



# INTERNATIONAL SECURITY - IRE107

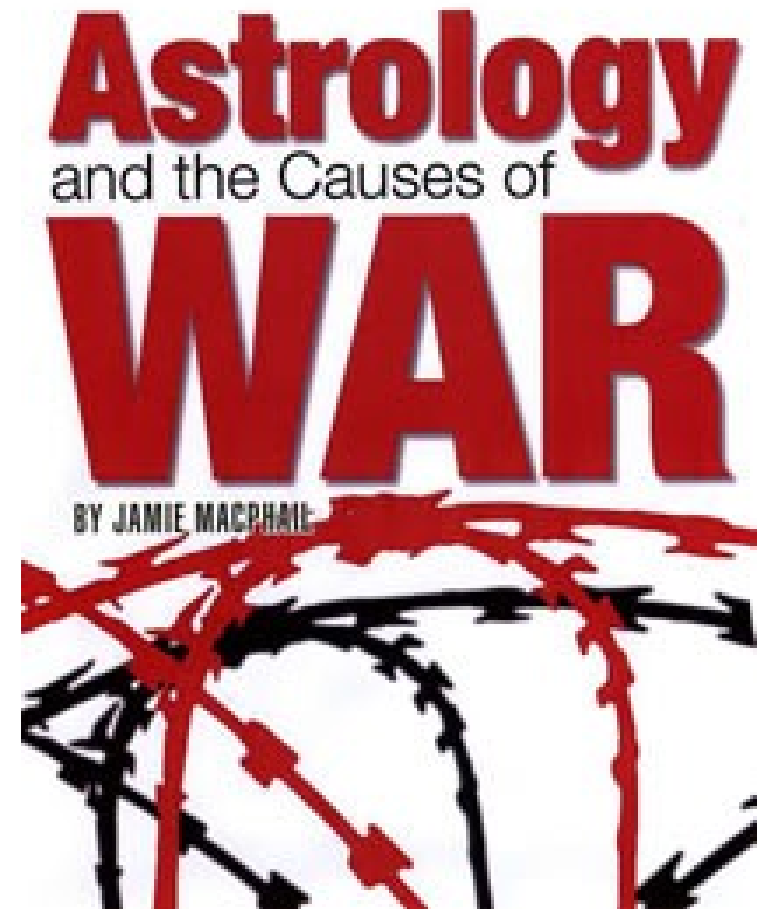
FALL 2018

## Causes of war

dr. Martin Chovančík  
dr. Petr Suchý  
dr. Maya Hadar

## STARTING DISCUSSION

- What caused World War I ?
- How crucial is the leader to the decision of going to war?
- What are your best arguments for the impact of the Military-Industrial-Complex?



# DEFINITION

- **CONFLICT –**
  - **at least 2 actors, mutual incompatibility expressed by at least 1 actor**
  - natural part of societal and international interactions
- **ARMED CONFLICT –**
  - **contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year (UCDP)**
- **WAR –**
  - **a state-based armed conflict or dyad which reaches at least 1000 battle-related deaths in a specific year**
- varying typologies according to issue, actors, goals, and of course classifying entities

Literature on the causes of war does not only talk about WAR as defined here, but WAR as the general phenomenon

