestic context.

Domestic factors underlie two prominent narratives for Argentina's instigation of the Malvinas/Falklands War. The first, the *diversionary-war* thesis, argues the Argentine invasion was the last strategy of a contested military regime. Rising unpopularity at home, so the story goes, drove the military junta to seek a rally round-the-flag effect to boost its domestic legitimacy (Schenoni, Braniff, and Battaglino (2019; 1). Contemporary analysis tends to view the invasion as a scapegoat for the military regime in order to bolster nationalism throughout Argentine society and divert attention away from the Junta's failing national reorganization plan (Femenia 1996; McClure 2004; Oakes 2006; Levy & Vakili 2014).

At least two sets of facts make of this version a conceivable argument: the poor performance and lack of legitimacy of the Junta by 1981 and the effect the invasion did produce in the Argentine society. The regime, initially successful in its plan to reorganize Argentine society to reclaim its "greatness", had fallen on its face. Opposition to the

regime was increasing and becoming more public and, in the meantime, the economy had been collapsing (McClure 2004; 6). This was in stark contrast to the post-invasion experience, when a feeling of euphoria, unity and nationalism painted of blue and white the whole country (McClure 2004; 6).

For some other authors, however, it seems troublesome to believe the regime would have finally worried about the people's thoughts when this has never occurred before. As McClure explains (2004) "arguing that the military sought to divert attention from poor economic conditions in 1982 when it ignored public complaints in 1976 is not plausible" (McClure 2004; 6). It is true that many factors had changed over the years, the author holds, but the fact that the Junta has always shown unconcerned with public opinion or issues of legitimacy has remain invariable. Given that it was a highly repressive authoritarian administration, it had no need to reach a consensus among the Argentines (McClure 2004; 6).

The second narrative, the *miscalculation thesis*, is built over a dual fallacy: Argentina's exaggerated expectation of a forced negotiation and the British underestimation of Argentines capabilities (Lebow 1983; McClure 2004). The former illusion encouraged the Argentine Junta, dissatisfied with the progress of negotiations, to seek to resolve the question of sovereignty once and for all by force while the latter made British policymakers unresponsive to warnings of invasion (Lebow 1983; 5). Argentina's leaders had no desire to provoke a war but rather expected the Thatcher Government to retreat when Argentine marines occupied Port Stanley and Great Britain failed to develop a strategic rationale for deterrence on time (Lebow 1983; 30).

In this sense, the Malvinas/ Falklands war was a response miscalculation error on both sides, following the patterns of a *brinkmanship crises*¹. As Lebow (1983) indicates in such confrontations the initiator is not attempting to start a war but rather to achieve specific political objectives by means of coercion (Lebow 1983; 29). Accurate predictions of state behavior are not lineal, proponents of this thesis argue, and this was a clear example of the difficulty on navigating the fog and friction of foreign policy (Schenoni, Braniff, and Battaglini 2019; 1). Therefore, one could conceive the war over the Malvinas/Falklands as the result of imperfect information between the parties.

b. Hypothesis on the international context.

Arquilla and Rasmussen (2001) have recognized the need of further explanation in their intention to clarify the outbreak of the Malvinas/ Falklands war. They advance an alternative to existing theories that suggest a substantial shift in *relative power* had taken place, giving Argentina, for the first time in its history, a reasonable chance of winning a battle. Conventionally, the combatants were closely matched in terms of usable options, suggesting that the Argentine decision to fight was actually the result of a clear-headed calculation by the members of the Junta (Arquilla & Rasmussen 2001; 754).

As records show, between 1972 and 1981 Argentine defence spending doubled despite generally straitened economic circumstances, while British military expenditures remained virtually flat. More importantly, Argentina's growth was focused on building the kinds of capabilities that would be most useful in achieving regional mastery of the

¹ Lebow (1983) defines brinkmanship as “a confrontation in which one state knowingly challenges an important commitment of another with the expectation that its adversary will back down when challenged” (Lebow 1983; 29). According to this definition, brinkmanship succeeds only if the initiator achieves his goals without provoking war.

South Atlantic. Meanwhile, besides being the fifth most heavily armed power in the world, Britain had to deal with the threats of the Soviet Union so force projection over great distances was questionable. For Arquilla and Rasmussen (2001) the victory was not given (Arquilla and Rasmussen 2001; 755).

In sharply contrast, Schenoni, Braniff, and Battaglini (2019) picture the Argentina of the late seventies and early eighties as a country in decline when compared with its neighbors. Similar nations such as Brazil or Mexico were growing their material capacities, while smaller ones including Chile reducing the gap. In a listing about the world's biggest economies, Argentina went from the 8th position to the 22nd (Schenoni, Braniff, and Battaglini 2019; 142). In this sense the authors understand the decline as the crucial factor for the military -who had a strong nationalistic character- to adopt a framework of loss, invest in arms and finally start a fight (Schenoni, Braniff, and Battaglini 2019; 140).

As a matter of fact, International Relations theories dealing with the effects of power shifts in interstate war have proposed that declining states are more war prone than average (Schenoni, Braniff, & Battaglini 2019; 3). Its origins go at least as far back as Thucydides, who famously offered a powerful insight: "it was the rise of Athens, and the fear that this inspired in Sparta, that made war inevitable" (Thucydides 2019; 3). As Graham (2015) puts forward the Thucydides Trap stresses the attendant dangers when a rising power rivals a ruling power (Graham 2015; 4). This proposition has been applied to major and minor states alike suggesting that regional powers respond to decline as great powers do (Schenon, Braniff, & Battaglini 2019; 4). We therefore consider it a potential relevant factor to clear up the Argentinean behavior.

c. Hypothesis on the issues at stake.

In contrast with the preceding hypotheses, relatively little has been written that treats territory as a basic cause of conflict (Huth 2009; 8). Somewhat, as territorial disputes are often the underlying source of conflict, these tend to be treated as a constant feature of international politics instead of an explanatory variable. Accordingly, some analysts believe that the presence and characteristics of territorial disputes have limited power to elucidate when and why state leaders make a choice towards an aggressive stance. From this perspective we should then expect state leaders to initiate and resolve territorial disputes as a tactical response to more pressing foreign and domestic issues (Huth 2009; 8).

Even when the issues at stake are treated as an explanatory variable, the major-power bias in the literature leads these studies to conceptualize issues at stake in terms of reputations for resolve, the credibility of commitments to allies, or political and military leadership in the international system. Following Huth (2009) when the issues at stake are analyzed in less abstract terms, one should expect that territorial disputes are prone to higher levels of conflict than those centered around economic or ideological issues (Huth 2009; 9).

In regard to the Malvinas/ Falklands War, and in contrast with Argentinean scholars and politicians, British historians have tended to discount their nations interest in oil as a factor of dispute (Livingstone 2020; 131). Although there is no much research that causally links natural resources to international politics as a possible reason of the confrontation, Del Pezzo (2019) provides an interesting account about the War as a result of an *intra-imperial competition* over oil. The author shows how the presence of oil in the archipelago produced an interest on the United States, which translated into an

encouragement towards the dictatorship with the intention of recovering the Malvinas/Falklands, but that clashed with those of the United Kingdom (Del Pezzo 2019; 7).

In particular, there was an agreement of mutual convenience with Reagan's administration, but its goal to obtain access to oil deposits in the islands was strained by British interests in maintaining a relevant defensive role in the region given the soviet threat. And Argentina, under the Ministry of Economy Martinez de Hoz, was willing to negotiate with the British in exchange of a joint exploitation of resources. This is the reason why del Pezzo (2019) identifies an intra-imperial competition: Argentina would have tried almost simultaneously to obtain benefits from London and Washington, but both agreements were mutually exclusive (Del Pezzo 2019; 13).

Suenson (2017) provides a similar analysis, but frames it in the *geopolitics of oil*. The author suggests that the Malvinas/Falklands war was a conflict for the control of the existing reservoirs on the islands. He explains that natural resources have always had a strategic role for the growth of nations, but that oil itself has become the most important primary energy - "the fuel of capitalism". Its access then transcends a pure economic rational of oil as a commodity to be understood as a source of conflict in the global dispute for power. The geopolitics of oil are then seen as an objective for nations to control both their means of production, as well as those of other countries, in an intent to increase they wealth and power (Suenson 2017; 4).

Table 2. Identified causes of Malvinas/ Falklands war.

Domestic factors	International context	Issues at stake
Diversionary-war thesis	Changing power dynamics	Natural resources

Source: own elaboration table.

d. The need of a global theory.

Certainly, more comprehensive approaches have been put forward. Paul Huth (2009) for instance has provided an extensive approach to answer questions such as why some territorial disputes are characterized by high levels of military confrontation and why some states seek a negotiated settlement through compromise and conciliation. Similarly, Vasquez and Valeriano (2010) have created a typology of wars based on their multicausality. While Dominguez and Mares (2003) have developed a regional comparative account for understanding boundary and territorial disputes in the Caribbean and South America.

But even those who have noted the advantages of globalizing theories, have done so with regressions or comparisons between a few cases. As Ragin (1998) explains social scientists usually face a fundamental dilemma when they conduct social research (Ragin 1998; 105). On the one hand, they might highlight complexity of social phenomena and provide in-depth case studies that are considerate of the subject matter's distinctiveness. On the other hand, they might record trends that are consistent across numerous cases and draw broad, homogenizing conclusions (Ragin 1998; 105). Quantitative studies have been inconclusive, based on correlations and non-relationships, while the others have fallen back on problematic generalizations (Rihoux y Ragin 2008; ix).

