

Bureaucracies at War

Why do states start conflicts they ultimately lose? Why do leaders possess inaccurate expectations of their prospects for victory? *Bureaucracies at War* examines how national security institutions shape the quality of information upon which leaders base their choice for conflict – which institutional designs provide the best counsel, why those institutions perform better, and why many leaders fail to adopt them. Jost argues that the same institutions that provide the best information also empower the bureaucracy to punish the leader. Thus, miscalculation on the road to war is often the tragic consequence of how leaders resolve the trade-off between good information and political security. Employing an original cross-national data set and detailed explorations of the origins and consequences of institutions inside China, India, Pakistan, and the United States, this book explores why bureaucracy helps to avoid disaster, how bureaucratic competition produces better information, and why institutional design is fundamentally political.

Tyler Jost is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Brown University. He is also Associate in Research at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University. His research explores bureaucracy, national security decision-making, and Chinese foreign policy. He earned his doctorate from the Department of Government at Harvard University and received postdoctoral fellowships from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Columbia University, and Dartmouth College. While writing this book, he conducted research in nineteen archives and libraries across China, India, Pakistan, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Cambridge Studies in International Relations

EDITORS

Evelyn Goh
 Christian Reus-Smit
 Nicholas J. Wheeler

EDITORIAL BOARD

Jacqueline Best, Karin Fierke, William Grimes, Yuen Foong Khong,
 Andrew Kydd, Lily Ling, Andrew Linklater, Nicola Phillips,
 Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Jacquie True, Leslie Vinjamuri,
 Alexander Wendt

Cambridge Studies in International Relations is a joint initiative of Cambridge University Press and the British International Studies Association (BISA). The series aims to publish the best new scholarship in international studies, irrespective of subject matter, methodological approach or theoretical perspective. The series seeks to bring the latest theoretical work in International Relations to bear on the most important problems and issues in global politics.

- 166 *Jack Donnelly*
Systems, Relations, and the Structures of International Societies
- 165 *Jason Ralph*
On Global Learning
 Pragmatic Constructivism, International Practice and the Challenge
 of Global Governance
- 164 *Barry Buzan*
Making Global Society
 A Study of Humankind Across Three Eras
- 163 *Brian Rathbun*
Right and Wronged in International Relations
 Evolutionary Ethics, Moral Revolutions, and the Nature of Power Politics
- 162 *Vincent Pouliot and Jean-Philippe Thérien*
Global Policymaking
 The Patchwork of Global Governance
- 161 *Swati Srivastava*
Hybrid Sovereignty in World Politics

Series list continues after index

Bureaucracies at War

The Institutional Origins of Miscalculation

Tyler Jost

Brown University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
 978-1-009-30720-8 — Bureaucracies at War
 Tyler Jost
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
 New Delhi – 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009307208
 DOI: 10.1017/9781009307253

© Tyler Jost 2024

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
 of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
 place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009307253

First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Jost, Tyler, 1986– author.

Title: Bureaucracies at war : the institutional origins of miscalculation / Tyler Jost.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge

University Press, 2024. | Series: Cambridge studies in international

relations ; 167 | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2023050333 (print) | LCCN 2023050334 (ebook) | ISBN

9781009307208 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009307253 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: International relations – Decision making. | Bureaucracy. |

China – Foreign relations – 1949–1976. | China – Foreign relations – 1976– |

India – Foreign relations – 1947–1984. | Pakistan – Foreign

relations – 1947–1971. | United States – Foreign relations – 1945–1989.

Classification: LCC JZ1253 .J67 2024 (print) | LCC JZ1253 (ebook) |

DDC 327.09/045–dc23/eng/20240110

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2023050333>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2023050334>

ISBN 978-1-009-30720-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-009-30722-2 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
 or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
 publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
 remain, accurate or appropriate.

History is a catalogue of mistakes.	Liddell Hart
Plans are worthless, but planning is everything.	Dwight D. Eisenhower
兼听则明，偏信则暗 Listen to both sides and you will be enlightened. Believe only one and you will be ignorant.	Traditional Chinese Idiom

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiii
1 Introduction	1
2 An Institutional Theory of Miscalculation	21
3 The World of National Security Institutions	54
4 China under Mao	82
5 China after Mao	128
6 India	177
7 Pakistan	226
8 The United States during the Early Cold War	259
9 Conclusion	325
<i>Appendix A National Security Institutions Data Set</i>	339
<i>Appendix B Archival and Interview Data Collection</i>	342
<i>Bibliography</i>	348
<i>Index</i>	370

Figures

2.1	Types of national security institutions	<i>page</i> 27
2.2	A model of institutional design choices	47
3.1	Share of states by type of national security institution	59
3.2	National security institutions and regime type	60
3.3	Leaders and changes in institutional design	61
3.4	Interaction between leader experience and regime type	73
4.1	China’s national security decision-making, 1949–1976	88
4.2	China’s national security coordination, 1949–1976	92
4.3	Mao’s changing threat perceptions, 1949–1965	94
4.4	Institutional change in Politburo decision-making, 1949–1965	96
5.1	China’s national security decision-making, 1976–1988	136
5.2	Size of the Central Military Commission, 1949–2015	139
6.1	Information flow under Nehru, 1958–1962	187
6.2	Indian defense budget, 1947–1966	190
6.3	Terrorist violence in Jammu & Kashmir, 1990–2005	219
8.1	Venues for U.S. national security decision-making, 1953–1968	267
8.2	Bureaucratic representation in U.S. national security decision-making, 1953–1968	276

