The Distribution of Power and Systemic War in the Modern State System

THE PROBLEM OF WAR

ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS, LIKE THE SEAS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD; SO WHY DO THE WINDS AND WAVES CLASH SO FIERCELY EVERYWHERE?

Emperor Hirohito
THE PROBLEM OF WAR...

- Where we left off...
- Rise of the State system following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648
- Led to Empire Building under European monarchs

MAP 16.1
THE ACQUISITIONS OF LOUIS XIV, 1668–1713

MAP 16.2
EUROPE IN 1715
With the onset of the industrial revolution came the organization of labour, and class struggle.

The French Revolution (1789-94)

"Equality before law, abolishment of feudalism, “rights of man”.

Also sparked beginnings of nationalism
“A man’s greatest pleasure is to defeat his enemies, to drive them before him, to take from them that which they possessed, to see those whom they cherished in tears, to ride their horses, to hold their wives. I forbid you to show mercy to my enemies. Leave nothing but uninhabited ruins, neither a cat nor a dog.”

Genghis Khan
PATTERNS IN THE HISTORY OF WAR & PEACE

- Recurrence of War: Must always be prepared, if not... will be dominated. Co-op is often based on short term need or convenience.
- Rise and Fall of Empires: Empires always challenged. Fall often because of cost of maintaining empire.

PATTERNS... CONTINUED

- History is made by the Powerful: History is defined by the hegemonic powers.
- Intellectual tradition of Statecraft: Many common themes of intellectuals that guide empirical leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Realists</th>
<th>Liberals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Machiavelli</td>
<td>Locke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Tzu</td>
<td>Kant</td>
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<td>Thucydides</td>
<td>Aquinas</td>
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PATTERNS... CONTINUED

- Geopolitical Importance: Statecraft and national security has often been built around political geography.
- Examples: European Imperialism, Nazi Germany, US & Soviets in Cold War, US today.
### THREE TYPES OF WAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil Wars</th>
<th>Regional Wars</th>
<th>Systemic Wars</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Iran-Iraq</td>
<td>Napoleonic War</td>
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<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Arab-Israeli</td>
<td>World War I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>India-Pakistan</td>
<td>World War II</td>
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<td>Afghanistan (1990s)</td>
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<td>The Cold War</td>
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### A TASTE OF SOME MODERN CONFLICTS

1. Gulf War
2. Rwanda
3. Israeli-Arab War
4. Sudan: Genocide
5. S/S
6. Iraq Wars
7. India/Pakistan/Kashmir
8. Chechnya
9. U.S.-Afghanistan-Soviets
10. Vietnam War
11. Korean War
12. Thil Gong
13. Sierra Leone: Blood Diamond
14. Kosovo Genocide
15. Bosnian Serbs
16. Northern Irish Conflict
17. Macedonia and Greece
18. Cyprus and Turkey
19. Cold War
20. Sri Lanka Conflict
21. Burma (Myanmar)
22. North Korea
23. Israeli-Palestinian
24. China and Tibet
25. ... The List Goes On...
WAR IN THE STATE SYSTEM

WHY WAR?

- Why Not War?
  - 1900-2000 250 wars, 110 million deaths by war
- War is Politics
  - Clausewitz: “War is the continuation of politics by other means.”
- Two Elements Help Explain the Occurrence of Wars.

POLITICAL CONFLICT
THERE MUST BE POLITICAL CONFLICT FOR STATES TO FIGHT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tangible Conflict</th>
<th>Intangible Conflict</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Territorial</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic/Resources</td>
<td>Ideological</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Religious</td>
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POLARITY THEORY

- Focuses on Relationship Between Polarity and the Probability of War.
- **Polarity**: Number of Great Powers in the State System
  - **Multipolar**: Usually 3-5.
  - **Bipolar**: Two Great Powers
  - **Hegemonic**: A Single Great Power.
- The Fewer the Number of Great Powers, the More Stable is the International State System and Vice Versa.