Therefore, consideration should also be given to using a method that preserves the essential character of the case studies in a technique with a major N. Such formalization

has been proposed for the first time by Ragin (1987) as the comparative analysis of casual configurations (QCA). QCA's over-arching ambition is as Ragin (1987) puts forward to "integrate the best features of the case-oriented approach with the best features of the variable-oriented approach" (Ragin 1987; 84). While most aspects of the method require familiarity with cases, it is capable of pinpointing decisive cross-case patterns (Rihoux 2013; 234).

By way of illustration, Valeriano and Marin (2010) have elaborated a QCA to observe the different pathways to war, rather than the correlations associated developed by the widely recognized steps-to-war theory (Valeriano & Marin 2010; 1). But even if QCA has been used for theoretical analysis on the causes of war, research has been sparse and narrow in scope, especially about the Malvinas/ Falklands dispute (see **Table 2** for full references). The objective of this paper is then to advance not only in the understanding of the dynamics that led to the conflict, but also develop a more integrated approach to theory building by producing a body of knowledge to be applied to many instances ².

1.3 Theoretical Framework.

The puzzle is to develop a further comprehension on the Malvinas/ Falkland's dispute while trying to differentiate between the combinations of conditions promoting stable relations and those that can end up in an aggressive manner. At this point, the central argument of this work is that there may be a set of necessary and sufficient conditions (domestic, international, by issue) that make military conflict a real possibility in the

² As Wacker (1998) puts forward "good theory-building research's purpose is to build an integrated body of knowledge to be applied to many instances by explaining who, what, when, where, how and why certain phenomena will occur" (Wacker 1998; 371).

islands. However, in order to be specified, it requires to evaluate the existing theories and causal mechanisms established by the literature.

Based on our previous analysis, we consider the most revised hypothesis around (a) democratic norms of the challenger, (b) prior militarized conflicts, (c) balance of military capabilities, (d) dispute involvement with other states and (e) strategic location and economic value of territory.

H1: Democratic norms of challenger. There is an inverse relationship between how democratic the challenger is and the level of diplomatic and military pressure applied by a challenger against a target over disputed territory. The argument is that as political institutions become more democratic in a country, political leaders are less likely to resort to the threat or use of coercion and violence to resolve domestic political conflict. Instead, we should expect that leaders would favor hard-nosed bargaining and compromise on disputed issues (Huth 2009; 62).

H2: Prior militarized disputes. The domestic political consequence of a prior history of disputes and armed conflict with the target is that political leaders within the challenger will feel less able to be accommodating toward the target and to avoid open confrontation. As a result, higher levels of diplomatic and military pressure can be expected as well as a reluctance to offer concessions in order to settle the dispute (Huth 2009; 60).

H3: Balance of military forces. There is a positive relationship between the balance of conventional military forces and the level of diplomatic and military pressure applied by a challenger against a target over disputed territory. It follows then that challenger states with greater relative capabilities are more likely to initiate territorial disputes based on higher expectations of achieving their territorial goals, and more likely to engage in higher

levels of coercive pressure in an attempt to force concessions from the target or to take control of disputed territory (Huth 2009; 54).

H4: Challenger dispute involvement with other states. There is an inverse relationship between a challenger's involvement in political-military disputes with other states and the level of diplomatic and military pressure applied by a challenger against a target over disputed territory. If the challenger is engaged in conflicts with other states, it is less likely to be in a strong position to apply military pressure against a target due to the fact that it has already committed or intends to commit some of its available resources to a dispute with another adversary. As a result, the bargaining position of the challenger should be weakened, and thus the probability of the challenger achieving its territorial goals should decrease. The challenger should then avoid escalation of an ongoing dispute with the target and consider a settlement with the target (Huth 2019; 54).

H5: Strategic location or economic value. There is a positive relationship between the strategic location of bordering territory and the location of known natural resources of economic value within bordering territory and the level of diplomatic and military pressure applied by a challenger over disputed territory. The logic of these hypotheses is that control over strategically located territory should be of central concern to state leaders since both domestic political as well as military security payoffs can be achieved. Given these potential benefits, leaders should then be more resolute when involved in disputes over such valuable territory, to escalate such disputes to higher levels of conflict (Huth 2019; 50).

Purposely, the object under study is territorial disputes. Broadly defined, a *territorial dispute* involves either a disagreement between states over where their common homeland or colonial border should be fixed, or, more fundamentally, the dispute entails one country contesting the right of another country even to exercise sovereignty over

some or all of its homeland or colonial territory (Huth 2009; 19). Within the United Nations framework, the “Question of the Malvinas/Falkland’s Islands” refers to the dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the sovereignty of the Malvinas/Falklands Islands, South Georgia, South Sandwich and the surrounding maritime areas (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto Argentina, 2023).

Theoretically, the approach addresses the behavior of the *challenger* in a dispute. The reason behind this choice lies in the challenger’s character, as their actions and choices constitute the root causes of conflict and accommodation over disputed territory. It is the challenger that issues a claim to territory, decides whether to pursue it by force or to seek a settlement, while the target responds to these actions. Thus, a theoretical analysis of the escalation and peaceful resolution of territorial disputes that focuses on the proactive state should provide substantial insight into their dynamics (Huth 2019; 33).

The underlying assumption is that the unitary actor will make a rational calculation of policy choices and select the option that maximizes the expected gains or minimizes the expected losses. Following Huth (2009) in this paradigm of *rational choice*, an explanation for a challenger state's actions revolves around responding the following questions: What is the probability of altering the territorial status quo by diplomacy and military pressure? What is the utility to altering or accepting the existing status quo? (Huth 2009; 38). Naturally, this presumption does not imply that the challenger evaluates a whole list of options or has full knowledge of all the costs and benefits of the alternatives (Huth 2009; 36).

By definition, *militarized interstate disputes* “are united historical cases of conflict in which the threat, display or use of military force short of war by one-member state is explicitly directed towards the government, official representatives, official forces, property, or territory of another state” (Jones 1996; 163). These disputes, the description

goes, include incidents ranging in intensity from threats of using force to actual combat and mostly begin and end as one-on-one confrontations. Negotiated settlement will be the case of termination of conflict and rivalry between states, usually bounded by a peace agreement.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Territorial disputes in Latin America.

Territorial disputes in Latin America are not an exclusive phenomenon, but for many an anomalous issue³. There are reasons to believe that its triggers and evolution are determined by factors unique to the region (Dominguez and Mares 2003; Terradas 2021). In this sense, no clear pattern associates the existence of a boundary conflict with a decreasing level of economic cooperation or human development or with democratic instability. After all, as Terradas (2021) insists, an anomaly remains an unexplained occurrence until the elements that may have given rise to certain exceptional conditions are properly identified and studied (Terradas 2021; 7).

Beyond the analytical complexity, there appears to be at least some consensus: Latin America has a history of violent past related to boundary and territorial disputes, but it has been replaced by a status quo of apparent generalized peace. War broke out over territorial issues in 1969 between El Salvador and Honduras, in 1982 between Argentina

³ David McIntyre (1995), for example, argues that South America is especially anomalous because according to the common wisdom of International Relations theory, the internal characteristic of South American states should have made them prone to war. The states should have been war-prone because they had low levels of economic interdependence; were generally undemocratic; had unstable regimes; and had a lack of civilian control over their militaries (Terradas 2021; 18).

and the United Kingdom, and in 1995 between Ecuador and Peru. The next most severe disputes short of war also featured territorial or boundary causes: near-war between Argentina and Chile in 1978, tense relations between Chile, on the one hand, and Bolivia and Peru, on the other, and a naval clash between Colombia and Venezuela in 1987 (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 18).

What's more, the conflicts between some Latin American and Caribbean countries had an impact in the broader international relations within the Americas. English speaking nations have defended the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize and Guyana, while engaging in tensions with Guatemala and Venezuela. During the 1969 war between Honduras and El Salvador, the great promise of a Central American Common Market collapsed. In general, integration efforts since have stumbled due to the increased frequency and seriousness of their interstate disputes concerning boundaries and territorial matters (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 19).

In parallel to all this violent past, international standards now define the region as a *zone of peace* where war and inter-state armed conflict have largely disappeared (Terradas 2021; 1). Latin America is in fact now often hailed as the most peaceful region in the world. Typically, Latin Americans do not fear an attack from their neighbors; do not conceive that their nations can enter into war with each other and are shocked when inter-state violence breaks out on their borders (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 13). This state of affairs is grounded on multiple claims, from the creation of a balance of power for deterrence, the decision of the United States to step out and a relative insulation from the global system (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 20).

A fourth source of war containment is recognized to be institutional and ideological. The legal procedure of *uti possidetis juris* through which states won the right to keep what the predecessor colony had possessed; international mediation by willing countries or subsets

of countries; the creation of formal inter-American institutions (Organization of American States and the Inter-American Peace Committee); and the persistence of an ideology of shared Latin Americanism (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 25). These ideas and institutions are similar to what Mark Zacher has called the *territorial integrity norm*⁴ yet they appeared sooner than in Western Europe or the international system at large (Zacher 2001; 25).

But while the likelihood of war has declined, ten of the sixteen territorial disputes have remained opened. As Dominguez and Mares (2003) suggest the reasons are varied, but many have been reformulated in the context of changes within the international maritime law and new technological advances (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 26). This is particularly true in those disputes concerned on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (1982) which extended the zones of economic and environmental jurisdiction out to two hundred miles, exerting influence on the developments of the exploitation of resources. Some others have also been activated as a by-product of decolonization, such as that between Venezuela and Guyana or Guatemala and Belize (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 26).

