

# Reassurance, Resolve and Wedge Strategy\*

Hankyeul Yang †

This Draft: November 9, 2025

## Abstract

What is a wedge strategy and under what conditions does it lead to military conflicts between the aggressor and the third-party state? I present a novel framework for understanding wedge strategy by conceptualizing wedge concessions as costly reassurance signals. In particular, I show how driving a wedge between the target and the third-party could be understood as the aggressor seeking to simultaneously demonstrate resolve for the "local" issue while reassuring the third-party of its lack of greed for the "global" issue. I present a formal model for conceptualizing wedge strategy, and analyze historical cases through the lens of this new framework.

---

\*Acknowledgments

†Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University, Email: [yanghankyeul@tamu.edu](mailto:yanghankyeul@tamu.edu).