

IRE223: NATIONS IN CONFLICT

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"It is not worth while to try to keep history from repeating itself, for man's character will always make the preventing of the repetitions impossible"

Mark Twain, *Eruption: Hitherto Unpublished Pages About Men and Events*, 1940

Spring 2020

Session 3 : Causes of War I

On the Agenda for Today

2

- **What is War?**
- **Biological & Psychological Causes of War**
- **Conflict Theory**
 - Conflict's Perspective of Society
 - Karl Marx & the Revolution
 - Power and Conflict (Max, Weber)



What is War ?

War Is...

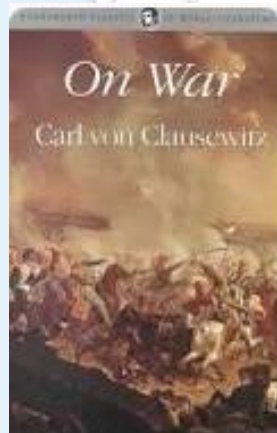
- "A **contest** between **nations** or **states** (international war) or between **parties** in the **same state** (civil war), carried on by **force of arms** for **various purposes**, as to settle disputes about territorial possessions, to maintain rights that have been interfered with, to resist oppression, to avenge injuries, to conquer territory, to extend dominion, etc.; a **conflict of arms between hostile parties** or nations; open hostility **declared** and **engaged** in"

Webster's Monarch Dictionary (Chicago, 1916)

What is War ?

Carl von Clausewitz =>

- Prussian general who fought during the Napoleonic wars
- Military theorist who analysed various aspects of war
- Most notable work => 'Vom Kriege' / 'On War'



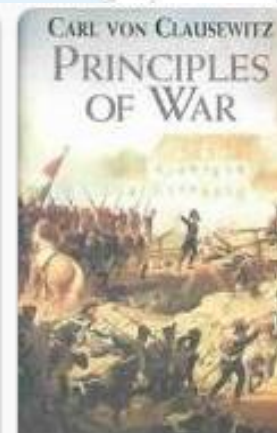
On War
1832



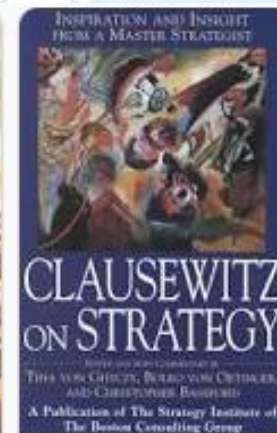
On Waterloo:
Clausewitz, ...



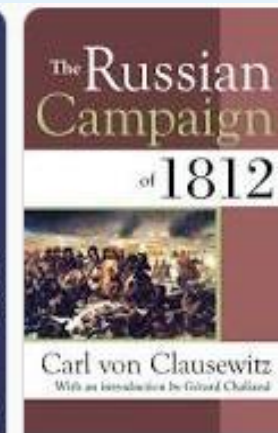
On the Nature
of War
2005



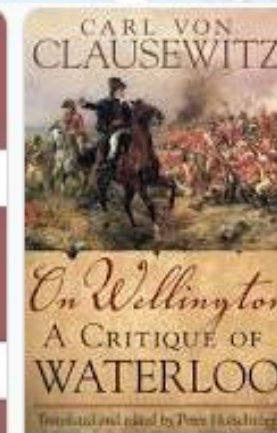
Principles of
War



Clausewitz on
Strategy
2001



The campaign
of 1812 in R...



On
Wellington: ...

What is War ?

Carl von Clausewitz =>

- “Politics is the womb in which war develops”
- “To secure peace is to prepare for war”
- “War is not an independent phenomenon, but the continuation of politics by different means”
- “War is not merely a political act but a real political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, a carrying out of the same by other means”



What is War ?



War Is...

- The province of danger, and therefore courage above all things is the first quality of the warrior
- The province of physical exertion, suffering, uncertainty & friction
- A **social phenomenon** and distinctly **political**
 - **Means** => “**Force** . . . is the means of war; to impose our will on the enemy is its object. To secure that object we must **render the enemy powerless**; and that, in theory, is the true aim of warfare

What is War ?

Characteristics of War =>

- The **waging of armed conflict** against an **enemy**
- A **legal state**, created by a declaration of war and ended by official declaration during which the **international rules of war** apply
- Condition of **open + declared, armed conflict** carried on between political units (e.g. states or nations), limited or general
- “Organized, socially sanctioned armed violence employed by opposing groups against one another, normally for political, social or economic purposes”

What is War ?