Nevertheless, several nineteenth-century disputes still exist today, displaying path-dependent characteristics typical of boundary disputes across the globe. Such endurance could be explained by geography, to the extent that certain conditions such as tropical rainforest have made boundary delineation more challenging. The story of war resurgence, particularly between Ecuador and Peru, has been laced with inaccurate maps. Another factor is the disruption of procedures that could have resulted in permanent

⁴ Mark W. Zacher defines the territorial integrity norm as “the growing respect for the proscription that force should not be used to alter interstate boundaries” (Zacher 2001; 215).

settlements, such as the United States military occupation in Nicaragua (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 26).

2.2 Methodology.

Despite the decline in the phenomenon of war, the fact that most military confrontations in Latin America have been a product of territorial disputes highlights a less likely, but equally alarming, possibility. In this sense, the search for the combinations of conditions that could lead to conflict is not only valid, but necessary in a region where disputes over territory have not disappeared. Qualitative Comparative Analysis (csQCA) is the tool that allows us to exercise *configurational thinking* and identify combinations of conditions capable of generating the same result (Rihoux y Ragin 2008; x). **Table 3** summarizes the variables and indicators to be employed in this analysis.

In recent years, an increasing proportion of social scientists have been opting for multiple case studies as their methodology for research. As Rihoux (2006) states “the explicitly comparative design is gaining momentum” (Rihoux 2006; 680). Such philosophical determination has to do with the academic pursuit of a dual –and seemingly contradictory– goal. On the one hand, the desire to gather in-depth insight in the different cases and capture their complexity. On the other hand, the wish to produce some level of generalization (Rihoux 2006; 680).

From this perspective, csQCA embodies some key strengths of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. It is a holistic approach, in which each individual case is viewed as a complex entity that should not be overlooked during the course of the analysis; but also admits the analysis of numerous cases, which is seldom done in case-oriented studies. Moreover, its key operations rely on Boolean algebra, which requires that each case be

reduced to a series of variables (conditions and an outcome). Hence, as an analytical approach the csQCA allows to identify parsimonious causal regularities, replication and testing, a key element in the constitution of scientific knowledge (Rihoux 2006; 682).

Since csQCA –unlike conventional statistical methods- is based on the analysis of relationships and not correlations, it is effective for the study of specific phenomena in particular regions or similar countries (Rihoux y Ragin 2008; ix). Considering that the objective is to study Latin American territorial disputes that derived in military conflict or negotiated settlements, the evaluated cases will be extracted from the systematization made by Huth (2009) and include the following dyadics: ARG vs CH, ARG vs UK, ARG vs URU, ECU vs PER, HON vs USA, HON vs SAL, PAN vs USA, GUA vs UK/ BLZ, NTH/ SUR vs UK, VEN vs UK/ GUY.

At the same time, territorial disputes will be dichotomized according to their outcome, that is, whether they lead to military conflict (1) or a negotiated settlement (0). As scholars explain, dichotomous csQCA is more especially made to deal with Small-N scenarios, typically less than thirty or forty cases, with a major focus on case-based knowledge (Rihoux 2006; 686). In the present analysis, according to both the main literature and data available, seventeen military conflicts and six negotiated settlements are identified. This does not imply that coverage is unquestionable in scope, as identical cases or those without data availability are not considered, but relevant for our purpose ⁵.

With the aim of generating solid inferences about territorial disputes in Latin America in general, and the Malvinas/ Falklands islands in particular, results will be complemented with a *process tracing analysis*. Process tracing involves the causal investigation of

⁵ With the aim of avoiding a selection bias, we employ what Mill denominated the indirect difference method. Under this strategy, both positive and negative cases are selected, what allows to observe variation in the dependent variable (Perez Liñan 2009; 8).

events developed over time (Collier 2011: 2). In this sense, it resembles the historical narrative, but with an analytical twist that links the results with the explanations through the causal mechanisms. The event under study will be the Malvinas/ Falklands War and the process tracing method will allow to recognize how the identified conditions are articulated in a causal mechanism that produced it.

Table 3. Variables, indicators and dichotomized conditions.

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Dichotomized condition</i>
<i>X1</i>	DIC Democratic norms of challenger	Freedom status of challenger	0: Free 1: Non-free/ Partly free
<i>X2</i>	PRIOR Prior militarized disputes	Total number of militarized disputes between challenger and target	0: No 1: Yes
<i>X3</i>	BALANCE		0: Weaker

	Balance of military forces	Number of men under arms of challenger	1: Stronger
<i>X4</i>	DISP.INVOLV Challenger dispute involvement with other states	Territorial disputes in each year that the challenger was engaged in with states other than the target	0: No 1: Yes
<i>X5</i>	LOCATION Strategic location or resources	Location (a) in close proximity to rich fishing grounds or seabed minerals and deposits; (b) in close proximity to major shipping lanes or choke points of narrow straits; (c) provides an outlet to the sea for an otherwise landlocked Country..	0: No 1: Yes

2.3 Results.

The csQCA⁶ reveals the distribution of military conflicts and negotiated settlements among Latin American territorial disputes. The seventeen military conflicts translate into twelve configurations out of the thirty-two possible (2^5 given that there are 5 causal conditions). It is also noticeable that only two rows (12 and 23) have a consistency below 1. Consistency is the proportion of cases in a row that report the same result and, in studies of N-small (10 to 50 cases and 4 to 8 configurations) a value of 1 or very close to this is required for the recognition of causal links (Greckhamer, Misangyi y Fiss 2013; 54).

Table 4. Truth table of Boolean configurations.

	DIC	STRONGER	INVOL	STRATEG	PRIOR	OUT	n	incl	PRI
4	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	1.000	1.000
2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
3	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
15	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
18	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
22	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
24	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
29	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
30	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
32	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
12	0	1	0	1	1	C	3	0.667	0.667
23	1	0	1	1	0	C	3	0.333	0.333
6	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1.000	1.000
14	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1.000	1.000
16	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1.000	1.000

⁶ All calculations were implemented with the package QCA 2.4 of R.

cases

- 4 Netherlands/Suriname vs UK/Guyana II, Guatemala vs UK/
Belize I, Guatemala vs UK/ Belize II
- 2 Ecuador vs Peru II
- 3 Netherlands/Suriname vs UK/Guyana I
- 15 Argentina vs Uruguay I
- 18 Ecuador vs Peru I
- 22 Argentina vs Chile II
- 24 Argentina vs UK II
- 29 Honduras vs El Salvador
- 30 Argentina vs Chile I
- 32 Argentina vs Uruguay II
- 12 Venezuela vs UK/Guyana I, Venezuela vs UK/Guyana II, Guatemala
vs UK/ Belize III
- 23 Argentina vs UK I, Honduras vs US, Panama vs US
- 6 Honduras vs El Salvador II
- 14 Argentina vs Chile III
- 16 Argentina vs Uruguay III

Contradictory simplifying assumptions (CSA) are those for which we find a mixture of positive and negative cases, and therefore the consistency index is greater than 0 but less than 1. For example, as appears in **Table 4**, by configuration 1010, Argentina and United Kingdom were involved in a military conflict while both Honduras and Panama signed peace with the United States (the consistency index reaches a value of $2/3$ or 0.667). By configuration 010110 Venezuela and UK/Guyana entered in military conflict twice, while Guatemala and UK/ Belize reached an agreement (with consistency of $1/3$ or 0.33). For some, finding contradictory configurations at early stages of the analysis is actually a constructive instance, as it forces the researcher to gain more knowledge from the empirical cases (Rihoux 2006; 692).

In any case, as contradictions go against the underlying principles of the methodology and make the research results invalid, studies using QCA should control for CSA and solve them if they have emerged (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 1). Yamasaki and Rihoux (2009) describe the protocol for solving CSA as follows. After having detected the presence of CSA, each remainder that constitutes such a contradiction is replaced by a fictive case with the same combination of conditions and an explicitly attributed outcome value (0 or 1), depending on the most plausible outcome based on in-depth empirical knowledge and theoretical insight (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 8).

Even if creating fictive cases and adding them to the truth table could remain a heuristic intervention, a widely asserted limitation to this procedure has been the fact that reminders start to be treated as real cases in the truth table. In consequence, the original remainders do not only lose their empirically empty status, but also their specific function as remainder in calculating a possibly more parsimonious solution. A second unfortunate repercussion of this procedure is the fact that QCA software will not display the fictive cases as simplifying assumptions in the output, as the fictive cases are considered to be empirical cases (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 11).

We decide then to follow Hesters & Delreux (2010) best practices, advocating that after deciding on the most plausible outcome one should explicitly assign the plausible outcome to the configuration, only in the minimization process of the non-plausible outcome, so where these remainders should *not* be included (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 12). This implies the construction of two different truth tables (**Table 4a and 4b**)— for the 0 and one for the 1 minimization respectively. In the truth table used for the minimization of the 0-outcomes, only the fictive cases with a plausible 1- outcome are included next to the empirical cases. Likewise, in the truth table used for the minimization of the 1-

outcomes, only the fictive cases with a plausible 0-outcome are included next to the empirical cases.