*-use of force*

-

*contention/response*

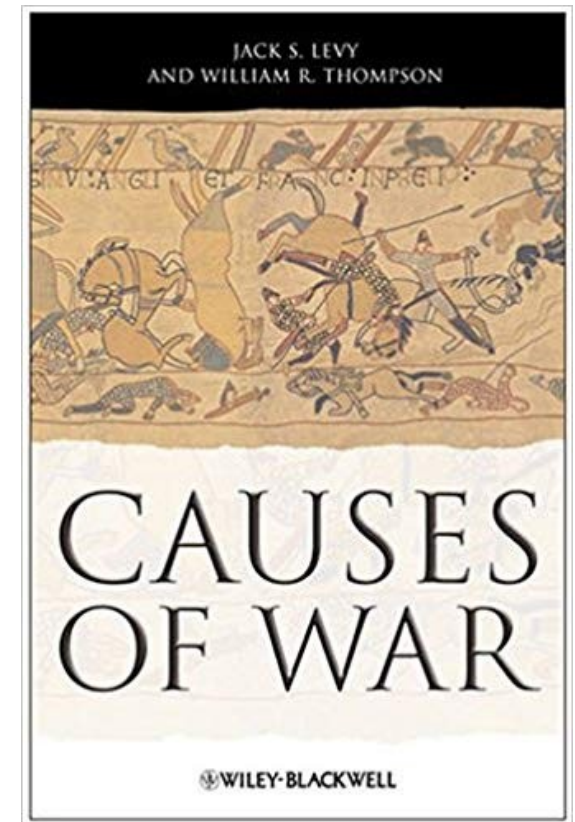
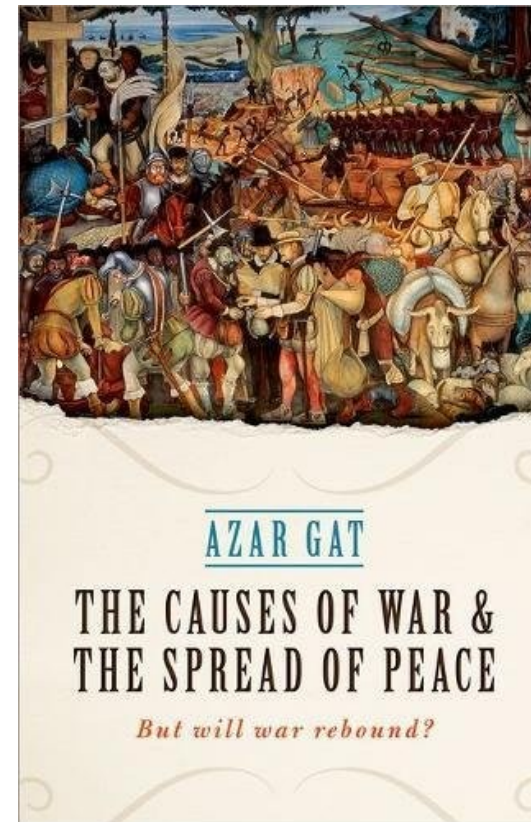
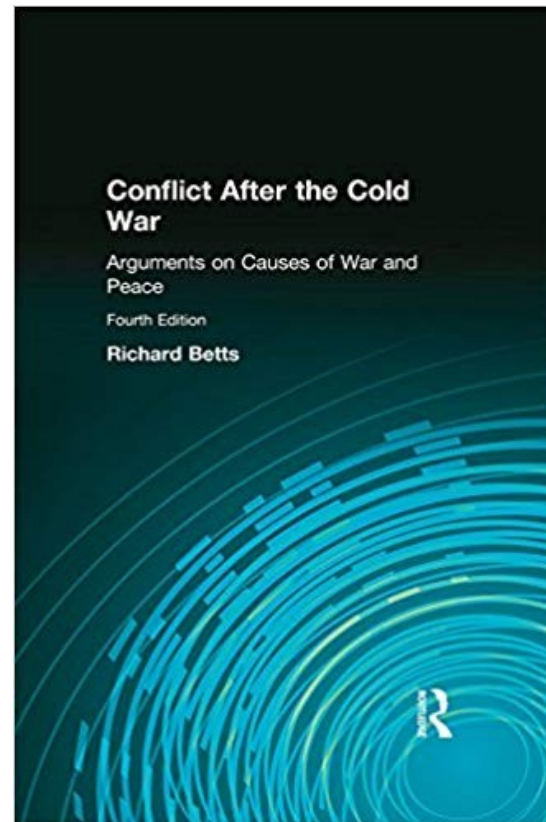
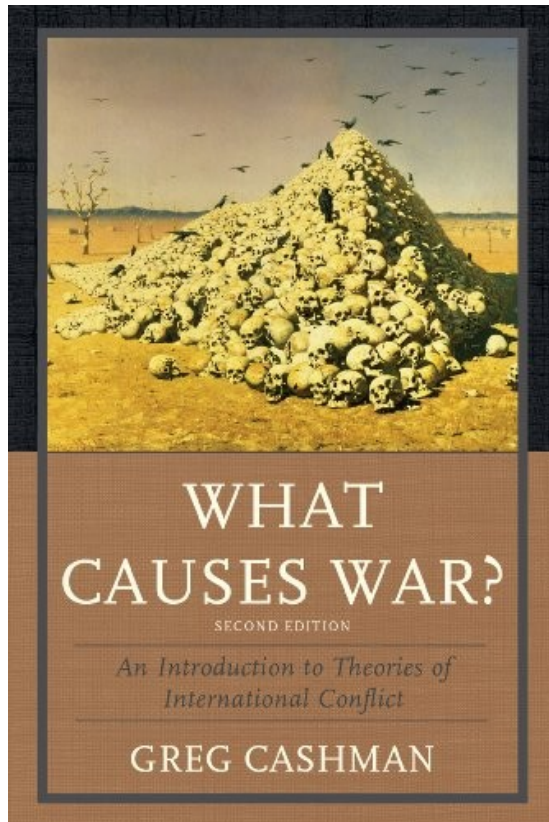
*-reciprocity*