Levels of War

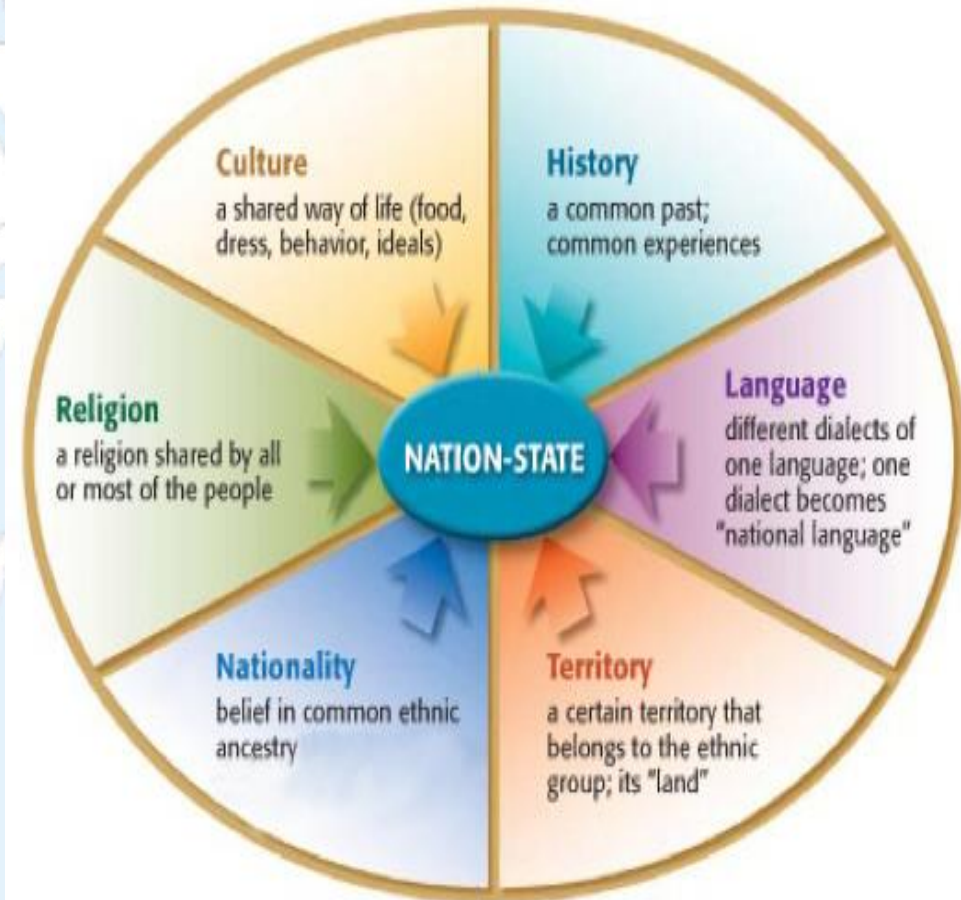
- **Strategic Level** => Grand plan for fighting a war, it's overall conduct
 - The domain of high level **civilian** + **military leaders**
 - Sets regions of operation, resources allocation, general plans of action (**Where to fight? + With what?**)
- **Operational Level** => The fighting itself
 - The domain of **generals** and **admirals**
 - Campaigns (a series of maneuvers + battles over an extended period) are planned and conducted (**how to fight?**)

The Nation-State System

- Organs of **modern political consciousness** (public education + mass media) emerged in the 19th century
- Globe-conquering ideology of **unique national identities** => Nation states, an illusion of homogeneity

Principal Properties =>

- **States' Sovereignty: Domestic Politics vs. IR**



The Nation-State System

- **Closed system**
- **The system in anarchical**
- **Instruments of National Power => Arsenal of means** available for employment in the pursuit of national objectives (Military, Diplomacy, Economic)
- **Conflicts** between states can be **resolved** in numerous ways, when other means fail, **force** is the **final arbiter**/mean of resolving differences
- Hence => The **nation-state system** is, in principle, a **warfare system**

What Causes War?

A light blue world map with white outlines of continents and countries, serving as a background for the slide. A horizontal bar with a blue gradient and a brown segment on the left is positioned above the text.

- **Biological + Psychological** explanations
- **Marxism + Neo-Marxism**
- **Liberalist** theories
- **Realist** theories

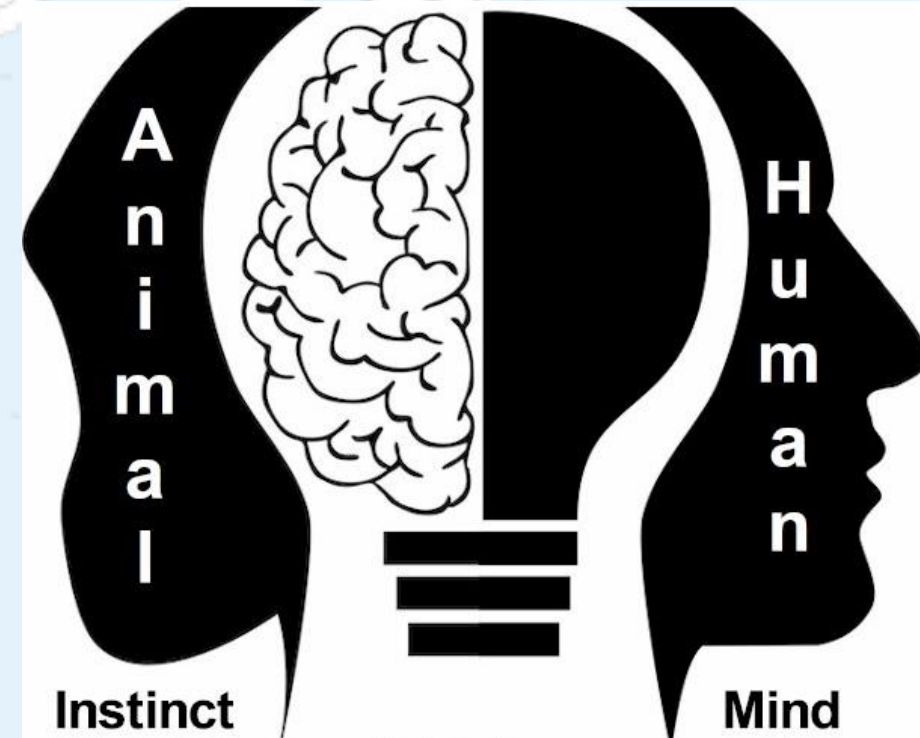
Why People Fight?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NlgqS47m5k>