4a. Minimization of 0-outcomes after CSA have been identified

	DIC	STRONGER	INVOL	STRATEG	PRIOR	OUT	n	incl	PRI
4	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	1.000	1.000
12	0	1	0	1	1	1	3	1.000	1.000
2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
3	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
15	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
18	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
22	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
24	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
29	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
30	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
32	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
23	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0.000	0.000
6	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0.000	0.000
14	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0.000	0.000
16	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0.000	0.000

cases

- 4 Netherlands/Suriname vs UK/Guyana II,Guatemala vs UK/ Belize I,Guatemala vs UK/ Belize II
- 12 Venezuela vs UK/Guyana I,Venezuela vs UK/Guyana II,Guatemala vs UK/ Belize III
- 2 Ecuador vs Peru II
- 3 Netherlands/Suriname vs UK/Guyana I
- 15 Argentina vs Uruguay I
- 18 Ecuador vs Peru I
- 22 Argentina vs Chile II

24 Argentina vs UK II
 29 Honduras vs El Salvador
 30 Argentina vs Chile I
 32 Argentina vs Uruguay II
 23 Honduras vs US,Panama vs US
 6 Honduras vs El Salvador II
 14 Argentina vs Chile III
 16 Argentina vs Uruguay III

4b. Minimization of 1-outcomes after CSA have been identified

	DIC	STRONGER	INVOL	STRATEG	PRIOR	OUT	n	incl	PRI
4	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	1.000	1.000
12	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	1.000	1.000
2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
3	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
15	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
18	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
22	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
24	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
29	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1.000	1.000
30	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
32	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.000	1.000
23	1	0	1	1	0	0	3	1.000	1.000
6	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1.000	1.000
14	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1.000	1.000
16	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1.000	1.000

cases

4 Netherlands/Suriname vs UK/Guyana II,Guatemala vs UK/ Belize
 I,Guatemala vs UK/ Belize II
 12 Venezuela vs UK/Guyana I,Venezuela vs UK/Guyana II
 2 Ecuador vs Peru II
 3 Netherlands/Suriname vs UK/Guyana I

15	Argentina vs Uruguay I
18	Ecuador vs Peru I
22	Argentina vs Chile II
24	Argentina vs UK II
29	Honduras vs El Salvador
30	Argentina vs Chile I
32	Argentina vs Uruguay II
23	Argentina vs UK I, Honduras vs US, Panama vs US
6	Honduras vs El Salvador II
14	Argentina vs Chile III
16	Argentina vs Uruguay III

As Hesters and Delreux (2010) highlight “in contrast with the conventional technique, the new technique respects the distinction between empirically empty and empirically represented combinations of conditions” (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 13). This is because it only intervenes in the analyses in which one does not want them to be taken into consideration, rather than in the analyses where they should serve as a remainder. The output then includes a list of all the simplifying assumptions that were utilized in the Boolean minimization, being closer to the general principles of csQCA and thus a better procedure choice (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 13).

An additional consideration pertains to the choice regarding the appropriate specification of the frequency threshold for configurations inclusion in causal analyses. That is, csQCA maps all logically possible configurations as well as the full range of diversity of empirically existing configurations, and thus the researcher has to specify the minimum number of cases that must be observed for each configuration in order for it to be considered relevant for purposes of causal analysis of necessity and sufficiency. In the context of small-N studies, it is common to specify a minimum frequency of one or two cases, given the small number of cases and the exploratory nature of such research as well

as the researcher's intimate knowledge with the cases (Greckhamer, Misangyi & Fiss 2013; 66).

When all contradictions in the truth table are solved, the last step is to analyze them into a minimal formula through Boolean algebraic minimizations to reveal the regularities in the data. The goal of the csQCA procedure is to represent the whole of the empirical cases in the most parsimonious expression of the different causal paths leading to the outcome. The minimization of both truth tables produce a 'complex solution' of eight individual combinations of conditions, which are perfectly consistent (1) and cover the total range of the cases. To reduce the complexity of these results, we follow Ragin (2008) and derive the *intermediate solution* consisting in the most parsimonious expression of the different causal paths leading to the outcomes (Hesters & Delreux 2010; 6).

M1: $\sim\text{INVOL} + \text{DIC} * \text{PRIOR} + \text{STRONGER} * \sim\text{PRIOR} \leftrightarrow \text{Outcome}$

M1: $\text{INVOL} + \sim\text{DIC} * \sim\text{PRIOR} + \sim\text{STRONGER} * \text{PRIOR} \leftrightarrow \sim\text{Outcome}$

a. Military conflict.

The intermediate solution leading to the outcome military conflict can be understood as a configuration in which there is absence of involvement or a dictatorship with prior military conflict or one in which the dyadic doesn't have any military past but involves strong challenger. The rule for defining whether these are necessary conditions for explaining the phenomena is simple: if X is a necessary condition to Y, every instance of Y should show the presence of X (Pérez-Liñán 2010; 20). As **Table 5a** shows, the inclusion of the outcome in the causal conditions is distant to 1: 0.571 in $\sim\text{INVOL}$ being

the highest and meaning that the presence of the condition is needed almost as much as its absence.

Table 5a. Intermediate solution of necessity for the outcome: military conflict

		inc1N	RoN	COVN
1	~INVOL	0.571	1.000	1.000
2	DIC*PRIOR	0.357	1.000	1.000
3	STRONGER*~PRIOR	0.143	1.000	1.000
4	expression	1.000	1.000	1.000

However, if the lower the RoN score the more trivial a condition is, the results provide substantial insight regarding what conditions play an important role in the decisions of a challenger state to apply military pressure. Across domestic as well as international-level variables most configurations appear to work in the predicted direction. First, that a challenger is more likely to escalate against a target if it is not involved in territorial disputes with other states. If the challenger is engaged in conflicts with other states, it may be in a weaker position to apply military pressure against a target due to limited available resources (Huth 2009; 28).

In second place, that even though regime type does not appear as a necessary variable to explain the Outcome, the combination of dictatorship and military past seems relevant. One can expect a history of past military encounters to foster the strong nationalism through which military dictatorships arise and survive. Examples would include the dispute between Argentina and United Kingdom over the Malvinas/ Falklands islands

(1982) or that of Argentina and Chile for the Beagle Channel (1978) that almost ended in war. In both, the Proceso de Reorganización Nacional was ruling the challenger country. Finally, that without a military past the challenger engages in conflict if stronger than the adversary. The fact that a privileged balance of military forces by itself is not a necessary condition to commence a military conflict may be explained by the fact that the effects of military balance are, in fact, somewhat curvilinear. That is, very weak as well as very strong challengers are less likely to engage in high levels of escalation compared to challengers who are closer to parity in military capabilities. Very weak challengers lacked the military means to pose a credible threat to the target, while very strong challengers do not consider their vital security interest at stake so often did not resort to the use of force since vital security interests were unlikely to be at stake (Huth 2009; 114)

Tabla 5b. Intermediate solution of sufficiency for the outcome: military conflict

		inclS	PRI	covS	covU
1	~INVOL	1.000	1.000	0.571	0.500
2	DIC*PRIOR	1.000	1.000	0.357	0.286
3	STRONGER*~PRIOR	1.000	1.000	0.143	0.143
4	expression	1.000	1.000	1.000	-

Necessary conditions must be present for the outcome can occur, but their presence does not guarantee that of the outcome as well. A sufficient amount of fulfilled conditions always leads to the presence of the outcome, but the outcome can also occur in their absence. As appears in **Table 5b**, this is where the Proportional Reduction in

Inconsistency (PRI) measure comes into play, which is found in the output for the parameters of fit function. In our case, at the sufficiency relation for the presence of the output, the PRI score is equal to the maximum 1 therefore it can safely be concluded that these configurations $\sim$ INVOL, DIC*PRIOR and STRONGER* $\sim$ PRIOR are sufficient for explaining military conflict, and reject that these could be sufficient for a peaceful resolution.

b. Negotiated settlement.

The csQCA also allows us to study the absence of the outcome in relation to the variables proposed by the literature. In this section, we intend then to analyze the combinations of conditions by which a challenger state would seek the resolution of a territorial dispute by compromise. One of the most interesting findings is that this is a situation where a single condition is necessary for the outcome, with a complete inclusion of the set peaceful resolution into the causal condition INVOL. Therefore, an examination of **Table 6a** reveals general support for the hypothesis.

Tabla 6a. Intermediate solution of necessity for the outcome: negotiated settlement

		incIN	RoN	covN
1	INVOL	1.000	0.600	0.455
2	$\sim$ DIC* $\sim$ PRIOR	0.000	0.900	0.000
3	$\sim$ STRONGER*PRIOR	0.200	0.632	0.125
4	expression	1.000	0.200	0.294

However, this variable seems more trivial than the configuration $\sim \text{DIC} * \sim \text{PRIOR}$, meaning there are more cases when it is present, but the outcome does not happen. At this point, one can start drawing some relevant statements. First, no single variable (domestic or international) can account for the social phenomena under investigation. Second, even though most of the variables seem to act in the expected theoretical directions, they become less obvious when it comes to Latin American reality. The issues by stake don't seem to play any role in the systematic analysis. And most notably, regime type doesn't appear to be a guarantee to prevent peace or conflict.

In particular, although democracy may have many merits it does not guarantee peace in Latin America. For instance, Ecuador and Peru have engaged in fights during 1981 and 1995, in both cases under civilian constitutional presidents elected by the people. The two leaders used the unsolved conflict for their own political ends, to the point where democratic political processes were even seen as barriers to peace. Something similar occurred during Venezuela's 1982 presidential election campaign, when the incumbent party took advantage of the expiration of the Protocol of Port of Spain that had "frozen" Venezuela's dispute with Guyana to refurbish its nationalist credentials. And the list is long, one could still identify at least ten more other instances⁷ (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 29).

⁷ Dominguez and Mares (2003) enumerate the following cases: Guatemala and Belize, Guyana and Suriname, Venezuela and Guyana, Venezuela and Trinidad-Tobago, Venezuela and Colombia, Nicaragua and Colombia, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras, Honduras and El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala (Dominguez and Mares 2003; 29).

