

The Logic of Images  
in International Relations

ROBERT JERVIS

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS  
A MORNINGSIDES BOOK

# Contents

Acknowledgments	v
Preface to the Morningside Edition	xi
CHAPTER ONE Introduction	3
CHAPTER TWO Signals and Indices	18
Signals	20
Indices	26
<i>Too Important to be Used for Deception</i>	28
<i>Causes and Correlations</i>	29
<i>Samples</i>	30
<i>Personal Characteristics</i>	32
<i>Domestic Events</i>	34
<i>Statements as Indices</i>	35
<i>Capability Indices</i>	38
CHAPTER THREE The Manipulation of Indices	41
Varieties of Manipulation	43
<i>Necessary Conditions as Indices</i>	53
The Discovery That an Index Can Be Manipulated	55
<i>Multiple Cycles of Manipulation</i>	57
<i>Transformation of Indices Into Signals</i>	60
<i>Getting Caught Manipulating Indices</i>	61
Nonmanipulatable Indices	64
CHAPTER FOUR Signals and Lies	66
Restraints on Lying	70
<i>Moral Restraints</i>	70
<i>Stake in the International System</i>	71
<i>Changing the International Environment</i>	73
<i>Internal Restraints</i>	74
<i>Signaling Reputation</i>	78

## CONTENTS

AVOIDING THE REPUTATION OF LIAR	83
ADVANTAGES OF BEING KNOWN TO LIE	84
Incentives for Lying	88
Signaling <i>in Crises</i>	90
<i>Unexpected Belief in Signals</i>	96
Debasing	102
Treaties of Alliance	110
CHAPTER FIVE Signals and Ambiguity	113
Codes and the Protection of Images	113
The Utility of Ambiguity L.	123
Costs and Risks of Ambiguity	130
Methods of Creating Ambiguity	135
CHAPTER six Coupling and Decoupling of Signals	139
The Conventional Nature of Signals	139,
Coupling and Decoupling	142
<i>Impact of Different Signals on Conflicts</i>	145.
<i>Multilateral Decoupling</i>	147
<i>Unilateral Decoupling</i>	152
DECOUPLING AND DECOMMITTING	155
Coupling	165
CHAPTER SEVEN Coupling and Decoupling of Indices	174
Affecting the Interpretation of Indices	174
<i>Coupling and Decoupling of Signals and Indices</i>	179
<i>The Likelihood of Successful Coupling and Decoupling</i>	187
<i>Decoupling and Avoiding Challenges</i>	190
<i>Alternative Explanations for Retreats</i>	197
<i>Victory Claims</i>	201

<i>Claims About Images of Others</i>	204
<i>Challenges Avoided or Created by Claims About One's Own Motives</i>	207
Expectations	216
Conclusion	223
CHAPTER EIGHT Signals and Indices in the Nuclear Era	225
Lack of Capability Indices	226
Doctrine and Reality	230
<i>The Strategic Dialogue and Limited War</i>	232
<i>The Transformation of the Threat That Leaves Something to Clance</i>	237
RISKS AND TWO WAYS TO PREVAIL IN A CRISIS	242
Images and "Security Areas".in the Nuclear Era	244
Sacrificing Values as an Index	250
CHAPTER NINE Application	254
Images, Signals, and Indices in the Vietnam Conflict	254
Index	277