

# **Globalization and Armed Conflict Among Nations: We Know Less than We Think We Do**

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October, 2007

(Draft document. Please do not quote. All comments most welcome.)

Paper prepared as the Presidential Address to the annual meeting of the Peace Science Society International, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, November 2-4. Earlier versions were presented as a guest lecture at the University of North Texas, February 21, 2007, and at the Globalisation and National Security Conference held at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, March 15-16, 2006, Singapore. I wish to thank faculty and students at North Texas and conference participants at NTU, Singapore for their helpful comments. Considerable research support of the Mershon Center, and the thorough and reliable research assistance of Mr. Daniel Blake is also gratefully acknowledged.

# Connections between Economic Life and Interstate Armed Conflict Through the Lens of Existing Work in International Relations

## Within Global Actors

- Realpolitik: level of development predicts to foreign activity and conflict.
- Economic Growth creating need for outward expansion and capability to do so.
- Some Key Concepts: “War Chest Hypothesis”, “Lateral Pressure”, “Diversionary Conflict”, “Hubris”

## Relative Position of Global Actors

- Unequal economic growth creates conflict-generating dynamics.
- Conflict rooted in opposed interests of Status Quo vs. Revisionist states.
- Some Key Concepts: “Power Transition”, “Power Cycle”, “Rear-End Collision”

## Relations Between Global Actors

- Economic exploitation of poor by rich through international economic relations.
- Rivalries over trade routes, market access, resource access.
- Material, welfare incentives for societies to resolve disputes short of war lest they rupture economic ties (the Liberal Insight).
- Some Key Concepts: “Imperialism” “Dependency” “Trade Wars”, “Resource Conflicts”, “Trade Brings Peace”, “Peace Brings Trade”.

## The Global Political-Economic System

- Long periods of global economic expansion, stagnation correlate with major war. (J.S. Goldstein)
- Appearance/Disappearance of global leader correlates with occurrence of major war. (Modelski and Thompson)
- Some Key Concepts: “Long Wave”, “Leadership Cycle”, “Hegemonic Peace”

# Globalization: Key Shifts and Trends

## *New Players*

- The (ir)Relevance of States?
- Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs)
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Market Agents: “The Electronic Herd”

## *New Forms of Interconnectedness*

- Intra-Firm Trade
- Transnational production
- Investment: FDI vs. Portfolio, and new forms of Capital
- Dispersion of Capital Centers
- Technology: Dispersion of Innovation Centers, More rapid diffusion of technology

# Gaps in Our Knowledge, Prospects for Conflict

## Gaps

- The set of relevant actors is growing in number and heterogeneity.
- Transnational production is strengthening forms of economic interconnectedness that could affect conflict incentives.
- Dispersion of Capital centers, ease of cross-border movement of capital works against power concentration.
- Dispersion of Innovation centers, ease of cross-border movement of technology works against power concentration.

## Prospects and Questions

- Conflict generating dynamics of growth, uneven growth persist as several nations join the global economy, and new powers emerge.
- Under what conditions will new and deeper forms of economic interconnectedness generate, exacerbate, ameliorate, or halt escalation toward armed conflict?
- How does the growing importance of non-state actors affect prospects for conflict?
- Is the epoch of state-based system leadership over? How would this affect levels of conflict in the system?