

Causes of War: Historical Construct and Its Future in Indian Sub-Continent

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Abstract

It may be deduced that all wars in the Indian sub-continent were fought for the acquisition of resources, power, glory, territory, spread of religion, establishment of empire. The *Arthashastra* has mentioned that after war, even before the war if it is possible, enemy state should be forced to sign the treaty for peace by - surrendering its army, surrendering the treasury and territory. Background of warfare is very rich since historical period: The Battle of Hydapes (326 BC), The Battle of Venni, The Battle of Sripurambiyam in 880 AD, The Battle of Vellure, The Battle of Roar (the Arab Conquest of Sind), The Battle of Laghman (the Turkish Conquest of Afghanistan), The Battle of Terrain (the Afghan Conquest of Northern India), The Battle of Panipat, The Battle of Pellsy, and after 1947-48, India had faced challenges in the form of border disputes with Pakistan in 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999 and border dispute with China in 1962. In general, causes of war are due to bargaining failures, religion (*Islam*, and *Christianity*), revenge, ethnic cleansing, indivisibilities and other physical impediments, and agency problems. One may say that since historical period the method of warfare is changing as per changing strategy of the enemy.

KEYWORDS: Labha, Raksha, Suraksha, Royal Tribute, Bargaining Failures, The Panchshela, Jihad.

Introduction

“*The prosperity of the state and its inhabitants cannot be maintained unless new territory is acquired by settlement of virgin land, by alliance or by conquest. Since conquest is the most important method of acquisition (labha) of new territory, preparing for and waging war also becomes an integral part of the science of war.*” It is used in the sense of material well-being, livelihood, and economic productive activity; and in general wealth is the wealth of the nation. Government’s sole duty is threefold: *raksha* (protection) of the state from external aggression, *palana* (maintenance) of law and order and *suraksha* (safeguarding) well-being of the people. Therefore, it may be deduced that all wars in the past, particularly in Indian sub-continent were fought for the acquisition of wealth in general. However, foreign invasions introduced spread of religion as an added dimension of the art of war. Why do wars occur and recur, especially in cases when the decisions involved are made by careful and rational actors? In this paper, a critical overview of the causes of war and dimensions of war – with some conditions in the mind of the legitimate power to take decision to declare war with some anticipated gains from a war in terms of resources, power, glory, territory, spread of religion and so forth exceed the expected costs of conflict, including expected damages to property and life – is being highlighted.

The *Arthashastra* mentions that after war, even before the war if it is possible,

enemy state should be forced to sign the treaty for peace by – surrendering with army, surrendering the treasury and surrendering territory. Such treaties enhanced strength of the standing army and treasury used to maintain it.

Historical Background

The causes for war may comprise of any reason from a will-to-conflict and economic causes to opposing interests and capabilities; these are specific socio cultural differences and similarities between the parties. War can also be caused by contact, significant change in the balance of powers, individual perceptions and expectations. The belief that war will be short and that either party feel that they will win also sometimes encourages people to go to war. History of conflict in India is very long though war is not elaborated in the contemporary documents. So far as historical period is concerned, following selected battles were fought for varied causes –

