**War in International Relations**

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**Introduction**

* War has been far too common in human history and thus is the central problem of international relations.
* Many political scientists and foreign policymakers view war as the continuation of politics e.g. when diplomacy fails, some states decide to use force.
* Others see war as the result of a breakdown of the modern international system because so many of the rules of international institutions were designed to reduce conflict among states.

**The Causes of War**

* In actuality, most wars are caused by the interaction between various factors at different levels of analysis (individual level, state and society level and the international system level)
* Waltz is perhaps correct that the characteristics of the international system- the general state of anarchy, the lack of an accepted arbiter- provide the general explanation of wars.
* But to understand complete particulars of why war broke out, we need to focus on each of the three levels of analysis.

1. Characteristics of the individuals, both leaders and the masses
2. Internal structure of states
3. International system
4. **The Individual:**

* Both the characteristics of individual leaders and the general attributes of people have been blamed for war.

**Aggressive Character of leaders**

* Some leaders are aggressive and bellicose; they use their leadership positions to further their causes.
* According to some realists and liberals, war occurs because of the personal characteristics of major leaders.

**Misperceptions:**

* Cognitive biases that made them value certain kinds of information more than others, whether or not the information was true
* Robert Jervis, in his book “Perception and Misperception in International Politics” proved that, once a leader believed something, that perception would influence the way the leader perceived all other relevant information.
* One of the most common forms of misperceptions is exaggerating the hostility of the adversary believing that;
* the adversary is more hostile than it may actually be, **or**
* the adversary has greater military or economic capability than it actually has

**Attributes of the Masses:**

* Realists thinkers like St. Augustine and Reinhold Niebuhr take the position that the characteristics of the masses lead the outbreak of war.
* St. Augustine wrote that every act is an act of self-preservation on the part of individuals
* Niebuhr went further by saying that the origin of war resides in the depths of the human psyche.
* However, some contradictions are involved in these assumptions
* If war is the product of innate human characteristics or a flawed human nature then war should occur all the time.
* Unlike, war does not happen all the time; it is *unusual* event, not the norm.

1. **State and Society:**

* This level of explanation suggests that war occurs because of the internal structures of state.
* According to **Plato** the war is less likely where the population is cohesive and enjoys a moderate level of prosperity.
* Many thinkers during the Enlightenment, including **Kant**, believed that war was more likely in aristocratic states.
* Liberals opined on the basis of Kantian position that ‘republican regimes’ (ones with representative government and separation of powers) are least likely to wage war
* This assumption is the base of the theory of the ‘democratic peace’.

**Democratic Peace Theory:**

* Democratic peace theory is a theory which posits that democracies are hesitant to engage in armed conflict with other identified democracies.
* Democracies are pacific because democratic norms and culture inhibit the leadership from taking actions leading to war.

**Liberals’ Views**

* Liberals opine that some types of economic systems are more war prone than others.
* Liberal states are expected to be capitalist states whose members enjoy relatively higher wealth.
* Liberal capitalist states choose to avoid war as war interrupts trade, blocks profits, and cause inflation.

**Radicals’ Views**

* Radical theorists, on the other hand, disagree with liberals’ views.
* They argue that capitalist liberal modes of production generates two major social classes within the state- the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.
* There emerged a competition between these two classes for economic dominance and political leadership.
* The struggle leads to war, both internally and externally

**Diversionary** **war**

* Some leaders in order to avert domestic economic crises resort to external conflict.

**Example**; The Falklands War is the classic example. Argentina began a war against the United Kingdom as the economy was in shambles.

**Contest over the structure of state**

* Some cite the contests over the structure of states as a basic cause of war.
* Competitions between different groups, ideologies and leaders have been the reasons behind many civil wars.
* The United State’s civil war (1861-65) between the North and the South
* Russia’s civil war (1917-19) between liberal ad socialist forces

**Internal state dynamics** are also responsible for the outbreak of war.

* It is illustrated by the struggle among competing economic systems (capitalism vs socialism) and among groups vying for scarce resources within the state.

**3. The International System:**

**Anarchy:**

* According to realists, the anarchic international system is equivalent to a state of war, where there is no overarching rule of law to make states cooperate.
* Therefore, states when feeling threatened decide to go to war against other states.
* The security dilemma makes such perceptions of insecurity all the more likely.

**Lack of an Arbiter:**

1. **Territorial Claims**

* One of the major reasons for war may be claim over territory
* e.g. between Pakistan and India
* There are no authoritative and legitimized arbiters of territorial disputes.
* Mearsheimer calls this the 911 problem- absence of central authority, to which a threatened state can turn for help.

