

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICS AND WAR

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### Introduction

The relation between war and politics always been entwined in human history and many political scientists and foreign policy makers view war as an instrument of politics. Every decision taken by the head of state have political consequences, which come with an ultimate cost. Examining the influencing factors of organized war with the purpose of achieving the states political goal, we characterize war as a major factor to obtain power from another state to gain political influence and control to accomplish the political goals of the specific state.

By investigating politics and how that relates to war you can see that war is used to force another state to achieve their political goals. Several factors are considered when resources are not infinite for the state. Therefore, by allocating problems by using showing strength between states to pressure a particular society is showing you that war is not just a political act but can be also a real political instrument. Ultimately, states will represent their own interests to maximize their own utility by using strength to change the decision of the opposition. We can say that, war is a vital form of utilization in politics.

### Research Objectives

The main objective in this study is to answer the question, “Is every war a political decision”? In order to begin answering this question, one must asses the understanding of the current political world. In a world where mass amounts of international relations exist, and more countries are continually trying to sign treaties, there is an important understanding of international relations within the political world. Since this research question is very much qualitative as it gains to understand the underlying reasons and motivation/opinions of the relation between politics and wars. This exploratory research will provide insights to the relations and help develop thoughts/opinions to potentially uncover facts and dive deeper into the research.

The understanding of the relations between politics and war will help individuals acknowledge the roles in shaping future economic outcomes by being informed of the importance of historical events that shaped our

current political world. Ultimately, society itself will understand the degree of involvement between politics and war.

I believe that this study will prove a hypothesis of politics having a big influence with wars that happen between states internationally.

## Literature Review

The first source deals with respect to conflict between states, and the possibility of diversionary purposes between the states. In the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History: The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (1988)*, Jack S. Levy's[1] major theme in his book is the gap between historians and political scientists in their evaluations of the relative importance of domestic political variables in the processes leading to war. The political science literature on the relationship between the domestic and foreign conflict behavior of states is a particularly striking example of this discrepancy. A main hypothesis in this book is, "The Scapegoat Theory"[2]. This theory allows political elites to use a foreign war to divert popular attention from internal social, economic, and political problems. For instance, a conflict within state A may tempt A's leaders to resort to the use of force externally for diversionary purposes. Alternatively, conflict within state A may tempt state B to intervene, either to exploit a temporary military advantage created by the impact of A's disorder on its military strength, or to attempt to influence the outcome of the struggle for the power in A. Conflict within A may generate weaknesses which provide an opportunity for B to attack, thus providing the political leadership of A with a real external threat which can be exploited for its own domestic political purposes. Consequently, showing the political variables in processes which may lead to war.

The second source, *The Reasons for Wars – A Updated Survey (2009)*, author Mathew O. Jackson and Massimo Morelli[3] discusses that incentives must exist for conflict and that some barriers exist to reach an enforceable bargain in war. They explain that some revolutions and coups arise from an agency problem, either on the part of the current ruler or the leader of the attack. Some civil wars erupt because of ethnic or religious diversities manifesting themselves in the form of multilateral bargaining failures. Although the theoretical understanding of the various causes of wars is developing well and there are innumerable case studies of war and analyses of conflicts, systematic empirical work[4] that analyzes the origins of wars across many cases is still relatively lacking. A richer understanding of the origins of wars would help further advance this relation and would help in sorting more frequent and important causes from those which are less so, ultimately helping to develop policies aimed at avoiding the costs of conflict. Therefore, the ways in which leaders gain power differ across political regimes and affects the type of leader that emerges and the extent to which they represent the state by politically waging wars and the decisions involved are made by careful and rational individuals.

The third source is a journal by Carl von Clausewitz, *On war: On the Nature of War (1984)*[5]. It describes war as a mere continuation of policy by other means. Clausewitz states that war is not merely a political act, but also a real political instrument. The author has stated that under all circumstances, war is to be regarded not as an independent thing but as a political instrument and it is only by taking this point of view that we can avoid finding ourselves in opposition to all military history. Clausewitz's view shows us how wars must differ in character according to the nature of the motives[6] and circumstances from which they proceed. Additionally, he also said

that war is a direct outcome of political activity and policies. Battles typically happen due to the rules and norms adopted by one country which are not acceptable by others or are in contradiction to their interests. Wars are fought to satisfy the political benefits of a nation; Clausewitz argued that policies not only help in determining the objective that military or army will look to achieve by engaging in a war and that such combats are political instruments to conquer land, people, or money. Thus, according to Clausewitz, war must not be seen as an act of real physical violence, instead it must be considered as the start of a political fight, in which one state threatens the other and forces it to follow their political concepts and policies.