WHY DOES POLARITY MATTER?

- Two Explanations for the Relationship Between Polarity and War/Stability.
  - **Complexity**: The Decision Making Environment Becomes More Complex as the Number of Great Powers Increases.
  - **Hierarchy**: The Fewer the Number of Great Powers, the More Concentrated is Power in the International System. At the Limit, a Hegemon is the International Equivalent to "the State" inside a Country.

EVIDENCE FOR POLARITY THEORY?

- **1850-1945**: Multipolar System and Chronic Warfare in Europe.
- **1945-2001**: Bipolar or Hegemonic System, and No Great Power War.
**POWER TRANSITION THEORY**

- **Hierarchy and Stability**
  - There exists a hierarchy of power in the international system.
  - The nation at the top of this hierarchy (the Hegemon) sets and defends the rules of the international state system.
  - The system is stable under hegemony—no war between the Great Powers.

- **Power Transition and War**
  - Other nations become dissatisfied with the international system established by the Hegemon.
  - The system is biased against their interests and dominated by hostile forces.
  - A dissatisfied country with rising power capabilities challenges the Hegemon and uses war to change the system.

**WAR IN POWER TRANSITION THEORY**

- War is most likely when a dissatisfied smaller power begins to accumulate the power resources necessary to challenge the Hegemon.
- **Rapid Economic Growth** provides the revenue and technology necessary for a challenge.
- **Political Capacity** tells us about the government’s ability to extract the resources from society that are necessary to develop military power and challenge the Hegemon.

**POWER TRANSITION AND SYSTEMIC WAR THROUGH HISTORY**

(Chart showing historical data and analysis related to power transitions and systemic wars.)
MODERN APPLICATIONS: THREAT

“And if Mr Kim keeps on toughing it out and building his bombs? Then America, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia will need to get tougher too. Even a deal-seeking Mr Kim will keep ramping up the tension so long as he thinks he can drive a harder bargain. Only a concerted stand and the message that aid will not flow until the weapons go can hope to put a stop to that. And if Mr Kim is bent on keeping his bombs? Even more reason for America, its allies, China and Russia, to stand together. North Korea unrestrained is a threat to them all.”

North Korea
Taking a stand
Feb 6th 2003
From The Economist print edition

MODERN APPLICATIONS: JIHAD

“Meanwhile, at Friday prayers at mosques throughout Pakistan, the virtues of jihad are preached. Muslims are urged to resist all infidels, especially those supporting America’s crusade against Islam in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya and Afghanistan”. Possible waverers get sinister warnings. The mullah at a Lahore mosque during Ramadan last November actually screamed that “all those Muslims who do not pray five times a day should be killed”.

Militant Islam in Pakistan
The other armies
Jan 16th 2003 | LAHORE
From The Economist print edition

MODERN APPLICATIONS: CONFLICT

Don’t say Hamas is winning
Some prominent Israelis dismiss the idea that its squeeze-Gaza strategy has failed. “So Hamas destroyed the fence—so what?” says Ephraim Sneh, a former general and minister who is a member of parliament for the Labour party, which is part of Israel’s ruling coalition. “It can’t restore the economy without connections with Israel. If they keep firing rockets we’ll just close the border again.”

The shifting balance of power
Jan 31st 2008
From The Economist Print Edition
MODERN APPLICATIONS: PEACE

In 2002 soldiers seized control of the northern half of the country in a failed coup. After France intervened, a power-sharing government was set up in 2003. But civil war resumed after forces loyal to Mr Gbagbo bombed the rebel-held north in November 2004. Ivorian leaders signed a peace deal in 2005, but Mathias Doué, a renegade general, continued to stir trouble. Another peace deal, struck in March 2007, offers the best chance yet for ending the conflict, though by July further violence threatened the plan.

“ONLY THE DEAD HAVE SEEN THE END OF WAR”

PLATO