1. The Battle of Hydapes (326 BC) was fought between Macedonians and the Pauravas perhaps to *'increase extent of Macedonian's power in the South-East Asia and to have extra money in the form of annual 'Royal Tribute' from conquered states'*.
2. The Battle of Venni fought between KarikalaChoas and the Cheras and Pandya Kings in Venni (modern village Kolivenni) 15 Kms east of Tanjore. This battle not only *'increased size of the Chola Empire but also revenue of the state increased many folds which is expressed in the form of construction activities and overseas expedition of the Chola's (Navy) for establishing Chola Colonies in the South-East Asian Countries'*.
3. The Battle of Sripurambiyam in 880 AD *'marked the revival of Chola power'* under Aditya. He increased his authority by capturing territories of the Pallavas.
4. The Battle of Vellure was fought between Parantakason of Aditya Chola I and the Pandyas. In this battle the Chola king defeated combined forces of Pandyan and Celonese Armies and *'extended his empire till Kanyakumari'*.
5. The Battle of Roar (the Arab Conquest of Sind) is the beginning of the Muhammadan invasion which *'resulted in the establishment of Muslim rule in India'*. This battle was fought between Raja Dahir of Sind and Muhammad Kasim *primarily for booty* from this rich state and also for *the spread of Islam in the fringe of (vast country) India*. It also established the cooperation between ground forces and the navy to achieve the aim. It established strong trade link and interchanged ideas between east and west. It also provided opportunity to the *Islamic* states to increase their territories by annexing more Indian states in future for establishing *Islamic* rule and extensive trade and commerce activities.
6. The Battle of Laghman (the Turkish Conquest of Afghanistan) was fought between Jaipal (King of Lahore) and *Amir*Subuktagin to *'include Punjab in Turkish Empire and collected immense booty, and spread Islam in this part of India and it paved the way to established Islamic rule in India'*.
7. The Battle of Terrain (the Afghan Conquest of Northern India) was fought between Prtivrj Chauhan and Muhammad Ghouri in 1192 AD. It *'established the Muslim rule in India and finally paved the way for establishment of Delhi Sultanate'*. It was starting of Muslim Civilization in India.
8. The Battle of Panipat was fought between *Sultan* Ibrahim Lodi and Babur. India,

initially Northern India, got Mughals as new rulers who established the Mughal *Sultanate* in India. The establishment of *Delhi Sultanate* and Mughal *Sultanate* were *Islamic* in nature but Indian society, culture and trade and commerce reached its zenith during these Dynasties.

9. The Battle of Plassey was fought between *Nawab* of Bengal and the English. It paved the *'easy way to establish the British Rule in India'* initially to extract and exploit its economic resources for economic advancement of economic condition of England and also for growth of Industrialization in England. The English defeated the French in third Anglo-French war and *'established their monopoly over Indian market'*. The English annexed the all Indian States, large or small, by different tactics by 1857 and *'another era of exploitation started with the rise of capitalism'*.

After 1947-48, India had faced challenges in the form of border disputes with Pakistan 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999 and border dispute with China in 1962. These wars were fought in the second half of the 20th century over the control of disputed geographical areas. Pakistan is contesting the merger of J&K with India and also award of Muslim dominated areas of Ferozpur and Gurdaspur to India in final draft of the Boundary Commission. Chinese authorities, on the other hand are not ready to recognize the McMahon Line and Johnson Line as the International Border between India and China. Since November 1962, in absence of primary sources regarding war and also absence of documents related with the peace talks, it is difficult to put forward sketch of development of settlement process between the two nations over the so-called disputed areas. Regular violations by the Chinese army in the East and the West clearly show that Chinese authorities do not believe in *'peaceful co-existence'*. China has aggressively adopted new methods of warfare by flooding Chinese goods in Indian Market at cheaper price by providing articles of varied nature from religion to kitchen. Indian failure in stopping or crippling this offensive tactics of China in Indian sub-continent clearly shows Chinese success and defeat of Indian Policy Makers and *Chowkidars* of our International Borders. Chinese are also providing munition to the terrorists' groups within the country and those trespassing the International Border and Line of Control. Both the countries were engaged in military operations in the vast theater of war [operation over a large, often continental area of op and represents a strategic national commitment to the conflict, with general goals that encompass areas of consideration outside of the military such as the economic and political impacts]; various campaigns to achieve surprise [subset of the theatre operation, or a more limited geographic and operational strategic commitment such as Battle of Britain, and need not represent total national commitment to a conflict, or have broader goals outside of the military impacts]; fought many battles in theatre of war [subset of a campaign that will have specific military goals and geographic objectives, as well as clearly defined use of forces]; with engagement of forces [tactical combat event of contest for specific area or objective by actions of distinct units]; and strike with an aim to achieve success [single attack, upon a specified target. This often forms part of a broader engagement. Strikes have an explicit goal, such as, rendering facilities inoperable (e.g. airports), to assassinating enemy leaders, or to limit supply to enemy troops].