-

*intensity/duration*

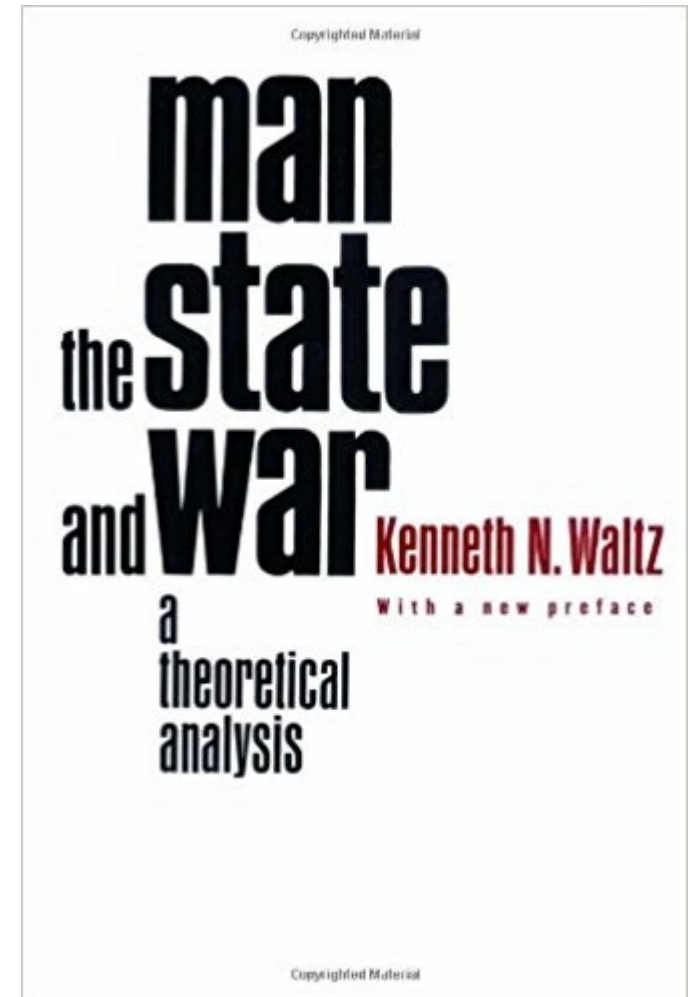
*-not for private*

# AUTHORITATIVE BOOKS



# LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

- How to think analytically about the varying causes of war?
- **Kenneth Waltz**
  - **Man, the State, and War (1959)**
  - 3 images (individuals, states, system)
  - now levels
- Now 5 level
  - Multiple authors have added State Dyads and Group analysis



# LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

## System

- anarchic nature of system
- number of players
- distribution of power
- alliances and trade
- system-wide norms
- cyclical theories

## National

- regime type
- policymaking process
- societal factors
- economic system
- public opinion standing
- interest group positions
- ethnicity, ideology

## Individual

- human nature
- predisposition to aggression
- brinkmanship
- leader personalities
- perception and misperception

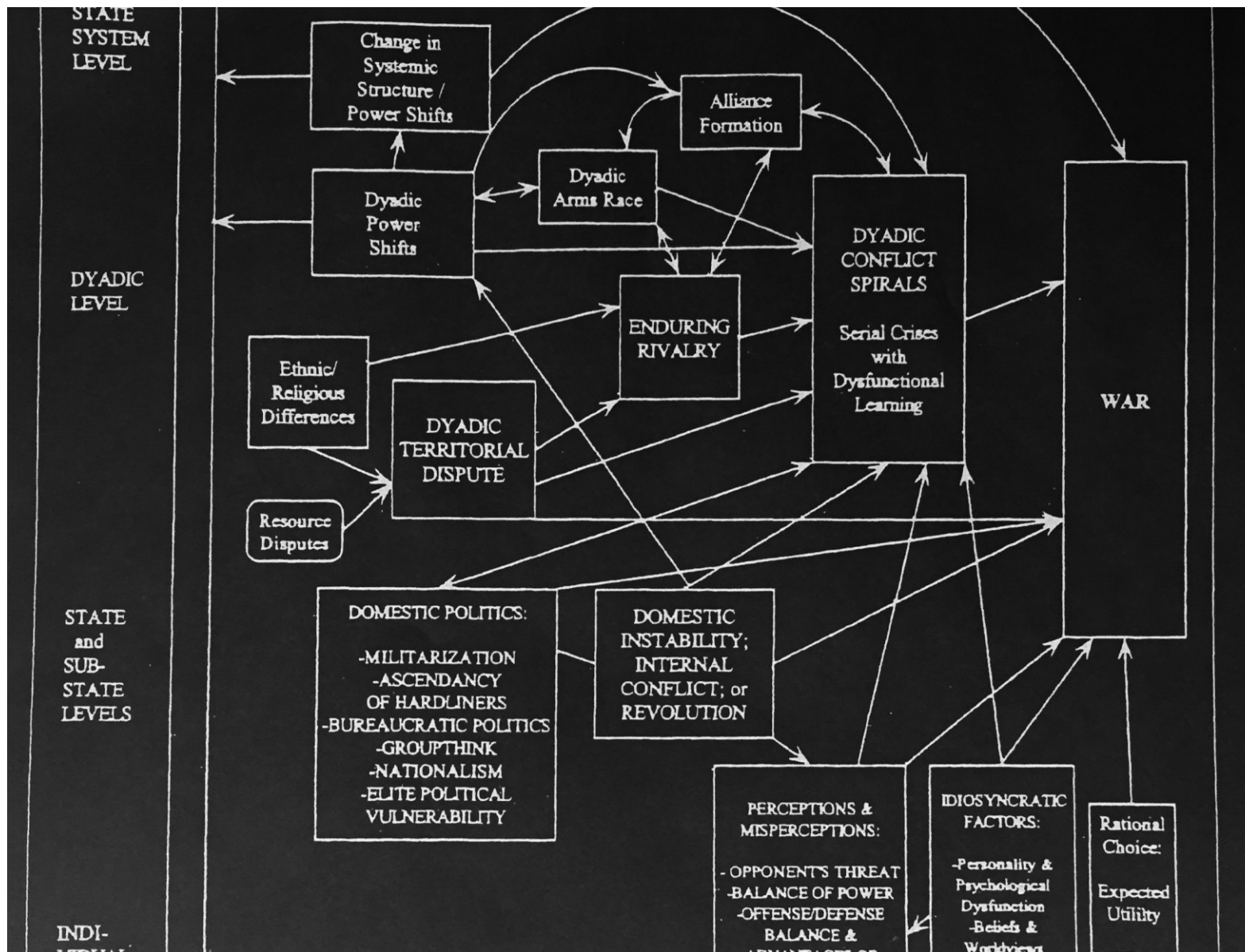
## Dyadic

- contiguity
- rivalry and balance
- shared ethnicity

## Group

- groupthink
- rational actor model
- bureaucratic model





# MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE LEVELS

Cashman & Robinson  
Introduction to the causes of war  
2007

# ANY ONE CAUSE IS INSUFFICIENT?

- constants cannot explain a constant
  - if wars continue, but are rare their onset cannot be explained by static variables
  - human nature, anarchy of the international system, ancient hatred between groups
- grievances are present everywhere, yet conflict is rare - overprediction
- same is true for many other variables/conditions/causes



# SYSTEM LEVEL

- **Security dilemma**
  - versus deterrence model (war occurs because deterrence failed)
  - Deterrence theorists argue that the more conciliatory policies advocated by spiral theorists increase the probability of war by undermining deterrence, and spiral theorists argue that the hardline policies advocated by spiral theorists only provoke conflict spirals and war. (Levy 2014: 31)
- **Cycle theories**
  - explaining global wars in cycles
  - 1494 – 1516, 1588 – 1608, 1688 – 1713, 1792 – 1815, and 1914 – 1945
  - rebalancing of world economic equilibrium
- **Balance of power theory**
