

Types and Sources of Conflict

- Conflicts often stem from two main sources
 - Material Interests
 - Territory, irredentism
 - Resource access
 - Pre-emption, retaliation
 - Economic conflicts
 - Values and beliefs
 - Ideology
 - Religious and ethnic claims
- Two sources are often mixed in practice

Forms of Conflict

- Often as expressions of Power.
 - Persuasion, Influence and Force
- Limitations on force, international norms and costs
- Most conflict takes place without violence, or with limited violence, particularly economic conflicts
- Several sources of escalation

Source of Conflict: Material issues

- Boundary disputes
- Access to resources or transport routes
 - Blockade is considered an act of war under international law
- Economic, trade or investment related conflict.
- Security threats to state
- Prestige and historical claims

Sources of Conflict: Beliefs

- Identity based conflicts
- Identity sourced in
 - Culture
 - Religion
 - Ethnicity
 - Ideology
- Identity used to construct worldviews that ascribe characteristics both to in-group and others.

Identity continued

- Identity-based conflicts often include descriptions of in-group as suffering injustices, and incapable of immoral behavior
- Others are ascribed to suspect motivation, opportunism and characteristics that defy logic or morality.
- The other is thought undeterred through normal means and often a threat.

Sources of Conflict

- Realist paradigm
 - Conflict over power of state
 - Military or economic (they are the same) issues
 - Rising power, or rising threat of neighbor
 - Identity claims are a means of mobilizing population and gaining credibility for threats or actions.

Sources of Conflict Other Paradigms

- Neol-liberal institutionalists
 - Force used in defense of state
 - Identity conflicts are, like realists, used to mobilize resources, but
 - Examples of abusive leaders and
 - Undermine cooperation
 - Multi-lateral institutions can mediate conflicts, raise costs for potential rivals of resort to force.

Conflict: paradigm Power Transitions

- Absent or distracted hegemonic state,
- Proxy war of regional powers in regional hierarchy
 - Afghanistan example
- Conflict caused by unsatisfied challenger state and unaccommodating lead state.

Characteristics of Conflict

- Issues in Contention
- Resources to hand
- Perceptions of self and adversaries
 - Perceptions of resources
 - Perceptions of self
 - Perceptions of rival
- Beliefs about self and adversaries

Perceptions and conflicts

- Beliefs about self and others can aggravate conflicts and make resolution difficult
- Beliefs about opportunities of success costs of loss
 - Relative power, population size, control of state.
 - Belief of existential threat
 - Belief (tied into others) of self-rightness and wrongness or inhumanity of others (god on our side)

Perceptions and Belief Create Room for Conflict

- Power relationships, material interests conflicts may trigger decision-making process
- As before, process may be filled with perception biases like preconception, confirmation bias.
- Perception also informs reference domain.

Mobilization Frames and Modes of Contention

- Mobilization Frames
 - Stories told to frame contentious issues
 - Resonant frame embedded in culture and historical or recent social experience.
 - Often expressed in ideological, religious or ethnic stories of struggle
- Leaders can become “prisoners” of their mobilization frames.
 - Appoint “true believers”
 - Leadership position contingent on frame and behavior accordingly.

Conflict Escalation

- Sources of Escalation
 - Belief in advantaged position
 - Risk tolerance (nothing to lose, or chance to win) caused by loss domain.
 - Possibility to expand conflict to area of advantage
 - Draw in other participants to conflict who might bring in resources.
 - Use of irregular forces, practices to undermine rival in another domain of conflict.

Conflict Analysis

- Multi-level analysis can sometime be more effective than realist, or even neo-liberal
- Much conflict is sub-state or “nation” level in multi-ethnic state.
- Perceptions of leaders may not be rational, or may not be motivated by interests of the state.

Conflict Escalation

- Rival perceived as weak, opportunity for greater leverage or seizure of goals
- Challengers frame problem (often driven by perceived threat or relative deprivation) as caused by other groups or states
- Escalation particularly likely if removal of rival is viewed as only solution available.
- Also, escalating threats and force are used to gain leverage in bargaining, and establish credibility of threats.
- Escalation spiral- like DD multi-iteration PD

Dealing with conflict

- Role of institutions
 - Certain institutions established to mediate conflict, facilitate resolution, change costs to actions.
 - Regional Institutions, ASEAN, AU, OAS, NATO, OSCE, United Nations, OIS
 - U.N. peace-keeping role, Security Council, chapter 7- Authorization for Coercive actions, including peacekeeping/ peace-making actions.
- Role of third-party states
 - Reflective of institutions, often with participation- Oslo accords, etc.

Roles of third parties

- Provide “good offices”
 - Space for direct communication between rival parties.
- Provide monitoring, oversight of agreements, elections etc.
- Alter the perceived payoffs for conflict that separate groups may have.
 - Peacemaking operations can threaten military, increase costs of defection- often taken on by hegemonic or great states
 - Economic sanctions linked to activities can undermine gains from land seizure.