Biological & Psychological Theories

- **Not** directly related to political science + IR, but part of an **Interdisciplinary study** of war
- Since **people create political systems** that **interact** in the global arena, human **biological** and **psychological** characteristics **affect** the **form + functioning** of IR
- **Main explanation of the occurrence of war**
 - Human **instincts**
 - Human **passions**



Biological & Psychological Theories

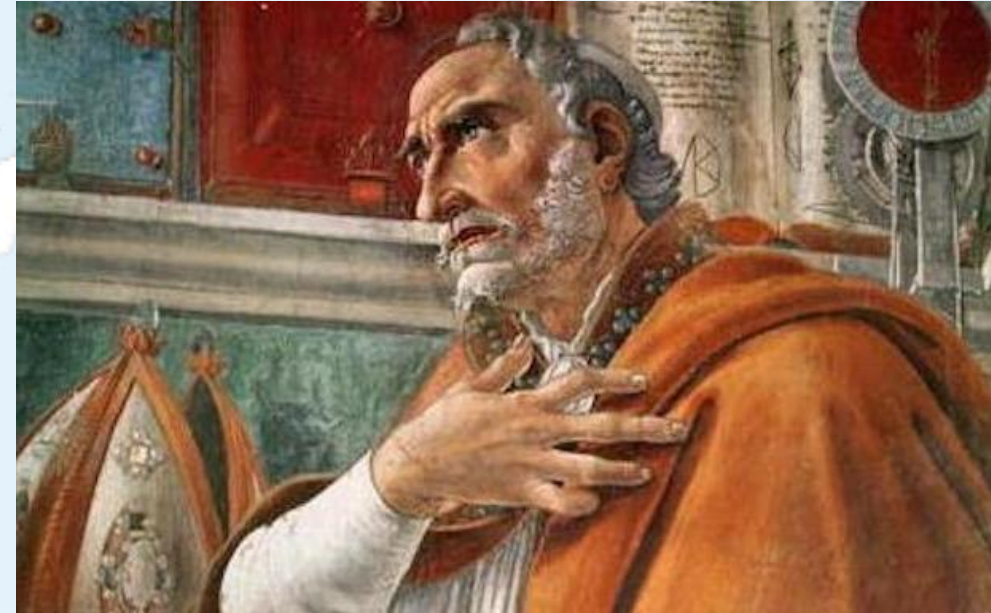
- Human aggressive behaviors stem from an **aggressive instinct**



Biological & Psychological Theories

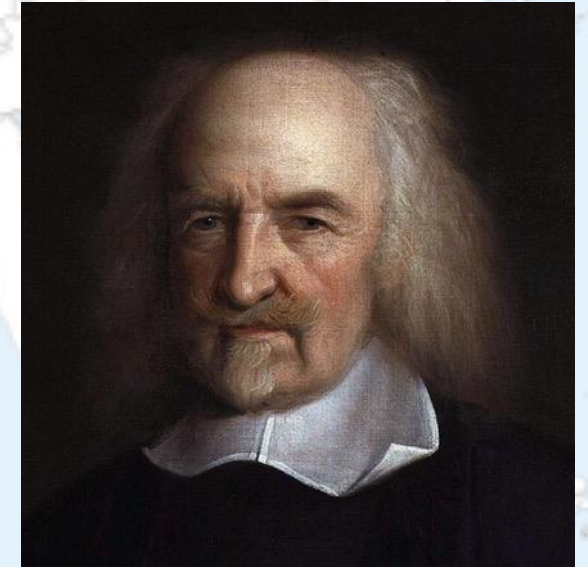
Ancient theories

- St. Augustine, a Christian philosopher, early 5th century AD
- Main argument => **Man's desire to dominate** causes wars
- Credited with the notion of the 'Original Sin'
 - According to Christian theology, human beings inherited the **sins of Adam**
 - The sinful nature gives rise to a '**libido dominandi**', a desire to dominate, evident in the brutal way we treat others, animals, etc.



Biological & Psychological Theories

- Thomas **Hobbes** (1588-1679), considered as one of the founders of modern political philosophy
- **'The Leviathan'**, (1651):
 - *"Man is wolf to man"*, man can be a priori regarded as **aggressive & violent**
 - The **primitive state of man/nature** => "the war of all against all", is dominated by **savage + cruel** behavior (causes wars)
 - Could only be avoided by strong, absolute sovereign: the **commonwealth**



"Whatever the result of a war where every man is enemy to every man, also a result of a time when men live without other security than what their own strength and their own capacity to invent their give..."