  - Preventing hegemony by balancing (military focus)
- **Hegemonic stability?**
  - Power transition – broader definition of power

# SYSTEM LEVEL

## ■ **Polarity**

- What makes countries more prone to war? A bipolar or multipolar system?
- Neorealism: bipolar stability prevents collective action and free ride problems
- Defensive and offensive versions of realism

## ■ **Bipolarity**

- Forces both sides to measured responses, clear intentions, policing other actors in the system
- Absence of mediator, chance of any conflict growing out of proportion, rational calculation might encourage war

## ■ **Multipolarity**

- More actors in power balances and alliances, more mediators, less concentration on one adversary, limited conflicts
- Higher incidence of conflict, more pronounced incompatibilities, more misperceptions of intentions, limited policing

# DYADIC

- examines relations between 2 states, rather than the whole system
  - also applicable to state and non-state actor if such is well defined (Angola/UNITA)
- **Rivalry** (accounts for up to 75% of interstate wars)
  - impact of contiguity
- **Steps-to-war model**
  - bears similarities to security spiral but is purely issue-based
  - explains that issue resolutions have a cumulative effect on the likelihood of war
  - under this assumption – realist responses (deterrence, coercion, arms buildup) actually increase chances of war
- **Economic interdependence as cause**
  - both cause and prevention depending on standpoint

# STATE / SOCIETAL

- **Paradigm dependent views**

- Liberalism sees representative states, realism militarily strong states, and Marxism egalitarian states as the solution to war

- **Marxist imperialism theory**

- surplus capital generates pressures for external expansion, drive for raw materials.