1. **Self-Determination Claims**

* Neither is there an effective arbiter of competing claims on self determination.
* Therefore, the issues of Kashmir, Chechen, Bosnian or Quebecois still are unresolved.

**Power Transition Theory**

* One of the explanations by realists is related to power transition theory.
* The Power transition theory, presented by A.F.K Organski, is a theory about the cyclical nature of war, in relation to the power in international relations.
* According to theory, it is not just the inequality of capabilities among states that leads to war; it is *changes* in state capabilities that lead to war.
* War occurs when a dissatisfied challenger state begins to attain the same level of capabilities as the hegemon.
* The challenger will launch a war to solidify its position.

**Examples:**

* The Russo-Japanese War (1904-5)
* The two World Wars

**Long Cycles of War and Peace**

* According to **George Modelski** and William Thompson, there are regular cycles of power transitions since 1494.
* There are one-hundred-year cycles between hegemonic wars.
* Hegemonic wars create a new hegemonic power; its power increases and then decreases, a struggle follows and at the end, a new hegemon assumes dominance.

**Aggressiveness of the international capitalist class**

* Radicals say that to expand economically is the need of dominant capitalist states within the international system.
* This tendency leads them to wars

1. with developing regions over control of natural resources and labour markets
2. with other capitalist states over control of developing regions.

**Categorizing Wars:**

* There are many different types of wars, which can be classified according to which people actually fight, the intensity of the conflict, and the extent of combatants’ use of violence, among other factors.
* Scholars generally categorize war as:

1. General war
2. Limited war
3. Civil war
4. Proxy war
5. **General Wars**

* A General War is armed conflict involving massive loss of life and widespread destruction, usually with many participants, including multiple major powers.

**The reasons behind these wars may include;**

1. To conquer and occupy enemy territory
2. To take over the government
3. To control the economic resources of an opponent
4. Over conflict of ideologies

* To contain the opponent (s) militarily, decision-makers utilize all available weapons of warfare and target both civilian and military sites.
* General wars are highly destructive and are characterized by mass civilian casualties
* **World Wars I and II** were total wars, marked by the complete destruction of the civilian economy and society in many countries, including France, Germany, the Soviet Union, Italy, Great Britain, and Japan.
* **The Thirty Years War** (1618-48) is the longest general war ever.
* It involves numerous great powers (Britain, France, Hapsburgs/Austria, Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden) and resulted in 2 million battlefield deaths.

1. **Limited War**

* A**limited war** is a war fought primarily between professional armies to achieve specific political objectives without causing widespread destruction.
* The objective of limited war is not surrender and occupation of enemy territory.
* Although the total of civilian casualties may be high, combatants do not seek to completely destroy the enemy’s social and economic frameworks.
* The numbers of limited wars have not declined. The decade of 1990s alone saw about 195 civil wars.
* With the increased development of modern warfare, limited wars have become the only option.

**Example:**

* The Persian Gulf War of 1990–1991 was a limited war in which the United States and its allies forcibly removed Iraqi troops from Kuwait.
* Korean War is another example of limited war

##### Civil Wars

* A**civil war** is a war fought within a single country between or among different groups of citizens who want to control the government and do not recognize another group’s right to rule.
* A few civil war become general, most can be categorized as limited
* Civil wars that remain continue for longer duration increasingly become international.
* The repercussions of civil wars are felt beyond borders primarily in the form of refugees.
* Regional rifts, such as the American Civil War between the North and the South

##### Proxy Wars

* A **proxy war** is a war fought by third parties rather than by the enemy states themselves.
* Many of the militarized conflicts during the Cold War, such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War, can be interpreted as proxy wars between the United States and the Soviet Union

**How wars are fought?**

* + - 1. **Conventional Means**
* Most of the wars have been fought through conventional means
* Weapons ranged from swords and shields, to gunpowder and cannons
* The purpose of such weapons is to defeat the enemy on the territorial battlefield.
  + - 1. **Smart Weapons:**
* Two major changes in the start of the 1980s impacted the conventional warfare.

1. **Changes in technology-** Smart weapons, increased miniaturization, precision-targeting munitions etc.
2. **International armaments market-** The market has wider geographic scope and its magnitude increased since 1980s.

* Modern warfare is characterized by greater awareness of tactical, operational, and strategic battle information with the use of highly advanced information technology.
* **A conventional army operates by**1. Identifying the enemy  
  2. Pinning the enemy down.  
  3. Killing or capturing the enemy.
* On the other hand, the three rules of unconventional warfare are:  
  1. Make it impossible for the opposing force to identify you.  
  2. Never stand and fight.  
  3. Don't worry about numbers. Just wear them down.
* The unconventional force using smart weapons, does not need to, and should never meet 100 soldiers on the battlefield with an equal opposing force (the whole concept of unconventional warfare is, in fact, unequal force).
  + - 1. **Weapons of Mass Destruction**

**Types of Weapons of Mass Destruction**

1. Nuclear
2. Biological
3. Chemical

* A nuclear, biological, or chemical weapon is able to cause widespread devastation and loss of life.