Tabla 6b. Intermediate solution of sufficiency for the outcome: negotiated

		settlement			
		incIS	PRI	covS	covU

1	INVOL	0.455	0.455	1.000	0.800
2	~DIC*~PRIOR	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
3	~STRONGER*PRIOR	0.125	0.125	0.200	0.000
4	expression	0.294	0.294	1.000	-

The analysis of sufficiency in **Table 6b** does not provide further insights. None of the combinations shows sufficient to explain why countries in the region reach negotiated settlements. These relative weak results open the door for potential future research. There are at least two elements that may need further approach in order to elaborate more comprehensive conclusions: the potential absence of enough empirical cases and/ or the absence of enough analytical variables.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 The Malvinas/ Falklands islands: more than just diddle-dee.

Malvinas/Falklands is an archipelago located in the South Atlantic, 550 km east of Argentinean Patagonia. It has an area of eleven thousand eight hundred km² and depends on it some desert islands, including South Georgia and Sandwich. The islands, blown by the South Atlantic winds, are veined by rocky outcrops and rock-runs, covered with white grass and a low shrub called by the islander's *diddle-dee*. They are typically windy, cold and rainy, but often illuminated by dazzling sunlight and pure air. Originally, they

supported only birds, including vast colonies of penguins, although now the almost three thousand population share the land with a huge population of sheep (Tato, Stanley, Dalla Fontana & McLaughlin 2023; 5).

On the other hand, the islands are of strategic and geopolitical importance. In the first place, the control of the islands has a strategic relevance in relation to the projection towards Antarctica. Not only because of its role as a base for assistance and resupply of expeditions heading the Antarctica continent, but, mainly because of the huge reserve of natural resources found in it: more than 80% of the world's fresh water, in addition to deposits of oil, gas, coal, gold, silver, uranium and iron. Antarctica also includes the substantial amount of biological diversity, organisms and microorganisms, of high value to the pharmaceutical industry (Schulz, Dupuy & Patronelli 2022; 277).

Following Middlebrook (2012) "what may be at stake in the South Atlantic is nothing less than who is going to be in the position to exploit the world's reserves of oil and minerals and the riches of the sea if the Antarctic Treaty—due to renewal or revision—should ever collapse" (Middlebrook 2012; 27). There could be as much oil, natural gas, coal and others minerals in that area as in any other part of the world. It is true that the cost of working these resources so far south and the political uncertainty about the area make such exploitation uneconomical at present time. But as reserves, particularly of oil, diminish in the more temperate climates, so then will be the cost of extraction in that area (Middlebrook 2012; 28).

In addition to controlling the South Atlantic fisheries and oil reserves, their location is crucial for interoceanic communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific (Tato, Stanley, Dalla Fontana & McLaughlin 2023; 5). In other words, the control of the archipelago not only represents an advance in terms of economic resources, but also makes it possible to know and potentially monitor commercial traffic between South

America and the rest of the world, as well as intelligence information regarding military maneuvers in the region (Schulz, Dupuy & Patronelli 2022; 276).

3.2 Malvinas/Falklands in historical perspective.

While the historical antecedents of the South Atlantic dispute derive most directly from the British expulsion of Argentine settlers from the Falklands in 1833, sovereignty disputes over the islands date from the early sixteenth century (Arquilla & Rasmussen 2001; 741). The time of their discovery is controversial, but there is a general consensus that their first inhabitants were Europeans during overseas expansion. The first colony established there (Port St. Louis) was founded by the French in 1764. Two years later the British established Port Egmont, which they abandoned in 1774. In 1770, France transferred the colony to Spain, which renamed it Puerto Soledad (Tato, Stanley, Dalla Fontana & McLaughlin 2023; 6).

Finally, with the fall of the Spanish empire in Latin America Argentina began to assert traditional Spanish claims. By application of the *uti possidetis iuris*, the islands became part of the newly independent territory, although the successive battles resulting from the state-building process weakened the effective control over the archipelago. In order to rectify this predicament, in 1820 the government of Buenos Aires took possession of it and began the commercial exploitation of the territory (Tato, Stanley, Dalla Fontana, & McLaughlin 2023; 6). To secure this sovereignty, Don Pablo Aregusti, was appointed resident authority in 1823. However, the underlying bases for development was a proprietary lease granted in 1828 to Louis Vernet, a French-born merchant who became naturalized in La Plata and was made “comandante de las Malvinas/ Falklands” (Gough 1990; 267).

The British diplomatic response in Buenos Aires was swift and forceful, fully backed by the British Foreign Office (Gough 1990; 267). Ultimately, a British expedition expelled the authorities of the United Provinces and settled on the islands. The seizure of 1833 was at least irregular, not only because of the destruction of Vernet's colony but also because it ignored the United Provinces' rights over the islands. The British asserted their control on the islands, not only on prior discovery and occupation, but also acquisitive prescription due to the continuous and effective occupation of the territories. Since then, this settlement remained under British authority, except for the seventy-four days of 1982 in Argentine hands (Tato, Stanley, Dalla Fontana, & McLaughlin 2023; 6).

From the perspective of international law, since 1946 the Malvinas/Falklands have been included in the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories and since 1964 its issue has taken part of the Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24). On the committee's recommendation, the UN General Assembly adopted the non-binding Resolution 2065 (XX) in which noted the existence of a sovereignty dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina over the Malvinas/ Falkland Islands and invited the parties to find a peaceful and definitive resolution. In recent years, the C-24 has adopted a commitment devoted to the dispute on an annual basis (Tudor 2022; 2).

The dispute has also been addressed by other international organizations such as the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Organisation of American States (OAS), Mercosur (or the Southern Common Market) and the Group of 77 and China. In reiterated opportunities, CELAC and Mercosur have expressed their strongly support for Argentina. The Group of 77 and China and OAS reaffirmed their view that Argentina and the UK resume negotiations on the issue. But at the end, the United Kingdom is not a member of these organizations, with the exception of OAS where it has observer status (Tudor 2022; 2).

In this sense, the United Kingdom's government argues that these partial statements do not reflect the islanders right to self-determination. As Jonathan Allen (2020), British Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (2017-2021), explained "United Kingdom's relationship with its Overseas Territories is a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to choose to remain British" (Allen 2020). This right of self-determination, they affirm, is supported in Article 1 of the two international covenants on human rights and the Charter of the United Nations. Therefore, the United Kingdom maintains no dialogue can take place unless the islanders so desire (Tudor 2022; 2).

Argentina, on the other hand, defends a position anchored in the historical experience and geographical proximity of the islands. The nation maintains that since its independence from Spain, from which it inherited the Malvinas/ Falklands, the country has exercised its sovereignty rights over the territory uninterruptedly. Accordingly, it points out the principle of self-determination cannot be applied by virtue of the specificity of the case, as the islanders had not been subjected to the alien subjugation, domination or exploitation by a colonial power. This argument is nourished by the fact that United Nations General Assembly expressly rejected to British attempts to incorporate this principle into a resolution (Tudor 2022; 3).

3.3 The War: a process tracing.

Like two bold men fighting over a comb (Middlebrook 2012; 28). That's how the world, more worried about the rise of the Cold War, sensed the outbreak of the battle over the small islands. How could two anticommunist western nations be fighting such anachronistic combat? (Razoux 2002; 9). But history proved it wrong: at the end, the

Malvinas/ Falkland's war became the only major naval air battle taking place since 1945 (Razoux 2002; 9). It was short, but long enough for Margaret Thatcher to transform the struggle into a myth of national rebirth and for the argentinians, even forty years later, to continue to experience the post-war echoes of this violent past (Lorenz 2022; 1).

The incident began in March 1982, with the unauthorized arrival of a group of Argentine scrap metal merchants to the islands of South Georgia. South Georgia, significantly largely as a base for the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) was then a Dependency of the Malvinas/ Falklands Islands. A few days later, the information that the British would confirm not only this presence on the territory but also the deployment of a substantial task force to sea, which was revealing of Argentineans intentions. Diplomatic attempts to get the invasion called off using the United States soon failed and on April 2 the invasion began (Freedman 2004; 1).

The operation, which have been dubbed Operative Blue and renamed Operation Rosario brought hope and euphoria between the Argentinean society (Benítez & Mónaco 2007; 20). Blue had been chosen because that was the color of the sky and the sea from where the invading troops descended upon the Malvinas/ Falklands. Rosario as symbolism from when creole and Spanish placed themselves under the patronage of the Virgin of Rosario to confront the invading English troops. The Junta, far from expecting the British to launch a full-scale counter-invasion, planned it as a *touch and go* short crisis in order to recover the islands (McClure 2004; 1).

But soon the Argentines illusion of supremacy would dissipate and after two months of fighting the islands would return under British control. The United Nations Security Council would grant permission, condemning the Argentine attack and endorsing the British right to self-defense. Thus the British government would open a land and naval battle, which would then involve the air force as well. The third and final phase was air-

ground and, after two and a half months of fighting, would grant them the ultimate victory. No other countries took part as belligerents in the war, but the United States became a third major participant, first through its intent to mediate between the parts and finally with its declared support for Britain (Badsey 2013; 142).

The human and material costs were high, but the war's aftermath exceeded the most illustrative immediate losses. Until the late eighties, diplomatic and economic relations were broken between the two countries. Measures taken by the British government included a freeze on Argentine assets in their banks, embargo of arms sales, suspension of export credit insurance and a ban on imports. Argentina also made a move, but was found in a weaker situation due to its acute financial and, again, political situation (Martin 1992; 149). If at the beginning of the conflict people were supporting the advance on the islands, by now the whole regime had fallen in its own trap. If the Junta thought of the war as the revival of its image, it had become its certificate of demise: at a very high cost, democracy was on its comeback (Rodriguez 2022; 10).