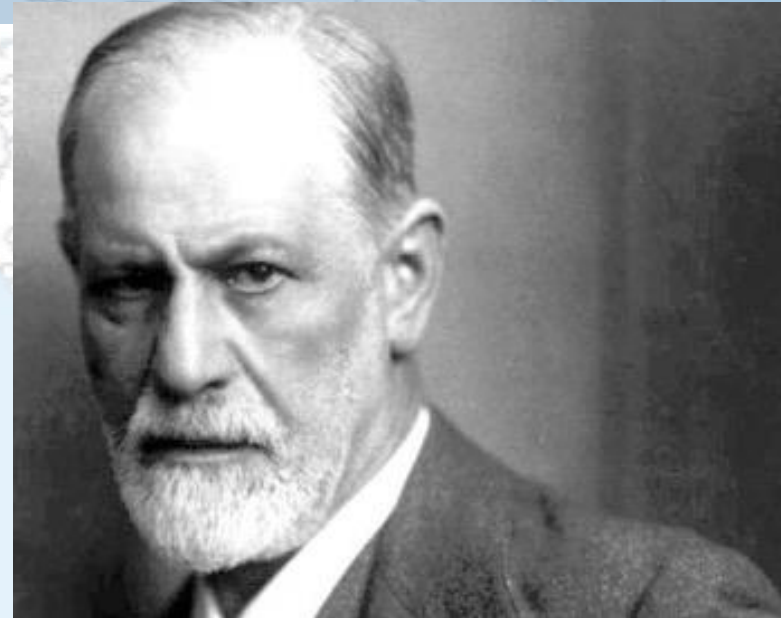
Biological & Psychological Theories

- **'The Leviathan', (1651):**
 - **'The ideal commonwealth is ruled by a sovereign power responsible for protecting the security of the commonwealth + granted absolute authority to ensure common defence => "Leviathan"**
 - **The text attempts to prove the necessity of the Leviathan (through social contract) for preserving peace and preventing war**



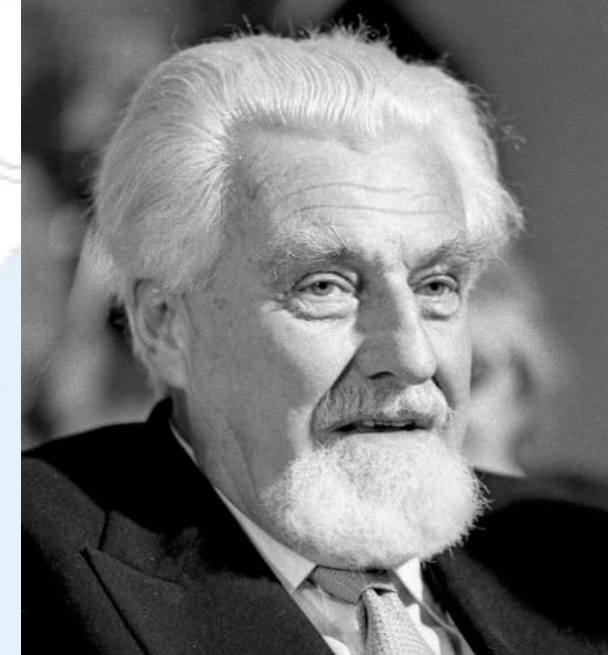
Biological & Psychological Theories

- Freud frequently described the **aggressive thoughts** and feelings his patients reported to him during their **free associations**
- **1920's** => became so impressed with the crucial role of human aggression that he radically revised his whole theory
 - Polarity of two governing passions: Sexuality + self-preservation => the **life instinct** (eros/**libido**: the urge to create) + the **death/aggressive instinct** (**Destrudo**: the urge to destroy) the drive for destruction of oneself or of others
 - Main argument: Humans are affected by impulses to destroy; **aggression isn't man's reaction** to an **outside stimulus**, but a **permanent force**



Biological & Psychological Theories

- Theories concerning **Innate human aggression** as the **main cause of wars** were especially popular in the 1960s
- Konrad **Lorenz** (1903-1989), Austrian zoologist, known for his work on the **roots of aggression**
 - Contributed to an understanding of how **behavioral patterns** may be traced to an **evolutionary past**
 - Followed Hobbes and argued that **war cannot be avoided since aggression is a human instinct**



Biological & Psychological Theories

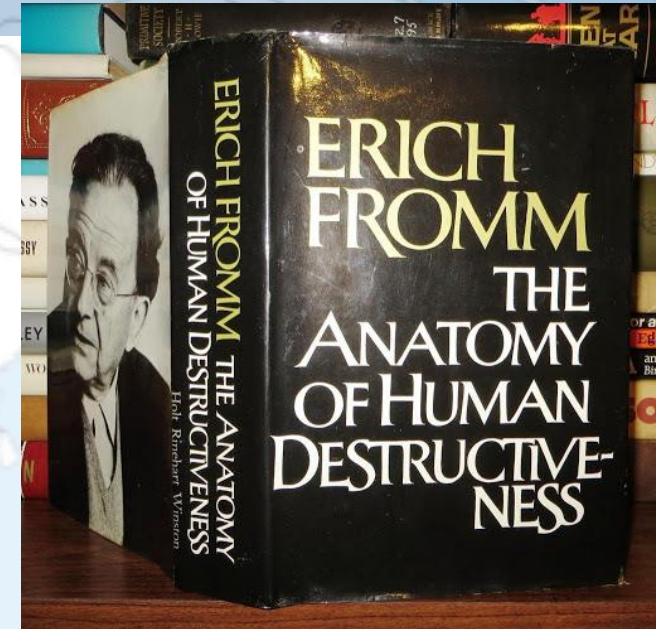
- In his book “**On Aggression**” he postulated a hypothesis similar to Freud's in its results => **Aggression is a force inherent in the human organism, yet different in its theoretical premises:**
 - Like his **animal ancestors**, Man is motivated by a 'phylogenetically programmed spontaneously flowing spring of **aggression**', situated in certain areas of the **brain**
 - According to Lorenz's '**Drive Discharge**' model, the energy of the **aggressive instinct** is **accumulated** in the body and looks for an opportunity to be **released** (catharsis)
 - The **aggression** plays an important role in **preserving the species**, establishing **social relationships**, and contribute to the **survival** of the **most able**