The fourth source, *Foucault and the Continuation of War (2012)*[7], the author, Jason Edwards analyses the relationship of war and politics that Micheal Foucault published, called, *Society Must Be Defended*. Edwards focuses on reasons why states engage in to advance and protect their interests when diplomacy fails. He further discusses the immediate problems that emerge from use of war as a means of analysing politics and power relations. Also, Edwards notes that war is just the central feature of human history and politics. From the authors point of view, politics is war and politics is certainly what makes war possible. From this standpoint we can see that Edwards is arguing that politics is not a departure of or cessation of war, but rather that politics has the form of war and is the condition for and moment of the constitution of all social life. Ultimately, the writer claims that “understanding how politics and relations of power in modernity are constituted as relations... of the friend-enemy distinction is characteristic of the political discourses and practices of modernity” Thus, his work supports that there is correlation between war and politics.

The last source, *The Morality, Politics and Irony of War: Recovering Reinhold Niebuhr’s Ethical Realism (2008)*, the author John D. Carlson[8] solely focuses on the unexamined relationship between elements in war such as “morality and politics.” Carlson says that, many states put forward strategic strategy and political reasons for war. The author begins by discussing the irony of America’s historical experience of war and the relationship between political causes of the morality of war. Consequently, Carlson’s research discovers that by having state’s deploying smart tactics and by showing strength as instruments of self-interest and power, politics plays a major role on warfare when states try to push these forces in a direction of self-benefit and not for international armistice.

The sources previously mentioned will help future research conducted on the relationship between politics and war. All authors provided detailed information on their standpoint of politics influencing war, including demonstrating the type instruments of influence being used and discusses the state of mind of the state’s pursuing these horrendous actions of war.

## Variables

Since this research is examining the comprehensive topic of political influence in causing wars, it is imperative to consider the other influencing factors as possible intervening variables. As mentioned already by the authors, the state’s influence can potentially form political violence that is impacted by one state having scarce economics using violence to compel the opponent to their demands, which can be considered the most intervening variable.

The independent variable in this study would be war because we are trying to research if war is started by politics. The dependant variable will be politics since we are determining that there is an influence of political factors behind the cause of a war.

## Methodology

For this qualitative research, the first source, the author, Jack S. Levy's methods to collect data were done through peer-reviewed articles reviewed by other experts in the field, along with including documents/records of past events, observations and numerous case studies. Research for this article has been supported by the [9]Stanford Center for International Security and Arms Control, by the Carnegie Corporation and by a Social Science Research Council/MacArthur Foundation fellowship in international peace and security. This will help inform the research proposal by allowing you to see potential impact of political and foreign choices made by states and political leaders.

The second source, the author Mathew O. Jackson and Massimo Morelli collected data through study of observations, documents/records, and case studies. This article will help inform the research proposal by analyzing cases of decision when wars are involved by gaining an essential perspective on the various sources of conflict and importance of different political factors that lead to war.

The third source, the author Carl von Clausewitz similarly uses methods used to collect data were documents/records, case studies, and observations. The various concepts proposed by Clausewitz are still extremely useful in understanding the concept of war in today's times and will help inform the research proposal by using his connection of war and politics, which constitutes that war is a technique through which a country can impose its policies onto other areas and nations.

Lastly, the fourth and fifth source similarly uses case studies and observations to collect information on the relationship between war, power relations and politics. The main message the author Jason Edwards and John D. Carlson portray in their text is that all state's use political strength or they would fall into anarchy.

## Ethics

It will be very difficult to maintain ethical research when it relates to the topic of politics and war. In my opinion each state will try to be unethical by withholding information that is relation to politics causing war since it will not be in their best interest disclosing that information to the public. Wars relation to politics is a bottomless topic that we can research and find relations that are going to include ethical research done by professional and along with unethical research that potentially can be obtained by displaying deception from a particular state or individual trying to protect its self-interests.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this research is worth studying because it analyses the factors that led up to the actual war. It is important to know about our past and how we evolved as states from the historical events from the past. By analysing former errors through research, we can avoid these errors in the political future because history will teach us the close relation between war and politics.

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