Third Parties Continued

- Neutral third parties provide opportunity for influence, and address of specific grievances, that may reframe conflict, and open possible solutions.
- Third parties can bring resources to bear on solving structural political and economic problems that prevent future conflict.
- Peace-keeping and Peace-making are distinctly different, but often mistaken and shifting roles.
 - Peace keepers primarily monitor negotiated peace.
 - Peacemakers are heavily armed forces to remove actors, or increase costs of use of force in a conflict.
 - Violations of treaties put peacekeepers in a peacemaking role, and in danger.

Actors in conflict

- Most conflict between the collapse of Soviets and U.S. invasion of Afghanistan was within states or included at least one sub-state participant.
- Lifting of repressive regimes, failure of states, particularly satellites of powers, created opening for new actors.
- Sub-state Ethnic, tribal, political leaders no longer constrained by “rules of the game” either a lack of functional state, or collapse of mechanisms for making claims.
- Neighboring states, or sub-state actors are often drawn in, or intervene in anticipation of instability.
- International institutions
- Regionally Powerful states.

War-making

- Different Forces structures
- Army, Navy, Marine-type, Air Force, Intelligence Irregular (special forces)
- Assymetrical warfare
 - Irregular and special forces
 - Irregular forces can be militias, paramilitary, guerilla, terrorist, special forces
 - Proxy war, to destabilize local allies of regional rival- Afghanistan

WMD (NBC)

- There are different levels of WMD
- In past used to refer primarily to Nuclear weapons
- Atomic weapons are not banned by treaty because they are targetable, and lead states possess them.
- Biological and chem. weapons banned because they are of limited effectiveness (chemical weapons) effects spread, and linger (biological) killing combatants and non-combatants alike.

Nuclear Weapons

- Unique
 - Only can be built by state amassing resources to project.
 - Very unlikely to be given by a state to a terrorist organizations in a “sneak attack”
 - Possible unconventional delivery systems.
- Severe consequences for use.
- Functional primarily as a deterrent, especially in the context of a state lacking accurate long-range delivery systems.

Dr. Strangelove: Deterrence

- Deterrence
- Historically defensive
 - Nuclear forces changed ideas.
- Seeks to alter payoffs, perceived payoffs for extreme defection by rivals.
 - Move from PD to chicken payoff structure.
 - $DC > CC > DD > CD$ to $DC > CC > CD > DD$ where both lose from defection.
 - Nuclear deterrence can form single iteration games.

Types of Deterrence

■ General Deterrence

- Protect homeland, prevent or retaliate attacks on own state.
- For Mutual G-D, cities must be vulnerable, retaliatory capability safe.

■ Extended Deterrence

- Attack on ally treated as an attack on self.
- Extended immediate deterrence is revealed during a crisis, when attacker threatens, and third state extends deterrent threats. Failed to extend threat in Iraq I.

■ Minimum deterrent force

- The smallest amount of force (nukes etc.) needed to deter actions

MAD MAD MAD world

- Mutually assured destruction theory
 - Offensive capabilities expensive and threatening
 - Offensive abilities offered plausible first strike tactics, and incentives for pre-emption
 - Agreement to reduce ABM programs, permitted smaller arsenals.
- Credibility of MAD questions, would we really destroy the world? Chicken and Schelling's steering wheel.
 - Flexible response...escalation trigger.

Deterrence

- Can be conventional or WMD
- Often requires expensive conventional forces.
- WMD can offer deterrent.
- Implications of MIRV's, Bunker Busters and Star Wars.
 - Target Rogue states;
 - Security Dilemma?

Collective Security

- Institution to prevent aggression by states against other states.
- Alliance to support international system of states and preserve sovereignty
- Difficult to execute because of numbers of states involved and differing state preferences.
 - Realists argue they are non-functional b/c don't address core state security issues for strong states

Collective Security

- Operates on the idea that the threat of massive force by other states will deter aggression.
- Balancing of Power Institution against states that violate non-aggression norms.
- Also used against states or groups that violate international norms of internal behavior.

Blowback

- From dangerous back blast caused by firing a weapon.
- Coined as description of the results of covert US intervention in Iran in 1953, and subsequent interventions
- US covert support of a British plan to remove elected Prime Minister and assert the rule of the Shah Reza Shah Pahlavi.
- Us and British supported a coalition of royalists and religious actors to push Shah out of power.
- Snubbed democrats and delegitimized “liberal” democratic leaders, and the undermined US moral authority in dealing with Iranians.

Blowback

- Is essentially the product of policy that backfires, either immediately or with a delay.
- Conceptualized as the result of pursuing short-term security considerations at the cost of espoused ideals.
- Some policies are attractive for apparent simplicity and intuitive nature. However, often the world is not so simple.
- The concept rests in the idea that forms of power other than force are as important- or more important in a world of trade and connections.