Biological & Psychological Theories

- **Lorenz**, in his later works, refined his ideas:
 - Even though **aggression**, in general, **serves the survival of the species**, this instinct has become **too strong in humans**
 - The **modern man** has few opportunities to **vent the aggression instinct**, thus modern war, waged (in an extreme case, by means of weapons of mass destruction) is **no longer a tool serving the preservation of the species** but a **threat** to the survival of the species
- The development of modern science + technology resulted in a **discrepancy between people's physical ability to kill and their instincts**
- Extreme violence is rare even among chimpanzees

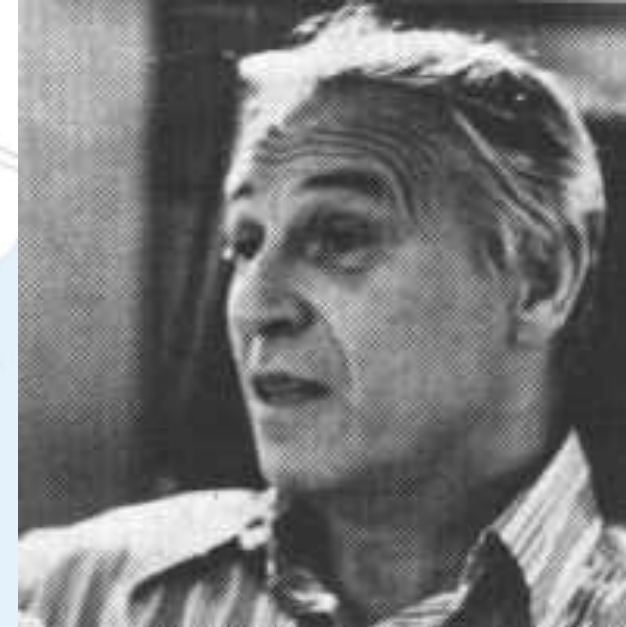
Biological & Psychological Theories

- Erich **Fromm**, 20th century German social psychologist
- Main argument => **Human nature** is basically **good + society** is the **cause of the evil** and corruption produced by man
- Two types of aggression exist- **Benign** and **Destructive**:
 - **Benign, defensive aggression**: Shared with other animals, fight or flight in the face of danger.
 - Consists of accidental/playful/acts resulting from ego hurt, escape from reality, a desire to conform/be free, or a need to attain a goal => Can be eliminated by constructing a society in which no one is threatened



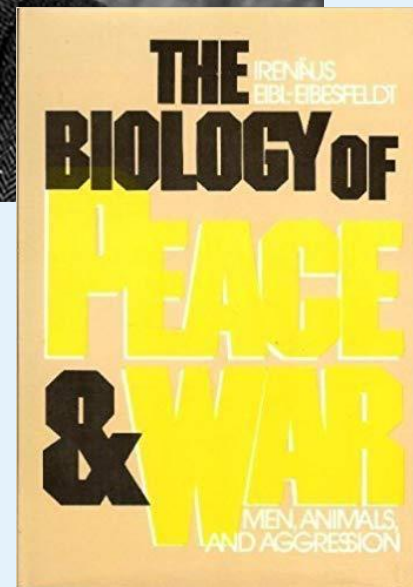
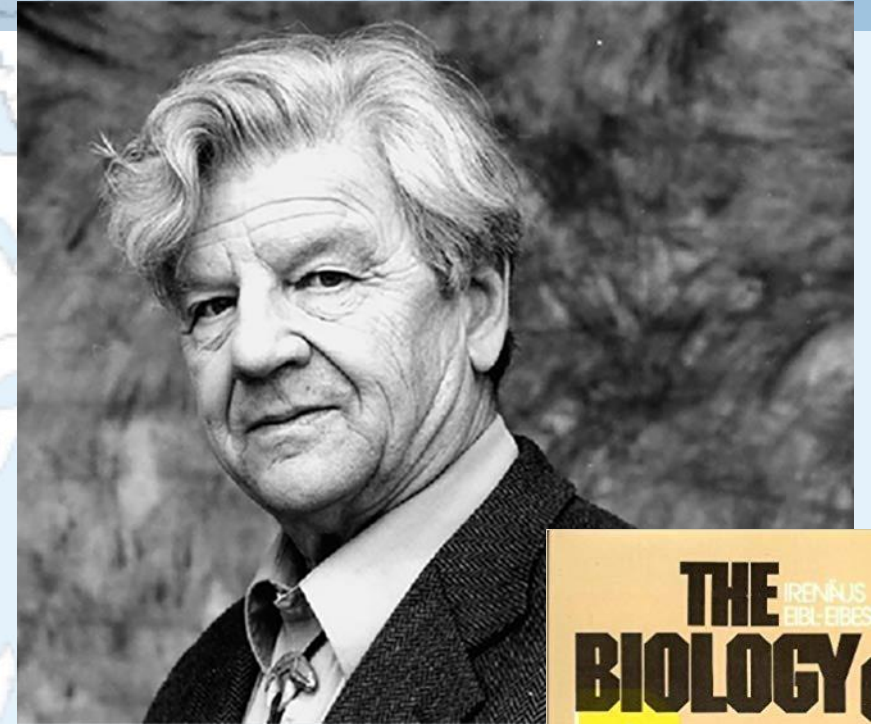
Biological & Psychological Theories