**Nuclear Weapons:**

* Of the three types of WMD’s, nuclear weapons represent the greatest threat.
* With the invention of nuclear weapons, the concept of full-scale war carries the prospect of global annihilation.
* During the Cold War the United States, the Soviet Union, and other major powers built up enormous—so many that the era was sometimes described as a “balance of terror
* After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the resultant end of the Cold War, the threat of a major nuclear war between the two nuclear superpowers was generally thought to have declined.
* Since then, concern over nuclear weapons has shifted to the prevention of localized nuclear conflicts resulting from nuclear proliferation, and the threat of nuclear terrorism.
* Efforts to control the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction are enshrined in international agreements such as the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968, the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972, and the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993.

### Chemical Weapons of Mass Destruction

* Types of chemical weapons include blister agents, blood agents, choking hazard agents, nerve agents, tear gas, vomiting agents and psychiatric compounds.
* The effect of chemical weapon is immediate unlike biological weapons

### Biological Weapons of Mass Destruction

* Biological WMD’s were first used the United States in 1763 when British officers planned to distribute blankets with smallpox.
* Attempts such as this continued during war as soldiers were steadfast in killing off their enemies.
* Today, however, the uses of biological weapons have been used primarily by individuals, rather than groups.

**Asymmetric Warfare:**

* Asymmetric Warfare (or **Asymmetric** engagement) is war between belligerents whose relative military power or whose strategy or tactics differ significantly.
* Conventional and nuclear warfare are more likely to occur among states with near equality of military strength that generally utilize similar strategies and tactics.
* By contrast, asymmetric warfare is warfare conducted between parties of unequal strength.
* The weaker party seeks to neutralize its opponent’s strengths by exploiting its opponent’s weaknesses.
* One strategy for asymmetric warfare is ‘guerrilla warfare’

**Guerilla Warfare**

* **Guerrilla warfare** is a form of irregular warfarein which a small group of combatants such as armed civilians or irregulars use military tactics including ambushes, sabotage, raids, petty warfare, hit-and-run tactics, and mobility to fight a larger and less-mobile traditional military.
* The aim of the guerrilla fighter is erosion of the enemy’s will to sustain the costs of continuing the war.

*“The guerilla wins if he does not lose. The conventional army loses if it does not win.”*

(Henry Kissinger)

* These wars are often very long but also tend to be successful for the insurgents as evidenced by the Vietcong’s victory over the United States in the Vietnam War, and the Mujahideen’s victory over the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s.
* Guerilla wars may lead to ‘insurgencies’.

**Insurgency:**

* A widespread rebellion against a government or an occupying power.
* The goal of insurgents is to ‘liberate’ areas and control an area for its own purposes.
* According to Bard O'Neil, “Insurgency has probably been the most prevalent type of armed conflict since the creation of organized political communities”.

**Examples:** The insurgency in Cuba that put Fidel Castro into power

**Case of Iraq War:**

* Some debate whether the conflict in Iraq after 2004 is a guerilla war, fought by a small dedicated group;
* Or An insurgency involving widespread opposition to American occupation;
* Or a civil war between two groups fighting for control of the central government.

**Terrorism**

* Terrorism is a particular kind of asymmetric warfare that has increasingly become a major international security threat.
* Terrorism involves four **major elements**;

1. **Premeditation**, the decision by a perpetrator to commit an act to instill terror or fear in other
2. **Motivation or a cause** , whether it be political, religious, or economic
3. **Targets**, usually noncombatants, such as political figures, bureaucrats, or innocent bystanders
4. **Secretiveness**, where perpetrators belong to clandestine groups or are secretly sponsored by states.

* Modern terrorism had largely taken shape by the turn of the 20th century.
* Terrorism is not tied to any one particular ideology or group.

**Ideological terrorism**

Ideological terrorism aims to promote a particular belief system through acts of violence; it may be practiced by both governments and groups.

**Types of Terrorism**

* Scholars generally classify terrorism into two types: terrorism practiced by governments and terrorism practiced by groups not affiliated with a government.