Pakistan has increased its activities by training terrorists and finally helping them to enter in the Indian territories to spoil Indian law and order situation in J&K by exploiting emotions of *Kashmiri* separatists. Such terrorist activities, time to time, pose challenges to Indian law and order. In this asymmetric warfare, terrorists are fighting by their own strength. It seems Indian Paramilitary Forces are not well trained to tackle such issues and finally when situation is out of control, matter is handed over to most trained professionals – the Indian Army. War has now changed into 4th G Warfare in which conflict is characterized by a blurring of the lines between war and politics, soldier and civilian. It includes any war in which one of the major participants is not a state but rather a violent non state actors. 4th G warfare is characterized by the nation states' loss of their near-monopoly on combat forces, returning to modes of conflict common in pre-modern times. It seems that in near future there is hardly any scope for 1st G warfare [refers to battles fought with massed manpower, using line and column tactics with uniformed soldiers governed by the state. It includes the earliest stages of organized, state-controlled armed forces waging war in the modern era]; 2nd G warfare [tactics of warfare used after the invention of the rifled musket and breech-loading weapons and continuing through the development of the machine gun and indirect fire] and 3rd G warfare [focuses on using speed and surprise to bypass the enemy's lines and collapse their forces from the rear. Essentially, this was the end of linear warfare on a tactical level, with units seeking not simply to meet each other face to face but to outmaneuver each other to gain the greatest advantage]

Causes

Bargaining failures as causes of war: We can discuss some of the alternative sources of conflict that are sometimes thought to fall into the realm of irrationality. It can be argued that many of these are more usefully viewed as being rational in nature, and hence the bargaining failure categorization still applies to many conflicts that are sometimes thought to be irrational. In order for this not to become a repetition, one has to be careful. An “irrational” act can always be rationalized simply by saying that it gave the agent taking it a high payoff for some basic reason. Thus in order to have bite, the payoffs to agents for various actions have to have some natural specification. Although the distinction is thus partly semantic, or reliant on some idea of what natural payoffs should be, we still find it to be a useful dichotomy. With this viewpoint in mind, let us discuss some causes of war that are often thought of as relying on some level of “irrationality”. As we will see, with our broad definition of rationality, even many of these may be interpreted as rational causes of war. This is not simply an issue of semantics, since the distinction has fundamental implications for how wars might be initiated, and if and how they can be avoided or terminated. To illustrate the importance of understanding which reason lies behind a conflict, it is important to note that if there is a lack of ability to enforce or commit to an agreement, then a war may last a long time. It will last until either side has emerged victorious, or the situation has changed so that the costs of continued conflict have become overwhelmingly high for all sides. Such a lack of enforceable agreements is often one of the main ingredients leading to extended wars. In contrast, suppose that enforceable and credible agreements are possible, but that the states start with asymmetric information, for instance, about the relative strength of one of the two countries. In such a case, there can be a bargaining failure which leads to war.

However, in such a setting, once war really begins the relative strengths of the countries can become clearer, and given that credible bargaining is possible, it can avoid further costs of war by concluding an agreement to end the war.

China is unable to bargain with the Indian Government so far as claim of disputed land is concerned. Thus, to really understand the multitude of ways the Sino-India war occurred in 1962, it is illuminating to provide a taxonomy of bargaining failures and their roles in wars. Asymmetric information and bargaining failures may arise from a variety of sources. It could be an asymmetry of information about the relative strengths of the countries either because of differences in what they know about each other's armaments, quality of military personnel and tactics, determination, geography, political climate, or even just about the relative probability of different outcomes. As Indian Government got asymmetric information from IB Director Mr. B. M. Maulik regarding Chinese preparedness and its intention in 1962 war.

Commitment problems: Commitment problems are probably the single most pervasive reason for bargaining failure. This applies to many aspects of agreements that might avoid conflict, including promises to make future transfers and/or not to attack in the future. *"Because of this distrust amongst men, the most reasonable way for any man to make himself safe is to strike first, that is, by force or cunning subdue other men - as many of them as he can, until he sees no other power great enough to endanger him. This is no more than what he needs for his own survival, and is generally allowed"*. As India has signed treaties with the China (the *Panhsheela* Agreement) for peaceful coexistence and number of treaties with Pakistan to not breach the cease fire. Both the neighbours, China and Pakistan, showed non commitment and breached the treaties, from time to time.