Another view of the long-term importance of the Falklands War was that it signaled a crucial turning point in the evolution of the Cold War. According to this perspective, the Soviet Union reconsidered the idea of challenging NATO after the British resolve in the face of the aggression, its surprisingly strong armed forces and the United States willingness to support a significant European ally besides the opportunity costs attached (Badsey 2013; 143). The way the British handled the aggression showed how much more capable and ready NATO is than many people expected.

Most importantly, as Mastny (1983) explains "the Falklands campaign vindicated the effectiveness of a compact, highly motivated, and well-equipped volunteer force - the kind of force that also the United States, but not the Soviet Union, relies upon" (Mastny 1983; 54). By this means, the British thus intensified uncertainty about the Soviet

capabilities vis-a-vis NATO which was enhanced by the Polish crisis. At the end, all this fostered deterrence and convinced the Soviet Union that nuclear dissuasion was not needed (Mastny 1983; 54).

a. Domestic causes

The tension surrounding control over the Falkland Islands had a long history of military conflict but peaked during a period of military dictatorship in Argentina (1976-83). During this period there were four designated presidents: Jorge Rafael Videla, Roberto Eduardo Viola, Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri and Reynaldo Benito Bignone. The Military Junta maintained as basic objectives of their National Reorganization Process: a) restore the essential values of the state; b) eradicate subversion; c) promote economic development; d) subsequently, to establish a democracy (Benítez & Mónaco 2007; 3). The generals believed in their messianic mission to save Argentina and in this context one should understand the ideological biases in their decision making (Lisińska 2019; 30).

When studying the domestic factors behind the choice of invading the islands, it is important to consider one tendency of the Argentine military resulting from its nationalist leanings. The generals view national causes, both domestic and abroad, as a means to justify its actions and self-legitimize the regime. If recovering the islands was what the Argentine society was claiming, the Junta would see as a duty to make it happen. Efforts aimed at resolving Argentina's territorial disputes were perceived as a means of demonstrating that the military government understood and acted upon the people's needs (Lisińska 2019; 36).

One should remember the attack on the Malvinas/ Falkland's occurred in a setting of governmental decline (Femenia 1996; McClure 2004; Oakes 2006; Levy & Vakili 2014). The military was facing a growing opposition, that culminated in one of the most brutal repressions in March 1982. In the economic aspect, since 1989 Argentina was in crisis (McClure 2004; 5). Despite the measures taken to end the import substitution model consolidated under Peronism, the inflationary process -far from calming down- continued and produced an Exchange rate overvaluation (Benítez & Mónaco 2007; 11). Under these circumstances, it is understandable that the population was upset with their performance. That the junta would seek a distraction seems to be a plausible argument (McClure 2004; 5).

A post-factum analysis reinforces the thesis of a government in the search for an improvement in public perception. It suffices to look at the massive demonstrations that took the streets and Plaza de Mayo after the invasion in support of what was interpreted as a patriotic act and reflected in a wave of blue and white flags. Even roads and their British reference names became a symbolic battlefield. Leaders of the major political parties sent delegations overseas to secure diplomatic backing for Argentina's position, so granting the regime their assent and active involvement in the war effort. McClure (2004) explains "the outpouring of popular support for the regime once the invasion had been completed was enormous, and unfortunately for the junta and for Argentina, unexpected" (McClure 2004; 5).

b. International causes

On the contrary, the international level showed suggestive changes for the regime. During 1981 Ronald Reagan assumed as the new Republican President of the United States. The

change in the new Administration projected an inverse foreign policy to that driven by the Carter administration. As Frausto (2016) refers “in contrast to Carter, Reagan embodied the romantic bravado of the old western cowboy. Where Carter stressed diplomacy and compromise, Reagan proposed peace through strength” (Frausto 2016; 10). Following this, where Carter saw violators of human rights, Reagan saw allies in the Cold War (Frausto 2016; 10).

Given the context, the relationship between the Reagan White House and the Argentine Junta flourished in a close anti-communist cooperation, mainly through Central and South America. Within a month into government, high-ranking Argentine’s and US officials embarked in several visits in order to achieve their respective agendas (Frausto 2016; 10). The dictators perceived this alliance as strong and unquestionable and probably assumed the United States would support their government unconditionally. As the Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs Nicanor Costa Méndez stated, the military believed that Argentina was too important for the United States to lose as a partner (Lisińska 2019; 34).

At the same time, there were numerous benefits for the South American country. The Carter Administration had lobbied to forbade military and foreign aid to strategically important regimes like Argentina. Reagan was not only advancing towards a closer cooperation in these sectors, but also offered the economic relief the regime was needing. However, the greatest benefit was probably that centered on the human rights issue, as the era in which Argentina was being pressured by the United Nations and other international organizations to improve its records was over (Frausto 2016; 50).

Accordingly, in the Junta’s strategic calculus, the United States would immediately align to their advance on the islands and, given this powerful support, Great Britain would cede sovereignty. At this moment, a more forceful approach was neither considered a choice

nor a need (Benítez & Mónaco 2007; 20). Even more, the Argentines were convinced that international law was also on their side, given the regularly call of the United Nations to negotiations on the issue of the Malvinas/ Falklands and the permanent refuse of the United Kingdom to engage in conversations (Lisińska 2019; 35). All of this would never happen.

Relations with neighboring countries which were not superpowers also influenced the outbreak of the war. Argentina had a long-running territorial dispute with Chile, with which it shares a long border, regarding the Beagle Channel and the sovereignty of the islands located therein. On occasion, the two sides clashed militarily (Yanagisawa 2016; 129). However, the British, unlike the Argentines, did not consider the Falklands to be a matter of great concern and were not willing to take the protests of a Latin American dictatorship, one accused of human rights violations, into consideration. Such an attitude only sought to encourage the Argentine military to consider alternative methods of resolving the ongoing territorial dispute (Lisińska 2019; 34).

A last argument for the Argentine military to take a more forceful approach to the Malvinas/ Falklands was probably the domestic situation in the United Kingdom. Margaret Thatcher's premiership commenced with significant political, social, and economic issues. The state was experiencing a recession, double-digit inflation, and nearly two million unemployed Britons. Support ratings for the government were at a low point, as Thatcher's policies evoked strong reactions from the most affected interest groups mainly the working class. What is more, reductions in military expenditures led to a visible decline in the British Armed Forces. At the beginning of the 1980s, many believed the United Kingdom had abandoned its status as a world leading power (Lisińska 2019; 34).

Meanwhile, the Argentine armed forces, with their 230.000 men, were the second army in Latin America. If their equipment was generally outdated, its men were motivated and fairly well trained. They had gained fame in the anti-guerrilla struggle. Contrary to what was claimed at the time, there was some relative balance of land and air forces, although the British had the naval advantage (Razoux 2002; 15). These circumstances allowed the Argentine dictators to draw two conclusions - firstly, that the military operation to reclaim the Falklands was feasible, and, secondly, that were it to be successful, the possibility of military response by the United Kingdom was very low (Lisińska 2019; Yanagisawa 2016).

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Forty years on: old dispute, new challenges.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the conflict over the sovereignty of the Malvinas/ Falklands, the islands of the South Atlantic and the surrounding maritime areas ceased to be just a problem between Argentina and the United Kingdom to become a regional and global cause. There may have been antecedents of this important global attraction of the Malvinas/ Falklands Question that date back to the UN 2065 resolution of 1965, in the face of the decolonization wave of the second half of the twentieth century, and the war in the South Atlantic in 1982, which had great Latin American solidarity towards the Argentine position and a great deal of United States aid to its Anglo-Saxon ally century (Bilmes 2021; 8). However, Bilmes (2021) explains how this gravitational pull was intensified by the global systemic crisis that emerged during the late 20th century (Bilmes 2021; 8).

Various notions have been proposed to characterize this process: *systemic chaos*, *historical-spatial transition*, *geopolitical transition* or *hegemonic transition* are some of them. All these underscore the situation of crisis and transition of the world system constituted by the Industrial Revolution Western powers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, under British hegemony, and post-Bretton Woods, under United States hegemony. Briefly, we can highlight a set of dimensions - the growing processes of relative multipolarity, the decline of US hegemony and the escalation of tensions between central and emergent poles of power, with the tendency to shift the “center of gravity” of the world economy and power from the West to the East (Bilmes 2021; 3).

In this setting, the struggle for hegemony has intensified. Given their geostrategic significance, the islands and maritime spaces of the Western South Atlantic and Antarctica became part of this game in the search of the reconfiguration of the world order (Bilmes 2021; 4). Meanwhile Argentina, and South America in general, have become a *visible face* of a story of dependency: in Petronelli’s (2022) words “an explicit and naked expression of colonialism in the 21st century and it clearly reveals the validity of the strategic disputes that our country is going through in the global stage” (Patronelli 2022; 3). From this perspective, the occupied territories by United Kingdom today constitute both relicts from a colonial past and a geostrategic imperative (Dupuy 2018; 13).

4.2 Possible future scenarios.

Today’s geopolitical climate starkly contrasts the authoritarian dictatorships of the Cold War era, but does not provide additional certainties about what to expect in the future. We have previously observed that democracy does not guarantee peace in Latin America and if a negotiated settlement could be reached considering Argentina’s weaker position

and history of failure, however, *multipolarity* could now be affecting the *balance of power*. In practice, this expresses airs of opportunity for the Argentineans to impose its position, by means of rapprochement with the European Union, as well as the establishment of international alliances with Eastern actors that strive to increase their situation of relative power. But naturally, this could only be achieved if it manages to deploy a comprehensive policy (in external, diplomatic, legislative, economic matters) to build favorable scenarios (Bilmes 2021; 15).