Tables

2.1	Informational demands in international crisis	<i>page</i> 32
2.2	Theoretical predictions regarding miscalculation	40
3.1	Examples of institutional types	58
3.2	Crisis performance across institutional types	65
3.3	National security institutions and international crisis performance	68
3.4	The political origins of institutional design	71
3.5	Summary of data collection	75
3.6	Overview of the case studies on decision-making	77
4.1	Evolution of China’s institutional design under Mao	85
4.2	China’s crisis performance under Mao, 1949–1976	101
4.3	Summary of the KMT invasion scare and Sino-Soviet border conflict	103
5.1	Evolution of China’s institutional design after Mao	131
5.2	China’s crisis performance after Mao, 1976–2012	150
5.3	Summary of the Sino-Vietnamese War and EP-3 reconnaissance aircraft incident	152
6.1	Evolution of India’s institutional design	181
6.2	India’s crisis performance, 1947–2015	198
6.3	Summary of the Sino-Indian War and Twin Peaks Crisis	200
7.1	Evolution of Pakistan’s institutional design	229
7.2	Pakistan’s crisis performance, 1947–2015	242
7.3	Summary of the Kargil War	244
8.1	Evolution of U.S. institutional design, 1953–1968	264
8.2	U.S. crisis performance, 1953–1968	281
8.3	Summary of the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis and Vietnam War	283
9.1	Summary of case analysis: Institutional design	330
9.2	Summary of case analysis: Decision-making	331

Acknowledgments

True to the spirit of its argument, this book is the product of an iterative dialogue with many advisers, mentors, and colleagues who have shaped my thoughts on bureaucracy, international politics, and the discipline of social science. When I was an undergraduate at West Point, Ruth Beitler, Suzanne Nielsen, and Tino Perez sparked my interest in political science and China. At SOAS University of London, Julia Strauss supported my application to doctoral programs.

As a graduate student, I was fortunate to have five mentors oversee my dissertation, which was an early attempt at articulating the ideas presented here. Iain Johnston taught me the fundamentals of how to study Chinese foreign policy. Josh Kertzer, beyond reading countless versions of this manuscript, was a model of productivity, creativity, and empathy that I will surely never match. Vipin Narang jumped institutional silos to join the committee. Liz Perry pushed me to think more like a comparativist. Steve Rosen was the model of a dissertation committee chair, generous with his time and patient with my ideas. Other faculty and colleagues whose feedback aided this project include Graham Allison, Dan Altman, Bob Bates, Don Casler, Allison Carnegie, Jon Caverley, Mark Bell, Matt Blackwell, Risa Brooks, Ryan Brutger, Austin Carson, Dan Carpenter, Binn Cho, Chris Clary, Dara Cohen, Zack Cooper, Dale Copeland, Fiona Cunningham, Alex Debs, Mac Destler, David Edelstein, Ryan Evans, Jeff Frieden, Jeff Friedman, Julia Gray, Naima Green-Riley, Sheena Chestnut Greitens, Mike Goldfien, Avery Goldstein, Steve Goldstein, Peg Hermann, Connor Huff, Bob Jarvis, Michael Kenwick, Sulmaan Khan, Sarah Kreps, Marika Landau-Wells, Melissa Lee, Chris Lucas, Dan Mattingly, Oriana Mastro, Nuno Monteiro, Jim Morrow, Eric Min, Andy Nathan, Rich Nielsen, Cullen Nutt, Rachel Esplin Odell, John Owen, Barry Posen, Abby Post, Mike Poznansky, Brian Rathbun, Steve Saideman, Anne Sartori, Rob Schub, Todd Sechser, Beth Simmons, Victor Shih, Austin Strange, Yeling Tan, Kai Thaler, Joseph Torigian, Stephen Van Evera, Alex Weisiger, Jessica Chen Weiss, Arne Westad, Peter White, Keren Yarhi-Milo, and Jack Zhang.

Acknowledgments

xi

Over the course of my field research, the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, Harvard Law School Program on Negotiation, Smith Richardson Foundation, United States Institute of Peace, and Weatherhead Center for International Affairs provided financial support. I also thank academic colleagues at the Academia Sinica in Taipei, the School of International Studies at Peking University, the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi, and the Center for International Strategic Studies in Islamabad for hosting me while I was abroad. Faculty and fellows at the George Washington University Institute for Security and Conflict Studies – Steve Biddle, Alex Downes, Charlie Glaser, Dan Jacobs, Michael Joseph, Elizabeth Saunders, Caitlin Talmadge, and Ketian Zhang – provided feedback and friendly support while I was working in the archives in Washington, DC.