- **Malignant/Destructive aggression: Exclusively human**
 - Consists of sadism + passionate desire for cruelty and destruction. Has **nothing to do with survival**, but with inflicting pain on others for pleasure, animosity
 - Is the result of "**exploitation and manipulation**" => Can be substantially **eliminated** when the existing **socioeconomic conditions** are replaced by conditions **favourable** to the development of man's **genuine needs**
- Fromm expressed **optimism** and **hope** that through **social** and **political upheavals** + love and understanding of mankind man will survive & prosper



Biological & Psychological Theories

- Eibl Eibesfeldt (1928–2018), an Austrian expert of human ethology
- Eibesfeldt integrated **violence** into the process of **cultural evolution** => **Aggression** by which the group delineates its territory contributes to the development of the **group identity**
- A **fear of foreigners** is an important factor **enhancing intergroup aggression** => War as a mean to keep foreigners out



Biological & Psychological Theories

- The **Seville Statement on Violence** of 20 scientists (1986), adopted by UNESCO (1989)
- Opposition to Lorenz's **fatalist approach**
- “We conclude that **biology does not condemn humanity to war**, and that humanity can be freed from the bondage of biological pessimism” (Ginsburg 2005: 94-96)
- Main argument: The tendency to wage wars is **NOT part of human nature**
 - Peace is possible

The Seville Statement on Violence

PREPARING THE GROUND FOR
THE CONSTRUCTING OF PEACE

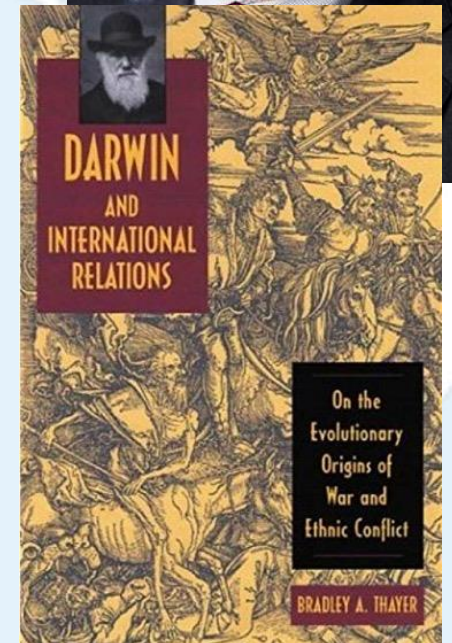
disseminated by decision
of the General Conference of Unesco
at its twenty-fifth session
Paris, 16 November 1989

edited
with commentary
by David Adams

UNESCO

Biological & Psychological Theories

- Bradley Thayer, contemporary scholar of IR
- Analyzed **int. affairs** through the lens of **evolutionary theory**
 - Explains human & state behavior + generate insights into the origins of human warfare and ethnic conflict (how did xenophobia and ethnocentrism evolved in humans)
 - Main argument => **Evolutionary theory** explains why the **instinctual tendency to protect one's tribe** morphed over time into **group inclinations toward xenophobia and ethnocentrism** in IR
 - These behaviors once contributed to our ancestors' success in radically different environments, remain a part of us



Is war Unique to Humans?

To what extent is human war a unique characteristic in our world?

- Behaviors associated with war (coordination, a clear hierarchy, complex maneuvers, strategies) were observed among species of ants + chimps
- **Non-human primates** use aggression to establish or challenge + defend hierarchies within groups
- However, humans are the **only species** to participate in war in a **non-instinctual manner**: we do not practice war simply because of a change in chemical signals
 - We are the only species that **plans** and **executes mass killing**, while being **aware** of what we're doing => Have a **choice** in the matter

Is war Unique to Humans?

Is war natural or instinctual?

- **Aggression** is clearly **linked** to the **hypothalamus** + **testosterone** => Yet, it isn't solely a product of internal/psychotic processes
- Aggression arise/elevates in response to confrontation (among individuals or groups), intrusion, frustration in a kind of activity
- Significant relationship between **environmental depletion/stimuli** + **warfare**
- Need to **understand aggression** in a **social context**, rather than solely biological

Biological & Psychological Theories

In conclusion =>

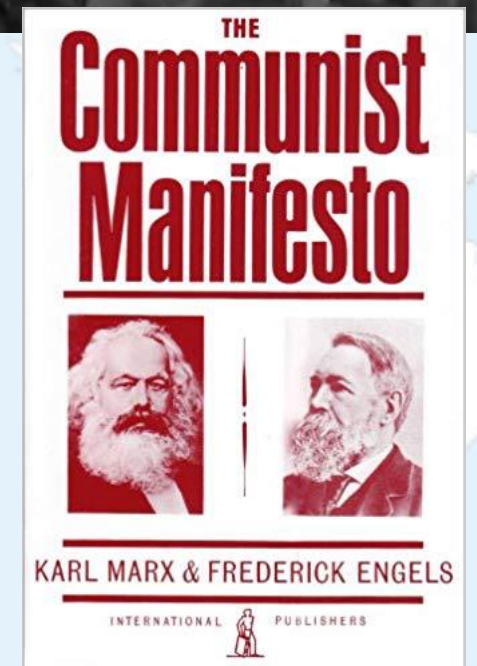
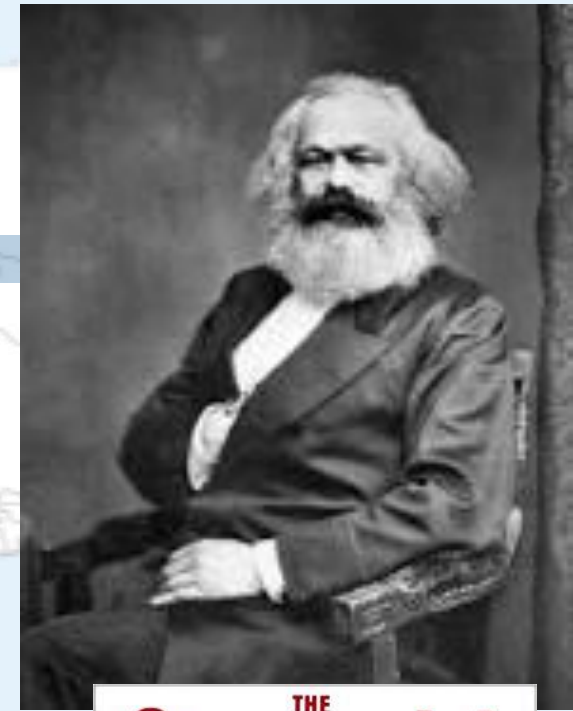
- **War-like behaviors are not unique to Humans**
- **Human Biology + Psychology are contributing factors to the occurrence of wars, however-**
- Since wars are a **minor form of political interaction** between state, there must be **other variables** (besides human nature), which theories of biological & psychological factors are **missing** when explaining the occurrence of war
- The 'evil human nature' may be a **necessary**, but **insufficient** condition for the existence of war