On one hand, the British withdrawal from the European Union led to multiple tensions concerning the islands, notably in the economic aspect. These mainly arose from the dependence of their main activities, fisheries and meat, on the European market (Benwell and Pinkerton 2016; 11). Brexit could now provoke a greater level of uneasiness in those countries from Europe that have been showing opposition in the United Nations when it comes to its Overseas Territories, for example in the conflict with Mauritius over the Chagos Islands (Bilmes 2021; 15). By this means, the break in the Euro-alignment could consolidate a more dialogue-oriented position with Argentina, which could further take advantage on the islander's unfavorable circumstances.

Regarding the East, Formento, Bilmes, Del Negro and Barrenengoa (2017) describe at least two megaprojects that speak to the crucial importance they give to communication with the Pacific: the bioceanic Train and the Nicaragua Canal (Formento, Bilmes, Del Negro & Barrenengoa 2017; 13). The bioceanic Train is a railway project that crosses southern Brazil, the whole of Bolivia and southern Peru, linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. As it is partly finished with European participation, China has shown interest in financing the remaining work, giving a sign that it is in its own interests for a project of this quantitative and qualitative scale to succeed (Formento, Bilmes, Del Negro & Barrenengoa 2017; 13).

The “grand canal” across Nicaragua was an initiative of Ortega’s administration that also granted a massive concession to the Asiatic Giant. The rhetoric behind this business is the national development and progress for the people. At the end, sea lines, their timings and control are of strategic relevance (Formento, Bilmes, Del Negro & Barrenengoa 2017; 13). A very similar interpretation has been claimed about the Chinese Spatial Station in Patagonia, where the Chinese put their technology at disposition of the Argentines while these grant part of their territory or what many understand as some extent of its sovereignty. On a deeper level of analysis, scholars are showing a clear advance of China in the continent, with the intention of displacing the traditional US hegemony (Castillo-Argañarás 2022; 122).

About the important potential hydrocarbon resources located in the South Atlantic islands, one notes the alliance between British Oil company BP and China’s state-owned CNOOC brought by 2014. In Argentina and the South Cone, this is reflected through the case of Pan American Energy (PAE). Today the second largest producer of oil and gas in Argentina, with presence in Bolivia and Mexico, this company was founded in 1997 with the fusion of Bidas –the historical oil company of Argentine origin- and the American one Amoco, acquired by BP during the late twentieth century (Formento, Bilmes, Del Negro & Barrenengoa 2017; 14).

On the other hand, one could expect harder times for the challenger. When analyzing the potential threats to Argentina, the most evident consideration could be the British nationalistic, territorial and expansionist turn; disclosed as the agenda of *Global Britain* (Bilmes 2021; 15). Global Britain was the term chosen by the country to showcase an international rather than inward-looking foreign policy position after Brexit, now intended to surpass the European continent. Its most significant clauses are contained within the ‘Integrated Review of Security, Development and Foreign Policy’ (2021)

which was launched under the headline title ‘Global Britain in a competitive age’. This outlines mainly four goals: maintaining a competitive advantage through science and technology; influencing the future open international order; bolstering defense and security both domestically and internationally; and fostering resilience both at home and abroad (Benwell, Clegg, Harmer, & Pinkerton 2022; 4).

One possible consequence is the Malvinas/Falklands to formally become an independent State that might join the Commonwealth under British military protection. According to Bilmes (2021) there have been already legal and political hints of such a possibility. For instance, the United Kingdom organized the “kelper referendum” of 2013, a plebiscite that –based on the ideal of self-determination of the peoples- dictated almost by unanimity the right to retain the political status of British Overseas Territory. This was in addition to the ‘Order of the Constitution of the Falkland Islands of 2008’ which sets a new Constitution for the island (Bilmes 2021; 15). Despite being depicted as a complicated scenario, it should not be overlooked in the future.

Moreover, Bilmes (2021) notes that within the British commitment to strengthening the Commonwealth, it has deployed a policy for being leaders of the ongoing global energy transition in favor of renewable and non-polluting sources. Within this framework, the so called “Commonwealth Blue Charter” (2018) was launched as a commitment to protect and sustainably manage the oceans. For the author, the danger lies in that through this initiative the United Kingdom could seek to give legitimacy to its control over the maritime spaces of the South Atlantic and the Antarctic Ocean (Bilmes 2021; 15). The Maritime Protection Area (2013) to protect biodiversity around the South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and Blue Belt initiative (2016) may constitute its most evident advances (Bilmes 2021; 15).

For now, the continent is under the protection of the Antarctic Treaty (1959), which prohibits any type of exploitation of resources. Through this unprecedented document, the governments of those countries recognized “that it is in the interest of all mankind that Antarctica should always continue to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and that it should not become the scene or object of international discord” as well as “the importance of the contributions made to scientific knowledge as a result of international cooperation in scientific research” in the region, and affirmed their position in favor of “establishing a solid basis for the continuation and development of such cooperation, founded on the freedom of scientific research in Antarctica” (The Antarctic Treaty 1959).

While the Antarctic Treaty System has been able to strengthen itself and overcome the contestations that arose between the 1970s and 1980s, the problems it currently faces seem more serious and threaten its stability. After decades of validity, it is possible that the lucubration of the Antarctic political system is no longer consistent with the global geopolitical context and that, as a consequence, requires a reformulation. However, no such proposals have emerged from the members or other States. Instead, there has been a greater resurgence of national responses to problems that are also interpreted at the national level. Cooperation no longer seems to be a viable, or at least efficient, path and the extension of the Treaty is to be expired in 2041 (Costa 2019; 12).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

“When does the fighting stop, how long does the effects of a war last? Until the guns cool down? Until the wounds, even the most horrible mutilations, heal? Until combatants are just a word, muttered like a prayer?” (Lorenz 2022; 1).

Beyond the occasional parade or commemorative song, the lessons of the Falklands War seem to come down to the present day to remind us of an alarming possibility: armed hostilities exist as an alternative on the world's dashboard. Far from being a problem of the past, the Malvinas/ Falklands War and territorial dispute as a broad compels us to rethink how (and if it's possible) to prevent conflict.

Any effective analysis for crisis prevention is intended to respond an apparent simple question, what are the proximate or direct causes that provoke it? (Ackermann 2003; 342). First of all, this paper remarks the fallacy of the democratic peace theory for Latin America. The analysis shows that this hypothesis does not account for the patterns of militarized conflict over boundaries or the prospects for their settlement in the region (Domínguez & Mares 2003; 363). In most instances, the existence of democracy or its practices and procedures is unrelated to the trajectory of boundary and territorial disputes (Domínguez & Mares 2003; 386). Democracy has many merits, but in accordance with Domínguez & Mares (2003), it does not guarantee the peace in Latin America and the Caribbean (Domínguez & Mares 2003; 380).

Territorial disputes in Latin America suggest that military conflict is multicausal, and in order to be properly understood it has to be interpreted from a holistic perspective that considers both the domestic and international variables that mobilize the challenger. In particular, the above exposed results display that military conflict can be explained by the following configurations – an absence of involvement in other militarized territorial disputes, the challenger's antidemocratic character together with a military past between the dyadic or the absence of military history but the presence of a strong challenger. In this sense, contrary to Huth (2009), this reflection reveals that—at least for Latin America—territorial factors may not be explanatory but a constant.

When it comes to the Malvinas/ Falklands War, the process tracing unfolds a confrontation that started in the framework of a dictatorship in Argentina. During this period there were four designated leaders. The nationalist nature of the Junta was the perfect engine to reopen the territorial dispute from a harder line. From a pure quantitative approach, one could have expected that the weaker Argentinean position, together with other opened territorial fronts discouraged any movement in this direction. However, the historicist rhetoric, biased in its possibilities and with a military past contributed to the well-known denouement. Argentina and the United Kingdom had already clashed before, and in the context of a crisis of legitimacy, the struggle for the Malvinas/ Falklands seemed to become the perfect façade for the authoritarian government.

Not of lesser significance are the combinations of conditions that have led to territorial agreements in the region. The question that must be asked in this case is what are the motivations that lead the challenger to negotiate. What we observe is that no single variable (domestic or international) can account for the phenomena under investigation and that, even more, variables become less obvious when it comes to Latin America reality. In any case, this does not imply triviality in the configurations obtained and –if so- Argentina today could be placed in that group of weak states with a confrontational history. However, the process of globalization and internationalization of the conflict could alter the balance of forces, causing the South American country to play a more prominent geopolitical role.

On the one hand, the Asian Giants interest and rapprochement with South America becomes evident in infrastructure projects such as the bioceanic Train, the Nicaragua Canal, oil agreements and the Chinese Spatial Station in Patagonia; the latter being particularly controversial from its potential military character. These advances remind us of the “unequal treaties” signed by China with foreign powers during the 19th and early

20th centuries, in which the benefits went to foreign powers, given that China was the weaker party. History may prove wrong, but it seems the Asian country wants to repeat that history, but in its favor, displacing United States power and taking advantage of the resources (Castillo-Argañarás 2022; 121).

Within this complex scenario, Brexit could also represent an opportunity to the challenger in order to constitute the threshold of power needed to face the challenges of the 21st century. For Bilmes (2021) “a possible formula for this could be the art for diplomacy plus levers of power” (Bilmes 2021; 16). Together with the decomposition and reconfiguration of the world order comes a margin for strategical recovery that, depending on the adopted policies, might result in continental unity and an advantageous rapprochement with Europe (Bilmes 2021; 16).