1. **Terrorism Practiced by Governments**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **State terrorism:**A government commits acts of terror against its own citizens.   During the French Revolution acts of terrorism were sponsored by the state itself.  Organized state terrorism used against state’s own citizens, reached its zenith in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin.   1. **International terrorism** (also known as **state-sponsored terrorism**): A government supplies and trains terrorists to make attacks in other countries. |  |

1. **Terrorism Practiced by Groups**
2. **Anti-state terrorism:** Any terrorist act not committed by a government
3. **Domestic terrorism:**A group with no ties to another country or government commits terrorist acts within its own country.

**Tactics**

The terrorists’ outlook and tactics changed dramatically since September 11, 2001, when over 3,000 civilians died and $80 billion in economic losses were incurred

* **Maximize fear:** Terrorist attacks are often targeted to maximize fear and publicity, usually using explosives or poison.
* **Advanced weapons:** The choice of weapons by terrorists has become more diverse.
* AK-47, sarin gas, shoulder-fired missiles, anthrax, backpack explosives, and airplanes as missiles have all been utilized
* **Contingencies:** Terrorist organizations usually methodically plan attacks in advance, and may train participants, plant undercover agents, and raise money from supporters or through organized crime.
* **Communications:** Communications occur through modern telecommunications, or through old-fashioned methods such as couriers.
* **Finance:** Financed through money-laundering schemes and illegal criminal activities
* **Suicide:** Terrorist recruits are indoctrinated so as they become increasingly willing to commit suicide to accomplish their objectives.

**Responses:**

* Responses to terrorism are broad in scope. They can include re-alignments of the political spectrum and reassessments of fundamental values.
* Specific types of responses include:
* Targeted laws, criminal procedures, deportations, and enhanced police powers
* Target hardening, such as locking doors or adding traffic barriers
* Preemptive or reactive military action
* Increased intelligence and surveillance activities
* Preemptive humanitarian activities
* More permissive interrogation and detention policies
* Sanctioning the states that have been sponsoring terrorism

**The Just War Tradition**

* The theory that identifies the criteria under which it is morally permissible, or ‘just’ for a state to go to war and the methods by which a just war might be fought.
* Developed by St. Augustine, Thomas Auinas, Hugo Grotius, and more recently by the political philosopher Michael Waltzer
* According to the Just War Theory, there are several criteria (self defense, massive violation of human rights etc.) that can make the decision to enter a war a just one.

**Just War Criteria**

There are generally seven principles

1. The war must be fought by the PROPER AUTHORITY of a government or the United Nations. The politicians must make the most important decisions

2. The war must be fought for a JUST CAUSE– the war must be started for a good reason – e.g. self-defense, gross human rights violations etc

3. It must be fought to restore peace. Most people argue that Britain and her allies, by taking on the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler, prevented greater evil from happening

4. There must be a REASONABLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS. You cannot go to war and waste the lives of brave soldiers for something which you have very little chance of winning, lives should not be wasted.

5. A war is just if it is waged as the LAST RESORT, all non violent means of solving the conflict must have been tried and failed before you turn to war

6. The force used in the war must be PROPORTIONAL to the cause. It would not be proportional to drop a nuclear weapon on a small country for invading a small island.

7. There must be CONTROLLED VIOLENCE. Every effort must be made to make sure that the possibility of violence is minimized and methods should AVOID KILLING CIVILIANS

**Just War in Realism and Idealism Perspective**

* Just war theory is commonly understood to represent a middle way between realpolitik's or “political realism” narrow focus purely on national self-interest, and absolute pacifism's.
* A just war is one fought for the sake of the pacifist's idealistic goal: lasting peace and justice.
* Yet, to achieve this goal, the just war theorist must be ‘realistically’ concerned with achieving victory and avoiding defeat.
* For these and other reasons, just war theory is associated with classic works of realism for their many strategic insights.

**Humanitarian Intervention**

* Since the end of World War II, the notion has emerged that all humans are in need of protection.
* Therefore, states have an obligation to intervene in order to fulfill their ‘responsibility to protect’.
* The notion gained greater prominence in the 1990s.
* The belief became popular that when actions by other states might reasonably end human rights’ abuses in a warring state, then states should intervene.
* The conflict between human rights and state sovereignty has been addressed by two recent developments in international society:
  1. an evolution in the notion of sovereignty from 'sovereignty as authority' to 'sovereignty as responsibility'; and
  2. an expanded definition of the Security Council on what constitutes a threat to peace and security
* When there are widely recognized gross violations and when military intervention does not conflict with other national interests, then humanitarian intervention is seen as a justified use of force.
* General climate of international society seems to favour humanitarian interventions; however, there are serious concerns about its negative implications.
* Humanitarian intervention directly contradicts the hallmark of the Westphalian tradition- respect state sovereignty.
* The issue of humanitarian intervention has the potential to divide international institutions such as the UN and damage their credibility.
* Given their colonial experiences, many Asian and African countries are skeptical about altruistic claims by Western countries.
* States like Russia and China insist that for a claim of humanitarian intervention to be legitimate, it must be authorized by the U.N Security Council