- **Liberal democratic peace theory**

- **Realists present many theories, such as:**

- Diversionary theory (rally around the flag effect)
  - Bodin (1576) *"the best way of preserving a state, and guaranteeing it against sedition, rebellion, and civil war is ... to find an enemy against whom they can make common cause."*
- Strategic culture
- Clash of civilizations

# GROUP / ORGANIZATION

- **Bureaucratic politics model**

- disposes of black box/state-as-unit approach to examine the dynamics between key decision-makers
- either government based or process based
- both serve to underline internal tensions and bargaining and thus serve to both escalate conflict (through for example incrementalism) or prevent its escalation through checks and balances
- focuses heavily on role of military in state politics

- **Groupthink**

- societal conformity within smaller defined groups limits maneuvering space – lack of criticism

- **Rational actor model (RAM)**

- investigates deviation from the RAM
- broadly investigated by de Mesquita (The War Trap)

# INDIVIDUAL

- **Hobbes vs. Locke**

- is natural man predisposed to war?
- furthermore is it nature or nurture that predisposes or dissuades him?

- **Bound rationality**

- balancing between acquisition of goals and prevention of negative escalation
- even if rationality in the decision-making process is assumed, uncertainty/incomplete information/fog of war prevails

- **Misperception**

- **contrary to bargaining model of war** where rational adversaries with shared knowledge of capabilities should come to prefer a negotiated settlement over armed conflict
- overstating or understating (own capabilities and intentions) might both lead to war
- hard to draw a causal link



# INDIVIDUAL

- **Prospect theory**

- oversensitivity to any loss and willingness to take extreme risk to avoid any loss
- loss aversion

- **Images and beliefs**

- personal worldview and persuasion heavily impacts decisions in brinkmanship

- **Cognitive and motivated biases**

- Capacity based, or emotionally bases exclusion or oversensitivity to threats and data

- **Poly-heuristic theory of decision-making**

- 2-step decision-making process – 1<sup>st</sup> step outright eliminates option which weaken domestic position (extreme loss aversion) and second steps seeks to be rational according to the highest expected utility

# CIVIL WARS

- far harder to use 3 or even 5 levels of analysis
  - most approaches use **organizational and group level up to national level** (rather than systemic or individual)
  - i.e. state weakness against rebels and opportunity, or group motivation and ease of recruitment
  - analysis on systemic level limited to colonialism, patronage, and weak/strong states
- greed and grievance has transformed into **motivation and opportunity**
- Motivation – *hard to establish clearly, but clearly impactful*
- Opportunity – *allows for clearer analysis and produces most configurational outputs*
- **Onset / Duration debate**

# CAUSE INDICATORS

## Structural

- Regime type,
- Regime performance,
- Current conflict situation,
- History of conflict,
- Social cohesion and diversity,
- Public security and health,
- Development and distribution,
- Provisions and Employment,
- Geographic challenge,
- Demographics

## Indicators

- Indicator, Regime Type, Lack of Democracy, Government Effectiveness, Level of Repression, Empowerment Rights,
- Recent Internal Conflict, Neighboring with HVC, Years since HVC, Corruption,
- Ethnic Power Change, Ethnic compilation, Transnational Ethnic Bonds,
- Homicide Rate, Infant Mortality, GDP per capita, Income inequality, Openness,
- Food Security, Unemployment, Water Stress, Oil Production, Structural Constraints, Population Size, Youth Bulge

# WHAT TO DO WITH THIS MULTI-CAUSAL DILEMMA

- Design early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict resolution tools around **EACH**
- **Across all levels of analysis – corresponding tools** exist and are being further developed
  - *Can you list any prevention tools? (think direct phone line between Moscow-Washington)*
- **Tools are informed not only by levels-of-analysis but also the CHANGING NATURE OF WAR**
- Next week we study the changing nature of war to combine into the study of conflict management and resolution tools

# JUST WAR

## **3 limits to just war Jus ad bellum, Jus in bello, Jus post bellum**

1. Just cause - Just defense or correcting a wrongdoing
2. Legitimate authority - Initially only granted to monarchs and heads of state
3. Right intent - Achieving a better peace
4. Proportionality - Benefits outweigh overall cost
5. Fair chance of success
6. Last resort

1. Discrimination
2. Proportionality of means