The following five reasons are related to the bargaining failure:

1. Asymmetric information about the potential costs and benefits of war.
2. A lack of ability to enforce a bargaining agreement and/or a lack of the ability to credibly commit to abide by an agreement.
3. Indivisibilities of resources that might change hands in a war, so that not all potentially mutually beneficial bargaining agreements are feasible.
4. Agency problems, where the incentives of leaders differ from those of the populations that they represent.
5. Multilateral interactions where every potential agreement is blocked by some coalition of states or constituencies who can derail it.

Religion as causes of war: In principle, a war between two theocratic states, or two states led by people of different religions, can be thought of as having rational explanations. It is a question of defining the objectives of the agents. One reason that one might place such motivations outside of the realm of "rationality", is that such objectives are often not put forth by a leader as if they are acting by choice, but instead leaders claim to be acting on behalf or under the direction of a higher being or religious code – the *jihad*. Thus, the leaders in such settings do not necessarily view themselves as

“optimizing” or “choosing” between paths but instead as following ordained directions. Perhaps even more importantly, from our perspective, such agents cannot be bargained with. Even if agreements are available and fully enforceable, such agents are driven by a specific goal that may be incompatible with the well-being or autonomy of another population. Thus, there is a critical distinction between a leader who is choosing and optimizing, even though the his or her rhetoric may be religious in nature, and a leader who believes that he or she acts simply as a channel for a higher being. In this light, many wars that are thought of as being religious in nature can still be well-understood from a rational perspective. To make this point clear, let us discuss two prominent examples that are often considered to be at least partly religious wars: wars against Indian states after 9th c AD.

Revenge as causes of war: Revenge is another reason for war that one would instinctively place within the set of non-rationalist explanations of war. It is important, however, to distinguish an emotional version of revenge from a version of what someone might call revenge in the context of a repeated game: the punishment phase involved in trigger strategies of one kind or another. Revenge in emotional terms involves actions motivated exclusively by anger for a past action, and not motivated by the potential incentive consequences, nor decided ex ante as part of an optimal strategy. Wars driven by revenge are also rare, although famous examples include the battle against Indian states by the English in the First War of Indian Independence in 1858.

Ethnic cleansing and other ideological mass killings have been experienced by Indians when Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India in 18th c AD.

First Strike Advantages and Preemptive War: One difficulty in attaining peace is that the natural anarchy in which international relations reside often leads to a first-strike advantage (preemption) by the illegitimate Government or Military Dictator or Red Government where people has no choice. That is, an element of surprise provides a significant advantage in initial strike (every time by the Pakistan) but every time defeated by the well-organized Indian Armed Forces.

Indivisibilities and other physical impediments: It is a situation where a fairly balanced agreement needs to be reached in order to avoid conflict. If it is difficult to finely divide territory, or other natural resources in ways that strike the exact balance needed, that could lead to an inability to reach an agreement in the face of war. For other perspectives on war as part of a bargaining process, explanation for war.

Agency problems as causes of war: Even when decision makers are fully informed and have perfectly consistent beliefs, conflict may still be rationally chosen when there are differences in preferences between decision-makers and the rest of their country (a principal-agent problem) particularly when the decision-makers are biased relative to their countries war can occur, regardless of the availability of enforceable or binding agreements.

Conclusion

Hence, one may say that since historical times, the method of warfare is changing as per changed strategy of the enemy. This state-centric conception of war was not

entirely without humanitarian benefits. Burdened with notions of collective responsibility, pre-classical international law made no distinction between combatants and civilians. It is herebyendeavoured to understand these changing reasons/methods in the context of a rich framework to understand the conditions for war. Although our discussion has drawn mainly from the annals of Indian states have experienced before 1857 and India after 1947. Although the theoretical understanding of the various causes of wars is developing well, and there are innumerable case studies of war and analyses of particular conflicts, systematic realistic work that analyze the origins of wars across many cases is still relatively lacking so far as Indian sub-continent is concerned.

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