**Approaches to managing security:**

* States need to address their insecurity because;

1. disparity in power between states
2. their inability to know the intentions of states and individuals
3. lack of an overarching international authority

* There are two major approaches to managing insecurity

1. Liberal Approach
2. Realist Approach

**Liberals’ Approach**

* Liberal approaches to managing the security dilemma call on the ideals of;

1. The collective Security
2. Arms control and disarmament

**a) The Collective Security Ideal**

* Collective security may be defined as a plan for maintaining peace through an organization of sovereign states, whose members pledge themselves to defend each other against attack.
* It is based on an old saying, “one for all and all for one” which simply means that an attack on one nation will be regarded as an attack on all states
* Collective security is regarded as most effective device of maintaining peace and deterring aggression.
* The Woodrow Wilson is regarded as the enunciator of the concept in modern time
* In his famous ‘Fourteen Points’ speech, addressed to Congress in January 1918, Wilson argued that ‘a general association of nations must be formed’ to preserve the peace.

**b) Arms Control and Disarmament**: the act of reducing, limiting, or abolishing weapons

**Nuclear Disarmament:**  the act of reducing or eliminating nuclear weapons and to the end state of a nuclear-free world, in which nuclear weapons are completely eliminated.

* Several conferences have been held to reduce arms e.g., 1932-34: World Disarmament Conference

**Realists’ Approach**

* Realism is a tradition of international theory centered upon the proposition that the international system is anarchic and exists in a state of constant antagonism.
* In order to managing insecurity, realism advocates for i) Balance of power and ii) Deterrence

1. **Balance of Power**

* At the core of the balance of power theory is the idea that national security is enhanced when military capabilities are distributed so that no one state is strong enough to dominate all others.
* According to Waltz, "so long as the notion of self-help persists, the aim of maintaining the power position of the nation is paramount to all other considerations"
* In order to contain power and limits its potential abuse, the balance of power is therefore central to the realist perspective of international relations.

1. **Deterrence:**

* The concept of deterrence can be defined as the use of threats by one party to convince another party to refrain from initiating some course of action
* A threat serves as a deterrent to the extent that it convinces its target not to carry out the intended action because of the costs and losses that target would incur
* A successful deterrence policy must be considered in not only military terms, but also in political terms.

**Nuclear Deterrence:**

* Nuclear Deterrence holds that nuclear weapons are intended to deter other states from attacking with their nuclear weapons, through the promise of retaliation and possibly mutually assured destruction (MAD).

Countries like China, U.K, France, Pakistan and India practiced nuclear deterrence.

**Changing View of International Security**

1. **Outsourcing War**

* Over the past decade, states and international organizations have shifted a surprising range of foreign policy functions to Private Military Contractors (PMCs)
* As the United States engaged in the "war on terror," it outsourced key security and military support functions, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, to private companies to carry out the work.
* The number of contractors even exceeded the number of military personnel. The US reliance on private military contractors reached a turning point with interventions in Bosnia, Croatia, and Angola in 1995.
* The work that is contracted out to companies ranges from logistical support to security for U.S. government personnel and reconstruction projects, to training military and security personnel, to operating and maintaining weapons systems.
* But the contracted companies have also served in more sensitive roles, such as interrogation and translating during questioning of alleged terrorist suspects.
* Earlier distinctions between soldiers and civilians are breaking down as PMCs are increasingly utilized by the developed world

**Examples of PMCs:**

* Blackwater (now renamed Xe), Aegis Defence Services, DynCorp, and Military Professional Resources Inc. (MPRI)

1. **State’s Sovereignty vs Human Rights**

* Since 1950s, a new realization has emerged that debates whether it is essential to protect state sovereignty or individuals living within.
* Some states are accused of and fall into atrocities and violence on its own people which generates serious concerns of gross human rights violations
* The issue of humanitarian intervention has generated one of the most heated debates in International Relations over the past decade - among both theorists and practitioners.
* At the heart of the debate is the involved tension between the principle of ‘state sovereignty’, a defining pillar of the UN system and international law, and the evolving international norms related to ‘human rights’ and ‘the use of force’.

**Conclusion:**

Since long, there have been no general wars

War possibility, however, cannot be ruled out

With the increased development of modern warfare, limited wars have become the only option

With one way or another, wars will continue as the most unfortunate fact of the human history