The Conflict Perspective of Society

- **Critical theorists** see **society** as riddled with disagreement, inequality + conflict
- Any **apparent consensus** in society is maintained by visible/hidden coercion
- **“Conflict theories...seek to explain *how* the unequal distribution of resources leads to conflict between those who **possess** and **control** valuable **resources**, on the one side, and those who seek to **increase their share of these resources**, on the other...”**
 - Turner et al (1998)

Conflict Theory

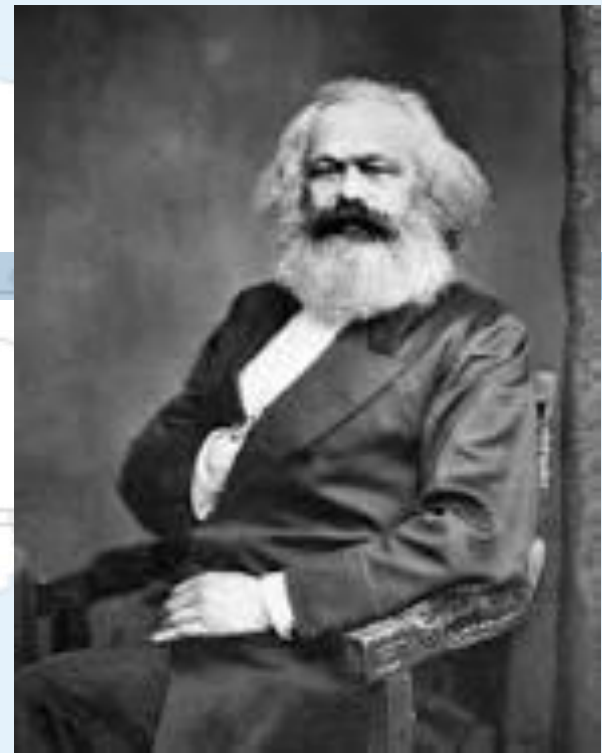
- A **macro-level approach**, most identified with the writings of German philosopher and sociologist Karl **Marx** (1818–83)
- Society (+ social interactions) as a **battlefield** => **competition for limited resources**
- Marx + Friedrich **Engels**: ***The Communist Manifesto*** (1848)
- **Communism** is a **political philosophy**: individuals should have **equal rights to wealth**
- **Marxism** is a way of understanding & analysing the **organisation** and **structure** of society + a way of understanding how societies **develop**



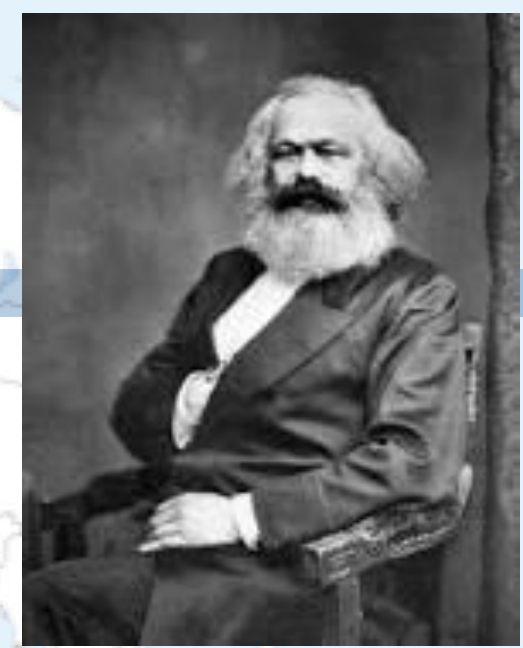
Conflict Theory

- **Marxism =>**

- The core of the **Marxist theory** is the concept of **class struggle**
- Argued that **class is the fundamental inequality in society**
- Society is made up of individuals in **different social classes** who must **compete** for social, material, and political resources (food, housing, employment, education, and leisure time)