I was fortunate to have time and space to turn my dissertation into a book while a postdoctoral fellow at the Belfer Center and the China and the World Program. Through the former, Steve Miller, Sean Lynn-Jones, and Steve Walt were supportive and insightful. Fred Logevall provided helpful feedback, particularly on the Vietnam case. Susan Lynch welcomed me to Belfer. Nick Anderson, Paul Behringer, Rebecca Gibbons, Kelly Greenhill, Mariya Grinberg, Phil Martin, Reid Pauly, Brad Potter, and Ben Zala helped workshop the theory chapter. Adele Carrai, Andrew Chubb, Andrew Erickson, Courtney Fung, Yinan He, Scott Kastner, Alison Kaufman, Wendy Leutert, Adam Liff, Dalton Lin, and Min Ye offered helpful comments on the empirical chapters on China.

This project was completed at Brown, where the Department of Political Science and Watson Institute were endlessly supportive. I am especially indebted to Wendy Schiller and Ed Steinfeld for their advice and support for this project, to Peter Andreas, Rob Blair, Mark Blyth, Jeff Colgan, Rose McDermott, and Nina Tannenwald for their feedback, to Patti Gardner for helping me navigate the transition to being an assistant professor, as well as to many other colleagues and graduate students at Brown who sharpened my ideas. Brown generously hosted a workshop for the manuscript, during which feedback from Tom Christensen, Taylor Fravel, Mike Horowitz, Jessica Weeks, Bill Wohlforth, and my colleagues at Brown was instrumental in testing the argument. The workshop would not have happened without the help of Deirdre Foley.

I am particularly indebted to individuals who helped, in very different ways, to make data available for this project. Nancy Hearst was unbelievably patient with my never-ending requests for Chinese-language materials at the Fung Library. Chuck Kruas provided access to a collection of archival documents from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs housed by the Wilson Center's History and Public Policy Program. John Wilson at the LBJ Presidential Library was particularly helpful with

xii Acknowledgments

fielding document requests during the pandemic. Merle Pribbenow graciously shared his translations of numerous Vietnamese documents and memoirs, which greatly assisted the analysis of cases on the Vietnam War and Sino-Vietnamese War. Several chapters in this book would not exist without their assistance. Caroline Deitch and Mila Hanauer helped by translating Russian language materials on the Sino-Soviet border crisis. Omar Afzaal did the same for a memoir in Urdu discussing the Kargil War. Kimberly Silva and Svetlana Rukhman helped source countless inquiries of foreign legislation needed for the cross-national data set. I was beyond fortunate to have a team of research assistants to build the cross-national data set: Maya Gros, Eiichiro Kuno, Orianne Mountabin, Hope Ndhlovu, Phillip Ramirez, Namsai Sethpornpong, and Gina Sinclair. Max Kuhelj Bugaric and Eileen Phou went above and beyond in coding these and other resources. Additional help came from Prottoya Chowdhury, Ellyse Givens, Bhanu Joshi, Alex Lee, Yucong Li, Dan Post, and Sanne Verschuren. Some of the ideas presented in Chapters 4 and 5 were first published in the summer 2023 issue of *International Security*. I am grateful to the editors for providing the necessary permissions. Finally, I am particularly indebted to John Haslam and Carrie Parkinson, who shepherded the manuscript through the publication process at Cambridge University Press.

Many friends – Adam Jannetti, Aroop Mukharji, Brian Palmiter, Mel Sanborn, Paul Shinkman, and Brad Wilson – provided wise counsel. My wife, Tina, was a sounding board for every page of this book. Her decision to marry me was the best moment of my life. This book is dedicated to my parents, Carl and Susan.

Abbreviations

CCRG	Central Cultural Revolution Group
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CID	Central Investigation Department
CMC	Central Military Commission
CMLA	Chief Martial Law Administration
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCNS	Cabinet Committee on National Security
CCS	Cabinet Committee on Security
CNSC	Central National Security Commission
DCC	Defence Committee of the Cabinet
DDEL	Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
ECC	Emergency Committee of the Cabinet
FALSG	Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group
FRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
GHQ	General Headquarters
GSD	General Staff Department
IB	Intelligence Bureau
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JCL	Jimmy Carter Presidential Library
JFKL	John F. Kennedy Presidential Library
KMT	Nationalist Party (Kuomintang)
LBJL	LBJ Presidential Library
MBVM	McGeorge Bundy Vietnam Manuscript
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSS	Ministry of State Security
NSA	National Security Advisor
NSC	National Security Council
NSLSG	National Security Leading Small Group
OCB	Operations Coordinating Board

xiv	List of Abbreviations
OHT	Oral History Transcript
PAC	Political Affairs Committee
PP	Pentagon Papers
PLA	People’s Liberation Army
PRC	People’s Republic of China
R&AW	Research and Analysis Wing
RNL	Richard Nixon Presidential Library
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
SWJN-SS	Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru (Second Series)
TLSG	Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union)
VCSJVA	Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive
WBVM	William Bundy Vietnam Manuscript