However, one should be cautious when analyzing the effects of Brexit in the territorial dispute. As stated by Great Britain, then incentives behind this move have not been a shift towards a close domestic and foreign policy but rather the opposite. It would be a more ambitious and far-reaching pursuit in the expansionist goal of sovereignty beyond regional borders. Conceptually, this has been conceived as the agenda for Global Britain (Bilmes 2021; 15). In practice, it has been a way for the British establishment to *kick the board* on the outlook for power (Bilmes 2021; 10). Achieving Global Britain is no simple task for a country distressed by a poor economic performance and fallout from the European Union. The aspiration for greatness, however, remains intact (Negroponte 2023; 1).

By these means, this research opens the door to new studies to incorporate original plausible variables to the analyses. It could be interesting, for instance, to examine the role that alliances, their purpose and size could play in the outcome of Malvinas/Falkland dispute. But beyond the theoretical relevance, the assumptions extracted represent an

advance at the decision-making level. Perhaps the focus of the debate should be broadened, from the more limited debate on whether the Argentinean or British claims should be judged by present standards or those of the 19th century; to be understood that the fate of this tiny islands is far from certain.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Sample process.

In this appendix we describe the sampling process. With the aim of avoiding a selection bias, we employ what Mill denominated the indirect difference method. Under this strategy, both positive and negative cases are selected, what allows to observe variation in the dependent variable (Perez Liñan 2009; 8). All cases were extracted from the systematization made by Huth (2009). Military disputes and negotiated settlements before 1972 were not considered due to lack of data availability for the democratic variable.

Territorial dispute	Year	Outcome
<i>Huth (2009)</i>	COW MIDB	<i>Huth (2009)</i>
Argentina vs Chile	1978	Military Conflict
Argentina vs Chile	1980	Military Conflict
Argentina vs Chile	1984	Negotiated Settlement
Argentina vs UK	1976	Military Conflict
Argentina vs UK	1982	Military Conflict
Argentina vs Uruguay	1969	Military Conflict
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (January)	Military conflict

Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (November)	Negotiated Settlement
Ecuador vs Peru	1977	Military conflict
Ecuador vs Peru	1981	Military conflict
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1975	Military conflict
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1977	Military conflict
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1992	Military conflict
Honduras vs El Salvador	1976	Military Conflict
Honduras vs El Salvador	1992	Negotiated Settlement
Honduras vs United States	1972	Negotiated Settlement
Panama vs United States	1977	Negotiated Settlement
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1976	Military Conflict
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1978	Military Conflict
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1976	Military Conflict
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1981	Military Conflict

APPENDIX B

Measurement of variables.

In this appendix we put forward the operational measure for each of the hypothesis that are revisited in Chapter 1 and empirically tested in Chapter 2: democratic norms of challenger, prior militarized disputes, balance of military forces, challenger dispute involvement with other states and strategic location or economic value.

VARIABLES MEASURING THE DOMESTIC CONTEXT

Table 1. Data for democratic norms of challenger.

Territorial dispute	Year	Challenger	Democracy	
<i>Huth (2009)</i>	COW MIDB	<i>Huth (2009)</i>	<i>Freedom House</i>	
			<i>Value</i>	<i>Result</i>
Argentina vs Chile	1978	Argentina	NF	NO
Argentina vs Chile	1980	Argentina	NF	NO
Argentina vs Chile	1984	Argentina	F	YES
Argentina vs UK	1976	Argentina	NF	NO
Argentina vs UK	1982	Argentina	NF	NO
Argentina vs Uruguay	1969	Argentina	-	NO

Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (january)	Argentina	-	NO
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (november)	Argentina	F	YES
Ecuador vs Peru	1977	Ecuador	PF	NO
Ecuador vs Peru	1981	Ecuador	F	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1975	Guatemala	F	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1977	Guatemala	F	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1992	Guatemala	PF	NO
Honduras vs El Salvador	1976	Honduras	PF	NO
Honduras vs El Salvador	1992	Honduras	F	YES
Honduras vs United States	1972	Honduras	PF	NO
Panama vs United States	1977	Panama	NF	NO
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1976	Netherlands/ Suriname	F	YES

Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1978	Netherlands/ Suriname	F	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1976	Venezuela	F	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1981	Venezuela	F	YES

Table 2. Data for prior militarized disputes.

Territorial dispute	Year	Prior disputes
<i>Huth (2009)</i>	COW MIDB	<i>Huth (2009) & COW MIDB</i>
Argentina vs Chile	1978	YES
Argentina vs Chile	1980	YES
Argentina vs Chile	1984	YES
Argentina vs UK	1976	NO
Argentina vs UK	1982	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1969	NO
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (january)	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (november)	YES
Ecuador vs Peru	1977	YES

Ecuador vs Peru	1981	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1975	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1977	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1992	YES
Honduras vs El Salvador	1976	NO
Honduras vs El Salvador	1992	YES
Honduras vs United States	1972	NO
Panama vs United States	1977	NO
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1976	NO
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1978	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1976	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1981	YES

VARIABLES MEASURING THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Table 3. Data for balance of military forces.

Territorial dispute	Year	Challenger military stronger						
		COW NMC					Result	
		<i>Milex</i>		<i>Milper</i>				
Argentina vs Chile	1978	1491581	629644	155	111	YES	YES	
Argentina vs Chile	1980	3060636	1455820	155	116	YES	NO	
Argentina vs Chile	1984	2282003	49000	174	15	YES	YES	
Argentina vs UK	1976	571428	11076590	155	337	NO	NO	
Argentina vs UK	1982	4147000	24169041	175	335	NO	NO	
Argentina vs Uruguay	1969	434631	37200	160	17	YES	YES	
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (january)	468085	68571	160	20	YES	YES	

Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (november)	468085	68571	160	20	YES	YES
Ecuador vs Peru	1977	192520	686107	30	125	NO	NO
Ecuador vs Peru	1981	247996	887554	34	157	NO	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1975	42900	11475228	13	348	NO	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1977	77700	11886891	14	326	NO	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1992	109160	-9	44	1	-	YES
Honduras vs El Salvador	1976	23700	37920	12	8	NO	YES
Honduras vs El Salvador	1992	42450	175000	17	49	NO	NO
Honduras vs United States	1972	15450	77639000	12	2323	NO	NO
Panama vs United States	1977	15000	100925000	8	2060	NO	NO

Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1976	0	18000	1	5	NO	NO
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1978	-9	13000	1	7	-	NO
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1976	417725	18000	55	5	YES	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1981	907301	22000	55	7	YES	YES

Table 4. Data for challenger dispute involvement with other states.

Territorial dispute	Year	Dispute involvement with other states
<i>Huth (2009)</i>	COW MIDB	<i>Huth (2009) & COW MIDB</i>
Argentina vs Chile	1978	YES
Argentina vs Chile	1980	YES
Argentina vs Chile	1984	YES
Argentina vs UK	1976	YES
Argentina vs UK	1982	YES

Argentina vs Uruguay	1969	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (january)	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (november)	YES
Ecuador vs Peru	1977	NO
Ecuador vs Peru	1981	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1975	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1977	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1992	NO
Honduras vs El Salvador	1976	YES
Honduras vs El Salvador	1992	YES
Honduras vs United States	1972	YES
Panama vs United States	1977	YES
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1976	NO
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1978	NO
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1976	NO
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1981	NO

VARIABLES MEASURING ISSUES AT STAKE

Table 5. Data for Strategic location or economic value.

Territorial dispute	Year	Strategic location or economic resources
<i>Huth (2009)</i>	COW MIDB	<i>Strategic Atlas</i>
Argentina vs Chile	1978	NO
Argentina vs Chile	1980	NO
Argentina vs Chile	1984	NO
Argentina vs UK	1976	YES
Argentina vs UK	1982	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1969	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (january)	YES
Argentina vs Uruguay	1973 (november)	YES
Ecuador vs Peru	1977	NO
Ecuador vs Peru	1981	NO
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1975	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1977	YES
Guatemala vs UK/ Belize	1992	YES
Honduras vs El Salvador	1976	NO

Honduras vs El Salvador	1992	NO
Honduras vs United States	1972	YES
Panama vs United States	1977	YES
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1976	YES
Netherlands/ Suriname vs UK/ Guyana	1978	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1976	YES
Venezuela vs UK/Guyana	1981	YES

APPENDIX C

Statistical model. Code developed for the csQCA.

```
> # liberias
> library(readxl)
> library(tidyverse)
> library(QCA)
> library(venn)
> library(ggplot.multistats)
> library(ggpolypath)
> # library(xlsx)
> library(writexl)
> library(ggvenn)
>
> #Preprocesamiento de los datos
> data <- data
> data <- data %>%
+   column_to_rownames(var="Territorial Disputes")
>
> #tabla de verdad
> ##completa
> tt_complete <- truthTable(data, outcome = "Outcome", show.cases =
TRUE,
+   n.cut = 1, sort.by = "incl, n", complete =
T)
> tt_complete
> ##solo con observaciones
> tt_obs <- truthTable(data, outcome = "Outcome", show.cases = TRUE,
+   n.cut = 1, sort.by = "incl, n", complete = F)
> tt_obs
> truthTable(data, outcome = "Outcome", show.cases = TRUE,
+   n.cut = 1, sort.by = "incl, n", complete = F)#, ddc = T)
```

```
> #Análisis de relaciones de necesidad
> supersubset(data, outcome = "Outcome", cov.cut = 0.52) #cov.cut =
The minimal coverage score
> #análisis de suficiencia
> eqmcc(tt_complete, details = TRUE) #esta funcion es obsoleta y se
reemplazó por minimize()
> ## minimize truth table
> minimize(tt_complete , include = "?")
```

