

Seminar week 12
Week 12- Lecture 11
The Cold War
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*My favorite Cold War war
Presentation*

Only two great powers remained in the world. . . . United States and the Soviet Union. We had arrived at a situation unparalleled since ancient times. Not since Rome and Carthage had there been such a polarization of power on this earth. . . . For the United States to take steps to strengthen countries threatened with Soviet aggression or Communist subversion . . . was to protect the security of the United States—it was to protect freedom itself.¹³

Dean Acheson Sec. Of State, 1947 (From Kissinger's book Diplomacy, 1994)

How can we use IR perspectives to understand the Cold War?

How important was ideology as opposed to the structure of the system in accounting for the Cold War

Would the USSR have gained unipolar dominance without US containment? Or would it still have collapsed?

Article: Cuban missile crisis was a triumph of diplomacy, not brinkmanship

Historians are re-evaluating the Kennedy administration's seminal success

https://www.salon.com/2012/10/13/cuban_missile_crisis_beliefs_endure_after_50_years/

THE SPIRAL MODEL & DETERRENCE MODEL (see

<http://web.mit.edu/17.423/www/Archive98/handouts/spiral.html>)

The spiral model and deterrence model are similar in kind and opposite in substance. Both models attempt to explain the outbreak of war. Both assign a central role to national misperception: specifically, both posit that states adopt war-causing policies in the false expectation that these policies will elicit compliance. However, they posit opposite misperceptions.

A. The Spiral Model posits that conflicts arise from punishment applied in the false expectation that it will elicit better behavior from the other side, when in fact it elicits worse behavior. Angered or frightened by the punishment, the other becomes more aggressive--adopting wider aims, and/or becoming more willing to use force to defend them. The first side responds with more punishment, assuming that its first punishment was too mild, the other grows still more belligerent, etc. In this way two sides divided by only minor differences can spiral into intense confrontation or war.

Prescription: Appeasement works better than threat of punishment. Carrots are safer than sticks. Peace is best preserved by conciliation.

B. The Deterrence Model posits that conflicts arise from acts of appeasement made in the false expectation that appeasement will elicit better behavior from the other side, when in fact it elicits worse behavior. The other, believing that it coerced or frightened the appeaser to offer its concessions, assumes that more threats will elicit more concessions. Hence it makes additional demands, backed by threats. It also may dismiss the appeaser's threats after the appeaser changes course and adopts deterrence; as a result it may move too far and trigger war.

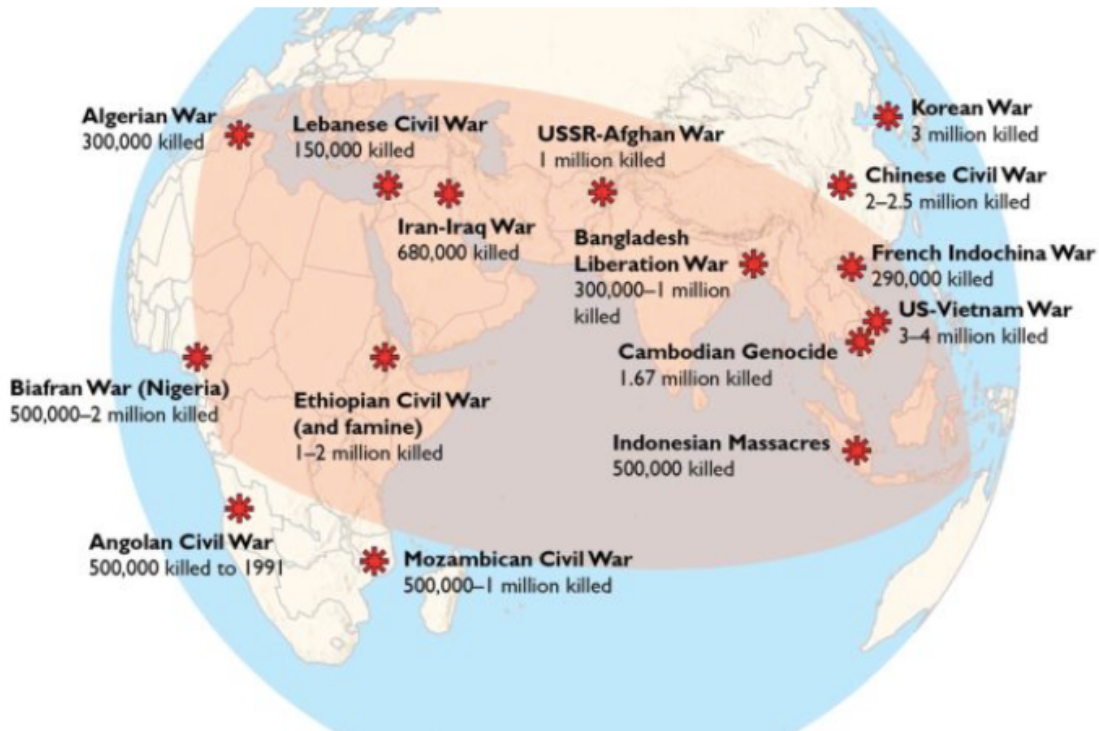
Prescription: Threat of punishment works better than appeasement. Sticks are safer than carrots. Peace is best preserved by unyielding policies.

Note: the spiral model incorporates one misperception (the punishing state falsely expects that punishment will elicit better behavior from the other, when it elicits worse behavior). The deterrence model incorporates two misperceptions (the appeasing state falsely expects that appeasement will elicit better behavior, when in fact it elicits worse behavior; and the appeased state then falsely expects the appeaser won't carry out its later threats when in fact it will.)

How “cold” is the cold war?

It wasn't just outside Europe in general; it was in Asia, particularly in the lethal crescent extending down from Lebanon to Southeast Asia and up to Korea. That zone—the Cold War's “bloodlands,” as Chamberlin calls it—accounted for 95 percent of Soviet military deaths and 99.9 percent of US military deaths during the Cold War. Seven out of 10 people who died in violent conflicts between 1945 and 1990 died there.

Why so much killing in Asia?



(Paul Chamberlin, *The Cold War's Killing Fields*; Alex de Waal and Bridget Conley-Zilkic, *Mass Atrocity Endings*; Bethany Lacina and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat.")

Further reading (focused, rather than whole books):

Rational deterrence, Robert Jervis

<https://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~fczagare/PSC%20504/JervisRationalDeterrence.pdf>

The Lethal Crescent: Where the Cold War was hot, by Daniel Immerwhar:

<https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/cold-war-killing-fields-paul-chamberlin/>

Next week: Presentation topic

What was the impact of the invasion of Iraq on the emerging world order?