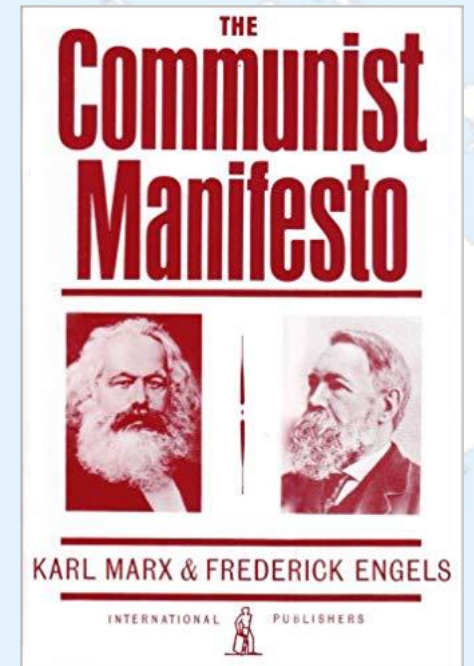
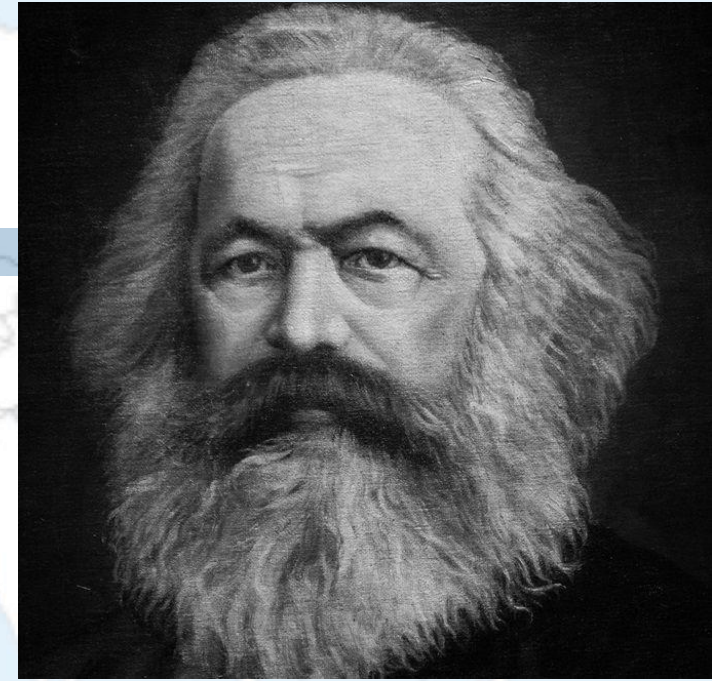
Conflict Theory



- **Marxism =>**
 - Some individuals and organizations can **obtain and keep more resources than others**, and use their power and influence to **maintain social institutions**
 - **Social institutions** (government, education, and religion) **reflect the competition** in the inherent social **inequalities** and help maintain the **unequal social structure**
 - Historically, the **oppressors** were the wealthy **owners of production means** (the **bourgeoisie**) and the **oppressed** were the **working class** (the **proletariat**)
- Marx argued that **the ruling class always develops ideologies to justify and legitimize their exploitation**

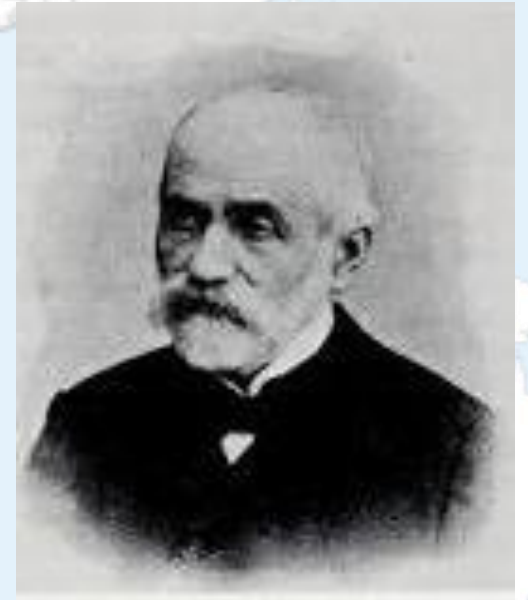
Conflict Theory

- **Marxism** =>
 - Coined the term '**false consciousness**': workers' acceptance of ideologies that ran counter to their interests
 - Argued that in time, **false consciousness** is replaced with **class consciousness** => the recognition of a common class condition and the development of a common unity in opposition to capitalist exploitation
 - Will set the stage for **revolution**



Conflict Theory

- Several theorists suggested variations/expansions of this basic theme
 - **Ludwig Gumplowicz** => Polish-Austrian sociologist (1838–1909)
 - Argued that **war + conquest are the basis of civilization**
 - Believed that **cultural and ethnic conflicts led to states being identified and defined by a dominant group** that had power over other groups



Max Weber, Power & Conflict



- Max **Weber** => Renowned German sociologist (1864-1920)
 - Interested in **social changes** (and social conflict) induced by the industrial revolution
 - Viewed the various **class divisions** in society as **normal, inevitable** and **acceptable**
 - Agreed with Marx, but also believed that social conflicts were also about **power** and **social prestige** (not just about money/resources)
 - Noted that **different groups** were affected **differently** based on education, race, and gender
 - Main argument: People's **reactions to inequality** were **moderated** by **class** differences, **rates of social mobility** and by **perceptions** about the **legitimacy** of those in power

Next Session...

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- **More Theories concerning the **causes of war****
 - **Realism, liberalism, etc.**

A light blue world map with white outlines of continents and countries, serving as the background for the slide.

Thank You For Your Attention!

Questions???