

All Power Is Relative Power  
# The Core Problem

WAR And CAUSATION

A. WAR As The Rational

WAR Choice - Will WAR  
Be Chosen: Only If The  
Net Benefits Exceed Net  
Costs ( $B > C$ ) (Benefits:  
Defeat of Adversary, Expansion,  
Averts A Survival Threat

B. WAR AS Miscalculation

1. Irrational Preferences  
(Unlikely Will Fail)

2. Misperception. False  
Causal Beliefs (About  
Weapons, Relative Power.

3. Incomplete Information  
(About Preferences For WAR/Peace



# I. Concepts

A WAR (WARFARE) -

Collective, Inter-societal  
Violence

1. Premise - Central  
Decision Maker

2. Premise - Unitary Actor  
(like an individual) - If  
not, states will be selected  
out of an international/anarchy  
a Competitive Market Model

B System - A Geographic  
Region (East Asia, Western  
Hemisphere, Europe) etc.

C. Structure - The Number of Major  
Powers In A System - Defined by  
Capabilities

D. Major Powers - Top Powers  
In An Anarchic System -  
Measured Typically By  
The Ability to Start A Systemic  
WAR

1. Capabilities - Population  
& Economic Resources\*

E. Anarchy - Absence of Central  
Government

F. Thus, For Purposes of WAR  
Causation, What Is Important  
In Anarchy Are Underlying  
Alliances & Adversaries

1 Adversaries - Defined By  
Historical & Objective Conflict

\* Also Domestic Commitment



## II. Conflict

A. Historical - Caused By  
Contingent Events - If these events  
had not occurred, the  
conflict would not exist

1. Europe 1914 - Historical Conflict

a. France - Germany -  
Consequences of Franco-Prussian  
War (1870) - Permanent Hostility

2. Austria-Hungary - Russia -

Conflict Over Power And  
Influence In the Balkans;  
Future of Ottoman Empire;

Decline of Austria-Hungary

3. Gt. Britain - Germany - Naval  
Arms Race - 1890' - 1914



B. Hegemonic (Objective)  
Conflict (Occurs Automatically)  
1. Hegemony - Predominant  
Power In A System -

2. Hegemonic Threat -

A. State Threatens To  
Achieve Hegemony

3. All Other Powers Face  
A Threat To Independence -  
(Sovereignty) - Prediction -

Other Powers Will Ally -

Balance To Block Hegemon

C. Balance of Power -

Distribution of Systemic Power -

Such That Adversaries Act In Balance

5 = 5 (Rival Alliances Balance)



D. In A Balance of Power  
WAR IS Unlikely, Because  
One War-State Would Face  
Defeat or Attrition

1. Rational States Will Not  
Choose WAR

2. Peace (Absence) of WAR  
Is Automatic & Self-  
Enforcing

3. Exception - Unstable Balance  
Make WAR Rational For  
Declining or Rising States

In Some Cases (Europe 1914)

4. Survival / Threat - A  
State Threatened In Terms of  
Survival May Choose WAR

All Power Is Relative Power  
E. Example - A Stable

Balance of Power - Europe 1914

Power Rankings: (Relative to

Germany = 4 Adversaries

France, Gt. Britain = 3

Russia = 2

A. Hungary = 1

1. A. Hungary Allies with  
Germany - Most Threatened,  
And Most Isolated

2. France, Gt. Britain, Russia  
Encircling Alliance

3. German Paradox = Potentially  
Encircled But Potential Hegemon  
- Thus Triggers Encirclement